Unit 3

19th Century Louisiana: A State in Conflict

Topic I
Statehood & the Battle of New Orleans

Documents
Territorial Period of Louisiana

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Louisiana Purchase and Territorial Period

The Louisiana Purchase in 1803 added an immense, undefined amount of territory to the United States.

BY PETER J. KASTOR

The period from 1803 to 1812 was a landmark in Louisiana history. In these years, the land that became Louisiana went from a European colony to a federal territory and finally to the eighteenth state in the union. In the midst of these political changes, Louisianians experienced social unrest, racial revolt, and international
conflict. Meanwhile, determining what would become of Louisiana and its residents forced people in the United States and in Europe to consider what it meant to be American. Although Louisiana became a state in 1812, that hardly settled the questions unleashed by the Louisiana Purchase.

Acquiring and Defining Louisiana

Nothing reflected the tumult and uncertainty of early Louisiana more clearly than the battle over its borders. In April 1803, France ceded a vast but vaguely defined geographic space to the United States with the Louisiana Purchase. News of the acquisition came as an enormous surprise to the United States. President Thomas Jefferson had sought only New Orleans and access to the Gulf Coast. He now faced the challenge of governing far more territory and, even more daunting, a much larger and more diverse population. Further, the Louisiana Purchase treaty failed to specify clear borders, and it would be almost two decades before the United States had clear title to all of the land that now constitutes the state of Louisiana.

The boundaries of Louisiana took shape as a result of the political conflicts that gripped Europe and stretched across the Atlantic Ocean. These conflicts played out differently in the New World, as the United States exploited Napoleon’s invasion of Spain in 1807 and the subsequent crisis within the Spanish empire to seize West Florida in 1810. The Mexican struggle for independence also made Spain willing to make major territorial concessions in the West, even as the United States abandoned some of its own ambitions in Texas. It was not until 1819 that the Transcontinental Treaty finally established the eastern and western boundaries of Louisiana.

In the midst of these international conflicts, the federal government was also subdividing the land acquired through Louisiana Purchase into manageable political subdivisions. In 1804, Congress created the Territory of Orleans, which included much of the territory that now constitutes the state of Louisiana. Territorial rule was intended to provide a temporary system of government for the region and to prepare Louisiana for eventual statehood and jurisdictional equality alongside the other states of the union. The federal leadership appointed most major offices, while local residents were allowed to elect a territorial legislature. This system of territorial administration constituted a dramatic change from European imperial rule.

Many Louisianans complained about what they considered the slow progress toward statehood. Local residents demanded an increase in the number of elected offices and were particularly keen to see members of the old francophone community elected to those offices instead of the newly arrived Anglo-Americans. Despite these grievances, few sought a return to European rule, in large part because they believed the federal system offered far more benefits to its frontier settlements.

In the years immediately following the Louisiana Purchase, the federal leadership, officials in the Territory of Orleans, and local residents struggled to create the institutions that would make self-government within the federal system secure. In 1812, Congress approved Louisiana statehood, and President James Madison eagerly signed it into law. Statehood actually preceded the final determination of Louisiana’s borders, which underwent minor revisions until the Transcontinental Treaty finally established the boundaries once and for all.

Ethnic Relations

The Louisiana Purchase created confusing political circumstances within the Territory of Orleans. The treaty granted immediate citizenship to white Louisianans, who were eager to enjoy what they considered the rights of U.S. citizenship. However, many people outside the territory claimed that the Louisianans did not know how to act as good Americans.
The political battle over Louisiana statehood often reflected the tense ethnic relations among whites within Louisiana. At the time of the Purchase, the territory’s white population consisted primarily of Creoles born in Louisiana, as well as migrants from Canada, the French Caribbean, and France itself. The vast majority of these people spoke French and considered themselves products of a French culture. At the same time, however, people had known more than thirty years of Spanish rule in Louisiana, and they had been joined by a sizeable population of Hispanic residents and Anglo-Americans. Equally important, many of them were deeply suspicious of the Napoleonic regime in France.

In these circumstances, Louisiana experienced complex and at times bewildering ethnic relations. The francophone (French-speaking) and anglophone (English-speaking) populations were often at odds. Meanwhile, the francophone majority created and preserved cultural institutions that made Louisiana unlike any other state in the union. French remained a common language in daily conversation and in official documents, and Louisiana’s legal system combined the Anglo-American common law with French, Spanish, and Roman principles of civil law.

At the same time, these differences were never so obvious as they now appear. First of all, there was no uniform francophone “community.” Creoles argued with French migrants, the residents of cosmopolitan New Orleans shared little with the residents of rural Louisiana, and French- and English-speaking residents often found common cause in their political and commercial pursuits. The notion of a Creole-American split eventually became the stuff of legend in Louisiana, but most observers were more struck by the absence of conflict or revolt.

The general amity among white residents depended in no small part on their commitment to racial supremacy. Whatever cultural or political disputes might divide white residents of Louisiana, they shared a belief in white superiority and a fear of non-white revolt. In the wake of the Louisiana Purchase, whites in Louisiana (regardless of ethnic background) came together to impose new restrictions on slaves and free people of color.

Non-whites responded accordingly. Slaves repeatedly sought to run away and in 1811, more than eighty slaves owned by Manuel Andry in St. Charles and St. John the Baptist parishes, launched an unsuccessful revolt along the German Coast that was the largest single slave uprising in the United States. Free people of color proved more successful. Located primarily in New Orleans, they sustained themselves as the largest, most prosperous community of free blacks anywhere in North America. Meanwhile, whites supported the efforts of the federal government to undermine Native American sovereignty and, eventually, to force most Native Americans out of Louisiana. Native Americans developed numerous strategies of resistance but in the end proved unable to restrain the federal onslaught.

