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A Guide to Early Modern French Louisiana Sources

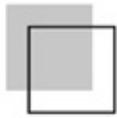
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A Note from the Editor



This issue of the journal examines the sheer treasure of the archive. Focusing on the storage, care, translation, digitization, and interpretation and context of documents related to the Atlantic World that are housed in Louisiana—and commenting, too, on the wider field of studies devoted to the Atlantic world—the six articles, two reviews, and interview herewith reaffirm the value of archives as repositories of both the object and its digital surrogate. In conceiving of this volume, guest editors Greg Lambousy and Emily Clark purposely limited their scope to this field of history and cultural studies in order to emphasize breadth and depth of the collections, as well as the amount of scholarship that awaits those who succumb to “the allure of the archives”—the condition that historian Arlette Farge has so eloquently described in light of her own experiences with documents of the past and her imaginings of their lives and afterlives.

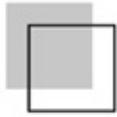
Lambousy and Clark were a perfect team to conceptualize this issue of the journal. Readers of *Collections* are familiar with Greg Lambousy, journal Board Member and Director of Collections at the Louisiana State Museum. Also based in New Orleans, Emily Clark, Ph.D., is the Clement Chambers Benenson Professor in Colonial History in the Department of History at Tulane University. Both have keen interest in, and have closely worked with, the archives of colonial Louisiana (1714–1803), a rich resource that draws scholars from around the world. In conceiving of this volume, they brought their perspectives and realized the potentialities of one another’s point of view. Intending to bring together theory and praxis for both the scholar and the practitioner, they sought out articles and reviews that would speak to both audiences. Their framing of this issue of the journal, thus underscores the way in which they have come to value the benefits of crossing boundaries to find out more about each other’s professions. Unsurprisingly, they have discovered that the overlap between interests and missions is significant, and that both are advanced when we explore the possibilities for collaboration and cross-fertilization.

As to the contents of this volume (which are further described in the following note from the guest editors), Sophie White, Howard Margot, Mélanie Lamotte, Susan Tucker and Jenny Marie Forsythe, Erin Kinchen, and Erin Roussel have contributed articles while Matthew Brennan and Kristin Condotta have offered reviews of recent, relevant texts. In addition, the guest editors offer their thoughts on the intersections between collections professionals and scholars. Their interview, conducted last fall, is a delight to read for it reminds all of us that archives matter. Further, their framing of the Reading Room as a populist space rather than an elitist place interested me as a scholar and practitioner, but much moreso as a faculty member who works with collections and the professionals who care for, interpret, preserve, and share them. My work as a faculty member and scholar simply could not be done without collections and their keepers.

Perhaps it might be suggested that a running narrative throughout this issue is that of “living dangerously,” to use the words of Society of American Archivists (SAA) President Kathleen Roe who, as the incoming chief officer in the fall 2014, asked archivists to spend the next year “living dangerously” and taking on the challenge of showing why archives matter. Without question, Lambousy, Clark, and the contributors to this volume have clearly taken up this challenge. And, I, for one, am grateful that they have!

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A Guide to Early Modern French Louisiana Sources



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Abstract Recent decades have witnessed steady and significant historiographical interest in the history of early modern French Louisiana. The field presently boasts a dynamic set of analysts actively investigating primary sources across America and France. In addition, many French Louisiana sources and historical issues remain unexplored, thereby suggesting that the historiography of early modern French Louisiana will continue to grow substantially. While numerous inventories of Louisiana sources have been published, few have specifically focused their attention on early modern French Louisiana documents. Several of these guides contain information that is no longer valid by pointing to sources that have been moved or have subsequently disappeared. In addition, many sources are being made more readily available through digitization and the creation of online databases. This article provides much-needed guidance on identifying and using French Louisiana sources. It lists the sources available and investigates their nature, details of access, state of preservation, as well as their state of digitization. It also suggests potential uses and interpretations that might be gleaned from such source material.

Recent decades have witnessed steady and significant historiographical interest in the history of early modern French Louisiana. The field presently boasts a dynamic set of analysts, actively investigating primary sources across America and France.¹ This and the fact that many French Louisiana sources and historical issues remain unexplored suggest that the historiography of early modern French Louisiana will continue to grow substantially.

This essay provides much-needed guidance on identifying and using French Louisiana sources in light of recent archival developments. It lists the relevant sources available and investigates their nature, details of access, state of preservation and, when relevant, state of digitization. It also suggests potential uses and interpretations that might be gleaned from such source material. Numerous inventories of Louisiana sources have been published, but few have specifically focused their attention on early modern French Louisiana documents.² Some of these guides contain information that is no longer valid, featuring sources that have been moved or have subsequently disappeared. Many sources are being made more readily available through digitization and the creation of online databases—the creation of the “Louisiana Digital Library” (LDL), an online library holding a vast number of digitized sources from diverse research institutions situated in Louisiana, is a prime

example here.

Although many documents have disappeared, those that survive are abundant and scattered throughout multiple repositories in France and the United States. This guide examines the sources held by twelve archives and repositories located in Louisiana, including The Historical Center of the Louisiana State Museum, The Historic New Orleans Collection at the Williams Research Center, The Louisiana State Archives, The Louisiana Research Collection of the Howard-Tilton Memorial Library at Tulane University, The Notarial Archives Division of the Clerk of Court of the Parish of New Orleans, The Special Collections Department of the Dupré Library at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, The Office of Archives and Records of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, the Catholic Life Center of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, and the Ursuline Convent Archives in New Orleans. Eight other archives examined in this article are located elsewhere in the United States: these comprise the Archdiocese of Mobile Archives, The Manuscript and Rare Book and Special Collections Divisions of the Library of Congress, as well as the Illinois State Archives. The guide also focuses on the sources held by nine research institutions situated in France, including the Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer, the Centre d'Accueil et de Recherche des Archives Nationales, as well as the Département des Manuscrits and the Département des Cartes et Plans of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. The vast majority of early modern French Louisiana sources are housed in these institutions. These research facilities are individually examined. In its last section, the article also investigates numerous digital projects. The holdings of the selected libraries and archives can, naturally, be of greater or lesser significance, depending on the historical theme examined. Needless to say, it is not possible to discuss all of these sources and to mention every relevant research institution in this article.

In fact, the scope of this paper is purposely limited. Since it is only intended to be a clear and practical guide for scholars seeking to use libraries and archives holding French Louisiana sources, few references are made to the history of the collections and archives in question. While I have worked in many of these research facilities, I have not searched all of the collections mentioned in this article. As a result, I often rely on the guidance of archivists and on sometimes imprecise research guides, which explain the disparities in the amount of detail in the description of the collections provided here.

The period covered in this paper extends from the seventeenth century to 1762–63, when French Louisiana was disbanded. Following an earlier period of exploration, permanent settlement in the gulf coast region began in 1699, when Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville founded Fort Maurepas at Biloxi, near today's Ocean Springs, Mississippi.³ The Louisiana territory then claimed by the French encompassed the land on both sides of the Mississippi river, eastward as far as the English colonies on the Atlantic coast and westward as far as the Red river. The Illinois settlements, started in 1673, were integrated into the jurisdiction of Louisiana by royal ordinance in 1717. Historians rarely study Louisiana as a whole and instead focus their attention on particular regions, such as New Orleans, Lower Louisiana (*la Basse-Louisiane*), or the Illinois Country (*pays des Illinois*). This renders their research more manageable, but these regions should not be studied completely separately. Political, economic and cultural exchanges existed within the entire Louisiana region. Although this article pays more attention to Lower Louisiana sources, the collections investigated contain many sources concerning the Illinois Country under Louisiana rule. This article also includes a section that focuses on certain documents available at the Illinois State Archives, where a large number of Upper Louisiana sources are now housed.

Research Facilities in the United States

The Historical Center, Louisiana State Museum

The Louisiana Historical Center of the Louisiana State Museum is a major research center for the study of early modern French Louisiana. The manuscript collections of the Historical Center are divided into two groups: the “Colonial Documents,” including the judicial records of the French Superior Council of Louisiana (1714–1769); and the general “Manuscript” collection. The Superior Council (*Conseil Supérieur*) of Louisiana was created in 1712, in New Orleans, “to judge in the last resort all civil and criminal cases that may arise in this province.”⁴ Its records constitute the largest collection of the Historical Center.⁵ They provide invaluable information on the everyday lives of Europeans and non-European inhabitants of Louisiana, free and enslaved, including evidence of the social, economic, cultural, and political life of French Louisiana. Documents include judicial records, wills, estate inventories, correspondence, successions, marriage contracts, baptismal and burial records, slave manumission acts, numerous records of commercial transactions, suits for payment of debts, applications by merchants for licenses to conduct business, and accounts of the administration of estates. In this collection, there are court cases and notarial acts for all of Lower Louisiana as well as, to a more limited extent, the Illinois Country.

