

Extracts of interest from:

[Mississippi: A Guide to the Magnolia State](#)

Compiled and Written by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration
The Viking Press, New York. 1938

This book was part of a nationwide series of guides in the 1930s that created work during the Depression for artists, writers, teachers, librarians, and other professionals. This classic book is a lively collaborative project that covers a distinct era in Mississippi from the hills to the Delta to the Gulf Coast. Even today this guide is an engaging look at the Magnolia State and includes driving tours featuring many of the state's treasures.

Of a total 586 pages, about 164 pages are of general information and history; 100 pages of description and city tours of Biloxi, Columbus, Greenwood, Gulfport, Holly Springs, Jackson, Laurel, Meridian, Natchez, Oxford, Tupelo and Vicksburg; and the final 250 pages of descriptive road tours through the state along federal and state highways.

Tour 3 (pp 315 – 323)

(Memphis, Tenn.) – Clarksdale – Vicksburg – Natchez – (Baton Rouge, La). US 61.
Tennessee Line to Louisiana Line, 334.6 m.

Two-thirds route hard-surfaced, two lanes wide, rest being paved.

Yazoo & Mississippi Valley R.R. parallels route throughout.

Accommodations of all kinds available; hotels chiefly in cities.

Caution: Look out for stock wandering on road at night.

Sec. a TENNESSEE LINE to VICKSBURG, 206.4 m.

US 61 passes through the State's great alluvial plain, an extensive flat land with sluggish rivers, lakes, and bayous. The land, often lying below the level of the Mississippi River, which flows between a system of high man-made embankments called levees, is not strictly a river delta. But for thousands of years the river has deposited over it the rich topsoil of half a continent, giving it a fertility equaling that of the Nile and making it one of the world's finest cotton-producing areas. For this reason the section is colloquially called the Delta. Spreading leaf-shaped to the south, it is a land of cotton and cotton planters. In the fall, or cotton-picking time, it is a sea of white, broken at intervals by dark lines of trees that grow along the bayous. The plantation big houses are substantial but not pretentious; the tenant cabins are all alike. Smaller towns, hardly more than plantation centers, are of a single pattern; each is centered about a gin, a filling station, a loading platform, and a short line of low-roofed, brick stores. The points of interest, aside from the land itself, are the levees and the river, the lakes, the Indian mounds, and the cotton fields.

At 0 m. US 61 crosses the Mississippi Line, 7.9 miles S. of Memphis, and, dropping from the hills to the Delta, gives an occasional glimpse of the green levee bank that is 25 ft. high (R) and of the wooded bluffs (L).

At 1.1 m. is the junction with a graveled road.

Right on this road is LAKEVIEW, 0.4 m. (222 alt., 200 pop.), a fishing resort (buffalo, crappie, perch, bass, catfish, and trout) by one of the lakes formed in an old bed of the ever-changing Mississippi River. The lake is six and a half miles long. Its front is privately owned (no overnight accommodations; boats rented to fishermen, \$1 a day).

WALLS, 3.4 m. (213 alt., 150 pop.), is a plantation town built near the Walls group of Indian mounds; so far as is known no post-Columbian material has been found in the mounds.

LAKE CORMORANT, 8.4 m. (208 alt., 207 pop.), borders a lake of the same name, which is typical of the bodies of water left behind when the Mississippi River changes its course; it is four and a half miles long and only 100 yards wide.

Between Lake Cormorant and Robinsonville the highway cuts due southward while the levee (R) swings slightly westward and the bluffs (L) swing eastward; here the leaf-shaped Delta, at the northern end not two miles wide, begins to widen; further south it reaches a width of approximately 85 miles. At various points, plantation roads lead through the fields and over the levee. From any of these roads at the top of the levee the river is seen still farther to the west, and occasionally a cultivated field in the swamps between the levee and the river.

At 16.3 m. is ROBINSONVILLE (204 alt, 150 pop.).