The War of 1812

The greatest test of Louisiana came during the War of 1812, when British troops invaded the Gulf Coast in 1814-1815. Louisiana militiamen defended the region ardently and demonstrated not only Louisiana’s commitment to remain in the United States, but also the ability of the United States to protect and support its newest state and its newest citizens. Meanwhile, slaves exploited the chaos to run away in large numbers, and some Native Americans allied themselves with Great Britain.
In the end, the Battle of New Orleans provided both white Louisianans and the federal leadership with an ideal opportunity to celebrate expansion and statehood. Free people of color and Native Americans who had fought alongside white soldiers also had the moment to prove their own loyalty to the United States. At the same time, the resistance of slaves and other Native Americans served as a reminder that the creation of Louisiana had expanded freedom for some while restricting it for others. These varied responses reflected the benefits as well as the challenges that faced people in an American Louisiana.

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Additional Data

https://64parishes.org/entry/louisiana-purchase-and-territorial-period
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New Orleans

The Port of New Orleans has been at the epicenter of American history for centuries: Wars were fought over it, and Louisiana was purchased by the United States in order to obtain New Orleans.

Map depicting plantations on the Mississippi River (http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0OHX6U9MS/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B0OHX6U9MS&linkCode=as2&tag=maritinements-20&lid=6VMNS764EB2AJZUQ)

From 1718 until 1810, New Orleans was essentially European. Decreed a city at its founding by Bienville in 1718, New Orleans was laid out by the French engineer, Adrien de Pauger, in a classic eighteenth-century symmetrical gridiron pattern, but the streets were little more than muddy ruts.¹

It did not really matter at the time as there were insufficient people to fill the grid until 1800.¹

From the beginning, New Orleans had a reputation as a very important place; and for most of the eighteenth century, image was
more important that reality. Although its geographical situation, strategically important site, and master plan for development guaranteed New Orleans a bright future, the realization of that promise was dependent upon the ambitions of the dominant political powers of the day.

Like so many American cities, promise and growth depended upon which political power controlled the interior of North America. In the eighteenth century, three European powers, France, Spain, and Britain were rivals for dominance.1

Oddly, it was France's economic policy of regulating all mercantilism to the benefit of the state, that held back the growth of New Orleans. Odd, because America's growth at that time depended on sea trade. The French viewed Louisiana and the Mississippi Valley as a buffer against British expansion westward from their seaboard colonies and, so, saw no point in investing large sums in Louisiana, except for the brief period from 1716–1722, that saw the founding of New Orleans.

John Law, a Scotsman, gambler, and financial advisor to the Duc d'Orleans, developed a scheme to form the Mississippi Company to assume the French Crown's debt in return for a charter to operate Louisiana as a colony. Law's ingenious proposal called for the proceeds from the sale of shares in the Mississippi Company to the French public to be used to back the Crown's debt and currency. Shareholders would receive dividends on the profits the Mississippi Company would reap.

1719-1720: MISSISSIPPI BUBBLE

John Law and the French Mississippi Company

By the time of Louis XIV's death in 1715, the treasury was in shambles, with the value of metallic currency fluctuating wildly. The following year, the French regent turned to a Scotsman named John Law for help. Law, a gambler who had been forced into exile in France as the result of a duel, suggested the Banque Royale take deposits and issue banknotes payable in the value of the metallic currency at the time the banknotes were issued.

Law's strategy helped the French convert from metallic to paper currency, and resulted in a period of financial stability.

In August 1717, Law incorporated the Compagnie des Indes (commonly known as the Mississippi Company), to which the French regent gave a monopoly on trading rights with French colonies, including what was then known as "French Louisiana." In August 1719, Law devised a scheme in which the Mississippi Company subsumed the entire French national debt, and launched a plan whereby portions of the debt would be exchanged for shares in the company. Based upon the expected riches from the trading monopoly, Law promised 120 percent profit for shareholders, and there were at least 300,000 applicants for the 50,000 shares offered.

As the demand for shares continued to rise, the Banque Royale which was owned by the French government but effectively controlled by Law continued to print paper banknotes, causing inflation to soar. The bubble burst in May 1720 when a run on the Banque Royale forced the government to acknowledge that the amount of metallic currency in the country was not quite equal to half the total amount of paper currency in circulation. On May 21, the government issued an edict that would gradually depreciate Mississippi Company shares, so that by the end of the year they would be valued at half their nominal worth. The public outcry was such that one week later, on May 27, the Regent's Council issued another edict restoring the shares to their original value. On the same day, however, the Banque Royale stopped payment in specie. When the Banque Royale reopened in June, the bank runs continued. By November, shares in the Mississippi Company were worthless, the company was eventually divested of its remaining assets, and Law was forced to flee the country.

The Evening Post, London, England: From Thursday September 21 to Saturday September 23, 1721

September 30, The Amsterdam Courant, Hanover September 23.

The famous John Law arrived here Incognito last Thursday with his Son, and was since Treated by divers Persons of Distinction; The Saturday following he had the Honour of being introduced to Prince Frederick, he is since gone for England if the common Report is true.

The Evening Post, London, England: From Saturday December 23 to Tuesday, December 26, 1721

The Creditors of Mr. John Law have met at the Notary Maignan's, to consider the properest methods of recover their Debts.

The Evening Post, London England: From Saturday November 10 to Tuesday November 13, 1722

Hague, November 5: The Committee of Council, nominated in inspect the Affairs of Mr. John Law, have given Judgment for the Sale of his Real Estate.

John Law who had been born into a family of bankers, believed that money was only a means of exchange that did not constitute wealth in itself. He received a pardon in 1719, moved to London, then to Venice where he died a poor man on March 21, 1729.

Law thereby launched one of the first modern public relations campaigns to convince thousands of Frenchmen of the fortunes to be made in a Louisiana rich in gold and fertile land. For two years, frenzied speculation shot the value of Mississippi Company stock upwards as Frenchmen of all persuasions rushed to invest their savings. But, by 1720, when no bonanza of dividends had been
forthcoming, the company collapsed when thousands of Frenchmen rushed to unload their shares, and Law fled France just ahead of an irate mob.

Both Spain and France proved unable to hold New Orleans as part of an empire against the Americans flooding into the Mississippi Valley after 1800. Napoleon tried to reestablish the French Empire in Louisiana, taking control of New Orleans from Spain in 1802; but financial troubles and the difficulty of holding French conquests in Europe and the Caribbean led him to sell all of Louisiana, including New Orleans, to the United States. In December 1803, Thomas Jefferson had pulled off one of the great real estate buys in history.

