JEFFERSON PARISH

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL

1947 YEARLY REVIEW

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JEFFERSON PARISH

Yearly Review

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

Kenner, La. 1947

STAFF

Publisher.....Justin F. Bordenave

Managing Editor and Business Manager....Joseph H. Monies

Associate Editor.....Ray M. Thompson

Associate Editor.....Margaret Baker

Associate Editor and Art Director.....Sue Thompson

OUR COVER

This is a reproduction of an oil painting made especially for our 1947 cover by Morris Henry Hobbs—and portrays Bayou Coquille, deep in the heart of Jefferson's bayouland. This was one of Jean Lafitte's favorite smuggling routes. And, there is a legend that, where it intersects with Bayou des Families—a favorite water crossroad in those days—the ghost of the pirate chieftain can be seen if you are there exactly at midnight when the moon is full.

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.

FEATURES

INTRODUCTION

Now We Can Go Fishing!

Here it is. A year's work. The 13th Annual Review of Jefferson Parish. Complete and finished.

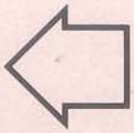
What took our writers days and weeks to uncover and discover, you can now learn in a few minutes.

Photographs that required months of patience to procure will pop up at you from the following pages—pleading for a few seconds of your attention.

In two hours you can absorb what it took us 365 days to prepare.

But when you read the amazing 1947 record of the Parish, when you realize from these pages that your parish of Jefferson will complete, at the end of this year, a $60,000,000 Industrial, Business and Residential Expansion Program—then all our work will be thoroughly justified in your pride in your own people.

So—good-bye 'til next year. Tomorrow we are going fishing. Grand Isle, of course. Where else in the world is there a finer place for a tired editor to recuperate for the 1948 Review?



With apologies to Robert Service:

"Deep within the heart of Jefferson they roam
For the call of the bayous is the call of home."

Lucky 13

By Weaver R. Toledano, President
Jefferson Parish Police Jury

This is the thirteenth issue of the Jefferson Parish Yearly Review—and the thirteenth consecutive year we have reported the progress of the parish to its people.

Contrary to the popular superstition, this 13th year in the Review's chronological history of Jefferson Parish is a VERY LUCKY YEAR.

1947 marks the peak of Jefferson's amazing post-war EXPANSION ERA. In this issue we are proud to report the completion or near completion of a long list of additions and improvements to the Parish, some of which have been under way since V-J Day.

Below are the details. But here, in an introductory sentence, is the essence of the story: For the last thirty months, both private enterprise and public interests have spent an average of $2,000,000 a month in Jefferson Parish—expanding its facilities to the extent of approximately 60 million dollars and strengthening mightily its accepted position as the most highly industrialized parish in Louisiana.

LET'S review, for a moment, the position of Jefferson Parish at the close of 1944 —before the war ended and before this 60 million dollar expansion program began.

Even then—Jefferson was recognized as a leading industrial and manufacturing center of the South. Its seven largest towns, occupying both banks of the Mississippi, are responsible for over half the goods manufactured in and shipped from the Port of New Orleans. Its still available, strategic acres are the answer to the future industrial growth of Greater New Orleans.

These seven towns are served by the Huey P. Long Bridge, the only bridge in the New Orleans area that crosses the Mississippi. They also are served by seven trunk line railroads, fast highways and the economically advantageous Intracoastal Waterway.

Here, in this concentrated industrial area, are now over 70 manufacturing plants, including the only Celotex plant of its kind in this country—the largest sugar cane syrup plant in the nation—the largest cottonseed products plant in the U. S. —and the largest shrimp canning plant in the world.

Through this great industrialized section, far-seeing economists have recommended the construction of New Orleans' proposed

short cut to the sea. Not only is Jefferson Parish the key to the existing manufacturing and shipping activities of Greater New Orleans, but its still unoccupied lands offer almost limitless sites for future factories and warehouses on both sides of this canal that would cut through it and give New Orleans its shortest and most economic all-weather connection with the commerce of the world.

Since the war, aware of its important location between the raw materials of Latin America, the South and Southwest and the inland markets of the United States, its existing and new industries have spent millions on buildings, machinery and improvements in preparation for the already increasing future business that will flow through and originate in Jefferson Parish.

The Celotex Corporation, world famous for its building products produced from Louisiana's native bagasse, has spent many millions in plant additions and new machinery.

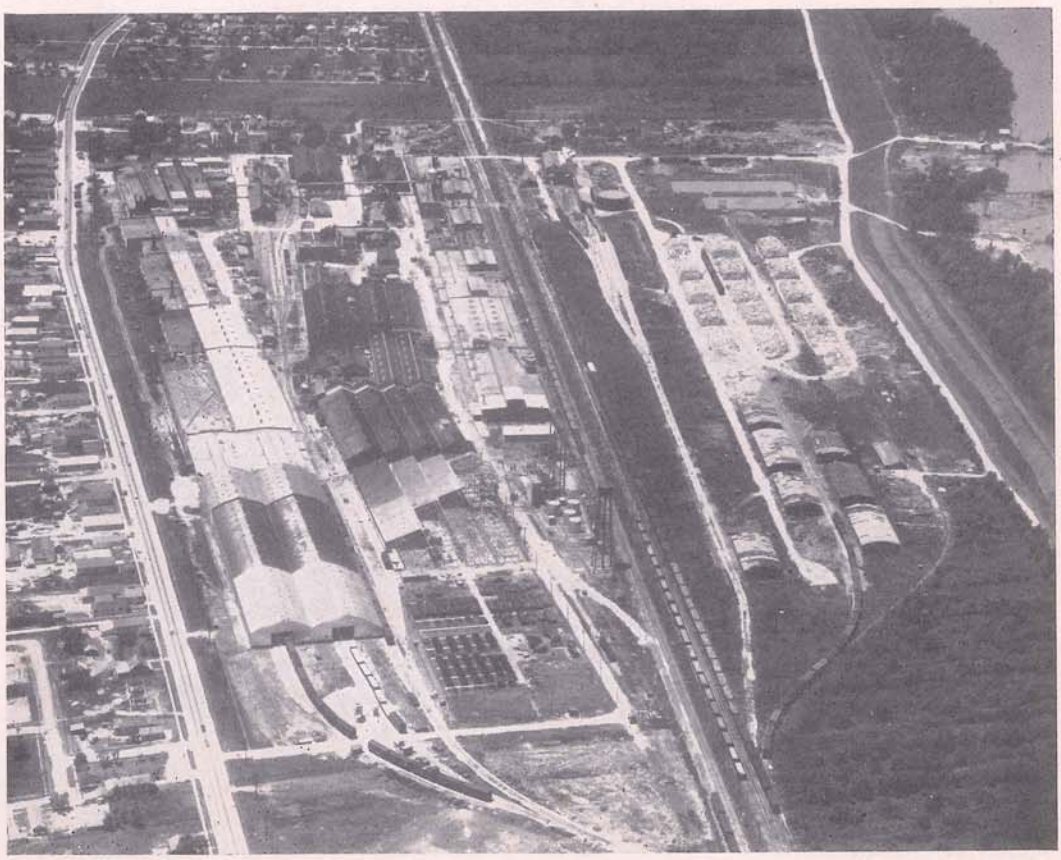
The Johns-Manville Products Corporation has more than doubled its plant capacity in preparation for the new homes that America needs so badly and has not yet really started to build.

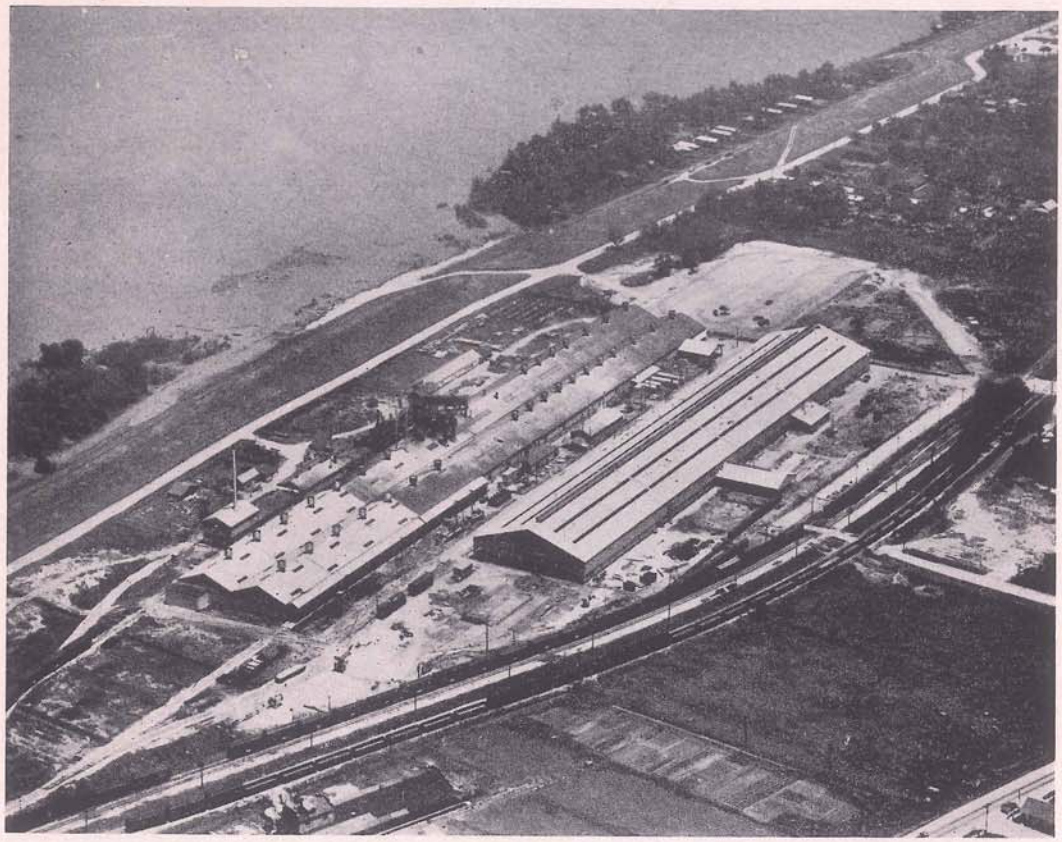
The Southern Cotton Oil Company has made extensive additions to its buildings and equipment for the deodorizing, refining and hydrogenation of vegetable oils.

The Avondale Marine Ways has, in spite of war's end, expanded its boatbuilding and repair facilities.

And, as reported in our story "Inside Information on the Crab" in last year's

This air view (taken May 4, 1947) of the Celotex Corporation plant shows better than a thousand words the tremendous expansion program of this company. All the white roofs, to the right of the highway, are new construction and to the right of them can be seen the ironwork of buildings still not completed. Compare the size of the boxcars to the size of the new buildings themselves. Celotex is now occupying 140 acres with still room to expand. It now employs 2,500 workers, has an annual payroll of nearly six million dollars and ships about 900 cars of its products a month, in addition to what is expedited on short hauls by truck. All of these figures, when the expansion program is completed, will naturally increase.





Above: Air view of Johns-Manville Products Corporation taken May 4, 1947. This company now employs 600 people—but when the additions to present plant and the construction of the new asbestos transit pipe plant are completed, it will require about 850 employees and the annual payroll will approximate $1,750,000, and about 600 cars of building products and pipe a month will leave Jefferson Parish. In this photo can be seen the large parking place for empolyees' cars—empty now because picture was taken on Sunday.

Below: Recent air view of Avondale Marine Ways, Inc., on the Harvey Canal. This new barge and boat repair yard, with 200' by 80' drydock, railway tracks, machine and metal working shops, was recently completed and is now in full operation with 175 employees and a decided anticipation for an increase during the year. It occupies an area 324 feet deep by 1,000 feet canal frontage and is a separate operation from its Mississippi River plant. This entirely new operation makes a substantial increase to the annual payroll of the parish.

REVIEW, the Southern Shell Fish Company has installed new equipment that efficiently mechanizes the old tedious and slow method of hand-picking delicious crabmeat from the stubborn shells. The Ed Martin Sea Food Company at Westwego has just installed a 300,000-pound quick-freezing plant.

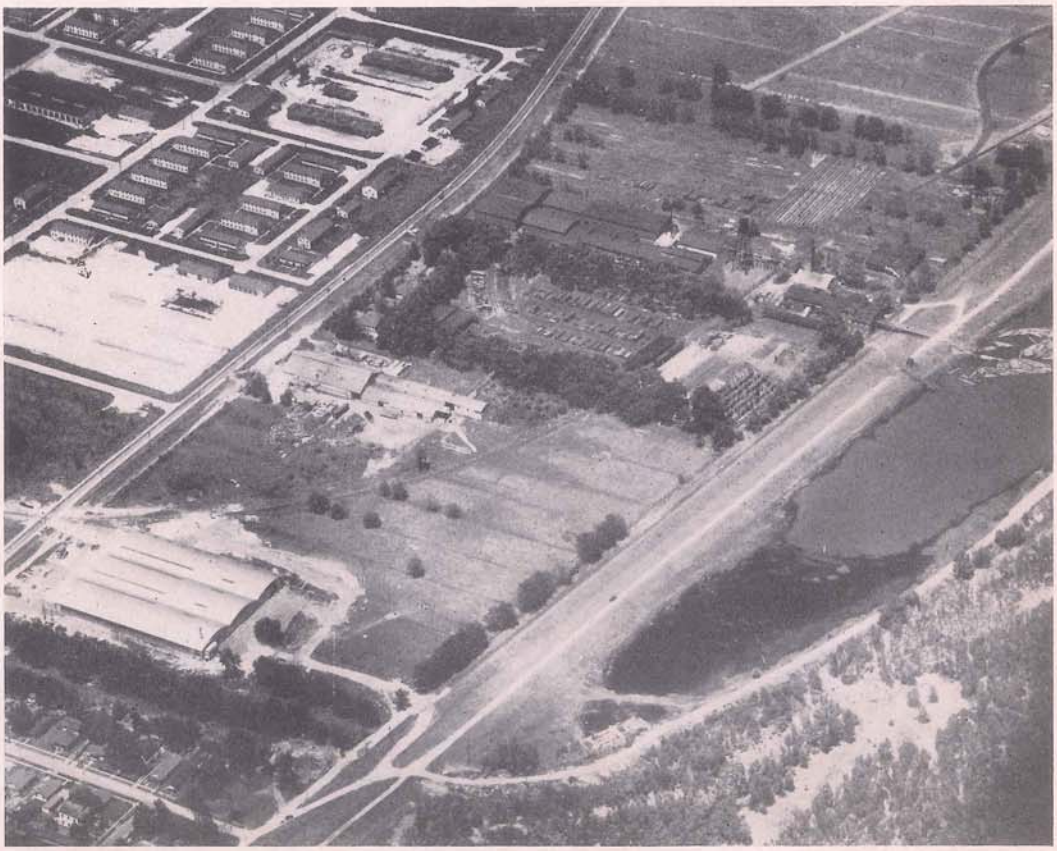
Completed in this era of expansion since the war are the now world famous Moisant International Airport, which on May 1, 1947, celebrated its first birthday as the largest commercial airport in operation in the U. S.; the Mays Yards of the Illinois Central System back of war-time Camp Plauche, with its 21 switching tracks capable of handling 100 cars each and its new repair and maintenance facilities; the largest drying kiln of its type in the South at the Airline Lumber and Supply Company in Kenner; and a new plant for the grinding and chemical treatment of sulphur by the Stauffer Chemical Company of Harvey.

New to Jefferson are the plants of the Kieckhefer Container Company at Harahan, the Delta Petroleum Company on the Airline Highway, the Little Giant Cement Products at Kenner, the Wilkinson Veneer Company on the Harvey Canal, the Ron Sevilla Distillers at Westwego, the Supreme Plastic and Manufacturing Company on the East Bank and Products Research Service, Inc., at Westwego on the West Bank, and the Marine Division of the Halliburton Oil Well Chemical Company

Look at this photo of industrial Harahan carefully. The white-topped buildings in the lower left belong to the newest industrial plant of Jefferson Parish—the Kieckhefer Container Company, which recently moved its entire plant and office from New Orleans to Harahan. This company manufactures solid fibre and corrugated paper shipping cases and will deliver the equivalent of 80 cars a month to local and national markets. Kieckhefer brought the payroll of 150 employees to Jefferson Parish.

In the center of the photograph are the established and progressive plants of U. S. Steel Products and the Freiberg Mahogany Company. Incidentally, to the right, is the same millpond of Freiberg illustrated in the article "Mansions on the Mississippi."

In the open spot at the extreme right is being built the new plant of the W. A. Ransome Lumber Company, and off the left is the Robert Todd Housing project.



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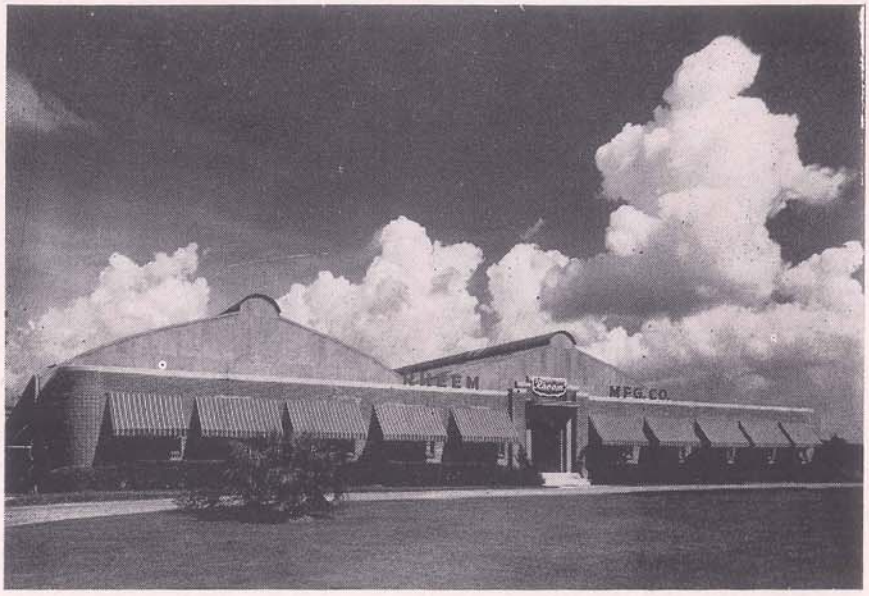

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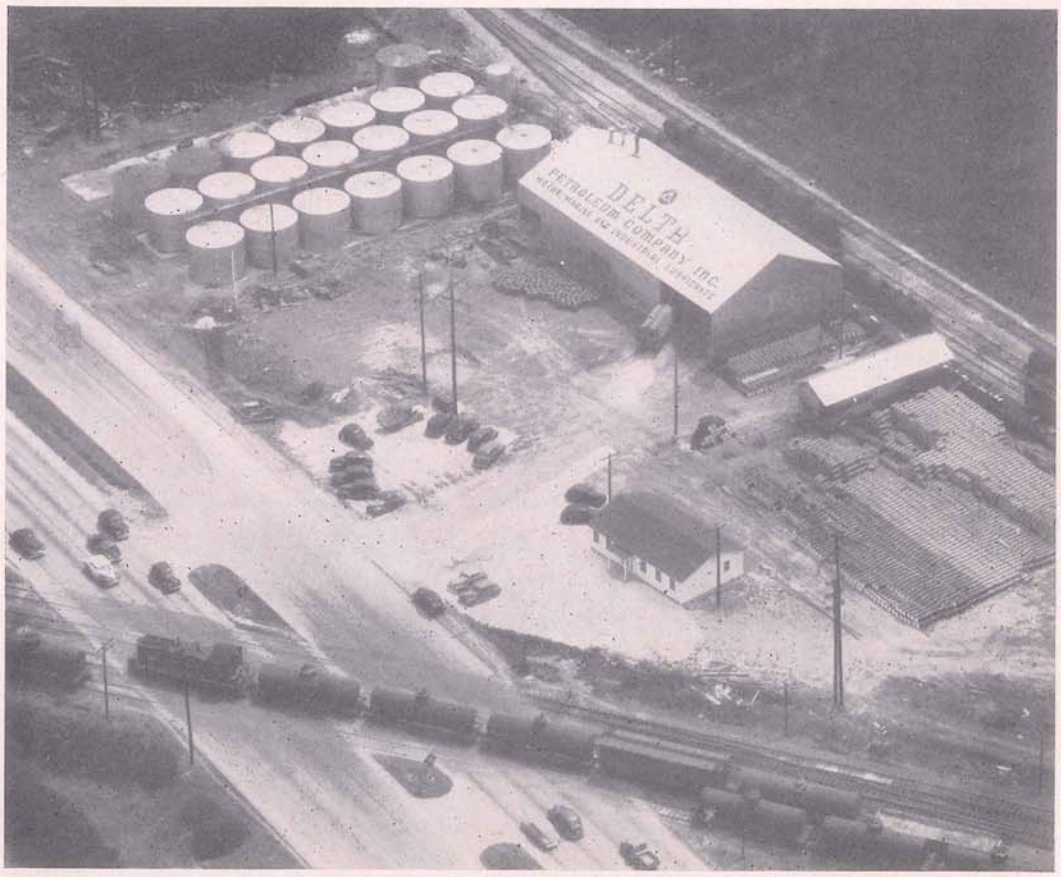
on the site of the former Allen Boat Company on the Harvey Canal. Five new pipe yards, storing at least a million dollars worth of pipe for Jefferson's growing oil industry, have raised their bulk on the Harvey Canal. Completed this year will be the new plant of the W. A. Ransome Lumber Company, now under construction near Harahan.

Deep in the Parish, where the oil companies have quietly spent at least $4,000,000 in drilling operations and equipment, twenty-six new producing wells are the result of their investments and efforts since August of 1945. At Grand Isle, another million at least has been spent by five major oil companies exploring the Gulf and inland waters around what the world recognizes as Jefferson's Tahiti.

