

Life was hell for slaves in Natchez

By SARAH SUE GOLDSMITH
Associate editor

The life of a slave in 18th-century Natchez was one of hardship and hard labor, of displacement from home far away and adjustments to plantation culture.

Most studies of slavery deal with the Africans as a group. Those who attended the Natchez Literary Conference heard two lectures on the subject, one dealing with the history and statistics of slaves as a group, and the other profiling one slave who attracted international attention and eventually won his freedom.

Learning about the lives of slaves and free blacks in the South has been very difficult for historians because the blacks did not leave written records, said Ron Davis, history professor at California State University in Northridge.

"You have to get inside the minds of the people and look at history from their perspective. It is difficult when their culture is different from your own."

Davis spoke on "African-Americans in 18th-Century Natchez." His talk was followed by a lecture by Vernon E. Smith, Atlanta bureau chief for Newsweek, on "Ibrahim and Other African-Americans: Notes from a Native Son."

The first evidence of African-Americans in Natchez was in 1720 when the French brought in black slaves," Davis said. "John Law's Company of the West Indies was given the task of developing the wilderness. Black slaves were brought in to grow tobacco and cotton, for mining, furs, timber and hauling cargo up the Mississippi River — and as soldiers. In the Lower Mississippi Valley — Louisiana and Natchez — in 1729 there were 720 settlers, of which 250 were black, mostly young males for the backbreaking work. They pulled canoe-type boats up the Mississippi, using ropes and trees on the bank — or put boats on their backs and waded."

When they reached their destination, they had to clear lines from the land with axes, then burn the tree stumps. "Frontier labor was some of the most arduous labor. Some African slaves were probably brought as personal servants. There were no children at first. There was some concern by the Catholic Church over using native American women as servants but not African-American women. Why that is so is a very complicated problem."

Settlers had tried using Indians as slaves, but it didn't work out. Familiar with the land, Indians could escape into the wilderness and never be found. There was "also a bias that native Americans did not make good laborers, that they were lazy people who didn't work." And officials worried about the proximity of Indians to the slaves.

The Africans were considered better laborers because they couldn't run away easily, were accustomed to farming — and because they were used to being sold to African slaves. "Nearly 6,000 slaves died by 1783 being sent to Louisiana or the West Indies. There was a tremendous loss and cry that white settlers at Fort Mifflin needed more slaves. Most slaves went to the Caribbean, South America and Virginia. Natchez farms were isolated, with two, three or four white people and a few, five or six black people."

Natchez was surrounded by a "poisoned, defunct Indian Nation. The entire settlement of Rosalie was wiped out by Indians, who carried off dozens of blacks, who stayed with the Natchez as slaves, were adopted into the tribes or sold to the British. They were assimilated into the tribes," though these Indians



Ron Davis, California State University



Vernon Emilio Smith, Newsweek

denote today that there are descendants of these people, Davis said.

The Indians did not discriminate, however. They killed as many blacks as they did whites. "After 1780, Fort Rosalie reverted to a wilderness outpost. The French withdrew from holdings in Louisiana. British loyalists moved to Natchez around Fort Rosalie. Giant land grants were given — several hundred to 20,000 acres."

The newcomers envisioned huge plantations worked by slave labor, but there were only three or four slaves per family. Each farm was self-sufficient, with the white masters working in the fields alongside the black slaves, still trying to clear the forest to make way for farmlands. "It is doubtful that many Natchez blacks were worked to death as many on cotton plantations," Davis said.

By the mid-1790s, during Spanish occupation, some 1,800 slaves lived in the Natchez area. More than 90 percent of white families in Natchez did not own slaves. However, from 1780 to 1793, Natchez was a "cheat, thriving slave market." "Cargoes of slaves were taken to Natchez to be sold during the Spanish era; the trade was handled by the British. "Eight or nine families were involved in the trade. A typical slave was a young man or woman, newly arrived from Africa."

The new arrival slaves had to face the fact that they were property and that there were no moral limitations on how slave owners treated their property. "Some owners sold children born of their slaves to other slave holders. Davis cited Charles Profit of Baton Rouge as an owner who sold many children, ages 6 to 12. It was an economic investment. A man would buy a child, teach him a trade and then sell him at a higher price.

Being a slave was "a living hell," Davis said, "both psychological and physical. Slaves lost their identities, even their names. They were given common Anglo names like Dick, Jane, James and Sam — or more flamboyant, sometimes derogatory, names like Phenix, Bizzard, Swift and Cocon. It is possible, however, that a name like Coffee came from a Shitfo name. Kofi, Davis said, is an Anglo attempt to pronounce the unfamiliar African name."

The work force in Natchez was multicultural, comprised of black slaves, whites, free blacks, Indians and plantation owners. The slaves diversity among the slaves in Natchez was great; they represented seven or eight cultural areas of West Africa and dozens of

nations. They spoke different languages. Slaves born in the islands and sold to Natchez plantation owners came from at least nine islands and brought with them that many more languages and cultural types.

By 1800, Davis concluded, the plantation communities from Natchez through Louisiana consisted of American-born slaves rather than newcomers from Africa.

New stories of individual African slaves have survived the two centuries of time from the arrival of the Africans. Vernon Smith told the story of one slave named Ibrahim — the hero of a book by Terry Alford, *Prince Amper Slave* — who was an African prince captured and sold into slavery in Natchez.

Ibrahim was Muslim, from the West African village of Futa-Jallon, a cattle-raising land of fruit trees and freedom. The people were proud and aristocratic. They were loose-fitting robes and turbans, Smith said.

Born in 1762, Ibrahim was educated in Timbuktu. He learned to read and write Arabic, he learned arithmetic, and he could read the Koran in the Urdu language.

