



UNDER THREE FLAGS

EXPLORING EARLY ST. LOUIS HISTORY

From the Ice Age to the Louisiana Purchase



WRITTEN BY

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DESIGNED AND ILLUSTRATED BY

KIM MULKEY YOUNG

Dedicated to the children of Saint Louis and the teachers who teach them
and to the students of Community School who inspired me to write this book - MH

To my husband, Bryan S. Young for all your support - KMY

ABOUT THE COVER

The cover illustration represents the coming together in peace of two cultures, the Native American and the French. The Native American is holding a calumet, sometimes called a peace pipe. It was constructed of a hollow reed with or without a pipe bowl and adorned with an eagle feather fan attached at its base. Europeans quickly learned that when a Native American showed a calumet, it was a sign of peaceful intentions. It was a ritual similar in spirit to the exchange of a handshake when one European met another. In the illustration, the calumet is raised to the sky in prayer as the smoke from the burning tobacco inside the reed rises. In the Native American belief system, tobacco smoke was thought to have the power to connect man to the spirit world. The gesture asks for blessings from the spirit world.

The Native American and French coureurs-de-bois, or trappers, established a mutually beneficial trading partnership throughout the Canadian and Louisiana Territories. The white line in the background symbolizes the great river system within the interior of the continent used to move trade goods by flatboats or canoes to and from New Orleans or Quebec. The Missouri and Mississippi rivers were some of the most important highways in this system and the location of St. Louis was carefully chosen to be near the confluence of these great rivers.

The other curved lines represent the rolling hills and river valleys of the area, home to the tribes native to Missouri.

Note to Readers

This book is by no means a comprehensive history of St. Louis. Instead it is my account of the early events that shaped our city. I believe the story that follows will help children to understand and appreciate the significance of St. Louis in our history.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to many people for their assistance in creating this book. The following people have taken time from their busy schedules to provide pertinent information and/or assistance in the taking of on-site photographs: Nancy Smith, John Biermann, Ken Cole of Mastodon State Historic Site; William R. Iseminger, Assistant Site Manager of Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site; Andrew Cooperman of the Cahokia Court House State Historic Site; Kathyn RedCorn, Director, Osage Tribal Museum, Pawhuska, Oklahoma; Richard Owings of St. Louis County Parks Museum of Transportation; Walter Strosnider, who resides on top of Sugar Loaf Mound.

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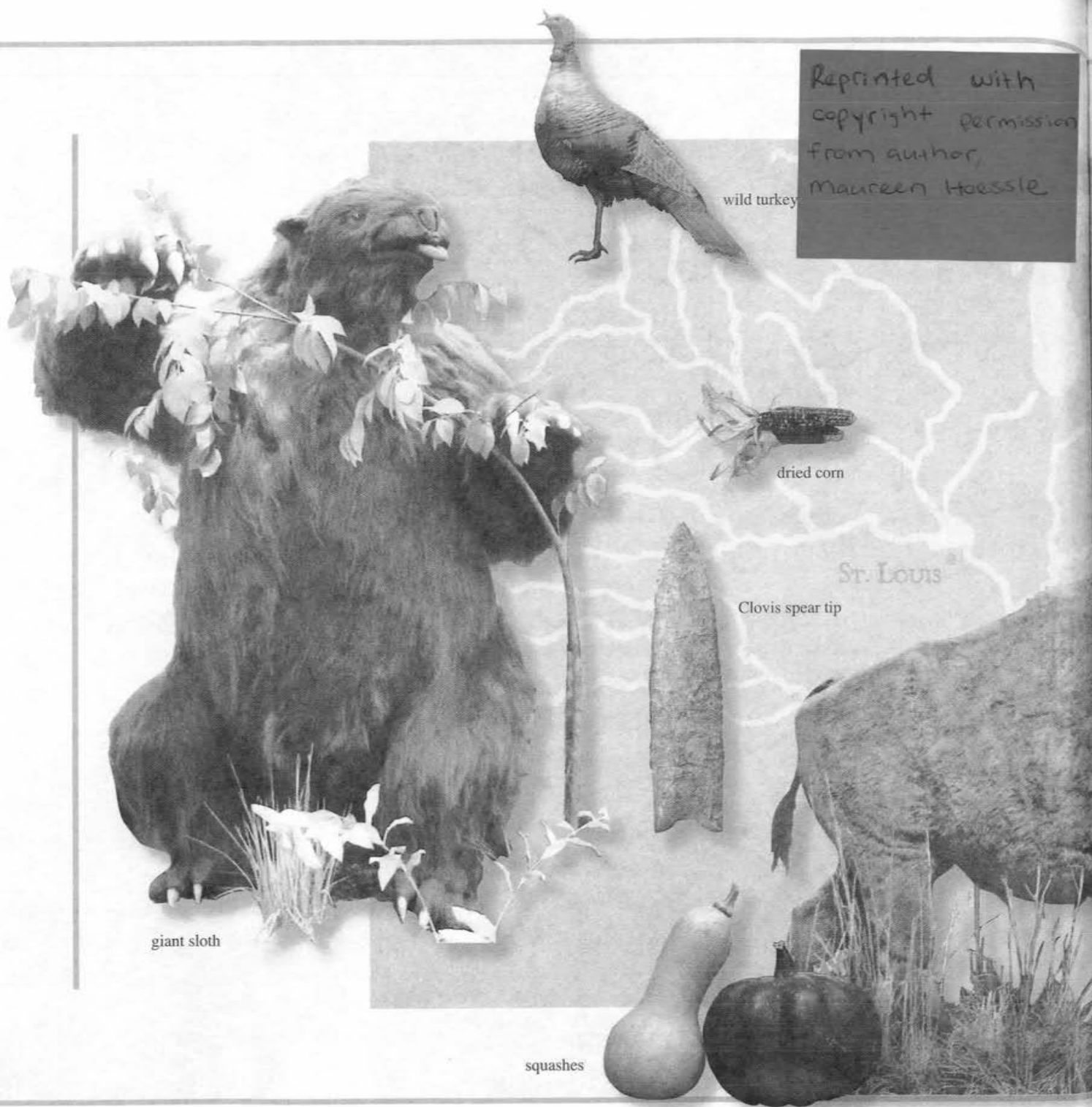
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wild turkey

