

The Louisiana Purchase

Critical Period of Spanish Rule In Louisiana. FROM 1784 TO 1789.

The definitive treaty of peace with Great Britain, concluded Sept. 3, 1783, was so favorable to the United States that it was unanimously adopted by the congress of the confederation Jan. 14, 1784, and immediately proclaimed. The foreign relations of the confederation government, during the eight years of its feeble existence, being conducted by the many states acting as separate states were successfully managed. After the peace Franklin comments much on the continuing cordiality of the court of France. Both Vergennes and Luzerne, his most trusted ministers, in their letters, published and unpublished, express their great gratification that the United States was able to secure from England such satisfactory terms. George III., who was concerned relative to his signature to England's ratification on April 9, 1784.

During the period from peace to good government under the hero of the Revolution, who also in her own age, the most significant events in our territorial history occurred in Kentucky, Tennessee and Lower Louisiana. Spain refused to accept the British and American construction of the river from 1782 and 1783, which were identical. Having acquired West Florida before the cessation by conquest, she continued to hold the disputed Natchez district until 1785. Controlling both sides of the lower Mississippi, the free navigation of that river was denied the Western Americans living on its banks and its tributaries. The latter thought it their duty to give the navigation to the sea and to civilization.

John Jay, our secretary of foreign affairs after Livingston, finding that Spain would not yield this point without war, was willing in 1785 to water the navigation for twenty-five years; but congress, wiser than Jay, declined to yield. However, while refusing to abandon their treaty rights, congress was in no position to force the issue. The policy was pursued by Gov. Estevan Miro, who succeeded the gallant Galvez in 1785, was to array all the Indian tribes within reach against the Westerners, and then, through their aid, to promote the aggrandizement of Spain.

Following that successful soldier and able administrator, Galvez, to his new elevation as viceroy of Mexico, we find that with the treaty of Madrid, the benevolent Louisiana wife he ruled mildly but absolutely over the Mexicans for ten years, gaining thereby extraordinary popularity and lasting renown. Galvez built a castle at the mouth of the Mississippi, which grew to be a castle or fortress of formidable strength. It was captured by Gen. Winfield Scott just before that hero entered the city of Mexico in 1847. The memory of this meritorious Spaniard has been perpetuated by the Texas city that has risen so recently from its watery grave. His death, at thirty-eight, was greatly deplored.

Events on the Mississippi. Recurring to events on the Mississippi, it appears extremely probable that the first suggestion of a union of Indian tribes and Spaniards to bring about a separation of the Western territories from the rest of the empire came from a Creek Indian chief with the Scotch name of McGillivray. This ambitious savage of fascinating personality was the son of a Scotchman of high mentality and a high-bred Indian princess. Unlike some of the worst and best qualities of his ancestors, this warrior, while not a statesman of the forest like Pontiac, or a gentleman in war-paint like Tecumseh, had high capacity for the scientific foreknowledge of things to come. He saw, before Aranda Navarro and Miro did, that Spaniards or Americans must dominate this continent. He was an expert in treaty-making, and he was bound in pursuit. James Robertson, his brave Tennessee antagonist, described McGillivray and the situation when he said: "The Spaniards are inspired by the devil; the Creeks by the devil, and the Spaniards; and the worst devil in human form is the Creek chief McGillivray." This enterprising savage gathered the Creeks, the Chickasaws, and many other Indian chiefs into an assemblage at Pensacola, which he called congress. This meeting was dignified by the attendance of Gov. Miro. The highest Spanish officials and their families attended with the chiefs social or public entertainments, where the painted savages excelled the whites in their flatteries by insisting that all the beautiful ladies present, and the noble ladies descended from heaven—McGillivray's zeal was made active by a bribe or a pension of \$50 per month, and other chiefs came in for the usual presents. After spending \$30,000 to the Indians, Miro and his friends are prepared to believe that all who had received rich presents were ready to declare on all occasions, whether drunk or sober, that they had Spanish hearts in their breasts and scaling knives in their hands for the Americans.

The civil and military governor of Louisiana, while adroitly placating and uniting the Indians, was not without other and less important concerns. In his proclamation of 1788 he exhorts the faithful Catholics to attend the celebration of the holy mysteries; to the abstinence of slaves; to the prohibition of this year the revenues from exports and imports at New Orleans amounted to \$2,000. In February, 1787, Navarro, the intendente of the province, wrote to Spain: "The poverty of this province is not the English, but the Americans, whom we must oppose by active and sufficient measures." And this official wisely adds by way of advice—that was not followed by the British way to check them is with a proportionate population, and is not by imposing commercial restrictions that this population is to be required, but by granting a prudent extension and freedom of trade." The trade with the Indians was largely increased by means of a loose liberality towards them, but the moribund Charles III., of Spain, was disposed to draw the line of virtual prohibition on up-river Americans. While the commerce of the developing regions of Tennessee and Kentucky was expanding yearly, the Spanish states, intentions and exactions were doubled. New customs officers and military forces had been placed at Natchez and New Madrid.

