CHAPTER XIII

CUARTELEJO.

To show just how the site and identity of the historical Cuartelejo have been recovered, and what has been discovered at the locality, the full paper on the subject, as given by its investigators, in Volume 6 of the Kansas Historical Collections, is here reproduced as a special chapter.

Odd from loc. the article on pgs. 124-129.
led to that rebellion, there took place from the Pueblo of Taos, the most remote of the northern Indian villages, and most intolerant of Spanish oppression, a migration of several Christian Indian families northeastward, to a locality far out upon the plains, on a main southern source of the Smoky Hill river, in what is now Scott county, Kansas, where they built an adobe pueblo of seven rooms. Their flight was known to the Spaniards, who called the new settlement "Cuartelejo" — meaning, apparently, a fortified place of refuge —, but made no immediate attempt to reduce them to subjection again or to bring them back. At Cuartelejo these Indians remained as an independent community, carrying on agriculture by irrigation after the manner of their brethren in the pueblos of New Mexico, for about three generations, or till some time subsequent to 1707, when they were brought back to Taos by twenty Spanish soldiers and a party of Indian auxiliaries under Don Juan de Archuleta, sent out by the governor of New Mexico for that purpose.

In 1706, Don Francisco Cuervo y Valdes being governor of New Mexico, Captain Juan de Uribarri marched out to the village of the Jicarilla Apaches, thirty-seven leagues northeast of Taos, and was by the latter Indians conducted to Cuartelejo, of which, says E. H. Bancroft, he took possession, naming the surrounding province "San Luis", and the Indian rancheria "Santo Domingo". He did not disturb the inhabitants of the place, and the name which he gave to it seems to have been little used, if at all, as the few early maps and manuscripts that note this far outlying pueblo generally cite it as "Cuartelejo".

With the Jicarilla Apaches as guides, his expedition proceeded to the Arkansas river, and in all reasonable probability by a more or less direct route through what is now southeastern Colorado — to a point only about sixty miles east of the Colorado state line, on that particular "Beaver creek" (locally so called) which on most maps is designated by the less hackneyed and hence more distinctive and desirable name of "Ladder creek", in the northern part of present Scott county, Kansas, where the ruins of a seven-room pueblo have been recently excavated by Messrs. H. T. Martin and E. D. Steele, and, from data given in the "Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft", identified as Cuartelejo by Dr. S. W. Williston, under whose direction, as then Professor of Paleontology in the University of Kansas, the excavation was made. The geographical data given by Bancroft are so explicit that there remains little room to doubt that Dr. Williston is correct in identifying the ruins on Ladder creek as the long lost Cuartelejo. This exceedingly interesting locality is twelve miles due north from Scott City, a town reached from either the east or the west by the Missouri Pacific railroad, and from the east also by the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe.

The expedition of Captain Uribarri across the upper Arkansas valley to Cuartelejo in 1706, exactly a century before the United States expedition under the gallant Zebulon Pike, seventy years before that of Escalante and Dominguez, and fifty-five years before that of Juan Maria Rivera, is the first one of historic record which there is undeniable reason to believe was made by people of European origin, over territory now included in the state of Colorado; the only earlier expedition known, and the first one known of any kind whatsoever, over Colorado domain, being that of the Taos Indian emigrants themselves about the year 1630.
Spanish and thirty Indians, reinforced encout by a body of Apaches under Captain Dominguez, led an excursion from Santa Fe against the Otos and Comanches. Leaving Santa Fe on the 15th of September and keeping on the west side of the Sierra, they traveled northward, in short daily marches and with some delays, till the 15th of October, after which they traveled eastward and southeastward and on the twentieth of the latter month were on the Arkansas river, then called the "Río Huesca", where soon after, probably near the east line of Colorado, they fell in with some Indians of Quartelesco, among whom they found men with gunboat wounds received from the French and their allies, the Pardos and Michaelis. An order was received from the Spanish vicerey to establish a presidio at Cuartelesco, 250 leagues northeast of Santa Fe; but a council of war decided that this was impossible and that the vicerey must have meant Jicarilla, only 40 leagues northeast of Santa Fe, and the council averred that, even there, twenty-five men would not be sufficient to garrison a post.

