



Tales of Texas



NEWSLETTER



November 2024

This issue of *Tales of Texas* details an election in Louisiana that had profound effects across the nation and in Texas.

This is the story of the most corrupt and unfaithful election in the whole history of our country.

The photo above is a typical "Welcome to Louisiana" sign as seen on main entry highways such as I-10 and I-20.

All other photos are labeled and taken from public domain.

If you want to read more: "America's Deadliest Election" by Dana Bash & David Fisher

Comments? Go to website listed below.

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The Sacred Ballot Box

So, why is *Tales of Texas* devoting a newsletter to an election that happened in Louisiana? Because the ramifications of the election were widespread and long lasting, particular in the states of the old Confederacy.

Our story begins in the Carpetbaggin' Yankee Reconstruction Era in Louisiana.

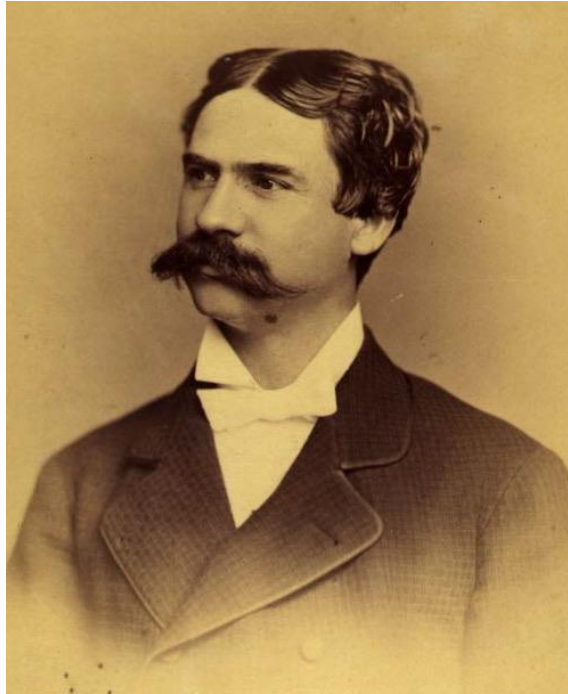
A man named Henry Clay Warmoth was the sitting governor of LA. He was a young carpetbagger. I suppose I need to define what a carpetbagger is/was. In this case it refers to a person of northern descent who comes to the South. The carpet bag refers to the luggage that these out of staters carried on their journey from north to south.

Warmoth was an ingenious individual who, like most other carpetbaggers, went south to make a fortune in fraudulent government contracts. Personal enrichment was his primary goal.

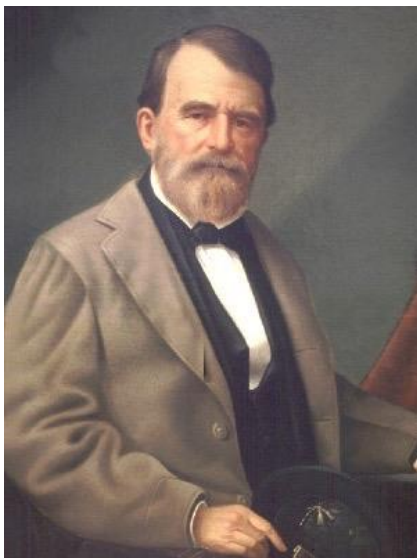
Warmoth engineered the most corrupt administration ever produced in the United States. He defended himself by saying his was not the worst. (He never denied being corrupt.) He was diabolically clever. He not only took advantage of a broken South, but he also proved he was in government service for the long haul. He singlehandedly changed or implemented election laws to give him the final say over who won any election in LA. He fundamentally changed LA law to favor the last man who saw or handled election results. He set up something called the "Returning Board" who finalized any election. Their operations were on the sly and hidden from observers.



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*Henry Clay Warmoth
Personification of Fraud*



John McEnery
Warmoth's Man

In 1872, Warmoth wanted to head to Washington as a senator. Please recall that senators were appointed by state legislatures in those days. Warmoth's scheme was to put his own man, John McEnery, in the governor's chair and have his own legislature appoint him as senator. The pipeline of federal dollars after the Civil War was a temptation carpetbaggers couldn't resist.

The governor's election was held and to no one's surprise, Warmoth's Returning Board certified McEnery as the winner.

The opposition was ready. They had their own stuffed ballot boxes and Returning Board. It was Fraud vs Fraud. In an astonishing development, the Returning Boards decided on different men.

Warmoth's equally corrupt and clever opposition was beating him at his own game.

Both sides claimed victory. Both sides had inaugurations, and both sides governed from different locations. The governor's election was not the only one on the ballot. Judges, sheriffs, clerks, etc all had two persons competing and not conceding. It was a disaster in the making.

