

The Ideal Title Opinion

A New Orleans Lawyer sought an F.H.A. loan for a client.

He was told the loan would be granted if he could prove satisfactory title to a parcel of property being offered as collateral. The title to the property dated back to 1803, which took the lawyer three months to track down.

After sending the information to the F.H.A., he received the following reply (actual letter):

“Upon review of your letter adjoining your client’s loan application, we note that the request is supported by an Abstract of Title. While we compliment the able manner in which you have prepared and presented the application, we must point out that you have only cleared title to the proposed collateral property back to 1803. Before final approval can be accorded, it will be necessary to clear the title back to its origin.”

Annoyed, the lawyer responded as follows (actual letter):

“Your letter regarding title in Case No. 189156 has been received. I note that you wish to have title extended further than the 194 years covered by the present application. I was unaware that any educated person in this country, particularly those working in the property area, would not know that Louisiana was purchased by the U.S. from France in 1803, the year of origin identified in our application.

“For the edification of uniformed F.H.A. bureaucrats, the title to the land prior to U.S. ownership was obtained from France, which had acquired it by Right of Conquest from Spain.

“The land came into possession of Spain by Right of Discovery made in the year 1492 by a sea captain named Christopher Columbus, who had been granted the privilege of seeking a new route to India by the then reigning monarch, Isabella. The good queen, being a pious woman and careful about titles, almost as much as the F.H.A., took the precaution of securing the blessing of the Pope before she sold her jewels to fund Columbus’ expedition.

“Now the Pope, as I’m sure you know, is the emissary of Jesus Christ, The Son of God. And God, it is commonly accepted, created this world.

“Therefore, I believe it is safe to presume that He also made that part of the World called Louisiana. He, therefore, would be the owner of origin. I hope to hell you find His original claim to be satisfactory. Now, May we have our loan?”

. . . And the loan was granted!