In 1711 the Spaniards went out from New Mexico, under Captain Pedro de Vizzano, the lieutenant-general of the province, a most unfortunate "military and colonizing expedition", apparently with the object of founding establishments in the Missouri country to check the westward advances of the French. The details of this expedition are but imperfectly known. From the brief and conflicting accounts given by French and Spanish writers, it would seem that it consisted of 200 Spanish cavalry, besides civilians and women and a large number of New Mexican Indian allies; that it went well equipped for its undertakings, which, according to French authority, included prospecting for mines as well as the founding of a military post and settlement; that it conveyed the fixtures of a chapel and was accompanied by a Dominican friar. The party entered Missouri through the channel and encamped near Chouteau's bluffs on the southwest bank of the Missouri river, where it was attacked by the Missouri Indians, who were friends of the French and armed with guns. Escalante, writing three-fourths of a century afterward, says that the massacre was the Pimicikas (northern Aransas) and he states it in the council of Chief Aranas, November 20th, 1711, where it was probably not realized by the Kaskaskians (Navajos), that it was by the Pimicikas (Moqui), and who at any rate were not in his speech in the council of Chief Aranas. The Missouri chief undoubtedly knew of the circumstance, and stated that three winters had passed since the massacre, the Missouri Indians having been committed by the circumstance, the Missouri Indians having been committed by the circumstance, the Missouri Indians having being committed by the circumstances of their eloquence to the French and hostility to the Spaniards. Escalante states that three winters had passed since the massacre, the Missouri Indians having been committed by the circumstances of their eloquence to the French and hostility to the Spaniards. Escalante also, in his account, mentions having obtained in the north at about this time some Spanish relics, said to have been derived from a great massacre of New Mexicans. The locality of this massacre is said to be in Cline county, Missouri, where also was the Missouri Indian village, as one may see by comparing D'Aulnay's map of Louisiana — drawn with remarkable accuracy in 1720 — with any good modern map of the state of Missouri. It was this expedition, the fear of Spanish
restitution for its destruction, and to protect the frontier of the French mining territory from further Spanish invasion, that caused the French in 1773 to build the Military Fort Orleans on the Missouri river opposite the village of the Missourie.

There is a legend which indicates that the Spaniards of this ill-fated expedition, in leaving New Mexico, passed down the canon of the Pecos river, and that their friends then ran down its valley to its most distant destruction. It is the circumstance which gave to that river its alternative name of "Rio de las Animas Perdidas", a name by which, abbreviated to "Las Animas", the river is now often called, and which is also perpetuated by the Colorado county of Las Animas and by the town of that name at the junction of that river and the Arkansas.

Since about the beginning of the eighteenth century it had been the desire of the French, and one of the special objects of the Compagnie des Indes, to bring the Missourie valley into commercial relations with both the Indians of the far west and the Spaniards of northern Mexico. Indeed French parties under St. Denis, acting for the Compagnie des Indes, succeeded in crossing the Texas frontier as early as 1710 and 1711 and in reaching the Presidio and Mission of San Juan Capistrano (on the west of the Rio Grande, below El Paso), bringing with them in the latter year a considerable quantity of merchandise, but the French policy was adverse to their proposed traffic, and their expeditions failed of their principal object.

The efforts of the French to open trade between the Missourie valley and New Mexico were equally unsuccessful, and prior to 1739 did not even result in the discovery of the much-sought-for route to Santa Fe. As early as 1703, twenty French Canadians left the village of the Tamaracs in the Illinois country with the avowed purpose of finding the way to New Mexico, trading for moccasins, and seeing the mines of which the Indians had told them; but they do not appear to have accomplished their object, though Canadians, in small bands, were on the Missouri at least as early as 1704, and probably before 1700, trading with the Indians, trapping, hunting and exploring, and in 1708 had ascended it to a distance of three or four hundred leagues. It had long been believed by many that the best route to New Mexico would be found by following up the Missouri river to its then unknown source, La Harpe in 1719, by way of the Arkansas, and De Bourgmont in the early twenties of the same century, by way of the Missouri and Kansas, made for the Compagnie des Indes costly but unsuccessful efforts to explore a route to Santa Fe and make it safe for their traders by peaceful treaties.
with the far western tribes than hostile to the Indian allies of the French.

But it was not until 1730 that the New Mexican capital was reached by traders. The Missouri valley, and this by a party of enterprising voyageurs who went both independently and — until after their return — even without the knowledge of the great French company.

