Underground Railroad Route
Along El Camino Real de las Tejas

By Rolonda Teal

July 2010

Challenge Cost Share Program
National Trails Intermountain Region
National Park Service

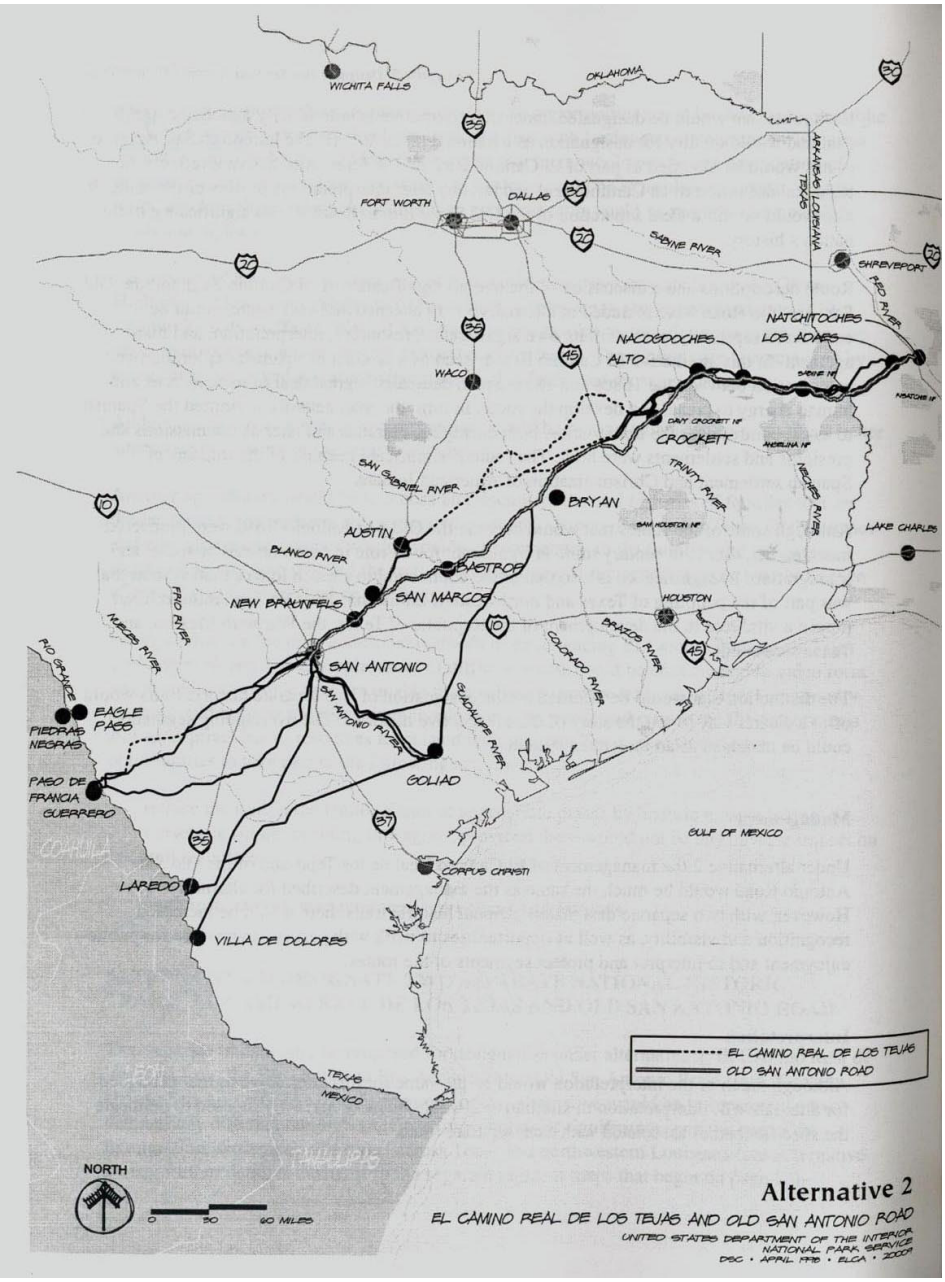
Underground Railroad Route Along El Camino Real de la Tejas

Project Background

In eastern Texas and western Louisiana, El Camino Real de la Tejas was formed from a series of trails used by Caddo Indians for travel between villages. Spanish colonists took over parts of those existing trails for the transportation of animals, military, civilian and religious personnel as well as supplies. Camino Real translates simply as the "King's Highway" and continued to be used in this way throughout Spanish dominion. French citizens from Louisiana also used the same paths for illegal and legal trade and as a means of travel to San Antonio to conduct business. After the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, portions of El Camino Real that were associated with the American period became known as the Old San Antonio Road. El Camino Real represents a series of paths that intercepted at various points along a main thoroughfare and not just a single road. In all, the King's Highway as defined by the National Park Service extends from Monclova, Mexico to Natchitoches, Louisiana and covers approximately 2,400 miles in distance (NPS 1998:1).

In 1911 the Texas chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution adopted a resolution calling for formal identification and marking of the historic road. Major V. N. Zivley was hired to survey the route in an attempt to identify original portions of the road. A year later Zivley reported that portions of the road could definitely be identified. Armed with this information, the Texas Legislature in 1929 formally adopted Zivley's identified route which is generally acknowledged as present-day State Highway 21 between the Sabine River and San Marcos.

In October of 2004, President George W. Bush signed a bill designating El Camino Real de los Tejas as a National Historic Trail under the jurisdiction of the National Parks System. Public Law 108-342 established that publicly owned lands along El Camino Real come under the direction the National Park Service and it also encouraged the development of partnerships for the promotion of economic and heritage development (Williams 2007:29) (See Map 1). Working from the theme of heritage development, this project seeks to identify the role of El Camino Real in the lives of African descended peoples. Specifically, how did this route provide Underground Railroad–type transportation for fugitive slaves?



Map 1: One of the proposed routes for El Camino Real as suggested by the National Park Service

