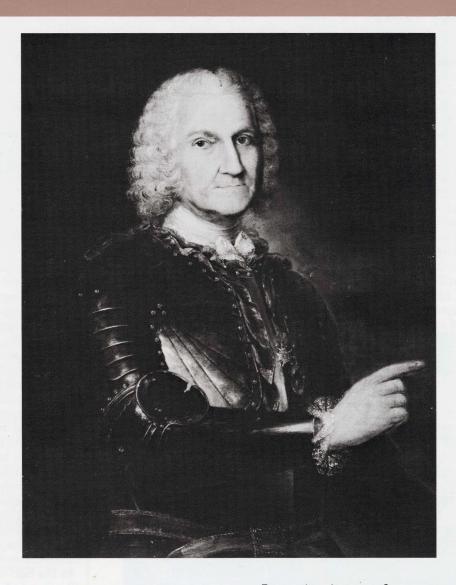


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COLLECTION ACQUIRES BIENVILLE PORTRAIT

In a city intensely aware of its origins, a founding father is not taken lightly: the name of Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, sieur de Bienville, who officially established New Orleans in 1718, may be found in the city's place names and in its cuisine. Until a few months ago, however, there was in the city no portrait of Bienville that dated from his lifetime. Thus, when the Historic New Orleans Collection purchased a previously

unknown portrait of Bienville, the local press acknowledged the event as front-page news. THNOC acquired the painting last spring with funds made available through the Clarisse Claiborne Grima be-

Eighteenth-century portraits of the city's forebears are rare—and rarely available-remaining in a family from one generation to the next. The portrait of Bienville acquired by THNOC apparently followed this pattern up to a point. After descending through generations of the Le Moyne family, the painting was acquired—through a bequest-by a family unrelated to Bienville and passed into the possession of a French marguise. Having no direct relationship to Bienville, the marguise decided to offer the portrait for sale and sent photographs of the painting to the Collection in October 1988, the first step in an acquisition process that lasted a year and a half.

Before agreeing to look at the portrait, the Collection hired an expert in French painting to verify its authenticity as an 18th-century portrait. Until this time, the only known portrait of Bienville dating from the 18th century was the one that had been on view during the Sun King exhibition at the Louisiana State Museum in 1984. A branch of Le Moyne descendants the Le Moyne de Martigny family —owned that Bienville portrait, as well as another of his brother Iberville, both commissioned by Bienville, according to the family. These portraits had come to the Le Moyne de Martigny family from their cousins, descendants of Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny, another of Bienville's brothers. The Martigny portrait of Bienville was reproduced in history books and magazine articles and became particularly well-known because of its publication in 1903 in Alcée Fortier's History of Louisiana. The existence of the other portrait —ultimately acquired by THNOC -remained generally unknown.

Photographs of the two portraits pointed up important differences: Bienville's sword belt was depicted only in the portrait owned by the marquise, and the two paintings were obviously done by different artists. An art consultant in Paris confirmed that the portrait offered for purchase was 18th century -possibly painted during Bienville's lifetime (1680-1767)—and that it was more than likely from the hand of a provincial artist. Confirmed by this report, the "unknown Bienville" was definitely of interest to the Collection. It was time to look at the portrait.

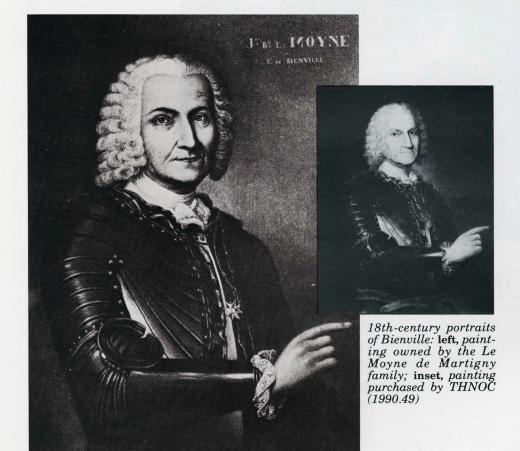
"...staff members uncrated the portrait and saw the 'other' Bienville."

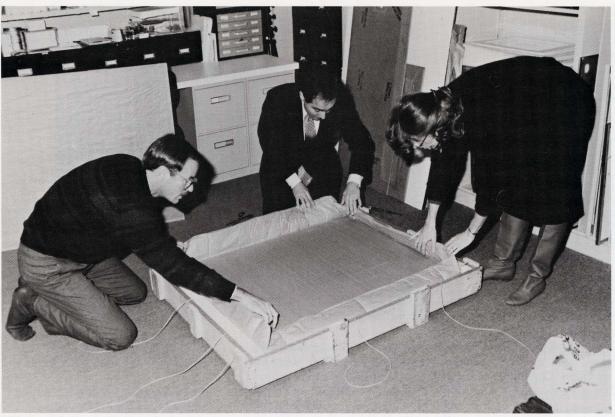
Before shipment could take place, however, there was French law to consider. According to regulations, artworks must be approved for export by a curator from the Louvre Museum who decides if the item is too important to French history to leave the country. Several months passed before the curator concluded that the painting was more important to American than to French history and released the painting for shipment to Louisiana.

Finally, a brief telegram arrived at Royal Street: "Bienville painting leaves December 15 via Air France. On December 22, 1989-a day of record-breaking snowfall in New Orleans—THNOC staff members uncrated the portrait and saw the

"other" Bienville.

In the half-length painting, Bienville stands facing the viewer, gesturing with his right hand. His modest, neatly-curled wig is powdered a fashionable white. He wears a type of harness worn by soldiers since the 1600s, according to Timothy Pickles, an expert on historical military dress. Pickles suggests that the uniform was probably part of the Le Moyne family's armory, donned for parades, ceremonies, and official portraits. Requisites of a gentleman's dress soften the effect of the uniform-a white linen





Uncrating the portrait: John Mahé, John Lawrence, and Maureen Donnelly



Editors: Patricia Brady, Louise C. Hoffman

Head of Photography: Jan White Brantley

The Historic New Orleans Collection Newsletter is published quarterly by the Historic New Orleans Collection, which is operated by the Kemper and Leila Williams Foundation, a Louisiana non-profit corporation. Housed in a complex of historic buildings in the French Quarter, facilities are open to the public. Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:00 a.m. until 4:45 p.m. Tours of the history galleries and the residence are available for a nominal fee.

