

# [The robert r. livingston, to open negotiations to](https://assignbuster.com/the-robert-r-livingston-to-open-negotiations-to/)

The Louisiana Purchase was the purchase of the French province of Louisiana by theUnited States in 1803. The province stretched from the Mississippi River westward to theRocky Mountains and from the Gulf of Mexico northward to Canada, covering an areaequal to that of the United States, prior to the purchase. Except for the Mississippi Riveron the east and Canada on the north, the boundaries were indefinite. The United Statesalso claimed West Florida between the Mississippi and Perdido rivers as part of thepurchase, but Spain denied the claim. As a result of the purchase, the port of NewOrleans and the entire Mississippi system were secured for American shippers, and thecountry was free to expand toward the Pacific Ocean. The price wa $15, 000, 000 for anarea of 828, 000 square miles (2, 145, 000 km) – less than 3 cents an acre.

In 1800, Napoleon Bonaparte got Spain to return it by a secret treaty. Napoleon planneda French empire in the New World, with its center at New Orleans. President Jeffersonwas alert to the dangers of a powerful nation controlling the mouth of the Mississippi. Heinstructed the American minister to France, Robert R. Livingston, to open negotiations tobuy New Orleans and some territory east of the city. A treaty would have to satisfy thefinancial claims that some United States citizens had against the French government.

Finally the French continued to claim that the province still belonged to Spain. Jeffersonsent James Monroe to help with the negotiations, and authorized him to spend no morethan $10, 000, 000. Napoleon offered Livingston and Monroe the entire province ofLouisiana in a treaty dated April 30, 1803. The American negotiators agreed to pay$11, 250, 000 to France and $3, 750, 000 for the French debts to United States citizens. The purchase forced Jefferson to give a broad interpretation to the Constitution, whichdid not specifically grant authority for acquiring new territory. This interpretation set theprecedent for later treaties that added to United States territory. The US Senatorpromptly ratified the purchase treaty, despite political opposition by the Federalists.

Thearea officially became United States territory on December 20, 1803. However it was 16years before the exact boundaries were established, by the Adams-Ons Treaty withBibliography: