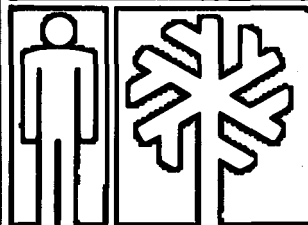


# reconnaissance survey

new area

april 1980

**STE. GENEVIEVE**



**MISSOURI**

STATE  
Missouri

Publication of this document should not be construed as representing either approval or disapproval of the Secretary of the Interior. The purpose of this document is to provide information for further consideration of the area as a potential submission to the Congress in compliance with section 8 of the General Authorities Act of 1970 as amended by Public Law 94-458.

920/139578

RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

STE. GENEVIEVE

Prepared by:  
National Park Service  
Midwest Region

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## INTRODUCTION

The existing town of Ste. Genevieve was one of several sites nominated as a potential study area for FY 1980 under authority of Section 8, P. L. 94-458. It was identified as a threatened National Landmark requiring a Reconnaissance Survey. Recent archeological investigations by the St. Louis District Army Corps of Engineers in the Ste. Genevieve area located what is believed to be the original townsite of Ste. Genevieve. In the fall of 1979, the National Park Service Team Captain for the Reconnaissance Survey made an orientation trip to Ste. Genevieve. Based on his trip and discussions with the Corps of Engineers, it was decided to include the possible original or archeological townsite of Ste. Genevieve in the Reconnaissance Survey. The following Reconnaissance Report, therefore, deals with both the archeological and existing townsites of Ste. Genevieve.

The Report discusses the (1) ownership pattern; (2) cultural, natural, scenic, and recreational resources and potentials; (3) existing uses and trends; (4) potential uses; and (5) land valuation. It also looks at present and future threats to the resources and measures being taken to protect them.

## SUMMARY

The Ste. Genevieve area is located approximately 50 miles south of St. Louis in east-central Ste. Genevieve County, Missouri. The existing town lies about 1/2 mile west of the Mississippi River at the foot of the bluffs which form the flood plain edge. The archeological town-site is located on the flood plain within a couple hundred feet of the Mississippi River and about 2 miles south of the existing town.

Being a small rural town, the landownership pattern has been fairly stable throughout the existing town's history. Except for some which are publically owned, the properties are privately owned and are being used in a variety of ways. Until recently, some have remained within the same family. The archeological site is privately owned and has been used for agriculture during the last 200 years.

The Historic District of the existing town is a Registered National Landmark of about 1,400 acres. The archeological site is about 35 acres and part of a larger tract of farm land being farmed today. Efforts are being made to designate this site a National Landmark.

Because of the number and variety of land parcels, it was not feasible for this study to obtain land values for the existing town. The farm land on which the archeological site is located is going for about \$1,500-\$2,000 per acre.

Ste. Genevieve's French Colonial heritage is what makes the community of interest and significant today. French explorers in 1635 began to travel the Mississippi River. In 1682 LaSalle claimed the entire Mississippi River drainage basin for France. In 1762 France gave up its claims to this area. However, in 1801 it regained control of the Louisiana Territory from Spain only to sell it to the United States in 1804.

Ste. Genevieve was never officially founded and the date that it came into being is not known. There is general agreement that the first permanent settlement occurred

sometime between 1723-1735. It began as a mining town with a few relatively wealthy entrepreneurs operating under license from France. A camp with temporary quarters was set up during the summer for the miners who mined lead further inland. Gradually permanent quarters appeared and eventually stretched about a mile along the river. Even though mining remained an important part of the local economy, agricultural products soon became important trade items. All of these items were shipped down the river to New Orleans and then to France.

The homes were unusual. They were constructed of vertical logs with posts in the ground, "poteaux en terre," or posts on a sill, "poteaux sur solle." Bouzillage (a mixture of clay or mud along with twigs, animal hair, straw, or limestone gravel) was placed between the posts and allowed to dry. The exterior walls were whitewashed to reflect the heat and protect the Bouzillage.

The houses were a unique blend of northern and southern French Colonial styling. The roofs were steep Norman truss hip roofs, often exceeding 70°. At first, they were thatched but eventually were replaced by cottonwood shingles. Because of the excessive heat a "galerie" porch was added around the house.

Behind the community was "le grand champ" (The Big Field), a common field used for farming.

In 1785 came the Great Flood which destroyed the town. The residents moved 2 miles north and established a new town. Their homes were constructed much as at the old site with the exception of some American influences.

Today Ste. Genevieve has retained much of its French Colonial heritage through its architecture, customs, and language.

It appears that both sites will continue to be used much as they are today. There is great potential for developing the sites to increase visitation and visitor awareness of the community's heritage and the role of the French within the Mississippi River Valley. Both sites could be interrelated through a developed interpretative program.

The sites are threatened by a variety of factors, the greatest being flooding of the Mississippi River. The existing town also experiences flooding from North and South Gabouri Creeks. Unauthorized and uncontrolled digs threaten the archeological townsite. A variety of steps are being taken to protect the existing town's resources but in some instances those actions are posing threats to the very resources which are to be protected.