Unbearable Trade Restrictions. Trade restrictions and impositions upon river traffic were fast becoming unbearable. Confiscations of vessels and cargoes and the imprisonment of officers and crews were not infrequent. The victims of these recurring outrages, if so fortunate as to escape from custody, wandered back to their settlements, penniless, hungry and in rage. A feeling of general indignation took possession of the pioneers of the Kentucky and Cumberland valleys. A military invasion of Lower Louisiana and the forcible seizure of Natchez and New Orleans were much discussed. The emergency called forth a leader of ability and audacity in the person of a daring, but disgraced soldier of the Revolution, Col. James Wilkinson, born in Maryland, had been with Arnold at Quebec, was adjutant general on the staff of Higate Gates, with whom he quarreled when secretary of the board of war, and later was "Clothier General" of the ill-fated Revolutionary army. Wilkinson, in 1787, being then a peaceable Kentucky merchant, casting about to find some solution for the practical non-intercourse problem, proceeded down the Mississippi with four boat-loads of flour, tobacco

and the Mississippi to the general government. To be thus caught by the parent state aroused a feeling of unrest and rebellious discontent. A convention presided over by Sevier met at Johnsonboro and decided to form a government for themselves. They promptly applied to congress for advice as to a suitable constitution. North Carolina took alarm and annulled the act of secession. The governor of the state committed Sevier to prison to restore the reign of order and law, which he did with wise discretion and perfect good faith.

In 1785 a second movement in favor of independence became so strong that Sevier was carried along with it. The people of Holston, numbering in all about 25,000, sent representatives to Greenville, which they called their capital, and elected John Sevier their governor. They proposed to extend their territory to the bend of the Tennessee, and include about one-third of Kentucky. The recognition asked for from congress was not forthcoming. Congress held the North Carolina session renewed so as to bring the separate territory under federal control. The state declined. Sevier held that the state could not vote to restore the reign of order and law to gain the influence and support of Benjamin Franklin by naming the proposed state Franklin, or Franklin, signally failed. Virginia got excited over the events, but congress kept cool. This trouble and the inability to enforce two Indian treaties caused Gen. Washington to utter a timely word of wisdom: "Do not adopt and carry into execution measures best calculated for their own good without the intervention of a coöperative power."

Meanwhile the Franklin settlers were fighting both Indians and each other. This could not last. In May, 1787, Gov. Caswell issued a mild but firm proclamation and Sevier's territorial government was at an end. The ultimatum of Spain had been brought to Philadelphia in May, 1787, by Diego de Gardoqui, her minister. It was that the free navigation of the lower Mississippi would not be surrendered. Madison expressed the prevailing thought when he said: "We must bear with Spain for awhile." We must bear with his usual foresight when in June, 1788, he wrote to Marbois: "The emigration to the west of the Mississippi is astonishingly great, and chiefly of a description of people who are not very subordinate to the law and constitution of the state they go from. Whether the prohibitions thereof of the Spaniards is just or unjust, politic or impolitic, it will be with difficulty that people of this class can be restrained in the enjoyment of natural rights. The discussions of the next two years in the congress at Philadelphia were too much along sectional lines to be edifying or instructive. The more judicious did not care for sections, half sections or quarter sections. But all at last, including Jay, wanted the entire navigation by treaty or force.

THE ADVENT OF NINETEEN TWENTY.

Gov. Miro, on Jan. 1, 1788, in a dispatch to Spain's minister of state, says: "The delivering up of Kentucky into His Majesty's hands, which is the main object to which Wilkinson has promised to devote himself entirely, would forever constitute this province a rampart for the protection of New Spain." Planters Continue Their Work. In April Wilkinson writes Miro: "I beg you to be easy and to be satisfied that nothing shall deter me from staying on and exclusively to the object we have on hand, and I am convinced that the success of our plan will depend on the disposition of the court. On May 15 the plotter introduces to Miro and Navarro, his friend, Maj. Isaac Duncan, as "a fit auxiliary in the execution of our political designs, which he has embraced with cordiality." On Jan. 1, 1788, he writes Miro that before the new congress can do anything to frustrate their schemes "we shall have become too strong to be subjected by any force which may be sent against us."

Writing to the Spanish governor Feb. 14, 1788, Wilkinson reveals his true color when speaking of Mr. Brown, a young man without experience, sent as a delegate to congress: "Nevertheless, as he firmly perseveres in his adherence to our interests, we have sent him to the new congress, apparently as our representative, but in reality as a spy on the actions of that body. We would myself have undertaken that charge, but I did not, for two reasons: First, my presence was necessary here, and next, I should have found myself under the obligation of swearing to support the new government, which I am in duty bound to oppose." Such being a minor part of the dreadfully insinuating and criminally compromising record of Wilkinson, how long could such a comforter of his country's enemies have kept his head on his shoulders under any strict government like that of Elizabeth of England? Possibly forty-eight hours. What would have been done with him under the absolute rule of Napoleon I? He would have been promptly tried and as promptly shot! And yet this bribe-giver and bribe-receiver, who was twice court-martialed, was spared to plot against the dismemberment of the republic with Aaron Burr, the first of American traitors. It is but just to our authorities to say that neither in 1786 when Wilkinson became the head of the army, nor in 1806, when he escaped punishment for treason with Burr, was there a scintilla of evidence known to the officers of the law that has been since recovered from the archives of Spain.

