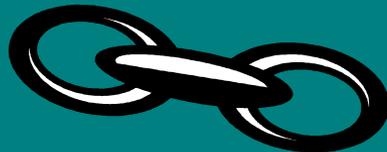


Part 1:

**PEARLS OF WISDOM
GLEANED FROM
50 YEARS OF EXPLORING
DUSTY BACKROADS
AND MUSTY
ARCHIVAL SHELVES**



Misconceptions



- There is a paucity of historical and cultural documentation
- Life-long wetlands residents have nothing of value to offer scientific researchers
- It is difficult, if not impossible, to forge trans-disciplinary bridges

Misconception 1

- **THERE IS A PAUCITY OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL DOCUMENTATION, ESPECIALLY CARTOGRAPHY**



Documentation

- **UNDERUTILIZED RESOURCES**
- **18TH CENTURY:**
- **French colonial sources**
 - Official correspondence – 1 million folios
- **Spanish colonial sources**
 - Audiencia de Santo Domingo – 1 million folios
 - Papeles Procedentes de Cuba – 15 to 18 million folios



Documentation

- **OTHER UNDERUTILIZED RESOURCES**

- Local records (conveyances, probates, judicial proceedings, etc.) – estimated 200,000+ pages 18th century, estimated 2,000,000+ pages (1803-1860)
- Huge reservoir of resources in state, federal, and university repositories
 - **Examples: Standard Oil Collection, Newberry Library, Beinecke Library, NARA Still Image Repository (College Park, MD), Bancroft Library, NARA San Bruno, CA, The Benson Ford Research Center, The Historic New Orleans' Collection**



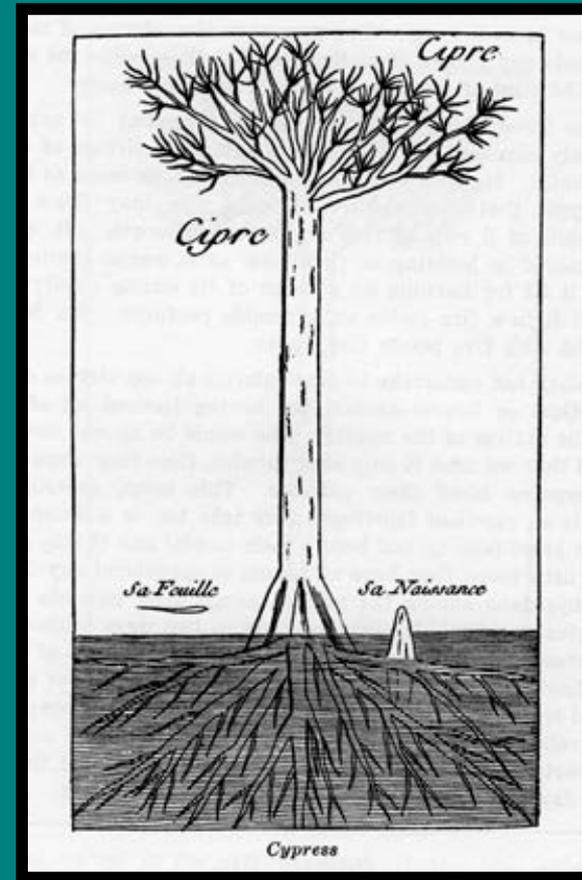
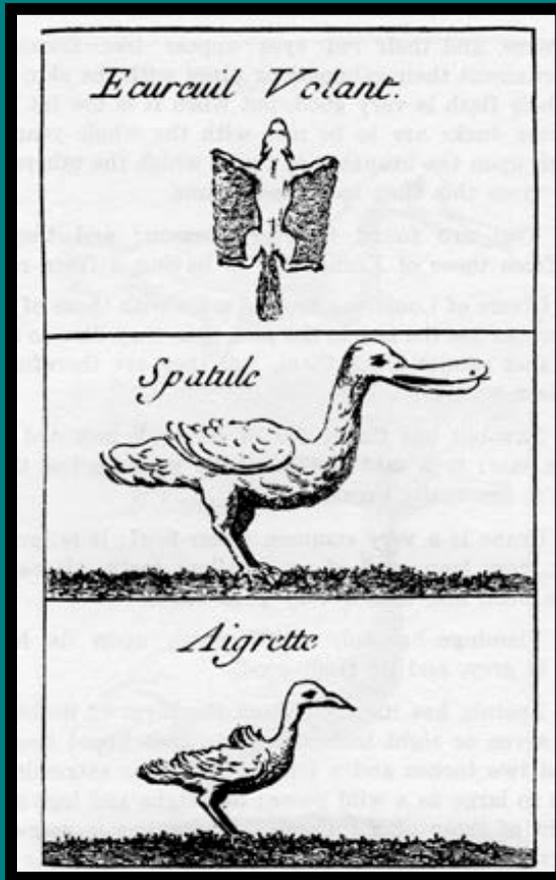


Documentation — Examples

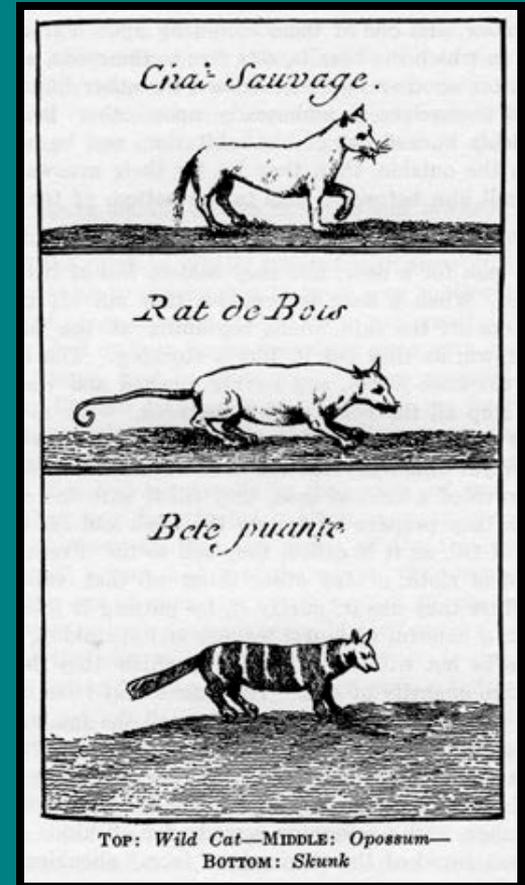
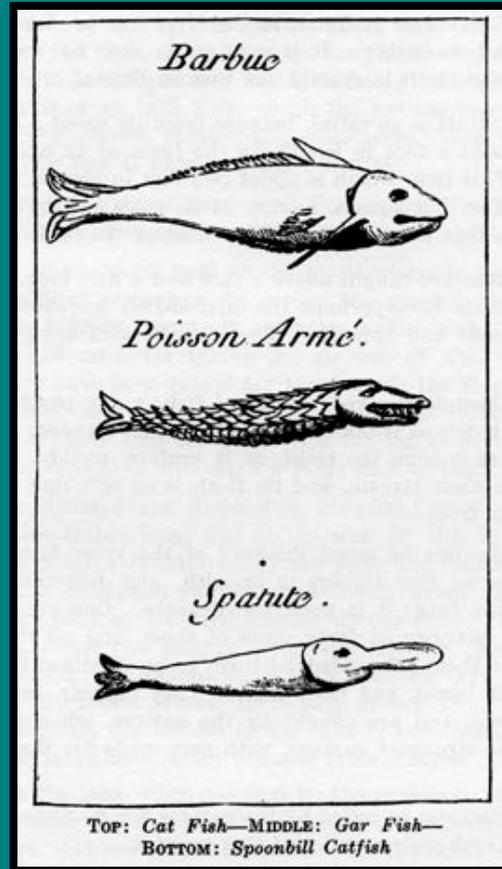
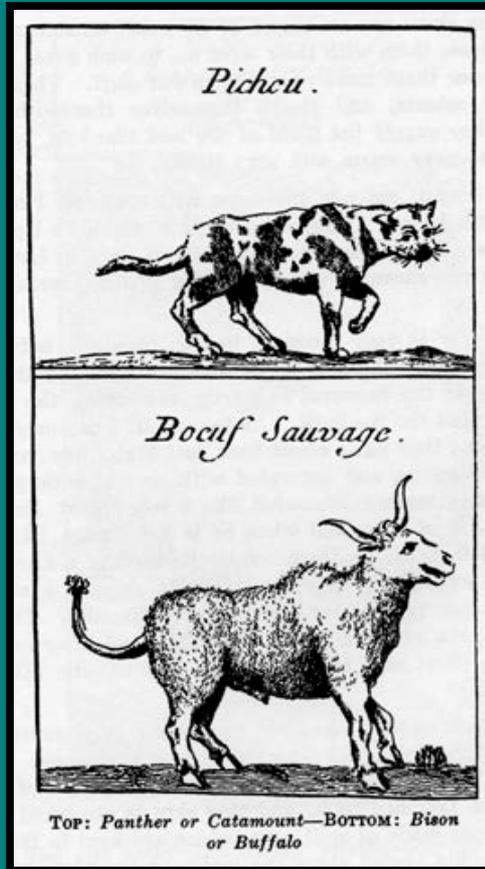
- **FRENCH PERIOD (1699-1763)**
- Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville's vivid descriptions of the natural and cultural landscapes of the lower Mississippi Valley (1699)
- Antoine-Simon Le Page du Pratz's detailed accounts of Native American life, and his sometimes amusing, descriptions, and illustrations of Louisiana's fauna and flora (ca. 1720-ca. 1732)



