



**THE OHIO VALLEY-GREAT LAKES ETHNOHISTORY ARCHIVES: THE MIAMI COLLECTION**

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## Charles Juchereau De St. Denys

(Due to length divided here into three parts)

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spent.[\(see fn. 31\)](#) He found it necessary to borrow huge sums for the project. Antoine Pascaud advanced the sum of 25,000 livres.[\(see fn. 32\)](#) Juchereau also drew heavily upon the fortune of his sister, Charlotte Françoise La Forest, who had inherited a considerable fortune from her first husband Françoise Pachot, a Quebec merchant.[\(see fn. 33\)](#) Though there are no figures on the sums secured from this source, it is known that Madame La Forest suffered heavy losses when Juchereau's project collapsed. This was evidenced by numerous suits brought against her for recovery.[\(see fn. 34\)](#)

Having procured the necessary funds Juchereau turned next to the task of organizing his project. He drew up a series of separate agreements with a number of voyageurs from Montreal. Of these agreements, all made between April 12 and May 13, 1702, eleven have been preserved.[\(see fn. 35\)](#) The contract with Charles Deno Detaillis is typical of the conditions agreed upon. Detaillis became a member of the company of twenty-six men who were to go to the Ohio. He promised to obey Juchereau in all matters and to work diligently. Juchereau on his part agreed to give Detaillis a proportional share of a third of the profits of the company during the first three years,[\(see fn. 36\)](#) his board and lodging as well as transportation, and to pay his wife and children 200 livres annually in pension during Detaillis' absence. In case of the death of Detaillis, his share of the profits were to go to his heirs. Detaillis agreed to take only personal effects with him and to engage in no trade. Juchereau was to furnish all the goods necessary for the voyage and the establishment, the same to be

<sup>31</sup>Memoir of Juchereau to the countess de St. Pierre, Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements*, V, 367-68.

<sup>32</sup>Memorial of M. Pascaud, 1706, Arch. Nat., Col., C<sup>11</sup>A, 25:290. At this time Pascaud says he did not hope to recover over 3,000 livres of this sum. P.-G. Roy thinks Juchereau was a wealthy man. *La Famille Juchereau Duchesnay*, 103.

<sup>33</sup>Pachot had married Charlotte Juchereau in 1680. *Ill. Hist. Coll.*, XXIII, 1934, p. 177, n. After Pachot's death in 1698 Charlotte Juchereau was married to François Dauphin de la Forest, the Illinois trader. Arch. Nat., Col., C<sup>13</sup>C, 3:152. La Forest was deeply indebted to the Pachots.

<sup>34</sup>See various actions in 1705 and 1706 in *Jugements et Délibérations*, IV, 1888.

<sup>35</sup>These agreements were signed with Charles Deno Detaillis, Nicholas La Berge, Paul Teyssier, François Legardeur de Mutrécy, Nicholas Le Moyne (Sieur de Leau), Alexis Le Gay, Gabriel Philippe (Sieur de Mantéville), Pierre Cardinal, Paul Groust, and François Marie Bouat. Little is known concerning these men.

<sup>36</sup>Juchereau himself was to receive two-thirds of the profits. The other third was to be divided equally among the other twenty-five men.

purchased at current Canadian prices. Of the others, the man who was to serve as smith was to enjoy half the profits of his forge. All properties were to remain in Juchereau's possession.[\(see fn. 37\)](#)

Before setting out for the Ohio, however, Juchereau found himself in serious difficulties. The Company of Canada had succeeded in getting the governor and intendant to oppose the Ohio project, which was pictured as militating against both the rights of the company and the welfare of the colony. Such a development would not only encourage the Indians to desert the beaver trade for that of bison skins, but would also entice Canadians into the Louisiana country, thus weakening the Canadian population. The Canadian governor had naturally been opposed to the foundation of Louisiana and had at least hoped to control the government of the new colony. When informed that Louisiana was to be governed separately he was full of resentment.[\(see fn. 38\)](#) Iberville's eagerness to assist Juchereau seemed ominous. Then, too, was not Juchereau to be allowed to export his goods by way of the Mississippi?[\(see fn. 39\)](#) Accordingly, the Canadian officials demonstrated with the home government, declaring that Juchereau's project was only a pretence under which he might carry on a trade in beaver. Why did he pick Canadians for his company when the men of France knew the leather trade better? Why did he wish to transport certain goods so far if he did not intend using them in an illicit trade? If Louisiana was to be governed independently, should not the boundaries of Canada be extended to include the lower Ohio region?[\(see fn. 40\)](#) The Minister made

<sup>37</sup>"Notarial Register of A. Adhémar," *loc. cit.* The original contract signed by François Bouat is now in the O. L. Schmitt Collection, Chicago Historical Society.

