2.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The City Landscape

The city of New Orleans and Orleans Parish are coextensive, covering an area of 199 square miles (518 kilometers). The boundaries are formed by the Mississippi River and Jefferson Parish to the west and Lake Pontchartrain to the north. Lake

United States (www.maps.com)

Pontchartrain is connected by the Rigolets Channel to Lake Borgne on the east, and the southern boundary of New Orleans is made up of St. Bernard Parish and, again, the Mississippi River. The city is divided by the Mississippi, with the principal settlement on the east bank. The west bank, known as Algiers, has grown rapidly. It is connected to eastern New Orleans by the Greater New Orleans Bridge. The early city
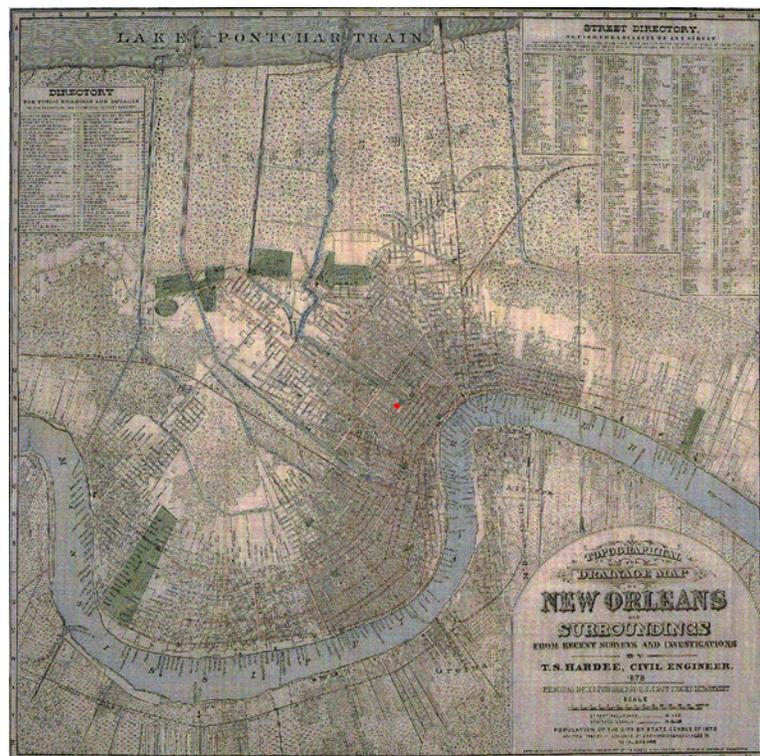

Louisiana state (www.louisiana.com)

was located on the east bank along a sharp bend in the Mississippi, from which its popular name, "Crescent City," is derived. The modern metropolis has spread far beyond this original location. Because it's saucer-shaped terrain lies as low as five feet (1.5 m) below sea level and has an average rainfall of 57 inches (1425 mm), a levee, or embankment system and proper drainage have been crucial to the city's development.


Topographical and Drainage Map of New Orleans and Surroundings, 1878, by T.S. Hardee, (THNOC).

2.2 Urban History

New Orleans' rich and varied history draws from its past population as well as its key location. Three different nations have occupied and ruled the city and together with Native American and black African peoples, each group has contributed its culture, language, and traditions that define the city today.

2.2.1 French Colonization

As early as the seventeenth century, France had established settlements in North America in the region now known as Quebec, Canada. By the mid seventeenth century, in order to insure their presence on the continent and to minimize that of the British, the French determined that control of the Mississippi River and its tributaries was critical. To do so, they would need to control the mouth of the river in the delta at the Gulf of Mexico. The problem with this site was the lack of high ground because the delta was—and is— primarily swamp, marshes, and water. Nevertheless, the site was deemed strategically necessary and was thus chosen for the new city.
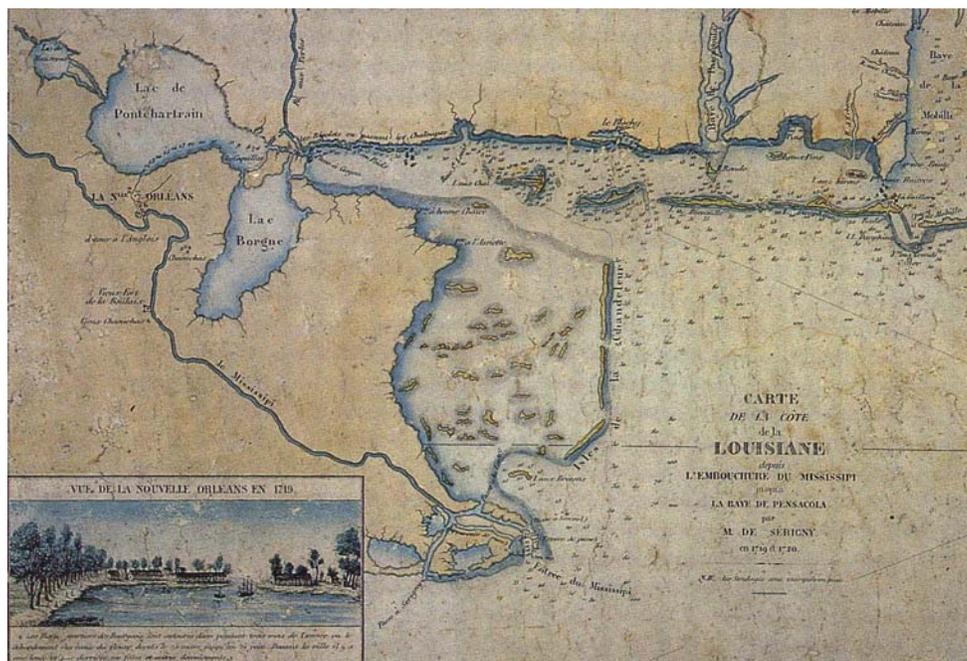
Map of the Louisiana Coast, 1719-20, by M. de Serigny. THNOC 22.1

New Orleans is situated on the northern bank of a great curve in the Mississippi River, with natural levees averaging ten to fifteen feet above sea level and only one to two miles in depth. The levees gradually drop off into swamplands.[1] While the oldest part of the city rests on these levees, the majority of the modern city rests at or below sea level and is subject to flooding. New Orleans was originally the size of what is now known as the French Quarter or *Vieux Carré*. The city was founded in 1718, and by 1720 Adrien DePauger and LeBlond de la Tour had drawn up plans in an orthogonal gridiron pattern. A central location was reserved for royal buildings and public squares, including the parish church, later to become St. Louis Cathedral.[2]