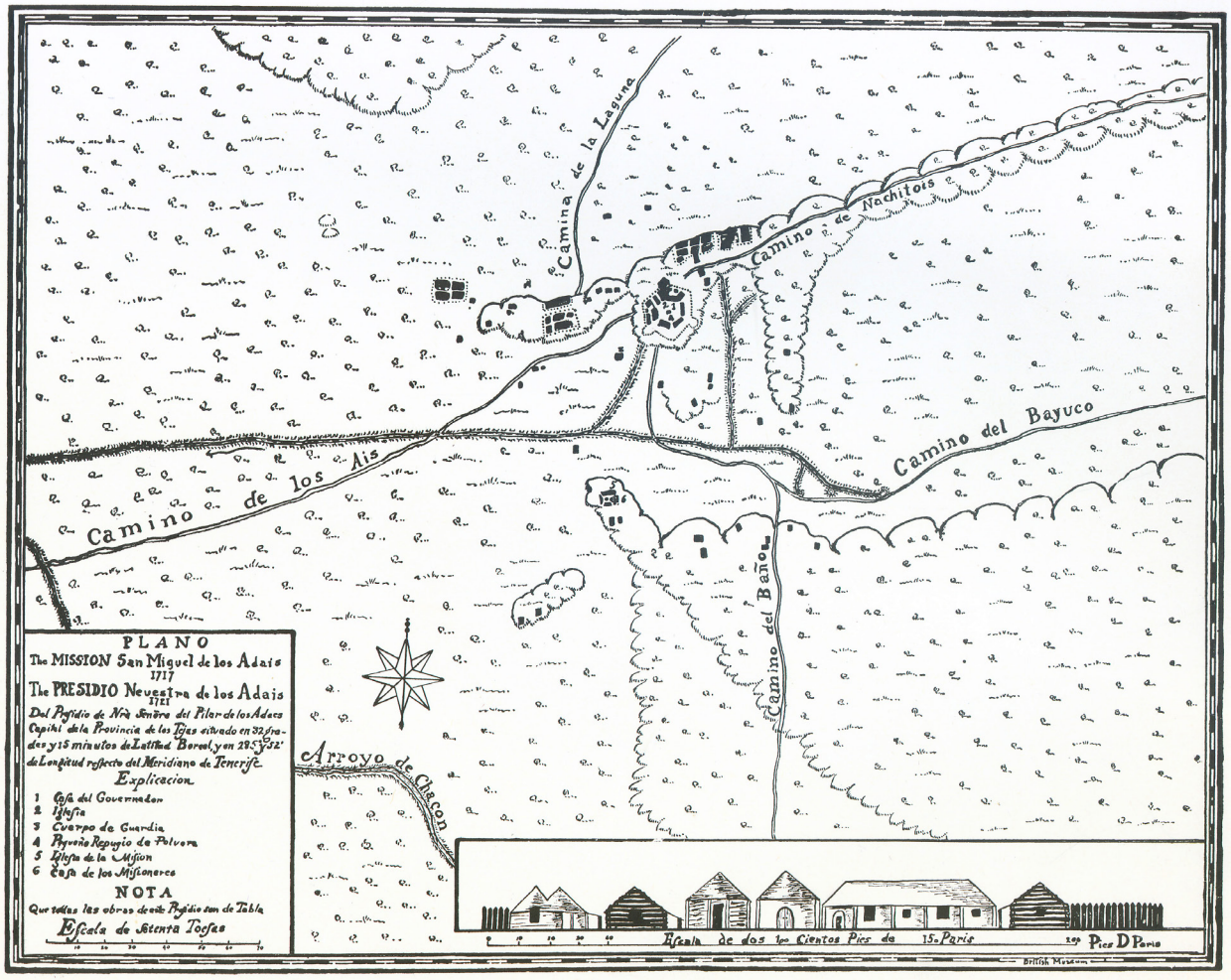
Natchitoches Parish

In 1714, French Canadian Louis Juchereau de St. Denis founded Natchitoches to serve the French military as a trading post and to block Spanish eastward expansion. Fort St. Jean Baptiste was built two years later in an effort to defend French traders and serve as the core of a permanent settlement. As early as 1722, people of African descent were present in Natchitoches. Twenty black slaves and eight Indian slaves were listed in the same year among a total population of fifty-four inhabitants at Fort St. Jean Baptiste (Mills 1981:3). By the latter half of the eighteenth century, almost half of the adult population in Natchitoches consisted of people of African descent and they soon constituted the majority of the population. This majority status did not change until after the Civil War when the parish, as did most of the South, witnessed an exodus of African Americans from small farming communities to more urban areas.

As a French and later American borderland community, Natchitoches played a significant role in the trade network of goods- including slaves- that existed with their Spanish and Indian neighbors. The road leading from Natchitoches to Los Adaes actually served as a beginning point on El Camino for people who had traveled up the Red River from the gulf. It was also from and through this location that enslaved peoples sought freedom from their oppressors.

Los Adaes

The fort of Los Adaes was originally constructed by the Spanish in 1721 to prevent French westward expansion into Spanish Texas. The site included a mission (San Miguel de Linares de los Adaes) and a presidio (Nuestra Señora del Pilar de los Adaes) and served as the capital of Spanish Texas from 1729-1770. As such, this site as suggested by historian Gwendolyn Midlo Hall (1992) was part of an established escape route for fugitive slaves. It was also a destination site in that slaves from as far away as New Orleans sought refuge at Los Adaes under "safehouse" like conditions. Some escapees were allowed to remain at the fort where they worked for some of the higher ranking government officials. Other fugitives were allowed to leave the fort for interior Spanish regions such as San Antonio and Mexico. The practice of seeking Los Adaes as a place of immunity likely continued in some form until the fort closed its doors in 1774 (See Map 2).



Map 2: This map shows the general location of the presidio (top center) and mission (south of the presidio) at Los Adaes. At the bottom right is a cut away of the various buildings associated with the site.

A combination of factors led to Los Adaes becoming a destination place for fugitives of all kinds. Its location as a Spanish outpost proved an attractive destination -even if temporarily- for Spanish and French military deserters as well as for a small number of both neighboring Indians (as religious converts) and African slaves. By the 1750s there were so many fugitives coming into Los Adaes that Governor Barrios wanted to issue a proclamation granting asylum to those who came there. Barrios suggested that fugitives "would come from as far as New Orleans" if the idea were accepted (Galán 2006:117). The suggestion however, was not accepted by Spanish Royal officials because they sensed it would create further political problems with their French neighbors. Yet, the suggestion of protection in Spanish territory is an idea that seems to have had enough appeal that it spread.

By the time Marqués de Rubí made his report in 1768 after a military inspection of the presidio, he concluded that it was primarily "composed of people collectively fugitives from other provinces" (Galán 2006:223). Although fugitives of all kinds found their way to Los Adaes, the core population of residents was poor Adaesaños soldiers with their families and a few higher-ranking military officers and priests. The core group comprising the post was as ethnically and culturally diverse as the fugitives who came there. A 1731 roster of soldiers with caste designations identified 60 men: 29 Español, 13 Mestizo, 9 Mulatto, 7 Coyote, 1 Indio, and 1 Lobo (See Appendix 1). The roster dates almost 40 years prior to the official report by Rubí, yet it already indicated a "surprisingly inclusive society of Spanish residents" (Blyth 2000:8). This is but one part of the attractiveness of Los Adaes for fugitives of all kinds including enslaved peoples.

Another attraction to Los Adaes by fugitives was its integral connection with trade networks consisting of local Indian groups, Spanish, French, and enslaved peoples. As occupants of a Spanish outpost, residents at Los Adaes were often neglected in receiving supplies needed such as weaponry, food, and clothing. Inattentiveness by the Spanish government to provide basic survival items forced Adaesaños citizens to perform roles not only as soldiers but also as farmers and traders (Galán 2006:113). Essentially, the soldiers lived under improvised conditions and generally performed many of the daily activities, including physical labor, that was typically reserved for slaves, with few exceptions.

On occasion, priests and officers at the fort had access to slave domestic laborers who performed less strenuously demanding work than enslaved agricultural laborers. Yet, slavery as an emerging enterprise never became established at Los Adaes as it did in neighboring Natchitoches, Louisiana. At this time there are only two known instances of slave purchases that involved their use as laborers by residents at Los Adaes. One occurred in September of 1748 and involved the sale of Luis de Urrutia Cofre de Pazas to a resident from Mexico City. The other transaction occurred the following day and involved the sale of Antonio Nicolas Patricio Cafre de Passa to a citizen of Los Adaes (Galán 2006:114-115). Outside of those two occurrences, most recorded information on slave or fugitive activities at Los Adaes are similar in nature to an incident that happened in 1768.

Viceroy Marqués de Amarillas (Los Adaes) informed Governor don Hugo Oconor (Texas) that a mulatto slave from Louisiana had requested immunity at Los Adaes. The new interim Governor Oconor, unaware of previous Spanish policies, awaited a response from his superiors on how to handle the matter, since French officials had requested the return of the fugitive. When the viceroy did not receive a response in a timely manner, he returned the slave to his owner. This case is of particular significance since it exemplifies the

general attitudes and problems that faced government officials on how to handle the issue of fugitive slaves. Oconor then informed Amarillas, "I am aware of your doubt about returning the slave that the commander of New Louisiana requested, and respecting the difference since that time, if the slave has not committed any crimes, why punish him by returning him to his owner? But if he retired to the mission because he's fleeing a crime, then you can advise the French commander to make a sworn pledge in favor of immunity, and in doing so, return the slave, which you also can practice in the future" (Galán 2006:119-121).

Although Amarillas's response was too late to spare this individual from being returned, this correspondence suggests several things: slaves believed they could gain freedom at Los Adaes, Spanish and French government officials had to communicate regarding fugitive policies, and that Spanish authorities may have had some sympathy for fugitives who they believed had been abused. The letter from Amarillas to Oconor was typical of the kind of dialogue that transpired over the years of Spanish occupancy at Los Adaes. Sometimes fugitives were returned and sometimes not. [1] Those fugitives who were granted asylum moved farther into the interior regions of Spanish territory to places like San Antonio and La Bahía (Meacham 2000:172).[2]

As argued by historian Ira Berlin (1974), Los Adaes then existed more as a "society with slaves" instead of a "slave society" like that which was forming in French Louisiana. As a "society with slaves", emphasis was not placed on profitability of laborers as much as on everyday convenience for colonists-thus the utilization of slave labor primarily for domestic chores. Another aspect of a "society with slaves" is that is allowed for more lenient attitudes regarding slave travel, the ability to carry arms, and stricter observances of religious doctrine in terms of marriage. In most cases where fugitives were returned to their owners, Spanish authorities requested that the slaves be given immunity for their escape attempts.[3] It was as if it was expected that slaves might run away, therefore they should not receive harsh punishments for doing so. This viewpoint could not easily be adopted by "slave societies" since their existence was critically dependent on slave labor.

In the developmental years of Natchitoches and Los Adaes, both operated as "societies with slaves". An excellent case to illustrate how "societies with slaves" functioned is observed in the proceedings of a slave trial for theft that occurred in 1757 in Natchitoches. During the interrogation of one enslaved man named Etienne, it was revealed that his mother Marion sent him "to Los Adaes to sell [some] cloth for silver". Etienne also confirmed that his mother often sent hams to Los Adaes with a Spanish man named Maringouin who would bring her chocolate, silver, silk, or jars of aloe vera in exchange for the meat (Rubino 2003:71). [4] This portion of the trial establishes that it was not uncommon for Natchitoches slaves to travel with relative ease to Los Adaes where they engaged in trade with Spanish residents. This type of leniency is typical of "societies with slaves". The trial also establishes the beginnings of an escape network that existed between African descended slaves and Spanish citizens.