Commercial families from many European countries established branches in the city, and John Law’s efforts accounted for 2,000 German immigrants. Spain made serious attempts to encourage Spanish emigration, settling several thousand Canary Islanders in the 1780’s twenty miles south of New Orleans and also to the west of New Iberia. Ironically, the biggest influx under Spanish rule was that of French-speakers: the Acadians who, expelled by the British from Canada, settled from the late 1760’s through the late 1700’s on all sides of the city, particularly to the west, near modern Lafayette. In the last years of Spanish rule, growing numbers of Americans settled and around New Orleans.

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New Orleans and American Annexation

For New Orleans, American annexation brought population growth and economic development. The Louisiana Purchase removed the political barriers to the development of New Orleans’ natural economic and situational advantages. From 1803 until 1861, New Orleans’ population increased from 8,000 to nearly 170,000. The 1810 census revealed a population of 10,000 making New Orleans the United States’ fifth largest city, after New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Baltimore and the largest city west of the Appalachians. From 1810 until 1840, New Orleans grew at a faster rate than any other large American city.

In 1803, New Orleans was basically 8,000 people directly or indirectly tied to moving goods from river vessels to dock to ship and vice versa. Its primary industry was the port, moving and storing goods. Ship chandling, repairing, and building were a distant second industry, but rapid economic growth after 1803 spawned new economic interests.

October 10, 1818, London Times, London, Middlesex, United Kingdom

A New Orleans paper of the 7th inst states, that a vessel had arrived at that port with the intelligence of the Patriot and Spanish squadrons having met near the coast of Terra Fuego; that Aury, not being able to escape from the Spanish frigate, of 38 guns, on account of her superior sailing, determined to carry her by boarding, which he effect, and a few hours afterwards he died on board of his prize of wounds he had received in the contest. The frigate was sent direct from the Governor of Cuba, in pursuit of Aury’s squadron. The frigate is now cruising off Carthagena, under Patriot colours.

By the 1820’s and 1830’s, New Orleans was the commercial and financial intermediary for goods from all reaches of the Mississippi.

The Levee, New Orleans, 1884
Currier & Ives.
The first steamboat came down river in 1812, providing a more efficient of transportation for cotton. In 1821, 287 steamboats arrived in New Orleans; by 1826, there were 700 steamboat arrivals. In 1845, 2,500 steamboats were recorded, and during the 1850's an average of 3,000 steamboats a year called at the city.

After 1830, then, steamboats were in general use on the Mississippi, allowing two-way packet lines to operate, carrying both cargo and passengers on regular schedules.

October 30, 1857, California Farmer and Journal of Useful Sciences

Business of New Orleans.

The business relations of Philadelphia with New Orleans, says the Philadelphia Shipping List, have been, materially affected by the system of railroads through the central West.

Merchandise which formerly came to us by way of New Orleans, now reaches us by this new course of transportation.

The annual statement of trade, published in the New Orleans Price Current, speaks of the comparative failure of the cane crop as the most marked feature of the year. The crop fell ten millions of dollars short of the previous year! On the other hand the cotton crop shows about fifteen millions excess. The total value of the products received from the interior was $158,071,369. This is an increase over last year of nearly $14,000,000; and in twelve years an increase of 250 per cent. The exports of produce and merchandise show an increase of nearly $9,000,000 over last year.

Of cotton the total receipts at New Orleans for the year were one and a half million of bales, the average price being 124 cents per pound. Of this, there were shipped to Great Britain 749,485 bales; to France, 258,103; to other parts of Europe, 186,069; and, to United States ports, 223,204. The entire crop of the South is estimated to have been a little short of three millions of bales.

The sugar crop of 1856 is placed at 81,373,000 pounds, against 254,569,000 the previous year. This was the product of 931 sugar houses. It is estimated that the entire crop averaged 10 cents per pound, which brings the money amount to about one-half the previous year. The average price of molasses has been about 55 cents, against 30 cents last year, and 18-1/2 cents the year previous.

The exports of tobacco from New Orleans in 1850-57 were 50,181 hhds, against 59,074 the previous year. As a tobacco market the city does not appear to be advancing.

The exports of flour for the year were 904,910 bbls. This is an increase, but the exports of western meats have diminished. The exports of whiskey were 60,058 bbls an increase over the previous year.

Currier & Ives. Champions of the Mississippi (http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00Q56CZZ6/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B00Q56CZZ6&linkCode=as2&tag=maritimenations-20&linkId=M2LB3OGKEECPEBBI)

Grain Shipments Via New Orleans

The exorbitant charges lor transportation from Chicago to New York have compelled Western farmers to look out for some other channel for shipment of their grain. In combination with the merchants of St. Louis they have tried the experiment of sending their grain down the Mississippi and shipping it from New Orleans to Europe.
The Chicago papers assert that this experiment has proven a failure that the warmth and humidity of the climate render success by the new route impossible, and that cargoes shipped from New Orleans have arrived at Liverpool "in a rotten condition." These statements are denied and apparently successfully refuted by the *St. Louis Republican*. That paper says the St. Louis Grain Association has shipped about twenty cargoes of grain from New Orleans to Liverpool, and that all but two cargoes arrived in excellent condition. The two cargoes which were slightly damaged, had suffered merely from want of care in battening down the hatches and the consequent admission of bilge water. These damaged cargoes were sold by Patterson Brothers at a higher price than Chicago wheat of the same grade which arrived on the same day by way of New York.

The *Republican* also asserts that last year fifty ships with cargoes of corn sailed from New Orleans, forty-nine of which arrived in English and French ports in excellent condition, and that the cargoes realized better prices than those of equal grade from Philadelphia, New York and Boston. The damaged cargo was not by any means in an unmarketable condition. The experience of California grain shipment seems to sustain the St. Louis theory. Our own grain crosses the equator twice before it reaches Europe, and is exposed to the heat of the tropics much longer than the wheat would be by the New Orleans route. Grain is shipped from St. Louis to New Orleans in barges and is transferred with but little delay to the ship. In five days from New Orleans the ship reaches the latitude of New York. As the northern railroads are clogged up with freight, and as the rates of transportation constitute an actual barrier to shipment, new outlets must be obtained.