In 1731, France appointed a governor to act as the new colony's representative and executive. The governor exercised dictatorial, judicial, and legislative control.[3] During this period of French rule, development of New Orleans progressed slowly. Immigration was encouraged only among Catholic Frenchmen, who usually preferred to remain in France, due to their general distrust and dislike of Englishmen and Protestants.[4]

New Orleans law is based on French Civil Law, a form of legislature that continues to serve Louisiana at its base. (The rest of the United States laws are based on British Common Law.)[5] One of the most influential laws was the Black Code *(Code Noir)* that dealt with slavery and racial issues. While some of the codes were severe, many others were lenient, especially in light of the rest of the continent's laws. Slaves could be educated, baptized, and married with the church's recognition, and sue their masters for abuse. Free people of color could own land and run businesses.[6] Many of these rights were revoked once Louisiana passed into the hands of the United States.

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[1] Donnald McNabb and Lee Madere, *A History of New Orleans* (New Orleans: Lee Madere, 1997), p.5.
[2] McNabb, pp.6-7.
[3] Federal Writers' Project, *New Orleans City Guide*, revised by Robert Tallant, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952), p.11.
[4] Mcnabb, p.7.
[5] Robert Florence, *City of the Dead: A Journey Through St. Louis Cemetery #1* (Louisiana: The Center for Louisiana Studies), p.34.
[6] *Ibid*,p.35.

The economic policy of French Louisiana benefited France, the mother country. Raw materials were transported back to France, while finished materials were sold in markets in the colony. It was this emphasis on containing commerce between France and its colony that limited Louisiana's growth and development. The French considered the area a buffer zone to English and Spanish expansion and a symbol of French dominance in North America.

This *laissez-faire* attitude changed when John Law, a Scotsman, gambler, and financial advisor to the Duc d'Orleans, developed a plan in which the Louisiana colony would be operated by his newly formed Mississippi Company. Sales of shares in the company would pay off France's debt and increase Louisiana's appeal as a place to live and conduct business. The plan failed. Due to the lack of profits, the territory reverted back to the Crown's control, and, after this debacle, France did little to encourage the colony's development. The shortage of immigrants led to large importation of slaves, which in turn resulted in a population surge: in 1800 the population was approximately 50% black.[7]

2.2.2 Spanish Colonization

At the end of the Seven Years War in 1763, the Treaty of Paris transferred Louisiana and New Orleans from France to Spain. However, it was not until 1764 that French officials in New Orleans relinquished the colony.[8] Such confusion characterized the first few years of Spanish control and resulted in much animosity towards the new administration. The French population refused to acknowledge Spanish rule until 1769 when the Spanish military arrived.[9] Eventually Spain gained firm control. The French law and government system was abolished as the Spanish installed a governor and established the *Cabildo,* a legislative and quasi-administrative council.[10]

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[7] McNabb, p.8.
[8] Federal Writers, p.13.
[9] McNabb, p.9.
[10] Federal Writers, p.13.

Trade increased dramatically under Spanish rule, largely due to English and American settlers further up river in the Ohio Valley. New Orleans grew to better accommodate such commercial enterprises as were necessary for business.[11] Due to two major fires in 1788 and 1794, most of the remaining early architecture in the old city reflects a mixed Spanish and French influence. New Orleans remained under Spanish rule until 1803. At that point, the French momentarily came back into power before the city and territory were transferred to the United States through the Louisiana Purchase.

2.2.3 Statehood

Spain ceded to France in 1802, but the news traveled slowly to the colony, reaching the city in 1803. Peace under the Spanish had been a welcome lifestyle that many were unhappy to relinquish.[12] A mere three weeks after France regained control, New Orleans residents were informed that they were, yet again, under a different flag. The United States, under the leadership of Thomas Jefferson, purchased a large tract of land to the west of the Mississippi River from the French in 1803. The "Louisiana Purchase" included New Orleans and was one of the greatest real estate deals in history.[13] This event brought an end to French and Spanish rule, but not to the two cultures. In fact, many New Orleans residents were as dissatisfied with this transfer as they had been with the previous ones, especially since English became the official language and the cultural backgrounds of the residents were not well represented in the new government.

New Orleans was incorporated as a city in 1805 with a mayor, recorder, treasurer, and council of aldermen who acted as the legislators of the municipality.[14] Louisiana became a state in the Union in 1812, and New Orleans was named the capitol. The British tried invading the city during the War of 1812, after the attack on Washington, D.C. The Battle

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[11] McNabb, p.9.
[12] Federal Writers, p.15.
[13] McNabb, p.9.
[14] Federal Writers, p.19.

of New Orleans (the last of the war) in January of 1815 was a decided victory for the United States under the leadership of General Andrew Jackson.

The settlement of New Orleans is distinctive from that of any other city in the United States. The combination of people, cultures, languages, and traditions creates a unique society that is often referred to as Creole. *Creole* is a complex word that has changed meaning over time. Originally used to refer to the children of French and Spanish blood born in New Orleans[15], the word *Creole* now represents "the synthesis of the various cultures in the unique New Orleans melting pot."[16] It is definitively descriptive of the new and old world syncretism of New Orleans.

The mix of people—from the earliest days of settlement—has had a profound impact on the city as a whole. Traditions and practices intermingled and influenced one another. Interracial relationships were common and resulted in a large population of "free people of color." This community had a great influence on the culture of New Orleans, especially in art and music.

The primary religion in the area was, and continues to be, Roman Catholicism. Colonization by both the French and the Spanish emphasized Catholicism and made it the official religion of the colony. Although Catholicism is no longer the official religion of New Orleans, its influence can still be felt. For example, the tradition of All Saints' Day, celebrated on November 1st, continues to be an important day of observance for both Catholics and non-Catholics alike. Cemetery celebrations are held the day after Halloween as families of the deceased visit and care for the tombs. Tomb repair and whitewashing were once common practices as well as decorating with flowers and *immortelles*.[17]

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[15] Lyle Saxon, Edward Dreyer and Robert Tallant, *Gumbo Ya Ya* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1945), p. 138-9.
[16] George F Reinecke, "The National and Cultural Groups of New Orleans" in *Louisiana Folklife*, edited by Nicholas R. Spitzer (Baton Rouge: The Louisiana Folklife Program, 1985).
[17] Samuel Wilson Jr. and Leonard V. Huber, *The St. Louis Cemeteries of New Orleans* (New Orleans: St. Louis Cathedral, 1963), p.40.

