

Chapter 3

The European Period, 1540-1798

Chapter Preview

PEOPLE

Marco Polo; Father Jacques Marquette; Louis Joliet; Henri de Tonti; Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville; William Dunbar; James Willing; Manuel Gayoso de Lemos

PLACES

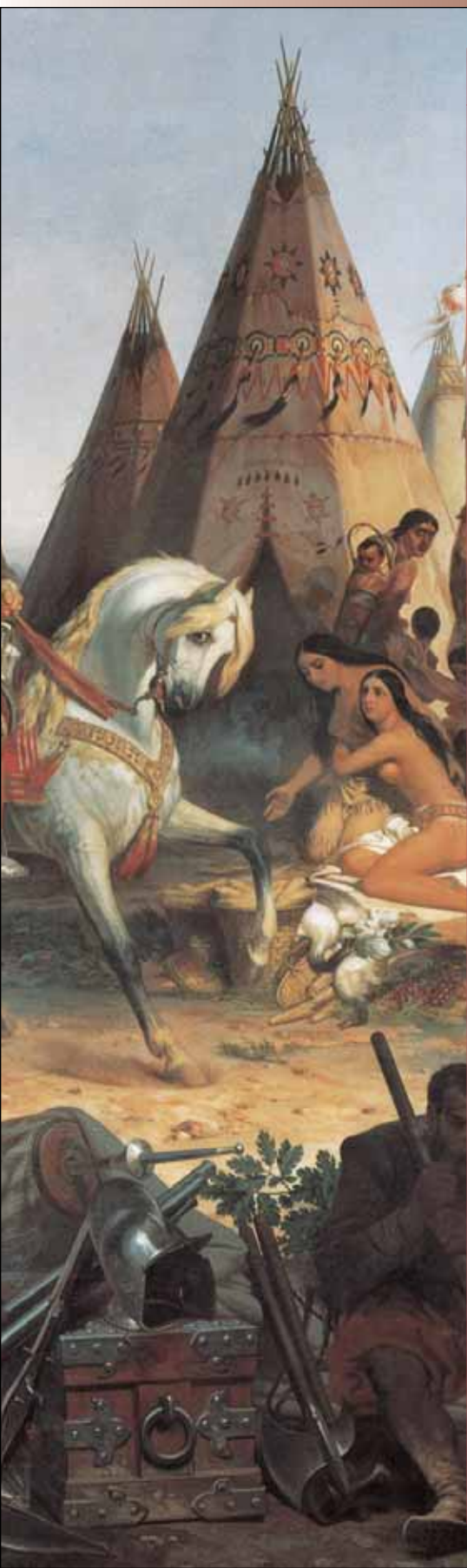
China, Venice, Orient, Silk Road, Tampa Bay, Fort Maurepas, Fort Louis, Fort Rosalie (Panmure), Natchez District, Fort Nogales

TERMS

silk, cartography, expedition, colony, casquette girl, Code Noir, Treaty of Paris of 1763, Proclamation of 1763, 31° parallel, 32° 28' parallel, firewater, confluence, indigo, Continental Congress, Loyalist, Treaty of Paris of 1783, militia, Treaty of San Lorenzo, right of deposit



Above: This painting by William Powell, which hangs in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol, imagines the first sighting of the Mississippi River by the de Soto expedition on May 8, 1541.



Map 18 Marco Polo's Travels

Map Skill: Did Marco Polo visit Constantinople as he traveled to the east or west?



About two hundred years before Christopher Columbus discovered the New World, another Italian explorer, Marco Polo, traveled across the great deserts of the Middle East, through the Pamir Mountains and across the Gobi Desert into the far reaches of Asia. After spending some time in what is today the city of Beijing, China, Marco Polo sailed along the coast of China southward, past what is now Vietnam, then westward to India. Eventually, he sailed to Ormuz on the Persian Gulf, then traveled overland to the Mediterranean Sea and back to his home in Venice. Marco Polo's writings about his travels and the riches of the East were enormously popular in the 1300s and prompted European merchants to establish trade with China and India.

Have you ever heard the phrase, "as smooth as silk"? Because **silk** (a fabric made from fiber produced by an insect called the silkworm) was so smooth, it was one of the most popular trade items between the East and West. Europeans had long grown weary of woolen clothing and were willing to pay dearly for silken cloth. They also developed a fondness for the spices of the Orient (East) that enlivened their otherwise bland diet. There was money to be made in trade between the East and the West, but the overland route from Europe to Asia, which was called the Silk Road, was a long and dangerous journey across deserts and mountains. Some traders even sailed around the southern tip of Africa to get to the East. That was a very long and expensive voyage, and it dramatically reduced the profits of trade with the Indies. Because of the disadvantages of the existing trade routes, Europeans began searching for a shortcut to the riches of the Orient.

Signs of the Times

U.S. EXPANSION

The original thirteen colonies had formed the United States of America by 1790. Vermont, Kentucky, and Tennessee had become states by 1796.

EXPLORATION

In the 1540s, as de Soto was exploring Mississippi and the Southeast, other Spanish explorers were discovering the Grand Canyon, exploring the Amazon River in South America, and navigating the California coast.

MUSIC

Revolutionary War favorites included "Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier," "The Foggy, Foggy Dew," and "All the Pretty Little Horses." British soldiers sang "The Yankeys Return from Camp" to make fun of the colonists. Today, it is known as "Yankee Doodle."

SPORTS

Golf was first played in America at a course established in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1786.

LITERATURE

Robinson Crusoe (1719), *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), and *Aesop's Fables* were popular books for parents to read to their children. Phillis Wheatley, a gifted black poet from Boston, published a book of poems in 1773. *The Power of Sympathy* by William Hill Brown (1789), is considered to be the first American novel.

INVENTIONS

Inventions from this period helped spur demand for cotton. The flying shuttle (1733) sped up the weaving process. The spinning jenny (1764) sped up yarn production. Edward Cartwright invented the power loom, harnessing water power to turn yarn into cotton cloth, and helped launch the industrial revolution. The cotton gin (1794) simplified the process of separating cotton fiber from seeds.

PRINTING

Andrew Marschalk brought the first printing press into Mississippi in 1798. In that same year, he printed a ballad titled "The Galley Slave," possibly as a demonstration, which caused "great excitement" in Natchez.

