



THE PAINTING

CHAPTERS OF ARKANSAS HISTORY • A PUBLICATION OF HISTORIC ARKANSAS MUSEUM

Arkansas History Assessments & Activities



"The mysteries of Don Joseph"

When we think about Arkansas Post, we know that it was an early step toward the creation of Arkansas as it is today. Valliere saw it as a place that would serve the needs of France and of Spain, and he also saw it as a place that would serve his own needs. Remembering Valliere's view of the Arkansas Post, think about the following questions and ideas.

Did Valliere think of the Quapaw and other Native Americans as citizens of France or Spain. Did he see them as "subjects" of France or Spain, protected by those countries but without the right of citizens? Did he think they were useful, or did he see them as a nuisance? Did he see them as enemies to be destroyed? This will call for your opinion, since we have no clear historical answers to some of these questions, so explain your reasons for your opinions.

Social Studies: TCC.1.2.; TCC.14.; PPE.1.2.; PPE.1.7.; PPE.1.8.; PAG.2.3

Arkansas History: TCC.1.3.; TCC.14.; PAG.1.3.; SSPS.1.3.



Think about our way of separating government activities into executive, legislative, and judicial functions. List Valliere's responsibilities that fell under each of these headings. Then go on to describe some of the activities you think he would have carried out in his role as military leader and the leading developer of the Post's economy.

Social Studies: PDC.1.2.; PDC.1.3.; PAG.1.1.; PAG.1.2.; PAG.1.8.

Arkansas History: PPE.2.2.; PDC.1.2.; PDC.1.5.; PAG.1.3.; SSPS.1.4.

When the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory, did the era of colonial officers like Valliere end in the region, or did it simply continue under American authority? Explain your opinion.

Social Studies: TCC.1.2.; TCC.14.; TCC.2.1.; TCC.2.3.; PPE.1.3.; PPE.2.5.; PAG.2.4.

Language Arts

Valliere was:

- An established, wealthy nobleman who wanted adventure
- A son of a respected family who needed to make his own way in life
- A common soldier who managed to become an officer
- An outlaw

Valliere was French by birth, and he served as a commandant of Arkansas Post for:

- France
- The United States
- Great Britain
- Spain

Valliere filled the role of judge at Arkansas Post because:

- He was a trained lawyer
- The colonial government established a formal court there
- The commandant had to serve in many different roles since he was the main official there
- He was elected to the position

It's easy to look at Valliere's portrait and think, "this is an important and wealthy man." Sometimes we think of Europe as being a place where people of nobility lived, and where castles and other great buildings were built. It is possible to forget that most Europeans were common laborers or farmers and that some upper-class families had to struggle to keep up their wealth and position. The language of the

(continued)





following passage seems to suggest that Valliere came to “New France” because he had a better chance of gaining or keeping status and wealth there than he had back home. How do you think Valliere would have explained choices he made?

His name appears to be French, and he was born in Grenoble, in the Dauphine province of France. Since the “de” in a person’s name often indicated nobility, was this man a nobleman? Not necessarily, it seems. Some of the men who became leaders in the colonies took on such titles that never would have been given to them back in France.

Is d’Hauterive part of the man’s name? Not really. It names the place where the person came from. If this man were a nobleman, we might think his family governed the place, or even owned it...

...If this man came from an important family, why would he leave his own country to live and work in a wilderness across the sea? Perhaps it was because he was the “second son” of his father. The oldest son usually inherited the family property, and the second or third son would have to make his own way. Such men often went into military service.

Josef was a second son, but his older brother also came to the city called New Orleans in the French colony of Louisiana. Both of the young men may have been looking for fortune and status that their family wouldn’t have had back home in France.

- Student shows a grasp of the economic, social, and political contexts of Valliere’s career and the ways in which he might have expected his place in the New World to be advantageous to him.
- Student lists some of the economic and social reasons that may have motivated Valliere’s in his decision making and makes some connections among them.
- Student lists some of the economic and social reasons for Valliere’s life choices.
- Student shows little or no grasp of Valliere’s likely motivations.



“How to build an empire....”

Arkansas Post’s main export changed from fur to meat and back to fur. These changes were mostly due to the needs of people who lived elsewhere. Explain how the needs of people in other places changed the Post’s exports.

Social Studies: TCC.1.1 ; PDC.1.2.

Arkansas History: TCC.1.1 ; PDC.1.2.

The location of Arkansas Post was no accident. Why was it a good place for the earliest European settlement in Arkansas? Why wasn’t it a good place for the territorial capital?

Social Studies: TCC.1.3 ; PPE.2.4 ; PDC.1.2.

Arkansas History: PPE.2.4 ; PAG.1.3.

Language Arts

At the time the French began to claim ownership of the area that became Arkansas, they expected to find:

- The fountain of youth
- Gold
- The route to China
- Fur

The Quapaw and other Native Americans were important to the fur trade at Arkansas Post because:

- They bought skins from the hunters at the Post
- They brought skins to the Post for trade
- They showed hunters from the Post where to find animals
- They taught the people at the Post how to prepare skins for shipping

The American factory was never very successful in the fur trading business. One fact that never contributed to its lack of success was:

- The presence of other well-established fur traders
- Their lack of skill in preparing skins for shipment
- The scarcity of furs in the region
- The presence of illegal trappers

After reading the entire article about the fur trade at Arkansas Post, re-read the passage below. Explain the effect of geography on the development of the fur trade at Arkansas Post after the Louisiana Purchase.

Finally, buyers didn’t think fur from Arkansas was as good as fur from the Northwest. Fur trade opened up in Oregon,

Washington, and western Canada around the time Treat started his factory. Arkansas fur began to lose its value in the markets.

The reason is interesting, but simple. It is colder in the Northwest than it is in Arkansas. Fur-bearing animals grow thicker, richer coats in cold country than in warm country. The Northwest was America’s Siberia. John Jacob Astor, America’s first millionaire, made his fortune trading for fur in that region

- Student analyzes the multiple effects of climate and timing on Arkansas Post’s fur trade, showing an awareness of the impact of the opening of the western regions of the country on the process of settlement in the Mississippi River region.
- Student describes both the relationship of cold weather to fur quality and the effect of competition from the Northwest.
- Student links fur quality to climate
- Student makes no clear link between location and fur quality