2.2.4 Immigration

During the city's first forty years, French immigrants arrived in New Orleans from both Canada (from the area now known as Quebec) and France.[18] The earliest to arrive were clergymen, administrators, and social outcasts: criminals, vagrants, and women "of immoral life."[19] This latter group was sent, in particular, to make the colony appear prosperous by simply enlarging its population.

Around 1763, at the end of the French and Indian War, refugees fleeing the British from Nova Scotia began to arrive in New Orleans. These "Acadian" people became known as "Cajuns," as they settled and farmed in the bayous surrounding New Orleans. Settlers also came from the other direction, fleeing Saint Dominique (Haiti) after a slave uprising around 1790.[20] This swell of refugees, along with the Americans who moved into the city and region after 1803, made the population of New Orleans rise dramatically to almost 25,000 in 1810.[21] The population virtually doubled within the first decade of the nineteenth century.

Slaves themselves were also brought into New Orleans, primarily from the western coasts of Africa and later from the French Islands. Slaves were used to mitigate the labor shortage due to slow immigration. This combination of slaves and free people of color contributed, as stated before, to blacks representing 50% of New Orleans' population by 1800.[22]

The Spanish were the other major group to settle New Orleans beginning in the 1760s. The installation of the Spanish colonial government in 1763 brought many immigrants with it, and they continued arriving well into the nineteenth century.[23] Post World War

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[18] Reinecke.
[19] *Ibid.*
[20] *Ibid.*
[21] Wilson, p.19.
[22] McNabb, p.8.
[23] Reinecke.

II, there was another influx of Spanish-speaking immigrants from Cuba, Honduras, and the Canary Islands.

There were fairly significant numbers of immigrants from other parts of Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Germans, Irish, and Italians founded their own churches, schools, social clubs, and other organizations, thereby adding their contribution to and influence on the city around them.[24]

2.2.5 Expansion and Growth

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the population of New Orleans increased from 8,000 to nearly 170,000.[25] This huge population increase can be attributed to the annexation of the territory and the continued expansion westward by the United States, as well as the increasing industrialization of the country. New Orleans' situation at the mouth of the Mississippi River made it crucial as a trading and economic center.

After the initial development of the city along the levee, the city began to expand outward as immigration continued. The arrival of the Americans after the Louisiana Purchase started the first wave of expansion. Immigrants of varying nationalities established communities in the less-settled areas in the nineteenth century. During the twentieth century, improvements to drainage made once swampy areas available for settlement.[26]

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[24] *Ibid.*
[25] McNabb, p.12.
[26] *Historic Neighborhoods of New Orleans* (New Orleans: Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans).
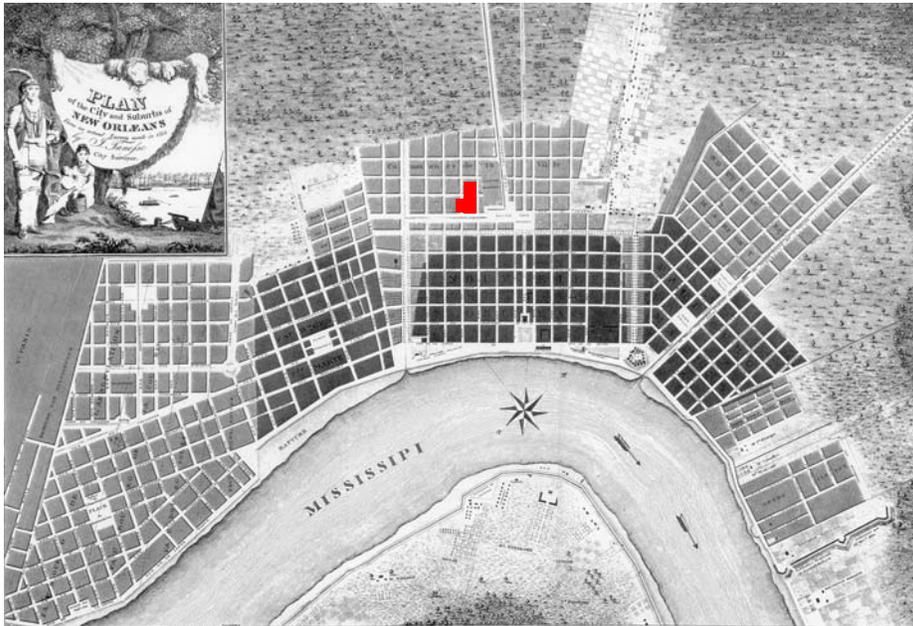
Plan of the City and Suburbs of New Orleans, 1815, by J. Tanesse, (THNOC). St. Louis 1 Cemetery is highlighted in red.

When the Americans began settling in New Orleans, they avoided the French Quarter, settling instead to the west of the Quarter in Faubourg St. Mary or what became known as the American sector.[27]   To the east of the Quarter, the Creole aristocrat, Bernard de Marigny subdivided his large plantation to create the area known as the Faubourg Marigny. This suburb, together with the French Quarter and the American sector, comprised the main sections of the city in the 1830s.[28]


Norman's Plan of New Orleans & Environs, 1845, (Special Collections, Tulane University). St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 highlighted in red.

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[27] McNabb, p.12.
[28] McNabb, p.18.