Right from Robinsonville on State 3, a graveled road, is COMMERCE, 4.8 m. (201 alt., 50 pop.), once a rival of Memphis for the river trade, now a plantation centered around the big house built on the slope of a large Indian mound. The land was originally bought from the Chickasaw by Dick Abbay, who built his first log cabin in 1832. Other early settlers were Tom Fletcher, a Choctaw Indian, and Col. Tom Burns. By 1850 Commerce had become the seat of Tunica Co., but, just before the War between the States, the river, which had been responsible for the growth of the town, started destroying it. Abbay's log cabin was washed away. Trying to save their homes, the settlers built the first levees in this section of the Delta, Abbay being assisted by Gen. James L. Alcorn, later Reconstruction governor. But the river climbed the levees, spilled into the streets, and swallowed Memphis' rival. Today the old COLONEL BURNS' STABLES of whitewashed brick serve as commissaries on the Leatherman plantation which borders both sides of the five miles of road leading from Robinsonville to the big house. The present LEATHERMAN HOME (private) was not built directly on the 50-foot Indian mound because of the unwillingness of the builder to desecrate a mound "full of the dead." The mound rises behind the house. From its top, so the inevitable legend goes, Hernando De Soto in 1541 had his first glimpse of the great river that was to be his grave. The view of the river is now cut off by the

levee and the trees. The Leatherman house is a modern structure, an impressive center for the silos, great barns, and Negro cabins on this typical Delta plantation.

At 5.7 m. a great bend in the levee brings it close to the road. From the top of the great sloping green mound is a good view of the lowland that has been condemned for habitation by the Federal Government. Here is a 1,000-acre tract that gives a good illustration of what Delta planters have to fight again and again. This field is planted each year in corn, but if the planter breaks fifty-fifty with the overflowing backwater of the nearby river he considers himself fortunate. The river wins more crops than the planter, yet the yield per acre is so great that even one-third of a full crop pays for the effort and risk.

At 7.8 m. on the plantation road is the DE BE VOIS INDIAN MOUNDS, nine small ones centered about one as tall as the Leatherman mound but much larger. Because of its size the center mound is believed to have been the place on which Chief Chisca of the Chickasaw tribe built his home, and the site of the skirmish De Soto had with the Chickasaw before he crossed the river.

TUNICA, 26.4 m. (197 alt., 1,043 PP-), is the trading center for the stretch of the Delta between Clarksdale and Memphis. The river (R) near Tunica has changed its course so often that what was Mississippi shore 30 years ago is now Arkansas territory.

At 39.5 m. is DUNDEE (190 alt, 300 pop.).

Right from Dundee on a narrow graveled road climbing over the levee (road between levee and ferry is low; drive with care) to a ferry, 6 m., crossing the river to Helena, Ark. (18-hr. service, leaving on the half-hour; \$1 for car and driver, 25¢ each passenger).

At 44.6 m. is LULA (180 alt., 448 pop.).

Right from Lula on a graveled road to GRANTS PASS, 2.5 m. A small wooden bridge near the head of Moon Lake, here a bayou, marks the place where Gen. U. S. Grant dynamited a pass from the Mississippi into the Coldwater River in order to get his gunboats through the Coldwater into the Yazoo and then descend on Vicksburg from the rear. The scheme failed, however.

West of Grant's Pass for several miles lies MOON LAKE (R), a Delta recreational center (fishing, swimming, boating); the scene is delightful.

At 14 m. on the graveled road circling Moon Lake is FRIAR POINT (171 alt., 988 pop.), lying in the shadow of the levee that conceals the Mississippi River from the town. From the levee's broad, flat top, however, is an extensive view of the river. The town is old, the only one of the towns established on the river in the 1830's that has not been swallowed by the waters that originally gave them importance. Nevertheless the river is a menace; because of it the county records were, in 1930, removed to Clarksdale, and Friar Point was abandoned as a county seat. Today the town lives by growing and ginning cotton, but it once had a steamboat trade that

bustled and hummed in the days before the War between the States. Grant stopped here on his way with a fleet of transports to Vicksburg. The ROBINSON HOME (open by permission) has a hole in its façade made by a cannon ball when Federal and Confederate gunboats were skirmishing in the river at that time. Ferry to Helena, Ark. (18-hr. service, leaving on half-hour; \$1 for car and driver, 25¢ passengers).