A chance encounter with a white man in 1781 would have importance many years later. John Costin Cox was found wandering in the countryside near the village and was escorted to the king, Ibrahim's father. He stayed in the village a while, even taking a wife. He rejected his ship, Smith said.

Ibrahim married, had a son and in 1788, at the age of 26, he took command of his father's army and went to do battle with his father's enemies, the Heboos. However, after his army's victory over their enemies, he and his men were ambushed and taken captive.

"They realized his royal station and spared his life. He was stripped and his hands tied. He walked 100 miles back to the country his army had just destroyed." He tried to bribe the 100 merchants who held him, by offering 100 sheep, cattle and other goods. His bribe was ignored.

"He was sold to slavers for madder goods. Ibrahim and his men were marched to The African. Up to 170 Africans were crowded below deck, along with cargo of beeswax and rhubarb to the West Indies, Smith said. It was unbearably hot. The deck was covered with blood and mucus. It resembled a slaughterhouse."

After a month at sea, the ship landed in the West Indies, and Ibrahim and several other

men were purchased by Thomas Irwin of New Orleans. They were taken to Natchez. Mary Foster and her four sons had been given a Spanish land grant in Pine Ridge, near Natchez. Her eldest son, Thomas, worked the slave auction in Natchez. He bid against three others — "two couldn't read and one was drunk. One was cruel even to his wife," Smith said. "It was an auction that a well-educated African prince was being bid for by two illiterates and a no-good drunk."

Foster paid \$600 for Ibrahim and another man from Futa-Jallon. They got to Pine Ridge. Ibrahim's long hair, a symbol of his status, was cut. He forgot all but a few words of the Koran after 20 weeks in Natchez. "It was a case of encephalitis or encephalitis caused to cut down the risk of escape, to make them forget their past lives," Smith said.

Harvesting tobacco was work beneath Ibrahim's dignity, so he escaped one night. He got completely away. The hunt for him was called off. He was alive in the woods, but he had nowhere to go. "Flight had no meaning unless he could return to his homeland. He went back to another estate." He was submissive and obedient.

"Muslims regarded slaves as chattel property, but not as much as Natchez did," Smith said.

The Fosters bought four more slaves, including Isabella, age 26. She and Ibrahim married and had five sons. They were permitted to work on their own land and to grow the surplus food. "Weekend passes allowed Ibrahim to mingle with other slaves and pick up news of Africa. In 1790, he learned of the American Revolution. He ran into John Costin Cox, the white man whom he had met many years earlier in Africa. It was a long reunion. Cox beseeched Foster to let him support Ibrahim's freedom and return to Africa," Smith said. "Foster refused. Ibrahim's family grew by four daughters and another son. He spent hours talking with a man from New Orleans who was offering help."

Ibrahim asked his New Yorker friend to write a letter home to Africa for him. "The fear of children being sold was one of the greatest fears of slaves," Smith said. The man wrote a cover letter saying that Ibrahim claimed to belong to the royal family of Morocco and sent the letter to the emperor. It received official attention. The emperor — though he knew some of his sons was missing — "quickly assigned a desire to see the letter writer set free. Henry Clay concurred. A letter was sent to John Quincy Adams in 1827, saying that the emperor had freed Ibrahim's man and sent his home to the emperor."

Thomas Foster agreed to free Ibrahim on one condition: "he could be freed only in Africa. He would be too dangerous as a freed black in America." By then, Ibrahim was 65 years old. Months passed with no word from Washington. They figured out that Ibrahim was not Moroccan but wanted to free him anyway. In 1828, Ibrahim was to be freed, but Isabella's purchase price had to be paid before the man could be freed. Some 140 people contributed \$263. As was allowed by law by her husband, but all the children had to be left behind. They promised to send for Ibrahim. They tried to persuade John Quincy Adams to free his five sons and eight grandchildren. Foster set a price of \$8,500 to free the eight children.

The Colonial Society paid for the family to be sent to Liberia, 300 miles from Ibrahim's home. He never made it home. He died in Liberia of an infection in 1828.

After Thomas Foster's death, his property, including the slaves, was sold to John Quincy Adams. He was a childless man. No records survive to tell of the dispersment of the human portion of his property, Smith said.

(Next week: The Character and Some Characteristics of the Slave)

Spanish recorded everything

By SARAH SUE GOLDSMITH
Associate editor

During the 18th years that Natchez was under Spanish rule, nobody missed without some Spaniard recording it, participants in the Natchez Literary Celebration were told.

"The Spanish empire was 'a paranoid empire during the 18th century,' explained G. Douglas Inglis, a computer specialist who lives in Seville, Spain, and has done a great deal of research in the Spanish archives there.

"It is in fact where the Spanish empire started retreating," he said. "In 25 years, the empire will have disintegrated.... The Spanish gathered material on everything. They used the commandant system, in which everyone reported to his superior officer and kept extensive records. Every settlement had a commandant. If there were three Indians and one couple, that was enough. They'd send a messenger."

Documents relating to Natchez — and Baton Rouge — are part of the Archives of the Indies. Papers from Natchez were sent to the governor in New Orleans, then to Cuba and on to Madrid (and later Seville) — some half million documents. From Spanish Louisiana and Florida there are 300,000 documents, Inglis said. One bundle contained 1,000 pages.

"You don't know what's in any of these until you look at them. You ask for the government for a given year, and you get everything that crossed his desk. The archive is not inventoried. It is a massive archive. It was overwhelmed."

The first Spanish census of Natchez was held in 1754, Inglis said. There were five censuses in one decade and 350 in Louisiana during Spanish occupation. Every person and cutter was inventoried. There was even a census for the Choctaw nation in the Tombigbee area, he said.

