



PHOTO FROM SHANE ANSARDI  
Shane Ansardi is the man who voices the tongue-in-cheek 'Chalmette HeyBrah (English-ish)' driving app.

## Meet the yatt behind 'Chalmette' driving app voice

BY DOUG MacCASH  
Staff writer

The voice of the "Chalmette HeyBrah (English-ish)" driving app is a tongue-in-cheek sensation among connoisseurs of a certain colloquial regional accent. You know, that old New Orleans sound. Call it yatt, call it Nin't Ward, Kennuh, Chalmatian, whatever.

To get the voice on your smartphone, you download the Waze Chalmette HeyBrah app. Pretty soon you'll be dodging potholes while listening to a vaguely annoyed navigator instructing you to "hook a right," or "hook a lef."

Heaven forbid you miss a turn, for you'll hear the exasperated voice cry out, "Oh Lawd, reroutin,' reroutin,' here we go."

It's hard not to laugh. What we wanted to know was who is the man behind the voice. The folks at Waze weren't much help because, as a representative explained, "the Chalmette HeyBrah English-ish voice was actually created by a local user and self-uploaded to Waze."

Happily, after our first story about the yatty navigation app appeared, a reader informed us that the do-it-yourselfer is her brother-in-law. And sooner than you can say "keep all your hands and your arms and your legs inside the vehicle at all times," we were speaking to the Chalmette HeyBrah himself, Shane Ansardi.

Ansardi is the real deal. He grew up in Meraux, Chalmette and Arabi. He proudly said his mom was from a family "of big yatts from the Ninth Ward," and his dad's people were from way down in Davant.

He said he's heard the indigent accent his whole life, and that he married "a Chalmette girl who has a worse accent than me."

Despite his absolutely pitch-perfect performance as a somewhat fatigued directional guide, Ansardi says he has no background in theater or comedy. Unless you count his compulsion to "crack jokes and act the fool."

Three years back, Ansardi said, his mother was hospitalized in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, which required lots of driving back and forth. It was during that period that he was inspired to create his own version of the Waze driving app.

Ansardi said his main motivation was to tease his wife, Jenny. When she heard it, he said, he was sure she "was going to want to jump out the window."

In fact, Jenny Ansardi said, she laughed her, uh, posterior off. Shane loaded the app onto Jenny's phone so she could find her way under his guidance.

"Now, I say, 'Shut up, Shane,' even when he's not in the car," she laughed.

### Learning from experience

Ansardi, a computer drafts-person, said he probably acquired the impatient tone of his Chalmette HeyBrah persona simply by driving from place to place in the region. Living in