<sup>38</sup>The Minister remarked: "It would be easier to send orders from France than from Quebec." Minister to De Callières, May 31, 1701, Arch. Nat., Col., B, 22:208; Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements*, VI, 585.

<sup>39</sup>In reality the oversight of Juchereau's project had been entrusted to the Canadian governor. See Arch. Nat., Col., B, 23:44-44<sup>v</sup>. However, the possibility of Juchereau's thwarting the Canadian authorities cannot be overlooked. La Potherie in his memoir of 1701, 1702 says: "M. de Juchereau who is an uncle of the wife of M. d'Hyberville [*sic*] has a considerable advantage he can send his buffalo skins out on(?) the Mississippi; but there has been seen one of his letters in which he indicated that the French *coureurs de bois* which are among the Outaouaks can only send him beaver(?) skins as well." *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, XXII, 1916, pp. 214-15.

<sup>40</sup>Callières, and Champigny to Minister, October 5, 1701, Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements*, V, 857-58.

no replies to these queries except to point out that the Canadian authorities were to oversee Juchereau's project.[\(see fn. 41\)](#) Juchereau, on his part, refrained from any acts which might antagonize his enemies. Thus he did not send out any canoes from Montreal in 1701 since "it appeared that that might cause jealousy."[\(see fn. 42\)](#)

It must be assumed that the men interested in the Canadian beaver trade were responsible for most of the official opposition. These men insisted that Juchereau, like Le Sueur, having been given the right to develop mines, would use this as an approach to the beaver trade. They pointed out that mining had in the case of Le Sueur "been closely related to the trade in peltries." Juchereau's privilege of sending canoes to Montreal would afford him adequate means of returning his peltries. Would he not be forced to buy beaver in order to attract Indians to his post? Had not La Forest, after having been restricted in his trade in the Illinois country, kept a house at Michilimakinac where under the pretence of transshipment he had carried on an illicit trade? Why did Juchereau choose such a remote region for his post? How could the government expect the company to compete with such men? These and other questions were put to the home authorities by the directors of the company.[\(see fn. 43\)](#)

Juchereau stoutly defended himself against these charges, pointing out that his activities were open to the inspection of the company. He also asserted that the charges lodged against him had been formulated without the knowledge of M. Dauteuil, the royal prosecutor. The company was accused of trying to extend its control beyond its recognized trading area.[\(see fn. 44\)](#)

In the midst of this controversy, Juchereau left Montreal on May 18, 1702, with eight canoes. Agents of the company, under the leadership of the Sieur de Boishébert, went along to look

<sup>41</sup>King to De Callières and Champigny, May 3, 1702, *Documents Relatives to the Colonial History of New York*, IX, 735.

<sup>42</sup>Juchereau to Minister, 1701, Arch. Nat., Col., C<sup>11</sup>A, 19:107-108.

<sup>43</sup>Protest of the Directors of the Company, November 10, 1701, Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements*, V, 363-65.

<sup>44</sup>Memorial of Juchereau in Response to the Company, Arch. Nat., Col., C<sup>11</sup>A, 36: 396-99; Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements*, V, 366-67. Juchereau insisted on his right to draw supplies from Canada and asked also that the king allow him to bring goods from France gratis. He also requested that the king furnish him 4,000 lbs. of powder, which was then hard to obtain in Canada.

after the company's interests and to see that no illegal trade was attempted.[\(see fn. 45\)](#) When the party reached Michilimakinac early in July, Juchereau halted in order to procure extra provisions. Then, too, a severe drought prevailing in that region had so lowered stream levels that it was thought advisable to await the autumn rains before attempting the portage to the Illinois.[\(see fn. 46\)](#) Having procured some thirty sacks of corn from two French traders, Juchereau offered as payment certain goods he was carrying to the Ohio. The traders, however, refused to accept the merchandise, and Juchereau was obliged to exchange his goods with the Indians for beaver, using the latter to pay for the corn. This at least is Juchereau's explanation of the trading he did, with the permission of Boishébert, at Michilimakinac.

