

EARLY HISTORY OF OLD BATON ROUGE

HOW SUGAR CANE CULTURE WAS STARTED

HISTORY OF SUGAR INDUSTRY IN ALL OF ITS BRANCHES

(Sarah Turnbull Sterling.)

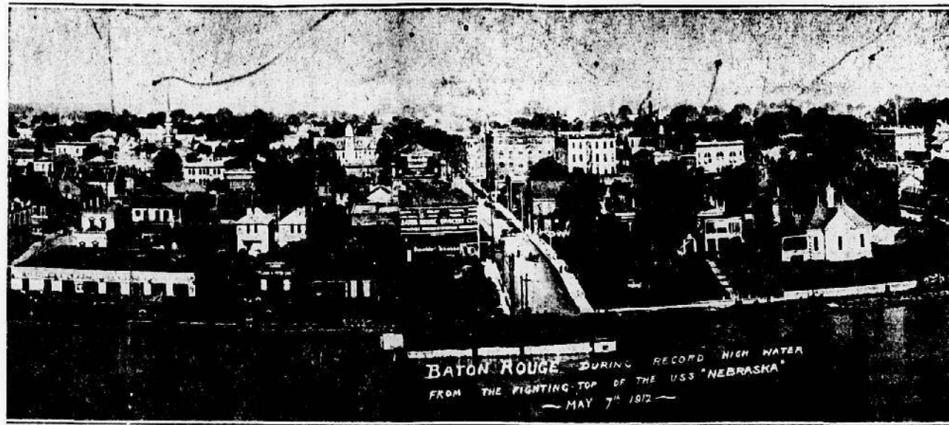
The year 1749 marked an event that was to make a great change in the welfare of Louisiana. This was the planting of sugar cane by Jean Etienne de Bore, and the result—the first well granulated sugar. Others had tried, the Jesuits, 1751, Dubris, a wealthy planter, Mendez and Solis, "had given some attention to the planting of that reed," "one of them boiled its juice to syrup; the other distilled it into a spiritous liquor of a very inferior quality called taffia."

"Bore was born in Kaskasia, in the Illinois district, on December 27, 1741. His father was Louis de Bore of an old Norman family; his mother was Therese Celeste Carriere de Montbrum. Robert de Bore, one of the Councilors and a Steward of Louis XIV household, was one of Bore's ancestors.

Etienne Bore received a military training, which may account for the self reliance and firmness of his character. He married in 1771 the daughter of Destrehan, ex-treasurer of Louisiana under French dominion. Etienne de Bore settled (presumably) on his wife's plantation in St. Charles Parish and later exchanged it for one about six miles from New Orleans, which is now Audubon Park on the upper limit.

Against the earnest solicitation of his wife, and friends, who thought the climate too cold for the cane to produce saccharine matter enough to be profitable, he bought a quantity of seed cane and commenced to build his sugar house. A gentleman named Morin who was in New Orleans from San Domingo, went to see Bore to expostulate with him, but being in-

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF BATON ROUGE



Scene of Louisiana's Capital City, taken from the Mississippi river when the "Father of Waters" was at flood stage.

TWO LEGENDS OF ITS DERIVATION OF A NAME

RED STICK IS THE FRENCH MEANING OF NAME OF CITY

There are two legends connected with the naming of Baton Rouge. Dupratz in his history of Louisiana says Baton Rouge is situated on the eastern bank of the Mississippi river at a distance of 26 leagues above New Orleans. "It is there," says he, "one sees the famous cypress trees, from one of which a ship carpenter made two pirogues, one sixteen, the other eighteen tons measurement. As cypress is red one of the voyagers remarked that a splendid cane or walking stick might be made from one of these trees. From that time the place was called Baton Rouge or Red Stick." Another claims that the name Red Stick was given this place by the first French voyagers for the reason that poles or sticks painted red were used by Tunica Indians to mark the boundaries between themselves and the Houmas located on the lower side of Bayou Manchez, formerly known as the river Iberville.

Both statements are made by early historians and the reader of to-day may make choice between them.