The records of the French Superior Council have suffered severe deterioration including mold, insect, and water damage. Much of the paper has become darker due to acidic assaults. Certain types of ink used in the documents have burnt the paper. As a result, many documents have deteriorated to the extent that they cannot be used. The Historical Center has taken various actions to preserve these documents. They have been placed in polyester sleeves, archival-quality folders, and Hollinger boxes to prevent further degradation. Access to the manuscript records of the French Superior Council remains limited due to the fragility of the documents. Researchers are permitted to use microfilm copies, but many of these are difficult to read; some are even completely illegible. Fortunately, the Louisiana State Museum has launched a formidable Colonial Documents Digitization Project, to digitize and publish the French Superior Council records online in a searchable database accessible to all, free of cost—please refer to the section on “Digital Projects.”

Currently, no comprehensive index of the French Superior Council records exists. The summaries and abstracts from the Works Progress Administration are stored in 94 chronological indexes called the “Black Books.” These are generally helpful, but contain numerous errors, unreliable spelling, and several omissions. *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* has also published a valuable index of these sources, but it fails to include many important documents. *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* is available online through subscription or in many research facilities, including the Historical Center. Additionally, a card catalog based on the French Superior Council records and arranged alphabetically by individual is available in the reading room of the Historical Center. Unfortunately some documents mentioned in these finding aids seem to have disappeared from the archives.

The “Manuscript” collection of the Historical Center also contains numerous French Louisiana sources. Record group 3, entitled “French Manuscripts, Mississippi Valley 1679–1769” is on loan from the Louisiana Historical Society and has been microfilmed. It contains letters patent establishing the Superior Council of Louisiana, as well as various edicts and orders issued by the French government and the Superior Council. The collection of “Miscellaneous Manuscripts and Modern Ephemera, 1387–1947” (record group 68) includes a diary from French Louisiana, letters, legal documents, marriage contracts, official appointments and photostats of other French documents. Record group 297, “Eighteenth-Century Commercial Publications, c. 1750” contains French trade regulations. There is a collection of “Photocopied Louisiana French Colonial Documents” from the Library of Congress (record group 377). These include correspondence and instructions issued by

the French authorities, the *Compagnie des Indes*, and the *Compagnie de l'Occident* to colonial officials, as well as regulations, appointments, and lists of supplies. The “Manuscript” collection also includes the compilation “Miscellaneous French Documents, 1726–1830” (record group 335), which contains “The Mossmier Family Papers, c. 1725–1873” (record group 15), “The Albert L. Lieutaud Collection, 1735–1896” (record group 212), and “The H. P. Dart Collection, 1618–1776, 1878–1920” (record group 284). Detailed content lists are available on the Museum’s website.

Moreover, the Louisiana State Museum houses a cartographic collection comprising many valuable maps dating from the period of exploration and early settlement in Louisiana, as well as several reproductions. These maps depict, for the most part, Louisiana, New Orleans, the Mississippi river, as well as other Louisiana territory waterways, and the Gulf of Mexico. The most significant cartographic collection available at the Louisiana State Museum is “The Helen and Solis Seiferth Collection, (1541–1878).” It contains maps by renowned French cartographers Jacques Nicolas Bellin (1703–1772) and Guillaume de L’Isle (1675–1726). Maps can be searched through the “Map Search” option on the Louisiana State Museum database.

The Louisiana State Museum also holds a large microfilm collection that contains documents pertaining to early modern French Louisiana. There are eighty reels covering the French period in “The Louisiana Notarial Records Collection, 1714–1778.” Notarial records provide valuable information for economic and social historians. The museum possesses copies of records for St. Charles parish (1740–1972) and for St. Louis cathedral in New Orleans (January–December 1728), as well as copies of “The Records of The Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas, 1576–1803.” In general terms, parish registers provide valuable social and biographical information. “The Records of The Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas, 1576–1803” manuscript collection is held by the University of Notre Dame and includes items concerning marriages, funerals, dispensations, ecclesiastical finance, as well as grants of indulgences, letters of transfer of priests.⁶ A calendar of summaries of this collection is available on the University of Notre Dame Archives website.

Finally, the Louisiana State Museum library contains several finding aids and copies of Church archives and of records available in the Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer. These comprise copies of censuses (1707–1741), correspondence, land grants, as well as baptism and funeral records (1720–1734) for Lower Louisiana and the Illinois Country. In general, French Louisiana censuses contain precious information concerning the composition of families and economic resources (plantations, livestock, weaponry, and factories). They often indicate the numbers of free men, women, and children, as well as indentured servants, domestics, and slaves. There is also a card index based on the records of St. Charles parish, called “The Little Red Church” files. It contains baptism, marriage, and death records for the population of the German Coast in the 1740s and 1750s. Additionally, the library holds several early modern printed books pertaining to the history of French Louisiana.

The Historic New Orleans Collection, Williams Research Center

Other valuable early modern French Louisiana documents are available in the manuscript, map, microform, and rare book collections of the Historic New Orleans Collection (HNOC) at the Williams Research Center. Sources in the manuscript division of the HNOC are inventoried in online inventories and there are unpublished finding aids in the reading room. The HNOC is currently working on digitizing large portions of its collection, although the process is far from complete. The extensive “John Law Collection, 1715–1726” contains manuscripts and printed pamphlets, broadsides, and books documenting the growth and collapse of the economic system established by John Law, the Scottish economist who developed a financial scheme for the French crown aimed, in part, at

advancing Louisiana's economy.⁷ It comprises royal acts and edicts concerning paper currency and the operations and administrative structures of the *Banque Générale de France* and of the *Compagnie de l'Occident*, which later became the *Compagnie des Indes*. The collection "French Louisiana Documents 1729–1765," contains five documents pertaining to trade, medicine, Native American tribes, slavery, military administration, and social conditions in French Louisiana.⁸ The HNOC also houses a small "Colonial French Louisiana Letter Collection, 1642–1803" concerning the *Compagnie des Indes*, life on the plantations, slave sales, Franco-Spanish hostilities, and wildfires.⁹ There is, in addition, a collection of printed "Acts of the Royal French Administration concerning Louisiana 1717–1771." It contains acts issued by the French government concerning the *Compagnie des Indes* in Louisiana, as well as letters patent regarding Jesuit property in Louisiana.¹⁰ Additionally, the HNOC holds several collections of private papers relating to early modern French Louisiana. A group of documents transferred from Louisiana State University called "The Chevalier de Pradel Papers, 1692–1962," contains the correspondence and miscellaneous papers of Jean-Charles de Pradel (1692–1764), a Louisiana soldier, *commandant*, and planter.¹¹ Pertaining to business and family matters and reflecting the life of upper-class colonists and slave owners, they document the military, economic, and social history of the colony. Topics covered include the treatment of slaves, contemporary events such as the Fort Rosalie massacre (1729), and Louisiana women's history—the collection includes letters written by Pradel's wife, Alexandrine de la Chaise. For further information, one can refer to the online inventory "Jean Charles De Pradel Family Papers."¹² The collection "Louis-Roger Franssure de Villiers folio 1714–1752" contains the papers of Louis-Roger Franssure (1684–1775), a military officer sent to Louisiana.¹³ These are, in large part, correspondence and legal documents concerning the French navy, and instructions from the king and the count de Maurepas regarding two expeditions to Louisiana (1735–1736 and 1739–1740). "The D'Auberville-Boulogny Family Papers, 1618–1873" is a collection of correspondence (1733–1867) and legal and military papers (1618–1860).¹⁴ In addition, it contains, genealogical sources concerning the Dauberville and Boulogny families. Other notable documents held by the HNOC include Sieur Le Moyne d'Iberville's petition to establish a colony on the Mississippi river and a Spanish "Report on the Cession of Louisiana to Spain by France (1762)."¹⁵ A few relevant sources are also available in "The Boulogny-Baldwin Family Papers (1710–1980)," "The François Fleuriau Papers (1722–1730)," "The Ernest Caliste Villeré Papers (1691–1981)" and "The Henry Clement Pitot Papers (1699–1990)."¹⁶

