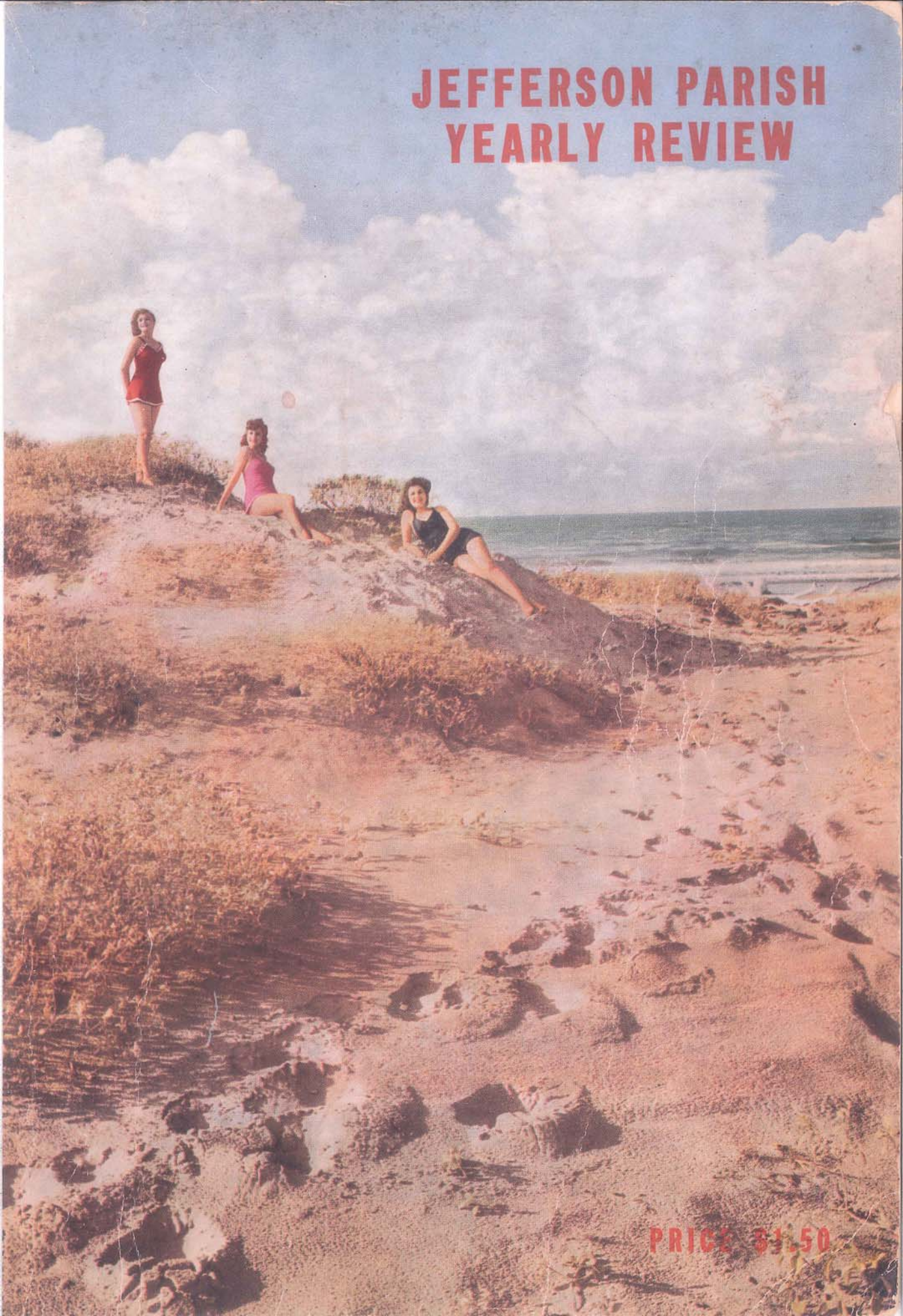
JEFFERSON PARISH YEARLY REVIEW



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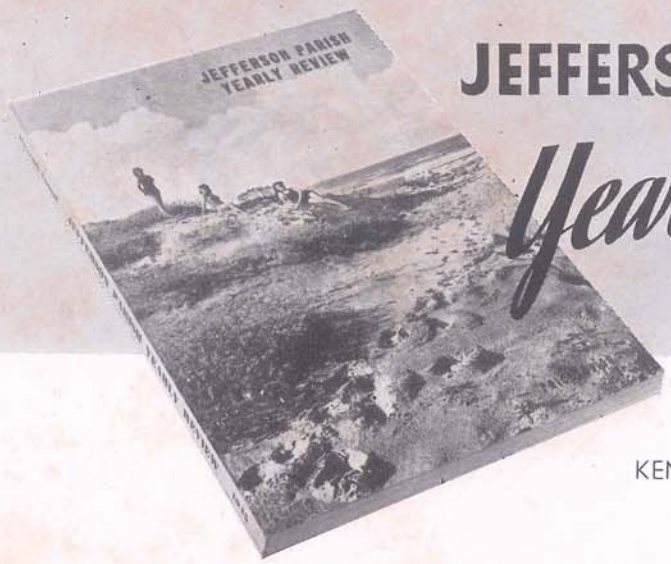

JEFFERSON PARISH *Yearly Review*

KENNER, LOUISIANA 1945

Published annually with the endorsement and support of the Police Jury of Jefferson Parish
Weaver R. Toledano, President

STAFF

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OUR COVER

These are the golden sands of Grand Isle—stretched along eight miles of beautiful beach that join Jefferson—and Louisiana—with the Gulf of Mexico. Here—the sun and the sea and the sand will heal the wounds of worry, will rejuvenate the tired body and will bring paradise as close to earth as it is possible in our world of material things.

The publishers of the Jefferson Parish Yearly Review will be glad, at any time, to furnish information to anyone interested in Jefferson Parish industrial opportunities. The establishment of new industries is encouraged in every way possible by the Police Jury and citizens of the parish. More detailed data will be furnished on its extremely low transportation costs, easy access to raw materials, excellent facilities for distribution and ten year tax exemption. To homeseekers, visitors or those just interested in the history or future of this prolific parish, the publishers offer the facilities of this publication. Your request for information or assistance will receive prompt and courteous response.

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This Book Manufactured in its Entirety by Union Labor
5

Foreword

HELLO again!

THIS is the eleventh consecutive issue of the Jefferson Parish Yearly Review — and once more we bring you up to date on the Land of Opportunity, represented by our parish and its neighbors.

SO many and so great are the present and postwar advantages for investments, industry and the individual in this area of accomplishments, that we have supplemented our reading contents this year with a map. Now your eye can visualize quickly the many diverse activities that exist in these several closely concentrated parishes . . . and then you can read our articles for complete and detailed explanation.

Jefferson Parish Yearly Review

Frontispiece **Beautiful Elmwood Plantation, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Durel Black, is one of the showplaces of Jefferson Parish. Located near the Huey P. Long bridge and nestled among giant, venerable oaks, this property was one of the earliest and largest Louisiana plantations, dating back to 1719 when it was a land grant to Joseph Chauvin Lafrenier. Records fail, as yet, to reveal just when this spacious and comfortable home was built but it is certain it was fairly early in Louisiana's history, for in the ground floor walls are imbedded narrow gun slits, used undoubtedly, in protection against warring Indians. A few years ago Elmwood was destroyed by fire but even the ravages of fire could not completely efface this fine old plantation for the walls and pillars stood untouched. It was then rebuilt and restored by Mr. and Mrs. Black and it is to their credit that they painstakingly and lovingly sifted the ashes and debris to regain every bit of the original hardware and material to put back into the restored home. The grounds surrounding Elmwood, although only a small portion of the original land, are lovely and an air of graciousness pervades the entire place, the atmosphere of which Eugene Delcroix has caught in this beautiful photograph.**

Jefferson Parish

Extends an Invitation To Industry and to Returning War Veterans

Through the President of the Jefferson Parish Police Jury, Weaver R. Toledano

Why do we extend this invitation?

What do we have to offer you? Who is going to do what for whom—and how?

These are questions you have a perfect right to fire back at us. Especially if, as an industry or a representative company of an industry, you are interested in transportation facilities, proximity to raw materials and to market, power, taxation and the availability of the correct type of labor. Or if, as a fighting man returning to civilian life, you are interested in a place where you can establish a home, be certain of steady employment and be assured of a safe future for your family.

So, in anticipation of your questions we'll support this invitation with most of the answers. We'll briefly review our past performances and rapidly outline our postwar program so that, when we are finished, you will have a clear, concise mental picture of our parish. Then, if our advantages fit the blueprint of your requirements, the Jefferson Parish Police Jury, the other parish officials, its various civic bodies and its leading citizens are all available to you to help you secure any other information which is not contained here.

First of all, Jefferson Parish is the most highly industrialized section of the South. It is the Brooklyn of New Orleans. In peace-

time, even before the logistics of war made New Orleans one of the most vital embarkation and supply ports in the world, there were sixty-one industrial concerns concentrated in this one Louisiana parish—and five of those concerns were and still are the largest of their kind in the world.

These five plants, giving constant and steady employment to contented workers the year round, are: Penick and Ford, Ltd., Inc., at Marrero, the largest cannery of cane syrup and molasses in the United States; the Celotex Corporation, also at Marrero, which has established a huge industry on a former waste product of sugar cane—bagasse—and from which this internationally known concern manufacturers an imposingly long list of building products; the Southern Cotton Oil Company at Gretna, one of the largest cottonseed oil processing plants in the world, which has been here over fifty years—a veritable symbol of the stability of the manufacturing and marketing advantages of this West Side of the River; the largest shrimp and oyster canning plant in existence, the Southern Shell Fish Company at Harvey, distributing to the far corners of the earth the delicious seafood of Southern Louisiana and the Gulf Coast; and finally, at Southport, the largest plant in the country for the creosote treating of lumber—covering 30 acres of ground—the American Creosote Works, Inc.

Close behind these five "world largest" plants, comes an imposing list of fifty-six other manufacturing concerns—none of which are war babies, but all of which were solid businesses before the war and will be even more substantial in the postwar period of great world demand. Some of them are: The Great Southern Box Company, Inc., which has one of the largest wire-bound box plants in the South; the two plants of the Commercial Solvents Corporation, one at Harvey and one at Westwego, and the plant of the National Distillers Products Corporation at Gretna, all engaged in the production of commercial alcohol, a vital ingredient in our present and postwar synthetic rubber program; the 33-year-old cottonseed oil refining plant of Swift and Company; a good half-dozen seafood packers and shippers, supplying fresh seafood and their by-products to the other states of the Union; boat building concerns, like the Avondale Marine Ways and the Allen Boat Company; and boat repair yards like the Harvey Canal Shipyard and Machine Shops.

Continued on next page

Incidentally, at one little section on the Harvey Canal less than a mile and a half long, twenty-nine firms have bought property and located since 1935.

But, to continue: **There are the woodworking plants of Jefferson Parish—the Freiberg Mahogany Company, an Army-Navy "E" holder, which deals in foreign hardwoods, chiefly mahogany from Central America, and whose products, now going into PT's, gliders and landing boats will, one day soon, be part of our new furniture, our postwar radios and our fleet pleasure boats; and, also, the Ipix Plywood Corporation, which now fabricates mahogany and other hardwoods into marine and airplane sections.**

There are the box companies: Louisiana Box and Lumber Company, famous for egg crates, and the Mancuso Barrel and Box Company, Inc. There is the Chickasaw Wood Products Company, makers of wooden barrels. There are a good half-dozen companies handling the oil of the Louisiana and Texas fields and located here because of the strategic transportation value of the Intracoastal Canal. There are the several companies that supply the oil well drilling and producing fields with specialized equipment. There are the steel drum manufacturers, including The Rheem Manufacturing Company, the U. S. Steel Products Company and the J and L Steel Barrel Company. These three plants combined produce in Jefferson Parish more steel containers than any other county, or parish, in the United States. There is the plant of the Continental Can Company, serving the seafood, molasses, syrup, and vegetable canners of the Gulf Coast. There is the Squire Dingee Company which, from the raw materials of Louisiana and Mississippi, packs pickles and mustard for U. S. and Cuban markets. Jefferson Parish is the molasses center of the nation, where, coming from all parts of the cane producing world, molasses is either processed or stored for delivery to other points of the country. There is the southern plant of Johns-Manville Products Corporation, established in Jefferson Parish because of its easy access to both raw materials and the Southern building trades market. There are the fertilizer and chemical companies. There is the Paper Makers Chemical Division of Hercules Powder Company. And, there are many other and smaller firms—all engaged in transforming the products of the Latin Americas, our own Louisiana, the South and Southwest into products in constant demand by the rest of the world.

These sixty-one manufacturing concerns are located here in this one parish of only 409 square miles because—first, it is the industrial section of the Gateway and Air Hub of the Americas; second, because it is located between the raw materials of the South and Southwest and the Southern and inland markets of the United States; and third, because it is adequately served by every known and modern means of transportation, including seven trunk line railroads, three national highways, the Intracoastal Canal, the Mississippi River and, opening this summer, the nation's largest airport, called Moisant International Airport, and which is featured in a special article in this issue.

Before the war, when production figures were last available, 55% of all goods manufactured in and shipped from the Port of New Orleans was manufactured on the west bank of the Mississippi in Jefferson Parish. This famous industrial parish, by the way, has strategic river frontage on both sides of the river.

JEFFERSON PARISH POLICE JURY — MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Seated, left to right: John H. Haas, Ward 1, Gretna (McDonoghville); Clem Perrin, Ward 6, Lafitte; Wm. Hepting, Secretary; W. R. Toledano, President, Ward 9, Kenner; Mrs. J. P. Smith, Parish Treasurer and Assistant Secretary; John J. Holtgreve, Ward 8, Metairie; B. P. Dauenhauer, Ward 3, Gretna; and Robert Ottermann, Ward 7, Southport.
Standing, left to right: Wm. E. Strehle, Ward 2, Gretna; Alvin E. Hotard, Parish Engineer; G. Ashton Cox, Parish Printer; Edward M. Thomassie, President Pro-Tem., Ward 4, Marrero; D. H. Roussel, West Bank Road Superintendent; Frank J. Deemer, Auditor and Bookkeeper; Russell Le Doux, East Bank Road Superintendent; Ernest Riviere, Ward 8, Metairie; Roger Coulon, Ward 4, Harvey; Joseph Weimer, Inspector of Liquor Permits and Business Licenses; Sidney Pertuit, Ward 4, Westwego; Wilfred Berthelot, Ward 5, Waggaman; Jessie J. Breaux, Ward 3, Gretna; and Roy Duplechin, Ward 4, Marrero.

Serving

. . . SHIPPERS with a modern fleet of towboats, tank barges and barges for general cargo on the Intra-Coastal Canal. Connecting line rates with barge lines plying to Middle West and Ohio River points.

Offices located at:
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NEW ORLEANS
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CAMDEN
HOUSTON

RIVER TERMINALS *Corporation*

In Jefferson Parish is the important $14,000,000 Huey P. Long Bridge across the Mississippi, serving both road and rail traffic. At the southernmost tip of the Parish is Grand Isle, the finest surf bathing beach in America, still to be discovered by the rest of the country. Here, also, besides industry, are one of the most prolific fur trapping regions in North America, a hunter's paradise for birds, a fisherman's mecca for anything from trout to mighty tarpon, and, paradoxically, a fine farming and dairying section.

There are 9,000 head of cattle on 125 dairy farms in Jefferson Parish, furnishing dairy products to the City of New Orleans and vicinity.

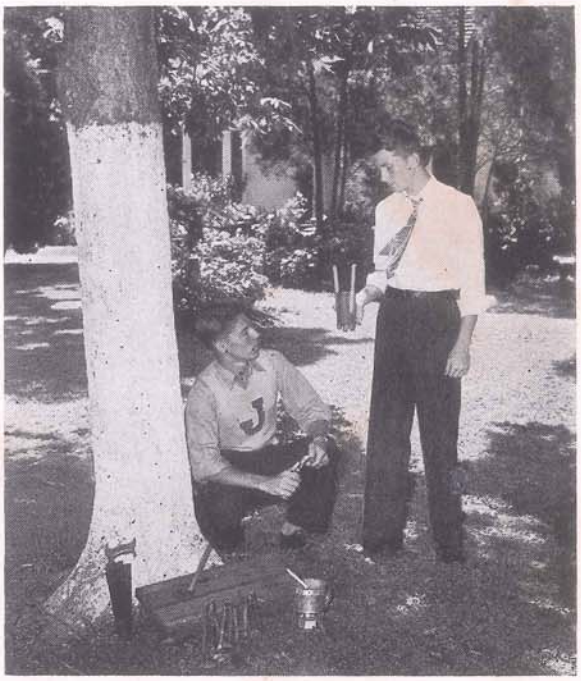
And, there are approximately 150 truck farms in this versatile parish producing just about every kind of vegetable found in the United States. These vegetables are grown on approximately only 3,000 acres of land—but the secret of their profitable success is their double and triple cropping. Since the war, the raising of poultry has sharply increased. Right now over 50% of the people have chickens in their backyards.

Working closely with the farmers of Jefferson are the county agent and the home demonstration agent—passing on scientific information on what to plant, when to plant, how to plant, methods of fertilization, the sanitation and feeding of cattle and poultry, and furnishing bulletins on the latest developments in farming and dairying and the ultimate handling of dairy and garden products by the housewife.

There has been a Home Demonstration Agent assigned to Jefferson Parish for eight years. A program for raising and canning fruits and vegetables for home use is now in progress. Supporting the Home Demonstration Agent are seven home demonstration clubs with an enrollment of approximately 175 housewives. Each of these functions as a trained leader who passes on vital information to other housewives in the parish. Their work on the value of proper diets has had a direct bearing on the correction of absenteeism in the many industrial plants.

Last, but not least, in Jefferson is the famous Lafitte Oil Field, the largest deep well producing field in the world—plus several other important oil fields.

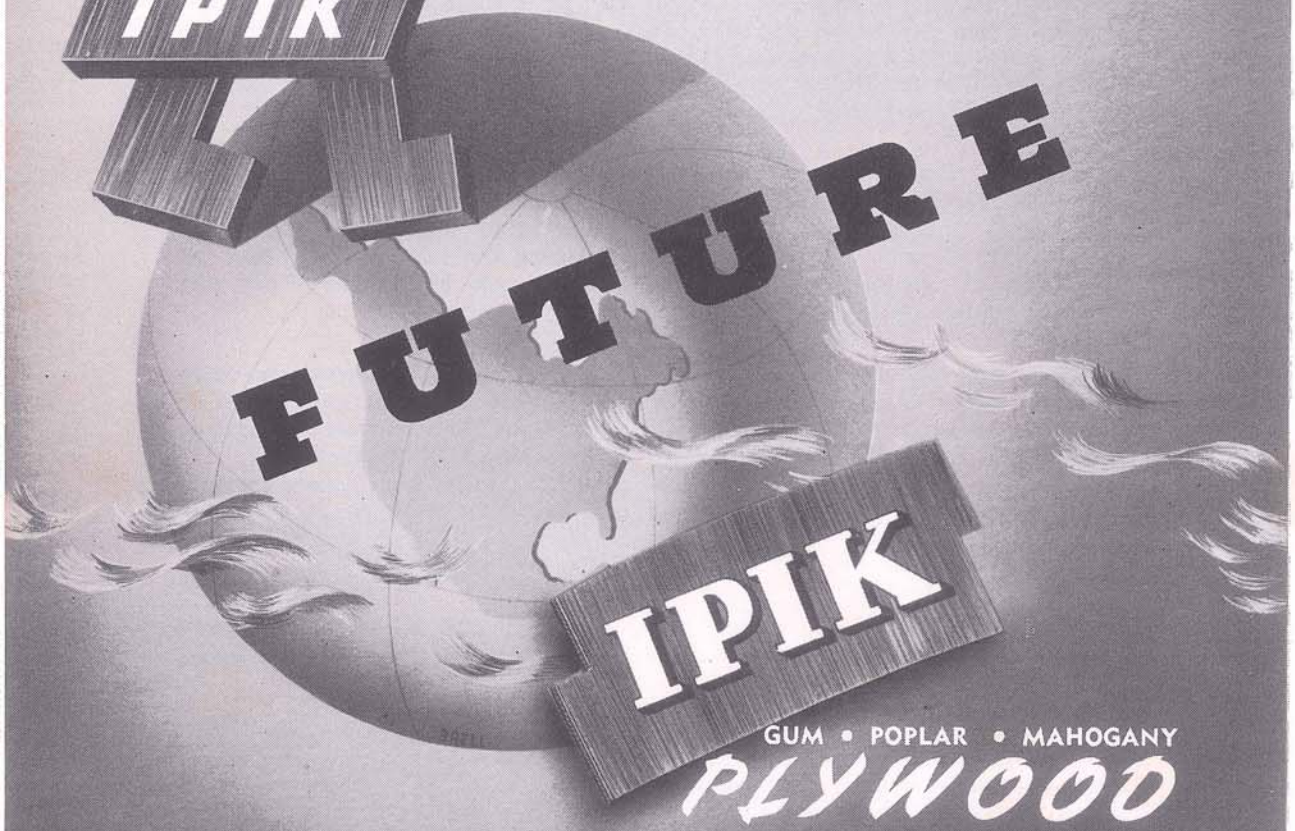
To new industries Jefferson offers a ten-year tax free program and abundant available acreage to established plants, a year round even climate for economical manufacturing and living, ample electric power and natural gas and a population of proud home owners from whom can be drawn capable workmen.



Paul Dastugue, Jr., and his teammate, Bob Elbe (standing), demonstrate how they won for Jefferson Parish the 4-H Club contest of "Pecan Tree Grafting" at Baton Rouge this year in a statewide meet. Paul was state representative at the National 4-H Club Congress in Chicago last year.

trade marked for the . . .

FUTURE



GUM • POPLAR • MAHOGANY

PLYWOOD

IPIK TEGO BONDED PLYWOOD has left its mark . . . on the beaches of the South Pacific—the frozen wastes of Kiska and Attu—the blue Mediterranean shores of North Africa, Sicily and Italy . . . has proven its dependability, its stamina, its utility on the world's toughest proving ground . . . the invasion beach!

LOOK FOR THE TRADEMARK—indelibly etched on bloodied sands and rocky shores the world over—when you plan a new boat . . . when you want tight-fitting, tight-closing, warp-proof plywood doors for your new home or office . . . when you want naturally beautiful plywood wall panels in your office or home. Yes, look for IPIK TEGO-BONDED PLYWOOD—your trade-marked guarantee of quality—the product of more than thirty years of experience in plywood manufacture.

