The Louisiana Historical Quarterly

Vol. 32, No. 1 JANUARY, 1949

Entered as Second Class mail matter June 6, 1917, at the post office at New Orleans, La., under Act of August 24, 1912.

Subscription $3.00 per annum, payable in advance. Address Louisiana Historical Quarterly, Cabildo, New Orleans, La.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Vol. 32, No. 1 JANUARY, 1949

PAGE

Twentieth Century Louisiana *by Dr. G. W. McGinty* 5

A Social History of St. Mary Parish, 1845-1860, *by Jewell Lynn de Grummond* 16

General Banks' Red River Campaign, *by Richard Hobson Williams* 103

The Freedmen's Bureau of Louisiana, *by John Cornelius Englesman* 145

Historical Documents—A Letter from the Battle of New Orleans from John A. Fort. *With Introductory Note by E. A. Parsons* 225

A SOCIAL HISTORY OF ST. MARY PARISH, 1845-1860*

By JEWEL LYNN DE GRUMMOND

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND

Geography

The meanders of the Bayou Teche form the first line of habitation in a parish in which the dwellings have clung close to the network of watercourses.[1] The stream twists its way along a ridge of land elevated some ten feet above its surroundings and sloping gradually downward as it leaves the banks, so that the waters of the area drain, not into the Teche, but away from it into Grand Lake on the east and the sea marsh on the west. As it flows southward, the bayou falls from its highest elevation of fifteen feet above sea level at the northern boundary of the parish to twelve feet at Franklin and finally to ten feet at its lowest eastern point. At one time an abundant forest of magnolias, sweet gums, and live oaks covered the banks of this stream, but as early as 1849, increasing cultivation had left only a single row of oaks. Beyond this forest strip lay prairie extending five or six miles from the bayou to the edges of the sea marsh on the west.

---

* Master's thesis in History, Louisiana State University, 1948.

[1] Except as otherwise indicated, the geographical description of the area is based upon the following accounts: Daniel Dennett, *Louisiana As it Is: Its Topography and Material Resources; Its Cotton, Sugar Cane, Rice and Tobacco Fields; Its Corn and Grain Lands; Its Numerous Varieties of Field Crops; Its Valuable Grasses; Its Fruits; Its Vegetable and Flower Gardens; Its Vast and Valuable Forests of Timber; Its Prairies, Bottoms, Swamp and Hilly Lands; Health and Longevity; Various Popular Errors Corrected Touching the Soil, Climate, and People of the State. Reliable Information for Farmers, Patrons of Husbandry, Laboring Men, Manufacturers, Capitalists, Men of Enterprise, Invalids; Any Who May Desire to Settle or Purchase Lands in the Gulf States* (New Orleans, 1876), 91-105 and *passim*; James B. Duncan, "Report on the Topography, Climate, and Diseases of the Parish of St. Mary, La.", in E. D. Fenner (ed.), *Southern Medical Reports; Consisting of General and Special Reports on the Medical Topography, Meteorology, and Prevalent Diseases in the Following States: Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Arkansas, Tennessee, Texas* (New Orleans, 1849), I, 190-196; Samuel H. Lockett, *Louisiana As It Is: A Geographical and Topographical Description of the State. Copiously Illustrated by Original Sketches and Accompanied by a Map Showing in Symbols and Colors the Nature of the Surface, Soil, Forest Growth, and Production of the Entire State. The Results of an Actual and Official Survey of the State* (Baton Rouge, 1873), 44-45, 158-161, 173-177; William H. Perrin (ed.), *Southwest Louisiana, Biographical and Historical* (New Orleans, 1891), 207-222; T. W. Poole, *Some Late Words About Louisiana* (New Orleans, 1891), 93-99, 103-105; B. J. Winchester, "St. Mary's Parish," in William H. Harris (ed.), *Louisiana Products, Resources and Attractions. With a Sketch of the Parishes. A Hand Book of Reliable Information Concerning the State* (New Orleans, 1881), 216-219.

Deeper on the eastern bank, the woodland stretched some two or three acres to an open prairie perhaps three times that width and bordered again on the far side by woodland.

The tillable lands of the Teche, extending from one to three miles from its shores, are far more extensive than those along the other and smaller streams of the parish, whose riparian soils suitable for cultivation seldom exceed a depth of one-half mile. Fine bodies of cultivated lands follow the beds of Bayou Sale and Bayou Cypremort for their entire courses, and fertile fringes of tillable soil border Berwick's Bay and Bayous Boeuf and Shaffer. Imposing stands of live oaks, magnolias, ashes, and gums once stood along the banks of Bayou Cypremort, at the headwaters of which stands the large open prairie of the same name. All the rest of St. Mary Parish is open sea marsh, covered from time to time by the tidal overflow, except for Côte Blanche and Belle Isle,[2] islands in the marsh towering over 160 feet above their surroundings. These two islands which belong to a chain of five such formations sprinkled across the coast, have a soil similar in most respects to the bluff country of North Louisiana.

Though its topographical formation places it in the coastal sea marsh area of Louisiana, St. Mary is usually considered in connection with the prairie parishes contiguous to it. Situated between the Atchafalaya River and Bayou Nezpique and the Mermentau River, St. Landry, Lafayette, Vermilion, St. Martin, Iberia, and St. Mary lie in the area of the old Attakapas country, and are often called the Attakapas Parishes.[3] Prior to 1811, a part of this area had been included in the County of Attakapas, but in that year the county was split to form two parishes, St. Mary and St. Martin.[4] At this division, St. Mary was bounded by Grand Lake on the north, by Berwick's Bay on the east, by a line passing one mile below New Iberia and through Vermilion Bay to the Gulf on the west, and by the four bays of the Gulf edging her coast on the south.[5] The parish, with an area of about 870 square miles, was approximately twenty miles in

[2] Prior to 1868, Petite Anse was also included in St. Mary Parish.

[3] St. Landry Parish is sometimes omitted from this category.

[4] Organization of Territory Acts, 1811, p. 104, cited in *County-Parish Boundaries in Louisiana* (New Orleans, 1939), #68, p. 25.

[5] For an exact delineation of these boundaries, see *ibid.*; *Louisiana Acts*, 1812-13, p. 134, cited in *ibid.*, #75, p. 28; *Louisiana Acts*, 1837, #28, p. 22, cited in *ibid.*, #112, p. 48.

width and had a coastline over forty miles long; throughout the period with which this study deals, her boundaries remained the same.[6]

Origin of the People.

St. Mary received an early quota of the Acadian refugees who settled along the Teche after 1765, and such names as Thibodaux, LeBlanc, Bourgeois, Charpentier, Broussard, and Landry remained as evidence of this influx. Many Frenchmen in the area came to Louisiana directly from Europe, leaving their progeny names such as Sigur, Darby, DeClouet, Olivier, and Bienvenu. Early Spanish settlers included the Navarros and Moras, some of the first to start plantations in the area. Besides these Latin peoples, British and American settlers migrated to the Teche in considerable numbers after the Revolutionary War.[7]

If names can be used as an indication of nationality, the native-born Louisianians in St. Mary in 1850 seem about evenly divided between people of French descent and those of other origin, with the latter having a slightly superior number.[8] The Garrets, Berwicks, Gordys, Yanceys, Footes, and Kempers appear almost balanced by the Verrets, Carlins, Sigurs, Heberts, Freres, and Patouts. The more common French names, such as Boudreaux, Theriot, Landry, Thibodeaux, and Robicheaux, though they appear, do not occur so frequently as tradition might lead one to expect.

The white population of St. Mary in 1850 was distributed thus:

Where Born	Number	Percentage of Total White Population
Louisiana-born Population	2904	77.5
Foreign-born Population	389	10.4
Born in States Other Than Louisiana	452	12.1
TOTAL	3745	100.0

[6] The creation of the Parish of Iberia in 1868 cut into St. Mary's territory. For the boundaries of that new parish, see *Louisiana Acts*, #208, p. 272, cited in *ibid.*, #183, p. 79.

[7] Alcée Fortier (ed.), *Louisiana: Comprising Sketches of Counties, Towns, Events, Institutions, and Persons, Arranged in Cyclopedic Form* (Atlanta, 1909), I, 421; Alcée Fortier, *Louisiana Studies: Literature, Customs and Dialects; History and Education* (New Orleans, 1894), 173.

[8] This and the following information about population is based on study of the microfilm copy of the Unpublished Census of 1850, Schedule I, Free White Inhabitants, of St. Mary Parish, available in Hill Memorial Library of Louisiana State University. The original manuscript is at Duke University.

Emigrants from Virginia, Kentucky, New York, North Carolina, and Tennessee made up over sixty-seven percent of the inhabitants born in states other than Louisiana;[9] no other state was represented by more than thirty-three of its natives in St. Mary. The foreign-born population was not far below the number of Americans born out of the state and was derived as follows:

Nation	Total Number in Parish	Percentage of Total Foreign-Born in Parish	Percentage of Total White Population in Parish
England	7	1.80	0.19
Ireland	56	14.40	1.50
Scotland	11	2.83	0.29
Germany	80	20.56	2.13
France	164	42.16	4.38
Spain	1	.26	0.03
Belgium	1	.26	0.03
Italy	2	.51	0.05
British America	6	1.54	0.16
Persia	2	.51	0.05
Switzerland	6	1.54	0.16
West Indies	2	.51	0.05
Unknown	51	13.12	1.36
Total	389	100.00	10.38

It is noticeable that the great majority of aliens came to St. Mary from Northern Europe, with France, Germany and the British Isles, in that order, supplying the largest numbers. Thus the unromantic figures of the federal census refute the popular theory that the great majority of the inhabitants of St. Mary were of Acadian lineage.

Earlier History

In 1848, the *Planters' Banner* of Franklin paused to reminisce over the steady climb and tremendous progress of the parish in the years since Louisiana's entrance into the Union[10] The faint hint of braggadocio in the article is probably understandable when one realizes that a traveler passing through the area in 1806 had remarked upon the primitive, almost entirely pastoral existence of a large number of the inhabitants.[11]

[9] Virginia supplied 16.37%; Kentucky, 15.04%; New York, 13.05%; North Carolina, 12.06%; and Tennessee, 10.84% of the American population born outside of the state.

[10] Franklin, La., *Planters' Banner*, April 20, 1848.

[11] Thomas Ashe, *Travels in America, Performed in the Year 1806, for the Purpose of Exploring the Rivers Alleghany, Monongahela, Ohio, and Mississippi, and Ascertaining the Produce and Condition of Their Banks and Vicinity* (London, 1809), 296. Hereafter cited: Ashe, *Travels in America*.

In this early period cotton and indigo were still the important crops of the area;[12] the change to cane culture did not come until the 1820's, though as early as 1816[13] eight planters were producing sugar in the Attakapas region. Indeed, in 1806 Ashe had noted that, though stock raising was an important occupation, sugar was "very abundant and profitable."[14] Slaves were deemed a necessary adjunct to the culture of the staples of the area and a local custom indicated the recognition of their value:

> The local manner of calculating wealth is very singular; it is said, such a man is worth ten negroes a year, and another one hundred; and it is understood to a dollar how much the income amounts to. One negro can cultivate two acres of cotton, the produce of which is two hundred dollars; the deduction from which ratio is, that he who has ten negroes is worth two thousand dollars per annum; . . . [15]

In 1824, there were 1515 acres planted in cane in St. Mary, and from these, 644 hands produced 1586 hogsheads of sugar.[16] The following year 504 additional acres were brought under cane cultivation and the resulting increase raised the total number of hogsheads for the year to 2,254.[17] The low cotton prices of 1826 caused many planters to turn to the cultivation of sugar cane. A few years later, however, first a drop in sugar prices and then a number of lean crops seemed to threaten the existence of many of these newly established plantations;[18] planters who made 300 hogsheads of sugar in 1832 considered themselves lucky.[19]

At this period indigo vats were still a common sight along the Teche and only a few sugarhouses dotted the public road from Franklin to New Iberia. By 1835, however, almost all the plantations along the bayou had turned to sugar production.[20]

---

[12] F. D. Richardson, "The Teche Country Fifty Years Ago," in *Southern Bivouac*, IV (1886), 593.

[13] *Niles' Weekly Register*, XIII, 58-59, as cited in Walter Prichard, Fred B. Kniffen, and Clair A. Brown (eds.), "Southern Louisiana and Southern Alabama in 1819: The Journal of James Leander Cathcart," in *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXVIII (1945), 795. Hereafter cited: Prichard and others, "Cathcart's Survey".

[14] Ashe, *Travels in America*, 309.

[15] *Ibid.*, 300-301.

[16] *Attakapas Gazette*, Feb. 12, 1825, as cited in *Planters' Banner*, April 27, 1848.

[17] *Planters' Banner*, April 27, 1848.

[18] New Orleans *Louisiana Courier*, Nov. 3, 1826, as cited in Joseph G. Tregle, Jr., "Louisiana and the Tariff, 1816-1846," in *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXV (1942), 54.

[19] James Brown to Henry Clay, Philadelphia, Jan. 24, 1832, quoted in James A. Padgett (ed.), "Letters of James Brown to Henry Clay," in *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXIV (1941), 1163.

[20] Richardson, "Teche Country Fifty Years Ago," *loc. cit.*, IV, 593.

In 1819 the *James Lawrence* plied its way up and down the Teche and through the Balize to New Orleans, probably the only schooner making regular trips along this route. She could go up the Teche only as far as New Iberia, for the snags and fallen trees obstructing the bayou prohibited navigation beyond that point.[21] Interest in transportation apparently kept pace with increased agricultural production, however, for in 1825 forty persons subscribed the sum of $1200 to clear the Teche for steamboat navigation between St. Martinville and New Iberia, and in the spring of the following year Captain Curry guided the steamer *Louisville* into the port of St. Martinville for the first time. Two years later A. Fuselier of St. Mary was engaged by the directors of the St. Martinville Steamboat Company to clear away obstructions to steamer navigation in Bayou Sorrel and Lake Chicot.[22]

Direct trade communications with the North seem to have been first opened in 1825 by Washington Jackson of St. Mary who sent his brig *Attakapas* with a cargo of 400 hogsheads of sugar to Philadelphia and the following year brought back a variety of dry goods and hardware for Franklin merchants.[23] Improvements were also made in transportation between New Orleans and the Attakapas country, and by 1838 conveyance apparently not only served utilitarian purposes but offered comfort as well, for a correspondent of the New Orleans *Picayune* wrote that he had "arrived safe at Franklin after four days in the superb steamer Yazoo, Captain Latham, who, by his strict attention and gentlemanly conduct, rendered our passage both safe and agreeable."[24]

Increased agricultural production and better transportation facilities fostered other changes. Villages sprang up at strategic points. Pattersonville[25] in 1819 apparently boasted only a tavern as a place of business,[26] but by 1838, several stores, a post office, and a public school were located there.[27] That same year the little village of Centerville—not considered worthy of mention in several earlier accounts of the area—contained a post office and some stores, and was the chief port for all goods coming into the Bayou Sale region.[28]

[21] Prichard and others, "Cathcart's Survey," *loc. cit.*, XXVIII, 810.
[22] *Planters' Banner*, April 27, 1848.
[23] *Ibid.*
[24] Walter Prichard (ed.), "Some Interesting Glimpses of Louisiana A Century Ago (From the Old Files of the *Picayune*)," in *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXIV (1941), 40.
[25] Now called Patterson.
[26] Prichard and others, "Cathcart's Survey," *loc. cit.*, XXVIII, 771.
[27] Prichard, "Some Interesting Glimpses of Louisiana A Century Ago," *loc. cit.*, XXIV, 40.
[28] *Ibid.*, 41.

But the leading port of the area was Franklin. Laid out in 1800 by Guinea Lewis and named by him in honor of the creator of *Poor Richard,*[29] it was nineteen years later a village of some twenty houses and 120 to 150 inhabitants, a village which formed the hub of a wheel of productive plantations fanning out to a circle of approximately ten miles. Isaac Reed was one of the more enterprising citizens at this time, running a ferry operated by horses on Lake Verret and nearby bayous, and probably owning Reed's Tavern in the village.[30] By 1838, the population had jumped to 800, and the boat-lined wharves of the port gave promise of even greater prosperity in the future. Already Franklin's citizens might enjoy the advantages offered by the two banks, two printing offices, two hotels, public school, female seminary, post office, courthouse, church, "extensive ice house," and macadamized streets of the town. Conveniently near two bodies of water, Lake Chitemaches and Côte Blanche Bay, Franklin not only profited from the recreational facilities as an excellent location for summer homes, but she also was kept well supplied with oysters and several varieties of fish.[31] With her thriving port, numerous business houses, and "cultural advantages," the little town by 1838 had already begun to assume a certain metropolitan air.[32]

CHAPTER II

THE PATTERN OF SOCIETY

Economic Basis: Landholdings

A glance at LaTourette's Map of St. Mary Parish in 1853 gives perhaps a clearer picture of the landholdings of the period than can be provided by the census records, with their emphasis on occupation rather than ownership.[1] As a rule the holdings straddled the bayous with approximately equal acreage on either side of the stream. In cases where the serpentine course of the waterway made this impossible, irregularly shaped patches appeared, often with narrow apexes jutting against neighboring lands equally odd in pattern on one bank and flaring out to great width on the other.

[29] Sidney J. Romero, Jr., "The Political Career of Murphy James Foster, Governor of Louisiana, 1892-1900," in *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXVIII (1945), 1130.

[30] Prichard and others, "Cathcart's Survey," *loc. cit.*, XXVIII, 763.

[31] Prichard, "Some Interesting Glimpses of Louisiana A Century Ago," *loc. cit.*, XXIV, 40.

[32] *Ibid.*, 41.

[1] Information in this and the following paragraph is based upon a study of the Parish of St. Mary as shown in LaTourette's Map of Louisiana of 1853, unless otherwise indicated.

Despite the apparent preference for riparian sites, several large and prosperous plantations dotted the sea marsh. One of the larger holdings in the parish was that of William Weeks[2] atop Grand Côte, an elevated oasis of rich prairie soil in the coastal lowlands. The partnership of Hays and Rose shared Petite Anse Isle with John C. Marsh, while the third such formation in the Parish, Côte Blanche, was owned by the firm of Hugger and Ogden. Aside from these outlying plantations, the overwhelming majority of the estates lay along the Bayous Teche and Sale and the Atchafalaya River. The largest landowner and one of the wealthiest men in St. Mary in 1850,[3] Martial Sorrel, had several separate holdings totaling 14,200 acres, located within a few miles of each other near the point where Bayou Cypremort takes its waters from the Teche. Smaller plantations and farms lay alongside these large estates, and apparently the two were mixed together indiscriminately throughout the parish.

In 1850, approximately forty percent of the holdings in St. Mary were being worked in plots under 500 acres in size, while the large estates exceeding 3,500 acres accounted for only four percent of the total.[4] These figures may not be assumed to be positive proof that ownership followed a similar pattern, but since only nineteen more names are listed in the 1850 Census[5] than are shown by LaTourette on his map three years later, the discrepancy was perhaps not great. By 1860 the number of plots totaling less than 500 acres had risen from the eighty-eight of the previous census to 134, exactly one-half of the holdings listed that year. Estates over 3,500 acres had also increased in number, but not to a great extent, the four percent of 1850 rising only to four and one-half percent.

Though the proportion of large plantations showed no great increase between 1850 and 1860, planters apparently began the cultivation of heretofore unimproved property and added to their facilities and equipment, for the cash value of the majority of estates rose. Only seven of the 206 farmers listed in Schedule IV of the 1850 Census were farming plots valued at less than $1,000, while thirty-one had plantations worth over forty times that

[2] Unpublished Census Returns of 1850, Schedule IV, Agriculture, referred to hereafter as MS. Census, 1850, IV. A microfilm copy of this material is available in Hill Memorial Library of Louisiana State University; the original manuscript is at Duke University.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Except when otherwise stated, the information given in the remainder of this chapter is based upon a study of the MS. Census 1850, IV, and the MS. Census, 1860, IV; the year referred to is indicated in the text.

[5] This refers to Schedule IV only.

amount. Ten years later, the Eighth Census showed 271 agriculturists in St. Mary Parish; at that time, twenty-two holdings were given values under $1,000, but the number of plantations worth over $40,000 had jumped to ninety. Thus, while the percentage of those low-valued lands rose only about five percent during this ten-year period, the holdings in the second classification mentioned had more than doubled their percentage to include over one-third of the listed total.

The 'fifties were prosperous years for the inhabitants of St. Mary. Apparently all classes enjoyed the accruing advantages, for in a comparison of approximately half of the names listed in the Fourth Schedule of 1850 with the similar records of 1860, only one instance was found of a holding which had not been increased in size. In that case the amount of land held had actually decreased, but the value of the total property, including farm machinery, had risen $32,000.[6]

Mary Porter was the owner of the plantation assigned the highest cash valuation in 1860. In 1850 her holdings had comprised 1,000 acres of improved land and 4,364 acres of unimproved ground, with a cash value of $120,000, and $20,000 worth of farm machinery. Ten years later, her 1,800 improved and 4,600 unimproved acres were valued at $400,000—some $100,000 above any other holding in the parish; and she had increased the value of her farm machinery to $50,000. Another wealthy planter who added to his holdings in the period between 1850 and 1860 was Charles Grevemberg, whose acquisition of an additional 2,507 acres raised the value of his estate from $100,000 to $200,000.

Proportionately large increases in the value of property holdings were not unusual among smaller planters. John B. Murphy had only 425 acres of land in 1850; his farm was worth $12,000 and his machinery $1,500. Ten years later he had acquired 3,000 acres of land and $12,000 worth of machinery, with the estate itself assigned a value of $100,000. Dr. John Tarleton's 550 acres were worth $20,000 in 1850; in 1860 he possessed 1,980 acres valued at $150,000. A 400% increase in the size of a man's holding was not at all rare, and planters with less than fifty acres in 1850 were often the owners of farms of 300 to 400

[6] The planter referred to is David Weeks, who in 1850 held 290 improved acres and 1,110 unimproved; his farm machinery was valued at $8000 and the cash value of his farm was $20,000. In 1860 he held 180 improved acres and 900 unimproved; his farm was worth $50,000 and his machinery $10,050

acres ten years later, with corresponding increases in the monetary value of their lands and machinery. The fifty acres Dazincourt Lange held in 1850 were worth $850; in 1860 his property included 300 acres and was valued at $8,700. It seems highly improbable that social cleavage could have been rigidly maintained under such fluid conditions, when transition from one economic class to another was so easily achieved.[7]

Slaveholdings; Whites; Free Colored

After 1830 a tendency of rich plantation areas to attract more planters and more slaves, thus causing the slave population to maintain a faster rate of growth than the free, was manifest throughout the rural portion of Louisiana's black belt;[8] St. Mary, as a part of that area, was no exception. Between the Seventh and Eighth Censuses, population of the parish had increased about 3,000, and fell into the following groups:

	1850[9]		1860[10]	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Whites	3,423	24.99	3,508	20.86
Free Colored	424	3.10	251	1.49
Slaves	9,850	71.91	13,057	77.65
Total	13,697	100.00	16,816	100.00

Though the slave population had increased 3,200, the parish had gained less than 100 white inhabitants.

