An official Louisiana Historic Marker has caused some public interest lately. The marker stands in Ms. Alice B. Prudhomme’s front yard. She is a member of the De Soto Parish Historical Society, and lives in Mansfield, Louisiana. Passerbys frequently ask, “What are you doing with a historic marker in your front yard?” She replies, “The marker is for my ancestor, Pierre Boit Lafitte, and I rescued it from a junk dealer.”

The marker erected in 1955 near the Carmel Catholic Church in De Soto Parish reads:

Pierre Boit Lafitte [sic] Grave of Pierre Boit Lafitte, son of pirate Pierre Lafitte, hero in defense of New Orleans against British in 1815. He owned an 11,963 acre grant. A community, lake and river were named for him.

The marker is wrong on several accounts remarked Ms. Prudhomme and continued with her narrative. The marker disappeared years ago from its original location and she heard in 1999 that a historical marker was to be auctioned in Shreveport. She called a lady friend and they went to the auction house in her small car. There, to her surprise, was Pierre Boit, her ancestor’s marker. The owner appeared and very politely explained that he had found the marker in the weeds near a shop that he owned on Greenwood Road. He had put it in his shop and it had been there for about 10 years and he had just decided to sell it. The ladies explained that they intended to take Pierre (the marker) home with them without bidding or buying it. The owner agreed. The ladies struggled with the huge, heavy marker in the trunk of their little car unable to close the lid. Their transportation problems lasted for some time but the marker was finally deposited in Ms Prudhomme’s front yard where it remains.

Ms. Prudhomme states that the father of Pierre Boit Lafitte was Paul Boit Lafitte, an early settler of Bayou Pierre, and not Pierre Lafitte the pirate. She hopes to get a corrected marker for her ancestor placed in the original location near his grave. Meanwhile the old marker attracts considerable attention in her front yard.

Notes


Private communication, January 2003, with Ms. Alice Bates Prudhomme.