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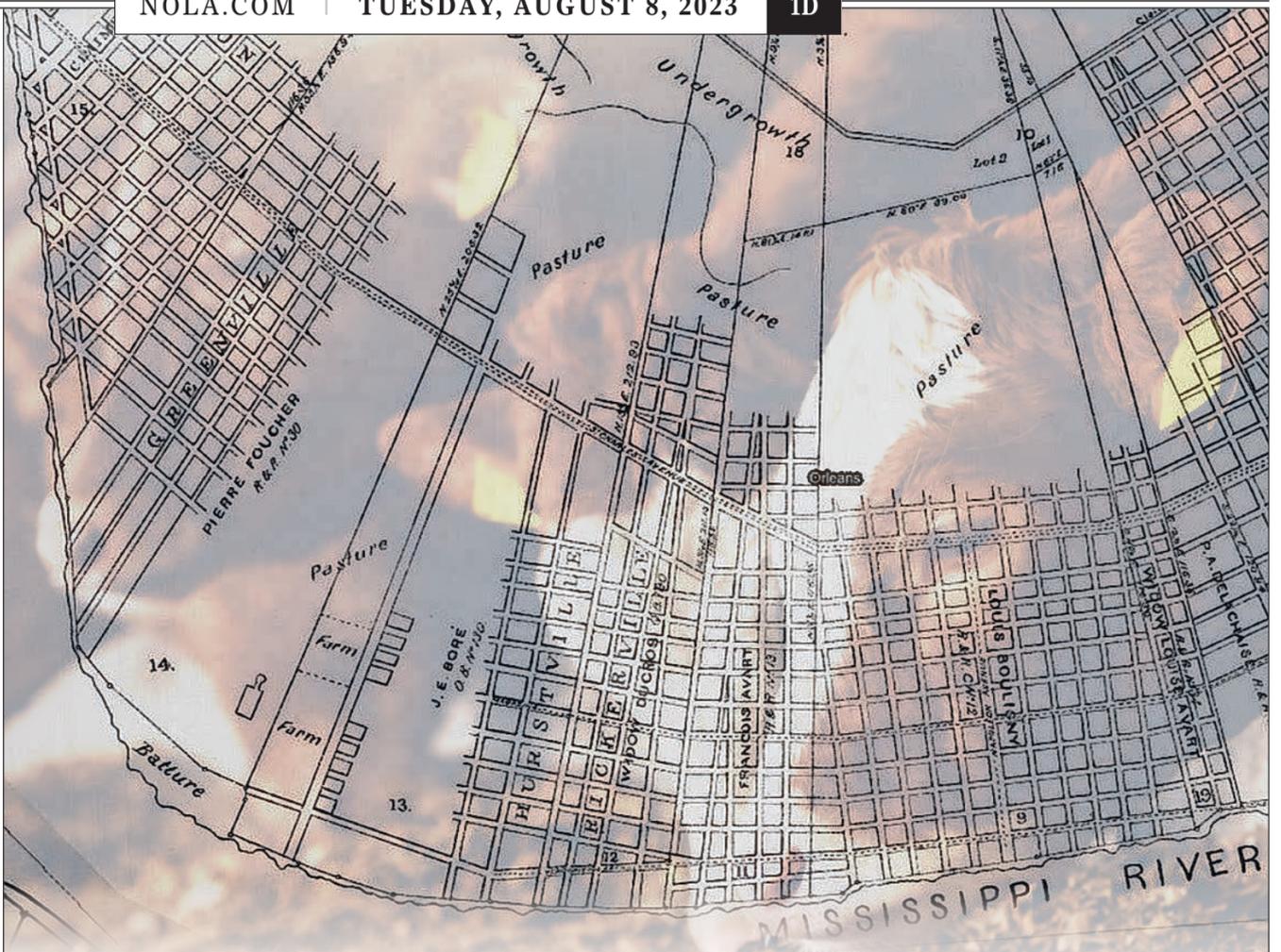


PHOTO COURTESY OF STATE LANDS OFFICE

Map from mid-1800s showing livestock pastures in what is now Uptown New Orleans

# HOME RANGE

ON THE

Richard Campanella's  
GEOGRAPHIES OF  
NEW ORLEANS

New Orleans as cattle country? Historic city had cowboys and livestock drives, too

BY RICHARD CAMPANELLA  
Contributing writer

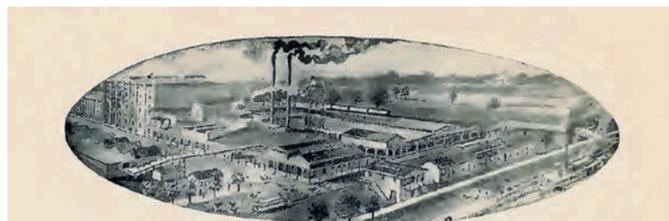
Cowboys, cattle drives and Texas longhorns do not typically come to mind in the New Orleans of the imagination.

But for decades, all three were part of our regional economy, because as the largest metropolis in the South — a city of gourmands and epicures — New Orleans was a major consumer of beef.

Where that beef was produced shifted over time.

The earliest came from bison, which were hunted by indigenous tribes as well as early French colonials, who called them boeuf sauvage, wild oxen.

Soon depleted, bison were replaced by domesticated cattle.



CRESCENT CITY STOCK YARD AND SLAUGHTERHOUSE  
THEIR ICE FACTORY and Rendering Department is thoroughly up to date.

THE Crescent City Stock Yard and Slaughter House Company, situated at the extreme upper boundary of St. Bernard Parish and about one square from the lower limit of the City of New Orleans, and is the terminal of two lines of cars of the N. O. Electric Railway Company.

The Slaughterhouse Company own and immense plant, with all the modern improvements and are well equipped for stabling, slaughtering and refrigerating live stock.

