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THE ROLE OF THE TRANSLATOR

D. MCD. KARILANOVIC

As a member of The Laffite Society with an avocational interest in foreign languages, and as a person involved in reading and collecting information of an historical nature on the lives of the privateers Jean and Pierre Laffite, I have had many opportunities, principally stemming from the requests of fellow Society members, to examine documents in French and Spanish whose translation into English would be beneficial.

At the inception of The Laffite Society in August, 1994, publisher and Society member Don Marler asked if I would be willing to translate some handwritten phrases from the Laffite Collection at the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center in Liberty, Texas, into English, and to respond as well to a request for information from a French genealogical study group. This casual inquiry gave birth to an almost full-time sideline of rendering into English historical information (and into French and Spanish, correspondence) for the personal interests of Laffite Society members, and for the archives of both the Society and of the aforementioned Sam Houston Center.

When one considers that making a typewritten transcription of often scarcely legible handwriting in centuries-old Spanish or French, and of then converting this transcription into an accurate yet flowing English translation, is a task which requires not only a knowledge of Romance languages and an attention to detail, but a "good eye," as well, it is understandable that this "leisure task" is for me not only an informative, but also a challenging, one.

As I have occupied myself with this assignment over the past two and one-half years, I have come to realize a hidden benefit of the effort - that of another dimension of knowledge to be

gained. The act of translating or interpreting a handwritten document does not merely make possible the conveyance of content and sense, but also, with repeated attention, appears to allow one to almost see or feel one's way into the fleshy substance of the hand that penned that document!

As I sit at my desk in a quiet corner, a soft light perfusing the "expectant" text which rests before me, brow furrowed with purpose, intently peering through a magnifying glass with pencil poised to jot down the letters of the word I am anxious to identify - I find that in this act of contemplation there has quietly stolen into my awareness the sense of a presence, of a personality, and that with frequent association in this context, one comes to feel a friendly intimacy with the writer.

To make easier the often difficult and time-consuming task of untangling and deciphering the letters of a highly individualized 19th-century writing style such as that of Jean Laffite, one can slowly trace the curling lines of the letters in a given word with the index finger. This act of gingerly touching and following the shape of the letters seems to permit a connection with the author's personality.

Some, including a few graphologists, say that "emotion, as well as other characteristics, can be expressed in the shape of a line." One might try the above experiment with any specimen of handwriting (although, I suspect, the more florid, the more "graphic", the better). In this sense, one need not be a translator of foreign languages to experience the benefits of continuity with the past.

Ms. Karilanovic is a founding member of The Laffite Society and currently serves as Secretary on its Board of Directors.

LECTURE NOTES; OR, LUCKY FIND IN THE DUSTBIN

MICHEL RATEAU

[TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL FRENCH BY DOROTHY MCD. KARILANOVIC]

[Editor's Note: *The Laffite Society* is grateful to Mr. Rateau for his permission to print the following. It was originally published in the bulletin *Généalogie et Histoire de la Caraïbe*, No. 82, p. 1631, May 1996. Instructions for contacting Mr. Rateau follow this article, which is a valuable bibliographical addition perhaps particularly for those interested in *Champ D'Asile*.]

I've just come from picking up from a public library dustbin a book missing its cover. The title and a short description are: *The Adventures of a French Captain, a Planter in Texas, Former Refugee of Champ D'Asile* by Just Girard, Bibliothèque de la Jeunesse Chrétienne ["Christian Youth Library"], Tours, Alfred Mame & Sons, ed., 1875, 191 pp. A very beautiful engraving: "Home of the American Indians."

Just Girard was born in Paris in 1792; orphaned from his mother at seven years, he left for St. Germain at 10 years and took up a commission at 17 years of age, in 1809. It is in the Spanish regiment that he is made lieutenant ... Fleurus, Mont-St-Jean ... and, on the abdication of Napoleon, he finds himself on half pay.

Returning to Paris, decorated with the Legion of Honor, he embarks for the U.S. and arrives in Baltimore in April, 1816. Over there he meets some colonists driven out of Santo Domingo (1794-1795), one of which is a Monsieur Tournel, formerly a wealthy resident of Santo Domingo, who has become a hardware merchant in Baltimore and who is a strong presence throughout this account. Tournel's family had been massacred; he had fled with his father, and was sheltered on a Spanish ship which left him in Havana, where he stayed for three years and where his father died.

Girard leaves Baltimore on a whaling ship on which he practices this profession for four years. Farther on, he is recalled because he has a wife, mother-in-law, and daughters fourteen and twelve years of age.

Chapter 2 mentions the Marshal of Grouchy; the Generals Clauzel, Vandamme, and

Lefebvre-Desnquettes [sic] (the organizer of the new state of Marengo, of which the chief site is Aigleville); Rigault (he, accompanied by his daughter, also an ex-colonist of Santo Domingo); the brothers Lallemant (including Dominique); Bernard; and the Colonel Galabert.

Tournel wishes to become a planter in Texas, which he explores and where he hopes to found a "New France," a project approved by the Count of Survilliers (Joseph Bonaparte), then at Philadelphia.

Further on, Monsieur Chenet, former lieutenant in the infantry of the Old Guard, is mentioned.

The affair of Champ D'Asile, which was in favor of the refugees of Santo Domingo, is retraced.

Also present is Monsieur Collin, of Santo Domingo, a relation of Tournel and for more than ten years a manager of a plantation in Louisiana. Michel Gournay, born in upper Canada, is a trapper. Girard marries Eléonore, the oldest daughter of Tournel.

Collin has an older son, and two daughters who marry the two sons of Tournel. Monsieur Girard marries and has several children; he will become aide-de-camp of Sam Houston. According to Collin, Monsieur Tournel dies some days after the declaration of independence of Texas.

In 1839, Girard finds himself in Houston for a meeting of Congress; he becomes one of the richest businessmen in the United States of that time ...

[Translator's Note: Michel Rateau has been a genealogical researcher for more than forty years and is associated with numerous genealogical organizations. For queries regarding historical research in France, particularly in the Dordogne region, and for genealogical and heraldic research in all historical periods, interested parties may contact him at 25 La Barrière, 24150 Mauzac-et-Grand-Castang, France. Telephone: (33) 05.53.22.56.08; fax: (33) 05.53.22.42.99. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your inquiries.]

PROGRAM ABSTRACTS

The Laffite Society generally publishes in *The Laffite Society Chronicles* abstracts of featured talks presented at the General Meetings, when the nature and length of these featured presentations lend themselves to such inclusion, and when the speakers facilitate same. These abstracts might contain information which is in conflict with the opinions of others or established documentation.

The material contained in this section does not, therefore, necessarily reflect the position of The Laffite Society. The Laffite Society does, however, encourage discourse regarding conflicting viewpoints, because it believes such discourse often leads to a broader and deeper understanding of the topics of discussion.

SUMMARY OF FEATURED PRESENTATIONS AT GENERAL MEETINGS, JANUARY 1996 THROUGH JUNE 1996

Monday, January 8, 1996

R. Dale and Diane Olson, President and Third Vice President, respectively, of The Laffite Society, presented a summary and update on continuing, computerized analysis of several purported facial likenesses of Jean Laffite. See the article entitled "Graphic Images of Jean Laffite" in this section.

Monday, February 12, 1996

Jean L. Epperson, author and First Vice President-Elect of The Laffite Society, presented a recently completed paper which untangled the genealogical threads of two likely unrelated, but historically confused, families: that of the privateers Jean and Pierre Laffite, versus that of the Laffittes of Bayou Pierre, Louisiana. See the article entitled "The Laffitte Family of Bayou Pierre" in this section.

Monday, March 11, 1996

Laffite Society member Robert C. Vogel - writer, historian, archaeologist, and renowned Laffite specialist - presented a talk on the extensive literary legacy of Jean Laffite. At his presentation, Mr. Vogel distributed a lengthy Laffite bibliography entitled "Jean Laffite in American Literature: A Check List of Published Works Through 1958". The first half of the bibliography is published in this section; the second half will be published in the next issue of *The Laffite Society Chronicles*.

Monday, April 8, 1996

Louise Nichols, Laffite Society member and owner of Yesterday's Books, a Galveston bookstore specializing in Gulf Coast history, led a round-table talk about classic Laffite material still in print. She exhibited samples of her current inventory and discussed a computer database which she can access to the benefit of the serious buyer and seller of old and scarce books (see the representative listing included in this section). Ms. Nichols may be reached through The Eiband Gallery, 2201 Post Office Street, Galveston, TX 77550, or at telephone number (409) 762-0335.

Monday, May 13, 1996

A.J. Billot, Laffite Society member, spoke of his ongoing genealogical research into his Louisiana antecedents, and of his opinion that the results which this research has yielded indicate that he is a descendant of the privateer Jean Laffite. Mr. Billot has concluded that Jean Pierre Billot, born in Bayonne, France, 17 November 1749, died in Baratavia Bay, 17 May, 1826, was also known to be Jean Laffite, the famous corsair. Mr. Billot noted that for generations, the traditionally close-mouthed, clannish old-timers who inhabited the environs of Baratavia have maintained that Jean Laffite, aka Jean Pierre Billot, perished in a battle with rival pirates during a mutiny of his crew and was buried in Baratavia Bay.

Monday, June 10, 1996

W.T. Block, Laffite Society member and author, presented a talk about James Campbell, a privateer and a close and trusted associate of Jean Laffite. Mr. Block is considered the foremost authority on the life of Campbell. The Laffite Society extends its appreciation to Mr. Block for presenting to the Society several articles that he has written on Texas history, and for granting the Society his permission to publish same in *The Laffite Society Chronicles*, including "Legend of John McGaffey's Gold" in this section.

GRAPHIC IMAGES OF JEAN LAFFITE

(PART I OF II)

R. DALE OLSON AND DIANE OLSON

Editor's note: this is Part I of a two-part series which analyzes various purported likenesses of Jean Laffite. Part I contains an introduction, an overview of the analytical process, and a description of two of the nine images analyzed. Part II of the series contains a description of the remaining seven images analyzed, the results of the analysis, and a reference section, and will be published in the next issue of The Laffite Society Chronicles.

Introduction

Various drawings, paintings, and daguerreotypes purporting to depict the facial appearance of Jean Laffite have appeared in articles, books, and as part of the contested collection of Laffite material housed at the Sam Houston Regional Library in Liberty, Texas. Little consensus of opinion exists concerning the validity of any of these representations.

This paper describes an investigation which measures the facial features of several of these representations and makes comparisons among them. Several purposes exist as motivation for the present research. First, the authors seek to determine if any of these images are of the same individual. Second, evidence is evaluated to determine if any one or more of the graphics may be inferred to be accurate representations of the facial features of Jean Laffite. Third, comparisons among early drawings and later daguerreotypes at Liberty are analyzed to provide additional evidence either for or against the legitimacy of the library's Laffite collection and, hence, of *The Laffite Journals*.

The Analytical Process

Image analysis is currently an expanding science, being used in fields such as criminology, medicine, engineering, and anthropology. Employment of the computer as a tool for image analysis has been reported in a study by Lillian Schwartz, a pioneer in computer graphics and consultant to A.T.&T. Bell Labs.

A recent paper has reported the "discovery" of a previously unknown portrait of Abraham Lincoln (the "Kaplan Lincoln"), and compared it with known portraits of the president. The author of the work is a medical doctor associated with the American Hospital of Paris at Neuilly, France (Frechette, 1994). Dr.

Frechette, whose academic background does not appear to include forensic anthropology, has employed what is referred to as the "canon of the vertical Golden Proportions", which concludes that "facial proportions can be determined mathematically". The methods employed by Dr. Frechette use overlays and anthropomorphic analysis based upon anatomical features such as "lateral commissure", "malar prominence", "nasal bridge", "alar cartilage", etc. Although Dr. Frechette has concluded that the Kaplan Lincoln is indeed the portrait of a young Abraham Lincoln, the findings are disputed by others. Authentication of the Kaplan Lincoln would carry significant economic concomitants.