Le Page du Pratz



Le Page du Pratz



Colonial Era Documentation

Superior Council Records, Notarial Archives, and Parish Probate Records

- Collectively the best source of information regarding national/ethnic origins of African and European colonists
- Probates - Perhaps America's best documentation for material culture and indigenous architectural evolution



Notable Spanish Resources

- **SPANISH PERIOD (1763-1803)**
- Commandant's reports
- Louis Judice's memoir
- Scores of census reports
- Hundreds of surveyors' plats



Colonial Era Documentation

Spanish colonial sources

**Commandant's reports
(PPC)**

**Best source of information
about Creolization**

**And colonial communities'
adaptation to new,
unfamiliar environmental
forces**



Colonial Era Documentation Example

N^o 2^o hâle au poisson. avec l'augmentation des prix

<i>Appreciation des nouveaux ouvrages</i>	<i>Deduction des anciens ouvrages</i>
pour 4 piliers ayant 80 pouces de cart 20 ^o de largeur et 13 pieds de haut. donnant par pied 107 pieds courants 428.	504 p ^o de p ^o de 14 63
28 piliers du centre 13 ^o de haut 70 ^o de largeur. chaque coupe haut 39 p ^o 1092	24 p ^o de amigo en terre } 118 p ^o de amigo del alto } conforme 7 a la 134 contrata 30
4 empâtements pour les angles 240	huchera del todo 114
28 empâtements du centre 380	114
2140	Distinccion concedida por el contrato por su buena voluntad 900
2140 p ^o de maconne egalant 9 tois 6 p ^o 4 a 120 ^o latija 5586-6	Se ha en obra solid y durable 424
28 tois de 5 p ^o de long 712. 140 a 85 35	que se debe disminuir de 1256-6
moins de ceux des dits ouvrages 35	Prefuel por el precio de los aumentos 832-6
1256 6	pagaderos el tercio de contado segun la contrata ante escrito

Abiendo examinado la proposicion del Sr. Lafond sobre los 36 pilares de ladrillo en lugar de p^o de maconne, seria muy

Construction Estimate, New Orleans Fish Market



American Era Documentation

- **Early 20th century American sources**
 - **Corporate archives**
 - Natural resource management
 - **State agency files**
 - Early Flood Control Efforts
 - Historical Environmental Footprint (land records)
 - Conservation
 - **Federal repositories**
 - Flood control
 - Smuggling
 - Oil and Gas Exploration (and their environmental impacts)
 - Post-1803 Immigration



American Era Documentation

- **19th CENTURY**
- American Land Claims Commission Records—**Plats and Witness Trees**
- Agricultural Census Reports (1850-1900)
- Newspaper accounts
- Military maps
- Nautical maps
- Louisiana Board of Public Works records
- Travelogues
- Corps of Engineers reports



Witness Trees



Documentation of Indigenous Flora

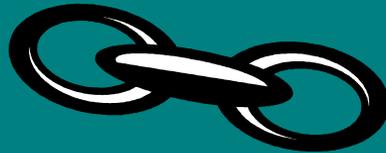
Value of Documentation

- Shows dynamic nature of the south Louisiana environment, which was very much a work in progress at the time of the initial European settlement.
- Documents original state of environment and human alterations to ecological systems
- Provides concrete evidence of impact of environmental change.
- Provides a track record of the responses of established populations to externally imposed environmental changes that threatened their homes and livelihoods. (**Example of Mermentau Dam.**)

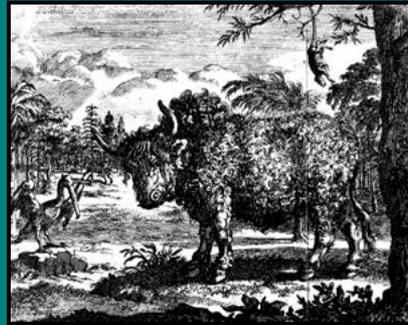


Part 2:

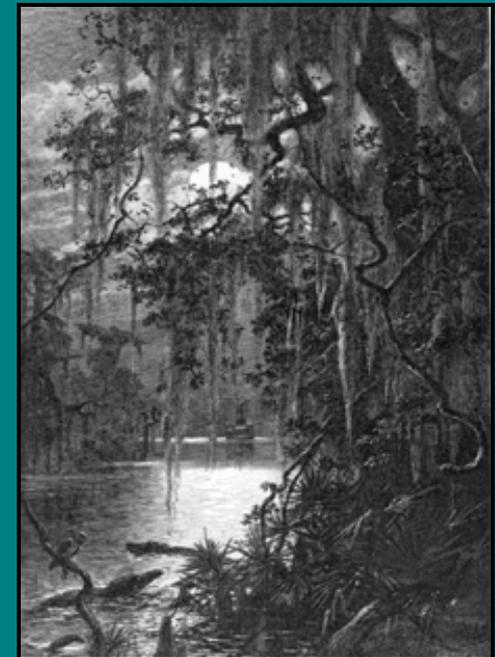
VISUAL EXAMPLES OF UNDER-UTILIZED RESOURCES



Visual Record

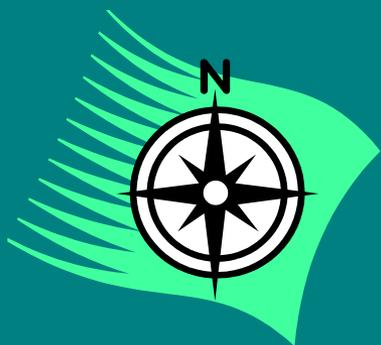


Not as extensive as the documentary record, but quality images are abundant.