PHOTO FROM RICHARD CAMPANELLA  
Crescent City Slaughterhouse, from 'St. Bernard Parish: Its Natural Resources and Advantages, 1905'

Like horses and sheep, most cattle arrived to Louisiana via Mexico, where colonial residents had introduced ranching techniques honed in Spain since medieval times. Cattle ranching did well among the Spanish missions of present-day Texas, within reach of the Louisiana market. Other livestock came

into southeastern Louisiana from points north or east.

By the mid- to late 1700s, beeves (the old-fashioned collective name for cows, steers and bulls) destined for local consumers were raised on plantations or grazed in cut-over

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## Ashley Longshore closes Magazine gallery

The Ashley Longshore Studio Gallery on Magazine Street in New Orleans has closed.



STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG MacCASH

BY DOUG MacCASH  
Staff writer

A star is gone. Ashley Longshore, one of New Orleans' most renowned artists, has closed her Magazine Street gallery and is reopening in New York City. Plain brown paper covers the display windows in her former location at Cadiz Street, where her colorful pop paintings and sculptures used to beam. A note on the door reads: "The art and spirit of this city is

forever in my heart. Thank you for everything."

In a telephone conversation, Longshore explained that the possibility of opening a gallery in New York had been on her radar for some time. After all, many of the highlights of her career had taken place there.

Longshore's loud, lush paintings were like memes on canvas. They playfully promoted celebrity, luxury, self-indulgence and,

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## TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Aug. 8, the 220th day of 2023. There are 145 days left in the year.

**Today's highlight in history:**

On Aug. 8, 1974, President Richard Nixon, facing damaging new revelations in the Watergate scandal, announced he would resign the following day.

**On this date:**

In 1814, during the War of 1812, peace talks between the United States and Britain began in Ghent, Belgium.

In 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte set sail for St. Helena to spend the remainder of his days in exile.

In 1861, biologist William Bateson, founder of the science of genetics, was born in Whitby, Yorkshire, England.

In 1911, President William Howard Taft signed a measure raising the number of U.S. representatives from 391 to 433, effective with the next Congress, with a proviso to add two more when New Mexico and Arizona became states.

In 1942, during World War II, six Nazi saboteurs who were captured after landing in the U.S. were executed in Washington, D.C.; two others who cooperated with authorities were spared.

In 1945, President Harry S. Truman signed the U.S. instrument of ratification for the United Nations Charter. The Soviet Union declared war against Japan during World War II.

In 1953, the United States and South Korea initiated a mutual security pact.

In 1963, Britain's "Great Train Robbery" took place as thieves made off with 2.6 million pounds in banknotes.

In 1973, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew branded as "damned lies" reports he had taken kickbacks from government contracts in Maryland, and vowed not to resign — which he ended up doing.

In 2000, the wreckage of the Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley, which sank in 1864 after attacking the Union ship Housatonic, was recovered off the South Carolina coast and returned to port.

In 2009, Sonia Sotomayor was sworn in as the U.S. Supreme Court's first Hispanic and third female justice.

**Ten years ago:** The U.S. sharply escalated its drone war in Yemen, with military officials in the Arab country reporting three strikes that left a dozen dead.

**Five years ago:** The United States announced that it would impose new sanctions on Russia for illegally using a chemical weapon in an attempt to kill a former spy and his daughter in Britain.

**One year ago:** Former President Donald Trump said the FBI conducted a search of his Mar-a-Lago estate as the Justice Department investigated the discovery of boxes of records containing classified information that were taken to Mar-a-Lago after Trump's presidency ended. The White father and son convicted of murder in Ahmaud Arbery's fatal shooting after they chased the 25-year-old Black man through a Georgia neighborhood were sentenced to life in prison for committing a federal hate crime.