dried corn

Clovis spear tip

giant sloth

squashes

chunky player figurine



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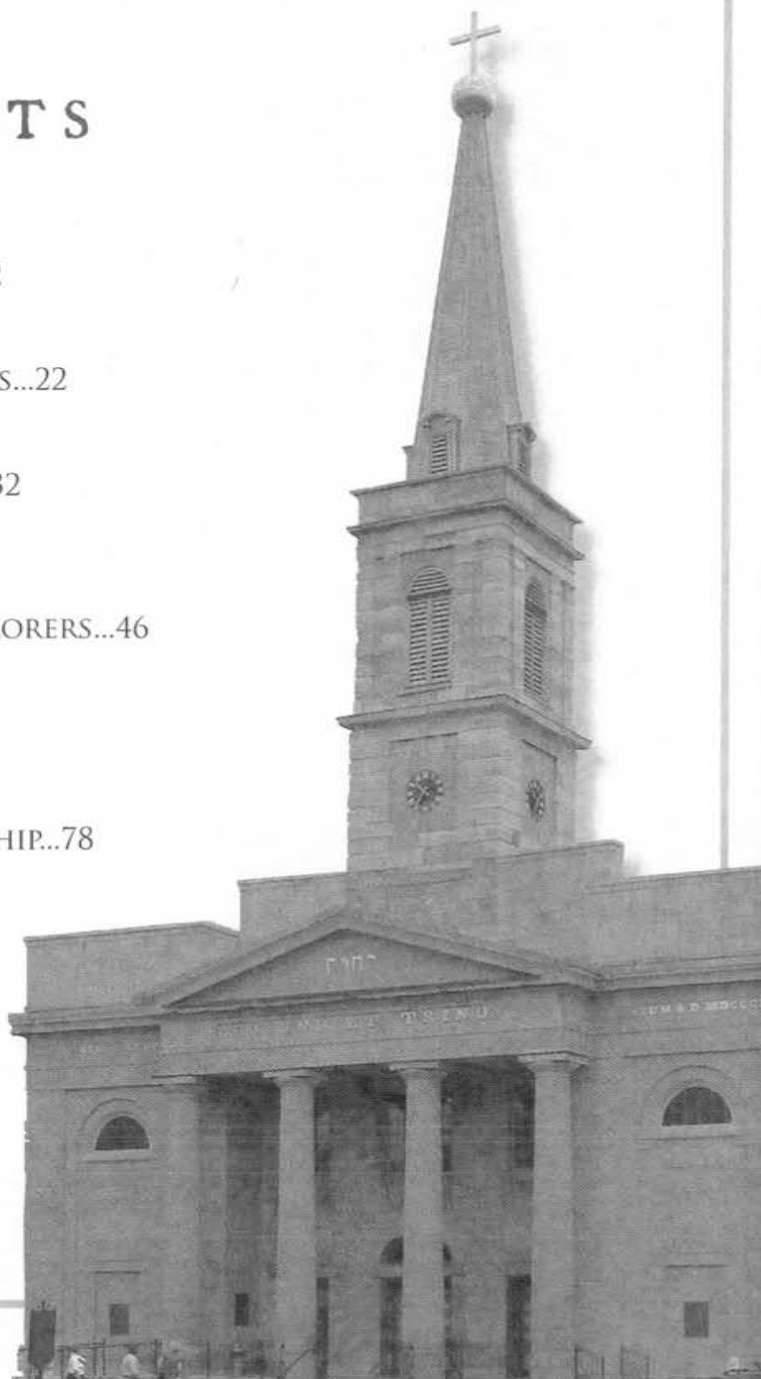


