Finally Raised from Donaldsonville

In 1833, the Legislature granted the State House property to the police jury "to be used forever by them as a seminary of learning."

This proved unsatisfactory. There were other uses to which the property could be put, but state law banned them, and the calls for use of the frame structure the legislators had scorned to house educational institutions were rare.

The police jury did the best it could to keep the property in a semblance of repair, but disuse took its toll and the result was a blight on the landscape of the growing community.

The people had joyfully heard the city's founder, William Donaldson, declare he would make his town the capital city of the state, and now they had to look on the results of the promise that had come true for such a short period in history.

The Act of 1842 stated, "The police jury of the parish of Ascension is hereby empowered to sell, alienate or dispose of, for the benefit of the parish, the property granted to them," canceling the obligation of public education use.

The State House was on Government Square, which comprised the area between present day Railroad ave., Claiborne, Houma and Opelousas sts.

In time, the materials from the State House ended up in Bayou Lafourche in an attempt to prevent the waters of the mighty Mississippi River from washing over onto the bayou side land. Even there, it failed, and in time a dam had to be erected.

Ascension Not Allowed to Remove Facility

By CLAIRE PUNEKY
(The T-P Bayou Lafourche Bureau)

DONALDSONVILLE, La.—As March moved toward its close, 125 years ago in 1842, the police jury of Ascension Parish, which had labored for some years with a so-called "white elephant" on its back, was relieved of its burden by an understanding state Legislature.

This burden was the one-time State House that had so briefly housed the lawmakers of Louisiana. Until Act 117 of 1842 was passed, the police jury was prohibited from disposing of the property, which had become an eyesore.

From the start, the idea of making Donaldsonville the capital city of Louisiana was caught up in controversy, and the actual date was pushed back again as building troubles and other obstacles mounted.

Then the State House was so unsatisfactory to the legislators they held sessions elsewhere in this city and very soon returned the capital of the state back to New Orleans.

The first session of the Legislature in Donaldsonville began Jan. 4, 1830. On Jan. 3, 1831, the Legislature again met here to spend one week in session before adjourning on Jan. 8, 1831, and holding the remainder of the session in New Orleans.