**Today's birthdays:** Actor Nita Talbot is 93. Actor Dustin Hoffman is 86. Actor Connie Stevens is 85. Country singer Phil Balsley (The Statler Brothers) is 84. Actor Larry Wilcox is 76. Actor Keith Carradine is 74. Movie director Martin Brest is 72. Radio-TV personality Robin Quivers is 71. U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin is 70. Percussionist Anton Fig is 70. Actor Donny Most is 70. Rock musician Dennis Drew (10,000 Maniacs) is 66. TV personality Deborah Norville is 65. Rock musician The Edge (U2) is 62. Rock musician Rikki Rockett (Poison) is 62. Rapper Kool Moe Dee is 61. Middle distance runner Suzy Favor Hamilton is 55. Rock singer Scott Stapp is 50. Country singer Mark Wills is 50. Actor Kohl Sudduth is 49. Rock musician Tom Linton (Jimmy Eat World) is 48. Singer JC Chasez ('N Sync) is 47. Actor Tawny Cypress is 47. R&B singer Drew Lachey (98 Degrees) is 47. R&B singer Marsha Ambrosius is 46. Actor Lindsay Sloane is 46. Actor Countess Vaughn is 45. Actor Michael Urie is 43. Tennis player Roger Federer is 42. Actor Meagan Good is 42. Actor Jackie Cruz (TV: "Orange is the New Black") is 39. Britain's Princess Beatrice of York is 35. Actor Ken Baumann is 34. New York Yankee first baseman Anthony Rizzo is 34. Pop singer Shawn Mendes is 25.

## LONGSHORE

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above all, self-reliance. Her public persona was as brassy and bawdy as Andy Warhol's had been shy and reserved. New York loved her for it.

In 2018, she was given the opportunity to take over a section of the fashionable Bergdorf Goodman department store for an exhibit of her paintings, which led to an adoring 2018 New York Times profile in which she was dubbed "Fashion's Latest Art Darling."

Soon, legendary fashion designer Diane von Furstenberg enlisted Longshore to produce portraits of women, including Cleopatra, Marlene Dietrich, Rosa Parks and others, to decorate her anchor store. A feature followed on "CBS News Sunday Morning," in which Longshore was crowned "the brash princess of paint."

Longshore said she's long rented an apartment in Manhattan, where she's able to indulge her passion for Broadway theater. Her vague plans to relocate her gallery suddenly came into focus over the winter, when she noticed a three-story storefront available for rent in Manhattan's Soho neighborhood. She said that seeing the space was "the same feeling as falling in love."

She expects to move in August. One member of her Magazine Street staff plans to move to New York to work in the new space; others will work as part of a remote sales team, she said.

"Is it scary?" Longshore said. "Yeah, it's scary." But, she said, New York is a global crossroads, where she might be able to tap into



STAFF FILE PHOTO BY CHRIS GRANGER

Artist Ashley Longshore gestures in front of a wall of art supplies at her studio on Magazine Street in New Orleans on Sept. 1, 2022.

a much wider market than Magazine Street was able to provide.

Longshore, who was born in Montgomery, Alabama, opened her gallery on Magazine Street 15 years ago. It's changed locations once.

She said she knew it was time to close this chapter of her career the same way a painter knows when a painting is finished.

"It's all about a feeling," she said. She said she needed New Orleans' "weird bohemian funk" but now she craves something else.

In 2020, Longshore was accused by a New Orleans social media opinionator of racial insensitivity for the content of some of her work. She described the episode as

"heartbreaking" but said it did not influence her decision to move.

Her long-term vision, she said, is possibly to open a French Quarter gallery, once the Soho gallery is established.

Sure, Longshore said, she'll miss her Uptown spot. After all of her art had been moved out, she said, she walked around the empty gallery and "felt so much energy and love." She said she recalled all of the patrons who'd come and gone, and the celebrities.

"People got engaged there," she said, laughing. "Babies were probably conceived."

Email Doug MacCash at [dmaccash@theadvocate.com](mailto:dmaccash@theadvocate.com).

## CATTLE

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backswamps near New Orleans. One pasture became the name of a community formerly known as St. Jacques de Cabahanoc in St. James Parish — today's Vacherie, French for cattle ranch.

Constraints of space and time affected beef production. Raise the beasts too far away, and they would lose weight on the arduous journey to the city; raise them too close, and land values go up, making feed more expensive. Once in the city, cattle were slaughtered immediately prior to sale, because unlike pork, beef did not easily preserve through smoking or salting.

**New grazing opens up**

By the early 1800s, the geography of beef had changed, as new grazing areas opened up closer to New Orleans.

One hot spot was Madisonville, which Samuel R. Brown described in 1817 as "handsomely situated" on the Tchefuncte River, and "unquestionably destined to become a great commercial city" for its access and resources.

"The country above Madisonville," Brown explained, "is peculiarly adapted to the rearing of hogs and cattle; for they neither require salt, nor attention in winter; and nowhere in the United States are they raised in greater numbers.... The reed cane, and the grass of the prairies constitute their principal food."