Figure 5 Timeline: 1540–1800



1798
Spanish authorities transferred Mississippi territory to U.S.

1795
Treaty of San Lorenzo; Spanish gave up claim to land north of 31°

1789
Manuel Gayoso appointed Natchez District governor

1764
West Florida's northern boundary amended to 32° 28'

1763
British West and East Florida formed; West Florida's northern boundary set at 31°

1729
Natchez attacked Fort Rosalie

1736
Battle of Ackia

1724
Bienville introduced Code Noir

1716
Fort Rosalie completed

1699
Iberville landed at Ship Island, found the Mississippi, built Fort Maurepas

1682
La Salle reached the mouth of the Mississippi River

1673
Marquette and Joliet explored the Mississippi River

1541
Hernando de Soto reached the Mississippi River

1550 1600 1650 1700 1750 1800

1701
Capital of Louisiana Province moved to Fort Louis on Mobile Bay

1718
New Orleans founded by the French

1722
New Orleans selected as capital of the Louisiana Province

1754
French and Indian War began

1763
Treaty of Paris ended French and Indian War; Proclamation of 1763

1765
British held Indian Congress in Mobile

1787
U.S. Constitution; Northwest Ordinance

1783
Treaty of Paris ended American Revolution

1776
Declaration of Independence

Section 1

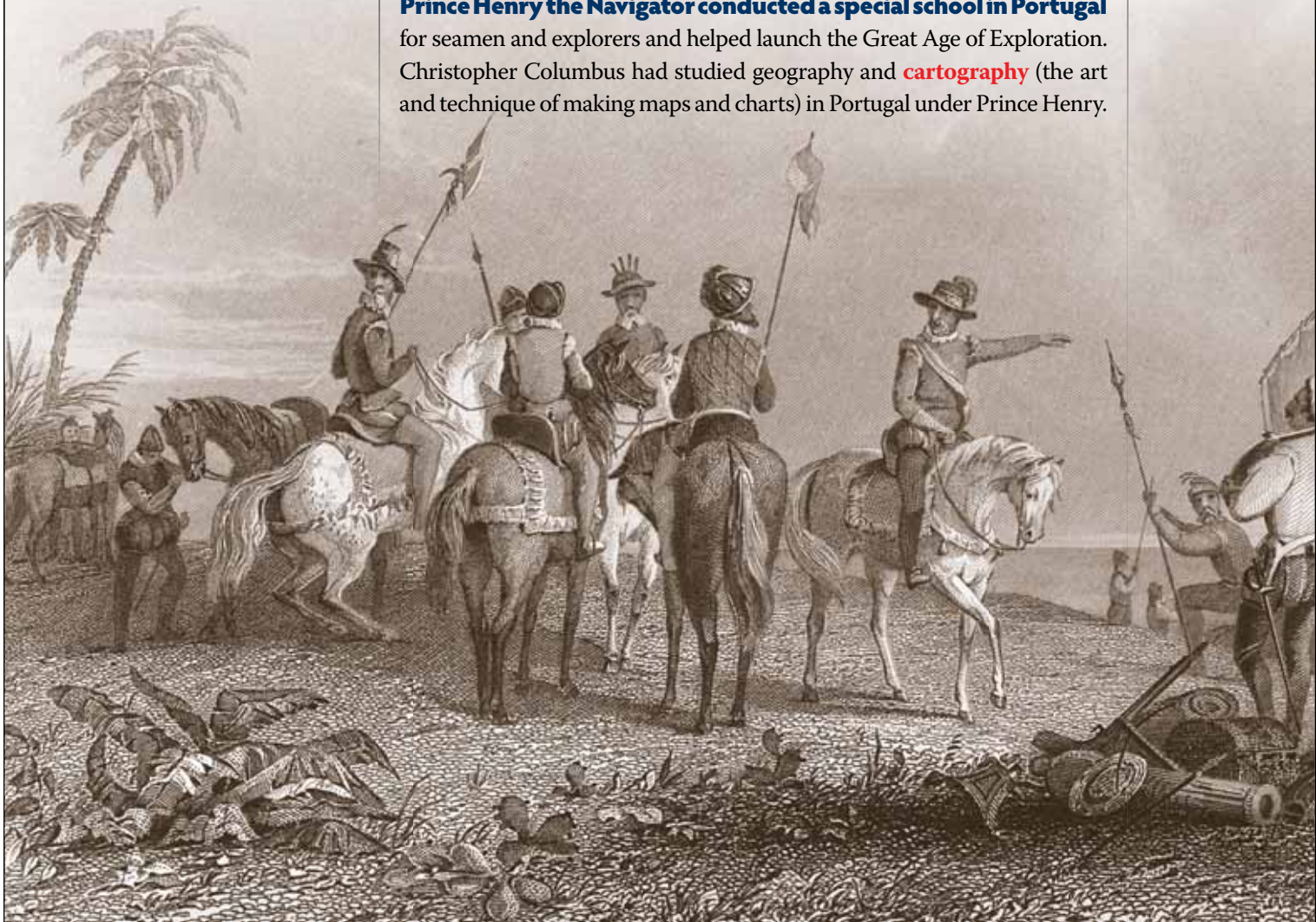
Spanish Exploration

Below: Hernando de Soto's expedition landed at Shaw's Point, on Tampa Bay, in May 1539. It was the first European expedition to explore extensively the interior of what would become the United States, traveling north as far as North Carolina and west as far as Texas, becoming the first Europeans to cross the Mississippi River.

As you read, look for

- Hernando de Soto's expedition through the Southeast and discovery of the Mississippi River;
- reasons for growing rivalries among European nations in the New World;
- terms: **cartography**, **expedition**, **colony**.

Prince Henry the Navigator conducted a special school in Portugal for seamen and explorers and helped launch the Great Age of Exploration. Christopher Columbus had studied geography and **cartography** (the art and technique of making maps and charts) in Portugal under Prince Henry.



He was convinced that the world was round and that he could sail west and eventually arrive in the Indies. Columbus persuaded the King of Spain to provide him with three ships—and crewmen and supplies—for his historic voyage in 1492. Columbus was correct in his belief that the world was round, but he did not know about the American continents, which the Europeans would call the New World.

Hernando de Soto's Expedition

In the early 1540s, less than fifty years after the discovery of the New World, a Spanish expedition led by Hernando de Soto trekked across the land that would become the state of Mississippi. This **expedition** (a journey for a specific purpose, such as exploration) was the beginning of what historians call the European period, or colonial period, of American history. The great powers of Europe—Spain, France, and England—were locked in a two-hundred-year struggle to control the New World and its vast wealth.

Hernando de Soto had served under Francisco Pizarro in Peru. He dreamed of leading his own expedition and finding even greater riches than those discovered among the Inca peoples of South America. In May 1539, de Soto landed at Tampa Bay, Florida, with a large expedition that included 620 men and women, 223 horses, a drove of swine, and a pack of dogs. Among his men were a physician, several priests, carpenters, and blacksmiths (who were needed to repair the metal armor worn by de Soto's soldiers). From Tampa Bay, de Soto marched northward through Georgia, South Carolina,

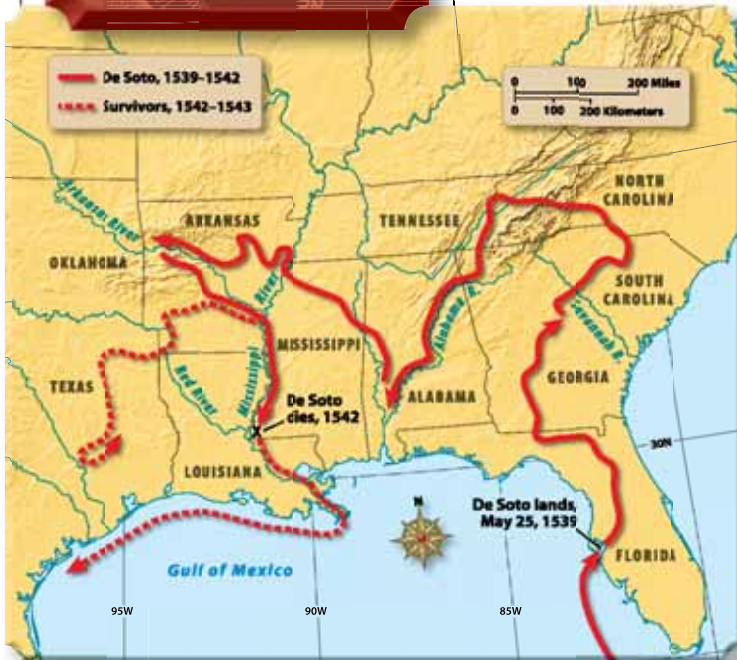


Above: Hernando de Soto was the governor of Cuba when he launched his massive expedition to explore the mainland of North America in 1539.



Map 19 Route of the de Soto Expedition

Map Skill: Near which present-day city did de Soto enter Mississippi?



and North Carolina before turning back southwestward and continuing through Alabama and Mississippi. De Soto reached the Mississippi River on May 8, 1541.

After spending about a month building rafts to ferry his men and supplies across the great river, de Soto continued westward through Arkansas into east Texas. Failing to find any gold or other treasure in Arkansas and Texas, de Soto returned to the river, where he died from a long-festering wound suffered in an earlier battle. Hernando de Soto was buried in the muddy waters of the great river that will always be associated with his name. After de Soto's burial, the survivors of his expedition, which was less than half its original size, sailed down the Mississippi to the Gulf Coast, where they followed the coastline to the settlement at Tampico, Mexico.

