Be sure to save this fishing map for future reference.
This marker is located at the junction of N. Highway 171 and Graham Street, Lake Charles. At an impressive ceremony on Sunday, October 11, 1964 the marker was dedicated. Miss Annie Lou Murphy, Louisiana State Tourist Commission, presented it to the Calcasieu Chapter of the American Revolution. Mrs. C.B. Roberts, Regent of the Chapter, accepted the marker. Be sure to visit this historical spot.

At the outset, I should like to pay special tribute to the Louisiana Tourist Development Commission for making possible this auspicious event. For the past number of years the Commission has been erecting markers throughout the State commemorating notable historic events and historic sites. Doing this not only provides the tourist with information about the State, but in a larger sense it gives the native Louisianian a feeling of deep pride for the place of his birth and upbringing. For no State in the American Union can boast of a more colorful and eventful past. I should like also to recognize Mrs. S. R. Campbell of Hymel, Louisiana whose deep interest in this State's history has prompted her to initiate the movement for the erection of the marker we are dedicating today. And lastly, to the Daughters of the American Revolution, sponsors of this event, we commend very highly for their continued interest in the history of this State and Nation.

A person born in Calcasieu Parish in the 1880's and still living can remember when this part of the State had not yet been reclaimed from the wilderness. At that time fewer than 50,000 people lived between the Sabine and the Atchafalaya rivers. These people were scattered over much of the area with large concentrations along the rivers and bayous. That area known as "Imperial Calcasieu" had fewer than 8,000 inhabitants.

Because of the lack of roads and bridges, most travel was made by water. The few roads that crossed the prairies were largely Indian or cattle trails.

Commerce on the Calcasieu River prior to 1860 was negligible. It was not until the opening of the lumber industry in Lake Charles in the years following the Civil War that the stream became one of the most important in Southwest Louisiana. The river assumed major importance in the decade of the 1880's at the time that the railroad had been extended through the area. This event began to challenge the river's supremacy. Schooners plying its waters brought cargoes of lumber to Galveston, which for a long time was the most important trading center for the people of the Calcasieu country and brought back groceries and other supplies. One writer remembers that immediately after the Civil War when Confederate money had become valueless and business had degenerated into barter, "landings," which in some cases later developed into villages and towns, came into existence along the Calcasieu River. Here such products as lumber, cowhides, cloth, tin plate, pewter tableware, some chinaware, and livestock were exchanged. In one instance, cowhides and logs brought to a landing store were traded for "two bolts of calico, one bottle of meal, coffee, salt and sugar." The sloop Emma took lumber and cowhides to Galveston and returned with "a cargo of salt bacon, 50 sacks of meal, 12 sacks of flour, black pepper, salt, furniture, chinaware, pants, muzzle-loading shotguns, powder, shot, wads, and caps."

A large portion of the products brought up the Calcasieu River from Galveston had originally come from New Orleans, for as early as 1856 Cornelius Vanderbilt had established a steamship line operating between Brashear City (Morgan City) and Galveston and intermediate points along the Texas coast. The next year when Brashear City became the terminus of the New Orleans, Opelousas, and Great Western Railway, the Crescent City...
was now connected by rail with the town on the Atchafalaya River. It was thus that the people of the Colcasieu country could get goods indirectly from New Orleans.

Like most of the streams of the area, the Calcasieu River was obstructed with snags, logs, fallen and overhanging trees, and sand bars, especially above Jones Bluff, twenty-eight miles north of Lake Charles. The river south of Lake Charles had an average depth of ten feet at low water, and widths varying from two hundred to six hundred feet. Beginning in the 1880's, the river was dredged a number of times by appropriations from the Federal Government to make a navigable channel to the Gulf.

This was the approximate setting in Calcasieu Parish when Rees Perkins came to this section of the State in the early 1820's. The Legislature granted him a permit to operate a ferry across the Calcasieu River a few miles above Lake Charles — then a settlement of a few families. The permit granted to Perkins became a model for all ferries later chartered by the Calcasieu Police Jury.

At the first meeting of the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury on August 20, 1840 at the residence of Arsene LeBleu, Rees Perkins was again granted a ferry permit "expedient for the good order of our parish."

At this same meeting, James H. Buchanan was given the privilege of establishing a ferry at his crossing immediately north of Lake Charles "on the same terms as that granted Rees Perkins." Buchanan's homestead was in a tiny hamlet then called Lisbon. The name was later changed to Bagdad. On the death of Buchanan in 1861, Adam Hortman assumed charge of the ferry.

Perkins Ferry continued in operation until a few years ago long after Hortman's Ferry had ceased to exist. These ferries served drovers on their way to the New Orleans markets over what was variously called the "Old Beef Trail" and "The Opelousas Trail" — and finally, the "Old Spanish Trail."

The ferries served not only cattlemen, but also roving Indians, missionary priests, travellers, and early settlers. The trail from Texas usually crossed the Sabine River at Nibletts Bluff and proceeded eastward until the crossings on the Calcasieu were made either at Perkins or Hortman's ferries. The terms of the permits granted by the Police Jury provided that each ferry owner maintain the road three to four miles above and below the ferry, and when necessary, construct bridges over gullies. Drovers were particularly anxious to rest their cattle where water was available.

When in 1880 the railroad was extended across the prairies to Texas, the big cattle drives ceased. The cattle were now marketed by rail. Thus ended one of the most colorful eras in Southwest Louisiana history. The ferries, however, did not cease to operate. They still provided services to travellers on foot, horseback, in buggies, and — at a later time, to automobiles.

In appearance, the ferries were usually flatboats surrounded by protecting guard rails. A rope slung taut across the river was used by one or two men to pull the ferry across. The ferriaghe costs in the period from 1840 to 1860 were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Transport</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-wheeled wagon and team</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buggy or horse cart</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxcart or team</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man and horse</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footman or lead horse</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming cattle</td>
<td>.03 a head</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local historian Miss Maude Reid tells this story about Adam Hortman's "leader."

The leader was a long-horned steer trained to jump into the river and guide the uneasy herd across to the opposite bank. But having done this, he felt that he had performed his duty and absolutely refused to swim back to his master's crossing. Instead, he walked onto the wooden barge and waited to be pulled across, whereupon he calmly walked off and waited for the next herd to come along. This tale has become part of the folklore of Southwest Louisiana.

This dedication is a fitting tribute to the pioneers who helped build this part of Louisiana.

— Source of information, Mrs. Gilmore W. Lassman of Lake Charles, Louisiana.
All of us have our hobbies, but a group of Lake Charles residents have an unusual hobby — possessing antique automobiles. The group meets the first Sunday of each month during the summer months at Sam Houston State Park and during the winter months at Don Woodard's home, 117 Garden, Hollywood (outskirts of Lake Charles).

Officers of the local chapter are: O. A. DeLord, President; Ray McKeever, Vice-President; and Don Woodard, Secretary-Treasurer. Other members are Dale Cannon, Dud Faulk, Lee Gunn, Charles D. Howard, H. L. Hutchison, David D. Nobles, H. E. Richardson, Ted Grosse, C. F. Smith, Richard LeDoux, Lenny Sanger, John Savage, and Roy J. Winzor.

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