The current study employed a different method, essentially "invented" by the authors. Each graphic representation was read via high resolution scanner into a Macintosh computer, with the resulting images clarified. All equipment employed is in the laboratory of Olson Photo Associates of Anaheim, California, owned by Mr. Ken Olson. Mr. Richard Cordero, computer specialist with Olson Photo, has executed much of the computer work.

Since the images were analyzed using the computer screen "pixel" as the unit of measure, the reduction and/or enlargement of the likenesses to a common size was not necessary. The distance between the center line of the eyes and the corner of the mouth was held comparable for all subject images.

Approximately twenty-five different measurements of the facial structure have been made. Each measurement has been compared to the aforementioned constant, resulting in a ratio. Each picture then has its own unique set of ratios which may be compared with those of other images.

[Editor's note: in some of the following paragraphs of this section, reference is made to several of the subject likenesses; the likenesses are described more fully in the portion of this article titled "The Images".]

As an example of the measurement analysis, consider the Laffite by Little. The distance between the center line of the lips and the center line of the eyes is 252 pixels, and the distance between the center line of the eyes and the bottom of the left ear is 159 pixels. This provides a ratio of 0.630 (159 divided by 252).

Not all measurements were possible on all pictures. The Laffite by Jarvis, for example, is a three-quarters view of the privateer seemingly speaking or singing and thus with the mouth contorted. Measurements involving his left ear are, due to certain poses, not possible, as in the case of the Telfer Laffite, where this organ is not represented.

Measurements involving areas covered by hair were estimated when the researchers were confident of accuracy. If doubt existed, the measurement was omitted.

Statistical analyses were conducted in which standard "t tests for related measures" were derived using the set of ratios from each picture. Inferential statistics was used to measure the probability that observed results are accidental and, as a result, suggest which sets of results may be attributed either to chance or to some systematic mechanism. Results which are due to chance are said to be "non-significant". If, however, the results indicate a low probability that they are a product of chance, the relationship is called "significant".

The probability that a relationship is accidental, or one of chance, is expressed, for example, as "p .01". This means that the probability of these results occurring by chance is smaller than .01, or less than one in one hundred. Many behavioral scientists have adopted $p = .05$ as a "cut-off" point between statistical significance and non-significance. For purposes of this paper, the lower the probability of chance, the greater the probability that any two given images are of the same person, based upon the facial measurements employed.

Several caveats are worthy of mention in the analysis of the raw data. First, this work only considers certain two-dimensional measurements. Numerous features, such as the shape of the nose, are not a part of this study.

Second, high probabilities would be expected in the analysis of any two human faces. Comparison of a human face with that of an animal would produce probabilities of a much smaller order. A subsequent study could include comparisons of known non-related individuals and comparisons of a single individual at different ages. This process would assist in the establishment of standards, or norms, against which the findings of this paper could be compared. Photographs of well-known and often photographed individuals could be analyzed at the same ages as the Laffites of the images in this study. Age-related changes could then be more

accurately evaluated and, again, used to establish possible norms against which the Laffite images could be compared.

Third, alternative techniques in facial feature analysis are available, other than the statistics-based method employed here. The authors were, during the progress of this study, in communication with a forensic police artist who is skilled in visual, holistic comparisons, but was not familiar with statistics-based evaluation.

Finally, neither of the current authors are trained forensic anthropologists, the field in which this research most appropriately resides.

Also under investigation in the current study is a likeness of Dominique You in the Jarvis painting and a later drawing of You which is part of the collection at the library at Liberty. The likeness in the Jarvis work is, unfortunately, not of sufficient quality to permit detailed analysis.

Only two of the pictures in the study are actual photographic reproductions, the Liberty Laffites #1 and #2. The other images are artists' representations and will vary, particularly as a function of the skill of the artist. The Laffite by Gros, if indeed authentic, was painted by a highly respected and known French artist, whereas the Laffite by Little was painted by Jean Laffite's granddaughter, and is representative of a lesser skilled artist.

Other likenesses purported to be of Laffite exist which were not included in this study. A painting by C.M. Forteza possibly depicts Laffite with others, "...gambling for high stakes" (Wiesendanger, 1971). No artist named Forteza has been associated with the locales of Laffite, and the authenticity of this being a likeness of Laffite is not established. The general, holistic, appearance of the presumed Laffite is, however, very similar to the image by Jarvis, and the settings compatible. The Forteza work is part of the collection of W.E. Groves.

Dr. Reginald Wilson, Laffite Society member of Dayton, Texas, has supplied the authors with several additional images he has located during his extensive research at the library at Liberty. These were received after this study update was completed.

The Images

Nine different graphic likenesses of Laffite were analyzed and compared, and are discussed below in approximate chronological order of production.

1) *Laffite by Gros* - This is a full-length painting by the French artist, Gros, dated 1804,

showing Jean aboard a ship, holding a sword. If one accepts that Laffite might have been born in the year 1780, he would have been twenty-four years old at the time of this portrait.

Baron Antoine Jean Gros was born in Paris in 1771 and died at Bas-Meudon in 1835. He was a pupil of David and was a major influence on both Gericault and Delacroix, and held an important position in the development of the romantic movement in France. "His highest achievements

were three paintings of Napoleon, 'The Bridge at Arcole' (1796), 'Napoleon Visiting the Victims of the Plague at Jaffa' (1804), and 'The Battle of Eylau' (1808). He departed from the conventions of Neoclassical historical painting by combining a colouristic bravura with dramatically crowded compositions, both derived from his study of Rubens and the Venetians -- an example that Gericault and Delacroix were to follow.

"The large-scale realistic depiction of contemporary events was also a departure from

Neoclassical convention, while his heroic, almost godlike treatment of Napoleon is strongly Romantic in spirit.

"The son of a miniaturist, he entered David's studio in 1785, and left for Italy (1793) with David's help; in Genoa he attracted the interest of Josephine, who presented him to Napoleon. He followed the army to Arcole, which led to his first Napoleonic epic, 'The Bridge at Arcole'. In 1801 he returned to Paris, where his

work was highly regarded, and he received many portrait commissions; he was a chevalier of the Legion of Honour (1808) and an officer (1828), and was a member of the Institut (1815).

"The exiled David bequeathed his studio to him, and a commission to decorate the Pantheon cupola occupied him intermittently between 1811 and 1824. Under the Restoration he executed some fine portraits ('Mme. Recamier in Old Age', 'Girl with a Jet Necklace'), but,

mindful of David's criticism of his colouristic experiments, he turned back to mythological painting in a colder, more conventional, Neoclassical study."

Gros was created Baron by Charles X, but his work was derided by younger artists; for this and more personal reasons he committed suicide.

There are major works of his in the Louvre and Versailles; he is also represented in many French provincial museums, and in Boston (Fogg); in Cleveland and Detroit; in Moscow (Pushkin); and in Washington (NG). (Lit. J. Tripier *Le France: Histoire de*



la Vie et de la Mort du Baron Gros (1880); R. Escholier: *Gros, Ses Amis et Ses Eleves* (1936); G. Delestre: *A.J. Gros* (1951) (Norman, 1977).

The Gros Laffite was allegedly an original part of a large collection of purported Laffite memorabilia currently located at the Sam Houston Regional Library in Liberty, Texas. This painting, however, has been reported to have been destroyed during a fire while in the possession of John A. Laffite (aka Laflin).

2) *Laffite by Jarvis* - This painting, executed on a mahogany board, is housed within the Cabildo at New Orleans, and has long been attributed to artist John Wesley Jarvis. Jarvis was born in South Shields, England, in 1780, and died in New York in 1840. Attempts to accurately date the Jarvis painting produce their own set of difficulties. According to *Early Artists of New Orleans, 1718-1918*, he was an active artist in New Orleans from 1821 to 1835. Per Lyle Saxon, who

unfortunately presents no documentation, the Jarvis Laffite was painted in 1812. This time frame is, however, inconsistent with other datings of the painting and a general chronology of events surrounding the life of Laffite. Another source, perhaps more reliable, but again devoid of documentation, is Glenk's guidebook to the Cabildo, which dates the painting to 1805, one year after the Laffite by Gros.

A review of Jarvis's whereabouts during the period casts doubt on these estimates. According to the informative *Early Artists of New Orleans, 1718-*

1918, Jarvis began his career in Baltimore in 1785 when he was apprenticed to Philadelphia engraver Edward Savage. He moved with Savage to New York City in 1801, and continued on his own in New York until he returned to Baltimore in 1810. After three years he returned to New York, where he remained as the foremost portrait painter of that city for the next twenty years.

An assumption may be made that the

Laffite painting was not executed in New York City, in that no evidence exists to place the subjects, Jean and Pierre Laffite and Renato Beluche, in that city. Therefore, the work might have been painted elsewhere, perhaps in New Orleans. Indeed, Jarvis did travel to New Orleans during five winters, 1820-21, 1821-22, 1828-29, 1829-1830, and 1833-34. These dates have been established through journals of others (e.g. that of Edward Fenno, a merchant from

Philadelphia who settled in New Orleans in 1819), and advertisements in local papers by Jarvis (e.g. *The Gazette*, December 20, 1821).

The present authors are unaware of any documentation which places Jarvis in New Orleans earlier than 1820. It has, however, often been asserted that Jarvis spent most winters in New Orleans between 1816 and 1834 while maintaining his permanent studio in New York.

Contemporary sources do not, however, confirm these earlier dates (*Early Artists of New Orleans, 1718-1918*).

Jarvis was commissioned to paint portraits of the heroes of the War of 1812 for the New York City Hall, and engaged Henry Inman as an assistant. Because of a portrait of Andrew Jackson that is a member of this series, previous sources have placed Jarvis in New Orleans in January, 1815. Current sources contradict both the site of creation and the date of the Jackson portrait, claiming that it was executed in New



York City in 1819.

Solely via reference to documented sources, the Laffite painting could date only as early as the winter of 1820, a time period during which Jean would have been in residence at Galveston. Even accepting the general date of Jarvis's earlier tenure in New Orleans, the painting could date only to the winter of 1816, i.e. just months prior to, or possibly concurrent with, Laffite's departure for Galveston.

Jarvis suffered a stroke in New Orleans early in 1834, became partially paralyzed, and returned to New York City, where he spent the remainder of his life, never returning to New Orleans. He died in New York on January 12, 1840.

Where was the Jarvis work created? Although no definitive answer is available, several places might logically be discounted, including the Maison Rouge in Galveston and its counterpart in Grande Terre, Louisiana. Even though the dates of Jarvis's documented presence in New Orleans overlap those of Laffite in Galveston, it is unlikely that Jarvis visited the Island City. He was, however, a social acquaintance of the Laffites and was given to a flamboyant life style and heavy drinking, conditions which would not completely preclude a social visit to Galveston.

The destruction of the Laffite commune on Grande Terre in September, 1814, preceded most estimates of Jarvis's arrival in New Orleans. Charles Tenny Jackson, his fictional Captain Sazarac, has written, "... and in the one picture that I cared about, done down at Lafitte's red fort before the Americans plundered it, I had the bad

taste to paint them in with my captain [a reference to Dominique You and Renato Beluche]." Although the Jackson novel contains much that is accurate, this item is probably not. Likewise, Jackson has Jarvis stating, "My new assistant is very clever at painting birds -- Monsieur Audubon is crazy to paint birds". Although John James Audubon did apply to Jarvis as an assistant in January, 1821, he was not accepted (*Early Artists of New Orleans, 1718-1918*).

Based solely upon *Early Artists in New Orleans, 1718-1918*, speculation suggests that this famous painting was executed following Laffite's destruction of Galveston, a rather unlikely occurrence.

The Jarvis Laffite shows Jean Laffite with his brother Pierre, Dominique You, and possibly Renato Beluche, sitting on a short stool during what appears to be an evening of smoking and drinking. Jean's countenance is drawn in the three-quarters view with his mouth open, presumably in the act of singing. Pierre is standing and filling a small clay pipe. Dominique is sitting next to Jean on a short stool smoking a pipe and holding a jug. The remaining figure, thought to be Beluche, sits on a stool at the right side of Jean. As suggested by Saxon, Jarvis may well have engaged in parties and drinking bouts with the Laffites. His convivial habits led to periods of deterioration and poverty. This behavior was in stark contrast to that of his Uncle, John Wesley Jarvis, the founder of Methodism.

[To be continued.]

THE LAFFITTE FAMILY OF BAYOU PIERRE

JEAN L. EPPERSON

The Laffitte family residing at Bayou Pierre, Louisiana, and the well known Laffites who were privateers and contraband traders in Louisiana and Texas, have been confused over the years by historians and by their own descendants as well. This has happened primarily because the given names in the two families were much the same, and because some of them were contemporaries. Separation of the two families will herein be attempted.

The progenitor of the Bayou Pierre Laffittes was Pierre Paul Bouet Laffitte, a native of the parish of Pouilleroque, Diocese of Lectoure, in Gascogne, France, and the son of Francois Bouet Laffitte and his wife Marianne. Familiarly called Paul or Bouet, he first appeared in the Natchitoches, Louisiana records on April 28, 1770. The occasion was his marriage to Marie Madeleine Grappe in St. Jean the Baptist Catholic Church. She was the daughter of Alexis Grappe and his wife Anne Guedon¹.

Alexis Grappe was an influential and wealthy citizen of Natchitoches. An Indian trader and interpreter, he was the second largest slave owner of the community in 1774. Grappe's father-in-law, Jacques Guedon (dit Muller), married to an Indian woman, had established Post du Bayou Pierre in 1723 with contraband trade with the Spanish as his motive. Post du Bayou Pierre, the town of Bayou Pierre, King Hill, Jordan Ferry, and modern Carmel are all one and the same². Log jams on the Red River made Bayou Pierre the main water route from Natchitoches to the north, affording access to the northwestern Indian tribes.

A militia roll of Natchitoches dated June 8, 1772, lists Paul Bouet Laffitte as 20 years old, five feet six inches in height, and enlisted for six months³. He probably was a little older than twenty at that time. He was 42 years of age when the census of Natchitoches Parish was taken in 1787, and therefore he would have been 27 years old in 1772⁴. He was somewhat older than Pierre and Jean Laffitte the privateers, who were born in 1779 and 1782 respectively. They were the sons of Marcus and Maria Zora Nadrimal Laffite⁵. No relationship between the families has been found.

The children of Paul Bouet Laffitte and his first wife Marie Madeleine Grappe were:

1. Pierre Paul Bouet, born about 1772; married Ursule Gagne (Ganier) July 30, 1798. He

was listed as a "Junior" in several records⁶.

2. Jean Baptiste Francisco, born June 24, 1776⁷.

3. Marie Teresa Jacinta Rosalia, born October 6, 1778; died 1782⁸.

4. A male child who died January 3, 1781⁹.

Madeleine Grappe Laffitte died January 12, 1781, probably from complications of childbirth¹⁰.

Paul Bouet Laffitte continued his militia service and was on the Natchitoches Revolutionary War Roster as a rifleman as late as 1782¹¹. He was listed in a number of records as "Cadet" Bouet Laffitte, "cadet" meaning a minor military officer.

After the death of his first wife, Paul Bouet married Eulalie Marie Anne, the daughter of Manuel de Soto and Marie des Neiges de St. Denis¹².

Manuel de Soto, a Spaniard, was among the earliest settlers on Bayou Pierre. He probably obtained his land from the Indians and built his home there sometime between 1745 and 1750¹³.

The children of Paul Bouet and Eulalie Marie Anne Laffitte were:

1. Marie Josepha, born December 15, 1783¹⁴.

2. Marie des Neiges, born December 1, 1785¹⁵.

3. Joseph Marie Cezaire, born August 19, 1787; married Mary Elizabeth Latham or Litton in 1817¹⁶.

4. Marie Pompose, born January 1790; married Jean B. Fontenot in 1807¹⁷.

5. Louis Bouet, born November 30, 1794; married Marie Antonio Flores in 1816¹⁸.

6. Manuel, born June 1796; died November 21, 1796 at the age of 5 months¹⁹.

7. Marie Felicite Bouet, born September 16, 1797; married Cezaire Fonteneau²⁰.

8. Francois Manuel Bouet, born 1799; married Marie Salome Procela on January 29, 1822²¹.

9. Aurore Bouet, born August 13, 1805²².

10. Marie Celeste Bouet, born 1811; married Fermin Poissot on March 19, 1827²³.

The Natchitoches Parish census of 1787 enumerated Paul Bouet Laffitte, his wife, and four

children (Pierre, Baptiste, Marie and Des Neiges) as living in Bayou aux Pierre north of Natchitoches. He had 84 arpents (about 84 acres) of land, two slaves, 350 cows and 40 horses. There were only nine heads of family on the creek²⁴. It is not certain when he moved there or how he obtained his land, but both of his fathers-in-law had connections to Bayou Pierre.

Bayou Pierre was called Las Piedras Creek (Stony Creek) by the Spanish, and was not named in honor of the youthful Pierre Laffitte. Actually a western channel of the Red River, Bayou Pierre diverges from the upper Red within the city limits of Shreveport. The bayou flows in a southwesterly direction, paralleling the main channel more or less for one hundred miles, then re-enters the Red River just above Grand Encore²⁵.

Paul Bouet applied for and obtained land for his sons, Pierre and Baptiste, on June 12, 1784 from Don Antonio Gil y Barbo, Captain of the Militia, Commandant and Governor at Presidio Nuestra Senora del Pilar de Nacogdoches. Paul Bouet for some unknown reason represented himself as the uncle of the boys, who were only 12 and 8 at the time. The land was granted from Bayou Naticole to the south shore of Bayou Pierre Lake, with no stipulation as to the amount of acreage²⁶.

After the Louisiana Purchase, the grant was surveyed on September 6, 1823 by John Dinsmore, Deputy Surveyor of the United States, and it contained 11,393.89 acres of land²⁷. This probably included the 84 arpents or home place Paul Bouet had acquired originally.

The Louisiana Congress decided by 1834 that the title to the 11,000 acres granted by the Spanish to the Laffittes was so vague that Pierre was only entitled to 2,000 acres, the quantity allowed by the act of March 3, 1807, to those settled by the Spanish Government²⁸. Pierre's brother Baptiste was mentally incompetent and Pierre acquired the land.

Pierre Jr. lived into the 1840's and was an important member of the community. His known children were:

1. Marie Magdelein Bouet, born November 17, 1799; married Pedro Flores²⁹.
2. Clement Bouet, born December 7, 1801; married Marie Catarina Cardova on October 20, 1845³⁰.
3. Joseph Marie Boit, born March 21, 1805³¹.
4. Severe, born in 1808; baptized December 6, 1812; married first to Elizabeth Lee on May 15, 1835, and secondly to Terese F.

Vasco³².

5. Lesure, married Sallie Le Garse³³.

6. Manuel (never married)³⁴.

7. Marie Ellen, married Joseph John Baptiste Prudhomme³⁵.

Pierre Laffite, the privateer, was born October 21, 1779 at Port au Prince, Santo Domingue (Haiti)³⁶. He married Francoise Selille (Sel), the daughter of Jean Baptiste l'Stang Selille, a planter of Santo Domingue. Selille (Sel) became famous in New Orleans as a portrait and miniature painter³⁷.

The children³⁸ of Pierre and Francoise Laffite included three daughters not named, as well as:

1. Pierre Charles, born about 1799.
2. Eugene Stephen Louis, born about 1802.
3. Cezar Edouard.
4. Jean Jacques.

The Journal of Jean Laffite by John A. Laffite says that Pierre, the privateer, was granted 11,400 acres of land along the Sabine River near Natchitoches by the bureau of Louisiana Land Grants³⁹. This is a mistake, as the reference is to the grant made to Pierre Laffitte, the son of Paul Bouet Laffite. Pierre Laffite, the privateer, had no land grant unless it was given in another name.

Paul Bouet Laffite was an intelligent and educated man, as reflected in his correspondence⁴⁰. He was also a loyal Spanish subject, only incurring the government's disfavor in 1799 when he was arrested and jailed in Nacogdoches for slipping an iron file to the seven Spaniards incarcerated there. The seven were men who had been captured while with the Philip Nolan expedition. Laffite was released promptly when the Caddo, Nadaco and Caudacho Indians threatened to attack the garrison if he was kept prisoner⁴¹.

In December of 1814 Paul Bouet, his children and other relatives arrived at La Bahia in Texas from Bayou Pierre. They were seeking asylum with the Spanish in order to escape the military draft in Louisiana occasioned by the war with England, taking advantage of the pardon offered to clear their names of complicity during the Mexican Revolution⁴². The family, after gaining their objectives, returned to their homes on Bayou Pierre. Paul Laffite's loyalties were again demonstrated to be with the Spanish rather than the French or Americans.

Paul Bouet or his son Pierre sent a letter to

Mariano Varela, Governor of Texas, November 28, 1815 advising him that insurgent troops had sailed from Louisiana for Galveston Bay in a squadron rumored to belong to "the pirate Lafite"⁴³. The Bayou Pierre Laffittes were certainly aware of the corsair Laffittes and willing to inform on them; therefore, they probably weren't even distant relatives.

Paul Bouet Laffitte's sons and grandsons left many descendants in Louisiana and Texas, perpetuating the name "Laffitte" in its various forms.

