# Louisiana Parishes Rotting in the Flood

## Only Signs of Life There Are Vultures Soaring Over Dead Animals, and Other Birds

## PLIGHT OF PEOPLE PATHETIC

## All Ruined, They Say, But They Are Not Grumbling, Though They Think Washington Should Bestir Itself

By L. C. Speers, Staff Correspondent of the New York Times

Melville, La.—Somewhere in the vast water-soaked desolation of the Mississippi flood zone there may be a town more desolate, more completely wrecked, or more unhappy than Melville, but one would never convince anybody in the Pointe Coupee-St. Landry country that such was the fact.

More than two months have passed since the western levees of the Atchafalaya at Melville gave way before the pounding of the deluge, and since that day not a train whistle has been heard in Melville, not an electric light has burned in homes, in streets or along the Jefferson highway.

To-day, as in the beginning, just one house remains above the flood waters, and that the railway depot, now housing the bank, the postoffice, the offices of the railway wrecking crews and a barber shop, the one and only centre of business or social activity in a town that but a few weeks ago was one of the most prosperous farming centres in the Mississippi Valley.

One must come to Melville, if he can get there, if he wants to see at first hand what maximum flood devastation looks like. There can be no overdrawing of the picture.

And what is true of Melville is true of the country for miles one all sides. It's water, slime, sand, mosquitos and sand flies for all four points of the compass. There is no choice of sorrows.

### Every Building Rotting in Flood

Across the way in Pointe Coupee, on the eastern side of the Atchafalaya, the desolation is just as complete. Over there the little town of Red Cross, opposite Melville, just shows above the flood waters.

One can take a launch and travel for miles toward Ravenswood and the happiness that lies beyond, and in all that stretch the traveler will not see one home, one outbuilding, one gin, one store that is not rotting in the musky flood waters of the Mississippi ad the Atchafalaya.

He will see no wild animal life, and this part of Louisiana was but a few short weeks ago the home of some of the finest deer herds in America, a land of wild turkeys and quail, with a bear thrown in now and then for good measure.

About the only signs of life beyond the levees are vultures that soar above the carcasses of dead animals, and hundreds of beautiful white herons, with the monotony broken sometimes by one of the blue-hued specks.

The Pointe Coupee part of the desolation takes in the northwestern edge of the parish from a point near Moon Lake in the south to another just north of McCrea in the upper part of the parish tip.

After an hour's journey on a watery waste the boat reaches Red Cross and docks at the base of the levee, on the top of which one sees for the first time the tents or the hastily put together huts of refugees. Cows, hogs, chickens, salvaged from the wreckage have the same haven.

### Atchafalaya Still Raging

Climbing the levee and starting on a hike of about a mile to a landing, one boards another launch that will take him to the Melville side of the Atchafalaya. He must carry his own luggage. The men, white and black, who might be hired, cannot help you. It is explained that they have been working for a long time in the water and their feet have become swollen and sore.

Reaching the Pointe Coupee end of the big Texac & Pacific Railway bridge, one views the Atchafalaya for the first time. The river is still raging foot above the flood stage. The current is sweeping past at express speed. The Atchafalaya is no longer just a Louisiana bayou. She is a river as wide and as majestic as the "Ole Miss" herself.

One notes the missing span in the railway bridge, and, after half an hour's hike over the levee through sand knee-deep, makes the Melville landing.

The third lap of the journey to the St. Landry side begins. As the traveler nears the landing the great gap in the western levee comes into view. This is the crevasse through which the flood roared its devastating way into the western half of the Sugar Bowl.

The break is a quarter of a mile wide and through it the water is still plunging into the unhappy lands to the south. In another half hour one lands at Melville and, of course, on the levee, for that is the only dry land there is in this part of the United States.

### Smile and Wonder at Traveler

Once again he hikes, but his journey ends at the railway station. Most of the people still in town are there to look him over. They smile a greeting and ask who he is and "what on earth are you doing in Melville?"

They cannot understand why anybody should come to Melville at this time.

Asked where the hotel is, they point to a building on the other side of the torrent, which is the other side of the Jefferson Highway, the splendid road of which Winnipeg is the northern and New Orleans the southern terminus.

In this part of the country the highway is buried for miles under water from three to ten feet deep. Just what has happened to it will not be known until the recession comes, and all the signs are that that happy day is still a long way off.

From the depot one gets a striking panoramic view of the Melville desolation. Over there is the new high school, a fine two-storied red brick structure. To the roofs of the first floor it is clogged with mud and sand.

