

NEW ORLEANS OF SEVENTY YEARS AGO

Claimed the Largest Interior Territory for Its Commerce.

Some of the Houses Which Were Leaders Then,

The Banks in Operation, the Street Numerical System,

And Other Interesting Facts Gathered from One of the Oldest Directories Here.

It is interesting to look over the old directories of New Orleans. The most complete set in existence is found in the office of our distinguished legal friend, Mr. J. Q. A. Fellows, whose comprehensive knowledge of the New Orleans of other days has been made familiar to the readers of the *Picayune* in the several articles on the subject of the old faubourgs of the city, heretofore published in this paper and prepared from information furnished by Mr. Fellows.

The set of directories in the possession of Mr. Fellows is complete back to 1840. Then 1846, 1841, 1838, 1834 and 1827. This last is quite a contrast with the directory of the present year. In size it is 4 by 6 1-2 inches, and about half an inch thick. It is not paged, has about 35 names on a page, 134 pages, or about 4300 names. It was compiled and published by John Adams Paxton, at the price of \$2; Lyman & Beardslee, printers, 56 Chartres street.

Among the advertisements is that of the Planters' Hotel, illustrated, 15 Canal, kept by Warfield & Moore, "formerly by Thomas Boale, and recently by Harvey Elkins." On the opposite page is a full-page notice of Pontchartrain Retreat, "erected last year by Mr. Harvey Elkins." Then follows the National Hotel, 107 Chartres, between Conti and St. Louis streets, kept by J. P. Cooper. Next the Lancaster School, for persons of color, 272 Dauphine street.

Durand & Thine advertise locksmith and blacksmith work, casting, etc., 174 On-the-levée, suburb Marigny.

James Moonoy, builder and architect.

William McKean gives notice that he has received from London a large collection of books, stationery and fancy articles, store 9 Canal street.

"The Orleans Infirmary and Marine Hospital, located on a high, open and airy situation, on Poydras street, near the bridge." Dr. Davidson was the physician in charge, 81 Customhouse street, and Beverly Chew was collector.

Samuel Ives, at 21 New Levee, at the sign of the coffee pot, had all kinds of tin and copperware, etc.

Lewis Mun had his watch and music store at 121 Chartres street.

A. L. Bolmare, 137 Chartres, had a large assortment of French and Spanish books in all branches of literature, jurisprudence, medicine and the arts.

Thomas Johnson had a boot and shoe store, 11 Conti street, near the levee.

Duillho, Jr., was the druggist, 144 Chartres, and J. & L. Brewster had a store at 10 Chartres.

Hotchkliss, Grissam & Clark were book-sellers and stationers, 4 Canal street.

Petelkat, Gillet & Co., at 7 Chartres, sold fancy dry goods.

M. J. Arthur, No. 114 Chartres, near the exchange, had a livery stable.

T. B. Keeler was in the hatting business, 18 Canal street, and Henry Grout had a furniture warehouse at 48 Chartres.

Richard Salter was in the "ship-carter's" business at his shipyard on the other side of the river.

Robert Evans & Co., had a clothing store, 15 Canal street, "directly opposite Elkins' Hotel," and Lee, Walton & Co. had a gentleman's fashionable clothing emporium, No. 15 Levee, corner of Customhouse.

Mme. Fox had a boarding-house, 149 Chartres.

Abram Platt and H. B. Parry opened the Lafayette Academy, 40 Canal street; reading, writing, arithmetic and grammar were taught at \$4 per month, other studies \$8.

Sheldon & Dixon were druggists, Tchoupitoulas, corner of Common, and Peter Dixon dealt in saddles at 30 Levee street.

In his preface to the public, Mr. Paxton says that on his "arrival in New Orleans in 1821 there was no directory to refer to." He also remarks that this directory (of 1827) is his fourth, and speaking of New Orleans, he styles it "the commercial metropolis of the state, and the grand emporium of the trade of a greater extent of interior country than any other town than the world can boast." This was 70 years ago.

In an appendix, he says, "will be found a complete list of streets, etc., the new tariff, public offices of the United States, state and city."

"The numbers on the houses in the city and suburbs," he continues, "I have regulated by authority, agreeably to the plan used in Philadelphia, allowing a number to every twenty feet front, leaving a space, or dead numbers, for the vacant lots, which is a permanent, convenient, and regular plan, and I hope will give general satisfaction."

The names of the streets are on seven pages; the tariff, with a circular from the comptroller to the collector, comprises 30 pages.

The exports of cotton to all ports is on four pages, and is for the years 1821 to 1826. In 1820, 18,430 bales were exported; in 1821-2, 21,005.