Options for protecting and preserving the resource other than by the National Park Service doing a Study of Alternatives would be for greater influence and interest on the part of the State of Missouri and/or the community.

The Reconnaissance Survey Team evaluated the resources based on the NPS criteria for resource significance and recreational potential which are outlined in the 1978 "Management Policies." It also evaluated the representation of the natural and cultural themes of the resource as described in the "National Park System Plan." That Plan, published in 1972, provides criteria for establishing a resource's potential for inclusion in the National Park System.

Ste. Genevieve reflects the theme "European Exploration and Settlement;" subtheme "French Exploration and Settlement" within the Mississippi Valley major facet. Three sites representing the major facet are presently included within the National Park System but none of them deal with a French settlement or village.



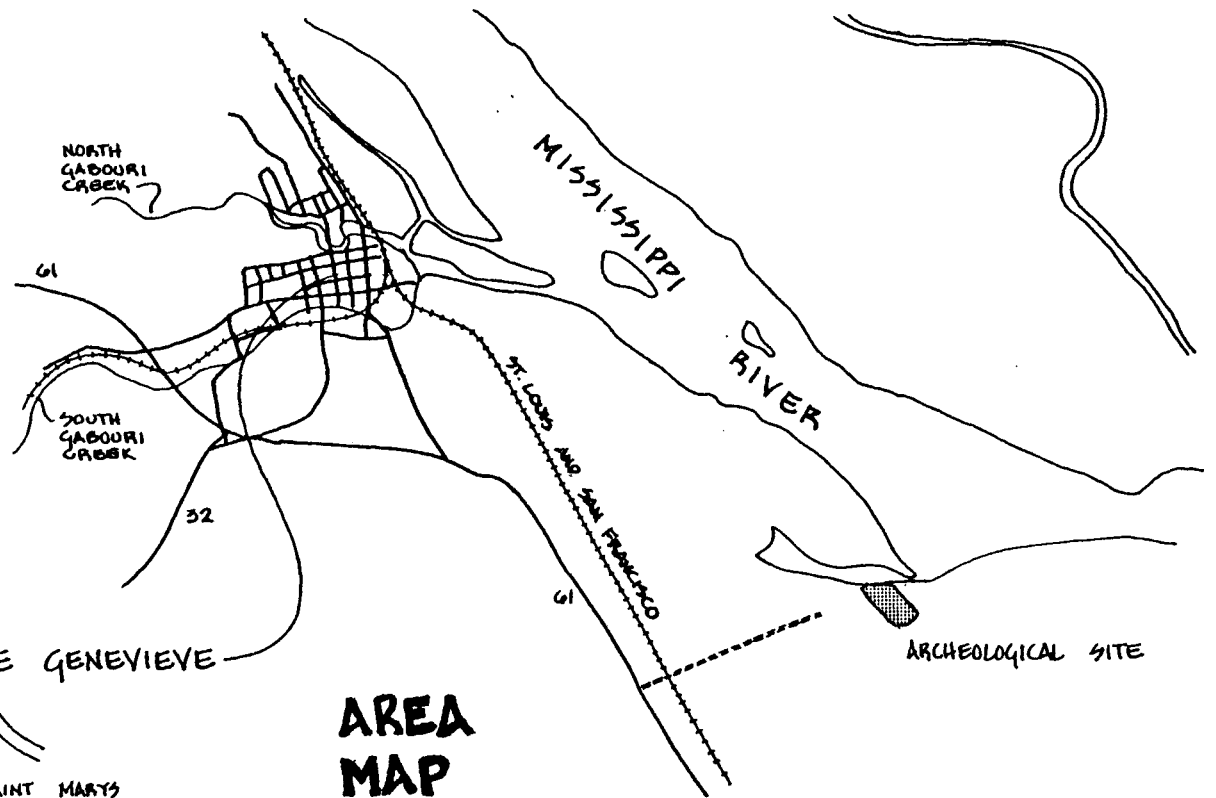
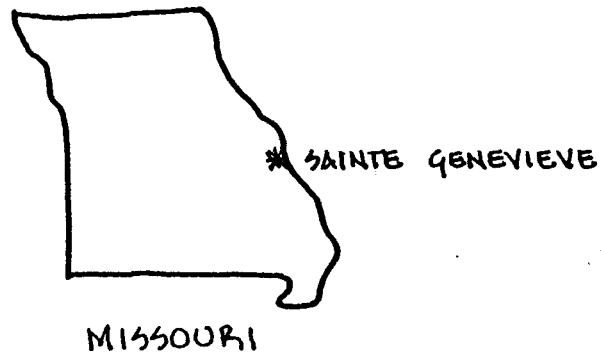
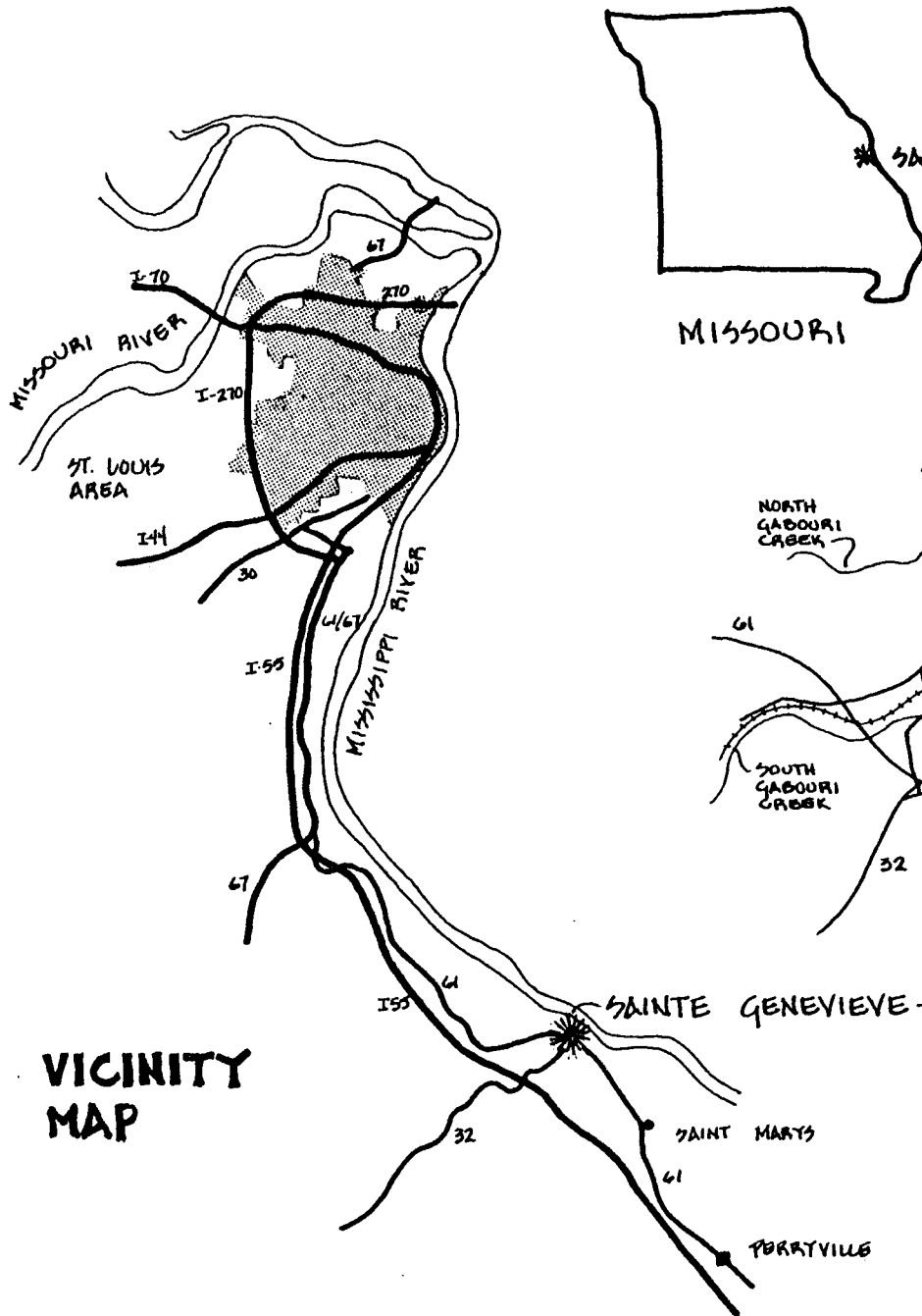
## SETTING