Pierre Laclède

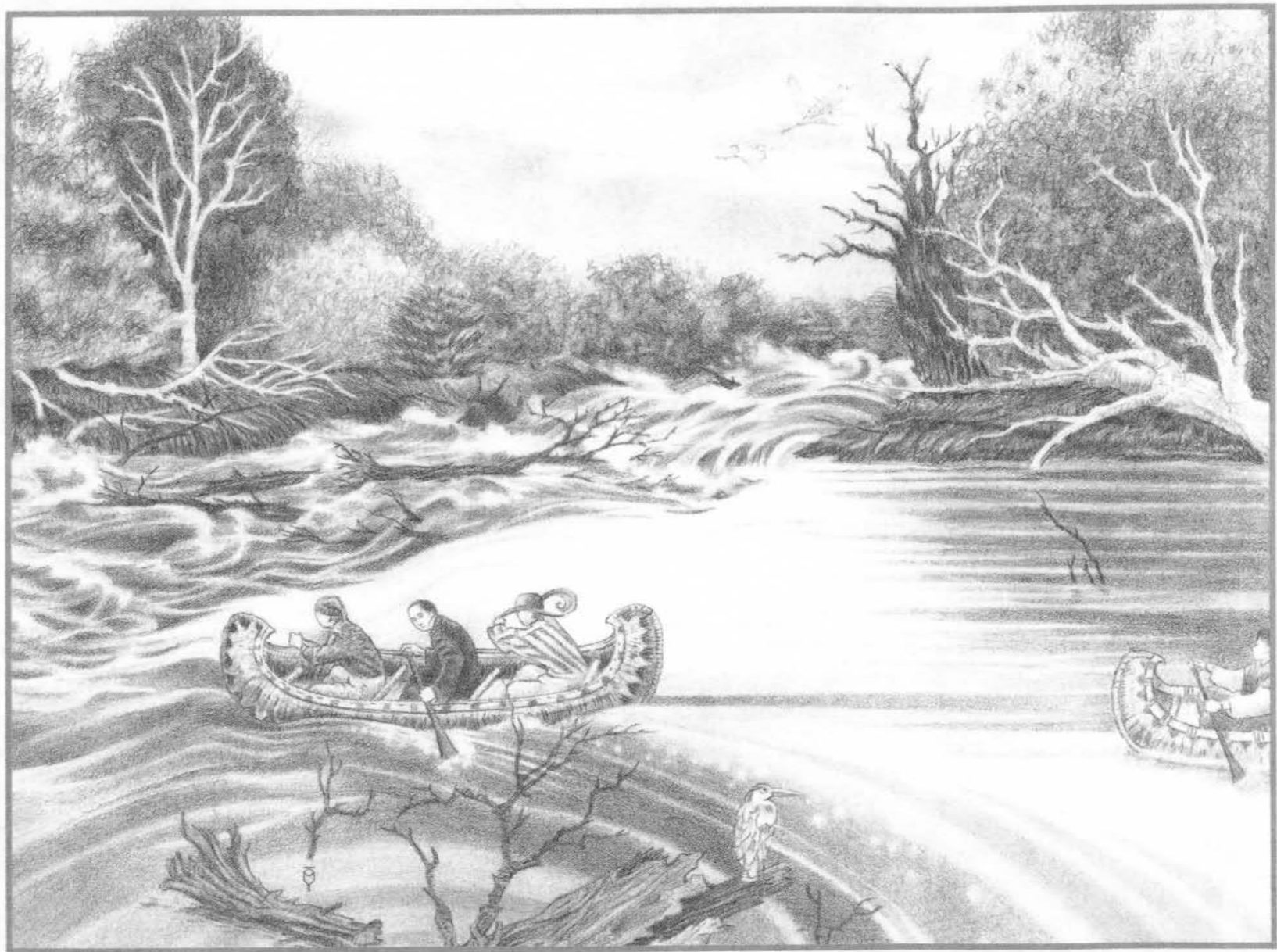
American buffalo



beaver



Old Cathedral

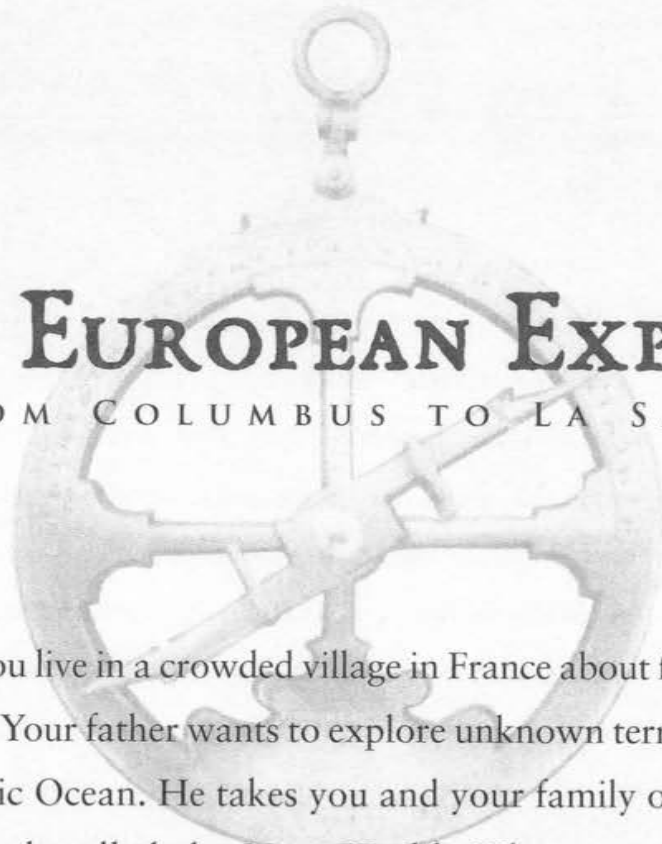


MARQUETTE AND JOLIET AT THE MEETING OF THE RIVERS

CHAPTER FOUR

EARLY EUROPEAN EXPLORERS

FROM COLUMBUS TO LA SALLE



Imagine you live in a crowded village in France about five hundred years ago. Your father wants to explore unknown territory across the Atlantic Ocean. He takes you and your family on a journey to this land, called the New World. When you arrive, you encounter people and animals that look strange to you. You travel through thickly forested lands on foot and paddle rivers in a boat made of tree bark invented by Native people, called a canoe.



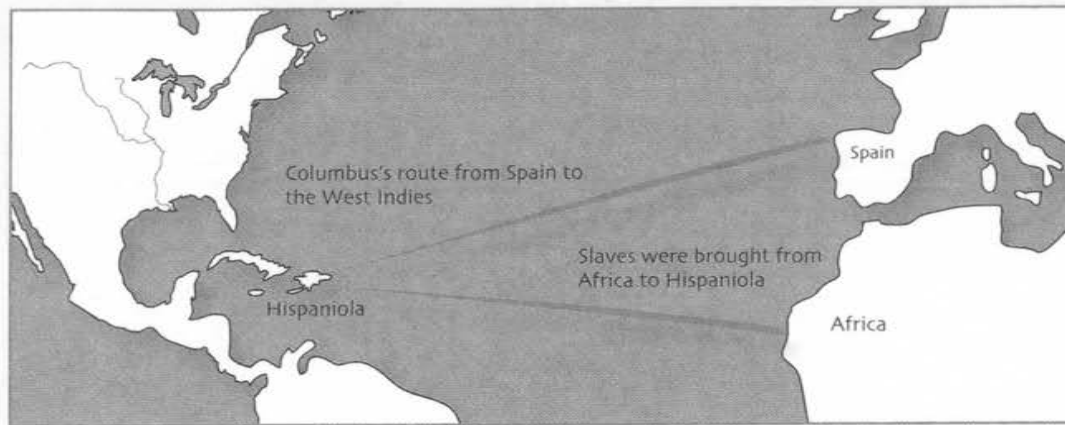
Christopher Columbus

Columbus thought he had reached the Indies when he arrived at the chain of islands in the Caribbean. As a result, he called the people "Indians." Today the terms "Native American," "Native people," "American Indians," and "First People" are used as well as "Indians" to describe the indigenous or native population of the Americas. In Canada, "First Nation" is used. All are acceptable terms.

