



LANDMARKS LETTER



Can you guess the building this architectural detail is from? See *Elements* on page 2.

The History of Fort Zumwalt

by Andrew Weil



Fort Zumwalt c. 1880

WHILE MOST PEOPLE in the St. Louis region have probably heard the name “Fort Zumwalt” in connection with the school district in St. Charles County, they are probably less familiar with the story of the “fort” itself and the fascinating role it played in the Colonial and Frontier period history of the St. Louis region. Others may be familiar with the now reconstructed building that stands in Fort Zumwalt Park in O’Fallon. Despite its impressive name, “Fort Zumwalt” was actually no more than a log home constructed by the family of American settler Jacob Zumwalt beginning in approximately 1798. It was however used periodically as a fort during the tumultuous years of the War of 1812, when low level conflict between British-allied Native American groups and American settlers in the St. Louis region would occasionally burst into brutal violence. This is its story.

The political context that eventually gave rise to the fort begins in the Colonial period as the French, Spanish, and English fought for control of the region. French explorers, missionaries, and coureurs de bois were the

first Europeans to utilize the interior of what is now the St. Louis metropolitan area. While the French made some early attempts to establish permanent communities west of the Mississippi, most 18th century French colonials initially preferred to live east of the river at settlements like Cahokia, Kaskaskia, and Prairie du Rocher. It was not until about 1740 that a group of habitants crossed the river and established a community at Ste. Genevieve, and in 1764 the trading post of St. Louis was founded. By that time, due to the outcome of the French and Indian War, France was forced to surrender its lands in Canada and the Illinois Country (east of the Mississippi) to Great Britain. Devastated by war debt, they also bartered their land west of the river to the Empire of Spain. Preferring to live under Spanish authority rather than submit to the hated British, many French colonists moved west across the river into what had become Spanish territory. St. Louis became an administration center for Upper Louisiana; the Territorial Government was centered in New Orleans, which, in turn, answered to Madrid. *continued on pg. 6 >*

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Elements

ST. LOUIS
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

THE ELEMENT SHOWN on the front cover is the grand entrance to the St. Louis Public Library, pictured below. It's just one of the many amazing buildings that await your eye when you go on a Downtown St. Louis Walking Tour with Landmarks.

For all the details, please see the article at right and join us for a tour of the architectural history of Downtown St. Louis.

Downtown Walking Tour Group at the St. Louis Public Library.



Downtown St. Louis
Walking Tours

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Landmarks Walking Tours are off to a roaring start this year. We've already hosted nearly 450 guests! The tours are now listed on both TripAdvisor and Airbnb Experiences so there are even more ways to buy tickets and let visitors know about this great way to experience the city. In addition to the weekly Saturday East and West Downtown Tours, we've added a monthly tour of the Grand Center Arts District on the second Saturday of the month.

If you haven't taken one of our tours, or it has been a while, we invite you to join us to learn more about the history and culture of St. Louis while you explore its rich architectural heritage. Tours are on Saturday mornings at 10am. You can find everything you need to know and purchase tickets on our tour website at LandmarksTours-STL.org.

We also offer special tours for groups of five or more. These tours are great for student groups, family reunions, employee outings, conference experiences, or just getting together with friends. In addition to tailoring a tour for your group, we have made arrangements with the National Blues Museum to use their venue to present our WABMO (What Are Buildings Made Of?) education programs at the start of our special tours, which has been very popular with educational groups of all ages.

There's still plenty of time to experience a Landmarks Walking Tour since we run our regular schedule through the end of October and we'll do special tours any time of the year. So, check out the tour website and we'll look forward to seeing you on one of our Landmarks Walking Tours.



Forgotten, But Not Gone: Retracing the Steps
of St. Louis' Oldest Cemetery

by Andrew Weil

FORGOTTEN, BUT NOT GONE, when St. Louis' second Catholic Burial Ground was rediscovered by construction crews in 1990, a story going back to the founding of St. Louis was uncovered as well. When St. Louis was founded in 1764, a town block (block 59) was set aside for the purposes of a church, rectory, and cemetery. A simple log church was hastily built on this block to serve residents as the rest of the town began to take shape. In 1776, a larger and more permanent log church was constructed to replace the earlier building. Constructed of vertical logs in the French Colonial manner, this church would have been very similar in dimensions and appearance to the surviving Church of the Holy Family (begun c. 1786) in Cahokia, Illinois (shown, right).

The 1776 church was located on the east side of the block, north of the midline with its narrow end fronting on 2nd Street. The rectory (for the itinerant priest) was on its south side with a perpendicular orientation to the church, and would (ideally) have been surrounded by dependencies like a chicken coop, bread oven, herb and vegetable gardens, and probably a grape arbor. The cemetery covered what was approximately the northern third of the block. An early representation of the property shows the two functional areas of the church block (church/cemetery—domestic/agricultural) separated by a palisade wall, which also surrounded the boundary of the entire block. Such walls were less for defensive purposes and more to keep marauding animals like hogs from rooting around in the gardens, and burial ground. By overlaying the woodcut on a current aerial of the Arch grounds, the original layout of the church block of 1776 is revealed on the modern landscape.

As St. Louis became more established, the old log church was replaced with a larger brick building. Under the direction of Bishop DuBourg, the third church to stand on block 59 was completed c. 1821 on the northeast corner of the property over a portion of the existing cemetery. According to a c. 1850 lithograph by Julius Hutawa in the collections of the Missouri History Museum, by the time the new church was completed, the cathedral block had advanced substantially. According to Hutawa the block contained extensive gardens, a grape arbor, stable, refectory, two wells, bath house, cemetery, the Bishop's home and a college building (which looks suspiciously like the former log church repurposed).