A considerable number of these slaves were held singly or in very small groups, for of the 250 slaveowners in the area in 1850, fifty-three percent owned less than ten slaves each and only ten percent held more than fifty.[11] Five people owned over 100

[7] Corroborative statements may be found in Roger W. Shugg, *Origins of Class Struggle in Louisiana: A Social History of White Farmers and Laborers During Slavery and After, 1840-1875* (Baton Rouge, 1939), 32.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Compiled from statistics given in *Statistical View of the United States, Embracing Its Territory, Population—White, Free Colored, and Slave—Moral and Social Condition, Industry, Property, and Revenue: The Detailed Statistics of Cities, Towns, and Counties; Being a Compendium of the Seventh Census, to Which Are Added the Results of Every Previous Census, Beginning With 1790, in Comparative Tables, With Explanatory and Illustrative Notes, Based Upon the Schedules and Other Official Sources of Information* (Washington, 1854), 248. Hereafter cited: *Compendium of the Seventh Census.*

[10] Gleaned from statistics given in *Population of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census, under the Direction of the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, 1864), 194. Hereafter cited: *Population of the United States in 1860.*

[11] Unless otherwise stated, this and the information following are based upon a study of the Unpublished Census Returns, Schedule II, Slave Inhabitants, of 1850 and 1860; the year is indicated in the text. Hereafter cited: MS. Census, 1850/1860, II.

Negroes each, with Martial Sorrel's 297 being by far the largest holding in the parish. Ten years later the slaveholders numbered 396; the group owning less than ten slaves each had fallen to forty-two and seven-tenths percent and the percentage owning over fifty was twenty-one. Seven planters owned over 200 Negroes each, and one of that number, John Bateman, owned 250. Paul Corwin, listed as "Sorrel's agent," held 364 slaves, thus giving Sorrel the largest holding in the area by a margin of 114.

The following chart indicates the growth of slaveholdings during the period:[12]

	1850		1860		Percentage of Increase
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
Total White Population	3,423	100.00	3,508	100.00	
Slaveholdings of 1-50	202	5.90	309	8.81	2.91
Slaveholdings of 50-99	21	0.61	54	1.54	0.93
Slaveholdings of 100-199	4	0.12	28	0.80	0.68
Slaveholdings over 200	0	0.00	5	.14	.14
Total Number of Slave-holders	227	6.63	792	11.29	4.66

Not only were there more slaves and more slaveholders in 1860, but most planters had increased their individual holdings. William Weeks, owner of 147 blacks in 1850, possessed 214 ten years later. Charles Grevemberg had increased the number of his Negroes from 183 to 210, and John Moore's seventy-five slaves had had forty-three added to their number. In prosperous circumstances typical of their area during the period, these men had added slaves, acres, and machinery to their establishments and had seen the size and value of their estates mount and even double.

Though the large majority of slaves were the property of agriculturists, some Negroes belonged to members of society following other trades. Many of the white inhabitants were artisans and laborers. Coopers, carpenters, blacksmiths, and brickmasons

[12] Unpublished Census Returns, Schedule I, Free White Inhabitants, 1850 and 1860. Hereafter cited: MS. Census, 1850/1860, I.

were especially numerous but the census also reveals a general sprinkling of merchants and coffeehouse and grogshop managers. Overseeing provided a means of livelihood for quite a large proportion of the men, and the engineering profession was also well represented.[13]

Probably many of these same trades provided employment for the free colored population of St. Mary. There is no reason to believe that their circumstances of life were greatly dissimilar from that of free Negroes in other sections of Louisiana. Perhaps the majority of them were artisans, following the trades of cooper, carpenter, mechanic, drayman, day laborer, etc., and occasionally reaching positions of financial comfort and security.[14]

In 1857, Mary Heloise Verdin, a free person of color, bought an eleven-year-old Negro girl, Margaret, from Mrs. Rachel Topham for "$455 cash in hand."[15] Whether this purchase was made for the purpose of emancipation or continued servitude is not ascertainable, but such cases, though unusual, were occasionally found in St. Mary during this period. Sometimes such purchases carried the specific condition that the slaves were to be liberated as soon as legally possible.[16]

The end of the prosperous decade before 1860 found St. Mary's population as a whole and in the majority of individual cases, the possessors of more slaves, more land, and more wealth than had been theirs in previous years.

CHAPTER III

RURAL LIFE

Plantation Premises

Often homes are an indication of a people's ideas; as such they provide a keynote to the cultural progress of an area.[1] In early years buildings in the Teche country frequently were constructed of a sort of adobe pulled out in layers from the deeply spaded mortar beds into which green moss had been trodden.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] Annie Lee West Stahl, "The Free Negro in Ante-Bellum Louisiana," in *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXV (1942), 371.

[15] Original Conveyances, St. Mary Parish (Franklin, Louisiana), M, August, 1857.

[16] *Ibid.*, N, Dec. 29, 1859.

[1] James C. Bonner, "Plantation Architecture of the Lower South on the Eve of the Civil War," in *Journal of Southern History*, XI (1945), 370.

Horizontal sticks placed at frequent intervals between the studdings held the mortar in place, and when dried and whitewashed this homemade plaster was pronounced both solid and attractive. A flooring of clay covered with ashes and a thatched roof or gables completed the building.[2] Though such early homes were crude, those of the Creoles, at least, were exceedingly clean and neat; visitors to the area, even when hostile to other Creole characteristics, nearly always admitted that they were excellent housekeepers.[3]

The enhanced prosperity that came with extensive cane cultivation in St. Mary brought the old adobe structures into disrepute, and by the early 1840's the plantation buildings had improved so as to become in many instances a real contribution to the beauty of the Teche scene. A contemporary description noted the striking contrast of the snow-white Negro quarters with the bright red of the brick sugarhouse, its tall black stacks standing like watchtowers over the plantation. The effect was often impressive.[4]

Houses of farmer and planter alike generally stood near the waterways, usually not over a hundred yards from the bayou.[5] Often a tight cluster of Creole dwellings gave testimony of the close family ties of that people, as it was a common practice for a Creole farmer to build a house adjoining his own for each of his children as they married until his whole bayou front was occupied, resulting in the formation of miniature vilages when the family had been especially prolific.[6]

Surrounded by gardens whose shrubbery reached to the stream's edge, the larger plantation homes usually overlooked hedges of lemon, osage orange, rose, and hawthorn forming boundaries between the various divisions of the estate.[7] Occasionally one found the cultivated land in one field surrounded by a cypress post-and-rail fence, often with two drainage ditches following parallel routes about twenty-five feet apart across

[2] Richardson, "Teche Country Fifty Years Ago," *loc. cit.*, IV, 593.

[3] Marguerite Pecot, "The Cajun," (M. A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1932), 39.

[4] Richardson, "Teche Country Fifty Years Ago," *loc. cit.*, IV, 593.

[5] Charles Daubeny, *Journal of a Tour Through the United States and in Canada, Made During the Years, 1837-38*, as quoted in Wendell H. Stephenson, *Alexander Porter, Whig Planter of Old Louisiana* (Baton Rouge, 1934), 120.

[6] Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States, With Remarks on Their Economy* (New York, 1856), 649.

[7] T. B. Thorpe, "Sugar and the Sugar Regions of Louisiana," in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, VII (1853), 750-751.

the entire tract; the dirt from the ditches might be thrown up between them to form a high, well-drained road through the center of the plantation.[8]

Oaklawn, the plantation near Franklin owned first by Alexander Porter and then by his brother James,[9] was described as having its large and pretentious mansion located upon the highest ground, with the gradual slope of the lawn in front of it ornamented by statuary and shrubbery. Near the house stood a cistern enclosed with brick and cement and further shielded from the heat by a rose-covered latticework encasement; only winter water flowed into this receptacle, as its connection with the eaves was shut off in the summertime in an effort to keep the water at the lowest temperature possible. The dense foliage of the fine stand of trees for which the manor was named barred the sun's rays from the brick dairy house, keeping cool the vessels of butter, cream, and milk within. Nearby was a large flower and vegetable garden.[10] A dovecote, considered a universal appendage to the house of a sugar planter,[11] was not mentioned in the description of Oaklawn, but the commentator may have deemed such an item too commonplace to notice.

On another sugar plantation of which we have a detailed description, the house, facing the waterway, stood only about seven rods from the public road; between this thoroughfare and the mansion was a yard formally planted with rows of evergreens and flourishing orange trees. Near the house stood a two-story dovecote and close behind it lay a second yard containing quarters for the family servants, the smokehouse, kitchen, stable, and carriage house; to the rear of this enclosure was a garden plot cultivated by a Negro gardener who, for his own pleasure, had planted a few violets and other flowers in addition to performing his assigned task of growing vegetables for consumption by the planter's family. From a corner of this back court a road led to the sugarhouse and the Negro quarters, which were about 600 yards from the main residence.[12]

[8] Olmsted, *Journey in the Seaboard Slave States*, 658-659.

[9] Stephenson, *Alexander Porter*, 125.

[10] R. L. Allen, "Letters from the South—No. 9," in *American Agriculturist*, VI (1847), 214.

[11] Olmsted, *Journey in the Seaboard Slave States*, 659.

[12] *Ibid.*

Large and pretentious homes were unusual in St. Mary; an English visitor to the region noticed that the loveliest lands along the Teche had not been utilized as a setting for plantation mansions, but rather that proprietors of quite extensive estates were "often housed in cottages which an English bailiff would despise."[13]

The majority of these smaller dwellings are believed to have been of one and a half stories, with the main floor elevated the height of a full story, enclosing beneath it a basement or leaving the space open except for the supporting brick pillars.[14] The roofs were often gabled at the sides and included under their eaves a front or back porch, or perhaps both. Most often the floor plan featured a central hall around which were clustered the main living rooms of the house. These modest homes were almost universally of wood, with pine and cypress, used separately or in conjunction, being the favored building materials.

The larger homes were more often two stories in height, and though the ubiquitous colonnade often afforded an exterior of some pretension, the internal arrangement remained simple. The invariably symmetrical plan had a wide hall extending the length of the building and opening at the front and back with wide double doors; often another hall crossed this main corridor and offered a side entrance and service stairway.[15] In some houses, wine cellars beneath the structure elevated the room immediately over them a little above the rest of the house, giving a variation of two or three steps in floor level. Rarely were the capitals of the colonnades worked with great attention to the architectural orders; usually they exhibited only the imagination and taste of the local carpentry.

A plantation home typical in many respects was described by a traveler who visited the two-story building. Its first floor was of brick and its second of wood, while the broad gallery, shaded by an extension of the high, steep roof characteristic of an old Creole house, completely encircled the structure. The white family's quarters were on the second story—library, parlors,

[13] Daubeny, as quoted in Stephenson, *Alexander Porter*, 126.

[14] The material in this and the following paragraph is based upon information found in Theodore Laist, "The Architecture of the Bayou Teche Country," in *Western Architect*, XXXVII (1928), 37-44, 47-54 (A typed copy of which article is available in Hill Memorial Library of Louisiana State University), and Cecile Willink, "Architectural Daguerreotypes of Louisiana," in *Country Life*, XXXIV (1932), 69.

[15] This material is supported by the author's acquaintance with several ante-bellum houses in the parish which fit the description almost exactly. An outstanding example is the Bauman House in Centerville now owned by Corbett Pelier.

and bedrooms all on that one floor.[16] In these larger establishments the kitchen was located in one of the out-buildings, that the ever present fire hazard might be lessened and the planter's family might escape the cooking odors and the noisy chatter of the slaves. Here an open fireplace usually filled one entire wall, with a brick hearth jutting out six feet or more before it. The large iron ovens were hollowed out on top to hold the live coals which baked the breads and pastries within, and hooks and cranes of various sizes extended from the sides of the fireplace to support the larger pots and kettles; smaller vessels usually rested on trivets.[17] Occasionally these kitchens were as large as thirty by eighteen feet, offering accommodations to large numbers of cooks.[18]

Furnishings in these homes were comparatively simple. The less pretentious dwellings usually had several tables of various sizes, about a half-dozen chairs, a few mattresses and bedsteads, and an occasional armoir.[19] The furniture was often home-fabricated and rough, but was kept highly polished, in harmony with the waxed floors, which were said to gleam as brightly as a fine dining table.[20]

Margaret Smith, whose estate totaled about $830 had, in the way of furniture, one cherry dining table, a cherry armoir, a safe, eight chairs, one cypress table and miscellaneous kitchen furniture; it is interesting to note that no bedstead is mentioned in this inventory.[21] A more extensive list was found detailing the possessions of Eliza Nimos Nixon. Though the total value of her estate was less than $200, she owned two beds and their bedding, five pairs of sheets, two quilts, a blanket, a cradle, nine chairs, a bureau, a secretary, a washstand, a safe, a clock, a table, and the unusual item of fifty dollars' worth of books.[22]

The more prosperous homes evidently contained the common articles already noted, usually in larger quantities, but not necessarily of higher value. Theodotia Campbell at her death left a settee, a set of tables, two armoirs, two small tables, one dozen wooden chairs, one dozen flax-bottom chairs, two rocking chairs,

[16] Olmsted, *Journey in the Seaboard Slave States*, 659.

[17] Beryl D. Hatfield, "Fish Cookery in South Louisiana, With Its Influence and Contributions," (M. A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1933), 14.

[18] Original Mortgages, St. Mary Parish, XVI, Jan. 25, 1853. All courthouse records quoted herein are at this same location.

[19] Unless otherwise indicated, the material in this and the two following paragraphs is based upon a study of the Original Estates Records for the period.

[20] Amos Stoddard, *Sketches, Historical and Descriptive, of Louisiana* (Philadelphia, 1812), 328.

[21] Original Estates, XXXI, May 8, 1848.

[22] Original Conveyances, H, Dec. 23, 1850.

a sideboard, a bureau, eight bedsteads and bedding, three looking glasses, a brass clock, and an article appearing rarely on succession lists (despite the popularity of music lessons), a pianoforte.[23] The heirs to John Rice's estate received, in addition to the usual furnishings, a large and a small map of the United States, a bookcase—a piece of furniture apparently seldom needed in St. Mary—twenty-five volumes of Sparks' American biographies, twelve volumes of the writings of Washington, ten volumes of the works of Franklin, and "a lot of old books."[24]

Cherry was apparently the favorite wood for furnishings, though other materials were also used. Louisa Bowles had, besides a cherry table, one mahogany armoir, table and bureau, a black walnut armoir, and two maple bedsteads.[25] Featherbeds were used, but were not the only type of sleeping paraphernalia, for moss mattresses appear on several inventories of the possessions of small farmers. Looking glasses were not uncommon, even in the poorer homes. Spittoons occasionally appear in inventories and probably were almost an essential article of furniture in a time when the chewing of tobacco made frequent expectoration a necessity.

The large number of chairs found in many homes—it is not unusual to find the possession of two or three dozen noted, and one man had fifty-six[26]—perhaps indicated that the owners often entertained groups of visiting friends, a favorite pastime in the region.[27] Sometimes neighbors met regularly at the home of one or another of the group for conversation or cardplaying. One such gathering in the vicinity of the Richardson plantation at Chicot Noir on Bayou Teche met each Sunday for a discussion of crop conditions, a game of cards or dominoes, and the mutual enjoyment of a convivial occasion. Dinner, "the great business of the day," was served at about two o'clock, with a reinforced complement of servants, clad in white aprons, attending the wants of the feasters. A member of the party remembered that "The feast began in earnest with . . . Gumbo, of African descent . . . the many courses . . . were 'distinct as the billows, yet one with the sea,' and each billow was enough to drown a common appetite. . . . I do know that one of those old, long practiced creole darky cooks,

[23] Original Estates, XXX, August 6, 1845.
[24] Original Mortgages, XIV-2, Jan. 13, 1851.
[25] Original Estates, XXIX, Jan. 2, 1845.
[26] Original Conveyances, H, Sept. 8, 1851.
[27] Richardson, "Teche Country Fifty Years Ago," *loc. cit.*, IV, 596.

under the inspiration of Madame, could beat the old serpent himself with tempting viands."[28] After dinner the group, occasionally feeling the effects of the claret and champagne they had enjoyed, settled down to an afternoon of song and conversation until sunset, when the party chose a place for the following week's gathering and left for home.[29]

Plantation Discipline

Visitors to the Teche region in the late 1840's and the 1850's seemed favorably impressed by the treatment of slaves of the planters with whom they came in contact. One traveler noted that the Negroes on the plantation he visited were efficiently disciplined and regarded their master "with affection, respect, and pride."[30] Often the owners took a paternal interest in their blacks; Judge Porter, for example, was described by a contemporary as "beloved by his own dependants, with whom, on reaching his estate, he shook hands, like a Feudal Lord amongst his serfs, receiving their congratulations on his return, and inquiring with interest into their family concerns."[31] One of his slaves in later years remembered the Judge as openhanded and generous, but firm—"Things had to be jes' so, but dar warn't no naggin' nor scoldin, it was jes' stiddy management."[32] Another indication of kindly affection and consideration for the welfare of the slaves are occasional instances in parish donation books of Negroes being given away for the stated purpose of seeing that they had good homes.[33]

It was, of course, to the planter's best interest to see that his slaves were well taken care of, and in plantation contracts one finds occasional mention of the expected treatment of the slaves involved. In a partnership agreement concluded between William F. Weeks, Alfred C. Weeks, and their mother, Mrs. Mary C. Moore, it was stated that the working hands, their children, and the old and infirm, should be "clothed, fed, and receive all necessary medical attendance, at the Expense of the partnership and shall be humanely treated."[34]

---

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] Olmsted, *Journey in the Seaboard Slave States*, 656.

[31] Daubeny, as quoted in Stephenson, *Alexander Porter*, 126.

[32] Charles Stewart, "My Life As A Slave," in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, LXIX (1884), 738.

[33] One such example is that of Mrs. Carlin's gift of a slave on Jan. 5, 1857, listed in Donation Book B (1855).

[34] David Weeks and Family Papers, Department of Archives, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.

Written agreements regarding plantation management and use of slaves were regarded as a necessity even among persons bound by the closest family ties, if one is to judge from the multitude of contracts between husband and wife, brother and brother, parent and child, to be found in the court records of the parish. Plantation contracts were usually concluded in some detail. An agreement between Elizabeth Dancy and Thomas E. Polk stated that he should give his medical services "to both the white and black members of the family"[35] and also act as financier for one year from the contracting date. Polk agreed to place twenty slaves on the place, paying the overseer's wages, the cost of the plantation tools, food, clothing, and other expenses incidental to their service; Dancy was to pay the cost of repairing the sugarhouse, Negro quarters, and white residence. Each of the contracting parties was to receive a share of the crop proportional to his investment.

In most contracts dealing with slave labor, notations concerning abilities and handicaps were included in the listing of the hands, their age, and value. For example, John C. Marsh's bill of sale of his sugar plantation on Petite Anse Island listed the Negroes on the place and noted that John Houston was a bricklayer and worth $1200; Charles was a cooper with a similar value; Gus was a blacksmith, Old Dick a carpenter, and Jane a seamstress. On the same list was Francis, who though only twenty years old, was subject to rheumatism, a condition probably accounting for his low evaluation of $200.[36] The slave roster of Marguerite Rentrop included Negroes of varied talents: one was a carpenter and sugar boiler; another a carpenter, sugar boiler, and cooper; while still another was both a cooper and a brick molder. Other slaves were listed as engineers, cooks and washers, sawyers, shoemakers, rough blacksmiths, and coach drivers; several had "runaway" written beside their names, and there were two indications of lameness, one of the loss of one hand, and one of the loss of an eye.

Public auctions of slaves were frequent events in St Mary[37] and advertisements of individual sales also appeared often in the local newspaper.[38] Groups of slaves were most often sold at

[35] Original Conveyances, I, Nov. 1, 1852.

[36] *Ibid.*, G-2, Sept. 10, 1849.

[37] Based on a study of the files of the *Planters' Banner* for the period, available in Hill Memorial Library of Louisiana State University.

[38] *Planters' Banner*, July 22, 1849.

the courthouse and the presence of house servants in their number was customarily indicated in the announcements of the sale.[39] Slaves prices in St. Mary probably followed the general trend of such prices elsewhere in the state; prices in 1853 were considered exceptionally high and at one judicial sale in the parish a Negro "in no way remarkable" was sold for $2300.[40] In addition to insuring the buyer a clear title to his purchase, bills of sale often gave a terse description of the servants conveyed. One of the slaves Darius Lognon bought from the Widow Provost in 1851 was subpects to fits,[41] and another bill of sale pronounced "a certain Negro man named Baptiste, aged about twenty-three years," sound in body and mind, and fully guaranteed hereby against the maladies, but *not the vices*, prescribed by law."[42] Certificates manumitting Negroes likewise often contained descriptions of certain of the freedman's characteristics, as did one given by Judge Joshua Baker granting his slave Erasmus his freedom and stating that "Erasmus is a little inclined to be yellow and is about forty-five years old. . . ."[43]

Occasionally skilled Negroes were hired out by their masters.[44] One slaveholder offered eight field hands, one of whom had a knowledge of bricklaying, and three half-grown hands for hire and expressed his desire to be engaged with his slaves as their overseer.[45] Such an arrangement was likely to prevent the mistreatment and undernourishment often associated with the hiring out of Negroes, a consideration which, along with the comparatively low wages usually offered, rendered the practice not so profitable as to become general in rural areas.[46]

Plantation discipline customarily rested in the hands of the planter, who, considering himself able to manage such matters alone, was likely to resent interference from others or suggestions that the legal authorities decide on punishments for his slaves. Usually only in emergencies did he resort to the courts.[47]

---

[39] A typical ad is in *ibid.*, June 24, 1847.

[40] *Ibid.*, Sept. 8, 1853.

[41] Original Mortgages, XIV-2, March 19, 1851.