Notes

1. Elizabeth Shown Mills, Natchitoches Extracts of the Catholic Church Registers of the French and Spanish Post of St. Jean des Natchitoches in Louisiana 1729-1803 (New Orleans: Polyanthos, 1977), p. 125. The patronymic "Laffitte" has also been spelled Laffite, Lafitte, La Fite, etc., but most often with two "f's and two "t's.
2. Louis Raphael Nardini, Sr., My Historic Natchitoches, Louisiana and its Environment (Natchitoches: Nardini Publishing Co., 1963), p. 41; Nardini, No Man's Land (New Orleans: Pelican Publishing Co., 1961), p. 135.
3. Elizabeth Shown Mills, Natchitoches Colonials (Chicago: Adams Press, 1981), p. 27.
4. Ibid., p. 61.
5. The Laffite family bible, Sam Houston Regional Library, Liberty, Texas.
6. Op cit. Mills, Natchitoches Extracts, pp. 410-411.
7. Ibid. p. 200.
8. Ibid. pp. 155, 206.
9. Ibid. p. 153.
10. Ibid. p. 153.
11. Op. cit. Mills, Natchitoches Colonials, pp. 38, 42.
12. Blaise C. D'Antoni, Bayou-Pierre Land of Yesteryear (Metairie: Privately Printed, 1958), p. 8.
13. Op. cit. Mills, Natchitoches Extracts, p. 61.
14. Ibid. p. 217.
15. Ibid. pp. 222, 345.
16. Ibid. pp. 176, 228.
17. Ibid. pp. 188, 237.
18. Ibid. p. 253.
19. Ibid. p. 356.
20. Ibid. p. 330.
21. Elizabeth Shown Mills, Natchitoches Church Marriages 1818-1850 (Tuscaloosa: Mills Historical Press, 1985), p. 22.
22. Elizabeth Shown Mills, Natchitoches Translated Abstracts of the Catholic Church Parish of St. Francis des Natchitoches 1800-1826 (New Orleans: Polyanthos, 1980), p. 32.
23. Ibid. p. 228; Mills, Natchitoches Marriages, p. 30.
24. Op. cit. Mills, Natchitoches Colonials, p. 61.
25. Robert C. Vogel, "The Bayou Pierre Settlements", North Louisiana Historical Association Journal (1976), pp. 110-111. An excellent geological/geographical article of the area, but it does not say much about the settlements.
26. Op. cit. Nardini, My Historic Natchitoches, pp. 108-109.
27. American State Papers, Public Land Claims in Louisiana, IV (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1859, reprint 1994), pp. 104-105.
28. Ibid. pp. 942-943.
29. Op. cit. Mills, Translated Abstracts 1800-1826, p. 176.
30. Ibid. p. 384; Mills, Natchitoches Marriages, p. 146.
31. Ibid. p. 29.
32. Ibid. p. 68; Mills, Natchitoches Marriages, p. 75.
33. Shirley Ritchie Ochsner, "Pierre LaFitte Family Genealogy", manuscript in the Sam Houston Regional Library, Liberty, Texas. This family claims descent from Pierre Laffite the privateer, but it is obvious that their ancestor was Pierre the son of Paul Bouet Laffitte. The family information was obtained from a relative, Mary Alice Laffite, who was evidently not French-speaking and who was relating family tradition.
34. Ibid. p. 2.
35. T.H. McKinnie and B.W. Porter vs. C.E. Jenkins, Suit #9690, District Court, DeSoto Parish, Louisiana.
36. Op. cit. Laffite family bible.
37. Stanley Arthur, Jean Laffite, Gentleman Rover (New Orleans: Harmanson Pub., 1952), pp. 19, 23 and 255.
38. John A. Laffite, The Journal of Jean Laffite (New York: Vantage Press, 1958), pp. 124 and 127; Laffite Family 1st Copy Book, Sam Houston Regional Library, Liberty, Texas.
39. Ibid. pp. 126-127.
40. Robert C. Vogel, "A Louisianian's View of the Mexican Revolution in 1810: Paul Bouet Laffite's Letter to Dr. John Sibley", North Louisiana Historical Association Journal, XVI (1985), pp. 131-135.
41. Maurine T. Wilson and Jack Jackson, Philip Nolan and Texas (Waco: Texian Press, 1987),

- p. 75; Arrest of Pablo Bouet Laffite, Nacogdoches, 5-1-1801. Bexar Archives.
42. Document 107, 12-30-1814, Bexar Archives. Transcription, translation and footnotes by Jeff Modzelewski, member of The Laffite

- Society, P.O. Box 1325, Galveston, Texas.
43. Stanley Faye, "The Great Stroke of Pierre Laffite", The Louisiana Historical Quarterly (July 1940), p. 754.

JEAN LAFFITE IN AMERICAN LITERATURE
A CHECK LIST OF PUBLISHED WORKS THROUGH 1958
(PART I OF II ~ THE NINETEENTH CENTURY)
COMPILED BY ROBERT C. VOGEL

Editor's note: the second part of this check list, covering 20th-century works through 1958, will be published in the next issue of The Laffite Society Chronicles.

1802

1. *Le Moniteur de la Louisiane* (New Orleans), 18 September - notice of Herico & Laffite blacksmith shop.

1812

2. *Courrier de Louisiane* (New Orleans), 4 May - notice of Jean Laffite pocketbook lost.

1813

3. *Courrier de Louisiane* (New Orleans), 17 March - Gov. Claiborne's proclamation for arrest of John Lafitte [sic].
4. *Niles Weekly Register* (Baltimore), December - reprint of Gov. Claiborne's proclamation of 24 November.

1814

5. *Missouri Gazette* (St. Louis), 11 June - letter from New Orleans on economic impact of smuggling; reference to "La Fiete [sic], the pirate and smuggler."
6. *Louisiana Gazette* (New Orleans), 12 July - "Another Emperor Fallen," arrest of the "celebrated Lafitte, Emperor of Baratania, King of the smugglers, &c."
7. *Louisiana Gazette* (New Orleans), 18 August - "Napoleon Junior" letter.
8. *Louisiana Gazette* (New Orleans), 6 September - notice of Pierre Laffite's escape from the Cabildo.
9. *Missouri Gazette* (St. Louis), 29 October - news of British intrigues and the Nicholls-Laffite correspondence.
10. *National Intelligencer* (Washington), 15 November; *Niles Weekly Register* (Baltimore), 19 November - reports of the Patterson-Ross raid on Baratania.
11. *Missouri Gazette* (St. Louis), 26 November - news of Patterson-Ross raid on the "Pirates of Baratania."
12. *Missouri Gazette* (St. Louis), 17 December - anonymous description of Baratania; reference to "one Monsieur La Fitte."

1815

13. *L'Ami des Lois* (New Orleans), 24 January - Jackson's general orders commending the Baratarians and Laffite brothers.
14. *Missouri Gazette* (St. Louis), 4 February - news of Laffite joining U.S. forces at New Orleans, furnishing 800 muskets, 300-400 soldiers.
15. *National Intelligencer* (Washington), 9 February - text of presidential proclamation granting pardon to the Baratarians.
16. *Charleston Courier*, 20 February - news of Laffite joining U.S. forces at New Orleans and the distinguished service of the Baratarians.
17. *L'Ami des Lois* (New Orleans), 28 February - notice of Pierre Laffite bankruptcy.
18. *The Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics and Literature, For the Year 1815*, vol. 50 (London: Baldwin, Cradock and Joy) - news of British expedition to "La Fete" and early stages of New Orleans campaign.

1816

19. Arsene L. Latour, *Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana, 1814-15* (Philadelphia), translated by H.P. Nugent.
20. *Missouri Gazette* (St. Louis), 29 June - "Lafitte," account of Baratarians at the Battle of New Orleans,

from the National Reg. [?], based on Latour.

21. *Courier of Louisiana* (New Orleans), 6 February - Pierre Laffite's letter to Collector of Customs Beverly Chew.

1819

22. *Courier of Louisiana* (New Orleans), 24 November - news of the Brown affair and USS Lynx visit to Galveston.
23. Hartman et Millard, *Le Texas, au Notice Historius sur le Champ d'Asile* (Paris: Chez Beguin).
24. G---n F---n, *L'Heroine du Texas, ou Voyage de Madame *** aux Etats-Unis et au Mexique* (Paris: Chez Plancher) - "the first novel of Texas."
25. U.S. House of Representatives, House Document no. 100, 15th Congress, 2d session, serial no. 22 - letters of Collector of Customs Beverly Chew regarding Galveston pirates.

1820

26. *Salern* [Mass.] *Gazette*, 2 June - reported from Cincinnati, 17 May, "La Fitte the pirate" has joined forces with Long in Texas.
27. *Niles Weekly Register* (Baltimore), 5 February - news of Brown incident [see also *Orleans Gazette* (New Orleans), 24 November 1819].

1821

28. *New Hampshire Gazette*, 20 March - "Lafitte, a brother of the notorious Baratarian pirate" in Charleston fitting out schooner [from the *Charleston Courier*].
29. William Davis Robinson, *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution: Including a Narrative of the Expedition of General Xavier Mina* (Philadelphia: privately printed, with a London edition the same year).
30. *Courrier de la Louisiane* (New Orleans), 22 May - news of pirate Laffite's narrow escape from capture off Cuba.
31. *Courrier de la Louisiane* (New Orleans), 29 November - news of Laffite shipwrecked and imprisoned in Cuba [see also *Niles Weekly Register*, 1 June 1822].
32. Timothy Flint, *Recollections of the Last Ten Years, Passed in Occasional Residences in the Valley of the Mississippi* (Boston).

1827

33. *Lafitte, the Baratarian Chief* (Auburn [NY]: Free Press) - the first Laffite novel/novelette; reprinted, sometimes under other, slightly different titles, in 1828, 1830, 1831, 1834, 1838, 1847, 1851, and 1874.

1829

34. Lord Byron, *Works* (London) - note "from an American newspaper" about Laffite appended to the text of "The Corsair: A Tale" [first published in January 1814].
35. Francois, Marques de Barbe-Marbois, *Histoire de la Louisiane et de la cession de cette colonie par la France aux Etats-Unis de l'Amerique Septentrionale* (Paris: Impr. de Firmin) - English edition, *History of Louisiana* (Philadelphia: Carey & Lea, 1830).

1831

36. "Lafitte, The Baratarian Chief, A Tale Founded on Fact," in *Graham's Magazine/Atkinson's Casket* no. 12 (December) - authorship attributed to "Intruder Tar" but text same as 1827 book.

1835

37. Capt. John Henry Coche (late of 43rd Regt. Inf.), "The Siege of New Orleans," in *The American Quarterly Review* XVIII (Philadelphia).

1836

38. Joseph Holt Ingraham, *Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf* (New York: Harper & Brothers).
39. Edgar Allen Poe, review of *Lafitte: The Pirate of the Gulf*, in *The Southern Literary Messenger*, vol. II (Richmond, Va.).

1837

40. Anonymous [Charles Ellms of Boston] *The Pirates Own Book; or, Authentic Narratives of the Lives, Exploits, and Executions of the Most Celebrated Sea Robbers* (Boston: Samuel N. Dickinson, and Philadelphia: Thomas Cowperthwait & Co.; reprinted in 1924 by the Marine Research Society, Salem, Mass.).

1838

41. *Lafitte, or The Baratarian Chief* (Dansville, NY) - reprint of 1827, bound with "Sophia; or The Girl of the Pine Woods."

1839

42. *Lafitte, the Pirate of the Gulf!!* (play) - starring Mr. Hamblin, performed at the Park Theatre in New York, with music by Mr. Chubb.
43. T., "The Cruise of the Enterprise: A Day with La Feete," in *The U.S. Magazine and Democratic Review*, vol. VI (July).

1843

44. John Lloyd Stevens, *Incidents of Travel in Yucatan* (New York: E. Walker), vol. II.
45. *Hunt's Merchant's Magazine*, vol. 11.

1844

46. *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), 27 August - "Visit to Lafitte's Island."

1846

47. William Henry Rhodes, "Theodosia, the Pirate's Prisoner: A Tragedy in Three Acts," in *The Indian Gallows & Other Poems* (New York).
48. "The Pirate of the Gulf or, The Hidden Treasure," in *Colburn's United Service Magazine*.
49. George Mason Graham, "Political Occurances on the Island of Galveston in 1818," in *Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine* (April).

1847

50. Anonymous, "A Visit to Lafitte," in *Knickerbocker Magazine* (New York), vol. 39 (March) - attributed to Lt. James McKay McIntosh [reprinted in *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, ed. Elliot Snow, vol. XI, 1928].

1848

51. Bernard Marigny, *Reflexions sur la Campagne du General Jackson en Louisiane* (New Orleans: privately printed [pamphlet]) - translated by Grace King and printed in the *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, vol. VI, 1923.

1850

52. *Daily Crescent* (New Orleans), 7 September - account of visit to Grand Isle and encounters with former pirates, by "Porpoise".

1851

53. William Fields (comp.), *The Scrap-Book: Consisting of Tales and Anecdotes, Biographical, Historical, Patriotic, Moral, Religious, and Sentimental Pieces, in Prose and Poetry* (copyright date 1851; 2nd edition, Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1857) - includes "Lafitte, The Baratarian Chief: A Tale Founded on Fact," from the 1831 *Casket* edition of the 1827 novel.
54. "George A. Pierce of La." [pseudonym?], "Life and Times of Jean Lafitte," in *De Bow's Review* (New Orleans), vol. XI (October).
55. *Daily Delta* (New Orleans), 21 October - J.D.B. De Bow letter responding to his magazine's recent columns on Laffite, disavowing Pierce's account.
56. *Daily Delta* (New Orleans), 9 November - letters to the editor about Laffite at the Battle of New Orleans.