The manuscript division of the HNOC comprises an impressively vast microform collection, which gathers sources from diverse French and American research institutions. It contains numerous microfilm copies of early modern Louisiana sources from the French Archives Nationales d'Outre Mer (ANOM), now situated in Aix en Provence. These include the "Correspondance à l'arrivée en provenance de la Louisiane 1678–1819," C13 series—a major collection of correspondence from Louisiana received by the *Secrétaire d'État à la Marine*, of primary importance to almost any researcher working on early modern French Louisiana (see section "The Archives d'Outre-Mer" in this article).¹⁷ The HNOC also holds a microfilm copy of Louisiana maps from the "Atlas Moreau de Saint-Méry," the originals of which are available at the ANOM (1730–1745). There are microfilmed documents concerning Louisiana from series G (1717–1789) of the ANOM.¹⁸ These comprise marriage and burial registers, censuses, commercial papers, passenger lists, land grants, reports on the activities of different people in Louisiana, and accounts of shipwrecks. Microfilm copies of documents, maps and plans concerning French Louisiana (1698–1768) from the "Dépôt des Fortifications des Colonies" (the originals are located at the ANOM) are also available.¹⁹ Since "The Colonial Documents Digitization Project" launched by the Louisiana State Museum will not be completed until 2016, it is also useful to note that the HNOC holds microfilm copies of the records of

the French Superior Council.²⁰

The HNOC also holds several microfilm copies of sources available at the Newberry Library, Chicago. These include an early-eighteenth century memoir by a French officer posted in Louisiana, a journal reporting Louisiana events by French military officer and historian Dumont the Montigny (1715–1747) and Louisiana maps from “The Edward Ayer Collection.” Additionally, the HNOC possesses microfilm copies of the correspondence of Pierre Rigaud Marquis de Vaudreuil (1698–1778) (commonly called the “Vaudreuil Papers, 1740–1753”) housed at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California.²¹ These copies are, however, very incomplete and often difficult to read. There are also microfilm copies of “The Records of the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas, 1576–1803,” and of the “Archives of the Ursuline Nuns of the Parish of New Orleans.”²² Regarding this latter collection, the original documents are held by the private, usually inaccessible, Ursuline Convent Archives in New Orleans. Relevant documents may be found on Reel 1 “Délibérations du Conseil, 1727–1902” (2 volumes), Reel 2 “Registre pour Écrire les Réceptions des Religieuses de France et Postulantes, 1726–1893” and “Les Lettres Circulaires, 1728–1894,” Reel 3 “Premier Registre de la Congrégation des Dames Enfants de Marie, 1730–1744,” Reel 15 “Journal depuis 1726 jusqu’en 1853,” Reel 18 “Lettres Circulaires depuis 1727 jusqu’en 1835,” and also in the Private Archives on Reels 16 and 17 and perhaps in “The Bournigalle Manuscripts, History and Notes” on Reels 19 and 19a—for more information, please refer to section “Ursuline Convent Archives, New Orleans” in this article. The HNOC purchased the Ursuline Library, which includes eighteenth-century volumes.

Some digital collections are accessible through the HNOC website. These include “A Guide to French Louisiana Manuscripts,” a database that identifies Louisiana documents in research facilities in France. This resource can be searched by name, type of document, repository, place, date and keyword. It is an expanded edition of Nancy Miller Surrey’s *Calendar of Manuscripts in Paris Archives and Libraries Relating to the History of the Mississippi Valley to 1803* (1926). There is also a digital version of “The Vieux Carré Survey,” a large study of properties within the French Quarter of New Orleans, available in the HNOC’s library. It comprises, among other documents, maps, drawings, engravings, and property records. Searchable by name and “architectural rating,” the digital survey reveals topographical, architectural, sociological, and legal information; it also identifies owners among the group of free people of color. This project was partly funded by the Collins C. Diboll Private Foundation. In addition, there is a digitized collection available online of “Maps from the Historic New Orleans Collection,” which features several early modern maps representing French Louisiana and held by the HNOC. These include, for example, a map of Louisiana and the Mississippi river by Guillaume de L’Isle and a map of Canada and Louisiana by Jean Baptiste Nolin, Jr. (1686–1762).²³

Finally, the HNOC possesses a collection of rare books containing early modern sources related to French Louisiana, such as Louis Hennepin’s *Description de la Louisiane* (1683) and Henri Joutel’s *Journal Historique* (1713).²⁴

The Louisiana State Archives, Division of the Louisiana Secretary of State’s Office²⁵

The Louisiana State Archives Division of the Louisiana Secretary of State’s Office houses several sources of potential interest to historians of early modern French Louisiana. All of these records are on microfilm and can be viewed in the library. The microfilm copy of “The Margry Collection: C13A French Colonies” includes Pierre Margry’s *Découvertes et Établissements des Français Dans L’Ouest*

et dans le Sud de l'Amérique Septentrionale, 1614–1698 (6 vols., 1876–1886). It also contains selected documents from the series C13 and series B of the ANOM. Series B includes administrative correspondence from France to Louisiana—please refer to section “Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer” in this article.²⁶ The Louisiana State Archives possess microfilm copies of the French Superior Council Records: 1679–1803, which are housed at the Louisiana State Museum.²⁷ Facsimiles of the Black Books and of the name card index to the French Superior Council records are also available in the archives.²⁸ There is a microfilm copy entitled “St. Denis Papers: 1732–1885,” which contains the testament and family papers of Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, commandant of Upper Cane river (1720–1744), as well as various documents related to the history of Natchitoches Parish.²⁹ An inventory of the collection was published in the June 2007 issue of *Le Raconteur*.³⁰ Original sources are housed at the office of the Natchitoches Parish Clerk of Court. The Louisiana State Archives possess, in addition, microfilm copies of “The Records of the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas” and of “The Vaudreuil Papers: 1742–1751.”³¹ The microfilm copies of documents from the Natchitoches and St. Charles parishes, called “The Natchitoches Parish Civil Records, 1723–1900” and “The St. Charles Parish Records, 1740–1872” may be of interest.³² This group of documents is composed of correspondence, records of sales, labor contracts, agreements, transfers, leases, obligations, mortgages, manumission acts, inventories, suits, official decrees, marriage contracts, succession, petitions and declarations. A microfilmed inventory for “The Natchitoches Parish Civil Records, 1723–1900” is available in the archives.³³ The collection “St. John the Baptiste Parish Original Acts: 1753–1798,” which contains, among other documents, sales records, successions, and suits, may also include relevant information.³⁴ Finally, pertinent documents may be found in the microfiche “Illinois Slave Records: 1720–1863,” which contains slave records of French Illinois, and in “The Edwin A. Davis Collection, 1700–1770” of the British Museum, which includes maps from French colonial America.³⁵

The Louisiana Research Collection, Howard-Tilton Memorial Library

Valuable French Louisiana sources can be found in the Louisiana Research Collection of the Howard-Tilton Memorial Library at Tulane University. Finding aids are available on the Howard-Tilton Memorial Library Louisiana Research Collection website, using the “Archive” tab. Relevant sources in the manuscript subdivision of the Louisiana Research Division are scattered in different collections. “The Rosemonde E. and Emile Kuntz Collection” contains a section titled “French colonial period, 1655–1768.”³⁶ It comprises numerous documents, including letters of officers of the *Compagnie des Indes*, regulations, land grants, census extracts, acts of sale, marriage contracts, estate inventories, and sources pertaining to the opposition to the cession to Spain. There are also several personal and family papers, including those of French Louisiana settler and Commissioner of the Marine Vincent Guillaume Le Sénéchal Dauberville.³⁷ These sources convey information concerning the establishment and development of the Louisiana colony, as well as early French authority over Louisiana. Part of the Kuntz Collection and other French Louisiana documents are available online in the expanding Tulane University Digital Library collection entitled “French Colonial, Spanish Colonial, and Nineteenth-Century Louisiana Documents.” More documents from the Kuntz Collection will be digitized as time and resources permit. “The Favrot Family Papers, 1669–1803” contain the official and family correspondence of eighteenth-century French Louisiana administrators and military officers Claude Joseph Favrot and his son, Pierre Joseph Favrot.³⁸ They also include instructions, diaries, pamphlets, land grants, and copies of baptismal, marriage, and burial records.

