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The Andry Family, The 1811 Slave Revolt, and The German Coast Project

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The Andry Family, The 1811 Slave Revolt, and The German Coast Project

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
History

by

Daniel Irwin Senentz, Jr.

B.A. University of New Orleans, 2017

May, 2019

*I dedicate this project to my dear Gabrielle Thorsen,
for whom I wrote this history.*

Acknowledgements

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I am appreciative for the efforts of Mrs. Melanie Gaumont, who met with me to discuss the educational portion of this website. She offered me one of her own lesson plans as a guide, which helped with the evolution of the education tab.

In the process of researching, the Thorsen family proved instrumental. Mrs. Lisa Rizzuto Thorsen provided the necessary starting points for the genealogical research. She voluntarily provided a family oral history on the death of Gilbert Andry, which is included on the website. Not only did she supply information about the Andry family, but also about the German Coast.

On a personal note, I would like to thank my parents, Dr. Tammy and Mr. Dan Senentz. Without them, I could have never gotten this far in my educational journey. I will always remember their efforts in raising me to become the man I am today.

A very special thank you to Miss Gabrielle Thorsen, who helped me at every turn, every wall, and every success I have had with this project. She has constantly been a blessing and an extraordinary help in writing about the Andry family and has given me the encouragement that I have needed to continue working until the very end. Miss Thorsen has been the inspiration for this project, and has given me hope for the future, which I will be sharing with her as my wife.

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Abstract

The German Coast Project explores the early nineteenth century history of the Louisiana's German Coast, spanning its formative years, the 1811 Slave Revolt, and the aftermath of the revolt, through the perspective of the Andry family. The website is powered through Omeka software, which creates a historical exhibition of compiled research. In addition, ArcGIS contributed to the website's construction, as it allowed for the inclusion of interactive programs and maps within the website. Designed for high school students and genealogists, The German Coast Project creates new scholarship pertaining to the German Coast and the 1811 Slave Revolt, through the often-overlooked perspective of the Andry family. The primary theme of the project is to portray how Manuel Andry and his family were able to prosper financially after the 1811 Slave Revolt, even though they suffered a heavy emotional loss.

Keywords: 1811 Slave Revolt, Louisiana, German Coast, Andry Family, Manuel Andry, Le Grand Dérangement, Charles Deslondes, New Orleans, Plantations, Slavery, Louisiana Territory, William Charles Cole Claiborne

Project Definition and Objectives

The German Coast Project¹ is the result of two years of research and study, as part of the requirements for an M.A. in History from the University of New Orleans. The website covers the settlement of the Louisiana German Coast from its peoples' origin in the Alsace region of France in the 1600s, to the formation of the First and Second German Coasts on the west and east banks of the Mississippi River.² Moreover, the history of the Andry family is introduced in the website. Manuel Andry moved his family to the German Coast in 1783, and they remained there until after the 1811 Slave Revolt, which drastically affected their lives.³ Manuel Andry's life is the primary subject of the project. His life is particularly important to the history of the German Coast, because he was one of the leaders of the area. As the Commandant of that area, he would have had many obligations to the public, especially in the day to day lives of the other residents. He would have been a wealthy property-owning farmer, with many slaves. His life after the revolt becomes important because although he achieved financial success in New Orleans, the emotional ramifications of losing his son Gilbert never truly faded. The website presents Manuel Andry's life as an example of the plantation owner's life before and after the 1811 Slave Revolt. Based on the archival findings within Glenn Conrad's *The German Coast: Abstracts of the Civil Records of Saint Charles and Saint John the Baptist Parishes 1804 to 1812*, the website expands upon Conrad's research into the lives of the Andry family, as well as

¹ The German Coast Project may be accessed by using the link: <https://germancoastproject.omeka.net/>

² This website was inspired by the genealogical pursuits of the Thorsen family and the research that they compiled about Commandant Manuel Andry.