[42] Original Conveyances, M, Aug. 17, 1857.

[43] *Ibid.*, June 25, 1843 (was not recorded until 1857).

[44] *Planters' Banner*, April 12, 1849.

[45] *Ibid.*, Feb. 10, 1848.

[46] V. Alton Moody, "Slavery on Louisiana Sugar Plantations," in *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, VII (1924), 252.

[47] *Ibid.*, 221-222.

A frequent problem of the planter was the runaway, and requests for information about such persons appeared in almost every issue of the newspaper. The advertisements often offered small rewards of ten or fifteen dollars. In an unusual type of notice, John Rice proposed to pay fifteen dollars for each of three runaway slaves if lodged in the St. Mary Parish jail, twenty dollars for each lodged in the jails of other parishes, and fifty dollars for each found out of the state.[48] Apparently many if not most of the St. Mary Negroes spoke both French and English, an ability frequently noted in the advertisements for runaways.

A slave ran away because of harsh or cruel treatment, severe punishments or threats of punishment, or perhaps merely to relieve the monotory of his existence and ease his dissatisfaction with his lot.[49] Occasionally slaves were incited to flee their masters by free Negroes or whites of antislavery views,[50] and though only isolated instances of abolitionist activity in St. Mary are noted, their influence was felt in the area. A remarkable siege of cold weather and a snowfall considered practically unparalleled in the history of the parish occasioned an article almost filling a column in the *Banner* and including comments which, though written with tongue in check, nevertheless suggests cognizance of antislavery activity:

> Oh, these cursed abolitionists are at the bottom of it all!—they are determined to render our slaves so useless here that we will be compelled either to liberate them or take them out of the Union!—on the whole we may safely assert that Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday last were southern days with northern principles.[51]

Another newspaper account reported the circulation of abolitionist tracts in Franklin and its vicinity and announced that "the wolf in sheep's clothing, whoever he may be, had better take long strides, keep a straight coat tail, and 'put' for a cooler climate without delay," suggesting that a coat of tar and feathers would be substituted for his wool camouflage and assuring the gentleman under suspicion that "he may take our word for it, that if discovered, he will find the southern climate altogether too hot for him."[52]

---

[48] *Planters' Banner*, May 25, 1848.

[49] Moody, "Slavery on Louisiana Sugar Plantations," *loc. cit.*, VII, 226.

[50] *Ibid.*

[51] *Planters' Banner*, Jan. 17, 1852.

[52] *Ibid.*, March 29, 1851.

Slave Life

The routine of life on a sugar plantation for both slaves and whites has been fully covered in articles devoted exclusively to that topic and shall be mentioned only incidentally in this study.[53] Suffice it to say that the planter usually acted as manager, planning the work of the plantation and employing as his assistant an overseer who supervised the work directly and controlled the slave. Trusted Negro drivers helped the overseer in the capacity of foremen, and slaves were divided into groups according to their laboring skills and abilities. Women and children were usually given the lighter tasks and the aged and crippled also received special consideration in the assignment of their duties.

On a visit to a St. Mary plantation, a traveler saw what use was made of aged slaves in the section. Simple manufactures were often their task, and on one plantation the production of both wool and cotton textiles for domestic use was in their hands; they used what the author described as "the most comprehensive yet simple little cotton machine that has yet been constructed, consisting of a compact frame some 4 or 5 feet long by 1½ wide with half a dozen spindles at one end and a miniature gin at the other. It is easily put in motion with a crank, even by a child; and being supplied with the cotton as gathered in the field, it is ginned, cleaned, corded and spun at one operation."[54] Though such home textile manufacturing was not entirely unique, other specific instances of similar industries have not come to light, and the frequent appearance of advertisements of ready-made clothing materials suitable for both hands and masters perhaps belies the assumption that home industry was widespread in this area in which cotton was raised only very rarely.[55] The Weeks plantation, one of the larger and more prosperous in the parish, apparently engaged in little or no manufacture of this sort, for a bill shows the purchase of calico, red flannel, checked cotton, and linsey in large amounts, probably for the use of the Negroes (eight ells of linsey was given to "Old Martha")[56] as well as finer goods such as black muslin, silk, linen, lace, Bishop's lawn, Swiss insertion, and edging, destined perhaps to adorn the mistress of

[53] Outstanding articles on these subjects are: Moody, "Slavery on Louisiana Sugar Plantations," and Walter Prichard, "Routine on a Louisiana Sugar Plantation Under the Slavery Regime," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XIV (1927), 168-178. The material in this paragraph is based upon these two sources.

[54] Allen, "Letters from the South—No. 9," *loc. cit.*, VI, 214.

[55] MS. Census, IV, 1850 and 1860.

[56] David Weeks and Family Papers.

the plantation. The purchase of kid gloves, a black silk cravat, and patent leather shoes perchance indicated that Mr. Weeks' sartorial elegance was in keeping with that of his lady. Straw hats and blankets for the Negroes also appear on the bill, along with "Shoes to Servants" and brogans.[57]

A sizable staff of house servants was usually maintained on the larger establishments. These domestics often received better treatment than their fellow slaves and profited from their removal from regular quarters into an establishment more closely connected with the residence of the white family.[58] Household service was considered by the slaves themselves to be a mark of distinction and a return to the fields was looked on as a disgrace.[59] The intimate association of whites with their house servants led in many cases to deep mutual affection.[60]

Behind the quarters of the house servants and the other outbuildings attached to the plantation house stood neat rows of Negro cabins, with the sugarhouse and the home of the overseer nearby.[61] The huts of the slaves usually were divided into four rooms shared by two families, each of whom had one of the large front rooms to serve as bedroom and sitting room and one of the smaller ones at the rear for a kitchen and dining room; often there was a gallery at the front of the building. A common chimney between the two larger rooms provided heat for both apartments. Mattresses of grass, moss, or rice straw stood upon rough bedsteads or lay on the floor, and pegs upon the wall served in place of closets.

Maintenance of sanitary conditions in the houses of the slaves required the frequent attention of the overseer or planter.[62] Indeed, keeping the Negro himself clean was often difficult. A correspondent to the Franklin paper said:

> I have known Negroes to remain weeks, with their bodies half exposed to the severest of our cold weather, and in the warmest and sultriest, in the same clothing, until it became thick with filth exuded from their skins, and gathered from that with which they were surrounded.[63]

---

[57] *Ibid.*

[58] Moody, "Slavery on Louisiana Sugar Plantations," *loc. cit.*, VII, 253.

[59] *Ibid.*

[60] Ruth Bates, "Conditions of Slave Life" (M. A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1913), 11.

[61] This paragraph is based upon Prichard, "Routine on a Louisiana Sugar Plantation," *loc. cit.*, XIV, 168.

[62] Ralph Butterfield, "Health of Negroes," in *DeBow's Review*, XXV (1858), 572.

[63] *Planters' Banner*, August 2, 1849.

Notorious for their proneness to carelessness and unreliability, slaves often stole rails from the fences to start their fires with. In one instance in St. Mary it was reported, though probably as a "tall tale," that a portion of a cabin was destroyed and a young Negress burned to death when she fell asleep while sitting on a stove, apparently unaware that it contained a fire; her master was severely burned when he endeavored to extinguish the blaze.[64]

It was to the planter's interest to see that humane treatment, adequate housing, proper food and clothing kept his Negroes healthy and content; and instances of habitual overwork, as instances of cruelty, were probably rare. Some St. Mary planters were evidently guilty of exacting unduly hard labor from their slaves, for it was said that some worked their hands like mules, starting them at their tasks before dawn, allowing only the noon hour's relaxation during the whole day, keeping them at their jobs in the fields until after dark, and then having them prepare and cook the food needed for that night and the following day.[65] A correspondent to the *Banner* suggested that during the summer season the hands and work animals be given a respite from their labors from twelve to three o'clock every day.[66]

The grinding season itself was a period of arduous labor for all the working inhabitants of a sugar plantation. The planter as well as the slave made long hours in the sugar mill a habit, often moving himself and his family into specially prepared apartments in the mill. There meals were served and in this unusual setting even the performance of daily household tasks assumed a certain air of festivity.[67] Despite the strenuous activity required during this period, all—black and white alike—seemed to thrive on the steamy atmosphere, and the hot syrup constantly available. The white children spent many hours in the sugar-house, followed by a train "of every imaginable sized 'little niggers,' that dabble in and devour the sugar and syrup, until they are literally loaded inside and out."[68]

Sundays were days of rest except during the grinding season, and many planters also allowed their Negroes Saturday

[64] *Ibid.*, Dec. 15, 1853.
[65] *Ibid.*, August 10, 1848.
[66] *Ibid.*, May 4, 1858.
[67] Moody, "Slavery on Louisiana Sugar Plantations," *loc. cit.*, VII, 241.
[68] Thorpe, "Sugar and Sugar Regions of Louisiana," *loc. cit.*, VII, 763.

afternoons in which to cultivate their own little vegetable patches. Often the raising of pigs, chickens, turkeys, etc., was encouraged, and these, with the vegetable produce, were sold to the master, whose payments allowed the blacks to purchase the small fineries and luxuries of which they were so fond.[69] Occasionally such products were sold by the slave to one of the many peddlars in-infesting the waterways, a constant source of irritation to the planters whose poultry and vegetables could so easily be pilfered and sold as the slave's own.[70]

Other days affording some relaxation for the Negroes on the plantation were the holidays ending the grinding season. Negroes were allowed complete freedom to do as they wished as long as their activities were harmless; long hours of repose were followed by frequent balls.[71] Some of the more liberal planters permitted dancing quite often throughout the year, usually on Saturday afternoons and Sundays. The celebration of New Year's Day often climaxed this holiday festivity with the distribution of extra rations and new clothing to the blacks, and an evening of dancing and singing.[72]

In considering the general conditions of slave life in St. Mary Parish, a good view of prevailing ideas of a master's obligations to his chattels is provided by a letter written to the Franklin *Banner* in 1849:

> I suppose, sir, you regard yourself as a very good master. Your Negroes are never worked hard except in a pushing time, you give them occasional hollidays [*sic*] when you let them have 'passes' to go to Franklin, Centerville, Pattersonville, or Jeanerett's and buy whatever their money will purchase; you give them four suits of clothes a year, plenty of fat meat to eat with little or no lean in it, and as much calomel, alloes, and quinine as they can stand when sick, in fact twice as much as you would take yourself under similar circumstances. As for his bedding, he does not need much, you think, and if he is not well housed in winter that is his look out and not yours.[73]

The author went on to suggest that "pushing times" need never occur on the plantation of an efficient master who kept his equipment in good condition by continuous care, and he urged

---

69 Moody, "Slavery on Louisiana Sugar Plantations," *loc. cit.*, VII, 256.
70 *Ibid.*, 259.
71 Thorpe, "Sugar and Sugar Regions of Louisiana," *loc. cit.*, VII, 767.
72 Moody, "Slavery on Louisiana Sugar Plantations," *loc. cit.*, VII, 278.
73 *Planters' Banner*, August 2, 1849.

that the propensity of Negroes to overindulge in alcohol, tempting but unwholesome food, and tobacco should not be allowed an opportunity for expression.[74] St. Mary planters must have been more generous in their distribution of clothing than most, for the four suits mentioned above are twice the quota usually given as typical of sugar plantations.[75]

An interesting, though apparently somewhat burlesqued, picture of slave life viewed by a member of that class was given in a statement made to a magazine correspondent by Charles Stewart, a slave on the Porter plantation.[76] As the manager of the racing stables of various liberal masters, Charles had apparently acquired a bank account of some size, and when he conceived a desire to marry a Negress on a neighboring planation, he purchased her from her owner for $350, ". . . fur I had made a heap dat las' year, more'n I could spend in clo's n' tobacco, more spesherly, too, by reason dat de colonel always give 'em bofe to me; . . ." and received the papers giving him the woman of his choice ". . . to hab an' to hole . . . as long as she behave herself." A few years convinced him of his wife's inability to tell the truth, a characteristic he found upsetting. His efforts to meet this problem he related as follows:

> I tried 'suasion an' finery, birch rods, split pine, an' a light hickory stick 'bout as thick as my littlest finger, an' I tried makin' her kin an' my kin dat had religion pray fur her at de big camp-meetin'. But it wan't no use. She had three likely arrs, 'bout a year betwixt 'em, an' I never had but dat one fault to find wid her: she cooked as good biskets, hoecake, baconfry, hominy mush, an' coffee as any gal I seed; den, moreober, she could iron an' wash my shirts, an' keep things a-goin' right smart; but she couldn't seem to tell de trufe to save her life, an' it got to be so dat I jes' made my mind up to 'vorce her as quick as eber I could. . . . Dar was a horse-dealer . . . by de name of Jones, what had de finest nag I had seen in a year fur sale at jes' de bery price I paid fur Betsey. De horse . . . was wuf de money, I tell you; so I jes' says to Major Puckett that he could have Betsy back at the same price I paid fur her, an' lowin' fur de war an' tar of de four years I had done kep' her, I would throw de boys into de bargain.[77]

[74] *Ibid.*

[75] Moody, "Slavery on Louisiana Sugar Plantations," *loc. cit.*, VII, 270.

[76] Stewart, "My Life As A Slave," *loc. cit.*, LXIX, 734. The material in this paragraph is based upon this article.

[77] *Ibid.*

Crops

Noted for their skill and success in cane cultivation,[78] the planters of St. Mary often led the state in the growth of that staple.[79] In the ten years from 1850 to 1860, St. Mary eight times headed the list in sugar production and in the two years in which she did not rank first, 1853 and 1856, she was second and fourth, respectively. The peak year came in 1858, when her production was 44,634 hogsheads, an amount double her production in some leaner years.

Sometimes these leaner years were the result of an unusual "spell" of weather. In the year 1853-54, which saw the production of the largest crop ever grown in ante-bellum Louisiana, St. Mary fell to second-rank position because of an August hurricane which caused great destruction within the parish, in some cases wiping out entire crops of corn and cane, and flattening numbers of homes, outbuildings, and sugarhouses.[80] Though the twisted cane had apparently recovered to some extent a few weeks after the storm, it was discovered when grinding began that the yield of sugar was very small in proportion to the amount of cane processed.[81] Another year, crevasses in West Baton Rouge and Pointe Coupée parishes resulted in floods damaging holdings along Bayous Boeuf and Teche and on Tiger Island. Plantations on both sides of the Teche suffered, particularly those on the east nearest the lakes which were subject to the overflow.[82]

Fuel—in a manufacturing process which required three cords of wood for the manufacture of each 1000-pound hogshead of sugar—was always an important item in the planter's budget of expenditures, and in years when the scarcity of wood sent prices up, it might be a large factor in tipping the scales so that plantation overhead outweighed profits, despite large crops.[83] Lumber was frequently imported from outside the parish, with Mobile a major source of supply.[84] In order to avoid the extensive purchase of wood, one of the more prosperous planters of the parish conceived a substitute. As the bagasse came out of the rollers of his mill it was placed in cars on a small elevated railway, which trans-

[78] Allen "Letters from the South—No. 9," *loc. cit.*, VI, 213.

[79] The material in this paragraph is based upon a study of P. A. Champomier, *Statement of the Sugar Crop, Made in Louisiana*, 1845, 1850-1860.

[80] *Ibid.*, 1856-57, p. vii.

[81] *Ibid.*

[82] *Ibid.*, 1850-51, pp. 44-46.

[83] *Ibid.*, 1853-54, preface.

[84] *Planters' Banner*, Sept. 20, 1845.

ported it to sheds where it was tipped out and allowed to dry; this dried bagasse was then consumed as fuel, furnishing about two-thirds of that necessary to run the mill.[85]

About midway of the period under consideration, in 1853, St. Mary produced her second largest crop of the period.[86] That year there were 175 sugar planters in the parish, forty-two of whom were Creole in descent, the rest "American." Three planters owned two or more plantations each and one of their number was in possession of seven. The 175 sugar estates in the parish, with their sixty-seven mills run by steam power and 115 by horses, yielded an average production of 226 hogsheads of 1,125 pounds each, with the average number of working hands per plantation estimated at thirty-seven.[87] In the ten years following 1850, the steam mills gradually gained in number so that in 1860 only sixty-nine of the 170 mills in the parish were still horse-driven.[88] The 101 steam engines of that year represented an increase of thirty from the previous year, when there had been in use in St. Mary, besides the mills already mentioned, eighty-two sugar-houses run by horsepower, two pneumatic batteries, and one vacuum pan.[89]

Marketing

Three methods of marketing his crop lay open to the planter:[90] first, the product might be shipped to New Orleans or some Atlantic market at which the commission merchant to whom it was consigned sold it to the highest bidder; second, the planter might sell from his plantation wharf to a sugar merchant who bought for northern markets; third, the crop might be sold in the sugarhouse to a speculator who removed it from the plantation and marketed it at his own expense and risk. The last two plans were probably the more widely used, for in each instance the planter knew the price he would receive before the product left his plantation and he had the added advantage of escaping charges for drayage, freight, and commissions.

[85] Allen, "Letters from the South—No. 9," *loc. cit.*, VI, 214.

[86] Based on a study of Champomier, *Statement of the Sugar Crop*, for the years 1845, 1850-1860.

[87] Based on a study of the chart given in Moody, "Slavery on Louisiana Sugar Plantations," *loc. cit.*, VII, 201.

[88] Champomier, *Statement of the Sugar Crop*, 1859-60.

[89] *Ibid.*, 1858-59.

[90] This paragraph is based on Prichard, "Routine on a Louisiana Sugar Plantation," *loc. cit.*, XIV, 176-177.

A letter to the *Planters' Banner* gave a perhaps not unusual view of the conditions in which some of the smaller planters occasionally found themselves. The author of the letter, a widow, explained that her property was mortgaged to the extent of $8,000, and though the interest payments had been met, she had found herself unable to reduce the debt. Her crop in 1851 had yielded fifty-five hogsheads of sugar, 960 barrels of molasses, and corn sufficient to provide for her stock. For her marketed produce she received $2,720, from which she had to pay $640 interest, an overseer's wage of $400, a bill for groceries and plantation supplies amounting to $345, $52 for meat, $215 for the manufacture of hogsheads and barrels, a steamboat bill of $78—these, together with numerous other expenses, amounted to a sum which left her only $113.35 profit, an amount not equal to the interest due on the $3,000 purchase price of her land.[91]

Another account of expenditures appearing in the *Planters' Banner* estimated the expenses of a St. Mary planter working twenty-five hands thus:

Commission, freights, etc., at 10%	$1,225.00
Overseer's salary	800.00
25 bbls. pork, at $20	500.00
Mechanics' work	500.00
Medical bill	300.00
Clothing for slaves, etc.	500.00
Family expenses	1,500.00
Incidental expenses	500.00
	$5,825.00

If one assumes that this same planter made a crop yielding 150 hogsheads of sugar at 1,100 pounds per hogshead at four cents and 600 gallons of molasses at fifteen cents, he would receive a sum of about $7,500, giving him a profit of about $1,675 in prosperous years.[92]

---

[91] *Planters' Banner*, Sept. 25, 1852.
[92] *Ibid.*, Jan. 31, 1852.

The crop was usually sold during the rainy months of December and January, and the condition of the roads, bad enough in wet weather without the deep ruts left by the heavy cane carts, was well nigh prohibitive at that time.[93] Year round complaints as to the conditions of the roads were frequent, and it was suggested that a person planning to ride a distance of one mile from Franklin on the New Town road[94] take with him a Negro and two mules to unbog him.[95]

The seasonal changes in the water level in sections of the route connecting St. Mary with the New Orleans market also presented difficulties. In 1851 a correspondent to the *Planters' Banner* ventured that if every planter shipping sugar during the period of low water could "be aware of the number of somersets which his persecuted and bedeviled crop has to go through before reaching the City, he would feel that such trials are the next thing to martyrdom."[96] On numerous occasions during the four-day trip from Franklin to New Orleans—a journey of some 420 miles—the hogsheads were rolled off the steamboats onto lighters so that the ship's draft might be decreased to allow safe passage through particularly shallow areas; the sugar was then moved from the lighters to shore, to be brought back when water of sufficient depth was reached once more.[97] In flood times the pilot was faced with quite the opposite problem and at times descended a section of the waterway stern foremost, using the engine to act as a drag by working the wheels upstream while the boat was rushed along in the opposite direction.[98]

Apparently such navigation difficulties were common, for the steamer *Old Times*, whose schedule appears typical, advertised that she would make two trips a month from the Teche country to New Orleans "provided she does not remain aground in the lakes more than two days in each trip."[99] Her freight rates for these trips were $3.50 per hogshead of sugar and $1 a barrel for molasses; passengers could make the trip for $10.00.[100]

By 1851, the period of fifty-two hours formerly required for the trip had been considerably shortened by the use of rail to

---

[93] Thorpe, "Sugar and Sugar Regions of Louisiana," *loc. cit.*, VII, 766.
[94] To New Iberia.
[95] *Planters' Banner*, July 26, 1849.
[96] *Ibid.*, March 8, 1851.
[97] *Ibid.*
[98] Thorpe, "Sugar and Sugar Regions of Louisiana," *loc. cit.*, VII, 750.
[99] *Planters' Banner*, March 8, 1851.
[100] *Ibid.*

make part of the journey. The plan called for travel by steamer from points on the Teche to a depot on Grand River, thence by railroad to Donaldsonville, and then on to New Orleans by steamer. Passengers making use of these improved transportation facilities could make the trip from Franklin to the city in fifteen hours at a cost of $5.00; the freight charged on sugar was $2.00 per hogshead and on molasses $.50 a barrel.[101]

Certain of these steamboats plying the route between the Teche and its nearest large market were quite spacious, some accommodating as many as forty passengers.[102] The *A. Fuselier* boasted wide and comfortable berths and proclaimed the saloons in both the men's and women's departments tastefully furnished,[103] while the *Camden* prided itself on the installation of new furniture and bedding and guaranteed the boat to be "entirely free from cockroaches, bedbugs, and other pestiferous insects, which are so annoying to travelers."[104] Delays of two or three days en route occasionally impelled passengers to desert such comforts and seek private transportation in smaller boats.[105]

In 1853 the line of the New Orleans, Opelousas, and Great Western Railroad had been surveyed through St. Mary Parish. This addition to the transportation facilities of the area no doubt considerably speeded the movement of goods, for a section of the tortuous 40 mile waterway was replaced by twelve and a half miles of railroad along a direct route covering in twenty-two miles the same territory as the old water route.[106]

A large part of the sugar product of St. Mary was marketed from the customhouse at the port of Franklin, whence it was shipped directly to the Atlantic markets.[107] Having direct access to the Atlantic ports probably made it easier for the planter of St. Mary to gauge the profits available at various markets and to ship his crop accordingly. Sugar prices in New Orleans, Richmond, St. Croix, Porto Rico, and Havana appeared quite regularly in the local newspaper.[108] William Hall wrote W. H. Weeks in 1849 that he was pleased to hear that that planter was sending

---

[101] *Ibid.*

[102] *Ibid.*, Jan. 9, 1851.

