Carencro's name likely from Indian legend

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Carencro was first known as St. Pierre for the Catholic church that was established there, but it is not certain that it was ever incorporated under that name.

The area around the town was known as the Carencro Prairie in the early history of Lafayette Parish settlement, and a bayou running through it was called Bayou Carencro.

The name probably comes from an Indian legend that a mastodon once died there and that vultures (carrion crows) feasted on the carcass for weeks.

Few white men settled in the Carencro area until the arrival of the Acadians in the late 1700s. Some of the Acadians sent in 1763 to settle the Atakapas district — as much of South Louisiana was then called — were given land along Bayou Carencro, although probably not in what is now the town.

Jean and Marin Mouton, Charles Peck, Louis Pierre Arceneaux and others began to establish cattle ranches in the vicinity at about that time. More cattlemen followed after 1770, when Spanish Gov. Alejandro O'Reilly decreed that "a grant of 42 arpents in front by 42 in depth could be issued only to those who owned 100 head of tame cattle, some sheep and horses, and two slaves to oversee them."

The first post office at Carencro was established Jan. 11, 1872, with Auguste Melchior as postmaster.

By 1889, Carencro had two sugar factories, one operated by J.C. Couvillion and another run by G.L. Singleton. In 1894, Victor E. Dupuis, one of the larger cane growers in the area, formed the Carencro Sugar Co. next to the Morgan Railroad that had by that time reached the town.

In the early 1880s and into the 1890s, Carencro was a larger shopping center than Lafayette. In 1890, according to one account, the town had "a good hotel, town hall, and all the other appurtenances of a first-class country town, including a cotton gin and two good lumber yards, also a well organized hook and ladder company ... two private schools ... and two public, one white and one colored ... and a Catholic church."