The Beginning of European Rivalries

After de Soto's failure to find any treasure, the southern woodlands were undisturbed for another 130 years. Eventually, the great powers of Europe realized that the real treasures of the New World were not gold and silver. More profit could be made from trade and commerce with the **colonies** (geographical areas politically controlled by a distant country) that could be established in this vast land that Columbus had discovered. So France, Spain, and England began establishing colonies in the New World.

As long as these European colonies were located along the fringes or on the coastline of North America, there was minimal contact or rivalry among the nations. But as the settlements began to move inland and the nations started claiming the same territory, that rivalry *spawned* (generated) a series of colonial wars. Those wars would ultimately result in the removal of the European powers from North America and the emergence of the United States. The place called Mississippi was right in the middle of that rivalry.

Something Extra!

De Soto encouraged the local natives to believe he was an *immortal* (living forever) sun god, so his men had to conceal his death. They hid his corpse in blankets weighted with sand and sank it in the middle of the Mississippi River during the night.

Reviewing the Section

1. Define in sentence form: cartography, expedition, colony.
2. Why did Hernando de Soto want to lead his own expedition in the New World?
3. What did Europeans come to realize were the real treasures of the New World?

Section 2

French Exploration and the Louisiana Province, 1673-1763

As you read, look for

- reasons for early explorations of the Mississippi River;
- the expeditions of Marquette and Joliet and of La Salle;
- the establishment of the settlement of Fort Maurepas on Biloxi Bay;
- rival claims among European nations and Native Americans and the resulting French and Indian War;
- terms: **casquette girl**, **Code Noir**, **Treaty of Paris of 1763**.

During the early years of the

European period, France established settlements in what is now Canada, but the French were more interested in finding a shortcut across the New World to the riches of the Orient than they were in establishing colonies. After hearing Indian tales about a great river that “lost itself in the great sea,” the French governor of Canada sent Father Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet to find and explore that river. They soon found the river that the Indians called the “Mississippi.” When, in July 1673, the Marquette and Joliet

Below: This painting, *Pere Marquette and the Indians*, was painted in 1869 by Wilhelm Lamprecht, and hangs at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which was named for the explorer. In 1673, Jacques Marquette, a Jesuit missionary, with Louis Joliet, a French-Canadian explorer, and five others, traveled down the Mississippi as far as the mouth of the Arkansas River in only two canoes. The voyage revealed to the French the strategic importance of the Mississippi River.





expedition reached an unnamed river that is now known as the Arkansas, they realized that they were on the river of de Soto, which was well known to them and to other European explorers. Although the river flowed south to Mexico, not west to China, Marquette and Joliet returned to Canada with a glowing description of both the trading potential and the strategic importance of this river. European nations were just beginning to understand how large North America was, and the French quickly realized that control of the Mississippi River would open up a vast trade area. Just as important was their realization that the great river could serve as a barrier to block the western expansion of the English colonies from the Atlantic Coast.

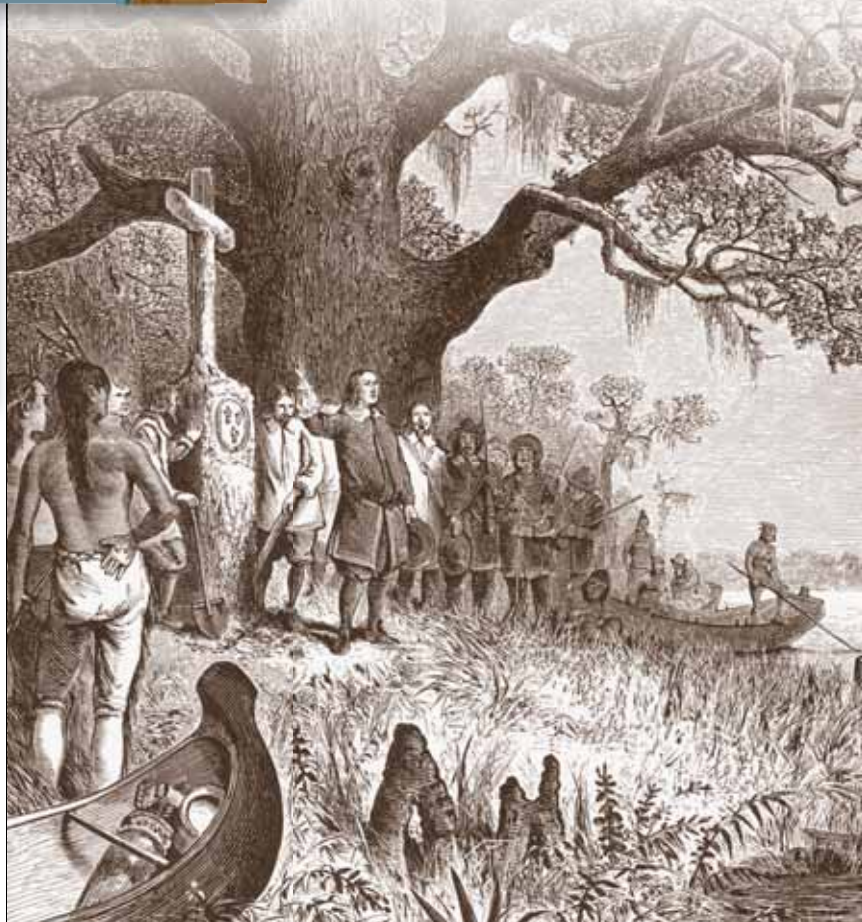
La Salle's Expedition

As we learned in Chapter 2, a French expedition under René Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle, reached the mouth of the Mississippi River on April 9, 1682. To celebrate this momentous occasion, La Salle held a formal and elaborate

Map 20 The Early Colonial Period

Map Skill: Which country claimed the land that is today the state of Florida?

Right: Having led an expedition to the mouth of the Mississippi River, La Salle claimed the entire Mississippi valley for King Louis XIV of France in an elaborate ceremony. **Opposite page, above:** On his second voyage to the New World, La Salle sailed past the Mississippi River. Attempting an arduous trek to reach it overland, he was killed by his mutinous crew.



ceremony. His men put on fresh uniforms and lined up with their muskets in hand. First they sang some French songs. Then they fired several volleys with their muskets while shouting, “Long live the King!” La Salle then planted the flag of France in the southern soil. He proclaimed in a loud voice that all the lands and tributaries of this mighty river belonged to Louis XIV, King of France. In honor of the king, this vast land area was named the Louisiana Province.

La Salle’s next major undertaking was to establish a settlement at the mouth of the river. This would give France control over much of the interior of this great continent. After returning to France for more supplies and men, La Salle sailed back toward the mouth of the river by way of the Caribbean Sea. Unfortunately, he could not locate the mouth of the river and sailed too far west. He actually landed on the Texas coast. In the meantime, Henri de Tonti, La Salle’s second in command, was waiting for La Salle at the mouth of the river.

Unaware that La Salle had sailed too far west, Tonti grew impatient and returned to Canada. On his way back up the river, Tonti left a letter with the Taensa tribe telling La Salle that he had returned to Canada. La Salle, realizing that he had sailed too far west, began walking through the southern wilderness in search of the Mississippi River. His rebellious crew, which had given him trouble from the very beginning of the voyage, assassinated their captain. They buried him in the forest and walked back to the French settlement in Canada.

The Significance of the Mississippi River

It soon became apparent to the governments of France, Spain, and England that the Mississippi River would be an important factor in the success of their colonial enterprises. Consequently, all three nations attempted to occupy and control that lengthy waterway. Each nation tried to establish a permanent settlement near the mouth of the river, but only the French were successful. Spain did establish a settlement at Pensacola and claimed possession of Florida and parts of the Gulf Coast. English ships did not arrive at the mouth of the Mississippi River until France had already firmly established her claim to that area.

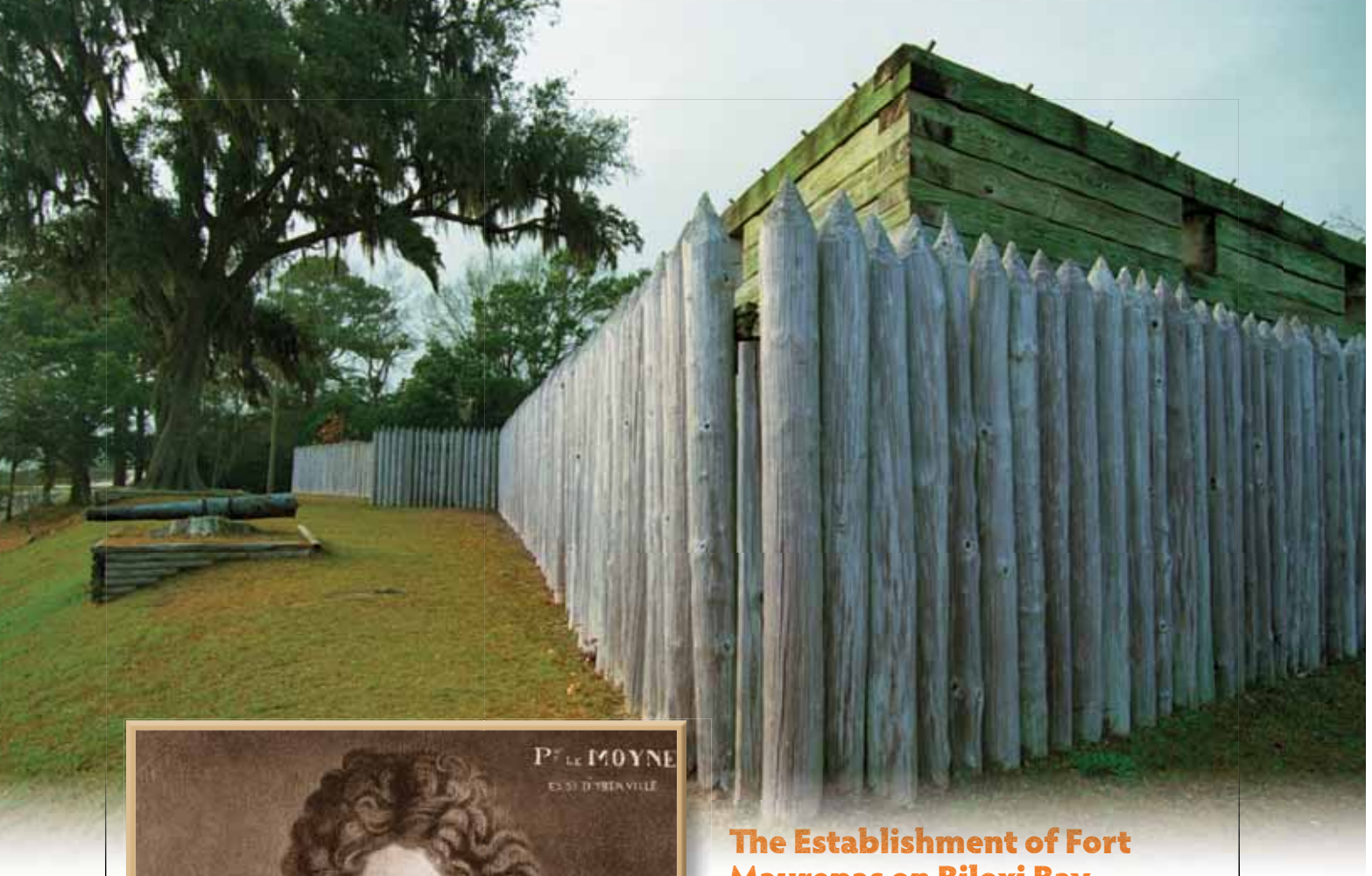
One of the important sites founded by the French in the New World was New Orleans, a port they established in 1718 near the mouth of the Mississippi River. Up the river from New Orleans was another French river town—called Natchez—which had been established in 1716 as the first permanent settlement on the Mississippi River. During the European period, all three of the great powers of Europe would control Natchez and the area that now comprises Mississippi.



Something Extra!

Henri de Tonti had lost his right hand in an explosion while he was serving in the French navy. He wore a glove over his metal hook, earning the nickname, the “Iron Hand.”





Top: You can visit a reconstruction of Fort Maurepas in Ocean Springs.

Above: Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, built the fort when he found the banks of the Mississippi unsuitable.

The Establishment of Fort Maurepas on Biloxi Bay

After La Salle's failure to establish a settlement at the mouth of the Mississippi River in 1686, the French government sent Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, to locate the Mississippi River and establish a French colony there. Iberville's expedition landed at Ship Island on February 10, 1699. Three days later, Iberville and a small detachment went ashore. They met a band of Biloxi Indians, who later took them to their village a few miles inland on the Pascagoula River.

For the next several weeks, Iberville and his younger brother, Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville, explored the Gulf Coast looking for the mouth of the Mississippi. Finally, on March 2, 1699, they found a river they believed to be the Mississippi. After sailing up the river for several days, they arrived at an Indian village where they were greeted as if they had been expected. It was the Taensa village where

Tonti had left the letter for La Salle fourteen years earlier. Iberville was then certain that he had found the Mississippi, but he decided that the swampy riverbanks were not a suitable location for a colony. He went back to the Gulf Coast and built Fort Maurepas on the east side of Biloxi Bay. It served as the capital of the Louisiana Province for a short time.

Bienville Appointed Governor

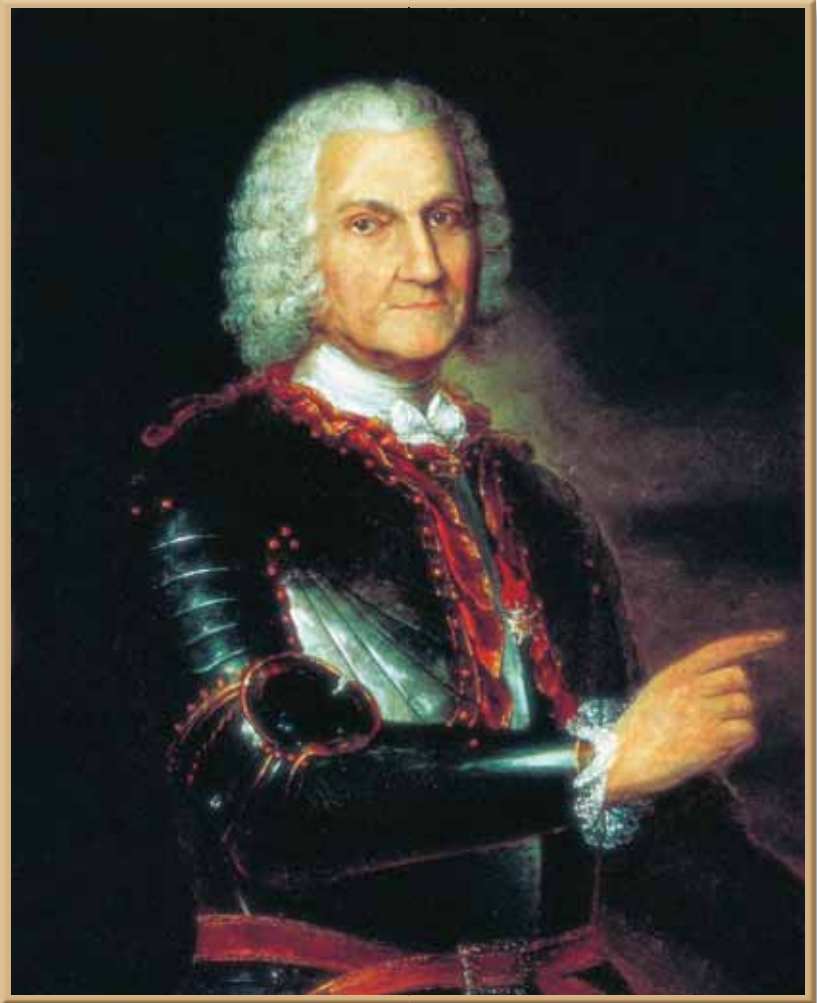
Fort Maurepas did not prove to be a desirable capital for the Louisiana Province. It was not located on a river and did not provide access to the interior regions where the French hoped to develop fur trading with the Indians. In 1701, the capital was moved to Fort Louis on Mobile Bay.