³ Researching the Andry family was successful because of the support and efforts of the Thorsen family, who are directly descended from the Andry family through Manuel Andry's son Gilbert Andry. Also, the Andry family settled along the east bank around 1765 by Louis Antoine Andry.

other residents of the German Coast who played a role in the slave revolt. In addition, the website attempts to chart the paths of the residents of the German Coast after the revolt.⁴

The University of New Orleans History Department prides itself on its students' work regarding local and regional history. This website promotes The University of New Orleans' mission by providing an innovative and publicly accessible way for high school teachers and history enthusiasts to learn about a lesser known component of Louisiana's history. The German Coast Project strives to create a concise picture of the German Coast, as well as how the 1811 Slave Revolt affected families, especially the Andry family. On this website, there is an education tab from which instructors can access an exemplar lesson plan for teaching the early history of the German Coast including thought-provoking short answer questions. The website also includes resources to aid students and genealogists in researching the German Coast and their ancestral families who may have lived along it. The German Coast Project is organized into four chronological sections, and an educational section with an exemplar lesson plan: A Background of the German Coast, Andry Family, 1811 Slave Revolt, Life After the Revolt, and For Instructors.

⁴ Glenn Conrad, *The German Coast: Abstracts of the Civil Records of Saint Charles and Saint John the Baptist Parishes 1804 to 1812* (Lafayette, LA: University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1981).

Literature Review

In undertaking this thesis, reviewing books that are both historical and digital in nature proved necessary. The sequence of the project entailed reading and analyzing historical books about the German Coast and the 1811 Slave Revolt. After deciding upon the website's context, the next step consisted of researching digital methods in order to put the context onto a web-based platform. Among the books referenced on the website include Glenn Conrad's *Abstracts of Civil Records of Saint Charles and Saint John the Baptist Parish: 1804 to 1812*, J. Hanno Deiler's *The Settlement of the German Coast of Louisiana and Creoles of German Descent*, Helmut Blume's *The German Coast During the Colonial Era: 1722 – 1803*, Daniel Rasmussen's *American Uprising: The Untold Story of America's Largest Slave Revolt*, and Pierre Clément de Laussat's *Memoirs of My Life*. The articles and books used for the creation of the website include Edward L. Ayers' *The Pasts and Futures of Digital History*, Daniel J. Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig's *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web*, and "Southern Spaces: A Conversation with Digital Historians."⁵ Conducting a comprehensive review of these books assisted in the construction of The German Coast Project.

Professor Glenn R. Conrad's *Abstracts of Civil Records of St. Charles and St. John the Baptist Parish from 1804 to 1812*, compiled in 1981, remains the only original source for the records of the German Coast and the 1811 Slave Revolt. Conrad grew up in New Iberia,

⁵ Glenn Conrad, *Abstracts of Civil Records of Saint Charles and Saint John the Baptist Parish: 1804 to 1812* (Lafayette: University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1981); J. Hanno Deiler, *The Settlement of the German Coast of Louisiana and Creoles of German Descent* (Philadelphia: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1909); Helmut Blume, *The German Coast During the Colonial Era: 1722 – 1803* (Destrehan: The German-Acadian Coast Historical and Genealogical Society, 1990); Daniel Rasmussen, *American Uprising: The Untold Story of America's Largest Slave Revolt* (New York: Harper-Collins Publishers, 2011); Pierre Clément De Laussat, *Memoirs of My Life* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978); Edward L. Ayers, *The Pasts and Futures of Digital History* (Charlottesville: Edward L. Ayers, 1999); Daniel J. Cohn and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); "Southern Spaces: A Conversation with Digital Historians" 2011, accessed on 12 April 2019, available from <https://southernspaces.org/2012/conversation-digital-historians>; Internet.

Louisiana in 1932, and spent much of his life writing and teaching about the history of Cajuns culture and history at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Evidence of runaway slave cases and land transfers are covered within this text. Whenever residents sold or bought items or property, this book recorded the event. The fact that this book was only published in 1981 and was the only hard-copy text of the history of the German Coast in this time period (1804 to 1812), was very interesting because the original court records had been around since when they had been written. Also included in this document was important references of the trials after the 1811 Revolt. The book contains concrete evidence of the major players involved in the revolt and the testimony of the formerly guilty slaves. One such reference was that of a slave named Dominique of the Bernoudy Plantation. He attempted to warn many of the white owners of the upcoming revolt before it occurred.⁶ This text provided much of the research with time stamps for the events of the revolt. The Revolt Tour on the project website was largely based on the events recorded in this resource.