The papers document French settlement in Louisiana, British ascendancy in the Ohio Valley, French-Indian relations, and the collapse of French power in North America. There are no current plans to digitize the collection but the Works Progress Administration published a series of transcriptions and a set of English translations was created by Tulane University (Historical Records Survey, Louisiana, 1940; Guillermo Nanez Falcon, 1940.) A few French Louisiana sources are available in “The John Minor Wisdom Collection, 1710–1960.”³⁹ These include correspondence, appointments, one petition, an act of sale, and a baptism extract. Like the Kuntz Collection, the Wisdom Collection is currently being digitized and added to the larger digital collection, “French Colonial, Spanish Colonial, and Nineteenth-Century Louisiana Documents.” “The Land Transactions Collection, 1721–1935” contains French Louisiana land grants, land claims, correspondence, and surveys.⁴⁰ Microfilms and photocopies must be used instead of the originals due to the fragility of the documents. “The De la Villesbret Family Papers, 1534–1975” may also contain relevant sources.⁴¹ From the eighteenth century, the De la Villesbrets were a family of landowners involved in the French army and navy. This collection consists of military papers including commissions, orders, records of service, diaries, and correspondence, as well as family papers, land titles, certificates of purchase or sale, leases, wills, and baptismal, marriage and death records. There is also a handwritten facsimile of a journal written in 1722 by Secretary of the Council of the *Compagnie des Indes* Charles René Bougués. “The Slavery Documents Collection, 1758–1865” contains virtually no French Louisiana documents.⁴²

Also of relevance to historians working on early modern French Louisiana, the Louisiana Collection comprises a “Louisiana Indians Miscellany Collection (1682–1737).” It contains translated extracts of French travel accounts and memoirs, as well as translations of letters and reports on major events. The project was sponsored by Louisiana State University and completed by Olivia Blanchard, Norris B. Fazekas and Stanley C. Arthur in 1940. I was unable to clearly identify the origin of the original documents on which the translations are based; they may have been housed at the Howard-Tilton Memorial Library.

Finally, the Louisiana Research Collection holds several microfilm copies of documents housed at the French Archives d’Outre-Mer (notably the above-mentioned series C13) and contains numerous early modern printed books related to Louisiana history. These can be found by searching the Tulane University Libraries Classic Catalog.

The Notarial Archives Division, Clerk of Civil Court, Parish of New Orleans

Since 2009, the Notarial Archives Division of the Office of the Clerk of Civil Court for the Parish of New Orleans holds several early modern French Louisiana notarial records beginning in the year 1735. An alphabetical index by first name, indicating dates and act types, is available on the Clerk of Civil Court website, and a spreadsheet is accessible in the Research Center. The sources can be examined in the Research Center or digitized copies can be provided on request via email. There are no transcriptions or translations of the documents. The notarial documents include succession records (1738–1792), several sales of properties, and wills. For the most part, these documents were produced in New Orleans. There are also manuscripts of Superior Council court proceedings from c. 1744 (17 folios). The documents were recently de-acidified, disbound and stored in archival folders and boxes.

Special Collections Public Services, Hill Memorial Library, Louisiana State University

The Special Collections of the Hill Memorial Library at Louisiana State University comprise a few early modern French Louisiana sources. As already explained, the original “Jean Charles Pradel Family Papers, 1719–1954” have been relocated to the Historic New Orleans Collection.⁴³ Microfilm copies are, however, available at the Hill Library. “The Edme Goudeau Family Papers, 1670–1811” (on microfilm) contains the private papers of a family of colonial French Louisiana medical doctors.⁴⁴ These include medical commissions (1670–1722), as well as orders and permissions from the authorities (1756–1811). Useful information may be found in “The Natchitoches Parish Records, 1734–1792,” which include judicial records, land claims, marriage records, and notarial acts.⁴⁵ There is also an inventory of the property of New Orleans resident Paul Pailloux, dated 1727, and a marriage contract of Pierre Vezin and Marie du Plassey created in New Orleans in 1749.⁴⁶ The library also owns microfilm copies of the ANOM series C13 A, 1694–1807.

Special Collections Department, Edith Garland Dupré Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The Special Collections Department of the Dupré Library at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette houses a variety of microfilm copies pertaining to the history of early modern French Louisiana. Researchers should use the finding aids available in the reading room. The Louisiana Colonial Records Collection was recently transferred to the University Special Collection Department. The collection comprises copies of “The Kaskaskia Manuscripts, 1714–1816,” which contain notarial records, as well as the judicial records of the French Council of Illinois. The Provincial Council of Illinois was created in 1722 at Fort de Chartres as a satellite of the Superior Council of New Orleans. Major trials and appeals were sent to New Orleans, but the Illinois Council oversaw civil and criminal cases, executed land grants, regulated titles, and managed local estates.⁴⁷ Most original Illinois papers are currently housed in the Randolph County Courthouse in Chester, Illinois. In addition, there are microfilm copies of “The Natchitoches Parish Registers (1729–1795),” of “The Notre Dame du Fort Condé de la Mobile Church Registers (1704–1764),” and of “The St. Charles Parish Colonial Books (1740–1759).” “The St. Charles Parish Original Acts (1740–1803)” contain notarial records, and there are also copies of “The St. John the Baptist Original Acts (1753–1778)” and of “The Records of the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas (1576–1803).” Relevant documents are also available in “The Records of the States of the United States of America” pertaining to Louisiana, a corpus of sources compiled by the Library of Congress and the University of North Carolina. It includes early modern manuscript ordinances concerning North American territories issued by metropolitan authorities. The library also owns microfilm copies of selected documents from the Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer. These includes royal regulations from series A and B, correspondence sent from Louisiana from series C, military papers from series D and religious and economic papers from series F. There are also microfilm copies of documents from the Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Archives de la Guerre, Archives de la Marine and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

Office of Archives and Records, Archdiocese of New Orleans

Several early modern French parish registers are accessible at the Office of Archives and Records of the Archdiocese of New Orleans. A finding aid is available on the website of the Archdiocese and the sacramental records (for persons with a surname) have been published in the *Archdiocese of New*

Orleans Sacramental Records, 1718–1831 (1987–2004), edited by Charles E. Nolan.⁴⁸ Pertinent information was abstracted from the records and published alphabetically. The documents include records of baptisms, marriages and funerals for New Orleans (St. Louis Cathedral)—baptisms, marriages and funerals, 1731–1733; baptisms, 1744–1753; baptisms, 1753–1759; baptisms and marriages, 1759–1762; and baptisms and marriages, 1763–1767.⁴⁹ There is also a marriage index entitled “St. Louis Cathedral, New Orleans, 1720–1730,” which contains marriage records for Biloxi, Yazoo, Fort Louis and Natchez.⁵⁰ The “St. Charles Borromeo, Destrehan, Combination Book, 1739–1755” lists marriages and baptisms.⁵¹ The records list Europeans and people of color, both free and enslaved. Partly owing to fire, there are several gaps in the sets of records. The original sacramental registers for that period have been de-acidified, encapsulated in many cases, and rebound. In addition, the Archdiocese holds an account of the trustees of St. Louis Cathedral, in New Orleans (1756–1801). There are photocopies of the earliest records of baptisms of St. Louis Cathedral (January–December 1728) and photocopies of reports sent to Paris by New Orleans priests between 1724 and 1734. The originals are supposedly housed at the Archives Nationales in Paris. The reports include baptisms (1729–1730) and funerals (1724–1728, 1729–1730, 1734).⁵² Finally, the office holds copies of “The Records of The Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas, 1576–1783.”

The Catholic Life Center, Catholic Diocese of Baton Rouge

The Catholic Life Center of the Catholic Diocese of Baton Rouge possesses baptism, marriage, and death registers for St. Francis of Pointe Coupée, the first of which covers the years 1727–1784.⁵³ The sacramental documents for the Diocese of Baton Rouge have been abstracted and published in *The Diocese of Baton Rouge Catholic Church Records 1707–1900* (1978–2003).⁵⁴

The Archdiocese of Mobile Archives

The Archives of the Archdiocese of Mobile possess sacramental registers for Notre Dame de Fort Condé de la Mobile, 1704–1778. Baptismal records start in 1704 and registrations of marriages begin in 1724. Access to the documents must be approved by the archbishop and is therefore limited, but microfilms produced by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon Church) are accessible through their Family History Centers. The Jackson County Genealogical Society published an index of the records in 1992.⁵⁵ Translations of the documents are available in the archives and Peter J. Hamilton undertook a transcription of the sources in the late 1800s.⁵⁶ These are among his papers held by the Alabama Department of Archives and History in Montgomery, Alabama.