When the capital was moved from Fort Maurepas to Mobile Bay, Bienville was appointed governor of the Louisiana Province. He spent almost fifty years in French Louisiana and served as governor on four occasions.

During his long service to the colony, Bienville consistently encouraged French settlers, especially women, to come to the lower Mississippi valley. Because the female population of the colony was very small, many Frenchmen married Indian women. Bienville disapproved of these marriages because he considered a large mixed population a threat to the peace and progress of the colony. Some Indian chiefs also opposed this practice. Consequently, Bienville developed an interesting scheme to get more French women to come to the colony.

The Casquette Girls

In 1704, Bienville arranged for twenty young ladies to be brought to Fort Maurepas, where they would be married to French soldiers and settlers. Within a short time, all but one had married. But the girls did not adjust very well to frontier conditions, and in 1706 they vowed to leave their husbands and return to France. This “petticoat insurrection,” as it was called, did not succeed because the French sea captains would not give the girls passage back to France. Over the next several years, perhaps as many as five hundred young women were brought to the colonies. They were known as *filles à la casquette*, or **casquette girls**, because each one was given a *casquette*, or small suitcase, containing a wedding dress and other personal articles. Most of the girls came from orphanages, brothels, and prisons, but some of them were sold by their parents. The casquette girls were usually under the care of the Ursuline nuns until a suitable marriage arrangement was made.



Above: Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville, younger brother of Iberville, was appointed governor of the Louisiana Province, and founded both Mobile and New Orleans.

Something Extra!

Bienville was only eighteen years old when he landed at Ship Island. His brother, Iberville, was nineteen years older.



Above: The city of Natchez dates its founding to the construction of Fort Rosalie in 1716. The fort was the local seat of colonial government and served as a trading post with the Natchez. The fort was rebuilt in 1731 following its destruction during the war between the Natchez and the French settlers.

Something Extra!

It was Bienville who, in 1718, designed and laid out the settlement that became the city of New Orleans. His choice of a location in the crescent (bend) of the Mississippi River gives New Orleans its nickname, the "Crescent City."

Fort Rosalie

In order to make trade and commerce on the lower Mississippi River safe from Indian attacks, in 1716 Bienville led a detachment of soldiers against the Natchez Indians for killing some Canadian traders. Bienville eventually negotiated a settlement with the Natchez chiefs. They agreed not only to surrender the guilty tribesmen but also to provide building material for a fort on the high bluffs at the Natchez landing. In 1716, Fort Rosalie was completed and became one of the major centers of French activity in the Louisiana Province.

The Development of the French Natchez District

The prosperity and the population of the Louisiana Province, especially in the lower Mississippi valley, increased significantly after the construction of Fort Rosalie. Some consideration was given to making Natchez the capital of the Louisiana Province, but New Orleans was selected as the capital in 1722.

When the capital was moved from the Gulf Coast to New Orleans, the Louisiana Province was also separated from the French colony in Canada. The Louisiana Province was subdivided into nine districts. Three of those subdivisions—the Biloxi, Yazoo, and Natchez Districts—were in the territory that later became the state of Mississippi. The population of the Natchez District increased over the next several years and numbered 710 in 1727. This population included 280 African slaves.

The Code Noir

When French landowners moved to Louisiana from the Caribbean Islands, they brought their slaves with them. As the slave population increased,

Bienville found it necessary to introduce special laws regulating the institution of slavery. Those laws, known as the **Code Noir** (which is French for “Black Code”), were issued in 1724. They were not as strict as the slave codes passed by Mississippi and other southern states in later years. Bienville’s code prohibited the separation of husbands and wives. Children under fourteen years old could not be separated from their mothers. Slaves who were freed by their owners became naturalized French citizens with all the rights and privileges of Frenchmen.

The Removal of the French from the Mississippi Valley

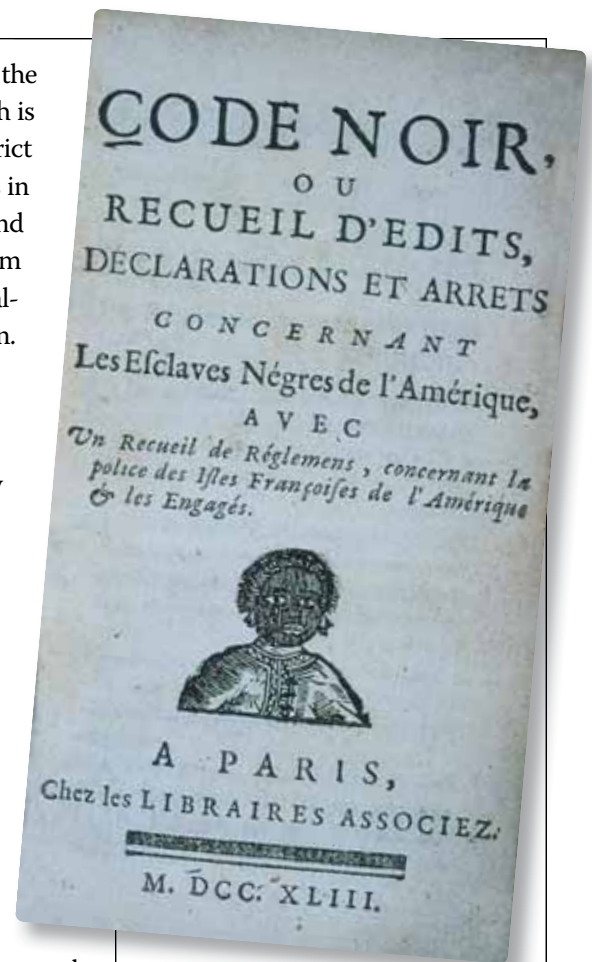
As long as the French remained traders and trappers, they were welcomed among the Natchez Indians. But when the French claimed the right of private land ownership and established large plantations, the Natchez were determined to drive them from their tribal lands. As we learned in Chapter 2, this resistance climaxed with the Natchez attack of Fort Rosalie in 1729 and the Battle of Ackia against the Chickasaw in 1736. For the next twenty years, the French were in almost constant conflict with the Chickasaw and their English allies.

In the 1740s, the French were also facing a new challenge from the English, who were moving westward and pressing their claim to land between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mississippi River. The overlapping claims to the same territory would inevitably lead to war among the three great nations of Europe. The three-way struggle for a colonial empire in North America culminated in the French and Indian War of 1754-1763. France and Spain, with their Indian allies, declared war against England, which also had some allies among American Indians.

The war was settled by the **Treaty of Paris of 1763**. Under the terms of this treaty, France ceded all of its land in North America east of the Mississippi River to England. To Spain, its ally during the war, France gave all of its land west of the Mississippi. The only French territory east of the Mississippi River that was not ceded to England was the city of New Orleans, which France gave to Spain. Because Spain lost the war, Spanish Florida was transferred to England, and Mississippi passed from French to English control.

Reviewing the Section

1. Define in sentence form: casquette girl, Code Noir, Treaty of Paris of 1763.
2. Why did the French government of Canada send Marquette and Joliet on an expedition?
3. What was the outcome of the French and Indian War for the different countries involved?



Above: Bienville instituted the Code Noir in 1724 to govern the treatment of slaves. Some of the regulations were to the benefit of the slaves, prohibiting the separation of families, and giving the rights of citizenship to slaves who had been freed by their owners.

Section 3

Under British Rule, 1763-1783

Map 21 Proclamation of 1763

Map Skill: Was the land in today's state of Mississippi west of the Proclamation line?