There are three churches. They stand like islands in a muddy sea, and all of them are choked with the slime of the deluge. Stores show above the water and huge sand dunes piled up to the second floors indicate what has happened inside.

The hotel, to get to which one takes a boat, is operating, that is, the second floor is. The first floor is a complete wreck.

A native points out where stood nine little cottages. Seven, he says, are on the way to the Gulf. Two others, brand new and never occupied, when the flood came, floated away and landed on somebody else's property.

### Farmer's Sad Story is Typical

In the distance one sees the wreckage of farmhouses. The water over the farms is just as deep as in Melville. A young farmer climbs the levee while one tries to grasp the completeness of the devastation.

With his wife and little children the farmer had been for weeks in a Red Cross camp at Opelousts on the other side of the parish. He thought it was time to come home, he said, and when he got there, home was ten feet of water and nothing more. Everything he had was gone, and he is just one refugee among hundreds and hundreds of others whose plight is just as sad.

There is not a house in the town that is not still under water from three to ten or more feet deep. In scores the owners and their families are living in the upper story. A few stores are open for business, from the second story, but the business is not there.

No matter to whom one talks the story he hears is always the same. Everybody, they say, is ruined. There is not a farmer in miles but is facing destitution. There will be no crops in the Melville zone this year and unless the Government wakes up and takes steps to close the break in the Western Atchalafayan levee, they say, there probably will not be any next year either.

Not in years, one is told, were such splendid harvests in sight as was the case when "crevasse day" dawned.

And one knows they are telling the truth, for the crops on the hills in Poyinte Coupee and St. Landry are wonderful to look upon. Nothing so emphasizes the fearfulness of the disaster in the lowlands as to vision the crops in the high places, which the flood waters did not reach.

### No Silver Lining in Sight

The scene on the levee at Melville is a moving picture that would touch the heart strings of any audience in the land. Whatever the focus, the camera would tell but one story, and that would be desolation, absolute and complete.

On the levee itself the people assemble and talk of the future. They do not have to discuss the present, for that is about them on all sides.

Five or six dogs, all of them blooded, two pointers, a deerhound, a collie, a wire-haired terrier and a wonderful airedale romp up and down the levee. Boys and girls in bathing suits cavort about and race with the water that roars down the Jefferson Highway. Five geese, three white and two gray ones, in single file parade solemnly up and down the embankment. This is all the happiness in sight.

One look at the men and women and one can understad what they are thinking about. They are not grumbling and they are all trying to see a bright side to the picture somewhere. The only trouble is that as matters now stand, there is no silver lining in sight.

Everybody has something nice to say about Secretary Hoover. He has done everything he could for them, and they know. They declare, one and all, that never will they forget Hr. Hoover.

But they also assert that sometimes they cannot help but think that Mr. Hoover is the only person in official Washington who is really interested in them. They are just as grateful to the Red Cross, but the Red Cross, they say, cannot solve this problem alone.

### Artesian Well a Blessing to All

So, day after day, the sun sets on the Melville country and when it goes down the only light is that of the moon.

And always the flood waters of the Atchafafaya are roaring through the town. The roar is hard to describe. The sound is like that of a torrential rain beating on a thousand slate roofs. In the nightime even the natives sometimes peek out to see whether a storm is not raging.

And the mosquitos. They are a pest of the first order. They bite by day and by night and sometimes when the nights are unusually sultry and the breezes stay away sleep is practically impossible.

As yet there has been no outbreak of malaria. The town and countryside has been inoculated against fever. Every possible precaution is being taken to ward off malaria.

The malaria-infecting mosquito has apparently not yet arrived. When the waters begin to stagnate will be the time to look for trouble.

For one thing, all Melville is thankful, and that is the great artesian well in the centre of the town which has so far met every demand for fresh and wholesome drinking water. That well, more than anything else, has sustained the Melville country in the hour of the great trial.

As to the future, Melville knows not what it will bring forth. The people hope that Congress will give them flood control and they think the Government gimht do something for the thousands of people in their own and other stricken zones who have lost everything they had and who are facing, without money or credit and in numerous instances without adequate food or clothing, a Winter that carries with it a threat of destitution and starvation.