[103] *Ibid.*, May 17, 1851.

[104] *Ibid.*, June 28, 1851.

[105] Stephenson, *Alexander Porter*, 119.

[106] Original Conveyances, May 21, 1853; "Attakapas and Mississippi Railroad," in *DeBow's Review*, VIII (1850), 391-392.

[107] Champomier, *Statement of the Sugar Crop*, 1860-61.

[108] *Planters' Banner*, Oct. 28, 1847.

another shipment of his sugar to Mobile, as good sugar was at a premium there.[109] Commission merchants from widespread areas advertised in the Franklin newspaper—J. V. Bacon and Son at Boston,[110] John E. Foley in New York,[111] Joseph Hall in Mobile,[112] A. C. Ainsworth,[113] Peterson and Stuart,[114] and M. M. Matthews and Company in New Orleans[115] are but a few of the many that might be named.

Despite the emphasis on sugar cane, other crops were not neglected. In 1850, of the 208 farmers listed in the Agricultural Schedule, twenty-one made no sugar and twenty-three no molasses.[116] Nine of those not cultivating cane had apparently chosen cotton as their money crop, for they ginned an average of about nine and a half bales each. Two of this group, Leon Frilot and Baptiste Charlette, also raised rice, the only farmers in the parish who engaged in rice culture. That same year all but two farmers raised corn, and all but thirty-two raised sweet potatoes. Only one planter in the parish, D. D. Richardson, raised Irish potatoes.

Apparently the practice suggested by agricultural reformers of raising all plantation supplies possible[117] did not become more popular in the ten years following 1850, for in 1860 of 271 farmers listed as agriculturalists, only fourteen made no sugar or molasses, none were listed as raising sweet potatoes or rice, or as slaughtering their own animals, and twenty-six raised no corn. Only six ginned cotton. One must accept these statistics questioningly for it seems strange that of all 176 farmers raising sweet potatoes in 1850, not one was cultivating that product ten years later. On the other hand, corn production increased; in 1850, only 17 crops totaling over 3500 bushels were listed, but in 1860 the number in that category is fifty-seven. Invoices from the Weeks plantation show that the purchase of pork, mackerel, bacon, butter, flour, turnips, oats, and similar foods was not at all infrequent.[118]

[109] Letter from William Hall to W. H. Weeks, Feb. 3, 1847. David Weeks and Family Papers.

[110] *Planters' Banner*, Jan. 9, 1851.

[111] *Ibid.*, Jan. 5, 1849.

[112] *Ibid.*, Oct. 7, 1847.

[113] *Ibid.*, Oct. 28, 1847.

[114] *Ibid.*

[115] *Ibid.*, Dec. 9, 1847.

[116] Except where otherwise noted, the material in this and the following paragraph is based upon MS. Census, IV, 1850 or 1860, as indicated in the text.

[117] *Planters' Banner*, Dec. 9, 1847.

[118] David Weeks and Family Papers.

Apparently most garden vegetables could be grown with ease in the climate of St. Mary. Peaches, pears, plums, and quinces were also raised;[119] even an occasional exotic, such as the pineapple, reached maturity without hotbed assistance.[120] These products were evidently for home consumption only, for the census of 1850 gives St. Mary no listing for the value of market gardens or orchard produce.[121]

Livestock

A contemporary of the period declared that the majority of Creole planters were stock raisers and thus were enabled to provide their slaves with beef from their own plantations, while American farmers, less inclined to gather large herds, had to continue their purchase of pork no matter how high its price.[122]

A native breed of horses, commonly referred to as "Creole horses", often provided their masters against the necessity of buying mules, for they had, along with feet and eyes suggestive of Andalusian stock, the endurance of the mule and, it was claimed by their supporters, the spirit of the thoroughbred.[123] The frequent importation of mules—usually brought in time to begin the grinding season[124]—was noted in the Franklin papers: within two months a drove of 100 mules had arrived in the parish from Texas[125] and A. M. Forbes of Missouri had exported 150 of his animals to St. Mary.[126] The almost yearly attacks of the disease, charbon, on the mules, horses, and cattle helped make such importations necessary.[127] Another cause given for the annual destruction of large numbers of livestock were the "bad range and bad weather" and it was noted that the majority of the stock had to subsist on grass alone as well as suffer the winter weather without shelter.[128] In some years droughts erased prairie ponds and numbers of the livestock on the islands of St. Mary felt their lack severely.[129]

---

119 *DeBow's Review*, I, After the War Series (1866), 213.

120 *Planters' Banner*, Oct. 18, 1849.

121 *Compendium of the Seventh Census*, 252.

122 Richardson, "Teche Country Fifty Years Ago," *loc. cit.*, IV, 593.

123 *Ibid.*

124 The advertisement in the *Planters' Banner*, Sept. 21, 1846, is typical.

125 *Planters' Banner*, August 10, 1848.

126 *Ibid.*, Sept. 21, 1848.

127 *Ibid.*, May 29, 1852.

128 *Ibid.*, Jan. 16, 1851.

129 Champomier, *Statement of the Sugar Crop*, 1851-52, preface.

Besides these work animals, a few blooded cattle had been imported into St. Mary. In 1847 James Porter brought in some purebred Southdown sheep and an Ayrshire bull of blooded stock.[130] Oaklawn plantation also boasted Devon and Shorthorn cattle and some fine English horses related to famous racing thoroughbreds of Great Britain.[131] Stables of larger plantations such as that one might include stalls for 50 to 100 mules and horses, and with the granary, sheds, and various other outbuildings usually in their vicinity, made an impressive picture.[132]

The value of barnyard manure as a fertilizing agent had been discovered and it was beginning to be used in St. Mary in 1851;[133] the use was apparently not extensive, for the following year it was considered lamentable, "and disgusting even, to see what a waste is going on in this country of one of the richest and most valuable manures known."[134]

Overcropping was considered common in the parish and some planters in St. Mary argued that a farmer could make more money by cultivating seven acres to each hand than by any more ambitious effort.[135] The opinions of particularly successful farmers were regarded with respect, and information by such persons frequently appeared in the *Banner*.[136] This interest in the findings of others led to an attempt to organize an Agricultural and Horticultural Association of St. Mary Parish in February of 1853, but the project apparently lapsed during the summer,[137] for it was not until the following January that notices of the meetings began to appear.[138]

CHAPTER IV

TOWN LIFE

Locations of Towns: General Description

A gazetteer published in 1854 listed four towns in St. Mary Parish: Franklin, Charenton, Centerville, and Pattersonville.

130 *Planters' Banner*, April 8, 1847.
131 Allen, "Letters from the South—No. 9," *loc. cit.*, VI, 214.
132 Thorpe, "Sugar and Sugar Regions of Louisiana," *loc. cit.*, VII, 754.
133 *Planters' Banner*, Jan. 16, 1851.
134 *Ibid.*, Jan. 24, 1852.
135 *Ibid.*, March 15, 1849.
136 *Ibid.*, June 29, 1848.
137 *Ibid.*, June 9, 1853.
138 *Ibid.*, Jan. 19, 1854.

Starting at the southern edge of the parish and moving northwest along the Teche one first reached Pattersonville, a town located about eight miles from Berwick's Bay and having about 600 inhabitants.[1] It was of fairly recent development, as was evidenced by a comment in 1849 to the effect that "It has never, until of late shown much signs of thrift. . . ."[2] Strategically located with reference to the natural trade routes of the nearby bayous and lakes and Berwick's Bay, the little town contained two meetinghouses, a seminary in the process of erection (in which it was proposed that two schools would be kept in constant operation), and several expanding businesses.[3] Two or three stores furnished the surrounding territory with clothing, staple and dry goods, and plantation necessities.[4] Beers and Whaley engaged in the commission business, and C. B. S. Whelden operated a lumber mill in the vicinity.[5] The United States Hotel, later Thompson's, one block below the post office, offered board and lodging at two dollars a day or thirty dollars per month.[6]

Twelve miles above Pattersonville, on the south side of the Teche, lay Centerville, in 1853 a tiny hamlet of about 200 inhabitants.[7] Despite its size it was the seat of several thriving business enterprises. These included numerous stores, a sawmill making cypress lumber,[8] an icehouse of 350 tons capacity which sold the "best kind of Boston ice" more cheaply than that commodity could be procured from New Orleans,[9] and a "general mercantile and coopering business."[10] Refrigerators of a sort[11] and a "newly invented Yankee contrivance for washing clothes,"[12] were offered for sale by enterprising Centerville citizens. The village had several inns; but for a period in 1850, it was without a grogshop.[13]

---

[1] T. Baldwin and J. Thomas, *A New and Complete Gazetteer of the United States Giving a Full and Comprehensive Review of the Present Condition, Industry, and Resources of the American Confederacy: Embracing, Also, Important Topographical, Statistical, and Historical Information From Recent and Original Sources; Together with the Results of the Census of 1850, and Population and Statistics in Many Cases to 1853* (Philadelphia, 1854), 886. Hereafter cited: *New and Complete Gazetteer of the United States.*

[2] *Planters' Banner*, Jan. 25, 1849.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Based on a study of the files of *ibid.*

[5] *Ibid.*, Jan. 5, 1849.

[6] *Ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1854.

[7] *New and Complete Gazetteer of the United States*, 212.

[8] *Planters' Banner*, Sept. 20, 1845.

[9] *Ibid.*, April 18, 1850; Feb. 13, 1851.

[10] Original Conveyances, St. Mary Parish, J, June 9, 1852.

[11] *Planters' Banner*, July 17, 1852.

[12] *Ibid.*, March 9, 1848.

[13] *Ibid.*, July 4, 1850.

Indian Bend, or Charenton, was a tiny post village north of Franklin, about eighty miles, by water, from the Gulf of Mexico.[14] Above this village was Jeanerette, at this time a town with only a few small stores and a post office.[15] In 1857, following a period of animated real-estate speculation on Berwick's Bay, Brashear City was laid out beside the railroad route through the area, and lots valued from $300 to $540 were sold.[16] A bright future was predicted for the town, and rumors of the location of the chief customhouse there continued to spread throughout the period.[17]

Franklin: Port

The most important town of the area was Franklin, the port of entry for the Teche and the parish seat of St. Mary.[18] Located sixty-five miles by water from the Gulf of Mexico, the town included in 1850, 540 white citizens, 58 free persons of color, and 293 slaves, giving it a total of 891 inhabitants.[19] Three years later its population was reported to have increased to 1400;[20] such a large gain in such a short period of time is almost unbelievable and must be accepted with some reservation, despite the evidence of increasing prosperity in the area. One commentator remarked in 1851 that "No inland southern town of the size presents the business, life-like appearance of Franklin."[21] The *Planters' Banner* reported that the town could supply all a planter's needs, importing goods directly from many northern cities.[22]

Franklin's port was to a large extent responsible for her prosperity.[23] Ships from Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Richmond, Galveston, Jamaica, Bermuda, Vera Cruz, Havana, and Matagorda lined her wharves, and there were already almost daily arrivals and departures as early as 1845.[24] Cargoes of lime, cement, brick, and similar materials from New York, lumber

---

[14] *New and Complete Gazetteer of the United States*, 216.
[15] Richardson, "Teche Country Fifty Years Ago," *loc. cit.*, IV, 596.
[16] Original Conveyances, M, April 29, 1857.
[17] *Planters' Banner*, March 9, 1854.
[18] *New and Complete Gazetteer of the United States*, 402.
[19] *The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850* (Washington, 1853), 474.
[20] *New and Complete Gazetteer of the United States*, 354.
[21] *Planters' Banner*, March 29, 1851.
[22] *Ibid.*, June 24, 1847.
[23] Unless otherwise indicated, the material in this paragraph is based upon a study of the files of the *Planters' Banner*.
[24] *Planters' Banner*, Jan. 3, 1846.

from Mobile, and various other imports were exchanged at Franklin for the shipments of sugar and molasses that were the chief exports of the region. On one Sunday in 1848 nine vessels were in the port at once, among them two brigs of 175 tons each.[25]

In a single month in 1846, 2,230 hogsheads and fifteen barrels of sugar, and 225 hogsheads and 2,270 barrels of molasses left Franklin. The largest part of these exports went to Richmond, which received 1,020 hogsheads of sugar and 1,185 barrels of molasses. Other shipments for the month went to New York, Baltimore, and Mobile, in that order.[26]

Trade at Franklin increased tremendously during the ante-bellum period. In 1847, seventy-one coastwise vessels and nine vessels from foreign ports, having an aggregate tonnage of 8,158 tons, entered the port. The seventy vessels totaling 7,847 tons that left the town during the same period took with them cargoes of 6,735 hogsheads of sugar, eleven barrels of the same product; 1,671 hogsheads and 7,973 barrels of molasses; and 30,700 feet of live oak timber.[27] Besides these products, Franklin also shipped out sixty-three bales of moss, 200 sacks of corn, and 5,000 feet of lumber other than live oak.[28]

A phenomenal increase in the trade of the port took place during the following year. Crew members totaling 736 men brought in 125 coastwise ships of an aggregate tonnage of 15,319. The thirty-two foreign ships, manned by 205 sailors, displaced 4,601 tons. The number of importing vessels fell a little below those exporting: the 145 ships leaving Franklin carried away 18,522 tons, some 1,394 tons less than the incoming trade. The exports for the year including 16,589 hogsheads and fourteen barrels of sugar, 2,742 hogsheads and 19,644 barrels of molasses, and 55,900 feet of live oak timber.[29]

In 1853, the commerce of Franklin was still gaining over that of previous years. The twenty-four vessels from foreign ports aggregated 3,582 tons and the ninety-eight coastal ships 13,812 tons. The 126 vessels clearing the port had an aggregate of 19,912 tons. A total of 19,064 hogsheads of sugar and 41,194 barrels of molasses was exported during the year.[30]

---

[25] *Ibid.*, Dec. 7, 1848.
[26] *Ibid.*, Jan. 14, 1847.
[27] *Ibid.*, Feb. 8, 1849.
[28] *Ibid.*, Jan. 20, 1848
[29] *Ibid.*, Feb. 8, 1849.
[30] *Ibid.*, Jan. 5, 1854.

From the figures available in the *Planters' Banner*, New York was the leading importer of the products of St. Mary.[31] Next came Richmond, with Baltimore, Mobile, Philadelphia, New Orleans, Charleston, Savannah, and Boston following in that order. It is interesting to note that the only export to Boston was hogsheads of molasses, a product which only she and New York purchased in that container.

Franklin acted as a distributing center for the products received at her wharves. Goods from the North destined for the Opelousas area landed at the port, went by carriage to Indian Village, where they were often stored for a time and then moved on as freight to their final destination.[32] Steamboats traveling from Franklin up the Teche as far as St. Martinville acted as distributing agents for the port of entry also, making stops to unload freight and passengers at all intermediate landings. Points along Berwick's Bay and Bayous Boeuf and Black also received goods from these agents.[33] In the spring of 1850 four steamboats regularly plied the route between New Orleans and the Attakapas area.[34]

The difficulties of navigation in sections of the water route connecting Franklin with the Gulf of Mexico necessitated the frequent use of special pilots familiar with the area. In June of 1850, an act was passed to define and regulate the duties of the pilots of the Atchafalaya Bay and River. The Governor of Louisiana was to appoint not over six pilots from a group of men who had lived in the state at least two years and had been citizens of the United States for a similar period, and who had been certified by the Clerk of the Police Jury of St. Mary as qualified to act as branch pilots. Every branch pilot was to have certain sureties totaling $1000 approved by the Mortgage Recorder of St. Mary, and was subject to a $500 fine or three to six months in prison if he refused to go on board a ship which was in need of his services.[35]

A large amount of Franklin's shipping was carried on during the month of January, at which time the District Court was in session in that town. Planters throughout the parish attending

[31] The material in this paragraph was compiled from figures published in the *Planters' Banner*.

[32] *Planters' Banner*, Dec. 30, 1847.

[33] Based upon a study of files of *ibid.*

[34] *Ibid.*, April 4, 1850.

[35] *Ibid.*, June 6, 1850.

court as litigants, jurors, or witnesses found it most convenient to meet then with the commission merchants in town during the peak of the shipping season and so make their arrangements for marketing their crops.[36]

Civic Services

The District Court met at Franklin twice yearly and the time of its meeting was a period of unusual activity for the town. Persons from all parts of the parish attended the court for business or pleasure, often spending several weeks in the vicinity while their cases were pending. Sometimes they waited for one or more sessions, away from their homes and employment, until the case with which they were concerned came before the Judge. Neither witnesses nor jurors were paid enough to meet their tavern bills and thus were forced to draw upon private means to pay expenses, often a great hardship to those in the lower economic groups.[37] The sessions were usually long, some lasting over a month,[38] and complaints as to the slowness of court action were frequent.[39] The fact that Franklin had fifteen rising young lawyers anxious to make their marks in the legal world was not considered a factor favorable to expediting the session; apparently lawyers as a class were not exceedingly popular in the vicinity, if one may judge from a comment in the *Banner:*

> The District Court is again in session in this place, and the lawyers are again in town. . . . Courts of Justice, lawyers and lawsuits are doubtless necessary, and so are bleeding and blistering in certain cases, but they are a pretty severe tax upon those who become too intimate with them.[40]

These sessions of the District Court met at the Franklin courthouse, a community center where political meetings, church services, holiday celebrations, and various other activities often took place.[41] In 1849 the standing structure was sarcastically spoken of as "aged and venerable" and some citizens "began to think it about time for owls, and bats, and serpents to take possession of the antiquated Court House. . . ."[42] Such criticism

---

[36] *Ibid.*, Feb. 10, 1853.
[37] *Ibid.*
[38] *Ibid.*, June 10, 1856.
[39] *Ibid.*, June 28, 1850.
[40] *Ibid.*, June 6, 1850.
[41] Based on a study of the files of *ibid.*
[42] *Ibid.*, Feb. 22, 1849.

must have had some effect, for four months later the Police Jury authorized an appropriation of $9,000 for a new courthouse, private citizens subscribed $3,000, and Judge Wilkinson gave $1,000.[43] The new building was to have a main center section forty feet square to be used exclusively as a courtroom, and two wings, each containing two offices or jury rooms sixteen by twenty feet. The porticos at the front and back were to be supported by heavy pillars, and the walls, foundation, and cornice of the building were to be brick.[44] Some public indignation was aroused when the contract for the construction of the edifice was awarded to Judge Baker, whose $12,000 bid was $750 higher than that of Weldon. The explanation given for such unusual action was that Weldon and his forty Negroes, not being natives of St. Mary, would take the cash paid them out of the parish.[45] Apparently the use of local labor did not hasten construction, for in August of 1850 it was remarked that "our new court-house . . . is in its erection a true representative of the law—'dragging its slow length along!' "[46]

The Town Council and the Police Jury also customarily met in the courthouse.[47] In regulating the government of Franklin, the Town Council frequently had to deal with public nuisances. Swine had been allowed to roam freely about the streets until 1849, when an ordinance was passed declaring hogs outlawed and giving any person the right to shoot any such animals running at large within the corporation limits.[48] As late as 1853, complaints were made about the herding of cattle in the thoroughfares of the town.[49] According to the *Banner* some citizens also found the dogs of the village disturbing:

> Was there ever any other Christian town so infested by such an execrable throng of uncivil mongrels, of every possible mixture, as our own beautiful and otherwise quiet Franklin? . . . It is dangerous to walk the streets in the night: if one is by any means belated in returning to his lodgings, he has to fight his way through a whole legion of dogs, and if he is not well armed with a good cane, or other weapon, he sometimes finds himself engaged in an unequal contest. There are

---

[43] *Ibid.*, March 31, June 7, 1849.

[44] *Ibid.*, June 19, 1849.

[45] *Ibid.*, June 26, 1849.

[46] *Ibid.*, August 1, 1850.

[47] Police Jury Proceedings, Oct. 18, 1847, as published in *Ibid.*, Oct. 21, 1847; Minutes of the Town Council, June 6, 1854, as published in *ibid.*, June 8, 1854.

[48] Minutes of the Town Council, March 5, 1849, as published in *ibid.*, March 8, 1849.

[49] *Planters' Banner*, April 7, 1853.

indeed some portions of our village to which ladies dare not venture to visit their friends, for fear of the myriads of dogs that throng the streets.[50]

Evidently not only the animals of Franklin required regulation, for in 1854 the Town Council passed an ordinance requiring a small fine or a light jail sentence from any one found lying drunk upon the streets or in any public place in the village. Any person permitting riotous or disorderly conduct, profane or obscene language, or indecent exhibitions in his place of business was liable to a fine of ten to fifty dollars for each offense; everyone participating was similarly liable.[51]

City regulations were made governing the erection of chimneys, hearths, forges, ovens, furnaces, and stables, and the digging of wells. Persons placing obstructions of any nature in the streets or public places to impede travel or frighten horses were subject to a fine of ten dollars and were required to remove the obstruction. A five-dollar fine was the punishment for ditching across sidewalks without placing a substantial bridge over the ditch.[52]

The sidewalks of Franklin were frequently a subject for discussion. In 1848, a complaint had been made as to the manner in which the ditches and streets had been worked, leaving the citizens, ". . . not alone over our heels, but nearly to our knees in mud;" the author of the protesting article suggested that the back streets be shelled and drained.[53] Sidewalks of the same area needed to be widened, as they were almost too narrow for one person to walk in comfort.[54] Evidently some attempts were made to improve these conditions, for the following year a letter from "Anti-Shells" complained of the walks of shells, a material which in his opinion made them fit neither for wet nor dry weather and gave those using the walks (many preferred the streets) a gait reminiscent of that of a person suffering with gout.[55] Two years later letters protesting the use of shells on the sidewalks were still appearing in the Franklin paper, and one critic also mentioned the roots of trees which formed miniature snags dangerous to an unwary traveler at night.[56] It was suggested that the Town Council

---

[50] *Ibid.*, July 5, 1851.

