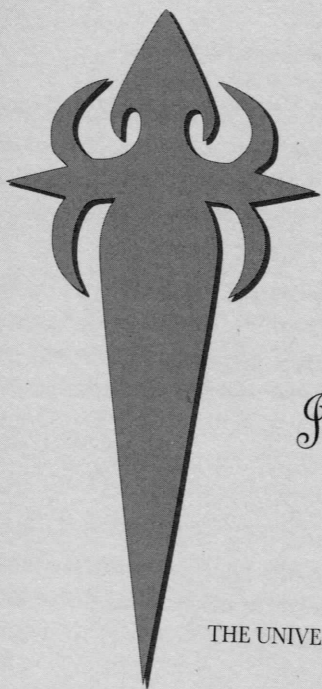


*Cultural Encounters  
in the Early South*



*Indians and  
Europeans  
in Arkansas*

COMPILED BY  
*Jeannie Whayne*

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# Almost "Illinark"

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## *The French Presence in Northeast Arkansas*

GEORGE E. LANKFORD

The realm between New Orleans and Fort de Chartres was shaped like a dumbbell, with population numbers and urban centers concentrated at the two ends. The midpoint on the system was venerable Arkansas Post, which stood near the junction of the Mississippi River with others draining a vast area to the west and northwest. That area has been well studied, but the loss of many of the records of the Post has left knowledge of the colonial development of Arkansas less complete than it should be.<sup>1</sup>

In the late eighteenth century, when French Louisiana became Spanish Louisiana, there were two waves of immigration into the realm west of the Mississippi, the first one the result of the cession of the east bank to the British in 1763 and the second the consequence of the American takeover in the 1780s. The second is known to have brought some new blood to Arkansas Post, but it has not been recognized that it also brought the potential of a significant development in Northeast Arkansas at the foothills of the Ozarks. The evidence of French presence in that area is scant, for the footprints those settlers left are mostly found in the deed records of the early American period, and their presence was short-lived.

Nonetheless, those footprints are there and can be discerned. There is enough evidence to indicate that in the last decade of the Spanish dominion there was a movement into northern Arkansas which could have led to a new population center, an "Illinark," to suggest an inelegant neologism. It may be easier to examine the evidence for this movement by looking at the lives of two different French families, one is an example of the settlers during the French period and the other exemplifies the settlers of the Spanish era.

As Morris Arnold has made clear, through most of the eighteenth century, the military post at the Arkansas, with its accompanying merchants and few farmers, was a small affair. With population at low figures, sometimes incredibly so, and the very walls seemingly always in need of repair from decay and flooding, Arkansas Post was apparently on the verge of destruction for most of its colonial life. It existed for three major reasons: it was a necessary rest stop between the larger colonial populations in Louisiana and Illinois; it provided some military control over the Central Mississippi Valley, thanks to the Quapaw warriors; and it was a necessary entrepôt for the fur trade on the Arkansas and White Rivers. Its role as economic center for the region created an unusual population picture, for the small post usually had the smaller portion of inhabitants; the vast hinterland of valleys and hills held the hunters and their families, who probably outnumbered the Post population in most years.

What makes it difficult to ascertain the demographic relation of Arkansas Post to the scattered entrepreneurs of the fur trade is the fact that the authorities rarely knew for certain who was out there. Several observers through the eighteenth century made it clear that the hunters had created their own forms of government apart from the official structures represented at Arkansas Post. Many of them could think of the Post as the location of creditors whom they could not pay, and they found it advisable to avoid going in for visits. Then, too, the roller-coaster political events—from Osage and Chickasaw depredations to international wars involving the English and Anglo-Americans—called hunters to other parts, and they had no reason to notify the Post of their whereabouts or intentions.

All persons hunting on the rivers were supposed to return every year as passports were not issued for longer periods. But there were large numbers of hunters who lived for twenty years or more in their camps without ever reporting to the Post. They constituted a large proportion, indeed sometimes a majority, of the European population in Arkansas during the French period.<sup>2</sup>

In the material gathered and published by Arnold and other researchers, few bits of information about the life of hunters surface, but the picture they give of the life of the hunters is more suggestive than carefully drawn.

One figure whose name emerges from the bureaucratic records is Joseph Francoeur. It may be a *dit* name; if so, his “real” name is not given in the published documents.<sup>3</sup> “Joseph” is known only from his daughter’s

marriage record, as is the fact that his wife was Marie Aimé. His sons had occasion to write several letters to the Spanish authorities in 1770, and they claimed to have lived on the White River for a quarter of a century. That puts them there in 1745, but that may indicate their births rather than the Francoeur occupation of the White, for their father was hunting in Arkansas at least two years earlier than that. In 1743 Anne Catherine Chenalenne, widow of Jean François Lepine, asked for an inventory of his estate so she could give to her daughter Marianne and son-in-law Guillaume Bienvenue, who had lost everything in an attack by the Chickasaw, their share. The inventory was done by Sieurs Louis Giscard *dit* Benoist and Charles Grosillion *dit* Tourangeau for the widow and Sieurs Jean LaFleur *dit* Emmanuelle and Pierre Imbau *dit* Lajeunesse for the children. In addition to “an old house with all the small buildings fit to shelter the cattle, consisting of three small buildings” close to the fort at Arkansas Post, sixteen hundred pounds of tobacco, three black slaves, and “an old crippled Indian woman,” the estate contained notes of debts owed Lepine by six hunters, one of whom was “Francoeur.” His note, dated March 18, 1743, recorded a debt of two hundred livres.<sup>4</sup>

While Francoeur may have moved around in Arkansas for a few years, he settled down at one place on the White River, probably by 1745. Arnold identifies the location by the current name of “Francure Township” in White County, and it is a reasonable guess that the Francoeurs lived in the vicinity of the present Georgetown.<sup>5</sup> His wife Marie was listed in the 1770 Arkansas Post census with their nine grown children: Jean, François, François (sic), Agnès, Jeanne, Marie, Angelique, Suzanne, and Anne.<sup>6</sup> It is unfortunate that there is never a mention of the sort of house he built for his growing family during the 1750s and 1760s, for it would be instructive to know what sort of architectural tradition was maintained by a French *coureur de bois* in Arkansas. The range of possibilities runs from Native American structures to French log construction, but neither documents nor archaeology have specified the house considered proper by someone like Francoeur.

He apparently did well in the fur trade, at least at first, for by 1749 he was already listed in the census as a “bourgeois,” an employer of other men in the trade. “The 1749 census . . . lists a habitant population of only thirty-one, including the commandant and his wife. But there were forty hunters on the Arkansas River whose passports had expired, and nine on the White and St. Francis rivers.”<sup>7</sup> The nine illegal hunters in the north broke down like this: “*Bourgeois*: Francoeur, *Engagés*: 4 [on White River]; *Bourgeois*: Tourangeaux, *Engagés*: 3 [on St. Francis River].”<sup>8</sup> Francoeur and his four subordinates thus were identified as the only Europeans known officially to

live on the White River in 1749. The Tourangeaux on the St. Francis was presumably one of those responsible for the Lepine inventory in 1743 at Arkansas Post.

Within the next two decades, Francoeur died. The 1768 census of Arkansas Post included "The Widow Francoeur, 3 boys, six girls and 2 negro men."<sup>9</sup> The three Francoeur sons apparently were continuing in the family business ("good old hunters," they called themselves),<sup>10</sup> for they were revealed only two years later as being involved in an altercation with one of their creditors, a merchant named Tounoir at Arkansas Post. One (or all) of the Francoeurs had borrowed from him, probably the standard outfitting loan made by the Post merchants to hunters, with the debt to be repaid at the end of the season. For whatever reason, the Francoeurs produced bear oil, but no hides or furs. While the sequence is not clear, it is probable that the Francoeurs were forced to deal with Tounoir at Arkansas Post because of a flare-up of the persistent danger of raids by the Osage.

In May of 1770, seven separate war parties of Osages ransacked many of the hunting camps along the Arkansas. . . . A few days later a number of hunters sent word that they were returning to the fort with their families, and some in fact soon began trickling in. The Francoeur brothers, for instance, arrived from the White River in June of 1770 with women and children; the children did not even have shirts. The Francoeurs had lived on the river for twenty-five years, had taken up with Indian women, and had had a large number of children by them.<sup>11</sup>

Tounoir must have determined that the only possession the Francoeurs had which could satisfy the debt was the store of bear oil which they had brought with them to the Post. He seized it, and he might well have kept it, but one of the Francoeur *engagés* took exception to his action and complained to the commandant. Arnold tells the story in detail:

In 1770 a merchant named Tounoir took a great deal of bear oil from the boat of a hunter named Francoeur to satisfy a debt. Lambert, an *engagé* of Francoeur, petitioned the commandant in writing to order Tounoir to replace the oil; Francoeur owed him wages, he said, and he claimed preference to Tounoir because his claim was "due for hard work." Captain Demasellière, the commandant, thereupon ordered Tounoir to return the oil. When Tounoir refused, the commandant was obliged to send his sergeant to execute his order. At this point, Francoeur asked to have set off a debt of 944 *pesos* that Tounoir owed him; the note evidencing this debt, unfortunately, was in New Orleans in the hands of de Clouet, the former commandant. Demasellière wrote to the governor to ask that he order this note paid since Francoeur had nothing but his gun. The commandant

then ordered Tounoir to pay court costs—that is, the sergeant's fee for taking the oil back; when Tounoir refused, Demaselière had him jailed. A short time thereafter the commandant ordered Tounoir to leave the post, but before doing so, Tounoir got Francoeur to sign some sort of "certificate," probably a release of Tounoir's note; and, to insult the commandant and literally as a parting shot, as he was leaving at high noon, Tounoir and his company fired off a volley of thirty rounds. Francoeur thereafter signed an affidavit that he executed the release to Tounoir when he "was drunk and thus it is of no value."<sup>12</sup>

