CHAPTER VII

DISTRICT OF NEW MADRID

Its Boundaries—"L'Anse a la Graise"—The LeSieurs—Situation of New Madrid—Colonel George Morgan—Grant to Morgan—His Expectation of Profit — His Description of the Site—The Survey of the Town—Opposition of Wilkinson and Miro—New Madrid Falls into Hands of Miro—Letter of La Forge—The Commandants of the Post—Emigrants Who Came With Morgan—The LeSieur Family—The La Forges—Joseph Michel—Robert McCoy—Richard Jones Waters—Tardiveau—Other Settlers—Robert Goah Watson—Military Companies—Other Settlements in New Madrid County—Little Prairie—Settlements in Scott County—Town Near Sikeston—Benton—Joseph Hunter—Tywappity Bottoms—Mississippi County Settlements—Spanish Land Grants—The King's Highway.

As originally defined by the Spanish in the grant to Morgan, the District of New Madrid extended from the Cinque Homme, south to the mouth of the St. Francois, and west a distance of ten or fifteen miles, though the western boundary was not exactly located. Out of the north part of this district was carved the District of Cape Girardeau and after this was done New Madrid District was bounded on the north by Tywappity Bottoms. The exact line between Cape Girardeau district and New Madrid district was, however, for a long time a matter of dispute. It was finally settled by the governor-general and located at a point about five miles south of the present town of Commerce. The western boundary was left unsettled; however, the district was generally understood to extend as far west as there were settlements. As we have seen in discussing the boundary of the District of Cape Girardeau, there was an attempt made by the commandants of New Madrid to extend their authority over all the territory west of the St. Francois river and to confine Cape Girardeau district between the St. Francois and the Mississippi. The southern boundary of the District of New Madrid was generally understood as about the present southern boundary of the state. It was fixed not by any order or enactment but by the fact that settlements extended only about that far to the south.

The first settlement in this district was made in 1783 by Francois and Joseph LeSieur, two Canadian trappers and traders who had been accustomed to come to the territory about the present site of New Madrid for the purposes of hunting and trading with the Indians. Other hunters and traders also visited this place which is situated in a great bend of the river. Before any settle-

ment existed there, while it was only a temporary trading post, it was called "L'Anse a la Graise." This name, which means the "cove of grease," was given it by those who came there to trade. Just what reason there was for the name is a question. Some have said that it came from the fact that stores of bear meat were kept there for sale to the passing boats; others said that it was named because of the fact that the hunters there killed an abundance of game, among which were many bears. A third suggestion is that the name was applied because of the richness of the soil.

Whatever the reason for the early name, the settlement was made by the LeSieurs. It was situated on the east bank of the Chapoosa creek; this was the early name of St. John's Bayou. The situation was a splendid one for the town; the great ridge which extends from the foot of the Scott county hills to the mouth of the St. Francois river is one of the most fertile and desirable parts of all of Southeast Missouri. This ridge touches the river at several places, among them New Madrid and Caruthersville. In early times it formed a most attractive place for settlers. It had immense quantities of timber of the finest sorts; within a short distance of New Madrid there was a lake of clear, limpid water; the woods swarmed with game; the climate was mild; the soil was exceedingly rich and productive. Those who visited the place believed it to be the most attractive site along the whole course of the river. These advantages had not been overlooked in the early times. The whole country about New Madrid is dotted over with Indian mounds. There are so many of these that it has been conceived by those who believed the mounds to have been built by a race preceding the Indians, that New Madrid was perhaps the seat of government for the extensive empire which they believed to have been organized at that time. Whatever the truth may be about this, there can be no doubt that great numbers of people lived here at the time the mounds were being built. It was near this place, perhaps, that De Soto camped on his expedition. An Indian village was situated here at that time and even when the French began to come here to trade there seems to have been an Indian village still in existence. Along this ridge was one of the great Indian roads which led from the crossing at Commerce to the south as far, perhaps, as the mouth of the St. Francois.

The LeSieurs lived and traded here for several years and other hunters and traders came, attracted by the advantages of the place, until there was quite a settlement. The most remarkable thing connected with its early history was the attempt of Colonel George Morgan to found a great city which should be the capital of a principality.

Morgan was an American; he was fond of the life of the woods; had an adventurous spirit; was bold and daring and far-sighted. He visited the West about the time of the transfer from France to Spain, paddled up and down its rivers, selected promising sites for settlements, and doubtless dreamed of an empire which might be established in Upper Louisiana. He took part in the Revolutionary war and was a man of considerable influence and high position in the United States. However, he became indignant at the treatment accorded him by the government of the United States. He had acquired from the Indians a large tract of land, enough to make him independently wealthy, but the policy of the United States government was

never to recognize the validity of an Indian transfer. In the view of the government, the Indians had no power or authority to alienate any lands. This invalidated Morgan's claims and he became practically penniless. He applied to the congress of the United States for redress, but this was denied him. He then conceived the plan of founding a settlement within Spanish territory. He seems to have been moved by a desire for wealth, and partly by a desire to revenge himself on the United States by helping to build up the power of Spain. He came into correspondence with Don Diego Gardoqui the Spanish minister at Washington. He pointed out to the minister the immense importance to Spain of colonizing her territory west of the Mississippi river and of inducing settlers from America to emigrate there. His familiarity with the West and his real ability caught the fancy of Gardoqui who entered into his scheme. Under the arrangement entered into between these persons, Morgan was to receive a grant of land reaching from the Cinque Homme to the mouth of the St. Francois river, a distance of about three hundred miles. The grant was to extend some twelve or fifteen miles westward from the river and thus to include between twelve and fifteen million acres of land. Morgan pointed out to the minister that if Americans were to be induced to settle on these lands certain things must be granted to them. It was accordingly agreed that Americans should be exempt from taxation and that they should have the right to self-government. In addition to these inducements Mr. Morgan held out to prospective colonists cheap land for he expected to sell parts of his enormous holdings for very small sums.

It was a part of Morgan's scheme to induce Indians from east of the river to settle in Spanish territory. This was to be done, in part, on account of trading with the Indians, and, in part, so that they might serve as a protection for the Spanish territory, especially against the Osage Indians who lived on the Missouri river. He promised Gardoqui that if the grant should be made on the terms agreed upon between them that within a very few years the population of the district should be at least one thousand persons. Morgan seems to have been deceived as to the authority of the minister to make the grant; he undoubtedly believed that he had secured from the Spanish government the grant of the lands mentioned. In the winter of 1789, he descended the Ohio river with a numerous party consisting of Americans and of Indians and selected for the site of his town the place now known as New Madrid. He was led to do this by the beauty of the situation and the probabilities that it would be a most desirable place for a prosperous trading village. Here he left a large part of the expedition while he, himself, in company with some other members of the party, made his way up the river to St. Louis to meet the lieutenant-governor of the district who resided there. The lieutenant-governor received him with great favor and entered into all of his schemes. He then returned and proceeded to carry out his plans for the settlement of the country.

Morgan's hope of wealth was founded on the expectation that a considerable trade would soon be developed at his post, which he named New Madrid, and that he would be able to dispose of large bodies of land. He evidently expected, also, to engage in the cultivation of the soil and in addition to this he had received a promise that if his scheme turned out successfully the Spanish government would grant him a pension in reward

for his services. He proceeded to lay out the site of his village and to have the surrounding lands surveyed. The surveyors who did this work were Col. Israel Shreve, Peter Light, and Col. Christopher Hays. It seems that his instructions to these surveyors was really the beginning of the present system of land survey, and that the United States government adopted the method devised by Mr. Morgan, in a subsequent survey of the public lands.

* Morgan thus describes the site which he had chosen for his town of New Madrid: "We have unanimously resolved to establish our new city above-mentioned with the date (of this letter) some twelve leagues below the above-mentioned Ohio, at the place formerly called L'Ance la Graisse, below the mouth of the river called Chepousea or Sound river in Captain Hutchins's map. Here the banks of the Mississippi, for a considerable distance, are high, dry, and delicious, and the territory west of the San Francisco river is of the most desirable quality for corn, tobacco, hemp, cotton, flax, and indigo, although according to the opinion of some, too rich for wheat, in such manner, that we truly believe that there is not a single arpent of uncultivable land, nor does it show any difference throughout the space of one thousand square miles. The country rises gradually from the Mississippi and is a fine, dry, agreeable, and healthful land, superior, we believe, in beauty and quality to those of any part of America.

"The limits of our new city of Madrid will extend about four miles south on the bank of the river, and two to the west of it, so that it is divided by a deep lake of the purest fresh water, 80 varas wide and many leagues long, running north and south and empting by a constant and small current into the Mississippi after flowing through the center of the city. The banks of this lake, which is called Santa Anna, are high, beautiful and pleasant; its waters are deep, clear, and fresh; its bottom is of clean sand, without logs, grass, or other vegetables; and it abounds in fish.

"On each side of this fine lake, streets, one hundred feet broad, have been marked out, and a road of equal width about the same. Trees have been marked, which must be preserved for the health and recreation of the citizens.

"Another street, one hundred and twenty feet wide, has been marked out on the bank of the Mississippi, and also the trees noted which must be kept for the above-mentioned objects.

"Twelve acres have been kept in the center of the city for the purpose of a public park, whose plan and adornment the magistrates of the city will look after; and forty lots of one and one-half acres apiece, have been considered for those public works or uses which the citizens may request or the magistrate or chief order, and another twelve acres reserved for the disposition of the King. A ground-plot of one and one-half acres, and a lot of five acres, outside the city will be given to each one of the first six hundred settlers.

"Our surveyors are now working on the extensive plan and proving up the ground plots of the city and the outside lots, and measuring the lands into sections of 320 acres apiece, in addition to those which they choose for the settlement of the people who may come (here). These portions and the conditions of the settlements are also in accordance with a plan universally satisfactory,

* Houck, "History of Missouri," Vol. II, p. 64.

which will avoid the interminable lawsuits which a different method has caused in other countries to the posterity of the first settlers.