IPIK PLYWOOD COMPANY

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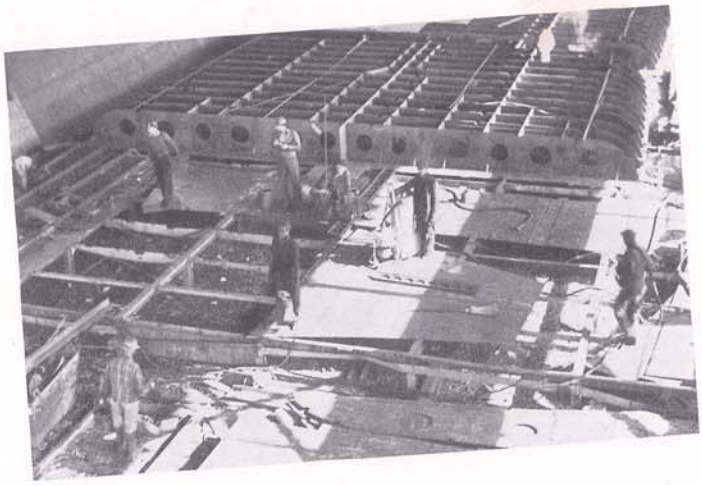
Free On Request: "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow in Plywood"



A visit to heavy industry in Jefferson! Here is the huge automatic electric welder at Avondale Marine Ways at work on the double bottom of a ship under construction.

And to the individual—the home coming veteran—Jefferson Parish offers a community where can be built a beautiful home; a community where is available a fine 12-year educational system for the children; a community where many diversified manufacturing concerns assure steady employment and a community where the $2,000 Homestead Exemption is in force and where all farm implements, all cattle and live stock are tax exempt.

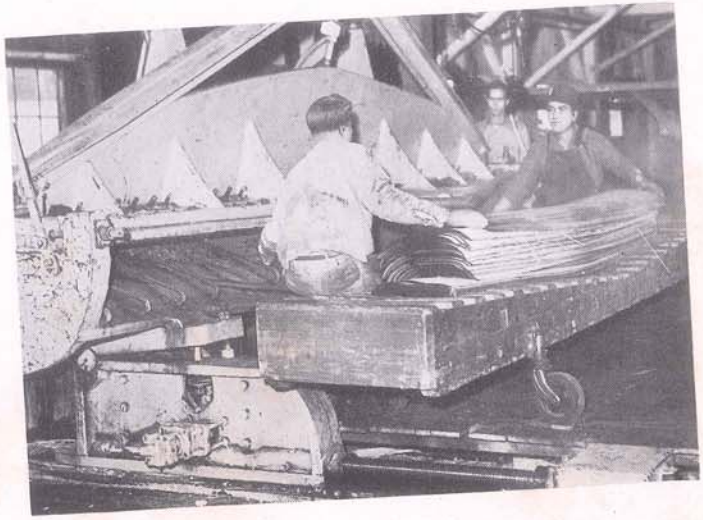
That; in digested form; is what Jefferson Parish, whose population doubled between 1920 and 1930, and which has again almost doubled (not even considering the war worker inflation which also affects every other industrial community), can offer the new industry and the new inhabitant, in the way of present advantages.

Add to these—now—the mighty postwar program of Jefferson Parish!

Even as these words are being written, rural electrification is being extended into the remotest bayous of Jefferson's Barataria country and to the farthest inhabited reaches of Grand Isle. The story is told in more detail beginning on page 147.

Plans for the construction of a free highway bridge across the Mississippi —connecting this great Industrial West Bank with the heart of New Orleans— are well under way. The bill giving congressional approval has already been signed by President Truman. This bridge, to be built by the Louisiana Highway Department and to cost $15,000,000, is covered by another article in this issue—on page 113.

Jefferson Parish is aggressively behind its postwar ship canal to the Gulf of Mexico—connecting the Great Port of New Orleans with the ocean



Jefferson is a processing center for the versatile mahogany of Central America. Here is shown the electrically driven veneer slicing machine of Freiberg Mahogany Company at Harahan that can slice pieces from 1/100" to 1/8" with 1/1000" tolerance at the rate of 10,000 surface feet per hour.

Jefferson, like the other Southern Louisiana parishes, has entered the Easter lily bulb industry. These two junior Jeffersonians demonstrate their grandfather's display of blooms at Kraak's Nursery on Central Avenue.

traffic of the world by means of a safer, faster, straighter water route. This is to be constructed straight down through Jefferson Parish to the Gulf of Mexico by the shortest and most economical engineering straight line. For the detailed story of that project read the article on page 26.

Jefferson Parish is also fathering a great four-lane highway to Grand Isle, connecting the Gulf of Mexico with the Port of New Orleans. This will make it possible for visitors to our community to bathe in the surf of the Gulf not more than one hour and a half from their hotel. It will connect by land as the Seaway will connect by water.

Part of Jefferson Parish fronts on Lake Pontchartrain. This section is one of the most beautiful residential sections of the entire New Orleans area. The community of Metairie, which is included in this part of Jefferson Parish that impinges on the Lake, is famous for the fact that it is always 5 to 10 degrees cooler than the heart of New Orleans in our mid-summer season. In this section are located some of the most palatial homes of the South.

A project is now being sponsored by Jefferson Parish to build a seawall lining Lake Pontchartrain, to protect property by preventing the future erosion of the lake front. Jefferson is as interested in its home-owners as it is in its industries. So, read more about this, also, in the article on page 101.

Another huge postwar project is the four lane highway through the heart of the parish, just back of but parallel to the present road, connecting the overpass near the Huey Long Bridge to the vicinity of the Algiers Naval Station.

May we introduce you to Mrs. Edna Sims, at right, Home Demonstration Agent of Jefferson Parish who, with Mrs. G. J. Spence of Metairie, is demonstrating how Louisiana's famous crayfish bisque was canned for shipment to the boys overseas.

Still another is an overpass in the vicinity of the east approach of the Huey Long Bridge to the Airline Highway which links New Orleans and Baton Rouge. This would eliminate to automobile traffic the present eleven railway tracks now encountered on the Shrewsbury Road.

There are also the proposed bridge across Big Bayou Barataria and the road along the Intracoastal Canal from Larose on Bayou Lafourche to this bridge on Big Bayou Barataria. This combination of bridge and hard surfaced road would expedite the produce of Lafourche and Terrebonne parishes to the New Orleans market.

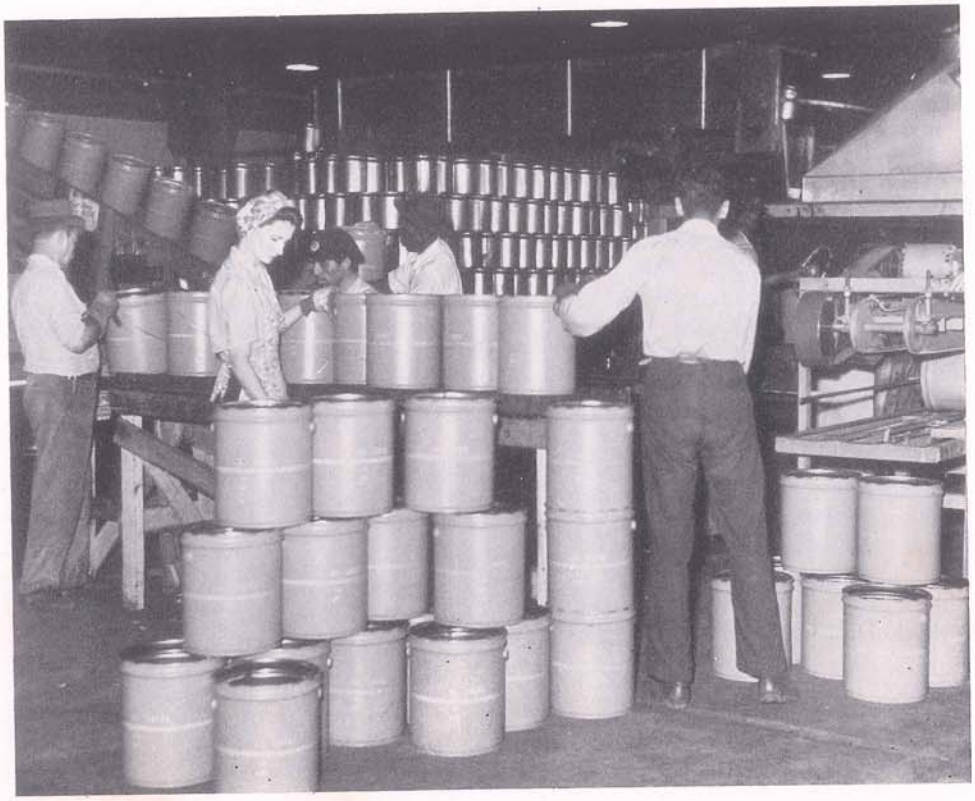
And, it is the plan of the Parish to have state legislation introduced in the near future which will permit the parish to add to the bay side of Grand Isle, thus increasing the width of this fertile Garden of Eden which now is approximately 8 miles long and three-quarters of a mile wide at its widest point.

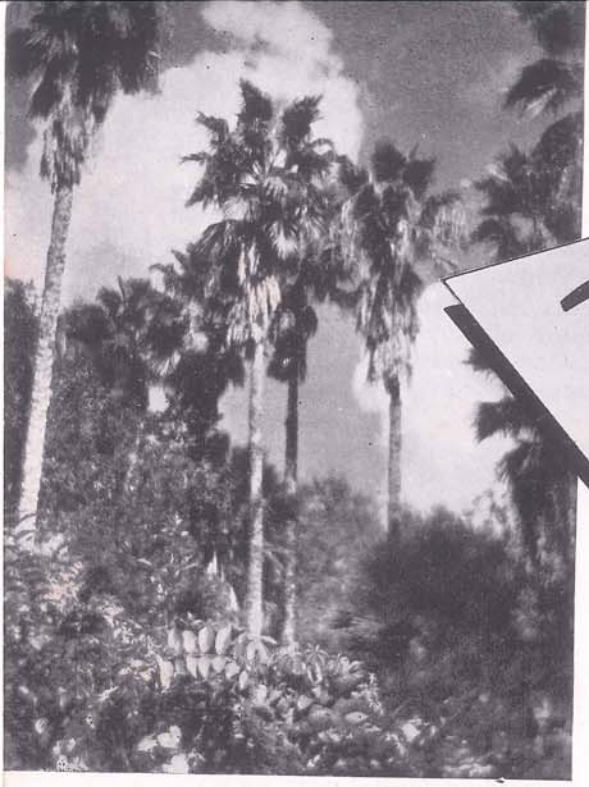
SUMMARY

Jefferson Parish is only sixty miles long—yet in that concentrated area is the largest airport in the nation today; an industrial plant for every mile of its length; trunk line railroads and railroad yards; a vital segment of the inland waterway system that reaches from Texas to Florida; miles of river front on both sides of the Mississippi; three national highways that terminate in San Diego, California, Winnipeg, Canada—and Madison, Wisconsin; the finest surf bathing and swimming in the United States; beautiful bayous that will take you back a hundred years to the days of Lafitte the pirate; bays and lakes that abound in oysters, shrimp and fish; marshlands and swamplands that are the haunt of millions of muskrat and fur bearing animals; farms stocked with blooded cattle; homes that are as modern as a Crane catalog; pirogues, tugboats, barges and Liberty ships; fishermen, farmers, financiers and factory workers—about 70,000 people who are the inhabitants of one of the most progressive and prosperous sections of the United States today.

And these people—all of them—invite you to come and share our great future.

The floating smoke pot for laying smoke screens over invasion beaches (simply a standard 5-gallon container converted to war work) now being manufactured at Rheem Manufacturing Co.





". . . the breezes swept in from the gulf and rustled through the tattered fronds of bananas and palms."

The Glamour of Grand Isle

By ELEANOR EARLY

IN THE West Indies they have a pretty way of defining the proper sort of island. An island, they say, should be small enough to go around in a day, big enough to live on, and little enough to love. As an island-lover from away back, I nominate Grand Isle, filling all specifications, as worthy of high place among tropical isles.

Almost everybody who knows it has a tender spot for Grand Isle, though some are inclined to apologize for mosquitoes and the heat. Maybe then it was sheer luck, but during a recent hot spell, when New Orleans simmered under a torrid sun, I visited Grand Isle and found it sweet and cool. No mosquitoes, and plenty of breezes.

The breezes swept in from the Gulf, lifting the gray moss of bearded oaks and rustling through the tattered fronds of bananas and palms. If there were mosquitoes anywhere, the winds must have blown them straight to sea.

The days were cool and the nights were sweet. The oleanders bloomed riotously, the mocking birds sang like mad, and the sweet olive smelled to heaven.

I have been told that until about ten years ago there was no road to the island, and the only way of reaching it was by boat. I think I should have enjoyed that—winding through the bayous on a little old fishing boat. But the motor road is wide and handsome and the countryside is interesting.

As a New Englander who knew no better, I fell in love with the water hyacinths along Bayou Lafourche, that shimmered in the sun like northern lilacs. They tell me that water hyacinth is nothing but a loathsome weed that clogs the waterways, and that the first bulbs were presented to Louisiana by a Japanese consul who would probably be delighted to know all the trouble they have been.

I am sorry about the plants being a nuisance, but those million blossoms, shining violet, made a fantastic garden, and a blossoming bayou is something to dream about, when willows bend over the waters and red birds flit through the tender green.

Once I brought a basket of hyacinth bulbs home from the West Indies, and I had to leave them at Customs until I could get a permit, and they were sent to Washington to be examined and cleared. When I finally planted

A world-wide traveler and famous author visits Grand Isle and finds it charming

them in my little pool, it was autumn and they died, and I have been regretting the whole business for a long time. Which is probably why I was so practically overwhelmed by the miles on miles of hardy blooms, and they seemed to me like pure beauty, with their green leaves and their lavender flowers floating idly in the sun.

Along the way we saw a store on wheels that was like nothing I had ever seen before. In the very old days skiffs plied up and down Bayou Lafourche with provisions of all sorts for the people who lived on its shores. Later, in horse and buggy days, there was a merchant who drove a tired horse, and peddled his wares from a wagon. Now there are stores that travel by motor. From Cut Off to Golden Meadow to Leeville—thirty miles down the Bayou, and thirty back again. In a two-day trip the itinerant merchant does some $300 to $400 worth of business. When he stops, he blows his horn and women in sun bonnets come out to buy.

Sun bonnets Bayou women wear sell in New York antique shops for a little less than the ones the horses wear. In the north a self-respecting horse wouldn't wear a bonnet, but I think the Garden Club ladies should revive the fashion, since bonnets are practical for women who work in the sun, and rather fetching, besides.

The motoring salesman sells practically everything from notions to cattle feed—paints, seeds, groceries, patent medicines, axe handles, mops, Mother Hubbards and overalls, pots and pans, slips and shoes and oil stoves.

Long ago, the itinerant merchants exchanged their wares for threshed rice or fur skins. They still carry old fashioned order books, and will shop for a lady who can't get to town.

"We reached Grand Isle at sunset . . . saw great oaks, bent by winds from the Gulf, and they seemed to me like old men, toughened and grown wise with hard living."

"The sands on the beach were golden brown, which is unlike the sands that I have seen on other beaches."

"I've done everything from matching thread to choosing an ice box," the merchant told us.

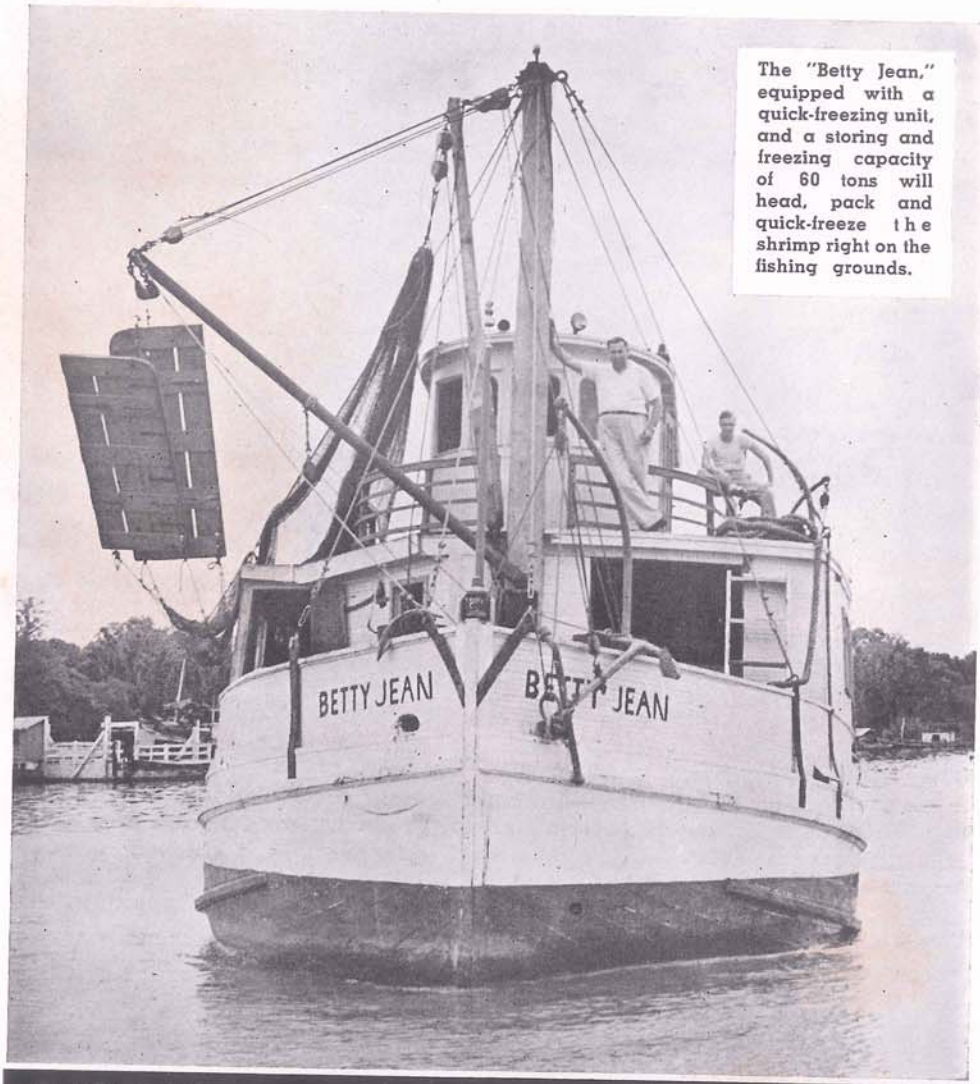
Along the Bayou the little farms are generally tidy, and their dirt yards swept with a broom. The people farm, and raise cows and chickens. In the winter many of them trap muskrats.

It astonished me to learn that there are more muskrats in Louisiana than in all the rest of the States combined, and that Louisiana trappers take more pelts than Canada and Alaska put together. The marshland along the bayous is paradise for muskrats, who chew all day on the sweet roots of marsh grasses, and never eat another thing. There are mink and raccoons in the marshes too, and between one thing and another, Louisiana has become the leading fur-producing State in the Union.

The trappers, who are Jacks-of-all-trades, do a little farming in the summer-time, and fishing. Most of them work on the shrimp boats, or for the men who own the oyster beds. And this may be as good a place as any to pay tribute to Louisiana's seafood. Trout, crabs, shrimp, crayfish and oysters—they are all excellent. In fact, Trout Marguery, as served at Galatoire's in New Orleans, is better than any trout I ever had at the famous Marguery in Paris where the dish originated, and I think one reason may be the lake shrimp that are in the sauce. Louisiana lake shrimp are plumper, firmer and more delicious than any shrimp I know anything about, and I have eaten shrimp all around the world.

In Copenhagen there used to be a place called Oscar's that was celebrated for its shrimp. The shrimp there were so good that the Duke and Duchess of Windsor would fly from Paris just to have some. Oscar used to serve 25 to 40 shrimp in what he called a Pyramid Portion, and in a dish called "Shrimp In A Crowd" he would serve from 130 to 140 shrimp. Lots of people got perfectly enormous eating them, but the Duchess always contrived to keep her figure. Oscar did so much shrimp business that he employed 50 girls—25 on the day shift and 25 at night—doing nothing but just shucking shrimp. Oscar told me that he was convinced that, next to women, American men love shrimp more than anything in the world.

Well, Oscar's shrimp were very good—and no wonder the gentlemen liked them. But I think Barataria Bay shrimp are better than any I ever ate in Denmark, and Mississippi River shrimp are tinier and sweeter than shrimp that swim in any other river.



The "Betty Jean," equipped with a quick-freezing unit, and a storing and freezing capacity of 60 tons will head, pack and quick-freeze the shrimp right on the fishing grounds.

SHRIMP BOUGHT AND SOLD

Any shrimper on the lakes or in the Gulf interested in selling their catch on the fishing grounds—contact us! The "Betty Jean" will act as mother ship for several other company owned trawlers as well as some privately owned.

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G. C. LEWIS, MANAGER

Crabs ★ Shrimp ★ Turtles ★ Frogs

Jefferson Parish's soft shell crabs are better, for my money, than the crabs that made Maryland famous. As for oysters!

In New England we consider our oysters superior to all others; and the best, we think come from Cotuit on Cape Cod. I have gone out in the dawn with Cotuit oyster men to the beds where the oysters are plump and sweetest, and, eating them from the shell, salty and cool from the sea, I had thought Cotuit oysters the best in the world. I have written this, and it has been published in books and magazines. But now I take it all back. BARATARIA BAY OYSTERS ARE BEST! Cock oysters are my favorite, and the best of these, I understand, come from the cool currents of the bays. Barataria Bay oysters are more flavorous, I think than the oysters that bed in other waters. They are plumper, sweeter, and less inclined to become dry.

The children of Grand Isle lead happy, healthy lives.

It is a rank heresy, by the way, to say that oysters should be eaten only in the months that have an "r" in them, and this silly fallacy costs the industry some eight million dollars a year. Oysters are good in *all* seasons but in the month of July they are not quite as tasty as usual because then they are busy spawning.

Oysters, by the way, contain 200 times as much iodine as milk, eggs or beefsteak, and lack only starch to be a perfect food. They are especially good for scurvy and rickets, and are said to be an aphrodisiac. I wouldn't know about this. But I do know that it is perfectly safe to eat raw oysters with liquor, despite the old superstition that a gentleman should get his drinks out of the way before tackling his oysters.

It seems to me that it would be a good idea for the restaurants on Grand Isle to make a specialty of seafood. We stayed at the Oleander, a spotlessly clean little hotel, and ate at The Nook, where the food was good and abundant. But I wish someone would make an arrangement with Julio Landry to provide oysters for a Grand Isle Oyster Bar where everybody would flock as they flock to Tony's to dance. Crayfish Bisque and Oyster Gumbo, Jambalaya, and Creole Stews of turtle, fish and chicken—these, I think, should be specialties of Grand Isle. Nothing fancy like Oysters Rockefeller, no French sauces, or lah-di-dah desserts. But the tasty, good dishes of the fisher-folk—plain food and plenty of it—and Grand Isle might become, as Cape Cod has, the mecca of tourists with a palate for hearty, simple fare.

. . . and flowers grow in lush profusion.