Professor J. Hanno Deiler's *The Settlement of the German Coast of Louisiana and Creoles of German Descent*, written in 1909, contained much of the background information regarding the settlement and the early years of the German Coast. Deiler was born in Germany in 1849, and moved to the states in 1879, where he taught German history at the University of Louisiana, now Tulane University. This manuscript contains a detailed history of the German Coast from the establishment of the Louisiana Colony in 1682 till the statehood of Louisiana in 1812. The book provides information on the immigrants who established the first settlement in the region. The text's timeline influenced the section of the website entitled "Background of the German Coast," which also included a timeline. The timeline on the website focuses more on

⁶ Glenn R. Conrad, *Abstracts of Civil Records of St. Charles and St. John the Baptist Parish from 1804 to 1812* (Lafayette: University of Southwestern Louisiana Press, 1981), 106-107.

the history of world events that contributed to the settlement of the German Coast before the people arrived in Louisiana.

Dr. Helmut Blume's *The German Coast During the Colonial Era: 1722 – 1803*, written in 1956, provides early historical information and data on the German Coast. Helmut Blume was born in Cologne, Germany in 1920, and he received a doctoral degree from the University of Leipzig. Blume discovered his interest in the history of sugarcane when he visited the German Coast in 1953. This book had many charts and statistics which the website uses. For example, the website uses the information on the 1731 Census and attempts to describe the changes occurring in the area in 1737.⁷ The book also cited when specific families along the German Coast first arrived, such as the D'Arensbourg family and the Labranche family.⁸ The charting of family history shown in this text was the inspiration for writing the website through the eyes of the people who lived there, with a primary focus on the Andry family.⁹

Daniel Rasmussen's *American Uprising: The Untold Story of America's Largest Slave Revolt*, written in 2011, was a more modern contribution to the history of the German Coast. Daniel Rasmussen, with the assistance of Mr. Leon Waters, explored the history of the 1811 Slave Revolt with respect to its significance in American history. Mr. Rasmussen was born in Washington D.C. around 1978 and attended Harvard University. His book was based on slavery in the American South which was also the focus of his undergraduate thesis. This book provides only a sensationalized account of the events of the 1811 Slave Revolt, and therefore historical

⁷ Helmut Blume, *The German Coast During the Colonial Era: 1722 – 1803* (Destrehan: The German-Acadian Coast Historical and Genealogical Society, 1990), 68.

⁸ The book's author, Dr. Helmut Blume, used the previous research of Hanno Deiler to discuss the story of some of the families living along the German Coast at this time (1722 – 1803).

⁹ Another source that contributed to the organization of this website as a family history on the German Coast was Dr. Ibrahim Seck's *Bouki Fait Gombo: A History of the Slave Community of Habitation Haydel (Whitney Plantation), Louisiana 1750 – 1860*, which follows the same general pattern as the website and Helmut Blume's book.

references to the Andry family are not available in the work. Rasmussen tries to entice his readers to learn about the events of the revolt by using romanticized language. However, this source refers to the slave driver Charles. Although this source was not viable directly in the construction of the website, the text contributed a few historical facts, specifically references to the slave driver Charles Deslondes.

Pierre Clément de Lassaut's *Memoirs of My Life*, written in 1803, is the personal record of the French Colonial Prefect of Louisiana during the Napoleon years. This record was his personal journal written for his son, and it recollects de Lassaut's travels in Louisiana before the Louisiana Purchase. This book provided a historical sketch of life along the Mississippi River between New Orleans and Baton Rouge. This source was important to the project, because it depicted life on the German Coast as seen from an outsider's perspective. Of the many plantations he visited, his visits to the Destrehan Plantation and the Andry Plantation stood out the most. He characterizes the Destrehan Plantation as follows:

On this plantation, the Negroes were perfectly well kept. Each one cultivated his own little plot (his garden) with the master's encouragement. He bought clothes and such other articles as the slaves needed wholesale and resold them to the slaves without making a profit. It was to his advantage – his slaves were better clothed and did not run away. By a wise distribution of hours, M. d'Estrehan doubled the work of forty to fifty workers without over working any of them (de Lassaut 1978, 60).

