

CAJUNS, CREOLES, PIRATES AND PLANTERS

Your New Louisiana Ancestors Format

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SEMINAR INFORMATION: Aaron Holt, an Archives Technician at the National Archives, will give an afternoon seminar on records available at the National Archives Fort Worth Branch. His presentation will consist of three parts. In the first, he will cover the general holdings of the National Archives Fort Worth Branch. This includes microfilm copies of records held by the National Archives (NARA) in Washington, D.C., as well as records held exclusively by the regional branch in Fort Worth. Of particular interest to Louisiana researchers are the naturalization records of the U.S. District Court in New Orleans.

The second part of Holt's presentation will focus on the recently released 1940 federal census. Using period articles and images, he will cover the preparations and enumeration of the United States. He'll also demonstrate how to navigate NARA's website to view the 1940 census for free and the county/parish plat maps.

In the third part, he will discuss some Native American resources available at the Fort Worth facility. Starting with a quick historical overview of the federal government and Native Americans, he will touch on the Native American holdings of NARA at Fort Worth. His primary focus will be on the Five Civilized Tribes (Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, Seminole, and Cherokee) and how to research those tribes.

The seminar will be held Sunday, September 30th, at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 4914 Constitution Avenue, in Baton Rouge. It is part of the Annual Meeting of Le Comité des Archives de la Louisiane and is free to members. Non-members may join at the door for the \$20 annual membership fee. Registration begins at 1:00 p.m. A short business meeting will be held at 1:15 and the program begins at 1:30.

Le Comité has been a prolific publisher of Louisiana genealogical source material since the late 1970s. Many of these publications will be available for sale at deeply discounted member prices for this one-day event only. All available back issues of the quarterly journal, *Le Raconteur*, will be offered at 50 cents each and a small number of used genealogical books and periodicals will be available. Indexes to *Le Raconteur* and selected books can be searched online.

For more details on this active group, check out their website at www.lecomite.org.

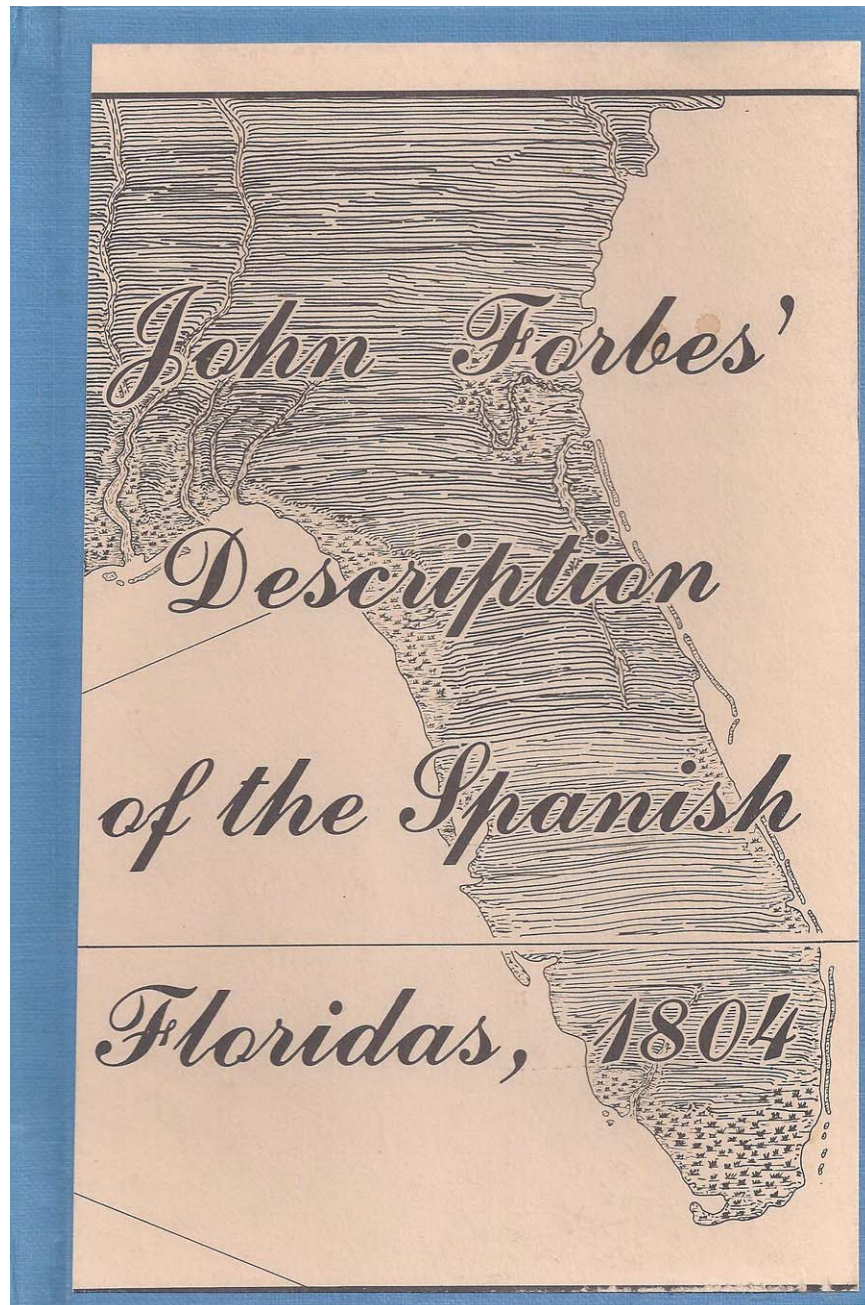
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DATA NEEDED: Balthazard Ricard DeVilliers (1727-1782) came to Louisiana as a young French army officer. When Spain took over the colony, he joined the Spanish army and served as commandant at several posts. He was married in New Orleans in 1760 to Françoise Voisin, by whom he had four children, three of whom left numerous descendants in Louisiana.