As the proceedings continued, accusations of a conspiracy were revealed involving two Spanish military deserters named Miguel de la Cerda and Joseph Antonio de Acosita y Arias.[5] Etienne volunteered that he had "conspired with all the slaves that they should go away" with the Spanish men to Los Adaes. They had also planned to kidnap some prominent Natchitoches citizens and to steal from one slave owner the items they needed for their departure. When the hearing finally concluded several days later, ten people were arrested on various charges and two months later, four of the arrested were sent to New Orleans including the Spanish deserter Miguel de la Cerda. This trial represents one of the earliest documents from the region that illustrates

cultural interactions between Spanish deserters from Los Adaes and Natchitoches slaves. Furthermore and more importantly, these proceedings establish the plotting of a slave escape to Los Adaes in the mid- eighteenth century.

By 1770, Natchitoches had begun to emerge as a "slave society" dependent on African descended laborers for tobacco production. Freedoms such as the ability to travel freely, engage in trade, and meet in groups become stricter and in cases was eliminated for enslaved peoples (Burton and Smith 2008:81). In addition, there was an increased presence of militia in the region during this period due to fear of slave rebellions and escapes, which could not be tolerated in a developing "slave society". Los Adaes, on the other hand, continued to exist as a "society with slaves," and its inclusion in the trade network helped to establish it as a place of refuge for all seeking escape from oppression of some form.

Some slaves who sought refuge in Spanish territory felt they had been born and reared under the Spanish flag, yet were forced to live in the province of French Louisiana. They believed they had a right to live according to Spanish customs.[6] Those who held this view knew Los Adaes provided, at least in proximal distance, a haven that could be reached within a day when traveling by foot from Natchitoches. For other fugitives, escape attempts were more challenging and required travel over greater distances, yet it was a far more attractive option than remaining enslaved. This point is further illustrated through an incident that occurred in 1771. An enslaved woman Marie Anne, her son Alexandre, a pregnant woman named Charlot, and a male named Louis left New Orleans and traveled for 18 months. Along the way they recruited other slaves to include: Gitter La Rose (who had his own gun, powder and lead), Raoul, Lafleur, and Mutin (Hall 2000:31767-31781). When arrested at the vacherie (cattle grazing land) of Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, commandant at Natchitoches, they said they were headed for the Spanish fort of Los Adaes (See Figure 1).[7] This group of fugitives had come in search of Los Adaes and freedom from New Orleans largely because of the fort's location, and also due to its reputation as a slave compassionate society.

One year after that failed escape attempt from New Orleans, Spanish officials ordered Los Adaes closed due to a lack of congregants at the mission and a poorly outfitted regiment of soldiers. By the following year, Antonio Gil Y'Barbo led the people of Los Adaes along with 300-500 others in the vicinity to present-day San Antonio, Texas.[8] Largely dissatisfied by the move, in 1774 Y'Barbo and other Adaesaños left San Antonio and created a settlement on the Trinity River which they named Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli. In less than five years they abandoned this settlement due to Indian raids, crop failure, and flooding (L'Herisson 1981:42). Residents moved again in 1779, this time to present-day Nacogdoches, Texas approximately 90 miles west of Los Adaes.[9]

Figure 1: This artistic rendering of the presidio provides a bird's-eye view of the site. Image taken from Louisiana Archaeology Week Poster 2001.

Throughout its existence, Los Adaes functioned as a Spanish outpost and mission, and as such attracted individuals to the region, such as military deserters and fugitive slaves, who were escaping some form of discontentment. While there are a limited number of historical documents that provide evidence of slave escapes or sales at the fort, they are still enough to suggest at least temporary refuge for runaways or a "safehouse" environment was provided.[10] Once Los Adaes closed and the town of Nacogdoches formed, fugitive slaves reset their sights to this place as a destination point as they attempted to acquire freedom.

Runaways/Fugitives

Throughout the institution of slavery in America, there were those who risked everything for a chance to improve their social and economic conditions. Escapes were often wrought with travel through unknown territory, risk of recapture, harm to family members left behind, and wild animal attacks (Genovese 1976:651). The typical demographic of a fugitive was a male between the ages of sixteen and thirty-five. They comprised 80% of the known fugitive population. About 1/3 of all fugitives were skilled laborers or had access to work conditions in which they were not relegated to the fields. A few had received some type of formal education (Genovese 1976:648; 653). Of the women who left for freedom, most traveled with a group that likely included a child(ren) and/or a spouse.

So common were instances of flight by slaves and attempts to figure out how to prevent them by their owners that physician Samuel A. Cartwright (1850s) created the term "drapetomania" to describe the presumed disease suffered by slaves who habitually fled from their owners (Genovese 1976:650). Although it

wasn't until the last decade of American slavery that issues of runaways was medically addressed, the French had tried to make a distinction between runaways much earlier. The laws created for slave-holding French Caribbean colonies established two types of slave escapes. The term "petite marronnage" literally translate as "small runaways", but was used to describe slaves who left their homes only to return a few days or weeks later. However, during a "grand marronnage" slaves were focused on "completely leaving the slave society and making a life for themselves elsewhere" (Thornton 1992:280). The biggest difference between the two types of escapes then was the intent behind the flight, which was not necessarily connected with the number of fugitives involved in an escape. For the French, it mattered if slaves sought total freedom versus a temporary hiatus.

Petite Marronnage

In all areas of the African Diaspora, there were attempts made by slaves to escape their conditions of servitude. Sometimes the fugitive left for only a few hours and at other times the departure lasted a few days or even weeks. Generally, these were folks who were considered habitual runaways but not necessarily considered a serious threat to the functioning of the plantation. Many times these types of fugitives relied on the assistance of others on the plantation to provide food and to keep them informed of the plantation owner's temperament as to when it might be best to return. Sometimes skilled laborers held a bargaining chip which allowed them to use unauthorized time away from the plantation as a means to negotiate better labor and social conditions. The reason for wanting a temporary hiatus mostly stemmed from the enslaved person feeling over-worked or simply wanting more personal time, perhaps to visit relatives (Thornton 1992:274-75). Their intent when leaving was to change some unpleasantness, but not to leave the institution of slavery altogether. None of the fugitives mentioned in this paper left the Natchitoches region for Los Adaes or Nacogdoches under the category of "petite marronnage". All runaways who entered Spanish territory, which implied crossing international borders, sought then to change their condition of servitude completely.

Grand Marronnage: The Cane River Insurrection of 1804

One of the major factors involved in "grand marronnage" was emotional and physical abuse. Fear of the whip was believed to have been the single greatest factor for both petite and "grande marronnage" slave escapes. Fugitives sometimes left their homes either in anticipation of or as a result of a whipping. At other times, it was not a single episode of abuse that caused the flight, but continued emotional and physical torment over long periods of time (Genovese 1976:649).[11] While it is not known if abuse played a role in a "grand marronnage" escape from Natchitoches Parish that occurred in the winter of 1804, this case illustrates the determination of enslaved peoples to change their social conditions.

In a letter from the citizens of Natchitoches to American military Captain Edward D. Turner, the farmers wrote the following:

> Mr. Commandant,
>
> The residents of the district of Natchitoches, bound as a community and undersigned, have the great honor to relate to you of a criminal act that just happened, which had the goal of leading to the general insurrection of all of our slaves. Luckily this criminal act was confined to the neighborhood by the Cane River at the residence of the Ambroise

> Le Comte, Louis Derbanne and Emmanuel Derbanne, where various of their slaves conducted criminal acts such as weapon thefts within various homes, especially in the home of Louis Derbanne. They stole gun powder and bullets, and horses before escaping to a foreign province to wait for their accomplices, finding refuge near the river Toijae in an almost inaccessible place, getting food by armed robberies.[12]
>
> Our community being in great danger, we ordered the deployment of various patrols to hunt down these slaves which we found to be willing to defend by any means any white people to come near them, especially not their owner/masters. Thanks to the intervention of the commandant of Nacogdoches, we ceased them and turned them in to you so that justice can be rendered according to the gravity of the situation, as guilty of a high crime of armed insurrection and robbery with infraction.
>
> We are presenting ourselves before you Mr. Commandant as the accusation to seek justice according to the rules and regulations from which depends the safety of our people and properties as well as the peace in the whole Louisiana.
>
> The undersigned residents and owners have no doubts that your ardour to maintain public order (Illegible) and that you will do everything in your power to punish the guilties and their accomplices (Natchitoches Parish Clerk of Courts, Conveyance Book II, Doc. 3208, Transcribed by Dr. Dayna Lee).