To secure this object the Government is asked to aid in building the Kanawha and James River Canal, a single tunnel of which will cost $35,000,000. This canal would connect the waters of West Virginia and Virginia across the Alleghenies and Blue Ridge and would convey the grain of the Mississippi Valley to Norfolk or some new shipping port near the mouth of the James river. The shipment by way of New Orleans would probably cost less than by way of Virginia after the canal was built, but its construction, if begun, would require many years time. If the theory of safety as to climate shall prove to be correct the shipment of grain from New Orleans must increase very rapidly. As nobody can as yet exact tolls on the great Mississippi, and as its capacity for floating barges is not likely to be overtaxed, the new route will possess permanent advantages which cannot be claimed for either railroad or canal, whatever may be their capacity.

September 30, 1892, *Sacramento Daily Union*, Sacramento, California, U.S.A.

**FORCED TO FIGHT**

*A New Orleans Crew Sue the Owners of a Steamship.*

New Orleans, Sept. 29. Fifteen of the crew and one passenger of the steamship *Pizzati* will to-day file a suit for $100,000 damages in the Federal Court against the owners of the steamer. The *Pizzati* was engaged by the Honduras Government, and, some months ago, during the revolution, was turned into an armed cruiser. She rendered valuable services in fact, succeeded in putting an end to the troubles. She shipped a crew in this city, and the crew aver that they shipped as commercial seamen, but were forced to fight. It is claimed the boat cannot be prosecuted under the Neutrality, Piracy and Shipping Acts.

July 18, 1898, *Los Angeles Herald*, Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

**The Freight Rate War**

SAN FRANCISCO, July 27. The Southern Pacific, in order to meet the reductions of the Panama line and the clipper vessel, has again reduced rates for the following commodities: Wine in wood, applying from all wine shipping points in California to New Orleans, Galveston, Houston and New York, to 40 cents; glue, 40 cents; rags, 50 cents; rubber junk, 50 cents, and canned salmon, 40 cents.

The rates on the last four commodities apply from all California terminals to New Orleans and New York.

Ocean-going ship building was slow to develop for similar reasons. Attempts were made in the 1850's to enlarge New Orleans' shipyards, but Northeastern financial sources were not interested in starting new shipyards to compete with the already well established Atlantic seaboard shipbuilding industry. By 1860, New Orleans did have fledgling machine shops, ironworks, several shipbuilding firms, located mainly on the westbank in Algiers. Algiers also supported a dry dock and a ship repair industry, so that in all, over 500 men were employed in ship repair and building by 1861.

However, the Civil War slowed the development of the industry, delaying for decades the emergence of a major shipbuilding industry in New Orleans.

As a seaport and major point of entry for the country, New Orleans always had a transient population of seamen, immigrants, and tourists, and what might be called a "hospitality" industry, of restaurants, theatres, operas, bars, gambling houses, and redlight establishments. This industry has always been much larger than what the resident population alone would support. The streets near the docks, in, above, and below the French Quarter, were lined by bars, flophouses, and clip joints.

Visitors of all classes seemed to enjoy the luxuries, and perhaps the depravities, of the city that care forgot. Residents also enjoyed cultural and recreational opportunities far beyond what most cities of New Orleans' size could offer.
Malcolm Heard
Numerous black and white photos are presented along with explanatory text and captions discussing the history and describing the features of various styles, and of particular buildings. Arrangement of information is in sections on types of French Quarter houses; components of French Quarter buildings an illustrated "parts" list focusing on doors, windows, shutters, stairways, dormers, and carriageways, among others; and the many styles represented in the Quarter an illustrated "glossary" covering 16 styles, among them French colonial, Spanish colonial, federal, Greek revival, Gothic revival, Italianate, Egyptian revival, Craftsman, 20th-century restoration, and modernism. Spiral wire binding (in a hard cover). Annotation c. by Book News, Inc., Portland, Or.

The French Quarter: An Informal History of the New Orleans Underworld
Herbert Asbury
Home to the notorious "Blue Book," which listed the names and addresses of every prostitute living in the city, New Orleans's infamous red-light district gained a reputation as one of the most raucous in the world. But the New Orleans underworld consisted of much more than the local bordellos. It was also well known as the early gambling capital of the United States, and sported one of the most violent records of street crime in the country. In The French Quarter, Herbert Asbury, author of The Gangs of New York, chronicles this rather immense underbelly of "The Big Easy." From the murderous exploits of Mary Jane "Bricktop" Jackson and Bridget Fury, two prostitutes who became famous after murdering a number of their associates, to the faux-revolutionary "filibusters" who, backed by hundreds of thousands of dollars of public support though without official governmental approval undertook military missions to take over the bordering Spanish regions in Texas, the French Quarter had it all. Asbury takes the reader on an intriguing, photograph-filled journey through a unique version of the American underworld.

Arrivals, Departures
John Finn
The journey to New Orleans marked a key moment in Degas's career; he left the city with a portfolio of unforgettable images of New Orleans life. Degas's five-month sojourn in New Orleans resulted in a number of works, including the "Cotton Office in New Orleans." He returned to Paris in 1873.
Begins with Ireland of Ancient Times and continues on to 1845 - 1847, during the famine and then on to Louisiana. It gives the Famine Ship Lists from 7/22/1847 to 6/29/1848. Then goes on to list cemetery listings in St. Patrick’s 1, 2 and 3, military, etc. There are quite a few pictures, some diagrams of the cemeteries and some family stories.

River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom

Walter Johnson
Through mining journals, correspondence, public records and popular literature, Johnson reminds us that New Orleans, not Richmond, was the engine of Southern prosperity: its largest city, largest slave market and the center of a booming international trading system. Mixed with fascinating anecdotes, grim accounts of slave life and a convincing argument for plantation slavery of any people was "essential" to the role in the 19th century’s burgeoning industrial capitalism. While this book refers to America’s slavery, as soon as national started sailing around the globe, they enslaved villages and countries around the world to do their bidding and increase their countries' coffer: China, India, Ireland, Africa, the Caribbean.