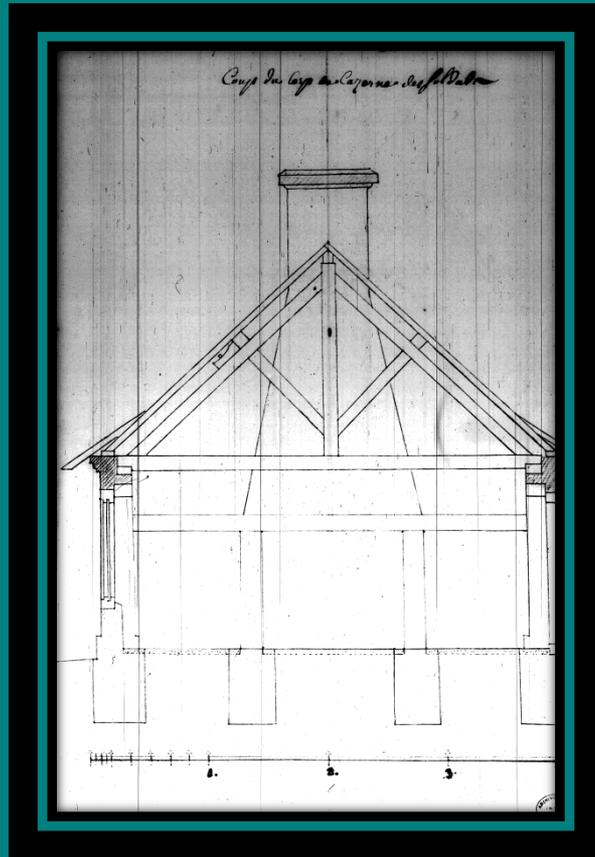


Visual Record

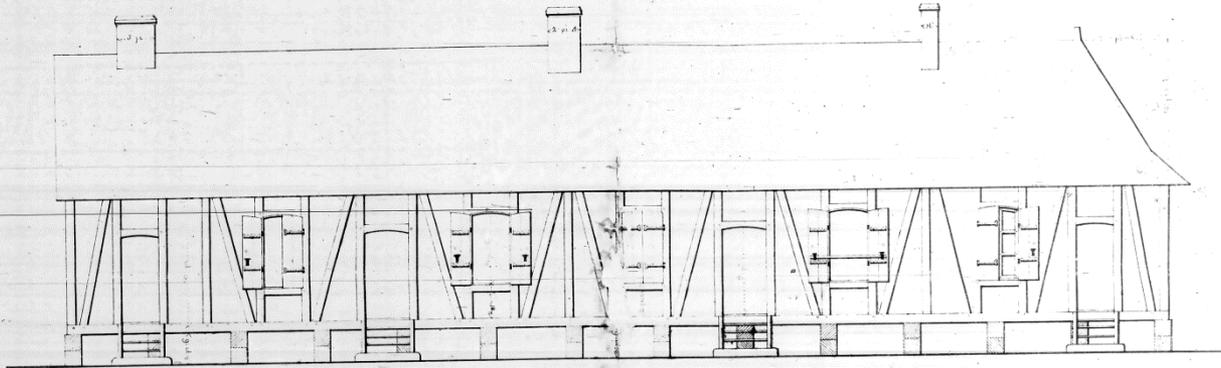
- Plats in the claims section of the Louisiana land office records



Birth of Indigenous Architecture



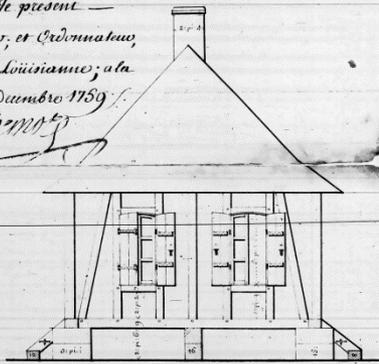
Architecture



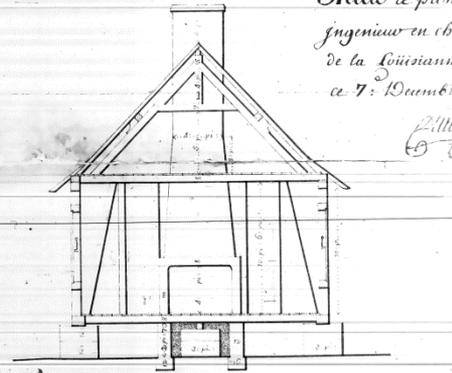
Profil pris sur la ligne E F:

Coupe prise sur la ligne C D:

Vu et approuvé le present —
par Nous, Gouverneur, et Commandeur,
en la Province de la Louisianne; ala
N^o. 14. d'Orléans, le 8. Décembre 1769.
Vertèze Sachemoy



Arrêté le present par Nous —
ingénieur en chef en la Province
de la Louisianne; ala N^o. 14. d'Orléans
ce 7. Décembre 1769.
Calvet

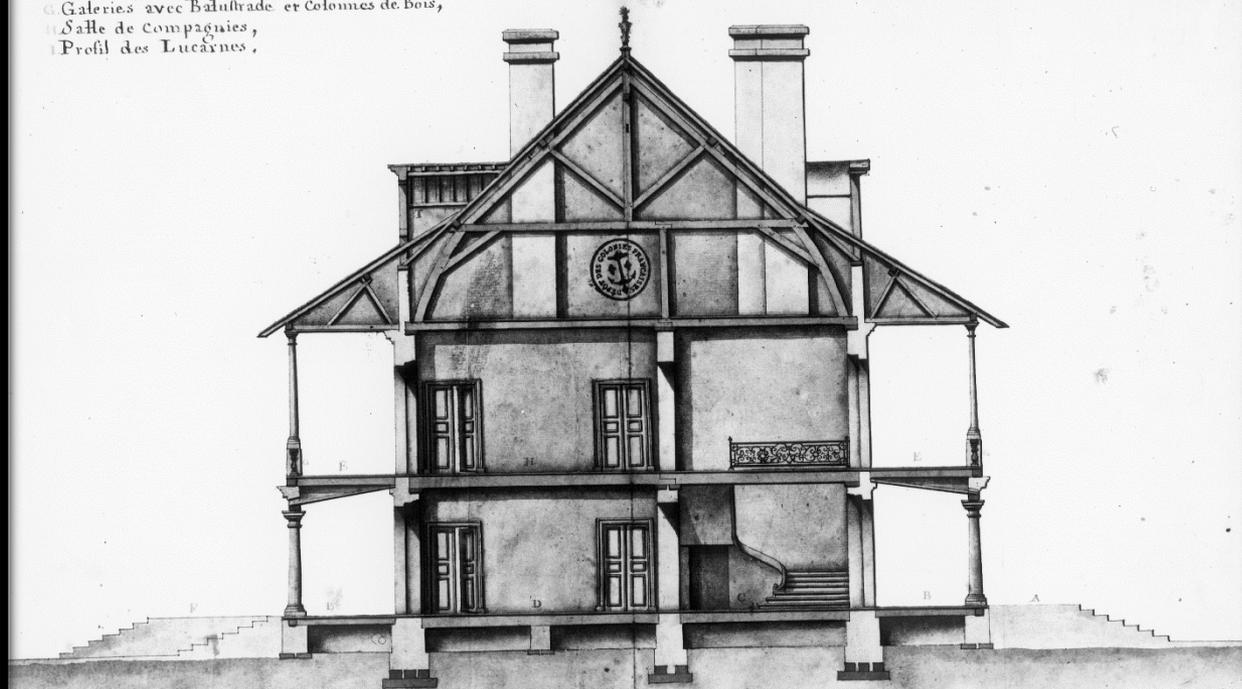


Architecture

100. **COUPE** et Profil du Bâtiment de l'Intendance, pris sur la Ligne Ponctuée. Conté c.d. Sur le.
Plan de l'autre part, a la Nouvelle Orleans, le Vingt Trois, août mil Sept Cent Quarente Neuf.

- A Perron du côté de l'Entrée,
- B Galerie avec des Colonnes de Briques,
- C Vestibule et le Grand Escalier,
- D Salle a manger, E Galerie avec des Colonnes,
- F Perron du Côté du Jardin,
- G Galeries avec Balustrade et Colonnes de Bois,
- H Salle de Compagnies,
- I Profil des Lucarnes,

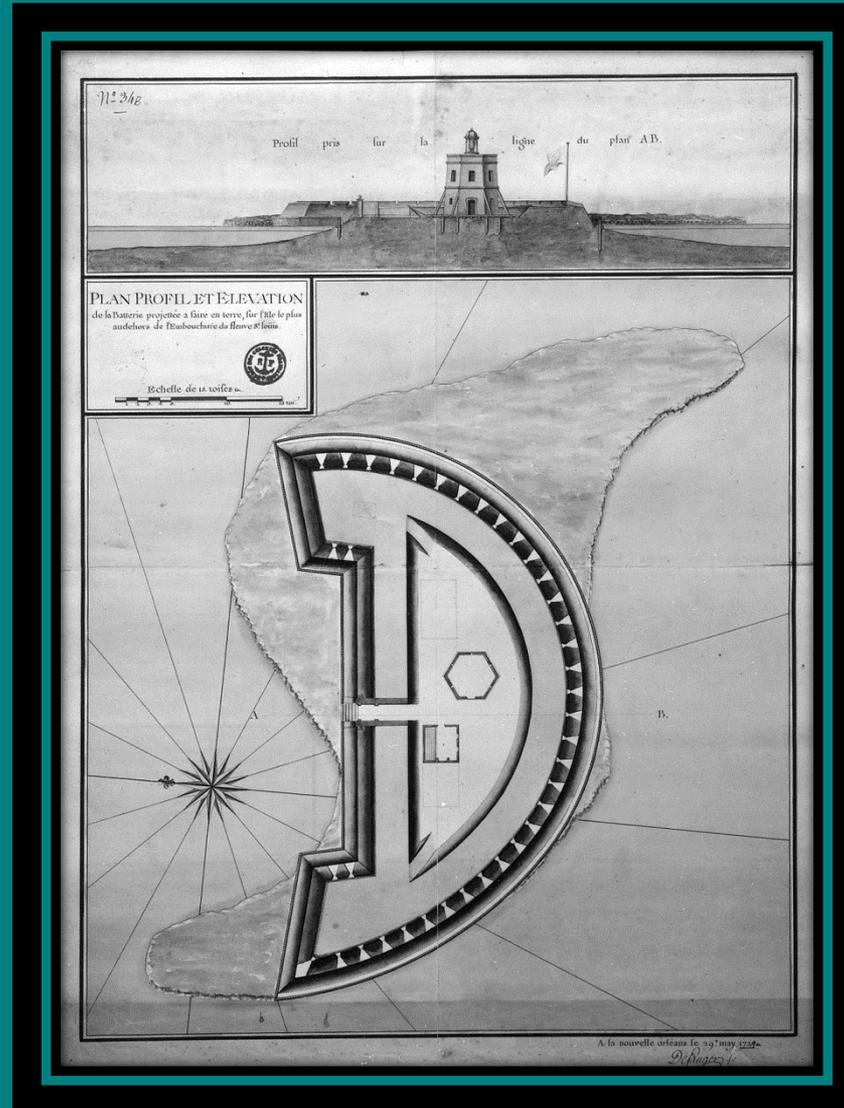
Antoine



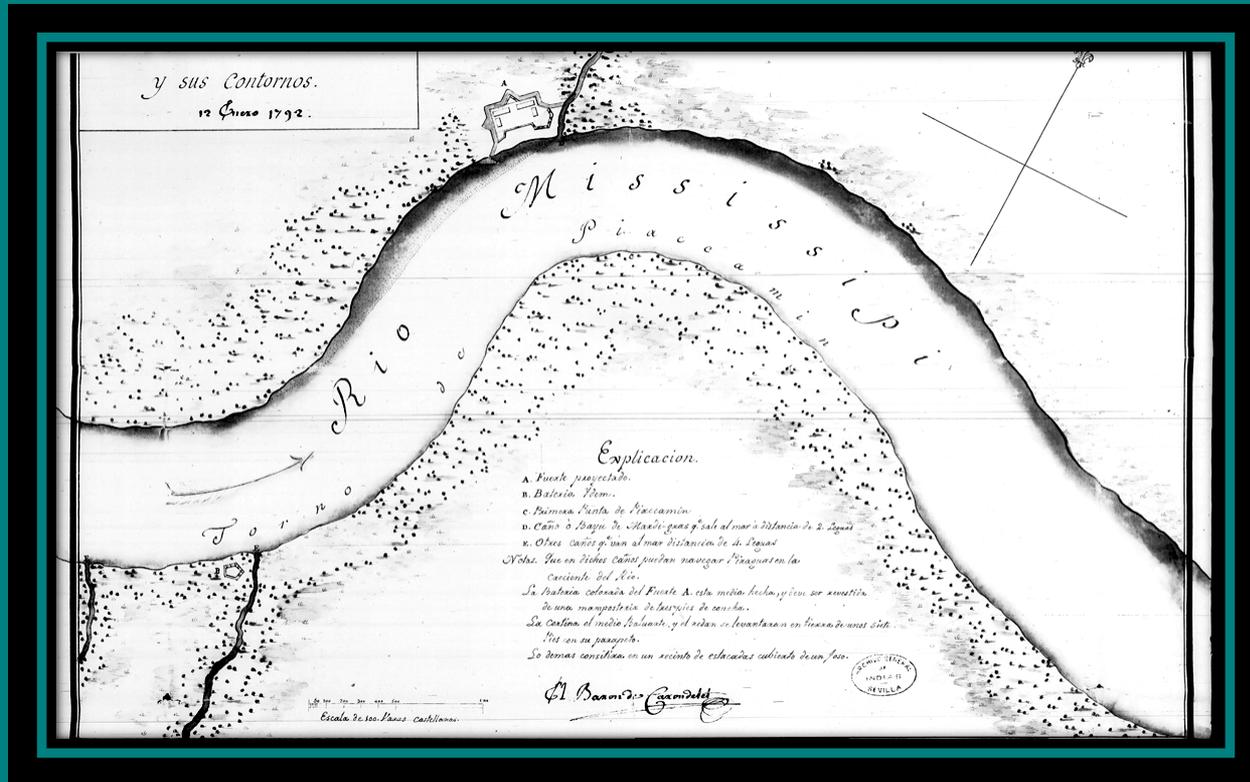
Echelle de Trente Six Pieds.



