

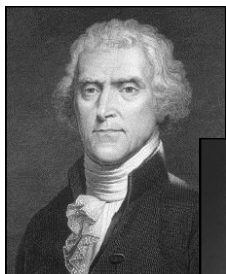
Louisiana Purchase (1803) Name _____

The Mississippi River

Rivers were the highways of the 1700s and early 1800s. With no freeways or jet planes, waterways were the fastest way to ship cargo—and the Mississippi River was one of the biggest, longest waterways around. American farmers wanted to use the Mississippi to send their products to the port of New Orleans, where goods could be shipped around the world. There was just one problem: The land *west* of the Mississippi was the Spanish colony of Louisiana, and Spain controlled the river! Worried that America might have its eye on Spanish land, Spain didn't let Americans use the river. But by 1795, Louisiana wasn't turning out to be as profitable as Spain hoped, so Spain finally opened the river to American boats.



In the 18th century, boats like these were used to transport goods by river.



Thomas Jefferson



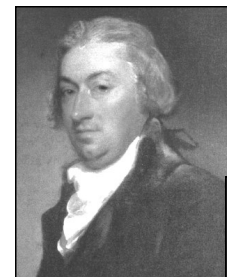
Napoleon Bonaparte

Shh! It's a Secret

It was a short-lived win. Just five years later, Spain gave Louisiana to France in a secret treaty! Now *France* controlled the Mississippi. Unlike Spain, France had big plans for the Louisiana colony. The French leader, Napoleon Bonaparte, was excited about expanding the French empire. France had already colonized islands in the Caribbean, and Louisiana would be an important addition for making those colonies more profitable. But for the U.S. president, Thomas Jefferson, having France as a neighbor was a disaster. Who knew what Napoleon might do? But before France even took control of Louisiana, Spain did something even worse: It closed the New Orleans port to Americans.

More Than They Bargained For

It wasn't long before the U.S. was talking about war. Some in Congress wanted to just take New Orleans and be done with it! But President Jefferson sent a man to France to find out if Napoleon might just sell New Orleans instead. The effort got nowhere. As the crisis heated up, Jefferson sent a second man to help convince Napoleon. The men were authorized to pay \$10 million to buy New Orleans (and Florida, while they were at it). What they didn't know was that because of some other issues, Napoleon didn't even want Louisiana anymore. The men were shocked when France asked how much the U.S. would pay for *all* of the Louisiana colony!



*Negotiator #2:
James Monroe*

*Negotiator #1:
Robert Livingston*



The 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis, also called the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, celebrated the 100 year anniversary.

But It Was On Sale!

Livingston and Madison weren't authorized to buy the whole thing. With letters going by ship, it would take months to get permission. But between the crisis in New Orleans and a new war brewing between France and Great Britain, the chance to get rid of America's new French neighbor was too good to pass up. So in 1803, the men made a deal to buy Louisiana for \$15 million. When news reached the U.S., it caused a stir. The Constitution says nothing about the procedure for buying land. Jefferson even thought they might have to amend the Constitution! In the end, they treated it like any other treaty the president might make. The Senate approved the purchase treaty, Congress approved the \$15 million, and the deal was done.