Other than the simple justice of the situation, there is a hint of another reason why Demaselière was not sympathetic to Tounoir. The merchant had ignored the commandant's orders not to resupply the hunters, because Demaselière wanted to force them to come in to Arkansas Post for licensing and other official controls. Shortly after the Tounoir-Francoeur contretemps he expressed his irritation that, while some hunters had come in, "others supplied by Tounoir, against my orders, have remained [along the White River]."<sup>13</sup>

The incident reveals several interesting facts about the Francoeurs. For one thing, they were all still together, but the marriage of some of the sons, if not the daughters, surely indicates that the old Francoeur household on the White River had expanded into a compound. The wives of the sons were identified as "Indians," and there were many children who dressed in native fashion (shirtless in the June heat). While the women's tribal affiliation was not indicated, these marriages suggest that the Francoeurs should be seen as part of the "Indian countrymen" phenomenon which was so important in the changing political and cultural structures of Native Americans across the Southeast. At the same time, the fact that they did not live in native villages, whether Quapaw, Osage, Caddo, or some other tribe, indicates that the Francoeurs were not filling quite the same role as the European traders further east, such as Colbert and McGillivray.

That lack of correspondence is borne out by the poverty of the Francoeurs. The commandant was sympathetic to the indebted hunter because he "had nothing but his gun." By contrast, the "Indian countrymen" to the east were for the most part quite successful and prosperous, providing new generations of mestizo leaders for the Native Americans.

What happened to the Francoeurs is not recorded in the documents. At least one of the girls, Agnès, daughter of Joseph Francoeur, went to Sainte Geneviève, where she married Jean Jaulin *dit* LaRochelle. In 1772 their son François was baptized, and six years later the baptism of their son Jean Baptiste was recorded; in 1786 came the baptism of their daughter

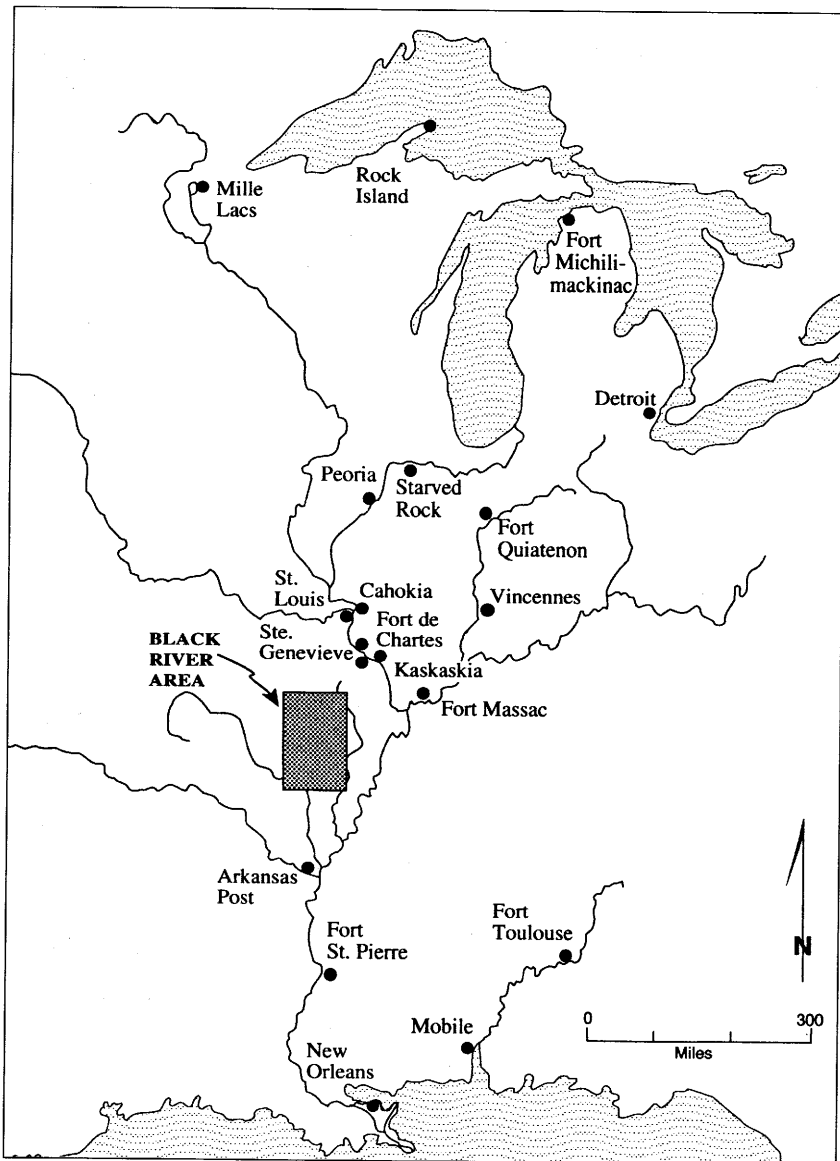
Jeanne.<sup>14</sup> Jean Jaulin died sometime before 1800, because in that year the widowed Agnès married Antoine Curain at Sainte Geneviève.<sup>15</sup> A decade later her daughter Jeanne married Christophe Piot there.<sup>16</sup>

In the 1770s Jeanne Francoeur married Pierre Pertuis, and both of them died before their son Louis was married at Arkansas Post in 1793.<sup>17</sup> One of the Francoeur sons, Jean, was listed in the Spanish militia there. The 1780 list for the militia company at Fort Carlos III included "Juan Batista Frincart," which is probably the hispanicized version of Jean Baptiste Francoeur, and he must have been a hunter, as no farm produce was listed.<sup>18</sup> The 1794 and 1796 censuses of Arkansas Post included François and Marie Francoeur (Francisco and Maria).<sup>19</sup> François must have died within the next year, because the 1798 census included only the Widow Francoeur.<sup>20</sup>

The family was not listed in the later censuses for the Illinois or Arkansas areas. There is one hint of a continued presence of the Francoeurs into the American period. The 1844 Government Land Office survey map for the Georgetown (White County) area shows the boundaries of a Spanish Land Grant labeled "Claim No. 2416 Francis Francure." The White County deed book ("A") dutifully picked up the metes and bounds of the tract, simply referring to it as "Private Survey No. 2416. Surveyed for Francis Francure who claimed in his own right 1600 arpens. . . ." Beyond this indication of a François Francoeur's late occupation of the site, there is no further evidence of French presence in that area of the White River. The Francoeurs were not listed in the later censuses for the Illinois or Arkansas areas, and later nineteenth-century references to "Negro Hill" and Georgetown (platted in 1908) ignore the earlier French establishment, suggesting that the Francoeur descendants had found other paths and other places, and that their presence in North Arkansas, after almost a century, was at an end.

#### ANTOINE JANIS

In 1781, as the Francoeur story was moving from the Ozarks country to the towns, the Janis story in northern Arkansas was being extended from the towns to the Ozarks. Antoine Janis was listed as one of the hunters on the White.<sup>21</sup> After a few years' absence, he was again listed, with his family of a wife and six children. He was named as "Antonio Janis" in the Arkansas Post censuses of 1794, 1796, and 1798.<sup>22</sup> His name recurs many times in the American deed records as the land ownership of Spanish grants was adjudicated after the Louisiana Purchase (discussed below). If the historical connections can be made and rightly interpreted, he and his family will constitute an instructive case of the French extension into Arkansas from the Illinois.



Some French sites in the Mississippi Valley.

Adapted from *French Colonial Archaeology*, ed. John A. Walthall  
 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991.)



Antoine Janis did not just appear from nowhere in the records of Arkansas Post. He was almost certainly a member of the well known Janis family who had for decades lived in Kaskaskia and Sainte Geneviève.<sup>23</sup> If his antecedents can be established, it will permit a much fuller picture of the dynamics of the settlement of the North Arkansas area in the late Spanish period.

Who were his parents, and where was he from? He is the right age to be the son of Nicholas Janis, patriarch of the family, but the son of Nicholas named Antoine was romantically involved with a slave named Mary Louise in Ste. Geneviève from 1792 to 1796, then into the 1800s in St. Charles, where he was a landowner with periodic appearances in the public records.<sup>24</sup>

He could be the son of one of the other sons of Nicholas. In 1781 a document protesting the behavior of the American army in Kaskaskia was signed by the Janis men: Nicholas, his sons Jean Baptiste, François, Antoine, and an unknown "Antoine Jr."<sup>25</sup> Antoine Jr. did not appear in the Kaskaskia census of 1787,<sup>26</sup> and he apparently never appears again in the Illinois records. Who was this Antoine Jr.? Jean Baptiste himself was only twenty-two, so he could not have been his father. His son, Jean Baptiste *fils*, for instance, was not born until 1784. Moreover, he did have a son named Antoine, who died young in 1805.<sup>27</sup> François was born in 1761, which means that he was only twenty in 1781 and thus could not have had an adult son named Antoine. It is more likely that he fathered the later Antoine, who married Félicité Bogy in 1826 and died in Sainte Geneviève in 1861.<sup>28</sup> The same is surely true of Nicholas's son Antoine, whose scandalous exploits and illegitimate children were still a decade in the future. Still, it is possible, if we grant him a birth around 1752 (a year after his father's marriage), an early marriage, circa 1769, and a precocious Antoine *fils* who would be permitted to sign a political document at age eleven.