"We have constructed cabins and a storehouse for provisions, etc., and we are making gardens and clearing one hundred acres of land in the most beautiful meadow in the world, in order to sow corn, hemp, flax, cotton, tobacco, and potatoes.

"The timber here is different in some kinds of trees from those in the central states of America. However, we have found white oak, high and straight, of extraordinary size, as well as black oak, mulberry, ash, white poplar, persimmon, and apples in abundance, and larger than those which we have hitherto seen. Also hickory, walnut, etc. The sassafras, very straight and of extraordinary size, is commonly 24 inches in diameter. The shrubs are principally cane and spice-wood.

"The timbers unknown to you gentlemen, are the cypress, pecan, coffee (sic), cucumber, and some others. The cypress grows on the lowlands at the edge of the river; its quality is equal to that of white cedar. We have a fine grove of these trees in our neighborhood which Colonel Morgan has had divided into shares of a suitable size, in order to assign them to each farm.

"We are satisfied with the climate, and we have reason to congratulate ourselves that we have at last found a country which conforms to our most ardent desires."

* Morgan gives this account of the way the town is laid out and the manner in which lots are to be disposed of: "The first six hundred persons applying for city and out lots, who shall build and reside thereon one whole year, or place a family who shall so reside, shall have one city lot of half an acre, and one out lot of five acres, gratis; paying only one dollar for each patent. All other city and out lots shall be reserved for sale, to future applicants according to their value. In the choice of the city and out lots the first applicant shall have the first choice of each; the second applicant shall have the second, and so on. Forty lots of half an acre each shall be reserved for public uses, and shall be applied to such purposes as the citizens shall from time to time recommend, or the chief magistrate appoint; taking care that the same be so distributed in the different parts of the city that their uses may be general, and as equal as possible. There shall be two lots of twelve acres each laid out and reserved forever; viz.: one for the King, and one for public walks, to be ornamented, improved and regulated by or under the direction of the chief magistrate of the city, for the time being, for the use and amusement of the citizens and strangers. So soon as these lots shall be laid off, the timber, trees and shrubs, now growing thereon, shall be religiously preserved as sacred; and no part thereof shall be violated or cut down, but by the personal direction and inspection of the chief magistrate for the time being, whose reputation must be answerable for an honorable and generous discharge of this trust, meant to promote the health and pleasure of the citizens. There shall be a reserve of one acre at each angle of every intersection of public roads or highways, throughout the whole territory, according to the plan laid down for settlement of the country; by which means, no farm house can be more than two miles and a half from one of these reserves, which are made forever for the following uses, viz.: one acre on the northeast angle or the use of a school; one acre in the northwest angle for a church; one acre on the southwest angle

* Houck, "Spanish Regime," Vol. I, p. 137.

for the use of the poor of the district, and the remaining angle in the southeast angle for the use of the King.

"In laying out the city, all streets shall be at right angles and four rods wide, including the foot-paths on each side, which shall be fifteen feet wide, and shall be raised twelve or fifteen inches above the wagon road. No person shall be allowed to encroach on the foot-paths, with either porch, cellar door, or other obstruction to passengers.

"All the oblongs, or squares of the city, shall be of the same dimensions, if possible; viz.: extending from east to west eighty rods or perches, and from north to south twelve perches, so that each oblong or square will contain six acres, which shall be subdivided by meridian lines, into twelve lots of half an acre each; by this means every lot will have at least two fronts, and the end lots will have three fronts. The lots shall be numbered from No. 1 upward, on each side of every street; extending from east to west; commencing at the east end.

"The streets shall be distinguished by names in the following manner: the middle street shall be a continuation of the middle range or road, extending from the first meridional line to the Mississippi river, and shall be called King street; and the streets north of this, extending from east to west, shall be called first North street, second North street, and so on, reckoning from King's street or Middle street. In like manner all the streets south of Kings street or Middle street, extending from east to west, shall be called first South street, second South street, and so on, reckoning from King street; so also, all the streets extending North and South shall be distinguished by the names of first River street, second River street, and so on; reckoning the space between the eastmost squares and the river, as first or front River street.

"The space between the eastmost squares and the river, shall not be less than one hundred feet at any place, from the present margin or bank of the river, to be kept open forever for the security, pleasure and health of the city, and its inhabitants; wherefore religious care shall be taken to preserve all the timber growing thereon.

"The lots of each square shall be numbered from the above space fronting the river. The eastmost lot of each square being No. 1, and so on, to the westmost lot of the whole city; by which means every lot in the city may be easily known and pointed out by any person.

"The two lots No. 1 on each side of King street are hereby given forever to the citizens for market places. The two lots No. 13 on each side of King street are hereby given forever to the citizens; viz.: that on the south side for a Roman Catholic school, and that on the north side for a Roman Catholic church.

"The two lots No. 13 in the fifth North street are hereby given forever to the citizens, viz: that on the south side for an Episcopal school, and that on the north side for an Episcopal church.

"The two lots No. 13 in the fifth South street are hereby given forever to the citizens, viz.: that on the south side for a Presbyterian school, and that on the north side for a Presbyterian church.

"The two lots No. 13 in the tenth North street are hereby given forever to the citizens, viz.: that on the south side for a German Lutheran school, and that on the north side for a German Lutheran church.

"The two lots No. 13 on the fifteenth North street are hereby given forever to the citizens

—that on the south side for a German Calvanistic school, and that on the north side for a German Calvanistic church.

"In like manner the two lots No. 13 in every fifth North street, and in every fifth South street throughout the city, shall be reserved and given for churches and schools, to be governed by such religious denominations as shall settle in New Madrid, on their respective plans.

"All these lots, thus given, or reserved to be given are to be esteemed so many of these forty promised as before mentioned.

"Every landing on the river opposite the city shall be equally free for all persons; under regulation, however, of the magistrates of the police.

"No trees in any street of the city, nor in any road throughout the country, shall be injured or be cut down, but under the direction of the magistrates of the police, or an officer of their appointment, who shall be accountable in the premises; and no timber injured or cut down in any street or road, shall be applied to private uses under any plea whatsoever.

"The banks of the Mississippi, throughout the territory, including a space of four rods in breadth, shall be a highway and kept open forever as such; and the trees growing therein shall not be injured, nor be cut down, but by the magistrates of the police or their order, for the reasons given above in relation to other roads.

"No white person shall be admitted to reside in this territory who shall declare himself to be a hunter by profession, or who shall make a practice of killing buffaloes or deer without bringing all the flesh of every carcass to his own family, or to New Madrid, or carrying it to some other market. This regulation is intended for the preservation of those animals, and for the benefit of neighboring Indians, whose dependence is on hunting principally—this settlement being wholly agricultural and commercial, no encouragement shall be given to white men hunters.

"No person shall be concerned in contraband trade on any account. Care will be taken to instruct the inhabitants what is contraband, that they may not offend innocently.

"Every person having permission to settle in this territory shall be allowed to bring with him his family, servants, slaves and effects of every kind, but not to export any part thereof, deemed contraband to any other part of his Majesty's dominions.

"Every navigable river throughout the territory shall be esteemed a highway; and no obstruction to the navigation shall be made therein for the emolument of any person whatsoever.

"No transfer of lands within this territory shall be valid unless acknowledged, and a record thereof be made in an office to be erected for that purpose in the district. This is meant to prevent fraudulent sales, and not to obstruct those made bonafide to any person whatsoever, being a Spanish subject.

"All mortgages must in like manner be recorded at the same office for the same purpose; the fees of the office shall be reasonable, and the books, with alphabetical tables kept of the buyer and seller, and of the mortgagor and mortgagee, shall be open for examination.

"The foregoing regulations and directions are meant as fundamental stipulations for the government and happiness of all who shall become subjects of Spain, and shall reside in this Territory.

Given under my hand at New Madrid this sixth day of April, 1789.

GEORGE MORGAN."

A number of settlers were attracted by the generous conditions on which land was granted and by the real desirability of the site of New Madrid, and Morgan steered well on the way to the accomplishment of his desire. He came in conflict however with plans that had been formed by Governor Miro the Spanish governor of Louisiana whose headquarters were at New Orleans and who was engaged in intrigue with General James Wilkinson. Wilkinson was an officer in the army of the United States in command of the district along the Mississippi river. He had planned with Miro to incite a rebellion among the people of the United States west of the Alleghanies, with the intention of separating this territory from the United States and of joining it to the Spanish territory. Wilkinson was drawing a pension from the Spanish government and had hopes that his efforts in securing a part of the territory of the United States for Spain would result in his receiving some very great reward. Of course Morgan's plan of drawing settlers to New Madrid and making that a prosperous and flourishing center of trade for Upper Louisiana was in direct opposition to the hopes of Wilkinson. He saw in Colonel Morgan a rival and set to work to thwart his plans. He wrote Governor Miro that he had applied for a grant in the Yazoo country in order to destroy the place of a certain Colonel Morgan. He told Miro that Morgan was a man of education and intelligence, but a thorough speculator. He also said of Morgan that he had been twice in bankruptcy, and that he was very poor, but also very ambitious. He also said that he had had a spy searching out information concerning Morgan and his agreement with Don Diego Gardoqui and that he was convinced that Morgan's scheme would be successful unless steps were taken to counteract it. He assured Miro that their plans would be greatly hindered if Morgan would be allowed to carry on his settlement.