The Militant South, 1800-1861

John Hope Franklin
The author identifies the factors of the South’s festering propensity for aggression that contributed to the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861. Franklin asserts that the South was dominated by militant white men who resorted to violence in the face of social, personal, or political conflict. Fueled by their defense of slavery and a persistent desire to keep the North out of their affairs, Southerners adopted a vicious bellicosity that intensified as war drew nearer. Drawing from Southern newspapers, government archives, memoirs, letters, and firsthand accounts, Franklin masterfully details the sources and consequences of antebellum aggression in the South. First published in 1956, this classic volume is an enduring and impeccably researched contribution to Southern history. This paperback edition features a new preface in which the author discusses controversial responses to the book.

Patriot Pirates: The Privateer War for Freedom and Fortune in the American Revolution

Robert H. Patton, grandson of the battlefield genius of World War II, writes that during America’s Revolutionary War, what began in 1775 as a New England fad, “became a massive seaborne insurgency that ravaged the British economy and helped to win America’s independence. More than two thousand privately owned warships were commissioned by Congress to prey on enemy transports, seize them, and sell the cargoes for prize money to be divided among the privateer’s officers, crewmen, and owners.

The Jews of the United States: 1654-2000

Hasia R. Diner
Since Peter Stuyvesant greeted with enmity the first group of Jews to arrive on the docks of New Amsterdam in 1654, Jews have entwined their fate and fortunes with that of the United States “as a decision marked by great struggle and great promise. What this interconnected destiny has meant for American Jews and how it has defined their experience among the world’s Jews is fully in this work, a comprehensive and finely nuanced history of Jews in the United States from 1654 through 2000.
During a most colorful period in New Orleans' history, from just after the Louisiana Purchase through the War of 1812, privateers Jean and Pierre Laffite attacked Spanish merchants on the Gulf. They were pirates to the U.S. Navy officers who chased them and heroes to the private citizens who shopped for contraband at their well-publicized auctions. They were part of a filibustering syndicate that included lawyers, bankers, merchants, and corrupt U.S. officials. Allegiances did not stop the Laffites from becoming paid Spanish spies, disappearing into the fog of history after selling out their own associates.
Warships of the World to 1900 (https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0395984149/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0395984149&linkCode=as2&tag=themaritime00-20&linkId=649121250f522b1c9dcd6eb1c5d2bb2f)
Lincoln P. Paine.

Dane A. Morrison (http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/145552302X/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=145552302X&linkCode=as2&tag=maritimeheritage-20&linkId=3GUXLX72VMJ6JH6)
Stephan Talty

Ancestry: The Objects of the Hereditary Societies and the Military and Naval Orders of the United States, and the Requirements for Membership Therein. (https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B01JG8IPYY/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B01JG8IPYY&linkCode=as2&tag=themaritime00-20&linkId=514fe69a9eb64722a33bd5dfde512385c) (Second Edition.)

Navigation Rules and Regulations Handbook (http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1937196232/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1937196232&linkCode=as2&tag=themaritime00-20&linkId=VSL2AWE2J8UE3DGK) U.S. Coast Guard
The Navigation Rules & Regulations Handbook supersedes Commandant Instruction M16672.2D This edition includes LNM 39-15 and NTM 41-15 33 CFR 83.01(g) requires: "The operator of each self-propelled vessel 12 meters or more in length shall carry, on board and maintain for ready reference, a copy of these Rules."

Frank Lanier

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How Louisiana Became A State

If You Think Politics is Rough Now...

RON CHAPMAN

The process for transition from a territory to a state is carefully laid out in the Ordinance of 1787, which predates ratification of the United States Constitution. Accordingly, a territory must reach a population of 60,000, at which time one delegate for every 1,200 residents must meet in convention to decide if statehood is desired. If the decision is in the affirmative, these delegates draft a constitution, which must be in accord with the American Constitution. The delegates then present a petition to the United States Congress for admission, which, once passed by the House of Representatives, approved by the Senate and signed by the president, affirms admission to the Union.

It seems simple enough, one would think. However, the situation with Louisiana's petition generated much controversy among the states and within Congress. Some concerns were unique to Louisiana itself; others arose because statehood for Louisiana opened the door for a whole host of other potential national issues.

In brief, opponents raised the following important issues:

1. Louisiana was the first state west of the Mississippi River and part of the Louisiana Purchase to seek statehood. It was also the first state to seek statehood from outside of the borders of the original national borders as established by the Treaty of Paris of 1783, which ended the American Revolution.

2. Admitting more states from any new territory would dilute the power and influence of the original states of the Union as the membership of the House and Senate would naturally reflect these new additions.
3. Louisiana had no fixed borders. The Louisiana Purchase had never determined where the western border would be. According to Napoleon, "You get what we got!" – whatever that was! To the east, the whole issue of West Florida raised its head. Just who owned this territory?

4. Louisiana had no democratic traditions. The other states were outgrowths of British colonial experience. In contrast, Louisiana's traditions were steeped in French and Spanish Divine Right monaracies.

5. Louisiana's law was based on the Napoleonic Code, not British Common Law. How could this unique legal system be accommodated in the Union?

6. Louisiana was Catholic! This generated deep concerns among predominately Protestant American citizens. Were they loyal to the nation or the pope?

7. The people of Louisiana spoke with foreign tongues: French and Spanish. They were a foreign land!

8. The city of New Orleans had become notorious for its "unique culture," which included violence, gambling, prostitution, drinking and other depravities. It was Babylon to many devout Americans, unfit for inclusion into the sacred Union.

9. Perhaps even more important, Louisiana, because of its French and Spanish legal system, had a wholly different approach to slavery. Louisiana possessed a sizable population of very wealthy and influential Free People of Color who played a vital role in the area's economic and cultural life. That was anathema to most Americans.