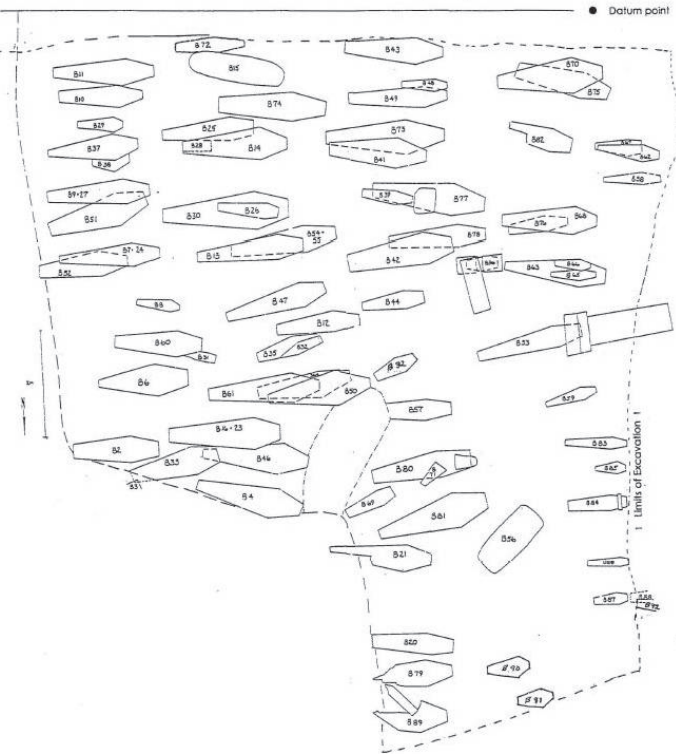
In 1823, St. Louis passed a law forbidding cemeteries within the city limits. Interestingly, this was not due to concerns about the spread of contagious disease, which was poorly understood, but associated with corporeal corruption. Rather the ordinance was passed in response to increasingly cramped conditions. The city limits were set at 5th Street and space for new development was at a premium. As a result, the cemetery on the cathedral block was disinterred and the remains of St. Louis' founders moved 1.7 miles northwest to newly donated land on the St. Charles Road in the Prairie des St. Louis. By 1830, the former cemetery lot had been completely leased for commercial development.

The Second Catholic burial ground was established on four acres of land donated by William Stokes at the northwest corner of what is today Dr. Martin Luther King Avenue and Jefferson. Part of Stokes' farm, this land was well suited for a cemetery on high, flat, well-drained ground on a major rural road, more than a mile from the city limits. Stokes and a woman he identified as his wife had arrived in St. Louis in about 1821. His real wife arrived in 1822 and sued him for divorce and alimony. In failing health and with a ruined reputation, Stokes decided to donate the land to the Church in the summer of 1823 shortly before his death.

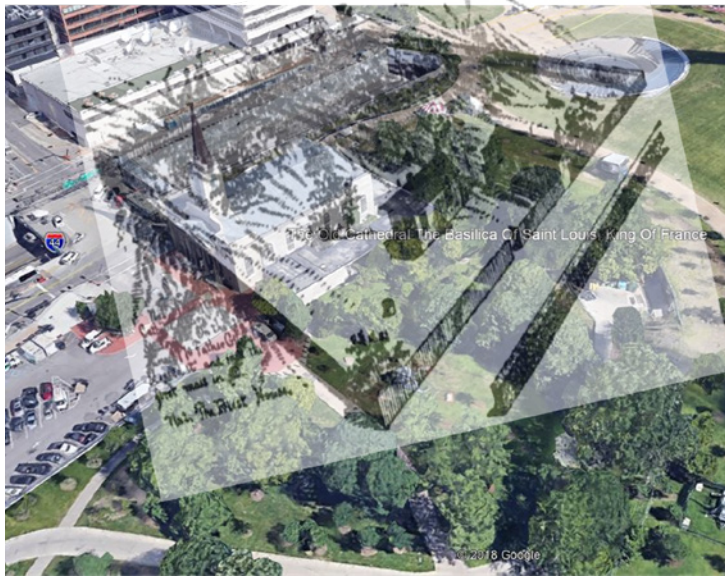
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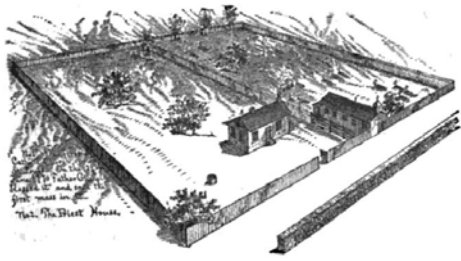
Church of the Holy Family, Cahokia, Illinois.



Plan map of burials identified at the second Catholic cemetery.



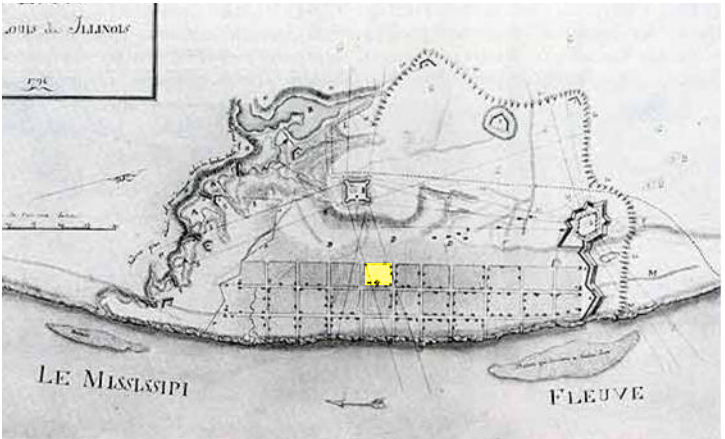
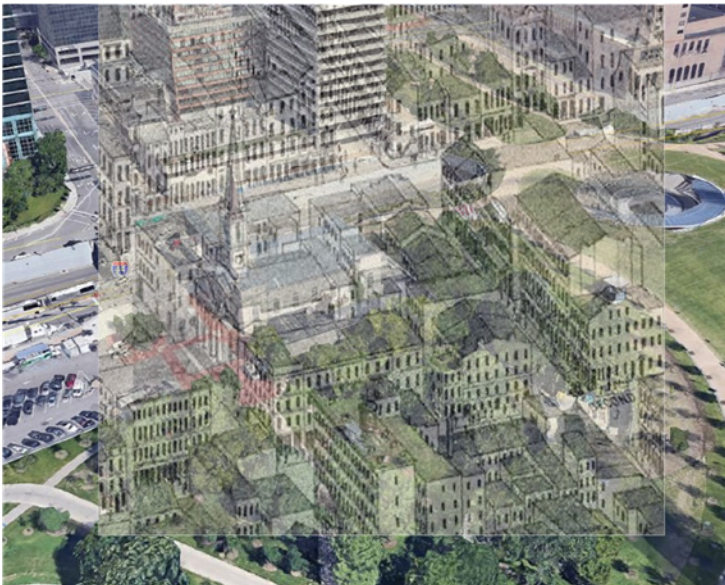
Cathedral block in 1776 (right) overlaid on modern landscape (top).