As you read, look for

- the establishment of British West Florida and the development of the Natchez District;
- the importance of Natchez during the American Revolution;
- boundary disputes regarding Natchez after the Treaty of Paris of 1783;
- terms: **Proclamation of 1763, 31° parallel, 32° 28' parallel, firewater, confluence, indigo, Continental Congress, Loyalist, Treaty of Paris of 1783.**



As early as 1733, England had some claim to the northern part of Mississippi. Under its original English charter, the colony of Georgia included all the area between South Carolina and Florida extending “from sea to sea.” Although France had never recognized England’s claim to this land, English possession was clearly and legally established by the Treaty of Paris of 1763.

But English officials soon realized that there would be many problems in trying to govern the vast territory they had recently acquired. As land-hungry Englishmen pushed into the interior after the French and Indian War, they encountered strong resistance from the Native Americans. In order to have more time to work out an agreement with the major Indian nations, the English government issued the **Proclamation of 1763**, which temporarily prohibited immigration into the territory between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River. This policy was not intended to permanently prohibit settlement in that area. The restriction was a temporary measure designed to keep the Native Americans and the white settlers from fighting over the land.



Something Extra!

Fort Rosalie was named for the wife of Count Pontchartrain, chancellor of France under King Louis XIV. Louisiana's famous Lake Pontchartrain is named for the count.

Left: This map shows the location of Fort Rosalie on the high bluffs above the Mississippi River. When the British gained control of West Florida, Fort Rosalie was renamed Fort Panmure. The Spanish had control of the fort during the Revolutionary War, followed by the United States, which abandoned the fort in 1804. The site of the fort is part of Natchez National Historical Park.

British West Florida

In 1763, the English government also divided the former Spanish Florida into two British colonies—British West Florida and British East Florida. As you can see on Map 21, British West Florida included part of the territory that would become the state of Mississippi. The original boundaries of British West Florida were the Mississippi River on the west, the Chattahoochee River on the east, the **31° parallel** (31 degrees north latitude) on the north, and the Gulf of Mexico on the south. When these boundaries were first established, British authorities were not aware that Fort Rosalie (Natchez) was north of the 31° parallel. When they realized this, the British moved the northern boundary of West Florida from the 31° parallel up to the **32°28' parallel** (32 degrees, 28 minutes, north latitude), which is approximately where Vicksburg is located. Revising this boundary placed Fort Rosalie within British West Florida. The British also changed the name of Fort Rosalie to Fort Panmure.

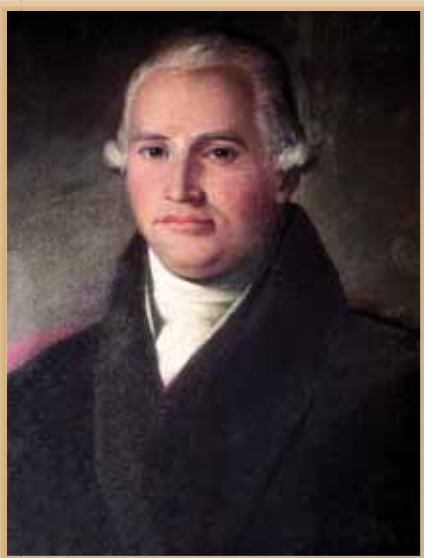
British Indian Policy

In 1765, the British government held an Indian Congress at Mobile, which was attended by Indian leaders from throughout the Southeast. The purpose of this conference was to reach an agreement by which the white settlers



Map 22 Natchez District

Map Skill: Which present-day Mississippi counties were in the Natchez District?



and Native Americans might live in peace. Out of this conference came pledges of friendship and trade agreements. British officials also promised Indian leaders not to sell whiskey, which was called **firewater**, to their tribesmen. The most important result of this meeting was that several Indian nations ceded large areas of their land to the British. The Choctaw surrendered some of their land around Natchez and Mobile, and both of these settlements prospered under British control.

Development of the British Natchez District

As the population of British West Florida increased, the colony was divided into four districts. One of those was the Natchez District, which included the area from the **confluence** (flowing together) of the Yazoo and Mississippi Rivers near Vicksburg, extending southward in a triangular shape to a forty-mile stretch along the Gulf Coast. This triangular-shaped district was similar in size and shape to the Natchez District created by the French.

Former British officers were given thousands of acres in land grants in the Natchez District in payment for their services during the French and Indian War, and a flourishing river trade and profitable agriculture attracted many settlers to the Natchez District. Although tobacco was the principal crop in the district, settlers also grew cotton, corn, and **indigo** (a plant from which blue dye could be obtained).

Natchez during the American Revolution

In 1776, when the thirteen American colonies declared their independence from England, the Natchez District remained loyal to the British. Most of the prominent citizens of Natchez were former British soldiers, and they did not support the American Revolution. Some Englishmen who did not support the Revolution moved to Natchez from the Atlantic colonies.

William Dunbar, one of Mississippi's most distinguished early citizens, moved to Natchez from Pennsylvania when the American Revolution began. Dunbar was a man of varied scientific interests, including astronomy. In 1803, Dunbar imported a large and powerful telescope from Europe. He generously shared the wonders of that marvelous instrument with the local citizens. The telescope was extremely popular, especially on those rare occasions when "shooting stars" and comets could be seen darting across the southern skies. But one local evangelical minister was not so impressed. He scolded Dunbar for prying on the privacy of the Almighty.

Because of its strategic location on the Mississippi River, Natchez was very important to the American colonies. The Spanish government, which controlled New Orleans and supported the American colonies, was sending arms and supplies up the Mississippi River to the Americans. The citizens of Natchez could and sometimes did prevent those shipments from passing through Natchez.



The Willing Expedition

The **Continental Congress** (the delegates who spoke and acted collectively for the colonies that later became the United States of America) sent a former Natchez resident, James Willing, on an expedition down the Mississippi River to Natchez and New Orleans. The purpose of his mission was to encourage Natchez citizens to join the American cause. If they would not join the rebellion, Willing was to persuade them to remain neutral and not interfere with supplies being shipped up the Mississippi to the American colonies. In addition, he was to go to New Orleans to purchase additional supplies from Spain and arrange for their shipment to the Atlantic colonies.

When Willing arrived at Natchez on February 21, 1778, he was greeted cordially, but he found that many Natchez residents were **Loyalists** (colonists who remained loyal to Great Britain). Probably exceeding his authority, Willing arrested several Loyalists, confiscated their property, and took them as prisoners to New Orleans. After selling some of their property, Willing became something of a problem to the Spanish authorities in New Orleans. They ordered him to leave the city and take his English captives with him. Spain was not yet at war with England, and they could not risk provoking an English attack on New Orleans to rescue the English prisoners.

Spain Declares War on England

The American Revolution, which kept England busy on the Atlantic coast, made her vulnerable to a Spanish attack along the Gulf Coast and

Above: Natchez remained loyal to the British during the Revolutionary War, using its position on the Mississippi to intercept American-bound arms from New Orleans. **Opposite page, below:** British Loyalist William Dunbar sought refuge in Natchez during the war.

Something Extra!

When James Willing finally left New Orleans, he was taken prisoner by an English warship and taken to New York.

Toward the end of 1779, he was exchanged for a British colonel.



Map 23 Disputed Boundary

Map Skill: Name another present-day city (besides Natchez) that lies in this disputed territory.

in Florida. Seeing the situation as an opportunity to regain Florida, Spain declared war on Great Britain in 1779 and attacked Fort Panmure, which the Spanish captured without much difficulty. Within two years, Spain had reoccupied most of Florida.

Natchez Revolt

The British citizens at Natchez refused to acknowledge the Spanish occupation of Florida, and, on April 22, 1781, a group of Natchez residents recaptured Fort Panmure. The

Natchez revolt was only temporarily successful, and Spanish forces regained the fort on July 23, 1781. During this turbulent period of transition from English to Spanish control, some English citizens fled the Natchez District.

