



**Pierre Caliste Landry** was the first African American to become mayor of a town in U.S. history. Born into slavery as Caliste Landry in 1841 on a sugar cane plantation, Landry was sent to live with a family of free African Americans and educated at a local school. Despite his owner's wishes for him to be freed, Landry was sold to the Bringer family who owned Houmas Plantation.

After the Civil War, Landry changed his name to Pierre and moved to an African American community in Donaldsonville. There he opened 3 schools for children and a store and built a home. In 1868, Landry was unanimously

elected mayor of Donaldsonville. He went on to serve as Justice of the Peace, a member of the Ascension Parish School Board, Superintendent of Schools and eventually served in the State House of Representatives. Landry is also responsible for the founding of the third African American college in Louisiana, New Orleans University, in 1935 (now Dillard).

In his later years, Landry became a minister and served 12 years as an attorney. Landry died in New Orleans in 1921.