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ISSN 0886-2109

© 1990 The Historic New Orleans Collection shirt and an elegant lace jabot show at the throat and lace ruffles fall gracefully at the wrist. The chest is covered with a solid metal cuirass padded inside for the wearer's comfort. The upper chest, shoulders, and arms are protected by a pair of vambraces made of hinged strips of metal that allowed easy arm movement. These were also padded, and part of the inner red velvet lining with gold piping adds a decorative trim around the edges of the armor. Pinned to this trim, Bienville proudly wears the medal of the Royal Military Order of St. Louis, given only to loyal meritorious officers of the Catholic faith who had served with distinction in the army or navy for at least ten years. The award was presented in 1717 in recognition of Bienville's service to the crown that included exploring the Gulf Coast and colonizing and governing the early French settlements in the

Once the portrait arrived at THNOC, staff members called on experts to verify the date of the painting and to offer information that might illuminate its provenance. Dr. Colin Bailey, curator of

paintings and sculpture at the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth and an authority on French painting, examined the portrait under fluorescent, ultraviolet, and natural lighting in order to see the original paint underneath the layers of old varnish and dirt. He concluded that the work was by the hand of an academically trained provincial artist. Like the Martigny version and most other unsigned paintings, the artist will probably never be known. Other consultants included local conservators who noted that the canvas was a medium-weave linen with an irregular pattern, suggesting that it was hand-woven, a technique that supports the 18thcentury date.

The painting, however, still lacked a complete provenance—its ownership could be documented only through two generations of the current owner's family. It was information from this side of the Atlantic that helped trace the painting's history.

In 1894, the Chicago Historical Society purchased a copy of a Bienville portrait distinguished by the same sword belt depicted in THNOC's painting. The Society's records indicate that the copy was made from an original portrait descended directly from Bienville's eldest brother, Charles Le Moyne, baron de Longueuil. At some time later, through a bequest, this 18th-century portrait was acquired by the family of the marquise.

Apparently, then, two portraits of Bienville were painted. They passed into the families of two of Bienville's brothers: one through the Sérigny branch (and ultimately into the related Martigny family); the other, through the Longueuil branch. The Longueuil painting, owned by the marquise, is the one that the Collection has purchased.

Once cleaned and stabilized by a conservator, THNOC's portrait of Bienville will be displayed in the French colonial room of the history galleries. Bienville's image will be placed directly across from a rare manuscript map of New Orleans drawn in 1732. After more than 200



years, Bienville has symbolically returned to the city that remembers him as its founder.

— John A. Mahé II

THNOC's Presidents



Rosanne McCaffrey Mackie

Attending meetings, presenting papers, chairing committees, editing journals, publishing articles and reviews—active involvement in professional organizations characterizes THNOC staff. This year Rosanne McCaffrey Mackie, director of systems, and Priscilla



Priscilla Lawrence

Lawrence, collections manager, are serving as presidents of regional museum associations.

Mrs. Mackie was inaugurated in April 1990 for a two-year term as president of the Louisiana Association of Museums. LAM has over 200 members—both institutional and individual—within the state. Created to improve communication among the state's museums, LAM has regularly added programs and services for its members; the group also lobbies and acts as a museum advocate. Mrs. Mackie has been instrumental in the creation of a computerized clearinghouse of museum information; as president, she will oversee the updating and continued use of that database.

Mrs. Lawrence was elected president of the Southeastern Registrars Association (SERA) last year; her term continues through the fall of 1990. SERA is the largest standing professional committee of the Southeastern Museums Conference (SEMC). SERA's 130 members represent museums from 12 southeastern states. The group organizes sessions at the annual meeting of SEMC and serves as a professional support network for those charged with museum registration. Mrs. Lawrence edited and produced SERA's Basic Condition Reporting: A Handbook, a widely used registration manual.

Director



Theme exhibitions are like chapters in textbooks. It's impossible to tell the "whole story" on any subject in one presentation. More than 60 exhibitions have been held in the Williams Gallery since 1971. Added all together the visual and textual information compiled for them would fill volumes, not just a book.

The subjects—all pertaining to local history and culture—include 19 shows about artists and photographers; four about Mardi Gras; and others about silver, maps, plantations, and music. The list continues: rare books, prints, law, newspapers, markets, coffee, and politics have all been featured in the Williams Gallery.

In contrast, the second-floor galleries — accessible through a guided tour — present an outline of Louisiana history. The docents alter the tours according to the specific interests of visitors.

During the last few months, the second-floor galleries have been undergoing extensive refurbishing and upgrading of the lighting and sprinkler systems. The installations will include more period furnishings and artifacts than before—in fact, the entire look of the galleries will differ from previous years, and new acquisitions will be shown, including the recently acquired Bienville portrait.

We wish we could present all aspects of Louisiana history within a few galleries. But through our exhibitions we have managed to touch on all major subjects—and some we just think are fun. The current offering, *Pelican's-Eye Views of New Orleans*, is the latest chapter in our history book.

— Dode Platou

Trahan Photography Donation

For four decades, photographer Roy Trahan has documented unusual aspects of New Orleans life. His work has centered on charitable and philanthropic organizations, besides the myriad other assignments of a commercial photographic practice. Now Mr. Trahan has generously donated his photographic collection of prints, negatives, business records, and photographic apparatus to the Historic New Orleans Collection. The visual materials in this body of work cover the period from approximately 1940 through 1980. In addition to his photographs for the United Fund and its many beneficiary organizations, Mr. Trahan worked for Xavier University, the Louisiana Tourist Commission, and the New Orleans Museum of Art. to name just a few of his clients. His long career in photography included medical camera work and some motion picture photography; he also taught photography at the Newcomb College art school.