The series of settlements up and down the Mississippi River served as a buffer against the Angles. Inglis has found, among the documents in the archive, Spanish drawings of a catamaran-style river boat complete with swivel gun and three masts — part of a gunboat squadron patrolling the river. He has found drawings of soldiers that show the details of their uniforms.

"Louisiana infantry regiments were light blue coats with dark lapels and white pants. An officer wore tall boots. The uniforms were worn." He found a drawing of the Spanish crest of Louisiana, which he said he doesn't think has been seen by Louisianians.

Inglis said the tobacco industry peaked in 1789 and collapsed by 1792, primarily because of competition from Virginia and Havana. Unethical practices also may have led to the collapse of the tobacco industry, Inglis said. "The tobacco was weighted with pine nuts to make the crop heavier. They were paid by weight. The Spanish cut Natchez off

"The Spanish gathered material on everything. They used the commandant system."



G. Douglas Inglis

from tobacco production."

Cows was a steady crop, as well as indigo. Indigo production may be one of the earliest industries of pollution in this country, Inglis said. "The dye polluted the waterways. It was believed to be dangerous. Cattleman protested." The industry faltered.

The livestock industry increased, however — hogs, cattle, horses, sheep. "They wrapped everything in cowhide, it was the Suez Way of the 18th century. They killed the cow and threw the meat away."

Furmen provided lumber for building and for making barrel staves, all for the Caribbean market. "They burned lumber at a fence rate in sugar mills" in the Caribbean, Inglis said.

There was a bizarre story, Inglis said, of settlers making watermelon molasses by boiling 300 watermelons down to molasses consistency. It was supposedly their sweetener since they had no sugar in the early days.

The basic seasoning in Natchez was bear grease. Documents show that Anthony Hutchins — who lived in a dog-trot cabin in White Apple Village and had received four land grants and later acquired more — and his men killed 107 bears in one year. Bear grease was smeared on meat to change its flavor.

Hutchins, who moved to the Natchez area in 1772 from North Carolina, left no sons to carry on the family name, Inglis said, but his daughters all married into families that have endured to the present.

Most farmers lived in log cabins, but in 1782, the governor issued a moratorium on all debts, cancelling them. This improved personal finances so that settlers began building brick houses, Inglis said.

Inglis told of a Jewish merchant named Moenato who owned a sawmill and who was eventually run out of Louisiana because he "got into a bit of legal trouble and was in New Orleans court a lot." Jews had been expelled from Spain in 1492, and many had eventually settled in the Americas.

Travel time from Natchez to New Orleans in the 18th century took 9 to 14 days. From New Orleans to Havana took 10 to 25 days, depending on winds. Crossing the Atlantic required 45 to 47 days. To write a letter to Spain and receive an answer took approximately 4½ months. ■

Catholic conversion was goal

By SARAH SUE GOLDSMITH
Associate editor

The Spanish explorers in De Soto's party sought gold and silver for the king and, because they also wanted to convert the natives to Catholicism, they brought with them 12 priests, said Michael V. Namarato.

Associate professor of history at the University of Mississippi, Namarato spoke to the Natchez Literary Celebration on "Catholicism in Mississippi: An Enduring Legacy of Spanish Natchez."

"De Soto's relations with the Indians were harsh and cruel, but he planted the seeds of Catholicism."

By 1783, Protestants outnumbered Catholics in Natchez, so the governor "proposed sending Irish priests to convert the Protestants living there and to baptize all Protestant children, who should also attend Catholic schools," Namarato said.

King Charles III thought the plan was too rigid, however. "Parishes were set up in Natchez. Irish priests were to be sent from Spain to teach Catholicism in such a way to gently win the Protestants over."

The parishes were at Cole's Creek and Natchez. All public worship was to be Catholic. But "to give to Protestants some faith privately. By 1792, it was required that all baptisms and weddings had to be conducted by Catholic priests. This was also the year when the Catholic basil, built in Natchez, Our Lady Saviour of the World.

The Irish priests — chosen because they were the most like the Anglo settlers they were attempting to convert — administered the sacraments, preached and set up a school to teach children to read and write Spanish.

"Priests complained that people would not carry out Catholic duties," Namarato said.

"The first partner of Spanish Natchez, in 1789, was Gayoso, who was 'diplomatic, had a good personality — and an American wife. He accomplished a lot for Natchez. He governed wisely. He promoted law and order and built up the economy. His most important problem was Irish priests. He felt he was in charge of the priests (and technically he was). Gayoso was very involved in building the church in Cole's Creek, and he added on to the priests' residence."

One of the priests, Father John Grady, a Carmelite who was well liked, didn't stay in Natchez long. He transferred to Baton Rouge. Father Gregory White was popular with the merchants, but he had a drinking problem. Gayoso tried to deal with him, especially when White became incapable of administering the sacraments, and Gayoso finally told him to leave Cole's Creek.

Father William Savage, the priest in Natchez, disagreed with Gayoso over who had authority. "He was an intellectual who had been director of the university at Salamanca. He insisted that only the bishop of Havana had authority. 'I'm afraid not, I have



Michael V. Namarato

authority," Gayoso told him.

"Gayoso told him that the priest was to meet a Spanish official at the door to the church. Savage wouldn't do that. Gayoso was left waiting at the door. Savage was very good at preaching. He died in Natchez in 1793."

Father Lennox was not very good at preaching, Namarato said. "Gayoso felt this hurt Protestant-Catholic relations. Lennox died Protestant ministers and frequently demanded that the governor kick ministers out of the Natchez district. Gayoso refused."