1852

57. *De Bow's Review* (New Orleans), vol. XII (January) - editorial responding to criticism of Pierce article.
58. *De Bow's Review* (New Orleans), vol. XII (February) - editorial on Lafitte article, with information from the *Daily Delta*.
59. *De Bow's Review* (New Orleans), vol. XIII (July) - "History of Lafitte" editorial, with a story from *Philadelphia Bulletin* [n.d.].
60. *De Bow's Review* (New Orleans), vol. XIII (August) - article "Lafitte" by WHK [Dr. Kilpatrick?].
61. *De Bow's Review* (New Orleans), vol. XIII (October) - "Early Life in the Southwest--The Bowies," by Dr. Kilpatrick.
62. *De Bow's Review* (New Orleans), vol. XIII (October) - Prof. Ingraham's letter commenting on the Pierce article.
63. W.B. [William Bollaert], "Life of Jean Lafitte: The Pirate of the Mexican Gulf," in *United States Service Magazine* (October-November).
64. W.B. [William Bollaert], "Life of Jean Lafitte," in *Littell's Living Age*, vol. XXXII (March).

1854

65. Vincent Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres* (New York).

1855

66. *De Bow's Review* (New Orleans), vol. XIX (July) - "Lafitte, 'The Pirate'--Early Times in the Southwest," article provided by the editor of the New Orleans *Daily Delta*, originally printed as "Jackson and New Orleans."

1856

67. Henderson Yoakum, *History of Texas*, 2 vols. (New York: Redfield).
68. Alexander Walker, *Jackson and New Orleans* (New York: J.C. Darby).

1857

69. *De Bow's Review* (New Orleans), vol. XXI (September) - item on "Lafitte the Pirate".

1859

70. *De Bow's Review* (New Orleans), vol. XXIII (September).
71. James Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, 2 vols. (Boston: Tichnor & Fields).

1866

72. Charles Etienne Gayarre, *History of Louisiana*, vol. IV (New York).

1868

73. Benson J. Lossing, *The Pictorial Field-Book of the War of 1812* (New York: Harper & Bros.).

1871

74. *Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), 20 August - "A Description of Lafitte," by an eminent late citizen [1863].
75. *Flake's Daily Bulletin* (Galveston), 5 November - "Treasure Trove".
76. Charles Gayarre, *Fernando de Lemos: Truth and Fiction* (New York: G.W. Carleton & Co.).

1874

77. *Lafitte; or, The Pirate of the Gulf*, play performed at New York's Bowery Theatre [program].

1879

78. Charles W. Hayes, *History of the Island and the City of Galveston* (Cincinnati).

1880

79. John Henry Brown, *Indian Wars and Pioneers of Texas* (Austin: L.E. Daniell).

1882

80. Francois-Xavier Martin, *The History of Louisiana From the Earliest Period*, vol. II (New Orleans: J.A. Gresham).
81. Charles E. Gayarre, "Historical Sketch of Pierre and Jean Lafitte, the Famous Smugglers of Louisiana," in *Magazine of American History*, vol. X (November) - reprinted in facsimile by Pemberton Press, Austin, 1964.

1883

82. George Washington Cable, "Plotters and Pirates of Louisiana," *Century Magazine*, vol. XXV (April).

1884

83. Prentiss Ingraham, *Lafitte's Lieutenant: or, Theodore, The Child of the Sea* (New York: Beadle & Adams) - dime novel.

1885

84. [Several leading writers of the New Orleans Press], *Historical Scrapbook and Guide to New Orleans and Environs* (New York: Will H. Coleman).
85. Eugene V. Smalley, "An Ancient Haunt of Pirates," in *St. Nicholas*, vol. XV (March).
86. George Washington Cable, *The Creoles of Louisiana* (London: J.C. Ninno).

1886

87. George Washington Cable, *The Creoles of Louisiana* (New York: Scribner's) - first American edition.
88. Charles Gayarre, "The Famous Lafittes at Galveston," in *The Southern Bivouac*, vol. II.

1888

89. Col. Prentiss Ingraham, *The Creole Corsair; or, The Golden Wings of the Gulf* (New York: Beadle's Half-Dime Library).
90. Col. Prentiss Ingraham, *Lafitte's Legacy; or, The Avenging Son* (New York: Beadle's Half-Dime Library).

1892

91. "Jean Lafitte Johnson: He Was the Grandson of the Once Famous Pirate," in *Times Picayune* (New Orleans), 25 December.

1893

92. *The Sun* (New York), 25 June - "A Romance of American History: The Story of Lafitte, the Pirate of Genius, and the Baratarians," by E.P. Mitchell.

1895

93. Grace King, *New Orleans, The Place and the People* (New York: MacMillan).
94. Henry Castellanos, *New Orleans As It Was* (New Orleans: L. Graham & Son).
95. *History of Texas Together with a Biographical History of Houston and Galveston* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co.).

1898

96. Frank R. Stockton, *Buccaneers and Pirates of Our Coasts* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap).

1899

97. Lucile Rutland, *Lafitte, a Play in Prologue and Four Acts* (New York: Goerch Art Press).

[To be continued.]

A REPRESENTATIVE LISTING OF CLASSIC LAFFITE
TITLES ACCESSIBLE VIA DATABASE

GENERATED BY LOUISE NICHOLS OF YESTERDAY'S BOOKS

- Jean Laffite: Gentleman Rover*, limited edition of 750, signed by author S.C. Arthur, 1952. \$130
- Famous Privateersmen & Adventures of the Sea*, Chas. H.L. Johnston, 1911; first edition, picture cover. \$30
- Jean Laffite, Gentleman Smuggler*, M.V. Charnley, Viking, 1934; second printing, fair condition, no jacket, contents good. \$40
- History of Louisiana*, four volumes, Chas. Gayarre, Hansell, 1903, 4th edition; very good condition, bibliography and maps added to this edition. \$240
- Wild Men of the Wild West*, E.L. Sabin, Crowell, New York, 1929, scarce; covers practically all of the gunmen of the West, from the land of pirates of the Mississippi to the outlaws of California. \$100 (another copy available for \$70)
- Our Navy and the Barbary Corsairs*, G.W. Allen, 1905, HM; very good condition, no drawings. \$80
- Lafitte of Louisiana*, Mary Devereux, Little Brown, Boston, 1902; very good condition. \$60
- Laffite the Pirate*, Lyle Saxon, NY, Century, 1930; first edition, good condition, no drawings. \$80
- Life and Times of Jane Long*, M.A. Turner, Waco, Texian Press, 1969; first edition. \$80
- Black Falcon*, Armstrong Sperry, Winston, 1950; very good condition. \$50
- Land of Lafitte the Pirate*, R.M. Thompson, Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, 1943; first edition, heavy wraps, spiral bound; history and legends of Barataria country south of New Orleans. \$80
- Pirate of Barataria*, L.B. Evans, Milton Bradley, MA, 1926; very good condition, no drawings; a novel about Lafitte. \$40
- Princesses, Ladies and Republicanines of the Terror (French Revolution)*, Therese Louis Latour, NY, Knopf, 1930; good/fair condition. \$60
- Pirate Lafitte and the Battle of New Orleans*, Robert Tallant, Landmark, 1951. \$30
- Strange Crimes at Sea*, Louis Davidson, NY, Crowell, 1954; good condition. \$50
As above, Grosset, 1966. \$35
- The Southwest, by a Yankee*, Joseph H. Ingraham, 2 volumes, rebound in fabricoid, boxed, ex lib., NY, 1835; first edition. One of the earliest books to describe the country west of the Mississippi. \$300
- Pirates Own Book*, Charles Elms, Salem, 1924; very good condition. \$200. Also, 1844 edition. \$400
- The Baratarians and the Battle of New Orleans, with Biographical Sketches of the Veterans of the Battalion of New Orleans, 1814-1815*, Jane Lucas Grummond & R.R. Morazan, LA, Legacy Publ., 1979; very good condition. \$70
- Magazine of American History*, Volume X, 1883; not found. Approximately \$100
- Tempered Blade*, Monte Barrett, Bobbs Merrill, 1946; first edition, signed. \$50

Buccaneers and Pirates of Our Coast, Frank R. Stockton, NY, MacMillan, 1898. \$55

b) 1950 reprint, no drawings. \$50

c) 1919, MacMillan, very good condition. \$80

d) Grossett, good condition. \$50

Incidents of Travel in the Yucatan, J. Stephens, 2 volumes, Dover, wraps, 1963. \$50

b) Harpers, 1858, later printing, Volume 2 only, ex lib.; good condition. \$80

c) Harpers, 1843, Volume 1, ex lib.; good condition. \$230

Maya Explorer: John Lloyd Stephens and the Lost Cities of Central America and Yucatan, von Hage, Victor Wolfgang, Norman, OK, 1948. \$60

A Visit to Mexico, by the West India Islands, Yucatan and United States, with Observations and Adventures on the Way, Wm. Parish Robertson, London, published for the author, 1853, first edition. Very fine set of a rare nineteenth century travel account, including the author's shipwreck in the Indies and subsequent journey to Mexico, the United States, and back to England from 1849-1851. The set looks as if it has never been opened, and the folding map is in fine condition; the inscription reads "To Mrs. Scott from her sincere friend Wm. Parish Robertson, No. 15 Norfolk Terrace, Bayswater, 13: May 1853." Robertson's mission was as Agent of the Bondholders of the English Debt; his business in Mexico was financial and concerned loans to the Mexican Government, but there are adventures and keen observations of customs along the way. A scarce account. \$475

Life and times of Stephen Girard, Mariner and Merchant, John Bach McMaster, 2 volumes, PA, 1918, TEG; slight stains, soils, rubs, spines sunned, otherwise in good condition. \$70

American Diplomacy Under Tyler and Polk, Jesse S. Reeves, 1906, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins, 1907; reading copy only, pen marks, ex lib. \$70

Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana, 1814-1815, Arsene L. LaTour, Phil., translated by H.P. Nugent; not found.

Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution, Volume 1 only, B.J. Lossing, NY, 1855; half calf, good condition. \$80
As above, but a two-volume set. \$190

The Creoles of Louisiana, George W. Cable, 1844; half-leather slipcase, inscribed by the author. \$400
Another copy, NY, 1889; very good condition. \$90

The Corsair, Lord Byron, 1814, first edition; fine condition. \$1,200

Life of Andrew Jackson, three volumes, James Parton, NY, 1861; second printing, very good condition. \$200

History of the Lives and Bloody Exploits of the Most Noted Pirates..., NY, Empire, 1935; near fine condition, a reprinting of the 1840's original. \$60

History of Texas..., Henderson King Yoakum, 1935; reprint, very good condition. \$160

Grande Terre, Paul J. Robert, Cong. Press, 1930. \$60

History of Louisiana (complete set contained five volumes), Alcee Fortier; Volume Two only. \$60

Recollections of the Last Ten Years in the Valley of the Mississippi, T. Flint, 1968, IL; fine condition. \$70

New Orleans, Grace King, 1926; good condition. \$70
Another copy, 1925, very good condition. \$70

50 Years in Both Hemispheres, Vincent Nolte, NY, 1854. \$90

LEGEND OF JOHN MCGAFFEY'S GOLD

W.T. BLOCK

There was little or nothing about the Sabine Pass of southeast Texas to attract the attention of the earliest settlers. A five-mile long tidal inlet at the state's eastern extremity, it was the common boundary between Louisiana and Mexican Texas, a water route which drained 30,000 square miles of land via the Neches, Angelina, and Sabine Rivers. On the western bank, there was an endless expanse of treeless marshes, of value only for cattle grazing. The only boon which might attract the cotton farmer were the two fertile, seven-mile long marsh ridges of high land, but their worth for human habitation was correspondingly reduced by the lack of firewood and building material.