The remaining alternative is the other son, Nicholas, about whom little is known. His existence was asserted by Arkansas historian W. E. McLeod.<sup>29</sup> The records, however, both of Kaskaskia and Sainte Geneviève, are silent about him. If for some unknown reason he chose to be called Antoine instead of Nicholas, then he would be a perfect choice for the Antoine Janis of Arkansas. Is it possible that two brothers could be named Antoine? It seems so. Given the tradition of receiving a saint's name (by birth date) and the perpetuation of given names in the same family, it is likely that in a large Catholic family there will be a duplication of names. Moreover, while *fils* is usually used for a generational shift, it is clear that it did not necessarily indicate a father-son relationship. An Antoine *fils* might well be the nephew

of an Antoine (this holds true for many Anglo-American families of the same period—"Junior" often just distinguishes the younger from the older). The term  *fils* could thus also indicate the smaller or younger person of the same name in a family, without signifying a generational shift. In this case, then, a "Nicholas Antoine" could be the brother of Antoine and could choose to go by "Antoine" rather than his father's name of Nicholas. As if to bear out this possibility, the Lawrence County deed records contain an astounding parenthetical remark. In 1817 the Arkansas Antoine's son Nicholas sold his right to his father's land claim; the deed referred to "Nicholas Janis (by nickname known as Antoine Janis)."<sup>30</sup> If this deed testimony be accepted, then Antoine's own son was named Nicholas, but called Antoine. If that were a repetition of the previous generation, then the Arkansas Antoine would himself be a Nicholas, and the mystery of his antecedents would be solved.

In any case, the Antoine Janis  *fils* in Kaskaskia in 1781 is in the context of the Nicholas Janis family, and he never again appeared in the Illinois records. It is a handsome fit, however, to see him as the Antoine Janis who appeared for the first time in the Arkansas records as a hunter with a young family in 1789. His wife was named Angelique, and his children in the 1794 and 1796 Arkansas Post censuses were listed by name in Spanish: Antonio, Juan Batista, Francisco, José, Felipe, Maria, and Elena. The youngest, Miguel, apparently was born after 1796 because he was named for the first time in the 1798 census.<sup>31</sup> Before the story of this family in Arkansas is examined, however, it will be useful to look briefly at their earlier history. With the putative identification of Antoine as the son of Nicholas, it is possible to supply some of the historical background for this pioneer Janis in Arkansas.

Nicholas Janis was an important man both in French Illinois and in his family, as his consistent signature suggests; it is always just "Janis," without further specification. It has been claimed that he was the son of François Janis and Simon Brosseau of Champagne, France,<sup>32</sup> but that assertion is contradicted by other genealogical information. Tanguay's listing specifies a Nicholas born to the couple from Champagne who then went to Canada, but their Nicholas in turn is revealed as having a wife and family in Detroit spanning the years from 1745 to 1761, a period when Kaskaskia's Nicholas was already in Illinois first as a bachelor, then as a newlywed in 1751.<sup>33</sup> Without that connection, all that can be said is that Nicholas Janis appeared as a young man in Kaskaskia and Sainte Geneviève around the middle of the century. His first appearances in the records were in 1751, when he sold a house and land in Kaskaskia for four hundred livres, suggesting he had

already been there long enough to purchase or build that property. That same year he married Marie Louise Taumur, daughter of Jean Baptiste Taumur *dit* La Source and Marie François Rivard, who had long been members of the Kaskaskia community.<sup>34</sup> Ekberg thinks that he first settled in the fledgling village of Sainte Geneviève for a few years, before selling his property there and moving to the older Kaskaskia.<sup>35</sup> What is clear is that he quickly became one of the pillars of French Illinois, established at that principal village on the east side of the Mississippi River.

He had six known children, and it was hypothesized that there was a seventh. They were Jean Baptiste (1759–1836), François (1761–1832), Antoine, Catherine, Félicité (ca. 1751–1837), and Françoise. Their marriages read almost like a survey of significant families of French Illinois: Jean Baptiste married Reine Julia Barbau; François married Pélagie Bienvenu; Catherine married Etienne Bolduc; Félicité married Vital St. Gem Bauvais; and Françoise married a Durocher. Jean Baptiste and François moved to nearby Prairie du Rocher, and all of the Janis families participated in the fur trade and farming, the characteristic occupations of the Illinois colony. They apparently grew prosperous at their endeavors, for when the French and Indian War came to an end in 1763, they became part of the British Empire rather than fleeing to another area of the world remaining under French domination. They were well aware of the fact that Arkansas Post, Ste. Geneviève, and the young St. Louis had become Spanish, but they seemed content to be British in Kaskaskia. C. W. Alvord described them this way: “Among the gentry, which was a rather elastic term, were also many well-to-do men, who had risen to prominence in the Illinois or else possessed some patrimony, before migrating to the West, which they increased by trade. . . . These members of the gentry lived far more elegantly than the American backwoodsman and were their superiors in culture. Their houses were commodious and their life was made easy for themselves and families by a large retinue of slaves.”<sup>36</sup> A hint of the quality of life in Kaskaskia comes as a historical detail: when Nicholas Janis’s daughter Félicité married Vital Bauvais in 1776, one of the gowns in her wedding trousseau was made from material which had come from France that same year.<sup>37</sup>

Life in British Illinois was not without its problems, though, and when George Rogers Clark arrived to conquer the Illinois on behalf of the new United States in 1778, he found that no battle was necessary, for the Kaskaskia French received them with enthusiasm and embraced the end of English control. They fed Clark’s army and even provided volunteers for the winter march to capture Vincennes, a brief campaign whose victory made a hero of young Jean Baptiste Janis.<sup>38</sup>

Nicholas Janis had been a captain of the militia at Kaskaskia under the British, in 1777, and he apparently continued that role after the arrival of the Americans.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, in 1779 he was appointed a judge, a seat he kept for several years.<sup>40</sup> The happy relations between the citizens of the Illinois and their liberators turned sour, however. The Americans were poorly supplied, and the generosity of the French was repaid with Continental currency which proved to be almost worthless.<sup>41</sup> Alvord summarized succinctly what happened in those important years when the positive attitudes of the French toward the Americans turned to hostility.

Since Clark with his half-naked Virginians had surprised them on that July night in 1778, the people of Illinois had passed through many phases of feeling towards the Americans. They had at first rejoiced that at last the liberty which had been the subject of their dreams was to be enjoyed. There followed a few months of peace under Clark's mild rule, when the French actually stripped themselves of their property to supply the troops with necessities and to further the cause which they had adopted. Then the anxious days came when the vandalism of the troops and the doubt about the payment for their goods made them less jubilant. They received Todd with his civil government as a prophet of a new era. Todd had failed and had handed them over to the military, and Montgomery had succeeded in so thoroughly cowing them, that their power of opposition was weak.<sup>42</sup>

The following years, marked by the attempts of several Americans to wield autocratic power in Illinois, were experienced as periods of anarchy punctuated by times of tyranny. Janis, as one of the justices of the court, found himself to be one of the political leaders of Kaskaskia struggling to maintain order and to find the right path for the French in the tensions of conflicting claims of American representatives. It was in the face of increasing demands for food and the forced quartering of troops in private homes that the French resorted to official protests, threats to appeal to Virginia, and finally the actual sending of the protest of 1781 mentioned above, which bears the signatures of most of the leading men of Kaskaskia.<sup>43</sup> This series of events over the years set the stage for a radical change in French Illinois. The document of 1781 said it very clearly: "All these acts of tyranny are the causes that our best inhabitants have withdrawn to the Spanish government, and others, who were expecting your justice, prefer Spanish laws to the tyranny and despotism which they have suffered at the hand of your people."<sup>44</sup> The great departure to the west bank of the Mississippi had only just begun.

When the change of government had failed to satisfy the French and the presence of the soldiers had led to disorder and tyranny, there began a steady stream of emigration to the Spanish bank, which ended in almost depopulating some of the villages of the American Bottom. Among the emigrants were the most important and progressive of the French inhabitants.<sup>45</sup>

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The period of the greatest emigration occurred between the years 1787 and 1790, when anarchy reached its climax in Kaskaskia, and the Spaniards were holding out the greatest inducements to settlers on the western bank of the river. There has been preserved a list of the male inhabitants in Kaskaskia for the year 1790, in which the heads of families are enumerated. The number is 44. This is a decrease of over 77 per cent in the French population of the village since 1783. This list is interesting on account of the names which are missing. Almost all the men who had been leaders of the French people throughout the period of the county of Illinois were no longer residents of Kaskaskia. We look in vain for the names of Cerré, Vitale, J. Bte., and Antoine Bauvais, Corset, Lasource, the elder Charlevilles, Morin, De Monbreun, Langlois, Levasseur, Lafont, Carbonneaux. They have crossed the river to seek peace and safety under the flag of Spain.<sup>46</sup>

Carl J. Ekberg suggests that another motive for migration was the rumor that the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 would require them to release their slaves, which they conceived to mean economic ruin. While his neighbors crossed the river, Nicholas Janis held out in Kaskaskia through these years; the Janis family left in groups for Spanish territory in the late 1780s, but Nicholas did not leave until the end of the decade. Jean Baptiste and François and their families went from Prairie du Rocher to Sainte Geneviève (François first to the Saline south of the city, then into Sainte Geneviève). Antoine went to St. Charles, and the other Antoine went to the Black River, south toward Arkansas Post. It appears that Nicholas the patriarch did not move to Sainte Geneviève until 1790 or 1791.<sup>47</sup> It may be that he was waiting for the new town of Sainte Geneviève to stabilize, for another major impetus to settlement there was the total destruction of the original Sainte Geneviève on the low river bottom by flood in 1785, "L'Année des Grandes Eaux." The decision was made to relocate the town itself on the higher bluffs, and the immigrants from across the river came steadily to help settle the new Sainte Geneviève.

