Strange Names and Words from Louisiana -
The legacy from it's Indian Tribes.

The French, Spanish, and English explorers recorded the language as they heard it. The Indians didn't have an alphabet or written record. The Map makers didn't care how the French, or the Spanish spelled it. Some words have 5 different spellings but all sound alike phonetically.

Algonquain

Mississippi - great water  
Nottoway - rattlesnake  
Pecaniere - pecan  
Powhatan - medicine man's hill  
Quebec - strait or narrow  
Ricoho - sandy place  
Weyanoke - river bend

Apache

Cannisnia - the blacks

Attacapass

Calcasieu - crying eagle  
Mermentau - Chiefs name

Caddo

Adois - bushwood  
Bistineau - big foam  
Caddo - Chief
Dorcheat - Clan
Fordoche - wild animal lair
Keatchie - panther
Nantaches - Salt
Natchitoches - chestnut eaters
Sodo - Hunter, warrior

**Brazilian Indian**

Mangrove Maringouin - swamp mosquito

**Caribe (west indians)**

Hurricane - big wind

**Catawba**

Yupon - tree shrub

**Chetimacha**

Natchez - warrior

**Choctaw Indian** (choctaw unknown means separation)

Abita - Fountain
Alabama - Those who clear land for farming
Amite - young
Atchafalaya - long river
Attakapas - Man eaters
Bayou - river creek
Bayou Funny Louis (originally fanilusa) - black squirrel
Bayou Goula - river people
Bogalusa - Black Creek
Bogue - River, Creek
Bogue Chitto - Swift river
Bogue Falaya - long river
Bonfouca - river residence
Bayou Bushley (originally bushli)- cut off
Cabahannose - duck roast
Cahoula - Beloved water
Castine - flea
Catahoula - beloved lake
Catalpa - divided
Cataouche - Part of the word means lake
Chacahoula - beloved home
Chaoui - racoon
Chappepeela - hurricane
Chata Ima - like a choctaw
Chetimaches - those who have cooking vessels, the Chitimacna tribe
Chickamaw - good land
Chickasaw - rebellion
Chickima - good
Chinchuba - alligator
Chipola - feast
Chuka Chuka - night cabin
Choupique - filthiness
Chula - fox
Colapissa - sentinels
Colewa - crooked
Coochie - bitter Great Water
Coochie Brake - Reed Brake
Coosa - Reed Brake
Coushatta White Reed brake
Faquetaique - Turkey hen
Houma - red
Istrouma - red stick (baton rouge)
Kisatchie - Reed brake river
Latenache - boggy river
Mako Nako - little trout
Manchac - rear entrance
Natalbany - lone bear
Okaloosa - black water
Opelousas - black legs
Osca Bay - Cane growing along the bay shore
Quache - to raise
Quachita - big hunting ground
Panola - cotton
Pascagoula - bread people
Patassa - flat fish or perch
Pinhook - linden - brass - wood tree
Santa Bard - snake creek
Shongaloo -Cypress tree
Talisheek - gravel
Talla Bena - Palmetto camp
Tallahatchie - River of Pearls
Tangipahoa - corn cob
Tchefuncta - chinquapin
Tchoupitoulas - those who live by the river
Teche - snake
Tickfaw - Pine rest
Tigouyou - forest people
Tuscumbia Bend - warrior killer
Washley - foam creek
Uski Chitto recorded on the map as Whiskey Chitto - Large cane break (big cane creek)

**Comanche**

Iatt - the name for the Ute Indians

**Cherokee**

Tallulah - unknown

**Chickasaw**

Tunica - the people

**Cree**

Woodchuck - ground hog

**Creek**

Osceola - black drink singer (brew made of Yupon leaves)

**Dakota**

Winona - first born if a daughter

**French**

Baton Rouge - red stick
Homas Indian boundary marker was a red stick their their word is "Istrouma"

**Iroquois**

Genesee - beautiful valley

Tioga - at the forks of the river

**Micmac**

Acadia - a place

**Menominee**

Oshkosh - claws
Mobilian

Biloxi - first people
Mongoulois - people of the opposite clan

Mohawk

Chautaugua - foggy place

Natchitoches

Campti - chiefs name

Pina

Arizona - few springs

Potawatomi

Wauksha - fox

Seneca

Chenago - large thistles

Sioux

Quapaw - downstream

Tensaw

Avoyelles - flint people

Virginia Renape

Chinquapin - rattle nut
Hickory - the emulsion from the nut
Opossum - white beast
Pocosin - a swamp
Raccoon - he scratches with the hands
Roanoke - polished shells or beads