At 46.6 m. is the junction with a graveled road.

Right on this road to COAHOMA, 3.5 m. (177 alt., 295 pop.), a small plantation center. Directly across from the depot is the L-shaped, clapboard HOME OF MRS. BLANCHE MONTGOMERY RALSTON (open by permission). Mrs. Blanche Montgomery Ralston, prominent for many years in civic and social service work in Mississippi, is now Regional Director of the Women's and Professional Projects of the Works Progress Administration.

At 48.6 m. on US 61 is the junction with a graveled road.

Left on this road 3.6 m. is JONESTOWN (175 alt., 506 pop.).

1. Left from Jonestown 1.4 m. on a graveled road to MATAGORDA (open by appointment), a plantation with a home built by Col. D. M. Russell around a two-room log cabin constructed before the War between the States. Colonel Russell had attained notoriety by resigning from Yale in 1856 as the leader of the Southern students' rebellion against President Woolsey's anti-slavery remarks. Kept from fighting because of weak lungs, Russell was commissioner of the Confederate States for making purchases in England, and on his return planned the Confederate raid on the banks at St. Albans, Vermont. Colonel Russell's initials, D. M. R., C. S. A., are said to be carved on the top of St. Paul's Cathedral in London; Russell is supposed to have made the climb on a dare, despite a lung hemorrhage. The name Matagorda was given to the place by Colonel Russell for a special variety of long-staple cotton he raised, a variety well known on the Liverpool Exchange. The house contains 22 rooms and five baths, has one of the best private libraries in the State, a choice collection of old china, and one of the State's largest and finest private art collections. Although the house is two stories high, its length and wide porches give it a low, rambling appearance. Climbing roses, gnarled cedars, and water oaks grace the grounds.

2. Right from Jonestown 2.4 m. on a graveled road to EAGLES' NEST PLANTATION. The plantation was the home of Gen. James L. Alcorn, whose persistence in fighting for a State levee system was finally successful. It was Alcorn who gave the plantation its name. Atop an Indian mound on the plantation is a MONUMENT TO ALCORN marking his grave. Alcorn served as Governor of Mississippi from 1870-71. He died in 1894 (see AN OUTLINE OF FOUR CENTURIES).

At 58.7 m. is the junction with State 6 (see Tour 14).

CLARKSDALE, 62.3 m. (173 alt., 10,043 pop.), is a typical Mississippi Delta city with level surface, far horizons, and broad surrounding cotton fields. Viewed from a distance, the bare and treeless business district of stores, gins, warehouses, and loading platforms appears squat and dwarfed; yet silver-leaf maples and water oaks line the residential streets giving the homes a secluded air. As many of these streets end abruptly in the cotton fields, the sudden emergence from shade into open country offers a startling contrast of light and shade. Fringed by dark cypresses and bright willows, the narrow Sunflower River winds through the city eastward and westward. Along its banks are many of the oldest homes of Clarksdale large, comfortable frame houses, with wide front galleries.

There is hardly a planter, tenant, or sharecropper on the surrounding plantations whose business does not bring him to Clarksdale every Saturday, the planter for business transactions, the tenant to buy supplies and fertilizer. These Saturday trips afford opportunity for much visiting on street corners; neighbors of the countryside call each other by their first names and with delightful informality extend invitations to foxhunting, fishing, or dancing. Weekends in the country form a large part of Clarksdale's social life.