We reached Grand Isle at sunset, and wandered up and down the little winding lanes where oleanders grow on both sides, and arch above. We saw great oaks, bent by winds from the Gulf, and they seemed to me like old men, toughened and grown wise with hard living. And their gray moss was like the beards of patriarchs.

They tell me that there is usually a high surf, but the water was calm, when I saw it, as a New England mill pond. The sands on the beach were golden brown, which is unlike the sands that I have seen on other beaches, and it seemed to me soothing to the sight, and kinder than the blinding glare of a snow-white beach.

After supper we went to Tony's which is an amazing place—a bar, a dance hall, a picture show and a restaurant all under one roof—to say nothing of the rooms where Tony lives with his family! There were card tables, slot machines, and a juke box. On the walls were hung cast nets and crab nets, and in the floor was a plank which can be taken up, so that when the girls sweep they sweep everything through the hole in the floor—a practical device for simplifying housework.

From Tony's we went to Andrew Adam's to dance. All of Grand Isle was there. Pretty little girls danced with men from the oil fields and the fishing boats. There were school teachers from distant parishes, people from New Orleans, and a few tourists like me.

Mr. Landry, the Oyster King, sat at our table and entertained us with stories of oysters and of singing birds, and I thought him quite handsome, and interesting as the patriarch of simple folk who know the wonderful ways of a primitive and a lovely world. He told us of the song bird's flight from Mexico to Georgia, and of a little bird with a rose heart on his breast that sung that morning in an oleander near the beach.

The next day we saw a small boy bring down a rose-bird with a sling shot. He put the bird in a cage made of twigs, in a garden of cucumbers, and said that its mate would come to visit it, and then he would trap the mate. He wanted to make pets of them, he said.

The next night we went to the movies. I never saw a movie house like it. Little children lay flat on the floor, staring up at the screen. The pretty girls who danced the night before sat toward the back, holding hands with the young men from the oil fields and the fishing boats. Down front the old people sat. Everybody came and went, wandering from the bar, buying coke or candy, chatting sociably as they passed back and forth.

In the morning, very early, I was awakened by a delightful sound of music. The air seemed filled with it. It was a rising, throbbing chorus, and it came from the throats of mocking birds singing in a grove of oleanders.

Below: "Life on Grand Isle seems sweet and quiet, and I think the people who live there are happy."

Right: "We wandered up and down the little winding lanes where oleanders grow on both sides, and arch above."

The next morning I was up before the birds, because I wanted to see the sunrise over the beach. The sky was gray and filled with clouds, and there was a tiny moon like a lady's fingernail in the sky. A bird's chirp broke the silence. Then there was an answering chirp. The birds sounded sleepy, too. Then the first one sang a little song. And presently there was another song, and another, until again the air was filled with music—and the mocking birds led all the rest. (If anyone should ask me what I have enjoyed most in Louisiana I think I should say the mocking birds on Grand Isle, the oysters from Barataria Bay—raw, Bienville or Rockefeller—then, maybe, the architecture and the ironwork in the Vieux Carré, and after that the magnolias.) The mocking birds will always be my first love. As they sang, the southern clouds grew pink, the sun came out of the sea, and the little moon grew paler.

There were pelicans fishing over the Gulf, and cows browzing on the golden sands. Gulls flew low over the water, and a black dog dug for crabs. The sun grew crimson, and the shining pools of water on the sands turned pink and purple.

That was the morning we visited the cemeteries—down Cathedral Lane to the white-washed graves, where the oaks bend low and the oleanders grow. Then out toward the bay where people say the pirates were buried. The tombs are open now to the sun and the rain, and the breezes that sweep from the bay. The pirates' cemetery seemed bleak and desolate, but the one in the village, sweet and cheery. And it was peaceful to think that one day I shall be in some such shadowy resting place.

People who read my books sometimes write to say that they think my predeliction for graveyards is a bit morbid. (I am forever finding old graveyards and writing about them.) But I *do* like a nice cemetery, and I particularly like the one on Grand Isle, which I do not consider morbid at all.

Outside of the cemetery, I liked a number of more cheerful things, like mocking birds and oleanders, the blue kingfishers in the lagoons, and Mr. Landry, and the singing birds, the golden sands (with never a flea), and the little winding lanes with the quaint and pretty names. They are like cool green tunnels, branched over with oleanders, and banana, and chinaberry trees; and one is Miss Minnick's Lane, one is Rigaud's Lane, and another is called Cathedral Lane and there is a spot called Fairyland.

The people of Grand Isle are descendants of Lafitte's corsairs—attractive physically, and gently-spoken. Their homes are built along the lanes, or near the wharves where the fishing fleets are, and most of them have tidy gardens.

Life on Grand Isle seems sweet and quiet, and I think the people who live there are happy. They must be, for they hardly ever leave the island—these descendants of pirates, who are content now to farm and fish, and to cater to tourists and folk from the mainland.

ELEANOR EARLY

Anyone who has ever read one of Eleanor Early's travel books needs no introduction to this delightful and charming author, for having read one of her books you will forthwith wish to read them all. Her best-selling travel books comprise an imposing list—"Ports of the Sun," "Lands of Delight," "New England Sampler," and "Nantucket Patchwork" to mention but a few. For years Miss Early's books have been greeted by critics and reviewers with acclaim, evoking comments such as this from the New York Times—"Nobody writes better guide books than Eleanor Early—better, more interesting, more charming." An indefatigable traveler, Miss Early recently turned her twinkling eyes on the Louisiana scene and is now at work on a book about Louisiana in general and New Orleans in particular, which is scheduled for postwar publication and which we—and we hope you—await with interest.

THE WEST.. AND BEST Seaway to the Gulf

By Arthur A. Grant

IT IS generally conceded that the present facilities of the port of New Orleans will be wholly inadequate to handle contemplated postwar traffic and that a Seaway Canal is the only practical answer. This Seaway Canal, which it is proposed to be built from the Gulf of Mexico to the Mississippi River at Westwego, is justified for the following reasons:

(a) It will protect New Orleans' historic position as a port of major importance.

(b) It will shorten sailing distance and time to world ports.

(c) It will reduce costs to ship operators and shippers.

(d) Its entrance at the Gulf will be free from the difficulties and hazards always present at the river passes, now the only access to this port. The absence of current and silt will insure against bar formation and periodic, expensive extension of the jetties.

(e) It is straight except for slight curves adjacent to the Gulf and river entrances.

(f) It will traverse practically no open water and be constructed through stable ground for practically its entire length—therefore require minimum dredging to maintain its 40-foot depth.

(g) Its northerly 13 miles, including the Locks at Westwego, will provide the alternate connection between the Mississippi River and the Intracoastal Waterway recommended by the War Department, thus saving $8,000,000.00.

(h) It will reduce congestion in New Orleans harbor.

(i) Ships may load to definite draft without regard to changing conditions at the passes.

Importance of the Mississippi River Gateway: The passes of the Mississippi river constitute one of the major gateways of the country for foreign and coastwise commerce.

Ships enter the river through either of two passes—South Pass, 13.5 miles in length, with a project depth of 30 feet of water, or Southwest Pass, 20.1 miles, with a project depth of 35 feet. New Orleans, approximately 94.5 miles above the head of the passes, is thus 108 miles from the Gulf via South Pass and about 115 miles via Southwest Pass.

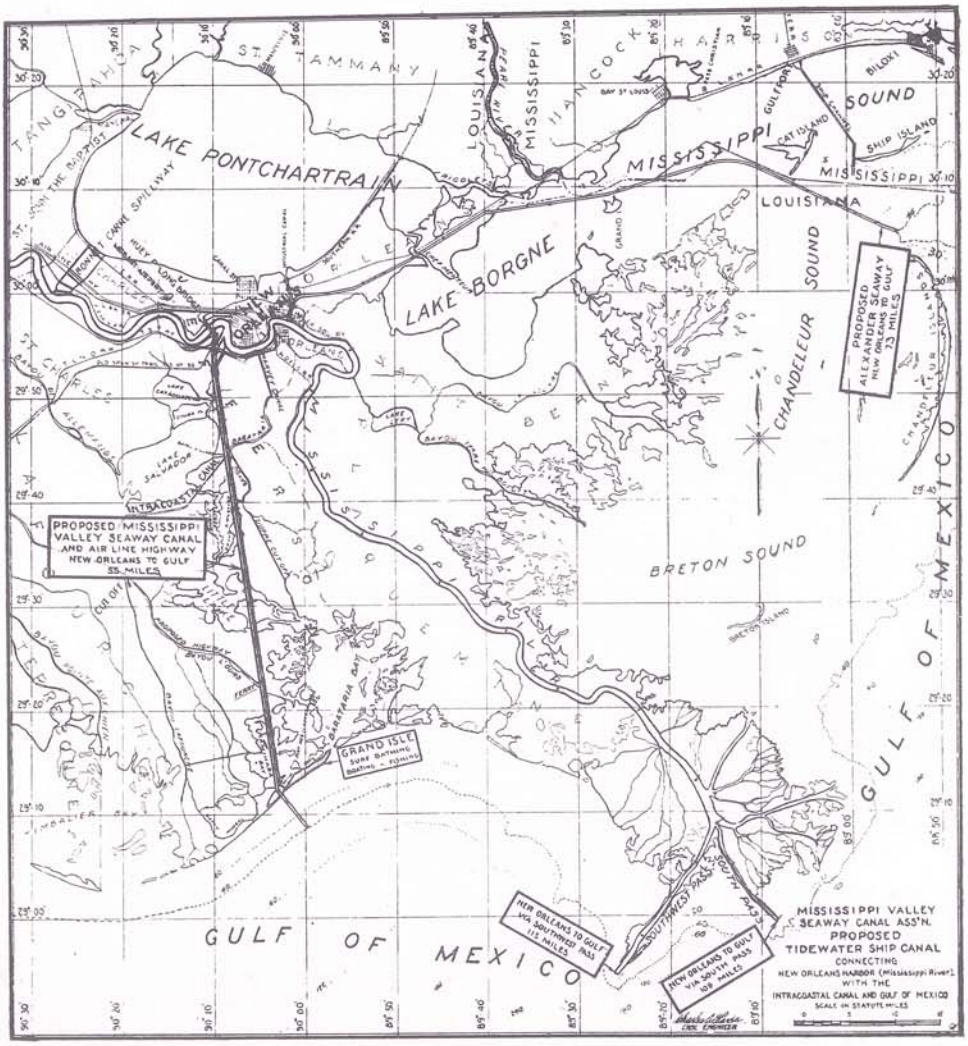
A diversified traffic is handled in and out of New Orleans on ocean-going ships. New Orleans is also an important terminal for barge shipments, handled on both the river and Intracoastal Canal. Eight major railroads converge

at the city. In recent years, as the result of severe competition and rising cost of operating ocean-going ships, there has been a trend toward larger vessels. This trend will undoubtedly continue in the postwar period, and is indicated by the fact that the average draft in 1932 was 18.8 ft., but had increased by 1942 to an average of 21.9 ft.

However, this average is only for those ships which actually did use the passes and makes no allowance for ships which, by reason of draft, could not enter the passes, nor for those others whose draft was purposely reduced below what it would have been had not the pass depth prevented heavier loading.

This gateway has been under an increasing handicap due to distance to the Gulf and difficulties encountered in maintaining adequate channel depths and widths through the passes. When the river afforded the only means of transportation to the interior of the country such handicaps were unimportant,

The map below clearly shows the superior merits of a Seaway Canal straight down from New Orleans to the Gulf over the proposed Alexander Seaway which is longer, less practical and goes in an easterly direction toward Mobile. From this map you can easily see why Jefferson Parish is so whole-heartedly behind the direct route to the Gulf.



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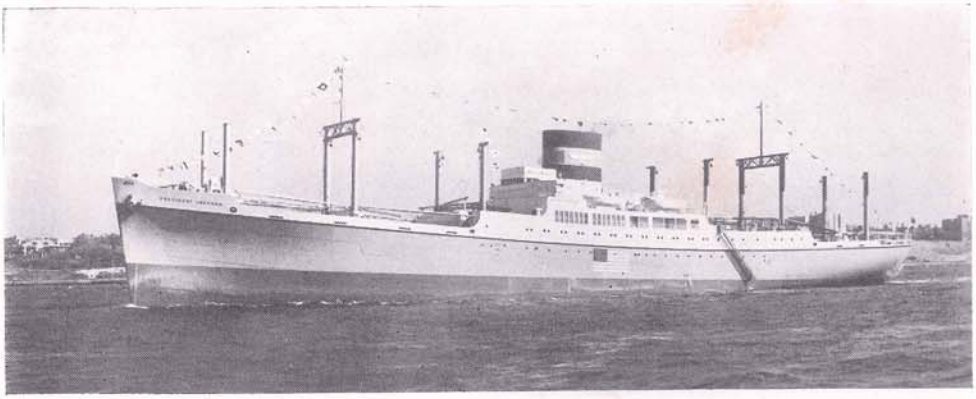

With the building of a Seaway Canal to the Gulf, ocean-going vessels of even larger draft than this passenger and cargo ship the "President Jackson" will be able to travel directly to New Orleans.

and New Orleans early became the most important port on the Gulf—until the construction of railroads to other gulf ports placed the latter on a more nearly equal footing in respect to this transportation to or from the interior. Even then the effect was not felt because of the success of the work initiated by Captain Eads in keeping the passes navigable. But as ships became larger and of deeper draft, New Orleans has increasingly felt the handicap of the limited depth at the passes.

Were it not for the handicap presented by its river access and by the passes, New Orleans would have every reason to expect a substantial increase in its commerce with South and Central America. Even were the presently proposed improvement to Southwest Pass made, this disadvantage would continue as compared with other ports. The fact that New Orleans is 600 miles closer to the Panama Canal than New York, for example, is not sufficient to overcome this handicap and cause the use of the Mississippi river approach.

Recognizing the inadequacy of the presently maintained depths at the passes, the Chief of Engineers has already recommended a 40-foot depth through Southwest Pass at an estimated cost of $4,200,000. Such a project will not only materially increase maintenance costs but involves considerations pointing to it as being palliative rather than curative. If the increased depth is to be maintained by the current of the river, rather than by constant dredging, it seems clear that more water or swifter water must be run through this pass. More water would carry more sediment to build up the bars faster, while swifter water involves greater channel restrictions to the detriment of navigation. It is at least debatable whether the relief would not be merely temporary.

The best permanent solution to this problem is a Seaway Canal, such as was suggested as early as 1874 by a board of U. S. Engineers. Various other proposals for such a canal have been made since.

The logical route for such a Seaway Canal is that shown on the map, on page 27. Such a canal, with duplicate locks located on the Mississippi river, in the vicinity of Westwego, and connecting with the Gulf at the west end of Grand Isle through Caminada Pass would be 52 miles long to the end of the jetties.

Traffic: One of the important features of the postwar economy of the United States will be the increasing importance of raw materials, principally from South and Central America and the West Indies, and exportation of manufactured articles. New Orleans is ideally situated to handle this traffic and it is logical to assume that it will constitute an increasingly greater proportion of the tonnage handled through the port. Foreign commerce now constitutes 50 per cent of the total tonnage handled at this port in ocean going ships, and

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as the importation of raw materials increased, this percentage should likewise increase.

For the year ending June 30, 1939, a representative year, 11,498,000 tons were handled in ocean going vessels through the port. According to the annual report of the Chief of Engineers, U. S. Army, the following commodities were included in this total:

Petroleum products	4,617,000 tons
Bulk grain	1,164,000 tons
Sugar (imported)	731,000 tons
Bananas	352,000 tons
Bauxite	313,000 tons
Sulphur	260,000 tons
Coffee	258,000 tons
Molasses	202,000 tons
Scrap	167,000 tons
Miscellaneous oils and fertilizers	123,000 tons
	8,187,000 tons

It will be noted that bulk commodities now constitute the major portion of the total traffic handled through the port. If New Orleans participates in the increasing importation of raw materials, such bulk commodities, principally petroleum products, bauxite and other ores, molasses, and miscellaneous oils and fertilizers will make up an increasingly greater proportion of the total traffic handled. If New Orleans is to maintain its importance as an import and export port, modern and efficient facilities must be provided to handle such commerce.

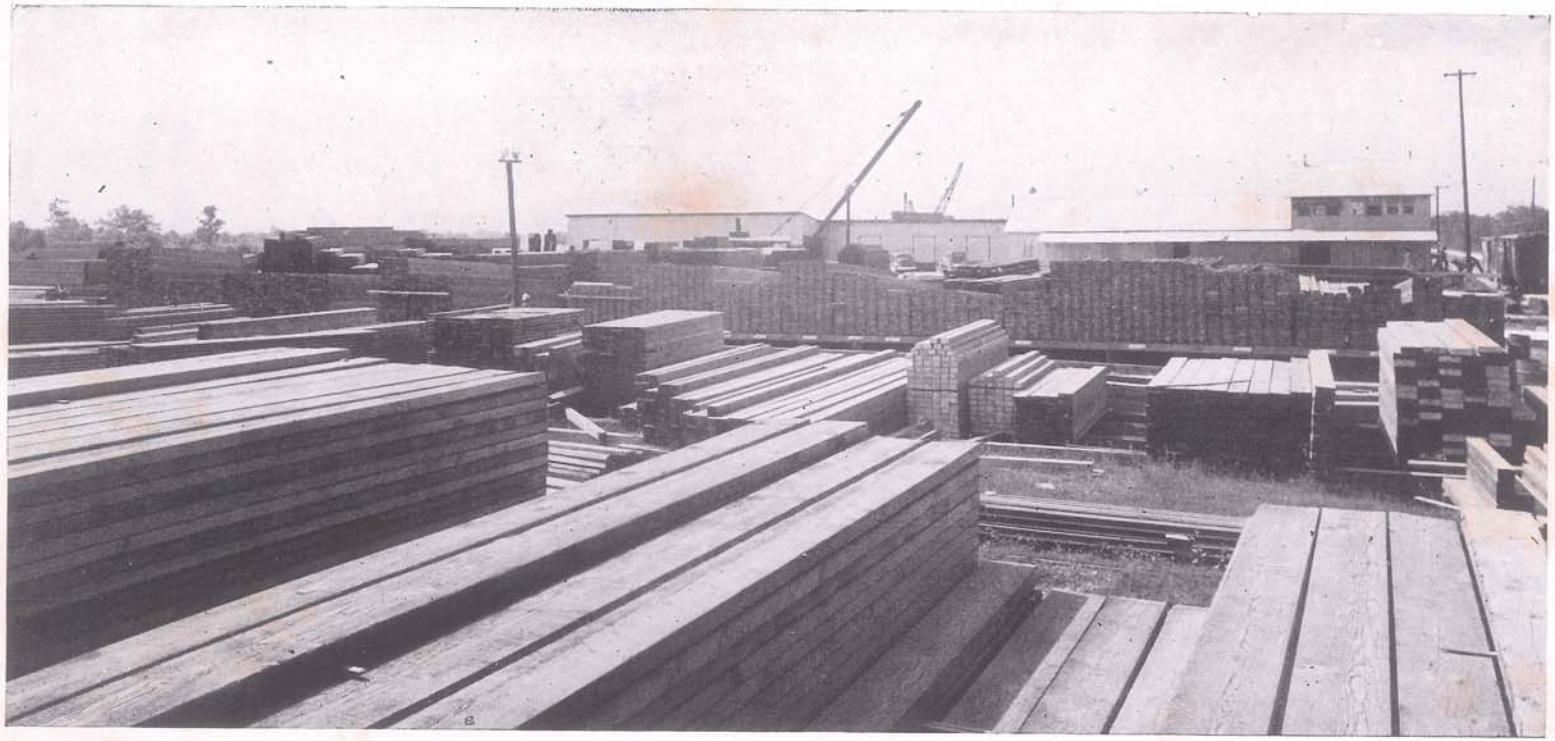
The bulk commodities now constituting the major portion of the traffic handled through the port are practically all handled on the west bank of the river and at points upstream and downstream from New Orleans, at the grain elevator, banana wharves and private railroad and industrial wharves, and it can be assumed that additional raw materials will be handled at the same locations. The relative percentage of the total traffic handled at these several locations are as follows:

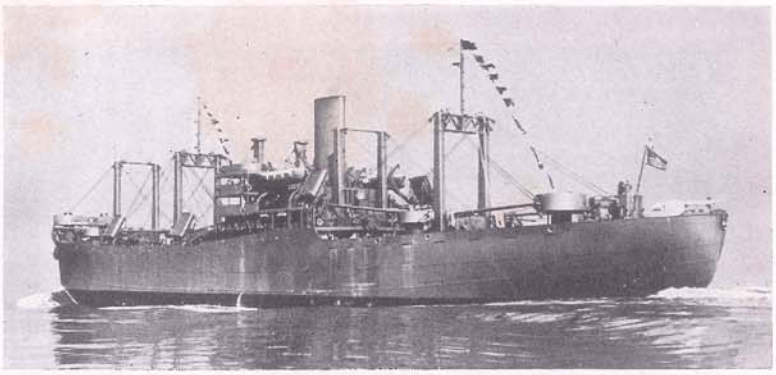
On West Bank and at points above and below New Orleans	53%
Private wharves on east bank	4%
Grain Elevator	8%
Banana Wharf	3%
City Front Wharves, including Public Cotton Warehouses	32%
	100%

In this connection, *it is significant that less than one-third of the total traffic of the Port of New Orleans was handled at city front general cargo wharves.*

A further fact of importance in any study of port development is that only a negligible amount of the total traffic handled in ocean going vessels through the port originates or terminates at New Orleans, the major portion being handled into and out of the city by barge line and railroad. Approximately 75% of the import and export traffic moving by rail is normally handled by the so-called west side lines, I. C., L & A, T & P, M. P. and T & N. O. It also would be readily accessible to the other New Orleans lines via the New Orleans Terminal Company (Southern Ry.) Back Belt.

Westbank Alternate Connection With Intracoastal Canal: A collateral matter is that of providing an alternate connection between the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and the Mississippi river to relieve the present congestion at Harvey Locks. This need for an alternate connection can be fully and adequately met by the use of the northerly 13 miles of the proposed Seaway Canal by barge traffic. It is therefore proper to combine the two projects and credit against the cost of the Seaway Canal the estimated cost of the smaller barge canal whose construction can be dispensed with.





Large ocean-going freighters such as the "SS Hotspur" will increase the tonnage handled at New Orleans in raw materials from South and Central America and the West Indies and exportation of manufactured goods when the Seaway Canal is constructed.

This alternate connection is included in the current Rivers and Harbors Bill. Two routes have been considered. One would extend from a point on the west bank of the river approximately 6 miles downstream from Algiers point, cutting southwestwardly 9 miles through the Jefferson-Plaquemines drainage district, and connecting with the existing Gulf Intracoastal Waterway about 6 miles below Harvey Canal Lock.

The other route would extend from Westwego, running southwardly about 13 miles to a connection with the existing Gulf Intracoastal Waterway at Bayou Villars. This second route is identical with the northerly 13 miles of the proposed Seaway Canal.

