

CAJUNS, CREOLES, PIRATES AND PLANTERS

Your New Louisiana Ancestors Format

Volume 2, Number 11

By Damon Veach



Photo by Glynn Riffel

Le Comite Board Members, left to right, Doris Falkenheiner, Cherryl Montgomery, Ann Riffel, Damon Veach, and Judy Riffel

BOARD MEETING: The Riffel home on Bartlett Street was the setting for the latest board meeting of Le Comite des Archives de la Louisiane. After the minutes and treasurer's report were accepted, the nominating committee for new officers was selected (namely Barbara Strickland and Warren Mestayer), and a lengthy discussion was made concerning the changes proposed to the by-laws. Other topics included the purchase of the latest Robert's Rules of Order along with website developments, publications report, membership report, and the final notes concerning the annual fall meeting.

This year, the annual meeting will take place at the Embassy Suites, Sunday September 26, 2010, 1 p.m. The next board meeting is set for El Rio Grande

Restaurant on Airline Highway on October 23, 2010.

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GENERAL MEETING: The general membership meeting of the Canary Islanders Heritage Society will take place on Saturday, June 12, 2010 at 11 a.m. at the Louisiana State Archives Building, 3851 Essen Lane. The speaker will be Paul Newfield who will discuss the Families of the Island La Gomera who came to Louisiana.

Information about the Canary Islanders Heritage Society of Louisiana can be found on the internet at www.canaryislanders.org, or you can contact the president of the society at rosemarie@canaryislanders.org. Thanks to Stephen Estopinal of Gonzales for sharing this information.

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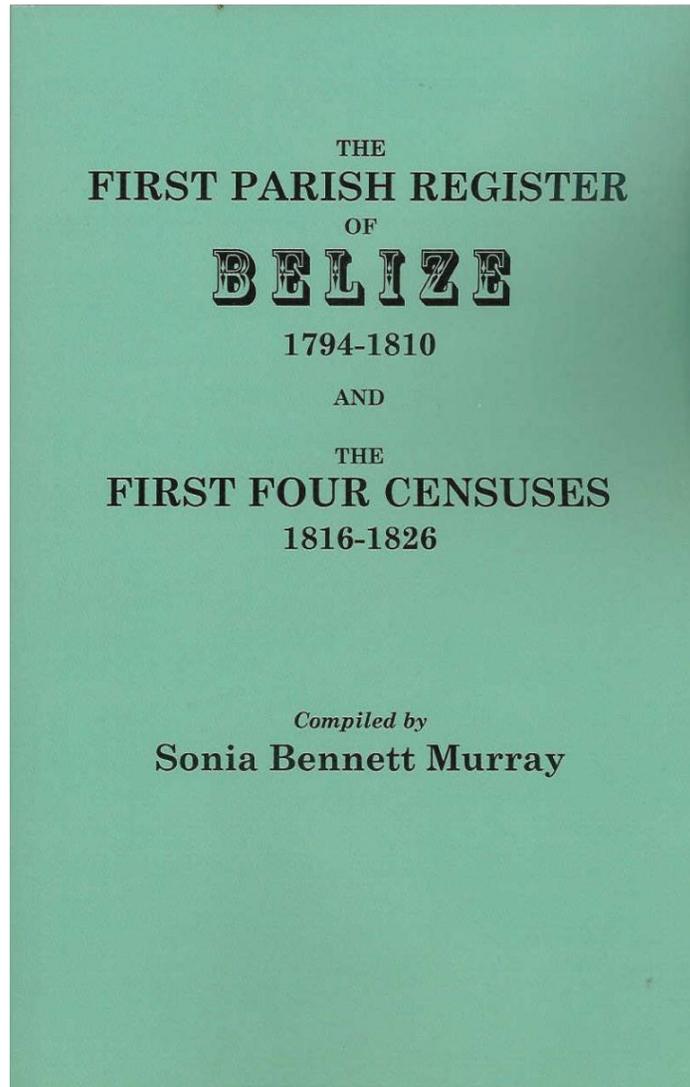
BELIZE RECORDS: Like most of Central America, Belize was originally the home to Mayan Indians. Occupied by Spain in the 16th century but relegated to a backwater status in its Empire, Belize fell under British control in the 1700s. Most of its 18th-century settlers came from Scotland, England, or Ireland, or were slaves imported from Africa. Belize's sea trade was extensive, so New Providence and other U.S. ports, as well as those in the West Indies, are mentioned in the records. Moreover, a number of Loyalists who fled the Carolinas at the end of the American Revolution settled in Belize (including Capt. James D. Yarborough, who gave the land for Yarborough Cemetery). Belize became an independent nation in 1981.

