

# AUGUSTE CHOUTEAU



*Aug. Chouteau*



Auguste Chouteau (1749-1829) supervised the construction of the first buildings in St. Louis as a 14 year old, in 1764. He was the most prominent citizen of the city in 1805 when the upper territory of Louisiana was transferred to the United States. As such, he was instrumental in reconciling the French and Spanish residents to the cession of the Territory to America.

He later was head of the western branch of the American Fur Company and was the President of the Bank of Missouri. He signed this note of the Bank as President on June 3, 1817.



St Louis February 23<sup>rd</sup> 1805

Sir,

Under cover you will receive a petition signed by some of the magistrates and Citizens of the County of St Clair recommending the establishment of a Ferry on the east side of the Mississippi opposite this town - which I request you to lay before the Governor -

I wish you to state to his Excellency that had I time I am confident that the signatures of almost every freeholder in the County might be obtained to the petition as no less than seven men with their horses came this day to the bank on the other side of the river without being able to cross - This circumstance being day repeated is a proof of the necessity



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## *Terms of Subscription for the* **MISSOURI GAZETTE.**

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## **LONDON, April 22.**

Upon the subject of Sir John Duckworth's late cruise, we have been favored with the following extract of a letter from an officer belonging to the squadron, dated

"Casand Bay, April 18.

"Having run down the Bay of Biscay, and called off Capes Ortugal and Finisterre, and Lisbon, we arrived off Madeira, and found Sir Samuel Hood, laying in Funchall roads, where we remained for two days. On the morning of the 3d of February, his majesty's ship Comus, gave us intelligence of her having been chased two days before to the N. W. of Madeira, and it then became obvious that the destination of the French squadron was the West Indies, for which we proceeded with all the expedition & made the islands of St. Lucia and Martinique in twenty one days. Off the east end of Martinique we saw six sail of the line; we cleared for action, and formed the line of battle, but, on exchanging signals we found instead of enemies; it was Sir Alexander Cochrane, with his squadron, who was waiting to give that enemy a reception which we were in chase of, conceiving that he would take refuge in that port. Finding that his fleet was sufficient to cope with them in those seas, we passed all the Windward Island, and anchored on the 16th of February in Bassaterre Roads, St. Kitts, where we remained only 18 hours, just long enough to take in water, but no provisions, nor even linen washed. We then proceeded to Saint Domingo,

where it was supposed the enemy had proceeded for the purpose of landing troops; but on our arrival there we found no ships. After cruising in the Mono Passage for seven or eight days, we made all dispatch for the coast of America, and arrived off the Cheseapeake on the 11th March. We communicated with the Statira frigate, and found that our Ambassador, Mr. Rose, was at Washington for the last time, to determine whether it should be peace or war with England. We should have gone in, but the Yankies would not let us have a pilot, nor supply us with water and provisions, which forced us to be content to live upon half our usual allowance; they would not give us a single pint of water or a cabbage stock. We left the Eurydice, to bring us any intelligence that might occur as to peace or war with America, and quitted the inhospitable shores of America for the Western Islands, where we procured all we wanted, after a long and very anxious cruise. The Governor of Flores [a Portuguese,] came off to us, but not being able to give us any information, the Admiral thought it most expedient to proceed for England, where we arrived this morning, after having been three months at sea, and made a complete circuit of the Western and Atlantic Ocean, a journey of upwards of thirteen thousand miles."

We learn by other letters, that our squadron remained several days off the Cheseapeake, and that the treatment it experienced was such as by no means to encourage the hopes of late entertained by many, of an amicably termination of our present negotiation with the United States. It is certain, that no article whatever of supply could be obtained by our admiral from the inhospitable and hostile Amerians; and it follows of course, that the reparation offered by our government for the affair of the Cheseapeake frigate was made in vain; although that circumstance alone, since so amply atoned for, was assigned by the President's proclamation as the motive for prohibiting all intercourse between the inhabitants and such British ships of war as might arrive in the American waters. Such conduct ar-

gues so hostile a determination in the government of the United States, that the general opinion expressed by the officers of our squadron, "that a war with America is inevitable," cannot be considered as founded upon weak or trivial grounds. We should have expected that Mr. Rose's mission would at least have procured for our squadron the rights of hospitality, if it did not effect a complete re-establishment of the former good understanding between the two countries; but we fear the Frenchified government of the United States has so far resigned itself to the baseful influence of the cabinet of the Thuilleries, that nothing but salutary chastisement will bring it to a due sense of the pernicious error into which its unnatural propensities have permitted it to be led. If America will have war with Great Britain, she will have herself only to blame for the consequences. It is our sincere wish to remain at peace with her, and our ministers, it is well known, have adopted every expedient short of comprising the honor, the dignity of the nation to avoid the extremity of warfare; but we are certainly not prepared to lay the honor and essential interests of the empire at the feet of any junto upon earth. The blustering American demagogues may perhaps have founded some portion of their confidence upon the support of a certain party in this country; some of them, as we lately took occasion to remark, may derive hope from the confiscation of property and the non-payment of debts; they may conceal from themselves their comparative impotence, by throwing their weight into the aggregate of the enemies of G. Britain; but a few short months of war would convince these politicians of the folly of measuring their puny strength with the colossal power of the British empire. We do not ourselves wish to be understood, as stating positively that a war with the United States is become inevitable; the door for amicable adjustment still remains open, and while it continues so, hopes of adjustment may not irrationally be indulged. But in whatever manner the negotiation may terminate, we shall have the consolation to re-