Inasmuch as the purpose of the alternate canal and lock is to relieve congestion at the Harvey Lock, already taxed to its capacity, and provide an alternate waterway in event it becomes necessary to close such lock for repairs, the proper location of such a connection logically depends on the character and flow of traffic to be handled. An analysis has been made of traffic moving through the Harvey Canal for the year 1942, the results being summarized below:

ANALYSIS OF HARVEY CANAL TRAFFIC

Traffic moving to or from Mississippi River points north of Harvey Canal Locks.		
Westbound	526,065 tons	
Eastbound	3,439,917 tons	
	3,965,982 tons	45%
Traffic moving to or from New Orleans Harbor south of Harvey Canal Locks.		
Westbound	667,143 tons	
Eastbound	2,637,251 tons	
	3,304,394 tons	37%
Traffic moving through Industrial Canal Locks.		
Westbound	48,177 tons	
Eastbound	1,549,412 tons	
	1,597,589 tons	18%
Total	8,867,965 tons	100%

Three facts will be noted in connection with this traffic movement: first, that the major portion moves to or from points above the Harvey Locks; second; that only a negligible portion moves through the Industrial Canal, and third, that by far the major portion of the traffic (86%) moves eastbound through the Harvey Canal.

Connection at Westwego would save 18.5 miles towing distance on all traffic moving to or from points above Westwego compared with connection

(Continued on Page 153)

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THE MUNIFICENT MISER

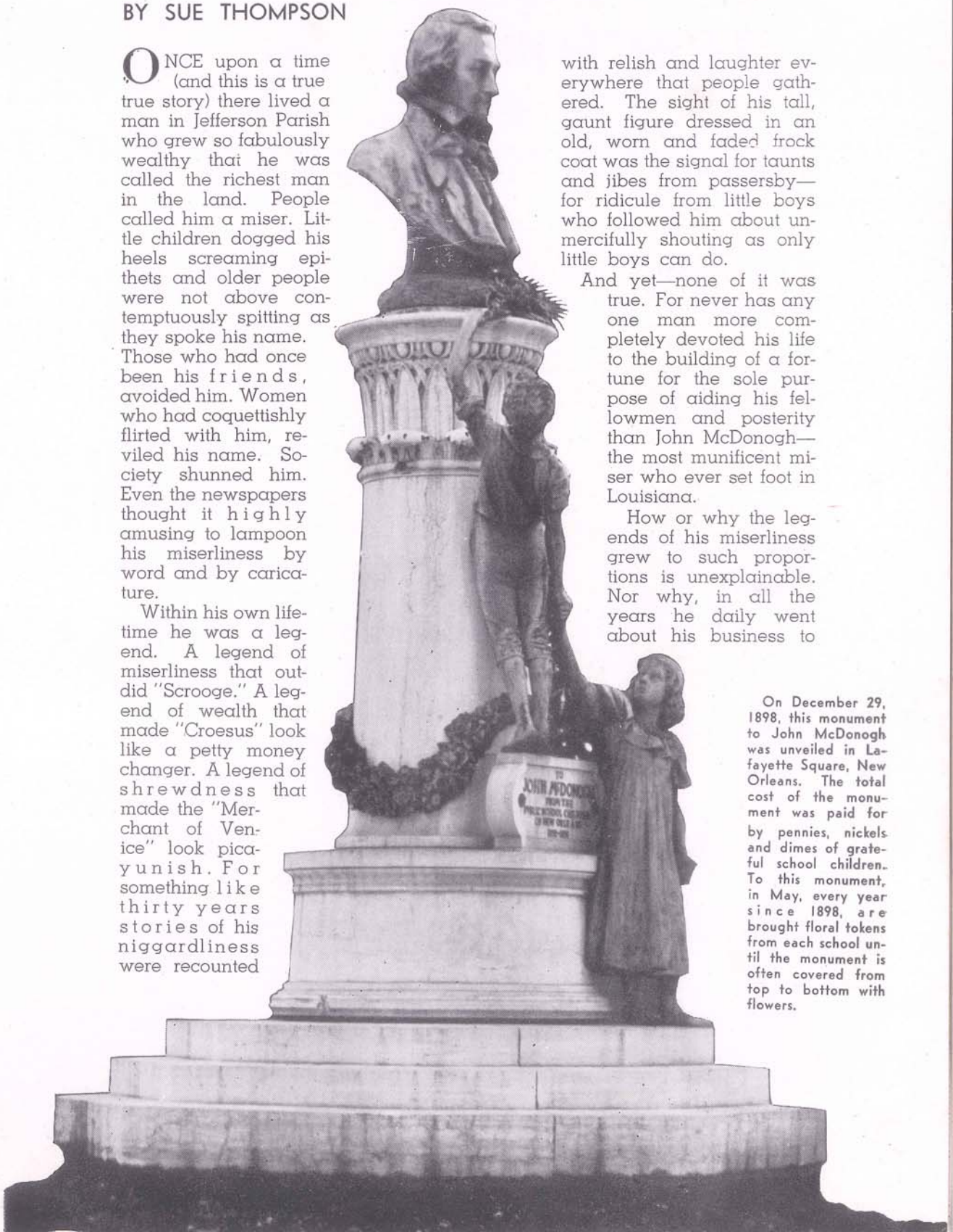
BY SUE THOMPSON

ONCE upon a time (and this is a true true story) there lived a man in Jefferson Parish who grew so fabulously wealthy that he was called the richest man in the land. People called him a miser. Little children dogged his heels screaming epithets and older people were not above contemptuously spitting as they spoke his name. Those who had once been his friends, avoided him. Women who had coquettishly flirted with him, reviled his name. Society shunned him. Even the newspapers thought it highly amusing to lampoon his miserliness by word and by caricature.

Within his own lifetime he was a legend. A legend of miserliness that outdid "Scrooge." A legend of wealth that made "Croesus" look like a petty money changer. A legend of shrewdness that made the "Merchant of Venice" look picayunish. For something like thirty years stories of his niggardliness were recounted with relish and laughter everywhere that people gathered. The sight of his tall, gaunt figure dressed in an old, worn and faded frock coat was the signal for taunts and jibes from passersby—for ridicule from little boys who followed him about unmercifully shouting as only little boys can do.

And yet—none of it was true. For never has any one man more completely devoted his life to the building of a fortune for the sole purpose of aiding his fellowmen and posterity than John McDonogh—the most munificent miser who ever set foot in Louisiana.

How or why the legends of his miserliness grew to such proportions is unexplainable. Nor why, in all the years he daily went about his business to



On December 29, 1898, this monument to John McDonogh was unveiled in Lafayette Square, New Orleans. The total cost of the monument was paid for by pennies, nickels and dimes of grateful school children. To this monument, in May, every year since 1898, are brought floral tokens from each school until the monument is often covered from top to bottom with flowers.

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and from McDonoghville to New Orleans, he never deigned to defend his name or his actions, is just as mysterious as how he came to be known as the most miserable of all misers!

Not until long after his death did the world learn any of the truth regarding John McDonogh. Nor did the public, for some time, fully comprehend what a magnificent thing he had done for the people and the state who maligned him. Only then was it discovered that John McDonogh had dedicated his life to building a fortune to make free education possible in the city he must have loved, but which had scorned him. For it was John McDonogh's fortune that was the foundation for the first public system of free education in Louisiana.

Today, of course, his memory is revered. School children make annual pilgrimages to his monument. Paens of praise are sung to his memory. Speeches are made and the populace is grateful. But it was not always thus.

John McDonogh made his first trip to New Orleans in 1800 as an agent for a Baltimore flour merchant. He was then a young man, tall, good looking, well educated, well mannered and with social credentials of the best. So excited was he over the prospect of seeing New Orleans for the first time that enroute up the Mississippi he disembarked from the ship, secured a horse and rode on ahead of the vessel . . . that he might see the Crescent City with his own eyes as quickly as possible. He must have immediately decided that this was *his* city for by 1802 his company, known as John McDonogh Jr., and Company, was combined with Shepherd Brown and Company. McDonogh and Brown were among the city's leading mercantile capitalists until 1804 when they became more interested in real estate than merchandise.

There are many legends of his retirement from the social whirl of New Orleans to his plantation across the river in what is now McDonoghville. Many attribute his life of a recluse to unrequited love and several historians have stated he left New Orleans immediately after having been refused the hand of Micaela, daughter of Almonester y Roxas, who later became the Baroness Pontalba. But as late as 1817 John McDonogh was still one of the city's Beau Brummels and his home at the corner of Toulouse and Chartres was the scene of many extravagant social affairs. He kept the finest of horses and equipage, retained a retinue of servants, was considered one of the best "catches" of the city and did not abandon his gay mode of life until 1825.

McDonogh himself gives the lie to the story of his retirement because of a love affair for there is a record of his discussion with a friend in which he admitted that he had forsaken the social life on the advice of his physician, Dr. Flood. Until McDonogh's death, October 26, 1850, when an inventory of his effects was made, it had been assumed that all of the magnificent furnishings of his Chartres street home had been auctioned off. But such was not the case for when the first floor doors of the McDonoghville plantation home were opened, the executors found stored within, all of the once rich and costly furniture in a sad state of decay. These furnishings which once had cost a princely sum were sold for $350.

The most frequently recounted story concerning McDonogh's early life was that of his supposed love for Micaela Almonester. There are many different versions, the most popular being that McDonogh was Protestant and would not comply with Don Almonester's request that he embrace Catholicism, which eliminated him as a suitor for Micaela. It is not impossible, but highly improbable, that McDonogh sought her hand in marriage for he was then a man of 30 and even though girls were often married at 15 or 16, the chances are there would have been much gossip over a marriage between McDonogh and Micaela.

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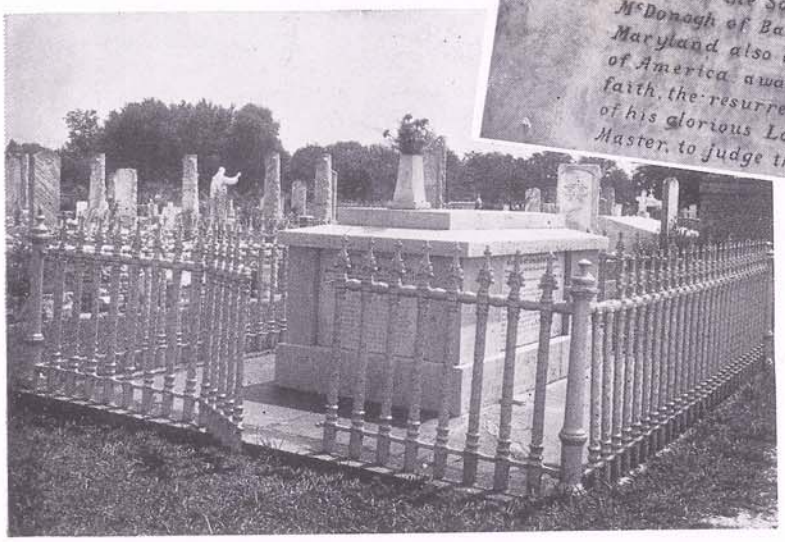
Sacred to the memory
of
JOHN McDONOGH,
born in Baltimore State of Maryland,
December the 29th, 1779;
died in the Town of M'Donogh, State of
Louisiana, October the 26th, 1850.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF

"Here lies the body of John McDonogh, of the City of New Orleans, in the State of Louisiana, one of the United States of America the Son of John and Elizabeth McDonogh of Baltimore, in the State of Maryland also one of the United States of America awaiting in firm and full faith, the resurrection and the coming of his glorious Lord, Redeemer, and Master, to judge the World."

A photograph of the inscription, written by himself, which appears on the front of the McDonogh tomb. It was not until 1890 that anyone thought it important to keep the McDonogh tomb well groomed and in repair. Prior to that time, Edward, son of Fanny and Jim Thornton, faithful and loyal negro servants of John McDonogh, kept solitary watch over the grave.



To the left is the now well-kept McDonogh tomb in McDonoghville Cemetery. Here it was that John McDonogh, unwept and unmourned, except by his own slaves and servants, was first laid to rest. The bones that rest within this tomb in McDonoghville now are those of his faithful servant "Fanny," whose deathbed request was that she be buried in the tomb of her former master . . . and which secret did not come to light until 1890!

That there was something other than just a passing friendship, is however, evident from a story told of the meeting of Baroness Pontalba and McDonogh in 1849, when she had returned to New Orleans and was building the now famous Pontalba Apartments. The Baroness needed a few additional feet in the rear of her property which was owned by McDonogh. Knowing his reputation for refusing to sell any property once he had acquired it she decided to try intrigue. Baroness Pontalba was certain that could she but meet him, she would persuade him to sell her the land. She therefore arranged with a mutual friend, who was McDonogh's attorney, to "just happen by" at a time when McDonogh was in his office on business. Everything worked as planned. The Baroness, fashionably decked out and looking regal despite her age, arrived at the attorney's office while McDonogh was there.

McDonogh greeted her cordially and graciously. Confident that she could sway his decision, she launched into a reminiscent mood, finally saying, "And now my dear friend, after these assurances of my esteem and my regret and penitence for the girlish folly that separated us so long ago, I have the presumption to solicit at your hands a small—a very small—favor. I desire to purchase a few feet of your property in the square adjacent to the lots upon which I am erecting those expensive and beautiful buildings which will so greatly embellish the environs of the Square. I need these few feet to provide for the comfort and convenience of the socially distinguished people who will eventually occupy my buildings. Surely you will not incommode them, or disoblige me?"

McDonogh had listened attentively, but answered with polite firmness, "I regret to have to say to you, Madame, as I have to many others, that I

to the

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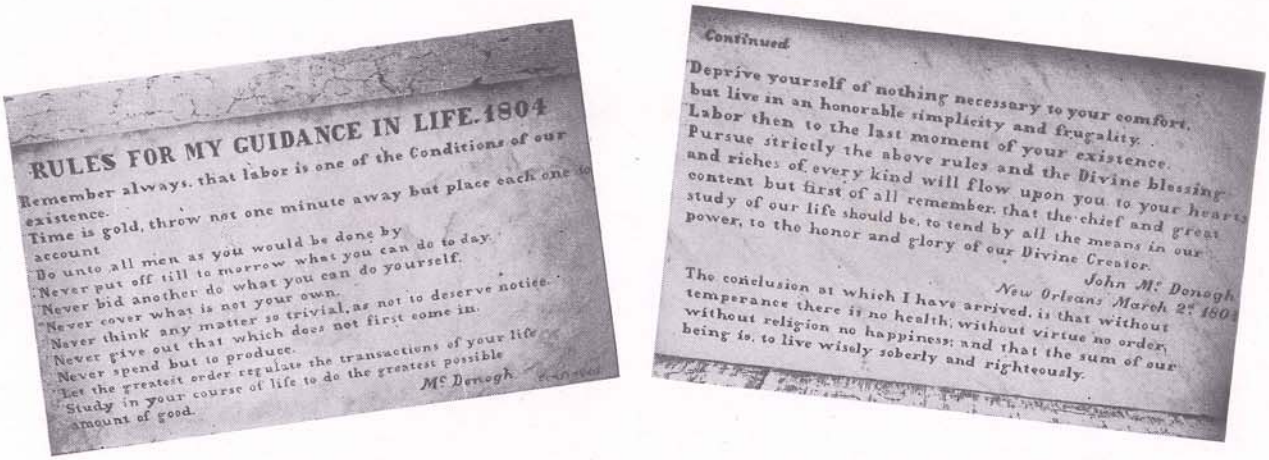


Reproduced here are photographs of the two sides of the McDonogh tomb on which McDonogh's rules for "My Guidance in Life" were inscribed according to a request in his will. Written in 1804, at a time when McDonogh was a young man, these lines reflect the seriousness of his nature and his deep religious concepts.

---

am not in a position to dispose of that, or of any other property. I hold it under a mandate from the Most High. I am not able to alter that mandate. I cannot sell the property you mention." It is said the Baroness did not conceal her disappointment and, after asking if that was his final decision, to which he replied it was, she added, "And you refuse this trifling favor to one to whom you were once willing to give your name, and, with it, all your possessions?"

There was a long silence—possibly McDonogh was going back in his memory to his youthful years in New Orleans—and then, "Ah Madame," he said, "that was a very great many years ago!" And with that he bowed formally and bid her a graceful adieu.

The story, of course, gives credence to the romance of McDonogh and Micaela . . . and it would seem that John McDonogh, must then, have aspired to the hand of Micaela. If so, we can't help but wonder if ambition and social prestige were not his reasons, for the portrait of Micaela, which we have seen, does not present her to be the beautiful woman she was reputed to have been.

Before McDonogh's retirement to his lonely existence in McDonoghville, there was another love entered his life, in our opinion the more important of the two romances that were a part of the fabric of his life.

It was about 1814 that John McDonogh met and fell in love with Elizabeth Johnson, the beautiful and charming daughter of a Baltimore merchant who had brought his family to New Orleans. But Elizabeth too was of the Catholic religion and McDonogh was a strict, and somewhat militant adherent, to Protestanism. It is evident that Elizabeth returned McDonogh's love for there is much reason to believe she pled with her father to permit them to marry. But he was adamant in his demand that McDonogh become a Catholic, which McDonogh felt he could not do. When all their pleas fell on deaf ears Elizabeth swore that if she could not marry McDonogh she would renounce the world—and did, becoming a nun. Many years later she became Mother Superior and as such was permitted visitors. Learning of this McDonogh visited her at the convent, to renew old acquaintance and pay his respects. Thereafter until he died McDonogh annually paid his respects, between the 1st and 6th of January, to the woman he had loved and lost but still respected. In spite of his years as a recluse he was a man of great sentiment. In his desk, after his death, was found a small slipper and a faded, perfumed bit

This photograph was taken May 4, 1945, as delegates from each public school brought their floral tokens to the monument of John McDonogh, their benefactor. Each year on "Founders' Day" all public schools observe a half holiday to commemorate educational founders in general and John McDonogh in particular.

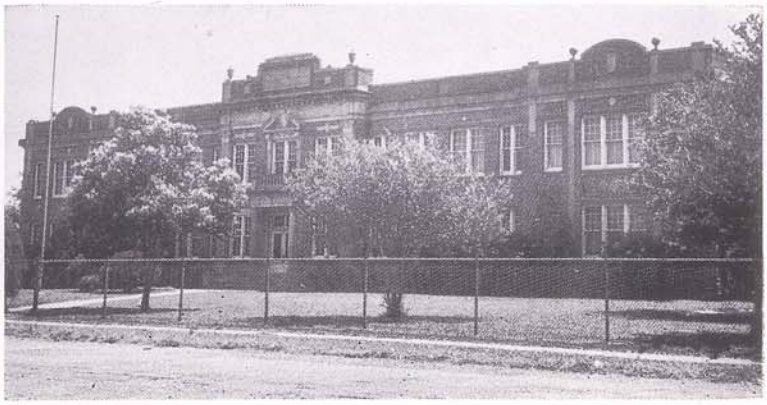
of ribbon. There is every reason to believe that these had once belonged to Miss Johnson and that McDonogh had cherished them as mementoes.

McDonogh lived in a three-room apartment on the second floor of his home across the river. Started as a home (he called it his "castle"), for a bride who never saw it, it was never completed. Only two long wings of the plantation home were finished, in one of which McDonogh had his small apartment. The original plans were for a large establishment. There were, however, a carpenter shop, a brickyard, and a blacksmith shop. The land, cultivated by his scores of slaves, produced vegetables which were sold at the French Market in New Orleans for a daily profit of from $80 to $100. Which is no insignificant sum, even in these days!

That McDonogh lived frugally is true. But he did not deny himself the simple, everyday comforts and pleasures. He had forsworn wines, liquors and the rich foods which his doctor advised against. It is difficult to reconcile the stories of his stinting on food with the known fact that his servants and slaves ate exactly the same foods as their master with one exception. McDonogh used sugar on his table whereas his slaves used molasses. He was partial to cold meats such as turkey, mutton and game and his servants partook of the same fare as the master!

The story of McDonogh's remarkable insight on the question of slavery will, we hope, someday be told. He was one of the first to recognize the situation could not continue—and his solution would have been sane and sensible had it been carried out. He believed in gradual and earned emancipation. He was exceptionally kind to his own slaves and was, in turn, loved by them. Many were liberated by McDonogh and he urged them to work for their freedom and to return to Africa for he was firm in his conviction that the black man and the white man could not live amiably and peacefully together, under existing conditions.

It was at this period that the American Colonization Society was formed to transport free American Negroes to Africa, where a republic of their own, Liberia, was being established. McDonogh offered to pay the transportation



McDonogh Public School No. 26 in McDonoghville. This is only one of the scores of schools which John McDonogh made possible by willing his entire fortune to the cities of New Orleans and Baltimore for the purpose of making free schooling available to all children.

expenses of any of his late slaves who wished to join in this colonization movement. About 150 slaves who had earned their freedom, accepted his offer.

His slaves were principally skilled workmen—bricklayers, carpenters, blacksmiths, etc., whom he hired out. These slaves were permitted to earn their freedom, McDonogh believing that freedom earned would be all the more appreciated; and the discipline and self-denial required in earning freedom would build up character so that a good citizen would be developed. But that is another story—and one which we cannot attempt here.

Nor was there any real basis in fact for the legend that he "robbed the widow of her mite." Actually the opposite was true. Samuel J. Peters, a friend of McDonogh's, acted for him on innumerable occasions of philanthropy. While he lived, McDonogh seemingly had no desire to be known as a philanthropist and hid his gifts and donations under the cloak of anonymity. He was often in court defending his right of ownership to properties and it was not uncommon for him to be accused of "robbing the poor and the widow." But we must remember that he was considered one of the largest land owners in the country, which in itself entailed much litigation. Therefore, it was natural that he should often, as mortgage holder, be a defendant—and we must remember also how bitter was the feeling against him so that many people tried to take advantage of him for no better reason than that he "was rich" and did not need the property or the land in question.

The rumors of his great stores of gold and silver were absolutely unfounded. McDonogh died with less than $10,500 in actual cash and owing $160,000 to the banks. He was a millionnaire in land only.