# The Art of Making Tea

## What to Do and What Not to Do to Get the Best Results

Mr. Spalding Black, on the staff of the Salada Tea Company, recently prepared an interesting leaflet entitled "The Art of Correct Tea Making." Approximately 26,000,000 cups of tea are consumed every day in Canada, and yet it is doubtful if one-tenth of this number is prepared with the necessary care to bring out the full flavor of the tea leaf so that this stimulating and refreshing drink may be thoroughly enjoyed. The following is from "The Art of Correct Tea Making":

"Tea is one of the kindliest blessings of Nature. In its comforting indulgence one can lose the worries of the day and forget the fatigue of effort.

"The full joy of a cup of this gracious beverage can only be reached when fine quality tea is used and ceremonial care exercised in its preparation, to draw from each tiny leaf the essence of flavor and refreshment with which it has been endowed by Nature.

### How to Prepare Tea

"In the countries of the East, where the drinking of tea has been enjoyed for a thousand years or more, the subject of preparing the leaf for consumption has become a fine art and a ceremony, but the full, delicious refreshment and healthful stimulation may be extracted from the fragrant tea-leaves, if the following rules are followed exactly:—

"Rule No. 1—The best quality of tea must be used. The tea also must be fresh, to yield the full goodness.

"Rule No. 2—The quality of the water used will affect the flavor of the beverage in the cup. Draw fresh cold water and bring it to a hard 'bubbly' boil. Never use water that has been boiled before. Sometimes chlorine put in water to purify it will completely change the flavor of the tea. The water is to blame, however, and not the tea.

"Rule No. 3—It is proper that only a crockery or china teapot be used, never one of metal or any other substance if the pure and delicious flavor of the tea is to be drawn forth. Tea likewise should never be enclosed in a metal tea-ball.

"Rule No. 4—The teapot must be scalded out with boiling water and while it is warm, place in it one level teaspoonful of tea for each cup required.

"Rule No. 5—Now pour the boiling water on the leaves. Allow to steep in a warm place for five minutes. Stir just sufficiently to diffuse the full strength of the tea. Then pour the liquid off the leaves into another heated vessel, unless served immediately. If poured off in this way, the tea will not take on a bitter taste, which even the finest tea will do unless prevented from over-steeping. Tea made according to these rules will be fragrant, delicious and completely satisfying."

A Jungle Trip

Julius Buck and jaguar he brought from West Africa.

## Delphiniums

Blue spires, azure lace, cerulean frills that reach almost to the window overhanging the garden! These are delphiniums now in bloom. Each day the graceful spires have added a bit to their height and to their lacy frills; ever so modestly and unobtrusively that one cannot see them grow. Merely unfolding, they add deeper hues to the blue of the garden and sky, and of the lobelias that foam over the gray window boxes.

Everywhere there are patches of blue in the garden, fragments of scattered azure, even to the corn flowers, these ragged sailors which are like humbler relations of the stately delphiniums which rise haughtily above them.

Blue butterflies give chase here and there, finally to flutter off in joyous, aimless fashion, making strange aerial tangents. It looks as if the delphiniums had been caught in a whirlwind.

Warm, cordial and genuine is the pervading blue of the garden, of the smiling earth, the unflecked, cerulean sky, and the bluish mist that hovers over near-by mountains A bluebird flashes its wings in the branches of a madrona tree, as it alights and turns quickly, striking a deep contrast to the red bark.

Blue is a dominant note of midsummer, repeated in bluebell and blue lupine and alfalfa bloom. Far off this blue spreads into the sapphire of the lake; the waters reflect the blue dome and join together such poignant blue colors as these of which delphiniums are made.

### Ask Me Another.

The following conversation took place during a physical examination of freshmen.

Dr. Bennett—"Calf?"

Frosh—"Fourteen inches."

D. B.—"Thigh?"

F.—"Twenty-six inches."

D. B.—Neck?"

F.—"Yes." — Tennessee Mountain Goat.

Sweet Young Thing—"I don't approve of your friendship with Mrs. Swiftset, Mummy. Her children have brought her up wrong."

## Children and Relatives

By Pauline Herr Thomas

"I don't believe you like your Uncle Jack as much as you do me," said the grown-up tease.

"Yes, I do, too!" said Polly.

"Your Uncle Jack isn't half as nice as I am," persisted the tease.

"Well, I guess we must like our uncles," declared Polly.

This little lady was trying to make the best of a difficult situation. She may have been fond of Uncle Jack, though it sounds doubtful. She was under the impression she had to like relatives; she had been taught that way.