Cathedral block in 1821 (left) overlaid on modern landscape (top).



Cathedral block in 1875 (left) overlaid on modern landscape (top).



St. Louis 1790s, Cathedral block highlighted

Forgotten But Not Gone, Continued...

The cemetery served all walks of life. Historical records and osteological analysis from archaeological investigations conducted in 1990 indicate that creoles, presumably both free and enslaved African Americans, and Native Americans were buried there along with the likes of August Chouteau and Antoine Soulard. The area quickly became a cemetery district with a Methodist Episcopal cemetery established on the west side of the Catholics in 1828, and a Presbyterian burying ground in operation to the east prior to 1830.

Unfortunately for St. Louis, the timing of these cemeteries was prescient. The city's first cholera epidemic hit in 1832 and subsequent plagues, peaking with the horror of 1849, overwhelmed the city's capacity to deal with the dead. The cemetery district on the St. Charles road was heavily used and newspapers reported sextons across the city resorting to tactics like burying multiple people in the same grave or in shallow graves above earlier, deeper interments.

In response to the ferocity of the cholera outbreaks, yet another, larger Catholic cemetery near Rock Spring was established in 1849. Bounded by present day Duncan and Clayton Avenues (north-south) and S. Sarah and Boyle (east-west), Rock Spring cemetery too was essentially filled to capacity in less than 20 years with the victims of cholera outbreaks of 1849, 1854, and 1866 making up the bulk of its occupants. Another factor which could have led to the speed with which Rock Spring reached capacity was that (supposedly) the burials from the Second Catholic cemetery were removed and reinterred there.

In 1850, the heirs of Amos Stoddard sued the Archdiocese of St. Louis claiming that the land where the cemetery was located was rightfully theirs and that William Stokes had never actually owned it. The courts agreed paving the way for the development of the land. Stoddard's heirs immediately began subdividing the property and while occasional burials continued through 1854, the cemetery was destined to become part of a dense residential district. Its fate was accelerated in 1855 when the City limits were extended westward from 18th Street to

a point 660 feet west of Grand. This put Second Catholic in violation of the ordinance prohibiting cemeteries within the City. Through public notices, relatives of those buried there were asked to specify where they wanted the remains of their loved ones to be relocated. Over the next few years, many were supposedly moved westward to Rock Spring. After 1857, removal to the newly created Calvary Cemetery in north St. Louis became an option, and after 1859, some were interred in the Crypt beneath the newly built church of St. Bridget of Erin across Jefferson to the north.

In 1876, the City's current boundaries were established and with nowhere else to go, the ordinance prohibiting cemeteries inside St. Louis City was either formally repealed, or conveniently forgotten. Rock Spring was closed in the face of industrial development pressure in 1899 and its burials (some of its burials) were moved to Calvary and the St. Bridget Crypt. After the dust settled, the march of St. Louis' early Catholic dead from the Old Cathedral to the edge of the Central West End, to their final resting places appeared to be over, and so it remained for nearly another century.

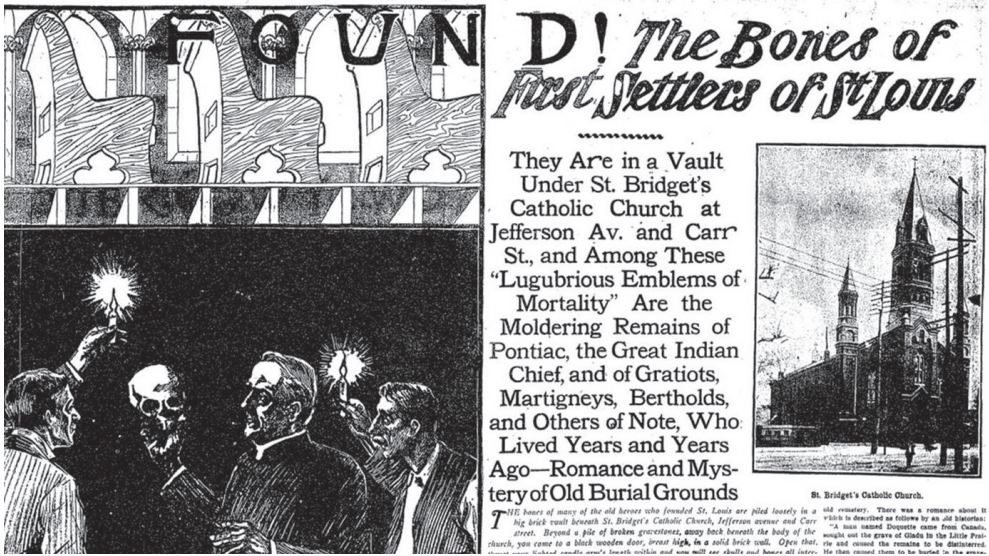
In 1990, workers conducting environmental remediation of a former gas station in advance of the construction of the new Second District Police Command uncovered wooden coffins and human remains. Lots of them. Per state burial law, archaeologists were called in to investigate, map, and remove the burials for reinterment. In 1991, the Archaeological Research Center of St. Louis began work at the northwest corner of Jefferson and MLK, the site of the Second Catholic Burial Ground. Only a fraction of the overall site required deep excavation for environmental purposes, so the archaeological work was limited in scope. In a 12x11 meter area, just 1,188 square feet, the remains of one hundred and twenty one individuals were recovered. This was a fractional burial density of almost 10 people per square foot. These findings clearly demonstrated that the newspapers of the cholera era were not slandering the City's sextons with their lurid tales; they were accurately reporting the news.