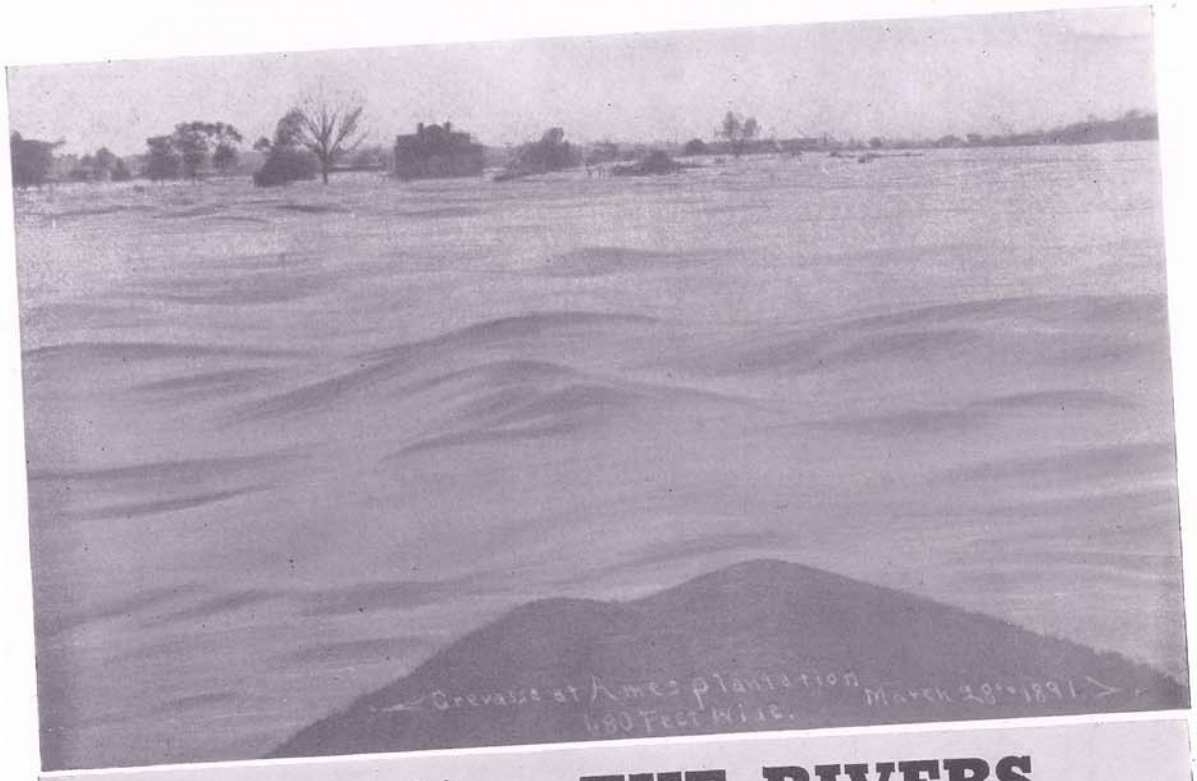
Because, in his later years, he made his daily business trip to New Orleans in a skiff rowed by a slave, everyone was quick to say he was too stingy to spend a nickel for the ferry. The truth was that taking the ferry meant a long, wearisome walk from his home to the ferry each day. One of his slaves suggested building a skiff which could be anchored close to his home, eliminating the walk to and from the ferry. But the populace did not take this fact into consideration, seeing only or wishing only to see, that he "would not spend a nickel for the ferry."

Aside from the very few men who had occasion to encounter McDonogh through business dealings, he had no human companionship during his self imposed exile in McDonoghville. Only his slaves and servants loved him—and who were in a better position to judge him than they who saw him every day? The story of one of his faithful servants is touching and, indirectly the reason for the monument to him in Lafayette Square.

McDonogh had brought with him to New Orleans a slave named "Fanny" who later married Jim Thornton, another of his slaves. For her loyal service McDonogh freed her but Fanny tearfully pled to be allowed to remain on, asking no more than just to serve him for the rest of his days. And these two—Fanny and Jim—were pathetically devoted to McDonogh to the end of his days. They were with him when he died and, together with his other slaves and servants, deeply mourned the great and good man they knew McDonogh to be.

Aside from a handful of curious white people from New Orleans, McDonogh's body was followed to the grave by no one but his own black dependents. Unwept and unmourned by the people who were to later benefit by his death, his funeral was ignominious. For 40 years his grave was for-

(Continued on Page 219)



Rebuilding THE RIVERS AND THE LAND

This old photograph taken March 28, 1891, shows, better than words can depict, the devastation and destruction wrought by floods before the mighty Mississippi was harnessed.

By Thomas Ewing Dabney

THIS year's victory over one of the most powerful attacks of the flooding Mississippi on record proves that the river has lost its right to choose its course, that engineers can lay out its channel with rod and transit, as they would a canal or a flume, and say, "Stay there; rise no higher than the mark we have set. You have a job to do for us, and you must do it in the way we tell you."

The river in 1945 poured 1,250,000 cubic feet of water a second past New Orleans, and the maximum gauge reading was 19.8 feet (May 1), which was nearly two feet above the flood stage. Yet it was not necessary to open the Morganza Floodway, 45 miles above Baton Rouge, an emergency outlet designed to take 640,000 cubic feet of water a second from the main stream and so relieve the pressure upon the straining levees; the Bonnet Carre Spillway, 23 miles above New Orleans, was able to give the relief needed, with a capacity of only 250,000 cubic feet of water a second.

Yet this flood was comparable with those of 1937, of 1936, of 1927, and the other great downpourings that have made such disastrous history. Some of the gauge readings on the Mississippi stem were higher this year than those of former years.

For more than 200 years man has been fighting with the Mississippi. Until 1936, it was a losing fight. In that year the uncompleted flood-control plan, adopted by the federal government in 1928, showed that at last the engineers had taken the measure of the giant. That plan broke away from the levees—only defense and added controlled outlets, cutoffs and impounding of waters in tributary streams. The result has been security against flood attack, and better navigation.

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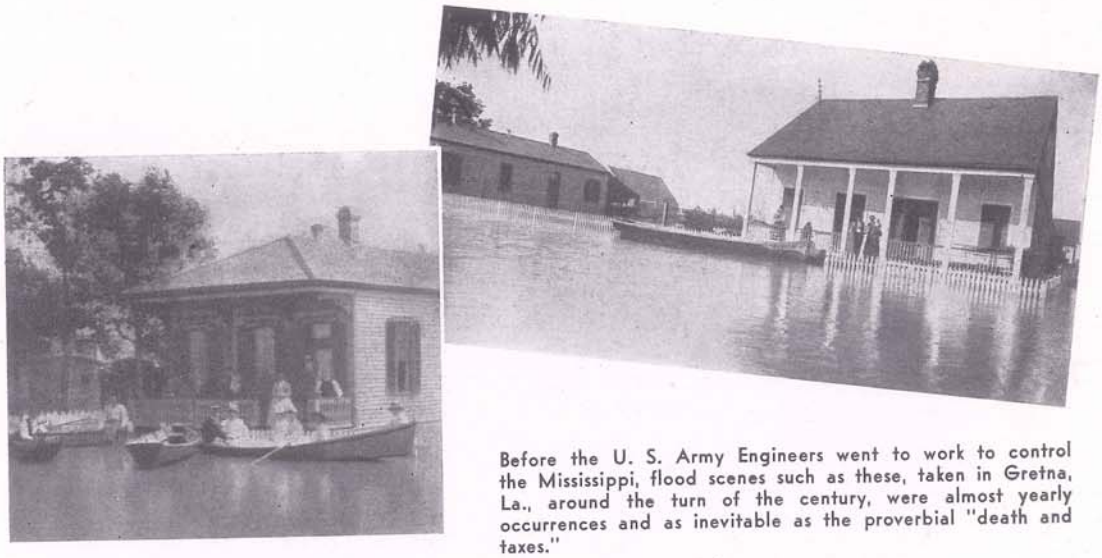
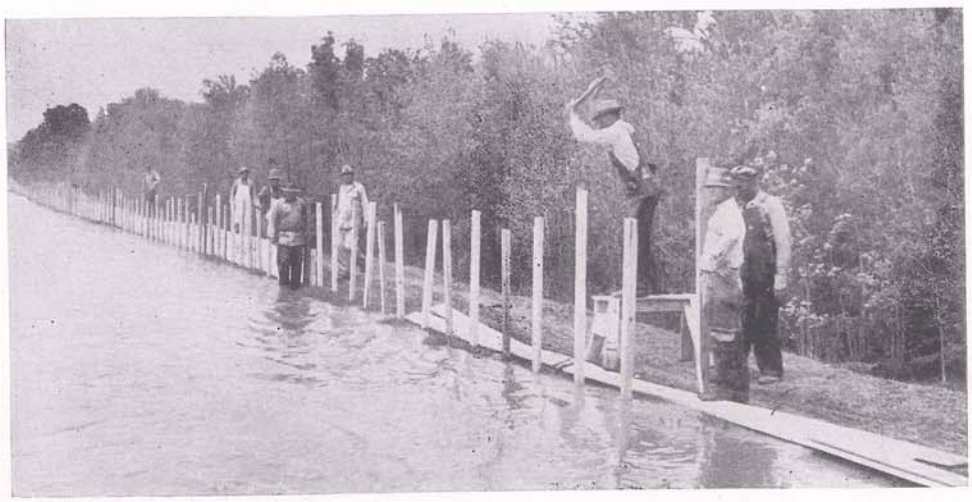


Before the U. S. Army Engineers went to work to control the Mississippi, flood scenes such as these, taken in Gretna, La., around the turn of the century, were almost yearly occurrences and as inevitable as the proverbial "death and taxes."

Consider the immensity of the problem: The Mississippi river system drains 1,250,000 square miles of territory, 41 per cent of Continental United States, most of the area which lies between the Rocky and the Appalachian mountains. The flow of 16,000 miles of navigable streams and tens of thousands of miles of non-navigable streams is concentrated into the 1000-mile stretch of the Mississippi between Cairo and New Orleans, known as the Lower River. Geologic ages ago, the Mississippi fell off a cliff twice the height of Niagara at about where Cape Girardeau, Mo., now is. With the land and rock scourings of a continent which it helped to reshape, it filled in this extension of the sea and built the lands which are such a valuable part of the Union today. Through this yielding soil, it changed its course at will: the many crescent-shaped lakes along the main stem of the river testify to how the current has swung to right or left under the hydraulic drive of the flood-seasons; time after time it abandoned its old sea-outlets and drove new ones. And on both sides of the river, it left a flood-plane of 30,000 square miles which it occupied when the spring rains and the melting snows sent down more water than the channel could carry off. These 30,000 square miles of flood-plane are the most productive parts of the Mississippi Valley.

Even the Colonial French found that their ships, which drew only 12 feet of water, could enter the river only by the hardest effort. There was enough water to hide a church steeple in the river, but there were bars at the mouth.

This year the tributaries of the Mississippi ran rampant. Here is a flood scene at long suffering Colfax, on the Red River, which has eaten into the older part of town during the last twenty years, chewing up over 150 acres.



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At famous Natchitoches, which once was a thriving city on the main channel of the Red River, the citizens view the flooded highway and also hope for the final control of the river's vagaries.

The river was then abandoning its outlet and preparing to seek a new entrance to the Gulf of Mexico. The French dragged huge harrows across the bars, and so managed to worry their small ships into the main stream.

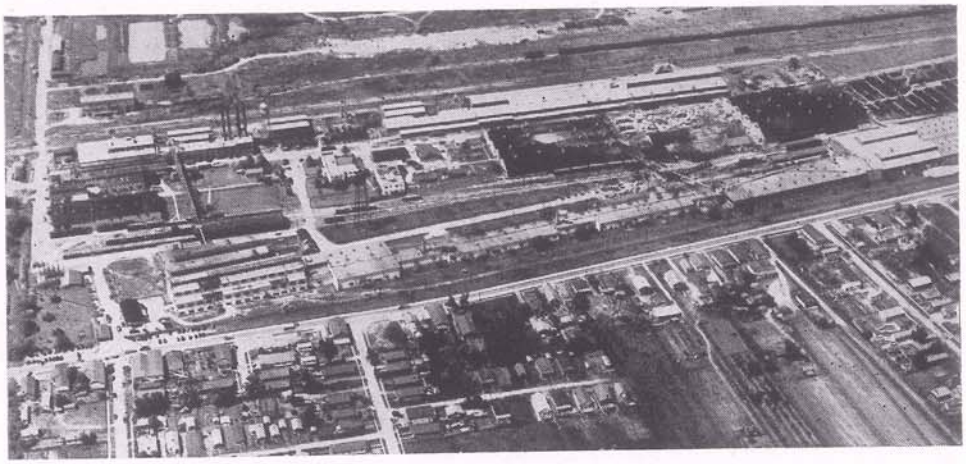
To hold back the floods, they began to build levees. They believed that three-foot embankments would do the job.

Levees and harrows—these continued to be weapons with which engineers attacked the river for a century and three-quarters. During the last part of this period, engineers helped out their harrows with oversize propellors on ships, which planed off some of the bars, and broke up others with powder blasts. But the river had licked them and they knew it; Congress in 1874 was about to vote an appropriation to build a canal from the river to the Gulf, so that ships could get into the stream.

Then James Buchanan Eads, who had already made engineering history by building the St. Louis river bridge which 28 leading civil engineers assured the world, over their signatures, could not be built, hydraulic and soil conditions being what they were, announced he could build jetties in Southwest Pass which would assure a channel of 28 feet for all time. He would do the work for $10,000,000, and would not expect to be paid one cent if he did not produce the full 28 feet.

Army engineers, who had never been able to achieve more than an 18-foot channel, raised a great hullabaloo. Congress offered Eads $5,250,000 to jetty South Pass. That made Eads' problem many times more difficult, for the river was abandoning South Pass, through which it discharged only 10

At Jonesville, where the Black and Little Rivers meet, the women lend willing hands to stop the flood waters—hoping for the day when the engineers will have completely eliminated this annual hazard.



This aerial photograph of the Celotex Corporation at Marrero, La., shows the tremendous industrial development now possible behind the levees of the Mississippi since Ol' Man River has been tamed.

per cent of its water as compared with 45 per cent each through Southwest Pass and Pass a Loutre. At the lower end of South Pass, the water was only seven feet deep, at the upper, 15 feet. Eads took South Pass, because it was the best he could get.

He built the jetties, or artificial banks, to concentrate the drive and the scouring action of the current; he built enormous dams and deflecting works to make the river pour more water through South Pass and less through the other Passes; and by 1879 had won a 31-foot channel.*

This was the first time Man said to the river, "You must flow in the channel of our convenience." This was the first successful challenge to the might of Old Man River.

The army engineers, to whom the flood control of the Mississippi had been given with the creation of the Mississippi River Commission in 1879, believed they could hold the river off the 30,000 square miles of flood-plane by levees; but the flood of 1922, which crevassed over 13,200 square miles of land, and of 1927, which rolled over 28,537 square miles, proved the fallacy of their reasoning; hence the enlarged flood-control act of May 15, 1928.

The Bonnet Carre Spillway, the Morganza Floodway and the Bird's Point-New Madrid (Mo.) Floodway were the next orders to the Mississippi to keep its bounds, and to waste its surplus waters only where they would do the least damage to civilization's development.

Then came the most audacious attack of all upon the river's right to choose its route, the cut-off program. A cut-off is a new and shorter channel through a peninsula formed by the river's meanders. The Mississippi had frequently driven through such short cuts, in flood-time, and engineers had tried to prevent it, first because they believed they introduced abnormal slopes up and down-stream, and second because the river generally chose routes that were most damaging to development. It often happened, in the past, that a man went to sleep on one side of the river and woke up on the other; and many plantations have been ruined in this way, to say nothing of the new navigation problems. Modern studies in hydraulics proved the soundness of the cut-off principle, under proper control, and as part of the flood-proofing work in the Valley, in the 1930 decade 11 cut-offs were driven through the tangle of river bends between Arkansas City and Natchez. The river itself added the

**The government followed through Eads' vision of Valley needs and jettied Southwest Pass, 1903-1909.*

12th, at a spot which the engineers approved. These cut-offs shorten the river by 100 miles, and speed the discharge of the swollen river into the Gulf—eight days to travel the distance that formerly consumed 20.

To turn aside the frontal attacks of the river against levees and against the banks beneath the levees—attacks especially severe where bends deflect the full force of the current against these banks—engineers have laid concrete protections above water and asphalt mats below water. These last are spun off barges, built for the purpose, almost as a spider spreads its web. "The river shall not pass the metes and bounds we have set for it," say the engineers, and they have made this stick with the greatest hydraulic giant Man has yet tackled.

In other parts of the Mississippi river system the engineers have been rebuilding the rivers. Fifty locks and dams have given the Ohio a nine foot channel from Cairo, where it enters the Mississippi, to Pittsburgh, 981 miles away, where it is formed by the confluence of the Monongahela and the Allegheny. Locks and dams have pushed a channel almost as deep for 128 miles up the Monongahela and 72 up the Allegheny. On other tributaries to the Ohio, the engineers have picked up the challenge of high water and commerce-choking shoals and are making the streams serve Man's needs.

On the 2,473-mile long Missouri, engineers have already stabilized the channel to a six-foot depth, at ordinary stages, for 80 miles to St. Joseph, Mo. They expect to increase the depth to eight or nine feet, and carry that navigation upstream to Sioux City, Iowa. The Fort Peck Dam is one of the principal factors in this large plan—one of the greatest engineering projects ever conceived in the United States, a monumental flood-control, power-generation and irrigation project 1,951 miles above the mouth of the Missouri. This dam impounds the head waters of the Missouri into a lake 16 miles wide by 180 long.

Daniel Boone found a new frontier in the Tennessee Valley; engineers are re-creating this same area into a new frontier with their reshaping, redesigning and rebuilding of the Tennessee river. More than 100 years ago the

The beautiful Metairie garden district, one of the finest residential sections of the South, together with its costly golf course shown below, would have been impossible had not the U. S. Engineers mastered the rampages of the Mississippi. Millions of dollars worth of valuable property is now completely protected from damage by flood.

JEFFERSON DEMOCRAT

Official Journal of the

PARISH

OF

JEFFERSON

SINCE 1896

Gretna, Louisiana

United States began, at Muscle Shoals, Ala., the work, and achieved mightily; but it was not until the present generation that the Tennessee Valley Authority began its vast creation in an area nearly as large as England. Five dams on the Tennessee river, and dams on Tennessee river tributaries, to hold back 10,000,000 acre feet of water, take one of the big contributors to floods out of the picture, and assure navigable channels throughout the year. On this job the engineers have shown they can control the run-off of an astonishing drainage shed which is 3000 feet above sea level at its peak, and 300 feet above sea level at the point where the downpourings discharge into the Mississippi. Navigation is being stabilized on about 1,200 miles of riverway in the Tennessee Valley.

Returning to the Mississippi: By locks and dams, by bank protection and dikes, and by dredging operations, engineers are winning a nine-foot channel to Minneapolis, 853 miles above the Ohio; and also a nine-foot channel to Stillwater, on the St. Croix, a tributary, 24 miles away. They are building large reservoirs to hold back floods at the head of the Mississippi and on its tributaries in Minnesota.

The fight for security against floods and economy in transportation has brought forth many fabulous achievements in engineering. The problems have often demanded the designing of new equipment, and that has been done. Nowhere in the world has the river struggle evoked such triumphs as on the Mississippi system.

The channel and flood fight is not over, will not be over for many years, if ever, because the forces involved are so enormous that it is almost impossible to conceive the possibilities until the actualities develop, and then no one can say whether they are the ultimate or a herald of worse to come.

There are many sections which still feel the devastation of the flood rush. But what the engineers have accomplished on the Lower Mississippi, where the forces are the greatest and the difficulties are the largest, proves that they can make any river do what they will it to do; it proves that no matter what the attack, they are able to meet it, once they know the force the enemy musters.

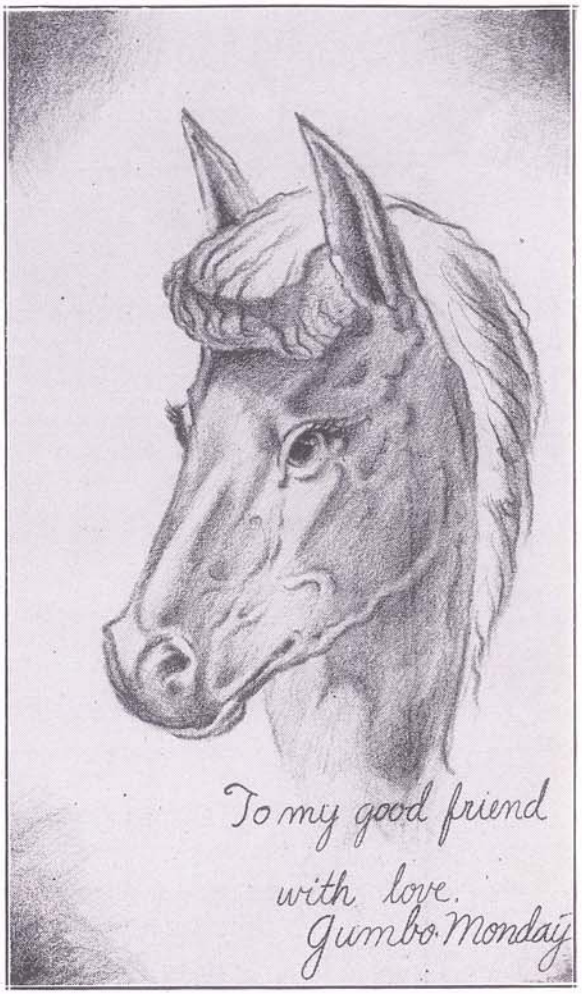
The colonizers and early developers of the United States exploited what they found as they followed the rivers through this fat land of ours, and because they knew more and were able to do more, they achieved more than the Indians ever could have done. The engineers of today are following those same rivers and remaking them, and in so doing they are evoking a productive capacity—another name for civilization—for the land as far beyond the present as the present is above the past.

THOMAS EWING DABNEY

Thomas Ewing Dabney is already a familiar name to readers of the Jefferson Parish Yearly Review. He is the author of "Tropic Intrigue," "Revolution or Jobs," and "One Hundred Great Years," a comprehensive, interesting and definitive history of the New Orleans Times-Picayune. He has been publishing the Socorro Chieftain at Socorro, New Mexico for a number of years and has now entered politics as Representative in the State Legislature of New Mexico. Mr. Dabney is an authority on the history of the South and Southwest and is particularly well informed upon the subject which he has written for this issue. We are quite certain Mr. Dabney will be equally successful in politics as he has been in publishing.

GUMBO MONDAY *the Bayou Pony*

BY WILLIAM F. LOCKWOOD



This is Gumbo Monday, the bayou pony, whose friendly and humorous letters are delighting children all over the country. No wonder the kiddies love this shy and beautiful "writing pony" so!

THERE are many ponies up and down the bayous of Jefferson Parish and throughout Louisiana, but to my knowledge Gumbo Monday is the only pony who writes letters. During the past year Gumbo Monday has been corresponding with children everywhere—hundreds of them—all over the United States.

Many people want to know how Gumbo Monday became engrossed in such an unusual avocation . . . and where he comes from. I, myself, am not sure of Gumbo Monday's origin, nor his birthplace, but I do know that he came from the Deep Delta country. There are those who say he comes from down around Bayou Des Oies, because in his letters he often mentions his great friendship for geese. And there are others who say that Cousine Perpetuee first saw him on Bayou Villars. The first actual knowledge of Gumbo Monday leads many to think he early became attached to a family of delta people a few miles south of Lake Salvador.