2.2.6 Society and Cultures

The city continued to expand westward to the "Irish Channel," an area north of the American Sector. Irish immigrants came to work in the growing city near the docks and helped to build the new canal established in the area.[29] The Americans continued settling westward by purchasing old plantations and establishing the Garden District in the 1830s and 1840s. Expansion continued upriver, spawning Lafayette and Jefferson City and also continued northward as drainage improved and the marshy land was made habitable.[30]
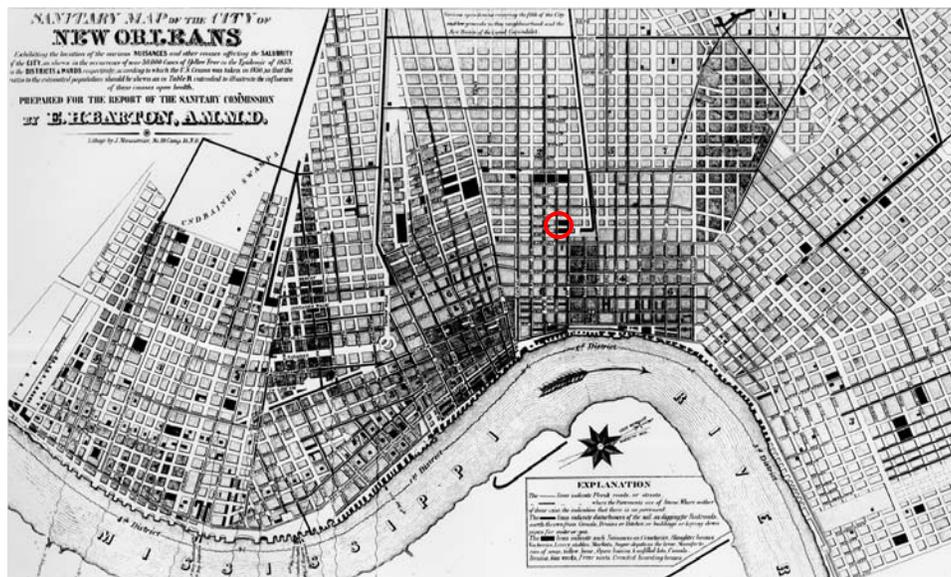
Sanitary Map of the City of New Orleans Exhibiting the location of various Nuisances and other causes affecting the Salubrity of the City, as shewn [sic] in the occurrence of near 30,000 Cases of Yellow Fever in the Epidemic of 1853. (Special Collections, Tulane University). St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 is circled in red.

The development of the population and its growth did not proceed without problems. The climate, natural environment, and a lack of sanitation caused major health epidemics for many of the new unacclimated immigrants. Flooding and yellow fever took its toll on the population on numerous occasions (see map, above): 2,200 people succumbed to the disease in 1818; 2,800 in 1847; and 9,000 in 1853. Small pox and cholera also affected

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[29] *Ibid.*
[30] *Ibid.*

the population.[31] This alarming surge in the number of deaths resulted in a dramatic demand for cemetery space.

2.3 Neighborhood History
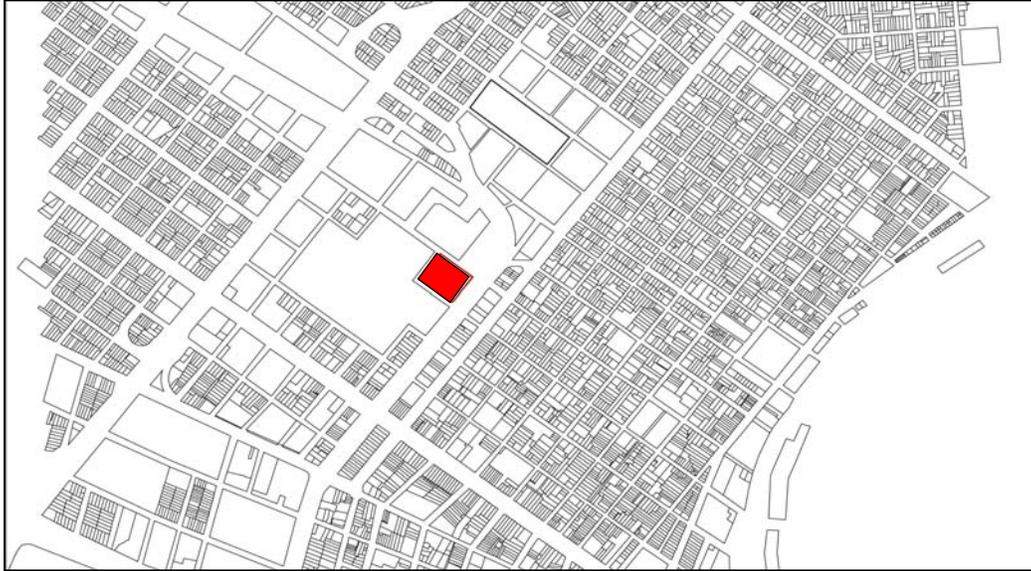
Site neighborhood. St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 is highlighted in red. (Map digitized from Sanborn map photographed at The New Orleans Public Library, March 2001.)

In New Orleans, the Faubourg Tremé lies north of the Vieux Carré within an area generally agreed to lie between Canal, North Broad, Saint Bernard, and North Rampart Streets. This area also encapsulates the site currently occupied by St. Louis Cemetery No. 1.[32] The Faubourg Tremé is considered to be of national historical significance as it is one of the oldest African-American neighborhoods in the nation. It is said that "the culture of the Creoles and the free persons of color is rooted, to a large extent, in Tremé and the sixth ward, which were substantially developed in the late nineteenth century."[33]

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[31] *Ibid,* p.19-20.
[32] Robert J. Cangelosi, *Which Way Tremé? An Architectural Terminal Project* (Baton Rouge: LSU Department of Architecture, 1975).
[33] Office of Policy Planning, *Sixth Ward / Tremé / Lafitte Profile* (City of New Orleans: The Historic New Orleans Collection, December 1978).

2.3.1 Early Settlement and Development

Settlement of the area began in 1731 when Chevalier Charles de Morand, an employee of the Company of the Indies, established the city's first brickyard in the area of Bayou Road above Claiborne. Soon afterwards, Morand purchased the brickyard and much of its surrounding land and developed a large plantation upon the grounds. At this time his holdings included the area surrounded by what are currently North Rampart, Claiborne Avenue, and Bayou Road. In 1756, Morand extended his holdings to include the area bounded by Governor Nicholls, St. Bernard, Galvez, and Rampart Streets. In 1774, his occupation came to a close when he sold his land to Pablo Moro and his wife, Julie Prevot.[34]

By 1780, most of the area had been acquired by Claude Tremé, the husband of Madame Moro's granddaughter and the namesake of the area. This land was given further value in 1794 when the Baron de Carondelet, Spanish Governor of Louisiana, decided to create a canal, "half a league long" from Bayou St. John to the town.[35] This would serve the dual purpose of draining the swampland to the north and establishing a navigable route from New Orleans to the Bayou and then on to the Gulf of Mexico. By 1796, the canal was well traveled and had been christened "Canal Carondelet."[36]