Wetland Settlement



Environmental History

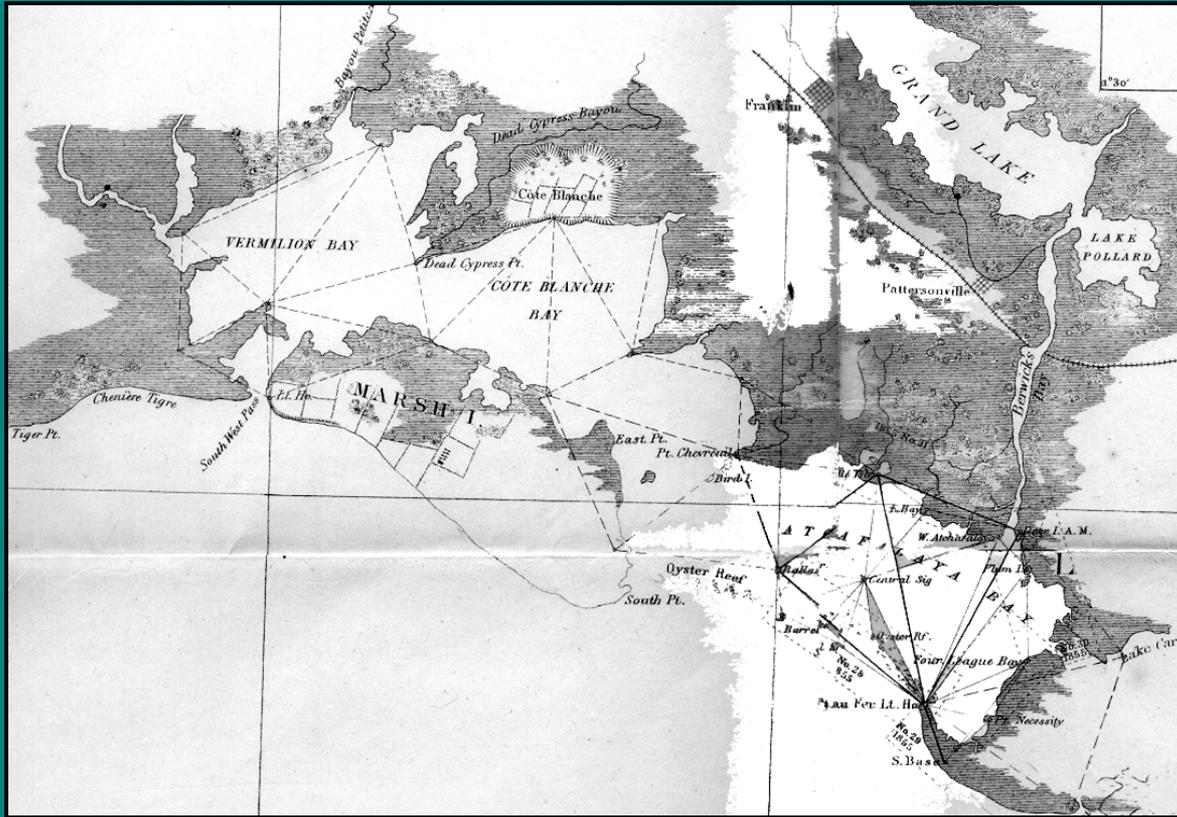


Plaquemines Point Fort, 1790s



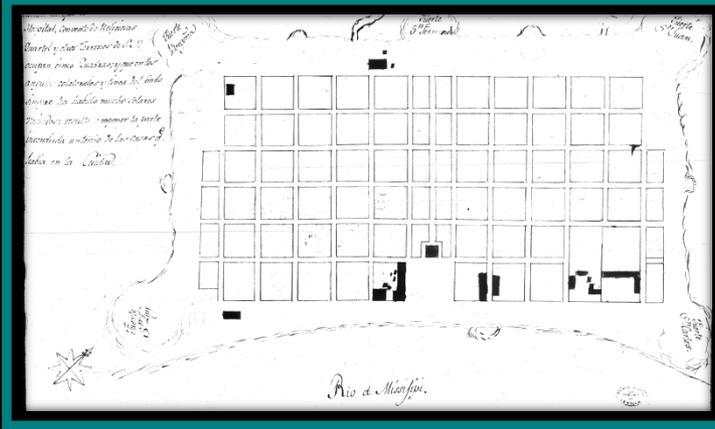
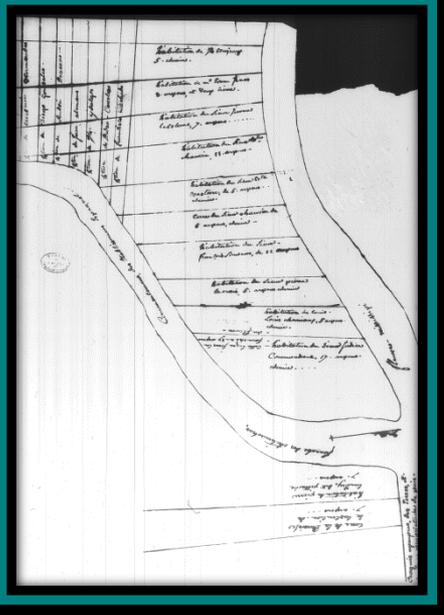
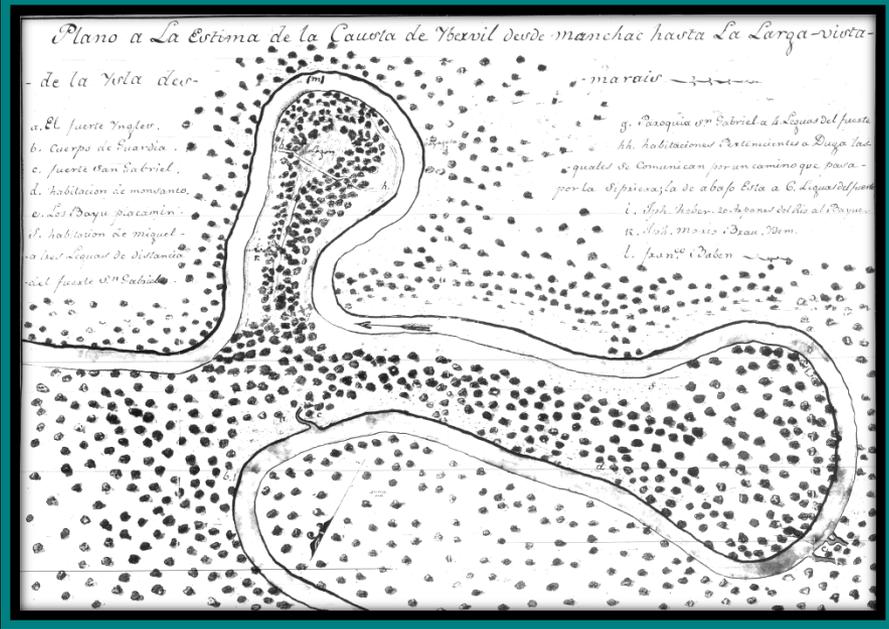
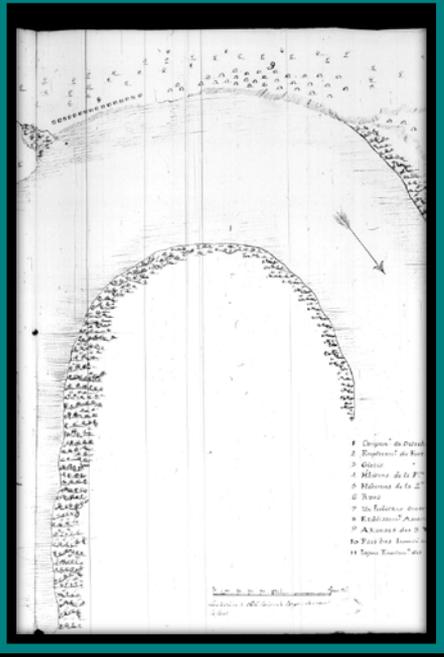
Military Maps

- Houma area,
1863



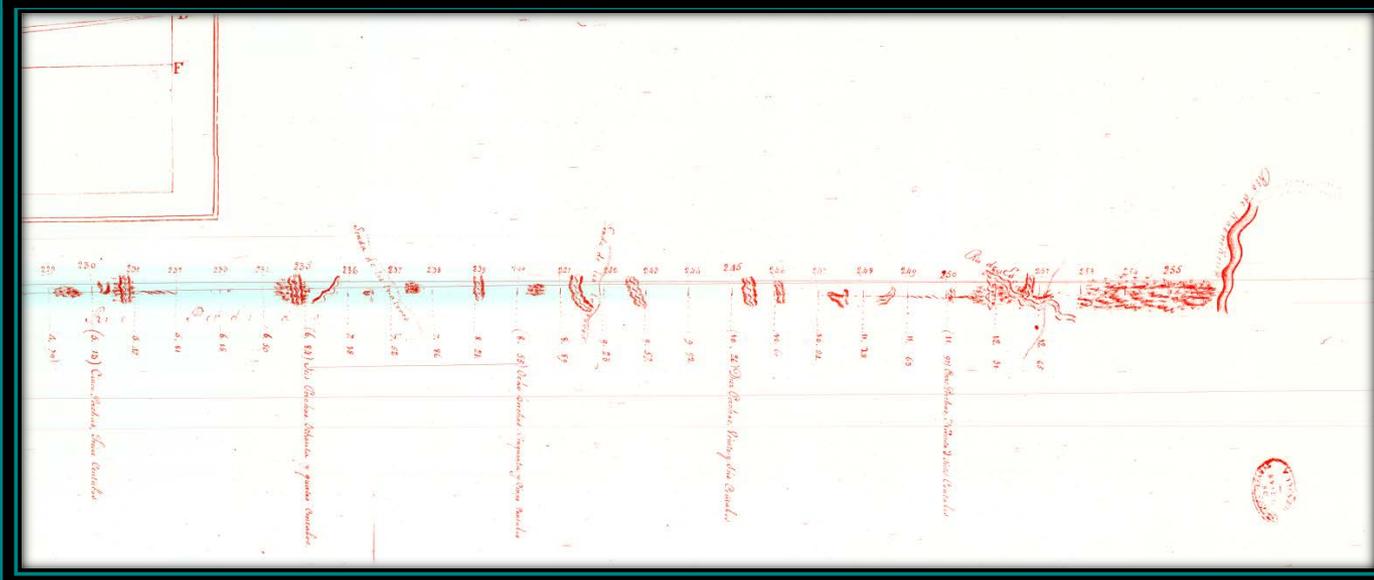
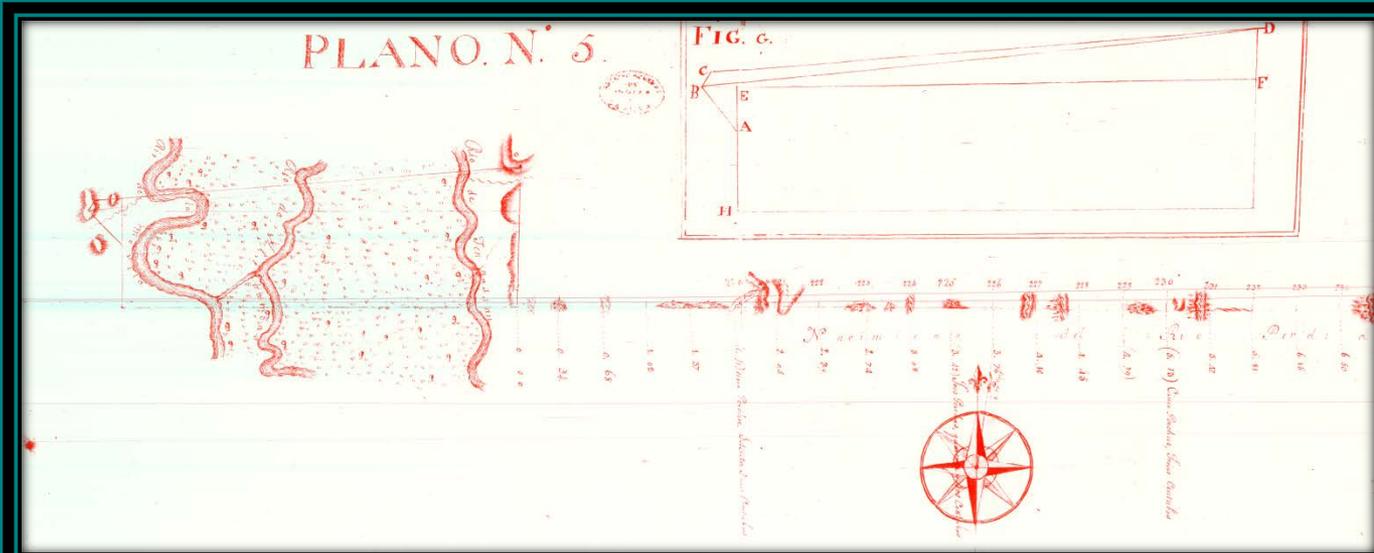
Nautical Maps

