

MARIE THERESE CHOUTEAU,

maiden name Bourgeois, was born in New Orleans in the year 1733, and in 1749, at the age of sixteen years was married to Auguste René Chouteau of that place. The only child of this marriage, Auguste, was born on September 26, 1750.

This union continued but for a brief period, as in the following year Mrs. C. left her husband and returned to her friends.

The family tradition regarding the cause of her separation from Chouteau, and her subsequent connection with Laclede, is this:—

“She had not long been married to Chouteau, who was much older than herself, and of a jealous disposition and violent temper; than he commenced a system of abuse, which culminated in personal violence on his part, in which he inflicted a wound on her face the scar of which she carried to her grave. After this she left him and returned to her friends, which step on her part, they claim, met the approval, not only of all her friends, but of the Catholic clergy with the bishop at their head, who advised them in future to live apart from each other, and sanctioned their separation as far as he consistently could, and which they chose to consider as final and complete.

“Laclede came to New Orleans in 1755, and after becoming acquainted with each other, a mutual attachment ensued, which resulted in what they chose to consider their *legal* union, although not strictly in conformity to the usages of the church, which met the approval, not only of their personal friends, but of the community at large — for New Orleans was then but a very small place, hardly more than a village, its population according to Gayarré, not ex-