Captain Turner composed a letter the next day addressed to Governor W. C. C. Claiborne of Louisiana in which he described the sequence of events as related to him. According to Turner, during the escape one slave had been shot at by local patrols but was not wounded. He was separated from the rest of the group and turned himself in the next day. During interrogations he implicated thirty other people in the escape plan. Turner was also able to confirm that an Indian boy had heard some of the escape plans the night before and the boy mentioned that whistles had been distributed among the slaves the night of the escape, which were to be used as a means of communication (Rowland 1917:387). More information came to Turner from a posse of men from the Lower Cane River region who were sent to try and recapture the fugitives. They reported that the fugitives were seen on the "great Nacogdoches road" but could not be caught before going deeply into Spanish territory (Rowland 1917:387).

Within a week of the fugitives' departure, Natchitoches resident Alexis Cloutier, along with five members of the militia, two mulattos and a free Negro arrived at Nacogdoches seeking the return of the runaways. In all, Cloutier requested from Spanish officials the return of four Negro men, two mulattos, one woman and her two-year-old child. Jose Joaquin Ugarte, who was the Captain of Militia at Nacogdoches, showed a cooperative spirit by dispatching six soldiers along with two Conchete Indians to act as guides during the search.[13] On October 27th the fugitives were spotted at the Attoyac River, and three days later they were handed over to Alexis Cloutier and company, "so they might take them to Natchitoches" (Béxar Archives Reel 19:70 - 73).[14]

Within a month of the escape Natchitoches citizens had armed themselves, strengthened night patrols, and requested a detachment of military reinforcements from Attackapas and Opelousas (Rowlands vol 2:384). The entire territory of Louisiana was already in a semi state-of-alarm, for it had been only nine years since the Pointe Coupe Conspiracy (1795) had occurred and just a few months since the Haitian Revolution.[15] As further

evidence became unveiled during the investigation of the escape plot, it appeared that the slaves had largely been influenced by Spanish citizens. Not only did slave owners have to contend with rebellious slaves, but also with the people who assisted them during escape attempts. In a correspondence from Captain Turner to Governor Claiborne, Turner reported that two white men had been apprehended for helping the fugitives from Natchitoches to escape, and when detained the men had eight Negro accomplices with them. According to Turner, it seemed that the "prime instigator" for the massive escape attempt had been a Spanish man who had since left for Nacogdoches (Rowland 1917:385-386).[16]

Fugitives at Nacogdoches

Nacogdoches is named for the Caddo family of Indians who once populated the region, and it remained a Caddo settlement until 1716 when Spain established mission Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Nacogdoches. The shift in demographics to create the formation of Nacogdoches as an Adaesaños community is largely attributed to Antonio Gil Y'Barbo a former resident of Los Adaes. Y' Barbo helped plan the town's layout, built the first mercantile store, and he created some of the laws for the new citizens (McDonald, 2009).

Nacogdoches' location as a borderland territory, as well as its existence as a "society with slaves" proved to be just as inviting for fugitives as Los Adaes had been. A few years after the closure of Los Adaes, many slave fugitives changed their sights to this place as their new destination. The official Spanish position regarding fugitives had been made clear by Viceroy Conde de Revilla Gigedo of Mexico in 1790. The law prohibited the return of Negro slaves to their masters and it was expected to be followed. However, laws made by those in the interior regions were not always adhered to at the outposts, sometimes due to lack of military enforcements, and at other times simply from a need to keep the peace between international neighbors.

By 1804 and after continuous desertions by slave laborers from Natchitoches and other American colonies to Nacogdoches, Marquis Casa Calvo suggested that the 1790 royal order be suspended and fugitive slaves returned to their owners with the provision that they not be punished for their escape attempt (Rowland 1917:324). Casa Calvo's suggestion continued to be ignored by his superior Salcedo who insisted on awaiting a formal position on the matter from Spain.[17] The biggest issue in question was whether or not there actually was a royal proclamation that prohibited the return of fugitive slaves, and if so should it still be honored under the current political conditions. A second issue of concern focused on officially recognized borders. Shortly after the Louisiana Purchase and fearing American encroachment in Spanish territory, Salcedo sent soldiers to Bayou Pierre, the Old Adaes settlement, and La Nana to guard the roads leading to East Texas (Almaráz 1971).

Perhaps in retaliation, American troops entered Spain's claimed territory and forcibly pushed the Spanish troops stationed at La Nana to the west bank of the Sabine River. Spanish officials then sent approximately 2,000 troops to the east bank of the Sabine River to reclaim the area. Actions such as those, and the inability to reach any formal decisions regarding boundaries, led to the subsequent formation of an area known as the Neutral Strip (1806-1821).[18] This region became a virtual bed of lawlessness which extended almost the entire length of the western boundary of present-day Louisiana. As a region that had no European jurisdiction it cultivated acts of piracy, illegal slave trade, and other such infamous deeds. Yet, it was also in the Neutral Strip that slave fugitives could reach "semi-safety" from their owners. Runaways from Natchitoches and other

parts of Louisiana were officially free once they reached this region, yet they still had to remain mindful that recapture was possible until reaching the full protection of Spanish Nacogdoches.

In regards to slavery, the Neutral Strip may have actually led to an increase in grand marronnage-type escapes from Louisiana and other regions to Nacogdoches. There are numerous examples of these occurrences over a three year period. Beginning in May of 1806, eight fugitives arrived in Nacogdoches with Kentucky travel papers. The fugitives were in such bad shape that no one wanted to retain their services, so it was suggested that they be taken to the Villa of Salcedo where they could work for their keep (Béxar Archives Reel 22:107).[19] Three months later, a man and woman from Natchitoches arrived at the post seeking asylum due to harsh treatment by their owner the Widow Juliana Besson. Then in 1807, Natchitoches resident Mr. Pavie took a fugitive slave that belonged to his friend Madam Roquier from a Spanish soldier at the Sabine Crossing.[20] Apparently the fugitive had departed with another slave and upon detection of their desertion, Madam Roquier sent some of her other slaves to look for them. The fugitives were captured by Roquier's slaves before reaching the Sabine River and tied to a tree for safe-keeping. During the night one slave managed to escape yet his companion did not. The one who had eluded Roquier's posse is the individual who was taken at gunpoint by Pavie from the Spanish soldier at the Sabine River. Pavie successfully returned the fugitive to Madam Roquier, inciting anger among neighboring Spanish officials.

The above examples provide clues as to the gender, reasons for escape, and physical condition of fugitives who arrived at Nacogdoches. It also shows travel through portions of the Neutral Strip as part of the journey. This pattern of "grande marronnage" escapes continued despite American protest and Spanish attempts, at times, to pacify their discontentment. The year 1808 proved to be an equally challenging time for Spanish officials with the frequent arrival of fugitives from various places.[21] As the population of fugitive slaves burgeoned, Commandant Salcedo ordered an investigation into who was living in Spanish territory and why they had come. Below is a snippet of some of the answers provided by the fugitives who were interviewed by Spanish soldiers.

-*Richard,* who was there with his daughter and two sons, stated he was born a slave but had obtained freedom in the territory of Islas Negras. He was tricked and brought to Louisiana under false pretenses. While there he along with his wife and seven children were re-enslaved.

- *Juan Luis and his wife Margarita* belonged to Julia Besson of Natchitoches. They said they came due to bad treatment and also wanted a legal union since they had been together for many years as a couple. They were given jobs at the post as servants of the assistant inspector.

- *Luis* belonged to Andre Rambien of Natchitoches and left due to severe punishment. He was given a job working for Atanacio de la Cerda.

- *Narciso,* a slave of Francois Roquier, said Roquier's son-in-law had whipped him for asking for something to eat. He was sent to work for a settler named Ylario Alamillo.

- *Perri* (Teri) also belonged to Francois Roquier and left for the same basic reason as Narciso. Perri now worked for Don Guillermo.

- *Ambroisio* was the slave of an Englishman, Mr. Aloof from Opelousas. He had arrived at the fort due to severe treatment and showed the scars produced from a whip. He was given the task of working for Antonio Avila (Béxar Archives Reel 24:136-145).

What this interrogation of slaves suggests is that fugitives were arriving at Nacogdoches from various parts of Louisiana in alarming numbers and claiming abusive conditions as their primary reason for leaving.[22] The French were surely affected by the loss of property and must have had concerns with how to reclaim their losses. This interrogation also suggests the level of frustration Spanish officials must have had regarding how to utilize the foreigners so as not to further economically tax newly developing communities. But, more importantly, this recap of the interrogations of slaves illuminates the determination of fugitives to obtain their freedom

Perhaps knowledge of the neutral territory contributed to escape attempts and enticed a large group of slaves in 1808 to leave Natchitoches for Nacogdoches. Governor Claiborne wrote to Secretary of State James Madison reporting that there had been the successful departure in one night of "more than 30 negroes" (Rowland vol. 4:244). The governor wanted to offer a type of fugitive exchange program between the two territories as a solution to the problem and justly so, since the elopement of 30 slaves certainly created a sense of panic for plantation owners.