Though a few French Huguenot families are said to have been established earlier in the locality, John Clark is given credit for founding Clarksdale, the seat of Coahoma Co. Clark was the son of an English architect, who was sent to Halifax by the British Government to help rebuild the city destroyed by fire. The elder Clark died of yellow fever in New Orleans in 1837 leaving John, age 14, to make his way. In December 1839 he landed at Port Royal near the present town of Friar Point in Coahoma Co., where he met Ed Porter who became his partner in the logging business. After several years both Clark and Porter quit logging for farming. Clark bought his first 100 acres of land from the Government in 1848. The land site was well-chosen, for though the Delta above the Lake Washington district was largely a trackless swamp at the time, here on the banks of the Sunflower was a narrow spot of dry ground. Formerly it was a point of intersection for two most important Indian routes: the Chakchiuma trade trail, which ran northeastward to old Pontotoc, and the Lower Creek trade path which extended westward from Augusta, Ga., to New Mexico. At the point of intersection was a fortification. After Clark's arrival, more Huguenot families came in, cleared land, and settled on plantations. In 1858 he began work on Hopedale, the original Clark home, and in 1868 opened a store and platted off a village on the site of the Indian fortification. In 1882 it was incorporated as Clarksdale. Frequent floods, a fire that swept away the business houses in 1889, and the lack of roads retarded the development of the town for many years, but since 1900 its corporate limits have pushed the cotton fields farther and farther back on all sides. A network of paved highways now connects it with the other parts of the State, and, perhaps more important, ties it close to other plantation centers. It is today the trading, ginning, compressing, and financial hub of a great cotton-growing area. Of secondary importance are lumber mills and planing mills, using timber cut from the Delta swamps.

The CUTRER HOME (private), NW. of courthouse on Friar Point Road, occupies the site of one of the first houses in Clarksdale. Built by the daughter of John Clark and almost hidden by oak

and cedar trees, on the bank of the river, it is a red-roofed, stuccoed mansion of good proportions.

HOPEDALE, adjoining the Cutrer home, is the original John Clark home. Begun in 1858 by workmen brought from Philadelphia, the house was not quite finished at the outbreak of the War between the States. Clark and his family moved in, however, and at the close of the war completed the construction. Though remodeled and modernized, the west side of the home, facing a large lawn studded with magnolia and oak trees, retains its earlier character. The interior trim is of solid walnut, the lumber having been whip-sawed from trees grown on the plantation.

The CARNEGIE PUBLIC LIBRARY, SE. corner Delta Ave. and First St., a red brick English Tudor type building, was completed in 1914 at a cost of \$25,000, but within recent years additions have more than doubled its value. With 49,250 volumes, the largest public library collection in the State, and an annual book circulation of 167,982, it is one of the outstanding libraries in Mississippi. The collection of Indian relics on display here is also outstanding; excavated from the old fortification and from the many nearby mounds, are agricultural implements, hunting knives, beads, pipes, and pottery.

The Delta Staple Cotton Festival, held usually in late Aug. or early Sept., is an event that attracts visitors from a number of States. It is the social climax of the harvest season.

At Clarksdale are the junctions with State 1 (see Side Tour 3A) and US 49 (see Tour 7, Sec. a). Between Clarksdale and Cleveland the highway traverses cotton fields stretching for miles on each side. The cotton stalks grow taller than a man. In the few fields where it is cultivated corn reaches 15 ft. in height.

BOBO, 71.9 m. (164 alt., 110 pop.), is an early plantation settlement.

ALLIGATOR, 75.4 m. (163 alt., 278 pop.), was named for the alligators that formerly infested Alligator Lake by which the town lies.

DUNCAN, 77.3 m. (157 alt, 337 pop.), like many Delta towns, has several Chinese families. In 1929 all buildings here were swept away by a tornado that killed 22 people. Since then the town has been completely rebuilt.

HUSHPUCKENA, 80.3 m. (250 pop.), is a pecan-shipping center.

At SHELBY, 82.7 m. (141 alt., 1,811 pop.), the two crews building the Yazoo & Mississippi Valley R.R. from Vicksburg to Memphis met in 1884.

WYANDOTTE, 85.7 m. (142 pop.), also known as Chambers and Winstonville, is a suburb of Mound Bayou.

MOUND BAYOU, 88.7 m. (143 alt., 834 pop.), Renova and Wyandotte are the only towns in the State populated entirely by Negroes.