In this excerpt, the author portrays Destrehan as someone who took care of his slaves. However, Destrehan had little patience when it came to production on his plantation, which negatively affected de Laussat's impression of him. de Laussat offered the following observation:

For the sugar refiners, grinding is the most important operation. It causes them extreme worry, especially in Louisiana, where they supervise the work themselves instead of trusting an overseer. M. d'Estrehan was there all the time, following all of the operations. Woe to anyone who would disturb one of his Negroes at this time, or his horses, or oxen! Obliging though he usually was, this would have been like stabbing him in the back (de Lassaut 1978, 61).

Pierre de Laussat's impression of the Andry family contrasts to his impression of the Destrehan.

On a visit to the Andry Plantation, he observed the following:

We stopped at the last of the sugar mills, that of M. Andri [Manuel Andry], and had dinner with Madame Andri, he being absent. M. Andri was the commanding officer of his parish, called the Second German Coast or Saint-Jean-Baptiste, whose church is situated on the right bank of the river. Our noonday meal was delayed a little for a good enough reason – they served us a banquet!

The eldest son in the household, who was seventeen or eighteen years old, had married the evening before Mademoiselle Glapiant [Catherine Sophie de Glopion], thirteen or fourteen years old. Early marriages are frequent in these parts. The children here, in this particular case, had been asking to be married for the past two years, and the parents gave in. Madame Andri was none too pleased, fearing that such a youthful daughter-in-law would make her look older.

After a jovial dinner, we set out again at one-thirty in the afternoon (de Laussat 1978, 62-63).

This outside perspective of Pierre de Laussat, who had never visited Louisiana until this time, allows the reader to consider the humanity behind the residents, besides only considering their monetary wealth. An image is created of the Andry family years before the revolt, which aided in writing about the family during that time (1803).

Professor Edward L. Ayers' *The Pasts and Futures of Digital History* is an article which describes the impact of the web and digital methods on the history world in 1999. Edward L. Ayers (1953 – Present), former President of the University of Richmond from 2007 to 2015, helped form the Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities and The Virginia Center for Digital History. He recognizes the advances in technology which had assisted the field of history at that time, stating that more libraries and university archives have been making the change to digital and have been creating public online archives. He also notes that history is better suited for the digital world than many other professions, and the web is an efficient vehicle

for connecting with larger and more diverse audiences.¹⁰ Like the University of New Orleans' (UNO) late Professor Michael Mizell-Nelson, Ayers states that using history in the digital realm has improved the connection with the public. Michael Mizell-Nelson was an important figure in the evolution of the UNO History Department's digital history program and he helped create the University's Digital History Lab, which has assisted many students with their work and furthered the research and practice of creating history digitally in the New Orleans area. His work was inspired by much of Ayers theories on digital history. In the article, Ayers also suggests that using new media will engage the public more. He realizes the use of CD-ROMs has changed the interaction with students and readers of history. By this time, people were only reading textbooks and articles to learn about history, yet with the introduction of the CD-ROM, readers could be more interactive with the material. The German Coast Project strives to capture this same engagement of the eighth-grade student, as a media-enriched website, much like how CD-ROMs allowed for more interaction in 1999.

Director Daniel J. Cohen and former Director Roy Rozenzweig's *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web*, written in 2006, is a book that offers a notable reference for scholarly work created on the internet. Roy Rosenzweig (1950 – 2007), the founder of The Center for History and New Media, wrote in this book of his experiences creating digital archives for public use. He referred to the best practices and common mistakes of creating websites. For instance, he mentions the ways one can organize your website to prevent it from being lost on the web because of insufficient updating. He used many examples of digital history sites including *The September 11 Digital Archive*, *Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy 1718 – 1802*, and *Theban Mapping Project*. *The September*

¹⁰ Edward L. Ayers, *The Pasts and Futures of Digital History* (Charlottesville: Edward L. Ayers, 1999).