One of the most noteworthy series of photographs in the donation was produced while Mr. Trahan was teaching. In 1940, he and several Newcomb students created a photographic essay about the town of Pierre Part, Louisiana, in the Atchafalaya River basin west of Napoleonville. The images portray-sometimes with elegant understatement, sometimes with documentary directness-a village of fishermen, trappers, and moss gatherers just two years after the area was first made accessible to automobiles. This fall an intern from the University of New Orleans will catalog the collection, identify the student photographers, and interview participants in the project.



Pierre Part, Louisiana (1990.16)

Much of the photography in the Trahan Collection is concerned with people. In addition to publicrelations shots at ground-breaking ceremonies and ribbon cuttings, there are photographs of children and adults in the process of overcoming physical handicaps. His photographs speak eloquently: each moment is captured with Mr. Trahan's confidence of execution and certainty of technique. Subjects covered by his photographs are largely unrepresented by other images in the Collection's pictorial holdings. The quality of Mr. Trahan's work and the originality of his viewpoint and subjects make the donation a welcome addition to the Collection.

The Trahan Collection contains thousands of items, including both black-and-white and color prints (4x5 to 11x14 inches) and negatives and transparencies in several formats (35mm to 4x5 inches). Initial processing of the collection will begin shortly; portions of the Trahan Collection will be made available to researchers as they are processed.

— John H. Lawrence

Planned improvements in the library require temporary disruption of the reading room from August 15 to approximately September 18. Researchers who anticipate traveling to use the library may wish to write or phone (504/523-4662) in advance.

Williams Prizes in Louisiana History Awarded

Lawrence E. Estaville, Jr., author of Confederate Neckties: Louisiana Railroads in the Civil War, and Kimberly S. Hanger, author of "A Privilege and Honor to Serve: The Free Black Militia of Spanish New Orleans," have received the 1989 General L. Kemper Williams Prizes in Louisiana History. Florence M. Jumonville, chairman of the Williams Prizes Committee and head librarian at the Historic New Orleans Collection, presented the awards on March 16 in Alexandria, Louisiana, at the annual banquet of the Louisiana Historical Association.

Confederate Neckties, issued by McGinty Publications at Louisiana Tech University, describes the importance of railroads to the Confederate war effort in Louisiana. They evacuated troops from New Orleans when federal forces occupied the city, transported food to nourish the starving populace of the Crescent City, and provided a vital link in the trans-Mississippi supply route that extended from Mexico through North Louisiana to Virginia. Aware of the railways' strategic importance, Union soldiers and Confederates alike sought to control them, and the intensity of their combat demolished most of the state's railroads.

A favorite means of destruction by northern troops gives the book its title. The soldiers removed sections of track, warped them over a bonfire made of crossties, and wrapped and twisted the rails around trees, thus rendering it impossible for southerners to reconstruct the missing sections. This practice occurred throughout the South, not only in Louisiana. "Confederate neckties," as these damaged rails came to be called, still may be found in some areas, long since overgrown by the trees around which they are wrapped like a necktie around a man's neck.

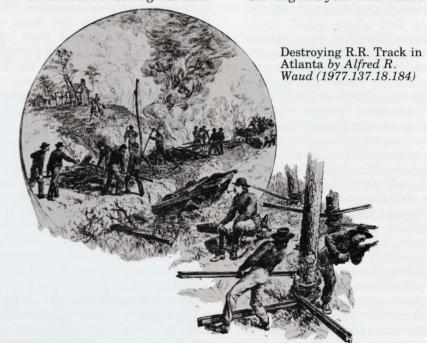
In Confederate Neckties, Dr. Estaville, an associate professor of history at Clemson University in South Carolina, wrote, "Water transport in Louisiana during the Civil War was still the most important mode of transportation. Yet the

state's 395 miles of railroads played a far larger role in affecting the outcome of the war in Louisiana than has been heretofore recognized.

"A Privilege and Honor to Serve" is one of several articles resulting from Kimberly Hanger's continuing research on free persons of color in New Orleans during the Spanish colonial period. The province of Louisiana was strategically important to Spain as a borderland colony between the rich vicerovalty of New Spain and the colonies of an aggressive British enemy. Spanish officials, charged with the defense of the sparsely populated province, had little choice but to recruit free persons of color for colonial militia units. Ms. Hanger examines the organization and the role of the free black militia in the New Orleans area: during wartime recently named museum historian at the Louisiana State Museum.

In cooperation with the Louisiana Historical Association, in 1974 the Historic New Orleans Collection established the Williams Prizes for the purposes of promoting excellence in the writing of Louisiana history and honoring the authors of outstanding works on that subject. Two awards, one for the best published book or article and the other for the best unpublished manuscript, are offered annually. Prior recipients include Gilbert C. Din, Joe Gray Taylor, and Vaughan B.

A committee of three persons, one a staff member of the Historic New Orleans Collection and the others representing the Louisiana Historical Association, selects the recipients of the Williams Prizes. Serving this year with Miss Jumon-



the troops defended against the enemy and in peacetime pursued runaway slaves and patched breaks in the levee. Her well-researched paper concludes with the observation that free blacks capitalized on colonial administrators' need for their efforts and cherished the prestige that accompanied military service.

A doctoral student at the University of Florida, Ms. Hanger was

ville were Dr. Light T. Cummins, professor of history at Austin College in Sherman, Texas, and Dr. Warren M. Billings, professor of history at the University of New Orleans.

Entries in the 1990 Williams Prizes competition may be submitted until February 1, 1991. For more information, please communicate with Miss Jumonville at the Collection.

Research Notes

Land-Transfer Records

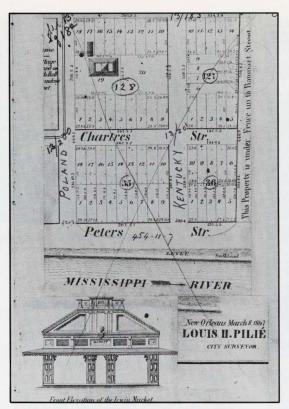
Of interest to land and architectural historians, as well as to genealogists, is a body of materials acquired from Lawyer's Title Insurance Company which documents area land transfers from the 1820s through the 1970s. Prior to issuing an insurance policy covering claims against a landowner's property title, Lawyer's Title Insurance Company investigated the land's ownership history. This firm's research created the documents that form a large part of the land-tenure records held by the manuscripts division.