- Atchafalaya Bay area, 1855



Settlement
Patterns

Hydrology



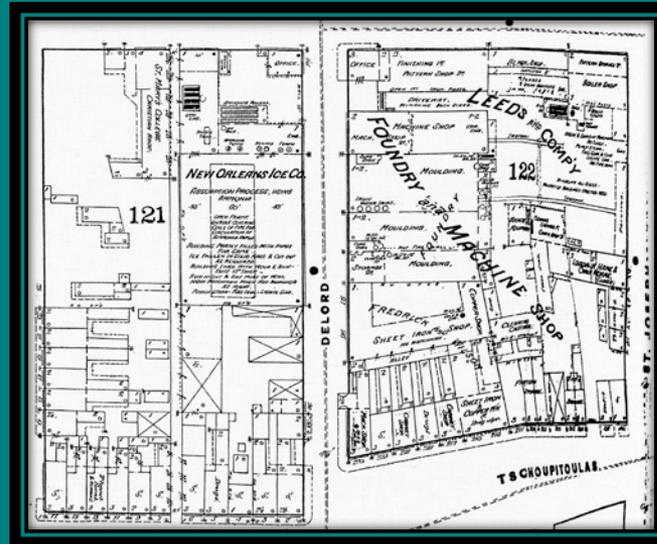
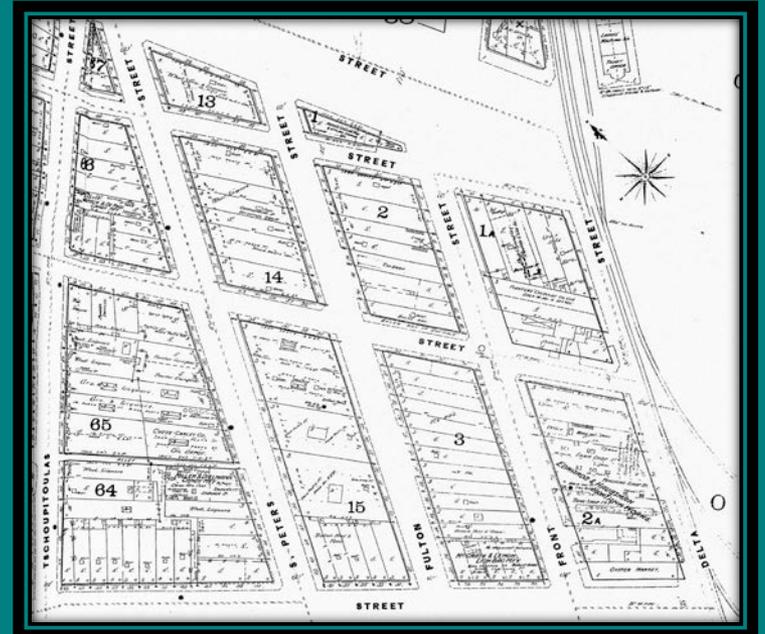
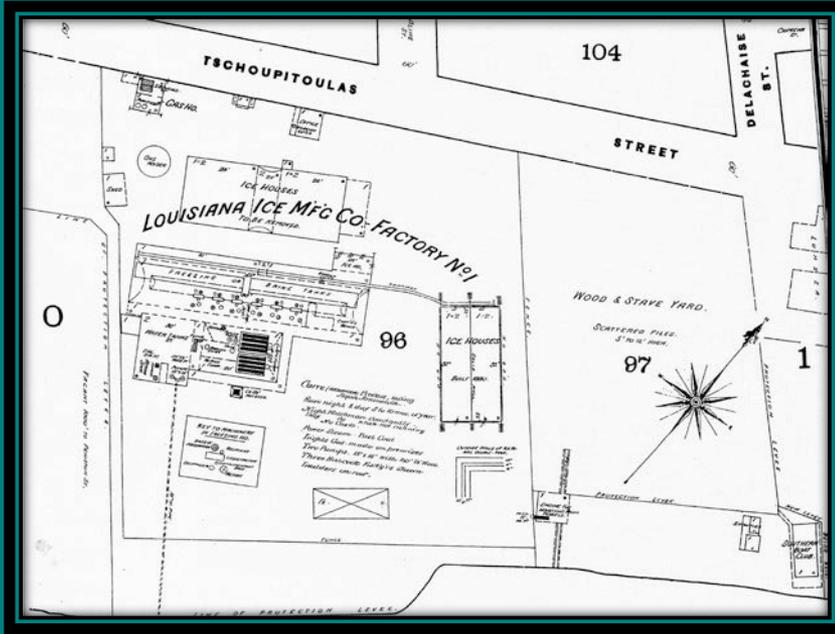
Mississippi
River
Valley,
Late 18th
Century



Commercial Maps



Sanborn Insurance Maps



City Directories

New Orleans' City Directory 1867

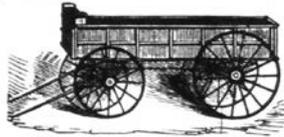
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<u>10000</u>	<u>#1 Shooks</u>				<u>7⁰⁰</u>	<u>700⁰⁰</u>

Oysters R.

RECEIVED
 CHECKED
 BY

March 6/1908
H. J. F.

Note Box Shooks, Packing Boxes, Crates and Lumber

Chronicling America -Historic American Newspapers America

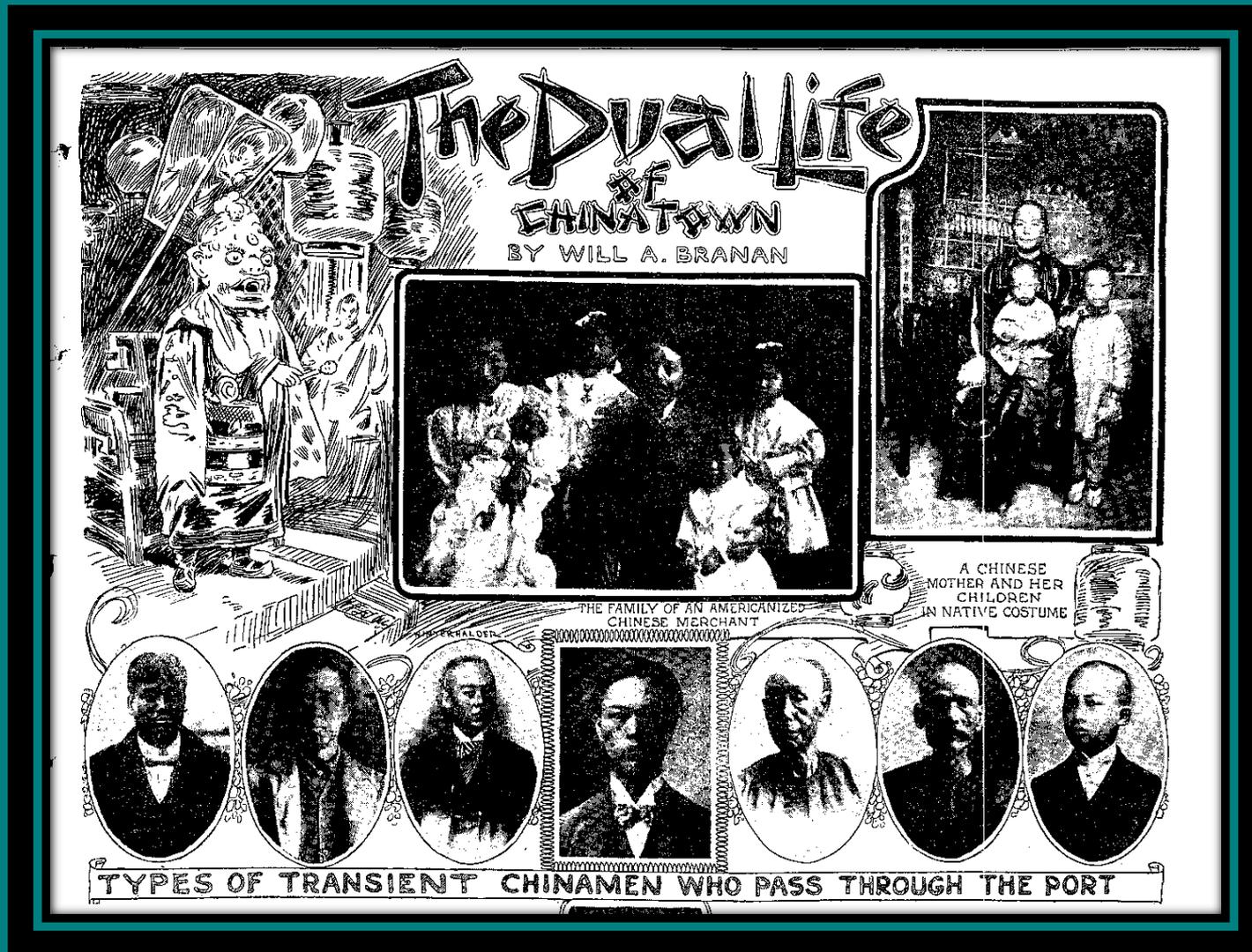


PRINTED BY
WHITE & ANDERSON,
PUBLISHERS.