Our story continues in Europe long before the United States became a country. Europeans had a long tradition of travel and exploration, dating back to the Crusades and to the trade routes of Marco Polo. The desire of Europeans to spread Christianity, to accumulate wealth through trade, and to solve their overpopulation problems inspired them to travel beyond their national borders. Christopher Columbus was an Italian explorer who lived in the 15th century. He was a very well-educated man who read the stories of Marco Polo about the Far East, also called the "Indies" (now known as India and Southeast Asia). The stories described a land rich in minerals, exotic food, and spices.

In the 1400s, Europeans sailed south, around the tip of Africa, to get to the Far East. It was a long journey with dangerous waters, and they often encountered pirates. Travelers could go by land to the Indies, but they had to climb mountains, cross deserts, and cover land controlled by dangerous tribes. Those who made the difficult journey brought back exotic foods, spices, and cloth. Once the Europeans tasted exotic spices such as cinnamon, ginger, cloves, nutmeg, and pepper, they wanted more than just salt to flavor their food. (In those days food spoiled very easily with no refrigeration. Spices covered the smell and taste of rotting food.) They also desired rice, perfumes, fine silks, and precious stones from the East.

Columbus believed he could find a shortcut to the Indies by sailing west across the Atlantic Ocean. In 1492, he set out with his crew and his fleet of three ships, the *Niña*, the *Pinta*, and the *Santa Maria*. After a long and difficult journey, the



ships reached a chain of islands. Columbus and his crew believed these islands were the Far East, the land they were seeking. They actually had arrived in a land that they did not know existed. Columbus called the people he met “Indians” because he believed they had arrived in the Indies. Spain later named the chain of islands the “West Indies.” Eventually, Europeans came to call these islands and the massive continents nearby the “New World.” By 1507, the continents would be called the “Americas,” after the explorer Amerigo Vespucci.

SLAVERY IS INTRODUCED TO THE NEW WORLD

Columbus established the first Spanish colony in the New World on an island he named “Hispaniola.” The Spanish who came later enslaved the Native people to mine for gold and work in the fields. When the Native people died because of exhaustion and European illnesses, slaves were brought to the West Indies from Africa.

Soon the Spanish realized that gold was plentiful in the region that is modern-

(continued on page 51)



America

Columbus may be credited with the European discovery the New World in 1492, but it was named after another explorer, Amerigo Vespucci. Vespucci explored parts of South America and claimed it to be a new continent. He published a book in 1503, called “Mundus Novus,” or “New World.” The stories of his travels were read all over Europe. In 1507, a German mapmaker decided to name the New World after Vespucci. He engraved a map on which he labeled the new lands “America” and the name stuck.

EXPLORE



Explore the Black World History Museum located in North St. Louis. See a portion of a slave ship reconstructed to actual size. View the film clip that shows in greater detail how slaves were brought to this country in overcrowded boats. See devices used to control slaves, such as a whip and wooden leg shackles. Look for important information on contributions made to this area and the world by African Americans.

A Brief History of Slavery

Slavery began in ancient times. In the first and second centuries, Egyptian, Roman, Greek, and Chinese armies enslaved people conquered in battles. Later Muslims, Italians, Spanish, and Portuguese developed an immense slave-trading system, purchasing people from African tribes to take to Europe as laborers. Slavery had long existed in Africa, where tribes captured and enslaved people of enemy tribes. European slave merchants bought their slaves from African rulers; later they became involved in capturing and selling slaves.

When the Spanish and the Portuguese, and later the English and French, began claiming ownership of the islands of the West Indies in the 15th to 16th centuries, they captured Native people to farm and work the gold mines. Most natives died from working in the mines or from European diseases. The conquerors then turned to Africa and brought slaves in by the thousands to work in the sugar cane fields, trading the slaves for guns, kettles, ammunition, and kegs of rum.

Captives were yoked together at the neck or linked together by chains to be transported from their homelands to the coast of Africa. Once onboard the ship, the captive people were chained together, lying side by side in the bottom of the boat. They were fed bread or rice for meals and taken to the top deck, where they were drenched with cold water for showers. The boat was purposefully overcrowded to make up for the many that would die en route from the terrible conditions or diseases. Slaves who died were cast overboard.

In the 1600s, England, France, and the Netherlands controlled the slave trade between Africa and the Americas. A Dutch ship brought slaves from Africa to Jamestown, Virginia, the first slaves brought to North America.



Slave handcuffs

day Mexico. In 1519, Hernando Cortes led an army of 600 men into Mexico. Ships loaded with gold and silver returned to Spain. The mighty Aztec empire had been conquered. For the next hundred years, Spanish **conquistadors** overpowered Native people from Central America to South America in search of riches.

FIRST EUROPEANS IN THE ST. LOUIS AREA

In 1541, a Spanish explorer named Hernando De Soto was determined to find gold in the North American continent. He landed in today's Florida with 600 men. For six months, he and his men searched for gold in the Florida peninsula. Chopping their way through thick forests and swamps, they traveled into current-day Georgia, the Carolinas, Tennessee, Alabama, Oklahoma, and possibly Missouri. De Soto claimed all the land he explored for Spain.