Despite its unattractiveness for settlement, Sabine Pass had long been a crossroads of history dating back to the Attakapas Indians. Due to the abundance of sea food, marsh fowl, and alligators, the stone-age tribesmen spent the summer months encamped on the ridges. Their successors were the pirates of Jean Lafitte, who often sought temporary refuge or fresh water in the Pass, or slave traders such as John, Rezin, and James Bowie, who smuggled their African chattels overland or by sea from Galveston Island to Louisiana. In effect, Sabine was solely a haven for every freebooter afloat or every outlaw astride until 1832, the year that a Yankee adventurer, John McGaffey, settled there.

A fourth generation American of Scot descent, McGaffey was born in Sandwich, New Hampshire, on May 28, 1787, and was the son, grandson, and nephew of several American Revolutionary fighters. After marriage, he settled at Circleville, Ohio, where his wife and 16-year-old daughter died during a smallpox epidemic in 1822. Crushed by their loss, the pioneer left Ohio with a surviving daughter, Lucy Ann, traveling first by steamboat to New Orleans, and later to the Big Woods settlement in present-day Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana. There he met and married in 1825 a young widow, Sarah Garner Murphy, who had an infant son.

The newlyweds were soon under pressure from Sarah McGaffey's brothers to move on to Mexican Texas. David, Isaac, and Jacob Garner had already settled at Old Jefferson (present-day Bridge City in Orange County) where there were no taxes to pay and the rich prairie and forest lands were awaiting claimants. McGaffey soon joined his brothers-in-law at

Jefferson, driving his wife's small cattle herd overland with them. Eventually, Sarah McGaffey's parents and siblings all resettled in Texas, where brothers David, Isaac, and Jacob fought at the Battle of San Antonio, brother-in-law Claiborne West signed the Texas Declaration of Independence, and brother-in-law Ben Johnson fought at San Jacinto.

In September 1826, McGaffey and his family were enumerated in one of the earliest censuses, when the *alcaldes* of Liberty hoped to unite the Atascosita District with Stephen F. Austin's colony at San Felipe. Copies of McGaffey's letters to the Father of Texas can still be found among the Stephen F. Austin Papers.

John McGaffey was foresighted enough to realize that Sabine Pass would eventually become the shipping terminus for a vast cotton commerce floated south along the Neches and Sabine waterways. During spare moments he hewed logs, which he then shipped by yawl boat from Jefferson to Sabine Pass, and he soon began construction of a comfortable cabin, chinking the log crevices with moss and clay. His new home on Front, or Shell, Ridge soon completed, he moved his young family and cattle herd there in 1832. His closest neighbor resided twelve miles away at Johnson's Bayou, Louisiana.

Those were lonely years on Front Ridge for John and Sarah McGaffey. Their cabin was located three miles from the Pass, the only route that a traveler might use, and a visitor bearing news of the outside world was rarely seen. The couple became the parents of seven children, but only two, Neal, born in 1837, and Mary, born in 1840, were destined to reach adulthood.

The family and their two slaves grew patches of corn, sweet potatoes, cotton, and other produce, and McGaffey kept a barnyard filled with chickens, sheep, hogs, milk and prairie cows. Geese, ducks, deer, panthers, and black bears abounded in the neighboring sea cane marches, where large packs of prairie wolves also roamed. McGaffey spent much of the winter months on the beaches, where he sawed up drift timber into firewood. Uprooted trees floated through the Sabine Pass daily and were quickly washed ashore by the tidal currents. During those earliest years land titles were unavailable, for McGaffey and his relatives had squatted in a forbidden zone, the 20-league border reserve.

After Lorenzo de Zavala acquired the

zone as a land grant, titles to land became available, and in 1835 McGaffey received an authorization to survey his league. That November, while Sarah's brothers, David, Isaac, and Jacob Garner, were en route to the impending Battle of San Antonio, John McGaffey and Dr. John Veatch, a pioneer East Texas surveyor and physician, dragged measurement chains through the marshes to stake out the 7-square mile McGaffey league. But before the Sabine settler could reach Nacogdoches with his surveyor's field notes, the battle was in progress and the Nacogdoches land offices had closed.

In 1838 he was granted a patent by the Republic of Texas, only to have it contested by a Texas veteran's bounty claim located within the league. The claim, however, proved to be one of many counterfeit land certificates which clouded land titles in Southeast Texas for most of a decade, and it was 1845 before McGaffey was finally granted a clear patent, signed by President Anson Jones.

In 1836 the McGaffeyes were startled one day by a band of men who had the appearance of pirates, but who were actually part of a slave ship's crew. An Englishman, Captain John Taylor, had sailed the brig "Elizabeth", laden with slaves purchased in Barbados, into the Sabine Pass, where the ship's lookout soon spied smoke rising from the McGaffey chimney. Taylor wanted only fresh water and beef to feed his cargo and crew, and McGaffey quickly rounded up a number of steers which he sold to the slaver captain.

The "Elizabeth" remained anchored at Sabine for three months, during which time her owner moved his chained slave coffles overland to Nacogdoches and San Augustine. When the brig finally sailed, Taylor steered for Galveston Island where he hoped to sell the remainder of his cargo.

During the 1830s, the Sabine pioneer began pooling his marketable cattle herd each year with those of James Taylor White, Christian Hillebrandt, and other southeast Texas ranchers, traveling the lonely and unsung Opelousas Trail to New Orleans. It was a dangerous trip of two months duration, for thirty or more streams had to be forded or swum, with usually a 10% herd loss due to drowning or irretrievable bogging of steers. At first McGaffey drove from 200 to 300 heads annually, which he sold at from \$10-\$12 each in gold. Gradually the size of his trail herd increased, and by 1848, the year of his death, the cattleman branded 1,500 calves and drove 900 head to market, which he sold for \$9,000. Sometimes he made the return journey from New

Orleans overland, but if he needed to purchase a sizable quantity of supplies, he would sell his horses and book passage on a cotton schooner bound for the Sabine Pass.

About 1835 a stranger knocked at the McGaffey door one night. He was afoot, dressed in threadbare garb, and asked for food and lodging for the night. Although the stranger wore a pistol, he did not appear to be a man of violence, and with typical rural cordiality, McGaffey offered him the best accommodations that his frontier household afforded. The stranger identified himself as Josiah, or "Josie", Carton, talked freely of his schooner voyage from New Orleans, but offered no explanation for his presence at Sabine, or what his mission or objective was. At daylight he offered to pay for his lodging, but McGaffey refused. Carton then thanked him and left, only to reappear at dusk of the same day, and again at dusk of the following day. By then his hospitality wearing thin, McGaffey was becoming apprehensive, both for his family's safety and because he kept a modest amount of gold hidden in a chest beneath a bed, and a much larger cache buried in the barnyard outside.

Finally in desperation, he accosted the stranger. "Mr. Carton, I don't usually butt into other folks' affairs, but your coming back every night like this worries me for my family's sake."

Even before McGaffey could finish, Carton interrupted with the following explanation, "Sir, I know my strange reappearances at night must concern you considerably, but I've reached the point where I must take you into my confidence anyway. Can we talk alone?" McGaffey sent the other family members to another room while Carton continued.

"Years ago me and two partners owned a pirate ship which operated from Lafitte's headquarters on Galveston Island. We had just captured a Spanish plate ship off Vera Cruz after a hard fight, and she was a real prize, loaded with plenty of bullion and coins, both gold and silver, and dozens of kegs of Jamaican rum and Spanish wine. We loaded all of the booty onto our ship and were headed back, when suddenly our boat was trapped by a hurricane that ripped away our sails, masts, and rudder. For weeks we drifted about like a cork until all of our water and food was exhausted."

"We already had lost half of the crew in the sea fight, and when our water was gone, the rest of the crew broke open the kegs of rum and wine. They stayed drunk until some of them

mutinied, and we soon shot them and threw them overboard. Others died or jumped into the sea, and there was left only me and one partner and two others, each more starved than alive, when another storm drove our ship aground about three or four miles west of here."

"It was a week or more before we recovered much strength. We had guns and we soon killed a deer and some alligators in the marsh and found a pond of fresh water. The boat was still fast aground in the surf, but already showed signs of breaking up. For several days we rowed our whale boat out to the wreck and filled kegs with gold and silver. Then we dug a large hole back from the beach and halfway between two drift logs. After we got all the treasure ashore and buried, we marked the spot by driving two brass spikes into each log. We then pocketed what gold coins we could carry and set out afoot for Louisiana, where we expected to buy another schooner and come back for the treasure."

"We bought a new boat at New Orleans, but before we could provision it and sail, two of us caught yellow fever and died, and my partner was killed when we were robbed on the waterfront. I was so badly cut up that it was months before I could walk again. I finally got back a few years later. That was before you moved here, but by then the boat wreck had disappeared. There were some drift logs along the beach, but none of them had spikes driven into them. I hunted for the treasure until my supplies ran out, and then I caught a cotton schooner back to New Orleans. Mr. McGaffey, I will give you half of the treasure if you will help me look until we find it."

After listening to the ex-pirate's story, the Sabine pioneer readily agreed to accept his offer, and for several weeks they labored to uncover drift logs along the beach, many of which Carton helped McGaffey saw up and load into his wagon. Finally they gave up hope of finding anything, and as spring and the rancher's impending cattle drive were approaching, they abandoned the treasure search. But before leaving, Carton gave McGaffey the address of a friend in New York in case the treasure was ever located.

As the years passed, McGaffey looked at intervals for the pirate cache as he hauled firewood from the beach. But eventually he forgot about Carton and the search for gold. McGaffey had certainly found an alternate treasure in his cattle herd, for each year's trail drive left him with plenty of gold for supplies and much to spare.

The winter of 1847-1848 was especially

rainy and cold, coupled with numerous offshore tempests and thunderstorms which had dwindled the rancher's fuel reserve rapidly. And an unexpected development occurred when one of Taylor White's riders dropped by to inform McGaffey that the Turtle Bayou cattle baron, White, planned to leave for New Orleans two weeks earlier than usual with 1,800 heads. Rain, cold, or sunshine, the Sabine settler traveled daily to the beach, which had been buffeted by the recent storms, to renew his firewood supply. And one day he came upon two drift logs partially uncovered among the sand dunes, one of which had two brass spikes driven into it. He hurriedly uncovered the buried portions of the other log and there he found the other two spikes which confirmed Carton's tale.

The site was more than a mile from where he and the ex-pirate had previously been searching. At a point equidistant between the logs, McGaffey began digging in the sand, and within minutes his shovel struck the cache of Spanish bullion and coins. He worked feverishly to fill his wagon with as much of the treasure as his mules could pull, covered it with driftwood, and started home. Upon arrival, he dashed through the door of his cabin, eager to share the joyous news with his wife, and bellowed, "Sarah, I've found it! I've found Carton's gold!"

For a few moments, Sarah and John McGaffey fingered the coin and bullion and joyously predicted their future, perhaps in some civilized community such as New Orleans. But a sobering effect quickly enveloped them when they realized that the nearest bank was 100 miles away at Galveston, and the treasure would surely have to return to the ground until such time as they could dispose of their property and herd. And March, the month that the cattle drive was due to begin, was rapidly approaching.

McGaffey had just built four cypress feed troughs for use in his cow barn, and he quickly divided the treasure, filling each trough to the brim and then nailing a cypress lid on each. As night approached, he hurriedly dug four holes, placed a feed trough filled with gold coins in each, and back-filled the holes - one located about two hundred yards to the north, two more in the old cornfield to the east and west, and the fourth in the front marsh to the south. He drove a stake nearby to mark each site.

During succeeding days, McGaffey, his slave Wash, a close friend named Lucar Dubois, and three hired hands began rounding up and penning the trail herd of 900 steers, for in less than two weeks he was scheduled to pool his

cattle with those of Taylor White and Chris Hillebrandt at Taylor's Bayou.