In anticipation of criticism, Juchereau hastened to write M. Dauteuil explaining his actions.[\(see fn. 47\)](#) It appears that Juchereau sought to excuse himself by accusing others of breaking the law at Michilimakinac. Then, too, he pointed out that Boishébert had approved what had been done. [\(see fn. 48\)](#) Boishébert, though not denying that he had given his approval for the transaction mentioned, accused Juchereau of trading in other cases, and concealing his activities under the guise of dealing with his "associates." La Forest was also named as guilty of carrying on an illegal trade on the Mississippi.[\(see fn. 49\)](#) Madame Juchereau and M. Dauteuil came to the defense of Juchereau, denying all charges.[\(see fn. 50\)](#) The death

<sup>45</sup>Juchereau to Minister, August 25, 1702, Arch. Nat., Col., C<sup>11</sup>A, 36:402; Memorial of Madame Juchereau to De Callières and De Beauharnois, November 11, 1702, *ibid.*, 410. The company which had lately complained of paying 6,000 livres for poor relief in the colony expended nearly 4,000 livres to equip Boishébert's party. General Account of the Company to its Stockholders, October, 1702, *ibid.*, C<sup>11</sup>A, 20:238. Tonty and La Forest also travelled along with the Juchereau party.

<sup>46</sup>Juchereau to Minister, August 25, 1702, Arch. Nat., Col., C<sup>11</sup>A, 36:402. Dry weather had resulted in a scarcity of grain at Michilimakinac according to Juchereau.

<sup>47</sup>Declaration of Juchereau, July 23, 1702, Arch. Nat., Col., C<sup>11</sup>A, 36:408-409. Juchereau argued that the necessity of provisioning his men justified this breach of his contract.

<sup>48</sup>Extract of Juchereau to Dauteuil, August 21, 1702, Arch. Nat., Col., C<sup>11</sup>A, 86:406-407; Memorial of Madame Juchereau, November 11, 1702, *ibid.*, 414.

<sup>49</sup>Boishébert to De Callières, August 30, 1702, *ibid.*, C<sup>11</sup>A, 20:220-21. It was charged that Juchereau had already sent back to Montreal two canoes loaded with beavers. Memorial of Madame Juchereau, November 11, 1702, *ibid.*, 410-11.

<sup>50</sup>Memorial of Madame Juchereau, November 11, 1702, *loc. cit.*; De Callières and [\(con't.\)](#)

of De Callières soon afterward removed one of Juchereau's chief enemies. De Beauharnois, who succeeded to the governorship *ad interim* delayed action in the matter indefinitely. La Forest, however, was eventually forced to give up his concession in the Illinois country.[\(see fn. 51\)](#)

Juchereau and his party left Michilimakinac for the Illinois region in the late summer of 1702. The route followed was that of the Fox-Wisconsin portage. Boishébert alleged that Juchereau chose the longer route in order to embarrass him.[\(see fn. 52\)](#) Whether Boishébert accompanied the expedition beyond Michilimakinac is not clear. In any case Juchereau's difficulties were not over, for he was forced by the Sioux to pay tribute as he passed through their country.[\(see fn. 53\)](#) The party may have tarried in the Wisconsin country for a while, and has even been accused of trading there.[\(see fn. 54\)](#) In the meantime Iberville is supposed to have dispatched a small force to the mouth of the Ohio to await Juchereau's arrival.[\(see fn. 55\)](#) Having arrived at Kaskaskia, the party was joined by Father Jean Mermet, the Jesuit who was to act as almoner and missionary to the post. It was probably mid-November before the party reached its final destination.[\(see fn. 56\)](#)

(50. con't.) De Beauharnois to Minister, November 15, 1702, Arch. Nat., Col., C<sup>11</sup>A, 20:8485. According to these charges the sons of Madame Pachot and even Dauteuil himself were guilty of complicity in Juchereau's trading, the report being that these men had already hidden some 12,000 lbs. of peltries at Sillery.

<sup>51</sup>De Callières died May 26, 1703. Beauharnois seems to have been favorably inclined toward Juchereau. For the removal of La Forest, see Beauharnois and Vaudreuil to Minister, November 15, 1703, Arch. Nat., Col., C<sup>11</sup>A, 27:17; La Forest to Minister, 1706, *ibid.*, C<sup>13</sup>C, 3:157-157<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>52</sup>Boishébert to De Callières, August 30, 1702, Arch. Nat., Col., C<sup>11</sup>A, 20:220. The Chicago portage was of course more direct. Pénicaut relates how M. D'Eraque and his party met Juchereau on the Wisconsin and descended with him to the Illinois. Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements*, V, 42526.