Ursuline Convent Archives, New Orleans

The Ursuline Convent Archives is an institutional archive separate from the Archdiocese of New Orleans located at 2635 State Street, New Orleans. The archive is usually not accessible to the public but the Historical New Orleans Collection holds microfilm copies of the documents. An inventory has been prepared by Sister Jane Frances Heaney and is available in Charles E. Nolan’s *A Southern Catholic Heritage: Colonial Period, 1704–1813* (1976).⁵⁷ The Ursuline nuns arrived in New Orleans in 1727. They served as nurses and teachers and they also ran an orphanage.⁵⁸

The collection comprises several bounded volumes. Pertinent material can be found in volume “Private Archives III,” which contains the Brevet of Louis XV allowing the establishment of the Ursuline convent in 1726. The volume “Registre pour Écrire les Réceptions des Religieuses de France et Postulantes, 1726–1893 et les Lettres Circulaires, 1728–1894” includes the records of reception of novices and their professions, as well as obituary accounts of deceased nuns, which provide precious biographical information. The volume “Délibérations du Conseil, I 1727–1902” comprises records of council meetings, which contain important decisions. The volume “Premier Registre de la Congrégation des Dames Enfants de Maries, 1730–1744” includes accounts of the convent, its rules, practices, members and elections. The volume “Journal depuis 1727 jusqu’en 1853” contains a journal of events. Finally, the volume “General Accounts, 1789–1812” also includes a relevant document, entitled “Mémoire de Linges et Hardes des Orphelines ce 6 Avril 1752.”

The archives also contain numerous manuscript sheets classed in folders according to the subject and nature of the documents. These comprise correspondence from bishops, French officials, and copies of letters written by Ursuline nuns. These sources provide information concerning student admissions, the cloister, court appearances, plans for building, as well as purchases and sales of property.

There are also a few printed books, including *Cérémonial des Vestures et Professions, pour les Religieuses de Sainte Ursule de la Congrégation de Paris* (Paris, 1681), *Directoire pour les Novices de L’Ordre de Sainte Ursule, de la Congrégation de Paris* (Paris, 1709) and *Règlements des Religieuses Ursulines de la Congrégation de Paris* (Paris, 1705). This latter book focuses on student instruction and rules of life in the convent. From 1727, the Ursuline nuns convent possessed a copy of this volume.

The Library of Congress, Manuscript Division/ Rare Book and Special Collections Division

A variety of collections of early modern French Louisiana sources and copies of sources are available in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress (LoC). These include “The Louisiana Miscellany Collection, 1724–1837,” which contains early modern French Louisiana work contracts, as well as payment bills for buildings, fortifications and maintenance.⁵⁹ Judy Riffel has created a *Guide to the Louisiana Miscellany Collection 1724–1837* (2006), in which she states that “few historians and even fewer genealogists have cited these records in their published works” despite “their enormous value.”⁶⁰ There is also a manuscript booklet by Dumont De Montigny titled “Histoire de la Louisiane: Poème en Quatre Chants, circa. 1736.”⁶¹ Evoking several important events, it can be of great use to many historians of early modern French Louisiana. In addition, the Manuscript Division of the LoC possesses numerous microfilm copies of collections available in research facilities that are scattered across the United States and in France. There is a facsimile of the collection “Memoranda on French Colonies in America, Including Canada, Louisiana, and the Caribbean, 1702–1750,” of which the originals are possibly housed at the Newberry Library.⁶² It contains memoranda and travel accounts, probably transcribed between 1702 and 1750. These depict Louisiana and its inhabitants and also relate to commerce and navigation. The Manuscript Division of the LoC also possesses microfilm copies of “The Records of The Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas, 1576–1803,” as well as collections of copies made from archival repositories in France that document the French presence in North America.⁶³ These comprise a collection called “The Louisiana Colonial Records Project,” which consists of microfilmed copies of material relating to

Louisiana dating from 1620 to 1875, from the Colonies, Plans, and Marine series of the Archives Nationales.⁶⁴ Additionally, the division holds microfilm copies, transcripts, and an inventory of series C13 A (volumes 1–54), though they may be incomplete.

Finally, the Rare Book and Special Collections Division of the LoC holds numerous books related to French Louisiana history.

The Illinois State Archives, Springfield, Illinois

One of the most important collections for French Upper Louisiana history is “The Kaskaskia Manuscripts” housed in the Randolph County Courthouse in Chester, Illinois. Most of the documents come from French Kaskaskia and Fort de Chartres. For preservation purposes, it is preferred that one use the microfilm copies available at the Illinois State Archives or in other research institutions. The Illinois State Archives hold two sets of microfilms of “The Kaskaskia Manuscripts,” covering the period 1714–1816. The first microfilm series (48 rolls) includes the Randolph County records as well as other French period documents. A finding aid for these microfilms was originally published in an article of *Illinois Libraries* (June 1961 issue), which briefly describes the contents of each microfilm roll.⁶⁵ The second microfilm series includes copies of several original Kaskaskia manuscripts, summaries, and an incomplete name index (14 rolls). Most Kaskaskia Manuscripts are notarial documents, including inventories, sales of effects, land transactions, bills, receipts, work agreements, wills, inheritance settlements, appointments of guardians, marriage contracts, baptismal records, and letters. The Provincial Council records included in the Kaskaskia Manuscripts contain reports of civil and criminal trials, court interrogations and depositions. Like the Superior Council records and the other Louisiana notarial documents, “The Kaskaskia Manuscripts” offer a wealth of information to historians by documenting the economic, social, administrative and political life of French Upper Louisiana. The collection was divided into three groups, “Commercial Papers,” “Private Papers” and “Public Papers,” but the principles for this classification are unclear. The collection has been calendared and there are indexes, abstracts, and translations.⁶⁶ Maps, travel accounts, fractional censuses, and parish registers for French Upper Louisiana are extent—some of them are located in collections mentioned in this article.

Other relevant research institutions in the United States

Other collections containing sources on early modern French Louisiana in the United States include the French colonial records of the post of Natchitoches, which are housed in the Natchitoches Parish Clerk of Court’s office. The records start in the 1720s and include, among other documents, sales of land and slaves, donations of land, receipts, and apprenticeship contracts.⁶⁷ The website of the Creole Heritage Center of Northwestern State University provides a new online searchable index for the Natchitoches French colonial documents (1732–1819).

At the University of Texas at Austin, the Briscoe Center for American History holds early modern French Louisiana travel accounts, correspondence, and royal decrees, available in “The Alexander Parsons Collection (1678–1928, 1951).” The collection must be accessed on microfilm due to the fragility of the documents; a finding aid is available on the Briscoe Center’s website.

As noted above, the Huntington Library holds the correspondence of Pierre Rigaud Marquis de Vaudreuil (1740–1753), and “The Edward Ayer Collection” of the Newberry Library contains

Louisiana sources. These include memoirs concerning early modern Louisiana and the post of Natchitoches, as well as two travel accounts.

The Research Center of the Chicago History Museum's "French America Collection (1635–1817)" includes several letters relating to the Mississippi valley, a memoir by Le Page du Pratz, and a patent under which La Salle explored upper Louisiana. An index to a large part of the collection is available in the Research Center.

Microfilm copies of colonial documents from St. Charles parish (1740–1872) are available at the New Orleans Public Library. The New Orleans Public Library also holds a copy of "The Heartman Manuscripts on Slavery (1724–1897)," the originals of which are housed at Xavier University, New Orleans. But there is relatively little from the French period in this collection.

Relevant documents may also be found in the collection "Ste. Geneviève Archives, 1756–1930," which is held by the State Historical Society of Missouri. It includes marriage certificates, land grants, inventories, wills, ordinances and letters. Several of these documents pertain to enslaved laborers and to Native American communities.