The Ste. Genevieve study sites are located in east-central Ste. Genevieve County, approximately 50 miles south of St. Louis. The existing town has a population of about 5,000 and lies west of and within 1/2 mile of the Mississippi River. It is situated at the foot of the surrounding bluffs which form the edge of the flood plain. A major portion of the central business district, in addition to the Ste. Genevieve Historic District, is in the Mississippi River flood plain. The archeological townsite lies on the Mississippi flood plain within a few hundred feet of the river. This site is about 2 miles south of the existing town (see location map).

Ste. Genevieve is serviced by three major highways. Interstate 55, connecting St. Louis, Missouri, and Memphis, Tennessee, is about 8 miles west of town. U.S. Highway 61 and Missouri Route 32 run through the town. Two railroads service the community. A ferry boat service exists between Ste. Genevieve and Illinois.

Ste. Genevieve's economy is based on manufacturing, agricultural, and commercial services. Agriculture has always been an important factor in Ste. Genevieve's economy. Because of limestone in the surrounding bluffs, one of the country's largest producers of lime is located in Ste. Genevieve.

The county seat is located in Ste. Genevieve.



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### OWNERSHIP PATTERN

Existing Town - Properties as used in this section refer to historic properties, those within the Historic District. From the time of the town's establishment circa 1785 to the present, the properties have been largely in private ownership. A few of the properties are publicly owned. From the time of their construction until recently, a number of homes have remained within the same family. Overall, ownership has been stable during the town's existence with normal turnover for a small rural community. Use of the structures range from residential, commercial, sacred, to public. Total acreage within the Historic District is about 1,400 acres.

Archeological Townsite - Of the original townsite which stretched about 1 mile along the Mississippi River, only about 35+ acres remain. This site, which is part of a larger section of landholding, is privately owned and divided between two or three owners. One of the owners is a sand and gravel company. It appears that the land which has been used for agricultural purposes for over 200 years has remained under various private owners for sometime.

## LAND VALUATION

Existing Town - The location of the property is a prime factor in determining the land's value. There are a number of historic properties located within the flood plain. These are experiencing a slower rise in value in comparison to those properties located outside the flood plain. The Army Corps of Engineers is proposing a flood control project. Should that project be implemented, land values within the flood plain would likely increase more rapidly than in the past. The properties outside the flood plain have been experiencing a steady increase in value, though the rate of increase does not appear to be as rapid as in larger metropolitan areas. Because of the number and variety of properties involved, it is unrealistic at this time to determine land values. When dealing with historic structures, experience in other sections of the country has indicated that these properties usually are more expensive than non-historic properties.

Archeological Townsite - This land is being farmed. It is reported that its value is about \$1,500-\$2,000 per acre.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

Historical Background - Archeological evidences of inhabitants through the Mississippi Valley area dates to as early as 900 A. D. These people were an advanced Indian culture whose names remain unknown. It appears that they lived in sizeable cities with comfortable dwellings. They built mounds, a number of which exist within the Ste. Genevieve area today, especially near the archeological townsite. By the time the Spanish explorer DeSoto reached this area in 1541, he found few Indian communities.

French explorers began to travel down the Mississippi River in 1635. In 1682, LaSalle claimed the entire Mississippi River drainage basin for France. As a result of the Seven Year War in Europe, France in 1762 ceded all its claims west of the Mississippi River, known as the Louisiana Territory, to Spain and east of the river to England. France regained control in 1801 of the territory it ceded to Spain. In 1804 France sold the Louisiana Territory to the United States.

There is general agreement that the first permanent settlement at Ste. Genevieve occurred sometime between 1723-1735.

Philippe Renault, a French banker, was granted mining rights for the area circa 1720 by the Royal Company of the Indies. Renault with his slaves and equipment first settled in Fort Chartres on the east bank of the Mississippi River about 10 miles north of the Ste. Genevieve area. After several years of ill luck, he moved his company south to Kaskaskia on the east bank of the Mississippi and several miles below the Ste. Genevieve area. Jesuit Fathers who established Kaskaskia were the first to become aware of the lead located in the bluffs west of the Mississippi.

During the summer months, Renault moved his men and equipment to the west bank of the Mississippi. Here he established temporary quarters on the "le grand champ" (The Big Field). Gradually, he began to establish permanent quarters. By 1735 his settlement became known

as "Le Vieux Village de Ste. Genevieve" (The Old Village of Ste. Genevieve). This new location proved successful for Renault.

Ste. Genevieve's location was ideal for shipping and mining the lead. The terrain provided easy access from the mines to the river. In addition, the river was at its closest to the bluffs and mines. The lead was transported from the mines to Ste. Genevieve by horse, first being moulded into a shape for placement around the horse's neck. From Ste. Genevieve the lead was shipped to New Orleans and then to France. The location of these mines today is unknown.

Salt springs, located near Ste. Genevieve, were known and described by early French explorers. The salt was easily obtainable and was very important for curing meat and hides. Some of these springs exist today.

As Ste. Genevieve grew, so did its economy. Other products sent to New Orleans and France included salt, furs, and agricultural products such as corn, wheat, oats, barley, flax, cotton, and tobacco. These were shipped from Ste. Genevieve by flat and keel boats. Eventually agriculture displaced the mining as the chief revenue producer, though mining remained active.

By the mid-1700's, the village grew about 1 mile along the west bank of the Mississippi River. The homes usually faced the river with the individual homesites laid out in squares about the size of a small city block. The homesites were enclosed by a 7-foot high stockade type fence of cedar or oak. Besides the house, the homesite contained a kitchen, bake house, smoke house, out-house, well, and a garden area for personal use. A lane was left between the properties.

The homes were usually one room, although there were some with two rooms. Exterior dimensions were typically 12 by 13 feet, 15-foot square, or 18 by 19 feet. Vertical log construction characterized most. Barns and outbuildings were constructed using horizontal log construction.

The vertical log construction was very interesting. The most popular and widely used method was called "poteaux

en terre" (post in the ground), a method unknown in France but found in early settlements on the Gulf Coast. The house was outlined on the ground and a trench dug about 3-feet deep. Cedar or white mulberry posts about 8-inches thick and 16-feet long were placed in the trench about one hand span apart and the trench backfilled. Wooden sills across the post tops held the posts in place. A less frequently used method was "poteaux sur solle" (posts on a sill). Here the foundations were of stone rubble upon which the ends of the logs rested.

