

The bold exploit of the brothers Mallet attracted great attention at New Orleans, and Bienville resolved to renew it, find if possible a nearer and better way to Santa Fé, determine the nature and extent of these mysterious western regions, and satisfy a lingering doubt whether they were not contiguous to China and Tartary.¹ A naval officer, Fabry de la Bruyère, was sent on this errand, with the brothers Mallet and a few soldiers and Canadians. He ascended the Canadian Fork of the Arkansas, named by him the St. André, became entangled in the shallows and quicksands of that difficult river, fell into disputes with his men, and, after protracted efforts, returned unsuccessful.²

While French enterprise was unveiling the remote Southwest, two indomitable Canadians were pushing still more noteworthy explorations into more northern regions of the continent.

sept [huit] Français par le Général Hurtado, 24 Juillet, 1739. Père Rébald au Père de Beaubois, sans date. Bienville et Salmon au Ministre, 30 Avril, 1741, in Margry, vi. 455-468.

¹ *Instructions données par Jean-Baptiste de Bienville à Fabry de la Bruyère, 1 Juin, 1741.* Bienville was behind his time in geographical knowledge. As early as 1724 Bénard de la Harpe knew that in ascending the Missouri or the Arkansas one was moving towards the "Western Sea," — that is, the Pacific, — and might, perhaps, find some river flowing into it. See *Routes qu'on peut tenir pour se rendre à la Mer de l'Ouest, in Journal historique, 387.*

² *Extrait des Lettres du Sieur Fabry.*