The Madisonville herd likely originated in Texas, then part of Mexico, and cowboys from that region regularly visited Louisiana. Charles Gayarré recalled how in the 1810s, Mexican cowboys known as ouachinangs would drive hoofed animals to peddle to local planters, including his grandfather.

"The men who led and owned them," recalled Gayarré, "wore the broad Spanish sombrero(,) their faces were bronzed, and their eyes dark and piercing. They wore soft leather gaiters up to the knee and their heels were armed with spurs six inches long."

This scene played out not in some dusty western cow town, but right on Tchoupitoulas Street near today's Children's Hospital.

**Expanding the geography of beef**

In the decades ahead, the geography of beef expanded dramatically, as Texas went from Mexican governance to independence to U.S. statehood. Cattle herds also formed in southwestern Louisiana, many of them stewarded by Acadians and Creoles of color. More often than not, their market was New Orleans.

Those beeves that came from central Texas were driven to the Matagorda Bay port of Indianola or Galveston, loaded onto steam transports and shipped up the Mississippi. Those that came from north Texas were driven to Shreveport and barged down the Red and Mississippi.

Once arrived, the animals were

discharged at landings in Jefferson City (present-day Uptown) and Lafayette City (now the Irish Channel), where the aptly named Bull's Head Tavern catered to livestock workers.

The West Bank had a number of advantages in importing cattle. Canals had been dug westward to access Louisiana's Attakapas ("Tucapaw") region, which had natural prairies ideal for grazing. In the 1850s, the New Orleans, Opelousas, & Great Western Railroad opened to link Algiers to points west, further speeding cattle shipments.

**'We knew they were coming'**

Cattle could also be driven overland. Katherine Harvey Rog r, who grew up on the West Bank in the late 1800s, recalled "the wild, long-horned Tucapaws cattle that periodically stampeded through Harvey. We knew they were coming by sounds ... of fast-pounding hoofs, the pistol-like cracking of long whips and the whoops and howls of cowboys on wild Texas ponies."

In a scene straight out of Wild West, local folks "ran madly for shelter (as) the stampeding cattle left a trail of wrecked fences ... and sometimes death to those who were caught in their path," Rog r remembered. "Once the Tucapaws ran through the corner barroom in Grandma's brick building, (causing) bottles and glass being smashed to bits."

Another West Bank advantage was the Southern Steamship Line, founded by Charles Morgan to connect Algiers with coastal Texas, to which he later added Morgan's Louisiana & Texas Railroad. Both transports brought in western livestock by the thousands to the West Bank, where a dedicated cattle ferry got them to consumers across the Mississippi.

The final step entailed herding the cattle to city abattoirs — that is, butchers, many of them from the Gascony region of France.

Abattoirs had the legal right to set up their shops throughout the city, which enabled them to slaughter on demand and sell promptly to nearby consumers before spoilage set in. That was good for business, but bad for quality of life, as neighbors had to endure nauseating offal and carcasses dumped in gutters.

**The impact of surplus**

The problem peaked after the Civil War. Unlike the rest of the South, where livestock reserves were slaughtered wholesale to provide wartime rations, Texas, being lightly populated and on the margins of the conflict, found itself with 5 million surplus head of cattle.

Beef does not age well on the hoof, so Texas ranchers sent as many as possible to New Orleans, putting lots of beef on the table — and lots of guts in the gutters.

Citizens petitioned for state authorities to centralize the abattoirs, a position readily supported by railroad interests as well as city officials. If centralization prevailed, wrote legal scholar Mitchell Franklin, "the expectation that

New Orleans rather than Chicago could become the very heart of the world slaughtering industry seemed justified."

In 1869, the State Legislature complied by passing "An Act to Protect the Health of the City of New Orleans, to Locate the Stock-Landings and Slaughter-Houses, and to Incorporate the Crescent City Live-stock Landing and Slaughter-house Company," which centralized meat processing and granted a monopoly to one operator.

The new monopoly facility would be located at Slaughterhouse Point in Algiers, where managers hastily erected makeshift facilities.

**A political battle**

Citizens cheered, but the Gascon butchers protested over the loss of their autonomy. They were joined by those opposed to monopolies, those suspecting corruption, and those who resisted all actions of the biracial Republican state government.