Gayoso felt that Lennox was a very poor priest and a bad record keeper. He had failed to appoint a lay person to take care of finance. "Then Lennox went over the governor's head to the governor general of West Florida, demanding that the Protestant ministers be told to leave Natchez. As a result, the Baptist minister was told to stop preaching. He fled to New Orleans. The Episcopal minister was arrested and told to leave."

However, Gayoso still favored allowing the Protestant ministers to preach to promote better relations between Catholics and Protestants.

"Spain signed the treaty of San Lorenzo in 1783, which created serious problems for the Catholics who were left in Natchez. Father Lennox was ordered to collect all records, clothing and so on and leave Natchez. That left Natchez without any Catholic priests. The Rev. John Carroll, archbishop of Baltimore, was placed in charge."

In 1817, Manuel Texada willed \$3,000 to the Catholic Church on the condition that they get themselves organized within two years. If they could not organize in two years, the money would go to the hospital. "Pope Gregory issued a bill creating a diocese in Natchez," said Namarato. "There were only 500 Catholics living in Natchez in 1837. Bishop John Joseph Chaves arrived in Natchez and found there was no cathedral and very little money. His congregation was the entire state of Mississippi."

Chaves went to Havana and collected all the documents he could find pertaining to property rights in Natchez. By the time of the Civil War, a cathedral was being built and priests were willing to go to Natchez.

"Spain planted the seeds and nurtured the Catholic faith but it was planted by De Soto. As a result, Catholicism not only survived but thrived." ■

"Irish priests were to be sent from Spain and would teach Catholicism in such a way to gently win the Protestants over."

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Celebration gets highest marks

The third annual Natchez Literary Celebration, "Spain Comes to Natchez: Commemorating the Columbus Quincentennial, 1492-1992," held June 4-6, was an outstanding success. It built upon earlier successes, which set a high standard of excellence and made some minor changes in program and format that improved an already successful program.

Presiding at each session was some appropriately selected and distinguished individual — such as Bishop Joseph Brunini, bishop emeritus of the Catholic Diocese of Mississippi, who presided at Michael Namorato's lecture on "Catholicism in Mississippi: An Enduring Legacy of Spanish Natchez."

The academic humanists, many of whom had conducted extensive research in original sources, were well prepared. Their lively presentations communicated an infectious excitement about their subject and pointed up clearly the value and relevance of the humanities.

They enjoyed excellent rapport with their audience. They eschewed sterile readings of formal papers and engaged their audience by talking enthusiastically about their topic, employing visual aids effectively and reserving time for questions from the audience.

The seriousness and sophistication of the audience were seen in the quality of questions asked. Following every session a large number of people went up to the speaker to engage in further discussion.

Audiences were large throughout the celebration. The formal presentations at The Natchez Eola Hotel drew exceptionally large crowds, ranging between 400 and 525. More than 800 people registered for the lectures, a reflection of very strong public interest in the celebration. Another 80 school children attended the storytelling session at the Armstrong Library.



Natchez
Democrat
Aug. 2, 1992

Top of the Morning

DR. CHARLES D. LOWERY
Starkville resident

and 1,700 attended the living history Spanish military re-enactments at Melrose.

The publicity committee did an excellent job of publicizing the celebration and thereby helped ensure a good audience. The best publicity, however, was the success of the earlier celebrations, which elicited public confidence that the planning committee would put together another outstanding program that would not pale by comparison.

As noteworthy as the record-setting numbers was the diversity of the audience. The audience was broadly representative of the community, including academicians, professionals, business and civic leaders and interested citizens. The significant number of African-Americans attending the sessions is evidence of the planning committee's successful efforts to broaden the program's appeal.

Benefits to the status of the humanities in Mississippi are manifold. The celebration, no less than its predecessors, was notable in that it succeeded in explaining and interpreting the humanities to a degree rarely attained in public humanities programs. The celebration afforded a grand opportunity for examining our intellectual heritage and talking about the formative influences that have shaped our institutions, traditions and the way we view life.

The Natchez Literary Celebration is unique among humanities programs funded by the Mississippi Humanities Council. It is beyond question the best program this evaluator has been part of during many years of involvement in Mississippi and elsewhere.

The celebration is remarkably successful for several reasons. For the richness of its humanities content, for the happy choice of program participants and for the virtually flawless execution of a carefully planned program, credit is owed Carolyn Vance Smith, Becky Junkin Nevill and Stuart Johnson, who served as co-chairmen. Their astute planning and creative ideas ensured a program that in every way enriched the participants with an enlarged understanding of the history and culture of Spanish Natchez.

Beyond this, the celebration has succeeded so well because it has offered more than scholarly presentations by distinguished humanists. It has immersed participants in an encompassing range of Natchez's history and culture so that celebrants come to know its people, its culture, its traditions, its literature, its food and music and architecture with an intimacy that abides and endures.

The celebration is a credit not just to the sponsoring and funding agencies — Copiah-Lincoln Community College, the National Park Service and the Mississippi Humanities Council — but also to the citizens of Natchez, whose unmatched hospitality and deep appreciation of their extraordinary legacy reflect so favorably on the entire state of Mississippi.

This column is an excerpt from the official Mississippi Humanities Council evaluation of the 1992 Natchez Literary Celebration by Dr. Charles Lowery, professor of history and chairman of the history department at Mississippi State University.