[51] Minutes of the Town Council June 6, 1854, as published in *Ibid.*, June 8, 1854.

[52] *Ibid.*

[53] *Planters' Banner*, Dec. 28, 1848.

[54] *Ibid.*, April 7, 1853.

[55] *Ibid.*, Dec. 20, 1849.

[56] *Ibid.*, June 7, 1851.

be compelled to walk down the shells, so as to make the thoroughfares usable, "and if each member will only take his share of the curses and denunciations showered upon the Council for this act, we promise that the weight of each will be so increased as to make the task an easy one. . . ."[57]

The roads of the parish connecting Franklin with the other villages of St. Mary also received their share of criticism. An elderly citizen claimed that the caleche which had become a necessity since his advanced age made horseback riding impossible was rendered useless by the condition of the highways. He said:

> . . . It would have taken two yoke of oxen to drag my caleche through some portions of the public highway. . . . Some also who have the finest carriages, of which there are fifty to one in comparison to the number twenty years ago, have the worst road in front of their own dwellings.[58]

A near disaster on Berwick's Bay was credited to the bad condition of the roads and bridges considered by the victim to be characteristic of the whole area.[59]

The Police Jury of St. Mary was held responsible for the poor transportation facilities of the parish,[60] and at its frequent meetings in Franklin evidently attempted to improve the situation. The area was divided into a number of road wards,[61] and commissioners were appointed to choose locations for various public highways in different parts of the parish.[62] About $1,800 of the annual expenditures of St. Mary (which usually totaled around $7,750) was devoted to the upkeep of public roads and bridges.[63]

One means of raising money to meet governmental expenditures was by taxing the various businesses of the village. In 1850 hawkers and peddlers "on horse or otherwise" had to pay a tax of thirty dollars per annum; wholesale or retail merchants, grocers, traders, dealers, and druggists were assessed twenty dollars yearly, and restaurant owners had to pay half that sum. Proprietors of a depot for the sale of slaves were charged fifty dollars, and a proprietor of a public stable paid twenty. Each

[57] *Ibid.*, June 19, 1852.
[58] *Ibid.*, Feb. 15, 1849.
[59] *Ibid.*, June 30, 1853.
[60] *Ibid.*, Feb. 15, 1849.
[61] Police Jury Proceedings, Oct. 18, 1847, as published in *ibid.*, Oct. 21, 1847.
[62] Police Jury Proceedings, April 15, 22, 1850, as published in *ibid.*, May 2, 1850.
[63] Based upon a study of the Police Jury Proceedings published in *ibid.*, of which those in the issue of March 2, 1848, are an example.

billiard table in the town was taxed thirty-seven and a half dollars, and each tenpin alley fifty.[64] Evidently some antagonism had recently been aroused against grogshops, for whereas the tax on that type of business had been only fifty dollars in 1848,[65] it was raised to $300 the following year,[66] and in 1850 was $250.[67]

These taxes should have given the Town Council a sizable budget, for there were many merchants and businessmen in Franklin. For some time after June, 1848, all meats, vegetables, and other provisions offered for sale within the town limits had to be vended from the city market house. This market offered its stalls free to all but persons selling meat, who were required to pay twenty-five dollars rent. Goods were to be offered for sale from four in the morning until two in the afternoon, and a ten-dollar fine punished each violation of the regulations.[68] A comment the following year suggested that such an arrangement was not entirely satisfactory: "We have a market . . . but we have never heard of any one person's getting the gout by patronizing it. . . . Nothing is sold there that would make an epicure's eyes glisten."[69]

Commercial and Social Centers

Perhaps the more tasty foods were available at the stores of private individuals. William Emmer's bakery, confectionery, and fruit store would prepare cakes for parties "at the shortest notice,"[70] and numerous storekeepers sold fancy as well as staple groceries.[71] Augustus Knapp offered candies at twelve and a half cents a pound, bacon for five and one-half to seven and one-fourth cents per pound, a like amount of cheese at five and one-half to nine and one-fourth cents, and lard at eight and one-half to ten cents.[72] Two oysterhouses opened within a week of each other in October of 1847, offering oysters raw, stewed, fried, in gumbo or in soup; fresh oysters were opened and delivered for one dollar per hundred.[73] The Franklin Apothecary Hall dispensed ice creams and

---

64 Minutes of the Town Council, Jan. 21, 1850, as published in *ibid.*, Jan. 24, 1850.

65 *Planters' Banner*, Feb. 24, 1848.

66 Minutes of the Town Council, Jan. 15, 1849, as published in *ibid.*, Jan. 18, 1849.

67 Minutes of the Town Council, Jan. 21, 1850, as published in *ibid.*, Jan. 24, 1850.

68 Police Jury Proceedings, June 3, 1848, as published in *ibid.*, June 8, 1848.

69 *Planters' Banner*, Jan. 25, 1849.

70 *Ibid.*, April 8, 1849.

71 One example is James Parkerson's ad in *ibid.*, Oct. 28, 1847.

72 Original Estates, XXXI, Feb. 3, 1847.

73 *Planters' Banner*, Oct. 28, 1847.

syrups at its soda fountain, and the Ice Cream Saloon on the corner of Main and Commerce offered those refreshments in addition to iced lemonade, ginger pop, and soda water.[74] Wine stores, tobacco shops, and numerous coffeehouses and grogshops also offered their wares to the Franklin populace.[75] Ice was sold in the town[76] and bottled beer was delivered from Berwick's Bay to Jeanerette twice a week throughout the year.[77]

Many of the stores sold dry goods and clothing as well as foodstuffs.[78] Levy's Emporium had fine cashmeres, watersilks, changeable silks, black satin mantillas, and needleworked capes.[79] Bloch and Godchaux's establishment offered ball dresses, hats, caps, and other ready-made clothing for sale,[80] and Miss Bristol, milliner and mantuamaker, offered to manufacture bonnets to order.[81] There were numerous tailors in Franklin and several bootmakers as well.[82]

The barber who opened a shop in Franklin in 1848 made wigs and toupees and offered his services to the ladies as a hairdresser, having had thirty years of barbering experience in Paris.[83] A bathhouse had been installed at Gordy's Hotel in 1848, and offered baths of pure cistern water, fifty cents for hot baths and thirty-seven and one-half cents for cold; showers were twenty-five cents.[84] Other services available at the hotel often included portrait painting and the taking of daguerreotypes, for the itinerant artists and photographers passing through St. Mary usually set up their businesses at Franklin.[85]

In 1848, the *Banner* reported that there were two carriage builders, two carriage trimmers and harness makers, a carriagesmith, a cabinetmaker, a plowmaker, a gunsmith, three watchmakers, several coopers, and a tin- and coppersmith in Franklin.[86] There were also a blacksmith shop,[87] several brickmaking con-

74 *Ibid.*, August 17, 1848.
75 Based upon a study of the files of *ibid.*
76 *Ibid.*, May 20, 1847.
77 *Ibid.*, May 6, 1847.
78 The ad of Parkerson and Randler, *ibid.*, April 27, 1848, is an example.
79 *Planters' Banner*, Nov. 4, 1847.
80 *Ibid.*, Nov. 2, 1848.
81 *Ibid.*, Dec. 14, 1848.
82 Based upon a study of the files of *ibid.*
83 *Ibid.*, August 31, 1848.
84 *Ibid.*, June 21, 1848.
85 *Ibid.*, Jan. 3, 1846; Feb. 18, 1847.
86 *Ibid.*, June 8, 1848.
87 *Ibid.*, Sept. 20, 1845.

cerns,[88] a stonecutting establishment, which made monuments, tombs, and slabs for sideboards and mantels,[89] and a firm selling and hanging wallpaper.[90] Numerous stables offered to rent sulkies[91] or provide for horses left in their care.[92]

The gathering of the salt supply for South Louisiana was not mentioned in the *Planters' Banner* for the period, but some of the product probably was distributed through Franklin, as the chief source for the region was in the salt springs of Petite Anse Island.[93]

Postage rates in 1845, as now, varied with the weight of the letter and the distance it was to travel. Letters of less than one-half ounce going 300 miles, or less, could be mailed for five cents; if the destination exceeded 300 miles, the cost was ten cents, and a five-cent increase was charged on each additional half-ounce, or part thereof, above the original one-half ounce paid for. Letters traveling less than thirty miles were delivered free of charge.[94] In the summer of 1847, it was announced that stamps were to be used and that the local post office would soon have a supply on hand.[95]

In 1845, the New Orleans mail arrived at Franklin every Tuesday and Friday at five in the morning and left at noon on the same day; the Opelousas mail arrived at noon on the same two days of the week, and left at five in the afternoon.[96] In 1847 the irregularity of the mails was attributed "in great measure to the wear and tear of horseflesh on our route," and the contractor announced that he hoped the new mail steamboat would soon be ready to use.[97] By 1848, mail service had been so improved as to deliver letters leaving Franklin Tuesday afternoon in New Orleans by noon on Friday; letters mailed in New Orleans on Sunday morning got to Franklin the following Tuesday and those sent on Wednesday morning arrived at the St. Mary port on Friday.[98]

---

[88] The ad of Freeman Welsh in *Ibid.*, July 29, 1847, is an example.

[89] *Planters' Banner*, May 4, 1848.

[90] *Ibid.*, Jan. 18, 1849.

[91] *Ibid.*, Sept. 20, 1845.

[92] *Ibid.*, Jan. 6, 1848.

[93] Rock salt was discovered there in May, 1862. Jackson Beauregard Davis, "The Life of Richard Taylor," in *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXIV (1941), 70.

[94] *Planters' Banner*, Nov. 1, 1845.

[95] *Ibid.*, August 19, 1847.

[96] *Ibid.*, Nov. 1, 1845.

[97] *Ibid.*, Jan. 14, 1847.

[98] *Ibid.*, April 6, 1848.

Though the mail connection with New Orleans was regular, the one between Franklin and the more northern areas of the state was quite erratic. At one time copies of the *Natchitoches Chronicle* for February 22 and March 1, the *Opelousas Gazette* for February 26, March 5, 12, and 19, and the *St. Landry Whig* for March 8 and 25 all reached Franklin on April 2.[99] In June of 1851 a mail driver from Opelousas was halted by a person who threatened him with a cane knife and wounded him slightly in the thigh; the carrier fired on him and the man left. It was noted that the mail drivers on that route always traveled well armed.[100] The following month the mail arrived at Franklin "so saturated in consequence of the boat's capsizing in the lake, as to render a large portion of it useless."[101]

In 1854 the mail route was improved so that on mail days New Orleans morning papers reached Franklin that night. Such expeditious service was made possible by the use of the railroad between New Orleans and Bayou Lafourche; Attakapas mail traveled by boat from that point.[102]

Organizations

Another type of service to the community was rendered by the local fire company, Germania. Organized in July of 1847, it was originally made up of about thirty German citizens of Franklin under the presidency of a local druggist, William Rabe.[103] The group had special uniforms and held regular meetings, notices of which were printed in German in the local paper.[104] In case of fire, any person could obtain the services of the company and the engine if they sent in two gentle horses, unharnessed, and applied at the home of Captain Rabe, Bersheim's Coffee House, or Erbelding's Barber Shop for a key to the engine house. The alarm was to be given by ringing the church and courthouse bells, at which sound the members of the company assembled.[105] At a fire in April of 1848 the company turned out promptly, but the lack of buckets and a suitable suction hose made it nearly

[99] *Ibid.*, April 5, 1851.
[100] Such a list appears in *ibid*, Jan. 11, 1849.
[101] *Planters' Banner*, August 9, 1851.
[102] Presumably near the present site of Jeanerette
[103] *Planters' Banner*, July 29, 1847.
[104] *Ibid.*, Oct. 28, 1847.
[105] *Ibid.*, Dec. 9, 1847.

impossible to use the engine.[106] Blame for the frequent fires in the area was usually placed on unknown incendiaries, and in 1851, it was decided that more watchmen were needed to prevent such arson.[107] Soon afterward seven patrol squads with seven members apiece were formed; each was to patrol from nine at night to four in the morning one night a week. Fines of two dollars were levied against absentees who did not send a substitute.[108] These measures were followed up by certain precautionary ordinances passed by the Town Council concerning the positions of stoves and stovepipes in relation to various inflammable materials.[109]

A favorite gathering place for citizens of Franklin was the Reading Room. There LaTourette's *Map of Louisiana*, Morse's *North American Atlas*, bound copies of the *Planters' Banner* since 1836, and many of the leading journals and periodicals of the nation offered diversion and edification. Chess tables, a cabinet of curiosities, Robert Cruikshank's illustrations entitled "The Bottle,"[110] and the Franklin Circulating Library also occupied places in the Reading Room. One might read books by George Sand, Harriet Martineau, Charles Dickens, Alexander Dumas, Jane Austin, and many others among the library's collection of over 300 volumes.[111] Persons were charged five dollars a year or seventy-five cents a month for the use of the Reading Room facilities; strangers could enjoy its advantages for one week free of charge.[112]

The Reading Room was for a time located on the second story of the Odd Fellows Hall.[113] This building, often called Union Hall, was owned principally by the Franklin branch of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, whose 115[114] members held their meetings in the large lodge room on the third floor of the edifice. The building had been erected in 1849 at a cost exceeding $10,000. It measured forty by eighty feet and was three stories high.[115] Soon after its completion the Order had installed an organ which was reported to have been made to order in Paris.[116]

---

106 *Ibid.*, April 20, 1848.
107 *Ibid.*, Nov. 8, 1851.
108 *Ibid.*, Nov. 15, 1851.
109 *Ibid.*, June 8, 1854.
110 *Ibid.*, Jan. 20, March 16, 1848.
111 *Ibid.*, April 15, Nov. 11, 1847.
112 *Ibid.*, Sept. 3, 1847; Sept. 6, 1849.
113 *Ibid.*, Jan. 31, 1850.
114 *Ibid.*, March 22, 1849.
115 *Ibid.*, June 28, 1849.
116 *Ibid.*, Jan. 10, 1850.

The Franklin Lodge No. 57 F. & A. Masons which had been organized in January, 1848,[117] often joined with the Pattersonville Lodge to celebrate the Festival of St. John the Baptist, Washington's Birthday, and other special occasions, marching from the lodge room to the Methodist Church in the full regalia of the order.[118]

A St. Mary organization which received much publicity in the local papers was the Sons of Temperance, which was organized in Franklin in November of 1848.[119] Other branches of the organization were formed at Pattersonville in 1849,[120] and at Centerville the following year.[121] In January of 1850 a meeting of the Sons of Temperance took place at Franklin, where a procession headed by the local brass band marched to a stand on Willow Street especially prepared for the occasion and there, with appropriate ceremonies received "the magnificent banner" presented to the organization by the ladies of the parish. At that time the order had 200 members in a parish estimated to have only about four times that many qualified voters. The celebration was concluded with a ball "crowded to excess, but delightful."[122] A few months later a division of "Younger Brothers" was formed for those too young to join the Sons of Temperance order itself.[123] The various branches of the order often joined each other in celebrations, sometimes chartering a boat in which to make the trip from one lodge to another.[124]

In 1853 it was announced that men and women in St. Mary were taking steps toward the organization of "Good Samaritans and Daughters of Samaria," and notices of their meetings began to appear in the following year.[125]

Another organization at Franklin was the Young Men's Lyceum, which was begun in 1852

> to promote the cause of literature among the young men of this place, to afford rational public entertainment to the ladies

[117] *Ibid.*, June 14, 28, 1849.
[118] *Ibid.*, August 1, 1850.
[119] *Ibid.*, Nov. 30, 1848.
[120] *Ibid.*, August 9, 1849.
[121] *Ibid.*, Feb. 21, 1850.
[122] *Ibid.*, Jan. 17, 1850.
[123] *Ibid.*, Feb. 28, 1850.
[124] *Ibid.*, May 2, 1850.
[125] *Ibid.*, March 25, 1853; Dec. 14, 1854.

and gentlemen of this community once a week during the winter season, and to improve the members of the society in the noble art of public speaking.[126]

About once a month the City Guards, known as the St. Mary Blues, held regimental reviews dressed, as the season required, in full winter or summer uniforms.[127] Honorary members, admitted to the company for twenty-five dollars per annum, were not required to muster and were exempt from military duty.[128] In 1848 a number of young men from Franklin and the nearby vicinity met to organize a volunteer infantry company to be called the Franklin Guards;[129] apparently the organization was short-lived, for only one notice of a later meeting of the group appeared in the paper.[130]

With her town militia, her fraternal organizations, civic service groups and numerous stores and industries, the Franklin of 1845 to 1860 offered many and varied opportunities in the fields of both social endeavor and business.

CHAPTER V

ASPECTS OF CULTURE

Amusements

One of the popular amusements of the ante-bellum period in St. Mary was hunting. Groups such as the Pattersonville Hunting Club celebrated successful expeditions of their members with venison suppers and other similarly appropriate get-togethers.[1] Large numbers of deer frequented the coastal sea marsh, and it was reported that their increase kept pace with the toll exacted upon them by local hunters.[2] Sometimes during seasons of high water, the deer, driven from their native haunts by the flood tides, sought higher lands, and the planters along Bayous Boeuf and Black had only to go into their own plantation fields to shoot large numbers of them.[3]

---

[126] *Ibid.*, Oct. 16, 1852.

[127] Based upon a study of the files of *ibid.*

[128] *Ibid.*, June 29, 1848.

[129] *Ibid.*, July 27, 1848.

[130] *Ibid.*, August 10, 1848.

[1] *Planters' Banner*, May 11, 1848.

[2] *Ibid.*, Jan. 16, 1851.

[3] *Ibid.*, June 6, 1850.

Deer were not the only game found in the area, for the bays of the St. Mary coastline were visited yearly by large numbers of brant, wild geese, and other waterfowl; sizable flocks of wild ducks appeared in most parts of the parish.[4] Hunting might be highly successful even in the close vicinity of Franklin, where snipe, woodcocks, partridge, and squirrels were reported to be found in abundance.[5]

The lakes and bayous of St. Mary were well supplied with fish[6] and "fishing frolics" provided frequent entertainment for the local inhabitants. The shell bank at the mouth of Bayou Sale was a favorite fishing spot and one might see large numbers of buggies, wagons, and carts drawn up near it on Saturday afternoons. Here Negroes stretched long nets through the waters while other members of the party went bathing; the catch of the fishermen might include sheephead, flounders, redfish, gars, mullet, and numerous other varieties.[7] If ladies were present on the expedition, the customary fish dinner might be followed by dancing on the lawns of nearby picnic grounds.[8] Fishing enthusiasts of Bayou Sale and Centerville erected a large building to accommodate such parties at Salt Point, within sight of Côte Blanche Bay and near Bayou Sale.[9]

Sportsmen of St. Mary prided themselves on their horsemanship, and young gallants often trained "courtin' horses" to prance, rear, and fidget about that they might display their skill in the presence of the opposite sex.[10] Horseracing must have been an interest of long standing in the parish, for as early as 1845 a race track with stands and stables had been built near Franklin and attracted crowds from large sections of the Opelousas and Attakapas regions.[11] In that year the racing season began four days after Christmas, with races in which entries from New Orleans as well as those from local stables competed for prizes, such as the fifty-dollar purse offered by the Jockey Club.[12] The Franklin Jockey Club was apparently quite active during the 1840's, holding regular meetings to decide the conditions

---

[4] *Ibid.*, Dec. 6, 1845.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Ibid.*, Jan. 16, 1851.

[7] *Ibid.*, August 9, 1849.

[8] *Ibid.*, May 18, 1848.

[9] *Ibid.*, August 9, 1849.

[10] Charles Dudley Warner, "The Acadian Land," in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, XXXIV (1887), 354.

[11] *Planters' Banner*, Dec. 6, 1845.

[12] *Ibid.*, Jan. 3, 1846.

under which their races were to operate, and advertising in the *Planters' Banner*, the *Attakapas Gazette*, and the *Delta* and the *Picayune* in New Orleans.[13] The gambling of which the Creole traditionally was so fond[14] was no doubt given ample opportunity for indulgence in connection with this sport.

Horses from St. Mary were often outstanding contenders in races in other parts of the state, and her entries had already won four of the spring races of 1848 by April of that year.[15] Probably one of the better-known stables in the parish was that of Alexander Porter, who had purchased *Harkforward*, a descendant of one of the most famous English racers of that time; though a series of unfortunate accidents prevented the use of the animal on the turf, he did sire several blooded horses in the area.[16]

Another favorite pastime was dancing, an exercise of which many persons of Creole descent were particularly fond and one in which they often excelled.[17] Public balls usually were held fortnightly, first in the Franklin Exchange and then, after the Odd Fellows Union Hall was built in 1849,[18] in the section of that building set aside as a ballroom.[19] Cotillion parties were also held at the United States Hotel in Pattersonville[20] and at Mrs. Kendall's Centerville Hotel.[21] An admission fee of two dollars was generally required of the gentlemen attending the dance,[22] perhaps to pay the local musicians who supplied the violin accompaniment to the evening's entertainment[23] and to provide for the refreshments that were an expected part of the ball. These preparations did not always find favor with the dancers, who grew tired of the gumbo, pork, beef, and fowl, often poorly prepared, that was nearly always served.[24]

Sometimes various organizations sponsored balls, such as the benefit dances given by the Roman Catholic Church at which the ladies brought contributions to the supper table and the gentlemen

---

[13] *Ibid.*, Jan. 14, 1847.

[14] Shugg, *Origins of Class Struggle in Louisiana*, 43.

[15] *Planters' Banner*, April 27, 1848.

[16] Stephenson, *Alexander Porter*, 128-129.

[17] Stoddard, *Sketches, Historical and Descriptive, of Louisiana*, 321.

[18] *Planters' Banner*, Nov. 15, 1849.

[19] This information is based upon a study of the files of *ibid.*

[20] *Ibid.*, May 22, 1852.

[21] *Ibid.*, Dec. 25, 1852.

[22] There were some exceptions, but the price was usually as given in *ibid.*, Dec. 6, 1845.

[23] *Ibid.*, Nov. 4, 1847.