The first concession made by the French government was to Diron D'Artaquette but after the failure of Crozat, many wealthy individuals were granted concessions including the lands given D'Artaquette and embracing nearly all that portion of this parish fronting on the Mississippi river.

In the year 1763 by treaty the Floridas passed into the possession of the British with Captain George Johnston, Governor, who immediately sent a detachment of troops to Baton Rouge to construct a small fort and from that time Baton Rouge was

spired by Bore's firmness, asked to be his sugar maker, and his was the first voice to cry out in Louisiana, "It granulates." These words rang through the country. He sold his sugar for twelve and a half cents per pound, and his molasses for fifty cents a gallon, and made a profit of twelve thousand dollars. In 1795 Etienne Bore died on his plantation, twenty-four years after the first crop was made, leaving each of his three daughters one hundred thousand dollars. Bore was the first Mayor of New Orleans, the grandfather of our historian, Judge Gayarre. These things happened during the gracious rule of his Excellency the Baron de Carondelet, and Governor Johnson. I have taken the facts from Prof. Alcee Fortier's "History of Louisiana."

Much curiosity has been felt about the quite small and old sugar kettle turned bottom upward on the campus at the Louisiana State University. Colonel J. W. Nicholson told me that was the kettle used by Bore. The sirup de battery. Exactly who gave it to the State of Louisiana he does not recall, but it was the property of the State, and was in the Capitol grounds until the civil war. During the war

it was used by Mr. Dent, the brother-in-law of General Grant, to make rum in. Afterwards it was bought at auction, or a sale of old iron, by Messrs. Hill and Blackie, East Baton Rouge, for their new foundry, but knowing its value, they did not break it up, and in 1890 or '91, at the solicitation of Colonel Nicholson, these gentlemen gave it to the Louisiana State University, and Colonel Nicholson had it placed on the little mound where it now is. It is to be regretted that there is no tablet marking its history.

I have to write this in little chapters as memory comes back from childhood of the "Sugar House", up to the present time. After Bore's time, from the Tunica Hills to the gulf, the "sugar making season" was one of delightful festivity. The very heart of it was on the "coast" about Baton Rouge and even down among the orange groves of the "lower coast." When "Mammy" would dip peeled oranges into the boiling sirup and set them over night in the "frost" for "my chiles good tas' in de mornin." Oh! halcyon days, Oh! Opal days of sugar making season, from the dawn when the whistles from the

sugar houses blew the end of the first watch, and the first sunbeams woke up to a new delight in this beautiful land. The grey mists of morning floated up from the blue, blue river, laden with the perfume of crushed cane. The amber autumn sun that shone down at early morning on the frosty green fields, and later on the long beautiful rows of purple cane with golden roads between. Our dear beautiful southern land, and the sunshine that touches all the "China trees" to gold, the "shumac" hedges, and down on the coast, the orange groves.

The men come trooping in from the night watch to breakfast, whittling little paddles for to "to tas" the new sirup with when we go down, telling us of the "strike," which does not mean an uprising of labor, but the number of barrels of sugar successfully "taken off." Those banquet spread breakfasts, topped off with buckwheat cakes and "La Quite," that make the modern "menu" maker consider, think, enough for a week's supply. All is excitement; we set the housemaids to work shelling pecans and walnuts for pralines. Then the neighbors begin to come in, all, all is

sugar house news. "How was our 'strike'?" Theirs was pretty fair, pretty fair." With these small words one could scarce know that fortunes were made or lost.