This party, taking counsel of some of their Indian friends, and abandoning the then generally approved plan of ascending to the Arickaree village and seeking a route to New Mexico by way of the upper Missouri, took a route quite different from that and from any that had previously or, I may safely add, has since been attempted; and which was to a curious combination of the Oregon and the Santa Fe trail. The party consisted of eight Frenchmen, of whom the Baliet brothers, Gaul and Pierre, were the leaders.

Starting on May 16th from the Pawnee villages on the Loup fork of Nebraska, and travelling on the average, with their pack train of merchandise, only about five leagues a day, they ascended the Missouri, and then, after a week, went up the forth fork for three days and then back again, going over the tongue of land to the South fork, which they called the river of the Padoucas, and up the latter to Lodgepole creek. Leaving the South fork of the Platte on the 15th of June at the mouth of Lodgepole creek in what is now the northeastern corner of Colorado, they struck to the south, through the eastern border-region of Colorado. Crossing almost daily one or more of the numerous sources of the Kansas river, and the season being that of the June freshets, it is little wonder that they dubbed the Arickaree fork "the river of Anxieties," and lost seven horses loaded with merchandise in the Main or South fork of the Republican, which they called the "Canses."

On the last day of June, and when by the estimates given in their journal they had travelled 155 leagues from the Pawnee villages and Mill were now 110 leagues from Santa Fe, they reached the Arkansas river, and on the rocks bordering it they found the first signs of the Spaniards. Up this river they travelled for five days. They seem to have struck it a little below the mouth of Big Sandy and to have left it a little below that of the Scurtory. On the Arkansas, June 8th, they fell in with a village of Comanche Indians to which they gave a small present, receiving some venison in return.

Conceiving that this village had unfriendly designs, they encamped a league from it. On the 6th, when the French were about to leave the Arkansas, there came to them from the Comanche village an Arickaree slave, with the message that the Comanches had a mind to wipe them out. The Frenchmen sent him back saying that
his masters had only to come and that they would wait for them. But
the Comanches made no movement and the Arickaree having returned to
the Frenchmen and informed them that he had formerly been a
slave in New Mexico and knew the road thither, they persuaded him to
accompany them as guide, representing that they might be able to ac-
quire his liberty. On this day, the 8th of July, they doubled
their usual day's journey, travelling ten leagues, to get as far away
as possible from the Comanches. Their route from the Arkansas was
southwestward, perhaps not differing greatly from the wagon-route
which today leads up between Rule creek and the Purgatory and around
the head of Pecos Pine canon to Emory gap or Trinchera pass.
Camping, on the 12th, at the foot of the Raton range, which they called
"the first mountain", the 14th found them on the upper waters of the
Canadian, which they called "riviere Rouge", a translation of the name
"Rio Colorado", by which the upper Canadian has for two or three
centuries been known to the Spaniards and western Indians. Twenty-
one leagues from there they found Taos and the mission of Picuris,
Word of their coming having been sent ahead, the Commandant of Taos
sent out to them mutton and fine wheat bread, and when they were
within a league of Picuris, the Commandant and the Padre came out to
meet them and the hardy adventurers were welcomed with the ringing of
bells. On July 23d they reached Santa Fe, where they were hospitably
received. The object of their coming being inquired by the Governor,
Paul Mallet, replied that their purpose was to introduce commerce, in
view of the close union that there was between the crowns of France
and of Spain. Though such trade was desired by the local authorities
and people of New Mexico, and the Frenchman were treated
with every consideration by these, it was found necessary to wait at
Santa Fe nine months, for no communication to be sent to
and had a reply had from the Viceroy of Mexico, there
being but one caravan a year, each way, between Santa Fe and the City of
Mexico.
The Viceroy's reply was to try to engage the Frenchmen
to remain in the country, and there was believed to be a plan of em-
ploying them to discover a country travel to the west-
ward, according to Indian tradition, there were men who wore silk
shores, seven of them did

return; which after receiving a friendly letter to the authorities of
New France, in which it was hinted that if they came again with goods,
they should be furnished with a passport from the Governor, so that
their merchandise should not be subject to confiscation. Their return
was by a more southerly route, by way of the plains of Texas, and from

the upper branches of the river of that name, across to the Canadian river, or which after following it for three days, they separated three of them desiring to return to the Mississippi by the route to the Pawnee villages and thence to the Illinois, and the four continuing down the Canadian river, the lower forty or fifty leagues of which, having abandoned their horses, they descended in canoes made with the only two knives that remained in the party. The Canadian river, having thus been explored, for practically its whole length, considerably earlier than the Arkansas, by the hardy Canadians, may well have been named the Canadian, though it has been known by the English as early as 1779, twenty-one years earlier, and the Spaniards, the upper and the limits of Colorado.