Three intact headstones were discovered during archaeological investigation; these give an interesting glimpse into the Catholic community of St. Louis at the time. One marked the resting places of Catherine, Morris, and Mary Regin. All died during the 1840s. Catherine was six years old, Morris was two and Mary's age was not specified, but she was recorded as having come from Castletown-Roche, Co. Cork Ireland. The second stone was written in French and recorded the resting place of Emilie Caya, another child who passed away in the 1840s. The final stone was written in German and recorded the location of 39 year old Alois Wiedemer. Analysis of skeletal remains from across the site confirmed that the rest of the cemetery was as diverse as St. Louis was itself in its early years with Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans coexisting in death as they had in life.

Rediscovery of historic burial grounds in urban and even rapidly suburbanizing areas is a commonplace occurrence in the United States,

as it is all over the world. In St. Louis, a 2006 archaeological investigation of Spanish Land Grant Park in Florissant that sought to find the original location of St. Ferdinand Church uncovered large intact areas of its associated cemetery (supposedly removed in the 19th century). In 2011, the expansion of a laundry company near 7th and Park uncovered intact remains of the "Rutger" or "City" cemetery. In 2014 excavation related to Cortex development found burials where Rock Spring Cemetery had been located. Historians and preservationists (myself included) love to look back on beautiful buildings or even entire neighborhoods that no longer survive and wax poetic about how they are gone, but not forgotten. In a city as old as St. Louis, whose geographical boundaries and regulations pertaining to burial grounds have evolved over more than 250 years, it is also worth reflecting on those places that are forgotten, but not gone.

St. Louis Post Dispatch November 24th, 1907.



For the most part, Spanish authorities recognized the improbability of populating the new territory with immigrants from Spain. Instead, they viewed the land as a geographical buffer that insulated their lucrative colonies further to the south from the British. Despite the initial influx of French Colonial settlers, the population of Upper Louisiana in the early days of the Spanish regime remained insufficient to deter the British threat. After the Revolutionary War established that the newly minted Americans hated the British as much as they did, the Spanish employed a risky gambit in a bid to increase settlement and make the Territory more secure. The strategy was rooted in the idea that if they could grow the population by offering grants of free land, the settlers would logically defend their homes (and thus the Territory) against invaders.

By the 1790s, many Americans in frontier areas like Kentucky were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with their new government. In many cases, taxation and other “intrusions” into people’s lives and affairs had increased since the end of the Revolution and with the threat of war fading and Native American groups largely pushed out, unscrupulous land speculators began to manipulate, buy and cheat lands away from pioneer settlers.

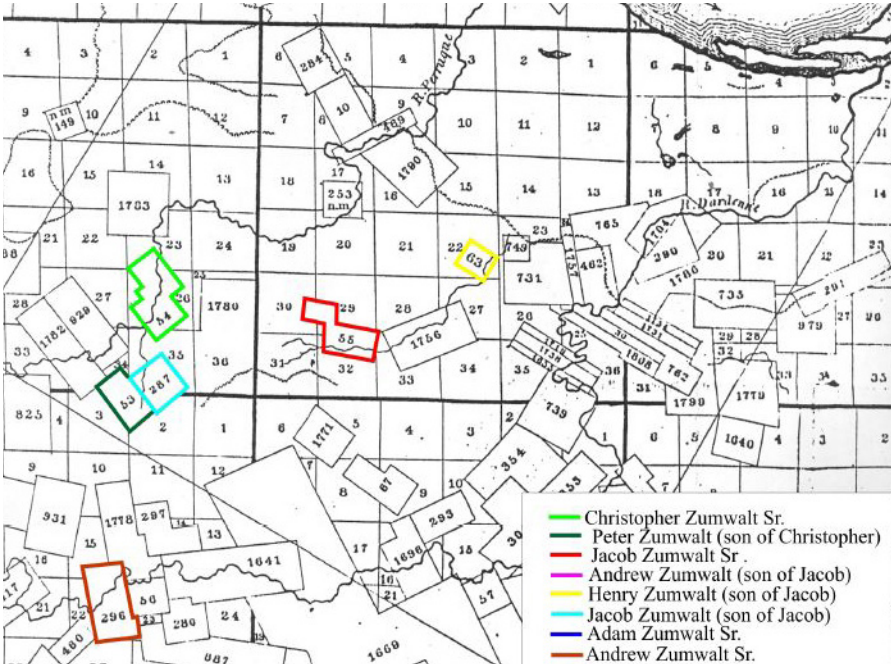
In 1796, the Spanish authorities began circulating advertisements throughout Kentucky, the Northwest Territory, and other areas of what was then the western frontier of American settlement. These ads promised that settlers who moved to Spanish territory would be given land for free and would pay no property taxes. Americans responded rapidly to the generous terms and began the journey to the west side of the Mississippi.