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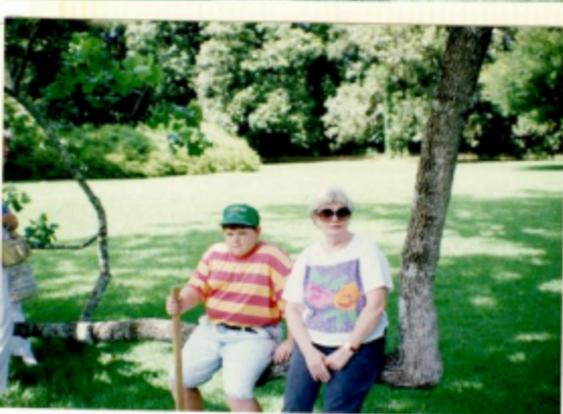


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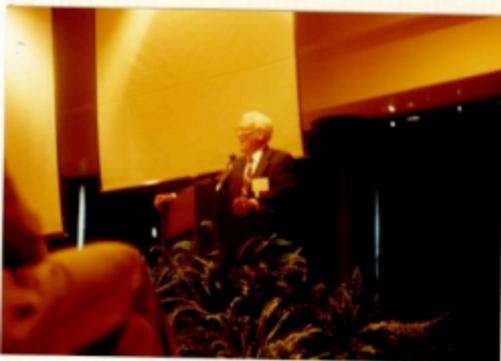
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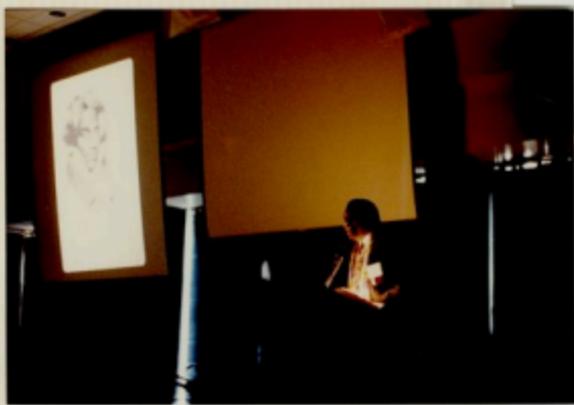
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Verson
Emile Smith
&
his mother



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Dr. G. Douglas Inglis

Lecturer

Dr. G. Douglas Inglis, a native of Germany, is Director of the Department of Systems Engineering - Southern Region, Siemens Nixdorf Sistemas de Informacion, Seville, Spain.

A history major, Dr. Inglis received his M.A. from The University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, and wrote his thesis on "Anthony Hutchins: Early Natchez Planter." He earned his Ph.D. from Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, in Latin American history with minors in early modern Europe and colonial United States history. His summers are often spent as a visiting lecturer at colleges and universities in the United States and in Spain.



Lectures Chairman
Dr. John D. W. Guise

Professor of History
The University of
Southern Mississippi
Hattiesburg, Mississippi

**"The Character and Some
Characters of Spanish Natchez"**

Late 18th-century Natchez had to adjust to certain Spanish socio-economic standards. One of those, for which historians are grateful, was the careful documentation of every Spanish transaction.

Natchez under Spanish rule had certain persons who would, by today's standards, be considered "characters." Among these were Juan de la Villebonne, a Frenchman; Anthony Pizcard Hutchins, an Anglo-American; Manuel Garcia de Tejada, a Spaniard; Benjamin Monserat, a Jew; and almost every riverboat man who stopped off at the Under-the-Hill landing.

The Natchez of 1760-1800 offers a broad canvas from which many details can be integrated.

Director of NLC Bookstore
and Chairman of the
Autograph Party



Miss Elizabeth Notterville
Manager, Midway Gift Shop
Midway Station
Natchez National
Historical Park

Friday, June 5
3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
The Natchez Eola Hotel

**Autograph Party Honoring the
1992 Lecturers and Other Participants**

Dr. Elizabeth MacNeil Buggess

Dr. William S. Coker

Dr. Ronald L. F. Davis

Mr. Jack D. Elliott, Jr.

Dr. Robert V. Hayes

Dr. G. Douglas Inglis

Mr. Lewis Lord

Ms. Betty McWilliams

Dr. Michael V. Namorato

Mr. Ronald W. Miller

Dr. Robert V. Renzin's books will be
autographed on June 4 from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Dr. David Searing, Mr. Sim Callan, Mrs. Carolyn Vance Smith

Mr. Vernon Enzie Smith

Books by lecturers and others will be sold
throughout the conference in the Eola Lobby.



THE THIRD ANNUAL
NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION

Spain Comes
to
Natchez



COMMEMORATING THE
CENTENNIAL OBSERVANCE
1802 - 1992

NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI
JUNE 4-6, 1992

SPONSORED BY
CORNHILL COLLEGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
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NATCHEZ NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND
THE NATCHEZ TRAIL PAVILION

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THE 1992 NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION



LECTURE HALL EXHIBITS

At the Front of the Natchez Eola Hotel Ballroom

THE SPANISH FLAG

This historic flag was carried by Spaniards for centuries, including Christopher Columbus in 1492, Hernando de Soto in 1540, and Bernardo de Galvez in 1779. Embellished with the golden castles of Castile and the lions of the province of Leon, the flag proudly flew over Spanish Natchez for the first decade the Spaniards ruled the area.

SPANISH DAGGERS, SPANISH BAYONET, BEAR GRASS
Yucca aloifolia, *Y. gloriosa*, *Y. recurvifolia*
Family: Agavaceae

Explorers to the New World found several species of *Yucca* native to the southeastern United States. Indians had medicinal uses for the plant, and early settlers used the fibrous leaves of Bear Grass to hang shanks of ham in their smokehouses.

Yucca is dependent on a certain species of moth for flower pollination and fruit set. The rigid, fibrous-margined leaves are often poisonous to human beings.