The personal wealth which the French lavished upon the visiting army was ultimately never repaid, and they came to consider their American

experience a very expensive lesson. Janis and his fellow enthusiasts for the American cause found after the decade of the 1780s that they lost a great deal of wealth—the goods and food they had bestowed upon the American army, as well as goods lost to the depredations of the encroaching American civilians during the anarchy. With their departure to Spanish territory they abandoned years of investment in Kaskaskia and the other villages of Illinois. Nor were they ever to recoup their losses, even when the United States government tried to indemnify them years later.

Those who had given freely of their goods for the support of the American cause were never to receive full recompense for their services. Most of the bills which were presented were finally paid by Virginia, but not until they had passed into the hands of speculators such as Bentley and Dodge, who had given to the original holders very small percentage of the face value of the claims. Later the United States attempted to compensate the French people for the losses they had suffered by granting them concessions of land; but the delays were so long, their needs so pressing, and their foresight so poor that the men to whom the grants were made sold them for a song to land-jobbers and speculators, long before the difficult land question of Illinois was finally settled a generation after the occurrence of the events for which the French and others had ruined themselves.<sup>48</sup>

The major beneficiary of this upheaval was the Spanish government. As historians have consistently made clear, the primary purpose of the Louisiana borderland in Spanish eyes was to stand as a buffer zone protecting New Spain from Anglo-American encroachment. The Spanish had been wooing the French of Illinois for decades, offering land and governmental support to their coreligionists. Alvord suggests that they had also moved to darker persuasions, such as encouraging Native American raids and offering no help to the French in their time of troubles, other than a promise of welcome on the west bank. The times conspired to grant the Spanish their wishes, and Spanish Illinois grew rapidly. The towns of St. Charles, St. Louis, and Ste. Geneviève soon became more than villages, and the French found themselves prospering as subjects of His Most Catholic Majesty.

The sparsely inhabited region to the south also benefited. Antoine Janis was not the only refugee from the Illinois who headed away from the towns toward the fur trading frontier of the southern Ozarks. Several bachelors and men with young families moved south into the area under the political control of Arkansas Post, and some of the names which appear on the census rolls of that district in the 1790s were last seen on the Kaskaskia census of 1787. Some, like Joseph Baugi (Bogy), went to the village at the

Post, but several went to the riverine locations where they would be close to the fur trade routes.

Antoine Janis was one of the latter. As noted earlier, he was not on the 1787 census in Kaskaskia, probably because he was already in the Ozarks. In 1789 Jean Dianne, a merchant at Arkansas Post, petitioned the commandant for help in collecting debts from many hunters on the Arkansas and White Rivers to whom he had extended credit. He named sixteen on the White, and Antoine Janis was one of them.<sup>49</sup> The debt was incurred at least a year earlier, perhaps even before that since hunters tended to stay away from the Post until they were able to pay their obligations (as noted in the case of the Francoeurs). He was not in hiding, however, because he was living somewhere with his growing family. They were not listed in the 1791 and 1793 censuses of Arkansas Post, but he and his family were named in the 1794 enumeration. His wife was Angelique (father's name not given), and the children were Antoine, Baptiste, François, Joseph, Philippe, Marie, and Hélène.<sup>50</sup> No agricultural produce is listed, which indicates that whatever they grew in their home garden was for their own use and not reported to the Post.

The 1796 Arkansas Post census is close to identical. Only Marie is missing, but that absence only lasted two years at most. Since Pierre LeMieux  *fils*  was later to claim an interest in Antoine Janis's land because he was an heir of Pierre (François?) who married a Janis daughter,<sup>51</sup> it seems likely that Marie was listed in the 1796 census with her new husband, François LeMieux.<sup>52</sup> François LeMieux was also listed in the 1787 census of Kaskaskia, where his father Claude had even been elected a justice at one time.<sup>53</sup> If François and Pierre were brothers, their relationship in the documents would seem reasonable. The Janis listing in the 1798 census presents a minor mystery, for seven of Antoine's children are listed again, but the names are not quite the same. In addition to Antoine and Angelique, there are Antoine, François, Joseph, Alex, Michel, Hélène, and Marie. Jean Baptiste and Philippe of four years earlier are missing, but they have been replaced by Alex and Michel. Marie has returned and is called Janis, and François LeMieux has disappeared, possibly deceased. Instead, there is now a separate listing for Pierre LeMieux, his wife Victoire, and his daughter Victoire.<sup>54</sup>

The Arkansas Post records cease at that point, but the Janis family reappears fifteen years later in deed records. In 1801 five plots on "Black River fork of White River," New Madrid district, were granted by Henri Peyroux (commandant at New Madrid) to John Latham, who rented or sold them to Etienne St. Marie  *fils* , who "inhabited and cultivated" them over the next

two years. At some point, perhaps in 1803, the Janis family acquired the grants. When the U.S. Commission was established to adjudicate land claims, the five grants were claimed as follows:

1000 arpens Antoine Janis  
750 arpens Nicholas Janis  
750 arpens François Janis  
750 arpens Jean Baptiste Janis  
750 arpens Joseph Guignolet<sup>55</sup>

Later deeds reveal that these members of the Janis family are the Arkansas Antoine and three sons, with a friend. The details of the two titles from the Deed Record Books of Lawrence County, Missouri Territory, in 1817 are very helpful in clarifying what happened.

Sept. 23, 1817

Nicholas (x) Janis (by nickname known as Antoine Janis) to William Russell of the Town and County of St. Louis, Missouri Territory, for \$150, his right in 640 A on Black River being the settlement of said Nicholas Janis; & said Janis' right in 640 A on Black River, being the settlement of Anthony Janis, dec'd, Father of Nicholas Janis; & the right of Nicholas Janis in 640 A on Black River, being the settlement of Francis Janis, dec'd., who was a brother of Nicholas Janis.<sup>56</sup>

The "640 A" stands for 640 arpents, the French and Spanish land measure which was just slightly less than an acre. The illiterate grantor was the Nicholas "Antoine" Janis referred to earlier. He affirmed that he was the claimant of one 640-arpents grant, that his deceased brother François claimed another, and that their deceased father Antoine claimed a third, all on the Black River. A deed drawn up a week later clarifies the family structure still further.

1817 October 4

Jean Baptiste (x) Janis (commonly called Jo Janis): Michael (x) Janis, Maryann (x) Janis, Meno (x) Janis, now the wife of Jerman Charboneaux; Angelique (x) Janis, now the wife of Charles Curotte; & Louise (x) Janis, now the wife of John LaBass (whose proper name is John Fayce) ["Fayas," of whom more later], who are the children and heirs of Anthony Janis, deceased; and the said John Batiste Janis and Michael Janis are brothers of Francis Janis, dec'd; and the said Louise, Angelic, Meno and Maryann Janis are sisters of said Francis Janis, dec'd. Wherefore, for \$200, the said John Batiste (x) Janis, Michael (x) Janis, Maryann (x) Janis, John (x) LaBass, Louise (x) LaBass (alias Janis), Jerman (x) Charboneaux, Meno



(x) Charboneaux (alias Janis), Charles Curotte & Angelic (x) Curotte alias Janis sell to William Russell of the Town & County of St. Louis, Missouri Territory, their interest in the following lands, to wit: 640 A on Black River, the settlement of Anthony Janis, dec'd; 640 A on Black River, the settlement of Anthony Janis, dec'd; 640 A on Black River, the settlement of Francis Janis, dec'd.<sup>57</sup>

The Spanish grants under consideration are thus the same ones granted by Peyroux in 1801, and the Janis owners are the same family listed in the Arkansas Post censuses of 1796 and 1798.

1796	1798	1801	1817
Antoine		grant	deceased
Angelique			
Antoine (Nicholas)		grant	Antoine (separate deed)
Jean Baptiste	missing	grant	"Jo"
François		grant	deceased
Joseph			missing (separate grant)
Philippe	missing		missing
Alex			missing
Michel			Michel
Hélène			=Meno? m.Jerman Charboneaux
Marie			Marie Anne [Widow LeMieux?]
Angelique	not born?		m.Charles Curotte
Louise	not born?		m.Jean LaBass <i>dit</i> Fayas

From this comparison it appears that Philippe and Alex were either dead or had left home early, before the men became involved in Spanish land grants. Joseph seems to have had no stake in his father's or brother's grants, but he had his own, a venture undertaken with his brother-in-law Jean Fayas (discussed below). Marie Anne was still unmarried, but her sisters Meno, Angelique and Louise were married to Charboneaux (who had been listed as a bachelor in the 1794, 1796, and 1798 Arkansas Post censuses), Curotte, and Fayas. A later deed, in 1818, revealed that Pierre LeMieux, who had yet another Spanish claim, was also an heir of Antoine Janis.