The Canal ended in a square basin, to allow boats to turn, at what is currently the intersection of St. Louis and Basin Streets (see map below). Basin Street was later created and then widened to accommodate better travel to Canal Street in the 1820s. Until the construction of the New Basin Canal, the Carondelet Canal served as the only means of transporting products produced on the north shore of the lake to the city. The terminus of the canal in Tremé was used as a landing depot for schooners carrying lumber, firewood, charcoal, and other commodities. Warehouses soon appeared along the canal's borders in Tremé to store these goods.[37]
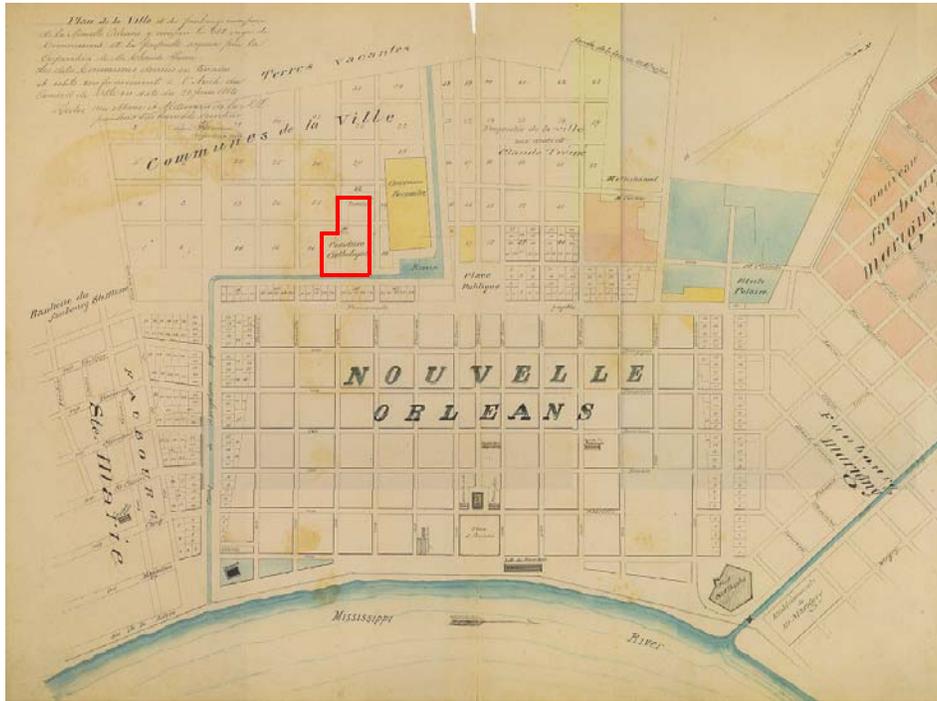
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[34] *Ibid.*
[35] Cangelosi.
[36] *Ibid.*
[37] *Ibid.*

*Plan de la Ville…de la Nouvelle Orléans by Jules Allou D'Hemecourt, 1870s, after
Jacques Tanesse, 1812, (THNOC 1966.33.30). Note the encroachment of St. Louis
Cemetery No. 1 (highlighted in red) by lots planned for development.*

The Canal gave the area some commercial viability and soon Claude Tremé began to
subdivide his plantation for further development. In 1798, Christoval T. de Armas
purchased a portion of the plantation below Bayou Road, and in 1799, Tremé began
subdividing his remaining land. In 1810, the remainder of the Tremé plantation was sold
to the Corporation of New Orleans for $40,000 and by 1816, the city was selling this land
in smaller subdivided lots for a profit.[38] These lots were sold to both white people and
free people of color, most of whom were either the children of white men or individuals
who fled the slave uprisings in the West Indies. The free men of color who resided in
Tremé were often musicians, craftsmen, and artisans. It was at this point in the late
eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that this suburb began to establish itself as a
unique neighborhood of mixed ethnicities.[39]

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[38] Office of Policy Planning, *Sixth Ward / Tremé / Lafitte Profile.*
[39] *Ibid.*

Although Tremé had developed somewhat separately from the rest of the city, it still had not gained acceptance as a separate entity when in 1836, it was included with the Vieux Carré as the city's first municipality.[40] This concept would begin to change throughout the 1840s as the neighborhood continued to grow and was augmented by such structures as the Tremé market, the city's fourth largest public market, and St. Augustine Church, the city's third oldest Catholic church.

1896 Urban Context of St. Louis 1 Cemetery (highlighted in red). (Map created by Studio based on the 1896 Sanborn map photographed at The New Orleans Public Library, March 2001.)

By 1883, there were few undeveloped lots left in the area, which was densely populated with predominantly small shotgun houses and Creole cottages. Larger dwellings were situated along the major avenues. These Creole cottages were typically simple four room houses with separate kitchens and servant's quarters, which were located in two story buildings in the rear of the main houses. Neighborhood groceries and bars were characteristic of the area, as were halls, Benevolent Societies, Social and Pleasure Clubs.[41] According to the 1896 Sanborn Map, (above) this was an area of extensive residential settlement.

2.3.2 Storyville

Storyville, a region that covered 16 square blocks in its entirety (Iberville to St. Louis and North Robertson to North Basin Streets), began in 1897 when Alderman Sidney Story

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[40] Cangelosi.
[41] Office of Policy Planning, *Sixth Ward / Tremé / Lafitte Profile.*

proposed a legal "red-light district" to be located within this existing section of the city as a means of controlling and regulating prostitution in New Orleans. "Storyville," or "the District" as it was coined, was established on January 1, 1898, and "for years, the area between North Rampart and North Claiborne, existed as a haven for jazz and brothels"[42] and at one point housed as many as 2000 prostitutes.[43] Many important jazz musicians performed in these bordellos, including Jelly Roll Morton, Sidney Bechet, King Oliver, Buddy Bolden, Paul Barbarin, Kid Ory, Freddy Keppard, Bunk Johnson, Henry "Red" Allen, and Manuel Perez.[44]   In 1917, the era of "Storyville" ended, when the Department of the Navy closed down the district.