Bouzillage (a mixture of clay or mud and a binder of twigs, straw, animal hair, or limestone gravel) was placed between the posts and allowed to dry. The walls were tilted slightly inward.

The house was constructed about 4 feet above the ground. Walnut or oak planks were used for the floors. Some houses had cellars. Ceilings showed the tongue groove boards of the attics. House walls were plastered. Iron and glass were a rarity and had to be imported from France. A limestone fireplace was in each room. Large homes were made up of two rooms connected by a large center entrance hallway. One room served as the dining and living rooms while the other functioned as sleeping quarters. Exterior walls were whitewashed to protect the Bouzillage and to partly reflect the heat. The roofs, like those in Quebec and Normandy, were steep Norman truss hip roofs with large hand-hewn timbers pegged together. Thatching was used first for the roofing material. In order to shed water, the roofs were steeply pitched, often exceeding 70°. In time, thatching was replaced by cottonwood shingles.

What gave the homes of Ste. Genevieve a unique style was the blending of the northern and southern French Colonial style. The southern influence was the introduction of the "galerie" from the French West Indies. These were long open porches on all four sides of the house. The people of Ste. Genevieve found the heat oppressive and the "galerie" was the ideal solution. It also served to protect the whitewash from rain. It was about 8-feet wide and was supported by small diameter posts connected by a small handrailing.

Stone houses were not found because the stone was expensive and difficult to quarry. The use of stone was limited and was restricted to chimneys and some foundations.

Behind the houses was "le grand champ" which was divided into long narrow strips called arpents, an arpent being 192-feet 6-inches wide. These extended almost a mile to the foot of the bluffs. Each arpent was designated by walnut trees planted along the boundaries and by individual fences. The fences were more for protecting the crops from wild and domestic animals. Many of the trees exist today.

Circa 1752, provisions were made for a church to be built on "le grand champ." It was not until some 8 years later that the church held its first religious service. Up until this time, religious needs were met through the priest located at Kaskaskia.

Social life of the villagers appeared to be happy and pleasant. There were frequent social gatherings and much dancing. One major reason for this merriment was that the people of Ste. Genevieve did not have the problems that other settlers had with the natives.

From the time that the first structures appeared on "le grand champ" until the spring of 1778, the Mississippi River caused few problems. Starting with the 1778 spring, however, the river began to meander and erode the west bank. Over the next 7 years, it eroded more and more of the bank. With the spring of 1785 came the Great Flood which covered "le grand champ" with 15 feet of water. Boats were reported moored to the chimney tops.

The only structures surviving were those built on stone foundations. The residents finally realized that they would have to seek higher ground and selected a site about 2 miles to the north between the North and South Gabour Creeks. The new village was named "les petite cotes" (Little Slopes).

Joseph Coulture was the first person to move to this location when the river destroyed his house in the spring



of 1778. By 1791 the old townsite was completely abandoned except for the church which was not moved until 1794.

The new village was carefully laid out in a grid pattern with blocks of 300 to 350 feet on a side and further divided into quarters called "emplacements." Each household received an "emplacement" on which was located a house, storage buildings, stables, garden, and well. The "emplacement" was surrounded by either a 7-foot high log palisade fence or a "poteau canell." This latter enclosure consisted of channeled out mulberry posts spaced 5 feet apart. Cottonwood boards were placed between the posts.

Some homes from the original site were salvaged and moved to this new site. Where new homes were constructed, the only major change was in the roof design. Though not entirely abandoned, the Norman hip style gave way to the American gable style. In addition to being more economical to construct, it allowed greater use of the attic for storage and additional rooms. It became common to plaster the ceilings. The same foundation types were used as at the old site. Greater use was made of brick, but stone for the main house still remained in limited demand. Barns and stables were constructed with horizontal logs or channeled posts and boards. Brick or stone was used for the outdoor kitchens. Another American practice, weatherboarding, became common around the beginning of the 19th-century.

Business and trade in this new location improved. The chief exports to New Orleans still included furs, agricultural products and lead; while the most popular imports from France were furniture, building hardware, millwork, glass, and other manufactured products. Currency consisted of furs and tobacco carrots (tobacco leaves pounded into wood molds), as well as coinage from Spain and France.

Ste. Genevieve was becoming a flourishing community. Local industry developed and included enterprises such as a grist mill, tannery, stonemasonry, mining, and blacksmithing. River traffic increased. The community was the principle seat of government in the region. However, in 1804 when the Louisiana Territory came under United States possession, Ste. Genevieve started to lose out to St. Louis where some traffic and business were diverted.

Ste. Genevieve did not die, though. When Missouri became a territory in 1812, the town became the seat of one of five territorial districts. Rail traffic connected it to the north and south. A plank road increased the shipment of goods to outlying communities. Eventually Ste. Genevieve became a county seat.

