

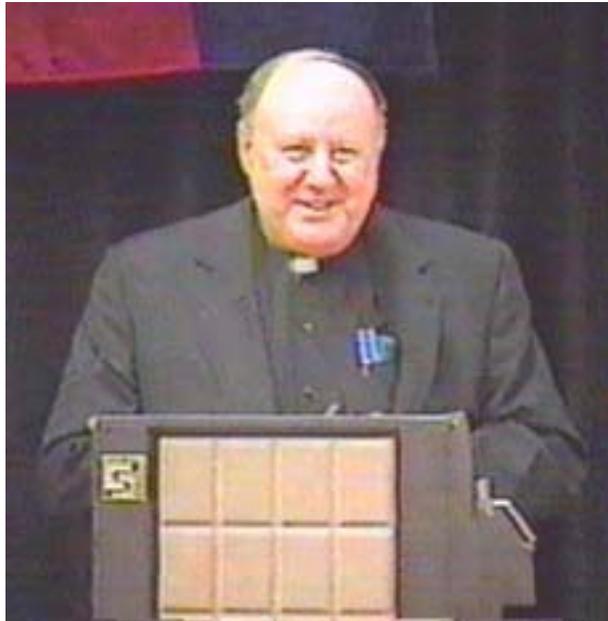
CAJUNS, CREOLES, PIRATES AND PLANTERS

Your New Louisiana Ancestors Format

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By Damon Veach

HEBERT BOOKS: As many of you have heard, Claitor's Publishing has acquired all of Father Donald J. Hebert's publications, and they are available now by checking out the main web site at www.claitors.com. In fact, two new volumes have just been released – [*Southwest Louisiana Records, Volume 43 \(1911\)*](#) and [*Southwest Louisiana Records, Volume 44 \(1912\)*](#). Clicking the preceding links will allow you to securely order these volumes online or you may call Claitor's at 225-344-0476 to order by phone. These are priced at \$70.00 each, and three more – Volumes 45, 46, and 47 - are at the bindery and will be available in three to four weeks. These books of early records are absolutely the best you are going to find anywhere, and they deserve a spot on all major library shelves, especially those with genealogical collections.



Father Hebert was 57 at the time of his death, and his funeral was held at 10 a.m. on Friday, February 25, 2000, at Church of Assumption BVM in Mire. He passed away at his home and was placed at rest in Assumption Cemetery. Father Hebert attended Immaculata Seminary in Lafayette, St. John Seminary in Little Rock, Ark., and graduated from Notre Dame in New Orleans in 1968. He was ordained June 1, 1968, in Lafayette.

He was an assistant pastor at St. Francis Regis in Arnaudville from 1968, until his assignment of assistant pastor in 1970, at St. Anthony in Eunice, until he became

pastor of St. Joseph in Cecilia in 1975. In 1980, he became pastor of St. Anthony in Eunice until he became administrator of Annunciation in Duralde in 1984. In 1985, he was pastor of Our Lady Queen of All Saints in Ville Platte until he became pastor of Church of the Assumption BVM in Mire in 1989, until his death.

Born on April 8, 1942, he is perhaps best known as the compiler of dozens of volumes of Catholic Church records in Southwest Louisiana, but he also wrote several other valuable books and helped to publish and promote other books. As a personal friend, I can only say that he was one of the most dedicated genealogists I have ever known. He was an individual who always wanted to make sure that records were preserved for future generations, and he placed much importance on getting all these church records in print. He also helped many genealogists by distributing their works.

I need to mention or describe something here that some publishers do and others completely refuse to do. This in a way determines the quality of some genealogical books. A major publisher like Claitor's strives to come up with near-perfect books. This requires long hours of proofing and re-proofing. This is all done in coordination with the authors or compilers of the material to be published.

When a book is self-published, you don't have the same scrutiny that a major publisher has to take in order to come up with the final print edition. A publisher also has to deal with an individual or individuals that may believe they have the best of the best manuscripts, and they let you know quickly that no editing needs to be done. It is a personal thing. It is something they don't want anyone else to change. They either want it published on their terms, or they have a book that needs expertise in the promotional and publishing area and will allow proper editing. Of course, any book can have an error even after proofing, but I refer here to the individual who has taken on the expense of publishing his or her own manuscript. Sometimes you have excellent final copies while at other times, it may be a disappointing manuscript or book.

Herein is the point that I need to make and perhaps clarify here. Father Hebert was a very generous and hard-working individual, and his books are some of the best that you will ever find in the genealogical marketplace. However, when Claitor's acquired the rights to publish and distribute all of these publications, it was learned that Father Hebert released many books by individuals who self-published their works. This is admirable, but the quality of the Hebert books are by far superior to many of those that he chose to help by distributing them through his own contacts.

Claitor's has the ability to do the same, and the difference is definitely worth mentioning. For instance, if I have a book of genealogical records that I compiled and granted Claitor's the right to distribute, this is a way of selling more of my previously published books. Therefore, Claitor's would be the distributor, not the publisher, and if it reached out-of-print status, distribution could continue with

Claitor's reproducing the book yet it would not be a new volume. It is just a way of reprinting without revising or going into another edition.