And, on this same Grand Isle, in this period of expansion covering the last two years, two hundred new deep sea trawlers have made their headquarters in calm, peaceful Barataria Bay, from which they cruise the Gulf in their search for the succulent shrimp.

Supplementing and as a result of these major industrial additions, Jefferson Parish has, in spite of lethargic nationwide home construction, witnessed the building of over 1,700 new homes for its increasing population. The expanding seafood and oil industries of the parish have resulted in new wharves, warehouses and equip-

This is a recent air view of another new Jefferson Parish industry — Delta Petroleum Company, Inc. — with two more buildings to be completed. These will be a 1-quart and 5-quart fully automatic canning plant, one of the most modern in the South. This company now employs 65 people and the annual payroll crowds $140,000. At present about 150 cars, both tank and boxcars, are shipped a month. Rail is now the only means of transportation used, but in the near future trucks will be added to serve the local market. This photograph shows, in the foreground, the Airline Highway on the east bank of the Parish.



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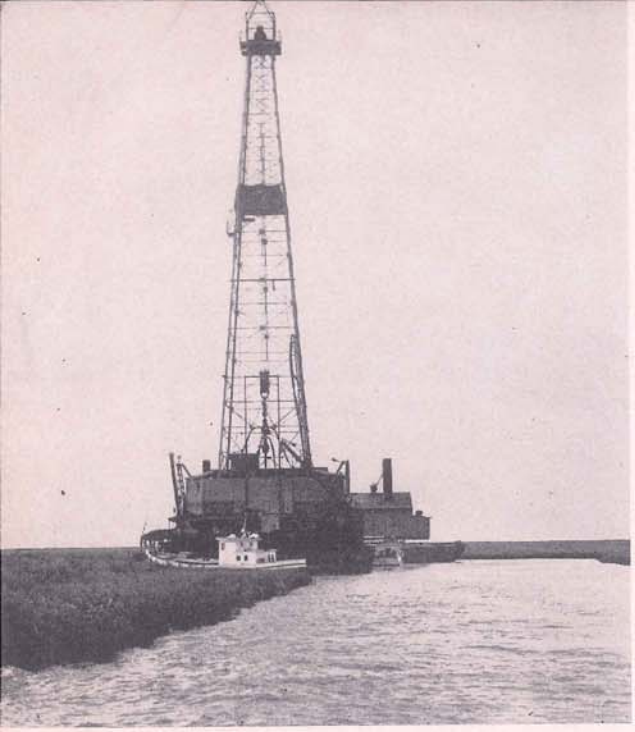
ment to the tune of another quarter million dollars in the communities of Lafitte and Grand Isle and the Barataria area between them. And Gretna, the parish capital, to serve the new business that is crowding its commercial establishments, has spent at least another half million dollars in new business houses and additions to those already bursting their business seams.

In this parish, as part of the great expansion program, over a million dollars worth of public utilities improvements have been added. And, as we go to press with this lucky and lovely report, the state has authorized the expenditure of another half million (contracts already let) on new bridges and roads in Jefferson.

It seems a shame to break off this report of what is now happening in Jefferson Parish—since this is far from the end of our expansion era. We have said it is merely the peak of the period since the war. However, it looks more like the beginning of a surging march forward which, when I report to you next year, will prove that this was not just a "lucky" year but a year of keen foresight.

It is my humble opinion, as a public servant who has served the parish in my present capacity for a quarter of a century, that our industrial past and our present period of expansion are just preliminary steps to a great future prosperity in Jefferson Parish which you would not believe even if I dared to visualize it.

A group of new homes, photographed from the air on the east bank of Jefferson. Over 2300, both large and small, have been constructed in the parish during the last 30 months. Here's a striking figure—of the 2,500 new homes built in Greater New Orleans last year (including Orleans, Jefferson and St. Bernard parishes) 1,000 of them, or 40%, were constructed in Jefferson. And yet, Jefferson includes only about 12% of the population of this Greater New Orleans area. The deduction is obvious. Jefferson is not keeping up with the crowd — it is moving ahead of it!



OIL and MUST

By James Nelson Gowanloch

Chief Biologist, Department of Wild Life and Fisheries of the State of Louisiana; President, New Orleans Academy of Science now in its 94th year; member of Board of Directors and Conservation Committee of Southern Association of Science and Industry; Consulting Biologist for Louisiana State Parks Commission; National Secretary of National Shellfisheries Association.

THE purpose of this article is to discuss the destiny of Louisiana with reference to its coastal waters and the vast economic assets that exist both in the coastal waters and in the Gulf of Mexico.

Jefferson Parish is strategically in the heart of this destiny and therefore, it is apt and meet that these important concerns should be presented in the eminent Jefferson Parish Yearly Review which has established for itself a reputation throughout the nation.

First therefore, there shall be discussed five biological resources of the State of Louisiana and the influences upon these resources of five completely different, highly important, not often recognized factors.

Coastal Louisiana presents an ecological pattern that is surpassed in interest nowhere in the world. The incredibly vast Mississippi watershed, draining thirty-one states and, in part, two Canadian provinces, funnels its complex influence into the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico in the center of Louisiana's 500 miles of coast line. The results are amazing.

Permit that the writer indicate that the most conservative estimate by Dr. Joel Russell, reveals that at least two million tons of silt are brought to and deposited in the lower delta every twenty-four hours. This load may rise at times to four million tons in a single day. It is possible to identify positively at New Orleans, silt elements that have had their origin in the Yellowstone River. Louisiana is an extraordinary part of the United States. It has an average elevation of one hundred feet above sea level with, in the four hundred mile long, fifty mile wide flood plain which we are here discussing, an average of only ten feet above the sea.

Immense periods of time and slow but vast changes have forced this funnelling of waters into one of the most immense drainage and biological patterns in the world.

Five Louisiana biological resources are here chosen and the measure of effect of five hereinafter enumerated influences will be indicated.

The biological resources: *Waterfowl*—Louisiana provides winter haven for probably fifteen to twenty per cent of our continental waterfowl population. *The Blue Crab*—Louisiana's five hundred miles of coast line supports a crab industry that is capable of developing far beyond its present stage where one hundred thousand pounds of crab meat are produced in one port in one day. *The Oyster Industry*—Eight hundred thousand acres of suitable water bottom are available. *The Muskrat Industry*—Louisiana, in one-eighth of its area, produced in one year, six and one-half million pelts of the total of thirteen million produced in the entire United States. *The Shrimp Industry*—Louisiana provides over 70% of all the shrimp produced in the United States and Alaska—a fishery that in the last prewar year ranked sixth in volume and fourth in value of all the fisheries of the United States and Alaska, a fishery, that al-

WATER MIX

Says Dr. Gowanloch: "We want to keep and help the oil industry in Jefferson Parish, but we cannot afford to lose our wild life and fisheries. It has been proven that both can exist successfully side by side."

though not often realized is one of the great fisheries of the world with a production in Louisiana's coastal waters of as much as one hundred and twenty million pounds in one year.

Now the five factors that are profoundly modifying this pattern:

First — Oil development. The discovery of incredibly valuable oil resources in Louisiana's coastal lands and under Louisiana's coastal waters, has greatly affected the ecological pattern of these areas. Oil activities come in three stages—exploration, drilling and production. Exploration, involving use of heavy charges of underwater explosives, we have found after exhaustive and costly research, to be relatively harmless. Considerable damage, however, has been caused locally by the construction of canals, permitting invasion by sea water. Drilling operations can be readily controlled. Production operations are dangerous, capable of immense destruction of biological resources through pollution. Their strict and complete control, which is perfectly possible, is imperative. A further reference to the problem of oil pollution will be found at the end of this article.

Second—Lateral navigation canals. The Mississippi drainage, in its long geological history, though fluctuating, had some measure of equilibrium—a pattern which although it included tension zones was nevertheless, broadly predictable. Navigation canals cut across long established drainage patterns, prevent access of fresh water to oyster beds and crabs and shrimp nursery grounds, make possible elsewhere disastrous intrusion of sea water into previously stabilized areas, destroying the basic ecological patterns.

Third—Flood control. Flood control is necessary to safeguard the lives of thousands of people and to protect unestimated millions of dollars worth of property. Yet these justified flood control activities can wreak immense damage on coastal biological wealth. Permit that the writer cite one example:

The Bonnet Carre Spillway was constructed to divert some of the waters of the Mississippi River eastward through Lake Pontchartrain and Lake Borgne to the Gulf of Mexico and thus, in times of flood pressure, protect New Orleans. This spillway has been twice used. It was opened in 1937, February 4th to March 16th, for forty days, with a top discharge of 210,000 cubic feet per second. The results to coastal fisheries were entirely beneficial. The early time of year was greatly significant.

1945 came along, bringing the greatest contained flood in human history. The Bonnet Carre Spillway was opened March 24th, to May 17th, for fifty-four days, with a maximum discharge of 305,000 cubic feet per second. This fresh water, projected over some of the finest oyster beds, destroyed all the oysters in the State of Mississippi and wide areas of oyster beds in Louisiana, east of the

river—a loss of oysters, state owned or privately owned--of far in excess of three million dollars, for which loss the United States Army Corps of Engineers, will accept no financial responsibility whatever.

Fourth — Water hyacinth. This species, imported from northern South America, has over-run the United States throughout the area south of a line drawn from Savannah, Georgia to Los Angeles, California. It impedes navigation, alters drainage patterns and destroys wildlife. The Louisiana legislature has just given us two hundred thousand dollars to experiment with methods for controlling this dangerous plant. We are using a wide variety of derivatives of 2,4-D—Dichlorophenoxyacetic acid. Its ultimate control will cost millions.

Fifth—Industrial pollution. This has not yet become heavily damaging. High biochemical demand water—from sugar mills has local effects—but as stated, the most dangerous factor could be oil pollution.

Such is the changing pattern of Louisiana's coastal lands and coastal waters, the definitive unit in probably the largest drainage and biological pattern in the world. The effects of the impact of these five factors are little realized by the sport fishermen and the commercial fishermen who, in Louisiana, as everywhere else, ascribe poor fishing to proximate, superficially observed, often completely unrelated, phenomena and, in Louisiana, as everywhere else, long wistfully for the good old days.

The second purpose of this article is to present, with all possible emphasis, the need for the scientific investigation of the resources in the Gulf of Mexico. It is therefore desirable to return to a consideration of the shrimp fishery of Louisiana and discuss the destiny of one of the great fisheries of the world.

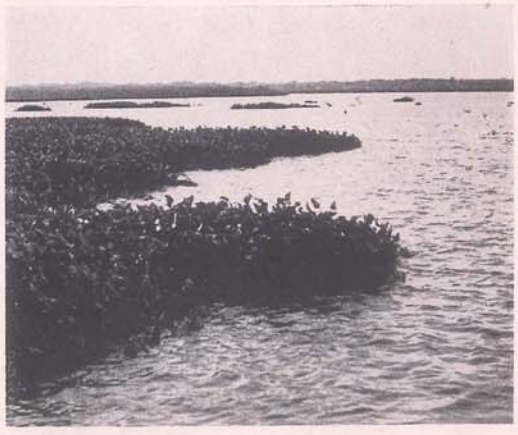
Based chiefly on one species, the common sea shrimp, Penaeus setiferus, the Louisiana fishery has had a spectacular career. Primitive cast nets, then half-mile long haul seines, were in turn succeeded by low-powered otter trawl luggers, shallow draft and usually operating only five miles offshore.

It is necessary, to understand what follows, to gain some picture of the common sea shrimp's extraordinary life history.

Less known, fifteen years ago, than any other economically important marine resources, the common sea shrimp was completely mysterious, its breeding, its growth, its longevity, all blank pages.

A "Christmas Tree," or the outlet pipes of a producing well far out from shore in Barataria Bay, back of Grand Isle. Oil storage tanks in the background.

The Beautiful Strangler of the Bayous—the lovely but lethal Water Hyacinth—begins its stealthy infiltration process on a segment of our intracoastal waterway.



The same approximate spot a few weeks later. Beautiful to look at, its blanket of green and purple is already a positive menace to navigation. Just give it a while longer and it will be in complete possession, barring all passage.

This is the final stage of conquest—the waterway hopelessly clogged, navigation impossible. Now the state must spend money removing and destroying the plants. But it is only a temporary victory. Immediately the hyacinths will begin their patient, persistent campaign all over again.

Louisiana, dubious of the safety of a fishery so rapidly expanding, under a mechanized expansion that alarmed the traditionally traditional son-of-his grandfather Cajun fisherman, sought and secured the aid of the Federal government. Cooperative Shrimp Investigations were organized in 1931 with headquarters in the then Louisiana Department of Conservation. Federal activities were directed successively by Frank Weymouth, Milton J. Lindner and William W. Anderson. The writer had charge of Louisiana's participation. Georgia and Texas also cooperated.

Clear and unexpected was the life cycle picture that emerged from these researches. The definitive reports are now being written by the Federal government. Succintly stated, the shrimp is a weird animal. Shrimp spawn offshore but the helpless hundredth-inch planktonic larvae must drift inshore or, apparently, they perish. Some dozen larval metamorphoses accomplished they grow rapidly, move seaward and apparently live but one year. Many fishermen believed their lifespan to be eighteen years.

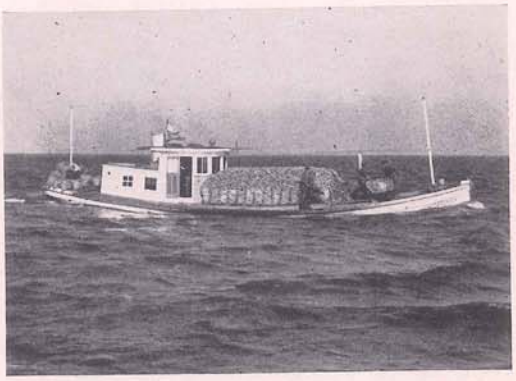
Discovery of heavy concentrations of large ("Jumbo") shrimp offshore in 1937, led to the development of a twenty million pound additional catch where not a pound of shrimp had previously been produced and led concomitantly to the next evolution of the shrimp fishery.

War intervened, bringing depletion of man power, loss of equipment and the black confusion of the black market.

The war over, those gold rush days of the shrimp market in the war years attracted attention and investment of great sums of money by many people including many veterans.

Now comes the point of this discussion. The Louisiana shrimp crop as far as we can at present ascertain, is suffering from no depletion. Louisiana production fluctuates at somewhat above 100,000,000 pounds a year. The limiting factor is apparently the capacity of the nursery grounds. Therefore, barring discovery of new offshore concentrations, the pattern becomes the simple mathematical one of dividing up a biologically stabilized crop among more and more harvesters equipped with more and more expensive machinery. That, economically, just won't work. Constantly larger, constantly more costly shrimp boats are now built. One unit, for example, cost $165,000.00. Twenty-four hundred shrimp boats oper-

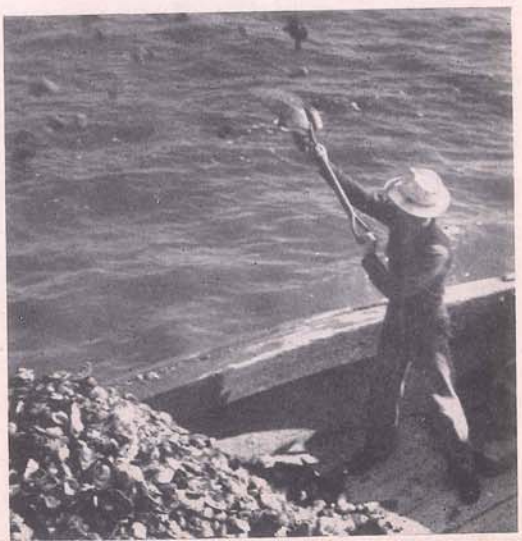
An oyster fisherman's camp in Barataria Bay.



An oyster boat loaded with seed oysters.

Culling oysters. The man in the foreground, inspecting the catch, is Emile Bouvier, a well known oyster operator in Barataria Bay. To compensate for damages and loss to his oyster beds for the period of 1945-47 he has entered suit against the oil companies operating in the same waters for the amount of $1,403,355.25. His suit is only one of many so filed.

Planting the seed oysters.



The famous Blue Crab of Louisiana.

ated in Louisiana in 1940; 3,030 in 1946; 2,327 of them 45 feet long; 326, 45 to 50; 338, 50 to 60 and 39, over 60 feet.

Another economic factor emerges, the development of the Baja California fishery for shrimp on the West Coast of Mexico. The writer had as his recent guest, the dynamic executive, Senor Hector Ferriera, who directs these enterprises in the Bay of San Carlos. He stated that in one day, 34 canoes, equipped only with cast nets, caught ten metric tons (2,200 pounds constitutes a metric ton) of shrimp and that last season he shipped into the United States 1,500,000 of fresh shrimp and ten million pounds of frozen, headless shrimp.

Still another factor enters, inter-state and international competitions and complications. Mr. Wayne Heydecker and Fred Zimmermann have aided us in two New Orleans meetings for the establishment of a Gulf States Fisheries Compact for which we now seek and shall secure, necessary Congressional authority. We can then iron out interstate differences, quit quarrelling among ourselves and provide intelligent, effective and friendly approach to the solution of serious international problems that have already begun to arise in the Gulf of Mexico.

It all adds up to this, $30,300,000.00 worth of shrimp boats in Louisiana alone, plus the shrimp boats of our other Gulf states, will have to find other eggs in other baskets.

An inventory of potential Gulf of Mexico resources must be made. We must be able to give these men who are investing in the Gulf of Mexico some of the answers they need. We cannot do that now. Alexander Agazzis' "Blake" cruises to the explorations by the "Atlantis" have provided much scientific data but the economic categories imperatively needed are still largely lacking.

Menhaden, Spanish mackeral, Kingfish, Tuna, Shark and probably Bluefish should all be studied and their potentialities evaluated. An adequate and costly vessel and scientific personnel, aware of, and sympathetic with commercial problems, can alone serve to fulfill this task. The expansion of the Shrimp Investigations into the Gulf Fisheries Investigations is excellent but the magnitude of the task in terms of ships and scientists and the profound need for getting the answers as quickly as possible cannot be over stated.

Equally important to the individual, particularly to residents of the Parish of Jefferson, are the less spectacular commercial fisheries and other biological resources such as oysters, crabs, muskrats and water fowl. Although their volume and value are less, they affect either di-

Fishing for soft shell crabs—a favorite Louisiana sport and a profitable Louisiana industry, which is, however, declining for reasons undoubtedly covered in this article.

This picture was taken several years ago when soft shell crabs were far more plentiful in Louisiana waters than now.

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rectly (oyster growers, crab fishermen and trappers) or indirectly (guides and others serving the interest of hunters; persons associated with the seafood-packing industry, and those concerned with the handling of furs) the welfare of a great number of people to a most important degree.

The success of all of these living creatures that form the basis of these industries depends upon their surroundings from which they must obtain food and shelter both for themselves and for their young. Some, like the shrimp, require highly different areas for their nursery grounds and for their growth later into adults while others, like the muskrat, may undergo their complete development or, life cycle as it is called, in practically the same spot. It is often true that very serious effects may result from quite indirect causes. Fish for example, depend for their food on a long and complicated "chain" of living forms that, starting with very small, even microscopic plants, build up into the living forms upon which the final game or food fish lives. Interference at any step in this "chain" may have the most disastrous results in damaging the final "crop" in which man is interested either as a sportsman or commercial fisherman.

Correspondingly, interference with even these minute forms of life may, under certain circumstances, wipe out a once prosperous crop fishery. It must therefore be understood that such changes in the surroundings (or "habitat" as it is called) may, slight though they seem, decrease or even wipe out completely, valuable biological resources upon which so many depend.

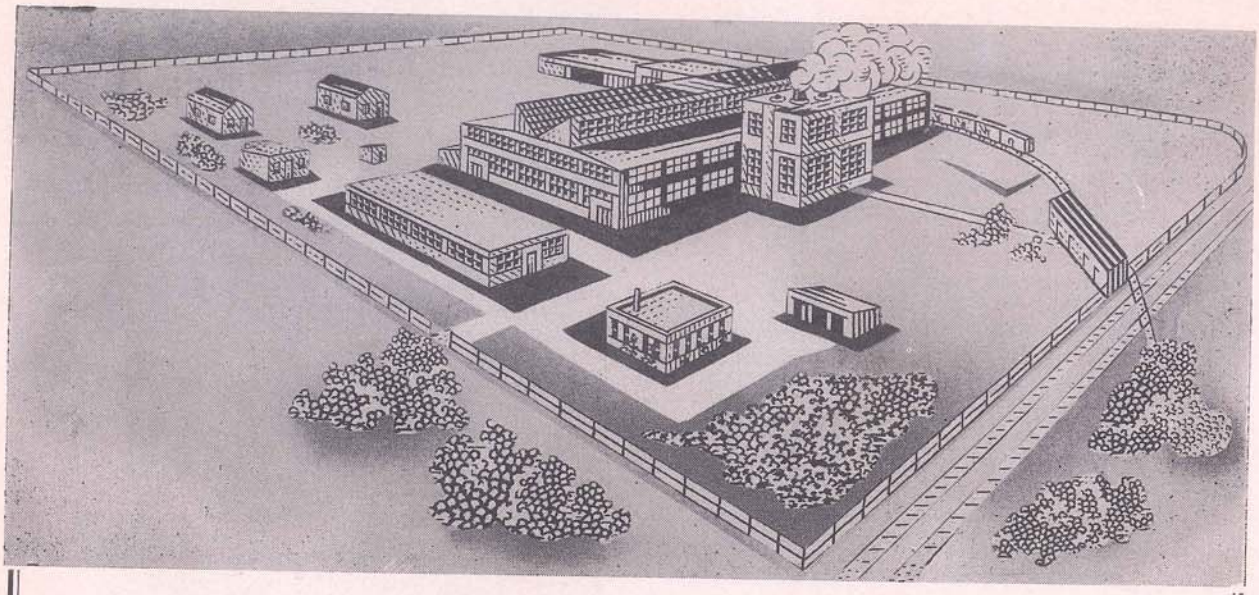
One great change that has occurred in the pattern of our Louisiana coastal lands has been the tremendous and still rapidly expanding exploitation of oil. These oil developments, unless conducted with extreme care, involve the possibility of serious biological damage to almost everything that lives in the marsh lands or in the coastal waters. That possibility must be most thoughtfully examined and whatever measures necessary, must be ascertained and employed to preserve other valuable interests, interests which mean bread and butter to so many people.