In his letters Gumbo Monday makes several references to "Nunc" Billy and to "Poco," his infant companion. Gumbo Monday writes, for example, " 'Nunc' Billy has the longest moustache of any man up or down our bayou." Unfortunately he hasn't as yet, said *which* bayou.

The thing children like best about Gumbo Monday's letters are the illustrations in them . . . although some of the bayou folk who know Gumbo Monday well, do not believe that he himself illustrates the letters. Hercule Broussard of Bayou Lafourche, for instance, says he know "Nunc" Billy—the same "Nunc" Billy that Gumbo Monday writes about—and that "he was always a man very adept with the pencil and with the brush, and fashioned his pictures

very much like the illustrations in the letters." This pleased *me* very much when I heard it because, you see, I myself am "Nunc" Billy. Gumbo Monday mentions in one of his earlier letters that "Nunc" Billy was then doing a portrait of him, and fortunately this portrait has been located in a deserted trapper's shanty not far from "The Mound" of the famous Lafitte. The shanty in which this picture of Gumbo Monday was discovered has led several bayou people to believe that Gumbo Monday guides *my* pirogue on *my* daily rounds of the bayous. Whether or not this be true need not concern us here—however, I must observe that there is no indication in any of the letters, that it *is* true.

Rummaging among Gumbo Monday's effects recently I found a cache of letters written to him by *his* correspondents. These letters were from almost every state in the Union and bore such postmarks as Dryden, Washington; Sterling, Illinois; Memphis, Tennessee; Niobrar, Nebraska and Ft. Worth, Texas. One of these letters to Gumbo Monday, from a little girl in New Orleans, read:

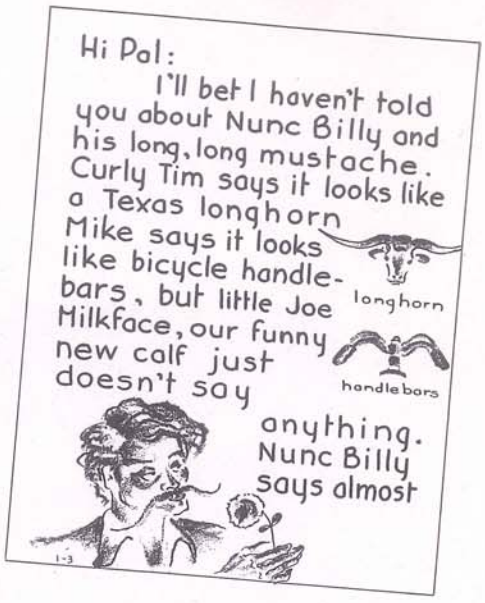
"Dear Gumbo MonDay I hope to see You Some Day. I hope to See your FrieNDs to. I Hope I can riDe on your FrieNDs. I guess I will be rideing on you the Most because it has beeN a LonG TiMe scenc I Have SEEn you. I Can Imagine YOU WANT to SEE ME to. Maybe we CaN go Out SoMewhere by OurSelF. Maybe WE can Ride through the Meadow. Because I thinK you have a Word in YOUR NaMe which is BOW so I will put a BOW in this leTTer. Lov,

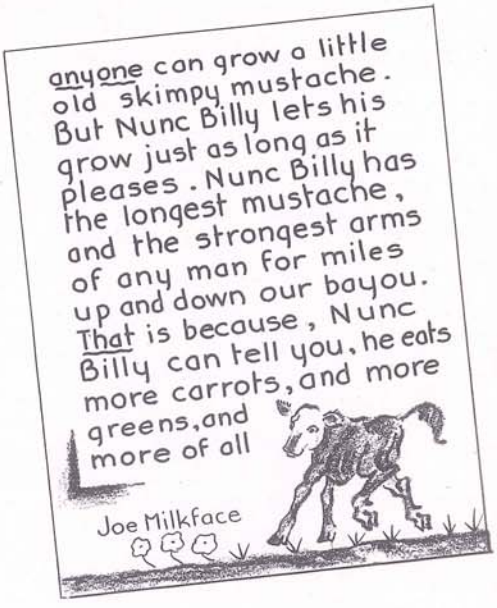
E--- R---

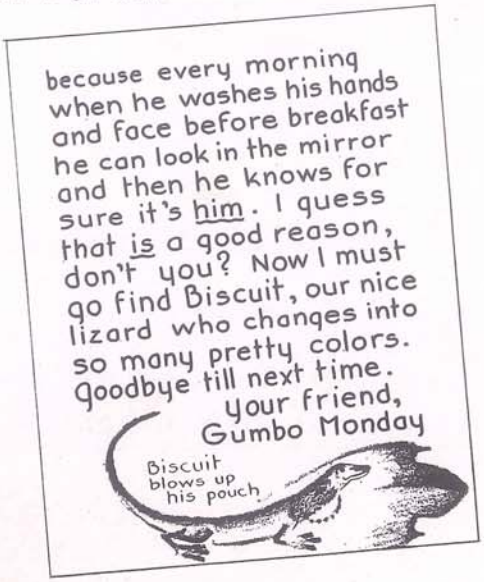
(And a picture of a bow was appended.—Editor.)

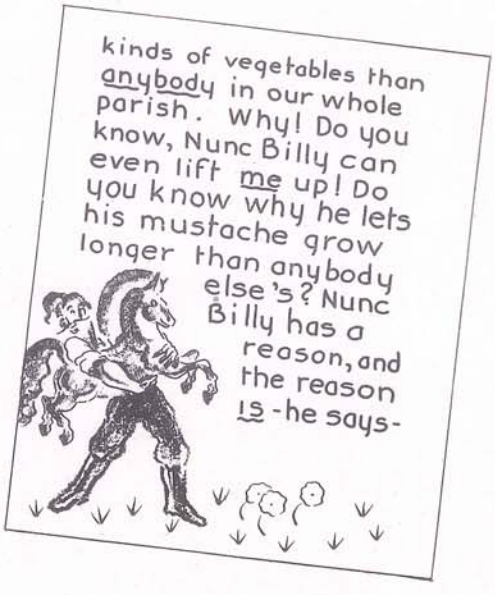
Gumbo Monday's place in the general scheme of things seems definitely established, at least by one little boy in Marion, South Carolina: "Dearest Gumbo Monday," he wrote, "I love you, I love you more than Santa Claus."

Reproduced here are four of the weekly letters which Gumbo Monday writes and mails to his little friends. Nor is interest in these warm, human letters limited to youngsters either—for even the grown-ups like to get them!







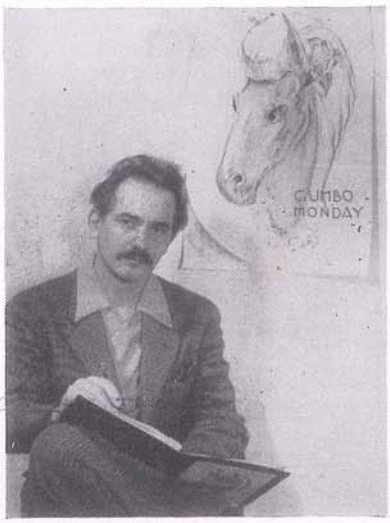


Gumbo Monday writes to his little friends of simple, daily events; he goes wading in the bayou to cool off; he makes his bed out of Spanish Moss; he rides a ferry boat with Poco, Perro and Chaton; he crosses the State Line in a trailer (which Nunc Billy built especially for him) but he is very disappointed to find that there isn't actually any State LINE at all, at least if there *was* one he didn't see it. He writes of how Tou-cou-tou, the mockingbird, explains why he can meow like a kitten but cannot bark like a dog. "For," says Tou-cou-tou, "there are plenty of little cat-birds but there aren't any little dog-birds." Of course, Tou-cou-tou can only mock what there *is*—and never what there *isn't*. Life in and around the bayous seems so much simpler as Gumbo Monday explains many of the things which have heretofore been so inexplicable.

Gumbo Monday writes these letters in sets of eight and sends some little gift or memento with each set of letters. For a little pony, Gumbo Monday travels a great deal, and each set of letters is written during one of his visits. For example, one set of letters was written while he was in Florida visiting his friends, Pretzel, the Flamingo; Dulcet, the most beautiful of all tiny deers, and the Porpoise. Another set of letters came from Mexico where, as Gumbo Monday expressed it, "I learned to speak Spanish—that is, a wee bit" and where he was surprised to find that "Poco," the name of his little playmate, actually means "little" in Spanish. From such remarks as this people are inclined to believe "Nunc" Billy is a true Cajun, and maybe the uncle of Poco, who they suggest, is probably a Spanish Creole. But, the really important question, that is, from what stock Gumbo Monday derives, has yet to be answered. Maybe one day he will tell us!

Almost every letter Gumbo Monday writes is in a different color of ink, and on different colored paper. Gumbo Monday seems to know just what really pleases children. The children particularly love to receive letters written and mailed directly to them. Gumbo Monday sends off his letters once a week, although one sick little boy, who lives not far from Barataria, received his letters every day because he was so sick. He was asked how Gumbo Monday knew he was sick. "Oh, that was easy for Gumbo Monday," said the little boy, "Tou-cou-tou told him!"

Note: Undoubtedly many readers will want to know how they can get Gumbo Monday to write letters to them or to little friends of theirs. If you wish more information regarding "Gumbo Monday's letters" just send a postcard to Jefferson Parish Yearly Review, P. O. Box 1703, Zone 11, New Orleans, La.



WILLIAM F. LOCKWOOD

Wm. F. Lockwood, alias "Nunc" Billy, is the creator of Gumbo Monday. He tells us that in the creation of these increasingly popular letters, he has found the fulfillment of a long-standing urge to write and illustrate fiction for children. His writings up until this time have been non-fictional and include a syllabus for the creative education of children in Louisiana. An artist of national reputation, he has painted many murals in Louisiana, Florida and New York. Mr. Lockwood is at work at present, on a mural to be placed in one of the oldest buildings in the Vieux Carre, New Orleans. He was the Rockefeller Foundation Fellow in Art Education 1939-1940. Having spent ten years teaching art in universities he is now devoting his full time to painting and kindred creative work.

CAMERA COUNTERPOINT

Photographs by
EUGENE DELCROIX
Text by
TILDEN LANDRY

ROADS FOR
THE ROVER
thread the picturesque
countryside, weaving
through romantic
moss-hung groves,
along cool streams,
into a hunters'
and fishermen's
paradise

HAVEN FOR HOMEMAKERS

. . . in a simple cottage garden or the acres of a broad estate - - - peace and plenty, leisure for living, world-famous scenery right in your front yard

THE
MARKSMAN
here finds
high adventure
a few steps from
his own front porch,
after a cooling
summer
shower

THE
SAILOR
- - - whether he be six
or sixty - - -
delights in
myriad streams that
mark the map
like
liquid lace

SHIMMERING
MOONLIGHT
sprinkles smooth water
with silver
in the deep peace
of a night
made for
quiet companionship

SPARKLING
SUNLIGHT
dances across
the bayous
on mellow mornings
made for
outdoor activities
- - - all the
year round

THE BEACH IS BOUNTIFUL on Grand Isle . . . collecting driftwood is an ancient trade. Carts like this were the island's only vehicles in Grandpère's day

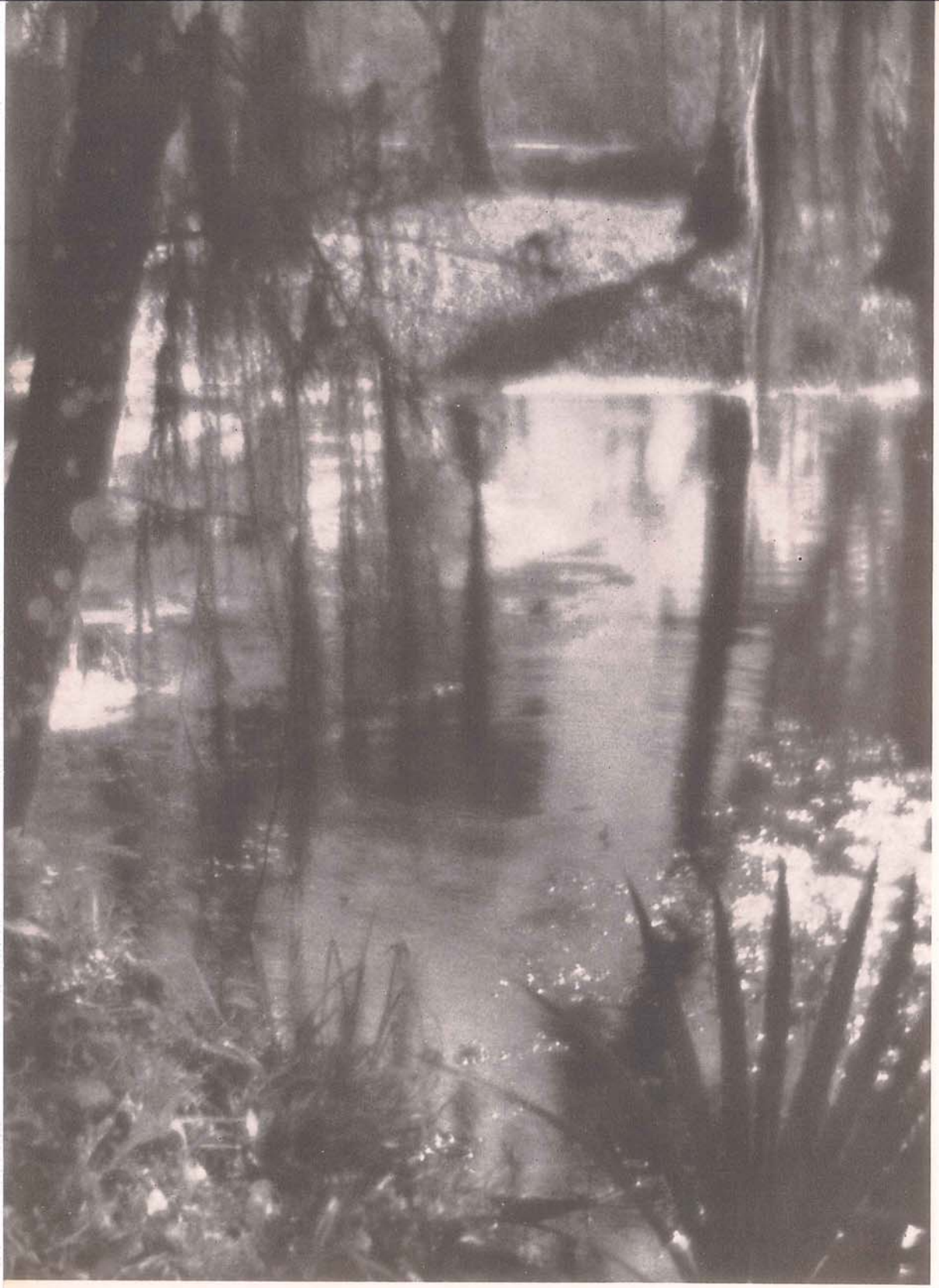
THE LANES
ARE LOVELY
shaded trails
that
bring beauty
to the eye
and make melodies
in the
memory

EVERYTHING
GROWS
with gusto
in the eager earth
of this
fertile parish.
Corn, cane
and many crops
flourish
in fabulously
rich soil

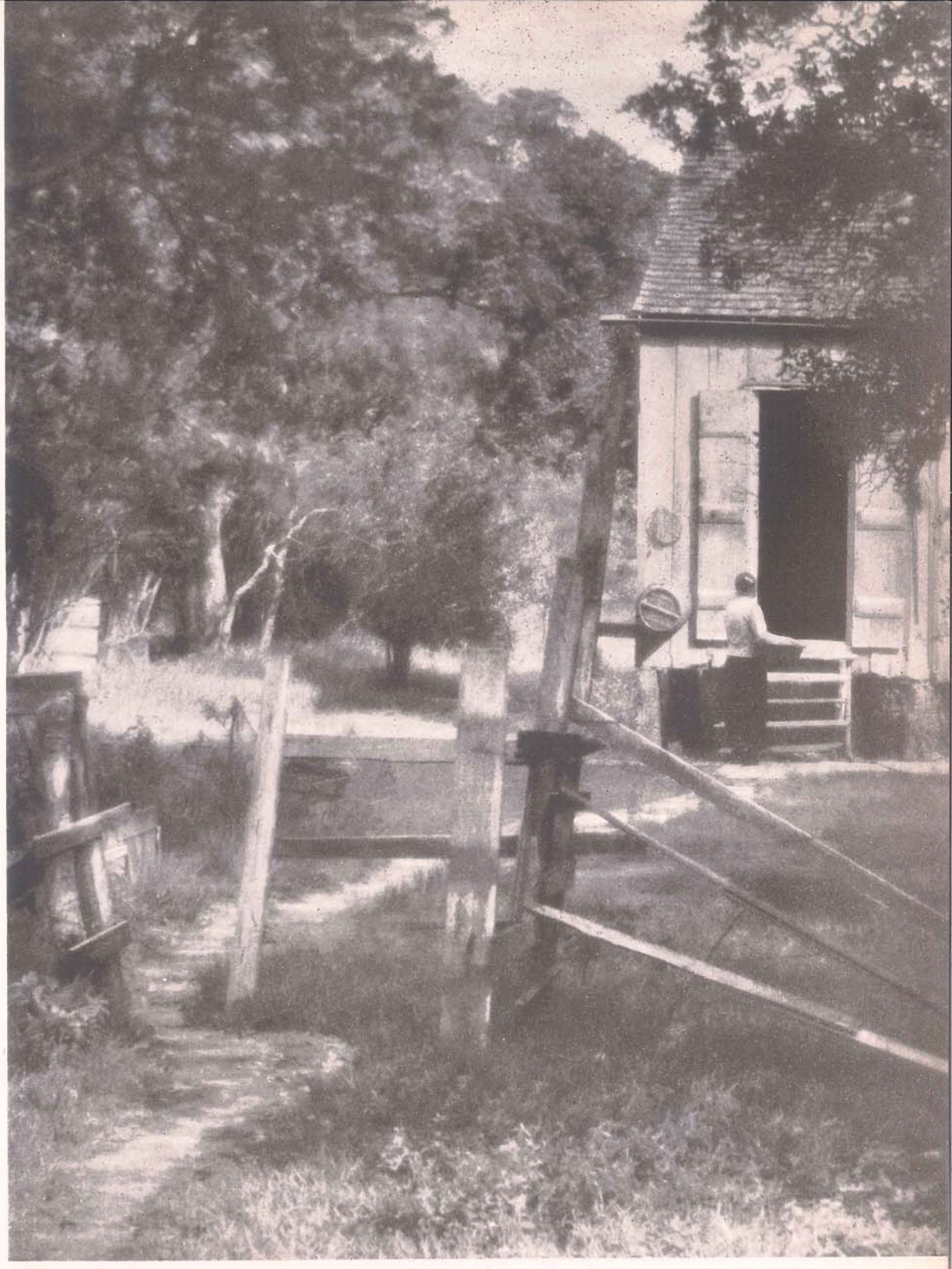
PEACEFUL
PASTORAL
pictures
come to life
at every
stream's edge,
at every
day's end,
when the herds
turn homeward

GAIETY beckons on the breeze-blown borders of the Spanish Main, where boisterous buccaneers lived not so long ago.

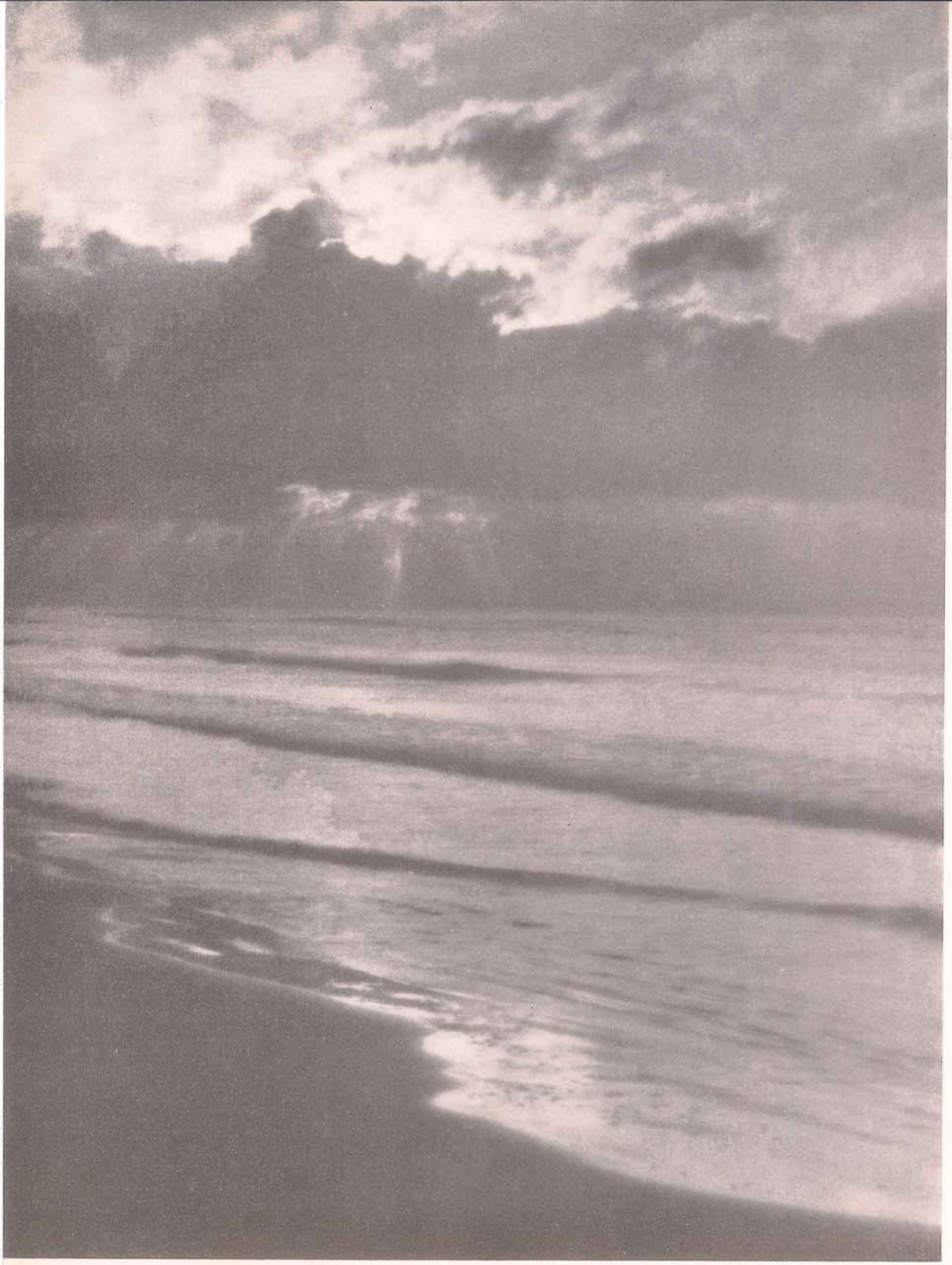
MYSTERY broods over gaunt and battered trees that clutch at the clouds, limbs writhing in a weird witch-waltz.