Acting on this information Governor Miro proceeded at once to try and put an end to the operations conducted by Morgan. On the 20th of May, 1789, he wrote to the Spanish government protesting against the grant that had been made to Morgan. He said that it formed a state within a state and asked the government to cancel this grant; at the same time he wrote to Morgan himself and charged him with having exceeded his powers and with having acted toward the government of Spain in bad faith. He said that Morgan had no authority to lay out a town and provide for a government. He informed Morgan that it was his intention to construct a fort at New Madrid and to place a detachment of soldiers there to control the situation. Morgan saw that this interference would very likely work the ruin of all of his hopes. He replied to the letter in a most apologetic manner, saying that if he had, indeed, exceeded his authority he had done so because of his zeal in the service of the King of Spain. He was unable to conceal the fact, however, from those colonists who had come and were coming to New Madrid, that he had fallen into disfavor with the government and they immediately began to fear that he would be unable to carry out his promise. It seems too that an emissary of Miro visited New Madrid and succeeded in stirring up some ill feeling against Morgan and his rule. The colonists complained about some of the regulations and finally sent an agent, one John Ward, to present a petition to Governor Miro. Acting on this petition Miro carried out his threat and sent a company of soldiers with orders to construct a fort at New Madrid and

to take entire charge of the government of the post. This practically destroyed Morgan's influence, and with its loss went all his hope of making a settlement at New Madrid. The post was continued under the government of Spanish officials.

The officer whom Miro sent with the company of thirty soldiers to take charge of the post was Lieutenant Pierre Forcher who laid off a town between Bayou St. John and the Decyperi. The fort which he built on the bank of the river he named Fort Celeste, in honor of the wife of Governor Miro. Commandant Forcher was a man of energy and administrative ability and under his rule order and prosperity reigned in the community. He was succeeded after about eighteen months by Thomas Portell. Portell was a man well suited to the place, governed with justice, and was able to satisfy most of the people.

A letter is here inserted which was written in 1796 by Pierre Antoine La Forge to Charles DeHault De Lassus. De Lassus had been appointed military and civil commandant of the post and district of New Madrid. La Forge was a resident of the post and thoroughly acquainted with the entire situation. His letter cannot fail to be of interest as it covers the conditions at New Madrid at that time.

New Madrid, Dec. 31, 1796.—To Mr. Chas. Dehault DeLassus, Lieutenant-Colonel admitted into the Stationary Regiment of Louisiana and Military and Civil Commandant of the Posts and Districts of New Madrid—Sir, the Commandant:—Before handing you the first census of New Madrid under your commandment, I have ventured upon a sketch of the origin of the settlement of this post, and the courses which have retarded its growth and chiefly its cultivation. If former defects have kept it until this time in a species of stupefaction, your sagacious views and the zeal you exhibit to second the good will of Mr., the Governor General of this Province, towards this settlement, can in a little while efface the trouble it experienced in its birth.

I was present, Mr. Commandant, when you pronounced with effusion these words, which I wish that all of the inhabitants might have heard; words which depicted so frankly your kind intention, and the interest which Mr., the Governor, takes in us.

"The Governor," said you, "is surprised at the langour exhibited by this settlement and its little advance; he desires its prosperity. I will reflect upon its failure," added you, "and will endeavor to remedy it; I ask your assistance. If the inhabitants need encouragement, if they stand in need of help, let them inform me of their wants, and I will convey them to the Governor General." This offer was appreciated by those near you; little accustomed to hear the like, they wondered at you, and appeared to rest content.

Nevertheless different statements were spread among those who heard you. Why so long a silence since your generous offer? Is it distrust on their part? Is it mistrust of their own misunderstanding? Is it profound reflection to better further your views? or may it be self interest that induces some to remain silent? I am ignorant of their motives, and limit myself to the hope that they will eventually break their silence and make known to you their solitary reflections.

If my knowledge equalled my desires, I would hasten with all my power, sir, the commandant, to tender you the homage of my services, but they fall too far short to allow me to hope that they could be of any utility to you. I will confine myself solely to communicate to you such knowledge as I have

acquired, and my reflections thereon since I have been at this post, and may a series of these reflections assist in your benevolent heart some happy idea that may tend to the advantage and prosperity of this colony.

Some traders in pursuit of gain, came to l'anse a la graissse (cove of fat or grease), a rendezvous or gathering place of several Indian nations, and where, as we are told by tradition, they found abundance of game, and especially bears and buffaloes, hence the name of l'anse a la graissse. A first year of success induced them to try a second, and to this others. Some of them, determined to establish their homes where they found a sure trade and unlimited advantages, divided there among themselves the land. The bayou, named since St. John, was the rallying point, and the land the nearest to this then became settled, therefore we find that Messrs. Francis and Joseph Lasieuer, Ambrose Dumay, Chattoillier, and others, divided among themselves this neighborhood; property which Mr. Foucher, the first commandant, considered as sacred, and which he did not disturb. The profits of the trade of l'anse a la graissse having been heard of as far as the Post Vincennes, the St. Maries, the Hunots, the Racines, the Barsaloux, etc., of that place accomplished for some years very advantageous trips. They congratulated themselves, moreover, that the Indians of l'anse a la graissse traded with them amicably, whilst those of the United States were treacherous towards them, and made them averse to inhabit a post where their lives were in constant danger.

Nevertheless an unfortunate anarchy, a singular disorder, prevailed, at l'anse a la graissse: all were masters, and would obey none of those who set themselves up a heads or commandants of this new colony. A murder was committed by an inhabitant on another—then their eyes were opened, they began to feel the necessity of laws, and some one at their head to compel their observance. They bound the culprit and sent him to New Orleans. Everything tends to the belief that the commandants of the posts of Ste. Genevieve and of St. Louis had, during these transactions, apprised the Governor-General of what was occuring at l'anse a la graissse; but a new scene was in preparation.

One Morgan, having descended the Ohio the first year that traders settled at l'anse a la graissse, examined, in passing, the land, and found it suitable to fix here a settlement Returning to America (U. S.), he removed and succeeded in bringing down to this post several families. He selected for the village the elevated ground, where at present are the habitations of Jackson and of Waters, near the Mississippi. They built some houses on the land, and, full of his enterprise and the success he expected from it, Morgan descended to New Orleans to obtain, not encouragement simply in his plans, but proprietary and honorary concessions beyond measure. He was baffled in his pretensions, and did not again set his foot in the colony.

These various occurrances determined the Governor General to send a commandant to this post, and M. Forcher was selected. Men are not gods, they all possess in some respects the weaknesses of human nature; the predominant one of the first commandant was self-interest; and who in his place would not have been so sent to a desert in the midst of savages, to bring the laws of a regulated government to new settlers as barbarous as the Indians themselves? What recomponse would he have received for neglecting his personal interests? What obligation would the new colony have been under to him? None.

Mr. Forcher was the man that was wanted

for the creation of this new colony. Busying himself at the same time with his own interests as of those of the inhabitants; with his own amusements as well as theirs, but always after having attended first to his business; and by a singular address, if he sometimes plucked the fowl, he not only did it without making it squall, but set it dancing and laughing. M. Forcher remained but a very short time at this post, and did a great deal. In eighteen months he divided out the country, regulated the land necessary for the village and that of the inhabitants. He built an imposing fort, promulgated the laws of the King and made them respected. He was the father and friend of all, lamented, regretted and demanded again, from the Governor General down, by the unanimous voice of all the inhabitants.

In all his labors was Mr. Forcher assisted by anyone? Had he overseers at the head of the works he presented? Not at all; he alone directed everything; he laid out the work, penetrated the cypress swamps to select the useful trees; he walked with the compass in hand to align the streets and limit of lots; he demonstrated by his example to the perplexed workmen how much men with but little main strength, but with intelligence and dexterity, can multiply the extent of the same, and surmount obstacles. His administration was too brief to ascertain the good he might have done, had it continued the ordinary period. What is certain is that, during the eighteen months that he was in command, there came to New Madrid the largest portion of families that are still there, and it was he that attracted them there.

M. Portell, successor to M. Forcher, commanded this post during five years; the population did not increase under his administration, and the growth of agricultural labors was but slightly perceptible.

M. Portell did not value the inhabitants sufficiently to do them a substantial favor, nor did he use the proper means to improve the condition of the colony. He was not a man of the people, and when by chance his interest required him to assume the character, he was extremely awkward in it; they perceived that he could not play his part, and that a residence in court would have infinitely better suited him than one in a new settlement mostly ill composed. M. Portell had a good heart, he was by nature noble and generous, but his mind was somewhat mistrustful and suspicious, and his age placed him in a position to be influenced by his surroundings. I am convinced that if M. Portell had come alone to this colony, he would have exhibited much less weakness and that his time would have been much more to him for the public good than it had been.

The little progress made by the colony must not, however, be attributed to the apparent indifference which seemed to form the base of M. Portell's character; physical and moral courses retarded its advancement.

At the period when M. Portell assumed command he found the inhabitants of this post made up of traders, hunters and boatmen. Trade was still pretty fair for the first two years of his residence here, so that nearly everyone, high or low, would meddle with the trade and not a soul cultivated the soil. It was so convenient, with a little powder and lead, some cloth and a few blankets, which they obtained on credit at the stores, to procure themselves the meat, grease and suet necessary for their sustenance, and pay off a part of their indebtedness with some peltries. Some of them, but a very few, seeded.

equally as well as badly, about an acre of corn, and they all found time to smoke their pipes and give balls and entertainments. How often have I heard them regretting those happy days, when they swam in grease, and when abundance of every description was the cause of waste and extravagance, and the stores of fish from their dragnets gave them whiskey at four or five reaux (bit of 12½) a gallon, and flour at four or five dollars a barrel, maintained and kept up these festivals and pleasures, which only came to an end when their purses were exhausted.

Mr. Forcher, a young man who, during his command of the post, never neglected his work or business for amusements, yet found time to be at them all, and often was the first to start them, but M. Portell was not so sociable in this respect. He found fault with this giddiness and folly, and judged that a colony, peopled by such individuals, could not attain a very brilliant success.