Mound Bayou was founded in 1887 by Isaiah T. Montgomery and Benjamin T. Green, Negroes. Montgomery was a former slave of Joseph Emory Davis, brother of Jefferson Davis, and purchased the Davis plantation at Davis Bend after the war, living there with his family until he moved to Mound Bayou. Later he, the only Negro delegate to Mississippi's Constitutional Convention of 1890, supported the provision whose effect was to bar Negroes from voting.

Montgomery and Green, accompanied by their cousin, J. P. T. Montgomery, and twelve families, most of whom came from Davis Bend, Warren Co., Miss., surveyed this site in Bolivar Co. and cleared it for occupation. Indian mounds NE. and SE. of the site gave the town its name. The population had reached 183 before the end of the first year of settlement. In February 1898 the Negroes petitioned the Governor to incorporate the village, and in August the charter was signed and sealed. The town has the usual mayor, sheriff, aldermen, and chamber of commerce ; the inhabitants engage in farming, lumbering and merchandising and service businesses. Here is the BOLIVAR COUNTY TRAINING SCHOOL, a coeducational institution. Overnight accommodations for white visitors are available at the Montgomery Home (R), a red brick house.

Founder's Day, held annually in July, is attended by prominent Negroes from all parts of the country.

MERIGOLD, 91.4 m. (804 pop.), with a population composed of whites, Negroes, and Chinese, has two white churches, three Negro churches, a high school for white children and a Rosenwald grammar school for Negroes. In the park are a swimming pool and tennis courts. . (If you are not aware of "Rosenwald Schools," see here <http://www.preservationnation.org/national-treasures/rosenwald-schools.html?gclid=CJHE0seo768CFeJgTAodnBaprw> – Gene Y)

CLEVELAND, 98.8 m. (139 alt., 3,240 pop.), is a growing Delta town made prosperous by the large planting interests of its inhabitants. Many of the white frame cottages in its residential section are perhaps the best examples in the State of the modern adaptation of the Greek Revival design for small dwellings.

DELTA STATE TEACHERS' COLLEGE is a modern plant, established in 1924 to serve the northwestern section of the State. It is a Grade A fully accredited senior college. The NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM (open), though small, exhibits articles of interest. The Choral Club is outstanding in the State.

SHAW, 109.4 m. (133 alt., 1,612 pop.), is a lively cotton ginning and marketing center. Its well-built frame cottages, paved streets, brick consolidated high school, and outdoor swimming pool (open) form a typical center of the new Delta.

At LELAND, 125.1 m. (113 alt, 2,426 pop.), along the high sloping banks of Deer Creek is a charming residential section. Unlike the majority of Delta towns, which are dependent solely on the production of cotton, Leland profits from the growing of three other major products alfalfa, vegetables, and pecans. Leland, formerly Three Oaks Plantation, was settled in 1847 by Judge

James Rucks, whose commodious home, with its surrounding slave quarters, smokehouses, cotton houses, barns, and stables, was a settlement in itself. At that time Deer Creek was navigable, and the fact that Three Oaks was in a bend on the high banks was responsible for its transition from a plantation to a plantation center, the change taking place in 1884 with the coming of the Yazoo & Mississippi Valley R.R.

Here is the junction with US 82 (see Tour 6).

Right from Leland on an asphalt road along Deer Creek to the DELTA EXPERIMENT STATION at STONEVILLE, 2.5 m. established in 1906 and containing 760 acres under the supervision of Federal experts working in collaboration with Mississippi State College. The station has recently acquired 3,000 acres of sub-marginal land that is to be reforested.

(Note: A lot of history is crammed into the small tract of land officially known as the Mississippi State University Delta Research and Extension Center (near Leland, MS) that most people just call "[Stoneville](#)." – Gene Y)

At 132.2 m. (R), facing Deer Creek, is a two-story stucco home with red tile roof and bright green lawn; it is typical of the new Delta big houses.

ARCOLA, 135.4 m. (115 alt, 343 pop.), is a plantation trading center.