11 Digital Archive was useful because it gave a concrete example of how to manage digital collections of data and collect new information to import onto the website. This website organizes the stories uploaded to construct a cumulative digital resource for reading about other's life experiences on September 11, 2001.¹¹ Much like *The September 11 Digital Archive*, Michael Mizel-Nelson's *Hurricane Digital Memory Bank* is a place for any member of the New Orleans community to provide their history on a digital source.¹² This database is an example of an open-sourced website, or the public can easily contribute to the pages of the site, Yet The German Coast Project is built to monitor the material that may contribute to the website. The public must contact and provide the author with the materials to add on this site. Gwendolyn Midlo-Hall's *Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy 1718 – 1820* is an organized database of slaves in Louisiana. In the book, Cohen and Rosenzweig contemplate the advantages and disadvantages of having a historically based databank. They discuss the importance of having an internet-based location for finding historical material, yet they also warn the reader that the upkeep of this type of website may be difficult to maintain.¹³ The book also mentions the *Theban Mapping Project* website, which provided an example of how mapping can portray the historical information on a website. Much like how The German Coast Project utilizes the applications of ArcGIS to depict information visually and engage its users, the *Theban Mapping Project* offers viewers a chance to see the tombs of the Egyptian Pharaohs on a map-based program.¹⁴ Not included in this text, but part of the Center for History and New Media, is the

¹¹ Daniel J. Cohn and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006) 178.

¹² Michael Mizell-Nelson, "Hurricane Digital Memory Bank," 2005-2019, accessed 12 April 2019; available from <http://hurricanearchive.org/>; Internet.

¹³ Daniel J. Cohn and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006) 132.

¹⁴ Daniel J. Cohn and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006) 65.

Histories of the National Mall website. This website takes an up to date approach to formatting and displaying material for a broader audience. Using a map-based template, *Histories of the National Mall* investigates what the audience wants to discover about the topic. Site organization is much more intuitive than previous history-based websites.¹⁵ The German Coast Project offers a similar application through the ArcGIS platform for viewers to use in the “1811 Revolt Tour.”

“Southern Spaces: A Conversation with Digital Historians,” is an online interview conducted by the editorial staff for *Southern Spaces* which discusses not only the need for digital history, but also the ideas of digital historians on the advancement of the new scholarship in this field. The article interviews Robert K. Nelson, Andrew J. Torget, and Scott Nesbit for an in-depth conversation about their digital history projects at the time. Written in December 2011, this article provides a modern look upon the field of digital history. Three major questions were asked in this interview which influence The German Coast Project’s main goals:

- (1) Does digital scholarship allow you to do things that you couldn't in a traditional archive?
- (2) What are the specific projects that you are all working on? How were these projects conceived, and how did they become digital?
- (3) Who are the audiences for these digital projects, and what do you want them to learn when they go to your sites?

The first question brought up major conceptual questions for the construction of The German Coast Project. The historians in the interview said that digital history provides a medium for reaching out to the public. The German Coast Project could not be written as a thesis essay,

¹⁵ George Mason University, “Histories of the National Mall,” 2015, accessed 31 March 2019; available from <http://mallhistory.org/>; Internet.

because the material and information involved with this history was too broad for one essay to include. As a website, the history of the Andry family and the German Coast can be easily organized and will allow the expansion into other family histories. The second question gave examples of the projects historians are working on currently. Similar to The German Coast Project, Andrew J. Torget's *The Texas Slavery Project*, 2008, came from his dissertation thesis. Torget built the website based upon his need for visualization of the tax records from 1840. Robert K. Nelson's *Redlining Richmond* creates an ArcGIS map which lines out the zones in Richmond, Virginia. Much like The German Coast Project, this project dealt with the task of visualizing the data which was collected. The third question attempts to discover the desired audiences for digital history projects. This question was invaluable for The German Coast Project, because throughout the writing process the project did not have a clear audience. The article provides answers to this – much of the digital work being constructed at the time is geared to academics who are not focusing their work in the digital sphere. The goal is to bring digital material to all scholars. The German Coast Project focuses on providing classrooms with the material needed to teach high school students about history. The concept of The German Coast Project is inspired by Michael Mizell-Nelson, who put an emphasis on digital history in the classroom at the University of New Orleans.