A month after the fugitives left Natchitoches, Claiborne again wrote Madison requesting that two or three companies of cavalry be sent to Natchitoches and Opelousas to "put down that spirit of desertion, which at present prevails among the slaves" (Rowland vol. 4:283). Claiborne also reported that the fugitives, after arriving at Nacogdoches, were furnished with Spanish cockades (ribbons), given a dance, and sent off towards the Trinity River (Rowland vol. 4:283).[23] Little else is known about this group of fugitives except that they departed from Natchitoches. Their owners likely represented several plantations, as in the 1804 escape attempt. There is undoubtedly a need for additional research to determine the region of Natchitoches from which this group departed, the plantation owner's names and the names of slaves who escaped. Yet, what is known is that a couple of months after marching off towards the Trinity River, the fugitives were returned to their owners in Natchitoches. In a letter to all parish judges in Louisiana, Governor Claiborne recommended clemency for those that had escaped and actually suggested "an entire pardon of the offence of desertion" (Rowland vol. 4:350).

Whether the slaves were punished or not is also unknown. However, in both the 1804 and 1808 escapes from Natchitoches, Spanish officials requested that those who had escaped or had been implicated be granted immunity. Only in the 1808 return of fugitives did the American government request immunity. By 1809 and in an attempt to decrease the flow of immigrants into East Texas, Commandant General Salcedo closed the Texas-Louisiana border to all persons regardless of ethnicity (Almaráz 1971:35). This act likely made escapes more difficult for enslaved persons but did not eliminate future attempts. Although the 1804 and 1808 escape plots were largely unsuccessful, there are many other instances in which fugitives from Louisiana actually made it as far as present-day Mexico. To accomplish this feat meant that some portion of the escape route, if not most, paralleled or was the same as portions of El Camino Real de la Tejas.

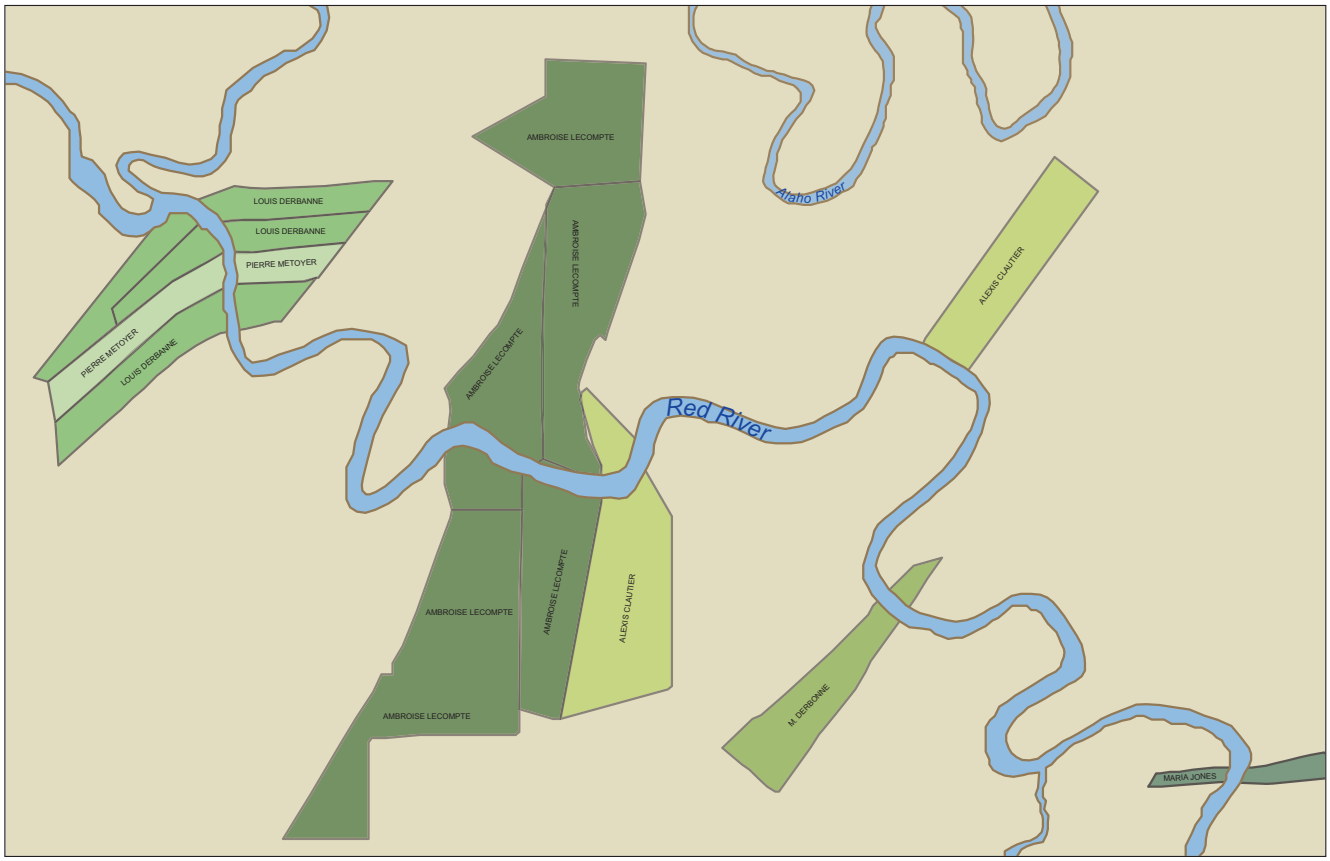
El Camino Real de la Tejas: Fugitive Escape Route

In 1998 the National Park Service established the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program (NURNFP) whose mission is to promote programs and partnerships that preserve sites and resources associated with the Underground Railroad. The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program Act directs the National Park Service to establish a program that tells the story of resistance against the institution of slavery in the United States through escape and flight (NPS 1998). Using criteria identified by the NPS for Underground Railroad nominations, this project "Underground Railroad Routes Along El Camino Real de la Tejas" seeks to conduct historical research that supports an investigation into the role of El Camino Real as part of an escape route for fugitive slaves.

Several historic markers have been placed along El Camino Real commemorating its importance as a transportation route during colonial times. However, unlike Zively's report on the Texas side of the border, no one was hired to conduct work in Louisiana that was equivalent. Recently, though, Mr. Jeff Williams completed his master's thesis, GIS Aided Archaeological Research of El Camino Real de Los Tejas with Focus on the Landscape and River Crossings along El Camino Carretera (2007), which focused on documenting portions of the original trail. Williams' area of study extended from the west side of Geneva, Texas, through a large portion of Sabine National Forest, and slightly past the eastern shore of the Sabine River. Utilizing spatial analysis, Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates, historical documents, oral histories, and maps, Williams has made the most recent attempt at documenting portions of the original King's Highway on the Louisiana side.

The limited availability of historical information and the need for additional research makes it virtually impossible at this time to identify an absolute path taken by fugitives. However there are several known possible routes on which they might have journeyed. Using the single 1804 escape attempt as an example, this project tries to identify portions of the actual escape route that shared parts of El Camino Real as fugitives sought sanctuary in Nacogdoches. Sometimes, as stated by Williams, "It is necessary to understand what is known in order to identify what is unknown." Using this basic approach, the researcher will separate what is known from what is speculative and make suggestions on points that need further investigation. Here is a recap of what is known.

On October 16, 1804 over 30 slaves were implicated in an escape attempt, although only nine actually made it to Nacogdoches. Those who left were from the plantations of Maria Dupre, Alexis Cloutier, Emmanuel Derbanne, Ambroise LeCompte, and Louis Derbanne, (See Map 3).[24] At the home of Louis Derbanne, the fugitives stole horses and ammunition in preparation for their journey. What is also known is that most of the owners of the fugitives were engaged in some form of trade with Nacogdoches citizens. This issue is of importance in terms of the escape route taken and will be discussed later. Finally, we know that an Indian boy stated whistles were given to the slaves, and the patrollers also confirmed hearing them used that night. What is unknown is why only a handful of slaves actually reached Nacogdoches out of the potential group of 30, and what route they took to get there.



Map 3: This map identifies the plantations from which more than 30 slaves escaped on October 16, 1804. NPS.

The sound of a whistle at night could travel a few miles and were likely distributed to set the time of departure so that the fugitives at the farthest point (Maria Dupre) could notify those near the last stop which was at the home of Louis Derbanne. Perhaps some type of miscommunication with the whistles led to deviations with the plan, resulting in some of the intended escapees missing their opportunity to leave. For those that actually left, we must consider the most expedient route from Maria Dupre's property to Louis Derbanne's place.