We have seen that the first Spanish expedition known to have passed through the upper Arkansas valley was about two and a half centuries ago; that the first one by white men was by Spaniards, about two centuries ago; and that the first one by white men from the East — "Tabbyboos" — the Comanches, Otes and Shoshones called them — was by the French, nearly 150 years ago. But all of these were mere travelers; none of them came as residents, either temporary or permanent, and none of them built a habitation.

The first house known to have been constructed for human occupancy in the valley of the upper Arkansas was built for commercial purposes and probably was not built by Frenchmen. It is probably dated before 1763, and was built by Frenchmen. It is probably dated not long prior to that year as one of the members of the expedition that built it was still living in 1785, as the year of publication of Captain Amos Stoddard's Historical and Descriptive Sketches of Louisiana, a work in which the following account of the enterprise is given:

"While Louisiana was in the hands of France, some of the French traders from the upper Mississippi transported a quantity of merchandise, by way of the Arkansas, to the Mexican mountains, where they erected a temporary store, and opened a trade with the Indians, and likewise with the Spaniards of north Mexico. The Spanish traders at or near Santa Fe, fearing this an infringement of their privileged rights, procured the imprisonment of the Mississippi adventurers, and the seizure of their effects; and demanded punishment and confiscation. The cause was ultimately decided at Havana. The prisoners were liberated, and their property restored, on the ground, that the store in question (situated on the east side of the summit of the mountains, and below the source of the Arkansas) was within the boundaries of Louisiana. One of the persons concerned in this transaction is now living, from whom we obtained the several circumstances attending it."

Stoddard's narrative, Captain Meriwether Stittend in his excellent History of the American Fur Trade of the Far West.
says, "From this description it is evident that the "temporary store" was in the neighborhood of the modern city of Pueblo, Colorado, and was therefore the first structure known to have been erected by white men within the limits of the state of Colorado."

On the 26th of November, 1806, the memorable expedition of Captain Zebulon Montgomery Pike constructed a log breastwork in what is now South Pueblo. It was a small affair, constructed as a mere temporary defense in case of possible need; and it consisted of only fourteen logs, inclosing the spot chosen for it to a height of five feet on three sides, the fourth side being thrown on the river. It was used for six days by twelve men of the party. While Captain Pike and three others were making their unsuccessful but plucky attempt to ascend the great mountain that was destined to bear, as a fitting monument, the doughty explorer's name, and was used by Pike himself and his three mountain climbers, only for the night of their return from their effort.

It is, however, interesting as the first structure built on the upper Arkansas by English speaking citizens of the United States; and it should be further noted that while built by our military, it was in territory afterwards decided to be part of Mexico, being south of the line fixed by our treaty of 1819 with Spain, as the northern limit of the Spanish possessions, though in territory which had been for many years claimed by France as a part of the domain which she finally transferred to us by the Louisiana Purchase.

Pike's breastwork is also the first structure of any kind positively known to have been built in Pueblo county and on the site of the modern city of Pueblo, as the location of the French store of nearly half a century earlier, though most likely to have been within the limits of this city or county, may possibly have been in the county of Fremont or Otero.

On and following the 9th of January, 1707, Captain Pike's party constructed a small blockhouse on the north side of the Arkansas river at the present location of Canon City. It was built as a place of defense and deposit, and was occupied during January and February by two of the party: Baroney Vasques, the interpreter, and Patrick Smith, a private, who were left there in charge of it and of part of the baggage of the expedition.

Though doubtless fairly comfortable as a winter quarters, it was probably, in size and as a place of defense, inferior to the stockade that Pike later built on the Rio Grande.

During the summer of 1814, Joseph Philibert, of St. Louis, had a party of men trading with the Indians, and on the quiet no doubt with some of the bandits of New Mexico in the upper valley of the Arkansas. In the winter of 1814-15 the rendezvous of this party was at the twentys.