As De Soto and his men pushed west in their search of riches, they killed many Native Americans. They took others as slaves. The Europeans unknowingly carried diseases for which the Native people had no **immunities**. Thousands of Native Americans died from **smallpox** and other European diseases. In 1541, the party crossed the Mississippi River into today's Texas. De Soto is credited as the first known European to discover the Mississippi River. By 1542, his men were exhausted, and De Soto died of fever. (An interesting tidbit of information: A city just south of St. Louis was named after De Soto.)

Another Spanish explorer, Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, traveled overland from Mexico, in the southwest of the continent, also in search of gold and riches.



Florida

Florida was discovered and claimed for Spain in 1512 by Ponce de Leon, who was in search of "the Fountain of Youth." He first saw land on Easter Day, and on account of the abundance and beauty of the flowers named the land "Pascua de Florida" (feast of flowers). Later, De Soto gave the name "Florida" to all the land he claimed for Spain.

Algonquin

When the French settled in the Great Lakes region, they had moved to an area of the continent inhabited by Native Americans speaking dialects of the Algonquian language. The French *coureurs-de-bois*, who learned to speak Algonquin fluently, recorded many of the Algonquian names for the places they explored in the New World. The word Mississippi means "great river" in Algonquin.

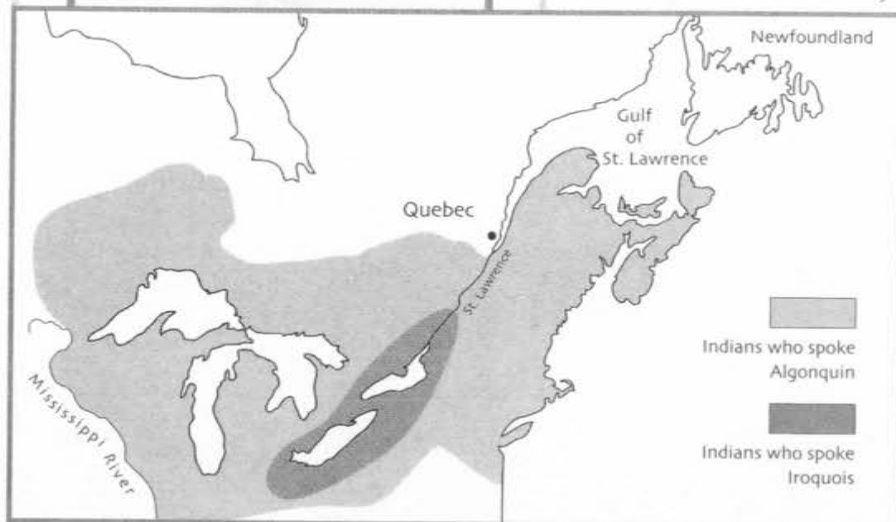
It is unknown if he ever reached today's Missouri. No other known Europeans came to this area for more than 100 years.

FRENCH EXPLORERS SETTLE NEW FRANCE

Europeans still dreamed of reaching the Far East for its spices and silks. During the 1500s, the Spanish controlled the south Atlantic Ocean. Armed with cannons, their warships watched for any English or French ships. The English and French explorers steered their ships north to avoid the Spanish. They dreamed of finding an easy river route through the continent and called this imagined route "The Northwest Passage." In searching for the passage, Europeans explored North America.

In May 1497, an Englishman named John Cabot sailed north across the Atlantic Ocean and discovered what today is called Newfoundland. The French also looked for the Northwest Passage. In 1534, Jacques Cartier set sail and found the Gulf of St. Lawrence. That body of water led to the Great Lakes and to the interior of the continent. The French, by pure luck, had stumbled upon the only river system on

the eastern coast that led into the interior of the continent. In the 16th century, the French claimed the St. Lawrence River and its **watershed** for their king. For approximately the next 200 years, the French were able to explore deep into the interior of the continent without competition from other European nations. In 1562, Quebec was founded, and, by the 1660s, the French had built a colo-



ny in North America called "New France." (An interesting tidbit of information: New France was later renamed "Canada." Canada means "village" in Iroquois.)

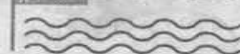
In 1607, English colonists settled at a site along the shores of Virginia that they named Jamestown after their king, James I. English colonists continued settling along the east coast of the continent. The Appalachian Mountains presented a natural barrier to the west, as did the dense forests that covered the eastern half of the continent. The English were slow to enter the middle portion of the continent. Taking possession of Indian land as they migrated westward, they based the building of their towns and farms on the traditions of the Old World.

MARQUETTE AND JOLIET

King Louis XVI of France dreamed of an empire and wanted to win control of North America. If a route could be found through the continent, it could help the French develop a rich source of trade with the lands of the Far East. Since the early 17th century, adventurers in the New World had heard of the mighty river that the Indians called the "Mesippi." The governor of New France ordered an expedition to discover if the Mississippi River flowed west into the Pacific Ocean, to see if it was the desired Northwest Passage.

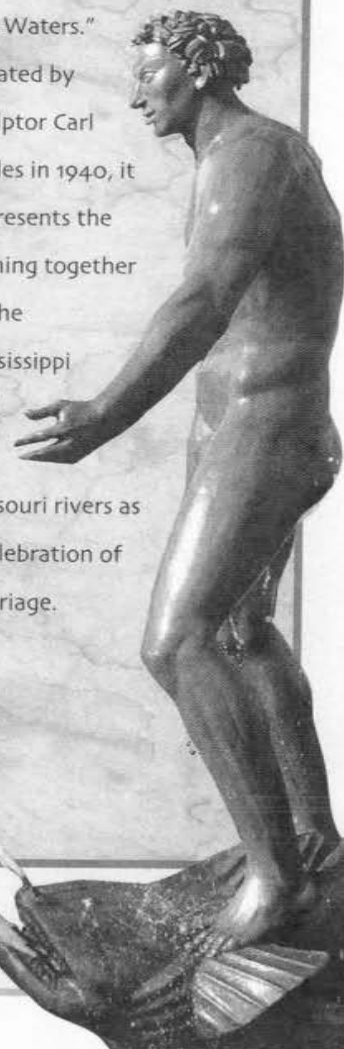
Louis Jolliet was an experienced *voyageur-de-bois* (boatman) chosen to be in charge of the expedition. Jacques Marquette was a dedicated Jesuit missionary noted for his ability to speak the Algonquian language. In 1673, Marquette and Jolliet set out to discover whether this great river reached the Pacific Ocean. In his

EXLORE



Explore the bronze fountain in front of Union Station titled "Meeting of the Waters."