Research facilities in France

The Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer

The Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer is the most significant repository of early modern French Louisiana sources available in France. Many of its holdings are of paramount importance. Access to some of these documents is restricted due to their precarious state of preservation. Usually, researchers are not permitted to use original sources when microfilm copies are available. Many detailed inventories are accessible online and there are finding aids in the reading room of the ANOM. The "Fonds Ministériels" comprise sources from the French ministries in charge of the colonies. In the early modern period this was the Ministry of the Marine. Series A, "Actes du Pouvoir Souverain, 1628–1779" contains major legislative texts, including ordinances, declarations, edicts, orders, provisions, and memoranda from the metropolitan and Louisiana governing bodies. These provide a variety of information to historians by documenting the everyday lives of the inhabitants of Louisiana, their concerns, as well as those of the authorities, the evolution of colonial policy and economy, and contemporary events including wars and revolts. Many relevant documents can be found, in particular, in the sections A 22–23. Series B, "Correspondance au Départ, 1665–1789" contains administrative correspondence from France to Louisiana. Composed of orders, instructions, memoranda and letters to Louisiana governors and administrators, it documents various economic issues and political matters, including relations with Native American communities, and European diplomacy regarding Louisiana territories.⁶⁸ Several subseries are of interest in series C, "Correspondance à l'Arrivée, 1610–1815," which includes administrative correspondence from Louisiana to France. Subseries C2, "Compagnie Française des Indes, 1649–1835" contains numerous documents concerning the activities of the *Compagnie des Indes* in Louisiana. Other relevant sources may be found in subseries C11 D, "Amérique du Nord (1661–1771)." The largest and most important subseries is section C13 and its main section, C13 A, "Correspondance à l'Arrivée: Louisiane, 1678–1819." This correspondence contains reports and memoranda sent by the authorities in charge of the colonies (especially governors, administrators, and military officers) to the ministry in France. Topics covered include the settlement and development of the Louisiana colony, its economy, defense, and relations with the Native Americans. Other relevant documents are situated in subseries C13 B, "Louisiane: Supplément, 1699–1773" and C13 C, "Louisiane: Divers, 1675–1767." In series D,

“Troupes et Personnel Civil, 1658–1885,” subseries D2 C documents the career of the members of the military, civil, judicial, and religious personnel of French Louisiana.⁶⁹ These include military roll numbers, dates and places of birth, certificates of admissions and retirement, reports on desertion, health and death, physical descriptions of military men, propositions of reward and decoration, as well as salary bills. Although several documents from this subseries have been lost, it provides a wealth of biographical information. Series E, “Personnel Colonial Ancien, XVIIe–XVIIIe” is similar, as it contains reports, correspondence, and memoirs concerning the military, civil, judicial, and religious personnel of Louisiana. Numerous early modern French Louisiana documents are available in series F, “Documents Divers” as well. Subseries F1 A contains financial sources documenting the political and economic history of Louisiana. These include account records, budget reports, reports on expenses, payment orders and receipts for the years 1703–1706, 1709–1728, 1731–1737 and 1750–1759.⁷⁰ Subseries F2A, “Compagnies de Commerce, 1626–1821” includes documents issued by several trade companies, including the *Compagnie de la Louisiane* (1712) in section F2A 11. The most significant subseries in series F is the compilation F3, “Collection Moreau de Saint-Méry.” Originals are not accessible, but microfilm copies are available. Subseries F3 includes originals and copies of letters by governors and administrators, instructions from the metropolitan authorities, and sources issued by the local authorities. Compilations include “Louisiane 1680–1803,” and correspondence from Louisiana.⁷¹ Different maps of Louisiana are available in the Atlas Moreau de Saint-Méry. Subseries F5 A, “Missions Religieuses, 1638–1808” comprises correspondence, memoirs and requests for ship boarding. Topics covered encompass Jesuits’ property and the management of ecclesiastical resources. Relevant sections include F5A 1, “Missions du Canada et de la Louisiane, 1667–1782” and F5A 3, “Canada et Louisiane, XVIIe–XVIIIe.” Subseries F5 B, “Passagers” contains lists of passengers boarding and disembarkation in French and colonial ports, including civil and military personnel (see, especially, the list of Louisiana passengers bound to France, 1732–1765).⁷² The subseries F6, “Papier Dauvergne, 1648–1870” includes sources related to Louisiana history and the slave trade.

In the “Fonds Ministériels,” the “Dépôt des Papiers Publics des Colonies” (DPPC) contains administrative papers from Louisiana. Section 1DPPC2866, “Louisiane 1720–1734” (formerly classed G1 412) includes parish records of baptisms, marriages and deaths for Biloxi, Notre-Dame des Kaskaskia, Fort de Chartres, and New Orleans—the French *État Civil*. However, due to their poor state of preservation, they normally cannot be examined and currently, there are no microfilm copies available. Section G1 464, “Louisiane 1706–1732” contains correspondence, lists of passengers travelling from France to Louisiana, accounts of resources including weaponry as well as censuses for Louisiana and for Dauphin Island, Hoffen, Mobile, Natchitoches, New Orleans, and the Illinois region. Topics covered comprise French relations with Native American tribes, the John Law concession and the management of the *Compagnie des Indes*. Portion G1 465, “Concessions: Louisiane, 1696–1881” contains land grants and royal instructions concerning the land grant regime in Louisiana.

The “Fonds Ministériels” also include the “Dépôt des Fortifications des Colonies, 1636–1913,” a repository containing, among other documents, maps of Louisiana and Louisiana territories as well as legal sources, memoranda and reports often pertaining to military defense.

Independent of the “Fond Ministériels,” a limited number of relevant documents from the mid-eighteenth century are available in “The Albert Louis Lieutaud Collection” in the “Archives Privées” of the ANOM.⁷³ These concern several Louisiana families.

Finally, the “Bibliothèque” of the ANOM houses a vast number of contemporary and modern editions of printed books related to the history of early modern Louisiana. These can be searched in

the “Bibliothèque” database available on the website of the ANOM.

Centre d’Accueil et de Recherche des Archives Nationales (CARAN)

While in France the vast majority of sources related to early modern French Louisiana history are located in the Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer in Aix-en-Provence, the Centre d’Accueil et de Recherche des Archives Nationales (CARAN) in Paris holds a significant number of relevant sources as well, of which inventories are available online. Some of these documents cannot be examined due to their poor state of preservation, but often permission may be obtained. Many such documents are located in the “Fond de la Marine.” Series A may be of interest to French Louisiana historians, as it contains early modern edicts, declarations, letters patent, and ordinances concerning trade, the Marine and the colonies. Series B, “Service Général,” comprises decisions from the Marine Council (*Conseil de la Marine*), regulations from the King’s Council, as well as logbooks, travel accounts, memoranda and letters. Many of these documents concern Louisiana—see, especially, subseries B3. These documents pertain to colonial matters including trade, war, and the *Compagnie des Indes*. The CARAN series C, “Personnel” completes series D, “Troupes et Personnel Civil, 1658–1885,” and E, “Personnel Colonial Ancien, XVIIe–XVIIIe” from the ANOM. It notably documents the careers of civil officers, administrators, marine officers, military personnel and merchant officers. Sources comprise correspondence, certificates of admissions, boarding dates, reports of involvement in particular actions, records of bestowed rewards, criminal proceedings, trade papers and orders. There are also crew rolls of ships belonging to the royal marine and the *Compagnie des Indes*, indicating places of origin, health conditions and information concerning crew recruitments. These documents provide a wealth of biographical information, reveal the origin of some migrants to the colonies and cover various subjects pertaining to military history and the history of trade. Series E, “Conseil du Roi” contains diverse regulations issued by the King’s Council, some of which concern the administration of Louisiana when under the administration of the *Compagnie des Indes*. Series G, “Documents Divers” includes correspondence and memoirs concerning trade, the companies and the administration of the colonies. Subseries G6 pertains to John Law’s economic project and the former *Compagnies des Indes*. And in Series JJ, there are several corpuses of sources documenting Louisiana history.⁷⁴ These contain early modern travel accounts, scientific descriptions, letters and maps. Serie 4JJ contains slave ship logbooks including information concerning ship positions and daily life on slave vessels. Series outside the “Fond de la Marine” comprise relevant documents as well. Such is the case with Series K, “Monument Historiques,” which include memoirs from Louisiana, 1693–1783, documents concerning the exploration of the Mississippi valley in the eighteenth century and other Louisiana sources, 1540–1759.⁷⁵ In Series M, “Mélanges,” there are documents concerning trade in Louisiana, missionary activity in the Mississippi valley, relations with Native Americans, the *Compagnie des Indes* and military equipment in Louisiana.⁷⁶ Pertinent documents are also available in Series T, “Papiers Privée Tombés Dans le Domaine Public,” which contains documents related to Louisiana land grants, as well as correspondence and reports concerning Louisiana.⁷⁷ Finally, subseries V7 “Commissions Extraordinaires du Conseil” contains papers related to Louisiana land grants, the *Compagnie des Indes* and the failure of John Law’s economic project.⁷⁸ Post-revolutionary sources housed at the CARAN have recently been moved to a new building in Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, in order to enhance storage conditions in the Parisian archives.

Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF), Département des Manuscrits/Département des Cartes et Plans

The Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF) houses a variety of early modern French Louisiana sources. Finding guides are available online on the library departments' websites and Waldo Leland's *Guide to Materials for American History in the Libraries and Archives of Paris* (1932) can also help in identifying relevant sources.