This volume is a collection of some of the earliest British genealogical records known to survive for this nation. Compiled by Sonia Murray from originals at the Belize National Archives in Belmopan, the volume contains transcriptions of the oldest extant parish register (1794-1810) for Belize and four of its oldest censuses.

The First Parish Register of St. John's Church (1794-1810) contains records of birth, marriage, baptism, and death. The baptisms, for example, give the name of the infant; the date of, or age at, baptism; the names of parents; and, frequently, the names of grandparents. Death records identify the decedent by date and occupation, and occasionally by next of kin. Slaves or free blacks are usually so designated in all record categories. Owing to Belize's large Scottish influence, naming practices were influenced by the patronymic custom. In these cases women retained their maiden surnames throughout their lives, regardless of marital status. As the author points out, "this is a blessing to genealogists, identifying women at a time and place in which many people died young, and quick re-marriage was the rule."

The four censuses transcribed for the book (the household censuses of 1816, 1823, and 1826, as well as the slave census of 1820) convey a clear sense of the ethnic makeup of Belize society. Heads of household and slave masters, for example, are

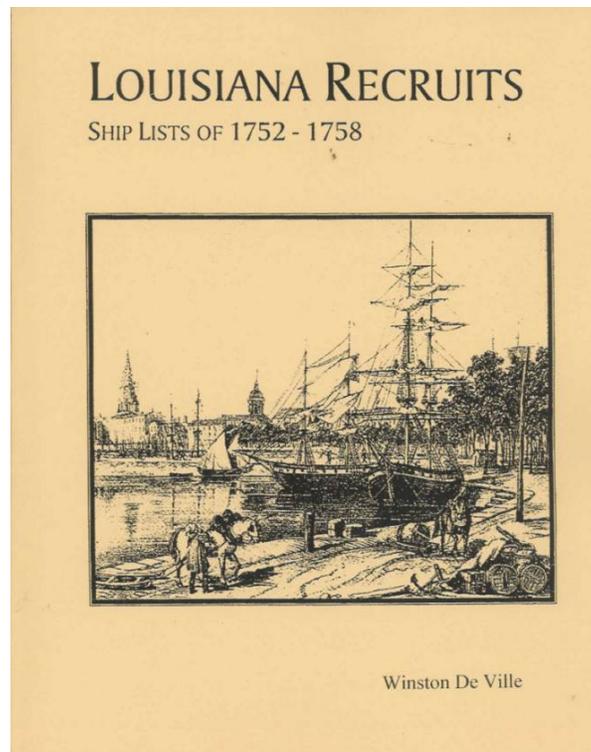
identified as white, colored, or free black. "Coloured" refers to free Amerindians and people of mixed race (white/Indian, black/Indian, white/black, or white/black/Indian). Slaves could be black, mulatto, mixed race, or Amerindians or their descendants who had been slaves on the Mosquito Shore before 1776. Although head of household information is the most detailed in each census, we are given the name of every other person living in each household as well.



The First Parish Register of Belize, 1794-1826 and the First Four Censuses, 1816-1826 is a fully indexed work that identifies thousands of 18th- and early 19th-century inhabitants of Belize never before accessible to researchers. Orders should be sent directly to Clearfield Company, 3600 Clipper Mill Road, Suite 260, Baltimore, MD 21211. The price is \$34.50, postage and handling included.

ANOTHER RE-ISSUE: Winston De Ville presents in this book a look at the troops from the independent companies of the Navy and destined for service in the French Colony of Louisiana. With a preface by Rene Chartrand and an index by Gladys de Villier and Mary Chadbourne, this book details in chart form those men dispatched to the colony. This is perhaps one of the best in De Ville's list of achievements. It is such an important documentation of these early residents and will be an important addition to any genealogical library.

Based on records long-undiscovered in the National Archives of France, this book contains the recruit's name, the names of his parents, including the mother's maiden name, his place of birth, and his profession. This is one of the few works that addresses migrations to Louisiana after the initial period of settlement, and before the Spanish regime.



This reprint comes from Claitor's Publishing of Baton Rouge, and the price is \$26.00. [ORDER NOW!](#)

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FREE SERVICE: Correspondence to this column should be directed to Damon Veach, Cajuns, Creoles, Pirates and Planters, 709 Bungalow Lane, Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5337. The e-mail address is ancestorslaveach@cox.net. Queries and book reviews are printed as space permits, and you are encouraged to take advantage of this free service. Claitor's Publishing can serve as a distributor for self-published

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