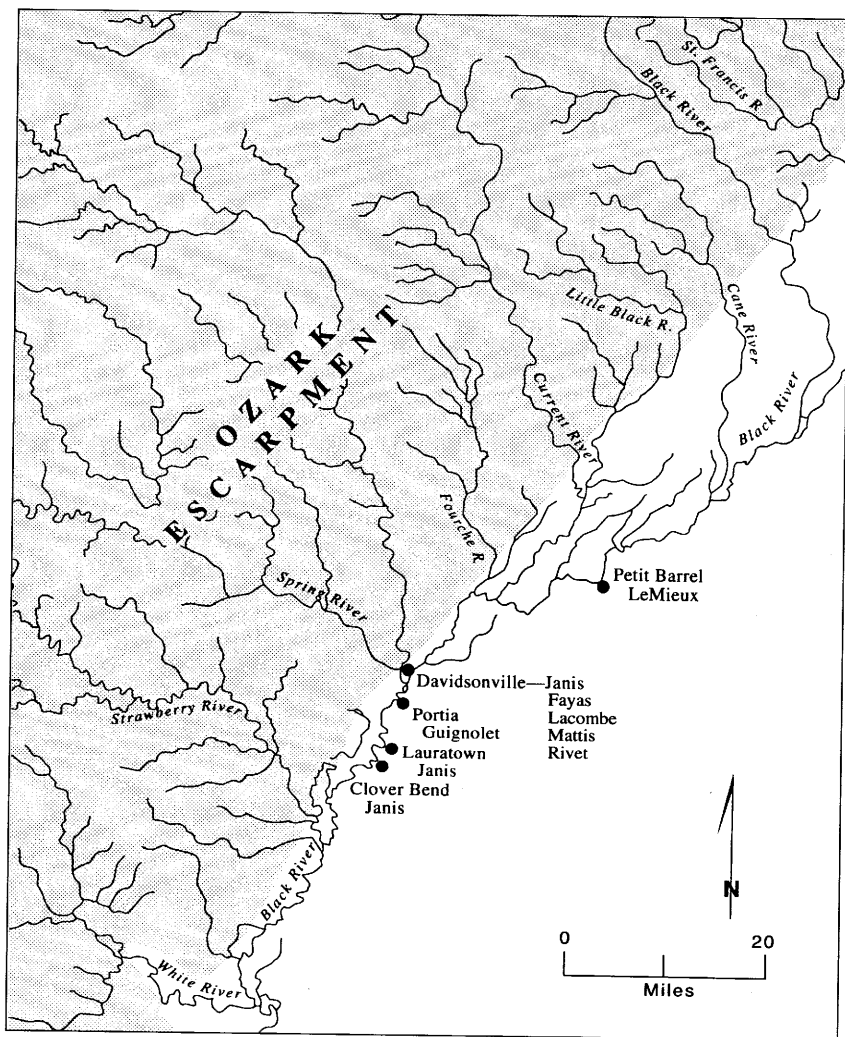
In 1808, after Spanish Louisiana became part of the United States and the Board of Land Commissioners was established to determine which of the Spanish land grants should be honored, Joseph Legrand testified before the Commission on the Janis grants. He said that Antoine's one thousand arpent grant was inhabited by Janis, "a wife and six children," and cultivated from 1801 until the present, and that about thirty arpents were in cultivation in 1808. He affirmed that Nicolas and François only had five or six

arpents currently in cultivation, Jean Baptiste had eight or nine, and Joseph Guignolet, who had lived there in 1803 with a wife and child, had fifteen or sixteen in cultivation. The Board, however, refused to confirm the five claims at that sitting.<sup>58</sup> In the ten years after that early hearing the claimants made many sales of their grants, on the chance that they would ultimately be approved. Jean Baptiste sold his claim in 1814.<sup>59</sup> In a September 1816 deed Antoine Janis sold what he asserted was his "only claim" on the Black River.<sup>60</sup> A year later he and his son François were both dead of unknown causes, for Nicholas and his siblings began selling their interest in the rights to their grants.<sup>61</sup> In 1818 the U.S. indemnification commission, tasked with trying to weed out the fraudulent land claims from the legitimate in the wake of the New Madrid earthquake of 1811–12, heard testimony that the plots owned by Antoine, François, and Nicholas had been "materially injured by the earthquakes," an indication that New Madrid validation was also being sought.<sup>62</sup>

Ultimately, only the grant of Jean Baptiste appears to have been approved. That one is known to have been located at Lauratown on the Black River, and it was plotted as a Spanish grant on the U.S. survey maps. It is likely that the others, those of Antoine, Nicholas, and François, were nearby, but the documentary descriptions do not permit identification of the locations.

Even their brother Michel had a grant, probably close at hand, for he, too, sold his rights in 1820.<sup>63</sup> So, too, did Meno's husband, Jerman (Germain?) Charboneaux.<sup>64</sup> Angélique Janis's husband, Charles Curotte, had a grant on which they presumably were living in the last days of the Spanish period.<sup>65</sup> Antoine's grandson Pierre LeMieux also had a grant, and its location is known, since it was confirmed; his land was on Black River "about fifteen miles above the mouth" of Current River, a place called by the French "Petit Barrel" and by the Americans "Peach Orchard."<sup>66</sup> McLeod helpfully noted that the location is near the present town of Peach Orchard in Clay County.<sup>67</sup> Claiming he had settled on it in 1800, LeMieux sold it in 1816 for only \$40, which either indicates that he had little hope of seeing it confirmed or that he had long since abandoned it for other locations. The latter is supported, in fact, by McLeod's assertion of local tradition that LeMieux was the head of the French settlement at Clover Bend.<sup>68</sup> If true, then he had left his own grant to reside nearer the rest of the Janis family. It may not be too speculative to suggest that LeMieux and his family moved into a home left empty by the death of Antoine and François Janis in 1816, thus strengthening the Janis enclave.

Another member of the enclave was Joseph Guignolet, the possessor of



Ozark Escarpment. Known French locations on the Black River.

the other grant in the Janis list. Like Antoine Janis, he was on the Arkansas Post censuses of 1794–98 as a bachelor, but Joseph Legrand noted that he lived on his grant on the Black with a wife and child in 1803.<sup>69</sup> The location of the grant is known to be at Portia, just above Lauratown.<sup>70</sup> Guignolet was still living there in 1816, when he sold the rights to all of the grant except “the place and preemption right where said Joseph now lives.”<sup>71</sup> Two years later, in 1818, he was ill and went to live with the Charboneaux family; when

he died he left his last property, sixteen head of cattle and three horses, to Michel Janis, Meno Charboneaux, and Marie Anne Janis.<sup>72</sup> His will was witnessed by Louis Lariver and Alexander Brident, both of whom also had land grants nearby. Lariver's claim was on the White, and he sold it in 1820.<sup>73</sup> Brident's claim on the White was validated by the Board of Land Commissioners in 1811.<sup>74</sup>

Antoine Janis's other son, Joseph, had embarked on another land venture, possibly earlier than the rest, since he was not even listed on the 1798 census of Arkansas Post. He apparently established close relations with four other men (hunters like himself), one of them his brother-in-law Jean Fayas, and they settled adjacent to each other on the west bank of the Black just above the junction with the Spring River. From the descriptions, the plots ran from the river bank straight back, side by side. The owners were Joseph Janis, Jean Fayas, Cola LaCombe, Jérôme Matis, and Augustine Rivet.<sup>75</sup>

Fayas (Jean LaBass *dit* Fayas) had served in the Arkansas Post militia in 1780 and was one of the delinquent hunters on the White in 1789. In 1793 the census listed him and three children, but he and his son Jean were alone listed in 1794–98 (unless "Madelena Thyase" in Charles Refeld's home in 1794 was one of the missing children).<sup>76</sup> In 1812 his grant on the Black was confirmed by the board.<sup>77</sup> When the Janis grants were being sold in 1818, he (or his son Jean) was shown as the husband of Louise Janis. This is somewhat confusing because only two years later two children of Jean Fayas and *Hélène* Janis were baptized.<sup>78</sup> The godfather of the children, also named Jean and *Hélène*, was Germain Charboneaux. Either two generations of Fayas men married Janis sisters, or there is another double-name problem.

Cola (diminutive for Nicholas) LaCombe was from Sainte Geneviève, where his father (?) Louis LaCombe was married in 1773 and bought a house in 1782.<sup>79</sup> Louis and Nicholas were granted New Bourbon lots in 1797, and two of Nicholas's children died there in 1799 and 1801.<sup>80</sup> Those deaths may have been the motivation to go south, for he next appears in the records in connection with the Black River land grant.

Jérôme Matis received a lot in New Bourbon in 1797, where he was living in 1801 when he and Cola LaCombe signed a petition by the inhabitants requesting that the Peorias be ordered to settle at least three miles distant from the village.<sup>81</sup> With seven thousand shingles delivered to the grantor in Sainte Geneviève, Matis bought another piece of land in New Bourbon in 1803, which makes it likely that he had not personally settled on the claim on the Black during the legal period set by Land Commission rules.<sup>82</sup>

Augustine Rivet was in the Arkansas area much earlier, for he was listed as a bachelor hunter in the censuses of 1794 and 1796.<sup>83</sup> Nothing more is known about him until he shows up in the records as the owner of the Black River claim with the others—Janis, Fayas, LaCombe, and Matis.