By examining the property descriptions, land surveys, and names of related persons (buyers, sellers, notaries, contractors, surveyors) that accompany these land-transfer records, it is possible both to outline the history of an individual piece of land and to trace the larger process of municipal land development and subdivision.

Land-transfer records consist of transaction files, sketchbooks, tract books, conveyance books, and transcript records. Transaction files and sketchbooks provide the greatest detail concerning any individual piece of land at the time of transfer. Tract books, conveyance books, and transcript records contain less detail but may provide a broader chronological perspective of an area or individual lot.

The manuscripts division has begun cataloging land records; this very large-scale project will ultimately allow a researcher to gain access to the records through such index points as municipal district and square, address, buyer, seller, and date of transaction. For the present, however, cataloging of these records is incomplete, and access to them is limited to the index points specified in the following descriptions.

Transaction Files. This collection of approximately 48,000 abstract files provides a record of real estate transactions from the early decades of this century through the 1970s. While the contents of individual files may vary, a typical dossier will contain some or all of the following items: 1) property de-



Plat plan, surveyor's sketchbook (MSS 290)

scription (physical description of land, location in reference to faubourg, tract, plantation, or district, reference to early surveys, buyer, seller, price); 2) surveys or sketches based on surveys; 3) copies of wills; 4) court proceedings and other legal documents; 5) tax records; 6) title chains; 7) records of liens, new construction, repairs, paving; 8) notes and correspondence; 9) title insurance policies; 10) restrictions on utilization of property, alterations of existing structures, and new additions. These records can currently be retrieved only by using the Lawyer's Title file number.

Sketchbooks. Field books of surveyors working primarily in Orleans Parish number approximately 650 volumes and are accessible through district and square. Among surveyors represented are A. de Armas, C. A. de Armas, G. de Armas, G. W. R. Bayley, R. Bond, D. M. Brosman, H. C. Brown, L. W. Brosman, George H. Grandjean, J. A. D'Hemecourt, M. B. Johnson, C. U. Lewis, E. Pilié, Louis Pilié, G. C. Pruschen, H. W. W. Reynolds, W. J. Seghers, and Villeré. In addition to containing information ranging from subdivision of squares to lot descriptions and floor plans, the sketchbooks are sometimes illustrated with pencil drawings and watercolors.

Tract books. Tract books consist of simple sketches of squares with enclosing street names, followed by a chain of transactions for property within the square. The chain cites buyer, seller, lot number, and date of transaction. Dating from the 1820s through early decades of

the 20th century, entries in these volumes include listings of earlier street names and square numbers used in alternate identification systems. Tract books are indexed by district and square numbers.

Conveyance books. Details concerning land transfers recorded in conveyance books include vendor and vendee, notary, date, suburb, property description, street names, and citations of plans and their location. These volumes are indexed by conveyance number and cover the period from 1827 through 1876.

Transcript records. Transcript records contain much the same information as conveyance books but are arranged and indexed by recorded date of transaction. These records cover the period from 1876 through 1967.

With the exception of the sketchbooks, land transfer records are housed at the Collection's Tchoupitoulas Street warehouse. Researchers wishing to examine any of these documents should make prior arrangements with the manuscripts division for their transfer to the manuscripts reading room at 722 Toulouse Street.

- Joseph Scott

New Orleans



It is comfortable to know who founded your city, like knowing your father. Even though the month and day of that event remain conjectural, the year, 1718, was reported by Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, sieur de Bienville. This controversial leader, credited with being New Orleans's founder, circumvented the planning of the city until 1722, preferring Biloxi as the territorial capital.

And yet, as early as 1699, his elder brother, Pierre Le Moyne, sieur d'Iberville, had written of his first view of the river crescent and the Indian portage to Lake Pontchartrain, a recognition of the important land link and the deciding factor in selecting the site.

Antoine Crozat, whose private charter of Louisiana lasted from 1712 through 1717, felt that Iberville had selected the spot on the Mississippi, "first choice for a new post." But it was John Law who, within the jurisdiction of the Company of the West in 1717, proclaimed it a city in honor of Philippe d'Orléans, Regent of France, and ordered Bienville to establish it.

Two years later, fewer than ten frame buildings marked the still unplanned Nouvelle Orléans; Bienville continued his residence in Mobile, ignoring the crown's mandate to establish a new capital, and detaining at the coast engineer Le Blond de la Tour with the order to

Bienville and the Louisiana Colony

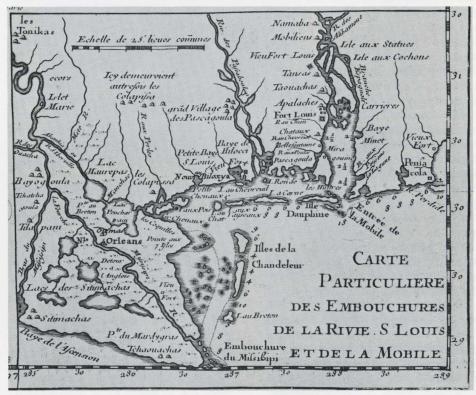
lay out New Biloxi for the seat of government.

To capture a glimpse of this complex and reluctant "founder," it is necessary to consider Bienville in relation to his family, to the crown, and to the reality of the New World. While local historians Martin, Gayarré, Fortier, King, and Ficklen romanticized Bienville and the other Le Moynes, French historian Marcel Giraud has cleared away many myths in his four-volume Histoire de la Louisiane Francaise.

Born in Montreal in 1680, Bienville was the ninth of eleven sons. His ambitious father, Charles, had catapulted his large family into a new aristocracy, based on an awareness of colonial economics, monetary benefits, and potential political controls. To Louisiana, Iberville led four brothers—Joseph de Sérigny, Jean Baptiste de Bienville, Gabriel d'Assigny, and Antoine de Châteauguay—and two uncles by marriage, Charles and Louis Juchereau de Saint-Denis.