Previous studies have indicated that to industries so highly divergent as the oil industry and the oyster industry can actually exist side by side with full activity of both without either one harming the other. The fact remains that since this is

To dig canals back into Louisiana's trapping grounds, this unique but effective equipment is often used. Whirling knives on the front of this flatboat, driven by a gasoline motor, literally bore a waterway through the trembling prairie.

These few mink furs, held by Clem Perrin, fur buyer, represent about $500 to the trapper who sold them to him.

The whole family pitches in during trapping season. Here the trapper's children are shown hanging up the day's catch of muskrat skins to dry.



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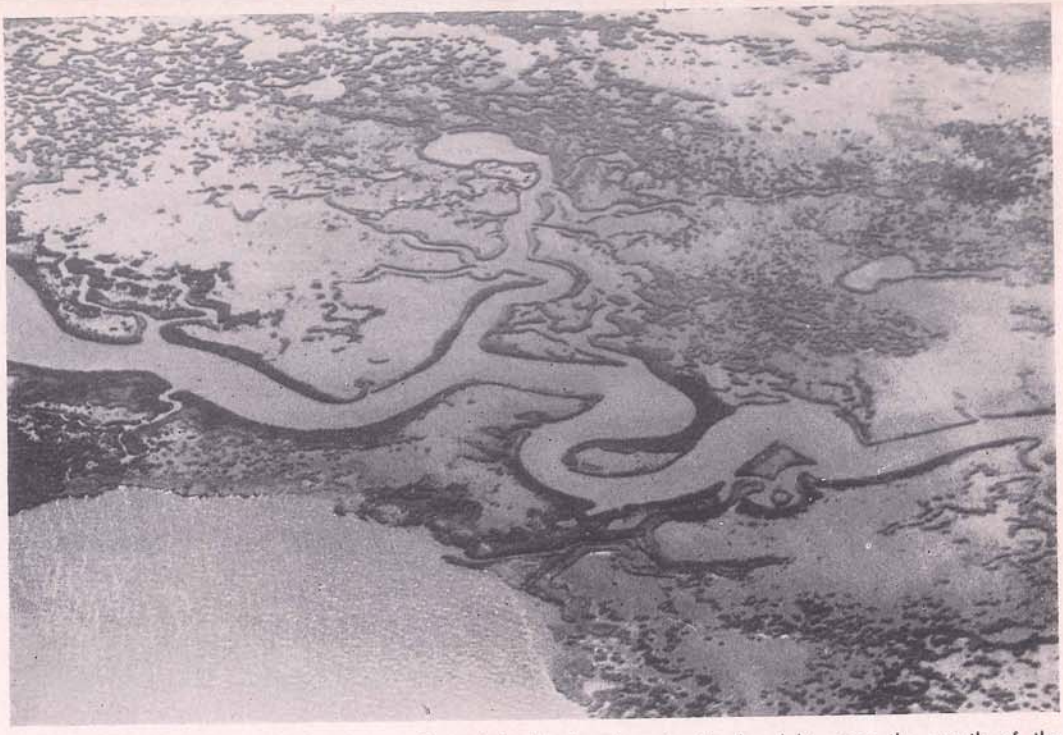


The amazing and complex pattern formed by land and water in the delta near the mouth of the Mississippi. Man made factors which change the natural balanced plan of this greatest drainage and biological area in the world and tend to destroy wildlife and seafood are discussed in this article.

so, no effort by any local, state or federal agency should be spared to insure that disastrous and quite unnecessary damage be avoided.

It is a matter of fact that Jefferson Parish can well be a center of the most highly developed, most productive and most profitable seafood industry in the forty-eight states (if Hiawaii comes in, let us call it 49), but the considerations that are heretofore discussed must be with greatest care examined and controlled otherwise, the fine destiny of the Parish of Jefferson, as the center of one of the greatest seafood developments of the United States of America, cannot reach its fulfillment.

An airview of Grand Isle, whose 8 miles of seashore are the only stretch of Louisiana's Gulf Coast accessible to the non-boat owner, shown with the Gulf of Mexico in the background and Barataria Bay in the foreground. From here about 200 shrimp trawlers operate far out into the Gulf.

A serenely secluded corner of our continent offers you, for a Sunday or a summer, more calm and contentment than a billionaire can buy.

Vacation in CORSAIR COUNTRY

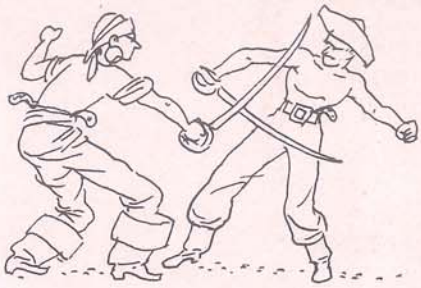
By Tilden Landry

AT Bayou Coquille a sweetly swinging curve of road takes you through a great grove of oaks. The unhurried hand of Time has played with these trees since the earth was young, obviously thinking of other matters while it twisted and knotted the gargantuan branches that bend down to brush their long gray pennants of Spanish moss against the top of your car.

That is the beginning. Every mile beyond is fabulous; you are in buccaneer country now. Only twenty minutes behind you is a big, busy, tall-towered city, full of neon and high blood pressure—but here you find it a little hard to believe that such things exist. The trail touches the edges of cool swamps and shadowy tangled jungles and broad meadows and marshes, all lustily alive with the eager green growth of the semi-tropics.

As you go southward the sparkle of water glimpsed among the trees grows more frequent. You are in the deep delta—land that has been pushed out into the sea—and the sea has argued about it, pushing back. So a large portion of southern Louisiana is as much water as it is land. The maze of meshed and meandering waterways provided by this arrangement is beautiful, exotic, mysterious, and once, to a local entrepreneur named Jean Lafitte it was a business asset of incalculable value. Today you and I,

This is Bayou Coquille . . . where you mentally shed the drab garb of civilization and don a red bandana, and peer hungrily ahead into the corsair country stretching a hundred miles and a hundred years due South.



The story goes, that crossing this road at midnight on many a moonlit night may be seen the restless ghost of Jean Lafitte, lonesome for the loot and life of the good old days.

given a boat of sufficiently shallow draft and a bayou-born guide, can thread the same routes through which fortunes in contraband slipped boldly past the bewildered authorities by night and by day. And we can see exactly what the privateers saw in the heyday of the Spanish Main, because in this wet wilderness nothing changes.

And that is what makes the southern end of Jefferson Parish an oasis of simple, peaceful pleasure in the midst of a turbulent and complex world. If you like your vacationing cushioned with luxurious appointments, if you prefer to make your wishes with p u s h b u t t o n s—turn around now, quickly, before enchantment gets a half nelson on you. But if you have eyes that hunger for beauty and a heart that can hear the music of romantic places and a spirit that likes to play in the sun, you *can't* turn back now.

Southward beside the shaded bank of broad Bayou Barataria the road takes you along the four-mile course of one of the most colorful of all races, the annual Pirogue Race for the championship of the world. It is held each May, but in any month you are likely to see youngsters and grandpères shaping seasoned cypress logs into the long, graceful, delicately balanced craft that may—who k n o w s?—one day, before frantically cheering thousands, rocket a man across the finish line at Fleming's Landing and into deathless fame; but if not—*que voulez-vouz?*—one still has a fine pirogue, and a man without a pirogue in bayou country is like a man without snowshoes in the Klondike.

A pirogue will take a man, they tell you, through any place that is more than a little damp. *If* man and pirogue understand each other, that is. If you are an uninstructed novice, don't try it. The pirogue will become, at your first off-balance breath, a thing alive, ticklish and temperamental and bent on finding out whether you can swim.

The pirogue is second nature to bayou folk from the time they learn to walk, and everywhere the bayou itself is the village street. Here along Barataria the motorist passes people's back yards. The bayou dweller's front door faces the water, with

"Mother, may I paddle this pirogue?"
"Yes, my darling daughter. Put on a bathing suit instead of those shorts—and don't go near the water."

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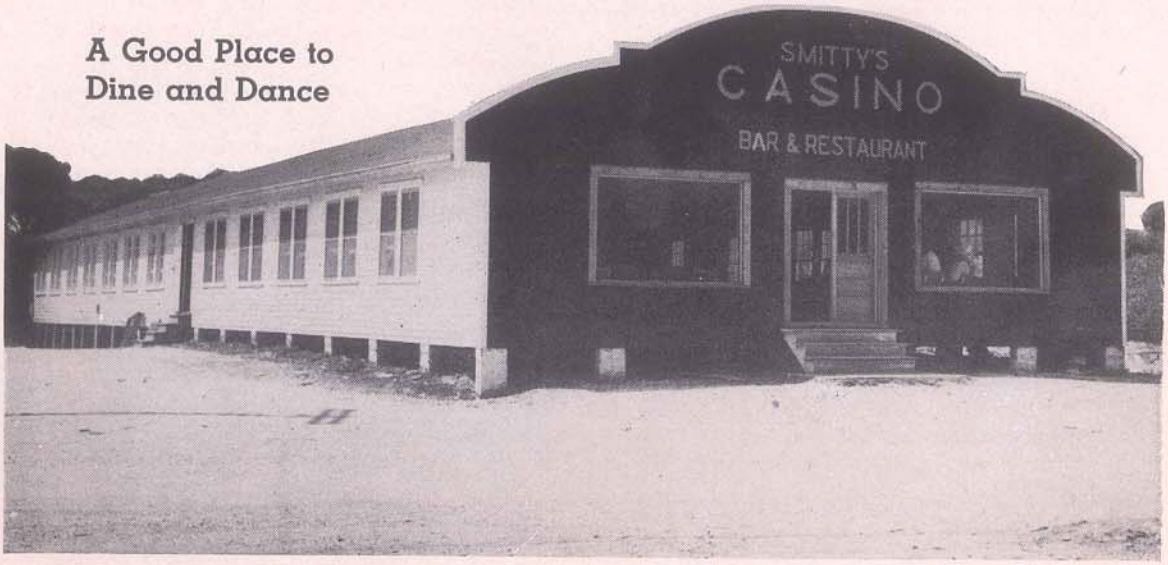

his pirogue or his lugger tied up only a few steps away, just across the picturesque foot path that edges the bayou.

At Lafitte, where Bayou des Oies flows into Barataria, you stop at hospitable Barataria Tavern, whose seafood and steaks you will dream about, and whose wide walls are a sight to make a sportsman's eyes pop. They are hung from end to end with magnificent mounted examples of the things a man with a rod or a net or a gun can bring back from nearby woods and waters: silver tarpon, terrapin, ducks, deer, alligators, crabs, trout—all big enough to get you into a good Liar's Club.

Or you can spread a picnic feast and put out leisurely crab nets, if you like, under the spreading oaks of an ancient cemetery presided over by Mary Perrin, who will enjoy telling you a tale about Lafitte and Napoleon and John Paul Jones—a tale which I will not repeat here because I don't think you would believe it; but that won't deter Madame Perrin, and it is indeed a story worth coming many a mile to hear.

This bayou crossroads is a place interminably busy with boats. One-lung bateaux, sturdy net-draped shrimpers, sleek sport cruisers, and the omnipresent pirogue. If you can possibly arrange it, get on a boat—the only way to travel south from Lafitte—and make the indescribably beautiful water journey to Grand Isle.

There is another way to get to the island, and this is the way you must go if you want to have your car with you to go exploring in: westward from New Orleans on U. S. 90 and turn left at Raceland. A good highway hugs the right bank of Bayou Lafourche down to its *fourche*, the forked mouth for which the bayou was probably named.

Every mile of this drive is storybook stuff, rich in visual flavor; but Lafourche is another s t o r y, another adventure. Watch the tree line, off to your right. Far from the road at Raceland, it closes in steadily as you roll southward, until the forest meets the bayou's border. Then, suddenly, there are no more woods, and the smell of the sea comes to meet you, and you are crossing a broad salt-marsh where birds patrol the sky in endless echelons, and then you are gliding over a long wooden bridge and there, stretching long and lovely into the blue water, is your island.

That's the way I feel about it, and if you are my kind of people so will you. They can have Pitcairn and Pago Pago and Bali and the Bahamas—Grand Isle is *my* island. In that first glimpse of cool white surf on warm golden sand there is always a grateful feeling of homecoming.

Up the narrow lower end of the island a dazzling white ribbon of road parallels the beach, and it is so quiet you can hear the restless rollers of the Gulf above the song of your motor. There is a grassy strip of land on your left where calm cattle stand and graze and wade in shallow pools, and just beyond, the placid waters of the bay are sprinkled at the edge with little islets of marsh grass of assorted sizes, where gulls and terns loaf around, talking to each other and picking up an occasional between-meals snack.

Where the island begins to widen, the first of the characteristic island trees appear. Stroked by a century of steady prevailing winds as by a big brush, they lean permanently to leeward, their weirdly tangled limbs all pointing anxiously away from the beach, their tops flattened in a permanent pompadour. Perhaps taking their cue from the rhythmically repeated gesture of the trees, the island's early settlers chose homesites behind the shelter of the tree line.

You will see, extending almost the full length of the island, a row of fine live oaks apparently too orderly in alignment and too uniform in size to have been a natural accident; the old people will tell you that they were planted by a foresighted lieutenant of Lafitte, one Louis Chighizola, best known as *Nez Coupé.*

Violent storms are rare here,—there have been only three since *Nez Coupé's* time—but the bulwark of sturdy oaks justified the vision that prompted their planting when, in 1893, a disastrous hurricane wiped out Chenière Caminada, only a half-mile from the southwestern tip of Grand Isle. The toll was nearly a thousand lives on the Chenière; Grand Isle, snug behind its windbreak of oaks, lost only seven.

There has been a lot of building along the beach in recent years—fine summer homes, cozy camps, tourist cabins, taverns. But the island's own people live back among the lush growth of oaks and oleanders and sweet olives and palms.

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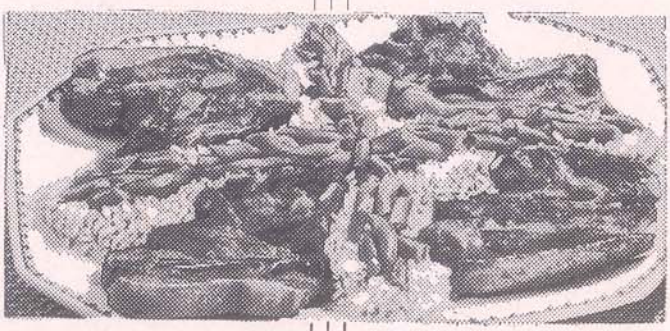

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Right: Where you and I have a front yard, the bayou dweller has a wharf—and, where we park a Ford or Chevrolet, our friend, the fisherman ties up as proudly his "beeg" or "leetle" boat.

Photo below: This is Bayou des Oies (Bayou of the Geese). To the left is the famous cemetery where Mary Perrin, a Falstaff on the distaff side, lustily claims lie side by side the mortal remains of Napoleon, John Paul Jones and Lafitte.

There are no streets. Lovely narrow lanes cross the cluster of homes at the island's center, and to explore each of them is a richly rewarding experience. I envy you who can savor the thrill of doing this now for the first time, but it is a moderate and comfortable envy, because again and again I have turned into a lane which should have been familiar and been stopped in my tracks by the beauty of an entirely new vista, a fresh and wonderful picture painted by some unexpected trick of slanting sunlight on a Gothic arch of blooming oleanders, or perhaps a row of silhouetted palms against one of the lavish sunsets that run riot over the back bay.

You will not find the lanes located and named on your road map. Most of them are on private property, and their public use is an instance of the good-natured neighborly courtesy which enables the island's seven hundred inhabitants to live amicably together without any formal community government. No matter if your drive or your stroll takes you through somebody's back yard—you get the same cordial smile and *"Bon jour"* you would receive at his front door.

You might like to start with Chighizola Lane, which cuts across the entire width of the waist of the island to an old pirates' landing on the bay side, now used by only a few of the fishing boats. Still standing nearby is the little cottage which was the home of Louis Chighizola, and beside it a venerable tree in which you can find the hole reputedly bored by the buccaneers and used as a primitive post-office. Such legends, here on Grand Isle, are to be accepted with no less reverence than one accords to the cherry tree of Papa Washington. This is no more than common courtesy to one's hosts; the island is populated largely by direct lineal descendants of the cosmopolitan crew of Jean Lafitte.

Right above: Yes, go by boat if you can—starting from Big Bayou Barataria so scenically portrayed here.

Right: The leaning trees of Grand Isle, pointing like mute messengers to the peaceful pavilion of patriarchal oaks that await you at the island's heart.

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Many lovely homes and cozy camps have been built on Grand Isle in recent years, bringing with them the unmistakable stamp of production line civilization . . . but . . .

. . . still, deep within their oleander and oak retreats, the picturesque homes of the corsairs' children possess a nostalgic charm that no "prefabricated cottage with bath and bar" can ever weakly imitate.

The best advice I can give you about the lanes is to spend a lazy afternoon poking the nose of your car into one after another until you have seen them all. I could tell you about Cathedral Lane, which is called that because of the way the oleanders make you feel, and about Rigaud's Lane and Ludwig's Lane and Miss Minnick's Lane and the rest, and about the delights that await you in each—but I would be robbing you of a lot of fun. The lanes of Grand Isle are properly an intimate experience, full of the deep satisfaction of personal discovery. Such things are not to be classified and charted. This is a place for unworried wandering, and if you want to do it barefooted you will be quite in fashion.

Much of the island's beauty is for pedestrians only. A lengthwise footpath runs through the middle of the village, wending its friendly way right through the dooryards of the islanders. It will take you, too, through a magnificent grove that is known as "Fairyland", one of the most beautiful spots in the South.

The people of Grand Isle are amiable and charming. As in most of southern Louisiana, you will find many old folk

Deep in the heart of Grand Isle—a typical lane, a typical gate, a typical island home—and the gate crasher is a visitor, even as you and I.

Only on foot can you enter Fairyland. No klaxon has ever disturbed the bird songs here—no synthetic rubber has ever crushed the ferns and wild flowers.

who speak only French. But these you must not confuse with the "Cajuns"; islanders will tell you—in their own colorfully accented speech—that the Acadian accent of neighboring parishes is not easy to understand. The French you hear on Grand Isle is in many cases pure Parisian—and this should surprise you no more than the traces of English and Italian and German ancestry you will find in the language and in the faces of the tanned citizens of this insular Shangri-La. Such things are natural in a village founded by seafaring adventurers recruited from the scattered seven seas.

Until about a dozen years ago, when the bridge was built across Caminada Pass, Grand Islanders lived in contented isolation. Their only vehicles were the high two-wheeled carts you may still meet bringing driftwood from the beach.

The coming of automobiles meant, of course, many a change in island life. But in the midst of the annual invasion by summer visitors, the natives have managed to retain among themselves the essentials of isolation. They enjoy the electricity and the movies and the gaiety of strangers, but they continue to live with dignity in their own quiet and easy-paced world. Among them it is still possible to find a peace as perfect, a solitude as sweet as if the hundred miles of highway between island and city were a thousand leagues of deep blue water.

Deep blue water is there, to be sure, enough of it to satisfy anybody. You are on the edge of the broad Gulf of Mexico. There is no other land between you and Havana or Matamoras or Tampico or Campeche. Along the outside border of the island stretches about eight miles of broad beach. You can drive your car right out on it and along the water's edge if you want to, and you will want to. The whole stretch of Gulf shore between Pensacola and Galveston offers no finer spot than this for surf bathing or surf fishing.

Three protecting sandbars eliminate all undertow and shut out sharks, so that a swimmer can revel in the rare combination of robustly rolling salt surf and safety as comforting as that of a country club pool. The sand is a tawny tan, and pleasantly strewn with gnarled and

Yes, at the northeastern end of Grand Isle, visitors arrive in their own or chartered planes on the island's own field, from which the Civil Air Patrol sent guarding eyes over the Gulf during the war.

Yes, you can drive along the beach in your car—and, if you run out of gas (it's an idea) there may be beach beauties to give you a push.

A beautiful beachcomber at Grand Isle, watching pelicans play overhead, pauses beside a piece of driftwood that probably came down the Mississippi.

weathered driftwood and washed-up bits of colorful sea life waiting for a wave to come back and get them. You will want to spend hours in the water and hours on the sand, watching the pelicans fishing, or strolling over the dunes, or—a pleasure worth any amount of trouble it can cost you—seeing a sunrise come up out of the Gulf, a breath-taking benediction of beauty.

At the northeastern end of the island, opposite to the end at which the highway traveler arrives and departs, there is a modest little airport, where many visitors arrive in their own or in chartered planes.

There is as yet no regularly scheduled air service to Grand Isle, but it is possible to arrange to be flown down from New Orleans at a moderate price. And you may perhaps never land at another airport where your pilot will often find it necessary to buzz the runway clear of wild horses before coming in. Droves of wild horses roam the open spaces of Grand Isle at will, gentle but undomesticated, and I will leave to you the fun of finding out from an islander friend how they came to be there.

At this end too is the busy landing where the fishing fleet and the oil-company boats and the Coast Guard craft tie up. Known as Bayou Rigaud, the place gleams with bright white shell and neat nautical paint, and the general store is a fascinating place where you can sit down on the vertebra of a whale and listen to the salty talk of deep-sea fishermen. But of course you are a deep-sea fisherman yourself, or you are about to become one.

