St. Pierre or Carencro—Take Your Choice

(Advertiser Staff Special)

CARENCRO—The old folklore it St. Pierre, railroad expediency tabbed it Carencro, not one knows where the name came from and no one is sure how it came to be. Even its age can't be determined with any accuracy. The church there is 75 years old and even that age is open to dispute.

Carencro, St. Pierre—take your choice—is a mystery town.

The founding—there was none. Carencro just happened. It was a central point between Grand Coteau, Bruas Bridge and Lafayette. Near it, in the early days, was wood plenty to build homes furnish heat, make wagons and boats. The soil surrounding it is fertile—perhaps as most fertile in the area. Its inhabitants, for the most part, are French descendants of the Acadians. Probably, families gathered here, built homes and were joined by friends. Carencro was built, not through any one individual's effort, but because before the days of the railroad it was a busy place—well located.

As with all towns, Carencro has its legends. It's had its share of characters, out of the ordinary people, who put spice in what might have been just everyday living otherwise. The old man who raised snails in the mud near the town. Circles over the carcasses were made by buzzards—the carrion branch line through the community; residents were scandalized. But dirty, smoky, sooty iron horse was not for a quiet town. Grand Cerese fought off the railroads, but Caren- cro capitulated. It wasn't too bad, because they relegated the railroad to the north part of town. A siding was built, and it was a hanger that served as ticket office. To show their disgust, the citizens began dumping their garbage, dead animals etc. back of the siding. The stench attracted bug- zards, and Carencro was the logical result.

None of the older residents call their town Carencro—it's St. Pierre and it will always be St. Pierre. It's Carencro on the map because the railroad kept confusing shipments destined for this St. Pierre with cargoes consigned to another St. Pierre, La. The iron-horsemen called it St. Pierre Carencro and so Carencro it is.

A once familiar name has disappeared from the town—that of Carencro. Francois Carmouche's blacksmith shop was the scene of the first masses held in Carencro after the parish of St. Peter was created. Francois had married, he had no children. His brother, Emilien, was a bachelor. Since they were the only males, they named the church.

Emilien, however, still lives in legend. Reportedly, he was a very wealthy man. In his old age, he was alleged to have buried his treasures in an iron pot somewhere at what is now Mrs. E. B. Arnaud's property. It may still be there—but if it is, it's all that's left of what once were prominent Carencro names.

The name was given for sure how old Carencro is, but it's history was never as well founded as the present Carencro name. Some of the best stories about Carencro concern the origin of its name. There are three outstanding theories that had a godfather and godmother.