On the night before his departure, McGaffey urged Sarah to accompany him outside so he could show her where each of the feed troughs was buried, but she declined, stating that there would be plenty of time to worry about the gold and their future plans after her husband had returned from New Orleans. John then gave her verbal directions to the sites, but she paid little heed to his words, being otherwise engrossed at that moment with a sick child.

During the week which followed, McGaffey's trail herd linked up with those of White and Hillebrandt, and the three ranchers began the slow, 300 mile trek to New Orleans. With more than 4,000 steers strung out along the route, it was no doubt the largest drive ever witnessed on the Opelousas Trail up until that year. Except for the many river crossings, which were always negotiated with difficulty, it was a routine drive, interrupted only by the nightly stops at the various "stands" along the way. Each stand owner in Louisiana made his living from the drovers, providing cattle pens, forage, and good food and lodging at reasonable rates for the night.

After nearly six weeks on the trail, McGaffey arrived at New Orleans, where he sold his stock for \$9,000, paid off the three drovers, and he, Dubois, and Wash began the return journey overland. At dusk of the afternoon of May 13, 1848, the trio had just reached a stand near Breaux Bridge, Louisiana, when McGaffey, still in the saddle, was suddenly stricken with chest pains. He dismounted and sat down on a porch to rest, but soon keeled over, expiring instantly. Dubois buried his friend at the cemetery in St. Martinsville and, displaying a brand of honesty rarely encountered, returned to Sabine Pass with Wash and delivered the \$9,000 in gold to Sarah McGaffey.

The loss of her husband left Sarah momentarily grief-stricken, but sheer survival on the frontier allowed little time for bereavement. Sarah soon realized what a mistake it had been to be so inattentive when her husband tried to give her directions to the treasure sites or when he offered to draw her a map.

During the ensuing weeks she and her children booked passage on a steamer to Atchafalaya Bay, Louisiana, where they leased a carriage and traveled overland to St. Martinsville. After visiting her husband's grave, Sarah bought a tombstone and had it erected on the site. Back home at Sabine Pass, she spent many days searching for the stakes that McGaffey had driven

in the ground near each spot where he had buried a feed trough filled with gold. But her slave's spring plowing and the spring rains had obliterated all sign of freshly-spaded earth or stakes in the cornfield, and the front marsh was at the moment inundated.

When time permitted, Sarah and her slave continued to probe for the treasure, leaving parts of the neighboring field pockmarked from their fruitless efforts. But as the months and years passed, the search waned and eventually ceased, for the McGaffey cattle herd kept her supplied with more gold than she could possibly spend.

Sarah's children, Neal and Mary, grew up and married, and each reared a large family at Sabine Pass. In 1860 Sarah and her heirs were worth more than \$45,000 in land and cattle, exclusive of any gold or other assets she might have on hand, and at the time of her death on July 12, 1871, she was one of the wealthiest women in Jefferson County.

After Sarah's death, her property was parceled out to her children. For decades an intermittent search for John McGaffey's gold continued, at first by her children and grandchildren, and finally by total strangers who brought divining rods, mining compasses, and other strange detecting devices which were used in the pursuit of buried treasure. Bill Longworth was one of those who devoted many years to the search, but never once did his shovel strike the lid of any of the cypress feed troughs filled with gold.

Another legend handed down by the McGaffey descendants related an incident when a ship captain asked John McGaffey for permission to build a brick crypt and inter a body in the family cemetery. The coffin was supposed to contain the remains of the captain's wife, said to have died of cholera aboard ship, but possibly fearing the plague, no one except crew members attended her funeral or knew for certain what the coffin contained. In time, there were widespread rumors that "her" casket actually contained a vast hoard of pirate gold brought ashore under the disguise of death.

In 1936 the legends gained fresh notoriety when a grandson of Sarah's discovered a grisly scene in the ill-kept cemetery. One morning he found that the above-ground brick vault, the name of its occupant long forgotten, had been broken open. The bones of the deceased person were strewn about nearby. Some vandal treasure hunter, no doubt, believed that he had found the hiding place of McGaffey's gold.

If anyone at Sabine Pass still continues the search for the McGaffey treasure today, more

than 135 years after its reputed burial, I am not aware of it. But there are many McGaffey descendants still in this vicinity who will tell you that it's still hidden somewhere out on Shell Ridge, in four different places, awaiting the first shovel that strikes its cypress lids.

There were two previous attempts about sixty years ago to publish the McGaffey legend as handed down by descendants, but each article contained such a volume of historical error as to constitute a different story. One writer attributed the hero's role to one "Neil" McGaffey, supposedly John's brother Neal, who was actually

a lawyer and never once made the annual cattle trek eastward. Both accounts credit the hero with being an Irish immigrant, who wanted only to "go back to Ireland and build a castle." It would take two pages of type just to correct the mistakes, and it is the writer's belief that what you have read is the first account that can claim historical accuracy.

{Reprinted from W. T. Block, "The Legend of John McGaffey's Gold," *OLD WEST*, Winter 1977, pp. 10ff.}

SPECIAL EVENT, SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 1996:
VISIT TO SAM HOUSTON REGIONAL LIBRARY & RESEARCH CENTER, LIBERTY, TEXAS
R. DALE OLSON

For the second consecutive year, members and guests of The Laffite Society visited as a group the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center in Liberty, Texas.

Society member Dr. Reginald Wilson spoke to the group about his long history of research at the Library. Dr. Wilson provided insight into the resources available there, and surveyed the various avenues of research in which he is currently engaged.

Specifically, Dr. Wilson examined the intriguing series of correspondences between Lacie Laffite (Laflin) and Audrey Lloyd. Lacie was the wife of John Andrechyne Laflin (who brought to public knowledge *The Journal of Jean Laffite*), while Audrey Lloyd was an author working on a

book concerning Jean Laffite. The two women became friends through the United States mail and their letters now form an integral part of the Laffite-Laflin story.

Following a tour of the Library, the group adjourned to the nearby home of Reginald and Betty Wilson for an impressive lunch hosted by Mrs. Wilson.

Several attendees returned to the Library to pursue further research after the meal.

Laffite Society members were joined by guests Joe and Judy Dolfi of Tiki Island and Margaret Dolfi of Galveston. Member Mary Smith Fay of Houston brought Sharon Cunningham and others as guests from the Houston area.

SPECIAL EVENT, THURSDAY ~ SUNDAY, JUNE 13 ~ 16, 1996:
"THE PLANTATION TOUR" OF THE NOTTOWAY, OAK ALLEY, VIALA, AND
DESTREHAN ANTEBELLUM ESTATES, AND A WEEKEND IN NEW ORLEANS

JEFF MODZELEWSKI

In mid-June, 1996, a group of twenty Laffite Society members and guests from Texas took part in an enjoyable special event in Louisiana dubbed "The Plantation Tour".

The fun began on Thursday, June 13, when most participants car-pooled to an after-lunch rendezvous in "Old Turnerville", near Plaquemine, Louisiana, about twelve miles southwest of Baton Rouge. "Old Turnerville" is a neighborhood of late-nineteenth-century homes, many of which are currently undergoing restoration. The visit was hosted by Mr. Steele Loubiere, who conducted a tour of a circa-1875 home that he purchased in November 1994 and began to renovate in March 1995. Steele and his parents, Clyde and JoAnn Loubiere, graciously provided for the group a delicious and much-appreciated refreshment break of Louisiana fudge, pralines, and an assortment of beverages.

Throughout the mid-afternoon, groups of Laffitians departed "Old Turnerville" to make their ways to their lodgings for the evening. The majority steered a course for Nottoway Plantation in White Castle, Louisiana, some six miles southeast of "Old Turnerville", while the remainder headed for Oak Alley Plantation in Vacherie, Louisiana, a greater distance down the Old River Road toward New Orleans.

Guests at Nottoway enjoyed the magnificence of this 53,000-square-foot mansion completed in 1859. The home was built to anchor a 7,000-acre sugar plantation and was spared total destruction during the Civil War through the efforts of a Union gunboat officer, a former guest of the estate's founder.

Lodgers at Oak Alley breathed in the atmosphere of an antebellum manor house completed in 1839, whose view toward the nearby Mississippi is framed by the corridor of massive, 300-year-old live oaks which gave the plantation its name. Oak Alley was the first of the Great River Road plantation homes to be fully restored.

After a wine and cheese party hosted at Nottoway by Dale and Diane Olson, the group convened at Laffite's Landing Restaurant on the Viala Plantation, in the shadows of the Sunshine Bridge near Donaldsonville, Louisiana. Two Louisiana members of The Laffite Society joined

the Texan Laffitians at this juncture. All enjoyed a wonderful meal, a terrific ambiance, and an interesting informal talk by the restaurant manager on the history of the locale, including the restaurant's purported resident phantom!

Laffitians enjoyed themselves the next morning, Friday, June 14, at breakfast and in exploring the countryside, before meeting at 2:00 that afternoon for a pre-arranged group tour of Destrehan Plantation in the town of the same name. The Destrehan plantation house was first constructed in 1787, and is the oldest documented in the lower Mississippi Valley that is still intact. Stories abound of appearances of ghosts in the mansion, including those of Jean Laffite, Louisiana Governor William Claiborne, and other notables.

The group's spirits were only slightly dampened by the tremendous rains that made their presence felt during the tour of Destrehan and the subsequent drive into New Orleans. Once in the Crescent City, participants lodged in one of several hotels, the majority staying at the Hotel St. Pierre and there enjoying a late afternoon wine and cheese party hosted by Jim Nonus. No structured activity was scheduled for that evening, but a substantial number of the group strolled for several hours through the Vieux Carré.

On Saturday morning, June 15, the group met at 10:00 at 437 Royal Street, site of the Pavie-Marcy House and home to James H. Cohen & Sons, Inc., a long-established and prestigious dealer in rare coins, antique weapons and jewelry. Mr. Cohen and his staff closed the doors of his shop to all but Laffitians for more than an hour, and spoke about many of the fascinating items in inventory. Not a few participants yielded to the temptation to purchase one or more novel finds to bring back with them to the Lone Star State.

No structured activities were planned for the afternoon other than the by-now traditional wine and cheese party, this time hosted by Kathy and Jeff Modzelewski, again at the Hotel St. Pierre.

That evening the group met for a delicious dinner of New Orleans Cajun and Creole specialties at the Pelican Club. Many later walked, as they had the previous evening, through the streets of the French Quarter, along

the Moonwalk atop the Mississippi levee opposite Jackson Square and the Saint Louis Cathedral; and even as far as the something-for-everyone Riverwalk Mall.

On Sunday, June 16, the Laffitians gradually drifted out of New Orleans during the morning and early afternoon, wending their way toward the Sabine and home. For most participants, their "Plantation Tour" experience confirmed the impression fostered by the Laffite Society's monthly meetings: namely, that the group is composed of people who treat historical research seriously, but who also enjoy a relaxing,

convivial, all-around "good time"!

[Author's Note: I express my thanks to Diane Olson, Third Vice President - Special Events, who in preparation for the outing prepared a comprehensive publication containing itineraries, directions, and background information on places visited on "The Plantation Tour". Not wishing to rely solely upon my memory these many months later, I drew upon this document as a source of some of the detail published in this article. A copy of this special-event publication is housed in The Laffite Society Archives at The Eiband Gallery, 2201 Postoffice Street, Galveston, TX, 77550.]

CURRENT NEWS

NEW WORK BY MEMBER JEAN L. EPPERSON NOW AVAILABLE

Laffite Society First Vice President Jean L. Epperson, author of multiple works on Texas and Louisiana Gulf Coast history, has completed her most recent volume, *Lost Spanish Towns: Atascosito and Trinidad de Salcedo*. The book has been published by Laffite Society member Don Marler's Dogwood Press.

Ms. Epperson, an avid researcher and historian, provides a fresh look at these lost Spanish colonial towns and presents new findings on both the communities and their inhabitants.