A comfortable cruiser or a rugged little lugger will take you out, and you will come back with fish. These are fabled fishing grounds, and your Grand Isle skipper, on any given day, can find fish in them as easily as I can find a pair of socks in my own bedroom—maybe the particular green ones I had in mind are in the laundry, but I won't go out with bare ankles; and that's the way it is on a fishing trip out of Bayou Rigaud. If the tarpon won't pay any attention to you, you go after something else. You don't come back empty-handed, you don't come back bored. You come back with fish. Usually many fish, and *always* delicious fish.

Night life on Grand Isle is not quite like the after-dark recreation you will find

Docked at Bayou Rigaud at Grand Isle you'll find the fishing fleet. Today the descendants of Jean Lafitte's Baratarians trawl for shrimp instead of patrolling the Gulf for prizes. And today, mixed with their sturdy craft, you will find the radar equipped boats of the oil companies, as avidly hunting for oil as the pirates once searched these waters for rich, helpless merchant ships.

All fishing is not commercial on Grand Isle! Here is a string of trout representing one visitor's delightful week-end and a brace of duck—caught and killed in season, we assure you.

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GRETNA, LOUISIANA

anywhere else. You go to the movies at Tony's, which is simultaneously and overlappingly a cafe, casino, cinema, and dance hall. Here you sit and enjoy your motion picture with beer and cigarettes and general conversation; if a part of the picture bores you, it's all right to go into the other room and amuse yourself in other ways for a while, remembering to be very careful where you step when you come back, because the younger spectators like to sit or sprawl on the floor.

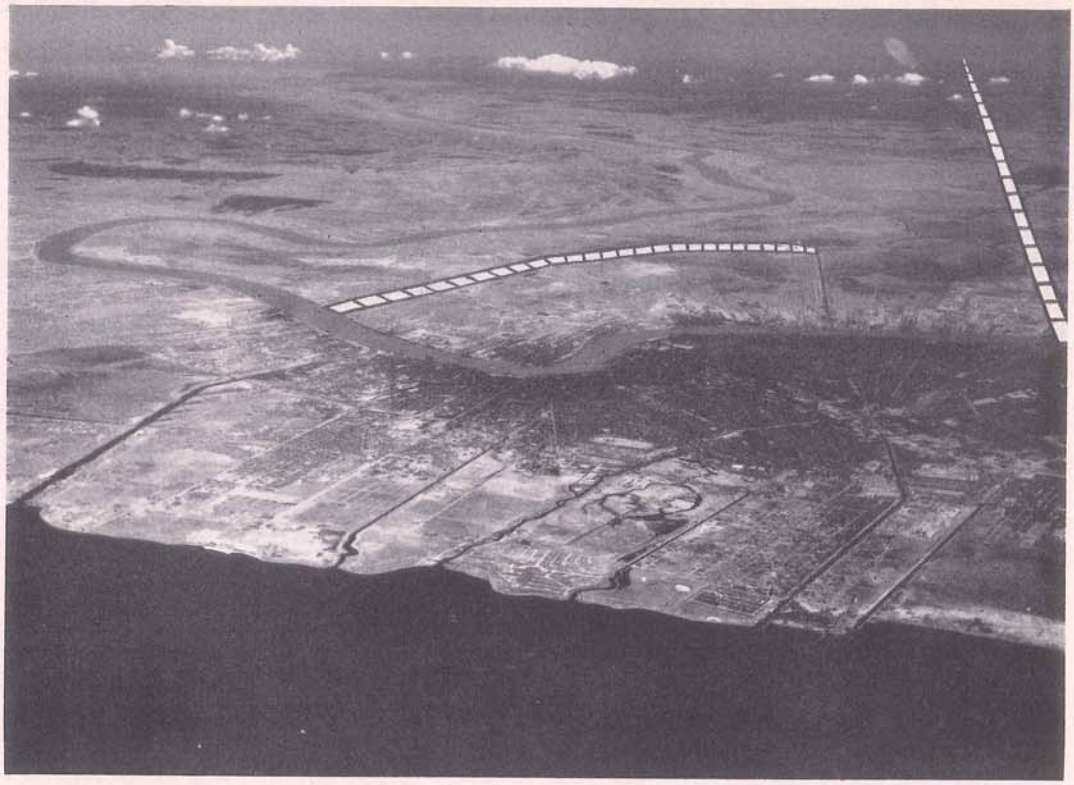
Saturday nights, everybody goes to Tony's or the Casino or Adams' to dance or to watch the dancing. The infants and the very old and all the in-betweens are there in animated family groups, and the tourists and summer residents are not always distinguishable from the natives, unless you look for the deep island tan and listen for the soft island speech. The girls wear slacks or shorts or gay beach dresses, the men wear anything that's comfortable, and shoes are entirely optional. The islanders love dancing and bring to it a great enthusiasm and a long heritage of natural grace and rhythm. Saturday night in the taverns on Grand Isle is as colorful as a carnival, as exciting as New Year's Eve.

I have not tried to tell you all about Grand Isle. No one can. No one could convey to you in any number of words and pictures precisely what champagne tastes like, or how velvet feels, or what happens in your heart when you find out that your beautiful redheaded bride can make good coffee . . . and Grand Isle is like all of these things, and a thousand other things that have nothing to do with latitude and longitude and temperature and tide—things that are beyond imagination until you have found them inside of yourself.

If you are looking for an island, and as far as I know the only people who are not looking for an island these days, are the fortunate few who already have one—then I hope I have said just enough to lead you to suspect that this is probably the haven you have dreamed about, to make you want to come and see.

And the next time I sit on Grand Isle beach in the moonlight with a million stars crowding the cool sky and a fine driftwood bonfire at my feet, I shall like to think that one of the other winking fires a few dunes away may be yours, and that you are enjoying the deep, deep peace that is only to be found, after a long fond search, on an island of your own.

As you sit around your driftwood fire, your last night on Grand Isle, your companions will turn into corsairs in the moonlight and you will find yourself living a century and a half ago. You are a buccaneer awaiting word from the sale of your loot in Nouvelle Orleans. And, as you are drinking wines stolen from a Spanish prize, you swap tales with Gambi's men.



For your guidance in the important article that follows, we have indicated on this aerial photograph the more logical West Side shortcut to the Gulf (extreme right), connecting with the Mississippi at Westwego. Also indicated on this photo (about center of air view) is the additional link with the Intracoastal Canal which must be constructed at a cost of 8 million dollars if the East Side Canal is constructed. This unnecessary construction cost is completely eliminated if the Barataria Route at the right is approved—also the additional expense for bridges which would be necessary in this busy area.

GREAT AND COURAGEOUS PLANNING TODAY WILL BUILD WORLD'S GREATEST PORT TOMORROW

By Thomas Ewing Dabney

NEW ORLEANS, a hundred years ago, was the nation's greatest port. A quarter of a century ago it was glad to be considered the second port, so far behind New York that it seemed to be in another world. Today, by grabbing the figures of the entire customs district which includes the river movement from the jetties to Baton Rouge, it still makes second-port claims, but a realistic appraisal of the facts shows that it is the seventh port, handling relatively less of the foreign trade, though the tonnage has increased as a result of this country's development, especially in industrialization. Tomorrow it faces the possible competition of the St. Lawrence Waterway, which, if it is built, will take an enormous part of the Upper Valley tonnage now moving into world consumption through New Orleans. But despite this, New Orleans tomorrow can be the first port—if it seizes such an

opportunity as it muffed a quarter of a century ago.

This opportunity is opened by the admission of a responsible federal agency that the port has outgrown the river, and needs another approach from deep water if it is to take its proper place in the increasing trade-movement of the world, a commerce which the rapid development of this hemisphere from the Rio Grande to Tierra del Fuego will make inevitable. To take the place of the river, Major General Robert W. Crawford, district engineer of the Mississippi River Commission, has recommended the construction of a tidewater channel from the deep-water contour of the Gulf of Mexico through the marshes to the Industrial Canal. The project he studied would cost about $112,000,000 and of that, the federal government would furnish $82,000,000.

Why has New Orleans outgrown the river? Why does it need a seaway if it is to take its proper place in serving the Mississippi Valley's foreign-trade needs?

Ships are larger now, and will be larger in the future—economy of operation makes that necessary. In the ten years from 1932 to 1942, the average draft of vessels entering the river increased from 18.8 to 21.9 feet. These were the ships which were able to get into the Mississippi: the heavier-tonnage vessels did not attempt it. Southwest Pass, the larger of the two entrances to the Mississippi, has never achieved the full project depth and width, 35 feet and 1000 feet, respectively, and engineers do not believe it ever will. Even if it did, future tonnage will need more water. Moreover, both South and Southwest Pass have always been hazards, because of the angle at which ships must enter the narrow channel against the four-mile current; fog conditions frequently cause costly delays, as in January, 1947, when for almost a week inbound and outbound commerce was immobilized. The 110 miles or more of river current impose another cost and delay on the movement of ships, to say nothing of the twisting river, especially during periods of high water. On the river-front of New Orleans there is a 22-foot variation in the loading and unloading level, from high to low water, and wharves suitable for the demands of modern commerce cannot economically be built there. The present structures are capable of sustaining only about 350 pounds per square foot, and a capacity of 800 to 1000 pounds is needed.

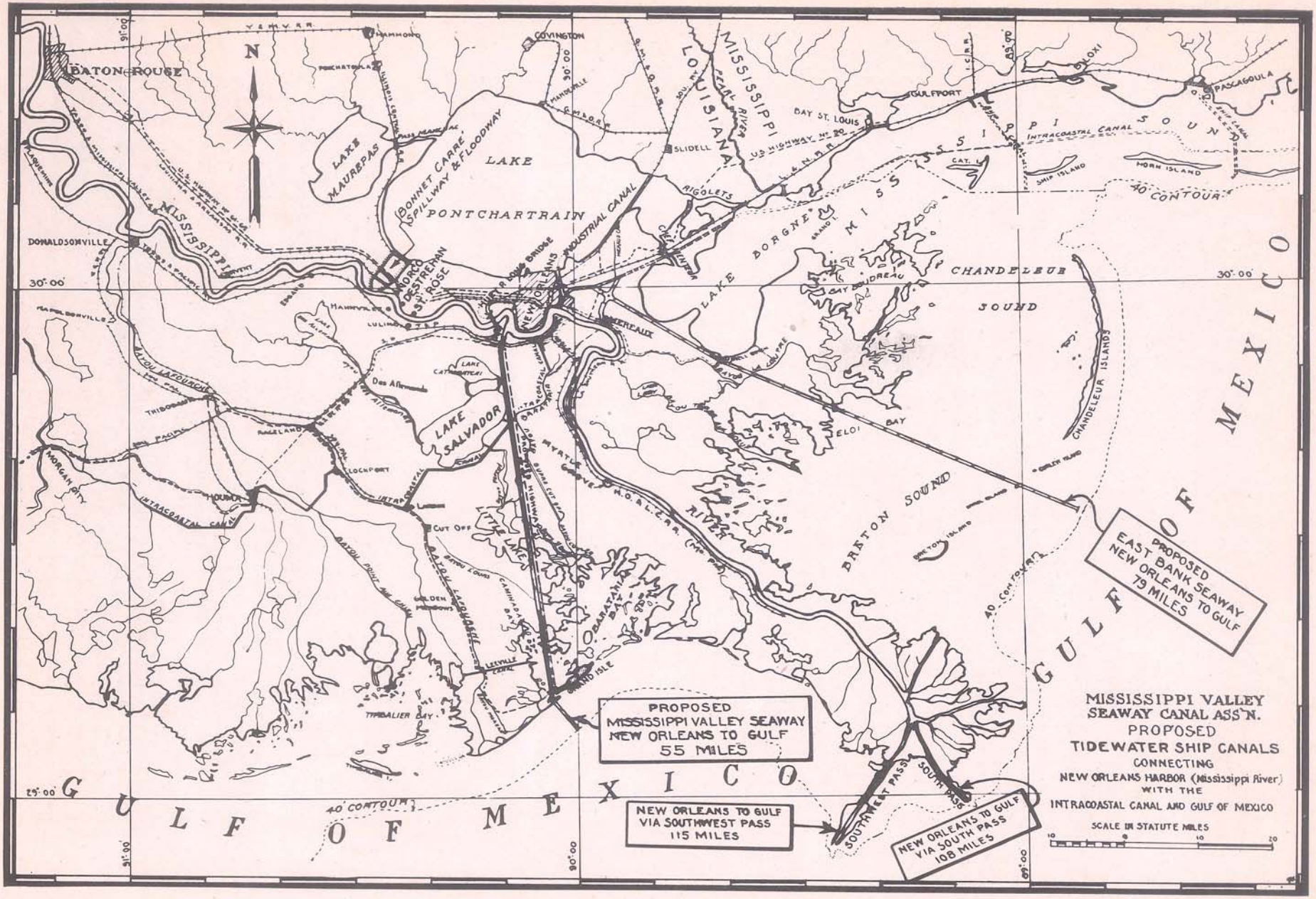
Far-sighted thinkers on port problems knew New Orleans was outgrowing the river many years ago. They also knew that port conditions were changing, and saw that New Orleans could no longer plan on the brokerage basis when this port was content to receive and ship commodities and merchandise originating elsewhere and bound elsewhere; but must be ready to service the increasing industrial development of the country. So they developed plans for the Industrial Canal.

This was to be an artificial waterway, connected with the river by a lock, capable of indefinite extension by laterals, and its purpose was to open up waterfront sites for industry and private business. Such sites could not be sold to private enterprise on the Mississippi river—the law forbids that. The Industrial Canal moreover was to be a fixed-level waterway where loading and unloading of vessels was cheaper and quicker than on the river-front.

At the dedication ceremonies of the Industrial Canal, May 5, 1923, Governor

EDITOR'S NOTE: Because of the urgent need of the SEAWAY, we consider this article the most important in this year's REVIEW. And, to present it to you accurately and interestingly, we called upon the best qualified writer for the assignment in the United States—THOMAS EWING DABNEY. You will remember him as the author of the splendid history of the Times-Picayune which came out in 1944, called "100 GREAT YEARS." Because of his ability to thoroughly grasp a subject and then portray it to his readers, he was given the assignment of writing the biography of the nation's great hotel tycoon, C. N. Hilton—a monumental work which he has just completed.

Dabney, from the rich storehouse of his personal journeys, his years of reporting and studying the port of New Orleans and the Mississippi River, without a doubt knows more about the SEAWAY than any other living writer. Twice during the past year, Tom Dabney has covered the U. S. In this article are reflected his understanding of the SEAWAY as it affects the entire nation.


BATON ROUGE
N
LAKE MAUREPAS
BONNET CARRÉ SPILLWAY & FLOODWAY
LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN
LOUISIANA
MISSISSIPPI
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
DONALDSONVILLE
NORCO
DESTREHAN
ST. ROSE
NEW ORLEANS
INDUSTRIAL CANAL
LAKE BORGNE
CHANDELEUR SOUND
CHANDELEUR ISLANDS
BRETON SOUND
MYRTLE GROVE
M.O.&L.C.R.R.
LAKE SALVADOR
LOCKPORT
HOUMA
MORGAN CITY
INTRACOASTAL CANAL
BAYOU LAFOURCHE
LITTLE LAKE
GRAND ISLE
BARATARIA BAY
TIMBALIER BAY
GULFPORT
BAY ST. LOUIS
PASCAGOULA
BILOXI
SLIDELL
RIGOLETS
HORN ISLAND
SHIP ISLAND
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PROPOSED EAST BANK SEAWAY NEW ORLEANS TO GULF 79 MILES
PROPOSED MISSISSIPPI VALLEY SEAWAY NEW ORLEANS TO GULF 55 MILES
NEW ORLEANS TO GULF VIA SOUTHWEST PASS 115 MILES
NEW ORLEANS TO GULF VIA SOUTH PASS 108 MILES
SOUTHWEST PASS
SOUTH PASS
GULF OF MEXICO
MISSISSIPPI VALLEY SEAWAY CANAL ASS'N.
PROPOSED
TIDEWATER SHIP CANALS
CONNECTING
NEW ORLEANS HARBOR (Mississippi River)
WITH THE
INTRACOASTAL CANAL AND GULF OF MEXICO
SCALE IN STATUTE MILES
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John M. Parker said: "The Inner Harbor and Navigation Canal is intended to conserve all the advantages to the public and to commerce generally which come from public ownership and operation, and yet to afford to modern industry and commerce, where needful, every advantage and facility which comes from privately owned and operated access to water frontage."

James A. Farrell, chairman of the board of the United States Steel Corporation, speaking at the same ceremonies, said, "Commerce moves at will, following the channels of greatest economy and ease. If the channels through which commerce moves to and from industry become clogged, then industry decays. If industry is hampered or hindered, perplexed and uncertain, then commerce dries up at its source. Industry, in order to thrive and support its workers and reward its investors in the measure to which they are entitled, is often times compelled to locate where its future will be unhampered in extending its facilities."

Resolutions adopted by the New Orleans Association of Commerce on February 8, 1922, stated: "The Industrial Canal gives the dock board the opportunity to adopt the following four-phase policy: 1. Complete public ownership and operation on the river; 2. Complete public ownership and private operation on short-term leases of public utility harbors on land west of the canal; 3. Public ownership with long-term leases for private wharves on both banks of the canal; 4. Private ownership of land and buildings on land east of the canal."

The dock board, however, which administers the river-front wharves and which built the Industrial Canal, instead of opening the latter facility to the private development for which the project was conceived, virtually closed it to private enterprise. It feared that the facilities which it had created and the economies which it had made possible would jeopardize the investment in its river-front docks. Instead of being willing to write off an obsolete equipment, as industry often has to, knowing it would make up that loss with newer and better equipment, it decided to stand by the old docks, and so nullified the purpose which had launched the Industrial Canal—the only purpose which could have justified that large expense.

It made a white elephant of that ably conceived development, and saddled the tax-payers of Louisiana with the responsi-

An air view of part of the industrial sector of West Jefferson Parish, in which is produced over 55% of the goods manufactured in and shipped out of the Port of New Orleans. Just to the left of this area would emerge the Mississippi River end of the proposed West Side Short Cut to the Gulf—right where industry is already located to receive its products and where both industry and commerce can expand as the port grows.

Depending on You...and Us

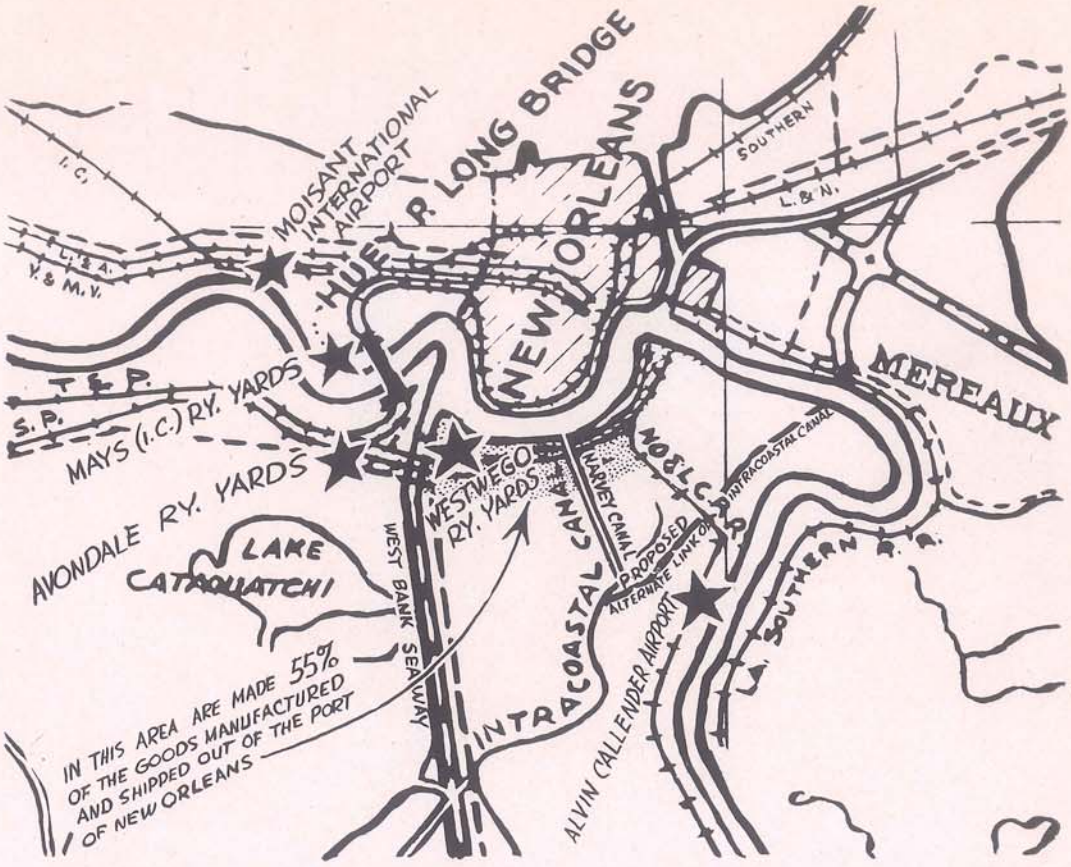
American families . . . FIFTEEN MILLION OF THEM . . . are counting on the workers and plants of this country to "deliver the goods" for the homes they're planning.

Many of you folks in Jefferson Parish have a share in that job. It's our mutual responsibility and opportunity.

The Celotex Corporation is proud to have a part in the great building program that will make America a better place to live and work.

CELOTEX
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.
BUILDING PRODUCTS

THE CELOTEX CORPORATION MARRERO, LA.



This map is the key to the whole article. On here, at a glance, you can orientate any of the places referred to and can mentally fix them in your mind with relation to the east and west banks of the river with New Orleans on one side and West Jefferson Parish on the other.

bility of paying for and maintaining it. This has been about $2,500,000 a year; from the gasoline-tax in highway operation, even, it has drawn part of the funds applied against the vast debt.