Now Polly was being circumspect, quite grown up in fact, but children are not all like Polly, and it is only the very exceptional child that will stick to a thing under pressure when the sole guiding principle is "must," Of course, it is absurd to force children where affection is concerned. We all have decided preferences ourselves. Changes in opinion as well as preference must come from conviction. So that this matter of children and relatives becomes a distinct problem to mothers.

"Must we go to Grandma Black's to-day? Oh! I wish it was Grandma Hoyle's. I like her better," said Betty, who was more childlike than Polly, and, therefore, less discreet.

Whereupon, Betty's mother went to great lengths to tell her that it was rude to say such things, and that she must learn to like both grandmas the same. All of which had no weight with Betty, because her opinion remained precisely the same. She, moreover, became less and less well behaved whenever she went to see the less favored grandma.

Whenever general greetings were in order my little girl drew away from Auntie Sue. I confess I urged her to "kiss Auntie" in order to spare the latter's feelings, with always the same result—embarrassment on the part of myself and Auntie and rebellion on the part of Jeanne.

One day I decided to look into the reason for the child's apparent dislike. I asked her why she did not want to kiss Auntie when she went to her house.

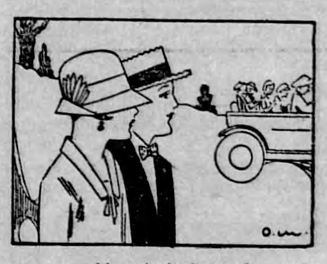
"Well, mother, Auntie Sue never smiles at me like the other aunties," was her reply.

I took her on my knee and recalled to her a favorite grown up of hers who smiles a great deal and another one who seldom smiles.

"You like them both, you know, but one doesn't seem to smile at you much and one does," I explained. "Now, I'll tell you what the real difference is and why you like them both. One smiles with her eyes and heart and the other only with her heart. Our Father has not given me us all faces that smile a great deal, but if you learn to know Auntie Sue as well as you know these others, perhaps you'll find that her heart smiles very much indeed."

I have never once urged her to "kiss Auntie," but she has done so, and I feel that she is learning not to dislike her. Those we have learned to tolerate, we may yet learn to love.

It seems to me that even what appears such a small thing as Baby's preference for one auntie over another may be used toward character building, if Mother will approach it in a thoughtful way.



How Is It Done?

"Wonder how the old woman who lived in a shoe got so many children into it as well?"

"You might get some idea by noticing the number of children some people are able to get into a flivver now."

## "CANADA TRIUMPHANT"

By T. A. Browne.

(Written on the Occasion of the Celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation, July 1, 1927).

Called the great Soul of the Northland: Come unto me you who rule,
They who would plan for my greatness needs must attend in my school
Vast are my dreams for the future here in my mighty domain,
They who would labor to mould me, let them now aid and sustain.

And they who ruled in the temples, labored and wrought for the good
Of those who reared them to honor, hearkened and understood,
And through days of stress and contention, came Union following storm,
And out of the Union a nation, I, a Dominion was born.

Long have I brooded and waited over my league vista'd lands,
Waiting the slow evolution, nursing my wide scattered bands,
Men from far lands and strange races sprung from the ends of the earth,
They came to me and I fed them, asking not station or birth.

Now breaks the dawn of fulfilment, now through the mists see arise
Splendors your dreams have recorded, sweet to the patriot's eyes.
Lo! 'tis the vision of greatness, prophetic, soul-stirring, grand,
All that you dreamed, Master Builders, all that I hoped for or planned.

Reaches that billow and beckon, pregnant with bounty and life,
Vistas of life-giving plenty, foreign to clamor and strife!
Cities that spring as by magic, fair, full of promise, they mould,
Rising in splendor and beauty, proud in their settings of gold.

Harbors o'erflowing with commerce where the proud galleons ride,
Weighted and straining like racers waiting the turn of the tide,
Legions of peaceful invaders, bearing no weapons that slay,
Eager, expectant, and joyful, entering under my sway.

Behold an edifice building out of the wealth of the Earth
By the Sons that I have nurtured, by men of different birth;
Building in love and in labor by men who are undismayed
By the storm and stress of seasons, undaunted and unafraid.

Behold an edifice rising over the land that God made,
August, eternal, majestic, reared by the ploughshare and spade,
Builded of granite and iron, of oak and gold and of steel,
A temple where all may worship, a temple where all may kneel.