In the Département des Manuscrits of the BNF, the vast collection "Pierre Margry" pertains to the history of French exploration and colonization. It contains some original documents and many notes and copies of documents, of which the originals have sometimes disappeared. Copies are based on sources from various departments of the Archives Nationales, the Bibliothèque Nationales de France, the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, the Archives Départementales, as well as provincial libraries and private collections. The collection contains original correspondence, travel accounts and the Louisiana censuses for the years 1722, 1724 and 1732. The "Collection Eusèbe Renaudot" contains sources pertaining to exploration, geography, and diplomacy in America. There is an account of a voyage in the Mississippi valley by Henri de Tonty (1678–1690) and a description of a voyage from the Illinois Country to the Gulf of Mexico by Fathers François Jolliet de Montigny and Julien Binneteau (1699). The "Collection Abbé Dangeau" comprises the correspondence of Cabart de Villermont (1628–1707), who kept himself informed of colonial matters, in which references are made to Louisiana. Still in the manuscript department of the BNF, relevant information can be found in the "Mélanges de Colbert" collection, which contains originals and transcripts of various documents, including the correspondence of *Contrôleur Général des Finances* and *Secrétaire d'État à la Marine* Jean-Baptiste Colbert. Naturally, many of these sources concern the colonies.

Additionally, the Département des Cartes et Plans of the Richelieu site of the BNF holds numerous early modern French maps of Louisiana and Louisiana territories. The collections of the former Marine Hydrographic Service and the "Collection D'Anville" are of particular interest, as they document the period of exploration and colonial settlement in North America. The D'Anville collection contains a "Carte de la rivière de Pascagoula," among other exceptional items, drawn by Dumont de Montigny in 1732.

Other relevant research institutions in France

In France, several other research institutions hold early modern French Louisiana sources. These include the Archives du Port de Lorient, which owns extracts of parish registers for New Orleans (1724–1725), notarial acts, and parish registers for Louisiana (1709–1760), as well as documents pertaining to the slave trade in Louisiana. In this archives the "Fond de la Compagnie des Indes, 1718–1789" may provide much useful information to French Louisiana historians.

Regarding military matters, subseries A1 in the archives of the Service Historique de la Défense contains documents and copies of letters pertaining to early modern French Louisiana. Other correspondence, memoranda, regulations, and orders revealing information concerning military administration and operations may be found in series A, B, M and X.

Several relevant sources are also available at the Archives Diplomatiques du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères. These include memoranda on Louisiana pertaining to economic and diplomatic matters.

At the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, there are several memoirs concerning eighteenth-century exploration and travel in Louisiana. Similarly, the principal collection and the collections Cuvier and

Godefroy of the Bibliothèque de L'Institut de France contain Louisiana travel accounts and memoirs. These document, among other subjects, the history of trade and navigation, as well as French relations with Native Americans. Descriptions of flora and fauna by naturalist travellers in Louisiana are accessible at the Bibliothèque Centrale of the Museum d'Histoire Naturelle.

Digital Projects

Digital Projects Developed in the United States

Many early modern French Louisiana sources became and will become available online through digitization. As mentioned at the head of this article, the “Louisiana Digital Library” (LDL) contains Louisiana documents from various institutions. The LDL collection of “French Colonial, Spanish Colonial, and Nineteenth-Century Louisiana Documents” from 1655 comprises early modern French Louisiana documents from the Rosemonde E. & Emile Kuntz Collection, which is housed at the Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University. These include property sales papers, professional, military and family papers, legal documents, maps, as well as census extracts. The collection “French Colonial, Spanish Colonial, and Nineteenth-Century Louisiana Documents” is also part of the expanding Tulane University Digital Library. More documents from the Kuntz Collection will be digitized as time and resources permit. Like the Kuntz Collection, the Wisdom Collection of the Howard-Tilton Memorial Library is currently being digitized and added to the larger digital collection, “French Colonial, Spanish Colonial, and Nineteenth-Century Louisiana Documents.” There is also a LDL section entitled “Early Louisiana French Correspondence.” It features a digital body of French letters written in Louisiana in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It includes a few personal letters by Jean Charles de Pradel, which are now housed at the Historic New Orleans Collection. Relevant maps of North America, the Mississippi valley and New Orleans can be found on the LDL too, in the collection “Maps from the Historic New Orleans Collection” and in the “Louisiana State Museum Map Collection,” which contain maps held by the HNOC and the Louisiana State Museum. Also available on the LDL, the collection “Free People of Color” comprises family papers, business records, and public documents related to free people of color and housed at the Historical Center of the Louisiana State Museum, at the Special Collections Public Services of the Hill Memorial at Library Louisiana State University, at the Historic New Orleans Collection, at the Louisiana Research Collection of the Howard-Tilton Memorial Library at Tulane University, and at the Louisiana Division of the New Orleans Public Library. This collection should soon feature early documents related to French Louisiana. It will provide an index, a finding aid, and scholarly resources for analysts working on free people of color in Louisiana. Finally, the LDL collection “Records of the French Superior Council (1714–1769)” contains some judicial records, legal documents, correspondence, property sales papers, inventories, manumission acts, business agreements, as well as petitions to recover maroon slaves, which are available at the Historical Center of the Louisiana State Museum.

As already explained, the Louisiana State Museum has launched a much broader Colonial Documents Digitization Project, to digitize and publish the French Superior Council records online, in a searchable database. The original structure of the archive will be respected. Scanning of the documents has already been completed, and the Museum has begun indexing the documents—for the first time, the entire collection will be indexed. The database will become operational in 2016 and will also include transcriptions. The Works Progress Administration ordered the creation of synoptic transcriptions and translations of most of the documents between 1935 and 1942. These will be

available in the database. The Louisiana State Museum welcomes the contributions of scholars willing to share their transcriptions and translations.

Numerous sources issued by religious authorities and related to early modern French Louisiana history should soon become available online too. The Archdiocese of New Orleans has digitized microfilms of the French colonial period sacramental records and may soon upload these images on the Internet. The Catholic Life Center of the Diocese of Baton Rouge has microfilmed its sacramental records and intends to digitize all of its earliest records. In addition, the Archdiocese of Mobile intends to make its manuscripts available digitally in coming years.

Regarding printed material, most of the books related to French Louisiana history available in the Rare Book and Special Collections Division of the Library of Congress have been digitized and are available online. Databases that may be helpful include “Eighteenth-Century Collections Online,” “Early American Imprints,” and the “English Short Title Catalog.”

Digital Projects Developed in France

The Archives Nationales d’Outre Mer have digitized a significant number of early modern French Louisiana sources. This is the case of the entire series C13, “Correspondance à l’Arrivée en Provenance de la Louisiane 1678–1819”, although it is not possible to say when these documents will be made available online. Series E, “Personnel Colonial Ancien, XVIIe–XVIIIe” and subseries F5 A “Missions Religieuses, 1638–1808” have been digitized too, and are now available on the ANOM website. The maps of Louisiana of the “Dépôt des Fortifications des Colonies, 1636–1913” and of the Atlas Moreau de Saint-Méry are available through the “Ulysse” database on the ANOM website, as well as through the database project initiated in 2004 entitled “Nouvelle France-Horizons Nouveaux.” Since 2002, the “Ulysse” database progressively makes iconographical sources available on the Internet.

The database “Nouvelle-France, Horizons Nouveaux” features digitized documents concerning New France (including Louisiana) that are housed in the Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer, the Archives Nationales in Paris, the Archives Départementales of Charente-Maritime (La Rochelle), Gironde (Bordeaux) and Pyrénées-Atlantiques (Pau), as well as the Bibliothèque et Archives Canada (Ottawa) and the Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales of Québec (Montreal).

Series 4JJ of the Centre d’Accueil et de Recherche des Archives Nationales, which includes slave ship logbooks, has been digitized and is available on the Archives Nationales’ database “Campagnes de Traite Négrière Françaises aux XVIIIe Siècle.”

Finally, the Bibliothèque Nationale and Library of Congress’s digital library “La France en Amérique/ France in America” provides access to sources documenting the French presence in North America from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century—the original documents are housed at the BNF and at the Library of Congress. These include a few sources issued from the vast collection “Pierre Margry” of the Département des Manuscrits of the Bibliothèque Nationale. The project “La France en Amérique/ France in America” is part of the BNF digital library “Gallica,” which also contains a vast amount of digitized manuscripts, printed documents, drawings, and engravings related to the history of early modern French Louisiana held by different archives. Early modern French maps of Louisiana and Louisiana territories from the Département des Cartes et Plans of the Richelieu site of the BNF can also be viewed in the online library “Gallica.”