<sup>53</sup>"M. Juchereau [*sic*] has given a thousand crowns' worth of goods to get a free passage to go to his dwelling. . . ." "Report of Detroit in 1703," *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections* (Lansing), XXXIII, 1903, p. 175. Also, Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements*, V, 325.

<sup>54</sup>See especially Benjamin Sulte, "Henry de Tonty," *Trans. Royal Society of Canada*, 1 ser., XI, 1893, pp. 27-28.

<sup>55</sup>Juchereau to Minister, August 25, 1702, Arch. Nat., Col., C<sup>11</sup>A, 36:402.

<sup>56</sup>Father Marest, writing on November 26, 1702, tells of endeavors to entice the Illinois Indians to remove to Juchereau's post, thus indicating that Juchereau was there to receive them. Marest to Lamberville, in R. G. Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations* (Cleveland, 1896-1901), LXVI, 38-39. News of Juchereau's arrival reached lower [\(con't.\)](#)

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The question of the location of Juchereau's establishment is one of considerable difficulty. Those who have assumed that the post was located on the Ohio on the site of the later Fort Massac are undoubtedly in error. [\(see fn. 57\)](#) On the other hand, a careful study of the sources leaves much to be desired. The De Gannes Memoir locates the post two leagues above the mouth of the Ohio. [\(see fn. 58\)](#) An unsigned memoir of 1712 agrees with De Gannes as to the distance of the post from the mouth of the river and adds that the fort was built on the right bank. [\(see fn. 59\)](#) These two documents are sufficient evidence to quash the thesis that the post was located as far up the river as the later fort and would seemingly locate the place satisfactorily enough provided the positions of the two rivers have remained essentially the same.

Before coming to any conclusion on the subject, certain old maps must be consulted. Though several of the more or less well-known maps of the period locate the fort roughly, there are five maps which seem most dependable. The first of these is a map entitled "Amplissimae Regionis Mississippi seu Provinciae Ludoviciana." This map gives the location of the post as being very near the junction of the Ohio and the Mississippi. [\(see fn. 60\)](#) The Bellin Map of 1750, one of the best of the general French maps, locates the fort approximately on the thirty-seventh parallel close to the forks of the river, but has it placed somewhat nearer

(56. con't.) Louisiana on February 8, 1703, being brought down by the crew of a boat returning from the Illinois. La Harpe's Journal in French, *Historical Collections of Louisiana*, III, 29. No documents from Juchereau's hand have been found dated later than August 25, 1702. His later papers were doubtless destroyed by persons interested in getting rid of evidence concerning his activities after he left Michilimakinac.

<sup>57</sup>Among those who have fallen into this error are Mrs. M. T. Scott, "Old Fort Massac," *Publications of the Illinois State Historical Library* (Springfield), VIII, 1903, p. 39; Logan Esarey, *History of Indiana* (Indianapolis, 1915-1918), I, 15; and A. B. Hulbert, *Historic Highways of America* (Cleveland), VIII, 1904, pp. 15-16. M. Fauteux saves himself by saying the fort was "at or near the location of old Fort Massac." *Essai sur l'industrie au Canada*, II, 416, n.

<sup>58</sup>De Gannes Memoir, October 20, 1721, *Ill. Hist. Coll.*, XXIII, 1934, p. 394.

<sup>59</sup>Exact Description of Louisiana, of its ports, lands, rivers, etc., 1712, Arch. Nat., Col., C<sup>13</sup>C, 1:346. This writer also mentions that the fort was built "upon a site of considerable elevation" and declares he was present when it was built.

<sup>60</sup>This map, published at Nuremberg in 1780, and edited by Jean Baptiste Homann, shows an excellent general knowledge of the Mississippi region. Copy in the Ayer Collection, Newberry Library.