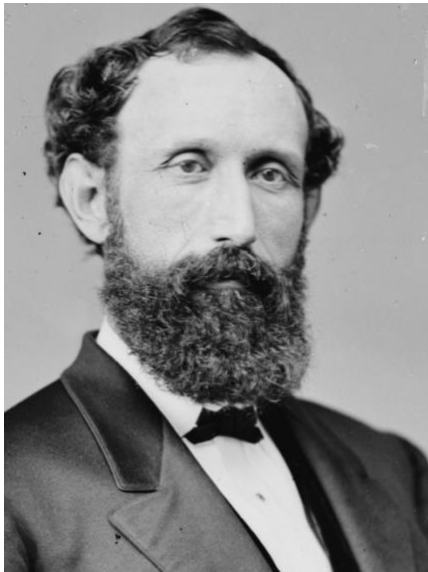
President U.S. Grant wanted to stay out of state affairs, but a year later he was pushed into a corner and had to decide. The federal government recognized Kellogg as the winner, but that didn't solve anything.

An intrastate civil war emerged in LA as the factions attacked the other side. We are talking violence in the extreme. Newly enfranchised black Americans comprised a voting block that could decide elections. Rather than court the black vote, a violent confrontation occurred in Colfax, LA. One hundred fifty black men were massacred there in a horrific display of violence.

The following year, Grant decided the "legitimate" government should be backed and installed.



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John McEnery
Shadow Governor of LA



Battle of Liberty Place
New Orleans

Forces under the command of General James Longstreet, yes, *that* Longstreet of Confederate Army fame, engaged McEnery's force in New Orleans at the Battle of Liberty Place. Longstreet's horse was shot out from under him, but he pulled off a victory for his new boss, U.S. Grant.

The violence against blacks, and the violence that pitted one side against the other could very well be the darkest, most shameful historical events that ever occurred in the United States. But wait. There's more!

The perpetrators who engineered the Colfax Massacre were arrested and brought to trial. Of course, the state courts couldn't even figure out who the legitimate judge was, much less convict the murderers.

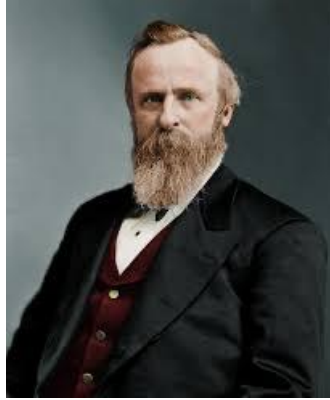
Federal prosecutors used a novel approach. They brought action against the killers in federal court for civil rights violations. This tactic worked. Until it didn't.

The case wound up in the US Supreme Court. In an incredible turn of events, SCOTUS, ruled that the legal theory was not practical. The ruling said that if it were used, every murder case in the US would be a civil rights violation. The court returned all power to interpret federal laws back to the states.

The case is the infamous *United States v. Cruikshank* landmark decision. By turning equal protection back to the states, it ushered out civil rights advances and ushered in Jim Crow. The South had just won the Civil War judicially.



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President Rutherford B Hayes

The heart of any democracy is the ballot box. When the ballot box is impugned or mismanaged out of incompetence or fraud, the results can be catastrophic. The people of Louisiana proved this conclusively in the election of 1872. People were massacred. There was a huge civil war style battle in the streets of New Orleans.

So, what happened that threw the state into an out of control mob scene? First, both sides were equally corrupt. To this day, nobody knows who won the election. Second, the news media picked their sides and staked their interests on various candidates. The people had no place to go for objective reporting.

The next election, 1876, found that nothing had improved. Louisiana's election results were thrown out as fraudulent. This threw the election into the House.

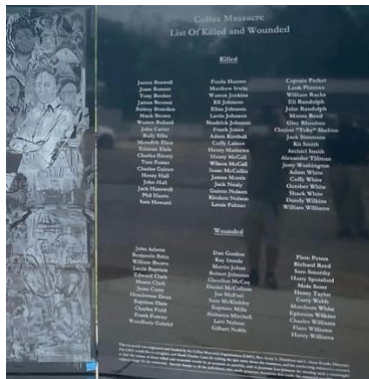
Louisiana's inability to have an honest election, meant that every other citizen, North and South, could not have an honest election as the founders imagined.

Rutherford "Rutherfraud" B. Hayes was "elected" to the presidency on the condition that he would end Reconstruction and nullify any gains made by minority citizens. He was happy to make the Devil's deal, and he moved into the White House.

Cruikshank allowed the worst kind of cruel murderers out on the street to operate with impunity. The reforms realized during the Civil War to end slavery and grant equal rights under the law were thrown out in *Cruikshank*. It took about ninety years for the infamous case law to be overturned.

I learned that the ballot box is sacred. We all have a duty to not only treat it honestly, but to make it *appear* we are taking the appropriate measures to secure it. We have the duty to monitor and observe the box, then challenge, if such legal challenge is appropriate. Then accept the results and move on to the next election. The main reason the LA elections got out of hand was every voter in the state *truly* felt they had been cheated. The news media played along, inflaming the situation.

Every election is a mandate on the future. A future only as secure as the ballot box.



Colfax Massacre Memorial