At last, game in these parts becoming scarcer, the Indians removed themselves further off, and were seldom here; the traders knew very well where to find them, but the inhabitants waited for them in vain; then grease, suet, meat and peltries being no longer brought by the Indians, it was only a few resident hunters and the traders themselves who provisioned the village; the unfortunate habit of not working had gained the day, it was too difficult to overcome it, so great distress was often seen in the country before they could snatch a few green ears of corn from a badly cultivated field. Three or four Americans, at most, as far back as 1793, had risqued the settlement of farms on large tracts of land. The Creoles undervalued them, did not eat their fill of dry corn bread, and smoked their pipes quietly. They were, however, surprised to see that, with several cows, they often had not a drop of milk, while these three or four Americans gorged themselves with it, and sold them butter, cheese, eggs, chickens, etc.

By dint of looking into the matter, and waiting in vain for the Indians to supply them with provisions, it struck them that the most prudent thing they could do would be to become farmers. It became, then, a species of epidemic, and the malady spreading from one to another, there was not a single one of them but who, without energy, spirit, animals or ploughs, and furnished only with his pipe and steel, must needs possess a farm.

It was towards the close of the year 1793 that this disease spread itself, and towards the spring of 1794 all the lands in the vicinity of New Madrid were to be broken up and torn into rags, to be seeded and watered by the sweat of these new farmers. Who can tell how far this newly awakened enthusiasm might have been carried? It might have produced a salutary crisis, and self-love and necessity combined, we should be supplied with farmers at all hazards, and whose apprenticeship might, perhaps, have resulted in some success.

An unlooked for occurrence calmed this effervescence; all were enrolled into a militia to be paid from January 1, 1794, and they found it much pleasanter to eat the King's bread, receive his pay, and smoke his pipes, than to laboriously grub some patches of land to make it produce some corn and potatoes. These militiamen were disbanded about the middle of 1794; their pay was already wasted. They found it a great hardship to be no longer furnished with bread by the King, the largest portion of them had neglected their planting, they found themselves at the year's end in want, and clamored as thieves against the King, saying it

was all his fault. M. Portell knew his people and disregarded these outcries.

In the meantime five gallies had come up in the course of this year, and had passed all the summer at New Madrid, and they had caused a great consumption of food. M. Portell found nothing in the village for their subsistence, and drew his supplies for them in part from Illinois and from Kentucky. He did not let pass the opportunity of making it felt by those of the inhabitants of long residence, that should have been in a condition to have furnished a part of these supplies, but the blows he struck came too late, and made but little impression—the hot fever which had occasioned the delirium, where every one saw himself a farmer, had now subsided; no one thought any more of it, some of them who had made a trial of their experience at Lake St. Isidor, had so poorly succeeded, that the laugh was not on their side, and it needed but little for hunting, rowing, and smoking the pipe, to resume their ancient authority over nearly all the colony.

In 1795 a new fit of the fever struck the inhabitants. The settlement of Ft. St. Fernando occasioned a hasty cleaning out of the little corn there was in the colony. Kentucky furnished a little, and Ste. Genevieve supplied a great deal, even to New Madrid, that fell short after having consumed her own supply. This example struck the inhabitants: they saw that if they had harvested extensively, they could now well have disposed of their surplus—new desires to go on farms to raise stock and to make crops.

During these occurrances several American families came to New Madrid; some of them placed themselves at once on farms, and like children our Creoles, from a state of jealousy, clamored against the Americans, whom they thought too wonderful. Jealousy stimulated them, and they would also place themselves on farms.

It is in reality, then, only since the year 1796 that we may regard the inhabitants of this post as having engaged in cultivation, and that it is but yet absolutely in its infancy; a new scarcity they have just experienced before the last crops has convinced them of the importance of raising them, not only to provide against such affliction, to enable them also, with the surplus above their own consumption, they may procure their other indispensable necessaries.

The population of the years 1794, 1795 and 1796 is nearly about the same, but the crops have increased from year to year, and all tends to the belief that this increase will be infinitely more perceptible in future years.

In the year 1794 the corn crop was 6,000 bushels; in 1795, 10,000, and in 1796, 17,000.

It was in this condition of things that M. Portell left his command.

It was, perhaps, impossible, from the foregoing facts, that the settlement at New Madrid could have made greater progress than it has up to this time. It was not husbandmen who came and laid the foundation, it was tradesmen, cooks, and others, who would live there with but little expense and labor, who, being once fixed there, having their lands and their cattle, the Indians having removed themselves to a distance, and trade no longer within the reach of all the world, necessity taught them that to procure the means necessary to live, they must resort to tilling the soil. The first attempts were difficult, but the inducement of disposing with ease of their crops determined them to labor.

The first steps have been taken; nothing remains for a wise commandant, but to manage everything with prudence, according to the views of the government, to firmly repel

idleness and laziness, to welcome and encourage activity, and exhibit to the industrious men that he is distinguished above others and has earned the protection of the government, in giving him tangible proof, either by preference in purchasing from him or some other manner of recompense. The honest man, the active and industrious man, is sensible of the slightest proceeding on the part of his superior, and it is to him a great expansion to reflect that his labors and fatigues have not been ignored, and that they have given him a claim on the good will and benevolence of the heads of a Providence.

What a vast field is open to a commandant who would reap advantage by these means, and gain the benediction of all the worthy inhabitants of a colony.

I stop here, Mr. Commandant; what I might say further would add but little to the good purposes you design for the progress and success of the place. I have made a concise narrative of the origin of the post of New Madrid, and the reasons of its slow growth in agriculture. The census which follows, will give you a correct view of its present situation. It will prove to you that courage and emulation need but a slight support to emerge from the giddiness where they have so long remained. But for certain the Creoles will never make this a flourishing settlement, it will be the Americans, Germans and other active people who will reap the glory of it.

Observe, if it please you, sir, that amongst the habitations granted long since, those given by Francis Racine, by Hunot, Sr., the Hunot sons, Paquin, Laderoute, deceased, Gamelin, Lalotte, etc., have not yet had a single tree cut on them; that those of the three brothers, Saint Marie, Meloche and other Creoles are barely commenced.

You will see, on the contrary, that the Americans who obtain grants of land have nothing more at heart but to settle on them at once and improve them to the extent of their ability, and from this it is easy to draw conclusions.

Another observation which will surely not escape you, sir, is that the total head of families amount, according to the census I exhibit to you, to 159, and that in this number there are fifty-three who have no property. This, I think, is an evil to which it would be easy for you to apply a remedy. In a county destined to agricultural pursuits, and to the breeding of domestic animals, it is too much that one-third of the inhabitants should stand isolated from the general interest, and that the other two-thirds should be exposed to be the victim of a set of idle and lazy people, always at hand at their slightest necessities to satiate their hunger by preying on the industrious.

I think, Mr. Commandant, that several habitations left by persons who have absented themselves from this post for a long time should be reunited to the domain.

The following are of this class:

One Enic Bolduc, absent for over two years, had a place at Lake St. Francis No. 2.

One John Easton, absent for over three years, had a place at Lake St. Eulalie; it is now abandoned. One Mr. Waters says he has claims on it. What are they?

One Tourney had a place at Lake St. Isidor; he associated with to cultivate it one Gamard. Tourney returned to France, and Gamard had worked for two years at Fort St. Fernando.

One M. Desrocher, why has he not worked his place in the Mill Prairie, which he holds for over four years? Has he not enough with the one he holds at St. Isidor?

One M. Chisholm holds three places; he lives on one he has just commenced to clear; a second is in litigation, and for over four years he has done nothing on a third near the village—has he not enough with two? Why hold land uselessly, and above all near the village?

The examination you will give the census, and the information concerning the property of each head of a family will lead you probably to other reflections. I append to the whole a new map of the village and its environs, as taken after the last abrasion of land by the Mississippi; this work claims your indulgence; it is not that of an artist, but one of the most zealous subjects of his majesty; and the only merit it may possess is to demonstrate to you with correctness the number of places that have been conceded in the village, the houses that are built thereon, and the names of the proprietors on the general list which correspond with the same numbers as those placed on each conceded place.

I pray you to believe me, with profound respect, sir, the commandant,

Your very affectionate and devoted servant,*

New Madrid, December 31, 1796.

PIERRE ANTOINE LAFORGE.

De Lassus remained as commandant at New Madrid until the spring of 1799 when he was transferred to St. Louis and became the lieutenant governor of Upper Louisiana. De Lassus was, perhaps, the most popular official ever in command at New Madrid, as he was, indeed, one of the most popular in all Louisiana. He was succeeded by Don Henri Peyroux who was transferred to the post from Ste. Genevieve. Peyroux landed in New Madrid in August, 1799, and was in command four years. He then resigned and returned to France.

John Lavalle succeeded Peyroux as commandant of the post and held the place until the transfer to the United States in March, 1804.

The emigrants who came to New Madrid with Colonel Morgan were mainly from Maryland and Pennsylvania. Among them were David Gray, Alex Samson, Joseph Story, Richard Jones Waters, John Hemphill, Elisha Windsor, Andrew Wilson, Samuel Dorsay, Benjamin Harrison, Jacob and Benjamin Meyers, William Chambers, Elisha Jackson, Ephraim Conner, John Hart, James Dunn, Lawrence Harrison, John Gregg, Nicholas and James Gerry, John Wallace, John Becket, John Summers, Louis and Joseph Vandenbenden, Joseph McCourtney, John Pritchett and David Shelby.

As we have seen the earliest French settlers were the two LeSieurs, Francois and Joseph. They were not only the first, but perhaps the most influential of all. Many of their descendants are still to be found in New Madrid county. These two were the sons of Charles LeSieur a native of the south of France who had emigrated to Three Rivers in Canada. Francois and Joseph came to St. Louis in 1785 and entered the employ of Gabriel Cerre who was a fur trader. It was in his interest that they visited the place where the town of New Madrid was afterward located. Joseph died in 1796 and left no children. Francois married on May 13, 1791, Cecile Guilbequet, a native of Vincennes. In 1794 they removed to Little Prairie, remaining there until the earthquakes of 1811 and '12 when they returned to New Madrid county and made their home at Point

* "History of Southeast Missouri," p. 140.