EXCITEMENT . . . beautiful, wild swamps, unchanged since long before the white man came, cover mile upon untracked mile - - - a challenge to man's exploring spirit.



SERENITY . . . over many a friendly fence you see
life lived at an easy pace. The Spring of other climes
comes here to spend a part of winter, a part of summer.



THIS IS A LAND of promise. Good to look upon, good to live in,
a place for planning and building and growing . . . where
a man can take hold of tomorrow and make it his own.

FEDERAL, STATE AND DISTRICT OFFICIALS

Hon. James H. Davis, Governor of the State of Louisiana

Reading from top to bottom: Hon. Allen J. Ellender, United States Senator from Louisiana; Hon. John H. Overton, United States Senator from Louisiana; Hon. J. Emile Verret, Lieutenant Governor, State of Louisiana; Hon. Paul H. Maloney, Member of Congress, Second Louisiana Congressional District; and Hon. Alvin T. Stumpf, Louisiana State Senator, Tenth Senatorial District.

PARISH OFFICIALS

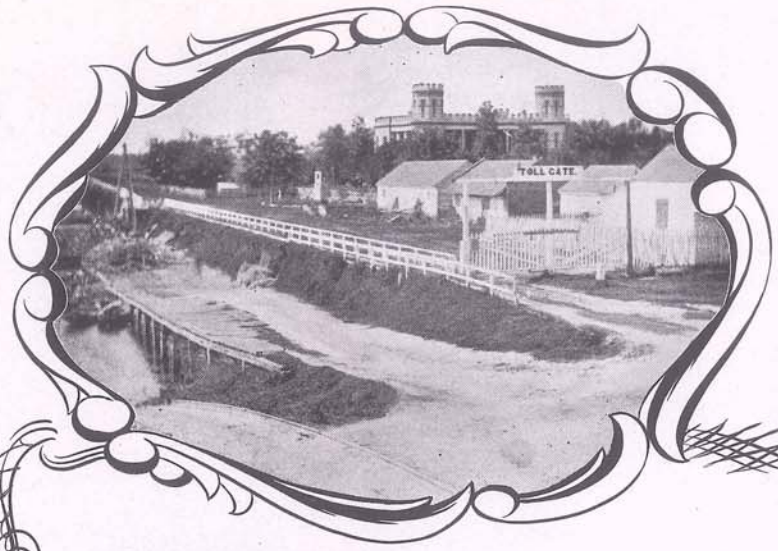
Hon. Frank J. Clancy, Sheriff

Reading from top to bottom: Hon. Vic A. Pitre, Clerk of Court; Hon. Vernon J. Wilty, Assessor; Hon. James E. Beeson, State Representative; Dr. Charles F. Gelbke, Coroner; Hon. Edward M. Thomassie, President Pro-Tem., Police Jury; and Hon. Weaver R. Toledano, President, Police Jury.

Right center: Hon. A. T. Higgins, of Jefferson Parish, Associate Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court. Top row, 24th Judicial District Court officials, left to right: Hon. L. Robert Rivarde, Judge; Hon. John E. Fleury, District Attorney; and Hon. Leo W. McCune, Judge.

COURT OFFICIALS

Below left to right: Hon. E. Howard McCaleb, of Jefferson Parish, Judge of the Court of Appeals; Hon. Frank H. Langridge and Hon. L. Julian Samuel, Assistant District Attorneys, 24th Judicial District Court.



In the background of this old photograph can be seen the Castle which Captain Joseph Harvey built for his young wife, Louise Destrehan. In the foreground is a portion of the intricate affair rigged up, prior to the building of the locks, which transported, via tracks, big and little boats across the levee from canal to river.

PICTURE from the PAST

BY MRS. KATHERINE HARVEY ROGER

Wherein a daughter of Horace Hale Harvey takes you on a trip down Memory Lane

FEW people realize that the history of Harvey runs back to within a few years of the founding of New Orleans. In fact, I doubt if there is any part of the first Crescent City that is as old as Harvey's Canal, or d'Estrehan's Canal, as it was first called.

Those who never knew Harvey as a one family dominated feudal estate accept it for what it is today—the modern and comparatively new government-owned and operated eastern and New Orleans terminal for the thousand mile long, Louisiana and Texas Intracoastal Canal system.

Even I, who was a part of that earlier era and knew that five generations of my ancestors had spent vast sums to lay a groundwork for this Intracoastal Waterway, might believe with them from the total lack of old landmarks, that the town had no further background than the present Harvey shows.

But I listened avidly to my grandmother's and my father's (the late Horace Hale Harvey) stories of earlier years and earlier ancestors. In my own childhood, the deserted castle was my playhouse; its gardens, the town, the canal, the river levee and its batture my playground. Otherwise, I too, might have been lulled into forgetfulness of all that past from the up-to-date appearance of the present day Harvey.

It all began with Jean Baptiste d'Estrehan de Tour, who, in wig, satins, laces and jewels, landed in this new colony to set up an establishment on his grant of land from the King of France. On the west bank of the Mississippi River he laid out an indigo plantation. Then he dug in 1724, with slave labor, a canal to drain his vast lands, starting it just inside the Mississippi river bank and running it six miles southward to Bayou Ousha, or Barataria, as it was later called.

Later he turned his indigo plantation to sugar cane and experimented at granulating sugar. But it was his son-in-law Etienne de Bore, on the plantation that d'Estrehan had given one of his daughters as a wedding dowry, who was the first to successfully granulate sugar and revolutionize the industry of the South.

D'Estrehan had a number of other establishments but spent most of his time in his colonial home on the upper bank of the Canal and at his place in St. Charles parish (where Destrehan is today). Political opponents wrote of him to the King of France: d'Estrehan is too powerful a man and too rich for the good of the country," and asked for his recall to France.

His older children married and comfortably established on plantations of their own he went back to France for an interval. One son, Jean Noel d'Estrehan de Beaupre, remained at Harvey, or Cosmopolite City, as he named it. De Beaupre played an active and important part in Louisiana's early colonization. But his home, his plantation and his canal were his chief interests. After the Louisiana Purchase his name was put up as candidate for Louisiana's first governor. Though he made no personal campaign, he finished second. Named as one of the two first United States Senators from Louisiana he declined saying, "I am too busy with my own affairs." Some of his friends and most of his enemies doubted that excuse and his lack of interest in the gubernatorial race on the ground that "d'Estrehan's heart and his loyalty still belongs in France."

In 1737 he enlarged the canal to the proportions of a full size canal. German settlers who dug its full six miles with wooden shovels received as pay portions of d'Estrehan's land in what is now Gretna.

Jean Noel's son, the dashing, handsome, Nicholas Noel Destrehan—as the name had evolved—became heir to the original grant over the river. He married Victorine Fortier, who died, leaving him childless. His second wife was Louise Henriette de Navarre.

Nicholas Noel built a home, so handsome and expensive that legend says it was roofed with gold dollars. It was started as a home but with his second wife's death, who left him with four small children, he turned it into a museum, travelling abroad for works of art to fill it. Eventually it burned to the ground with everything in it completely destroyed.

Nicholas Noel's oldest child was Louise, my grandmother. There were two other daughters, Adela and Eliza. The youngest child was a son whom Destrehan wanted to name differently from any other man's son on earth. So he coined a name by taking the first letter of the alphabet and the last, the next to the first and the next to the last—thus achieving the name of Azby for his son. But the Catholic priest, christening this son, insisted that the baby be given a saint's name too. They finally compromised with Peter. Peter Azby. "For church purposes only," Destrehan heatedly told the holy man.

Destrehan was a man of unusual ideas. He was a student of the stars, studying the heavens from an improvised observatory atop his "golden roof." He worked out a calendar, figured decimally; ten months to the year, ten days to the week, ten hour days and so on. The original plan and drawings for this was one of the valuable family papers destroyed by fire at Harvey. He designed a clock to go with the calendar but no one but Grandma ever saw the diagram of it.

Not all of Destrehan's ideas however were visionary. In his yard he built a miniature kitchen and washroom fitted out as completely as were those rooms in the big house. A retired old mammy was put in charge to teach his little girls all the duties of running a house and to learn, by practice, the menial work of their servants. Louise and Adele took to it willingly but Eliza hated every small task, flatly refusing to scrub when her turn came. She screamed and stomped her pretty foot. Hearing the racket inside the children's house, her father hurried across the yard to investigate and found Eliza in a tantrum. "What is this Eliza?" he asked severely.

"I won't scrub, Pa-Pa! I won't, I won't!"

Dedication ceremonies of the first successful Harvey Locks in 1907 which Horace Hale Harvey carried to completion and which his mother did not live to see.

"Yes you will scrub, Eliza. Now get down on your knees and scrub that floor." And with tears mingling with the hot soapy water, Eliza scrubbed—while her handsome, stern father stood over her.

Early in life Nicholas Noel lost an arm, amputated after his *capeau*, a cape with hood-like sleeves, had caught in a piece of sugar house machinery and dragged his arm in with it. After that, in signing his name, he always added "maimed." Like this—"Destrehan: maimed."

The Destrehans were life long friends of the Chouteau's, the founders of St. Louis, and when marketing their sugar crops up the river the Destrehans, especially Nicholas Noel, always visited with them in St. Louis.

Throughout their early years old mammies cared for the children. But as they grew, the school problem arose and Nicholas Noel took Mrs. Chouteau's oft repeated advice to put them in the Sacred Heart Convent in St. Louis where she could keep a motherly eye on them. Once there, they became the particular charges of the retired Mother Duchan, founder of that order in America. For Azby, Destrehan employed a tutor.

On her return from school Louise became her father's assistant and correspondent. At sixteen she was married to Joseph Hale Harvey, over twice her age and whom she had only met at her father's dinner table. One day her old mammy called Louise in from the garden to don a beautiful new outfit her father had lately bought her. "But why dress now Aunt Airy?" she asked her old mammy.

"Yo Pa says so, honey."

"But where am I going?" she insisted.

"I dunno honey," the old woman said gloomily.

"Where in the world am I going in this outfit Aunt Airy?" demanded Louise.

"Honey, yo' Pa kin kill me but I gotta tell yo'! Tite Louise you gonna git married!"

"Married! To whom Aunt Airy?" the stunned Louise asked.

"To that handsome, red headed, talkin', Virginie sea cap'n, thas' who!"

And that is how Louise married Captain Joseph Harvey, the man of her father's choice. For her dowry she received the canal and the lands around it. With her money, her husband built for her a medieval, two turreted baronial castle patterned from a faded old picture of his grandfather's and great-uncle's home in Scotland.

There are many true tales told of this once adventuresome sea captain, descendant of a long line of Scottish Dukes, and of his young wife, Louise, when they lived in the castle over the river. I've chosen two that always amused me. I'll tell both in my father's own words.

He said, "My Mother and Father (Louise and Joseph Harvey) spent their honeymoon in Havana and while there Pa thought he had sprained his big toe—but later he discovered it was gout.

"There were times," Papa continued, "it was so painful he would sit with his foot heavily bandaged and saturated in liniment, propped up on a chair

in front of him and Aunt Eliza, long years after, said she only remembered him dressed in some elaborate house robe. But Pa wasn't always in silk kimonas and nursing his gout. He was often host to large dinner parties, or out on his boat playing poker, or at his club or the hotel in New Orleans for a few days of relaxation.

"After his father-in-law's death, Captain Joseph Harvey changed the canal and the town's name to Harvey. He built two fine boats, the 'Lafitte' and the 'St. Nicholas' to open up freight lines to the Gulf of Mexico and the Baratarias and he constructed an intricate affair to transfer boats over the levee from the canal and into the river, or vice versa. Later he set about building a lock to open the canal into the river, using a design his father-in-law had worked out. The locks failed, not because of faulty design, but because they had been built on a hidden quicksand bed.

"All this time Pa was suffering with gout, so bad at times he couldn't walk. And so grouchy and cross that all his children but me (for I was his personal companion) were scared to death of him.

"My brother Nick had an inventive mind and was always experimenting with something or other. Some of his ideas were good, or would have been, if he had carried them to completion. Years later many of his theories were successfully worked out by other people.

"About the time Pa was spending most of his time in a chair nursing his gout, Nick figured that baking might be good for it, seeing that heated flannels gave him relief. So he rigged up a tent with an alcohol lamp in it and when he had got it working he approached Pa, saying: 'Pa, I've found something I believe will relieve your gout pains. Would you care to try it?'

" 'I'll try anything once for this damn, damn gout,' Pa growled.

"So Nick brought in the tent-like contraption and the entire household gathered around Pa in the large drawing room on the first floor. Nick carefully lifted Pa's bandaged foot inside the tent. When the tent flap was tightly shut and the lamp lit it began to warm up his foot and Pa looked pleased. 'Nick,' he said, 'that makes my foot feel mighty good.' And he lay back in his comfortable chair to relax.

"Suddenly the whole thing blew up and the next I remember Pa was chasing Nick with his cane, and running on both feet too. And Ma and the servants and all of us children were racing around trying to get outside or out of Pa's and Nick's way as they went 'round and 'round the room—and Nick was having a terrible time out-running Pa.

"You see when the lamp burned out all the oxygen in the tent, the thing exploded. A factor which Nick hadn't taken into consideration.

"Now what happened in the next story," Papa said, "made Charles Gayarre, who was a relative, mighty provoked with Ma, though Ma hadn't

Despite the age of this old photograph this view clearly shows the early Harvey Locks. In the upper right hand corner can be seen a portion of the fabulous Harvey Castle.

done a thing. It was me. I had been riding fish all one day and the story somehow traveled to Paris. By the time Gayarre visited France it had reached fantastic proportions. Wherever he went Gayarre was questioned about Louise Destrehan's children, who had to ride to school on fish because the only roads in Louisiana were bayous.

" 'Now Louise,' the gentle little historian protested to her on his return, 'that was too much, subjecting me to denying such a story. It's that adventuresome husband of yours that has given you such impossible children!'

"When Pa heard that he roared with laughter. You see, a crevasse had backed so much water into the canal and the lowlands that it filled a wide deep drainage ditch not so far behind the Castle grounds. One evening a little colored boy and I stood watching big buffalo fish swimming through the ditch and under a fence—which gave me an idea and I told my playfellow to meet me there next morning at daylight.

"Well sir," Papa added, "we rode fish all day long. We'd get up on the fence and drop down astride a big buffalo's back when he passed, hanging on for dear life while he wiggled and shook like a bucking bronco. We'd ride some of them forty or fifty feet up the ditch while others shook us off as soon as we dropped astride them. Shaken off we'd climb the bank and run back to the fence for another ride, for the buffalo fish came through there that day in a steady stream.

"Too dark to see them anymore I went home and crept up the back stairway of the castle to the nursery and crawled into bed, hungry, cold, wet and worn out. When Ma found me I was burning up with fever and all but died during the spell of typhoid pneumonia that set in."

Still a young woman when her husband died at their town house in New Orleans, Louise moved back to take charge of her neglected interests over the river. She built a modern raised cottage in the front corner of the Castle garden—for she had no inclination to open the Castle again, preferring a simple life. Only Horace and Robert were with her now—the rest were married and in homes of their own.

A tour of inspection of her property always started her days. Dressed in heavy rich silk, one of the few luxuries she still clung to, she would walk up and down the canal, inspect the brickyard, the levee and the galleried brick store buildings, returning home to sit in the dining room whose windows overlooked the canal and the ferry landing, for the balance of the day. To her here, came her business world and her family. Louise was small, soft spoken and with little to say that wasn't necessary. What she did say was final. "Ma's word" or "Mrs. Harvey's word" was never questioned.

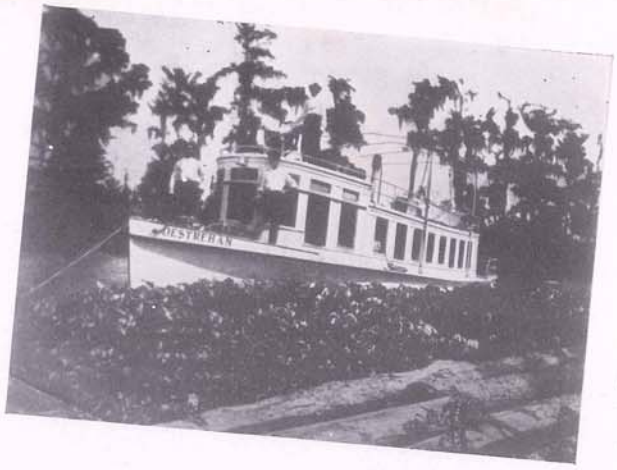
Well over 70 she started the most important undertaking of her life as the leader of the Destrehan-Harvey faction that was to build locks that would open up the narrow mud barrier separating the slow, sluggish canal water from what was often a wild, terrifying giant of a river.

When the great new lock was well on its way, Mrs. Harvey daily climbed down into the deep muddy excavation here a pile driver hammered long timber piling deep into the earth.

Death cheated her from completing them, though she would never have thought of it in that light. She had started them . . . that was all that was important. The destiny of the canal had progressed without a lapse throughout four generations before her and she knew it would keep on progressing.

On November 15, 1903, while the warm sunlight shone bright over her beloved Harvey, its little leader, who had earned the title of one of the smartest business women of her time, lay quietly dying in her oversized canopied bed. Just before the last she begged her sons, Henry, Willie, Horace and Robert—for Nick was already dead—to carry her out on the canal bank so that she could look on her canal and the lock under construction once more. But her request came too late for she was already dying.

With her death—and Robert's soon afterward—the lock construction stood at a standstill until a working arrangement was made to please all family



Above: Captain Horace Hale Harvey's yacht the "Destrehan" which was a familiar and often anxiously awaited sight to the bayou people who loved him.
Left: The raised cottage, now falling to pieces, which Mrs. Harvey built and lived in on the "Castle" grounds while she supervised the building of the locks.

factions. Henry P. Dart, the only outsider who ever owned any of the family land, was made president and legal advisor. Horace was put in full charge as secretary, treasurer and manager. With firm sure hands, an imaginative mind, and unquestioned ability, he picked up where his mother had left off and quickly proved that the Destrehan-Harvey affairs were again in the hands of a leader. With the management of the lands and canal went a kind of parenthood toward the feudal grant of his forefathers and to Horace the people of Harvey and the Baratarias now came for help and advice.

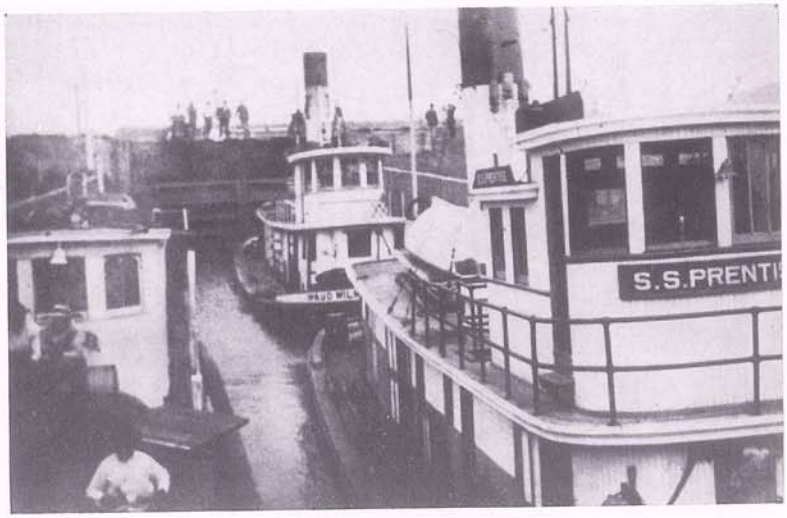
He was small, slight, restless and quick of foot, calm of disposition and with the soft voice of his mother. The urban Horace Harvey was always immaculately dressed, and in his later years jauntily carried a cane. But as M'Sieur Ho'rass, the "Little Father of the Baratarias," shirt tail hanging out of rough dried pants, barefooted and wearing a wide straw hat tied under his bearded chin, he was in his native element.

Through long hard years of effort in Louisiana and Washington in the interests of southern waterways in general, and his canal in particular, Horace Harvey persisted with the same singleness of purpose as his forefathers and his mother. In 1924 the Intracoastal became a reality when the U. S. Government bought Harvey Canal, the first link in the chain that will one day reach from the Rio Grande to Boston as a safe, inland waterway.

Ten years later, the lock was completed and with enough Generals of the U. S. Army Engineers present to carry on a small war, not only was the new lock and the canal honored but so was the family who had first brought them into being—and the small, quiet man, the last of the family leaders who brought the canal to completion.

Not many years later, within sight and sound of his beloved canal and almost where the long evening shadows of the old Harvey Castle once fell, Horace Harvey died. The newspapers said, "Full of accomplishment he went to his reward. But for the fact that he was too honest a soul, and too much devoted to the cause, to think of self, he could have enjoyed during his latter years, the consciousness that his memory would live though his body died . . . His life work has been of extraordinary value to this state . . . The future will rightfully appraise him as one of the seers and prophets of the economic development that it will enjoy . . . "

It was a newspaper writer, who, following a great hurricane in 1915, first called Horace Harvey the "Little Father of the Baratarias." He wrote, " 'M'sieur Ho'rass! Oh, M'sieur Ho'rass—heah we is. C'mon mes enfants M'sieur Ho'rass is heah wid som'n t'eat. Y-a-as, I bet you dat,' the Baratarians said when they saw the headlight of Horace Harvey's big power yacht flashing here and there on the tall marsh grass bordering the bayous—and indeed the 'Little Father of the Baratarias' was with them, following hard on the heels of

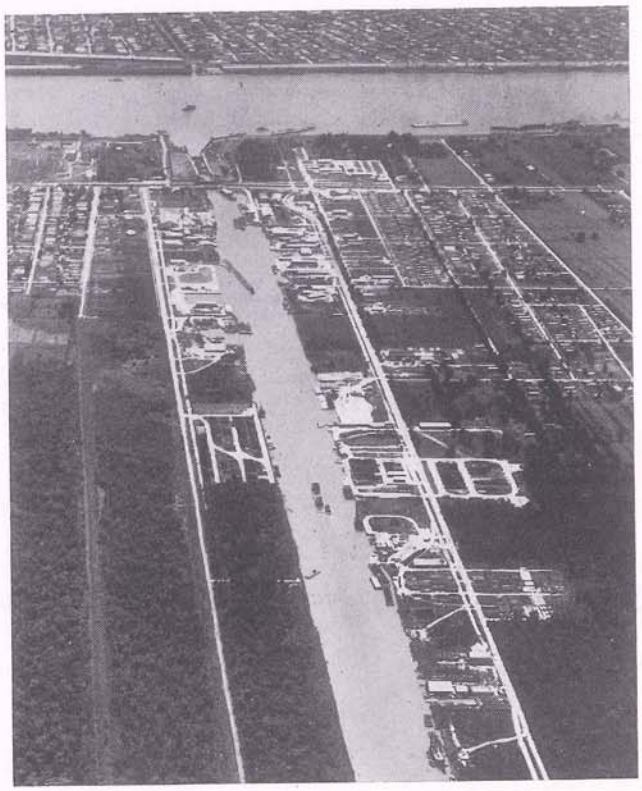


Taken from a faded old photograph made in 1907, this shows some of the tugs which, during the storm on September of that year, anchored in the Harvey Canal Locks. 1907 was the same year the locks were first put into successful operation.

the great gale, even before it had blown out. M'sieur Ho'rass, canal builder, business man, philanthropist, guide, philosopher and friend of the untutored Baratarians throughout all that wide labyrinth of bayous, lakes and lagoons, marshes, islands and chenieres between Harvey's Canal and Grand Isle—known generically as the Barataria country."

