

## NEW ORLEANS NOSTALGIA

*Remembering New Orleans History, Culture and Traditions*

*By Ned Hémard*

### **Heirs Apparent**

The Prince of Wales is the title currently held by Prince Charles, as heir apparent to the reigning monarch of the United Kingdom (his mother, Queen Elizabeth II). The title has been traditionally granted to the heirs apparent of the United Kingdom, the Kingdom of Great Britain and (before that) the Kingdom of England since Edward II in 1301.

The story that Edward II's father (Edward I) presented him as an infant to the Welsh as their future prince is probably apocryphal. The purported tale is that the Welsh demanded a prince who spoke Welsh, and Edward promised them (at the time of his conquest of Wales in 1283) a prince born in Wales that spoke no English at all. His newborn baby (born 1284 at Caernafon Castle, Wales) could certainly speak no English at birth. Only thing is that the aristocracy at that time in England was speaking Norman French. Great origin story, but this myth did not actually show up in print until the 16th century.

Heirs apparent are different from heirs presumptive. The United Kingdom employs primogeniture (right of first born to inherit) with a male preference. That is, a female has as much right in the succession order as a male (but ranks behind all brothers whenever born). It is for that reason that a female is an heiress presumptive, with the possibility that a brother could be born in the future who could become the heir apparent. That didn't happen in the case of the present Queen Elizabeth.

The European nations of Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium and Norway have absolute primogeniture, inheritance by the oldest surviving child regardless of gender.

The title Prince of Asturias is given to the heir apparent of the Spanish throne, and the earlier Kingdom of Castille. The present Prince of Asturias, Felipe, is the son of King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia (who are visiting Pensacola, Florida, this February on the 450th anniversary of its founding by Don Tristán de Luna y Arellano in 1559). A violent

hurricane just over a month later prevented Pensacola from being a continuous settlement. Andrew Jackson wreaked havoc upon the English there back in late 1814. The defeat at Mobile and their expulsion from Pensacola prevented a sweep across Mississippi and forced the British to change their invasion plans and target New Orleans directly, contributing to their huge losses at the Battle of New Orleans the following month.

France practiced what was known as agnatic primogeniture, which (according to the Salic Law attributed to the Salian Franks) prohibited any inheritance of the crown through the female line. The title given to France's heir apparent from 1350 to 1791 and again from 1824 to 1830 was the *Dauphin* of France, or (more strictly) the *Dauphin de Viennois*. *Dauphin* is French for dolphin, and there is an interesting history of how "Flipper" came to grace the flag of the next in line to the Kingdom of France, how a street in New Orleans' French Quarter came to be named Dauphine and how Dauphin Island near Mobile was thought to be the site of a terrible massacre.

The *Dauphiné* was an area of France inhabited in ancient times by a Gaulish tribe known as the *Allobroges*, among others. Over time it became an independent mountain principality within the Holy Roman Empire ruled in the twelfth century by Count Guy IV of Albon (circa 1095-1142). Guy had a coat of arms with a dolphin, and he sported the nickname *le Dauphin*. His descendants changed the title to the *Dauphin de Viennois*, after the family seat at Vienne. This is the French town where it is said Pontius Pilate was banished by Caligula and died by his own hand in A.D. 41, according to Eusebius. In 1349, the heirless Humbert II de Viennois sold his lordship to Philippe VI, King of France, with a major stipulation that all future heirs to the throne of France would be known as *le Dauphin*, as well. The first *Dauphin* was Philippe's grandson, the future Charles V, King of France. He and future *Dauphins* would unite the coat of arms of the *Dauphiné*, which featured dolphins, with the French *fleurs-de-lis*.

On January 29, 1699, Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville put into Pensacola Bay where he noticed the presence of two Spanish warships at anchor before the newly re-established Spanish colony there. Sailing westward from Florida he arrived at Mobile Bay two days later and came upon an island they named Massacre Island for a large pile of human skeletons that were discovered there. Iberville recorded the carnage in his journal. Instead of the scene of some gruesome skirmish, it was probably a burial mound broken asunder by a hurricane. The island was later named Dauphin Island for the great-grandson of Louis XIV. The Sun King outlived three other *Dauphins*, each of them dying within less than a year's time.

Ignace Francois Broutin's May 1728 map of New Orleans is where Dauphine Street first appears, spelled *Dauphiné* with an *accent acute*.

*Dauphine* (without the accent) is the name for the wife of a *Dauphin*. But there is no female *Dauphin*, that is, an heiress apparent (thanks to the Salic law mentioned above). There was no *Dauphin* in 1718 since the former *Dauphin* was now an eight-year-old king, Louis XV, and had no children yet. He had become king at the age of five and ruled with the aid of the *Régent, Philippe, duc d'Orléans* (his great-uncle and New Orleans' namesake).

So it is obvious that Dauphine Street was not named for the *Dauphin*. It was either named for the *Dauphiné*, the province of southeastern France described previously, or (according to John Chase) "the Paris brothers of Dauphiné, who were active in the Farmers-General after the fall of Law". That's John Law, the Scottish gambler-economist responsible for financing New Orleans, creating the Mississippi Bubble and bringing about a chaotic economic collapse in France.

Dauphine Street was first named *Rue Vendôme*, probably because John Law was put in charge of the development of the *Place Vendôme* in the first *arrondissement* of Paris when state finances were running low. He built himself a residence there, and the square was completed by 1720 (just as Law's paper-money bubble was bursting). The slick Scot suffered a severe setback when he had to pay back taxes in the tens of millions and was forced to sell his property to members of the exiled Bourbon-Condé family. Law fled France in 1720. Instead of wiping out Louis XIV's deficit with all that funny money, he and the *duc d'Orléans* doubled it in four years. Seems like there's nothing new under the Sun (King).

During Spanish rule in New Orleans, Dauphine Street was known as the *Camino de Bayona*. Bayona is an ancient Spanish port town founded 140 BC, where Columbus' ship, the *Pinta*, returned on March 1, 1493. Bayona became the first European town to receive news of the discovery of the New World.

In 1990, Regina Kever and Chef Susan Spicer made a discovery of their own. A 200-year-old Creole cottage at 430 Dauphine became the site of an exceptional restaurant named "Bayona". With signature dishes like the grilled duck breast sandwich (with cashew butter and pepper jelly) and an outstanding garlic soup, gourmands raved.

In another Creole cottage in the Riverbend area of Carrollton, one can discover another great creation, *Pommes Dauphinoise*. The Restaurant "One" offers grilled beef tenderloin with a Stilton cheese *glacage*, served with asparagus and Dauphinoise Potatoes (sliced thin and baked with heavy cream, butter and garlic).

After opening "Bayona", Susan Spicer soon gained national attention with her restaurant featured in the "New York Times" and "Food & Wine". She received the James Beard Award for Best Chef, Southeast

Region, in 1993, and opened the hip bistro "Herbsaint" in 2000 with three partners. Cooking classes, appearances on television, cookbooks and her charitable work for the city continue to spotlight Susan Spicer as an outstanding ambassador and heiress apparent of New Orleans cuisine.

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