Pleasant. Francois LeSieur died in 1826; he had been married three times. The children of the first marriage were Francois, Jr., whose wife was a LeGrand; Colestique, who became the wife of Noah Gambol; Marguerite, who married Hypolite Thiriat; Godfrey, who married Mary E. Loignon and reared a family of eleven children; Matilda who became Mrs. W. B. Nicholas; and Christine, who was married to George G. Alford. His second wife was a Miss Bowman, and their son was named Napoleon. In 1820 he was married for a third time to the widow of Charles Loignon. Another member of this family was Raphael LeSieur who was a nephew of the two brothers and came to Madrid in 1798.

Another of the other French settlers was Pierre Antoine La Forge who came from France. La Forge was an aristocrat by birth, had been educated to be a priest, but fell in love with his cousin Margaret Champagne. He resided in Paris, but was compelled to leave at the time of the Revolution. He came to America then. At first he lived in Gallipolis, Ohio; he then removed to New Madrid where he was appointed a public writer and interpreter. He was also an adjutant of militia and justice of the peace and a notary public. De Lassus thought very highly of La Forge and accounted him one of the best officers in the service of the Spanish. His descendants still live in New Madrid county and have always been influential citizens. Among them we mention Alexander La Forge, A. C. La Forge, Hon. William Dawson, Robert D. Dawson, Dr. Geo. W. Dawson, and Dr. Welton O'Bannon. Others also have attained prominence and wealth.

As we have seen, Francis and Joseph LeSieur are the first settlers in New Madrid. The third was Joseph Michel. Michel's son, also named Joseph, who was born in 1800, lived to be a very old man, dying in 1895. He lived in New Madrid until 1829, when he moved to Hales Point, Tennessee. He was a nephew by marriage of Captain Robert McCoy who was also his guardian. He married a daughter of John Baptiste Olive one of the early settlers in New Madrid.

Captain McCoy was one of the most prominent men in New Madrid, he came to the settlement with Morgan, and became an officer under the Spanish authorities, being in command of a Spanish galley, or revenue boat. There were several of these galleys stationed at New Madrid and they were charged with the execution of the Spanish commercial laws. All boats passing New Madrid were required to stop and to give an account of themselves, and to pay the required tax to the government. It was while in command of one of these boats that McCoy captured the celebrated Mason gang of robbers and river pirates who for a number of years committed depredations on the river commerce. Joseph Michel who visited New Madrid in 1887 had a vivid recollection of the encounter between McCoy and the Mason gang. The Spanish governor at that time was Peyroux. He ordered McCoy to Little Prairie where he found and captured Mason and his men. They were then brought to New Madrid, sent from there to New Orleans and were then ordered up the river again, and on the return while their boat was tied at the river bank with most of the crew on the bank, Mason and his men seized the boat, shot and wounded Captain McCoy and made their escape. McCoy was commandant at post of New Madrid in 1799, then he was commandant at Tywappaty Bottom. He died in New Madrid in 1840.

Another of the early French settlers was Etienne Bogliolo who had been a resident of St. Louis, but early moved to New Madrid and engaged in trading. He secured some large grants of land from the Spanish authorities, but lost his property and died poor.

Another of the French settlers was John B. Olive. He left numerous descendants who still live in New Madrid county. Still another was John LaValle. He came to New Madrid direct from France and was a man of education and of superior intellect. Of his descendants, many still live in the county.

Of the men who came with Morgan, one of the most prominent was Doctor Richard Jones Waters. Waters was a native of Maryland, he came to New Madrid about 1790 and began the practice of his profession. Besides being a physician he was also a trader, mill owner, and land speculator. He married the widow of Louis Vandenbenden. The Waters family of New Madrid are descendants of Richard Jones Waters. He left a large estate and was an energetic, enterprising man. De Lassus rated him as a good officer, but referred to his somewhat extravagant disposition.

Barthelemi Tardiveau was a Frenchman who came to New Madrid with Morgan. He was a native of France and lived in Holland and had been a merchant in Louisville. He was a very able, energetic man, and was probably the most cultured man in the early settlement. He was a master of several different languages including French, English, and Spanish, as well as a number of Indian tongues. The company with which he was associated was, perhaps, the most extensive trading company in New Madrid district. He came to New Madrid after some experience east of the river which satisfied him that if the French in America were to prosper they must remove to the west side of the Mississippi. While living in the east he had interested himself in securing large grants of land from Congress for the benefit of French settlers and in satisfaction of their claims which had originated from Indian grants. He was fairly successful in this matter, but he soon saw that the very land he had been granted slipped out of the hands of the French and into the possession of the Americans. This convinced him that the French people would not prosper unless they got further away from the Americans. This conviction led him to give his assistance and influence to the support of Morgan's scheme. He not only followed Morgan to New Madrid, but he induced others of his friends and acquaintances to do the same.

Steinbeck and Reinecke, the traders whom we have noted as being established in Cape Girardeau, had a trading post at New Madrid also, they were further interested at Little Prairie. Bogliolo was also a trader as was the firm of Derbigny, La Forge & Company.

About 1804 Robert Goah Watson, a Scotchman by birth, but who had resided in Vincennes, Indiana, and also in Nova Scotia moved to New Madrid. He engaged in trade and acquired a large fortune. He was a man of great energy and ability and had the respect and confidence of all the people of the community. He was noted for his kind and charitable disposition and rendered such service to the community that he was affectionately referred to as the Father of the Country. Watson was killed on his farm near Point Pleasant. He left a large family of children, consisting of four sons and five daughters. One of his daughters married John Nathaniel Watson, another Doctor Ed-

mund La Valle, a third married Thomas L. Fontaine, a fourth married W. W. Hunter and the fifth daughter married Doctor Thomas A. Dow. Many of the Watsons, Fontaines, La Valles and Hunters of New Madrid county are descendants of Robert G. Watson.

Shortly before his death Judge Watson wrote a sketch of his life. It is inserted here because of the information it contains as to conditions existing in this part of the state, and especially for its presentation of the great difficulty attendant upon travel in that early day.

I am a Scotchman by birth. I left Auldearn, Scotland, a small town east of Inverness, in March, 1802. I came to this country when a lad with an elder brother of mine, Wm. G. Watson, under the guardianship of an uncle of ours, who had been in this country a number of years previous to our arrival, and was doing business as a merchant in Detroit, Michigan, then a small town. We took shipping at Greenoch, Scotland, and landed at Montreal, lower Canada, the latter part of May. From there we took passage on a batteau at a place called Sacchine, six or eight miles from Montreal. We crossed the small lake some six or eight miles wide, which brought us to the mouth of the river Magon. We proceeded on this batteau, which was loaded with merchandise, for Upper Canada, there being no other mode of conveyance at that period. After being fifteen days on the river, contending against a strong current and numerous falls, shoals, and other obstructions, we arrived at Queenstown on Lake Ontario, a small town settled by British subjects, with a garrison containing two or three companies. After remaining there four days we took a small vessel for passage to Niagara, a small town at the head of Lake Ontario, after being out six days. From there we walked to Queenstown Heights, a distance of ten miles. From Queenstown we took a wagon to Fort Erie. When we arrived we found a vessel waiting for freight for Detroit and Upper Canada. We remained some ten days before the vessel got in freight and was ready to sail. While waiting we had nothing to do only amuse ourselves by hunting and fishing. We crossed from Fort Erie to the mouth of Buffalo Creek on the American side and found there a tribe of Indians encamped on a hunting expedition. The city of Buffalo was not then spoken of, or had any connection with the state of New York, either by railroad, canal, turnpike or any other kind of road. The whole Lake country was claimed and owned by Indians, the only white settlement at that period on Lake Erie, was at a place then called Presque Isle, near the line dividing the state of New York from Pennsylvania. It was then the only good harbor on the Lake. After leaving Fort Erie we arrived at Detroit, eight days out in the latter part of August. I remained with my uncle, Robert Gouie Watson, in Detroit, one year. He sent my brother and myself to school during that time, which was pretty much all the school-going we ever received. My uncle had a small trading establishment on the British side opposite Detroit, and he sent me over there to take charge of it. I remained there about a year, he being connected with the Indian trade on the American side at Sandusky and Huron river along Lake Erie, then a considerable trading country owned and claimed by the Indians. I visited that country on business for my uncle in the year 1803. Where Cleveland and Sandusky are now located there were no white settlements or settlers, with the exception of a few In-