2.3.3 Iberville to the Present
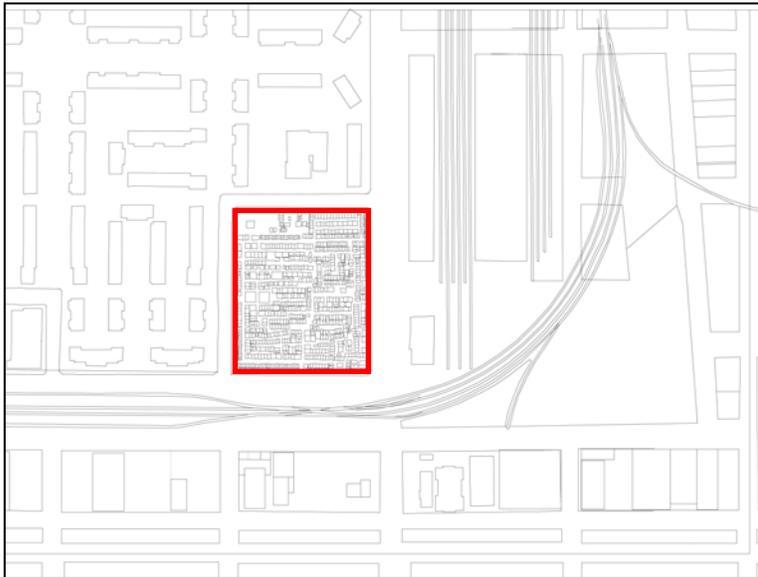
1940 urban context of St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 (highlighted in red). (Map created by Studio based on the 1940 Sanborn map photographed at The New Orleans Public Library, March 2001.)

It was not until the mid-twentieth century, however, that the area began to physically change. The canal was gradually filled in between 1927 and 1938, usurped by the New Basin Canal. In addition, by 1940, the Municipal Auditorium was built in what was known formerly as Congo Square and the Tremé Market was demolished. It was also in 1940 that the remains of Storyville were demolished and in its stead the Iberville Housing Project was built, on the north and western edges of St. Louis Cemetery No. 1, bounded by Iberville, Claiborne, St. Louis and Basin Streets. This

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[42] Faubourg Tremé in New Orleans
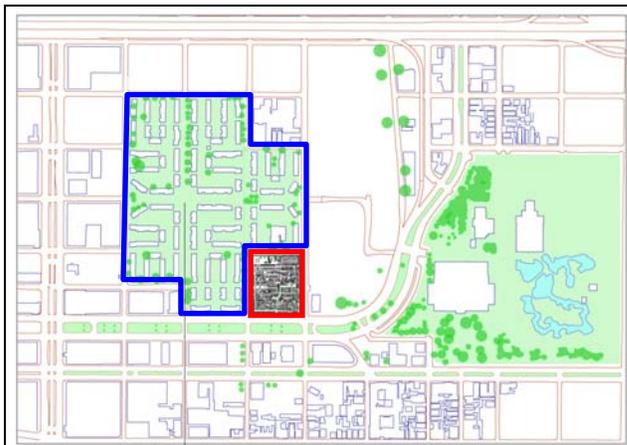http://www.travelape.com/neworleans/attractions/faubourg-treme/
[43] Al Rose, *Storyville* (Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 1974), p. 73.
[44] Rudy Lombard, Robert Perkins, William Lorway, and Anthony Gendeson, *1-10 Multi-Use Study* (Claiborne Avenue Design Team Report: New Orleans City Archives, 1976).

project resulted from the nationwide effort by the Public Works administration to "clear slums and construct low rent housing projects."[45] In all, seventy-three two- and three-story brick colonial revival units were constructed, housing 858 apartments.[46] This was accompanied by the Lafitte Housing Project and a trend toward converting single-family houses into multi-family residences in the area.

By 1969, significant social changes had occurred in the neighborhood, although many of the old Creole cottages, corner groceries, and neighborhood bars remained.   The predominately Catholic neighborhood had seen the introduction of several protestant churches and small apartment complexes. In addition, the introduction of Interstate 10 Expressway to the north, (moved by preservationists from its planned waterfront location) resulted in the demolition of Claiborne Avenue's nineteenth century allee of oak trees. By the 1970s, the area had become known as a low rent neighborhood housing predominately African-American citizens.[47]   During this time, the city made several major attempts to rehabilitate the area. Many

Current urban context. Iberville Housing Project (blue). Louis Armstrong Park (large green area to the right of the picture). St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 (red). (Maps created by Studio.)

of these efforts, such as the building of a large cultural complex, were not completed due to a lack of funding. However, one such attempt, Louis Armstrong Park (see map, above), was constructed in 1976 on the site of the former Congo Square, and still acts as a major gathering place for city functions.

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[45] Office of Policy Planning, *Iberville Project Neighborhood Profile* (City of New Orleans: The Historic New Orleans Collection, December 1978).
[46] *Ibid.*
[47]Office of Policy Planning, *Sixth Ward / Tremé / Lafitte Profile*.

Throughout its history, the Faubourg Tremé has been a crucible of Creole culture. From the architectural and cultural heritage present in St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 to the active African-American history of many of its inhabitants, this neighborhood still maintains a unique place within the greater cityscape of New Orleans. Interest in the area continues today in part because of its affordable historic housing and neighborhood identity, as well as the presence of the St. Louis cemeteries. Within walking distance from the French Quarter, Tremé represents an interesting and distinctive cultural landscape. There have been recent announcements that the National Park Service will soon develop and manage the Louis Armstrong Park as a national heritage site dedicated to jazz.

2.4 Site History and Physical Changes

St. Louis Cemetery No. 1, New Orleans, LA. 1970's Aerial Photo, (THNOC).

Built in 1789, St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 is New Orleans' oldest extant cemetery. Before its construction, prominent citizens were entombed within the parish church located at the head of the Place des Armes, now St. Louis Cathedral in Jackson Square. In 1725, the city's first independent cemetery was opened

outside of the city limits on the upriver west side of St. Peter Street, presently the area between Burgundy and Rampart Streets. Known as St. Peter's Cemetery, this site utilized underground burial. To make up for New Orleans' low and swampy elevations, the ground level of the cemetery was raised using soil from surrounding ditches.[48]

The history of St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 began in 1788, one year before its construction. This was a year of great trauma for the city because the river flooded, a great fire destroyed 856 buildings (80% of the city), and a serious yellow fever epidemic broke out among the populace.[49] At this time, the Cabildo simultaneously realized that the cemetery at St. Peter's had been filled and was warned by local physicians that the proximity of the cemetery to the city could cause another serious epidemic. In response, a new cemetery was located farther away from the population, just outside the city in an area north of current Rampart Street.[50]

On August 14, 1789, by Spanish royal decree, "His Majesty was pleased to approve the construction of a new cemetery."[51] It featured above ground brick tombs covered in plaster, set within a system of shelled paths and grassy aisles, and surrounded by a palisade. By the early 1800s, New Orleans had moved to using primarily aboveground tombs. Brick seemed the most logical material for the construction of the tombs, as there was no natural source of stone in New Orleans and brick could be produced locally in a much less costly manner. As with buildings in the French Quarter, tombs were constructed of plaster-over-brick construction, many with decorative ironwork. In 1803, with the opening of the city to northern immigration, a strip in the rear of the original cemetery was set aside as a burial place for Protestants.[52]