Taking all of these issues into consideration, it is not surprising that some delegates in Congress had difficulties digesting thoughts of Louisiana joining the Union.

**Questioning the Purchase**

The problems began with the Louisiana Purchase. Despite what many may wish to believe, that process did not run smoothly. Many in the Northeast believed President Jefferson's acquisition was illegal. In fact, the territory itself can be considered stolen because Napoleon never compensated Spain for Louisiana before selling it to the United States. Admitting any states from this newly acquired region raised serious questions about the legality of acquiring new territories, the process of doing so and whether these new territories should be admitted on equal status with the original states of the Union.

However, support for Louisiana statehood lay in the documents of the Louisiana Purchase itself. According to Article III, the "... inhabitants of the ceded territory shall be incorporated into the Union of the United States and admitted as soon as possible according to the principles of the federal constitution." Given that language, rejection of statehood for Louisiana would be tantamount to rejecting the Louisiana Purchase. The obligation to fulfill that requirement would arise during the debates.
The question of just what was Louisiana arose next. On March 26, 1804, Congress by a vote of 66 to 21 divided the Louisiana Purchase into two parts: the Territory of Orleans (present-day Louisiana) and the District of Louisiana, later called the Missouri Territory. This dissection angered local Creoles, but they lacked the ability to influence it.

President Jefferson appointed W.C.C. Claiborne as governor of the Territory of Orleans, and the process immediately began for admission into the Union.

But ... what was Louisiana?

The western boundary remained in dispute. Spain considered the border to be the Arroyo Hondo, just west of Natchitoches (now known as the Calcasieu River). The United States argued that the Sabine River – or possibly even the Rio Grande River much farther to the west – established the western boundary.

Negotiations broke down between these two countries over this issue, and it nearly ended in war. The American Gen. James Wilkinson, who also appears to have been a paid agent of the Spanish government, resolved the problem by establishing the Neutral Strip or No-Man’s Land east of the Sabine River and west of the Arroyo Hondo.

Although a temporary resolution to the growing international crisis, this solution did nothing to firmly establish the western boundary for a potential state of the Union.

To the east another problem reared its head – West Florida!

The United States purchased Louisiana from France in 1803; however, the area of the “Florida Parishes” remained unresolved. Jefferson believed they were part of the deal. Spain claimed that they remained in Spanish hands. The issue remained frozen until 1810.

In that year, local plantation owners decided they no longer wished to be governed by Spain. Also, considering that Spain had just been occupied by Napoleon, were they now French? Taking all of this into consideration, they rebelled and on Sept. 23, 1810, established the Republic of West Florida, an independent nation.

Their intention was to join with the United States, and they believed that a suitable arrangement could be made whereby they could transition from an independent nation to an American territory.

President Madison had other ideas, however. Going back to Jefferson’s original position, he proclaimed that West Florida had always been American. He clearly laid claim when he wrote, “[West Florida] has at all times, as is well known, been considered and claimed by them as being within the colony of Louisiana conveyed by the said treaty.”

On Dec. 6, 1810, Madison sent in the military and took possession of West Florida, much to the horror and indignation of some members of Congress, Spanish authorities and the shocked residents of the Republic of West Florida. So ended the independent Republic of West Florida after a mere 74 days!

The fact that this was done and how it was done would become a matter of concern during the statehood debates. Some questioned the legality of the entire process while others raised the question: To which American territory should West Florida be attached?

As one can see, once the actual congressional debates on Louisiana statehood began, a whole host of problems arose that faced no other state, not the least of which was, “Just what actually is Louisiana?”

In his 2004 book about the Louisiana Purchase, A Wilderness So Immense, historian Jon Kukla expressed the problem poignantly: “Controversies over race, religion, law, language and culture not only delayed Louisiana’s statehood until 1812, they worked like the rumblings of an earthquake along the vulnerable fault lines of 19th-century American society and government.”
Seeking Admission

After much dispute and delay, the Territory of Orleans sought admission as a state. In March 1810, Sen. William Giles of Virginia presented to the Senate a petition to accept the Territory of Orleans into the Union. On April 9 the Senate accepted the petition and ordered the territory to hold a convention for the purposes of drafting a constitution and petition for admission as a state. The process followed the Ordinance of 1787.

This motion passed the Senate on April 27 by a vote of 15 to 8. The bill then went to the House of Representatives.

Once there, problems arose. On Dec. 17, Julien Poydras, the territory’s representative, presented the petition for statehood based upon Midlll of the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. On Dec. 27, U.S. Rep. Nathaniel Macon sought admission based upon the addition of West Florida to the Orleans Territory.

This immediately created a controversy. U.S. Rep. William Bibb of Georgia moved to strike any provisions relating to West Florida. He believed that territory belonged to other territories in the region but should not be attached to the Territory of Orleans.

At this point an eruption of sectional anger exploded. U.S. Rep. Laban Wheaton of Massachusetts rose and declared the entire bill unconstitutional. He then raised an interesting prospect. Wheaton questioned if there would be any limits to the extent of this new nation: “If we may extend our limits at all, without the consent of the people, further than what is expressed in the Constitution, who can tell where may be our ultimate bounds or what number of states we may have in the Union?”

His concerns were prescient. One can only imagine his shock were he to learn that the United States would eventually span the continent and extend from midway across the Pacific Ocean to the frozen Arctic Circle.

Others rose in opposition, as well. U.S. Rep. Pleasant Miller of Tennessee sympathized with those opposed because of the “un-American” character of the population: “For inasmuch as we know that if we send Paddy to Paris, that Paddy he will come back.” Beneath his underlying derogatory comment lay a deep concern about the loyalty of the new population. One must remember that at this time America was struggling desperately to avoid the contagion of the Napoleonic Wars and the nation was terribly split over support for Great Britain or France. Federalists opposed France and saw Louisiana as too pro-French.

