

# CHAPTER TWO

## THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE

*The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 was one of the most important events in the history of the United States and Montana. It doubled the size of the United States, and included the territory that would someday become the state of Montana. It began the westward expansion of the United States which would eventually stretch all the way to the Pacific Ocean.*

**Locate the following places on the map before reading this chapter:**

- |                |              |                     |                       |
|----------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Europe         | Spain        | France              | Rocky Mountains       |
| Mississippi R. | New York     | Northwest Territory | Ohio River            |
| Missouri River | Philadelphia | Boston              | Washington, D.C.      |
| New Orleans    | Paris        | Atlantic Ocean      | Appalachian Mountains |



### Vocabulary

- |            |            |          |        |           |
|------------|------------|----------|--------|-----------|
| territory  | markets(n) | port     | treaty | authority |
| produce(n) | market (v) | boundary | adjoin |           |

### The Louisiana Territory

The Louisiana Territory included the land between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains. After the end of the American Revolution, the land owned by the United States extended only as far as the Mississippi River. The Louisiana Territory

was owned by Spain until 1800, when it was given by a secret treaty to France, which was then ruled by Napoleon. When President Jefferson learned that France now owned Louisiana, he was not pleased. He didn't trust Napoleon because he knew he was very powerful and would be a threat to the United States if he controlled the land across the Mississippi. He sent a letter to the U.S. Minister to France, Robert Livingston, to try to buy New Orleans from Napoleon.

### **Reason for the Purchase**

The farmers along the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers depended on the port of New Orleans in the Louisiana Territory to market their produce. They floated their produce down the Mississippi River to New Orleans, where it was put on boats and shipped to markets in the eastern United States and Europe. This was much faster and easier than sending it by wagon over the Appalachian Mountains.

In 1802, the Spanish official in New Orleans closed the port to American farmers. This caused a great protest in the United States by farmers and merchants who depended on New Orleans. They demanded that President Jefferson do something! Some wanted to go to war to seize New Orleans from France. The President decided to get New Orleans through negotiation.

### **The Purchase Itself**

In 1803, Jefferson sent James Monroe to France as a special envoy to buy New Orleans. Monroe was given the authority to spend up to ten million dollars. When Monroe and Livingston offered to buy New Orleans from Napoleon, he surprised them by offering to sell the whole Louisiana Territory. They knew they should take advantage of this opportunity right away. Without asking President Jefferson, they agreed to pay the French fifteen million dollars for the whole Louisiana territory. This amounted to about three cents an acre. Although Monroe and Livingston had spent more money than they were supposed to, the United States government agreed to the purchase.

### **Three Effects of the Purchase**

The Louisiana Purchase affected the United States in three ways. First, the United States doubled in size. Second, the western boundary of the United States moved all the way to the Rocky Mountains. Third, President Jefferson would now send the Lewis and Clark Expedition to explore this new territory, including the land that would become Montana.

**Now outline the Louisiana Purchase on the map at the beginning of the chapter.**