In every port in this country, from Portland, Maine, to Portland, Oregon, industry can own or control its water-frontage. This has been one of the factors in the higher standards of living on which the United States justly prides itself. It is one of our Open Doors to Opportunity. But the dock board, inspired by the ideology of the past when only a brokerage business was possible for this port, and ignoring the freedom and economy demands which industrial development in the future would bring, maintained the policy of the Closed Door.

I have known every member of the dock board from the earliest days of the Industrial Canal, and I know them to be men of high integrity, of devoted sincerity, and of undoubted ability in their fields. I mean and I imply nothing against them individually or against their intentions. I merely record the fact that they have not been in tune with port needs, and the proof has written itself in what has taken place here and elsewhere since the launching of the Industrial Canal project.

Eight other ports have grown into important competition by allowing industry the facilities, and the economies, which New Orleans denied it. Had New Orleans opened the Industrial Canal to the development for which it was intended, would Houston, Gulfport, Isabelle, Corpus Christi, Beaumont, Port Arthur, Lake Charles and Pascagoula today be cutting so deeply into the business of this port? And would the United States Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce, be recording such dismal figures as it did in January, 1946, when New Orleans moved only 17.4 percent of the exports, and 30.8 percent of the imports, of the total volume of the Gulf ports alone? These figures compare with 32 and 53 percent, respectively, of the year before. During this same period the Galveston-Houston figures increased from 37.3 to 50.8 percent, for exports, and from 3 to 8.1 percent, for imports. The actual tonnage of Galveston-Houston in January, 1946, imports and exports, was 1,082,500; of New Orleans (including Baton Rouge) 465,000. New Orleans had less than one-twentieth of the total foreign-trade tonnage of the first seven ports in January, 1946.

If Natural Gas could be carried in *Buckets...*

Every family within reach of a gas well could have natural gas service . . . every Jack and Jill in Louisiana would be fetching a pailful . . . if gas could be carried in buckets!

But that's impossible, of course.

The only way to move natural gas from wells to markets is through pipe lines—great steel arteries that wind over hills and under rivers, through swamps and wastelands, linking enormous underground reservoirs with the burners in your home and factory.

United Gas has more than 6,000 miles of such lines, connected to more than 100 fields in Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. At the outlet ends of United's pipe lines are 322 southern cities and towns, many of which are served by United Gas distribution systems. *By providing this link between wells and markets, by making this gas available for* use, *United is giving* value *to gas that might otherwise remain worthless in the ground* . . . is helping to bring the comfort and convenience of natural gas service into your home and that of your neighbor.

UNITED GAS

SERVING THE *Gulf South*

This can happen again! The above aerial photograph of the docks at New Orleans was taken on January 18, 1939—before the war and before New Orleans became the port of embarkation that temporarily sent its tonnage and its commerce soaring. The most effective preventative of similar future peacetime idleness is the Seaway as soon as possible.

Especially conspicuous has been the development of Houston since September 7, 1914, when it opened its tidewater harbor on Buffalo Bayou (canal) to the private ownership and operation which New Orleans denied. Ten years later, that new port facility had 62 industries, with an investment of $65,000,000, a payroll of $7,500,000 a year, and a tax-return for Houston of $1,000,000 a year. By 1945, it had 118 industries and shipside warehouses, and four miles of private wharves able to berth 52 ocean vessels; and under construction was a $25,000,000 plant of the Dupont Company. The total investment in iron, steel, chemical and other industries and in shipside warehouses on Houston's new harbor is now more than $600,000,000. Such an investment in New Orleans would yield a tax revenue of more than $10,000,000. With only a part of it New Orleans would long ago have taken the Industrial Canal out of the tax-budget of Louisiana.

The dock board, on October 24, 1945, admitted its error in the announcement of

This aerial view of the Port of New Orleans—both sides—dramatically shows how congested is the New Orleans area and how little chance for industrial expansion it has on the east bank. Also, just as dramatically, this same aerial view proves how logical is the west side claim to the seaway, where industries, warehouses and stockyards will have the room to develop along the short cut to the Gulf.

a modification of its policy. The 1945 pronouncement invites industry to establish on the Industrial Canal, but restricts the movement across the docks built by industry to the necessities of its business or manufacture, and gives the dock board the power to decide what is or is not necessary.

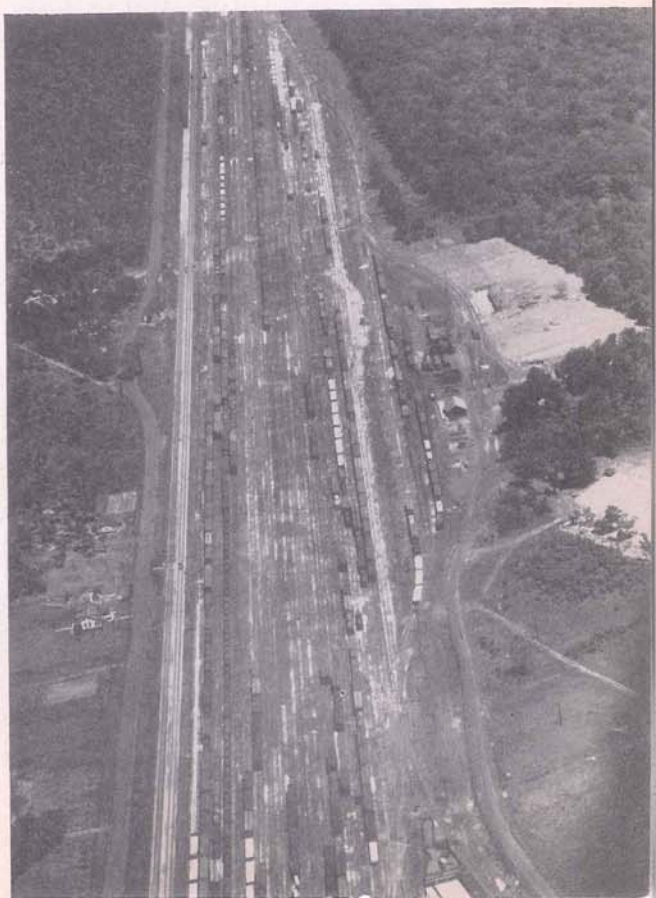
It would be just as logical for the city government, after a man has built a factory or a store and paid his license, to decide what materials or merchandise he could move over the streets to his place of business. But it is not necessary to ask here whether this new policy by the dock board is more promise than performance: the important fact is that the dock board has admitted that under Public Monopoly all has not been well.

The dock board is now supporting the seaway proposal. It admits that New Orleans as a port has outgrown the Mississippi river, and has therefore outgrown the inadequate river-front wharves. It has been influenced to this belief by such men as Lester F. Alexander, a river contractor and engineer who for 40 years has fought the battle of Southwest Pass: no one knows better than he how difficult, dangerous and expensive are the river approaches to New Orleans. Others, too, have contributed to this understanding of a basic port need.

If the dock board had allowed the Industrial Canal to develop, during the past 20-odd years, as it was intended to develop, there would probably be so large a port created along that waterway and its extensions that the seaway would have to be extended to the east from the Industrial Canal, even though a more suitable location had revealed itself. But when the dock board now supports the eastern line, the question arises, Is it thinking of the best possible development for the Mississippi Valley, of which New Orleans is the port, or is it trying to salvage the investment in the Industrial Canal, which its own policy in the past so badly damaged? Is it thinking any more clearly now than it was a quarter of a century ago?

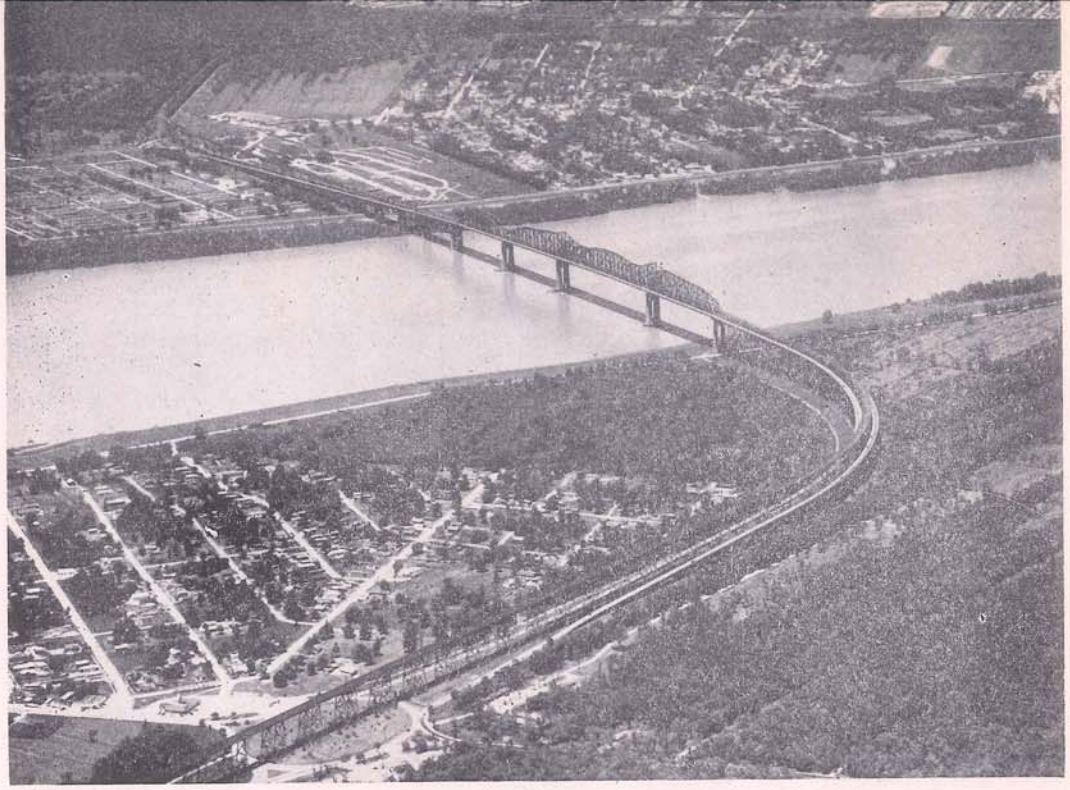
Let us examine this east-bank proposal. It calls for a 70-mile channel from the 40-foot contour south of Chandeleur Island in the Gulf of Mexico, through the marshes south of Lake Borgne to the Industrial Canal; and for a 9-mile extension from there to the Mississippi river at Mereaux; total, 79 miles. At Mereaux a lock would be built, connecting with the Mississippi river. The lock would be 760 feet long, 110 feet wide and 40 feet deep — this is

Two more reasons why the West Side is the logical future location of the short cut to the Sea. Above is the Harvey Canal—the western terminus of the Intracoastal Waterway with which the channel to the Gulf would connect a few miles below, before it connects with the river at Westwego. Below, the new, gigantic Mays Railroad Yards of the Illinois Central System at Harahan—a network of 21 switch tracks, each capable of handling 100 cars, plus repair and maintenance shops.



GREAT SOUTHERN BOX COMPANY, INC.

Southport - - - - - - - Louisiana



The famous Huey P. Long railroad, automobile and pedestrian bridge that connects the East and West Bank of Jefferson Parish, nine miles above the heart of the city of New Orleans. It is the only span across the Mississippi in the New Orleans area and gives New Orleans an unbroken highway west. It was completed in 1935 at a cost of 13 million dollars. The height of the central pier is equal to that of a 36-story building.

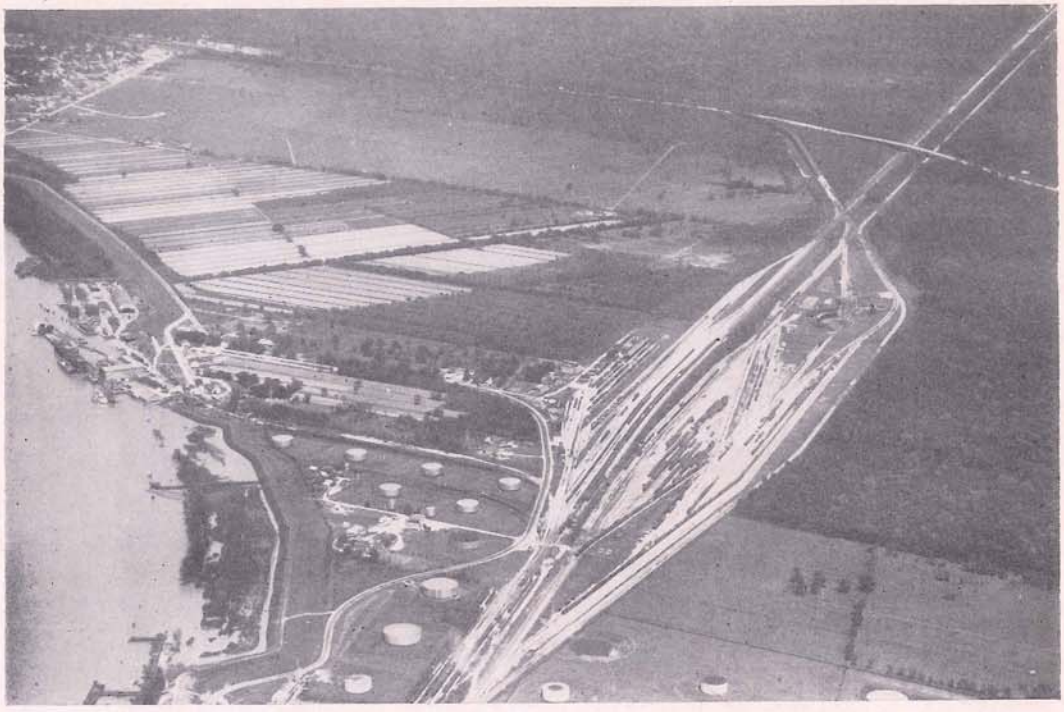
nine feet deeper than the Industrial Canal lock connecting with the river. The canal excavation would be 36 feet deep and 500 feet wide at the bottom.

The estimated cost of this project is: canal and jetties, $50,000,000; river lock, $32,000,000; rights-of-way and improvements incident to the undertaking (railroads, highways, bridges, etc.) $30,000,000; total, $112,000,000, of which the federal government would furnish $82,000,000.

Fortunately, for the future development of the port, the Industrial Canal development has not been sufficient to fix the location of the seaway. We can look for the ideal location.

That is on the west side of the river.

The first town on the west side downriver after crossing the Huey P. Long Bridge is Westwego. Referring to the west side canal route drawn in on the photograph on page 38, this is an enlarged view of the approximate area where the short cut to the Gulf would connect by locks with the Mississippi. Practically the entire area shown here are switching facilities of the Texas Pacific and Missouri Pacific railroads. Again we point out the available acres for future industries that must have room to locate wherever the seaway is built. Note room for expansion.



This air view of the Avondale Railroad Yards was taken May 2, 1947. On the river is shown a tank terminal that stores and handles all types of liquid products, including crude oil, gasoline, whale oil, molasses, etc., for import and export on the Mississippi. The left hand tracks, coming into the picture under the overpass, are the Texas and Pacific and Missouri Pacific, and to the left of the maze of tracks are their switching and repair yards. Tracks under the overpass on the right are the Southern Pacific and to the right are its similar yards. Inbound freights are broken up here—all cars destined for the east bank are sent across the Huey P. Long Bridge and all west bank traffic is distributed from these yards by switch engines. All outbound freights for all three roads are made up here. Again note room for expansion.

By a shorter, more direct and cheaper route a seaway can be projected from the Gulf of Mexico to the very heart of New Orleans — much closer to the center of things than the Industrial Canal.

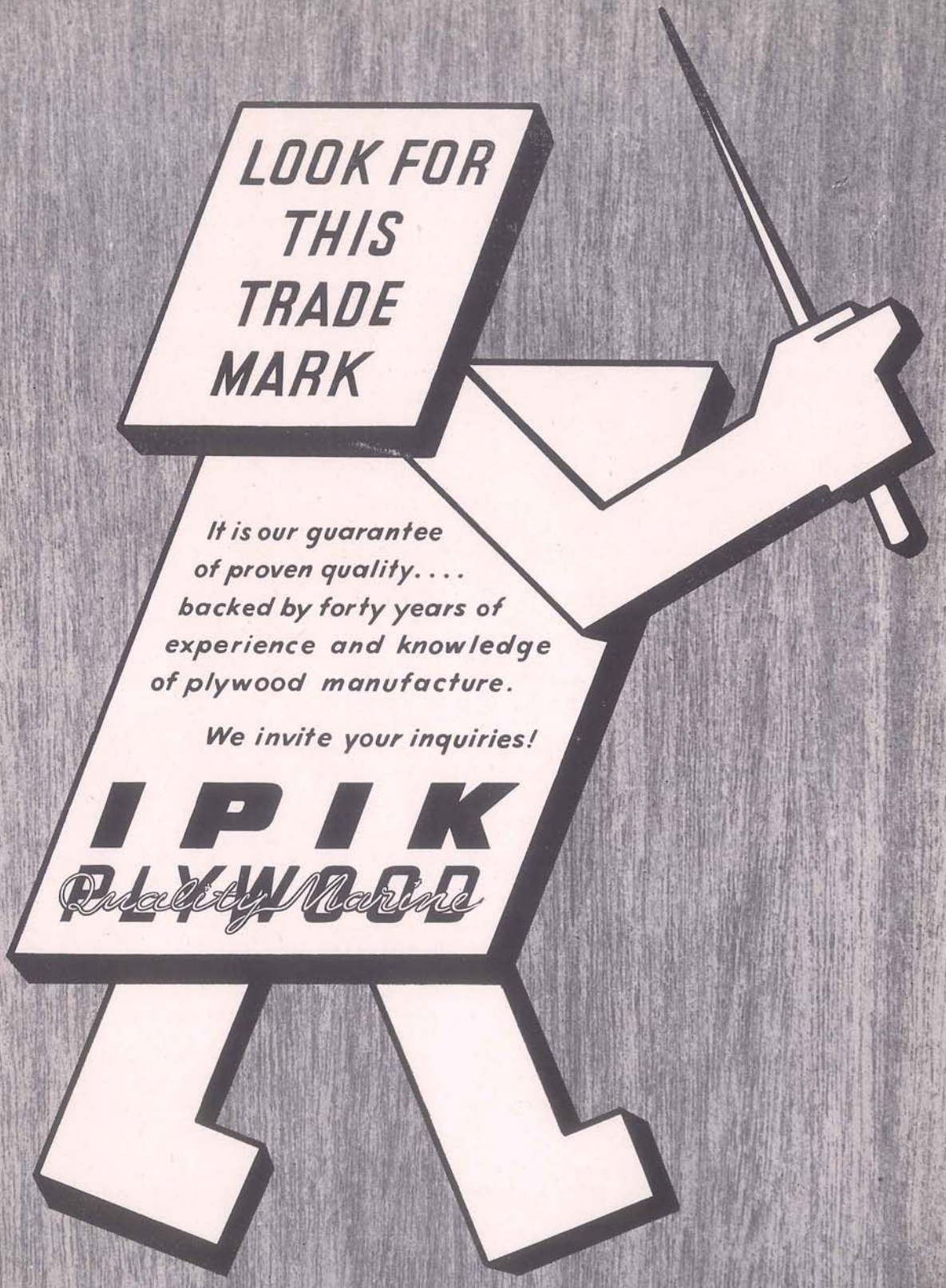
This route has been supported and pushed, for several years, by the Police Jury of Jefferson Parish and other parish officials, led by District Attorney John E. Fleury. More recently E. S. Pennebaker and the Mississippi Valley Seaway Canal Association have swung behind this proposal. A deep student of port affairs and a constructive thinker, Mr. Pennebaker is manager of the T.P.-M.P. Terminal Railroad of New Orleans.

The route for this west-side seaway would be from Grand Isle (west end) through the marshes west of Barataria Bay straight north to Westwego, which is opposite the New Orleans headquarters of the U. S. Engineers at Prytania street. At Westwego there would be twin locks, each 80 feet wide, 800 feet long and 40 feet deep, connecting with the river. The canal would be 40 feet deep and 600 feet wide at the bottom. This canal would be only 52 miles long. Add three miles of dredging and jettying from Grand Isle to the deep-water contour of the Gulf, and the total distance is only 55 miles, as compared with 79 on the east side! Not only would there be a large saving in dredging the canal, but the three miles of jettying, in open water, would be much less costly than running jetties through ten times that distance on the eastern route.

Mr. Pennebaker believes this west-side seaway, including the twin locks, could be built for $50,000,000 and that facilities for a great port could be built for $25,000,000 — total, $75,000,000 for the finished product, ready to do business. This is $47,000,000 less than the estimated cost of the east-bank seaway.

The choice of this route for the seaway would make it unnecessary to build the alternate route of the Intracoastal Canal, with another lock, below Algiers. The estimated cost of that project is $8,000,000. That saving should be deducted from the cost of the seaway. So the west-side seaway would really be $55,000,000 cheaper than the one on the east side of the river—a large economy for the tax-payers!

From copious experience in dredging channels through the swamps and trembling prairies of Louisiana, engineers know there would be no serious problems in dredging and maintaining this seaway.



IPIK PLYWOOD COMPANY

GUM - POPLAR - MAHOGANY

KENNER, LOUISIANA

The material from the excavation would raise the surrounding land, for as far back as it is desirable to go, several feet above tide level, and the ground so created would sustain the weight of wharves, warehouses and factories. Fog dangers and delays would be reduced to a minimum, for the temperature of the seaway would be the same as that of the Gulf; it is the meeting of the cold river water with the warm Gulf water that causes such dense fogs at the river's mouth. The west-bank seaway would be a shorter route to the ports of the Americas, from which a great and increasing business may be expected in the future. There has been small physical development along the route of the proposed west-bank canal, and construction costs would not be unduly increased by the necessity of building bridges and overpasses, and changing highway or railroad routes, as on the east side. Army engineers who studied nine possible seaway routes in 1930 said this is the "most advantageous." Their report, dated June 11, 1930, is contained in Document No. 46, committee on rivers and harbors, House of Representatives, 71st Congress.