Rather than balk at the tide of settlers flowing out of country, the American government was largely pleased with the idea. Though the Spanish were obviously manipulating these settlers, Thomas Jefferson believed it would be the United States that would have the last laugh. Knowing the ferocity and independence of the pioneers who were moving into Spanish lands and anticipating a Louisiana where the Spanish were hopelessly outnumbered by American migrants, Jefferson wrote “I wish a hundred thousand of our inhabitants would accept [Spanish settlement terms]...it may be the means of delivering to us peaceably what may otherwise cost a war.” In other words, he saw that the Spanish had unwittingly invited a Trojan Horse within their walls, and given it a comfortable stable.

Among the Americans who responded to the enticements of the Spanish were members of the Zumwalt (sometimes spelled Sumwold, Zumalt, and Sommalt) family who were living in the vicinity of Lexington, Kentucky at the time.

The patriarch of the Zumwalt clan, Johann Wilhelm Andres Zumwalt [aka Andrew], came to Philadelphia from Germany in 1737. He and his wife Mary then moved to the vicinity of York, Pennsylvania where they began a substantial family. Andrew and Mary had two sons and three daughters before Mary’s premature death. Andrew later married his second wife, a woman named Ann Regina, and the couple moved to Frederick County, Virginia. This couple had five more sons and a daughter; among these children was a boy named Jacob, who would eventually settle in what is now St. Charles County, Missouri.

Born in 1752, Jacob Zumwalt grew up in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley and married Katherine (Queti) Miller in 1772. Jacob and three of his brothers (George, Christopher, and Adam) fought in the Augusta County militia during the Revolutionary War and later moved to Kentucky in the early 1780’s along with their three other brothers. Jacob’s brother Adam was apparently one of the first of the brothers to make the trek westward and fought along with Lieutenant Colonel



Distribution of Zumwalt family land claims, 1809. Jacob Zumwalt outlined in red at center.

Daniel Boone and other early settlers at the disastrous Battle of the Blue Licks in 1782. It is very likely that Daniel Boone and Adam Zumwalt became acquainted at that time.

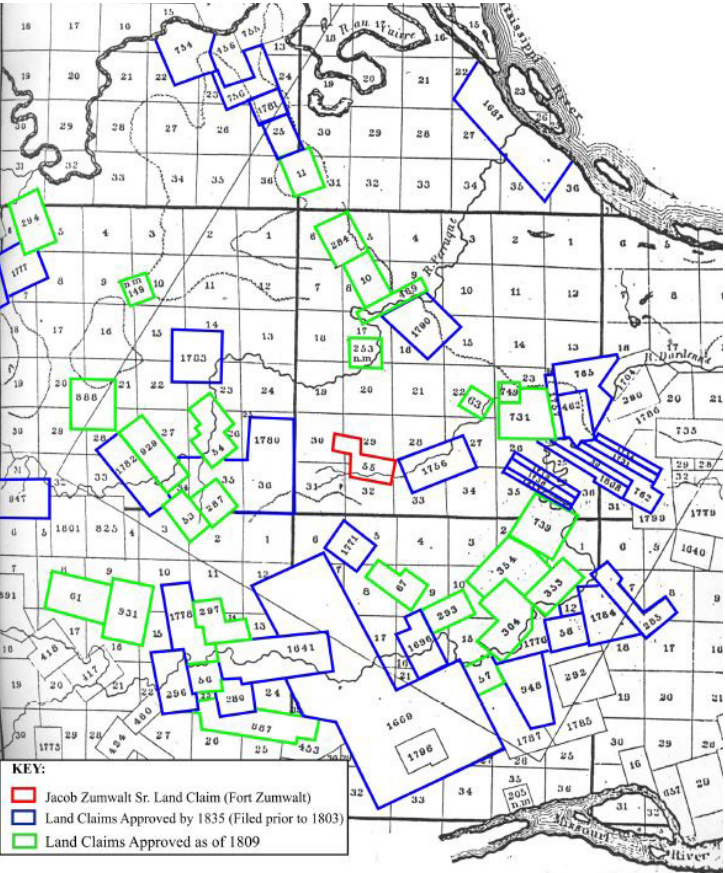
It has been asserted that members of the Boone family (Daniel Sr. and Nathan) encouraged the Zumwalt migration to Upper Louisiana. The evidence for this is intriguing, but circumstantial. If indeed any member of the Boone family played a role in the Zumwalt’s decision to move to Missouri, it should be noted that Daniel Morgan Boone (one of Daniel Boone’s sons) is the most likely candidate. He owned land near the Zumwalt properties in Kentucky and, at the invitation of Spanish authorities investigated portions of Louisiana in 1797. Soon thereafter he was granted lands near Femme Osage Creek in modern day St. Charles County. Around the same time, most of the Zumwalt clan accepted the Spanish offer of free land and headed west themselves.

Per Spanish policy, in order to qualify for a land grant, settlers typically had to occupy a property for one year and make measurable improvements like clearing trees and building a home.

Jacob Zumwalt along with family members Christopher, Jacob, Andrew, Andrew, Adam, Peter, and Henry applied for their land concessions at St. Louis between October 27th and November 9th 1799, indicating that they likely arrived in the Territory in the fall of 1798.

In their migration, it is likely that the Zumwalts traveled along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers for much of their journey to Louisiana. Adam Zumwalt’s son Solomon remembered later that his father came to Missouri using a large boat, which he and several hired hands paddled to the mouth of “Barrack” (probably a corruption of Peruque) Creek in St. Charles County. Peruque Creek arises near Warrenton and flows northeast into the Missouri River (today a dammed section forms Lake St. Louis). Jacob moved onto grant number 55 (shown above) along with his wife Katherine (Queti), and their children Andrew, Henry, Jacob Jr., George, Dolly and Elizabeth. Katherine Queti Zumwalt died in July of 1799 and was buried near the log home that the family was probably still in the process of completing, in what is today O’Fallon’s Fort Zumwalt Park.