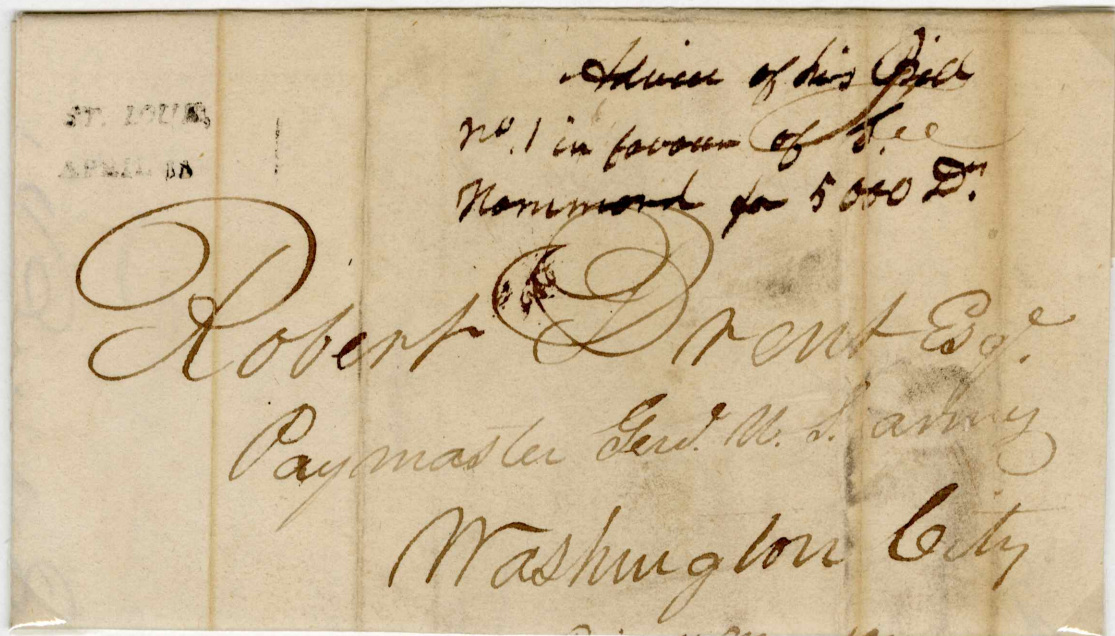
(See 4th Page.)



S a i n t L o u i s

M I S S O U R I T E R R I T O R Y

1 8 1 9



Letter from Thomas Hempstead dated April 7, 1819. Under authority of the Governor he draws on the Paymaster General for \$5,000 to pay the Territorial Rangers and Militia, for "...Pay, Subsistence, rations & Forage, allowances for Horses and Traveling allowances..."



S a i n t L o u i s

M I S S O U R I T E R R I T O R Y

H A R M O N Y

1 8 2 0



This letter is datelined "Troy [Missouri Territory] Apl 7th 1820." It was carried privately to St. Louis, where it entered the mails for Harmony, the religious community in Indiana.

It is addressed to Frederick Rapp, the secular leader of the community. It enclosed \$6 for te \$5 the writer had borrowed from Rapp when he left Harmony.