CONDITIONS,
FIVE DOLLARS A YEAR
IN ADVANCE.

VOLUME IX. THIBODAUX, LOUISIANA, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1854. NUMBER 48.

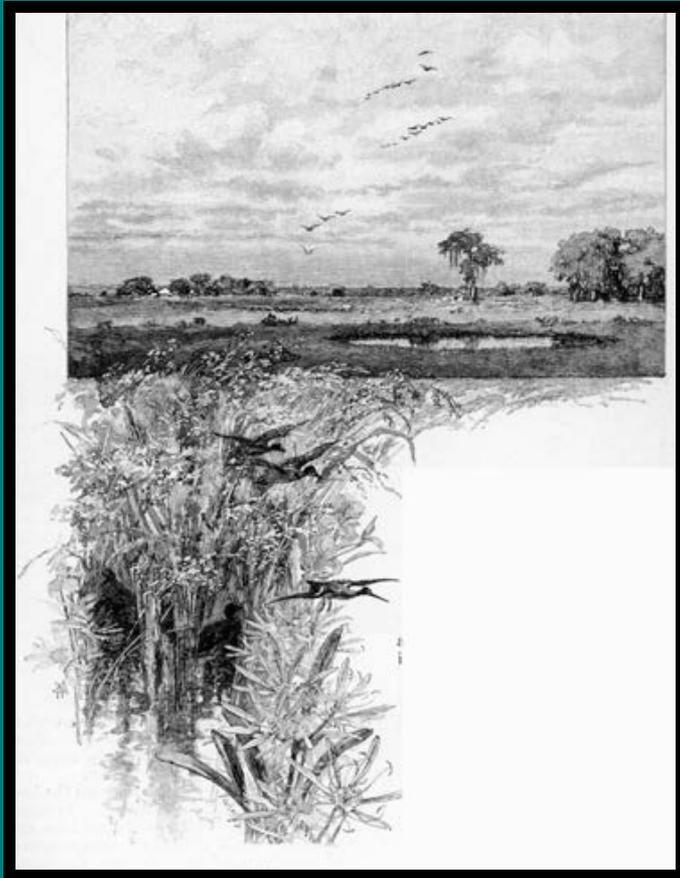
Chinese are one of the ignored and forgotten groups.



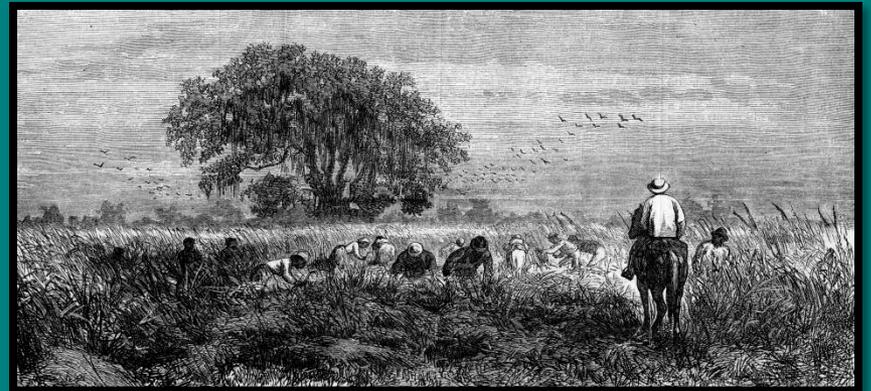
New Orleans Daily Picayune, August 14, 1910

