

The Louisiana Purchase

The Louisiana Purchase

- In 1803 President Thomas Jefferson sent an ambassador to France to gain trade access to the port of New Orleans in the Louisiana Territory claimed by France.



New Orleans

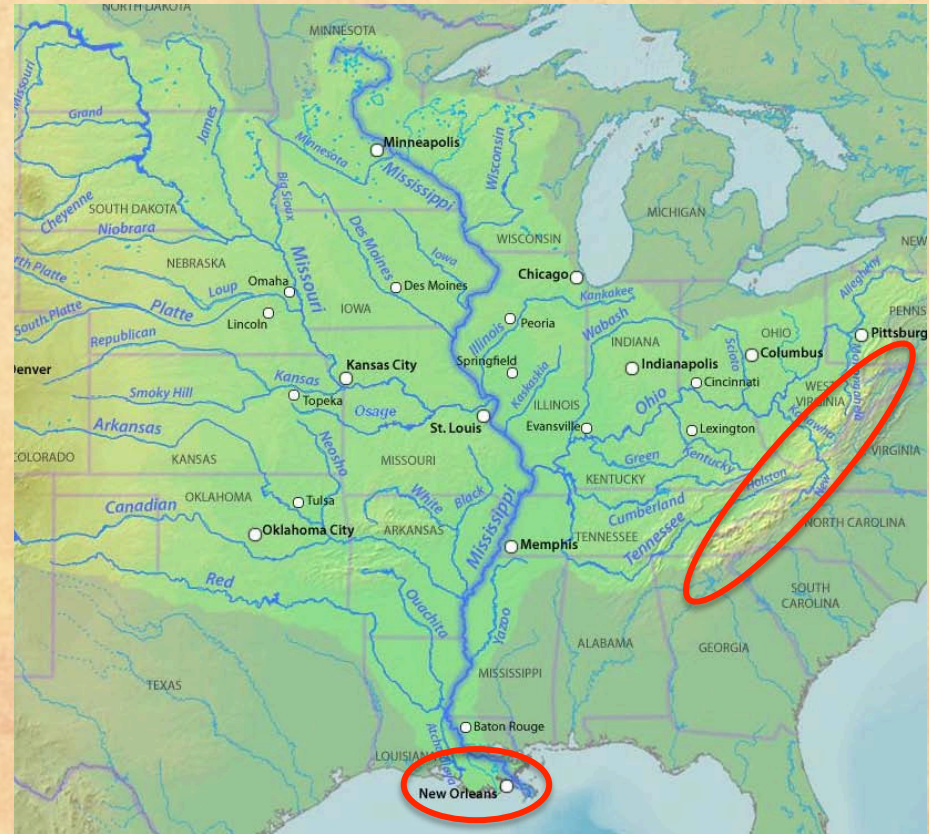
- As U.S. citizens settled beyond the Appalachian Mountains and in the Ohio River Valley, transportation of goods to market using the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers were very important.
- Trade access had already been threatened before and gaining rights to New Orleans was the chief goal of the ambassador, and then James Monroe, sent by President Jefferson.



Out to the Atlantic ports

Why was New Orleans important?

- The Appalachian Mountains formed a barrier to transporting goods over land to ports and towns of the East.
- It was cheaper, and often even faster to send goods by boat downstream.
- 3/8 of all American produce and products in 1800 were shipping through New Orleans.



Transportation in 1800

- For all of the our country's history (in fact all of human history) travel and communication was done in only two ways
 - By land- walking, mounted on a horse, or harness animals
 - By water- rafts, boats, ships traveling with wind or current
- While it was a longer route by boat down the Ohio, larger amounts of goods could be shipped and actually cost less.



More than New Orleans

- But Jefferson didn't get what he sent Monroe to accomplish, instead, France offered the *entire Louisiana Territory*.
- Napoleon, the leader of France, needed money for to wage war with England and couldn't colonize Louisiana at the time.
- For \$15 million, the U.S. doubled it's size, paying only \$.03 an acre (that would be \$.42 an acre today).

The United States July 1803

- Now not only access to New Orleans, but 828,000 square miles west of the Mississippi River



More Reasons to Explore

- President Jefferson instructed Meriwether Lewis to search for the Northwest Passage (again, water routes are the fastest & best form of travel) and now Lewis & Clark could explore the new U. S. Territory of Louisiana.