In 1752 the original townsite had 27 inhabitants. By 1767 that number increased to 350 and to 700 by 1772. At the new location, by 1795, there were 839 residents. This increased to 1,163 individuals by 1800. Today, there are about 5,000 residents in Ste. Genevieve. As the community grew, there was a large influx of people other than French; the largest of which was German. This though did not destroy the French flavor of architecture, customs, or language.

Archeological Townsite Today - Until 1975, the exact location of the original townsite was unknown and was thought to have been completely washed away by the Mississippi River. As a result of other work in the Ste. Genevieve area by the St. Louis District, Army Corps of Engineers, archeologists in the spring of 1975 discovered artifacts in an area believed to have been the original townsite.

Two uncontrolled surface collections were made at the site in the spring of 1979, one by the Corps' archeologists and the other by the University of Missouri. The artifacts were dated to the mid-18th-century or earlier. The design patterns of some of the artifacts were similar to those produced in Rouen and Marseilles, France, during the mid-18th-century. Other artifacts strongly represented those of British and Spanish origin dating to the mid-1700's. These analyses were made by two independent historic archeologists. A relatively permanent occupation of the site is indicated by the wide functional and stylistic range of these artifacts.

Also, identified at the site were several areas of dark stains thereby indicating the presence of organic material. The collected artifacts were found in association with these stains.

Historical records, oral tradition, and collected artifacts strongly indicate that the area is the original townsite. All available evidence to date indicates that the area has remained relatively undisturbed from the time that it was abandoned. The size of the survey area is about 35+ acres.

This town was quite different from the usual 18th-century frontier settlement. The entrepreneurs were neither displaced/discontented persons nor adventurers but rather they were selectively wealthy persons interested in mining. They established a town and carried with them many of the luxuries that wealth afforded them. The significance of the site is that it would give a more comprehensive picture of European expansion into the region. The site would represent the only known relatively undisturbed early 18th-century French river town in the Middle Mississippi River Valley. Ste. Genevieve was one of 40 French towns established along the river.

Existing Town Today - The existing town to date has retained much of its French Colonial heritage. There are a number of structures dating from the late-1700's to the mid-1800's. Some of the homes are reported to have been moved here from the original townsite after the flood.

There are good examples of the historic construction methods. Features such as the Norman truss, "poteaux en terre," and "poteaux sur solle" can be seen.

The majority of the historic homes, with few exceptions, are used as private residences. The interiors of most of these have been modernized to some extent over the years.

Below is a list of some of the best preserved structures. This list is by no means a complete list and does not imply that there are not other good examples existing.

Bolduc House - 123 South Main Street, one-and-a-half-story frame house, erected circa 1785 by Louis Bolduc, prosperous lead miner, merchant, and planter. Constructed of "poteaux sur solle" with Bouzillage wall filling. This house is a Registered National Historic Landmark and is listed in the Historic American Buildings Survey. The

house has been restored and is one of the finest and least changed examples of French Colonial architecture in the United States. There are some furnishings owned by the Bolducs but most are period pieces. This is a two room house with Norman truss roof. A log palisade fence surrounds the property. The house is owned by the Colonial Dames and is open to the public.

Jacques Guibourd House - Northwest corner of Fourth and Merchant Streets, one-and-a-half-story frame house, built about 1800 by Jacques Jean Rene Guibourd. Constructed "poteaux sur solle." The exterior is clapboard. The rear walls contain two pairs of nine-lighted casement windows, the only known original examples of French Colonial fenestration surviving in the Upper Mississippi Valley. A brick wall surrounds the property. The house is listed on the Historic American Buildings Survey. Owned by The Foundation for the Restoration of Ste. Genevieve, it is open to the public.

Jean Baptiste Valle' House - Northwest corner of Main and Market Streets, one-and-a-half-story frame house constructed about 1785 by Jean Baptiste Valle', the last commandant of the Ste. Genevieve District. The foundation of the house is unusual for the area. The walls are quite thick and are of stone. The reason for this is unknown. The house has been modernized and is a private residence.

Vital St. Gemme de Beauvals House - 20 South Main Street, one-story frame, clapboard house built about 1786. The house is a combination "poteaux en terre" and "poteaux sur solle." A massive stone fireplace divides the interior. The ceiling is unusual in that it is constructed of giant beams and pegged together. There is a modern wing to the rear. The exterior has been altered. It is privately owned and open to the public.

St. Gemme-Amoureux House - West side of St. Marys Road, 1/3 mile south of South Gabouri Street, one-and-a-half-story frame structure built about 1785 by the St. Gemme family. It is of "poteaux en terre" construction. It contains Norman trusses and clapboard siding. It is privately owned and opened to the public and is used as an antique shop.

Felix-Valle' House - Southwest corner Second and Merchant Streets, two-story Federal style stone structure built about 1815, occupied by Felix and Valle' as a residence and office for the Menard and Valle' Fur Trading Company. This is one of the first stone structures constructed in Ste. Genevieve and represents a departure from the traditional wooden, vertical log construction. It shows the American influence in this community. It is currently being restored by the State of Missouri Department of Natural Resources. There is limited public access until restoration is completed.