[24] *Ibid.*, Feb. 28, 1850.

paid an admittance fee of three dollars.[25] The Kings' Balls were evidently given by a group formed especially for that purpose.[26] As only three or four "Kings" sponsored each ball, the membership of the club must have been drawn from the wealthier ranks of St. Mary's citizens, for a single ball often cost each of its sponsors over $100.[27] One of the balls they gave in 1850 was pronounced a model one, with good order and decorum prevailing to an extent rarely seen at any ball in Franklin; the good music, well-lighted ballroom, and tasty ice creams, lemonade, and other refreshments served were accorded high praise by the dancers.[28] At another party given by the same organization, it was reported that the champagne was too freely distributed, for many of the Negroes, who were always *ex-officio* attendants at these dances, supplied themselves with the liquid in quantities too large to retain sobriety.[29]

It was a frequent complaint that wherever a ball or public dinner was given "everybody's spoiled boy and pet negro" were there.[30] As each lady brought a female servant with her and most of the gentlemen also brought attendants, it was not surprising that "Grinning darkies and jabbering youths" crowded the ladies' drawing room, all doorways and passages, and even a portion of the ballroom itself; it was estimated that between fifty and seventy-five Negroes and boys were at every ball.[31] The youths who frequented these affairs were declared without reverence for their elders, their efforts to obtain first place on the floor and first seats at the table often forcing the older people present to wait until the boys were finished before they could take their turns. Sweetmeats passed to the ladies were usually intercepted before they reached their anticipated recipients and gobbled down by boys whose manner of eating reminded one observer of hogs in a corncrib.[32]

Balls, as a favorite means of celebrating a holiday, were given in honor of the anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans, Washington's Birthday, Christmas, New Year's, and practically

---

[25] *Ibid.*, Sept. 28, 1848.
[26] *Ibid.*, Feb. 27, 1851.
[27] *Ibid.*, Jan. 23, 1851.
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] *Ibid.*, June 13, 1850.
[30] *Ibid.*, Dec. 13, 1849.
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] *Ibid.*, August 2, 1849.

every other occasion that called for recognition. Masquerade dances were held on Mardi Gras, and one year at least the maskers had to submit to a private examination before being allowed to enter the ballroom in order that "all improper characters may be excluded."[33] The St. Mary Blues, the local home guard troop, attended their Christmas dance in full uniform and waltzed and quadrilled in a hall in which decorations and sacred pictures appropriate to the season were overshadowed by a large painting of General Taylor and his horse.[34]

In 1847 a special Christmas celebration held in Franklin was well attended by people from all parts of the parish. The little girls, dressed in white frocks trimmed with pink made especially for the occasion, joined the boys of the town to parade up Main Street bearing the symbols of the season in the form of a cross, a mounted turkey, a boar's head, the wassail bowl, and the Yule log. The procession made its way to the Methodist Church, where it was planned that the reception of St. Nicholas should take place. Once there, however, it was discovered that Sam, the sexton, and one of the lady members, concerned about the propriety of having a fiddle in the church, refused to unlock the door. The parade was forced to return to the courthouse and there hold the celebration, singing carols, visiting with St. Nicholas, and receiving presents.[35]

Evidently some Christmas celebrations were more boisterous, for the editor of the *Planters' Banner* complained of the loud noise of guns, pistols, firecrackers, and oyster horns, and remarked bitterly that "No one whose ears were not saluted with those melodious sounds can at all comprehend the hallowed feelings which they inspired."[36]

The people of St. Mary waited anxiously to see who should first cross their thresholds after the midnight hour denoted the beginning of a new year, for the character of that person was regarded as an indication of the future fortunes of the family. The holiday custom of kissing under the mistletoe was no longer observed, and the editor of the Franklin paper, staunch Son of Temperance that he was, in bewailing the passing of such a pleasant tradition remembered that "wassailing" had always

[33] *Ibid.*, Feb. 14, 1852.
[34] *Ibid.*, Dec. 23, 1847.
[35] *Ibid.*, Dec. 30, 1847.
[36] *Ibid.*, Dec. 28, 1848.

accompanied it, and declared that if one could not be had without the other, certainly it was best to give up both.[37] Evidently others did not share his opinion, for it was reported that numerous persons got intoxicated as a result of accepting a drink at each of the homes they visited, for, in keeping with the New Year tradition, practically everyone held open house on that holiday.[38]

Two holiday celebrations in which the children played an important part were May Day and the Fourth of July. On May Day the little girls of the parish, dressed to represent Spring, Winter, Hope, Vanity, Modesty, Piety, and other similar characters, assembled in Franklin to take part in the pageant of the May Queen.[39] The boys of the area had their turn on the morning of the Glorious Fourth, when they met to debate on the resolution for independence, each representing a signer of the Declaration. On the afternoon of the holiday, the St. Mary Blues paraded, guns were fired, and numerous orations were delivered before the company gathered at the picnic grounds in Live Oak Grove.[40]

Most holiday celebrations featured dancing of some sort, and numerous teachers of the art apparently found it profitable to offer lessons in St. Mary. Teachers from New Orleans sometimes spent their summers in Franklin,[41] holding special children's classes and offering to teach private lessons in the rural sections.[42] Often these dancing professors gave balls at which the attainments of their pupils were exhibited to the public. Professor Burns' weekly balls proved so popular that he was forced to repeat one in which a series of dances representative of various countries were performed in appropriate costumes.[43] Polkas, mazurkas, and waltzes were taught,[44] and some rejoiced to see the introduction of these livelier dances in place of the more old-fashioned quadrilles,[45] though the newspaper jokingly noted "the absurdity of a *man* dancing the polka, . . . it appeared as if the individual had a hole in his pocket, and was vainly endeavoring to shake a shilling down the leg of his trousers."[46]

---

[37] *Ibid.*, Dec. 30, 1847.
[38] *Ibid.*, Jan. 6, 1848.
[39] *Ibid.*, April 27, 1848.
[40] *Ibid.*, July 1, 1847.
[41] *Ibid.*, June 3, 1847.
[42] *Ibid.*, June 10, 1847.
[43] *Ibid.*, April 14, 1853.
[44] *Ibid.*, June 10, 1847.
[45] *Ibid.*, March 24, 1853.
[46] *Ibid.*, Dec. 7, 1848.

Local musicians offered lessons on the violin,[47] piano,[48] guitar,[49] and harp,[50] and their pupils probably spent many hours practicing *Louisiana Girls, Come to me Where Luna Dwells, Go Thou False One,* or some other popular piece of the day.[51] At one time a brass band was organized in Franklin and their later successful concerts probably compensated for the discordant noises of their early days, when one critic had called the organization a "licensed charivari."[52]

Political barbecues were frequently given, sometimes without party distinctions,[53] but more often with one party supplying the numerous speakers and acting as sponsor for the banquet and the ball which customarily ended the meeting.[54] Often a series of barbecues given at the various towns and hamlets in the parish served to allow political candidates to expound their views throughout the area. In 1848, a number of Rough and Ready Clubs working to raise support for Taylor's candidacy for the presidency, sprang up in St. Mary and sponsored at least one barbecue a week at Jeanerette, Centerville, Pattersonville, and other locations in the vicinity.[55] Occasionally minor altercations arose between persons of different political convictions, but as a whole the affairs were conducted without mishap.[56] At one barbecue to which the party acting as host had invited its political opposition it was promised that "no harsh denunciating language will be used."[57]

Local entertainment was often supplemented by that provided by visiting lecturers, circuses, and dramatic troupes. Exhibitions featuring the performance of "occult feats of Deceptive Transformation" by "East Indian" jugglers,[58] "moving automatons,"[59] Lord Byron the learned pig,[60] and "Ethiopian Songs" performed in character with banjo and violin[61] all proved popular with St. Mary audiences. Circus performances were frequently given at

[47] *Ibid.*, Jan. 6, 1848.
[48] *Ibid.*, March 13, 1852.
[49] *Ibid.*, Sept. 20, 1849.
[50] *Ibid.*, July 9, 1846.
[51] *Ibid.*, May 18, 1854.
[52] *Ibid.*, Sept. 20, 1849.
[53] *Ibid.*, Sept. 18, 1852.
[54] *Ibid.*, Oct. 21, 1852.
[55] *Ibid.*, July 27-Oct. 12, 1848.
[56] *Ibid.*, Oct. 19, 1848.
[57] *Ibid.*, Oct. 21, 1847.
[58] *Ibid.*, Nov. 16, 1848.
[59] *Ibid.*, Dec. 30, 1847.
[60] *Ibid.*, Oct. 7, 1847.
[61] *Ibid.*

Pattersonville and Centerville, as well as Franklin, and drew crowds estimated, probably with undue generosity, at figures as high as 1000.[62]

Large crowds gathered to see Mr. Carr's performance, one which should have proved interesting if he were able to live up to the incredible announcement that "he eats hot coals of fire, using lead for sauce, and hot ashes instead of pepper, swallows a sword, devours fifteen or twenty pounds of nails, a pint of fishhooks, a handful of . . . brickbats, and waste pieces of old iron."[63] W. Ferguson Ramsey's program of music on four different kinds of bagpipes also was well attended. Apparently it was the unusual that was most popular, for the two "musical soirees" of an English ballard entertainment recently from London found but few in their audience.[64]

During the summer of 1850, a troupe of actors stayed in Franklin and gave several performances weekly,[65] entertaining with music, dancing, and a variety of plays ranging from Kotzebue's tragedy of *Pizarro, or the Conquest of Peru*[66] to a comedy entitled *Nature and Philosophy*.[67] Local amateurs sometimes took part in these performances, and enough interest was aroused to warrant the formation of a Histrionic Association at Franklin.[68] The editor of the *Planters' Banner* noted that the local taste seemed to prefer light comedies, which were always well attended, and he rejoiced to see the heavy dramas and tragedies abandoned.[69]

Many of St. Mary's citizens probably missed these summer theatricals, for that season of the year was a favorite one for vacation trips. Though a large number of the families of the parish left to enjoy what a local patriot termed "the doubtful pleasures of a sojourn in the north during the summer months,"[70] and others perhaps visited some of the more popular watering places, such as White Sulphur Springs, Virginia,[71] many groups went to a nearby resort—Last Island. Boats made regular trips to the island every

[62] *Ibid.*, Feb. 7, 1850.
[63] *Ibid.*, Feb. 22, 1849.
[64] *Ibid.*, Nov. 22, 29, 1851.
[65] *Ibid.*, June 27, 1850.
[66] *Ibid.*, August 1, 1850.
[67] *Ibid.*, July 18, 1850.
[68] *Ibid.*, August 1, 1850.
[69] *Ibid.*, August 22, 1850.
[70] *Ibid.*, May 12, 1850.
[71] In the present state of West Virginia; Stephenson, *Alexander Porter*, 101.

Saturday morning and often remained there six days, providing accommodations for as many as eighty persons on each trip.[72] The excursion trip on the *Grey Eagle* cost lone gentlemen twenty dollars,[73] a gentleman and his lady forty dollars, and single ladies nothing.[74] On most of these expeditions the passengers brought their own provisions, bedding, and camp equipment.[75]

There were two hotels on the island, at least one of which could accommodate up to 100 guests.[76] Opportunities for amusement were evidently plentiful, for the seabeach of the island offered a stretch of land pronounced "most interesting and captivating . . . for morning or evening rides" on horseback. Boat racing in the bay was another favorite sport.[77] One of the boardinghouses on the island had a well-stocked bar, billiard tables, and a bowling saloon to provide for its guests' relaxation.[78] A visitor to Last Island wrote of the fine sea foods available at the resort, the bathing and fishing facilities offered, and the summer homes being erected by two Franklin citizens; the only thing on the island that he found disagreeable was the mosquito.[79]

Religion and Education

In 1860 the census listed eight churches in St. Mary Parish, together having accommodations for about 1,400 Catholics and 1,300 Protestants, and owning property valued at $49,200. Of these churches four were Roman Catholic; two were Methodist; one Baptist; and one Episcopalian.[80] Though the churches could accommodate a large percentage of the 3,508 white inhabitants in the parish at one time,[81] attendance at religious services was evidently not as good as one might expect. A correspondent to the local newspaper complained that grogshops were more crowded on Sundays than the houses of worship, and added, no doubt with exaggeration for the sake of emphasis, that the ministers were starving while the saloonkeepers grew fat and wealthy.[82]

[72] *Planters' Banner*, June 26, 1850.
[73] *Ibid.*, July 5, 1849.
[74] *Ibid.*, August 17, 1848.
[75] *Ibid.*
[76] *Ibid.*, June 9, 1853.
[77] *Ibid.*, August 1, 1850.
[78] *Ibid.*, May 8, 1852.
[79] *Ibid.*, July 25, 1850.
[80] *Statistics of the United States, (Including Mortality, Property, etc.) in 1860, Compiled from the Original Returns and Being the Final Exhibit of the Eighth Census, under the Direction of the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, 1866), 401-403. Hereafter cited: *Statistics of the Eighth Census.*
[81] *Population of the United States in 1860*, 194.
[82] *Planters' Banner*, August 2, 1849.

Even those attending the services occasionally must have found it difficult to concentrate on the sermon, for there were various disconcerting influences. The set of "smart boys" in the village amused themselves at religious meetings by kicking the seats, banging the pew doors open and shut, whispering, laughing, and leaving before the services were over.[83] The slaves attending church were regarded by some contemporaries as also contributing "much towards breaking up the solemnity which the sermon is calculated to inspire," their attempts to sing in church resulting in "such kind of music as reminds one of an old-fashioned corn-husking, or the blowing out at the close of sugar making."[84] Any mention of heaven, hell, death, the grave, or eternity elicited from the Negroes sighs and groans, which some members of the congregation found disturbing.[85]

Perhaps a good example of some of the difficulties encountered in building a church in a predominantly rural area in this period is shown by the experiences of the Episcopal congregation. The parish was organized in 1846 by the Reverend Samuel G. Litton, who had settled in Franklin, and construction of a brick church was begun the following year.[86] Though sufficient funds had been collected to begin the building, it was necessary to make constant appeals for additional contributions and for payment of the amounts already subscribed.[87] By the end of November the sum due for work finished and the materials already used was $878 and the total of the remaining subscription list only $565.[88] A circular printed to aid in the collection of money for the completion of the church met with little success, and in March the work was temporarily abandoned.[89] Evidently the congregation was able to raise the sum needed, for in December of 1848 the vestry voted to procure pews and finish the church building, and by the following May the structure was so nearly completed that services could be held in it each Sunday.[90]

---

[83] *Ibid.*

[84] *Ibid.*, March 21, 1850.

[85] *Ibid.*

[86] Herman C. Duncan, *The Diocese of Louisiana. Some of Its History, 1838-1888; Also, some of the History of Its Parishes and Missions, 1805-1888* (New Orleans, 1888), 74.

[87] *Planters' Banner*, Nov. 11, 1847.

[88] *Ibid.*, Nov. 25, 1847.

[89] *Ibid.*, March 9, 1848.

[90] *Ibid.*, May 31, 1849.

After erecting their building, the members of the church sought a regular clergyman to officiate.[91] Apparently this desire was gratified, for in the summer of 1854 after a period in which notices of sermons at the Episcopal Church appeared only every two or three months,[92] the Reverend W. H. Burton announced that henceforth services would be held there every Sunday.[93] By 1855 there were fifty pupils enrolled in the Sunday School, and the church was prosperous enough to build a rectory, the first Episcopal one in Louisiana.[94] The pastor at Franklin preached once a month (on week days) at Jeanerette and New Iberia and also held a number of services for the colored population of the area. Three Negro congregations were organized in 1858, one at Franklin, one on the Duncan plantation, and the third on the Porter estate.[95]

In contrast to the Episcopalians, the Methodists of the parish were by 1845 already so well organized as to be able to hold regular quarterly meetings for the Franklin circuit with several ministers in attendance.[96] At that time services were being held in the courthouse, but in January, 1847, the dedication of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Franklin took place.[97] Though a different minister might have preached each Sabbath, it appears that regular weekly services were conducted.[98] The officiating rector often preached in Franklin at eleven o'clock Sunday morning and at Centerville at four that afternoon.[99] The Reverend R. H. Reid not only found time to carry out those duties, but he also delivered monthly lectures on subjects connected with Jewish history which, though primarily for the young men of his congregation, were open to all interested.[100] The two Methodist churches in St. Mary in 1860 together provided accommodations for 800 people and owned $18,000 worth of property.[101] The quarterly meetings held regularly in the parish customarily began on Saturday morning and lasted until Thursday evening; these were usually reported well attended.[102]

---

[91] *Ibid.*, August 22, 1850.
[92] Based upon a study of the files of *ibid.* for the period
[93] *Ibid.*, July 13, 1854.
[94] Duncan, *The Diocese of Louisiana*, 74.
[95] *Ibid.*, 75-76.
[96] *Planters' Banner*, Nov. 15, 1845.
[97] *Ibid.*, Jan. 14, 1847.
[98] Based upon a study of the files of *ibid.* for the period.
[99] *Ibid.*, March 13, 1852.
[100] *Ibid.*, March 30, 1854.
[101] *Statistics of the Eighth Census*, 402.
[102] *Planters' Banner*, March 30, 1854.

Though the four Roman Catholic churches in the parish were double the number of those of the Methodists, their property was valued at $3,000 less than the possessions of the Wesley sect.[103] The Immaculate Conception Church had been established at Indian Bend, later called Charenton, in 1843, and St. Joseph's Church at Pattersonville was built three years later.[104] By 1852 a church was being erected in Franklin and the pews were sold at a fair held to raise funds to finish it.[105] On May 29, 1853, services were held in the new church for the first time; Reverend Francois of Indian Bend officiated, and, though the building was not yet completed, it was reported that a sizable congregation was in attendance. By June 23 of that year an organ had been installed, and Mr. Grimmer of Franklin was acting as organist.[106]

The Baptists were evidently the smallest organized religious group in the parish, for in 1860 their one church could accommodate only 200 persons and their property was worth only $1,200.[107] Probably the largest gain in membership came in 1854, when a Baptist revival was held in the parish. For two weeks in May, frequent religious services were held in Pattersonville, where it was estimated that some seventy or eighty persons joined the church. This effort proved quite strenuous for the minister, who had just concluded a series of similar revival meetings in Franklin the week before.[108] Though only one notice of the regular Sunday morning sermon in the Baptist church was noted in the Franklin newspaper for the period,[109] it seems logical to assume that services were held with some regularity.

Religious groups sometimes sponsored educational organizations, such as the boarding and day school attached to the Roman Catholic church in Franklin which was opened in 1853 under Reverend Paul Guerard, the parish priest.[110] Perhaps most of the pupils were still attending public schools in that year, however, for of the 174 persons in school in 1850 only fifteen were enrolled in private academies. These 174 scholars represented but a small percentage of the 1,210 white inhabitants of St. Mary

[103] *Statistics of the Eighth Census*, 403.

[104] Louisiana Historical Records Survey Project, *Guide to Vital Statistics, Records of Church Archives in Louisiana, II: Roman Catholic Churches* (New Orleans, 1942), 29.

[105] *Planters' Banner*, Dec. 11, 1852.

[106] *Ibid.*, June 23, 1853.

[107] *Statistics of the Eighth Census*, 401.

[108] *Planters' Banner*, May 11, 1854.

[109] *Ibid.*, May 18, 1854.

[110] *Ibid.*, Jan. 13, 1853.

between the ages of five and twenty, but the literacy rate was quite high, for of the total white population of 3,423, only 254 citizens over twenty could neither read nor write. Ninety-eight pupils attended the four public schools of the parish—there was one teacher for each school—and these schools received $9,545 a year, the total educational income reported for the parish.[111]

Two years before the Seventh Census was taken, the Police Jury had divided St. Mary into seventeen school districts,[112] and designated the Reverend R. M. Sawyer as Parish School Superintendent.[113] About fourteen schools had been opened in 1848. The whole school fund was based on a rate of ten dollars a year for each scholar; allowing forty students to the district, this gave a teacher only $400 annually, which critics of the plan considered not more than half enough to attract a good schoolmaster.[114] Apparently they were correct about the difficulties to be encountered in securing instructors, for though the Franklin school was under the direction of a graduate of the University of Virginia and planned to employ a French teacher also, the small rural schools frequently advertised for schoolmasters.[115] The school at Franklin was probably the largest, located as it was in the most populous district; in 1849 it was proposed that a school building twenty-five by forty-one feet be constructed. The single-story structure was to have two eight-foot galleries running its entire length, ten windows, and two doors.[116]

Though the Grand Jury seemed to regard the public educational system as wholly satisfactory,[117] this estimate was not universal among the citizenry if one may judge from the following attempt of a patron to suggest his disapproval in a humorous manner:

> Fur the Planter's Banir
>
> Mr. Editur:
>
> Dear Sur—
>
> Mistur Editur, i want you mity bad to gave em gosh, bekase i have a haf duzin big fat daters that i want to edikate mity bad. Dod rot em! i tell you they kin nok up koort housis

---

[111] *Compendium of the Seventh Census*, 249.

[112] Police Jury Proceedings, April 16, 1848, as published in the *Planters' Banner*, May 11, 1848.

[113] *Planters' Banner*, June 8, 1848.

[114] *Ibid.*, August 17, 1847.

[115] Examples are found in *ibid.*, Sept. 7, 1848, and May 10, 1849.

[116] *Ibid.*, Dec. 13, 1849.

[117] Criminal Suits, St. Mary Parish, 1850-1871, June 4, 1851. All Court Records cited hereafter are those of St. Mary Parish.

and od fellers hols in a mity hury, but wen it kums to edikate daters they are mity slak about it. I begin to think its tu spite me, bekause they no that my eldis dater, hu rites this and awl my other riting, is hily akkomplished. . . .

I am yours til deth.