U.S. Rep. John Rhea of Tennessee, in opposition to his colleague, opposed any amendments to the bill for statehood. He argued that the United States Congress was bound by the Treaty of Paris of 1803, which formalized the Louisiana Purchase, in particular Article

III. Unless they were prepared to surrender this vast territory back to Spain, they had to bring Orleans into the Union.

Rep. Bibb did not disagree; however, he did affirm his position that West Florida belonged to Mississippi and that the state of Georgia had to be consulted before any action was taken on West Florida. In response, U.S. Rep. Daniel Sheffey of Virginia moved to remove West Florida from the Territory of Orleans, and this passed. The future state of Louisiana had just lost a significant portion of its territory.

Next came a most powerful issue and one that likely had never reared its head in the halls of Congress before. The question at hand was race! Louisiana had a large, wealthy, socially influential and politically active community of Free People of Color because of its French and Spanish heritage. This was unique in the South and caused consternation among some members of Congress.

Rep. Miller of Tennessee took particular umbrage to the status of this population to the point that he proposed an amendment restricting the right of suffrage to white males only. He had deep concerns that a person of color might find his way into Congress, in which case he had "no inclination" to work with him. Congress had now opened the issue of voting and race!

U.S. Rep. George Poindexter of Mississippi, an early champion of Louisiana's statehood, then rose up. He pointed out that a very large number of wealthy and respectable people fell into the category of Free People of Color.

Nevertheless, Miller persisted in offering his amendment, and it passed with 17 "ayes," the "nays" not being recorded. White-only suffrage had been dictated by the House of Representatives. For the first time, Free People of Color gained an early indication that life for them under American law would prove to be decidedly more difficult compared to what they had come to experience under French and Spanish control.

Cracks in the Union

The issues concerning Louisiana's bid for statehood exposed a variety of cracks in the Union and placed on display many underlying prejudices and concerns about race and power.

The boundary question was not limited to West Florida. The entire western boundary of Louisiana was open to debate. On Jan. 14, 1811, U.S. Rep. Timothy Pitkin of Connecticut called attention to the undetermined borders to the west with Spain. Just where was it, he asked: the Sabine River, Rio Bravo, Rio Grande, Natchitoches, Arroyo Hondo? How can anyone seek to admit a state into the Union if its borders are as yet undetermined?

This awakened U.S. Rep. Richard Johnson of Kentucky, who again raised the principle that admitting any territory to the Union violated the Constitution. At this point, the most vociferous opponent of statehood rose from his seat: U.S. Rep. Josiah Quincy of Massachusetts.

Quincy had an interesting background; he had single-handedly attempted to impeach President Jefferson but lost that bid by a vote of 117-1. One has to wonder who seconded his original motion. Nevertheless, this firebrand took to the floor in strong opposition to Louisiana's entrance into the Union: "I address you, Mr. Speaker, with an anxiety and distress of mind with me wholly unprecedented. To me it appears that this measure would justify a revolution in this country. I am compelled to declare it as my deliberate opinion that, if this bill passes, the bonds of this Union are virtually dissolved." He further stated: "The constitution is a political compact from which the original parties would be released if the assumed principle of this bill became law."

This threat to the Union angered Rep. Poindexter of Mississippi. He accused Quincy of treason for even suggesting secession from the Union. The Chair sustained Poindexter, but then the House voted 56-53 for Quincy.

Now vindicated, he continued on the attack. The decision was clear in his mind. Members had to make a choice as to "whether the proprietors of the good old United States shall manage their own affairs in their own way, or whether they and their constitution and their political rights shall be trampled under foot by foreigners."

He added: "You have no authority to throw the rights and liberties and property of this people into hodge-podge with the wild men on the Missouri or with the mixed, though more respectable, race of Anglo-Hispanic-Gallo-Americans who bask on the sands at the mouth of the Mississippi."
He continued his assault by saying that passage of Louisiana statehood would produce states that were free "from their moral obligation, and that, as it will be the right of all, so it will be the duty of some, to prepare, definitely, for a separation: amicably if they can, violently if they must!"

Some representatives from other states shared his sentiments, although not to his extreme.

He tried to soothe emotions to some degree by stating that his opposition did not spring from any animosity toward anyone seeking protections of the great American Constitution but sprang entirely from a "deep conviction that it contains a principle incompatible with the liberties and safety of my country."

The next day, Jan. 15, Congress again addressed the issue of Louisiana’s statehood with emphasis now placed on the western borders of the territory and its impact on relations with Spain. Poindexter sought to ease concerns about any war with Spain growing out of undue national claim to territory. He then injected another issue: Opposition was not driven by the issue of statehood for Louisiana; it sprung from New England’s pro-British sentiments concerning the Napoleonic Wars. Louisiana’s statehood debate had now taken an international turn.

At this point U.S. Rep. Thomas Gold of New York chimed in. He raised an important question, the resolution of which would establish Louisiana statehood and benefit the future of the United States, although not to his liking.

In considering the extension of statehood from beyond territories granted by the Treaty of Paris 1783 that ended the Revolutionary War, he wondered aloud: "Whether this empire should be bounded by its existing limits or by the shores of the Pacific Ocean. Whether this would be a commonwealth of reasonable limits ... or a government of acquisition and conquest, whose ambition knew no limits and in whose extension the original states would be lost."

The issue he raised focused on how big this new nation could become. Once the door for new states from new territories had been opened, could it be closed? The implications of his argument are profound!

In response, Rep. Rhea argued that taking Rep. Gold's position was itself unconstitutional because it denied the nation’s ability to gain territory.

Debate had become overheated.

Rep. Quincy exercised a last-ditch parliamentary effort to kill the measure entirely by postponing any vote on statehood. That motion failed by a 78-28 vote. The enabling act for Louisiana statehood then came before the entire House of Representatives. The resolution passed 77 to 36 with the New England states opposed. There were no “ayes” from Rhode Island, Connecticut or New Hampshire, and the vote from Massachusetts split 6 “aye” to 4 “nay.” The vote proved the case for regional opposition.

It had been a hard, brutal and acrimonious debate. But passage of the resolution through the House of Representatives had finally been achieved. Now for the Senate.