Unknown

Wyandotte - the islanders
The History and Geography of the Caddo Language

http://www.as.ua.edu/lavis/abstractsCDE.htm#chafe

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The words of my title are to be taken in several different senses. I will first summarize briefly the history of the Caddo people as it is known from available historical records, mentioning their earliest known locations and their several migrations to other areas. Turning to more linguistic matters, I will begin with some remarks on the history of research on the Caddo language. I will then illustrate a few of the ways in which the history of the language itself can be reconstructed. Then I will discuss its place within the Caddoan language family, consisting of Caddo, Pawnee, Arikara, Wichita, and Kitsai, and will touch on possible relations of that family to the Siouan and Iroquoian families. Finally I will illustrate ways in which the Caddo language has been influenced by languages spoken in adjacent areas, including the Indian languages Tonkawa, Arapaho, Osage, and Choctaw, as well as the European languages Spanish, French, and English.

From French to English in Louisiana: the Prudhomme family’s story

http://www.as.ua.edu/lavis/abstractsCDE.htm#eble

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When the United States purchased Louisiana from Napoleon in 1803, the dominant language was French. With Americanization came the English language. By the time of the Civil War, English had largely displaced French in public discourse in most of the state and in the city of New Orleans. Only in the relatively isolated Acadian area of southern Louisiana did French have dominance over English.

This paper examines the shift from French to English in the area of earliest French settlement in the Louisiana Purchase territory, around the town of Natchitoches in northwestern Louisiana. It is based on the family papers preserved by the descendants of the merchant Jean Pierre Philippe Prudhomme, who came to the Natchitoches area in 1716. The Prudhomme family became prosperous planters. In 1821 they moved into a house on the banks of the Red River where subsequent generations lived until the 1990s. The house and some of the land are now owned by the National Park Service as part of the Cane River Creole National Historical Park.

The Prudhomme family papers (about 16,375 items), dating 1765-1997, occupy 41 linear feet in the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. They include plantation journals and accounts, slave records, legal papers, files of the plantation physician, and a wide range of items related to the social and non-business interests of the Prudhommes, such as school lessons, greeting cards, invitations, recipes and remedies, and letters.

This paper will focus on the 19th century, noting the types of writing and the chronology of the shift in language. It will also examine texts for kinds and amounts of code.
switching. The 30 letters from one teenager to her cousin a few miles away, written in the late 1850s, for example, are almost all entirely in English, a few sentences in French appearing in two or three. Around the same time, a mother in the family writes to her son, “mon cher fils,” in French. The language history of this one family gives a fuller picture of the historical and contemporary variety of language in the American South.

Reference
Prudhomme Family Papers (#613), Manuscripts Department, Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/

Vowel Merger as a Snapshot of The History of Southern American English: Conditioned Mergers Before /r/
http://www.as.ua.edu/lavis/abstractsCDE.htm#ehrhardt
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In a comprehensive overview of linguistic change, William Labov (1994) identifies merger as one of three major types of phonological change (the others being splits and chain shifting). Labov notes that mergers are among the most common type of sound change and goes on to identify two types: conditioned mergers, or those that occur in a singular phonological environment; and unconditional mergers, or those that occur everywhere they can occur. Although linguists studying Southern American English (SAE) often focus on chain shifting (i.e., the “Southern Shift”), conditioned mergers are also quite common in SAE. For instance, the mergers of /I/ and /E/ before nasals, of /ju/ and /u/ after alveolars, and of initial /ju/ and /u/ have all been robust processes in SAE over the last century. One set of conditioned mergers that have also been robust, but that have not been fully analyzed, are conditioned mergers before /r/.

This paper explores one set of conditioned mergers before /r/: the merger of /er/, /Er/, and /r/, which leads to the homophony of the sets Mary/merry/marry, and the merger of /r/ and /or/, which leads to the homophony of horse/hoarse. It does so by examining the mergers in two sources of data, the Linguistic Atlas of the Gulf States (LAGS) and the Linguistic Atlas of the Middle and South Atlantic States (LAMSAS). Taken together, these two sources provide apparent time data on more than a century of Southern speech, and they also allow for the tracing of the mergers from inception to completion. Using these sources, this paper maps out a history of the two vowel mergers before /r/ in SAE and examines the social factors that served as amplifiers and barriers to their spread. The apparent time distributions of the mergers suggest that their diffusion was probably a consequence of the dialect contact that resulted from widespread urbanization after 1880. In this respect, the mergers form a kind of snapshot of the history of SAE.
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