The building of the Carondelet Canal in 1795 to the north led to the construction of a navigational road that eventually caused the western end of St Louis Cemetery No. 1 to

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[48] Wilson, pp.7-8.
[49] *Ibid*, p. 8.
[50] *Ibid.*
[51] *Ibid.*
[52] *New Orleans City Guide* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1938), p. 189.

be removed during the first half of the nineteenth century. This road, owing to failed plans to construct a waterway along Basin and Canal Streets, later became the site of a railroad line at the end of the nineteenth century.[53] In 1822, the rear of the cemetery was diminished when part of the Protestant section was removed to allow an extension of Tremé Street. The city offered Christ Church a tract of land on Faubourg Street, at the head of Girod Street, for the building of a new Protestant cemetery. Upon acceptance of this offer, the remains of several Protestant occupants of St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 were removed to Girod Street,[54] though a portion of the Protestant section of the older cemetery was retained.

In 1817, an epidemic resulted in the formation of a city board of health. This office decided that the display of bodies at funeral services and their subsequent transportation to the cemetery could spread disease. This decision led to the passage of a city ordinance on March 22, 1821, forbidding the placing on view of the dead during any funeral service from the first day of July through December.[55] Before this time, all funerals took place at St. Louis Cathedral and processed to St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 from there. To rid the city of the danger that these funeral processions might present, a mortuary chapel (currently Our Lady of Guadalupe Church) was built adjacent to the cemetery on Rampart Street. Originally the Mortuary Chapel of St. Anthony, the church was designed by the French architects Gurlie and Guillot[56] and today stands as the oldest church in the city.

Saint Louis Cemetery No. 1 is a microcosm of New Orleans history. The diversity and integration of the early city's population is as evident in death as it is in life. Some of its more famous inhabitants include (refer to numbered Site Map, Appendix A):

1. **Barbarin Family** – One of the most significant New Orleans jazz dynasties. Tomb #218.

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[53] *Ibid*, p.6.
[54] Wilson, p.12.
[55] Florence, p. 53.
[56] The History of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, http://www.saintjudeshrine.com/history.htm

2. **Etienne de Boré** (1741-1820) - New Orleans' first mayor. He is credited with being the first person to successfully granulate sugar. His grandson, Charles Gayarré, a noted Louisiana historian, is also buried in St. Louis No. 1 Cemetery. Tomb #224.

3. **Blaize Cenas** (1776-1812**), Dr. Augustus Cenas** (1809-1878) – Blaize Cenas was the first Postmaster General of the New Orleans. Tomb #108.

4. **Eliza Lewis Claiborne** (1784-1804) – First wife of William C.C. Claiborne, the first American Governor of Louisiana. Also entombed here are her son and her brother, Micajah Green Lewis, who died in a duel defending the honor of his brother-in-law, the governor. Tomb #640.

5. **Clarice Durlade Claiborne** (1788-1809) – The second wife of William C.C. Claiborne, Governor of the territory of New Orleans. Tomb #589.

6. **Daniel Clark** (?-1812), **Myra Clark Gaines** (1810-1887) – Daniel Clark was the American Consul when Spain ruled New Orleans, and later the Territorial Delegate to Congress. Myra Clark Gaines, his illegitimate daughter, gained notoriety due a court case regarding her claim to Clark's large land tracts after his death, resulting in litigation which lasted over 65 years. Tomb #590.

7. **Pierre Derbigny** (?-1829) – A noted jurist who, along with Louis Moreau-Lislet, drew up the Civil Code of Louisiana. He was Governor of the state from 1828 until his death in 1829. Tomb #476.

8. **Colonel Michael Fortier** (1750-1819) – Royal armourer and soldier. Fortier fought with the Spanish under Galvez, aiding in the capture of Manchac and Baton Rouge, LA, from the British. He later became a member of the first New Orleans city council. Tomb #81.

9. **Grima Family** – A prominent family descending from Albert Xavier Grima who emigrated from Malta in 1780. Descendants include a notary, a lawyer, a judge, an ophthalmologist, and a writer. Tomb #72.

10. **Benjamin Latrobe** (1764-1820) – Founder of the architectural profession in the United States. He was buried in the Protestant section, but only a plaque stands in his memory, as his remains may have been lost when graves were moved. Location unknown.

11. **Marie Laveau** (1794-1881) – Well known Voodoo Queen. Her remains are reputed to be interred in the Glapion family tomb although there is no solid proof. Tomb #347.

12. **Louis Moreau-Lislet** (1767-1832) – Co-author of the Louisiana Civil Codes of 1808 and 1825. Tomb #105.

13. **Bernard de Marigny** (1788-1871) – Wealthy French landowner who participated in early Louisiana government. He lost most of his wealth through gambling. He is credited with introducing the game of craps to the United States. Tomb #606.

14. **Dr. Joseph Montegut** (1735-1819); **Edward Montegut** (1806-1880) – Dr. Joseph Montegut was a leading physician and surgeon in Charity Hospital and his grandson, Edward, was mayor of New Orleans from 1844-1846. Tomb #144.

15. **Ernest "Dutch" Morial** (1929-1989) – New Orleans' first African-American Mayor. Tomb #2003.

16. **Paul Morphy** (1837-1884) – World famous chess champion. Tomb #366.

17. **Homer Plessy** (1862-1925) – Plaintiff in the landmark 1896 Supreme Court Case Plessy vs. Ferguson, which declared separate as being equal. This was overturned by the landmark case Brown vs. the Board of Education in 1954. Tomb #619.

18. **Carlos Trudeau** (?-1816) – Surveyor General of Louisiana and a leading French and Spanish Colonial surveyor. Tomb #54.

19. **Numerous veterans of all the wars fought by residents of the area.**

2.5 Tourism through Time

The above ground cemeteries of New Orleans have long been a source of awe and inspiration to the visitor and tourist. Travelers' accounts dating from the earliest years of the nineteenth century, and continuing through to the present day, reference these "cities of the dead" as curiosities not to be missed on a visit to New Orleans. Even arm-chair travelers of the nineteenth century could visit one of these other-worldly places through the many travel accounts in publications such as the *Daily Advertiser* (1802), *Scribner's*

Monthly Magazine (1873), and various *Harper's Weekly* articles and sketches dating from the 1860s through the early 1900s.