This west-bank route is through Jefferson Parish, which has made an enormous development during the past quarter of a century. Industrial development has been especially impressive, a great deal heavier than on the east side of the river, and so it will continue, because of the supplies of raw materials, because of the concentration of transportation facilities there, and because there is more room for industrial expansion.

Some three-score and ten industries, including several of the largest plants of their kind in the world, are in Jefferson; they turn out 60 percent of the New Orleans-area production which is shipped out of the port of New Orleans. Population doubled in the past decade; it doubled in the decade before that.

Oil fields and natural gas fields have in recent years brought new wealth and new power for industry to Jefferson; salt and sulphur production on a vast scale has come to the west side of the river; other huge sources of raw material make the west bank more advantageous for industrial development than the east.

Five of the eight trunk-line railroads which serve New Orleans enter the city from the west, and they carry 75 percent of the import and export traffic moving by rail. These are the Illinois Central, the Louisiana and Arkansas, the Texas and Pacific, the Missouri Pacific and the Southern Pacific. Only the Louisville and Nashville, the Southern, and the Gulf, Mobile and Northern enter the city from the east — they carry 25 percent of the export-import tonnage borne by rail. To build the seaway on the east side of the river would mean that 75 percent of an increasing tonnage from the west would have to be dragged across New Orleans, which already occupies nearly all the land between its water boundaries, the Mississippi on one side, Lake Pontchartrain on the other. This would introduce a problem compared with which the physical difficulties of New Orleans' Union Station are child's play.

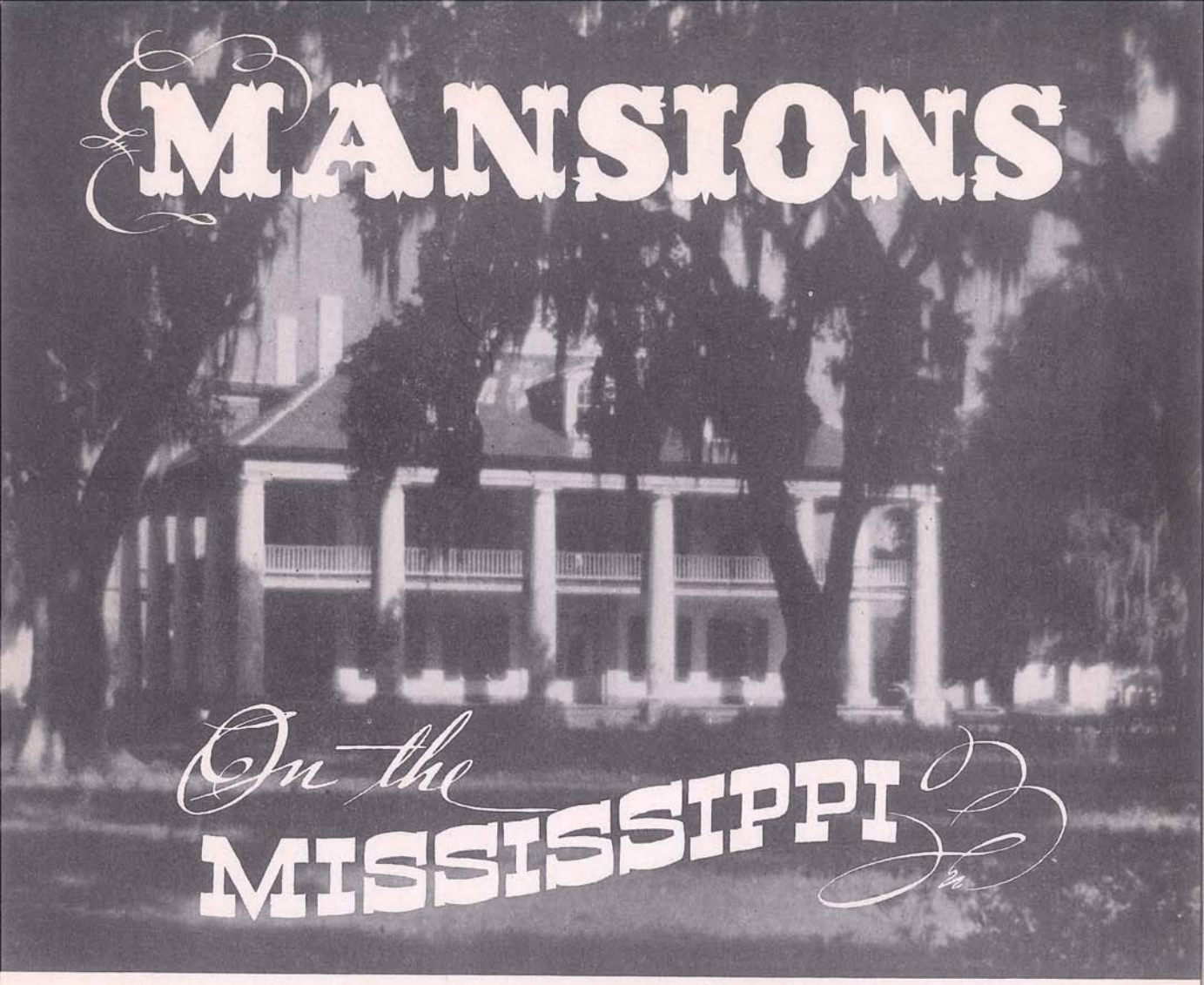
Moreover, an analysis of the waterborne traffic moving through Harvey Canal (Intracoastal waterway) in 1942 shows that 45 percent was from or to points north of Harvey, and only 18 percent moved through the Industrial Canal. And an analysis of the ocean-borne tonnage of the New Orleans-Baton Rouge customs district in the five pre-war years, 1936-1940, averaged 16,096,583 tons a year, emphasizes the up-river and west-side trend. Of that total, 7,841,010 tons originated at or were destined to Westwego, Norco, Goodhope, Destrehan, St. Rose and Baton Rouge — 48½ percent of the total; 8,255,573 tons to points below Westwego—51½ percent. Only a little more than half of the shipping which New Orleans claims actually belongs to the port, as the word is used in the narrow but general acceptance.

It is true that New Orleans outweighs Jefferson Parish in voting and financial strength; but is it not time that New Orleans recognizes that Jefferson Parish is a part of it in an economic sense?

Unfortunately the average Orleanian thinks of the West Side in terms of the grubby villages which entered the century; it remembers Jefferson as an uncharted wilderness through which Lafitte made his way to his pirate stronghold on Grande Terre Island more than a century ago. He does not realize that much of the West Bank, especially that section through which the seaway would run, is closer to Canal street than are many parts of New Orleans. The Robert Moses report, "Arterial Plan for New Orleans," dated November 1, 1946, pointed out that "The natural area of residential expansion of New Orleans is in the direction of Algiers and Gretna"—both of which are on the west bank.

The Huey P. Long bridge in 1935 made one community of both banks of the Mis-

Continued on Page 113



Houmas House, restored by Dr. George B. Crozat.

By Hartnett T. Kane

IN a file of unbroken splendor they stretched along the lower river, above and below New Orleans, these mansions on the Mississippi.

A hundred or so years ago, in the high water of spring, a passenger on one of the great white steamboats could behold an endless parade of the plantation houses—a sight unparalleled in America. Every mile or so rose another of them. Some called it the "Gold Coast," this frontage on the Mississippi; for natives it was a well-known front yard, their own and their neighbors'.

Here was the cane sugar center of the North American continent—that comparatively narrow spread of ground along the greatest of streams, on which the delicate crop could be grown with success. There, behind the levee, lay the fields of waving green, the thick purplish stalks with their tassel-like tops. Nearby towered the tall brick chimneys of the refineries, which would work at fever-heat when cold weather came, in their effort to grind the last ounce of juice from the stalks and convert it into wealth.

And a little distance away, closer to the levee, stood the tall white columned houses that were the ornaments of the grower—a sign of his affluence, a symbol of his ambition. Some were of the simple Creole or West Indian type, raised structures whose first floors were flush with the ground, the second having a railed gallery beneath a low-hanging roof. Others

As accurately and interestingly as the author covered the whole of Louisiana in his "Plantation Parade," he has, on smaller canvas in this article, picturesquely portrayed that portion of the river including and adjoining Jefferson Parish. Readers will remember that his most recent book was the best seller and coming movie "New Orleans Woman" and will be glad to know that he is completing his sixth book, soon to be released, dealing with the plantations of Natchez and to be called "Natchez on the Mississippi."

were of the soaring Greek Revival, heavily columned establishments of elegance in the grand manner. And some occupied a place between, with a quiet beauty that grew with the years.

The parishes of Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James and St. John the Baptist knew an uncounted number of such mansions; some in this area equalled the grandeur of any in the prewar South. One or two owners could claim that their's surpassed all others in the region.

Fate has caught up with various ones. Time has taken toll, eating away at once-solid pillars until they sagged and fell away; wearing off the galleries and crumbling the shingle roofs. Fire has been cruel to others, wiping them out in an hour, to leave lines of brick columns against the sky, ironic in their significance. Now and then, when levees were less firm than today, the powerful Mississippi has eaten into a bank, and sadly the owners have left the old place to its ruin. Another landmark has gone.

Yet dozens remain in this vicinity to form a file of monuments to a way of living that will never return to democratic America. Few would want to bring back the system of human exploitation, the enslavement of one man by another. But it is impossible to deny that these mansions represent a period of remarkable

This is Three Oaks Plantation House below New Orleans—a home in the old Louisiana tradition, built about 1840. On each of the two floors, four principal rooms back up to each other and all open upon the galleries that extend all around the house.

home-building, a combination of rare good taste, and no less rare simplicity, which the nation has seldom known.

Much exaggeration has been made, to be sure. Over-romantic people have spoken of "thousands" of retainers, of buildings whose proportions were fantastic. The fact is that the slaveholders were only a narrow minority in the older South; the most of them had about sixty-five or fewer bondsmen, generally much fewer. The plantation houses remain, however, as evidence that for those on the Mississippi's borders in Louisiana, there was majesty in the manner of life, a rich heritage of construction for later Americans.

Below New Orleans, on the east bank of the river near Chalmette stand two buildings with which a great deal of history is connected. Three Oaks Plantation House, property of the American Sugar Refinery, gets its name from the trio of fine trees just before it. As the story goes, General John Lewis planted a pair of acorns to mark the birth of twin brothers in the family. But there was a slip, and a third acorn fell into the ground. The building, surrounded entirely by a colonnade of thick pillars, is a fine example of Louisiana plantation construction.

Nearby is Bueno Retiro or the Rene Beauregard home. James Gallier, Sr., the noted Louisiana architect, is known to be the builder. It dates back to 1840 and has been much admired in its day. Eight columns stand at the front, the same number at the back, with a sloping roof ornamented by dormer windows. A restoration is in prospect. The home was long the property of the son of the famous Creole, General P. G. T. Beauregard.

Near the Chalmette Oil Refinery is the site of the fabulous de la Ronde plantation, the "Versailles of Louisiana" in Creole days. Pierre Denis de la Ronde once planned to put up a port of Versailles at this point which would outstrip New Orleans. On Lake Borgne he projected a similar town, which he would call Paris. Between them would be the *"Chemin de Paris,"* Paris road, which eventually was called Parish road by the natives. Monsieur de la Ronde had nine daughters, whom their friends called the Nine Muses; one son—Apollo.

The de la Ronde mansion, which dated back to 1805, had a great line of moss-hung oaks, a majestic sight of the river. The spot is famous as one of the sites at which occurred the Battle of New Orleans. The American and British soldiers clashed in bloody battle here and

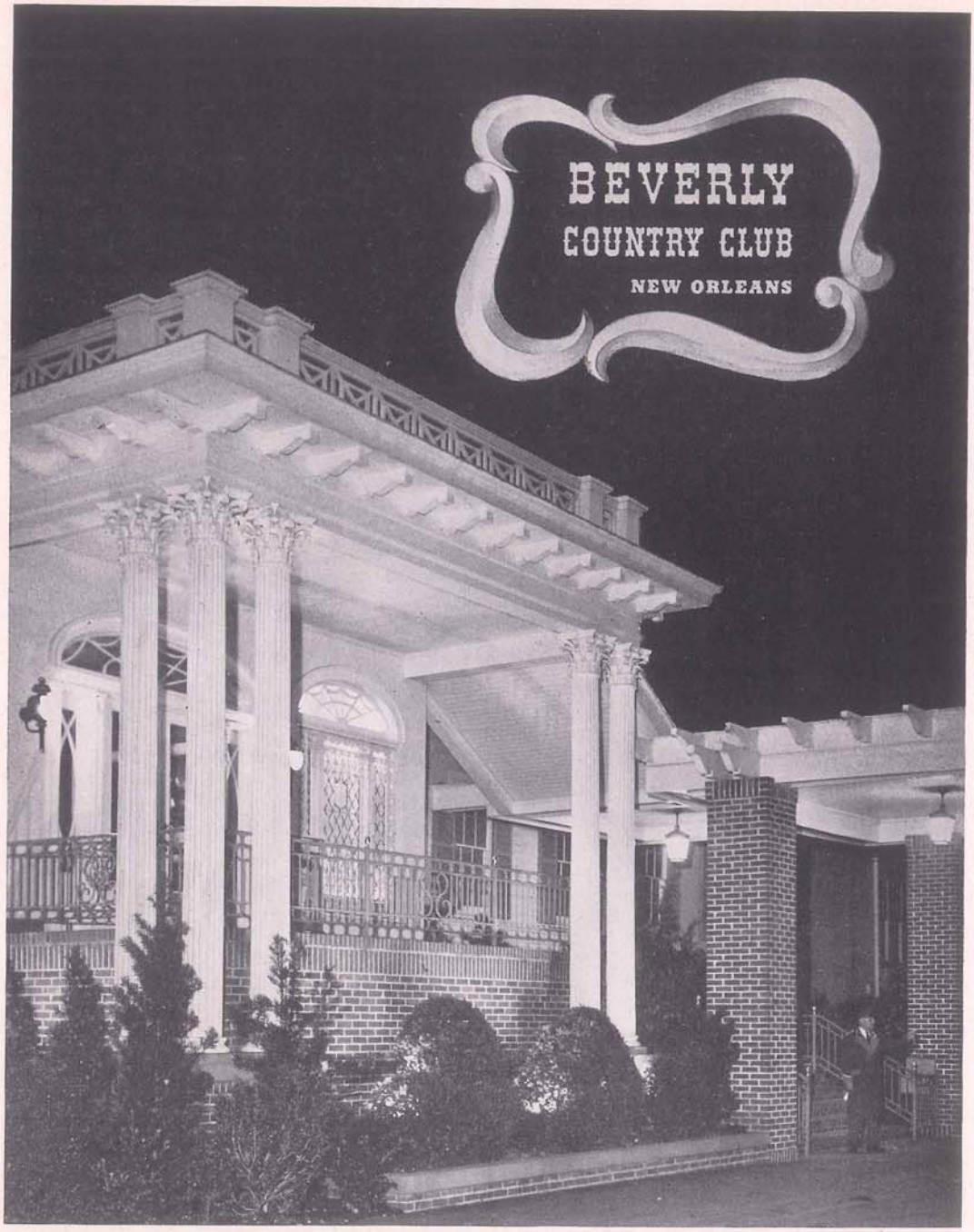
Above: The old slave quarters at Reserve.

Below: While the tractors hum on many famous plantations, the horse and plow still rule the furrows on others, especially those now divided into tenant farms.

by error, later, the oaks received the name of "Pakenham Oaks." The house, a castle-like structure of brick, was burned about 1875, but the ruins are there and have become a kind of shrine, one of the most celebrated in Louisiana.

Farther down along the same road, at Braithewaite, stands Orange Grove, one of the most untypical plantation buildings in Louisiana. It has nothing of the Creole or Greek Revival about it; instead it is a replica of an English castle, with Tudor windows, peaked turrets and many

The once proud Jefferson College, built in 1830 as a gift from Valcour Aime to the Marist Fathers to educate Louisiana youths, is now known as Manresa, a Jesuit retreat.



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gables. Thomas Morgan built it in 1850. In recent years it has been abandoned, and vandals have broken in to destroy mantels, window panels and fine doorways. It gives a somewhat eerie picture, a forgotten and mournful establishment in its setting of Louisiana palmettoes and oaks.

A short distance off is Kenilworth, along slow-flowing Bayou Terre aux Boeufs. Some sources indicate that this was first a blockhouse, built about 1758. Later it was embellished in the Creole style, to become a traditional "big house" with brick columns below and delicate wooden ones above. The old beams, iron bolts and stairways give token of its age and authenticity. The Bienvenue and Estopinal families occupied it for years; today it is the property of Scott Wilson.

Above New Orleans at the Huey P. Long bridge on the east bank—a mile or so away along a side road off Highway 1—stands Elmwood, a house with a history like none other that I know. It dates far back to the 1700s, the Creole days; it has been identified with such figures as William C. C. Claiborne, first American Governor of Louisiana; before that, Lafreniere, the Creole who rebelled against the Spanish rulers. Originally the old place had two stories, of the West Indian type, with heavy columns at the bottom, supporting colonettes above.

On one sad night it burned. Most people would have given up. Not Mr. and Mrs. Durel Black, the owners. The lower columns and much of the walls remained; with these they reconstructed the first floor, put the roof back; and today Elmwood shines in much of its former beauty, among its trees and its camellia bushes.

About two miles onward, a short distance off the highway, is the Colonial Country Club, formerly the Soniat plantation, owned by one of the best known of the Creole clans. It dates from about 1818; originally it had an appearance much like that of the original Elmwood. In 1924 it was somewhat changed for its new purpose. The Soniat family is also remembered in New Orleans for the old plantation house that has since become Mercy hospital, opposite the Texas and Pacific railroad station on Coliseum street.

Another thirteen miles or so along the river waits d'Estréhan, where lived Jean Noel d'Estréhen de Beaupré, a father on a large scale. Needing room for his fourteen children, M. d'Estréhan put up an expansive place, with heavy pillars but still reflecting the Creole plan. This was in the 1820's; later the house passed to Stephen Henderson, eccentric Scotchman whom the Creoles called Monsieur Croesus or, more simply, Old Baggy Pantaloons. After death his name figured in a sensational lawsuit in which his relatives sought to prevent him from freeing his slaves.

Less than two miles onward comes Ormond, one of the finest restorations in the state. The building, a magnificent bit of construction, is a long, low-built Creole house with two attached wings. Its first owner was Pierre Trépagnier, a well-to-do Frenchman who made friends with Spanish rulers of Louisiana. One day he was summoned from breakfast by a horseman with a hurried message, and was never seen again. Eventually Ormond was occupied by a doughty warrior, Colonel Richard Butler, who refused to obey an army order to cut off his queue. Gentleman had always worn such "tails," he said—and he did, even to his grave. His family had a hole cut in the coffin so that the braid would stick out, defiantly to the end! Today the Alfred W. Browns own the revivified Ormond.

This once famous Soniat Plantation, above New Orleans, is now the Colonial Country Club. It is interesting to note that this photograph was made 27 years ago.

This is the famous San Francisco Plantation house—which posterity has likened in style and architecture to the floating steamboat palaces of Mark Twain's day.

A less happy fate has been that of Trépagnier, about three miles onward, along the road near the Bonnet Carre spillway. It was built by Jean Francois Trépagnier, brother of the man who disappeared; he was killed in a slave uprising. Today his plantation house is wearing away, occupied by tenants.

Voisin, some ten miles up, is an early raised cottage built about 1790, a structure whose walls are of the much-admired "bousillage," with walls of clay and moss between cypress boarding. Voisin has another fact of interest; a single family has occupied it for some hundred and thirty-five years.

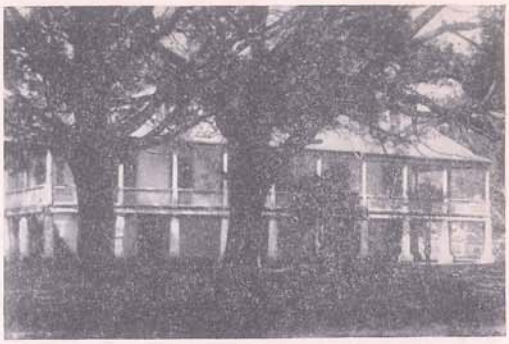
San Francisco, about three miles along the road, remains unique in this vicinity—a "Steamboat Gothic" house, whose exterior reminds the visitor of nothing so much as one of the floating palaces of the earlier day, with its many small windows, fluted columns and railings. Nearby is Reserve, with the refinery of Godchaux Sugars.

Mount Airey, near Gramercy, has been notable for its rich iron work on the gallery, stairway and captain's walk, and its square white columns; and also for the preservation of its pigeonniers, garçonnières and other outer buildings. Most plantations of the former day had these auxiliaries; not very many have survived.

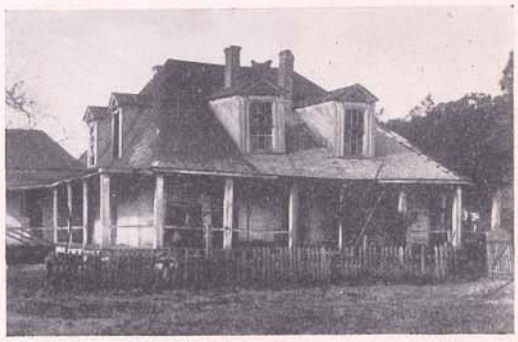
Welham, reached about nine miles onward, after passing Lutcher, is a much-admired red brick structure with a white-plastered front. The river has cut closer, but Welham has been carried back; today it stands near the road, as sturdy as ever.

