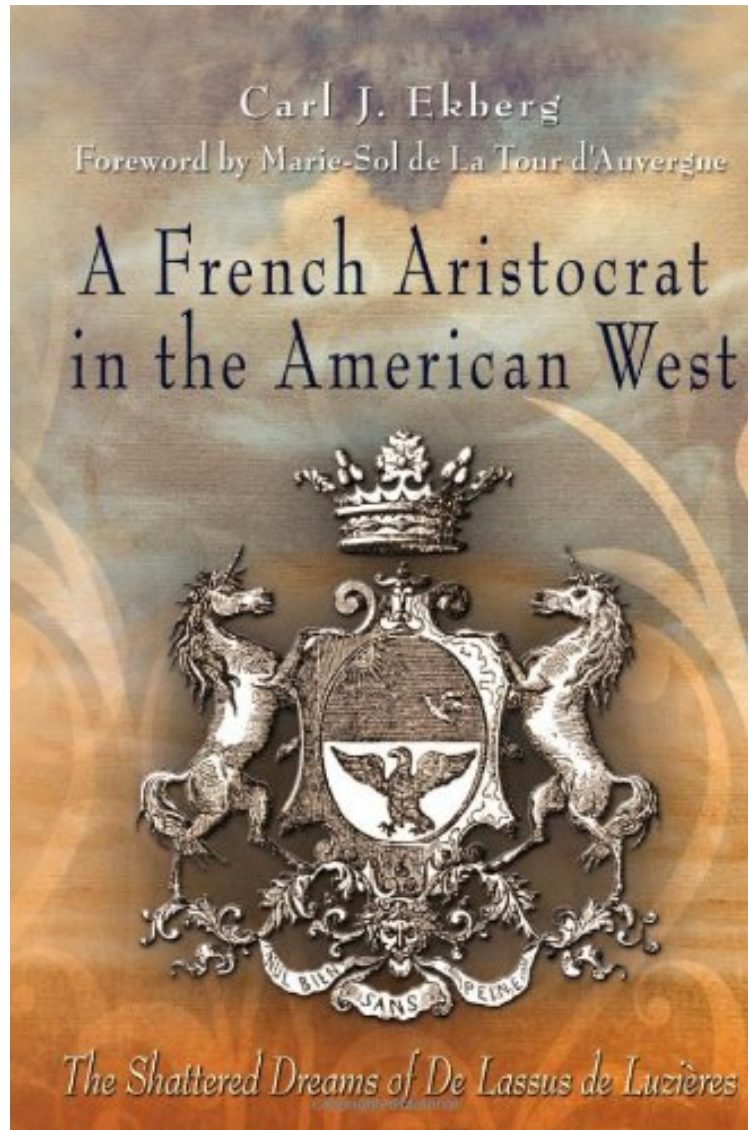


(Ebook free) A French Aristocrat in the American West: The Shattered Dreams of De Lassus De Luzieres

A French Aristocrat in the American West: The Shattered Dreams of De Lassus De Luzieres

Carl J. Ekberg

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Carl J. Ekberg : A French Aristocrat in the American West: The Shattered Dreams of De Lassus De Luzieres before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A French Aristocrat in the American West: The Shattered Dreams of De Lassus De Luzieres:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Highly recommended, especially for college library collectionsBy Midwest Book ReviewA French Aristocrat in the American West: The Shattered Dreams of De Lassus de Luzieres is

the biography of Pierre-Charles de Lassus de Luzieres, who left Revolutionary France with his family to buy land in America. He was swindled by the notorious Scioto Land Company, yet he chose to remain in North America and move to the Mississippi River Valley. He dreamed of creating a commercial empire; though he never precisely realized his most grandiose aspirations, he was pivotal in founding the city of New Bourbon and encouraging American settlers to move westward across the Mississippi River. His most notable legacy is his extensive writings about life on the Mississippi frontier during the last years of the colonial era. A French Aristocrat in the American West is divided into two parts - a thoughtful biography of de Luzieres, and a meticulous collection of source documents. The result is an invaluable account that simultaneously serves as a primary and tertiary source of American colonial history, as well as of the life and times of a truly extraordinary American. Highly recommended, especially for college library collections.¹ of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent, well-researched historical and biographical work. By D. Pusch Ekberg did an excellent job of presenting his research on this often-overlooked but profoundly important figure in the history of Spanish Illinois. Ekberg's style of writing and the organization of the work make a great combination. I especially liked the inclusion of so many English translations of De Lassus d Luzires' papers.

In 1790, Pierre-Charles de Lassus de Luzieres gathered his wife and children and fled Revolutionary France. His trek to America was prompted by his purchase of two thousand acres situated on the bank of the Ohio River from the Scioto Land Company, the institution that infamously swindled French buyers and sold them worthless titles to property. When de Luzieres arrived and realized he had been defrauded, he chose, in a momentous decision, not to return home to France. Instead, he committed to a life in North America and began planning a move to the Mississippi River valley. De Luzieres dreamed of creating a vast commercial empire that would stretch across the frontier, extending the entire length of the Ohio River and also down the Mississippi from Ste. Genevieve to New Orleans. Though his grandiose goal was never realized, de Luzieres energetically pursued other important initiatives. He founded the city of New Bourbon in what is now Missouri and recruited American settlers to move westward across the Mississippi River. The highlight of his career was being appointed Spanish commandant of the New Bourbon District, and his 1797 census of that community is an invaluable historical document. De Luzieres was a significant political player during the final years of the Spanish regime in Louisiana, but likely his greatest contributions to American history are his extensive commentaries on the Mississippi frontier at the close of the colonial era. A French Aristocrat in the American West: The Shattered Dreams of De Lassus de Luzieres is both a narrative of this remarkable man's life and a compilation of his extensive writings. In Part I of the book, author Carl Ekberg offers a thorough account of de Luzieres, from his life in Pre-Revolutionary France to his death in 1806 in his house in New Bourbon. Part II is a compilation, in translation, of de Luzieres's most compelling correspondence. Until now very little of his writing has been published, despite the fact that his letters constitute one of the largest bodies of writing ever produced by a French migrant in North America. Though de Luzieres's presence in early American history has been largely overlooked by scholars, the work left behind by this unlikely frontiersman merits closer inspection. A French Aristocrat in the American West brings the words and deeds of this fascinating man to the public for the first time.

Carl Ekberg's *A French Aristocrat in the American West* demonstrates yet again that small stories set in remote places can inform and instruct about matters of great import. His well-told tale of de Luzieres' remarkable journey from the court of Louis XVI at Versailles to a remote village in the North American backcountry offers valuable insights about revolutionary upheaval, shifting imperial policies, international rivalries, and mid-America's little-noticed francophone frontier. As with Ekberg's previous books, this is a must-read. William E. Foley, author of *Wilderness Journey: The Life of William Clark*