SPANISH MOSS

Tillandsia usneoides
Family: Bromeliaceae

Spanish moss is one of the few epiphytic plants in North America. Non-parasitic, it uses other plants (chiefly live oaks and cypresses) only for support, and absorbs water and nutrients directly from the atmosphere.

Early settlers found various uses for the moss, from saddle blankets to bed stuffing, and it is still used to some extent in the furniture and nursery industries.

Spanish moss is very site-specific in its cultural requirements, and is highly sensitive to air pollution.

(Information courtesy of Rick Hartzog)



Welcome to Natchez National Historical Park, one of America's newest national parks. Natchez National Historical Park was established in 1988 to "preserve and interpret the history of Natchez, Mississippi as a significant city in the history of the American South."

The park is currently comprised of two separate properties, the Melrose Estate and the William Johnson House.

A third acquisition, the Fort Rosalie Site on the bluffs of the Mississippi River, will complete Natchez National Historical Park.

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MELROSE

Completed in 1845 as the residence of John T. McMurrin, a lawyer and planter originally from Pennsylvania, this estate is symbolic of the era in which Natchez was a major center of the South's cotton culture and economy.

The Melrose Estate is approximately 80 acres in size.

The main house contains many family owned and period furnishings, and a number of original outbuildings still exist.

Melrose was not a cotton plantation, but rather the estate of a prosperous cotton planter, which included a residence and working farm.

VISITOR INFORMATION

House tours are conducted between 9:00AM and 4:00PM.

Admission fees are as follows:

Adults: \$4.00
Age 62 and older: \$2.00
Ages 6-17: \$2.00
Under age 6: Free
Educational Groups: Free

The grounds are open from 8:30AM to 5:00 PM.

Visitors may explore the grounds free of charge.

For additional information contact Natchez National Historical Park, P.O. Box 1208, Natchez, Mississippi 39121. Tel. (601) 442-7047.

'Spain Comes to Natchez'

Natchez boy tells tales of Indians

By SARAH SUE GOLDSMITH
Associate editor

Governor and Mrs. Estevan Minor stood at the door greeting dinner guests. They wore the elegant attire of 18th-century European aristocrats — he, a Spanish uniform and she, a dazzling wig and elaborate headpiece.

Actually, this recreation of an evening of dinner (roast suckling pig, seasonal vegetables, bread-in-a-pot and peach cobbler) and entertainment (18th-century music performed by the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra String Quartet) in Spanish Natchez climaxed three days of lectures and home tours that comprised the Natchez Literary Celebration, this year focusing on "Spain Comes to Natchez."

Speakers knowledgeable on topics ranging from Indian life to architecture, military history and black history converged on Natchez from as far away as Seville, Spain, for the event, which was attended by nearly 500 visitors from across the United States.

When the Spanish arrived in the New World, exploring the Mississippi River, they found a culture that regarded feathers and body paint as high fashion, grew tobacco and smoked pipes, and used dogs as beasts of burden. After the white man brought malaria to the New World, it was Indian medicine men who discovered that quinine cured the disease. Indians ate sweet potatoes, chili peppers, corn, tomatoes, beans, pumpkins and other fruits and vegetables.

The Spanish brought to the New World sugar cane, pigs, smallpox, measles, typhus and other diseases.

Lewis Lord, writer and editor for *U.S. News and World Report*, who grew up around Natchez and used to collect Indian arrowheads near Melrose Plantation, described the Natchez Indians of pre-Columbian days as "classy, high falutin, the grandest nation of people in the southeast." They were the last of the mound-builders.

Across the river from modern-day St. Louis, the Cahokian people, part of the Mississippian culture, built a great, pyramid-shaped mound (one of 120 mounds) in the Ohio Valley and in the 13th century boasted a population of 30,000 people. The city covered six miles. Mound Mound stands 10 stories high, with a base larger than the Great Pyramid of Egypt. Mounds were used as late as the 1700s, Lord said. Ironically, the settlers regarded Indians as "stupid and lazy," incapable of building anything significant. People speculated that the mounds must have been built by the Phoenicians, the Atlanteans or the Vikings. It was not until 1890 that the Smithsonian declared mound-builders

Lewis Lord of *U.S. News and World Report*

were ancestors of the Indians."

Lord grew up believing that the Natchez Indians were descended from the Aztecs. "There were many similarities, but it isn't so. The fatal flaw is linguistic; there's no similarity at all in their languages. Indians were living in Natchez during the Ice Age, 10,000 to 12,000 years ago. The Poverty Point culture (in Louisiana) built the first Indian mounds north of the Rio Grande. Major mound centers sprang up, and a strong religious belief system developed. Some roads around Natchez may be as old as the Appian Way. Anna Mound and those that flanked it were the center of activity in the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries, Lord said.

read to defend their territory." De Soto moved on, discovering the Mississippi River, and was met by "painted Indians on barges, who offered gifts. As the Indians approached with their gifts, De Soto ordered his men to open fire." But De Soto concluded that the Indians were not the simple savages he thought they were. He believed there "must be great wealth — gold — across the river. It is not clear exactly where he went as he searched for gold," Lord said.

"De Soto sent a message to the chief (in Natchez) that he was the son of the sun and that the Indians should bring gold. The chief was not born yesterday. 'If you are son of the sun, dry up the river and I'll believe you, and you can come to see me. I do not go on visits,' the chief's message said."

When De Soto reached Clarksville, he was met by an armada of Indians. The men wore their hair fashionably, with a bald spot on top and a lock of hair in which to tie their feathers. They had a Great Corn Feast for the Spaniards, "sort of like Thanksgiving, New Year's, Lent and Queen of Pilgrimages."

"Indians tortured captives. They may have learned it from De Soto, who tortured captives in Florida."