dian traders. My uncle also had an Indian trading establishment at New Madrid, Mo., under the management and control of a Frenchman by the name of Gabriel Hunot, who had numerous connections of that name in that place (New Madrid) and Fort Vincennes, Ind. From some cause my uncle was obliged to take charge of the trading establishment, and sent me out with an outfit of goods imported from London, expressly for the Indian trade, to take charge at New Madrid of the establishment. We left Detroit, I think, in July, 1805, with two pirogues loaded with Indian goods, myself, and four French Canadians for New Madrid. We found the river Maumee very low, making a long trip to Fort Wayne. No white inhabitants were on the banks from the time we left the foot of the rapids, with the exception of one Frenchman—a baker—at the mouth of the river Glase, called Fort Defiance, who furnished the Indians and traders who traveled up and down the river with bread. The length of time out in getting to Fort Wayne, I do not recollect. We found some Indian traders and a company of U. S. troops stationed there. We were then obliged to haul our goods and pirogues a distance of ten miles to the head waters of Little river, which empties into the Wabash. Those Indian traders at Fort Wayne were prepared with oxen and wagons to haul our goods and boats across, for which we had to pay them considerable and sometimes when the waters of Little river were very low, we had to haul our goods and boats a distance of forty miles, to where Little river empties into the Wabash. On one occasion I had to haul my goods and boats a distance of sixty miles to near the Missionary town, an Indian village on the Wabash where a Frenchman by the name of Godfrey from Detroit had located as a trader. The chief of this village was Thecomery, brother to the Prophet who held a power and sway over the different tribes, unparalleled in the history of Indian nations. I got to Vincennes after encountering extreme low water, having to carry our goods which were made up in small packages expressly to be carried from shoal to shoal by the hands, distance of one-quarter to one-half a mile, sometimes longer, and rolling our pirogues on rollers over every rapid until we got them in deep water. This was our daily occupation. We arrived at Vincennes after being out about two months. During our trip we were very much exposed, the weather being excessively warm and not having anything to protect us from the hot sun and bad weather; not even a tent, which latter was not used or hardly known at that early period, and being short of provisions, a little salt pork and a few hard biscuit and some lye hominy composed our diet, no tea, no coffee, no sugar; the latter article in those times was in but little use and scarcely known. From extreme exposure and hard living I was taken down violently with chills and fever. My hands knew that Gabriel Hunot, who was trading for my uncle at New Madrid, had a sister in Vincennes by the name of Pagey. I sent for one of her sons to come and see me. He did so, and seeing my critical situation invited me to his mother's house, and by his request I went there, and fortunate it was for me I did so. If I had remained where I was I must have died. Every care and attention and good nursing was given me night and day, by Mrs. Pagey and her kind sons. I owe my existence now to that kind lady's attention to me, which I shall forever remember with gratitude and esteem. I remained at Vincennes for some time to regain my strength. While there I became ac-

quainted with a good many of the French settlers and Indian traders, Rupert Debois, Francois Langois, the Lazells, Bamon—Indian interpreter for Gen. Harrison—and a number of names not recollected. Not a white inhabitant except Indian traders, from the time we left Fort Wayne till we arrived at Vincennes, and from there to the mouth of the Wabash—with the exception of Coffee island, some French families lived there of the name of Leviletts. We arrived at New Madrid in October and found the place settled principally by the French, and the town or village beautifully laid off in lots of two and four arpens, each, well improved and the streets wide and running parallel with the river. The banks of the river then as now were encroaching upon the town. The first town laid off by the Spanish had all fallen in, and at the present writing we are living in the third town carefully laid off back of the second, which has also gone. When the encroachments of the river will stop is hard to conjecture. After a residence of 50 years in the place I find little or no change in the caving of the river banks. I have moved my possessions back three times and my first residence is now in Kentucky. When I arrived in New Madrid I took possession of my uncle's trading establishment and commenced trading with the Indians, French, and Americans, the place being a considerable trading point principally with the Indians. I continued buying peltries and furs during the winter until March. I then baled all my peltries and furs and shipped them in two pirogues containing 24 packs each. I started them in charge of some Frenchmen up the Ohio river, then up the Wabash, some 350 miles from its mouth to Little river, then up that river to its source, where we hauled again our pirogues and furs across to Ft. Wayne on the Maumee or the lake, and from there we proceeded to Detroit where everything was delivered up to my uncle. I followed my shipment by land by myself some three weeks after they started. I went by the way of Kaskaskia, Ill. After leaving that village, settled by French not a sign of a white inhabitant did I see until I got to Fort Vincennes out three nights. I expected at Vincennes to have found several traders ready to leave by land for Detroit. They, like myself, generally followed their shipments of skins by land. They had left some five days before I got there and I was obliged to continue the journey by myself.

When I left Vincennes I took the Terre Haute route. At that place I found an Indian village and two French traders. I spent the night with them and the next morning proceeded on my journey. I crossed a stream not far from Terre Haute, called Vermillion and the next place I came to was an Indian village where I found a Frenchman, a trader by the name of Langlois. The next place of note was the Missionary town where I found my old friend Godfrey, spoken of on my trip out from there. My next point was Fort Wayne. I had then been out six nights from Vincennes and four of these nights I lay out by myself and from Fort Wayne to the foot of the rapids, two nights. This was a hazardous undertaking for a youth of only about 16 years. From the foot of the rapids to Detroit, the country was more or less settled by the French. I remained at Detroit some two weeks and started back by land the same route I went out. I made three trips by water and three by land and worked and steered my own pirogues and continued in the trade until the war broke out between this country and Great Britain in 1812. The war stopped all communication between this

country and Detroit, and I was then compelled to seek another channel of trade for my peltries and furs. In 18— I made a large shipment of peltries and furs in a keel boat, the largest shipment I ever made from this country, by the way of Chicago. The keel boat left New Madrid in March with a freight valued at $14,000. They went up the Mississippi, then up the Illinois, then up a stream I think they call Fox river, up that to within six miles of Chicago; my object in sending my skins that route was to meet a government vessel which the government generally sent out at the opening of navigation in the spring, with provisions and stores for the troops stationed there, but, unfortunately, when my furs and peltries got there the government boat had been there and left some five or six days before for Detroit. The hope of getting them to Detroit that season was hopeless. No vessels running the lake with the exception of one government vessel, spring and fall. My skins remained there all summer expecting to ship them in the fall. When we examined and commenced preparing them for shipment we found them all destroyed by moths or bugs. I did not realize one cent from the amount stored there. While at New Madrid trading with the Indians and shipping my skins to Detroit until 1812, I purchased stock and produce from 1808 up to 1825 and shipped it to New Orleans in flat boats. My first visit to New Orleans was in the year 1809 having consigned my first shipment in 1808. I loaded two flat boats with assorted articles of produce and steered one of them myself, but under the control and management of a pilot of Pierre Depron. I got to the city on my flat boats, but how to get back was the next question. No steam boats running at that time and but few barges and keel boats on the river. I bought a horse and started back by land; crossed Lake Ponchartrain in an open boat with my horse and took the road from Maisonville to Nashville, Tenn., passing through the Cherokee and Choctaw Indian country (owned and claimed by them) to the Tennessee river. In getting to New Madrid I was out six weeks, suffering much for the want of provisions for myself and feed for my horse, having to pay $1 per meal for myself and $1 per gallon for corn. My men had to wait some time at New Orleans before an opportunity offered to get back, and then they had to work their way home on a barge. From that period up to the present time I have continued visiting New Orleans every year and am of course well posted in being an eye witness to all improvements made in the city and coast since my first visit there. In 1810-11 I came up the Mississippi river in a pirogue with my hands that I had taken down on a flat boat. We left New Orleans the latter part of July with scant provisions or allowances of any kind for our trip having to rely on our guns and fishing tackle for a supply, not being particular as to what we killed or ate—Hobson's choice, that or none. Cranes, pelicans and eat fish, we considered a delicacy. We had not a tent or umbrella to protect us from the inclemency of the weather; when it rained so hard that we could not travel we put ashore and peeled the bark off the trees to make shelter from the rain. We were out 45 days. From 1808 to 1812 but few inhabitants were on the river. At Point Chicot we found two Frenchmen at White river and one at the mouth of St. Francois, Phillips and Mr. Joy, and a Spaniard on the side opposite Memphis. (Then Memphis was not known or spoken of.) One or two Indian traders were there at that time. At that early period the

banks of the Mississippi were settled by robbers and counterfeiters. Flat boats descending the river then had to go in convoys well armed and under the lead of some experienced commander; if they did not they were sure to be attacked, killed, or robbed of their effects by these robbers who were settled at different points on the river. In returning in a dug out with my hands, in 1810, we were followed by one of Mason's and Murrell's men from a little below Lake Providence until a few miles below Point Chicot. He came up within half a mile of us and no nearer; he continued his pursuit by following us two days. He was going as we thought to apprize some of his colleagues of our approach near Point Chicot, and that we were no doubt in possession of considerable money, proceeds of produce shipped to New Orleans. This robber was one of Mason's surviving confederates in crime, etc. He was a French Canadian by the name of Revard, and his location was on the island below Lake Providence; there he watched and saw everything that passed up and down. We tried to pass in the night hoping not to be discovered but we could not. He was too watchful of us to evade his notice. We had some confidential advisers who instructed us how to act in the neighborhood of Lake Providence, where Mason had his general rendezvous, on or near Bayou Mason, back of Lake Providence, a remote and secluded place where he kept his headquarters. Nothing saved us that trip from being killed by the French robber only my crew being French and he, Rivard, being a Canadian, disliked attacking, robbing and killing us, being French, he having heard my French crew singing French songs which was a custom among the French boatmen. After following us two days he abandoned the chase. My long residence at New Madrid gave me an opportunity of becoming acquainted with a great many people and their acts whether good or bad. Not a day from 1809 to 1815 but some innocent man, the owner of some flat boat loaded with produce, had been imposed on by some of this class by purchasing of them for money, which they called good, and on good solvent banks, when in fact it was nothing but the basest kind of counterfeit money. There was scarcely a day but what there was large amounts presented to me for examination and inspection. Our whole country from Evansville, Indiana, to Natchez was full of such people. In fact they ruled and controlled the country at that period. They had the sway. We were from the necessity in the minority they being the strongest party and to express our opinion against them and their actions placed our lives and property in a dangerous situation. After an elapse of a certain time a better population commenced coming in. We saw after counting these we considered honest and would take an interest in securing and driving out of the country the despised class, we had from necessity to consult with the citizens of the country and ascertain from them what course we ought to adopt in order to get rid of this description of population. They put at defiance all laws proving themselves innocent of every crime and charge brought against them. A general meeting of the citizens of the country was called and the matter laid before them. They came to a conclusion and that conclusion by a unanimous vote of the people then in public council. "That these people must leave the country" and a committee was appointed by the meeting to carry the resolutions into effect, which was done and the country cleared of thieves and counterfeiters. The last difficulty we had with them they

had their rendezvous at different places in the country, in the interior and on the river; they kept up a constant correspondence night and day with their leaders and strikers. They were numerous and their acquaintances on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers intimately connected with them in extending their dishonest operations was unprecedented in the history of this or any other country. We owe in a measure our complete success of clearing the country of this description of population to the energy and perseverance and determined action of a few honest and resolute men, one of them I will refer to with feelings of respect and pride as being one of the principal actors in accomplishing our object, that person was the deceased Capt. Dunklin, whose virtues and standing as a man and citizen is yet recollected and appreciated by a number of persons, yet in existence who were witnesses to his valuable service.