When the Zumwalts moved into the St. Charles District, it was at the western fringe of American settlement in the Territory. Known as “The Forks” (a reference to the land north of the Missouri and west of the Mississippi) the land was sparsely populated. French settlers had established some small communities in the area including



St. Charles District land claims filed by 1803 (Blue). Land claims approved by 1809 (Green). Jacob Zumwalt claim outlined in red at center.

“Les Petite Cotes” (St. Charles) in 1769 and various Native American tribes continued to exploit the region for hunting and trapping as they always had.

Sandwiched between the powerful Osage to the west, and surrounded on every other side by Sauk and Fox, Sioux, Kickapoo, Potawatomie, Ioway, Shawnee, Oto, Miami, and others, settlers of the St. Charles District were located in a vulnerable position. Relations with Native Americans were often unpredictable as land-hungry Americans pushed further into the frontier. The situation was also complicated by the ever shifting political landscape of European colonial powers who manipulated policy, trade, and violence to further their interests in the area.

The Zumwalts could not have been strangers to the delicacy of Indian relations after spending nearly twenty years in remote Kentucky. In the manner of people used to living on the fringe of Euro-American society, they seem to have maintained a pragmatic approach to Native peoples. While many of the Zumwalt men had fought Indians in the past, they also seemed open to peaceful relations and trade. Several stories told of Adam Zumwalt in particular illustrate the ability that many frontiersmen had to maintain perspective despite often severely strained relations.

Adam, who lived on survey 294 to the northwest of Jacob’s home lived in constant contact with Native Americans, many of whom were among the best customers at his distillery. He even purportedly hosted the great Sauk Chief Black Hawk a number of times in his home and allowed the Chief to dance with his daughters. Another story recounts how an unnamed Native American chief died while visiting Adam Zumwalt and how he was buried in the family plot along with a loaf of bread, a butcher knife, and his sacrificed dog. These stories of Adam welcoming Native Americans into his home, trusting them with his family, and tolerating their religious practices says something remarkable about the man, especially when one considers the violence of the Indian

Wars he experienced in Kentucky. In general, success on the frontier was largely dependent on the capacity to adapt; Adam, and presumably the other members of his family seem to have possessed this quality.

Settlers on the frontier in the St. Louis area did not only have to adapt to the presence of Native Americans, but to a kaleidoscope of different languages, cultures, and ethnicities. The English-speaking Zumwalts, for example lived in a region that was ruled by Spain, though most of the people in the towns were a mix of French colonials, creoles, and people of African descent (free and enslaved). French was the common language, Spanish was used in official proceedings, and Latin used for services in the only officially sanctioned (Catholic) Church. For the Zumwalts, who were apparently illiterate in their primary language of English, the immersion in this new world must have been trying.

THE AMERICAN PERIOD

In 1800, Spain returned Louisiana to France. With the stroke of a pen, the Zumwalts were now French subjects. Then, in 1803, the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from France; for the first time since leaving Kentucky, the Zumwalts were farming American soil. In March of 1804, the Spanish Lieutenant governor, acting as the agent of France (a telling example of frontier political elasticity), surrendered Upper Louisiana to American Captain Amos Stoddard at St. Louis.

A few years after assuming control of the Territory, the United States created a board of commissioners to “adjust” titles to land that had been granted by the Spanish. All those who had received land grants were required to petition the commissioners to recognize the legitimacy of their claims. This process was no easy matter. In an effort to combat fraud, the American government made the standard of proof needed to confirm a grant very high and many notable personages such as Auguste Chouteau and Daniel Boone initially had some of their claims rejected. Jacob Zumwalt’s petition floundered in the hands of the board for years before it was officially recognized in 1809.

Though it took several years, four members of the Zumwalt family (brothers Adam, Jacob, Christopher, and Jacob’s son Henry) had their Spanish land grants confirmed by the American government in what would become Dardenne Township of St. Charles County.

All the Zumwalt farms would have grown cereal grains, vegetables, and fruit in addition to raising livestock. In addition, it appears that the three brothers worked together in a vertically integrated system to produce food, flour, and whiskey. While Jacob appears to have primarily been a farmer, Christopher set up a grist mill and, as mentioned previously, Adam operated a distillery. The conversion of corn into whiskey greatly increased its value; everyone had corn, but everyone



Heald family spring house adjacent to Fort Zumwalt, c. 1900.

Fort Zumwalt Continued...

wanted whiskey. Other advantages that whiskey had over corn was that it was more compact (large amounts of corn made small amounts of alcohol) and thus a harvest could be converted into a more easily transported commodity. In addition, unlike corn, whiskey could be stored indefinitely. The system the brothers set up made great sense for the economic opportunities available in the area and would have probably made them both well known and relatively well off.

THE WAR OF 1812 AND THE BIRTH OF ZUMWALT’S FORT

At the time of the Louisiana Purchase, relations with Native Americans were tense in the St. Louis region. Though not common, violent (and well publicized) encounters between Indians and settlers did occur. Between 1805 and 1808, there were approximately ten white settlers killed in incidents in St. Charles County; the number of Native American casualties is not recorded

In addition to Native conflicts, the acquisition of Louisiana by the United States created new tension with Great Britain. As antagonism rose in the years prior to the War of 1812, Indians allied with the British raided American settlements in Louisiana with increasing frequency. Wide ranging American hunters were caught in deadly ambushes and families living in isolated farmsteads were occasionally murdered and mutilated by bands of warriors. Various Native American groups, who in many cases had already been displaced several times and were all too familiar with the voracious American appetite for land, readily joined the British in an attempt to dampen American enthusiasm for the West. In response, American militia companies as well as the occasional regular soldiers launched punitive raids against Indian settlements to the north. A brutal if irregular state of war existed in the region long before Britain and the United States came to official blows.