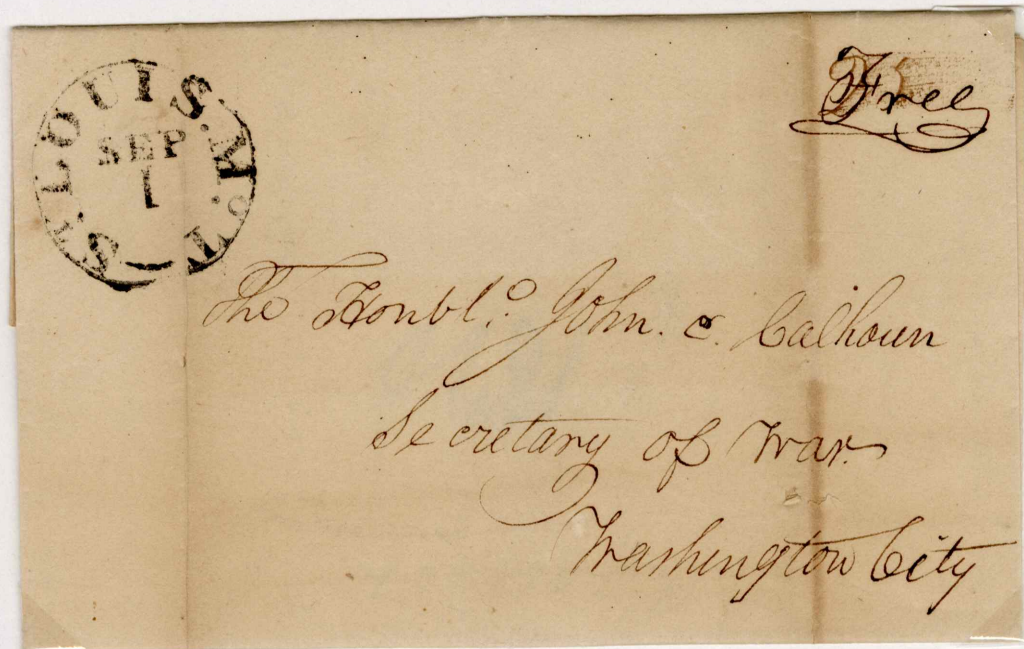
S A I N T   L O U I S

M I S S O U R I   T E R R I T O R Y

1 8 2 0



Elias Rector became the fourth postmaster at St. Louis on 1 December 1819, following the death of A. T. Crane in November of that year. He served until 1822, operating the office out of Madame Chouteau's stone mansion at Main and Chestnut.



The last recorded example of this townmark struck in black is 2 September 1820, just one day after this letter entered the mails.

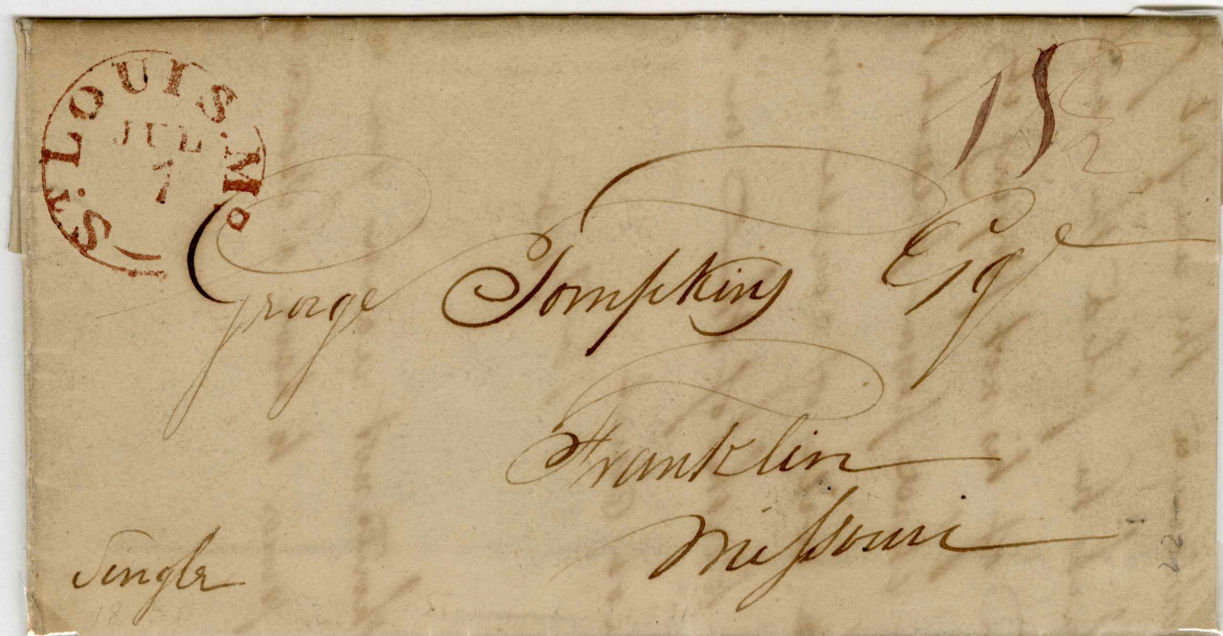
The letter is from William Rector, a brother of the postmaster, recommending Major Angus L. Langham as "Paymaster to the Rifle Regiment." Rector had been Surveyor-General for Illinois and Missouri Territories and a director of the Bank of St. Louis. Langham, a veteran of the War of 1812, was William's banking associate.



S a i n t L o u i s

M I S S O U R I T E R R I T O R Y

1 8 2 1



Two examples of intra-Missouri Territory mail shortly before the territory became a state. In anticipation of that event, the postmaster removed the "T" from the townmark by filing it down below the surface of the other letters. Addressed to the territorial towns of Jackson and Franklin. The bottom cover refers to attempts to collect a note signed by the St. Louis postmaster, Elias Rector.