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the Mississippi than the Ohio.[\(see fn. 61\)](#) The best of the English maps is probably that drawn in 1765 by Lieutenant Ross of the Thirty-Fourth Regiment from data assembled as he ascended the river to take possession of Fort Chartres after the Peace of 1763. Ross located the "Antient Fort destroy'd" at a point just south of the thirty-seventh parallel and almost as far inland from the Ohio as it was north of the junction of the rivers.[\(see fn. 62\)](#) The last two maps are French maps drawn to a larger scale, which, however, differ widely as to the site of the fort. The first of these, dated 1752 and drawn by Chausségros de Léry, gives the site of the fort as some two leagues east of the mouth of the Cache River and two times as far from the mouth of the Ohio as the crow flies. This map has the advantage of giving the scale of miles, but the parallels of latitude and longitude are not drawn.[\(see fn. 63\)](#) The other map, which portrays only the Illinois country, locates the fort at a point about midway between the two rivers and some four leagues above their junction. The latitude of the site as given on this map is approximately 37° 39' north.[\(see fn. 64\)](#) It is accordingly plain that, the maps serve only to increase the confusion about the exact location of the post.

In arriving at a conclusion, it seems safer to rely largely upon the references, cited above, which state that the post was located two leagues above the mouth of the Ohio. The fact that the maps show some agreement in locating the site on or near the thirty-seventh parallel is also significant. Modern Cairo is located about one minute north of the thirty-seventh, parallel at the junction of the two rivers. The nearest high ground as one ascends the Ohio from Cairo is at Mound City point, ten miles away. Metropolis, located on the site of Old Fort Massac, is some four times as far away, though not much farther north because of the bending of the river. Since the hills near Mound City and Mounds are sufficient evidence that the Mississippi has not recently flowed eastward so as to join the Ohio much nearer the site of

<sup>61</sup>Copy in the Ayer Collection.

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup>Original, Bibliothèque de Service Hydrographique, Paris, 4040 C, 19. Chausségros de Léry (Gaspard Chausségros, fils) was a son of the royal engineer of the same name. He built the fortifications at Quebec.

<sup>64</sup>Original, Bibliothèque Nationale, Estampes-Paris, Vd., 22.

Metropolis than it now does, Juchereau's post must have been located on the high ground somewhere near the present Mounds or Mound City, depending upon the relative course of the Ohio at that time.[\(see fn. 65\)](#)

In any case, Juchereau arrived and constructed his fort. He had brought with him, as has been noted, a missionary from Kaskaskia. It is to this priest, Father Mermet, that historians are largely indebted for the little information available concerning the establishment itself.[\(see fn. 66\)](#) It is not known how many men accompanied Juchereau to his destination.[\(see fn. 67\)](#) Nor does it appear that Indians arrived with the party, though Father Gabriel Marest indicates that efforts were made to persuade the Illinois to come.[\(see fn. 68\)](#) Father Mermet, seemingly more interested in his capacity as missionary to the savages than as almoner to the company, grew impatient waiting for the savages to appear. That he also disliked Juchereau is plain from Father Marest's account.[\(see fn. 69\)](#) In due time, however, some Mascouten Indians settled near the post and Father Mermet began his work among them. Father Marest says the missionary was not very successful.[\(see fn. 70\)](#) Father Mermet's real opportunity came with the outbreak of a pestilence among the Indians. The Jesuit ministered to the sick,

<sup>65</sup>For the views of another writer in agreement with this thesis, see John M. Lansden, *History of the City of Cairo, Illinois* (Chicago, 1910), 21-22.

<sup>66</sup>Father Marest to Father Lamberville, November 26, 1702, Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, LXVI, 38-39. See also Scott, "Old Fort Massac," *loc. cit.*, 41-43. Jean Mermet was born at Grenoble and educated at Embrun and Dole. Arriving in Canada in 1698 he first served at the Miami mission and then joined Juchereau's company. After the failure of that venture he served in the Kaskaskia mission. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, LXVI, 339, n.

<sup>67</sup>Various authorities have it that 20, 30, 34, and 35 men were with Juchereau. Le Moyne Bienville to Minister, September 6, 1704, *Can. Arch. Rep.*, 1905, I, 447; Pénicaut's Relation in Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements*, V, 425-36; 439; Scott, "Old Fort Massac," *loc. cit.*, 41.

<sup>68</sup>Marest to Lamberville, November 26, 1702, Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, LXVI, 38-39. The writer says: "I think that we shall have considerable difficulty in gaining our end."

<sup>69</sup>Marest says: "Monsieur Jucherau [*sic*] is prodigal of his promises, but he thinks, in reality, of his own interests. The Father who is with him is

not at all pleased. He is neither a missionary, for there are no Savages, nor a chaplain, for there is no stipend. He has not even a person to help him in his needs." Marest to Lamberville, November 26, 1702, Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, LXVI, 40-41. Marest himself did all he could to cooperate with Juchereau.

<sup>70</sup>Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, LXVI, 236-39.

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