Plan for The German Coast Project

The German Coast Project began as more of a map tour of the 1811 Slave Revolt rather than a complete website on the history of the German Coast. I received an assignment from Dr. Molly Mitchell to propose a conceptual history project and came up with the idea from talking to the Thorsen family about their ancestry and how their Andry ancestors connected to the revolt. I began the process of focusing on the small details and the specific theme of the revolt, and the small project turned into my concise history of the Andry family.

Initial research began with becoming familiar with the work of other historians concerning the 1811 Slave Revolt. I found books and articles by Albert Thrasher, Leon Waters¹⁶, Glenn Conrad, Pierre Clément de Laussat, and graduate thesis work on the newspaper's reception of the revolt of 1811 by Thomas Marshall Thompson.¹⁷ This process took me a couple of weeks to read through and complete my assessment before continuing with other research. At this time, I also looked for books concerning the Andry family and the German Coast, which is why the project included Pierre Clément de Laussat as a reference.¹⁸ A digital tour of the 1811 Slave Revolt was created in ArcGIS using the existing knowledge of the revolt from previous writers. I had been studying and learning the ArcGIS platform for about a month before beginning the construction of the tour. Learning the advantages of mapping technology, I deemed it necessary for my project to implement mapping programs in my work. The construction of the application took around a week to consolidate the information and apply it

¹⁶ The concept of the website and many of the features of the site, including the maps and the inclusion of articles from previous sources, had been inspired by the work of Leon Waters.

¹⁷ Albert Thrasher, *On to New Orleans!: Louisiana's Heroic Slave Revolt of 1811* (New Orleans, LA: Published in association with the African American History Alliance of Louisiana, 1995); Thomas Marshall Thompson, "National Newspaper and Legislative Reactions to Louisiana's Deslondes Slave Revolt of 1811." history Master's thesis (University of New Orleans, 1990).

¹⁸ The Andry family refers to Commandant Manuel Andry and his immediate family living around the time of the revolt.

into the tour. The ArcGIS tour of the 1811 Slave Revolt uses a modular map of the Second German Coast, which allows viewers to move around the area and read bulleted text which records the events of the revolt as they occurred.

Research continued for further information regarding the Andry family and their role in the history of the German Coast and the 1811 Revolt. I traveled to the Hill Memorial Library in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and to the Historic New Orleans Collection in New Orleans, to search for information regarding the family at the time of the revolt but was not able to find anything specific to the revolt. The big success was that I found information regarding Manuel Andry and his father, Louis Antoine Andry. At Hill Memorial Library, there were documents pertaining to Manuel Andry's grandson Michel Thomassin Andry, which included dental records, personal letters, and receipts when he lived in New Orleans. Although the information found did not directly apply to the slave revolt, an interesting image of mid-nineteenth century life was evoked. At the Historic New Orleans Collection, I discovered the proof of land sale from James Wilkinson to Manuel Andry, along with survey records containing the signature of his father Louis Andry.¹⁹ These small documents, although they were trivial to the naked eye, placed Andry family members in specific places at different times. For instance, the receipts from the bank in 1820s placed Manuel Andry in New Orleans after the revolt, and the proof of sale documents from James Wilkinson place Manuel on the German Coast soon before the revolt took place. Louis Andry reportedly helped in the settlement of the Second German Coast and assisted Charles Laveau Trudeau in the surveying of the lands along the Mississippi River in the 1760s. This information became useful in directing my website in the later stages.

¹⁹ Wilkinson, James, *The James Wilkinson Estate Collection*, 1810 – 1828. Box 1, Folder 4. (New Orleans, LA: Historic New Orleans Collection).