The granite, the hearts undaunted, the oak and the gold fair deeds,
The steel and the iron, girders binding the different creeds,
The floors are the throbbing heart beats of men who love my sod
And the dome, the love of country and abiding faith in God.

Mine to the consummation, building in honor and peace,
To nationhood full proportioned, growing in splendid increase,
With East and West undivided, bearing my banner unfurled,
A Nation exultant and godly, spreading its light on the world.

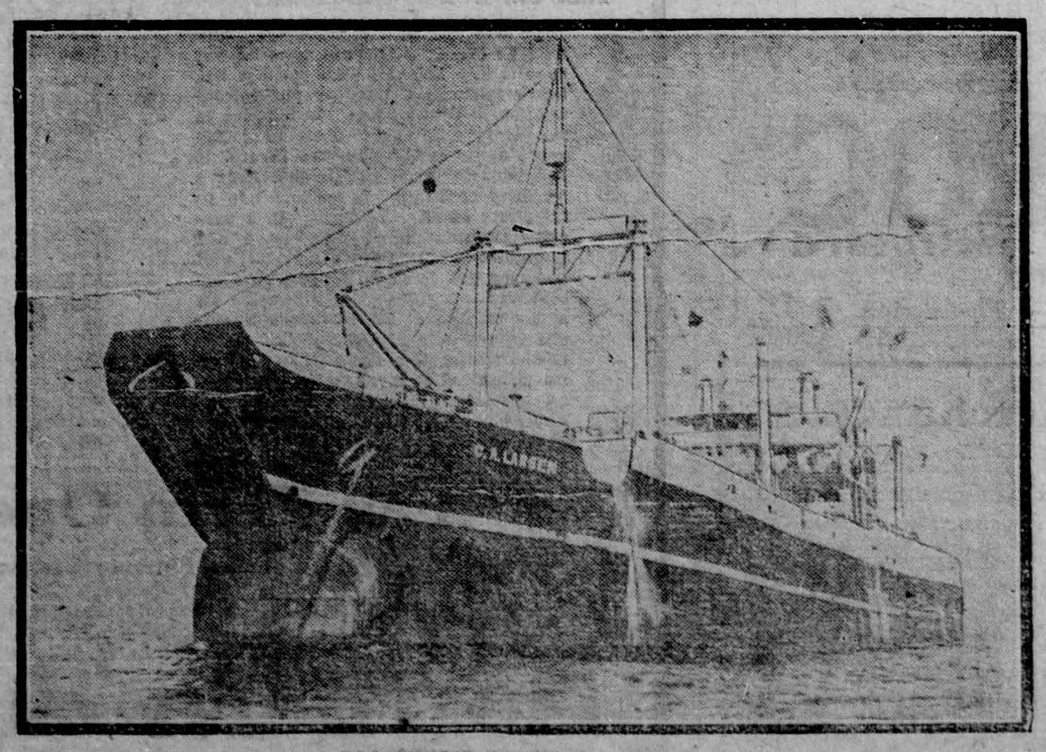
## The Antis

Observe our little group or sect,
The true, the good, the high elect
Who strike an attitude sublime
Against our country every time.
Clear-visioned, wise and pure of heart,
We always take the alien's part;
Betide, betide, whate'er betide,
We're on the other fellow's side.
We need not wait for all the facts
To judge a statesman's words or acts;
If someone says this nation's right,
He merely wants to start a fight.
Our chiefs are men of base intent;
We cannot trust our Government.
It has an evil animus,
But we are so magnanimous!
Whatever conflict may arise
We utter loud, hysteric cries
To help our adversary's cause
And win the outside world's applause.
And so our watchword, toast and song
Is still, "Our Country! Always Wrong!"

—Arthur Guiterman, in Country Gentleman.

## Back to the Land

Los Angeles Times: More farmers deserted the plow and hied themselves back to town in 1926 than in any previous year since 1920. . . The city-bred are rarely fitted to endure a farmer's life unless they have abundant capital, and the announcement of the annual number of those who have shaken the dust of the big cities from their feet means very little. The majority of them will be back in town in a few years, where they can earn a pay check without getting up at 4 a.m. to feed the stock of hungry animals. The solution of the agriculture problem will lie in devising a means to keep the man who is born a farmer contented with his lot. Propaganda luring the city man out on the farm is just wasted money, because he won't "stay put."



FOR BYRD'S SOUTH POLE TRIP

S.S. C. A. Larsen, largest whaling ship in the world, which is to take Commander Byrd on his south polar trip.