

# CAJUNS, CREOLES, PIRATES AND PLANTERS

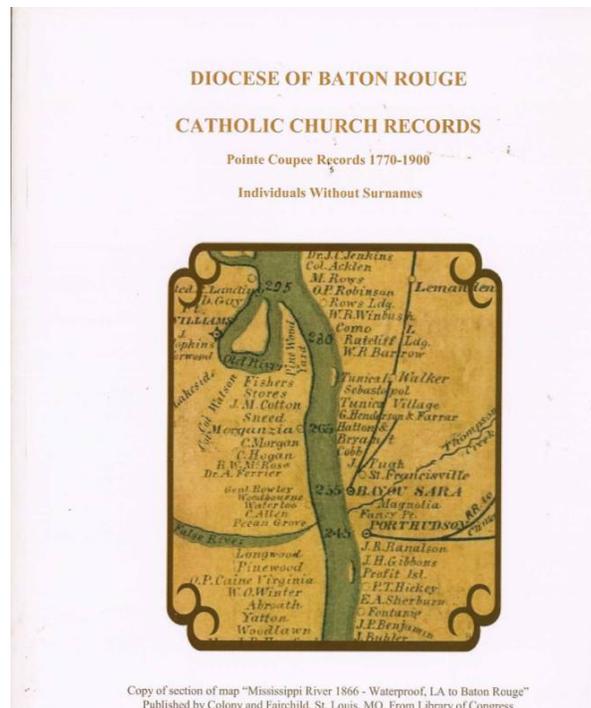
Your New Louisiana Ancestors Format

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By Damon Veach

**CHURCH RECORDS:** When researching family lineages, never overlook the importance of church records. The Catholic Church has done a wonderful job over the years, but some of the other denominations also have preserved records of births, deaths, and baptisms. In Louisiana, I like to point out two groups that have helped to present excellent record reproductions in book form – the Diocese of Baton Rouge and the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

The first is the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Archives Department. They have produced some of the finest reproductions of records for a number of years. I first started coordinating these publications with the late Nora Lee Pollard. According to Ann Boltin, MLIS, CA, Archivist/Records Manager, the last book they published was abstracts of sacramental records for slaves living in Pointe Coupee Parish. The Archives Department has been publishing the sacramental records of the diocese since 1978. *Pointe Coupee Records 1770-1900, Individuals Without Surnames* is one of their most recent releases.



They are now working on two projects. One is the continuation of publishing the slave records by civil parish for the diocese. They are almost finished proofing a manuscript that covers East and West Baton Rouge parishes and the Felicianas.

Volunteers are also working on abstracting baptism records for all parishes from 1900-1905. They intend to publish each sacrament in five year spans instead of putting them all together in one publication.

Because of the population explosion and the proliferation of records, they are unable to continue the usual "red book" format that researchers have come to expect each year. If this series is continued, each book would only cover one year. They have decided that disseminating the information efficiently was more important. Of course, since this information is not yet available, they do allow researchers to make appointments to come in and search the records after 1900.



All the publications were indexed by surname, so the records in these publications were never published. One exception is the reprint of the Pointe Coupee records in Volume 1b which contains all Pointe Coupee Sacramental records, including persons with and without surnames. The years included in the reprint remained the same as the original Volume 1, 1728-1769. This book follows the same format as Volume 1b with the entries being sorted by owner's name when given. Church parishes that were included were St. Francis of Pointe Coupee, St. Mary in New Roads, and Immaculate Conception in Lakeland. When used in conjunction with the series, Diocese of Baton Rouge Catholic Church Records, Volumes 1a-22, this book completes the church records found in the archives for the civil parish of Pointe Coupee. There are 7,282 entries in this book, and the entries include 5,342 baptisms, 12 marriages and 1,928 burials. The next two scheduled books will cover East Baton Rouge and St. James civil parishes.