Robert L. Schaadt, Director-Archivist of the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center in Liberty, Texas, says in his foreword:

"*Lost Spanish Towns: Atascosito and Trinidad de Salcedo* will become a major reference work on Southeast Texas from the period of 1756 to the 1830s. The author conveys

vital information on Atascosito, Trinidad de Salcedo, the presidio of El Orcoquisac, the mission of Nuestra Señora de la Luz, the Orcoquiza Indians, Champ D'Asile, the conflict of the Royalists and the revolutionaries, the 1807 Census of Atascosito, the filibustering campaign of Magee and Gutierrez in 1813, and the life of Charles Salier, the founder of Lake Charles, Louisiana."

Lost Spanish Towns: Atascosito and Trinidad de Salcedo contains six chapters totaling approximately 100 pages, plus notes, bibliography, and index. The volume was produced in paperback and is offered for sale at the price of \$10.00 per copy plus \$2.00 for shipping and handling. Texas residents must add 6.25% sales tax to their payment. To order, contact Ms. Epperson at Rt. 2 Box 162, Dayton, TX, 77535, (713) 385-2122.

OERTLING THESIS OFFERED IN T.A.M.U. CATALOGUE

Tom Oertling, who along with his wife Sarita is both a member of the Laffite Society and of its Archaeological Committee, has had his Master's thesis offered for sale in Texas A & M University Press's Fall/Winter 1996 catalogue. The work is offered as the second in a series titled "Studies in Nautical Archaeology," and became available in November 1996. The following description is found on page 11 of the catalogue.

SHIPS' BILGE PUMPS: A HISTORY OF THEIR DEVELOPMENT, 1500 - 1900 *Thomas J. Oertling*

All wooden ships leak, a stark fact that has terrified sailors since the earliest days of ocean travel. Maritime historical literature is filled with horrific descriptions of being aboard a slowly sinking ship. Starting from this human perspective, Thomas J. Oertling traces the five-hundred-year evolution of a seemingly mundane but obviously important piece of seafaring equipment in this one-of-a-kind history.

Beginning with early-sixteenth-century documents that recorded bilge pump design and installation and ending late in the nineteenth century, when bilge pumps were being mass-produced, Oertling covers a period of radical technological change. He describes the process of making long wooden pump tubes by hand, as well as the assembly of the machine-crafted pumps that helped revolutionize ship construction

and design. Also given in detail are the creation, function, and development of all three types of pumps used from about 1500 to well into the nineteenth century: the burr pump, the suction or common pump, and the chain pump. Of further interest is Oertling's overall examination of the nature and management of leaks in ships' hulls. Line drawings and photographs illustrate the text.

THOMAS J. OERTLING of Galveston received a B.S. from Tulane University and an M.A. in anthropology with a specialization in nautical archaeology from Texas A & M University. One of the field's recognized experts on ships' pumps, he has done extensive work in ship reconstruction and has published numerous articles.

Ships' Bilge Pumps
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CURRENT NEWS (CONTINUED)

LAFFITE SOCIETY MEMBER VICTOR LANG ELECTED TO ASSOCIATION BOARD

Victor Lang, new member of The Laffite Society and general manager of Galveston Harbor Tours, was recently elected to the board of the Texas Nature Tourism Association.

Lang, whose career has spanned several decades of government service in Washington, D.C., was nominated because of his leadership experience in tourism and governmental activities. The 181-member, nonprofit association was organized to educate the public about the

opportunities and benefits of nature-based recreational activities and to assist businesses which provide facilities or services for nature tourism.

The group's first board meeting was held in Austin on February 21. The board voted to hold its first membership meeting at an educational seminar in May.

(Adapted from *The Galveston Daily News*, Sunday, March 10, 1996, 10-B.)

THE LAFFITE SOCIETY ASSISTS THE TORCH COLLECTION OF TEXANA IN EXHIBITION

Early in 1996, officers of The Laffite Society assisted Ms. Gail Guidry, Accessionist and Document Curator of The Torch Collection of Houston, in selecting Laffite-related material for display in a recent exhibit.

The Torch Collection is a Texas and Southwestern art, historical artifact, and archival collection which includes important books, documents, fine art, firearms, maps, and Western artifacts. The collection spans the history of the American West and Texas under the six flags of Texas - France, Spain, Mexico, The Republic of Texas, the Confederate States of America, and the United States.

A relative of Stephen F. Austin, Torch C.E.O. and Chairman of the Board J.P. Bryan began his collecting in 1969, purchasing historical documents, maps, books, and objects. Collection documents include pieces by Texas luminaries like Stephen F. Austin, Sam Houston, Ben Milam, Gen. Antonio López de Santa Anna, and William Barrett Travis. The documents also contain land grants by Stephen F. Austin and other Texas *empresarios*, Texian loans, Republic of Texas currency, a comprehensive Texas postal history, and a map collection with depictions of Texas and the New World from the 1500's forward. Torch's archival collection includes many newspapers, first-edition books, and other published material by famous Texas writers like J. Frank Dobie, J. Evetts Haley and Walter Prescott

Webb.

The Torch Collection also recognizes the American cowboy and his contributions on the Western frontier in a sweeping assembly of Western objects and firearms. Included in the collection are guns by Colt, Smith & Wesson, Winchester, and other American firearms manufacturers. Torch also has an encyclopedic spur collection which covers the history of spur-making, with examples from European, South American, Mexican, Western and contemporary spur makers.

Torch's broad-based art collection spans Texas art history from the early pioneer artists of the 1800's to the modernists of this century. Texas artists represented in the collection are Jerry Bywaters, Edward G. Eisenlohr, Jean Louis Theodore Gentilz, Alexander Hogue, Tom Lea, William Lester, Hermann Lungkwitz, Elisabet Ney, Julian and Robert J. Onderdonk, Frank Reaugh, Everett Spruce, Julius Stockfleth, and Bror Utter. Also included in the collection are works by American artists Thomas Hart Benton, Edward Borein, William H. (Buck) Dunton, Col. Seth Eastman, William H.D. Koerner, Frederic Remington, Charles M. Russell, Joseph Henry Sharp, and John Sloan.

Torch Energy Advisors, Inc., is a foremost oil and gas asset management company. The Torch Collection is private and not open to the public.

CURRENT NEWS (CONTINUED)

FOREIGN RESEARCH UPDATE

The following is a partial listing of foreign language translations and compositions undertaken by Laffite Society board member Dorothy McD. Karilanovic from January through June of 1996.

1) The translation from French to English of a page from the Laflin-Laffite-Mortimer family Bible, allegedly handwritten by Jean Laffite, listing names and life-event dates for immediate family members.

2) The translation from French to English of two articles on Jean and Pierre Laffite and other persons of this surname, published in the French journal *Généalogie et Histoire de la Caraïbe* (*Genealogy and History of the Caribbean*), by a research group of the same name ("G.H.C.").

3) The translation from French to English of

questions and responses relating to an interchange of information with contributing authors of the aforementioned French group G.H.C.

4) Composition in French of a request to G.H.C. for information on various family members with a connection to the Laffites or to Gulf Coast History of their era (English translation also provided).

5) The translation from French to English, and the composition in French, of correspondence with Patrick Lafitte [sic] of Corneilla del Vercol, France, who claims descent from Jean Laffite (English translations of French compositions also provided). The correspondence received in French includes copies of seven letters from various French cities providing information on birth, marriage, and death dates for Laffite family members.

WELCOME, NEW LAFFITIANS

JANUARY 1, 1996 ~ JUNE 30, 1996

A.J. Billot
Houston, Texas
Don Birkholz
Galveston, Texas
Wanda Lee Dickey
New Orleans, Louisiana
Charles, Carolyn, and Irene Duke
Houston, Texas
Margaret Henson
Houston, Texas

Victor Lang
Galveston, Texas
Bill Leopold
Galveston, Texas
Jeff and Kathy Modzelewski
Galveston, Texas
George and Mary Frances Najarian
Galveston, Texas
Don Peak
Galveston, Texas

CALENDAR

General meetings of The Laffite Society are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at The Eiband Gallery, 2201 Postoffice Street, Galveston, TX, 77550, (409) 763-5495. Many of the meetings feature interesting and informative presentations by member or guest speakers. The exception is the December meeting, the Annual Holiday Social, which is an evening of food, drink, and entertaining conversation in a relaxed and festive setting.

Board of Directors meetings are scheduled for the first month of each calendar quarter (January, April, July, and October) on the same day as that month's general meeting, and normally either precede or follow same. Additional Board of Directors meetings may be scheduled at the

Board's discretion.

In addition to the monthly meetings, one or more special events are normally scheduled during the year. Two examples are discussed in articles in this issue of *The Laffite Society Chronicles*, one on the visit to the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center in Liberty, Texas, on January 13, 1996, and the other on "The Plantation Tour" excursion to Louisiana of June 13 - 16, 1996. Inquiries about upcoming special events may be directed to The Laffite Society, P.O. Box 1325, Galveston, TX, 77553, or to Third Vice President - Special Events, Jim Nonus, at (409) 763-5495. The Laffite Society will mail information to members and interested parties on the Society's mailing list as special event details are determined.

SPONSORSHIP OF MONTHLY GENERAL MEETING SPEAKERS

Since its inception, a special feature of The Laffite Society has been a presentation at monthly meetings by a Laffite Society member or guest speaker.

In an effort to augment the pool of available speakers, The Society has begun a program of "sponsorships" in which the expenses of guest speakers are paid by donations from individual members.

Given that all members of The Society do not enjoy equal access to meetings due to their distances from Galveston, it was felt by the Board that any expenses incurred relative to a guest speaker should not be taken from the general fund.

Sponsorships in the suggested amount of

\$20.00 each are available to members who wish to make such donations. While speakers, themselves, do not receive an honorarium, accommodations and other expenses incurred during travel are underwritten by The Laffite Society through these sponsorships of its members.

Members purchasing sponsorships are given special recognition at the appropriate meeting, and in the pages of *The Laffite Society Chronicles*. Persons wishing to make suggestions regarding future speakers should contact First Vice President Jean L. Epperson in care of The Laffite Society, P.O. Box 1325, Galveston, TX, 77553.

THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

FOUNDING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AUGUST 1994 ~ JULY 1996

PRESIDENT	R. DALE OLSON
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT	JIM NONUS
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT	RANDY PACE
THIRD VICE PRESIDENT	DIANE OLSON
SECRETARY	DOROTHY McDONALD KARILANOVIC
TREASURER	JAMES B. EARTHMAN, III
ARCHIVIST	KURT VOSS
PARLIAMENTARIAN	LOU GRAVES-MACBETH
COORDINATOR OF RESEARCH	BILL FOLEY
HISTORIAN	BERNADETTE FOLEY

THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

SECOND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AUGUST 1996 ~ JULY 1998

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SECOND VICE PRESIDENT	KATHY MODZELEWSKI
THIRD VICE PRESIDENT	JIM NONUS
SECRETARY	DOROTHY McDONALD KARILANOVIC
TREASURER	JAMES B. EARTHMAN, III
ARCHIVIST	RICHARD R. RASCHE
PARLIAMENTARIAN	DIANE OLSON
COORDINATOR OF RESEARCH	BILL FOLEY
HISTORIAN	BERNADETTE FOLEY
EDITOR OF PUBLICATIONS	JEFF MODZELEWSKI
PRESS DIRECTOR	DAVE ROBERTS
EX-OFFICIO ADVISOR, HISTORICAL PRESERVATION	RANDY PACE

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The Laffite Society is a not-for-profit organization devoted to the study of the privateers Jean and Pierre Laffite and their contemporaries, and to the geographical locales and chronological era associated with them.

Annual dues are as follows:

Student	\$ 15.00
Senior (Over 65)	15.00
Institution	15.00
Individual	30.00
Family	35.00
Sustaining Member	100.00
Life Membership (One Payment)	350.00