Green Tree Tavern - 244 St. Marys Road, one-story frame structure built about 1800, and measures 75 by 45 feet. It is a transitional building of "poteaux sur solle." Roof trusses are original Anglo American containing 150 stripped walnut saplings. Unusual triangular fireplaces open into three rooms. The house has been modified. It is privately owned and open to the public.

Old Brick House - Northeast corner Third and Market Streets. Two-story brick constructed about 1800. It is believed to be the first brick house west of the Mississippi River. The bricks are hand made and layed up in Flemish band. The structure retains its original windows. It is now used as a restaurant.

The significance of Ste. Genevieve is that it has retained a number of its French traditions and origins as well as excellent examples of French style and combination French and American style architecture.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

A variety of geographic features and resources exist within and surround the two Ste. Genevieve sites. There are five basic land forms and are as follows:

- Mississippi River Bottomlands: nearly flat, gently undulating surface east of the existing town and paralleling the Mississippi River. Soils are alluvial sands, gravel, and clays all underlain by glacial outwash generally 50 to 150 feet in thickness.
- Local Alluvial Bottomlands: low-lying, nearly level plain occupying a band paralleling North and South Gabouri Creeks. Alluvial materials have been transported short distances from upland soils. Rock outcrops commonly occur in creek bottoms.
- Eastern Sinkholed Uplands: characterized by numerous sinkholes. Drainage is along creeks and their tributaries with the majority through sinkholes exiting through springs. There are four Mississippian rock formations in this area. Soils are silty and erodible.
- Central Dissected Uplands: steep, rugged hills with alternating narrow ridge tops and narrow gulleys carved out of limestone. There are no sinkholes. Soils are derived from loess and limestone/chert residuum.
- Western Rolling Uplands: rocks are limestone and shale and are not generally sinkholded. Topography is not as rough as that to the east. Soils are residual, formed on chert free limestone and vary from silt to clay.

The difference in elevation for the area is approximately 140 feet. Within or near the city, the difference is about 60 feet.

North and South Gabouri Creeks are the two major streams flowing eastward through the existing townsite.

The primary mineral resource is limestone which is being mined. Sand and gravel is readily available along the Mississippi River bottomlands and along the stream beds of the larger upland streams. There are a couple of saline creeks about 10 miles south of town.

There are walnut trees within the flood plain which were planted to designate the "arpents," the garden boundaries within "le grand champ." Many of these trees date from the time of the original townsite.

#### SCENIC RESOURCES

The Mississippi River Valley with its surrounding bluffs and rolling uplands is very attractive offering many pleasant and interesting visual experiences.

The existing townsite is quite attractive with many charming buildings and street scenes.

#### RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

There are no major existing recreational facilities in Ste. Genevieve.

## EXISTING USES AND TRENDS

Archeological Townsite - This site is located within a cornfield. There is no indication that any change in usage will take place within the immediate future.

Existing Town - The properties are being used in a variety of ways. These include residences, apartments, commercial enterprises, public facilities, and museums. As economic changes occur, it is quite possible that some of these properties could change ownership thereby resulting in possibly different uses. Ste. Genevieve is a stable community thereby indicating very few rapid turnovers. There are several historic properties in a deteriorated state and their future status is uncertain.

## POTENTIAL USES

Archeological Townsite - Given adequate flood protection, this site offers a number of interpretive possibilities. Stabilized archeological features could be exhibited and interpreted without restoration or reconstruction. If adequate flood protection is not afforded, the site could be excavated and reburied.

Existing Town - There are more properties which could be restored and opened to the public. Greater effort could be made to experience the French culture of this community through organized tours and professional interpreters.

Overall - Both sites could be interrelated, developing a program in which visitors could experience the real and artificial past and present world.



## THREATS AND RESOURCE PROTECTION

General Comment - Below is a discussion of actions which are being planned or have been taken to protect basically the cultural resources. These actions could, in themselves, be threats to the very resources which they are trying to protect. A master plan for restoring the Historic District was completed about 1967 but was never implemented. The plan was quite ambitious for a community the size of Ste. Genevieve. The restoration approach and required development were somewhat controversial within the community.

Threats - Archeological Townsite - There are a number of potential threats to the integrity of the site: erosion by the river, indiscriminate digging by collectors and/or archeologists, and sand and gravel mining operations. Total destruction of the site is possible with each flooding of the river because of the location of the existing levee. The levee built on top of the site protects the southern portion. However, several blowouts have occurred at various times in this levee resulting in large areas being scoured to a depth of 10-15 feet. A blowout at the site could result in complete obliteration on both sides of the levee. Vandalism would probably be minimal because the site is under cultivation and both the landowner and lessee have demonstrated strong proprietary interests over their property. Archeologists also pose a threat to the site if excavations commence without adequate historic research and a comprehensive plan for a total project. Part of the site is owned by a sand and gravel company. The possibility exists, though slight, that sand and gravel could be mined from the site.