At 136.6 m. (R) is a house, facing Deer Creek from a great oak grove, that is typical of the ante-bellum Delta homes. A square frame building two stories high, it sits on a high foundation and has a wide screened porch; at the rear is a one-story wing.

At ESTILL, 139.4 m. (50 pop.), US 61 crosses the lower end of the 38,000 acres of the DELTA AND PINE LAND CO. PLANTATION (see Side Tour 3A).

At 143.1 m. is HOLLANDALE (111 alt., 1,211 pop.).

Right from Hollandale on a marked dirt road is LEROY PERCY STATE PARK, 4.2 m., the first of the Mississippi State parks; it was opened to the public May 1, 1936. The administration building, the superintendent's home and seven overnight cabins have been completed. Projects under way include additional overnight cabins, a swimming pool, development of the warm water pools, stables with horses for hire, two large lakes for fishing, canoeing facilities by Black Bayou, playgrounds for children, tennis courts and trails. A hostess arranges for club meetings, parties, and dances; there is equipment to serve banquets to as many as 300 people. The entire area of 2,541 acres will be used as a game preserve and stocked by the Mississippi State Game and Fish Commission. The park is named for the late U. S. Senator LeRoy Percy (1860-1929), one of Washington County's most distinguished sons (see Side Tour 3A).

PERCY, 148 m. (217 pop.), is the trading center and shipping point for a large plantation.

At 148.9 m. US 61 crosses the northern boundary of PANTHER BURN PLANTATION, owned by McGee & Co. of Leland and typical of the large corporation-owned plantations in the Delta (see AGRICULTURE). This plantation has a total acreage of 12,400 and a population of 2,200. The frame tenant cabins (L) face Deer Creek across old US 61. The railroad (R) is said never to have been able to purchase this strip of land, making it the only privately owned right of way used by the Illinois Central System. At 151.2 m. is the little town that forms the plantation center. At 151.7 m. the highway crosses the southern boundary of the plantation.

The dark brown, one-story frame buildings, each flanked by a basketball court, that dot the roadside in this section are schools built by planters for the children of tenant families.

NITTA YUMA, 154.7 m. (109 alt., 25 pop.), according to old settlers, was settled in 1768 by the Phelps family who were conducted up the Mississippi River by Indian guides. On the south bank of Deer Creek, W. of the railroad, is one of the cabins erected in 1768. It is constructed of cypress logs put together with wooden pegs. One end now houses a business office. West of town on the creek are the remains -of several log cabins, slave quarters, and brick cisterns, built before the War between the States. At the time of settlement much of this section was owned by the Vick family (see VICKSBURG). The large house (L) shows well the originality the early planter used in adapting current modes to his needs. Though having some Georgian characteristics, the house has a large archway through the center, furnished and used as a terrace.

ANGUILLA, 158.3 m. (107 alt., 467 pop.), was settled in 1869 by William C. H. McKinney. In what was little more than a snake-infested canebrake he built the first store and later a post office. The town, however, was not incorporated until 1913. It is a plantation center slightly enlarged by a lumber mill, and several gins and compresses.

Right from Anguilla on the graveled Deer Creek road to the BARNARD HOME, 0.4 m., an ante-bellum structure with fine old furnishings. The summer house is built upon an unexcavated Indian mound.

ROLLING FORK, 163.7 m. (104 alt., 902 pop.), the seat of Sharkey Co., is named for Rolling Fork Plantation, which Thomas Chaney cleared in 1826. Chaney's daughter was the first white child born in Sharkey Co. Lying in the lowest of the bottom lands of the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta, the town has frequently been flooded by overflow from Deer Creek, but in spite of this menace it has a substantial trade. On the SE. bank of Deer Creek is a group of THREE INDIAN MOUNDS, one of which is said to be the tallest in the county.

Here is the junction with State 1 (see Side Tour 3A).

Between Rolling Fork and the Yazoo River the highway runs through one of the Delta's poorer and less interesting sections, part of which is to become a national forest. The so-called Delta Unit is the most recently purchased of the seven in the State, and is bound roughly by Yazoo City, Rolling Fork, and Vicksburg. Much of the area is under water when the Mississippi and

Yazoo overflow, the backwater sometimes reaching a depth of ten feet. There are numerous Indian mounds scattered through the hardwood forests.