My work with the Omeka platform began with learning the basics. Initial practice with the Omeka platform involved importing pictures and images of the NYC subways as a test project, and I later enrolled in Dr. Charles Chamberlain's Public History Methods class. In this class, he taught me the specifics of Omeka, how to import videos, and how to organize a history website. The work created for this class included constructing website exhibits.²⁰

Dr. Connie Atkinson also gave me advice for the organization and the content of my website. I spent two weeks discussing and debating with her on what should be included in the site. We organized the specifics for each page and included conversations on the educational aspects of the project. After completing the outline for the website, I imported each section of the outline into each page, to make it easier for me to refer when writing. The writing process began with writing each page individually. The website itself is divided up into manageable sections, and I gathered notes and resources for the sections and write a full page in a day. This method was successful, because it allowed for mobility in where and how the website pages were written. Mobility was key in writing, since no one wants to carry ten thousand books and notes around all the time. For each page, I returned to the University of New Orleans Library and the East Bank Regional Library to gather the required secondary source books.

In the writing process, after finishing a page, hyperlinks in the text of each page would be attached to the bibliography page of each section. As a result, it is manageable to find references on the website. After this was completed, online research for images relating to the page's topic would be done; this required a link each image's website within the item's metadata. In order to use the images, permission from respective organization was required. Sometimes, instead of using images, a section would require maps or diagrams to explain or visualize the information

²⁰ When I learned the Omeka platform, I felt that I needed at least a semester to understand the fundamentals and the basics of the application.

on the website. I often used ArcGIS or photoshop to create the specific map or diagram necessary for the section of the site. The process of creating maps and diagrams from scratch usually took a day per map.

For each section, a brief overview and short answer questions are included. I only began working on this until after completing a section. Short answer questions focused on challenging readers to understand the major themes of each section. For instance, one of the questions for the “A Background of the German Coast,” attempts to incite individual opinions based on the information from the readings and creates a dialogue with the reader. Writing the overviews for each section proved especially tough, because I attempted not to reveal any of the answers to the questions within the summary. The final step of creating the website was writing the project overview. After creating website content, I constructed the project overview which provides a consolidated view of research and findings.

Project Results

“The Andry Family, The 1811 Slave Revolt, and The German Coast Project” is the creation of a learning website for high school students and educators, so that they may better access a lesser-known aspect of Louisiana history. In addition to historical overview, the website provides summary overviews and short-answer questions for each section. Also included are original ArcGIS maps which depict important events in the history of the German Coast and of the Andry family, including the map of Le Grand Dérangement, Incidents on the German Coast Before 1811, The Revolt Tour, The Andry Family in New Orleans, The Andry Family on the German Coast, and German Coast Residents after the 1811 Revolt. The website includes the 1811 Revolt Tour map to show a visual representation of events occurring during the revolt. Moreover, The German Coast Project borrows images from other historical sites that discuss the events of the German Coast. The project consolidates the various histories about the German Coast written by other scholars and fuses them into one singular website.

Currently, the website is the only digitally-based location of accessible knowledge of the Andry family as it relates to the history of the German Coast.²¹ As a result, the project’s contribution to the University of New Orleans is a prototype website for students of history. The aim of this project is to inspire others to create learning-based websites on content in which they are an expert. To date, however, the project has not had a public debut.

²¹ The history of the German Coast from its formation until the years before the Civil War.

Conclusion

The German Coast Project seeks to construct an educational and historical website for high school students, educators, and amateur genealogists. A website is reasonable medium to showcase research and findings, because it is more accessible to the targeted audience, unlike some archival sources. As a result, a concise history is now available to all audiences in a singular location. Although the project was created specifically for high school students and educators, public audiences could use the site as well. For instance, amateur genealogists may benefit from this website, as it may inspire a starting point for their own research. Also included in this site is an exemplar lesson plan for teaching about the Andry family and the German Coast.

“The Andry Family, The 1811 Slave Revolt, and The German Coast Project” is important regarding learning more about Louisiana history, because it attempts to compile a concise history of the Andry family into a website. The website uses the information gathered in the previous histories of the region and expands upon the individual history of the people who lived along the German Coast, such as the Andry family. The author hopes that this project is not the end of the road. Rather, he hopes to remain actively researching other family histories on the German Coast, including the other generations of the Andry family and the other residents on the German Coast. The website includes a list of families involved in the Revolt, which could be used as a starting point for expanding it to include other family histories. The website also includes the education tab for instructors to use. In all, The German Coast Project utilizes traditional research in a web-based platform, which will permit ease-of-access for all users and expand upon their knowledge of the German Coast in an educational atmosphere.

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Vita

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