You ought to hear "Tatatante" tell about the old days. She is so stately and sweet, presiding over an old southern home, its very gallery shaded up by great magnolia trees, and her roses, ah! She has gathered three generations of niece and nephew children about her, and the gentleness and love of the present day take the place of the glory behind her. She who "received in Paris" was the

friend and correspondent of Lamatine and Voltaire. When she tells of the days of the slave owners, who seemed Princes on their own lands, and lived like them. The aristocrats of Louisiana, Bonnezeze, Villeneuve, Allain, Dubroca, Favrot, Besant and dozens of others. Prince Murat, Governor Claiborne. How they used to ride down to the sugar houses in their stately coaches, with little "niggers" up behind to open all the gates, generally a hoary headed "kerridge driver" and a younger darkey to see that all the harness was in order. They

(Continued on page seven)

Mr. and Mrs. Home Builder

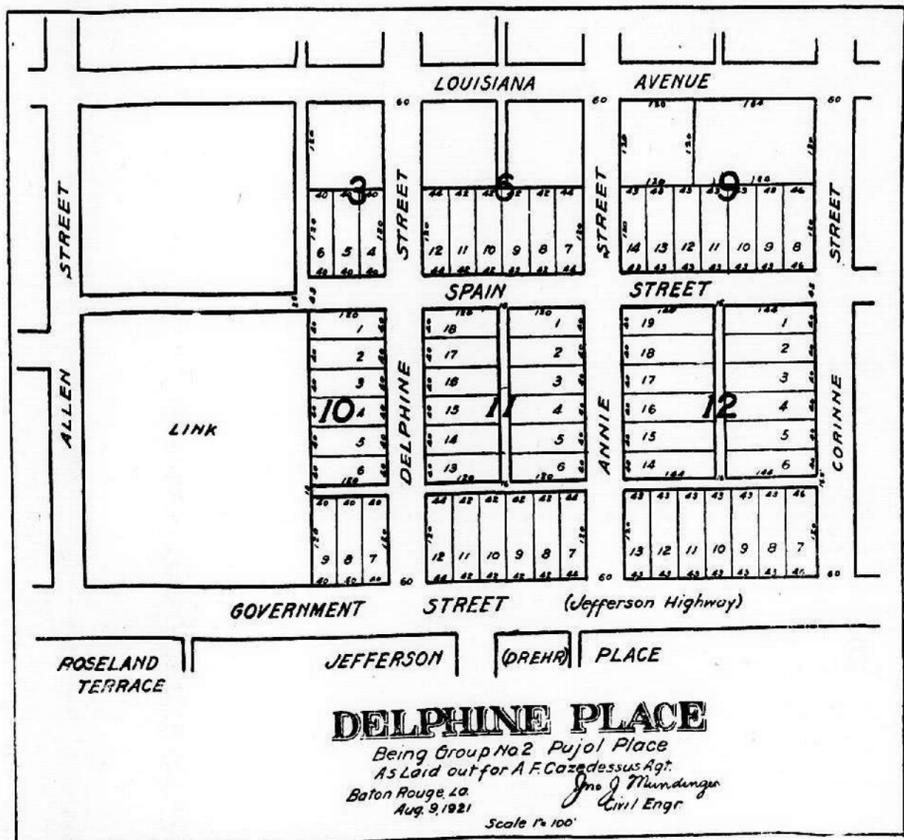
You are invited to carefully investigate "Delphine Place" a plat of which is here before you.

A. F. Cazedessus

Sole Agent

210 Third St. Phone No. 36

Baton Rouge, La.



Remember that "DELPHINE PLACE" is the last and most beautifully located subdivision that will be available for some time to come, close to schools and street car transportation.

Your favorable consideration should be attracted by the location of "DELPHINE PLACE," in a section already built up with modern homes, owned and occupied by some of our best citizens, on the Jefferson Highway, which is certain to improve in beauty as well as construction, because of its being the main thoroughfare leading to other high-class subdivisions, the Golf and Country Club and thence to New Orleans.

Every lot in "DELPHINE PLACE" will be served with graveled streets, paved sidewalks, city water and electric light lines, all of which are now being installed at no extra cost to purchaser of lots.

You will observe that alleys have been provided to serve nearly all the lots, which means that electric light, telephone and water lines will be located in the alleys instead of the streets.

Prices range from \$750 per lot up. Only a few lots at over \$1,000.

Terms, 20% cash, balance \$25 per lot monthly.

Contracts contain restrictions adequate to insure a strictly high-class, exclusive residential place.

This is your last chance to get what you need for a homesite on easy terms, so don't put off until lots are all sold.