Treaty of Paris of 1783

Under the provisions of the **Treaty of Paris of 1783**, the thirteen American colonies were recognized as an independent nation called the United States of America. Great Britain also ceded to the United States all of the land between the Atlantic Coast and the Mississippi River, and from Canada down to Spanish Florida. The boundary line between America and Spanish Florida was not clearly settled by the treaty. America claimed that the boundary should be the 31° parallel, which had been established as the original northern boundary of British West Florida in 1763. Spain, however, claimed that the boundary should be the 32°28' parallel, as amended by the British in 1764. What was at stake in this dispute was Natchez, and Spain was not going to give up this territory unless it was forced to do so. Because the young American republic was in no condition to take on Spain so soon after her revolution against Great Britain, the area between the 31° parallel and the 32°28' parallel remained in Spanish possession for the next fifteen years.

Reviewing the Section

1. Define in sentence form: Proclamation of 1763, firewater, confluence.
2. Why did the British move the northern boundary of West Florida from the 31° parallel to the 32°28' parallel?
3. Why did the Natchez District remain loyal to the British during the American Revolution?

Section 4

A Spanish Province, 1783-1798

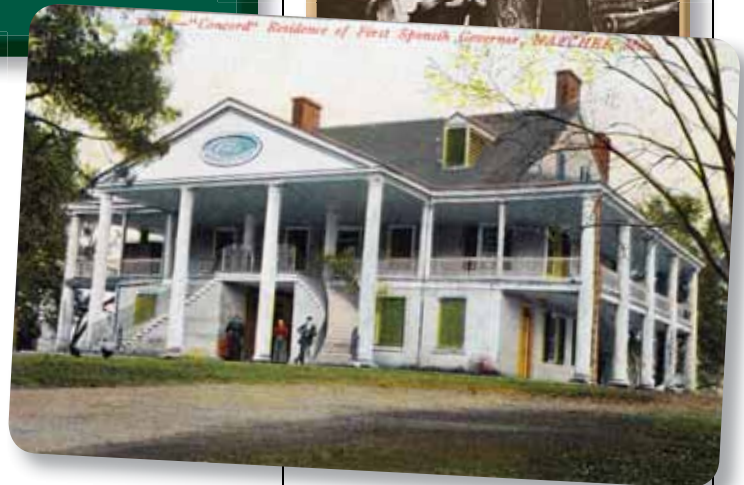
As you read, look for

- continued growth and prosperity in the Natchez District under Spanish control;
- accomplishments of Governor Manuel Gayoso de Lemos;
- problems such as the fear of slave uprisings;
- the departure of the Spanish authorities and the creation of a new American territory in Mississippi;
- terms: **militia**, **Treaty of San Lorenzo**, **right of deposit**.



Under Spanish control, the Natchez District

experienced continued growth and prosperity. Spain's liberal land grants attracted many settlers to the Natchez area. Although Spain was a Catholic nation, both Jews and Protestants were guaranteed religious freedom by the Spanish government. The migration of English and Americans into the Natchez District was so rapid that by 1787 a majority of the district's population spoke English rather than Spanish.



Governor Manuel Gayoso de Lemos

In 1789, Manuel Gayoso de Lemos was appointed governor of the Natchez District. A popular and intelligent governor, Gayoso ruled the district wisely and had the respect and cooperation of most of its citizens. "Concord," Governor Gayoso's mansion at Natchez, was frequently the scene of the kind of parties and festivities for which Natchez would later become famous.

Top right: Manuel Gayoso de Lemos served as the governor of the Natchez District from 1789 to 1798, when it was transferred to American control as part of Mississippi Territory. **Above right:** Sadly, the only records we have of Governor Gayoso's house, "Concord," are old photos and color postcards like this one.

Something Extra!

"Concord," which had greatly deteriorated after the Civil War, burned in 1901.



Above: When the Spanish gained control of British West Florida, Governor Gayoso elected to build two new forts further north on the Mississippi instead of repairing Fort Rosalie. This mural of Fort Nogales is one of a series of murals painted on the Vicksburg riverfront by Robert Dafford, depicting important events in the history of the city.

Spanish Forts

Fort Rosalie, originally built in 1716, was *dilapidated* (falling apart) and in need of repair when Gayoso came to Natchez. But Gayoso decided to build several new forts rather than repair Fort Rosalie. In 1791, the Spaniards built Fort Nogales near Vicksburg; in 1795, they constructed a fort on Chickasaw Bluffs. These two forts gave Spain effective control over the lower Mississippi River and its tributaries.

Population Increase

Population growth in the Natchez District kept pace with economic development. By the end of the Spanish period, the white population numbered approximately 4,500 and slaves numbered about 2,400. As the cotton culture became increasingly important to the Natchez economy, Spanish authorities encouraged settlers to bring their slaves into the Natchez District by offering additional land grants to slave owners.

Slave Revolt in 1795

In 1795, rumors about a possible slave revolt circulated throughout the Natchez District. The **militia** (a force of citizen-soldiers) was mobilized, and Spanish authorities arrested a group of slaves at Pointe Coupee, Louisiana, who were believed to be the leaders of the revolt. After several of those slaves were executed, the rumors of revolt and the fear bred by those stories were quieted. But such rumors would continue throughout the period of slavery. Southern whites lived in a constant state of fear of a massive slave uprising until the system of slavery was finally abolished.

America Acquires Mississippi

In 1795, while Spain was engaged in a war in Europe, America pressed its claim to the land north of the 31° parallel. Spanish officials were reluctant to give up this land. However, because they were already preoccupied with the European war, they did not want to risk another war in America. In such a war, Spain was sure to lose New Orleans and perhaps more. To save as much of their American colonial empire as possible, the Spanish gave up their

claim to the land north of the 31° parallel. Under the terms of the **Treaty of San Lorenzo** in 1795, Spain also allowed Americans free navigation of the Mississippi River. America was also given the right of deposit in New Orleans. The **right of deposit** was the privilege of depositing, or storing, goods, which they would later export to Europe without having to pay duties or taxes. Spain also promised to do what it could to restrain the Indians living in Spanish Florida from attacking American settlements along the border.

The Spanish authorities, especially Governor Gayoso, did not want to leave Natchez. They had homes and friends there and delayed their departure as long as possible. But after the 31° parallel was surveyed and marked in 1798, the Spanish had no more excuses to remain in Natchez. On the morning of March 30, 1798, Spanish authorities officially transferred the territory to the United States of America and left Natchez by river for New Orleans. As the American flag was raised over Fort Rosalie, accompanied by a fifteen-gun salute, Mississippi became an American possession.

From its creation as a territory in 1798 to its secession in 1861, Mississippi became the leading cotton-producing state in America and was known as the Heartland of the Cotton Kingdom. We will study those years in the following chapter.



Map 24 Mississippi Territory

Map Skill: In which year did the Mississippi Territory have the greatest increase in size?

Something Extra!

The Treaty of San Lorenzo is often called Pinckney's Treaty because it was negotiated by Thomas Pinckney for the United States.

Reviewing the Section

1. Define in sentence form: militia, Treaty of San Lorenzo, right of deposit.
2. Why would Manuel Gayoso de Lemos be considered a successful governor?
3. Why was Spain willing to give up land north of the 31° parallel in 1795?