John Sevier. It is more difficult to reach a just conclusion concerning the course of action of that hardest frontiersman, John Sevier. He had fought bravely and worked hard to settle the Watauga region, between the Cumberland and Allegheny mountains. In 1784 North Carolina agreed to cede 29,000 acres lying between their own mountain boundary

generally discussed prior to 1788 may fitly close our relation and is found in a letter from Thomas Jefferson, dated Paris, Jan. 28, 1788: "The Spaniards must be viewed as the next from which all America, north and south, is to be peopled. We should save care not to think of the interest of that great continent to press too soon on the Spaniards. Those countries cannot be settled and held until our population can be sufficiently numerous to bear them off in peace. The navigation of the Mississippi we must have. This is all we are as yet ready to receive."—James Q. Howard.

BOGUS TOMBSTONES IN TRINITY.

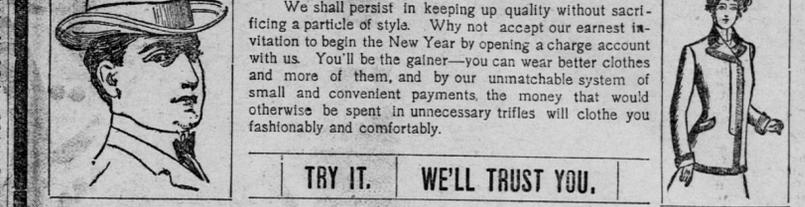
It may be a trifle startling to out-of-town visitors as well as to many native New Yorkers whose interest in matters historical has led them to inspect the old tombstones in Trinity churchyard, bearing names of prominence and power in earlier years, to learn that two of the most famous names there are simply "bogus." The tombstones referred to are those of William Bradford, New York's first prime minister, and John Lawrence, the hero of the naval fight in 1812, between the Chesapeake and Shannon, and who died with the words, "Don't give up the ship," upon his lips.

There is also a third stone which shares with these in being a copy. This stands near the door of the north transept, having the inscription beneath a rudely carved angel holding a scroll, "Blasius Michael Cresap, First Captain of the Rifle Battalion, and son of Col. Thomas Cresap, who departed this life October, 18th, 1775." This man, whose name the majority of visitors pass by without a glance, was only thirty-three years of age when he died, yet he had seen service in Indian warfare of such character as to make him the object of interesting comment by two presidents of the United States. Thomas Jefferson, in his "Notes on Virginia," painted Cresap as a ruthless Indian butcher, calling him "a man infamous for the many murders he committed upon the Indians." On the other hand, President Roosevelt, in his book, "The Winning of the West," availing himself of later historical research, shows Cresap in a kinder and more humane light. This young rifle captain is usually described in biographical dictionaries as "a trader and Indian fighter. He was a hard-bitten as well as penetrating manly

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The Boer War in Prophecy. The Giant, Adamastor, the Spirit of the Great Stormy Cape.

By HUBERT M. SKINNER

The giant Adamastor was a frightful apparition which appeared to the great navigator Vasco da Gama 40 years ago. But what, you ask, is meant by the description of his black lips? Are not the lips of the cannon's mouth black? And is not its flash a sulphurous yellow, like yellow lightning? But disregarding the particularities of the simile, the fact that all lips black that tell lies? And were there not lies in the whole story of the Jamestown raid and in the matters that led up to it? It seems clear that, as a prophecy, Adamastor is the great power of the British at the Cape, and that all the learning and skill of critics in many lands cannot supply another explanation approaching to this in reasonability.

Yet, after all, I do not admit that Adamastor is a prophecy at all. He is simply a symbol of the great forces of nature at the frowning and dangerous Cape. He belongs with the "Flying Dutchman" in the folklore of superstitious sailors. The capital city of Lisbon, possessed, has given to mythology by his polished narrative, we are reminded of the Greek Demnos, who was changed to a laurel tree by his jealous deity, and of Lot's wife, who became a pillar of salt. Various translations of the "Lusiad" have been made in English, with varying degrees of fidelity. Unlike the "Iliad," the "Aeneid," and the "Paradise Lost," this poem is divided into stanzas. In the original, and has the grace of elegant stanzas, which retain in this form as to me the best. The story of Adamastor occurs in the Fifth Canto, in which Da Gama, having repaired to the city of Melinde (an old town of East Africa) is relating to the natives the more notable events of Portuguese history and the story of his expedition, and has come to the passage of the "Stormy Cape." From one of the older English translations which retain in this form as to me the best. The story of Adamastor occurs in the Fifth Canto, in which Da Gama, having repaired to the city of Melinde (an old town of East Africa) is relating to the natives the more notable events of Portuguese history and the story of his expedition, and has come to the passage of the "Stormy Cape." From one of the older English translations which retain in this form as to me the best. 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