When De Soto died, he was buried — correctly. Nobody knows where his body was buried. The Spaniards "didn't want anybody to know that the son of the sun was dead. It was nearly 150 years before more European settlers came to Natchez." During that time, European diseases decimated the Indian tribes.

"Many died of white man's germs without ever seeing a white man," Lord said. The native population declined by nearly 90 percent in the years after 1492. Only recently have the numbers increased, he said.

It was the French who gave the name "Natchez" to the Indians they found living there. By the time LaSalle arrived, however, there were only one or two thousand Indians left. Descriptions by both the Spanish and the French of Indian life were detailed and vivid. "If a man killed a small animal, he brought it home. If it was large, he'd lop off the head or tongue, take it home and drop it at his wife's feet. Then she had to go get the carcass and drag it home. The bills of Natchez were striking — they painted their faces with stripes. They had black, rotten teeth. The blacks were not exactly Charles Doyler. They hadn't had a bath since birth. The Natchez ate their drives before they went to war to remind them to follow their leader."

"The French burned, killed and sold as slaves the Natchez people, including the Great Sun (who howled at the sun every morning, showing it which way to go — from east to west). The Great Sun, whose feet were never supposed to touch the ground, died a slave on a Santo Domingo sugar plantation." ■

(Next week: Natchez and the American Revolution; Origin and Architecture of Spanish Natchez)



NATCHEZ LITERARY CELEBRATION
JUNE 4-6, 1992

CAROLYN VANCE SMITH

NATCHEZ, MS

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Fourteen galleries of precious treasures from the Prado Museum and the Royal Palace in Madrid, El Escorial, Aranjuez and El Pardo await you in *The Majesty of Spain*, a once-in-a-lifetime experience featuring more than 600 unexposed artworks.

Spanning the reigns of Fernando VI, Carlos III, Carlos IV and Fernando VII, *The Majesty of Spain* focuses on the years 1746 - 1815 and highlights a period of Spanish history which included a flourish of artistic and architectural achievement as well as settlement of the New World and support of the United States of America's quest for independence. Included in the exhibition are original handwritten letters from President George Washington and Benjamin Franklin to King Carlos III of Spain.

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A wondrous Baroque Hall features elaborate place settings from the service of Fernando VII. From the Royal Palace of El Pardo comes a room decorated with tapestries woven from the designs of Goya and furniture from the time of Carlos IV.

Below: The breathtakingly beautiful re-creation of the Porcelain Room captured the halls of seven-thousand Wedgwood ceramic ware being larger than a room.



Contrasted of sculpture with rich ornaments of sculptural relief, the Hall of Successors from the Casa del Principe at El Pardo will convey the sumptuousness of interior design and decoration under the Spanish Bourbon kings.

Dissecting the passage of time are 17 rare royal clocks from one of the finest collections in the world. Some of these lovely one-of-a-kind timepieces, exquisite in their craftsmanship, show the time, day, month and even movement of the moon and earth.

The majesty of Spain is showcased here through art, architecture, design and decorates, including capes, sculpture, porcelain, bronzes, armatures, shoes, furnishings, toys, religious objects and costumes. Each treasure in the exhibition brings to life the rich historical and cultural legacy of 18th through early 19th-century Spanish royalty.

Presented by the same people who drafted more than 825,000 visitors with the highly successful *Palaces of St. Petersburg: Russian Imperial Style* exhibition in 1995 and the *Splendor of Versailles* exhibition in 1995, *The Majesty of Spain* is a once-in-a-lifetime experience for all of North America.

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English speaking available.

Jackson depicted as true statesman

By SARAH SUE GOLDSMITH
Associate editor

On his deathbed, Andrew Jackson said there were two things he had left undone: he didn't shoot Henry Clay and didn't hang John C. Calhoun, said professor and author Robert V. Remini.

Remini, professor of history at the University of Illinois at Chicago and a world authority on Jackson and Clay, addressed his remarks to a large audience at the Natchez Literary Celebration.

Andrew Jackson was popular with the American people of 1824. After all, he was the hero of the Battle of New Orleans, the "first real victory" Americans could claim against British troops, Remini said. Jackson's army "killed, wounded or captured 2,000 troops who supposedly defeated Napoleon and sent him into exile. Only 12 Americans died. The British seized our ships, impressed our seamen. The Spanish were still occupying American territory above the 31st parallel. Jackson called them the dogs. He hated them. 'I wish to see them all in a ditch,' he said. Andrew Jackson loved the Union with a passion. Henry Clay did, too.

"An interviewer once asked me if we have any men like Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay today. Oh, Lord — If only we could have men who cared about this country the way they did!" Remini said.

In 1876, American statesman John Jay entered negotiations with the Spanish to the effect that the United States would not navigate the Mississippi River for 24 years in exchange for commercial concessions, the speaker explained. "Tennessee settlers offered to make an oath of allegiance to the Spanish in return for being left alone. James Wilkinson was trying to get Kentucky to secede. It was part of the Aaron Burr conspiracy." Wilkinson later settled in West Baton Rouge Parish, and his descendants still live in Port Allen and Baton Rouge.

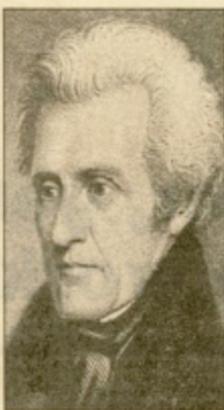


Robert V. Remini

Remini gave a brief sketch of Jackson as a boy and young man, preparing the way for the he spoke in Spanish Natchez. Andrew Jackson was only 9 years old when the American Revolution began. He was captured by the British. "When he refused to blacken an officer's boots, a British officer took out his sword, hit him on the head and slashed his hand."