In 1808, a worried Henry Dearborn (Secretary of War) authorized the formation of a large militia in the Territory; Governor Merriwether Lewis announced the call for volunteers in the Missouri Gazette. In addition, Lewis called for the residents of the exposed western districts such as St. Charles to organize a system of forts, blockhouses, and stockades for their mutual protection. While some forts such as Fort Howard (about two miles south of present-day Winfield in Lincoln County) were built specifically as defensive military works. A significant installation, it enclosed 1.5 acres within a stockade and boasted towers at three of its four corners. On the other end of the spectrum, house forts like Fort Zumwalt were simply large, centrally located houses where people could “fort up” when danger approached.

The choice of the home as a fort makes sense considering that a place of refuge is only helpful if people know how to find it. Jacob was one of the earlier American settlers in the area, and he was respected as an elder statesman and veteran of the American Revolution. The home would have been known as a component of the large Zumwalt clan whose holdings not only included four properties in Dardenne Township, but nearby farms of three other brothers and their extended families as well. In addition, Zumwalt properties included community focal points such as a mill, distillery, and Methodist meeting house meaning that the family had a high degree of visibility and notoriety even among widely dispersed neighbors. Also not to be discounted, the Zumwalt homestead had a large and reliable spring very nearby, which to this day keeps the lake in Fort Zumwalt Park full.

In November of 1810, Benjamin Howard assumed control of the Louisiana Territory. In the midst of escalating tensions, he toured the countryside with William Clark, Brigadier General of the Territorial Militia, selecting and inspecting sites for fortifications. Despite the progress of the militia as a fighting force and the growing network of defenses, by late August, many settlers were too afraid of Indian attack to leave their homes; just in time for the harvest, farms were going un-worked. That fall, Indians ambushed a party of Americans who were hunting about 40 miles north of St. Charles, killing three. Later that winter, a family of eight living on an isolated farm near Clarksville was murdered. Solomon Zumwalt, Adam Zumwalt’s son, remembered that the Indians carefully avoided militia patrols. Not pursuing a traditional

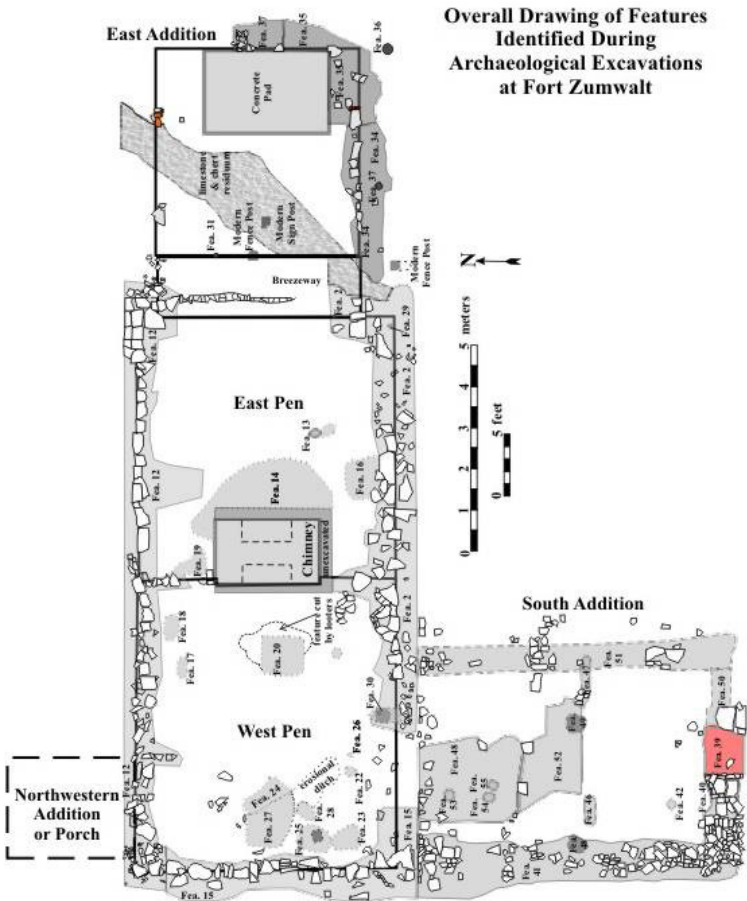
military victory, they pursued an asymmetric approach attacking soft targets like farmsteads and small hunting parties in the interest of creating terror.

The diffuse nature of settlement and the agricultural economy of the area made the St. Charles District extremely vulnerable to this type of guerilla warfare. Such attacks undermined the regional economy while forcing some residents to flee and dissuading potential new residents from coming. Widely scattered but vicious attacks kept the populace on edge and brought immigration to the area to a standstill. *The Missouri Gazette* advised people to tend their fields in groups and to post sentinels. Solomon Zumwalt confirmed this practice in his remembrance of the wartime years saying: “...the settlers would fort for a while and there would be none killed for a while, they would move from the forts to their farms and someone would be killed—then they would fort again...during that war, neighbors would collect to tend their corn, while they worked, some of them stood guard.”

THE STRUCTURE OF THE FORT

Historic images and archaeological investigations have shown that Fort Zumwalt was essentially a 1.5 story, double pen log house with a central hearth (additions to the east and south were added later in the 19th century). Though it is possible that the home was adapted for defense with a surrounding palisade or rifle ports, physical evidence is lacking. It is most likely that those who sought shelter within the fort’s walls did so primarily for the safety that was offered by numbers and cooperation.

There is significant debate with regard to how or if the building itself was modified into a fort during the War of 1812. The documentary record is rich in speculation and hearsay, but falls short on credible information. Edna McElhiney Olson, a prolific historian of the fort who was affiliated with the St. Charles County Historical Society in the middle of the 20th century, stated in numerous letters, talks, and publications that Jacob Zumwalt built two additions to the home during the War so that the property could be “used as a fort.” She also noted that both the



Original Fort Zumwalt chimney 2005 prior to reconstruction of surrounding building.

spring and the icehouse were enclosed in a stockade during the War. Olson relied fairly extensively on statements made by descendants of the Zumwalt and Heald families (the latter purchased the property from the Zumwalts in 1817), but it is difficult to say how much of this information is rooted in fact.