One of his descendants, Judy Riffel, has formed a Facebook page called Descendants of Balthazard Ricard DeVilliers where she has begun posting genealogical information and photographs. Descendants interested in joining the group can contact her at riffelj@bellsouth.net or via Facebook.

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EARLY RECORDS: Much has been written about those areas that are included in the Florida Parishes of Louisiana, but one book that stands out on the early history is *John Forbes' Description of the Spanish Floridas, 1804*.



Spain was unhappy and protested the 1803 purchase treaty of Louisiana. Carlos Martinez de Irujo, the Marques de Casa Irujo, protested that the purchase was a violation of the terms under which Spain had retroceded Louisiana to France. It was also rumored that the purchase included all of West Florida to the Perdido River or that area of French Louisiana east of the Mississippi River prior to 1763.

This all led to the preparation and collection of a number of documents pertaining to the history and limits of Florida and Louisiana to clearly prove that West Florida could not possibly have been included in the Louisiana Purchase. Since John Forbes had lived in Spanish West Florida, Casa Irujo requested a description of Florida from him. For Forbes, this meant a chance to promote the firm he represented, which was soon to become John Forbes and Company.

Little is know of Forbes' early life before he reached Pensacola in 1785. He was a son of James and Sarah Gordon Forbes and was probably born in Aberdeen, Scotland, ca1769. An uncle was a Charleston merchant and purchased large tracts of land from the Spaniards of East Florida.

The introduction to this rare and limited edition is well documented, and Forbes' description of the Spanish Floridas is an important work for anyone researching this part of the history of Louisiana and the southern states along the Gulf of Mexico. Three maps are included. One is of Florida and the Gulf region from Forbes' description. Another is the correct geographic locations of the Southeast in 1804. The third map shows the Choctaw land cessions to the United States, 1801-1802.

This book was edited with the introduction by William S. Coker. It was translated by Vicki D. Butt, Joyce Lee Durbin, Maria Del Carmen MacDonald, Mary Ellen West, and Coker. The maps were by Jerome F. Coling with an index prepared by Polly Coker. It was printed by E.O. Painter Printing Company, DeLeon Springs, Florida with a copyright in 1979 by the Perdido Bay Press.

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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.