In the fall of 1814, Haines from Arkansas moved his post to the town, and when Capt. Philip Haines, the well known pioneer of western New Mexico, reached the upper Arkansas valley, there they
rent the winter.  June of 1843 found them on the 
headwaters of the Platte, where, having 
had continual trouble from mauling Indians since their spring 
roamings began, their party divided, half of it crossing the 
mountains westward, and half following along the eastern base of the 
front range southward till they again reached the Arkansas river, 
where in some way they learned that the fort on the Missouri, whence 
they came and where they were expecting to dispose of their 
property, had been broken up, so that it would be useless to return thither 
would be useless.  Four of them now left for Santa Fe.  The remain-
ing six, dispersed in small bands for hunting, were themselves hunted 
by Indians, who killed three of them.  The three who remained, 
Williams and two men named Chaplain and Parteau, — now sought an 
asylum among the Arapahos, the very Indians by whom their comrades 
had been killed.  The Arapaho chief told them that their only safety 
was in remaining under his protection, knowing that his words were 
too true, it being much safer to enter boldly into such an Indian 
camp than to leave it, they remained in the Arapaho village during 
the following winter, in wretched despair of ever again seeing their 
families and firesides.  

In the spring, Maj. Chittenden, in his 
abstract from Williams' journal, "Chaplain and Parteau desired to 
continue with the Indians, who assured them that they would certainly 
be killed if they attempted to return home; but Williams determined to 
get away or lose his life in the attempt.  His comrades helped him 
to make a canoe, and having cached his furs, he bade his companions 
farewell and set out down the river March 1st, 1843.  The parting 
was a gloomy one.  Chaplain shook hands with Williams, while Parteau 
turned away and wept.  A number of Indians witnessed the scene.  Chap-
lain and Parteau told Williams just as he was departing that they 
should also try to get away in about three days.  Each promised to 
notify the friends of the others if he should get back first; and thus 
they parted, never to see one another again.  
Williams descended the Arkansas about 400 miles, trapping beaver on 
the way, until his canoe was stopped by shallow water.  The June rise 
enabled him to start again, but on the 23rd of June he was captured by 
the Seneca Indians, who bound him fast and took possession of all his 
property, consisting of the furs he had caught along the river.  The 
Indians kept him prisoner until August 18th, when they restored part 
of his furs and set him free.  He arrived at Boone's lick, his home, 
east of Santa Fe, on September 1st.  The Indian sub-agent at Fort Osage, O. C. Endley,
to whom Williams reported the theft of his furs, caused the Indians to restore them.

"In May, 1814, Williams, in company with Morias May, Braxton Cooper, and eighteen Frenchmen, called Phillebert's Company, set out for the mountains to bring in the furs cached there. They arrived safely at the Arapaho village, where they called a council of the chiefs and demanded to know what had become of Chaplain and Parteau. The Indians could give no satisfactory account of them except that, some time after Williams' departure, they had set out with eleven horses and their furs to try to reach the Missouri, and that two white men, supposed to be they, had been found by the Crows, dead.

"Pailing in his inquiries, Williams hired Le Claire (or Le Clerc) of Phillebert's Company, and with May and Cooper, uncashed his furs and started home. After descending the Arkansas about 300 miles they were stopped by low water, and Williams was again compelled to cache his furs and return home without them. In the course of the following winter he received information that Le Claire had told of the cache of furs, and that a company under his pilotage had started to find it. Williams, with Joseph and William Cooper, brothers of Braxton, and all members of the noted pioneer family for whom Cooper county, Missouri, is named, made haste to forestall Le Claire in his scheme of robbery. They succeeded in reaching the furs first, and guarded the cache until spring, when they took advantage of high water and floated down to the settlements. It afterward came out that certain parties from St. Louis were back of Le Claire and his companions, and had promised them immunity even if they had to murder Williams to achieve their purpose. They hired a band of Indians to help them, but when the latter learned of the extreme business that they were called upon to do, they withdrew from their engagement and the whole scheme fell to pieces."

The party of Joseph Philibert of St. Louis, mentioned above as the "Phillebert Company", and which Williams, May and Cooper accompanied to the Arapaho village on the upper Arkansas, remained and traded in this part of the country Arkansas for nearly three years, and in the latter part of 1815 was absorbed by a stronger company.

In September of that year Meeurs, Augustine Chouteau and Julian de Munx fitted out an expedition to go to the upper waters of the Arkansas to trade with the Arapahoes and other tribes living thereabout, with them went Mr. Philibert, who had returned to St. Louis for goods, leaving his men on the Arkansas. The party encountered difficulties