Created by sculptor Carl Milles in 1940, it represents the coming together of the Mississippi and the Missouri rivers as a celebration of marriage.



EXLORE



Explore the Confluence Greenway, a network of natural areas, outdoor recreational opportunities, educational facilities, and historical sites. See the confluence of the great Mississippi and Missouri rivers at Jones-Confluence Point State Park just 20 minutes north of downtown St. Louis. Take a walk or ride your bike across the mile-long Chain of Rocks Bridge (closed to motorized traffic), which crosses over Chouteau Island. Bike trails connect downtown St. Louis to many of these sites.

journal, Marquette noted the herd of 400 bison he saw on the shores, the great fish (possibly catfish) threatening to rip up their canoes, and a huge painting of two monsters on the bluffs along the eastern side of the river. But their greatest discovery came when they arrived at the **confluence** of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers (illustrated on page 46).

Paddling down the westward side of the Mississippi River, they saw a great disturbance in the water ahead. These are the words Marquette used to describe the event: "Sailing quietly in clear and calm water, we heard the noise of a rapid, into which we were about to run. I have seen nothing more dreadful. An accumulation of large and entire trees, branches, and floating islands, were issuing from the mouth of the river, with such **impetuosity** that we could not without great danger risk passing through it. So great was the agitation that the water was very muddy, and could not become clear." Marquette and Joliet are credited as the first Europeans to discover the Missouri River.

The expedition followed the Mississippi south to the Arkansas River. Friendly Indians told of hostile Spaniards living downriver. If the Frenchmen were captured or killed, the information they had gathered would not get back to New France and to King Louis. Also, they believed they had already learned what they had journeyed to find. The Mississippi River flowed south into the Gulf of Mexico, not westward into the Pacific. It was not the fabled Northwest Passage. After two months on the river, Joliet and Marquette decided to turn back to New France.

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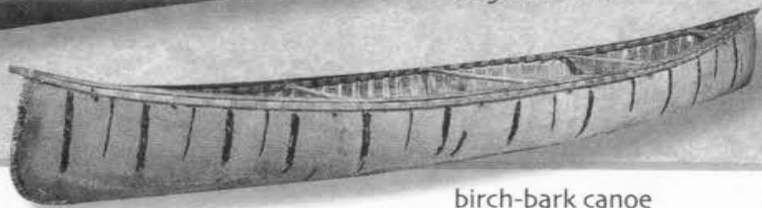
How Missouri Got Its Name

When the Europeans came to North America, they entered a land of 500 nations. These nations were roughly organized into 10 language groups throughout the continent. Some of these languages were Algonquin, Iroquois, Souian, and Cherokee. Native speakers of Algonquian dialects extended from present-day Missouri to Maine along the Mississippi and St. Lawrence rivers. Tribes within a language group were friendly to each other, and the French became friends of Algonquin-speaking Indians living along the Great Lakes. Father Jacques Marquette moved to New France to convert Native people to Christianity and became fluent in Algonquin.

The Algonquins crafted beautiful, feather-light, birch-bark canoes that were easy to portage over the rough terrain between the rivers of the northeast. When the French arrived in the early 17th century, they quickly adapted Native canoes to their own use. In 1673, Marquette and Joliet traveled down the Mississippi in two birch-bark canoes. When the men came to the confluence, however, the rough waters threatened to rip apart their fragile boats. The Illinois, who spoke Algonquin, described the people who lived along this unruly river as great hunters and boatmen. These people rode the rough and rapid waters in canoes made of hollowed-out logs. The Illinois called these people "Missouri," a word in Algonquin meaning "people of wooden canoes." The French put the word "Missouri" on their maps to mark the place where the Missouri people lived. Over time it became the name of the river, the territory, and later the state.



dugout canoe

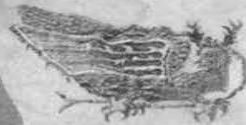


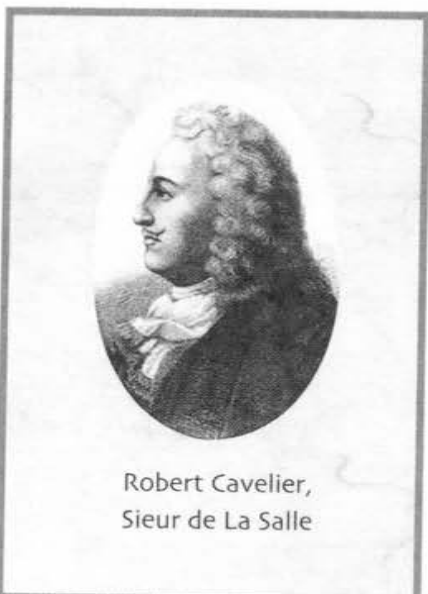
birch-bark canoe

EX LORE



Père Marquette State Park, an hour north from St. Louis, is named in honor of the priest Jacques Marquette. You will enjoy this beautiful scenic park, which overlooks the Illinois River. To get to the park, take the gorgeous Great River Road, which follows the Mississippi River. Look for the great Piasa Bird, originally painted on the bluffs by the Illini tribe, located at the Piasa Park in Alton, Illinois.