Their five adjacent plots were bought by de Mun and Company in 1815 as a way of creating a county seat for the newly created Lawrence County, Missouri Territory.<sup>84</sup> The purchase of the five grants, even unconfirmed, probably seemed safer than trying to wait for virgin land to be surveyed, and Lawrence County needed a county seat immediately. Moreover, the site just above the junction of the Spring and the Black must have seemed a likely site, liable to grow rapidly with the river as a highway. Thus came into existence the Anglo-American town of Davidsonville, destined to die after only fifteen years of existence.<sup>85</sup>

This aggregation of Spanish grants cannot be precisely plotted, for all of the locations, other than that they were on the White and Black Rivers, are not known (see map). Most of them were never finally confirmed by the United States, even after decades of litigation, so their very existence is now attested only in the scattered relics of sales of the “rights” to land speculators. It is only when they are pulled together in this sort of historical perspective that the size of the French occupation of the southeastern Ozarks can be appreciated. The grants which have been alluded to in the preceding pages, all connected with the Janis family in one way or another, number seventeen, all presumed to have been on the Black River. But there were yet others in North Arkansas. There was Jean Baptiste Graver, for example, who improved a grant on the Black beginning in the 1790s (he was listed in the Arkansas Post census of 1798 as “Crever”).<sup>86</sup> Pierre Lefevre had a grant on the Cache River confirmed in 1812, which places yet another French settler in the area.<sup>87</sup> There were at least four Spanish grants on the White River in the thirty miles above the mouth of the Black, and the original grantees may have been part of the French enclave.

Antoine Bauvais was the focus of yet another group of the Kaskaskia/Sainte Geneviève French settlers. Thanks to a late (1832) registration of his Spanish grant by Richard Searcy, the location of Bauvais’s settlement is identifiable. The U.S. survey had apparently ignored the grant boundaries, so Searcy translated it into a land call, locating it in Section 30 of T5N R8E, on the Mississippi River a little north of Memphis.<sup>88</sup> The exact relation of the Arkansas Antoine Bauvais to the family in Sainte Geneviève is not known, but it is probable that Antoine, born in 1732, was a son of the patriarch, Jean Baptiste St. Gem Bauvais of Kaskaskia and Sainte Geneviève,

“who became the richest man in the Illinois country.”<sup>89</sup> Like Nicholas Janis, he had been there since the early days (in his case, before 1725) and had reared a large family.<sup>90</sup> His seven children, like Janis’s, married into the other pioneer families of the Illinois. Marriage even brought an official link between the Janis and Bauvais families, for in 1776 his son Vital St. Gem Bauvais married Félicité Janis. He himself died in 1767, leaving a complex estate which took a decade to settle.<sup>91</sup> His children, especially Jean Baptiste and Vital, became leaders in the new Sainte Geneviève.

Antoine Bauvais appeared in the Arkansas records in 1789, when he signed a petition against the Osage.<sup>92</sup> In the 1791 and 1793 censuses he was listed along with his wife, Charlotte Levasseur, six children, and six slaves. He died the next year at the age of sixty-two, and the 1794 and 1796 censuses listed the Widow Bauvais and her family, who were continuing their substantial farming.<sup>93</sup> The family was missing from the 1798 census. Antoine Bauvais was also connected with others who were part of the Arkansas Post sphere. His wife Charlotte’s father, Estanislas Levasseur (an “artisan”), and Levasseur’s sons François and Etienne (and his wife Marie Larose) were all listed in the Arkansas Post records.<sup>94</sup> They, too, were from Kaskaskia. Antoine’s sister (?) Marie was the wife of Jean Baptiste Desruisseaux, who signed the Osage petition in 1789, but died before the 1791 census, leaving his wife and three children to continue their farming.<sup>95</sup> Joseph Baugi, from Kaskaskia, was an important member of the Arkansas Post community, becoming “*Don José Bougi*” by the 1796 census. His wife was Marie du Placy (Plasy, Placide), whose brothers (?) Jean Baptiste, Joseph, and Louis were listed as hunters in Arkansas through the 1790s.<sup>96</sup> In 1805 in Sainte Geneviève, Joseph Bogy  *fils*  married Marie St. Gem Bauvais, daughter of Vital Bauvais and Félicité Janis, thus bringing together the Baugis, the Bauvais, and the Janis.<sup>97</sup>

There is no evidence that all these families were living close together in Spanish Arkansas, but there is a possibility that the Antoine Bauvais connections constituted another enclave similar to that of Antoine Janis, possibly on the Mississippi River. It is clear that they all were in the Arkansas area through the 1790s, and they may have continued there into the 1820s.

As a whole, all of these families—claiming at least twenty-four sites in Arkansas between the Post and Sainte Geneviève—produced a pattern of settlement which should probably be considered an immigration movement. Many of them were listed in the Kaskaskia census of 1787, and they thus were subject to the same motivations to leave American Illinois that were discussed above—anarchy, political despotism, economic losses, and American immigration pressure. Instead of going with their larger families

to St. Charles, St. Louis, or Ste. Geneviève, however, this group went south into the sparsely settled region between the Missouri towns and Arkansas Post. They maintained their ties, to be sure, for their family connections lay in the towns of Spanish Illinois, but they began what amounts to a new colonization. Their governmental center was Arkansas Post, but their cultural connections were in Ste. Geneviève. The Janis enclave on the Black River was an impressive beginning, considering at least seventeen land grants (or settlements) there. It is instructive to recall that venerable Arkansas Post in 1749 had only seven households, and that the full census for the Arkansas district in 1796 listed only fifty-seven households—and the Kaskaskia group constituted at least ten of them.<sup>98</sup>

This new population center was doomed not to come to fruition. The reason for it, of course, was the passage of the vast region of Louisiana to the United States, and the particular mechanism which brought the “Illinark” to an end was the U.S. Land Commission. The problem was getting a colonial era settlement legitimated in the American system of land ownership. For the French living on their land, the difficulty lay primarily in the fact that their titles were incomplete. As Arnold and others have made clear, there were no grants to individuals during the French dominion,<sup>99</sup> and the full process of receiving a clear title under the Spanish was daunting. For people who lived far from the governmental centers, it seemed too difficult and expensive to bother with, especially in the sparsely settled areas. In fact, Arnold says, “There was not a single regular Spanish land title ever made out in the entire state of Arkansas.”<sup>100</sup>

As long as the settlers remained under the Spanish flag, possession and improvement of the land was sufficient title, but the transition to U.S. territorial status in the opening decades of the nineteenth century forced the regularization of land titles. The Board of Land Commissioners found themselves having to determine “legitimacy” for prior land ownership. Their task was complicated by land fraud—and the belated attempts of some of the Spanish commandants to give settlers legal grants before the Americans took over. The board’s response was to set strict standards which had to be met in order to show the legitimacy of a claim, including proof that the claimants were actually living on the land prior to December 1803, or even earlier, and that they were farming significant acreage. Both the standards and the process of providing proof were difficult for many of the French, and they saw little chance of success. Moreover, there may have been some anti-Gallic bias involved, for the board refused to confirm the joint ownership of the commons in the French towns, and thus voted against the European settlement pattern itself.<sup>101</sup> It is also possible that some

of the grants were part of a French pattern of settlement seen in other places, such as the Mobile region, in which distant agricultural plots were held for summer residence, with the family in the town house for the remainder of the year.<sup>102</sup>

This process of the transition of land grants to U.S. deeds has been discussed in detail elsewhere and will not be resurveyed here.<sup>103</sup> It is enough to point to what the deed records of Lawrence County show—that the French settlers considered it much more likely that they could realize some profit out of their imperfect land titles by selling their claims (and thus the land itself, in the short run) to Anglo-American speculators, many of whom were lawyers who felt comfortable with the litigation which would be necessary to secure firm U.S. ownership. As it turned out, very few of the Spanish land grants were ultimately confirmed, and the deed records alone remain to mark the French presence in Northeast Arkansas in the colonial period.

What happened to the French colonial settlers? The deaths of the older generations came early in the nineteenth century. In Sainte Geneviève the patriarch Nicholas Janis died in 1808,<sup>104</sup> Vital Bauvais died in 1816,<sup>105</sup> the younger Jean Baptiste Janis died in 1830 and the elder in 1836.<sup>106</sup> François Janis preceded his brother in 1832,<sup>107</sup> and octogenarian Jean Baptiste St. Gem Bauvais died in 1833.<sup>108</sup> As mentioned above, in Arkansas Antoine Janis died in 1816. The family did not all vanish from Arkansas, however, at least not immediately. In 1825 the Lawrence County Circuit Court appointed a commission to mark a road from “Janis mill” on Janis Creek to the county seat at Davidsonville.<sup>109</sup>

Pierre LeMieux *père* died in 1818,<sup>110</sup> and the younger Pierre was still in Lawrence County in 1829 when he, his wife, three sons and a daughter were listed in the Sheriff's Census.<sup>111</sup> He was the administrator in 1834 when his brother (or son) Antoine died.<sup>112</sup> He himself died in 1840, at Clover Bend, suggesting a continuing French community for at least another two decades.<sup>113</sup>

John LaBass (Jean Fayas) revealed his accommodation to the new regime in an 1816 deed granting a small piece of land to a ferry owner across the Spring River “opposite the place where I now live.”<sup>114</sup> He had successfully sold his plot on the Black (Davidsonville) and was living nearby on another plot, adapting to the U.S. system. The elder Jean LaBass died in 1826, and his son Jean was one of the administrators.<sup>115</sup> The only member of the family listed in the Sheriff's Census of 1829 was “Mary LaBasq” and her family.<sup>116</sup> The continuation of the LaBass name in the area suggests that at least some of Jean's descendants became part of the new order and stayed there. The others, having realized whatever profit



they could from their years on the Black, probably moved to Ste. Geneviève or St. Louis, many of them—those born in Arkansas—thereby finding themselves in the context of a French community for the first time.