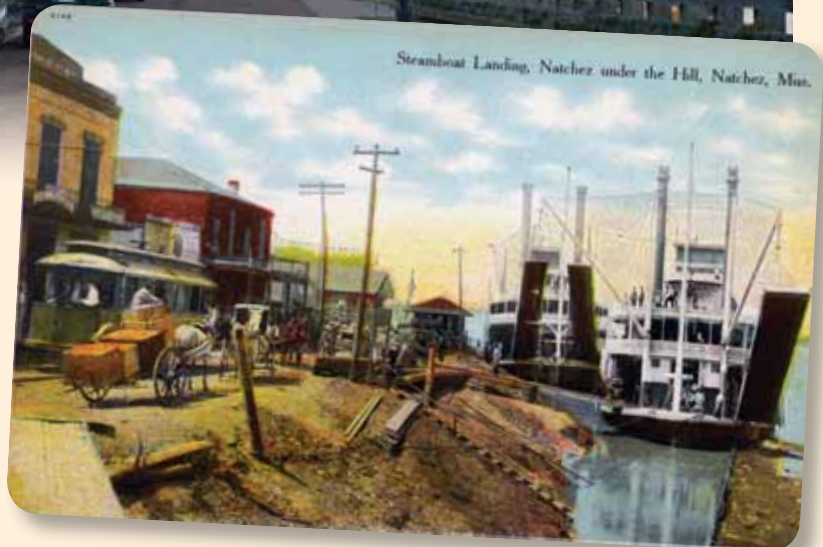
Of Special Interest

Natchez: The Wickedest Waterfront on the Mississippi



The city of Natchez is one of the most fascinating sites on the Mississippi River. It was the first permanent European settlement on the river; a multinational community; a city of intrigue, decadence, and sophistication; a town of two stories. There was “Natchez under the Hill,” which was known as the “wickedest waterfront on the Great River”; then there was the grandeur of “Old Natchez,” with its newspapers and reading rooms, palatial homes and millionaires, and its tiny suburb of Washington six miles to the east.

The European settlers of Natchez and its surrounding countryside developed a diversified economy that included manufacturing, agriculture, logging, and cattle. There were, however, side effects of manufacturing that were disturbing to the cattlemen. Livestock was an important part of the Natchez economy, with



Top: “Natchez under the Hill” as it looks today. **Above:** This old color postcard shows the bustling 19th-century steamboat landing on the “wickedest waterfront on the Great River.” **Opposite page, above:** “Old Natchez” is famous for its beautiful old mansions, like “Gloucester,” begun in 1796. **Opposite page, below:** Natchez was built on a high bluff overlooking the Mississippi River. At the foot of the bluff was the area called “Natchez under the Hill.”



over 14,500 head of cattle, 5,500 sheep, and 20,000 hogs in the Natchez environs. In 1793, a group of cattlemen complained that the chemical waste from the indigo factories was polluting the creeks and streams and was harmful to their livestock. In response to their complaints, Spanish Governor Manuel Gayoso fined

the factory owners and ordered them to discontinue dumping their wastes into the streams. That may have been the first antipollution law in our country.

The modern city of Natchez has kept much of the charm of Old Natchez. It bills itself as the place "Where the Old South Still Lives!"



Chapter Review

Chapter Summary

Section 1 Spanish Exploration

- Christopher Columbus sailed west in 1492 and discovered the New World.
- In 1539, Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto landed at Tampa Bay, Florida; his expedition traveled through the Southeast, reaching the Mississippi River on May 8, 1541.
- The expedition continued west, then returned to the Mississippi River where de Soto died; his survivors escaped to Tampico, Mexico.
- France, Spain, and England began establishing New World colonies; conflicting claims generated colonial wars.

Section 2 French Exploration and the Louisiana Province, 1673-1763

- French Canada's governor sent Father Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet to find and explore the Mississippi River.
- René Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle, reached the mouth of the Mississippi on April 9, 1682, and claimed its lands and tributaries for French King Louis XIV. He named it the Louisiana Province.
- Returning to Louisiana after a supply trip, La Salle missed the mouth of the Mississippi; Henri de Tonti grew tired of waiting at the river's mouth and returned to Canada but left a letter for La Salle with the Taensa.
- La Salle's crew assassinated him in Texas, buried him, and walked back to Canada.
- Frenchman Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, landed at Ship Island on February 10, 1699; on March 2, 1699, his expedition found the Mississippi River, and the Taensa gave them Tonti's letter.
- Iberville returned to the Gulf Coast and built Fort Maurepas on Biloxi Bay.
- In 1701, Louisiana's capital was moved from Fort

Maurepas to Fort Louis on Mobile Bay; Iberville's younger brother, Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville, became governor.

- Casquette girls came to the colonies to marry French soldiers and settlers.
- In 1716, Bienville built Fort Rosalie on bluffs at the Natchez landing.
- New Orleans became Louisiana's capital in 1722, and the province was separated from Canada; three of Louisiana's nine districts (Biloxi, Yazoo and Natchez) were in today's Mississippi. Bienville's 1724 Code Noir regulated slavery in the province.
- Overlapping land claims among France, England, Spain, and Indian allies led to the French and Indian War of 1754-1763.
- The Treaty of Paris of 1763 ended the war. France ceded eastern North America (except New Orleans) to England; France gave New Orleans and its land west of the Mississippi to Spain; and Spain ceded Florida to England.

Section 3 Under British Rule, 1763-1783

- In 1763, the English government divided former Spanish Florida into British West Florida (which included part of today's Mississippi) and British East Florida.
- The British moved West Florida's northern boundary from 31° to 32°28' to include Fort Rosalie (changed to Fort Panmure).
- The English Natchez District flourished with river trade and agriculture; many of its citizens were loyal to the British in the American Revolution.
- James Willing, on a mission for the American cause, confiscated property of some Loyalists and took them prisoners.
- Spain declared war on Great Britain in 1779 and captured Fort Panmure; Natchez residents recaptured it in 1781, but Spanish forces regained it.
- The Treaty of Paris of 1783 ended the American

Revolution and established the United States of America; disputed land between 31° and 32°28' stayed in Spanish possession for fifteen years.

Section 4 A Spanish Province, 1783-1798

- The Natchez District prospered under Spanish governor Manuel Gayoso de Lemos.
- In the 1795 Treaty of San Lorenzo, Spain gave up land north of 31°; on March 30, 1798, Mississippi became an American possession.

Activities for Learning

Understanding the Facts

1. List the present-day states the de Soto expedition traveled through in its quest for gold.
2. What three European nations struggled for control of the New World?
3. What phrase did the Indians use to describe the Mississippi River?
4. What territory did La Salle claim for France?
5. What was the first permanent settlement on the Mississippi River?
6. What three Louisiana Province districts later became territory in the state of Mississippi?
7. Describe the original boundaries of British West Florida.
8. List two results of the 1765 Indian Congress.
9. How did Spanish authorities respond to a slave revolt rumor in the Natchez District?
10. In what ways did the Treaty of San Lorenzo benefit American interests?

Developing Critical Thinking

1. How did the Spanish government use the war between Great Britain and the American colonies to their advantage?
2. How did the policies of Spanish authorities attract settlers to Natchez?

Writing across the Curriculum

1. Assume that you, Henri de Tonti, had agreed to meet La Salle at the mouth of the Mississippi River. After several weeks of waiting,

you have, reluctantly, decided to return to Canada. Before leaving, write a letter to La Salle explaining your decision.

2. In 1704, you are leaving home to resettle in the Louisiana Province. What articles would you place in your one small *casquette*? Why would you choose them?

Exploring Mississippi on the Internet

Go to http://www.pbs.org/wnet/colonialhouse/history/1628_southeast.html. Read "What was happening in 1628 in the Southeast?" Select two important events from the reading and summarize them.

Building 21st-Century Skills: Primary Sources

A primary source is an eyewitness (first-hand) account or record of an event. Primary sources include interviews, journals, legal documents, letters, and news articles. Historians use primary source evidence to reconstruct past events.

Read an excerpt from the Code Noir and answer the questions that follow:

Article XVIII: We forbid slaves from selling sugar cane...at the risk of a whipping for the slaves

Article XXXIII: The slave who has struck his master in the face or has drawn blood...shall be punished by death.

Article XLII: The masters may also, when they believe that their slaves so deserve, chain them and have them beaten with rods or straps.

1. Who is being regulated by the code?
2. What types of behavior are subject to punishment?
3. What types of punishment can be inflicted for violating the code?
4. What does this code suggest about slavery in the Louisiana Province?