> *When I entered the gateway, I was struck with surprise and admiration. Though destitute of trees, the cemetery is certainly more deserving, from its peculiarly novel and unique appearance, of the attention of strangers, than...any other in the United States.*[57]


St. Louis 1 Cemetery, 1834, by John H. Latrobe, (THNOC).

Unlike other nineteenth century cemeteries located elsewhere in the United States, St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 truly resembles a dense miniature city. With structures of varying styles and sizes, housing all classes, races, and ethnicities representing New Orleans society, St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 is a tangible record of a continuously developing cultural history. The existing landscape of tomb styles, types, and sizes is a landscape that tourists of the past would still recognize. Accounts dating back to the earliest years of the

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57 Joseph Holt Ingraham, *The South-West by a Yankee*, Vol. 1, 1835, p. 154.

cemetery's visitation describe the mixture of rich, well-kept, limewashed tombs with unkempt monuments and ruins. This contrasting picture of richness and decay is part of the significant historical landscape.

In the early 1800s, travelers sought out the cemetery to enjoy a sublime and foreign experience. Upon entering the wrought-iron gates and passing through the "tortuous paths,"[58] visitors allowed the visual experience of the place to stimulate emotion and reflect on life, death, and mortality – common themes of romanticism in the nineteenth century. Later visitors came to see this unique cemetery to view the "sepulchral houses" of the famous and infamous of New Orleans. Today, the cemetery is still a major tourist

draw, and cemetery tours are a key element for the total New Orleans experience. Many visitors are drawn by the architectural and historical content of the cemetery, while others come for the modern intrigue of voodoo, vampires, ghosts, and the sensationalism created by fictional accounts in popular books and movies.
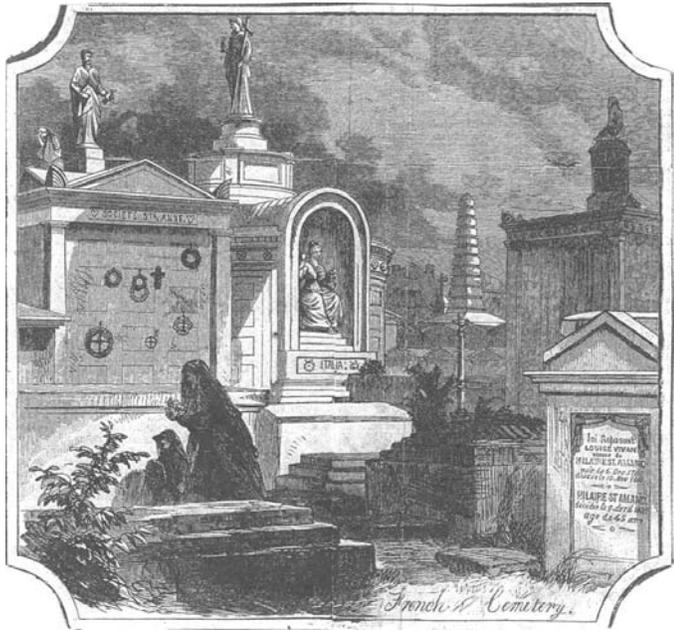

"French Cemetery." (View of Societé Ste. Anne, Italian Benevolent Tombs). Wood engraving, 1867, after a sketch by A. R. Waud, Harper's Weekly, 1867, (THNOC, 1974.25.6.410).

Historically, the cemetery was visited because of its unusual appearance and emotive qualities. It evoked a sense of melancholy and nostalgia with its maze of paths, decaying brick tombs and unusual epitaphs. Today, architecture, intrigue, history, and memory draw the modern tourist to this place. Whether it is through one of the many organized tours, or through individual discovery, each

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[58] Emmeline Stuart Wortley, *Travels in the United States etc. during 1840 and 1850* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1851), p. 127.

visitor who walks through the iron gates of St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 is cast into a world separate and unlike their own.
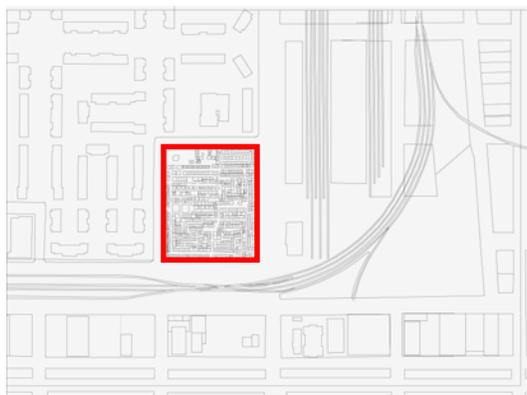
2.6 Physical Evolution of Surrounding Urban Context
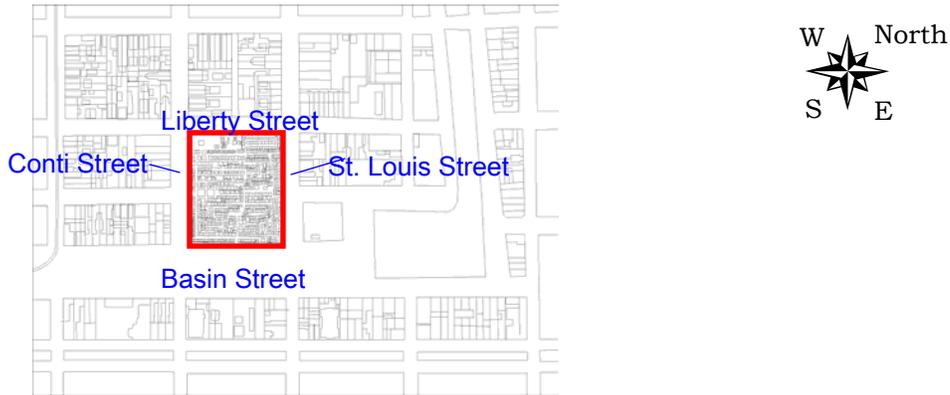
Created by Studio based on 1896 Sanborn Map. St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 in red.

Created by Studio based on 1908 Sanborn Map. Railroad built. Storyville still present. Carondelet Canal partially filled.

Created by Studio based on 1940 Sanborn Map. Iberville Housing Project replaces Storyville. Basin Street buildings largely demolished. Carondelet Canal filled.

Created by Studio based on 1994 Sanborn Map. Railroad removed and replaced by Interstate 10 exit/entrance.

Created by Studio based on 2001 Sanborn Map. Warehouses replaced by parking lot.