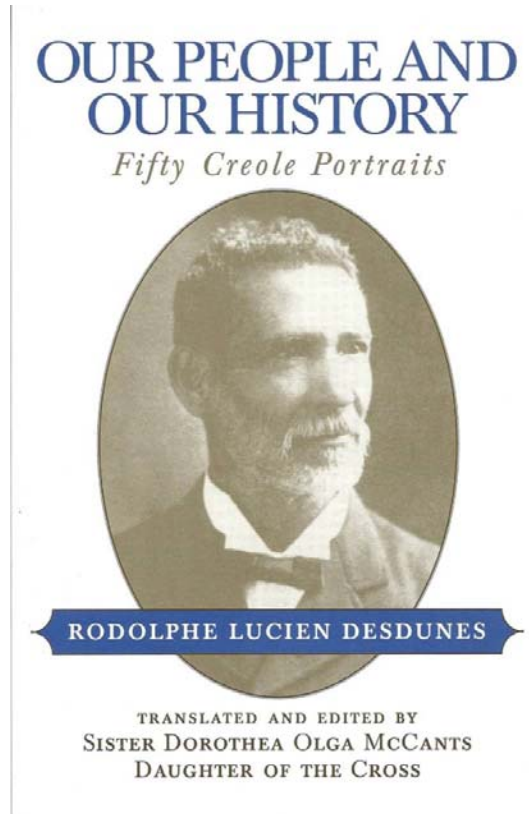


CAJUNS, CREOLES, PIRATES AND PLANTERS

Your New Louisiana Ancestors Format

Volume 4, Number 12



CREOLE PORTRAITS: In *Our People and Our History, Fifty Creole Portraits*, originally published in French in 1911 and translated into English in 1973, Rodolphe Lucien Desdunes records the lives of fifty prominent Creoles who lived in New Orleans at the end of the nineteenth century. Desdunes was a Creole and had little formal education, but he was an articulate observer of his times and culture. His portraits of doctors, lawyers, teachers, musicians, artists, and writers of his race are powerful evidence of the extraordinary role that Creoles played in the cultural and political history of Louisiana.

In 1804, the French-speaking population of New Orleans addressed a memorial of protest to the U.S. Congress. Their language was threatened, and their petition was to help stop a sudden elimination of the French language from the legislature and the courts.

In 1968, the legislature of the state of Louisiana passed a bill that assures the teaching of French in public elementary and high schools. Between these two events in history, we can see how the French language has survived. Much has been written about French-speaking gentlemen both in fiction and non-fiction, and many

sketches can be found of the plantation period of Louisiana men, their women and their children.

What few people realize is that many a French-language writer of nineteenth-century Louisiana was partly of African ancestry. Many poets, journalists, and dramatists came from among the free people of color. They stood apart yet shared in the formation of the culture of this state as we know it today.

Our People and Our History, Fifty Creole Portraits was translated and edited by Sister Dorothea Olga McCants, Daughter of the Cross, a religious order at St. Vincent Academy in Shreveport, and she is also known for her translation of *They Came to Louisiana: Letters of a Catholic Mission, 1854-1882*.

This book can be ordered from any major bookstore or directly from Louisiana State University. The foreword was written by Charles E. O'Neill, S.J., and it is an excellent look at this period with great documentation and references. This was followed up by a great introduction by the translator. This is definitely one that should be in all major libraries in Louisiana, and it makes for a great addition to any personal library. It is an important part of this state's history and legacy.

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HISPANIC ANCESTRY: *Hispanic Confederates* is now in its third edition and is a great source for tracing Hispanic ancestors. Although it is not generally acknowledged, thousands of soldiers of Hispanic ancestry fought on behalf of the Confederacy during the American Civil War. As a result of the Spanish colonial settlement of the Gulf Coast states and Mexican control of the territories that were to become Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona, a significant number of Hispanic-Americans were affected by the outbreak of the Civil War.