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Notes

1. For a good summary of recent works in the field, please refer to Gilles-Antoine Langlois, *Des Villes pour la Louisiane Française* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003).
2. Guides focusing on early modern French Louisiana sources include: Henry P. Beers, *The French & British in the Old Northwest: A Bibliographical Guide to Archive and Manuscript Sources* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1964); Henry P. Beers, *French and Spanish Records of Louisiana: A Bibliographical Guide to Archive and Manuscript Sources* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989); Henry P. Beers, *The French in North America: A Bibliographical Guide to French Archives, Reproductions, and Research Missions* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1957); Winston De Ville, "Manuscript Sources in Louisiana for the History of the French in the Mississippi Valley," in John Francis McDermott, ed., *The French in the Mississippi Valley* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965); Nancy Miller Surrey, *Calendar of Manuscripts in Paris Archives and Libraries Relating to the History of the Mississippi Valley to 1803* (Washington, D.C: Carnegie Institution, Department of Historical Research, 1926); Waldo G. Leland, *Guide to Materials for American History in the Libraries and Archives of Paris* (Washington, D.C: 2 Vols, Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1932) Vol. 1, 97–101.
3. Beers, *French and Spanish Records of Louisiana*, 3.
4. COL A 22 F° 19 "Édit pour l'Établissement Définitif d'un Conseil Supérieur de la Louisiane (n° 12) (septembre 1716)", 179, Archives Nationales D'Outre-Mer (ANOM).
5. Record Group 1, "Judicial Records of the French Superior Council, 1714–1769," Historical Center, Louisiana State Museum; John R. Kemp and Edward Haas, "Louisiana State Museum: Louisiana Historical Center," in Light Townsend Cummins and Glen Jeansonne, eds., *A Guide to the History of Louisiana* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1982), 173–182, 176.
6. See Thomas T. McAvoy and Lawrence Bradley, *Guide to the Microfilm Edition of the Records of the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas, 1576–1803* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Archives, 1967).
7. "John Law Collection," MSS 606, Williams Research Center, The Historic New Orleans Collection (HNOC).
8. "French Louisiana Documents, 1729–1765", MSS 315.
9. "Colonial French Louisiana Letters Collection," MSS 264, HNOC.
10. "Acts of the Royal French Administration concerning Louisiana," MSS 268, HNOC.
11. "Chevalier de Pradel Papers," MSS 589, HNOC.
12. "Jean Charles De Pradel Family Papers," MSS. 2866, HNOC.
13. Louis-Roger Franssure de Villers folio," MSS 680, HNOC.
14. "Dauberville-Boulogny Family Papers, 1618–1873," MSS 103, HNOC.
15. "Iberville Prospectus, M556," HNOC; "Report on the Cession of Louisiana to Spain by France," MSS 178, HNOC.

16. "Bouligny-Balwin Family Papers, 1710–1980," MSS 171, HNOC; "François Fleuriau Papers, 1722–1730," MSS 376, HNOC; "Ernest Caliste Villeré Papers, 1691–1981," MSS 13, HNOC; "Henry Clement Pitot Papers, 1699–Dec–1990," MSS 400, HNOC. In addition, a collection of "German Study Files, 1704–1981" documents German migration to, and German life in, Louisiana from the period of early settlement on the German Coast in the 1720s. It includes, among other documents, legal sources, copies of censuses and translation of contemporary accounts of Louisiana.
17. "Archives Nationales de France: C13 Series, 1678–1819," 84–70-L, HNOC.
18. "Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer, G Series—Louisiana," 2002-68-L, HNOC.
19. "Section Outre-Mer, Dépôt des Fortifications des Colonies Louisiane," 84-43-L, HNOC.
20. "Records of French Superior Council and Judicial Records of Spanish Cabildo," 99-44-L, HNOC.
21. "Vaudreuil Papers, 1740–1753," 99-91-L, HNOC.
22. "Records of the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas," 72-69-L, HNOC; "Archives of the Ursuline Nuns of the Parish of New Orleans," 99-1-L, HNOC.
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25. See Judy Riffel, *A Guide to Genealogical Research at the Louisiana State Archives*, revised 2d ed. (Baton Rouge: Le Comité des Archives de la Louisiane, 2009), 32–37.
26. P1998–34, Louisiana State Archives (LSA).
27. N1997–14, LSA.
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31. No accession number; P2004–58, LSA.
32. P1976-42, LSA; P1976-43, LSA.
33. P1976-42, LSA.
34. N2003-027, LSA.
35. N1991-28, LSA; N1976-27.
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37. For more details, see *The Rosemonde E. and Emile Kuntz Collection, Donated by Felix H. Kuntz, Collector: A Catalogue of the Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera* (New Orleans: Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University, 1981), by Guillermo Nanez Falcon.
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39. "John Minor Wisdom Collection, 1710–1960," LaRC Manuscripts Collection 230, HTML.
40. "Land Transactions Collection, 1721–1935," LaRC/Manuscripts Collection 506, HTML.
41. "De la Villesbret Family Papers, 1534–1975," LaRC/Manuscripts Collection 84, HTML.
42. "Slavery Documents Collection, 1758–1865," LaRC/Manuscripts Collection 503, HTML.
43. "Jean Charles Pradel Family Papers, 1719–1954," MSS 2866, Hill Memorial Library (HML).
44. "Edme Goudeau Family Papers, 1670–1811," MSS 1377, HML.
45. "Natchitoches Parish records, 1734–1792 MSS 480, 876, 929, 940, 961," HML.
46. "Pailloux, Paul. Inventory, 1727," MSS 91, HML; "Vezin, Pierre F. O. Document, 1749," MSS 431, HML.

47. Beers, *The French & British In the Old Northwest*, 13, 14; Gilles Harvard and Cécile Vidal, *Histoire de L'Amérique Française* (Paris: Flammarion, 2003), 108.
48. Charles E. Nolan ed., *Archdiocese of New Orleans Sacramental Records, 1718–1831* (New Orleans: 19 Vols., Archdiocese of New Orleans, 1987–2004).
49. SR/1, SR/2, SR/3, SR/4, SR/5, Office of Archives and Records, Archdiocese of New Orleans (ANO).
50. SR/ 56, ANO.
51. SR/210, ANO.
52. SR/184, SR/185, ANO.
53. PCP-1, PCP-2, PCP-3, The Catholic Life Center, Catholic Diocese of Baton Rouge.
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59. MSS30585, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division (LoC).
60. Judy Riffel, *Guide to the Louisiana Miscellany Collection, 1724–1837* (Baton Rouge, Le Comité des Archives de la Louisiane, 2006) vii, v.
61. MSS5849 LoC.
62. Microfilm 17,976 LoC.
63. Microfilm 13,951 LoC.
64. MSS56317 LoC.
65. Marguerite J. Pease, “Archives in Randolph County: A Revised Inventory,” *Illinois Libraries*, Vol. 43, No. 5, June 1961, 433–448.
66. See, notably, the numerous works by Clarence W. Alvord. See also, Illinois State Archives, “Inventory of Microfilm of Records in Office of Circuit Clerk and Recorder of Randolph County, Chester, Illinois” (1952), revised in the Illinois Historical Survey, University of Illinois, 1960; Illinois Historical Survey, “Translations of French Records, Vol I: Documents 1–697 1722–1774, Indexed and Calendared” (1960); Illinois Historical Survey Translation of French Records, Vol II: Documents 698–1034 1725–1810. Indexed and Calendared (1960).
67. John F. McDermott ed., *The French in the Mississippi Valley* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965) 225, 226.
68. Pertinent documents are located—though not exclusively—in sections FR ANOM COL B 4, 20, 23, 25, 27, 29–30, 32, 34–36, 42bis and 43, 52.
69. See, especially, D2C 41 Volontaires de la Louisiane, 1754–1803; D2C 50 Officiers Militaires en

Service en Louisiane, 1694–1803; D2C 51-52, Compagnies Détachées en Louisiane, 1710–1770; D2C 54 Rôles des troupes Françaises en Service en Louisiane, 1739–1777; and D2C 59 Officiers Militaires et Civils en Service en Louisiane: Matricules, 1692–1776.

70. See especially FR ANOM F1A 11–13, 15–26, 30–33 and 37–38.
71. FR ANOM F3 24–25; FR ANOM F3 290; FR ANOM F3 241; 242–243.
72. FR ANOM FR F5B 34.
73. FR ANOM 82 APC 1.
74. See ANOM FR 2JJ 56, 3JJ 276, 3 JJ 277, 4 JJ 14–19, 6 JJ 38, 61, 75.
75. ANOM FR K 1232, 1–54; K 1374; K 1232.
76. ANOM FR M 204, M 1026, M1024.
77. ANOM FR T 66 1–2, T 590.
78. ANOM FR V7 215–235, V7 254–259, V7 215–235.