PRUDENCE PRIM
fur dady.[118]

In 1849 the editor of the *Banner* paused to review the history of private academies in Franklin for the past six years. First Mr. and Mrs. Sawyer had begun their school and attracted a satisfactory patronage, then two other teachers, Copp and Pooley, entered the field. The public schools were opened soon after under the supervision of two young men, who, after teaching long enough to starve Pooley out, left the field, one to go to California and the other to enter a "more lucrative calling." Reverend Litton opened his school next, but was soon forced to retire because of ill health. Foster's failure followed the others, and then almost simultaneously three schools were opened in Franklin. Indeed, it seemed that the village either feasted or fasted when it came to educational fare.[119]

Mr. and Mrs. Sawyer, who operated the Franklin Institute, offered courses in orthography, reading, penmanship, elementary geography, and arithmetic for nine dollars; English grammar, geography, ancient and modern history, natural philosophy, chemistry, astronomy, rhetoric, logic, moral and intellectual philosophy, elocution, composition, and arithmetic for twelve dollars; and algebra, geometry, Latin, and Greek for sixteen dollars. French needlework with worsted and various kinds of embroidery could also be added to the curriculum. Scholars had to furnish their own rooms, but could board with the Sawyers for thirty dollars and have their washing done for six dollars.[120] Mrs. Bassett's school, besides the usual courses, offered piano lessons for five dollars a month, instruction in drawing and shading in pencil; and when the pupil was sufficiently advanced, in painting landscapes, flowers, and fruits, for two dollars.[121]

The Franklin Seminary, a coeducational school which opened in 1847 under the direction of Thomas Pooley, provided instruc-

118 *Planters' Banner*, July 12, 1851.
119 *Ibid.*, June 14, 1849.
120 *Ibid.*, Jan. 14, 1847.
121 *Ibid.*, August 1, 1850.

tion in Latin, Greek, French, science, drawing and painting, besides the fundamentals of an "English Education" for twelve, fifteen, or eighteen dollars a quarter, depending on the age of the pupil.[122] A month after the opening of the Academy, Mrs. Brown was engaged to teach music and singing to Pooley's pupils,[123] and some time later, three other assistants were added to the faculty; it was reported that pupils from all parts of the parish were enrolled at the school.[124]

After the Christmas vacation of 1848, Pooley and his assistants reopened their school as St. Mary's Seminary, for boys only. It was to be in three divisions, the first of which was the Primary, which included elementary subjects such as arithmetic, reading, and writing, and cost twenty-four dollars per five-month session. The second or Practical Division consisted of more advanced arithmetic, geometry, English grammar, French, elocution, mapmaking, and some elements of general science for thirty-two dollars. The third was called the Scholastic Division and included a thorough mathematical, classical, and "*Belle Lettres* course" designed to prepare a young man to make a creditable showing in any college.[125]

Pooley's school was run along liberal lines, with a system of student government in which the scholars had a constitution and bylaws, and elected their own officers. Corporal punishment had been abolished, and instead culprits spent their Saturdays at the seminary studying or engaged in other employment under the teacher's supervision.[126] Only two months after the inauguration of this school, Pooley discontinued his work in Franklin and moved to Pattersonville to conduct an academy[127] in a new $3,000 building which had been erected to house the school.[128]

Soon after Pooley's school closed, H. H. Morse opened a Classical and English Day School for boys, limiting the number who might enroll to twenty-five. Lessons in writing and bookkeeping were taught from seven to nine in the evenings so that townspeople might take advantage of the classes.[129] When Pooley returned to Franklin in December of 1849 to revive his Seminary,

[122] *Ibid.*, April 15, 1847.
[123] *Ibid.*, May 6, 1847.
[124] *Ibid.*, April 13, 1848.
[125] *Ibid.*, Feb. 1, 1849.
[126] *Ibid.*, March 1, 1849.
[127] *Ibid.*, May 10, 1849.
[128] *Ibid.*, May 24, 1849.
[129] *Ibid.*, June 28, 1849.

he also adopted his plan of night classes for adults, teaching French, both the spoken and written language.[130] Sometimes teachers offered to form classes of adults and children and to give lessons in private homes rather than formally organizing schools.[131]

The schools customarily gave public demonstrations of the progress of their pupils. These recitations usually lasted several days, as did the one given by the Franklin High School in the summer of 1850. On Monday the pupils began the translation of their Spanish authors into French and English, writing the translation and the original text on the blackboard to show not only their linguistic accomplishments, but also to demonstrate their progress in orthography. Reading and declamation in French were featured Tuesday, and recitations in English, literary analysis, history, geography, and arithmetic were given on Wednesday.[132]

A quite detailed account of a recitation of Madame Delahoussaye's school,[133] which could accommodate forty young ladies with board and lodging,[134] was written by "a Father . . . completely astounded at the display of wit, learning, and eloquence," which "far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the parents." The English examination lasted four hours on Wednesday, during which pupils read letters of friendship they had composed and performed various other literary exercises; the proud father boasted that "with history they were as familiar as if it were their matin hymn. Astronomy and several other studies they were well acquainted with, and in arithmetic their progress was remarkable." The second day was the French examination; a legal discussion written in that language by the more advanced students was thought excellent and it was said that their *belles lettres* "could bear the test of the most sarcastic critics." The third day was devoted to music and the awarding of the prizes earned during the school term.[135]

---

[130] *Ibid.*, Dec. 27, 1849.

[131] *Ibid.*, Feb. 10, 1853.

[132] *Ibid.*, August 1, 1850.

[133] For information about Madame Delahoussaye, see Velma Savoie, "The Life and Writings of Madame Sidonie de la Houssaye" (M. A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1936).

[134] *Planters' Banner*, Jan. 10, 1850.

[135] *Ibid.*, Jan. 9, 1851.

In 1851 Madame Delahoussaye enlarged her facilities and announced that

> Beds, mattresses, pillows, &c will be provided by the institution; but each boarder will have to furnish three pair of sheets, one musquito-bar, and one pair of blankets. Besides the usual supply of linen, each boarder will be required to procure the uniform dress of the institution (for particulars of which apply to the superintendent); also, a bucket, six towels, and knife, silver spoon and fork. Those who do not wish the trouble of furnishing the bed-clothing above enumerated will be charged $1 per month for their use.[136]

Students evidently often sought their education in schools beyond the parish, for advertisements of the Thibodaux Female Institute, the New Orleans Female Seminary, the Bayou Chicot Academy north of Opelousas,[137] Opelousas Academy (formerly Franklin College),[138] Franklin High School and Mathematical Institute in New Orleans,[139] and Centenary College of Louisiana at Jackson[140] frequently appeared in the *Banner*. The alleged necessity of young ladies going to middle or northern states to complete their education led at one time, though apparently without success, to some agitation for a really good female seminary at Franklin. No concern seems to have been aroused by the fact that young men had to seek advanced education outside the state.[141]

Health

With the exception of two epidemics, St. Mary was, as a whole, quite healthy during the period from 1845 to 1860. The spring of 1849 brought an outbreak of cholera particularly virulent among the slaves. The disease was concentrated within the area along the bayou, sometimes seizing almost the entire working staff on one plantation and passing over neighboring estates entirely.[142] Some of the contemporary precautionary measures suggested to combat this illness were that flannel be worn next to the skin, that the feet be kept dry, and that all excess in eating

---

136 *Ibid.*, Jan. 16, 1851.

137 *Ibid.*

138 *Ibid.*, Jan. 23, 1851.

139 *Ibid.*, April 26, 1851.

140 *Ibid.*, April 10, 1852.

141 *Ibid.*, April 12, 1851.

142 E. D. Fenner (ed.), *Southern Medical Reports: Consisting of General and Specific Reports, on the Topography, Meteorology, and Prevalent Diseases, in the Following States: Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Arkansas, Tennessee, Texas* (New Orleans, 1850) 192. Hereafter cited Fenner, *Southern Medical Reports.*

and drinking be avoided; on the list of foods prohibited were fruits and vegetables of all kinds (except well-boiled and roasted potatoes), fish, salt meat, sweetmeats, and pastry. The Negro cabins were to be thoroughly cleaned, beds and bedding to be aired for eight hours in the fresh sunshine, and all slaves required to put on clean clothing.[143] In March of 1849, it was estimted that, since December 1, 1848, there had been 500 cases of cholera in the parish, fatal to more than 100 Negroes and between twenty and thirty whites.[144] It was noted that not a case had been reported among the free mulattoes.[145] By May recent showers were said to be creating a more healthy atmosphere, and the cholera seemed to be lifting.[146]

The other epidemic of the period was a disease believed to be yellow fever, which appeared in 1853, and so great was the apparent danger that the Police Jury created the position of Parish Health Officer. A licensed physician of the parish was selected to fill the post, and a five-man board of health was appointed to assist him in taking measures necessary to stop the spread of the disease. Vessels entering Franklin's port from areas where the fever was known to exist were required to submit to an examination.[147] As some difficulty arose in the enforcement of this inspection, a group of citizens met together and formed a band of thirty armed men subject to call at any time to compel observance of the regulation.[148] By the middle of October it was reported that twenty-one persons had died in the last week.[149] The epidemic apparently reached its peak in the early part of November, when it was thought necessary to organize a volunteer relief committee to see that nursing aid would be available where it was most needed.[150] By the end of that month, the disease had apparently spent itself, and the danger was believed over.[151]

Dysentery and "black tongue" made occasional appearances in St. Mary and three cases of smallpox were reported, a disease rare in that section, where chills and fever were the most frequent ailment.[152] Another affliction in the parish was dirt-eating, which

---

[143] *Planters' Banner*, Jan. 5, 1849.
[144] *Ibid.*, March 22, 1849.
[145] Fenner, *Southern Medical Reports*, 192.
[146] *Planters' Banner*, May 10, 1849.
[147] *Ibid.*, August 18, 1853.
[148] *Ibid.*, Sept. 1, 1853.
[149] *Ibid.*, Oct. 25, 1854.
[150] *Ibid.*, Nov. 9, 1854.
[151] *Ibid.*, Nov. 30, 1854.
[152] *Ibid.*, March 22, 1849.

was said to be especially common among plantation slaves; it was said that every large estate had three or four Negroes addicted to the practice. The skin color of the victim gradually assumed an unhealthy pallor and a lack of energy characteristic of the malady manifested itself. Some physicians of the parish considered dirt-eating a symptom of scurvy condition caused by the diet of salt pork, corn bread, and molasses commonly given the slaves, and advised that fresh meats and green vegetables be added to their meals.[153]

Several of the doctors living in the area belonged to the Attakapas Medical Society, which in 1854 had twenty-three members.[154] How many of that number were from St. Mary is not known, but the professional notices of about five physicians appeared in the Franklin paper,[155] and both Centerville and Pattersonville had resident doctors.[156] One, at least, had a medical background of some distinction, for he had served on the medical faculty of the University of Paris.[157]

Apparently there was some connection between dentistry and the jewelry business, as most dentists in the parish practiced the two occupations. Dr. Cisana and Doctors Trousdale and McLain offered to fit a customer with artificial teeth, (with or without gums,) or a new cameo necklace, with equal facility.[158]

Advertisements in the Franklin newspaper indicate that St. Mary had its share of quacks. Dr. Christie's galvanic belt, necklace, and bracelets, together with his magnetic fluid, were guaranteed by their manufacturer to offer a permanent cure for all nervous diseases, epileptic fits and convulsions, deafness, palpitation of the heart, and numerous other ailments, while a "valuable work" advertised that it could teach one how "To change the Sallow Face into one of *Beauty*, . . . to make Wrinkled Skin Smooth, To extend Human Life to One Hundred Years, or more; to Cure Baldness, . . . To make Brown Teeth as White as Pearls; . . . to hasten the Growth of Whiskers, Moustachios, &c., To Restore

[153] Fenner, *Southern Medical Reports*, 194-195.
[154] *Planters' Banner*, June 22, 1848.
[155] Based upon a study of the files of *ibid.*
[156] *Ibid.*, Feb. 2, July 13, 1854.
[157] *Ibid.*, March 16, 1848.
[158] *Ibid.*, Jan. 3, 1846; June 21, 1851.

and Preserve the Eyesight for Life; . . . To cure a Multitude of Dangerous Diseases. . . ."[159] Such quackery was evidently widespread, for an article in *DeBow's Review* stated:

> There is no disease of dreaded name for which the quack cannot furnish a cure. Asthma and consumption are disarmed of their terrors; gout is now but a harmless bugbear; and if any suffer or die of cancer, it must be the fault of their own obstinacy or incredulity.[160]

Some attention was given to sanitation. The meat at the Franklin Market House was regularly inspected and a record kept of the meat submitted under each brand.[161] Personal cleanliness was perhaps not so carefully watched, as bathing apparently was not a favorite diversion of the citizens of St. Mary if one may judge from the following quotation from the *Banner,* though the article does at least suggest a growing interest in the practice:

> Some persons skrink from bathing but when they once get used to it, it is indispensable. A medical writer says: "Let a child wash himself all over every morning for sixteen years, and he will as soon go without his breakfast as his bath."[162]

Crime

Cases of assault and battery far outnumber other charges in the criminal records of St. Mary Parish for the period.[163] The majority of these cases apparently arose from more or less petty differences between the parties and usually ended with the party judged guilty serving a five-day jail sentence and paying a twenty-five-dollar fine.[164] Abusive language often led to violent use of a walking cane as a weapon,[165] and knives were frequently brandished.[166] Several cases of attempted assault with rawhide whips are recorded, and in some instances, a bullet stopped the attacker before he could reach his victim.[167]

A misunderstanding during a game of cards was responsible for one affray. Thomas Sawyer struck H. Faivre with a chair

---

[159] *Ibid.*, August 7, 1852.
[160] *DeBow's Review*, I (1846), 446.
[161] *Planters' Banner*, May 18, 1853.
[162] *Ibid.*, July 12, 1849.
[163] Based upon a study of the Criminal Records for the period.
[164] *Planters' Banner*, July 13, 1854.
[165] Criminal Suits, 1844-1849, XIII.
[166] A typical case is given in Criminal Suits, IX and XXXV.
[167] One such case is given in Criminal Suits, 1850-1871, XXI.

and in the ensuing struggle Faivre soon shouted "Enough!" The testifying witness related how he "then took Sawyer of [f] him and as Faivre was Raising he Drew from the Same pocket that witness seen him have his hand in a Large Knife about one foot Long when opened and when he pulled it out of his pocket he opened it and advanced towards where Ths. Sawyer was and Ths. Sawyer left that place."[168]

Quarrels over a hound puppy resulted in an attack with a gun barrel which sent a man to bed for several days,[169] and bets as to which was the better man led to fights in which chairs and other pieces of furniture were violently thrown about.[170] A disagreement which began when one man touched another with a stick ended, after a flood of contumely had passed between the two as they sat on opposite sides of the main street of Franklin with a large part of the town's population forming an interested audience, in an exchange of shots which resulted in the death of one of the parties to the affair.[171]

Several cases of mistreatment of blacks were brought before the court. Webb, a slave youth of James Buck, was found dead at Centerville after having been mortally wounded in a beating by his master.[172] John De Hart was hailed before the court for branding one of his slaves three times and cutting a slit in each of his ears.[173] Jared N. Richardson was accused of beating and kicking his slaves, as well as having repeatedly thrown one young Negro against a brickkiln so violently that the boy was not expected to live; Richardson had to pay the state a fine of $250 and the costs of the case.[174] In a case involving a slave's attack upon an overseer—the victim's ear was slit and he received other wounds also—a court made up of a Justice and ten slaveholders acquitted the defendant.[175] Another Negro, Solomon Smith, a notorious runaway, fired at and wounded a white man of the parish; this slave had been the leader of a dangerous set of runaways who had infested St. Mary. He finally was tracked down through the use of hounds, tried and found guilty, and sentenced to be hanged.[176]

[168] Criminal Suits, 1844-1849, XXXXI.
[169] *Ibid.*, XXV.
[170] *Ibid.*, XXVI.
[171] *Ibid.*, XXXIII.
[172] *Ibid.*, 1850-1871, XXXXI.
[173] *Ibid.*, II.
[174] *Ibid.*, 1844-1849, I.
[175] *Planters' Banner*, March 23, 1854.
[176] *Ibid.*, August 21, 1852.

Prosecutions for the sale of spirituous liquors to slaves were frequent.[177] In one instance a free Negro who gave liquor to a slave was prosecuted.[178] The offense of selling merchandise to slaves without the master's consent was a fairly common cause of court action.[179] A $400 fine and two months in the parish jail was a frequent punishment for such liquor sales.[180]

Evidently affrays between white and free colored were infrequent, for only one such instance was noted in the records prior to 1860. Fortune Penn, a white man, had borrowed some saddlebags from Millo, a free man of color, who felt that Penn had neglected several opportunities to return them. When Penn moved toward the Negro, Millo knocked his hat sideways—apparently always an invitation to mayhem—and Penn picked up a brick and threw it at him. The two closed for the struggle and were separated by another free Negro who apparently had accompanied Millo; Penn kept the saddlebags.[181]

Cases of larceny were fairly common. Horses were stolen,[182] the contents of saddlebags were pilfered,[183] pockets were robbed,[184] and some small sums were taken from stores.[185] Occasionally robbery was committed on a larger scale, as in the case of the theft of a cartload of goods valued at $400 from the yard of M. Mayer.[186] A barkeeper at the Western Exchange in Franklin absconded with "a considerable amount" of the profits of his employers in his pockets.[187] Complaints were also made of the smuggling below the customhouse.[188]

Two cases of mistreatment of wives were noted. In one instance, the drunken husband broke glass from the windows, tore apart several articles of furniture and beat and cursed his wife; when she fled, he pursued, loudly accusing her of trying to run away. Neighbors finally were able to rescue the unfortunate woman who previously had been forced to leave the house several times to escape his violence. During the case, witnesses testified

---

177 An example is found in Criminal Suits, 1844-1849, LIX.
178 Criminal Suits, 1850-1871, XV.
179 *Ibid.*, XXX.
180 *Planters' Banner*, July 13, 1854.
181 Criminal Suits, 1844-1849, XXXVI.
182 *Ibid.*, XII.
183 *Ibid.*, VIII.
184 *Planters' Banner*, May 31, 1849.
185 *Ibid.*, Jan. 25, 1849.
186 *Ibid.*, Dec. 2, 1847.
187 *Ibid.*, August 2, 1851.
188 *Ibid.*, Oct. 11, 1849.

that the husband was an honest, good man when sober, not so good a recommendation as it might at first seem, when one considers that he was said to get drunk as often as four times a week.[189]

A case unique in the parish records of the time was that in which William Rabe sued Pamelia Lester Rabe for a divorce. The two had been married in South Carolina, and in 1845 a separation had taken place after evidence deemed sufficient by the courts of that state had been presented to prove that Pamelia Lester Rabe had given birth to a mulatto child and was guilty of adultery in other instances. In the case in St. Mary, tried several years later, the defendant stated through her defense that she "did in all things discharge her several duties as wife and mother with truth and fidelity" and asked that the request for a divorce be rejected, which it was.[190]

The most frequent civil cases involved breach of contract and failure in the payment of promissory notes.[191] Ooccasional suits against squatters, against the illegal seizure and sale of lands by the sheriff or other officials, and requests for separation of the property of the wife from that of her husband also appear, but the great majority of suits involved the nonpayment of debts.

A correspondent to the *Banner* considered rowdyism regrettably common in Franklin.[192] Drunken brawls at local coffeehouses were not at all infrequent, and blows, bites, and scratches left the parties as bloody as "bull dogs after a drawn fight."[193] The penalty for keeping such a disorderly place of business might be five days in the parish jail, a twenty-five-dollar fine, and the forfeiture of the license.[194] Another form of rowdyism criticized was the practice of target shooting in the town without regard for possible damages to property or persons. Such shooting was illegal, but customarily went unpunished.[195] Dissatisfaction with the administration of justice on other counts was also noted, and the "false, sickly and diseased sentiment in the public mind" which called on juries and judges to spare guilt was strongly condemned.[196]

---

[189] Criminal Suits, 1844-1849, XXXXVI.

[190] *Ibid.*, LII.

[191] Original Suits, CXXIX, #3605.

[192] This paragraph is based upon a sampling study of the records of the Original Suits for the period.

[193] *Planters' Banner*, April 17, 1852.

[194] *Ibid.*, July 13, 1854.

[195] *Ibid.*, Jan. 17, 1850.

[196] *Ibid.*, June 21, 1849.

The famous Vigilance Committees of the Attakapas country which were active in the late 1850's[197] evidently had no large scale operations in St. Mary. But in one instance a group of about forty men in Jeanerette banded together to execute judgment upon a man who had been forced to leave another section of the state by a similar committee. He was tried and given twenty-four hours in which to leave the area. He departed eighteen hours later "threatening America in general and the inhabitants of Jeanerette in particular with the wrath of the King of Spain."[198]

Lynch law ruled in St. Mary in at least one instance, when a Negro was hanged by a group of sailors who had been discharged from the towboat *Hecla* and left at the Franklin wharf. The victim, who was reported to have been put in jail for his own protection, though the account gives no further details, had been given the key to his cell by the sheriff and instructed not to open the door to anyone but that official. When the sheriff returned to the prison after having procured means of escape for the Negro, he found that the black had been lured from his refuge by a false report, and had been severely beaten, maimed, and finally hanged by a mob of sailors.[199]

Though it was maintained that this mob violence was not the work of Franklin citizens, it was reported that the policing of the town was so neglectful as to permit almost nightly burglaries and other illegal acts.[200] In May, 1851, the Police Jury provided for the appointment of regular patrols in the parish to assist the lone night watchman in performing his duties. All white males between eighteen and forty were to respond to the call of patrol captains or be subject to fine. These patrols were to arrest any Negro stragglers or any person, white or colored, disturbing the peace, particularly the peace of the slave population. Negroes who had passes from their owners and who conducted themselves politely were to be exempt from the twenty lashes administered to their more indolent brethren.[201]

As early as 1847 the Grand Jury, as a result of its regular inspection of the parish jail, had called attention to the need for

[197] See Harry L. Griffin, "The Vigilance Committees of the Attakapas Country, or Early Louisiana Justice," in *Proceedings of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association*, VIII (1914-1915), 146-159.

[198] Henrietta G. Rogers (ed.), "History of the Committees of Vigilance in the Attakapas Country" (M. A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1936), 324-325.

[199] *Planters' Banner*, April 27, 1854.

[200] *Ibid.*, April 26, 1851.

[201] Police Jury Proceedings, May 5, 1851, as published in *ibid.*, May 17, 1851.

improvements. On their visit that year they found four white prisoners in one cell and a Negro man and a girl in another;[202] though such an arrangement was pronounced only a temporary one, conditions were little better three years later, when the Jury discovered "palpable negligence in the proper surviellance [*sic*] of the prisoners" and declared the prison entirely inadequate.[203] In 1854 the immediate erection of a new jail was recommended,[204] and construction was begun the following year. The two-story building was to include four cells lined with ironwork forming meshes five inches square and having wrought-iron bars in the windows. All the cells had iron rings in the center of the floor. The rooms were to be as open as possible so as to allow for the maximum ventilation, and the whole building was to be painted white with green blinds to give as attractive an appearance as possible.[205]

Newspapers

Four newspapers were printed in St. Mary Parish during the ante-bellum period. The *Franklin Republican*, published in French and English, appeared weekly from 1832 to 1841. The *Attakapas Register*, also a weekly, was issued from January 22, 1857 to February 14, 1861, and for a time was the official journal of Franklin and St. Mary Parish. The *St. Mary Union Bell* lasted only two months in 1860.[206]

Probably the most outstanding newspaper printed in the parish during the period was the *Planters' Banner*, a weekly publication which was started in 1836 and continued until April of 1872.[207] Wilson, the Franklin postmaster who began editing the paper in 1839, published it every Saturday as the *Planters' Banner and Louisiana Agriculturist*, until October 5, 1848, when Daniel Dennett assumed his position.[208] Though Dennett left the paper in March of 1851 and did not resume the editorship until 1869, it was his editorial work which established its reputation, and his successors continued the policies he had established.