Robert Cavalier,
Sieur de La Salle

LA SALLE CLAIMS LOUISIANA FOR FRANCE

Another Frenchman, named Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle, paddled down the Mississippi River in 1682. At the mouth of the Mississippi River near present-day New Orleans, he claimed nearly half of the North American continent, including the huge watershed of the Mississippi, for the King of France. La Salle named the land “Louisiana” in honor of King Louis. Forts were soon built along the river to protect France’s claim to the land and to promote fur trading west of the Mississippi.

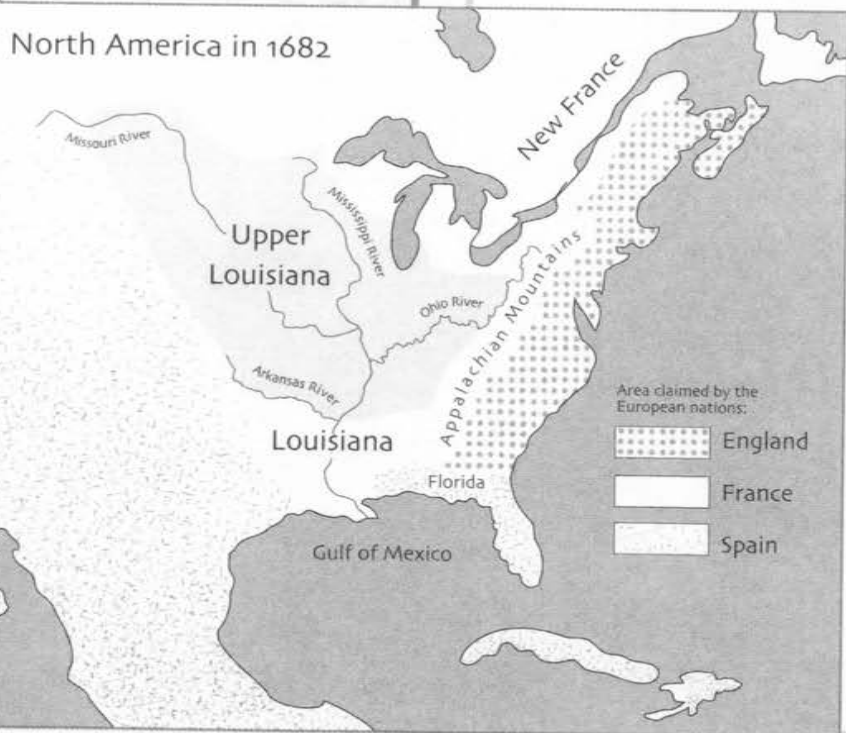
This land had treasures that the Frenchmen wanted. Because French fashion included fur in its designs, most of the fur-bearing animals in Europe had been

hunted to the point of extinction. Beaver fur was especially prized by the Europeans, and men could become wealthy in the New World by trapping the animal and selling the pelt to fashion-conscious Europeans.

French trappers and traders, called *coureurs-de-bois*, followed La Salle to the Missouri region. The typical *coureur-de-bois* was a young Frenchman who had left his homeland to seek freedom and adventure in the New World. He moved around the vast territory of Louisiana fearlessly, alone, and on foot. He stayed on

Three European nations, France, England, and Spain, competed to control all of North America in the 1700s.

North America in 1682



good terms with the Indians by adapting to their pattern of hunting and trading, learning their ways of survival in the wilderness, and by treating them with the respect accorded to equals. Adopting the practical fashion of leggings and moccasins from the Native American, the men wore hunting shirts made of tanned deerskin or coarse linen that hung to the knees and were belted and fringed. In the winter they wrapped themselves, Indian-style, in buffalo hide, or wore capotes (a hooded cape) in the French style. A cap made of fox, bear, or squirrel fur with ear flaps completed their winter wear. These men lived with the Indians, traded with them, spoke their language fluently, and sometimes took Indian wives.

The voyageur-de-bois (boatmen) used the waterways as the main transportation system. Though often difficult, the river was a preferred route to the overland paths through the wilderness. On foot, a trapper pushed through dense forests and underbrush and could carry only 50 pounds of goods on his back. When he reached the river, he could load his canoe with up to 150 pounds of goods and make about 12 to 15 miles a day paddling upstream.

LEAD IS DISCOVERED

In 1712, Antoine de La Mothe Cadillac was sent to Louisiana to search for silver. Instead, valuable lead and salt deposits were uncovered in what is now Madison County, Missouri. Lead was used for ammunition, and salt was important for preserving meat and fish. (An interesting tidbit of information: Cadillac went on to found the city of Detroit, the largest car-manufacturing city in the United States.

Fur Trapping

Beavers were trapped for their pelts.



A felt made from the pelt was used to make beaver hats.



A well-dressed European man liked to wear stove-pipe hats made from beaver fur. The felt was used for hats because it was fashionable, durable and repelled water.