Iberville, explorer and guiding force, was the first governor of Louisiana. During the three years of his control, he directed major exploration and the selection of sites for future forts, establishing the French colonial position. Pierre Le Sueur, a cousin and explorer, joined the Le Moynes' push toward the headwaters of the Missouri, as far as the Kaskaskias, to establish not only the crown's interest, but also the family's mining rights for lead and silver.

Giraud wrote: "Relatively few people were involved, in the first occupation of the coast...the grand total, including officers...eighty men...commanded by ensign Sauvolle [not a Le Moyne] and his assistant,...Bienville...." He continued: "After returning [to Versailles] from his third expedition in 1703, d'Iberville gave up the active role he had played... his colonial career was over... [but he] consulted on all details concerning Louisiana, [and] drew up instructions for his brother Bienville."



Carte de la Louisiane et du Cours de Mississippi, \det detail, ca. 1722, by Guillaume Delisle (1959.43i,ii)



View of John Law's Camp, New Biloxy by Jean Baptiste Michel Le Bouteux (1974.25.10.168)

During the War of the Spanish Succession, Iberville's last victory was over the English in 1706 at Nevis. Ill with yellow fever, he died leaving his nascent colony with no intermediary to the court and with a scandal that threatened to destroy all of his good works and his family, which maintained extraordinary filial loyalty through separation, death, and subsequent criminal investigations.

Iberville's programs of colonization were shrouded in indictments which alleged that his widow, brothers, cousins, and remote inlaws had received considerable fortunes as a result of fraud. The sustained accusations were based on the sale of captured booty; on profits made from merchandise exported; on premeditated fraudulent acts, (such as light weighing food). Bienville and Châteauguay, back in Louisiana, were held suspect.

And so it was during the massive, prolonged investigation into the affaire d'Iberville (1706-1735), that Jérôme Phélypeaux, comte de Pontchartrain, former confidant, while attesting to Bienville's knowledge of the colony, was unable to trust him with the full authority. Instead, the king's minister instituted a bipolar form of government,

military and civil, which caused historian Charles E. O'Neill to comment: "Louisiana was as healthy as any normal two-headed infant could be expected to be."

Bienville remained in the king's navy, never relinquishing his military authority despite family disrepute or personal denunciations. Pontchartrain and, later, Crozat allowed him to hang in this limbo from 1706 to 1717, causing further chaos in the weakened, neglected colony. Bienville added always to his list of enemies, as stated by Giraud because of his "intransigent character." His attacks against the political authorities were no less against the clergy; both sides were malicious and public. Paris listened, investigated.

Nevertheless, Bienville outlasted his critics, until his official appointment as commandant general by order of John Law. His nearly twenty-year presence had prevented the encroachment of both the English and Spanish into the interior of the continent. The Indians had felt his rewards and punishments.

The patterns of Bienville's behavior, studded with impatience, ill-humor, and dogmatism grew worse with the influx of too many under-financed emigrés. Four years

after the failure of Law's *Banque Nationale*, and the infamous "Mississippi Bubble," he was recalled to France. The year was 1725, and his enemies remained to brag of their success.

But the vagaries of Governor Etienne Perier's succeeding administration led to the disastrous Natchez Massacre in 1729, necessitating Bienville's return. For the next decade, he retained the unchallenged title of governor, confirming New Orleans as a major entrepôt. Perhaps weary, at last, of his constant disputes, he elected to return to France in 1743.

According to O'Neill, Bienville lived into his 88th year in Paris in a modest apartment on Rue Vivienne on the right bank. His daily visits to the offices of the Company of the Indies housed in the Palais Royal affirmed his interest in the colony. Indeed, one of his final acts was an appeal for continued French ownership of the colony when Louisiana was yielded to Spain. He died March 7, 1767, mystified by the crown's decision of abandonment to a former colonial enemy.

The 18th-century portrait of Bienville, recently purchased by THNOC, has artistic attributes. Stylistically Renaissance, it pretends depiction of an ancient aristocracy, as does the governor's gesture, an uplifted hand and pointing forefinger. His firm-set lips might well be about to part for the words, "In my opinion...," proffered with no thought of possible contradiction, despite the fact that he and his decisions continue to be plagued with ambiguities and controversy right to the present time.

- Mary Louise Christovich



Sources: Marcel Giraud, Histoire de la Louisiane Française, 4 vols. (Paris, 1953-74); Charles Edwards O'Neill, Church and State in French Colonial Louisiana (New Haven, 1966); Charles Edwards O'Neill, "The Death of Bienville," Louisiana History (Fall 1967); Samuel Wilson, Jr., The Vieux Carré, New Orleans (New Orleans, 1968).



The Place d'Armes at New Orleans in the 1730s by Henry Krotzer (1978.245.6)

Research Center Acquisitions



The Historic New Orleans Collection encourages research in the library, manu-

scripts, and curatorial divisions of its research center from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday (except holidays). Cataloged materials available to researchers include books, manuscripts, paintings, prints, drawings, maps, photographs, and artifacts about the history and culture of New Orleans, Louisiana, and the Gulf South. Each year the Collection adds thousands of items to its holdings by donation or purchase. Only a few recent acquisitions can be noted here.

CURATORIAL

THNOC has acquired several photographs which document demolished structures. Audrey Stier donated 15 photographs of the Olivier Plantation built in 1820 for Daniel Olivier. Taken in the 1930s by

architect Richard Koch (1889-1971) the photographs show the plantation in decay. In its heyday, however, the plantation was one of the largest and finest of the suburban residences below New Orleans. In 1840 the Catholic Orphan's Association of New Orleans purchased the building for St. Mary's Orphan Asylum; extensive additions were designed by the architect Henry Howard. These, like the plantation itself, were destroyed in 1949. Efforts to save outstanding structures such as the Olivier Plantation resulted in the founding of the Louisiana Landmarks Society; the orphanage relocated across the river as Hope Haven and Madonna Manor.