Thus ended a barely discerned immigration of the French from the Illinois into the area between Spanish Illinois and Arkansas Post, inland from the Mississippi River. Given several generations more to develop and complete the evolution of villages, the 1790s French might well have created another urban focus for settlement on the Black River and adjacent areas, but that time was not granted. The French presence in Northeast Arkansas vanished, leaving some names on the land and some deeds in the records, but no ongoing contribution to life and culture. Even so, it is provocative to consider that the southeastern edge of the Ozarks was once almost “Illinark.”

23. Ibid., 404.
24. Ibid., 404-6.
25. Ibid., 415.
26. Samuel D. Dickinson, "Historic Tribes of the Ouachita Drainage System in Arkansas," *The Arkansas Archeologist* 21 (1980): 1-11.
27. Joutel, "Relation," 3:416-19.
28. Griffith, *The Hasinai Indians*, 58-68; Bolton, *The Hasinai*, 70-91. The bulk of information on Caddo social and political organization comes from European descriptions of the Hasinai Indians; however, many anthropologists believe that Hasinai social and political forms are at least generally approximated among other Caddoan groups; see for example Don G. Wyckoff and Timothy G. Baugh, "Early Historic Hasinai Elites: A Model for the Material Culture of Governing Elites," *Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology* 5 (1980): 225-88.
29. "Fray Francisco Casañas de Jesus Maria to the Viceroy of Mexico," translated in Mattie Austin Hatcher, "Descriptions of the Tejas or Asinai Indians, 1691-1722," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 30 (January 1927), 206-18.
30. Joutel, "Relation," 3:444-46.
31. In his article "Who were the Ani-Kutani? An Excursion into Cherokee Historical Thought," *Ethnohistory* 31 (Fall 1984), 255-63, Raymond D. Fogelson defines epitomizing events as occurrences, either legendary or real, that encapsulate and dramatize some larger cultural process affecting a group of people. See also Fogelson, "The Ethnohistory of Events and Nonevents," *Ethnohistory* 36 (Spring 1989), 133-47.

#### ALMOST "ILLINARK": THE FRENCH PRESENCE IN NORTHEAST ARKANSAS

1. Stanley Faye, "The Arkansas Post of Louisiana: French Domination," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 26 (July 1943): 633-721; Idem, "The Arkansas Post of Louisiana, Spanish Domination," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 27 (July 1944) 1944; González López-Briones, M. Carmen, "Spain in the Mississippi Valley: Spanish Arkansas, 1762-1804," (Ph.D. diss., Purdue University, n.d.); Morris S. Arnold, *Unequal Laws Unto a Savage Race: European Legal Traditions in Arkansas, 1686-1836* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1985); Idem, *Colonial Arkansas, 1686-1804* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1991).
2. Arnold, *Colonial Arkansas*, 138.
3. *Dit* names were nicknames which had more official status than among English speakers and often appeared in legal documents. Thus the records speak of Jean LaBass, Fayas, Jean Fayas, and Jean LaBass *dit* Fayas—all presumably the same person.
4. Morris S. Arnold and Dorothy James Core, *Arkansas Colonials 1686-1804* (Gillett, Arkansas: The Grand Prairie Historical Society, 1986), 5; Arnold, *Colonial Arkansas*, 129, 137.
5. Arnold, *Colonial Arkansas*, 120, 186.
6. Arnold and Core, *Arkansas Colonials*, 20.
7. Arnold, *Unequal Laws*, 38.
8. Arnold and Core, *Arkansas Colonials*, 9.
9. Ibid., 18.
10. González, "Spain in the Mississippi Valley," 76.
11. Arnold, *Unequal Laws*, 81; Arnold, *Colonial Arkansas*, 158. Arnold cites Demasellière to General, 16 June 1770, Archivo General de Indias, Papeles Procedentes de Cuba, *legajos* 107 (hereafter AGI, PC, *leg.*); Brothers Francoeur to Demasellière, 17 June 1770, AGI, PC, *leg.* 107.
12. Arnold, *Colonial Arkansas*, 147.

13. Arnold, *Unequal Laws*, 81.
14. Mrs. Ida M. Schaaf, "Sainte Genevieve Marriages, Baptisms and Burials . . . 1759-1839," Typescript, St. Louis, 23, 41, 54.
15. Sainte Geneviève Baptismal Record B, p. 71, Sainte Geneviève Archives, Western Historical Manuscripts, University of Missouri Library, Columbia, Missouri (hereafter cited as WHM).
16. *Ibid.*, 156.
17. Dorothy Jones Core, ed. *Abstract of Catholic Register of Arkansas (1764-1858)* (Dewitt, Arkansas: Grand Prairie Historical Society, 1976), 20.
18. Arnold and Core, *Arkansas Colonials*, 25, 27, 29.
19. *Ibid.*, 58, 71.
20. *Ibid.*, 87.
21. *Ibid.*, 41.
22. *Ibid.*, 58, 72, 86.
23. W. E. McLeod, "Le Mieux and Janis Families," *Lawrence County Historical Quarterly* 1 (fall 1978): 23-24.
24. Carl J. Ekberg, *Colonial Sainte Genevieve: An Adventure on the Mississippi Frontier* (Gerald, Mo.: 1985), 227-29; WHM: 1805, U.S. WPA Historical Records Survey, Collection #3551, Folder 1851; 1811, Hunt's Minutes of Board of Land Commissioners 5, 437; 1822, U.S. WPA Historical Records Survey, Collection #3551, Folders 18084f.
25. C. W. Alvord, ed., *Kaskaskia Records 1778-1790* Illinois Historical Collections 5 (1909): 239ff.
26. *Ibid.*, 414-20.
27. Schaaf, "Sainte Genevieve," 22.
28. Sainte Geneviève Archives, C 3636, Folder 374, WHM; Rob Beckerman, comp., *Sainte Geneviève County Tombstone Inscriptions*, 3 vols., (WHM, 1982, mimeograph).
29. McLeod, "Le Mieux and Janis Families," 24.
30. Marion Stark Craig cites Lawrence County Deed Book B, pp. 20-21 in Marion Stark Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Deed Record "B," 1817-1825* (Regional Studies Center, Lyon College, Batesville, Ark., typescript), 3.
31. Arnold and Core, *Arkansas Colonials*, 58, 72, 86.
32. Lucille Basler, *Pioneers of Old Sainte Genevieve* (Ste. Geneviève, Missouri, 1983, mimeograph), 40.
33. L'Abbé Cyprien Tanguay, *Dictionnaire Genealogique des Familles Canadiennes*, 7 vols. (Montreal: E. Senecal, 1871-90), 4:580. I am not able to resolve the contradiction.
34. Natalia Maree Belting, *Kaskaskia Under the French Regime* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1948), 63, 83.
35. Ekberg, *Colonial Sainte Genevieve*, 34f.
36. C. W. Alvord, ed. *Cahokia Records, 1778-1790*, Illinois Historical Collection 2 (1907): xx.
37. Cover, Illinois State Historical Society *Journal* 17 (1924): 221.
38. This account of the beginning of the American period in Illinois is based largely upon Alvord's collection of French documents, and especially upon his detailed essay which introduces the Cahokia volume. See Alvord, *Cahokia Records*, and Alvord, *Kaskaskia Records*.
39. Alvord, *Kaskaskia Records*, 18.
40. *Ibid.*, 86.
41. Alvord, *Cahokia Records*, lxix-lxx.
42. *Ibid.*, ciii-civ.
43. Alvord, *Kaskaskia Records*, 142, 209, 213, 284-90, 340-44.