The distance between the property of Maria Dupree and Louis Derbanne was approximately 8 miles. In 1806, Barthelemy LaFon recorded the lower Cane River region and as Map 4 indicates, the path from Oppelousas to Natchitoches passed near Dupre's property. The path crosses the river on or near the property of LeCompte and does not cross to the east side of the river again until slightly north of the Derbanne property (See Map 4). Did the fugitives take the road along the back side of the western portion of the plantations almost unnoticed? One advantage of travel on the west side of Cane River is that the escapees would have been on the side of the river closest to their destination. After the fugitives departed the Derbanne home, they continued towards the Sabine River. How they got there is unknown. However, one possible route may have been to leave from the Derbanne property traveling northwest above Lake Acasa and then on to El Camino Real. A second possibility is that the fugitives went south of Lake Acasa and traveled the Oppelousas Road north to El Camino Real. To identify the precise route taken from the Dupre to the Derbanne home requires primary resources that have yet to be identified, as well as more research of known paths and roads that were traversed through the lower Cane River region.

Map 4: The red path marks the road that passed through several properties from which the slaves escaped.

The next reference as to a physical location of the runaways' reports that they had been traced to the "great Nacogdoches road" as they "did not mean to take the woods" (Rowland 1917: 386-387). We know that the "great Nacogdoches road" refers to El Camino Real, however the reference does not state if the fugitives were on the Louisiana or Texas side of the great Nacogdoches Road. If the reference is to the Louisiana side of the road then, according to Dr. Hiram Gregory, the escapees likely took a route through present-day Kisatchie National Forest arriving at El Camino Real (El Camino) slightly west of present-day Ft. Jesup (Gregory 2009). If the fugitives did not plan to travel through the woods, then they probably would have entered a main thoroughfare as soon as possible. The question is whether they arrived on El Camino west of Ft. Jesup or east of Ft. Jesup near Robeline, Louisiana. This choice of route is important in that it may have influenced the fugitives' route from Louis Derbanne's property. Again, additional research is required.

Once the group reached the Sabine River, the next question – given the relatively few options available - is where did the escapees decide to cross? The LeFon map identifies two roads that crossed the Sabine River. However, local history buffs and west Louisiana community members state that there were at least six ways to cross the Sabine River during the early 1800s. Where one forded the river depended on weather conditions, flooding in low lying areas, and who was trying to cross the Sabine, and at what point in history. According to some of the local lore, fording the Sabine was possible at the following locations:

1. The northern most route crossed the Sabine above Siepe Bayou, past Kilgore and Soto Saline Sloughs, then Southeast to the Round Lakes above Ten Acres Bayou and on into Converse.
2. A route entered the Sabine River at Brown's Bend and Myrick's Ferry. It then went in a southeasterly direction to the old St. Catherine's Church and then to Wright's Landing and into Noble.
3. Another route crossed the Sabine at Darnell's Ferry, also known as Hamilton's Ferry. The road then went due east to the Ebarb community.
4. A fourth route crossed the river at Shabino Ferry on the Crow Family land claim. This road is currently the Old Carter's Ferry Road. This road was in use before the Gaines Ferry road which was built in 1819.
5. Another route crossed at Carrizo Creek and Gaines Ferry, which is the current day Pendleton Bridge. It was initially known as Camino Carreterro and was essentially a bridle path. This route is believed to have been part of the original El Camino Real.
6. The final route crossed the Sabine at Palo Gaucho, south of La Nana and entered Louisiana territory near Salter Creek (Rivers, Theresa 1994:6-7; Garcie, Kenneth per. comm.; Rivers, Betty pers comm).

Some of the above routes (1 and 2) can probably be eliminated since they were the northern most routes and would have been out of the way in terms of expedient travel. This leaves at least four other routes. We do not know the condition of the river in the winter of 1804. However if the water level was high, then it is probable that the fugitives would not have wanted to risk traversing those waters, thus possibly eliminating some fording sites such as Gaines and Crow.[25] Another problem the fugitives would have had to consider with the Gaines and Crow Ferry crossings was their ability to proceed undetected by American citizens and troops on the east side of the Sabine.[26] By the time of the 1804 escape the Sabine River, particularly at the ferry crossings, was frequently patrolled by American soldiers. It seems unlikely that a heavily fortified and popular crossing site would attract fugitives who would not have wanted to risk an almost assured confrontation. Nowhere in the documents that reference this 1804 escape is there mention of any kind of skirmish at the Sabine River between the fugitives and Spanish or French or Indian or American citizens. The shear absence of historical information reporting any hostilities at the river suggests that no such incidents occurred. Therefore, it is possible the fugitives did not travel across the Sabine at Gaines' or Crow's ferries.

So the question remains, if the runaways did not make their way to the Spanish domain via the popular ferries, then where did they cross? With the current speculation, this leaves routes 3 and 6. There is a possibility that the fleeing slaves knew of at least one of those routes. Located between Crow and Patterson ferries was a Spanish ford that afforded travelers a shallow place to cross the river. According to the testimony of a couple of Shelby County, Texas men in an 1852 deposition, this ford could be walked across at certain times of the year. The men also said that the ford was referred to by different names such as the Salstre Prairie or the Pass of Salines or the Arroyo de las Boregas (quoted in Williams Shelby County District Court Clerk 1852:87-118).

This Spanish ford would have offered several advantages not available at well guarded river crossings. One advantage of this route is that the fugitives would have crossed the Sabine at a spot that was not likely to be flooded during the winter months (Williams per comm). A second advantage is that this crossing might have completely eliminated or at least limited the possibility of hostile encounters from slave catchers, military patrols, and outlaws. A third advantage is that this route was the most direct way to travel from Natchitoches to Nacogdoches. The final and perhaps most important aspect of this route is that it was an old Spanish trail that

traveled through colonial Spanish communities such as present day Ebarb. Spanish citizens, who sometimes crossed into American territory without official permission, were known to traverse this path.

It may be recalled from the Natchitoches trial, Etienne revealed that two Spanish men had conspired with the slaves to leave their owners and go to Los Adaes, it may also be recalled that the Spanish men accused of instigating the flight were military deserters. Although the deserters were heading to Los Adaes, the strategy in choosing one route over another is somewhat the same. Deserters from the military or the plantation all risked recapture and, therefore would plausibly have traveled as fugitives along the same paths to avoid detection. Spanish soldiers and citizens surely knew this route and could have easily informed slaves of its existence as well. This suggests knowledge of a somewhat safer route of travel, one which was familiar to Spanish colonists.

In the 1804 plot, it was through the testimony of an Indian boy and the slaves themselves that it is learned that their decision to flee was also largely influenced by Spanish citizens. Unfortunately, the names of those individuals are unknown, but if they too were deserters from the Spanish military, then (like the fugitive slaves) it would have been necessary to travel incognito whenever possible. Surely, Spanish fugitives would have known all the best places to cross the Sabine River with limited obstruction. Again, more research is needed to identify all shallow and seldom traveled river crossings. Yet, it is within the realm of possibility that there were certain places to ford the river that were conducive to illegal activities – places where one could cross in a hurry and with limited detection. It could be that the Spanish Crossing was part of a network of paths well known to fugitives of all kinds.

The next geographic placement of the plantation deserters is after having crossed the Sabine River. They are discussed as seen passing "near the dwelling of Bautista Pifermo" (Béxar Archives Reel 19:52).[27] The Pifermo land grant is believed to have stretched from the Paulo Gaucho Bayou to Boregas Creek and consisted of 17,713 acres (See Map 5). The original grant was awarded to Juan Ignacio Pifermo of Natchitoches on September 3, 1794. The Bautista Pifermo referred to in the document is Juan Baptiste Ignacio Pifermo – they are one and the same (ITC vol 1.: 192, 257,283, 307, 324,370: vol 2:23).

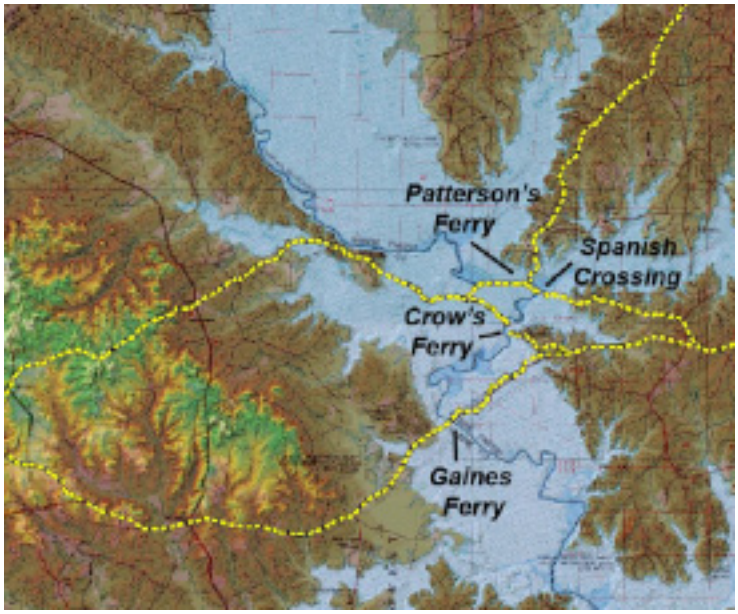
Map 5: In 1794, the Spanish colonial government awarded Juan Ignacio Pifermo a land grant in present-day Sabine County, Texas, through which a number of escaped slaves passed in 1804. NPS.