Recent news stories have focused on the destruction of the New Orleans Public Grain Elevator, the largest and oldest grain elevator in Orleans Parish. This elevator can be detected in the background of a photograph of the Stuyvesant Docks in 1917, donated by Louis C. Hennick. The photograph depicts the Dock Board Public Grain Elevator, then under construction at the foot of Bellecastle Street.



Olivier plantation by Richard Koch (1990.30.5)

The Collection has acquired a pencil drawing titled New Orleans Market by John Rutherford Boyd (1884-1951). Boyd, a native of Philadelphia, trained at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. He was an illustrator for numerous magazines, including McClure's, Appleton's, Collier's, Century, Scribner's, Cosmopolitan, and the Saturday Evening Post. The drawing captures the bustle of the French Market, suggesting the haggling of vendors and customers amid the baskets of produce and crates of live poultry. A glimpse through the columns of the market provides a slice-of-life: a driver waits in a carriage for his passenger; behind him are buildings typical of those along Decatur Street, with shops on the ground floor and residences above.



New Orleans Market by J. R. Boyd (1990.17)

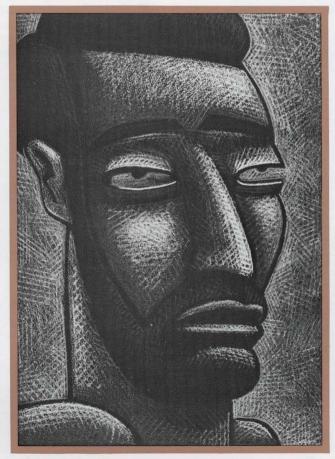
■ The Alfred Bendiner Foundation has donated several watercolor sketches by Alfred Bendiner, a well-known East Coast caricaturist who traveled extensively. The sketches depict life in the French Quarter in the 1950s, and include two menus from Brennan's Restaurant, annotated with watercolor sketches by Bendiner. A practicing architect, Bendiner served as president of the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, was a Fellow of the Institute, and an associate of the National Academy of Design.

Another recent acquisition is an ink and watercolor drawing of the U.S. Custom House in 1854. Drawn by New York artist J.



U.S. Customhouse by J. Wells (1990.44)

Wells, it shows, in perspective, a view of the Canal Street facade designed by architect A. T. Wood. Drawings in the lower margin illustrate two floor plans: the ground floor showing the Post Office across the rear of the Customhouse, and an upper floor showing the U.S. Court Room and General Business Room at the center of the building. Mrs. P. Roussel Norman has donated a photograph of Clarence John Laughlin taken in his study, circa 1981, and two colored-pencil drawings by New Orleans painter and printmaker Robert Gordy (1933-1986). Gordy was celebrated for his abstract-pattern painting featuring female nudes set against whimsical backgrounds. In his later years, Gordy concentrated on a series of human heads exhibiting a wide range of emotions. Both drawings, dated 1982, depict male heads. THNOC has also acquired a lithograph of Colonel Richard M. Johnson by New Orleans lithographer Jules Lion, dating from the 1840s. Johnson (1780-1850) served as ninth Vice-President of the United States under Martin Van



Male head by Robert Gordy (1990.31.2)

Buren from 1837 to 1841. He is believed to be the only U.S. Vice President ever to reside in New Orleans.

Additions to the collection of Mardi Gras memorabilia come from Stuart Thayer, who donated a 1902 Mardi Gras bulletin; from the School of Design, a 1990 Rex Proclamation; and from Audrey Stier, medals and badges from the United Ancient Order of Druids, a fraternal and social organization that formerly marched behind the Rex parade.

- Judith H. Bonner

LIBRARY

The American Civil War Surgery Series reprints facsimile editions of manuals issued for wartime surgeons. Five Confederate manuals have been published including a recently acquired volume which reproduces two manuals written by New Orleans physicians and originally published in the city.

Dr. Felix Formento, Jr., (1837-1907) opened the Louisiana Hospital in Richmond, Virginia, in 1861;

two years later he published *Notes* and *Observations* on *Army Surgery*, based on his experiences there. Formento favored the use of women as nurses and advocated small wards, cleanliness, good food, and ample fresh air—all of which contributed to the relatively low mortality rate at the Louisiana Hospital compared to other military hospitals of the time. The manual, oddly enough, was published in New Orleans after the city was occupied by Union forces.

A Treatise on Gun-Shot Wounds: Written for and Dedicated to the Surgeons of the Confederate States Army, written by Dr. Moritz Schuppert (1817-1887), was published in New Orleans in 1861. Schuppert left Germany in the early 1850s and by 1854 was named city physician in New Orleans. During the Civil War he continued to practice in New Orleans, probably seeing little battlefield service because of his age. Known by his colleagues for his prodigious surgical feats, Schuppert was a fierce supporter of the principles of antiseptic surgery promulgated by Dr. Joseph Lister.

Some fiber-content tags inside

today's clothing list ramie, usually in combination with other natural materials. Extracted from several fiber-yielding plants belonging to the nettle family, ramie has many virtues as a fabric but, until recently, was difficult to process. A recent acquisition, Prospectus of Ramie Culture, Illustrated, was written in 1894 by Capt. S. B. Allison, a director of the newly formed Perseverance Fibre Company, Ltd., of New Orleans. Allison describes his decorticating machine for processing ramie and discusses ramie cultivation which he felt was ideally suited to the Louisiana climate. This was a second attempt to establish ramie as a local cash

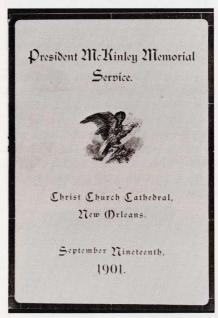
A recent gift of assorted ephemeral materials includes several noteworthy pieces. Gentilly Terrace, Here's Your Opportunity was a promotional brochure issued by the architectural and real estate firm of M. A. Baccich and R. E. E. de Montluzin in 1909 or early 1910. Shortly before World War I, interest in developing rural Gentilly attracted development because it was on fairly high ground with natural drainage and ready access



Illustration from promotional brochure, Gentilly Terrace (90-163-RL)

via the Pontchartrain Railroad. Gentilly Terrace was carefully planned so that homes would be built on small hills and businesses. restricted to a few commercial blocks. This brochure—depicting homes priced from \$2,900 to \$6,500 -touted the quality of life in the beautiful Gentilly Terrace subdivision, an area that did not enjoy substantial growth until 1935. Included in the same gift is a 1925 edition of Historic Holmes, a promotional item that outlines the history of New Orleans as well as the history of the D. H. Holmes, Co., with illustrations of the Canal Street store in cross-section.