Long before Horace Harvey died the original Destrehan family blood had been much thinned out through the process of marriage. But the "old timers" like myself hold tight to our memories of that first town of Harvey. And sometimes in nostalgic mood I mull over small forgotten happenings . . . the memory of a little child in high top shoes, cream colored cashmere dress, poke bonnet to match with a half wreath of sweetheart roses under it, lining a shiningly happy face because she was going to the city with Papa and Mama. Papa in a fashionable suit of tight, tight pants and short skirted coat and wearing the prettiest gray derby his little girl had ever seen. Mama in an hour glass dress with sweeping skirt of striped silk. The three hurrying beneath tall magnolia trees and waving banana leaves to cut across to the wide dusty river road and climb the levee embankment to a small pontoon wharf where the ferry—old Adams' skiff—was waiting to take them over the river.

Or the memory of the wild, long-horned Tucapaws cattle that periodically stampeded through Harvey. We knew they were coming by sounds on the wind of fast pounding hoofs, the pistol-like cracking of long whips and the whoops and howls of cowboys on wild Texas ponies, driving them from the Tucapaw country to the slaughter house pens in New Orleans. Everyone hearing that unmistakable sound of quick riding danger ran madly for shelter. From our perch on Grandma's high raised gallery behind a stout wooden fence,



This aerial photograph of the Harvey Canal as it looks today shows how the Destrehan-Harvey dreams have been fulfilled.

we watched them sweep by for none of us would have missed that sight for the world. Always the stampeding cattle left a trail of wrecked fences and small houses . . . and sometimes death to those who were caught in their path. Once the Tucapaws ran through the corner barroom in Grandma's brick building across the canal. And all of Harvey could hear bottles and glass being smashed to bits.

Not long ago, leaving the ferry at Harvey a feeling of nostalgia for the past came over me. I stood looking out over the country-side for something, besides the canal, to pin my memories to. Nothing at all of my remembered childhood was there. Then I listened, but no sound from the past came to me out of the present. Then I sniffed, for surely one of those many crowding sweet smells of the long ago would be lingering somewhere, to reach me now.

I wanted so badly, that day, to get just one whiff of that air of my childhood which had been so overpoweringly heavy and sweet each spring with the smell of orange blossoms, or the pungent odor of those old magnolia flowers, or from jasmine or the overly perfumed butterfly lillies that grew in the border of Grandma's beautiful garden.

I stood there hoping for even a faint breath of the salty wet smell of the sea that used to be brought in with dripping fish and seafood on freight and sailing luggers from the Gulf to the head of Harvey's canal where they were unloaded twice a week for the city trade and seafood market. I sniffed hard, but none of it was left in the fresh, odorless breezes passing through this well ordered community of Harvey. Discouraged, but not disheartened at not being able to connect by sight, sound or smell with the past I lingered on the levee hoping that one stray, messy, smelly, dripping wagonload of fish or oysters would go by on its way to New Orleans.

But none came. The great heavy hand of time had passed over all this land that had belonged to us, leaving nothing of the past's landmarks behind. Gone even were those once hectic hours, when vehicles of every size and description came over twice a week from New Orleans and the surrounding parishes to Harvey, in advance of the fish fleet from the bayous and the Gulf. They came by ferry, and trailed in by road, to circle and jockey in a bedlam of confusion for places of vantage near the wharf where the bargaining took place. Loaded, they unwound in another flurry of confusion and noise, and went their ways, as they had come, dripping trickling streams of sea savoured liquid.

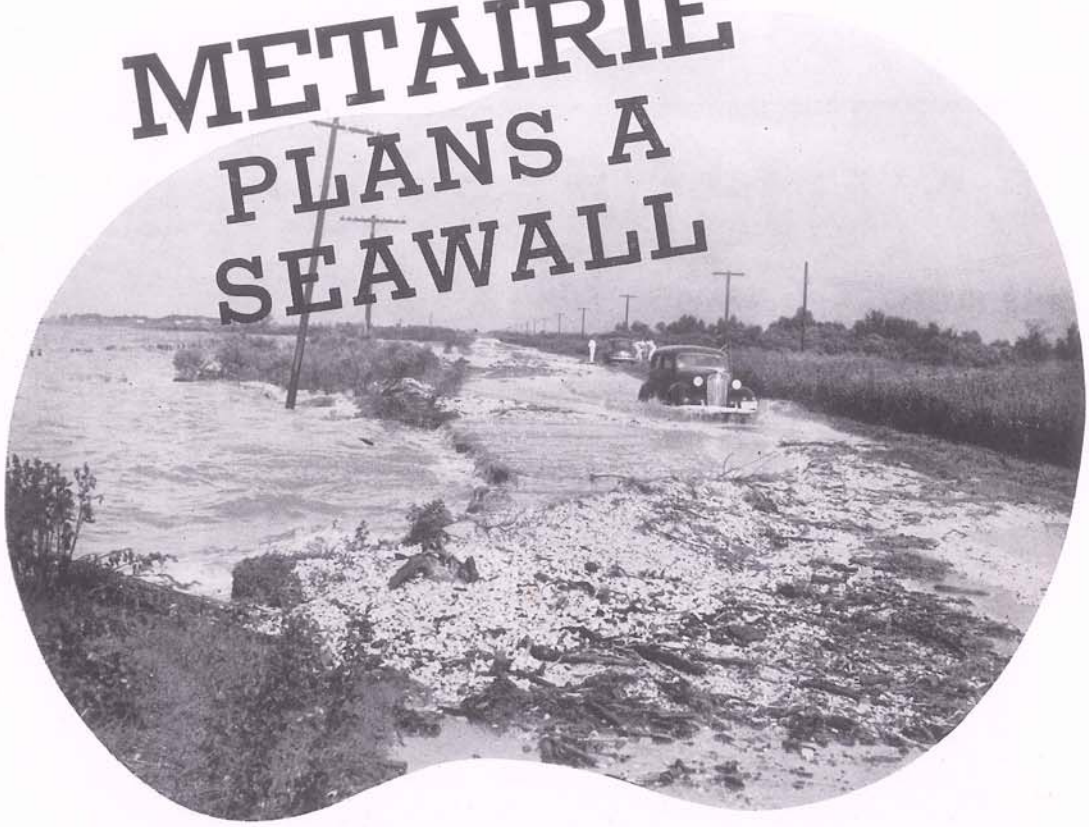
All that was gone now. All but the canal was gone in the cause of progress. From the changes I saw lying there below me in the crooks of the canal and the Mississippi levee banks I knew that the Harvey and the Canal of today had progressed even beyond the wildest dreams of all those old ancestors of mine, including Horace Harvey the "Little Father of the Baratarias."

And all traces of nostalgia for the past quickly slipped away from me.

MRS. KATHERINE HARVEY ROGER

Katherine Harvey Roger, the author of this charming and nostalgic story, is the direct descendant of the Destrehan-Harvey family, founders and builders of Louisiana who dreamed great dreams of the state's future. She is the daughter of Captain Horace Hale Harvey and the oldest of his eighteen children, having been born and raised in Harvey. A woman of prodigious energy and vitality, now that she has raised a sizeable family of her own, she is writing the biography of her father, "M'sieur Ho'rass" and the history of her family. Now a resident of Covington, she is most frequently found out-of-doors, either gardening or tramping through the woods to photograph the Louisiana countryside she loves so well.

METAIRIE PLANS A SEAWALL



By William J. Guste

YMBC PROJECTS PLANS TO PROTECT EAST JEFFERSON AREA FROM EROSION

"*JACQUES DE LA METAIRIE, Notary of Fort Frontenac in New France, commissioned to exercise the said function of Notary during the voyage to Louisiana, in North America, by M. de la Salle, Governor of Fort Frontenac for the King, and commandant of the said Discovery by the commission of his Majesty given at St. Germain, on the 12th of May, 1678.*

"To all those to whom these presents shall come, greeting:—Know, that having been requested by the said Sieur de la Salle to deliver to him an act, signed by us and by the witnesses therein named, of possession by him taken of the country of Louisiana, near the three mouths of the River Colbert, in the Gulf of Mexico, on the 9th of April, 1682.*

"In the name of the most high, mighty, invincible, and victorious Prince, Louis the Great, by the Grace of God, King of France and the Navarre, Fourteenth of that name, and of his heirs, and the successor of his crown, we, the aforesaid Notary, have delivered the said act to the said Sieur de la Salle, the tenor whereof follows."

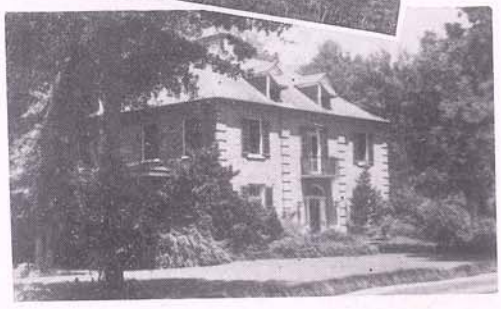
With such words was perpetuated in human memory the establishment of the great territory of Louisiana. Thus the first official document of this vast empire was prepared and executed. And thus from the very birth of Louisiana, the name of "Metairie" has been linked with its destiny.

Even as Jacques Metairie, after such preamble, continued with characteristic verbage in his "Proces Verbal" and expatiated at length on the virtues and values of the land to the north and west so appropriately, to the west of Louisiana's greatest city lies today the land of Metairie ready for an awakening of the greatest growth, development and progress of the metropolitan area of New Orleans.

*River Colbert was an early designation for the Mississippi River.

Showing how the flood waters can and do take huge bites from the unprotected lake shore.

The transmitter of 50,000-watt WWL is within the danger area, should Bonnet Carre's released waters run rampant.



This home in the Metairie Club Garden District (above) and even this home near the Huey P. Long Bridge (below) are both in the zone of needed protection.

The east bank of Jefferson Parish of which Metairie represents the prime part, comprises thirty thousand acres and is bounded on the east by the City of New Orleans, on the west by St. Charles Parish, on the north by Lake Pontchartrain, and on the south by the meandering banks of the Mississippi River. The distance from the parish line of New Orleans to that of St. Charles, running along Lake Pontchartrain, is ten miles. In this area, lies not only hundreds of millions of dollars of present wealth but what ultimately will be the richest and most outstanding development in the South.

New Orleans was established in 1718, thirty-five years after Jacques Metairie prepared his "Proces Verbal" at the mouth of the Mississippi. From that date on, its constant trend for residential or commercial expansion has been through the capturing within its borders of land areas to the *north and west.* The western wall of the early city (which we now term the Vieux Carre) running from Fort St. Louis at approximately Canal Street and the River to Fort Burgundy at approximately Canal St. and Rampart St. could not withstand the pressure for development of a community which controlled the gateway to the wealth and commerce of the Mississippi Valley. So the Grant of Gravier, the Jesuit plantation, the Faubourg Saint Marie, the city of Lafayette, Jefferson

Country homes and well kept properties, such as this on the Airline Highway, are also in the danger zone. Every foot of good land is valuable, and every foot should be retained and protected.

City, and Carrollton, all at one time separate and independent communities to the west of New Orleans were eventually taken within its borders.

How naive, is the statement in Norman's, "New Orleans and Environs" of 1845, where are explained the excursions of such date out of New Orleans. Here we read the following:

"Carrollton, a distance of six miles by the railroad, is an exceedingly pleasant resort. The line, for nearly a third of the way, passes through the suburbs of the city, and is dotted on either side with beautiful residences—the remainder passes through cultivated fields, pleasant pastures, and delightful woodlands. The road, like the country, is perfectly level, and kept in the finest condition. At the end of the route is situated the village; which is principally composed of tastefully built cottages, constructed in every variety of architecture that suited the individual fancy of the owner. Opposite the railroad depot, is one of the handsomest and most extensive public gardens, that is to be found in the vicinity of New Orleans. A race course is near by; and the strolls around are quite cheering to those who fly from the turmoil and dust of the metropolis."

Yet the pressure of metropolitan development gave way to all intervening obstacles. Standardized city planning and improved conditions, finally over came provincial and local prejudices as the city expanded in its uncontrollable growth.

It is little wonder then that the Young Men's Business Club of New Orleans with the vision and enthusiasm for constructive progress which it has always displayed, should have felt convinced that the interest of Metairie and the east bank of Jefferson Parish were but identical with the interests of present New Orleans, and that whether the future development of East Jefferson was to result in the expansion of the geographical borders of New Orleans proper or rather would be carried out through coordinated activities for the development of the general metropolitan area, East Jefferson and its hundreds of millions of dollars of presently invested wealth and its billions of potential wealth was a field to conjure the interest of any group which had the welfare of the present New Orleans at heart.

Early in 1942, the fact having been brought to the attention of the Club that as a result of high water in Lake Pontchartrain caused by the first opening of the Bonnet Carre Spillway and because of recurring storms since such time, the rear protection levee of East Jefferson, on which had been constructed the first link in the New Orleans-Hammond Lakeshore Highway, was being gradually destroyed, a committee was appointed by Emile L. Morvant, the then President of the Club.

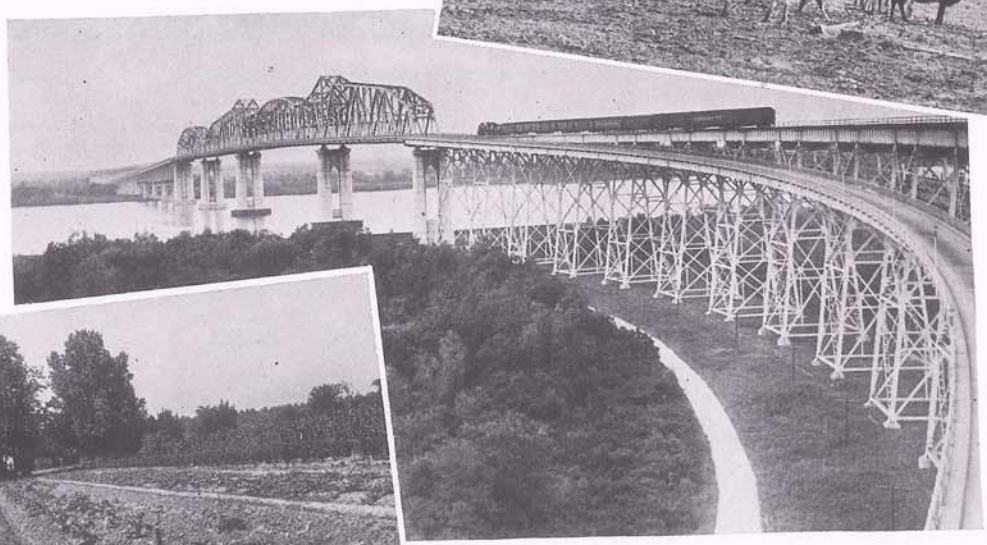
The committee named consisted of the following: James C. Kraus, chairman, Ben Abadie, Richard G. Drown, Jr., William J. Guste, John A. Ipser, Justin F. Bordenave and Willis A. Pellerin. This committee immediately commenced an intensive study of the entire problem involved relating to the needs of the area, the interests in jeopardy, the respective responsibilities of the governmental groups having jurisdiction, the cost of effective remedies, and the means of financing such costs. The studies of the committee revealed that a failure in the Jefferson Lakeshore levee would destroy millions of dollars of wealth in one of the richest sections of the state. The population of the area was well over 40,000 persons with over 13,000 individual tax payers and the actual value of homes and industries was well over one hundred million dollars. In the area was the newly constructed Moisant International Airport, having an extent of about twice the size of the most recent fields of Washington and New York, and possessing longer runways than any of the latest American airfields. In the area was the 50,000 watt radio transmitting station of WWL, possessing the South's greatest broadcasting coverage. In the area were millions of dollars invested in some of the South's most beautiful residences, a million dollar sewer system, a one and a half million dollar waterworks system; a two and a half million dollar drainage system, the eighteen hole golf courses with palatial club houses of the Colonial and Metairie Golf Clubs, both representing total assets of hundreds of thousands of dollars; the approaches to the Huey P. Long Bridge erected at a cost of

over $15,000,000; and traversing this section of Jefferson, the most modern of paved highways.

Aside from the opportunities of the future which irresistably appealed to their vision was the vast present worth of the area that was in Jefferson Parish.

Millions had been spent on the construction of the existing back levee. Since 1918 through the passage of Act 237 of the Legislative session of such year, the state had assumed the obligation of constructing and maintaining a modern road from Hammond to New Orleans, the route of which was later specifically defined in Act 95 of the extra session of 1921 as follows:

When the Spillway's millions of gallons raise Lake Pontchartrain, thousands of valuable cattle—and the vital placements of the Huey P. Long Bridge would be within the flood area, should present lake shore embankments give way.



Thousands of acres of cultivated land also lie in the path of the waters of a suddenly swollen Lake Pontchartrain should the present embankments collapse.

(Section 7—page 198) Route 33. Beginning at South Carrollton Avenue and New Basin Canal New Orleans, both sides of the New Basin Canal as far as the New Basin Canal to West End thence along the shore of Lake Pontchartrain, through La Branche, Ruddock, Stradder, Ponchatoula, Hammond, Amite, Kentwood, to a point on the Mississippi State line.

The various acts applicable stipulated the necessary cost of construction and maintenance of such road were to be provided through automobile licenses collected in the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, St. Charles, St. John, St. Tammany and Tangipahoa.

In 1922 an agreement between the 4th Jefferson Drainage District and the Louisiana State Highway Commission was entered into whereby the Drainage District and the Commission jointly contributed to the construction of a protection levee as a base for the Hammond-Lakeshore Highway in the section running through Jefferson Parish. At the completion of the hydraulic fill, the embankment was surfaced with clam shells and this offered temporarily a very excellent road along the shore. With the construction in 1933 of the Bonnet Carre Spillway which severed the embankment in St. Charles Parish for a distance of two miles, together with shifting attitudes of various state administrations, the Lakeshore-Hammond Highway met alternately with sup-

port and neglect so far as its completion was concerned west and north of Jefferson Parish, but the road in Jefferson which had been built was entirely usable and provided a necessary and valuable facility for that section of the Parish. It was the possibility of continued neglect which aroused the alarm of the Y. M. B. C. committee and which compelled the realization of the human as well as the financial disaster that would be produced unless proper safeguarding of the surface of the embankment as well as prevention of erosion from the lake was provided.

After completing its studies of factual conditions and its legal investigations to determine governmental responsibility, the Young Men's Business Club communicated with all public groups which might have any interests at stake and might in any respect be responsible under the circumstances. These included all parish political subdivisions, such as the Police Jury of the Parish of Jefferson, the 4th Jefferson Drainage District, the Pontchartrain Levee District, the Commissioners of the Sewerage District, and in addition the Mayor of the City of New Orleans, the Orleans Levee Board, State Highway Commission and other state officials, United States Senators and Congressmen, and the United States Board of Engineers.

As might have been expected, an unfortunate situation was revealed resulting from the reticence or failure of any such governmental groups to acknowledge responsibility in the situation. The local drainage district for example contended that the problem was one of flood control or erosion prevention and that by virtue of its agreement with the State Highway Commission, it was entitled to have the cost of levee protection provided by the State; the State Highway Commission on the other hand contended that the monies collected from the automobile licenses were earmarked for highway purposes and that prevention of lakeshore erosion was not a highway matter.

The problem was wrestled with in discussions with one group after another. Finally, through the assistance of the Congressional Representation in Washington and the development of a consciousness of impending danger on the part of interests concerned, a survey of the lakeshore conditions was made by the United States Engineers on the contention that the federal government was interested both from a flood control standpoint and because of

The Y.M.B.C. Committee which recommended the Metairie Seawall. Standing: Justin F. Bordenave, Ben Abadie, John Ipser, Willis Pellerin. Seated: Emile Morvant, James Kraus and Wm. J. Guste.

Golf greens, like the Englishman's lawn, are the result of years of care and careful grooming—and can be ruined in one uncontrolled sweep of flood waters.

the possibility of the area being affected through any further use of the Bonnet Carre Spillway. As a result of the survey, in the early part of 1945, the District Engineers proposed to the Board of Engineers in Washington the construction of an embankment upon the furnishing of certain local contributions. The Y. M. B. C. committee is now working along the lines of obtaining such local contributions from the governmental groups involved and of having the required conditions of the United States Engineers complied with. The carrying out of the proposed work will, for all times, provide a protection against the threatened hazards of flood and storm and will guarantee to East Jefferson the safety in such respect which New Orleans proper now enjoys.

In all its efforts and exertions the Y. M. B. C. committee has been confronted with repeated obstacles and difficulties, but it believes that it has progressed a long way in the development of proper interest in the importance of the problems entailed and the awakening of the consciousness of responsibility on the part of government groups.

Pending the construction of the proposed new embankment, it is the intention of the commmittee to keep close observation on the condition of the present levee and to obtain, as it did in the recent threat of the Bonnet Carre Spillway, this spring, full cooperation from all sources in furnishing necessary temporary protection until the permanent works can be eventually completed.

The Young Men's Business Club of New Orleans looks forward to East Jefferson as an area which, while thriving at present and deserving of all possible protection, has for the future a most glorious outlook of progress and development in which the people of New Orleans will undoubtedly share.

While unselfishly the Young Men's Business Club would, in the spirit of good neighbors, have been glad to cooperate in this important work to which they have turned their attention, nevertheless, the hopes of the future cannot escape attention and the goal of building the greatest of American Metropolitan Areas is a challenge which their vision, civic pride, industry and persistence compel them to accept.

WILLIAM J. GUSTE

Author of the preceding well told story of the proposed Seawall, is a senior member of the firm of Guste, Barnett and Redmann, attorneys at law. Mr. Guste is a graduate of Tulane "Magna Cum Laude" with the degree of B.A. and LL.D. A former president of the Young Men's Business Club, the most active and aggressive civic group in New Orleans, Mr. Guste has variously served as State Chairman of Emergency Relief Administration, Chairman of Civil Works Administration, and Vice-Chairman of Housing Authority of New Orleans. At present he is Chairman of New Orleans Department of Public Welfare, Member of Supreme Board of the Knights of Columbus, a Knight of St. Gregory and a member of Louisiana State and American Bar Associations.