Pifermo's residence was known as Ranch Chichi, which is where he lived with his wife Maria Clemecia Larnodier (also of Natchitoches), a servant Maximilian, and another servant Antonio and his wife Anastacia.[28] Ranch Chichi is clearly indicated on several early maps of the region, and it shows the location being near Bayou Boregas along El Camino Real (LeFon (1806); Carey (1814); Darby (1816); Tanner (1823)). This suggests that this is the dwelling that the fugitives passed since no other homes, other than two built for the Pilfermo slaves, are known to have existed at Ranch Chichi (ITC vol 2:23).[29] The location of Bautista's dwelling certainly implies that the fugitives traveled directly on El Camino Real or at least closely followed the highway.

The final geographic placement of the fugitives is at the Attoyac River which is where they were apprehended, but not before their willingness to defend themselves from recapture. As noted earlier, the runaways were heavily armed before leaving Louisiana and could perceivably have handled any minor threats. An entry in the Spanish monthly log book reported that only eight people had been sent in search of the slaves. Six of those eight were part of the militia and the other two were Indians. Within the group of fugitives were, minus the woman and her child, six men available to defend themselves against recapture. So why then did they not do so, especially after it was later learned through Natchitoches' citizens that the runaways, while near the Attoyac, had procured food through armed robberies?

An issue for consideration, based on the Attoyac River incident, is if the fugitives were robbing for food then they must have camped near El Camino Real where they could have encountered travelers. Was there a known safe place near El Camino Real and the Attoyac River, or did the fugitives simply camp there to wait for the rest of their group? Admittedly, more studies are needed that address safe houses or places that may have existed throughout the Neutral Strip and along portions of El Camino Real.[30]

This paper has attempted to provide some social and historical context for fugitive slaves in, and their use of, El Camino Real as an escape route. Although much of the route analysis is based on a single 1804 escape, it provides us with a general route taken by fleeing individuals from the southern portion of Natchitoches Parish. References, however, are scant and make it virtually impossible to confirm one specific route over another. Another difficulty in trying to choose a specific path is that there was likely more than one way for fugitives to cross the Sabine, depending on where the escape originated and who was involved in assisting the exiting group. For example, in the 1807 interrogation of a slave named Santiago, he recalled that while traveling to Campti he passed an Indian who had eight Negroes with him, and they were all traveling to Nacogdoches (Béxar Archives Reel 24:32-35). If coming from the Campti region, it is not likely that they would have gone as far south as Crow or Gaines ferries or the Spanish ford, but instead might have taken the Las Ormegas Road as a more direct route.[31] (See Maps 6 & 7).



Map 6: Some of these ferry crossings were not officially named in the early 1800s, however several were crossings were known by local residents and traders.

Map 7: Las Hormigas Road and other roads in the Sabine River vicinity, site of an 1807 slave escape. NPS.

Additional research of slave escape routes along El Camino Real de la Tejas, will require the use of technologies likely gained through oral histories and archaeology. As scholars and local researchers continue to add input to the information already known, it may be possible one day to identify preferred methods of travel for various types of activities and ethnic groups. Until that time, however, one thing is for sure – many Louisiana slaves left their conditions of servitude and traveled across international borders in a defiant act of "grande marronnage." As they made their way towards freedom, some portion of the fugitives travels were directly on, paralleled, and or intersected some portions of El Camino Real de las Tejas.

---

1 See John Thornton Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400 – 1680. 274-279. Thornton discusses and provides examples of the role of international borders in an African Diaspora context. Many fugitive slaves pitted country against country in order to obtain freedom. During periods of war, enslaved peoples joined the military ranks of the opposing nation and earned their freedom from participation in war.

2 See T. L.Meacham "The Population of Spanish and Mexican Texas, 1716–1836." Meacham states that in 1783 nineteen percent of the Texas population was classified as colored implying mestizo, mulattoes or anyone who did not fit well in other categories. He believes that even this figure may be wrong since many multi-ethnic peoples could and did fit easily into European society.

3 Spanish officials sometimes requested that fugitive slaves be given immunity for their escape attempts as a condition for returning runaways to their owners. See Dunbar Rowland, Official Letter Books of W.C.C. Claiborne: 1801 -1816. Vol.III. 324. In a letter from Marquis de Casa-Calvo to Governor Claiborne dated November 6, 1804 this request is discussed.

4 The individual identified here was likely Melchor Morain who served in the military at Los Adaes during the following years: 1751, 1753, 1759-1762.

5 Cerda and Acosta both served in the military at Los Adaes at various periods that spanned 1731 – 1762. Cerda lived in Natchitoches as a Spanish deserter. Acosta was listed as a mulatto, which by Spanish caste designations implied that he was of both Spanish and African descent.

6 The Territory of Louisiana was held by France (1682-1762) and to Spain (1762-1800) then back to France (1800-1803), and finally to America (1803). Although slaves lived under Spanish dominion at one time, the immediate social environment was French.

7 Apparently during the arrest attempt Mutin was shot and killed by local slave patrols. The fate of the others remains unknown; however it is likely they were returned to their owners.

8 Antonio Gil Y'Barbo was born at Los Adaes in 1727. He later became Captain of the post and was largely responsible for leading approximately 350 settlers to San Antonio and petitioning the government to allow those residents to return to East Texas. Y'Barbo is mostly known though for founding Nacogdoches, Texas (1779) where he was instrumental in the towns' development.

9 Nacogdoches, Texas replaced Los Adaes as a destination point for fugitive slaves. There are numerous documents that support this position. See The Bexar Archives (1717-1836): A Name Guide; Clarence Carter. The Territorial Papers of the United States, Vol. IX; Gwendolyn Hall. The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century.

10 A simple definition of a safe house is places where fugitive slaves were kept who were in route to freedom. In the case of Los Adaes it provided a place of refuge for slave fugitives until their fates could be determined or until they could move on to other regions. Additional research is needed on places that escaped slaves went to after leaving Los Adaes.

11 See John Thornton 275-281: See Eugene Genovese Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made.648-49. Both scholars discuss the various reasons for slave escapes.

12 The Attoyac River has several tributaries, but the main portion of the waterway is approximately 30 miles east of Nacogdoches and would have provided water, food, and a hiding place for the fugitives.

13 Personal communication with Dr. Hiram Gregory. He states that the Conchete Indians are actually part of the Caddo tribe and a cultural mix of Lipan Apaches.

14 See Dunbar Rowlins Official Letter Books of W.C.C. Claiborne:1801 -1816 .Vol. 2. 386-388. Edward Turner Letter to Governor Claiborne. Alexis Cloutier was appointed to represent Natchitoches citizens by Commandant of the Military Edward Turner. Cloutier was chosen because he was deemed trustworthy enough to go among the Indians.

15 See Caryn Cossé Bell Revolution. Romanticism, and the Afro-Creole Protest Tradition in Louisiana 1718-1868. Bell discusses the effects of the Haitian Revolution in Louisiana and American history.

16 Recall from the 1757 Natchitoches trial in which the slave Etienne stated that they had conspired with Spaniards to desert their owners. Once again there is a Spanish presence in a slave escape plot.

17 See Gwendolyn Hall Database for Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy 1699-1860, CD-ROM. 34,216 – 34,220. The issue of runaways extended throughout the Louisiana territory with escape attempts initiating from as far away as New Orleans. For example in the winter of 1795 one fugitive named Giomes reported he had "ran away from Opelousas alone" but met up with other fugitives Neptune, Hommette, and Bossman, who had all been hiding and living in the woods. The fugitives had horses, arms and munitions as well as many other goods with them and indicated when captured that they were headed for Nacogdoches.

18 See David La Vere, The Caddo Chiefdoms: Caddo Economics and Politics:1700-1835.127-32. Spanish General Simón de Herrera and American General James Wilkinson are generally created with the creation of this pact, however some scholars believe Caddo Indian leader Dehahuit should also be credited with helping the negations proceed smoothly.

19 Santísima Trinidad de Salcedo was a Spanish villa formed near the Trinity River where the San Antonio de Béxar and La Bahía roads met. The villa was named in honor of Commandant General Nemesio Salcedo y Salcedo.

20 The Pavie in this reference is identified only through his surname. This could be either Joseph or Etienne Pavie of Natchitoches.

21 In one instance that year Pompe, and a woman Maria along with who was likely their baby arrived at Nacogdoches. Pompe stated he belonged to Joseph Babens of Opelousas and she to Miniquit Babens and they left due to cruel treatment.

22 See Lance Blyth "Fugitives from Servitude: American Deserters and Runaway Slaves in Spanish Nacogdoches, 1803 – 1808". Blyth suggests that in some instances fugitives knew what to say in order to gain sympathyfrom Spanish officials. However some of the runaways questioned during the interrogation of foreign citizens actually "had the scars to prove " allegations of abusive masters.