Following comes a list of "steamboats in the New Orleans trade," 110 in number.

Then follows six pages devoted to Masonic lodges. Next comes the "government of the state of Louisiana, Henry Johnson, governor, and the state officers, the names of the members of the senate and the house of representatives, the militia, the judiciary, foreign consuls, United States court, land office, custom-house officers, and post office, with rates of postage. The postage for single letters of one sheet, not exceeding 30 miles, was 8 cents; over 30 and up to 80 miles, 10 cents; 80 to 150 miles, 12 1-2 cents; 150 to 400 miles, 18 3-4 cents; over 400 miles, 25 cents. There were, of course, no postage stamps in those days. All this information is contained in nine pages.

On three pages is given the corporation of New Orleans, Joseph Ruffignac, mayor, names of the city council, etc. There were eight auctioneers and twelve notaries.

The following is a list of the banks:

Branch Bank of the United States, capital... \$1,000,000

Louisiana State Bank, capital... 2,000,000

Bank of Louisiana, capital... 4,000,000

With branches at Donaldsonville, Baton Rouge, Alexandria, Opelousas and St. Francisville.

Bank of Orleans, capital... 500,000

Total banking capital... \$7,500,000

The West Orleans Insurance Company, capital... 200,000

Louisiana Insurance Company, capital... 800,000

Louisiana State, Marine and Fire Insurance Company, capital... 400,000

Mississippi Marine and Fire Insurance Company, capital... 300,000

Phoenix Insurance Company, of London, capital... 1,000,000

Orleans Navigation Company, capital... 200,000

Board of administrators of the charity hospital; Medical Society; Physico-Medical Society; board of medical examiners; Louisiana Auxiliary Bible Society; the Louisiana Mariners' Church Society; Library Society. The library here referred to contained 7200 volumes in French and English, and was open from 10 a. m. till 1 p. m. The Toussaint Free Library was another literary institution of the city of that day. The books of this library were kept in the Presbyterian church. Two of the charitable institutions of the same period were the Female Orphan Asylum, St. Charles street, corner of Julia, and an asylum for destitute orphan boys. The Hibernian Society of New Orleans was a chartered institution.

It is interesting to read over the names of the members or managers of these institutions, now all passed away, and only remembered by the very oldest of our citizens.

We have been thus extended in this notice as exhibiting the city seventy years ago.

The next directory in the collection of Mr. Fellows is that for 1834, entitled "Michel's New Orleans Annual and Commercial Register of the City and Schools,"

Gaux & Folle, printers, St. Louis street.

It commences with "A Vocabulary in English and French of the terms of trades, etc., used in this work."

There are twenty-four pages of advertisements. The names occupy 215 pages, with an average of forty-two on a page, or about 9000 names in all, nearly twice as many as seven years before.

Six pages are devoted to the federal government, and ten pages to the state and city governments.

There was quite an addition to the number of banks. Following is a list in 1834: United States Branch Bank, Bank of Louisiana, Louisiana State Bank, Bank of Orleans, Consolidated Association of Planters, Union Bank, City Bank, New Orleans Canal and Banking Company, Savings Bank, Mechanics and Traders' Bank, Commercial Bank, and Citizens' Bank.

Among others were the following institutions mentioned in this "Register": Louisiana State Insurance Company, Mississippi Marine and Fire Insurance Company, New Orleans Insurance Company, Louisiana Insurance Company, Western Marine and Fire Insurance Company, and the Phoenix, of London. Then we have the Orleans Navigation Company, and the Amite Navigation Company, The Barrataria and Lafourche Canal Company, the New Orleans and Carrolton Railroad Company and the New Orleans Sugar Refinery. Two fire companies are mentioned, to-wit: The Columbia Fire Engine Company No. 1, the Mississippi Fire Engine Company No. 2, with the names of the members. Mention is also made of the board of public works, the Loyce Steam Cotton Press, Orleans Press Company, the New Orleans Architect Office and the Pontchartrain Railroad Company.

The New Orleans Commercial Library was an institution of which J. G. Walton was president; James B. Walton, vice president; T. W. Collins, secretary, and John G. Gules treasurer. After this come the charity hospital administrators, Asylum for Destitute Orphans, and the Female Orphan Asylum. Then follow the militia and the Masonic lodges.

In another paper attention will be given to Gibson's Directory of New Orleans for the year 1838, which was quite an ambitious work; containing, besides much information concerning the city, such as is usually found in directories, historical sketches of Louisiana and New Orleans.

This set of directories should belong to one of our libraries for a valuable reference. It is the most complete in existence. The directories of the older years may be recovered if the community are properly notified of the years wanted. We think Mr. Fellows would part with the set.