Environmental Change

ca 1880

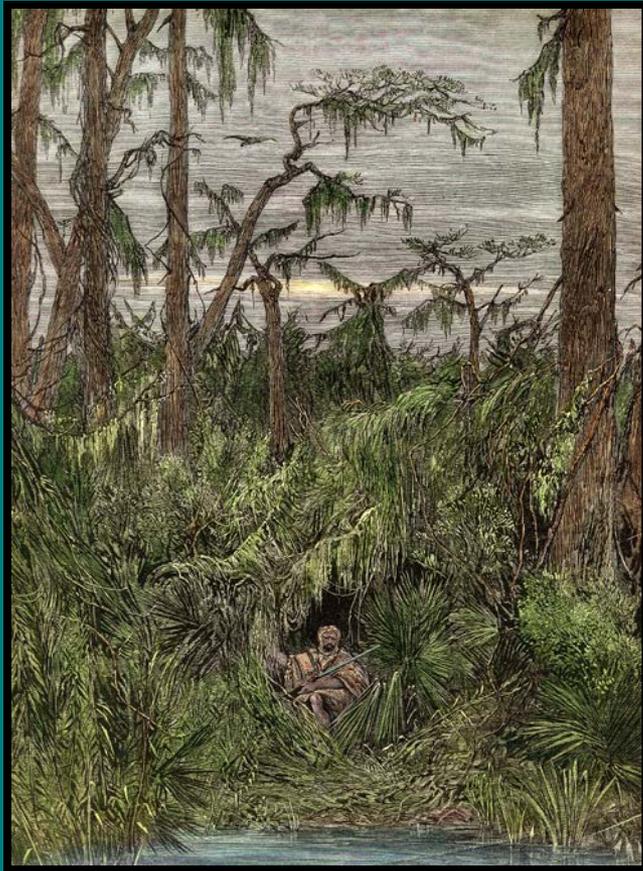


1887

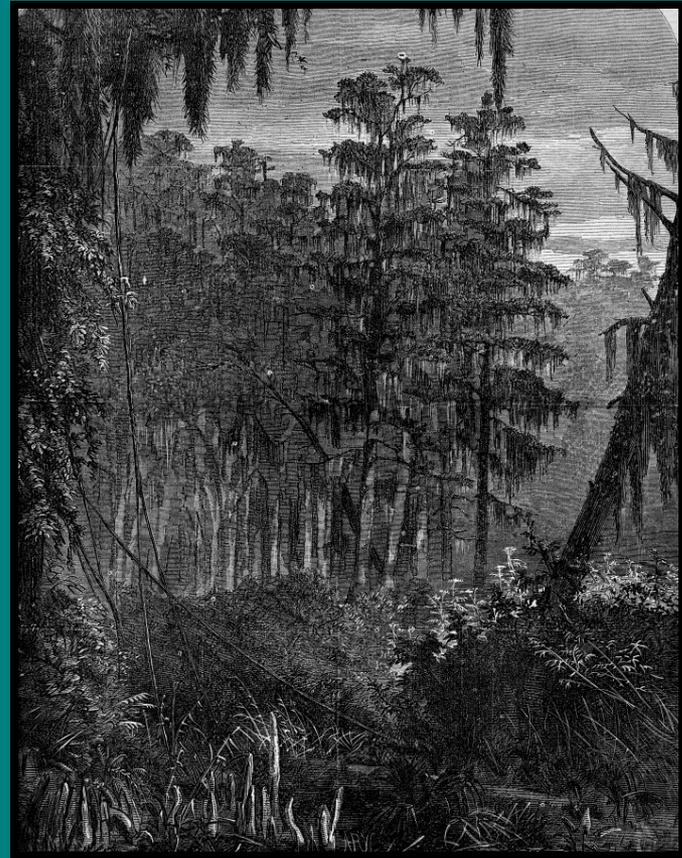


1966

Environmental Change



1858



1871

Environmental Change



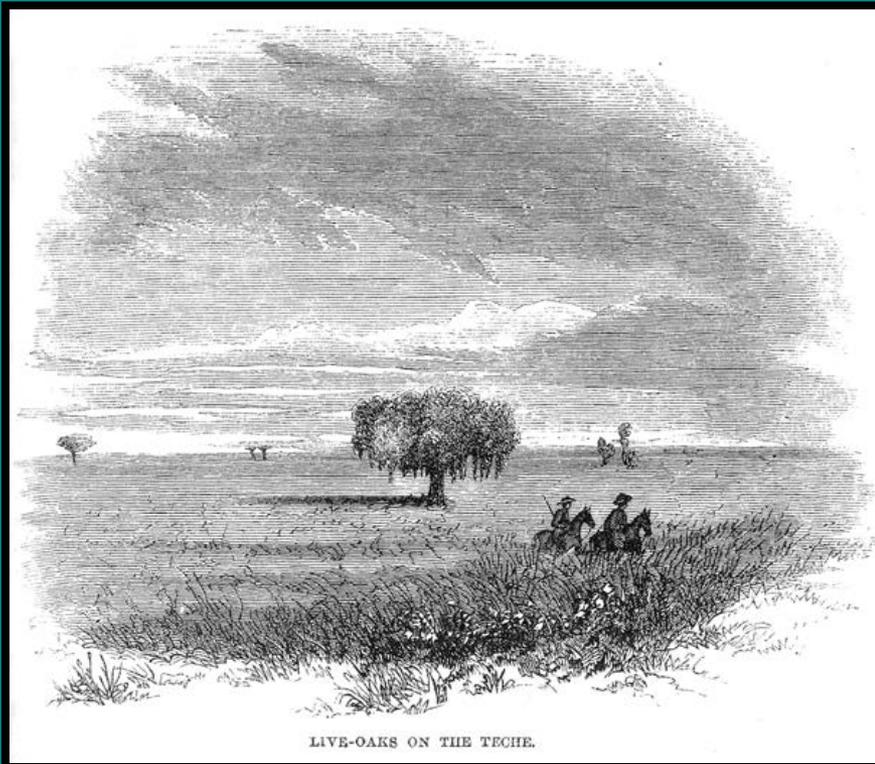
1887



ca 1905

Environmental Change

- Southwestern Louisiana prairie, ca 1858-1887



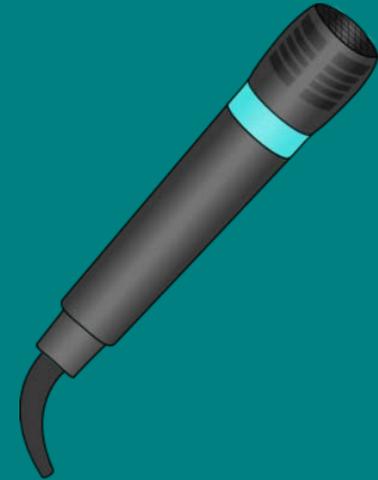
Visual Record—Examples



- Early human incursions into the environment
- Above: Swamper, Vermilion Parish, 1880s
- Below: Hunters in south Louisiana, 1888
- Far Left: J. B. Wiltz, avid hunter, ca. 1800

Part 3

- Extant documentation, however, can only provide a one-dimensional understanding of any community, particularly in an area, like the Louisiana coastal plain, where literacy – and hence surviving documentation – are far below national averages.
- To tap into the reservoirs of knowledge in such marginalized societies, researchers must mine these communities’ “living libraries.”



Misconception 2

- BECAUSE OF LOW LITERACY LEVELS AMONG TRADITIONAL COASTAL SOCIETIES AND THE FREQUENCY OF NATURAL DISASTERS, RELIABLE INFORMATION MAY NOT EXIST *IN SITU*



Traditional Ecological Knowledge

- 2000 census indicates Louisiana has the nation's most sedentary population
- A large portion of rural south Louisiana's population lives either on, or adjacent to, properties settled by their ancestors in 18th century
- Result: accumulation of an enormous amount of traditional ecological knowledge acquired over 200 years
- Despite its obvious significance, scholars have almost entirely ignored this resource.



Traditional Ecological Knowledge

- There is a real and current threat to the coastal plain's traditional ecological knowledge and associated database.
- The relocation of the Isle de Jean Charles band of the Houma tribe.
- The federal government is sending \$233.8 million in grants to Louisiana to move a coastal the Houma tribe, including \$48.3 million to help Isle de Jean Charles relocate behind levees in Terrebonne Parish.



Residents of the coastal plain are consistently the first to recognize and adapt to these ongoing, catastrophic environmental changes.



We run the risk of discounting the stake holders that have the most to lose since they are often ignored in the decision making process.



Heritage

- TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE IS PART OF OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE.
- WHY IS CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPORTANT?



- Heritage provides a foundation for cultural identity.
- All traditional knowledge is transmitted culturally.
- Cultural heritage holds the solutions to everyday problems.
- Heritage shapes all forms of cultural expressions.

Threats to Cultural Heritage

- Resource Depletion
- Environmental Change
- Unequal Development (natives don't often reap benefits of economic development)
- Language Loss



State of the State of Louisiana Studies

- As a result of reverse provincialism, Louisiana topics were not afforded the serious attention they deserve until late 20th century
- In late 20th century, south Louisiana attracted international attention because of the diversity of its population, which was once viewed as a paradigm for 21st-century America.
- Much of recent research has focused on how the established populations have been influenced by the region's cultural and natural environments.



Salient Characteristics of South Louisiana's Population

- Large Indigenous Population
- Sedentary Population with Strong Ties to Land
- Ethnic and Racial Diversity, but Common Synthetic Cultural Base
- Distinct Adaptive Strategies Shared Across Community Lines
- Marginalization
- Pragmatism and Adaptability
- Cultural and Environmental Diversity Are Mutually Linked



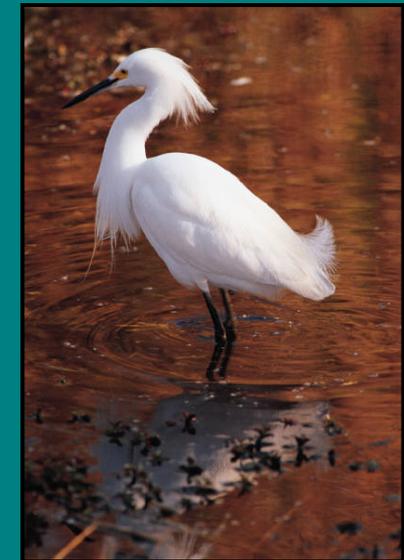
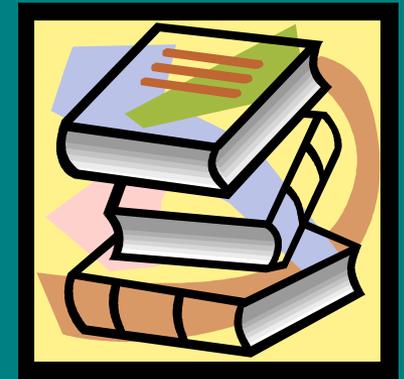
To understand Louisiana's present dilemma, one must first understand the historical processes directly contributing to its existence



The Time Has Come for Bridge Building



- Flurry of research and publishing activity has generally been limited by disciplinary boundaries
- Knowledge base is now sufficient to warrant trans-disciplinary collaboration



Misconception 3

- Conventional wisdom:
- **INTER-DISCIPLINARY**
- **BRIDGE-BUILDING IS EITHER IMPOSSIBLE OR POINTLESS**



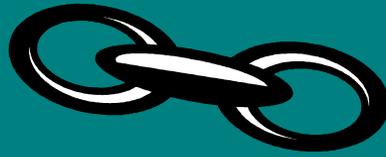
Collaboration

- WHY?
- Because Louisiana's problems are of such magnitude that the time has come for a more global approaches and more comprehensive understanding if we are to avoid the mistakes of the past.
- HOW?
- **HERITAGE HABITATS PROJECT -- disciplinary differences in methodologies are not a real impediment – IF PARTICIPANTS STRIP AWAY THEIR DISCIPLINARY JARGON AND SPEAK A COMMON LANGUAGE**



Part 4:

INTERPRETATION & DISSEMINATION



THIRD COAST SERIES



University Press of Mississippi

INITIAL VOLUME TOPICS

- 1) Inaugural Volume**
- 2) Landmarks Threatened by
Coastal Erosion**
- 3) Bayou Teche**

VOLUMES IN DEVELOPMENT

1) Finding Common Ground

(Traditional Ecological Knowledge)

**2) Swamp Rat: The Story of Dixie's
Nutria Invasion**

3) Hunted, Harvested, and

**Homegrown: Subsistence in Coastal
Louisiana (Foodways)**

4) Louisiana Dried Shrimp Industry)

5) Gulf Coast Oyster Industry

THIRD COAST SERIES



Part 5

JEUDI GRAS