And then there comes old Jefferson College, built for the sons of the former Creole planters. Its central building stands out as a massive one, with a great parade of columns across the front and a portico with six pillars in the center. These columns are some of the most imposing on the river. Near the iron gates sets a pink brick building with fluted columns that has been commented upon as much as the central structure. Today the institution has become Manresa House, a Jesuit retreat.

Beyond Manresa the observant visitor can find a few slight remains of Uncle Sam, once the finest plantation group on the river—big house, superb side buildings, offices, kitchens and all. The levee was moved back, and it all went. Fortune has been kinder to several others nearby. Colomb House is a tinier version



This photograph of "Elmwood" was taken in 1920—twenty years before it was partially destroyed by fire. It has since been beautifully restored and is one of the plantation homes most easily seen by New Orleans visitors.



The photo of this old plantation home between New Orleans and Harahan, taken in 1920, shows how, even a quarter century ago, the old houses were surrendering to time and neglect.

This is a collector's item—this photograph of levee construction on the Mississippi, taken also back in 1920. The location is the Orleans-Jefferson Parish Line.

of the plantation house, built by a colorful character, Christophe Colomb, Jr., who claimed descent from the Italian explorer, Columbus. The columns at the front are supposedly taken from an abandoned courthouse. Mr. Colomb was ahead of his time; while others laughed, he proposed that bagasse, the pulp left after pressing of the juice from cane, be put to use as a building material. Today a great industry has been developed because others have developed the same thought.

Then comes Tezcuco, a raised house with six square columns and fine iron

JEFFERSON DEMOCRAT

Official Journal of the

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OF

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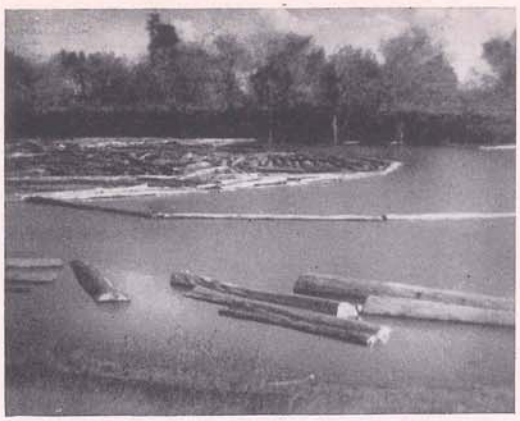
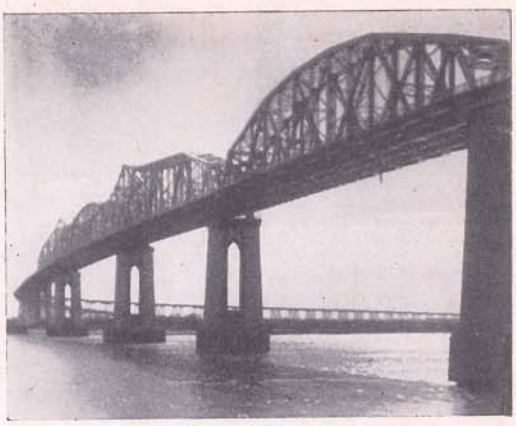
SINCE 1896

Gretna, Louisiana





Today, on the broad Mississippi near New Orleans, the plantations are replaced by industry and commerce. Shown here are the millpond of the Freiberg Mahogany Company, where mahogany logs from South America are held awaiting their production into veneer, and the famous Huey P. Long Bridge that crosses the river just a short distance from Elmwood plantation, dating back to the 1700's.

lacework galleries at front and sides. It was built by a member of the Bringier family who once dominated this part of the river. The Bringiers formerly had a great place, White Hall, with a cottage ready at all times for passing individuals. No questions were asked; a meal and bed were always prepared for the traveler.

Last in this vicinity on the East bank is Houmas House, which has had one of the longest of histories. Here settled the Houmas Indians, and the house took their name. General Wade Hampton of Revolutionary fame operated a plantation here in the early 1800, through an overseer. By 1840, Hampton's son-in-law, John Smith Preston, came here and put up a house in the grand style of the Greek Revival, with thick Doric columns on three sides. Later a bachelor merchant prince of New Orleans, John Burnside, occupied it. Mr. Burnside was noted as a man of remarkable capacity in several things, including claret. Today Dr. George B. Crozat has restored Houmas House with unusual skill; and nearby his sister and brother-in-law, Dr. Anita Crozat Kohlsdorf and Dr. E. G. Kohlsdorf, own Bocage—a striking house built for Christophe Colomb, father of the man who put up the little Colomb House, already mentioned.

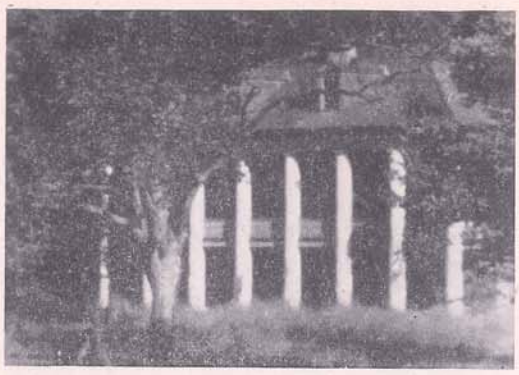
On the west bank of the Mississippi, at Vacherie, about 10 miles below the Houmas House, is one of the greatest sights in the Mississippi Valley, the splendor of Oak Alley. No plantation house in Louisiana has been restored more skillfully than the home of Mrs. Andrew Stewart; nowhere in the valley is there a vista like the double line of 28 oaks leading from the house to the roadway.

Oak Alley stands like a pink palace in the distance—a great square house with twenty-eight columns encircling it, double galleries with delicate cypress railings above. Jaques Telesphore Roman, brother of Governor André Roman of Louisiana, built it about 1836. An unknown Frenchman planted the trees, which have grown into a file of great majesty, meeting overhead to form a frame for the house in the distance.

Continuing on to Wallace, another notable resoration is under way. Here waits Evergreen, a house of heavy Doric columns across all the front, notable in other years for two curving staircases, extending outside from the ground to the second level. It offers a belvedere, white-railed, from which the caller has a view of the countryside for miles around. Dating back to 1840, it is now being repaired by Miss Mathilda Gray of New Orleans and Lake Charles.

The Wego house, a mile or so down the river, shows its age with its bousillage construction. Several times the Mississippi has come nearer, and each time it has been shifted to save it. About ten miles onward stands Glendale, with an old hipped roof, eight square pillars and early pigeonniers at both sides. Beyond the Locke Breaux Live Oak, President of the famous Live Oak Society, and some eight miles down the river, is the Keller House, a massive one dating to 1800. Between the Fortiers and the Kellers, it has remained unchanged for decades, with its pillars on all of the four sides and its downsweeping gallery.

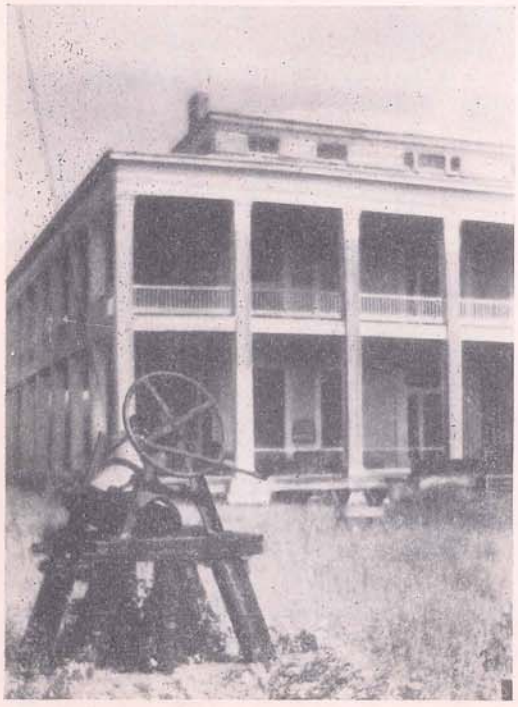
Past the Huey P. Long bridge, just opposite New Orleans, the great columns of Seven Oaks lift against the sky. It goes



Bueno Retiro, at Chalmette, known as the Beauregard home, as it was long occupied by the son of the Beloved Creole.

Most of the popular photographs of Oak Alley show the long approach of 28 oak trees. This is a close-up of the plantation house itself at Vacherie.

The old plantation bell of Belle Chasse, the historic Judah P. Benjamin home, with the recently restored plantation house in the background.



back to 1830, when the widow of Michael Zeringue erected it in a setting of trees which are almost as notable as the plantation house itself. The pillars are on all sides, eight to each exposure, and the railed captain's walk that surmounts the roof gives another striking touch.

And then, beyond Gretna, thirteen miles below Seven Oaks, in the Deep Delta country of the Mississippi, there rise the sturdy walls of Belle Chasse. This great place, three full stories high, was put up by Judah P. Benjamin, celebrated attorney of New Orleans who became Secretary of State and Secretary of War in the Confederacy. It has a curved mahogany stairway that ascends, swirl upon swirl, to the third level. It, too, has been carried back from the river and is being preserved as a monument to the statesman.

These are only the better known plantation houses among the many that line the Mississippi on its east and west banks; many others have a place in the procession. A curious thing has happened in recent years. After a long period during which it looked as if most of these establishments would disappear, they are now coming back to use.

Some are taken by corporations or other organizations, such as the oil company which owns d'Estrehan. Now and then, in various parts of Louisiana, one becomes a school or even a hospital. In other cases, men and women who have their business in the city have turned to these places as excellent country homes, for quick trips in the evenings or on weekends.

But in other ways the plantation houses are coming back. New industries have appeared to support them. Against the horizon stretch the lines of oil derricks and the chug of oil machinery replaces the old cries of the farm workers. Cattle are being introduced, and truck farming; diversification of agriculture has made an advance. The plantation houses have new bases of support.

More and more we of Louisiana, like others, have come to realize the value of such buildings. Wise architects have pointed out the advisability of the high-ceilinged rooms in such climates, the construction of the main floor off the ground as in the Creole houses, and the use of wide galleries. Many an owner has built in the older style; and now various individuals have returned to the earlier houses themselves. Life goes on again behind the white pillars of these mansions on the Mississippi.

Behind this curtain of lovely Spanish moss, travel through tranquil beauty with the camera magic of *Eugene Delcroix*

Beside a bayou's bank, the luggers laze . . .

...and lilies rock in rhythm with the ripples

In weather-mellowed homes Grandmere . . .

. . . and Grandpere ply their placid occupations

Gleaming amid tall cypress and towering oak . . .

. . . handsome homes wear classic colonnades

Quiet hours along the sunlit lanes of Grand Isle

. . . and

along

the breezy

borders

of Bayou

Barataria

You'll want to go where wandering waters lead

. . . and

where

a rambling

road will

beckon

to you

Warm sun

upon a

golden

beach

is fun

. . . and

so is

moonlight,

cool upon

a silver

one

For the very young, a land of limitless enjoyment

. . . but a place for secenely serious moments, too

The winds

and

the waters

whisper

in the

night

... and

your prayer

for peace

is answered

INDUSTRIAL PEACE GREATLY RESPONSIBLE FOR JEFFERSON'S PROSPERITY

Horton B. Dobson, Industrial Relations Director, The Celotex Corporation at Marrero, discussing labor relations with interviewer for Jefferson Parish Yearly Review from Public Relations, Inc.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION: During the past two years, Jefferson Parish industry has been barely touched by the unrest and controversy which have existed between management and labor in other parts of the country.

Its production, therefore, has marched steadily forward and no bitterness of strife and distrust clouds the future.

Interested in the reason for this, the Jefferson Parish Yearly Review—for this 1947 issue—commissioned Public Relations, Inc., an unbiased out-of-the-parish organization to make a survey of our industries, interviewing both executives and workers in representative Jefferson Parish plants—asking "Why?"

Some of the answers are astonishing. In only one spot is there doubt. High and increasing wages are reported throughout Jefferson Parish industry and with this goes increasing contentment and efficiency.

Following are the reports of the interesting interviews—as made by Donald Higgins and Martin Morey, who contacted management, and Thomas Ewing Dabney, who talked with men in the plants.

Management's Story at Celotex:

The Celotex Corporation operates the world's largest insulating cane board plant at Marrero, Louisiana, and manufactures insulating building materials and sound proofing products. At Marrero, Celotex employs approximately 2200 hourly paid workers, three shifts per day, six days per week. There are also approximately 300 additional individuals employed in various categories such as management, including foremen, supervisors, as well as clerical employees.

Says Horton B. Dobson, Director of Industrial Relations for Celotex: "During the past two and one-half years we have experienced no work stoppages, slow downs, or strikes. Our relations with our employees are such that we may be justly proud. We have an extensive personnel program, including a Labor Relations Department. We make use of such modern working tools as Job Evaluation, Aptitude Tests, and systematized up-grading. We also maintain a Merit Rating system applying to salaried employees." Mr. Dobson stated further that Celotex employees are provided free medical attention for accidents and minor illnesses including ambulance service, but excluding expenses of surgery. The plant also has a program for the re-employment and rehabilitation of veterans. Of over 1350 workers who saw war service in the Armed Forces, more than 500 have already been re-employed, and more are constantly returning.

Swift and Company Reports:

Manager R. A. Fincher, of Swift and Company's refinery in Harvey, made this statement: "We realize that fair treatment of employees is essential to good management-employee relations. For thirty-one years the company has provided pensions to which the employees do not contribute. For forty years the company has provided sickness and accident payments, as well as Employee's Benefit Association through which employees can protect themselves against loss from sickness, accident, and death.

"In addition to these benefits, the company has provided vacations with pay for hourly paid employees during the last twenty-five years, and for twenty-one years has made available group life insurance at low rates to regular employees.

"We bargain collectively with the organizations certified by the National Labor Relations Board and elected by our employees to represent them. Also, we observe with fidelity the terms of agreement between the company and the union arrived at in collective bargaining.

"Every effort is made to have the employees clearly understand that the company is sincere in its policy of fair treatment and wants them to feel free to bring up for consideration any misunderstandings they may have.

"This method has proved successful with few exceptions and, if followed, will continue for the good of the employees as well as the company, and will strengthen employee and management relationships."

The President of Great Southern Box is Interviewed: Shelley Schuster, president of the Great Southern Box Company at Southport, points to two main factors as reasons for the excellent labor relations of his company. First, the take-home pay of Great Southern workers is as high or higher than the take-home pay for the entire area; secondly, the attitude of the management of Great Southern is that unions are not all wrong. The Great Southern Box Company claims that it bargains with the union on a reasonable basis.

The Vice-President of Southern Shellfish Extends an Invitation: The Southern Shellfish Company at Harvey, one of the largest seafood canning plants in the world, is proud of its labor-management history. Charles M. Carriere, vice-president, points out that the company plant in Harvey has the best working conditions of any in the industry. If any one doubts this claim, Mr. Carriere invites them to visit the plant.

Mr. Carriere attributes the success of the company's labor-management relations to the many details which make for good working conditions. The factory is light and airy. A safety program is rigidly enforced. A visitor to Southern Shellfish will find every safety device available to the industry installed and in perfect working condition.

To top it all off, Southern Shellfish workers are paid the highest wages in the seafood canning industry of Louisiana.

No Strikes for 17 Years at Penick and Ford: The Penick and Ford Company has a labor problem because of the seasonableness of its business, which is the making of molasses and syrup. How well it has solved this problem is indicated by the fact that before the war most of the employees had been with the company for 15 years. The plant has had no strikes for 17 years.

The reasons for this fine record are given by J. E. Frederick, assistant to the plant manager, who says, "Every effort is made to distribute the work so that workers are employed steadily over long periods. I might also say that we have had a group insurance plan for workers since 1924. We also pay high wages."

Freiberg Mahogany Company is Pessimistic: At the Freiberg Mahogany Company in Harahan, the labor-management picture is the least favorable in the parish. Harry Freiberg, Jr., is not sympathetic to unions and is opposed to union activities in his factory. He says that the only reason he has not had more trouble is because the union is not yet powerful enough to cause real trouble. He is pessimistic about the future of his labor-management relations.

American Creosote Works is Satisfied: Shirley Braselman, president of the American Creosote Works, says his labor-management relations are satisfactory and gives this as the reason: "We get along with our labor because we have been able to meet all their demands. We have AFL contracts and pay good wages."

Reber at Rheem's is Enthusiastic: The Rheem Manufacturing Company plant, which sits beside the Jefferson Highway near the famous Huey P. Long Bridge, is one of the best to look at in all the parish. The beautifully landscaped grounds around this modern plant give a stranger a hint of the cleanliness and good housekeeping which is to be found inside.

L. A. Reber is mighty proud of his factory, his workers and the job that Rheem did during the war. The Rheem factory is now back at its peacetime job of manufacturing metal drums and containers, but during the war it received an Army-Navy "E" for production of parts for fighting equipment.

"I know all my workers by their first names," Mr. Reber says, "and so do most

of the administrative staff here." When asked to give some other details he recited a long list of things about Rheem that make it an ideal employer. Here are just a few: the plant is clean; the stretcher kept in the first-aid room has never been used for the company has an unusual safety record; personnel department takes a personal interest in the problems of the workers; a fine cafeteria; and high wages.

"We have just started an incentive pay plan," Mr. Reber said. "As a result, our workers now earn $5 to $8 per week more for exactly the same amount of work and the same hours as in 1946."

Avondale's Unusual Program: At the Avondale Marine Ways an investigator will find workers drawing the highest wages for the shipbuilding industry on the Gulf Coast. Both labor and management seem mutually proud of their work and their company. James H. Bull, president of Avondale, is modest enough to give all the credit to his personnel manager, Herman Evans.

Mr. Evans will talk for hours about the excellent job his department is doing. He sums it up by saying, "Lots of work, big wages and personal interest in our employees."

Here are two reasons why Avondale workers like their jobs: the personnel department has organized ten bowling teams and pays for the games, and Avondale owns a farm. Produce from the farm goes to Avondale employees. It's not unusual for the farm to yield 57 dozen eggs a week—and every egg is given to the Avondale employees.

LABOR'S VIEWPOINT

A Representative of The Largest Union at Celotex Reports: "With a payroll in excess of 2500 employees, the Celotex Corporation of Marrero is the largest employer in Jefferson Parish. Employer-employee relations are good, and are improving day-by-day." According to Jack Montagino, Recording Secretary and Secretary Treasurer of the United Chemical Workers of America Local 179 (CIO), "Complaints and grievances are amicably settled at plant level. Although the threat of a strike in 1947 was publicized, it was avoided as a result of an intelligent attitude on the part of both Management and Union," said Mr. Montagino. "The Union did not win all it asked, but it won some, and there was nothing resulting that disturbed the attitude of fairness of management and labor toward one another."

O. J. Landry, welder-operator at Rheem Manufacturing Company, discusses labor's viewpoint with Thomas Ewing Dabney.

Union Compliments Continental Can and J & L Steel Barrel: In the Continental Can Company of Marrero and the J & L Steel Barrel Company of Gretna, combined, are employed more than 400 members of United Steelworkers of America. Management-employee relations are extraordinary—take it from Michael J. Neary, international representative of that Union. "The Company-Union contract," he said, "calls for the arbitration of grievances and establishes the machinery for such arbitration. But not once during the year and more I have been here has it been necessary to invoke arbitration, because the differences have always been settled in across-the-table discussion by both sides. I have never seen better management-employee relations."

Labor Reports on Ipik Plywood and Freiberg Mahogany: In the woodworking plant of Ipik Plywood Company of Kenner, the labor picture is perfect; in the woodworking plant of Freiberg Mahogany Company of Harahan, it is not so good—says Angus Summer, Louisiana director of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union. "Management of the Ipik Company," he continued, "is making sincere efforts to raise the standard of living in the Kenner area. By the contract signed in 1946, it established a minimum wage of 68 1-2 cents an hour. The wage rises from that point to 83 1-2 cents. A couple of years ago, the Kenner area paid an average of about 40 cents an hour. I am sorry to report that management of

the Freiberg Company seems to be against the Union. Our last contract negotiations were rather unsatisfactory. If management changed its attitude, I believe its operations would be on a much better basis, for it would find that the Union is willing to meet the company more than half-way."

Union Commends Southern Box: "Ever since the company signed the union contract about two years ago, the relations between management and labor in the Great Southern Box Company of Southport have been good," according to D. O. Spears, business agent of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America. "It was necessary for the men to strike in order to get that contract, but with the settlement of the strike, misunderstandings seemed to disappear, and in its place came a sincere and intelligent desire on both sides to avoid future difficulties. Recently the contract was re-negotiated, and everything moved ahead without misunderstanding. Since the men were organized, they have been getting an average increase of 30 cents an hour in wages."

Avondale Has Union Approval: The Avondale Marine Ways of Avondale is not organized, but many Union men are employed there, and at the Union scale. Company-labor relations are excellent, Mr. Spears, business agent of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners reports.