European Influences

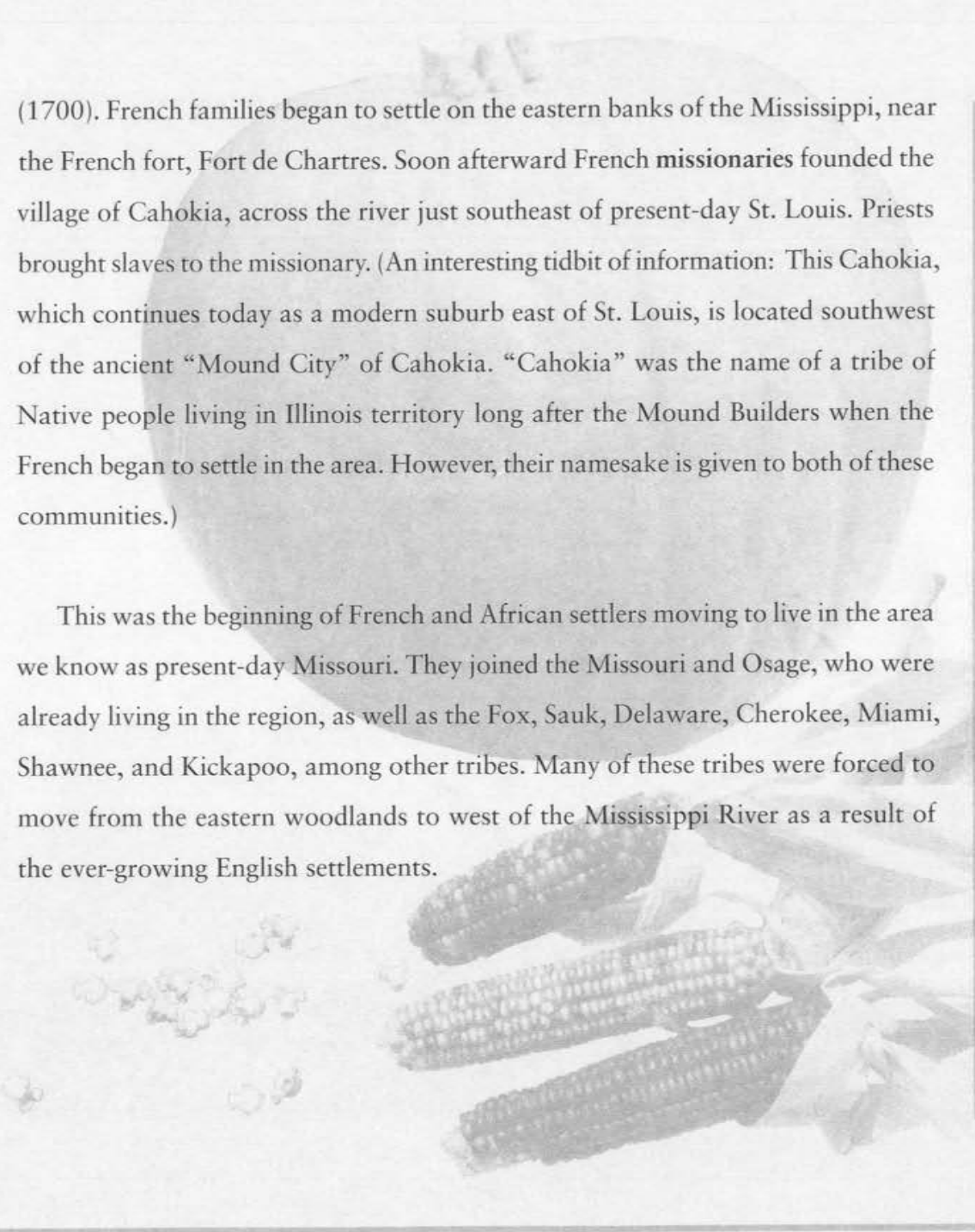
Europeans brought to the New World animals and plants that Native people had never seen before: cattle, pigs, sheep, chickens, horses, honey bees, wheat, lettuce, peaches, pears, bananas, sugar-cane, alcohol, and Asian rice. They also brought trade items such as cotton and wool clothing and blankets, guns, knives, pots, and kettles made of metal. In addition, Europeans introduced new ideas such as Christianity and the concept of land ownership. Native people generally believed that no one individual person or country could "own" the land.

The Cadillac car was named after him.)

In 1718, New Orleans was founded on the eastern bank of the Mississippi near the Gulf of Mexico, and in 1722 the city became the capital of the Louisiana Territory. In 1720, Fort de Chartres, the capital of **Upper Louisiana** was built on the east bank of the Mississippi, in the Illinois territory. West of the Mississippi, Philippe Renault, an ambitious mining promoter, set up the first extensive lead mines in 1720. He brought 200 workers, including slaves from the West Indies, to the area and imported mining tools manufactured in France. His main mining operations were on the **Meramec River** and in the area around Mine La Motte. He continued this operation for about twenty years. With the discovery of the lead mines on the western side of the river, many French settlers moved from Illinois territory to current-day Madison County, Missouri. Ste. Genevieve was founded in 1735 (the first permanent settlement in present-day Missouri) on the west bank of the Mississippi, and a road was built from that settlement to the nearest lead mines.

FRENCH AND AFRICANS SETTLE THE AREA

French explorers appeared in the region with increasing frequency. Following the earliest explorers, people of New France came into Illinois territory to establish **missions**, trading posts, and mining operations. The first two settlements in the area were on the east side of the Mississippi at Cahokia (1699) and Kaskaskia



(1700). French families began to settle on the eastern banks of the Mississippi, near the French fort, Fort de Chartres. Soon afterward French **missionaries** founded the village of Cahokia, across the river just southeast of present-day St. Louis. Priests brought slaves to the missionary. (An interesting tidbit of information: This Cahokia, which continues today as a modern suburb east of St. Louis, is located southwest of the ancient “Mound City” of Cahokia. “Cahokia” was the name of a tribe of Native people living in Illinois territory long after the Mound Builders when the French began to settle in the area. However, their namesake is given to both of these communities.)

This was the beginning of French and African settlers moving to live in the area we know as present-day Missouri. They joined the Missouri and Osage, who were already living in the region, as well as the Fox, Sauk, Delaware, Cherokee, Miami, Shawnee, and Kickapoo, among other tribes. Many of these tribes were forced to move from the eastern woodlands to west of the Mississippi River as a result of the ever-growing English settlements.

Indian Influences

American Indians introduced Europeans to canoes, moccasins, leggings and other deerskin clothing, methods of farming, corn, popcorn, potatoes, the sweet potato, pumpkins, tomatoes, and tobacco. (An interesting tidbit of information: The Iroquois nation demonstrated a form of self-government that inspired our forefathers when creating the Constitution. The Iroquois believed that all people were equal and had a voice in their government. This was different from European monarchies, where one ruler made all the laws for his subjects.)