Three recently acquired items related to President William Mc-Kinley are of local interest: a



(90-179-RL)

banquet menu and a musical program presented to the president on May 1, 1901, by the leading citizens of New Orleans during his visit to the city and the program from a memorial service held at Christ Church Cathedral on September 19, 1901, five days after McKinley died of gunshot wounds.

— Pamela D. Arceneaux

MANUSCRIPTS

A letter donated by Mildred Curroult provides a look at daily life in New Orleans in August 1817. Signing himself simply "Davidson," the writer described a city in the summer doldrums: few ships were

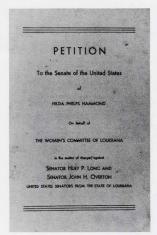
in port and "respectable" (read: well-to-do) families had departed for the "United States" or Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. Doctors worked overtime to combat an outbreak of bilious fever among the remaining residents during the "Sickly Season." Tempers were short during the hottest August in ten years; one man, angry that his brother had not received prompt medical care, shot the offending physician.

A rare issue of the Black Republican (April 22, 1865), decorated with heavy black borders, carried news of Abraham Lincoln's assassination and the inauguration of President Andrew Johnson. The recently acquired newspaper also had articles on states rights, the use of government buildings to house former slaves, the illumination of New Orleans in honor of "the late Union victories," and the Langston Tableaux and Literary Society's fund raiser at the St. Charles Opera House organized by Oscar J. Dunn. The only other known copy of this rare issue known to exist is in the American Antiquarian Society.

Judah P. Benjamin was a New Orleans attorney, businessman, planter, and Confederate cabinet member, but he left his American life behind when he fled to England after the Civil War. A recent acquisition, the Millaudon-Benjamin Collection (29 items), reveals a loose end he left dangling. Benjamin had entered in a number of business ventures with Laurent Millaudon, a developer of the town of Carrollton and the New Orleans and Carrollton Railroad. At the beginning of the war, Millaudon, the victim of deteriorating health and financial reverses, unsuccessfully attempted to collect a \$10,000 debt from Benjamin. As Benjamin ignored Millaudon's letters, interest compounded the debt. By 1880 Millaudon's heirs took up the quest while Benjamin, a noted Queen's counsel in London, firmly ignored the matter. Despite both diplomatic and legal assistance, Millaudon's family failed to recover their money.

John Hammond has donated an extensive collection of material documenting the activities of his mother, Hilda Phelps Hammond, the indefatigable leader of the Women's

Committee that opposed Huey Long. A firm believer in the power of the pen, Mrs. Hammond corresponded with John Holland, the Chief Investigator of Presidential and Senate Campaign Expenditures, and with newspaper editors throughout the country. Her published works include Is the Senate Afraid of Huey Long?, The Menace of Huey Long (reprinted in the Reader's Digest of March 1935), and Let Freedom Ring, an account of the struggle of the Louisiana Women's Committee. Petition to the Senate of the United States of Hilda Phelps Hammond on behalf of the Women's Committee of Louisiana in the matter of charges against Huey P. Long and Senator John H. Overton, United States Senators from the State of Louisiana stands as testimony to her organizational skills. The donation also includes transcripts of her radio programs entitled "Watch out America" as well as publications by the Women's Committee of Louisiana and of co-worker Shirley G. Wimberly concerning Huey Long.



(90-31-L)

■ As the 50th anniversary of the United States's entry into World War II approaches, the manuscripts division is especially interested in collecting materials illustrating the war's impact on New Orleans. William Groves, one of the region's premier collectors, has recently donated a large collection of scrapbooks tracing the events of World War II through local publications; this donation will enable the division to assist researchers interested in New Orleans during the war.

- Alfred E. Lemmon

Donors January-March 1990

Mrs. Walter S. Barnes Marie Moses Bezou The Hon. Lindy (Mrs. Hale) Boggs Lester Burbank Bridaham Mr. and Mrs. Richard C. Briede Dr. Howard A. Buechner Mrs. Peter Gibbons Burke Mrs. John W. Calhoun Frances Moses Crist Paul Dastugue Adrienne Duffy R. J. Dykes Earl K. Long Library, University of **New Orleans** F. Lee Eiseman Louis Frierson Mrs. Mims Gage Anne Moses Ganucheau **Odette Grosz** Louis Hennick Pendleton Hogan Waneeda Holland Mrs. Robert D. Irvine Elizabeth Killeen Benjamin A. Klemmer Mrs. W. Elliott Laudeman III Louisiana Power & Light Company John T. Magill John A. Mahé II Don Marquis Richard C. Marvin, Jr. Massachusetts Institute of Technology Mrs. John McCrady National Park Service Mrs. L. Kent Nelson Coralee Nesser City of New Orleans, Department of Streets New Orleans Museum of Art Mrs. P. Roussel Norman Carol T. Scherer School of Design Donald F. Schultz Paul J. F. Schumacher George T. Staples Audrey M. Stier Times-Picayune Publishing Corporation Roy Trahan United States Geological Survey John E. Walker Clay Watson Wade Welch Mr. and Mrs. J. Herbert Williams

PHOTO CREDITS

Jan White Brantley Cornelius Regan Judy Tarantino

Staff

PUBLICATIONS

An article by **Judith H. Bonner**, assistant curator, appeared in the *New Orleans Art Review*...and **John H. Lawrence** reviewed two exhibitions for the same publication.

Alfred E. Lemmon contributed an article, "Latin American Archives and Preservation and Conservation Institute" to the Society of American Archivists Newsletter...he also contributed an article to the Inter-American Music Review.



Stan Ritchey

CHANGES

Stan Ritchey (B.S., University of Southern Mississippi) has joined the Collection staff as an assistant in the curatorial reading room.