Jackson's brother was also a captive. "Their mother "was incredible," Remini said. "She offered an exchange to get her two dying sons back. One died. She served on a prison ship and died of typhoid. Andrew Jackson was an orphan at 13. He used to take outbuses and hide them as a joke. He was always carousing.

"He met Rachel (Robards) in Tennessee. She was as wild as he was. They went for each other. Only problem was — she



Andrew Jackson

was married to someone else. He was a psychopath, insanely jealous. I think Jason Robards is descended from her husband. She decided to go to Natchez. Guess who she asked to take her? She had 11 brothers she could have asked to escort her," but she wanted Andrew Jackson to go with her.

Jackson escorted Rachel to Natchez, and as soon as he returned to Tennessee, he heard that Lewis Robards had divorced Rachel. He raced back to Natchez and married Rachel Robards. "They lived together for two years before they found out that Mr. Robards had not gotten a divorce. Andrew Jackson and Rachel were technically living in sin. She, technically, was a bigamist."

The divorce was apparently obtained later because Rachel convinced Jackson that he had to marry her a second time.

"Their love affair is the most incredible thing I've ever encountered," said Remini. "Her letters were burned in a Hermitage fire. His letters show a passion and love for this woman. When Rachel was dead 20 years, his daughter-in-law would ask if there was anything she could do for him. 'Yes,' he would tell her. 'Go to my wife's grave and shed a tear and say a prayer.'

"The ladies at the Hermitage wanted to display the papers of Andrew Jackson. They thought I would look for proof of that first marriage. There was no trace. It was Spanish territory. All documents were taken to Cuba, then Spain, in three shiploads. Papers were packed tightly in boxes and the boxes numbered.

"I went to Seville and, thanks be to God, there was Douglas Ingila, now a resident of Seville. He was doing his doctoral dissertation on Spanish Natchez. We quickly became good friends. He could guide me as to where I might look.

"Some of these bundles had never been opened. We did find documents of Jan. 12, 1790, of Rachel Robards and Andrew Jackson. The evidence was there" but there was no proof of their marriage.

"The Spanish were wonderful at keeping records. I can recognize Andrew Jackson's handwriting as well as my own."

Remini called Jackson "the Napoleon of the woods. He foresaw the day when this nation would spread from one ocean to the other. Andrew Jackson was a slave trader; he returned a slave to Gov. Cayson." "Some of these bundles were married at Bayou Pierre, but "remains a mystery where they were married or if they were married. We never found a document proving they were married. When I wrote my book, I said that there was no proof that they were married. The ladies at the Hermitage were not happy."

Among his achievements as president, "he paid the national debt — \$89 million. What we need today are statesmen with vision" like Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay, Remini concluded. ■

(Next week: African-Americans in 19th-century Natchez)

Chiropractors

(Continued from Page 12)

The long jump is just one big contraction. One of her jumps was super and we were very happy for her," Corbin said.

Another noted athlete under their care was high jumper Hollis Corway, who took a Silver in 1988. He won, in New Orleans and will travel to Spain this summer. So will Kym Carter, a former Tiger now training in Austin; she finished third in the heptathlon.

Athletes they treated who had the misfortune to place low in the competition included: pole-vaulter Greg DuPlantis and Doug Freiler; Lyle Guillory, javelin; Ron Baccus, shotput; and 200-meter sprinter Henry Neal's hamstring forced him to drop out.

While chiropractors must be certified in sports chiropractic, massage therapists are not yet required to become licensed in sports massage techniques. Corbin and Keogh deem themselves lucky to have Jay Manda as their massage therapist. He operates a massage room at the Chiropractic Sports & Injury Center.

According to Manda, a massive powerlifter and armwrestler, deep tissue work is vital to working out at peak performance six times a week. But that is what it takes if a truck and field star hopes to make it to Barcelona this summer. He has done considerable deep tissue and soft tissue work with high-caliber athletes.

"There are no golden rules yet. There sure a lot of massage therapists in New Orleans who didn't know sports, and the athletes knew right away. You have to be careful; you can

sub down distance runners pretty thoroughly, but you need to go easy on sprinters," said Manda, a nationally-ranked senior powerlifter who bench presses 600 pounds.

Manda plays a major role in their popular, new combination therapy. "That's where we're making our name these days. Jay will massage them, then I will adjust them right after that. This is the way we did it in New Orleans," Corbin said.

Keogh talked about knowing a couple of U.S. Olympic Committee officials, Sam Seemee and Michael Millay, whom he met while coaching at LSU. These friendships helped cement his selection as part of the chiropractic team. While dining one night at a local restaurant, Seemee confided in Keogh that he was seeking to bring the Olympic Trials to New Orleans.

"I said 'Sure, you'll never get it.' He said they needed a big city, some place that would spin up the trials. Eugene, Ore., has held the

trials many times. It is very pretty and clean for track meets, but not much fun for media and fans. So Seemee played bit city versus small town and won it."

The only drawback appeared to be the heat, which is particularly tough on distance runners. However, they ran a check on summer weather in Barcelona, which is on the Mediterranean, and found the temperature and humidity is just as hot as New Orleans. The heat was not a problem.

Plans are being made to host the NCAA Track and Field Championships in Gormley Stadium, so the new medical facilities will be needed again, Keogh said. The 1996 Summer Games, the centennial of the modern Olympics, will be held in Atlanta.

With the chiropractic team of Corbin and Keogh he in Barcelona this summer? "We had the opportunity, but we're not going to go. We're talking about three weeks out of the office," said Corbin. ■

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY BOB BARNETT