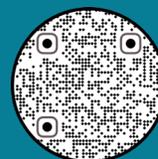




The France - Louisiana Connection
On view at The Historic New Orleans Collection



Procès-verbal of the retrocession of Louisiana from Spain to France (reproduction)

November 30, 1803; ink on paper

by Manuel Juan de Salcedo, Sebastian Calvo de la Puerta y O'Farrill, Manuel Andrés López de Armesto, Pierre Clément Laussat, and Joseph Daurerot, signers
75-217-L.1; MSS 125, f. 321

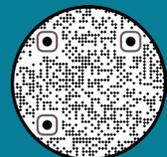
By the terms of the Treaty of San Ildefonso, signed in October 1800, Spain retroceded to France the colony of Louisiana and its dependencies, including the city and island of New Orleans; they had previously been held by France and ceded to Spain in 1762.



On November 30, 1803, representatives of both countries met in New Orleans at the Cabildo.

Their signatures on this document ceremonially concluded the official transfer of the colony to France.

View the full document:
hnoc.org > Research > Catalog,
then enter 75-217-L.1 in search box.



Procès-verbal of the cession of Louisiana by France to the United States of America (reproduction)

December 20, 1803; ink on paper
by William C. C. Claiborne, James Wilkinson, Decius Wadsworth, Pierre Clément
Laussat, and Joseph Daurerot, signers
75-217-L.2; MSS 125, f. 384

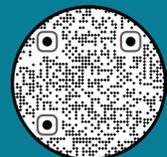
France kept Louisiana for less than three weeks before ceding the colony to the United States of America per the terms of the Treaty of Paris, signed on April 30, 1803.



Again, the Cabildo in New Orleans served as the venue for the official transfer ceremony. Outside, in the Place d'Armes—later Jackson Square—the French tricolor was lowered and replaced with the US flag.

Laussat later wrote: “I will say no more of the country; it is too painful to have known it and then to have been separated from it.”

View the full document:
hnoc.org > Research > Catalog,
then enter 75-217-L.2 in search box.



Double portrait of two men, possibly father and son

ca. 1845; pastel on paper
by Jules Lion (1810–1866)
2021.0264

When this portrait was exhibited at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1976, the sitters were identified as prominent Jewish merchant Asher Moses Nathan (1785–1864) and his illegitimate son, Achille Léon Lion (1827–1916).

The identification was made by curator and art historian Regenia A. Perry, who believed that the young Achille Lion—no relation to artist Jules Lion—had been born in Louisiana to a woman of color and to Nathan, a white man. Dr. Perry also accepted the then-prevalent belief that the portrait's artist was himself a Louisiana-born man of color. Her interpretation elevated this portrait to a very important place in African American art history, as it appeared to be the only known antebellum portrait to show a white father openly and affectionately acknowledging his mixed-race son.



Subsequent research has raised the possibility that Jules Lion was a French-born Jewish man, though this conclusion is not universally accepted. Our research into Achille Léon Lion, identified as the younger sitter, established that he was born in Paris and spent only a few years in Louisiana before returning to France in 1861. More research is needed to firmly establish the identities of these two men, but it certainly appears that the artist deliberately depicted the younger man with a darker skin tone. And prior to Perry's identification, the sitters were consistently referred to as father and son. Whatever their relationship and circumstances, the affection between the two men is unmistakable.

As we seek to better understand this portrait in the context of New Orleans's early 19th-century populations of free people of color and Jewish immigrants, we encourage you to visit Le Musée de f.p.c. and the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, which specialize in sharing the histories of these two important communities.

View the full document:
hnoc.org > Research > Catalog,
then enter 75-217-L.2in search box.