Hau Haynh has joined the maintenance staff.

MEETINGS

Director Dode Platou, John A. Mahé II, senior curator, and Priscilla Lawrence, collections manager, attended the annual meeting of the American Association of Museums in Chicago...Mr. Mahé serves on the Curators' Committee and Mrs. Lawrence serves on the Registrars' Committee.

Joseph Scott, manuscripts assistant, attended a records management seminar sponsored by the New Orleans Chapter of the Association of Records Managers and Administrators. Judith H. Bonner traveled to Lafayette for the conference of the Philological Association of Louisiana.

Alfred E. Lemmon attended the Society of Southwest Archivists in Austin, Texas...Dr. Lemmon and John Barbry, manuscripts assistant, went to Baton Rouge for a

meeting of the Friends of the Archives.

Dr. Patricia Brady, director of publications, and **Louise C. Hoffman**, editor, attended the New Orleans Writers' Conference.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

In April, head librarian Florence M. Jumonville was elected to membership in the American Antiquarian Society, a research institution founded in 1812 to expand the knowledge and appreciation of American history. Members are elected by their colleagues in recognition of scholarship, support of cultural institutions, manifest interest in bibliographical matters, or distinction as community or national leaders in humanistic affairs.

Dr. Alfred E. Lemmon, reference archivist, gave a paper on the musical archive of the Guatemala Cathedral at a symposium in Madrid on music archives in Spanish America. **John H. Lawrence**, curator of photographs, served as a judge in an art contest sponsored by Mercy Hospital.

Kathy Slimp, administration, was reelected secretary of the Friends of the Public Library and reelected to be a member of the executive board.



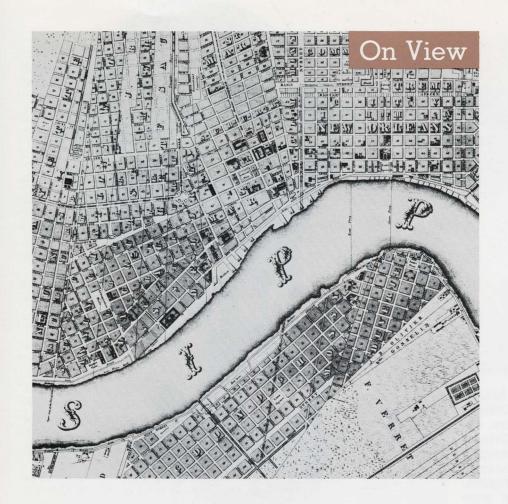
Kathy Slimp

MEDIA

John Magill, assistant curator, was interviewed about the exhibition *Pelican's-Eye Views of New Orleans* on WSMB Radio and on the Breakfast Edition program of WDSU-TV.

SPEAKERS BUREAU

Staff members have recently made presentations to the following organizations: Patricia Brady, Town & Country Garden Club...John Magill, Friends of UNO Library...John H. Lawrence, senior citizens group, St. Mary Magdalen Church.



A Reader Comments



The spring issue of the Newsletter (Vol. VIII, No. 2) included, in the curatorial acquisitions column, a photograph of a flooded street identified as "Flood in Mid-City, ca. 1927." A Newsletter reader, T. E. Wells, responded with the following information: "an all-time weather bureau record was set by

the cloudburst—10 inches in about an hour. I was in the Carrollton movie house (age 12) seeing a matinee. We thought God was destroying us for going to a movie on Good Friday.... Your photo is of a neighborhood not far away, Dupre and Baudin streets."

A featured item in *Pelican's-Eye Views of New Orleans* currently on view in the Williams Gallery is the *Topographical Map of New Orleans and its Vicinity* engraved in 1833 by Charles F. Zimpel, an architect and engineer. The detail of the map shown at left includes land that previously had been a part of the plantation of Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, sieur de Bienville. The area depicted in this map detail extends from the French Quarter to Jackson Avenue in the Garden District in present-day New Orleans.

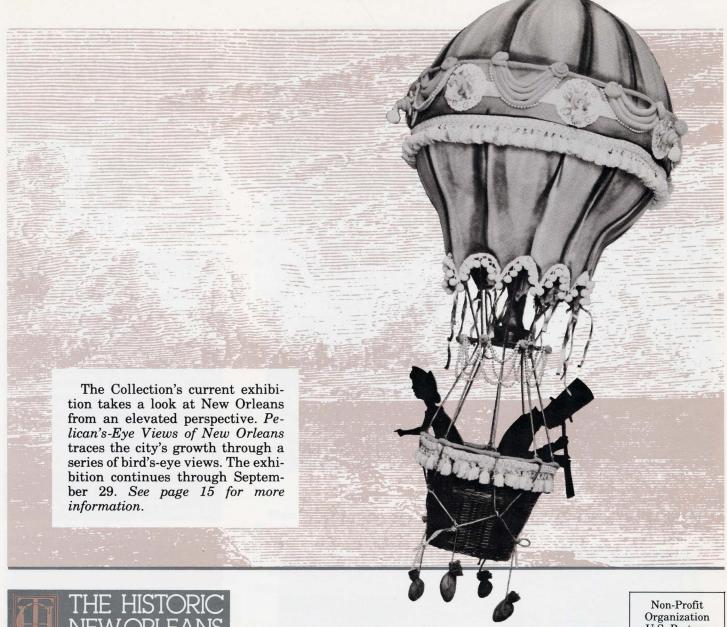
Information Request

An exhibition scheduled for early 1991 will feature the work of photographer Walker Evans and painter Jane Smith, both active in New Orleans in the 1930s. At one time Smith was married to Evans. Readers who knew Smith or Evans or who know the location of public or private works by Smith are asked to call John H. Lawrence, curator of photographs, at 523-4662.

The Shop



Items for sale in the shop include an assortment of unusual luggage tags that recall the days of travel by steamship and train. Pictured above is a valise-shaped tag bearing the inscription "My grip." Also pictured is a tag fashioned after a World War I medal for service in France; an original of this tag is in THNOC's Dingeldein silver collection.





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