---

202 *Planters' Banner*, Sept. 23, 1847.

203 Criminal Suits, 1850-1871, Jan. 22, 1850.

204 *Planters' Banner*, July 13, 1854.

205 Original Conveyances, K, Sept. 24, 1855.

206 Louisiana Historical Records Survey Project, *Louisiana Newspapers, 1794-1940; A Union List of Louisiana Newspaper Files Available in Offices of Publishers, Libraries, and Private Collections in Louisiana* (Baton Rouge, 1941), 54.

207 *Ibid.*

208 Unless otherwise indicated the material in this section is based upon a study of the files of the *Planters' Banner*.

The new editor was particularly interested in local conditions and felt it his duty to make the citizens of the parish aware of these conditions, be they good or bad. His strong pride in St. Mary manifested itself in numerous eulogies on her scenery, soil, climate, and agricultural advantages, as well as criticism of practices he considered detrimental to the welfare of the community.

Reports on local happenings or articles of special interest to the inhabitants of the area usually filled about one-fourth of the four-page paper. The front page usually featured a rather sentimental or melodramatic story such as *The Priest and Penitent,*[209] *The Reconciled Father,*[210] *The Hunchback and the Harlequin*[211] and *Vengeance of an Actress.*[212]

Agricultural advice sometimes occupied a place on the first page. Under the editorship of Robert Wilson a "Louisiana Planters' Calendar," dealing with the planting and cultivation of various crops and the care of livestock, had appeared in the first issue of each month. Dennett discontinued this column, but often printed advice to farmers, urging them to raise everything they needed, to free themselves from the uncertain income provided by dependence on the one-crop system.[213] Recipes and household hints also appeared, such as the recommendation that one or two small perch be placed in an open cistern to eat the embryo mosquitoes: "If you do not put in the fish, you will have to strain the water."[214]

The inside sheets of the *Banner*, besides the space devoted to the editorial column, featured regular quotations of the various market prices of sugar and cotton, as well as such necessary food items as flour, corn, pork, lard, and whiskey.[215] The remainder of those two pages was often filled with letters from various correspondents. These epistles, usually signed with pen names such as "Wandering Jew," "Medicus," "Decius," and "Saggitarius," dealt with subjects as varied as contributions to an indisposed Franklin minister, medical advice, sugar culture, education, and the advantages of the use of water rather than intoxi-

[209] *Planters' Banner*, May 2, 1850.
[211] *Ibid.*, June 13, 1850.
[210] *Ibid.*, May 9, 1850.
[212] *Ibid.*, Jan. 5, 1849.
[213] An example of this is found in *ibid.*
[214] *Ibid.*, May 3, 1849.
[215] The list in *ibid.*, Nov. 1, 1845, is typical.

cants. Besides these more general articles, letters from former citizens of Franklin who were making rather extensive trips were also printed, and correspondents sent communications from Chagres,[216] Texas,[217] California,[218] Mobile, Montgomery and Charleston.[219]

National and foreign news was not neglected. During the Mexican War reports on some of the activities of the army were published, as well as more personal accounts of several of the better-known commanders.[220] In 1849 articles on the Oregon Territory appeared, and plans for an Atlantic and Pacific railroad were noted.[221] Occasionally summaries of foreign news were printed, with a brief resumé of conditions in France, Italy, Poland, Austria, China, and India. For a period in 1850 a regular column called "Gleanings" appeared giving news from recent foreign journals.

A Poets' Corner was a regular feature of the paper, and many of the pieces which appeared were composed by local contributors. Written under the name of "G. Linnaeus Banks" was *Woo Me, and Win Me,* the third verse of which was:

> Woo me, and win me—but pray keep your distance,
> And sing as you like about "loving the fair,"
> Or else I shall certainly call for assistance
> To show you the door, where you'll get some fresh air.
> Of no use, my dear sir, is your sighing and blinking,
> Like some dozing owl, snugly lodged on his perch;
> My heart may be won—and the right way I'm thinking,
> Is to enter our names in the big book at church.[222]

Verse in more serious vein also appeared, with rather frequent sentimental laments upon the loss of a lover or the death of a friend. This interest in poetry was evidently not limited merely to contemporary works, for an article written especially for the

---

216 *Ibid.*, May 3, 1849.
217 *Ibid.*, June 21, 1851.
218 *Ibid.*, April 25, 1850.
219 *Ibid.*, August 8, 1850.
220 *Ibid.*, April 22, 1847.
221 *Ibid.*, Jan. 5, 1849.
222 *Ibid.*, Jan. 16, 1851.

Banner appeared, in which the object was to show that Shakespeare was familiar with the *Georgics* of Vergil; the *Georgics* appeared in the article in Latin.[223]

After January of 1850 the last two pages of the paper were classified under headings at the top of the column such as "Amusements," "Succession Sales," "Legal Notices" (these appeared in French and English, the only part of the paper printed in both languages), "Business Cards," "Education," and "Insurance &c." At the same time a new masthead for the *Banner* appeared and the motto from Choate, "Give to the labor of America the market of America," took a place at the head of the editorial column.[224]

These changes in the makeup of the paper came after an increase in circulation,[225] but apparently the larger income which would naturally follow such growth did not take place, for Dennett mentioned that he had an agent out trying to collect his debts and wrote:

> Our compositors now cost more than $1,000 a year, and when we add to this, paper, materials, our own time and the expense of supporting our family it is very easy to be seen that our expenses are heavy.[226]

The fees he had so much difficulty collecting do not seem unusually large: a year's subscription to the paper was reduced in 1849 from four dollars to three if paid in advance,[227] and five dollars otherwise.[228] Local merchants were granted special rates for advertising and merchants might insert their cards for six months for eight dollars, and professional notices cost ten dollars per annum. Steamboats advertised "for the season" for fifteen dollars, and political aspirants might announce their candidacy for office for ten dollars, the only group whose fee was specifically marked "payable in advance." The *Banner* retained an agent authorized to accept advertising and subscriptions in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia,[229] and notices requesting patronage of the United States Hotel in Philadelphia,[230] Manhattan House in New York City,[231] and various other northern hotels appeared in the paper.

[223] *Ibid.*, Jan. 24, 1850.
[224] *Ibid.*, Jan. 31, 1850.
[225] *Ibid.*, Jan. 24, 1850.
[226] *Ibid.*, Jan. 31, 1850.
[227] *Ibid.*, Jan. 5, 1849.
[228] *Ibid.*, Jan. 11, 1849.
[229] *Ibid.*, Jan. 27, 1853.
[230] *Ibid.*, July 14, 1853.
[231] *Ibid.*, Sept. 15, 1853.

The small squares of local advertising were customarily quite unimaginative. Those of Dr. William Rabe stood out by contrast; instead of the usual small-print, matter-of-fact announcement of the arrival of a shipment of goods, Rabe often headed his ads with "Look at this!" or "Christmas is Coming!" in heavy black letters, and followed with advertisements such as the one below:

> A New Advertisement
> about old things!
>
> . . . I have renewed my stock & offer facilities never surpassed in any town the size of our town.
>
> FOR THE CURIOUS, I have for show a lot of white rats, a seven feet long snake, a lamb with two bodies and one head and some powerful microscopes.
>
> FOR THE SICK, I have medicine enough to cure the whole Parish and some of the adjoining ones.
>
> FOR THE LADIES, I have candy just received from New York, Stationery, Books, Fancy Goods, Perfumery, etc., and
>
> TO ALL I offer my services, my goods of various description, my Soda Fountain, and strict attention to customers.
>
> FOR MY OLD CUSTOMERS, I have a lot of accounts on hand to exchange for banknotes and drafts.
>
> . . . William Rabe,[232]
> Apothecary Hall.

A few weeks later another ad appeared:

> I have some of that good French wine yet: is there nobody who wishes to drink good wine and—pay for it?
>
> There have been some people at my shop to see my rates, but few have asked me for the accounts. I am always ready to show both.[233]

[232] *Ibid.*, March 30, 1848.
[233] *Ibid.*, May 4, 1848.

No one reading the paper could long remain in doubt as to its editor's party affiliations, as his Whig sympathies were always apparent. He often spoke humorously of the Democrats in the parish, and once said: "There was an unusually large meeting of the friends of General Pierce in the parish of St. Mary, *under an umbrella*, at the corner of the Odd-Fellows' Hall, on Wednesday last. The most distinguished members of the party were in attendance."[234] His firm stand on various matters occasionally involved him in printed debates with other citizens of the parish. In an editorial reply to criticism by a leading Democrat of the parish, he remarked:

> It looks a little singular that he should accuse us of making an unintentional misrepresentation that, had it been intentional, would do very little credit to the wisdom or patriotism of our party or ourself, and immediately after explains that one great error consists in giving him credit for merits and powers that he does not possess. Well, for the credit of our party and ourself we will admit that he is a man of very ordinary merits, and of very common powers, physically and intellectually. The injustice of our misrepresentation did not before occur to us. We will most obsequiously ask the gentleman's pardon.[235]

When Daniel Dennett retired from his position with the *Planters' Banner*, he gave as his reason the requirement of a more active life to sustain his health, stating that he wished "to follow agricultural pursuits, as a more reliable means of support, and less perplexing to my feelings than the life of an editor."[236]

Literature

The only other native literature of the period which was published at the time was a textbook called *A New System of English Grammar*, written by Sidney S. Caldwell. He sold one half of his copyright to Thomas Sale of St. Mary for $1000; the book, intended for use in schools and colleges, was copyrighted in April, 1858, and 1000 copies were to be printed.[237]

Textbooks were frequent items in the few library inventories found. David Weeks purchased about ten dollars' worth of books

---

[234] *Ibid.*, Sept. 18, 1852.
[235] *Ibid.*, August 16, 1849.
[236] *Ibid.*, Feb. 27, 1851.
[237] Original Conveyances, N. Nov. 25, 1858.

from New Orleans, including Walker's *Dictionary*, Grimshaw's *United States*, Goldsmith's *Natural History*, six copies of Webster's spelling books, a prayer book, an arithmetic text, a copy of Worcester's geography, and one of his ancient atlas.[238] The estate of John P. Conrade listed "A select and extensive library of law books & Standard Literary works," including full sets of the Supreme Court Reports, copies of *Niles' Register* beginning with the first volume of that publication, and "all Textbooks now in use in the courts of this state."[239]

The most extensive library inventory found was that of M. A. Frazer, who had bought of J. B. Steel of New Orleans the following works: Wyndham and Huskisson's speeches, American oratory, Burns' *Works*, Sparks' *Life of Washington*, Dallam's *Digest of the Laws of Texas*, a copy of the works of Shakespeare, a volume of the works of various British poets, Thiers' *French Revolution*, Allison's *Europe*, Guy's *Medical Jurisprudence*, *Plutarch's Lives*, Flora's dictionary, a set of Rollins' History, a set of Mrs. Herman's Works, speeches of Chatham, Burke, Erskine, and others, Cowper and Thomson's poetical works, McCulloch's *Commercial Dictionary*, McCulloch's *Gazetteer*, Mills' logic, *The Spectator*, a book on the lives of literary men, and works on the poetry of Milton, Keats, Young and others.[240]

Booksellers in New Orleans consistently advertised their wares in the *Banner*, and subscriptions to *Holden's Dollar Magazine*, the *Family Magazine*, the *Southern Quarterly Review*, and several English publications were solicited in the same columns. A bookstore was opened in Franklin in 1847 by William Rabe, whose Franklin Literary Emporium advertised medical and surgical works with plates, collections of Britsh essayists, Byron's poems, Brand's encyclopedia, Thomas Moore's works, a biography of General Taylor, the Waverly novels and various other publications.[241] Sometimes agents of various publishing houses came through the area, and in 1853 R. A. Skinner displayed at Gordy's Hotel such works as Goodrich's *Pictorial History of America*, *Parley's Panorama*, *The Volume of the World*, *Biblical Defense of Slavery*, and *Bright's Family Practice*.[242] Another book ad-

---

[238] David Weeks and Family Papers, April 18, 1851.
[239] *Planters' Banner*, May 10, 1849.
[240] Original Suits, CXXXII, #3686.
[241] *Planters' Banner*, Jan. 14, Feb. 18, 1847.
[242] *Ibid.*, Sept. 22, 1853.

vertised was J. Thornton Randolph's *The Cabin and Parlor, or Slaves and Masters*, written to refute that "deceptive and irreligious publication," *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.[243]

While the parish had its share of ignorance, disease, crime, violence, and other darker phases of life, much of a commendable nature was to be found. Varied and well attended amusements bespoke a healthy and zestful social climate. Church attendance and support indicated a distinct religious interest. Public education left much to be desired, but interest in improvements was repeatedly manifested, and private endeavor did much toward meeting the deficiency caused by the inadequacy of public schools. St. Mary residents had regrettably little opportunity to become acquainted with good books, but they were fortunate in having an outstanding newspaper in their midst in the 1850's. All in all the cultural life of the parish appears to have been above the average of Louisiana communities of the period and to have compared favorably with that of other Southern areas.[244]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Manuscripts

Bisland, John (and Family), Papers. Department of Archives, Louisiana State University.

Palfrey, William T. (and Family), Papers. Department of Archives, Louisiana State University.

St. Mary Parish Records, Courthouse, Franklin, Louisiana: Criminal Suits; Donation Books; Original Conveyances; Original Estates; Original Mortgages; Original Suits.

Unpublished Census Returns, 1850, Schedule I, Free White Inhabitants; Schedule II, Slave Inhabitants; Schedule IV,

---

[243] *Ibid.*, Oct. 30, 1852.

[244] G. G. Johnson, *Ante Bellum North Carolina: A Social History* (Chapel Hill, 1937), and M. C. Boyd, *Alabama in the Fifties: A Social Study* (New York, 1931).

Agriculture. Microfilm copy in Hill Memorial Library, Louisiana State University, of originals in Duke University Library.

Unpublished Census Returns, 1860, Schedule I, Free White Inhabitants; Schedule II, Slave Inhabitants; Schedule IV, Agriculture. Microfilm copy in Hill Memorial Library, Louisiana State University, of originals in Duke University Library.

Weeks, David (and Family), Papers. Department of Archives, Louisiana State University.

Official Documents

Louisiana Historical Records Survey Project, *County-Parish Boundaries in Louisiana*. New Orleans, 1939. (Mimeographed).

Louisiana Historical Records Survey Project. *Guide to Vital Statistics. Records of Church Archives in Louisiana*. New Orleans, 1942 (Mimeographed).

Population of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census, under the Direction of the Secretary of the Interior. Washington, 1864.

Statistical View of the United States Embracing Its Territory, Population—White, Free Colored, and Slave—Moral and Social Condition, Industry, Property, and Revenue; The Detailed Statistics of Cities, Towns, and Counties; Being a Compendium of the Seventh Census. To Which are Added the Results of Every Previous Census, Beginning with 1790, in Comparative Tables, With Explanatory and Illustrative Notes, Based Upon the Schedules and Other Official Sources of Information. Washington, 1854.

Statistics of the United States, (Including Mortality, Property, &c.) in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns and being the Final Exhibit of the Eighth Census, under the Direction of the Secretary of the Interior. Washington, 1864.

Books, Pamphlets, and Articles

Allen, R. L., "Letters from the South—No. 9," *The American Agriculturist*, VI (1847), 213-215.

Ashe, Thomas, *Travels in America, Performed in the Year 1806, for the Purpose of Exploring the Rivers Alleghany, Monongahela, Ohio, and Mississippi, and Ascertaining the Produce and Condition of Their Banks and Vicinity.* London, 1809.

Baldwin, Thomas, and J. Thomas, *A New and Complete Gazetteer of the United States, Giving a Full and Comprehensive Review of the Present Condition, Industry, and Resources of the American Confederacy: Embracing, Also, Important Topographical, Statistical, and Historical Information, From Recent and Original Sources; Together With the Results of the Census of 1850, and Population and Statistics in Many Cases to 1853.* Philadelphia, 1854.

Bonner, James C., "Plantation Architecture in the Lower South on the Eve of the Civil War," *Journal of Southern History*, XI (1945), 370-388.

Boyd, Minnie C., *Alabama in the Fifties: A Social Study.* New York, 1931.

Champomier, P. A., *Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana.* New Orleans, 1844-1862. Statements were issued annually after 1849-50.

Davis, Jackson Beauregard, "The Life of Richard Taylor," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXIV (1941), 49-126.

DeBow's Review; Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial Progress and Resources. New Orleans, 1846-1870.

Dennett, Daniel, *Louisiana As It Is: Its Topography and Material Resources—Its Cotton, Sugar Cane, Rice and Tobacco Fields —Its Corn and Grain Lands—Its Numerous Varieties of*

Field Crops—Its Valuable Grasses—Its Fruits, Including the Orange and Other Tropical Fruits—Its Vegetable and Flower Gardens—Its Vast and Valuable Forests of Timber—Its Prairies, Bottoms, Swamp and Hilly Lands—Health and Longevity—Various Popular Errors Corrected Touching the Soil, Climate and People of the State, Reliable Information for Farmers, Patrons of Husbandry, Laboring Men, Manufacturers, Capitalists, Men of Enterprise, Invalids—Any who may desire to Settle or Purchase Lands in the Gulf States. New Orleans, 1876. Pp. 91-105 and *Passim.*

Duncan, Herman C., *The Diocese of Louisiana: Some of its History, 1838-1888. Also, Some of the History of its Parishes and Missions, 1805-1888.* New Orleans, 1888.

Fenner, E. D. (ed.), *Southern Medical Reports; Consisting of General and Special Reports, on the Medical Topography, Meteorology, and Prevalent Diseases, in the Following States: Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Arkansas, Tennessee, Texas.* New Orleans, 1849.

Fortier, Alcée (ed.), *Louisiana, Comprising Sketches of Counties, Towns, Events, Institutions, and Persons, Arranged in Cyclopedic Form.* Atlanta, 1909.

Fortier, Alcée, *Louisiana Studies: Literature, Customs and Dialects, History and Education.* New Orleans, 1894.

Griffin, Harry L., "The Vigilance Committee of the Attakapas Country, or Early Louisiana Justice," *Proceedings of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association,* VIII (1914-1915), 146-159.

Harris, William H. (ed.), *Louisiana Products, Resources and Attractions, With a Sketch of the Parishes. A Hand Book of Reliable Information Concerning the State.* New Orleans, 1881.

Johnson, Guion G., *Ante-Bellum North Carolina, A Social History*. Chapel Hill, 1937.

Laist, Theodore, "The Architecture of the Bayou Teche Country," *Western Architect*, XXXVIII (1928), 37-44, 47-54.

Lockett, Samuel H., *Louisiana As It Is: A Geographical and Topographical Description of the State Copiously Illustrated by Original Sketches and Accompanied by a Map Showing in Symbols and Colors, The Nature of the Surface, Soil, Forest Growth, and Production of the Entire State. The Results of an Actual and Official Survey of the State.* Baton Rouge, 1873.

Louisiana Historical Records Survey Project, *Louisiana Newspapers, 1794-1940; A Union List of Louisiana Newspaper Files Available in Offices of Publishers, Libraries, and Private Collections in Louisiana*. Baton Rouge, 1941. (Mimeographed).

Moody, V. Alton, "Slavery on Louisiana Sugar Plantations," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, VII (1924), 190-301.

Olmsted, Frederick Law, *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States, With Remarks on Their Economy*. New York, 1856.

Padgett, James A. (ed.), "Letters of James Brown to Henry Clay," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXIV (1941), 921-1177.

Poole, T. W., *Some Late Words About Louisiana*. New Orleans, 1891.

Prichard, Walter, "Routine on a Louisiana Sugar Plantation Under the Slavery Regime," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XIV (1927), 168-178.

Prichard, Walter (ed.), "Some Interesting Glimpses of Louisiana a Century Ago (From the Old Files of the 'Picayune')," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXIV (1941), 35-48.

Prichard, Walter, Fred B. Kniffen, and Clair A. Brown (eds.), "Southern Louisiana and Southern Alabama in 1819: the Journal of James Leander Cathcart," *Louisiana Hostorical Quarterly*, XXVIII (1945), 735-921.

Richardson, F. D., "The Teche Country Fifty Years Ago," *Southern Bivouac*, IV (1886), 593-599.

Romero, Sidney J., Jr., "The Political Career of Murphy James Foster, Governor of Louisiana, 1892-1900," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXVIII (1945), 1129-1213.

Shugg, Roger W., *Origins of Class Struggle in Louisiana: A Social History of White Farmers and Laborers during Slavery and After, 1840-1875*. Baton Rouge, 1939.

Stahl, Annie Lee, "The Free Negro in Ante-Bellum Louisiana," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXV (1942), 301-396.

Stephenson, W. H., *Alexander Porter, Whig Planter of Old Louisiana*. Baton Rouge, 1934.

Stewart, Charles, "My Life as a Slave," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, LXIX (1884), 730-738.

Stoddard, Amos, *Sketches, Historical and Descriptive, of Louisiana*. Philadelphia, 1812.

Thorpe, T. B., "Sugar and Sugar Regions of Louisiana," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, VII (1853), 746-767.

Tregle, Joseph G., Jr., "Louisiana and the Tariff, 1816-1846," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXV (1942), 24-148.

Warner, Charles Dudley, "The Acadian Land," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, XXXIV (1887), 334-354.

Willink, Cecile, "Architectural Daguerreotypes of Louisiana," *Country Life*, XLIV (1923), 69-71.

Unpublished Theses

Bates, Ruth, "Conditions of Slave Life." M. A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1913.

Harper, Myrtle B., "The Country Press of Louisiana, 1794-1860." M. A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1939.

Hatfield, Beryl D., "Fish Cookery in South Louisiana With Its Influence and Contributions." M. A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1933.

Pecot, Marguerite, "The Cajun." M. A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1932.

Rogers, Henrietta Guilbeau (ed.), "History of the Committees of Vigilance in the Attakapas Country." M. A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1936.

Savoie, Velma, "The Life and Writings of Madame Sidonie de la Houssaye." M. A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1936.