Together, opponents filed hundreds of lawsuits, some of which went to the U.S. Supreme Court. Their argument invoked the recently ratified Fourteenth Amendment, which ensured federal protection against state infringements on basic rights — such as freedom from slavery, the amendment's original intent. Attorneys for the butchers argued that the state-backed monopoly violated the federally guaranteed freedom to practice one's trade.

The yearslong legal battle forced butchers to figure out how to make a living in the meanwhile. They formed their own association to rival the monopoly in Algiers, and built a better slaughterhouse across the river at Stock Landing in present-day Arabi, outside the City of New Orleans.

The monopoly eventually acquired the new East Bank facility, and when workers "were given a choice between the company's fairly makeshift original abattoir and the larger, better-equipped one located on the same side of the river as the city," wrote legal scholars Ronald M. Labb  and Jonathan Lurie, "the vast majority quickly abandoned the west-bank facility."

In 1873, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the monopoly. Seen as a victory for states' rights, the Slaughter-house Cases have been controversial ever since.

But for butchers in New Orleans, the ruling was rather moot, because the original 1869 law had already centralized the industry, first in Algiers and then in Arabi, at the time straddling the parish line.

**Slaughterhouse rules**

By the early 1900s, the Arabi operation entailed the arrival of 100,000 to 200,000 animals annually, roughly 85% of which were bovines, 10% hogs, and 5% sheep. Raised mostly in Louisiana and Texas, the beasts landed at 6700 N. Peters St., and were herded into pens, where they were consigned to any of around 20 on-site commission merchants — men with names like Aycock and Mehler, for whom streets in modern Arabi are

## VOICE

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St. Bernard Parish, he said, requires frequent stops for "the train, the bridge and the train again."

"Exasperation is his natural state," his wife said.

The Ansardis say that friends and acquaintances frequently recommend the app to them, unaware that he is the creator. At a festival once, he ran into an old school buddy who couldn't wait to turn him onto the Chalmette HeyBrah dude.

**No offense taken**

The couple said they've never encountered anyone who felt the app was meant to deride people from Chalmette. People in Chalmette, they said, get it.

Ansardi said he wishes he could cash in on his star performance. But so far, he hasn't made "one [expletive deleted] dime," he laughed.

Since the introduction of the app, the Ansardis have moved to Slidell. It was the grandkids, they said; nothing else could have lured them away from da parish. But they still come back regularly, for trips to the barber, to buy hog head cheese from Tag's Meat Market & Deli and to visit other Chalmette irreplaceables.

Slidell is nice, they said. It really is. But Chalmette is still their anchor. "It's never felt like home anywhere else," Jenny Ansardi said.

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now named.

Each merchant sold his cattle, hogs or sheep to butchers affiliated with either of two separate cooperatives, who together toiled inside one slaughterhouse owned by the Crescent City Company. The animals arrived on hoof and left as cuts of meat, sausage or bacon, as well as bones to be ground as fertilizer, blood to be rendered as feed, and tallow, grease, hides and pelts.

Among the largest in the South, the Arabi slaughterhouse operated under varied auspices until 1963.

By then, nearly every aspect of beef production had changed logistically and geographically.

Refrigeration extended shelf life and enabled longer-distance transport, while feed lots were developed to fatten up cows at intermediary locations between pasture and slaughter.

Expanding interstate highways enabled slaughterhouses to relocate to rural settings in big livestock states, where highly mechanized "meat packing plants" could be built far away from urban populations, but within reach of their supermarkets.

The industry became as nationalized and globalized for New Orleans consumers as it had for Americans elsewhere.

Choose a cut of beef from your local supermarket, and you'd be hard-pressed to figure out where that cow came from.

The days of Mexican cowboys, Irish Channel livestock landings and Harvey cattle stampedes are long gone and hardly remembered.

After all, who thinks of New Orleans as cattle country?

*Richard Campanella, a geographer with the Tulane School of Architecture, is the author of "Draining New Orleans;" "The West Bank of Greater New Orleans," "Bienville's Dilemma," and "Bourbon Street: A History." Campanella may be reached at <http://richcampanella.com>, [rcampane@tulane.edu](mailto:rcampane@tulane.edu), or @nolacampanella on Twitter.*



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