Just as Father Hebert was generous in his promotional efforts, so it goes for Claitor's. Self-published books are promoted by the author or compiler, not the publisher, and it is a kindness indeed to find any publisher that will take on a distribution of these self-published books. With Claitor's print-on-demand equipment, this is one way to go to get an out-of-print volume of great genealogical importance back into print. When you go into the Claitor's listings of books, you will note the volumes that fall into the self-published category.

As far as genealogical records go, even the best of publishers cannot guarantee complete accuracy. An example would be in the case of a published census record where someone claims to have had a relative living in a certain location during that census year, but they do not find a listing in the book they have purchased. This doesn't mean he wasn't there or got left out. It may not even be the census taker's error. If the ancestor was possibly a boarder in a home, the owner of the property may have omitted his listing because he was not a member of the household, or family. There are other reasons. They could have been skipped accidentally by the census taker, or they may be listed elsewhere - or maybe even have just simply been in a place where he or she wasn't available to be counted. Remember all the possibilities when researching family lines. Don't take one source as the final answer. Search out other means of locating that missing relative or ancestor. Just don't blame a publisher because there would be no way of knowing the true status of what happened in a case like this.

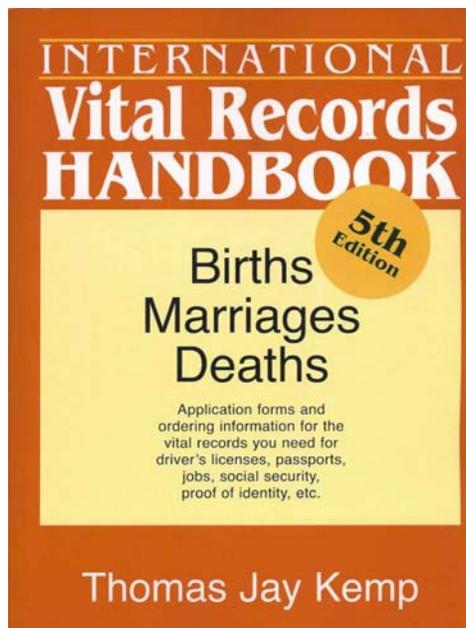
Now with this explanation taken, it might be a good time to check old volumes of genealogical value which may be available for re-printing. There are many self-published books that fall into this new category of possible distribution or even re-distribution through another source. Check into your files, and see if you have anything worthy of offering once more to the public. Making it available could mean something of great importance to researchers. Many self-published books are out there, but they are usually done in small quantities and without proper or well-known distribution points, most researchers will not know of their availability. Never overlook the importance of a self-published book. Just make sure the word gets out that they are available.

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REVISED HANDBOOK: At one time or another, researchers need copies of birth, marriage, or death certificates for driver's licenses, passports, jobs, social security, family history research or for simple proof of identity. However, the requirements and fees needed to obtain copies of vital records vary from state to state and from country to country, often requiring a time-wasting exchange of correspondence before the appropriate forms can be obtained.

The *International Vital Records Handbook* puts an end to all this wasted time. It offers complete, up-to-date information on how and where to request vital records. It also includes copies of the application forms, where available, thus simplifying and speeding up the process by which vital records are obtained.

The new 5th edition is now available, and it contains the latest forms and information for each of the fifty states and also furnishes details about records that were created prior to statewide vital records registration. In addition, it identifies vital records collections, online databases, and institutions of interest to genealogy researchers. Then, in alphabetical sequence, it covers the other countries of the world, giving, where available, the current application forms and instructions, as well as the key addresses of repositories or embassies that might help in obtaining copies of vital records.



If you are doing genealogy research and are not eligible to access a restricted record, you may be able to obtain an “information copy” of the record, which will contain all of the information found on the certified copy but will have a statement stamped on it saying that the document is for informational purposes only and cannot be used to establish identity. When a state does provide an informational copy for research, it is noted in this book. A number of searchable, free databases containing vital records are now available online, and many of these too have been noted in this book, as have specific repositories containing vital records collections that are accessible by genealogists.

Priced at \$49.95, plus \$5.00 for shipping and handling, this is definitely a book that should be kept on library shelves. And if you are needing information of this type and do not have access to a genealogical library collection, then this may be a wise investment to have in your personal library. It can be ordered directly from

Genealogical Publishing Company, 3600 Clipper Mill Rd., Suite 260, Baltimore, MD 21211-1953. If you have an older version of this book, it may be time to obtain this new edition.

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COLUMN INFORMATION: Correspondence to this column should be directed to Damon Veach, 709 Bungalow Lane, Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5337. Books and society publications are reviewed if sample copies are submitted with each request, and queries are published free of charge. These queries can be any length but should have a Louisiana connection by heritage or residence of researchers working on lines in other states or countries. Dated notices should be submitted several weeks prior to the scheduled event. The e-mail address is ancestorslaveach@cox.net.