In the years 1812-13-14 being at New Orleans each of those years, I returned home as a passenger on board of a barge or keel boat, 50 and 60 days out. I preferred this mode of getting back to the land route. In the year 1815 I visited Cincinnati, Ohio, on my way to Detroit, Michigan. I bought a horse and outfit at Cincinnati for my trip. Cincinnati was then a small place; the Court House was upwards of a quarter of a mile out of the city. I visited the Court House to see what was to be done having seen in the morning posted up at the different corners of the street hand bills that a certain gentleman, a lawyer of some distinction, a resident of the city, by the name of Binhem, would address the citizens at the Court House at a certain hour of that day on the subject of charges brought against him and published while he was absent from the city on professional business. It appears that during the progress of the war with Great Britain he was drafted as a soldier to join the U. S. Army but from some cause he failed to comply with the request of the draft and the charges I think made against him were cowardice and not willing to expose his life in defense of his country. In addressing the citizens he proved to them conclusively that he had used every exertion to raise means to equip himself and proved that he was a minor and under the guardianship of a near relative of his and who had control of his person and his means, although he had made frequent applications to him for means, but in all cases refused to furnish him with any and was opposed to his joining the army. His appeal to the people was a very feeling one and being an able speaker his appeal was listened to with every attention. His excuse was approved of. The same trip I became acquainted with the agent of the United States Bank at Cincinnati. The bank owned and claimed considerable town property, vacant lots on which they built family residences and offered them for sale through their agent. I was offered one or two lots with their improvements on them on Second and Third streets for from $1,000 to $1,200, each lot. The improvements must have cost the money. The same property cannot now be bought for $60,000. I had means at the time and if I had bought this property at the time and let it remain it would have proved a source of considerable revenue to me now. My object was to take General Harrison's road through the black swamp to Detroit. Urbana was then a frontier town, there was a new county laid off and a county seat located at a place called Bellefontaine. Some few log cabins were put up in place, but there was no public house in the place at that time. Next morn-

ing I took the road cut by General Harrison through the black swamp and traveled by the Northwestern army, and where he encountered so many difficulties in getting along as commander of the Northwestern army. His object was to attack and beat back the British army that had crossed over and attacked the American army at the river Raisin, under General Winchester. I had to travel one hundred miles through this swamp until I got to Fort Meigs, on the Maumee river, foot of the rapids. I found three houses in crossing the swamp, where a traveller could stay all night about 35 miles apart. My object is to show you the great changes in the country now to what it was then—comparatively not known. In 1806 I visited St. Louis, a small French village. Little or no business was done, the principal men in the place were two Chouteaus. Their descendants are still there, all respectable and influential men. Fred Bates filled an office about that time under the territorial government, a recorder of land titles or secretary of state, under the acting governor. I knew him at Detroit, Michigan, in 1803 or 1804, one of those years Detroit was destroyed by fire, and I assisted Mr. Bates in saving from the devouring elements a few of his small effects. He was then a citizen of that place. I was intimately acquainted with him at St. Louis from his arrival up to his death. He was an intelligent business man and a gentleman in every sense of the word. The earthquakes visited New Madrid county in December, 1811. Their effect was felt all over the U. S. and more particularly in this and adjoining counties, and the injury produced from the effects was more combined to this county than any other, producing alarm and distress, depopulating generally the whole country. Plantations, stock of all kinds, cribs of corn, smoke houses full of meat, were offered for horses to live on. At that time I was carrying on the Indian trade pretty extensively. The whole white population, or all that could leave as well as the Indians, left largely in my debt, leaving me considerably indebted to persons here and in other places and little or no means to pay with. What little was left me I had to subsist on and divide with those that remained and could not get away. We had a trying time, our population having all left, no business doing and no capital to do business with. Heavy losses at different times at Chicago and on the Mississippi river in produce sent to New Orleans in flat boats and by the earthquakes upwards to $30,000, leaving me destitute and without any capital to operate on; and on having a small family to support, I came to the conclusion, after consulting with my wife, to remain in the country and await the result of circumstances. To leave without means and move to a new country, among strangers and be dependent on them for support, I could not reconcile it to myself. I proposed remaining and awaiting with patience the result of what was to take place, which I have done. I never left but stood up and persevered, in prosperity and adversity, contending against the misfortunes and privations of a new country, the Mason and Murrell counterfeiters and horse thieves, earthquakes, and with all these reverses and misfortunes staring me in the face, it never produced the least change in my general course of conduct, but stimulated me to additional exertions. The misfortunes and privations I endured at an early period would have driven hundreds to acts of desperation. With me they never produced the least change. I am what I was forty years ago. Nothing ever induced me

to resort to dissipation, to take a glass of grog or smoke a cigar more than I did then. My general habits, if good or bad, are the same now, to which a long residence in the country and a general acquaintance with those now settled in the country, can testify. My friends who knew me, and I never deceived them, came forward to my assistance and relief; to them I owe the means I am in possession of. The staple of this country from 1805 to 1812 was cotton. The average yield of an acre was from 1000 to 1200 pounds of seed cotton. Since 1812 there has been a great change in our climate; the winters have grown colder and the other seasons more changeable. The raising of cotton has been entirely abandoned for the last thirty-five years; our staple, now, has been principally corn. Prejudices to some extent exist now in some of the states against this country. At an early period they had some grounds to speak rather lightly of this country, it being sickly and visited by earthquakes; inhabited by counterfeiters and horse thieves and but few inhabitants in the country. To a certain extent our country has been overlooked and misrepresented. Things have changed since then. The country has become healthy, our soil the best in the United States. It cannot be surpassed.

Doctor Samuel Dorsay, a native of Maryland, was appointed surgeon of the military post at New Madrid, a position which he held until the transfer to the United States. The position had attached to it a salary of $30.00 a month. On January 17, 1795, Dr. Dorsay was married to Marie J. Bonneau, a native of Indiana. He was afterward married to a daughter of Jeremiah Thompson of Cape Girardeau district.

Joseph Story, of Massachusetts, was one of the surveyors brought by Morgan to New Madrid, he assisted Morgan in laying off the city. He married a daughter of Jacob Beck in 1794.

Andrew Wilson, a native of Scotland, and a minister in the Presbyterian church, was also one of the early settlers. He seems to have given up his ministerial work before coming to New Madrid. His son, George W., was the first sheriff of the district.

Some of the other early settlers were John Summers, Joseph and Louis Vandenbenden. These brothers were merchants, and the widow of Louis afterward married Richard Jones Waters.

Jacob Meyers, Joseph McCourtney, David Gray and John La Valle were other of the early settlers. La Valle was the last commandant under the Spanish government; his descendants still live in New Madrid county.

Doctor Robert D. Dawson, who was a native of Maryland, came to New Madrid at an early date and engaged in the practice of medicine. He was, for a number of years, the leading physician of the town, and was a very popular man. His activities were not confined to the practice of his profession, but he had a great interest in politics. For a number of years he represented New Madrid county in the general assembly of the territory, and was elected a member of the Constitutional convention.

During the Spanish regime there were three military organizations in New Madrid. Two of these were companies of militia and the other was a dragoon company. One of the militia companies had for its officers La Valle as captain, La Forge as lieutenant, and Charpentier as ensign. The other militia company was officered by Captain McCoy, Lieutenant Joseph Hunot, and Ensign John Hart. Richard Jones Waters was captain of

the company of dragoons, George N. Reagan was lieutenant, and John Baptiste Barsaloux was ensign.

Cuming, who visited New Madrid in 1808 gives the following description of the town at that time: "New Madrid contains about a hundred houses scattered on a fine plain two miles square on which, however, the river has so encroached during the twenty-two years since it was first settled, that the bank is now half a mile behind its old bounds and the inhabitants have had to move rapidly back. They are a mixture of French Creoles from Illinois, United States Americans and Germans. They have plenty of cattle but seem in other respects to be very poor. There is some trade with the Indian hunters of furs and peltry but of little consequence. Dry goods and groceries are enormously high and the inhabitants charge travelers immense prices for any common necessaries such as milk, butter, fowls, eggs, etc. There is a militia the officers of which wear cockades as a mark of distinction although the rest of their dress should be only a dirty ragged shirt and trousers. There is a church going to decay and no preacher and there are courts of Common Pleas and Quarter Sessions from which an appeal lies to the Supreme Court at St. Louis, the capital of the territory of Upper Louisiana, which is two hundred and forty miles to the northward by wagon road which passes through Ste. Genevieve which is 180 miles distant. On account of this distance from the capital New Madrid has obtained a right to have all trials for felony held and adjudged here without appeal. The inhabitants regret much the change of government from Spanish to American but this I am not surprised at as it is the nature of mankind to never be satisfied." *

Alliot who visited Louisiana in 1803 says: "A hundred leagues farther up the river the traveler comes to that charming river known by the name of Belle Riviere (the Ohio) which, like so many others, pays its tribute of respect to the mortal Mississippi by giving its limpid waters to it; at that place is built the fort l' Ance à la Graice where a commandant and 150 soldiers are stationed, there is a hamlet there inhabited by three score persons. That place is so much more remarkable in as much as its inhabitants were the first along the river to engage in the cultivation of wheat. Excellent meadows are seen there on which cows and steers feed, its inhabitants rear many hogs and fowls, the forests are full of all sorts of game and fallow-deer."†

Nuttall who visited New Madrid in 1820 has this account of the town: "We arrived before noon at New Madrid, we found both sides of the river lined with logs, some stationary and others in motion and we narrowly avoided several of considerable magnitude. New Madrid is an insignificant French hamlet containing little more than about twenty log houses and stores miserably supplied, the goods of which are retailed at exorbitant prices, for example, 18 cents per pound for lead which costs 7 cents at Herculaneum, salt $5.00 per bushel, sugar 31¼ cents per pound, whiskey $1.25 per gallon, apples 25 cents per dozen, corn 50 cents per bushel, fresh butter 37½ cents per pound and eggs the same price per dozen, pork $6.00 per hundred, beef $5.00. Still the labor of the land seems to be of a good quality but

* Cuming's "Tour to the West," p. 281.