In late January 1811 the Senate opened debate. Immediately, Sen. James Bayard of Delaware struck out the amendment giving the United States power over territory east of the Mississippi River: West Florida! He also inserted a provision restricting voting in Louisiana to white males only. This passed 24-8. The issue of race and voting had again raised its head during this debate, for the first time in the United States Senate.

Sen. Samuel Dana of Connecticut proposed an amendment requiring every state individually to vote to admit a new state. The constitution had no provisions for admitting new states from lands beyond those derived from the original territory.
Congressional Volleys

Sen. Henry Clay of Kentucky defeated this amendment, and on Feb. 7, 1811, the Senate passed the bill for Louisiana statehood by a vote of 22 to 10. However, it contained a poison pill: The western boundary was to be the Sabine River and only white males were to be allowed suffrage. It then went back to the House.

At this point Louisiana's statehood became a tennis match between the House and the Senate. It was volleyed more than seven times, back and forth, over the issue of requiring white-only voting. Every time the House passed it, recognizing the right of Louisiana to establish its own control over voting rights, the Senate objected and sent it back.

Finally, on Feb. 10, 1811, the House caved in and acceded to the Senate's version preventing Free People of Color from voting on statehood for Louisiana.

Following the process laid out in the Ordinance of 1787, a convention was convened in New Orleans to adopt a constitution. Julien Poydras came back to the Territory of Orleans to preside over the meeting. There were 43 members in attendance: 17 Americans and 26 Creoles. In December 1811, after some debate, the delegates decided to name the new state Louisiana in honor of the territory's first claim. Other state names suggested were Jefferson and Orleans.

On Jan. 23, 1812, the completed document was returned to Congress with a provision for adding West Florida to the new state.

On March 20, 1812, the House passed the bill by a vote of 79 "aye" to 23 "nay," and on April 1, 1812, the Senate passed the same bill without further amendments, being satisfied that the issue of white-only voting had been established. The conference committee composed of members of both houses passed an identical bill on April 6, 1812, and soon after, President Madison signed the bill into law. Louisiana had become the 18th state to join the American Union.

Because this date neatly aligned with the ninth celebration of the Louisiana Purchase on April 30, it was determined that April 30 would become the official date for Louisiana statehood.

Thus, after a very confused and tortured process, the first state west of the Mississippi River carved from territory not a part of the original lands ceded by Great Britain after the Revolutionary War had become a state.

The western border would not become formalized until 1819 after ratification of the Adams-Onís treaty with Spain. As for the eastern border, West Florida had finally been included in the new state of Louisiana. Its eastern border was to be the main stream of the Pearl River.

Not surprisingly, that too created a problem. Just exactly what was the "main stream of the Pearl River"? Anyone knowledgeable about this area knows that a multitude of tributaries flow into the Mississippi Sound. Which one is the "main stream"?
To resolve this issue required a bit of Louisiana ingenuity. Legend has it that several gentlemen traveled up the Pearl River to the 31st parallel, which marked the demarcation line of West Florida. They then took an empty whiskey barrel, which likely was not empty when they departed, and floated it down the Pearl River. By their thinking, the barrel would naturally follow the main channel, thereby settling the dispute as to what the eastern boundary of Louisiana would be.

Thus we have the long and tortured process whereby Louisiana became the 18th state to join the Union. Many arguments arose in opposition. Some related directly to the history, culture, laws and racial characteristics of the Territory of Orleans. Others focused on the questionable boundaries of this newly proposed state.

But a significant portion of the opposition grew out of deep constitutional concerns over just how large the United States could become. Did the Constitution allow the acquisition of lands beyond those established by the Treaty of Paris of 1783? Could states be carved out of the lands gained by the Louisiana Purchase? Was there a limit to the number of states that could be admitted to the Union? What impact would a growing nation have on the power of the founding states?

Although it took a long time, the goal had been achieved. Louisiana took its rightful place among the other states of the Union. Then, a mere six weeks later, the United States declared war on Great Britain, thus opening the War of 1812.

The value of Louisiana's statehood to the Union would be proved by combat on a sugar plantation in Chalmette during the Battle of New Orleans. The very people denigrated by some members of Congress just two years before would secure the nation's freedoms in America's Second War of Independence.
Constitution of the United States of America (Excerpt)

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Article. I.

Section. 4.

The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of chusing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every Year, and such Meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by Law appoint a different Day.

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Louisiana Latitude and Longitude Map

Description: Map showing Latitude and longitude of Louisiana state of the US.

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States and Territories of the United States of America May 12 1812 to June 4 1812

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Constitution of the State of Louisiana 1812 (Excerpt)

We, the Representatives of the People of all that part of the Territory or country ceded under the name of Louisiana, by the treaty made at Paris, on the 30th day of April 1803, between the United States and France, contained in the following limits, to wit; beginning at the mouth of the river Sabine, thence by a line to be drawn along the middle of said river, including all its islands, to the thirty second degree of latitude—thence due north to the Northernmost part of the thirty third degree of north latitude—thence along the said parallel of latitude to the river Mississippi—thence down the said river to the river Iberville, and from thence along the middle of the said river and lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain to the Gulf of Mexico—thence bounded by the said Gulf to the place of beginning, including all Islands within three leagues of the coast—in Convention Assembled by virtue of an act of Congress, entitled “an act to enable the people of the Territory of Orleans to form a constitution and State government and for the admission of said State into the Union on an equal footing with the original States, and for other purpose: ” In order to secure to all the citizens thereof the enjoyment of the right of Life, Liberty and property, do ordain and establish the following constitution or form of government, and do mutually agree with each other to form ourselves into a free and independent State, by the name of the State of Louisiana.

Article I

Sect. 8th. In all elections for Representatives every free white male citizen of the United States, who at the time being, hath attained to the age of twenty-one years and resided in the county in which he offers to vote one year not preceding the election, and who in the last six months prior to the said election, shall have paid a state tax, shall enjoy the right of an elector: provided however that every free white male citizen of the United States who shall have purchased land from the United States, shall have the right of voting whenever he shall have the other qualifications of age and residence above prescribed—Electors shall in all cases, except treason, felony, breach of surety of peace, be privileged from arrest during their attendance at, going to or returning from elections.

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