23 See Dr. Jere L. Jackson Nacogdoches A Brief History. Jackson mentions a "Feast of Liberty" given to the New Orleans Greys, a volunteer military group who fought in the Texas War for Independence.
See John Thornton Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400 – 1680. 278- 287. It may be that that a celebration or feast of some kind was given to newly arrived fugitives to mark a transition in life and has correlations with the feast given to the escaped slaves from Natchitoches.

24 It is believed the escape actuated by slaves from the plantation of Maria Cave Dupre.

25 An additional deterrent to crossing at flooded sites would have been the inability of the fugitives to swim. It is acknowledged by the author that more research is needed on swimming practices among slaves near large bodies of water such as the Cane and Red rivers. An additional point for consideration lies in preferred routes of travel based on the season and road conditions.

26 The main concern for fugitives was recapture on the American side of the Sabine River. Being captured by Spanish soldiers on the west side of the river was not really a problem since it was with the Spanish that runaways could gain some protection.
See Jeffery Williams *GIS Aided Archaeological Research of El Camino Real de Los Tejas* with *Focus on the Landscape and River Crossings along El Camino Carretera.* Williams states the Crow Ferry crossing was in use prior to 1818 while Gaines Ferry did not begin conducting business until after that date.

27 See Elizabeth Mills Natchitoches 1729-1803 Abstracts of the Catholic Church Registers of the French and Spanish Post of St. Jean Baptiste des Natchitoches in Louisiana. Docs. 585, 643, 713, 1002,1572, 1720, 1821, 1983. Jean Baptiste was the son of Adrien Léger dit Piedferme and Marie Detincourt. He appears to have lived in Natchitoches until at least 1789 and serve as a Godparent for children of various ethnicities and social standings. The surname Pifermo appears to be a corruption –intentional or otherwise- of the name Piedferme.

28 Maximilia is listed as Juan Pilermo's nephew in some documents, however a 1795 Nacogdoches Census identifies him as a "little servant" who was 12 years old. The following three years still identified Maximilia as a servant and not as a nephew.

29 See Residents of Texas 1782-1836. Vol. II: 23. A rather detailed description of Pilfermo land and holdings is provided which suggests Ranch Chichi was actually on Arroyo de la Agua and contained a grist mill, granary, and two homes for his five slaves.

30 In order to be near El Camino Real and the Attoyac River at the same time, the fugitives would have camped out on the lands of Antonio Y'Barbo or José Antonio Chirino, or a yet unidentified land holder.

31 See NPS Map 7. It is interesting that where this road touches the Sabine River is referred to as an Indian Crossing. According to Santiago's testimony, it was an Indian who led the slaves from Campti. This supports the notion that various cultural groups utilized specific paths over others.

Bibliography

Almaráz, Félix , Jr. Tragic Cavalier: Governor Manuel Salcedo of Texas, 1808–1813. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1971.

Berlin, Ira. Slave Without Masters: The Free Negro In The Antebellum South. New York: The New Press, 1974.

Blyth, Lance R. "Fugitives from Servitude: American Deserters and Runaway Slaves in Spanish Nacogdoches, 1803 – 1808." East Texas Historical Journal XXXVIII, No. 3 (2000): 3-14.

Burton, Sophie and F. Todd Smith. Colonial Natchitoches: A Creole Community on the Louisiana-Texas Frontier. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008.

Galán, Francis. "Last Soldiers, First Pioneers: The Los Adaes Border Community on the Louisiana-Texas Frontier, 1721-1779". Unpublished dissertation. 2006.

Genovese, Eugene. Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made. New York: Vintage Books, 1976.

Gregory, Hiram, George Avery et al. "House of the Curandera." Los Adaes. Texas Beyond History. 12 December 2008. http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/adaes/images/f-curandera.html.
--- Personal communication February 21, 2009.

Hall, Gwendolyn. Database for Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy 1699-1860, CD-ROM. Baton Rouge. 2000.
--- Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992.

Institute of Texan Culture. Residents of Texas, 1782-1836. Nacogdoches. Ingmire Publication, 1984

L'Herisson, Lawrence. The Evolution of the Texas Road and the Subsequent Settlement Occupancy of the Adjacent Strip of Northwestern Louisiana: 1528-1824. Shreveport: LSU Press, Unpublished MA thesis. Louisiana State University - Shreveport. 1981.

Meacham, T. L. "The Population of Spanish and Mexican Texas, 1716–1836." Ph.D. dissertation. Austin: University of Texas at Austin, 2000.

McDonald, Archie *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v. "," http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/OO/cco3.html (accessed November 26, 2009).

Mills, Elizabeth. Natchitoches 1729-1803 Abstracts of the Catholic Church Registers of the French and Spanish Post of St. Jean Baptiste des Natchitoches in Louisiana. New Orleans Press. 1977.

Natchitoches Parish Clerk of Courts (NPCC). Trans. Dr. Dayna Lee. Conveyance Book II, Doc. 3208.1804.

National Park Service (NPS) *El Camino Real de los Tejas*: *Texas/Louisiana*. National Historic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment. U.S. Department of the Interior. Washington, D. C. 1998.

National Park Service (NPS) Underground Railroad. Official National Park Handbook. U.S. Department of the Interior. Washington, D. C. 1998.

Rivers, Theresa. Loggy Bayou, Cane Brakes, and Bayou Scie. Unpublished manuscript. 1994.

Rowland, Dunbar. Ed. Official Letter Books of W.C.C. Claiborne:1801 -1816. Vol.3. Jackson: 1917.

Rubino, Elizabeth Trans. Natchitoches Parish Legal Records. Vol.1. Natchitoches: The Natchitoches Genealogical and Historical Association. 2003.

Thornton, John. Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400 – 1680 New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Williams, Jeffery. "GIS Aided Archaeological Research of El Camino Real de Los Tejas with Focus on the Landscape and River Crossings along El Camino Carretera". Unpublished thesis. 2007.

Appendix 1

Table 2. 1731 roster of Los Adaes soldiers with *casta* designation.

Lieutenant	Joseph Cayetano de Vergara	*Español*
Alférez	Joseph Gonzalez	*Español*
Sergeant	Manuel Antonio de Losoya	*Español*

Acostta, Joseph de	*Mestizo*
Acostta y Arias, Joseph Antonio de	*Mulatto*
Albarado, Joseph de	*Indio*
Armijo, Juan de	*Mestizo*
Arejo, Joseph de	*Mulatto*
Avila, Agustín de	*Mestizo*
Bermúdez, Phelipe	*Español*
Cerda, Francisco de la	*Español*
Cordova, Nicholás Antonio de	*Español*
Cordoves, Antonio Gregorio	*Español*
Cos., Manuel de	*Español*
Covarrubias, Juan Antonio de	*Español*
Encarnazion, Juan Joseph de la	*Español*
Espino, Andrés de	*Español*
Flores, Miguel Julian	*Coyote*
Gámez, Juan	*Mulatto*
Hernández, Nicholás	*Español*
Hernández, Juan	*Español*
López, Gregorio	*Mulatto*
Luna, Pascual de	*Coyote*
Luna, Antonio de	*Español*
Marquéz, Juan Joseph	*Mulatto*
Montes, Ypolito de	*Coyote*
Morillo, Francisco	*Lobo*
Nápoles, Francisco de	*Español*
Padilla, Juan de	*Español*
Pán y Agua, Antonio de	*Mulatto*
Paulin, Juan	*Español*
Pérez, Pedro	*Español*
Pozos, Manuel Salvador de los	*Coyote*
Ramos, Juan Antonio	*Mestizo*
Reyes, Juan de los	*Mulatto*
Reyes, Julian de los	*Coyote*
Reyes, Manuel Luis de Los	*Coyote*
Río, Phelipe del	*Español*
Río, Xptóval del	*Español*
Río, Domingo del	*Español*
Rodríguez, Xptóval	*Coyote*
Rodríguez, Guillermo	*Mestizo*
Rossales, Joseph	*Mestizo*
Sánches, Andrés	*Mestizo*
San Miguel, Francisco de	*Español*
Santiago, Xptóval de	*Mulatto*
Santiago, Francisco de	*Mulatto*
Sánchez, Joseph	*Mestizo*
Sierra, Phelipe de	*Español*
Talamentes, Francisco Xavier de	*Español*
Torres, Joachín de	*Español*
Torres, Juan de	*Español*
Tovar, Juan Sánches	*Español*
Ventura de Alcala, Joseph	*Español*
Vera, Joseph Antonio de la	*Mestizo*
Villa Franca, Diego de	*Mestizo*
Villa Real, Blas de	*Mestizo*
Villa Real, Juan de	*Mestizo*
Ybañes, Lazaro	*Mestizo*
Ybarvo, Mateo	*Español*

(adapted from the McDonald and Perzynska 1994, 53:2a:32-34)