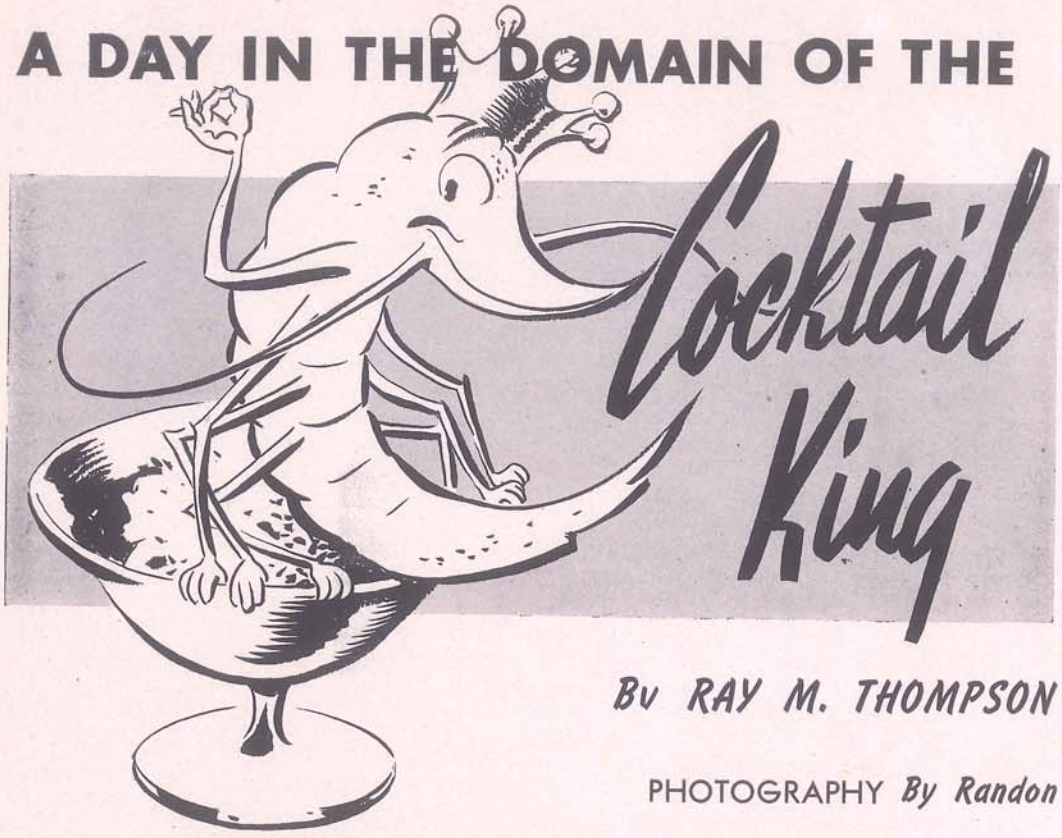
No More Strikes at Chickasaw: "In the Chickasaw Wood Products plant of Gretna, we had a strike in April, 1946," said Elijah Jones, president of Local No. 275, United Furniture Workers' Union. "It lasted 25 days. I do not believe we would have had that strike had not the company been recently sold. The new owners were not as thoroughly in touch with local conditions as they should be and as they have subsequently become. Since then, differences have always been settled in friendly fashion, across the table. We now find the remedy before difficulties reach an acute stage. The same applies to the Banks Street Trucking and Cooperage Company in Gretna, in which our Union also operates."

The Union Reports on Three Plants: There are three food packing industries in Harvey, and they employ nearly 1,500 persons when working at capacity. They are the Southern Shellfish Company, Swift and Company Refinery and Penick and Ford. Southern Shellfish is the largest shrimp and crab cannery in the deep South, and is the first to have membership in an international Union organization. "Relations with all three are excellent," said Albert O'Brien, international representative of Food, Tobacco, Agricultural and Allied Workers. "For a time, when we were organizing, we had some rough going with Southern Shellfish, but now management shows a sincere willingness to cooperate. With Swift and Company we sometimes have delays, because the local officers must get the okay of headquarters in Chicago. This is the only cloud on that horizon. Penick and Ford's management has constantly shown itself sincere and cooperative. It has never been necessary to call a strike in that plant. We expect these relations to continue good and to get better."

Everybody Cooperates at Rheem Manufacturing: On two different occasions the employees of the Rheem Manufacturing Company voted against proposals to unionize the shop, being satisfied with conditions as they were. Conditions are still in that happy situation—take it from O. J. Landry, welder-operator, who lives at 611 Arnoult Road—whom your reporter picked at random to ask the workers' side of the story. "Working conditions in this plant are as good as anybody could hope for, and a darned sight better than a lot of folks are glad to put up with," he said. "The wages are high—better than the Union scale; working conditions are pleasant, and the management is swell. We are all just like one big family. There is always a relief-man waiting to spell us when we need rest periods. The management seems to be personally interested in all of us, and tries to make things more advantageous for us all the time."

Labor Gets Cooperation at American Creosote: "We are having good relations with the American Creosote Works," said Edward Miller, business agent of Construction and General Laborers Union, Local No. 689. "The company and the men are cooperating with good faith for the best industrial results and for the improvement of the standards of living."

A DAY IN THE DOMAIN OF THE Cocktail King



By RAY M. THOMPSON

PHOTOGRAPHY By Randon

TO you and me, who crunch him delightedly between our molars (if any), and to the thousands of Louisiana fishermen who patiently (and profitably) follow his peregrinations, the Cocktail King—His Majesty Penaeus Setiferus—is familiarly known as shrimp (or "Swimps" as they slur it in the bayous).

This small but succulent crustacean, first cousin to the snobbish lobster whom he has passed in popularity even with the blue stocking crowd, is now Louisiana's No. 1 seafood. Nearly 105 million pounds of him were caught by the Pelican State fishermen in 1945 and shipped to every state in the nation. And, in the year 1946, just closed as this is written, Louisiana supplied the nation with half its total catch of shrimp.

The sight of him, enthroned in a cocktail, regally ensconced in rich red hot sauce, causes the salivary glands of millions of diners to titillate. Once they have tasted, even the satiated gourmets will trudge miles for Louisiana's gumbo and jambalaya, to which the tiny monarch has lent his lordly body and flavor. The gentry and common folk sit shoulder to shoulder, fraternally enjoying the exquisite pleasure of peeling boiled shrimp with their fingers, dunking them in a combination of catsup and Worcestershire Sauce, and interspersing the performance with swigs of cold beer. Eating boiled shrimp—a la digits—is like munching peanuts. You can't get stopped.

In Yucatan, down Mexico way, they love a hot soup that owes its habit-forming taste to that Inter-American, the shrimp. And, in front of me right now, is a recipe book with page after page of mouth-watering dishes, all featuring the little fellow.

Yet—in spite of his popularity—the shrimp is probably the least known of any fish, fowl or mammal that graces the American table. Where does he come from? How is he caught? What are his haunts and habits? Nobody, outside of a shrimp fisherman, seems to have the vaguest idea.

Which is why the editor of the REVIEW sent Randon and me out in the Gulf last January 7, to photograph and paragraph the pursuit and capture of the Cocktail King in his own domain.

Advance arrangements were made for us to board the "ALAMO," one of the many trawlers shrimping for Bertoul Cheramie, on one of its regular runs from Grand Isle into the Gulf of Mexico.

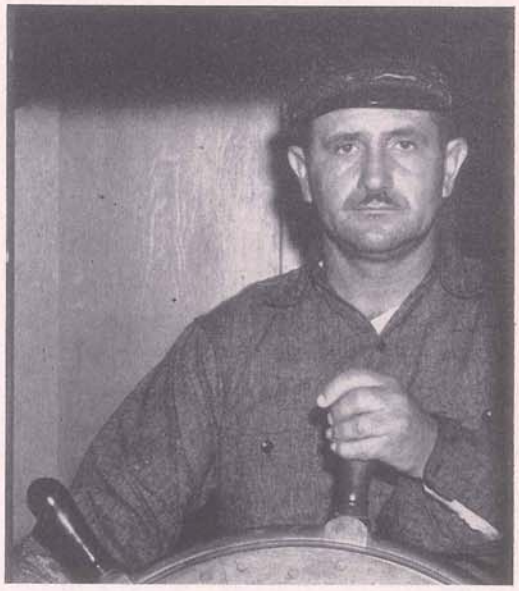
This story cannot be told without blending into it something of the fabulous career of this man Cheramie, who is to the State's deep sea shrimping industry what Ford was to the pioneer automobile industry, and Rockefeller to oil. During the ten short years since shrimping with the Florida type trawlers began in Louisiana about 1937, Cheramie has parlayed an original capital of nothing but nerve, a fisherman's seventh sense, and an uncanny knowledge of human nature into a fleet of shrimp trawlers and packing plants that catch and market several million dollars worth of the tasty tid-bit per year.

Approximately 225 boats in the bayous and Gulf waters of Louisiana bear the red stripe around the hull that identifies all boats fishing for Cheramie. He is easily the largest independent operator in the industry. From his shrimping career both capital and labor could learn many valuable lessons in the profitable operation of a free enterprise depending on the cooperation and loyalty of men—for there are no more rugged individualists in the world than Louisiana shrimpers. You'll see what I mean as this trip unfolds.

On the night of the 6th, Randon and I (accompanied by the REVIEW'S Managing Editor, Joe Monies) left New Orleans for Grand Isle, sixty miles due South or one hundred by road. Randon was loaded down with photographic equipment including a movie camera—and I had the tools of my trade—a notebook and pencil and a healthy curiosity. We carried no liquor—for shrimping in the Gulf demands complete sobriety—even of a passenger. When the boys are busy hauling in the net, a tipsy landlubber could be tossed over the rail by a sudden roll of the boat and never be missed—that is, until too late.

At 5 o'clock in the morning we scrambled out of our hotel beds—grabbed a cup of Cajun coffee—and headed for the wharf where the ALAMO was tied up. To me this 5 o'clock business was pure Hell—but to Randon, who goes on personal fishing trips like mad, it was a familiar rising hour.

As we arrived—it was still the middle of the night as far as I was concerned—



Captain Guidry, the competent owner and skipper of the ALAMO. Shrimpers like him with trawlers like this, normally carrying a crew of two and operating in the Gulf waters, inside and out, last year supplied the seafood lovers of the nation with 120,000,000 pounds of succulent shrimp.

And here is the ALAMO, upon which we were shrimpers for a day—sturdy enough to head for Cuba if the skipper were so inclined and the boat properly fueled. Above deck are the wheelhouse, the galley (neat as a domestic science demonstrator's model kitchen) and the crew's bunks. Below deck are the engine and the ice compartments for the catch.

the boats began lighting up like a pin ball machine, as the crews hauled out of their bunks and made ready for the day's work

There were at least thirty boats in the fleet that would go shrimping with us that day—and we hunted around a while in the darkness before we found the ALAMO and climbed aboard.

There are two types of shrimp fishing—"inside" and "outside." Inside fishing, done by smaller boats, means operating on the inshore waters—the bayous and bays. Outside fishing, conducted by boats the size of the ALAMO, means working outside in the Gulf of Mexico.

The shrimp is a very prolific breeder. The female will deposit as many as 800,000 eggs—carelessly, it would seem, in the deep waters of the Gulf. These eggs drift around for two or three weeks, but just at the right time the tides and currents carry them inland into the brackish waters of the bays, bayous and inlets. These quiet, protected waters are their nursery.

But when each baby shrimp gets large enough to navigate under his own power, he starts working his way back again into the deep, saltier waters of the Gulf where, as an adult, he spawns the following Spring and soon dies—and his progeny repeat the same circle of existence. As winter approaches the shrimp hurry their return journey to the warm deep waters far out from shore.

That is why the shrimp are smaller on the inside and why they are called "Jumbo" on the outside, where they are pulled in as big as six inches long. And that is why, this being winter, we were about to go shrimping out in the Gulf in a boat built for the job just a couple of years ago.

As the boats of the fleet cast off, one by one, and started toward the fishing grounds about 15 miles out, and as the ALAMO took its place in the line of ghostly silhouettes that were gliding along against the faintly breaking light on the horizon, we gathered around Captain Guidry in the compact little wheelhouse—to get acquainted and to start asking the million questions with which we badgered the men of the ALAMO that whole day.

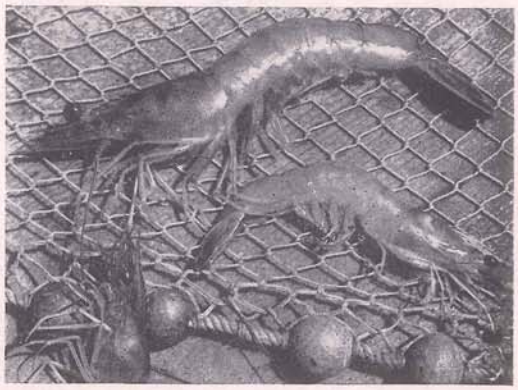
"How do you know where the shrimp are? Why are you heading for this particular spot which, you say, is about 15 miles out?

Patiently and smilingly Captain Guidry began explaining to us the gamble of shrimping. Although more at home in his native French, the Captain was able to describe everything clearly and distinctly to us in the melodious Cajun that listens so beautifully but is so hard to read. Only once in a while, when he wished to express a particularly difficult thought, would he turn to Randon and pour out a stream of Gallic. Randon, who is as French as Rabelais himself, would toss it back to us in English. So cooperative was Captain Guidry that by the time we had traveled a little over an hour—and were approaching the workshop of the shrimpers for that day—we knew just why we were going to do what followed.

Shrimping in the Gulf of Mexico is a guessing game on a vast scale—with science, luck, weather, and equipment all playing leading roles. The shrimp are there—millions of them—but they hunt for holes and the Gulf is a mighty big place with a very uneven floor—and the shrimp, to confuse the issue still more, are not always in the same place twice.

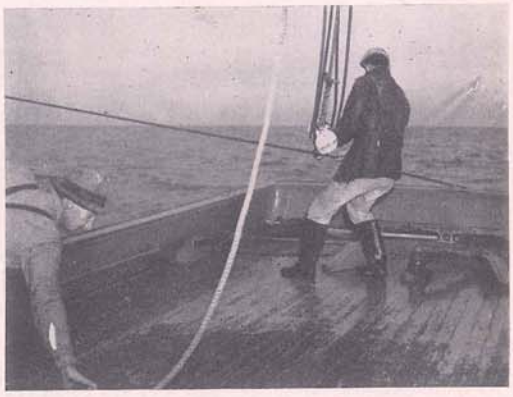
The shrimpers, however, have devised two methods of reducing the odds against them. One is the "try net," a miniature version of the big otter trawl, which they drag at full speed for a few minutes at a time. They keep pulling it up and letting it out, at these few minute intervals, until the contents show enough shrimp—and then out goes a buoy with a flag, marking the spot, and immediately afterward overboard goes the big net.

This is His Majesty, the Cocktail King himself—just after his capture. Like many a monarch before him, he is about to be beheaded—but back in the Gulf still remain millions of his "heirs apparent" who will perpetuate his name and fame.



This is Cherol checking the try-net. From the number of shrimp it contains, based on previous experience in these waters, the Captain decides whether to throw out the big net and trawl here.

Cherol and Emil fastening into trawling position the steel cables of the big net. At the left, outside of the picture, is the drum of the winch which pays out and reels in the cable. At the right, fathoms deep in the Gulf, is the big net scraping the muddy bottom where the shrimp hide.



Then, slowly, and in ever narrowing circles, the boat drags the area around the buoy. This usually takes about an hour and 45 minutes, as the speed is greatly reduced, caused partly by the drag of the net and partly by the slowing of the motor as a measure of safety to keep the cables from breaking from a sudden jerk, should the net encounter an unusual obstacle or hump on the Gulf's muddy bottom.

The second method for increasing the odds in favor of the shrimper is the "fleet" system. There were about thirty boats around us that morning—some within sight, some out of sight, all dragging their "try nets"—thirty hounds covering an immense chunk of the Gulf's surface, all hunting the same quarry.

You can see how it works. When those who find shrimp throw out their buoys and commence trawling the unlucky ones gather around and throw over their nets in the same general area. In our particular case, on this particular day, the chances of each boat finding shrimp was multiplied about thirty times.

We watched the first lowering of the net on the ALAMO pop-eyed. Never have I seen such synchronization of the efforts of three men. One on the winch—two handling the maze of ropes and hooks and cables, stepping around sure-footedly on the rolling deck like graceful dancers, never a word spoken, each signal transmitted by a simple raising or lowering of the hand, every man knowing and performing his job, fastening slippery ropes as gracefully as a surgeon wields his scalpel.

It was all done in a matter of seconds and the ALAMO settled down to its two hour job of slowly and steadily dragging a 90-foot net at the end of about 120 fathoms of steel cable along the muddy bottom of the Gulf.

A few seconds later we heard the cook, who had just finished performing tricks with ropes on deck, preparing for another feat of legerdemain in the imaculate galley.

This cook, Cherol Gisclair, even more French than his captain, was my favorite on that trip. I caught him early in the day watching me out of the corner of his eye as I nonchalantly tried to stay on my feet. An amused smile crinkled his mouth—but I knew he was ready to catch me or dive for me should I suddenly lurch overboard.

Also—and this is a confession—I was very, very sick for about two hours after we entered the Gulf. It isn't the choppiness on the Gulf that does it. No, it is the combination of waves going one way and the steady swell going another, a sort of motion that flicks your stomach like picking up a rug and shaking it end-wise and then rolling it up sidewise—all in the same movement. I fought what the old

novelists called "mal de mer," all the time conscious that Cherol was expecting me to grope for the rail any moment, trying to conceal my utter misery from Randon and Monies (who I discovered later, felt exactly the same way)—and then Cherol came out on deck, with a broad grin on his face, and handed me a huge bowl of macaroni, cooked Creole style.

I grabbed it desperately, trying to gulp back my stomach. My pride made me try a spoonful. Cherol, damn it, was watching me. The first stayed down. I tried a second. It tasted better. The third actually was good. And by that time I knew Cherol had licked the seasickness for me—but he was too much of a gentleman to let on. He merely asked me a few minutes later, still with the same friendly grin, how I liked my breakfast—and handed me a lit cigarette.

During the lull after breakfast, while the ALAMO slowly circled and trawled, and while the captain had a few moments of leisure, we asked more questions—this time about the boat and the business end of shrimping. And were we amazed!

This particular trawler, for instance, built of native cypress at Golden Meadow, Louisiana, two years before, cost $24,000. Definitely, shrimping is no business for small fry. The ALAMO is 60 feet long (which is the average length of the trawlers that operate in the Gulf), is powered by a 165 horsepower Gray Marine Motor, and will travel at a speed of about ten miles per hour when not pulling the net. It can operate as far out in the Gulf as its Captain wishes to take it. In fact, last season Captain Guidry and his crew shrimped along the coast of Texas.

A net, incidentally, costs around $250 in good American money—and every now and then they lose one. Maintenance is costly, too. When these shrimpers are not trawling, or when they are tied up at their home docks because of weather, they are usually working on their boats—tuning the motor, cleaning or painting the hull, repairing nets or performing any one of a dozen jobs necessary to keep every bit of equipment and every inch of the boat in top trawling condition.

Captain Guidry of the ALAMO, although a veteran fisherman of the Gulf area, has always worked for someone else—up to a couple of years ago. Then this man Cheramie, knowing his ability and realizing he was ready to branch out for himself, loaned him the money—at no interest—to build the ALAMO. There was no contract between them, just a verbal agreement that out of the profits of the ALAMO the money should be paid back in easy installments. The only condition, also verbal and not binding, was that

The first catch of the day! Back at the winch is Emil, skilfully and carefully operating the gears that lift the heavy net from the water. Guiding it over the side are Captain Guidry and Cherol. Incidentally, this is a very ordinary haul. Often the net is packed tight with shrimp to a point well over Cherol's head.

And now the net spews its glistening glutinous contents all over the deck. Crabs start scrambling in every direction—speckled trout squirm and gasp—squid, sting rays and beautiful specimens of peculiarly shaped and colored marine life shimmer and sparkle—but the practiced eye of the skipper scans the pile and in a few seconds has estimated almost to the pound the number of shrimp it contains.

Captain Guidry should sell his catch to Cheramie at the prevailing market price.

How did it work? Well, the ALAMO has trawled two seasons. At the end of the third, next year, Captain Guidry proudly states he will have paid back the loan and will own the boat free of debt—all because one fisherman had faith in another. Sounds like a simple creed—probably too simple and too workable for the many people in the world today who cannot get it through their selfish heads that "you cannot take out unless you put in." Cheramie gets his money back, secures the loyalty of a friend and receives the yearly catch of an efficient boat. Guidry owns his own boat, is in business for himself and is an independent shrimper who fishes for Cheramie not because he is forced to but because he wants to. That is America—as it should be.

This discussion of costs and expenses, of course, brought up the twin subject of the profit to be made in shrimping. It is, of course, variable with seasons and market conditions—but, at the time this trip was made, the ALAMO was selling shrimp at $55 a barrel.

Now, there are 210 pounds to the barrel, which means that Captain Guidry and his crew get approximately 26 cents a pound, or almost 2 cents for every shrimp they catch—as the Gulf Jumbos run about 15 to the pound.

There are good days and bad days. There are trips, like Cherol told me about, when they were out 30 days, worked only 13 of the 30, and he brought home to his new young wife $1250 for a month's work. Then there are days when they drag the "try net" all day and come home with nothing.

But it is the average that counts. Last year the ALAMO caught 800 barrels of shrimp—that means it earned $3666.67 a month. This is divided into two shares—one for the boat and one share for the captain and his crew of two. From the boat's share all expenses and all losses are paid and what is left goes to pay off the debt. The other share—or the other half—is divided 35% for the captain and 32½% for each of the crew, out of which comes the cost of food and ice in the same proportions.

Well, figure it out for yourself. It means that Cherol, the cook, and Emil, the other able Frenchman on the ALAMO, who operates the winch so beautifully, and Captain Guidry, the helmsman and owner, each earns an average of about $500 a month, after expenses, as just compensation for their skill and experience.

After the net is emptied and before the catch is sorted, over goes the net again for another haul. There is no waste motion or time on a shrimp trawler. Sometimes, if the shrimp are running heavy, as many as ten trawls a day are made. During those intervals when the boat is dragging the net over the Gulf floor, the previous catch has to be sorted, the deck cleaned and the shrimp washed and iced below.

Where they come from is a marine miracle. The sky can be totally free of them for miles, and not one can be spotted on the surface of the water as far as the eye can see—but the second the discarded fish and sea-life are pushed through the scuppers, they appear by the hundreds. Like fighter planes they swoop down and skim the fish from the water before they have time to sink, all the time accompanying their dive bombing with an incessant screeching that must be "thank you" in gull language.

This, of course, is figured on a twelve month basis. They do not actually fish 12 months. The shrimp season is closed from June 10 to the second Monday in August. Also, there are many days when weather will not permit shrimping.

Suddenly our discussion was at an end. The real drama on board the ALAMO was about to start—the hoisting of the net filled with the catch!