In 1926, an article in the *Kansas City Star* written by a Heald relative named Lee Shippey stated that “early in 1812 or thereabouts, a bastion like addition was set up on the low ground around the spring...notched with rifle portholes.” He based this information on the recollection of “people still living” who claimed to have seen the logs of the stockade in person. This assertion is intriguing because of Shippey’s family connections, the reference to eyewitness accounts, and the logic inherent in defending the fort’s water supply. However, historic photos of the Heald spring-house (dating to the late 19th or very early 20th century, therefore likely falling into the period when Shippey’s “people still living would have seen it” do not show the presence of any standing stockade logs.

Like the existence of a stockade, the existence of rifle ports in the fort itself is a common theme in Fort Zumwalt lore. This aspect of fortification would have made sense from a defensive perspective and is generally documented in descriptions of other period Territorial forts by contemporary witnesses and modern historians alike. Stephen H. Long, who traveled through St. Charles and the Booneslick Country on his way to the Rocky Mountains in 1819, visited Kennedy’s Fort (west of Fort Zumwalt in Warren County near present day Wright City) and several others in the vicinity. The forts that he noted were described as “strong log houses with a projecting upper story and loop holes for musketry.” It should be noted that this description is more reminiscent of some of the block houses constructed by the military during the War as opposed to house-forts like the Zumwalt’s.

Edna McElhiney Olson re-iterates the presence of rifle ports at Fort Zumwalt in much of her writing, as did Shippey in his 1926 article. In addition, several discussions of the War of 1812 fort network in Missouri by historians such as Louis Houck, Edgar B. Wesley, Douglas Hurt, and the anonymous 19th century author of the “*History of St. Charles, Montgomery and Warren Counties*” all refer to rifle ports as a feature of period forts in St. Charles County. Still whether the Zumwalt home was architecturally adapted into a military building remains an open question.

An alternative to the formal rifle port concept stems from the fact that the stone and clay chinking between the logs of the fort could be removed quickly, easily, and wherever necessary to make holes through which to fire a rifle. If the efficacy of such an approach is in doubt, consider the case of Captain Sarshall Cooper, namesake of Cooper County, Missouri, and casualty of the War of 1812 in the area. Toward the end of the War, an Indian crept up to the Callaway County fort in which Cooper was living, scratched through the chinking in his cabin wall, and shot him through the hole.

THE END OF THE WAR, THE END OF THE FORT

Although Zumwalt’s Fort was periodically used for refuge the there is no evidence that it was ever attacked. As previously stated, Native American raiders preferred soft targets such as isolated hunters, travelers, or farmers out in their fields. As the war smoldered on throughout 1812 and 1813, more rangers were commissioned and what was essentially an “Indian free zone” was created around settled areas. As the militia became more capable, large scale offensive operations were conducted in Illinois, where many of the raids against Missouri originated. Still, in the summer of 1814, an unfriendly portion of the Sauk and Fox tribe stole 150 horses and 300 cattle from the Booneslick Region. Isolated killings, scalplings, kidnappings, and mutilations were also reported from settlements in the area of modern Fayette, New Franklin, Arrow Rock, and from farmsteads along Moniteau Creek and the Chariton River.

Despite the official end of the war with the 1814 Treaty of Ghent, sporadic attacks continued in what by then had become the Missouri Territory. The treaty vexed the people at the tip of the spear because the diplomats who negotiated it had no idea how the conflict had manifested itself on the frontier. The militias were officially demobilized and the use of military force was no longer authorized against the British or their allies, but their allies were Native Americans who had joined the fight for their own reasons. While the British had decided to end the conflict, many of the objectives for which their Indian allies had gone to war had not been achieved. The status quo ante of the War essentially continued after the treaty but for the fact that, as one frustrated Missourian put it in the *Missouri Gazette*, “we are not permitted to kill the enemy but on condition he first kills us.”

Gradually, the tribes which had formerly been allied with the British came to realize the futility of their positions and the American Government began to realize the necessity of negotiating a separate peace in the West. In the spring of 1815, Secretary of War James Monroe appointed William Clark, Ninian Edwards, and Auguste Chouteau as Indian Commissioners and assigned them the task of negotiating peace. In the late summer of 1815, the vast majority of antagonistic tribes, abandoned by their British allies and cut off from trade, came to Portage des Sioux in St. Louis County to negotiate treaties with the Americans. The Rock River Sauk resisted for another year, but, under threat of federal military action, arrived in St. Louis in the spring of 1816 and thus officially ended the War of 1812 in the American West.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF THE ST. LOUIS FRONTIER

The initial treaties of 1815 sparked the beginning of a second and much larger wave of American migration into the Missouri Territory. The finalization of peace in 1816 confirmed to the country that the lands west of the Mississippi River were indeed again open for business. Wagons poured across the river, passed through St. Louis and headed for open land in the Booneslick Region and areas further west.

In 1817, Jacob Zumwalt turned 65. Having arrived at the official age of retirement for 21st century Americans, Jacob had far exceeded what for the time would have been the average life expectancy. He and his second wife Franqui were economically and socially established.

Their children were grown and had farms of their own, and the land that had been given to them by the Spanish was now worth a significant sum. In 1817, the Zumwalts sold their farm to Nathan and Rebecka Heald for \$1,000 and moved to Pike County, Missouri where they lived out their old age on the farm of their son Jacob Jr.

The Heald family and its occupation of the property is an equally fascinating story, but one for another day.

*A fully referenced version of this article appeared in the 2005 report of archaeological investigations conducted at Fort Zumwalt by the Archaeological Research Center of St. Louis. For additional reading see Waselkov in *The Missouri Archaeologist* Vol 40. December 1979.

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