† Robertson, "Louisians," Vol. I, p. 133.

the people have been discouraged by the earthquakes which, besides the memorable one of 1811, are very frequent experiences, two or three oscillations being sometimes felt in a day. The United States in order to compensate those who suffered in their property by the catastrophe granted to the settlers an equivalent of land in other parts of the territory." *

Besides those whom we have seen lived in the town of New Madrid itself and immediately about it, there were other settlements within the present territory of New Madrid county; some of these were made on Lake St. Ann, along the St. Johns Bayou, at Lake St. Mary and on Bayou St. Thomas. Some of the early settlers at these places were: Benjamin Meyers, Hardy Rawls, Lewis Van Denbenden and Joseph Story. These men opened up farms at the places mentioned and some of them erected mills and others were engaged principally in hunting and trapping.

The district of New Madrid, as we have seen, included not only New Madrid county, as it now exists, but also Pemiscot county, Mississippi county, Scott county and even the counties lying further west. During this period which we are studying settlements were made within the district in all the counties mentioned except those lying west of St. Francois river.

The first settlement in Pemiscot county was made at Little Prairie, a short distance below the present town of Caruthersville. The settlement was made in 1794 by Francois Le Sieur, who came to Little Prairie from New Madrid where he had formerly lived and on receiving the grant of land laid out about two hundred arpents into a town divided into lots each containing an arpent. Here a fort was also constructed called Fort St. Fernando. Among the early residents of the town and country in the immediate vicinity were: Francois Le Sieur, Jean Baptiste Barsaloux, George and John Ruddell, Joseph Payne, Lewis St. Aubin, Charles Guibeault, Charles Loignon, Francis Langlois and Peter Noblesse. The site of Little Prairie was well chosen it being situated at a place where the great ridge, of which we have previously spoken, touches the river, and the surrounding country was rich in soil, timber and game. There was considerable trade with the Indians; and the town, because of these advantages, prospered. The population was seventy-eight in 1799 and in 1803 it numbered one hundred and three. It continued to grow until the earthquakes of 1811 and 1812 by which it was almost destroyed. This earthquake seems to have had its center about Little Prairie and the shocks were probably more violent here than anywhere else. The greater part of the population moved away at the time of the earthquake so that the village was practically deserted, the only conspicuous settler who remained in the vicinity was Colonel John Hardeman Walker.

In 1808 Cuming visited Little Prairie of which he gives the following account: "We landed at the town of Little Prairie on the right containing twenty-four little log cabins scattered on a fine pleasant plain. Inhabitants chiefly being French creoles from Canada and Illinois, we were informed that there were several Anglo-American farmers all around in a circle of ten miles. We stopped at a tavern and store kept by European-Frenchmen, where we got some necessaries, everything is excessively dear here as in New Madrid, butter a quarter of a dollar per

* "Nuttall Journal," p. 77.

pound, milk half dollar per gallon, eggs a quarter of a dollar a dozen and fowls half to three-quarters of a dollar each.'' *

Cuming says that at this time there was a camp of Delaware Indians about one mile below Little Prairie.

Besides this settlement at Little Prairie there were some three or four other settlements within Pemiscot county. One of them was in the vicinity of the town of Gayoso, afterward the county seat; another in the western part of the county on Little river; the third was just north of the lake called Big Lake and the fourth was located on Portage Bay. All of these settlements suffered greatly from the earthquake and most of them were practically depopulated by its effects.

With the opening of the King's Highway from Ste. Genevieve to New Madrid in 1789 there sprung up a number of settlements along the line of this road, some of them being in Scott county. One of the first of these was made in the vicinity of Sikeston by Edward Robertson and a son-in-law, Moses Hurley. Robertson was a shrewd and capable man. He traded with the Indians and also kept a stock of goods which he sold to other settlers, but he accumulated the greater part of his wealth by land speculation. At his death he left a considerable amount of property.

Another one of these early settlements was made in Scott county in 1796 near the present town of Benton by Captain Charles Friend, who was a native of Virginia. He received a grant from the Spanish government near Benton and located there with his family. There were nine sons and two daughters in his family and most of them remained in the vicinity of the Spanish grant. Another settler in this neighborhood who came in 1811 was John Ramsay of Cape Girardeau.

Perhaps the most distinguished and influential family in Scott county in this period was the family of Joseph Hunter. He came to New Madrid in 1805 and located on a grant near New Madrid, but soon afterwards removed to Big Prairie not far from Sikeston and continued to reside in Scott county until the time of his death. The family of Joseph Hunter was a large one and was always wealthy and prominent in this part of the state; he, himself, was a member of the territorial council after the transfer to the United States and his son, Abraham, was one of the best known politicians in Southeast Missouri, holding office in the state legislature for about twenty years. He was the second son and married Sally Ogden. Their family consisted of three sons and three daughters; the sons were Isaac of Scott county, Joseph of New Madrid county, who has recently died, and Benjamin F., who lives near Sikeston. One of the daughters, Catherine, married Marmaduke Beckwith, Mary married Archibald Price. Another son of Joseph Hunter was named James; he married Lucy Beckwith. The youngest son of Joseph Hunter was Thomas; he married Eliza Meyers and to them were born two children, a daughter who became the wife of Colonel Thomas Brown, and Senator William Hunter of Benton. Of the daughters of Joseph Hunter, Mary married Andrew Giboney of Cape Girardeau, their daughter is the wife of Hon. Louis Houck, and Hannah married Mark H. Stallcup of New Madrid.

Another of the early settlers of Scott county was Captain William Meyers, who

* Cuming's ''Tour to the West,'' p. 283.

came to Missouri from Tennessee and made his home at what is now Benton.

Settlers began to locate in Tywappity Bottoms as early as 1798; among them were James Brady, James Curran, Charles Findley, Edmund Hogan, Thomas, John and James Wellborn and the Quimbys. Thomas W. Waters was the first settler on the site of Commerce, arriving there in 1802, here he began the sale of goods in partnership with Robert Hall and also operated a ferry across the Mississippi.

The first settlement in Mississippi county seems to have been made in 1800 by Joseph Johnson near Bird's Point. Other early settlements were made on Mathews Prairie called in the early times St. Charles Prairie. Those who lived there were: Edward Mathews and his sons Edward, Charles, Joseph, James and Allen, Charles Gray, Joseph Smith, John Weaver, George Hector and Absalom McElmurry. Johnson sold his land in 1805 to Abraham Bird whose name was given afterwards to the settlement known as Bird's Point.

All of these settlers whom we have named and many others whose names we cannot give were farmers and traders. Most of them were engaged in the actual cultivation of the soil. Even those who lived in towns and carried on trade with Indians and with other settlements in Louisiana owned and cultivated farms. With the well known liberality of the Spanish government, grants of land were very easy to secure. Anyone who had performed a service for the government or who promised to perform such a service in the future could obtain a grant of land. These grants were also given for the purpose of encouraging the development of industries. It is recorded in some cases, in connection with these grants, that they were made because the grantee expected to cut down timber on the land or because he expected to use the wood for smelting lead or other ores. These Spanish land grants varied in size. It was a custom in the mineral district to give every discoverer of a mine at least four arpents of land. Outside the mineral district large grants were frequently made. Twenty thousand and even thirty thousand arpents was not an unusual grant. These grants were made without any reference to the French surveys or to any particular system of lands surveyed. Generally they followed a line of a creek, or the meanderings of a swamp, or they included the tillable land in a certain valley, or they stretched from hill-top to hill-top in a most irregular way. It is a rather curious thing that practically the only trace of Spanish occupancy in Missouri consists in these old land grants. The name of New Madrid, of course, perpetuates the attempt of Morgan to found a great Spanish town and a few other settlements bear Spanish names. Outside of these, however, few memorials of Spain exist. No great public works were undertaken or carried through, no codes of laws were made, no great industries developed, only the grants testify to the presence of the Spaniard. These Spanish grants, owing to the irregularity of their boundaries and the apparently careless way in which they were recorded have been one of the most fruitful sources of legal controversy within the state. It has required a great deal of litigation to determine the ownership of much of the land covered by these grants.

About 1789 the Spanish government laid out a road running from New Madrid to St. Louis. This road crossed Big Prairie, passed

through the "Rich Woods" across Scott county to Cape Girardeau and thence to St. Louis by way of Ste. Genevieve. Through the greater part of its course it followed the old Indian trace along which De Soto very probably travelled. The route was determined by the Spanish as it had been for the Indians by the great sandy ridge which stretches from south the "Big Swamp" south of Cape Girardeau to Caruthersville in Pemiscot county touching the river at New Madrid. This road was called by the Spanish "el camino real" the King's Highway. In 1803 the expedition which De Lassus led to New Madrid passed along this road, cutting it out wider as they went. In 1808 the Territorial assembly of the District of Louisiana which was the name by which Missouri was then known, ordered that a road be opened between St. Louis and New Madrid. This road, doubtless, followed the old Spanish road, the King's Highway.

Between Cape Girardeau and New Madrid the road is still in use for a great part of the way. Between Cape Girardeau and Perryville there is a part of the road still in use; that part between the Maramec river and the City of St. Louis is also used now. Its name is perpetuated in a boulevard in St. Louis, called King's Highway. This is, perhaps, the oldest road in the state.