As John O'Donnell-Rosales explains in the Introduction to the new Third Edition of his ground-breaking list of Hispanic Confederate soldiers, many of these individuals (including businessmen and sailors living in cities like New Orleans, St. Louis, Natchez, Biloxi, and Mobile) would have to choose between their cultural aversion to American slavery, which had been outlawed throughout Latin America prior to 1860, and the desire to protect their way of life in the South.

After consulting a number of primary and secondary sources, including numerous rosters of Confederate soldiers, the author has compiled the only comprehensive roster of Hispanic Confederate soldiers in print. The number of soldiers listed here has grown to 6,175 men, a number nearly twice as large as identified in the first edition.

Included among the soldiers are (1) persons of Jewish descent whose ancestors were expelled from Spain in 1492, (2) mestizos of Spanish/Native American ancestry who joined many of the Texas regular and militia units, (3) mulattos of Spanish/African

ancestry, (4) soldiers of Asian descent whose forebears had emigrated from the Philippines to Louisiana and other places along the Gulf of Mexico, (5) Minorcans of Florida whose ancestors had intermarried with Italians, Corsicans, and Greeks and settled in Florida under British rule, and (6) white Spaniards, Cubans, Mexicans, and Islenos of Louisiana.

The author has arranged the *Hispanic Confederates* in alphabetical order. For each person, he gives the individual's full name, rank, and unit. In many cases researchers also learn something about the individual's tour of duty (e.g., "Confederate Spy in Baltimore from 1861-1862," "captured on the Blockade Runner Stingaree off the Brazos River, Texas" and so on.) At the back of the book is a bibliography of the sources the author used in compiling this unique list.

This book is priced at \$29.50, postpaid, and it can be ordered from the Clearfield Company, 3600 Clipper Mill Road, Suite 260, Baltimore, MD 21211. It is a soft-cover publication.

Another book from this publisher that is a great research aid is *Norwegian Connections From Arctic Fjord to American Prairie* by Judy Jacobson. As she has done in a number of her other publications, genealogist and librarian Judy Jacobson has universalized an individual family history by giving it broader significance as an example of settlement patterns.

In this case, her focus is upon her husband's Norwegian ancestors, the Jacobsons, and others who left the Arctic Circle fishing communities like Arberg, Harstad, Moen, and Fredriksberg, commencing with the outbreak of the American Civil War, for homesteading and other opportunities in Minnesota, North Dakota, and other states of the Great Plains. Although many Norwegians emigrated for religious and political reasons, the author reminds readers of economic dislocation in Norway owing to the uncertainties of the fishing and mercantile industries. It reached such proportions that approximately 200,000 Norwegians emigrated in the 1880s. By the turn of the century, Norwegians represented the largest ethnic group among the 183,000 persons living in North Dakota.

After providing the reader with ample background on the history of Norwegian immigration, Jacobson turns to her principal objective: to record the genealogies of families from the Arctic fjords. In this context, she sheds light upon the unusual naming practices that make identifying Norwegian ancestors difficult.

For example, Norwegian children typically did not take their father's surname, and surnames were in fact derived from the father's given name. This phenomenon helps to explain why the book ends with a given-name index and a surname index (as well as with indexes of subjects and place names). This important lesson in Norwegian onomastics is followed by detailed genealogical and biographical accounts, drawn from primary and secondary sources, of the following families: Eide, Eidissen, Erichsen, Frostad, Gjertsen, Hemmingsen, Ingebrigtsen, Jacobson,

Johansen, Pedersen, Rasmussen, Sagan, Seversen, and Simonsen. Rounding out this fascinating volume are illustrations of various Norwegian communities of origin, several genealogical appendices, and an extensive list of sources.

It is priced at \$38.50, postpaid.

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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 can be any length, and book reviews are printed as space permits, and you are encouraged to take advantage of this free service. All genealogical/historical/preservation books are reviewed in this column format, but a review copy is necessary for this service. Another service is offered here too. Claitor's Publishing can serve as a distributor for self-published genealogy titles. Go to their homepage for details on how you can obtain this excellent service. It is a way to get out-of-print books back into the system and definitely is a great assistance to genealogists who may need this information.