*Pointe Coupee Records 1770-1900, Individuals Without Surnames* is available for \$25.00 plus \$2.25 tax for East Baton Rouge parish residents and \$1.00 for residents in other Louisiana parishes. Libraries and out-of-state mailings pay no sales tax. Postage for the first book is \$3.00 and \$1.00 for each additional book. They can be picked up at the Catholic Life Center, 1800 South Acadian Thruway in Baton Rouge from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Friday. Payment can be made by

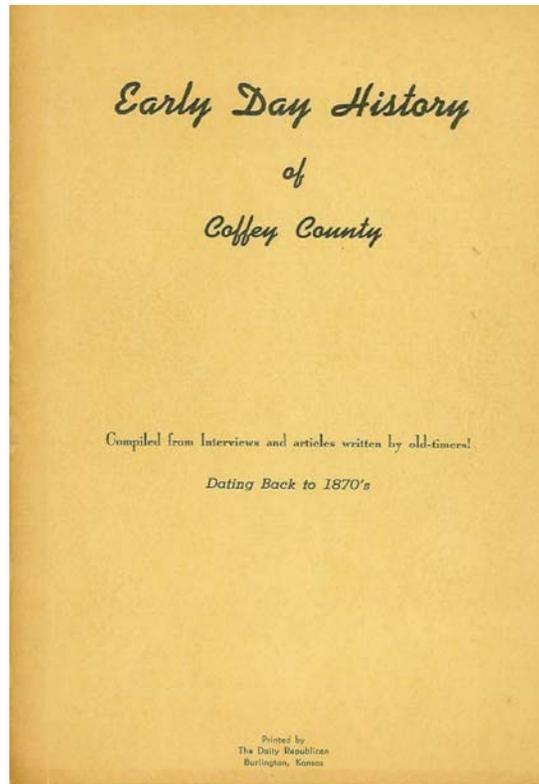
cash or check. Mail orders should be directed to Diocese of Baton Rouge, Department of the Archives, P.O. Box 2028, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-2028.

Their other recently released book titled *Roots of Faith: A History of the Diocese of Baton Rouge* is definitely one that all serious Louisiana collectors need. It is a full-color coffee table book on the history of the diocese from the earliest Catholic settlements in this area to the present day. This book is available for purchase in most Catholic parishes in the diocese as well as from the main office in the Catholic Life Center at 1800 South Acadian Thruway in Baton Rouge. The price of this book is \$32.00 plus appropriate taxes or shipping costs. Their web site can be found at [http://www.diobr.org/archives/published\\_sacramental\\_records.htm](http://www.diobr.org/archives/published_sacramental_records.htm).

Due to the challenges post-Katrina and the enormity of the work, the Archdiocese of New Orleans does not plan to continue publishing the sacramental records series. The Archives is still responding to research requests. They have updated their website – <http://www.archdiocese-no.org/archives>. Emilie G. Leumas, PhD, CA, Archivist, [lleumas@archdiocese-no.org](mailto:lleumas@archdiocese-no.org), can answer any further inquiries, but the web site is quite thorough, and you will probably find the information you seek there. The location of the Archives is 7887 Walmsley Avenue in New Orleans.

Other than these two major sources for the state of Louisiana, you will have to research the Internet to see what may have been published by each parish. Several individuals have come up with excellent church records. Many will be for Catholic Church records, but this is not always the case. It just appears that some groups were more concerned with these kinds of records than others.

As an example of a rare find, I would like to point out a small volume I located when I went to Kansas to check out family records. I stopped by the newspaper office in the little town of Burlington in Coffey County. Here I found a book of first-hand experiences of early residents, and within were many church records along with the individual accounts of moving to and settling in this part of the country.



Books of this type can be found in major library collections, and a search of the Internet will uncover many of these too. Just remember that you can't always tell by the title of the book all that is contained within. This is all part of the joy and frustration of genealogical research.

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**MISCELLANEA:** Queries are printed in this format free of charge. Books and society publications are also reviewed if a sample copy is sent with each request. Be sure to check out the new formats of this column when they are posted every Monday morning. And tell your genealogical friends about this free service. All back issues are archived for your convenience, and they are presented in three formats – PDF, HTML, and Word. Send news releases and other items directly to Damon Veach, Cajuns, Creoles, Pirates and Planters, 709 Bungalow Lane, Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5337. The e-mail address is [ancestorslaveach@cox.net](mailto:ancestorslaveach@cox.net).