Threats - Existing Town - A major threat to the Historic District is from flooding in which there are two sources. One is the Mississippi River and the other being the North and South Gabouri Creeks. Flooding by the Mississippi River is of long duration with major damage occurring with a 10-year frequency or higher flood. Such recent major flooding occurred in 1951 (20-year frequency); 1969 (15-year frequency); 1973 (25-year frequency); and 1979 (12-year frequency). Flooding along the Gabouri Creeks is of short

duration but occurs more frequently. When the Mississippi River floods, flooding occurs along the creeks. Here flood waters back up the creeks causing increased flooding. There is some flash flooding along the creeks when there are periods of heavy rains. Because flood waters cause damage to the structures, owners or prospective owners are deterred from investing in or acquiring the properties and restoring them.

The Army Corps of Engineers are proposing a flood control project for the community. The project would eliminate the threat of flooding but it, in itself, could pose a threat. Depending upon the final solution, the project could intrude upon and detract from this historic scene. The solution which has been recommended to Congress, based upon the best cost/benefit ratio, poses such a threat.

Until recently, Ste. Genevieve had neither a zoning ordinance/land use plan nor codes governing a new or remodeled building's exterior appearance. As a result there have been numerous instances of undesirable growth or changes made to structures which have seriously intruded upon the Historic District. It will be difficult to make any immediate changes to correct what happened in the past. There is now an approved zoning ordinance and historic preservation ordinance for the community. The zoning ordinance, however, does not adequately prevent intrusion into the Historic District. Whether or not Ste. Genevieve can enforce and implement these ordinances, especially the historic preservation ordinance, only time will tell.

There is no organized effort among the various groups involved in Ste. Genevieve's history to coordinate the interpretation of the historic structures, community's history, and significance.

There is no one organization, agency, or individual who can be relied upon for preservation or restoration techniques. Any work done of this kind has been done by the individual owner on his own with or without regard to the historic structure or fabric. In a few cases, consultants were called in but most of the work is accomplished by the individual himself.

Some historic structures are in very poor condition. Unless owners are found to stabilize and restore these structures, they could fall into total disrepair and possibly razed.

A comprehensive land use plan was developed in 1976 by the Southeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission. The plan has many strong points but in many ways, it does not adequately deal with protecting the Historic District.

Resource Protection - Archeological Townsite - The State of Missouri is in the process of nominating the site for national landmark status. However, certain information is currently lacking, therefore hindering the processing. The additional information is now being gathered. The study team spoke with the landowner and lessee about the historic importance of the site. They expressed a willingness to protect it from indiscriminate digging.

Plans are being prepared by the Corps of Engineers to construct a river front levee to replace the present private inland levee. Construction could take place as early as spring, 1980. This would protect the site from flooding and the more destructive blowouts.

The Old Missouri Research Institute is under contract with the State of Missouri to investigate and define archeological features through other means than excavation. Members of the Ste. Genevieve Historical Society, State of Missouri Historic Preservation Office, Corps of Engineers, and National Park Service, agree that excavations of the site should not be carried out in the near future and that each party will support the others in preventing any premature excavation attempts.

Resource Protection - Existing Town - The city enacted its first zoning ordinance in October 1979. Until this time, the city's growth went uncontrolled. (See Threats) The city also enacted a historic preservation ordinance in March 1978 to control a new or existing building's exterior appearance.

The Corps of Engineers are proposing to implement a flood control project. (See Threats) Federal, state, and local support for this project is growing; however, there is no guarantee that Congress will pass the necessary legislation.

The State of Missouri, certain individuals, and historic groups have taken an active interest in preserving, restoring, and maintaining several historic structures. Most of these are open to the public.

The Historic District and the Bolduc House are Registered National Landmarks.

The Southeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission developed a comprehensive land use plan for the community. (See Threats) It is up to the community to implement the plan.

OPTIONS FOR RESOURCE PROTECTION

Options for protecting and preserving the resource other than having the National Park Service do a Study of Alternatives are:

- Archeological Townsite - The State could acquire the parcel as part of its park system. The local historical society could acquire the area and institute by grants or cooperative agreements, a long term research effort.
- Existing Town - The State could work more closely with the community in encouraging historic preservation. Also, the community could continue to deal with the historic structures through enforcements and strengthening of the ordinances and implementing the comprehensive land use plan and rely on its own resources to preserve the structures.

PARTICIPANTS IN RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY:

Thomas G. Balsanek	Park Planner	MWRO	Team Captain
Randall Biallas	Historical Architect	MWRO	Architecture
Dick Hsu	Archeologist	MWAC	Archeology
Terry Norris	Archeologist	COE	Archeology
Roy Mathieson	Landscape Architect	COE	Site Consultant
Mike Weichman	Archeologist	MO DNR	Consultant

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As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities to protect and conserve our land and water, energy and minerals, fish and wildlife, parks and recreation areas, and to ensure the wise use of all these resources. The department also has major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U. S. administration.