44. *Ibid.*, 239ff.
45. Alvord, *Cahokia Records*, lxxxiii.
46. *Ibid.*, cxliv.
47. It is difficult to tell when anyone actually made the move, since most of these men had been transacting business and owning land in the western town for years, and the records reflect that business presence.
48. Alvord, *Cahokia Records*, cxxi. Sadly, even Jean Baptiste Janis's attempt to gain a pension for his heroism at the capture of Vincennes turned out badly. He apparently applied in the twilight of his life, and he must have done it incorrectly—he probably just wrote a letter. In 1833 he received from the government agent a copy of the printed Revolutionary War pension rules with a note saying that if Janis wished to obtain a pension, he would have to submit a request by the rules. Three years later Janis was dead at age 87, and the note was left among his effects. Sainte Geneviève Archives, C 3636, Folder 401, WHM. See also the Lyman Draper Collection, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison: 18J92-93.
49. Arnold and Core, *Arkansas Colonials*, 41.
50. *Ibid.*, 58. The names are given in Spanish, but in this paper I have opted to standardize all the listings of French-speakers in French orthography. While there is the danger of error in retranslating back into French forms, the gain in clarity makes it a reasonable risk.
51. Craig cites Lawrence County Deed Book B, pp. 25-26 in *Lawrence County, Arkansas Deed Record "B,"* 3.
52. Arnold and Core, *Arkansas Colonials*, 72.
53. Alvord, *Kaskaskia Records*, 116, 414-20, 440.
54. Arnold and Core, *Arkansas Colonials*, 86.
55. Record Group 951, First Board of Land Commissioners, 1805-12, Register of Opinions of Commissioners, 1809-12, Box 8, folder 4, New Madrid District, Louisiana, Missouri Archives, Jefferson City.
56. Craig cites Lawrence County Deed Book B, pp. 20-21 in Craig, *Lawrence County Deed Record Book*, 3.
57. Craig cites Lawrence County Deed Book B, pp. 22-24 in Craig, *Lawrence County Deed Record Book*, 3. The name "Charboneaux" is alternatively spelled in documents as "Charboneaux" and "Carbonneaux." For clarity, I have opted for the use of "Charboneaux" in my text.
58. Board of Land Commissioners, Minutes 5: 84ff, Missouri Archives, Jefferson City.
59. Craig cites Lawrence County Deed Book A: pp. 26-28 in Marion Stark Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Deed Record "A," 1815-1817* (Regional Studies Center, Lyon College, Batesville, Ark, typescript), 14.
60. Craig, *Lawrence County, Deed Record "A,"* 15.
61. Craig, *Lawrence County Deed Record*, 2-3.
62. New Madrid Land Commission, "Testimony," p. 77, Missouri Archives, Jefferson City.
63. Craig cites Lawrence County Deed Book B, pp. 186f in Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Deed Record "B,"* 18. Michel's brother-in-law "Piere LeMaux" was a witness.
64. Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Deed Record "B,"* 21.
65. The original deed is in the Richard Searcy Collection owned by Robert Stroud, with a copy in the Regional Studies Center, Lyon College, Batesville, Ark.
66. Craig cites Lawrence County Deed Book A, 24-25 in Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Deed Record "A,"* 14.
67. McLeod, "Le Mieux and Janis Families."
68. *Ibid.*, 11.

69. Arnold and Core, *Arkansas Colonials*, 61, 72, 83; Board of Land Commissioners, Minutes 5: 84ff, Missouri Archives, Jefferson City.
70. McLeod, "Le Mieux and Janis Families," 10.
71. Craig cites Lawrence County Deed Book A, pp. 31–34 in Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Deed Record Book "A,"* 15f.
72. Craig cites Lawrence County Will Book 1817–34, pp. 23–24 in Marion Stark Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Will Book 1817–1834* (Regional Study Center, Lyon College, Batesville, Ark., typescript), 8.
73. Craig cites Lawrence County Deed Book B, p. 219f in Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Deed Record Book "B,"* 21. The original deed is in the Richard Searcy Collection, Regional Studies Center, Lyon College, Batesville, Ark.
74. Certificate #1160, in *Early Settlers of Missouri As Taken from Land Claims in the Missouri Territory*, Walter Lowrie, ed. American State Papers, Public Lands (Reprinted by Southern Historical Press, 1986), 2:598.
75. Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Deed Record Book "A,"* 10–14.
76. Arnold and Core, *Arkansas Colonials*, 25, 41, 49, 55, 57, 71, 82.
77. Certificate #1164, Lowrie, *Early Settlers of Missouri*, 2:598.
78. Core, *Abstract of Catholic Register of Arkansas*, 47.
79. Sainte Geneviève Marriage Record A, p. 164; Deed #116, Collection C 2075), Sainte Geneviève Archives, WHM.
80. Sainte Geneviève Archives, C 3636 Folder 89, WHM; Schaaf, "Sainte Geneviève Marriages," 16, 17.
81. Indians #89, Sainte Geneviève Archives, Collection C 2075, WHM.
82. *Ibid.*, Deed #82.
83. Arnold and Core, *Arkansas Colonials*, 62, 84.
84. Craig cites Lawrence County Deed Book A, pp. 38–40 in Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Deed Record Book "A,"* 18.
85. For studies of Davidsonville, see Clyde D. Dollar, *An Archeological Assessment of Historic Davidsonville, Arkansas*, Arkansas Archeological Survey Research Report No. 17 (Fayetteville, 1977); Leslie C. Stewart-Abernathy, *The Seat of Justice: 1815–1830* (Fayetteville: Arkansas Archeological Survey Research Report No. 21, 1980); and George E. Lankford, "Town Making in the Southeastern Ozarks," *Independence County Chronicle* 31 (October 1989, January 1990), 1–19.
86. Arnold and Core, *Arkansas Colonials*, 83; Craig cites Lawrence County Deed Book B, pp. 197–99 in Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Deed Record Book "B,"* 19.
87. Certificate #1161, Lowrie, *Early Settlers of Missouri*, 2:598.
88. Searcy Collection, Regional Studies Center, Lyon College.
89. Belting, *Kaskaskia Under the French Regime*, 60. The name "St. Gem" is also spelled "St. Gemme" in the documents; I have chosen to use "St. Gem" in my text.
90. Goodspeed Publishing Company, *History of Southeast Missouri* (Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1888), 243f.
91. Ste. Geneviève Archives, Collection C 3636, Folders 117–18, WHM.
92. Arnold and Core, *Arkansas Colonials*, 40.
93. *Ibid.*, 42, 47, 53, 65; Core, *Abstract of the Catholic Register of Arkansas*, 28.
94. Arnold and Core, *Arkansas Colonials*, 44, 48, 58, 67, 80.
95. *Ibid.*, 40, 42, 47, 53, 65, 77.
96. *Ibid.*, 39, 41, 42, 47, 54, 66, 77, 83.
97. Sainte Geneviève District, Land Record Book B: 116, Collection 2482, Entry 33, pp. 48–51, WHM.

98. Arnold and Core, *Arkansas Colonialists*, 8–10, 65–76.
99. Arnold points out that this is not quite correct: “Actually, there was, of course, the huge grant to Law, which, believe it or not, Law’s descendants pressed, though unsuccessfully, in the Superior Court of the Arkansas Territory. We also know that as far back as the late seventeenth century (1689?), Tonty made a grant to Jacques Cardinal at Arkansas Post (see Arnold, *Colonial Arkansas*, 27). It is altogether possible that there were some land grants at the various (three) incarnations of the Post during the French period.” (Morris S. Arnold: personal communication, 1993.)
100. Arnold, *Colonial Arkansas*, 166; see 163–68 for a detailed discussion of the process.
101. Lowrie, *Early Settlers of Missouri*, 549, for St. Louis and St. Charles.
102. For examples of French settlement strategies around Mobile, see George E. Lankford, *A Documentary Study of Native American Life in the Lower Tombigbee Valley*, vol. 2 of the *Final Report of the Black Warrior-Tombigbee Project*, ed., Eugene M. Wilson (Mobile: University of South Alabama, for the U.S. Corps of Engineers, 1983, mimeograph).
103. See, for example, C. Richard Arena, “Land Settlement Practices in Spanish Louisiana,” in *The Spanish in the Mississippi Valley, 1762–1804*, ed., John F. McDermott (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974): 51–60; Ada Paris Klein, “Ownership of the Land Under France, Spain, and the United States,” *Missouri Historical Review* 44 (1949): 274–94; Eugene Morrow Violette, “Spanish Land Claims in Missouri,” in *Washington University Studies No. 8* (St. Louis: Washington University, 1921): 167–200.
104. Ste. Geneviève Archives, C 3636, folder 299, WHM.
105. Schaaf, “Sainte Geneviève Marriages,” 29.
106. *Ibid.*, 39, 43.
107. *Ibid.*, 40.
108. Beckerman, *Sainte Geneviève County Tombstone Inscriptions*.
109. Marion Stark Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Will Book, 1834–1858* (typescript, 1992), 43.
110. Craig cites Lawrence County Will Book 1817–1834, p. 9 in Marion Stark Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Will Book 1817–1834* (Regional Studies Center, Lyon College, Batesville, Ark., typescript, 1991), 1.
111. Marion Stark Craig, “1829 Sheriff’s Census (Lawrence County, Arkansas Territory),” (Regional Studies Center, Lyon College, Batesville, Ark., n.d., typescript).
112. Craig cites Lawrence County Will Book 1817–34, pp. 231–32 in Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Will Book 1817–1834*, 39.
113. McLeod, “Le Mieux and Janis Families.”
114. Craig cites Lawrence County Deed Book A, pp. 35f in Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Deed Record “A,” 1815–1817*, 16.
115. Craig, *Lawrence County, Arkansas: Will Book 1834–1858*, 21.
116. Craig, “1829 Sheriff’s Census,” n.d.

## BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE: THE INDIAN TRADE IN SPANISH ARKANSAS

1. Among Arkansas Post’s other functions were assisting the convoys and boats that moved back and forth on the Mississippi, helping to safeguard the region, and providing products from hunting. M. Carmen González López-Briones, “Spain in the Mississippi Valley: Spanish Arkansas, 1762–1804,” (Ph.D. diss.: Purdue University, 1983), 30.
2. Literature on colonial Arkansas is not extensive. For general works, see Morris S. Arnold, *Colonial Arkansas, 1684–1804: A Social and Cultural History* (Fayetteville: University of