At 195.2 m US 61 crosses the YAZOO RIVER (Ind., river of death). Here the Delta ends precipitately. South of the bridge over the Yazoo is the monument marking the SITE OF FORT ST. PETER, known during the siege of 1863 as Fort Snyder. In 1719 French missionaries erected here a stockade to protect settlers from raids of the Yazoo and Tunica Indians. Between the monument and Vicksburg the route is attractive, winding up through the Walnut Hills, heavily wooded with magnolia trees. Along the crest of these hills the trenches and earthworks thrown up by the Confederates in an attempt to turn back the Federal advance are plainly visible.

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Side Tour 3A (pp 346 – 351)

Clarksdale – Greenville – Rolling Fork, 133.5 m. State 1.

Yazoo & Mississippi Valley R.R. parallels route between Sherard and Rolling Fork. One-third hard-surfaced roadbed; rest graveled; two lanes wide.
Accommodations in cities.

This route roughly parallels the Mississippi River between Clarksdale and Greenville; it passes through the oldest and some of the most interesting of the Delta plantations and rims a number of beautiful lakes. The lakes, old beds left when the Mississippi River carved out new channels, have retained the horseshoe shape of the pronounced river bends. They are bordered by bright green willow brakes, and gnarled cypress trees that turn russet brown in fall. Part of this highway was under water in 1927 when the Delta about Greenville was inundated in the greatest flood Mississippi has known.

State 1 branches W. from US 61 at CLARKSDALE, m. (see Tour 3, Sec. a).

SHERARD, 9.3 m., is a typical large Delta plantation with 6,000 acres under cultivation. The northern end of Sherard is three miles from the big house (L) and commissary (R). In addition to the commissary two cotton gins, a sawmill, and a pecan cleaner and grader are operated. J. H. Sherard who cleared the plantation in 1874 lives (1937) in a low rambling house shaded by pecan trees. His sons, grandson, and daughter have separate dwellings grouped about his. One son, a doctor, practices almost exclusively among the families on the plantation. In the days when steamboats could leave the Mississippi at high water and go inland as far as Clarksdale, Sherard the elder used to sail by what is now his plantation. His story of clearing and draining the swamps that were the homes of snakes, alligators, and eagles, of building levees to hold the

cleared lands, and of prospering through cotton-growing despite these difficulties, is the story of all the Delta.

At 11.3 m. the levee is visible (R).

GREENGROVE, 13.5 m., was, from the 1850's until after the War between the States, the plantation of Confederate Cavalry Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest (see Tour 4). During the war Forrest brought his family here for safekeeping.

At 15 m. is RENALARA (35 pop.), a hamlet that grew up on the plantation of John P. Richardson who owned 18,000 acres of Delta land.

HILLHOUSE, 18 m. (157 alt., 75 pop.), is the center of the Beverly B plantation and the shipping point for the Delta Cooperative Farm.

The DELTA COOPERATIVE FARM, 22.8 m. (open: no fee, contributions accepted), has achieved some fame as a laboratory experiment in cooperative living. Organized in 1935 by Sherwood Eddy, New York writer and reformer, the farm is being used to improve the social, racial, and economic status of Southern sharecroppers (see AGRICULTURE). On 2,138 acres of buckshot land were placed 19 Negro and 12 white families; the number has been increased to 33 families (1938). There is an 11-acre common garden in which vegetables are produced for immediate consumption and for canning; a hog farm, a poultry farm, a sawmill, a blacksmith shop, a school, and a commissary are collectively operated. Alfalfa as well as cotton is cultivated. The Rust mechanical cotton-picker is in use. Thirty frame houses have been erected, and nearly 200 acres of land have been cleared and reclaimed.

The board of trustees, holding a deed of trust on the investment of \$25,000, is the supreme authority. Acting as a coordinator between the board and the tenants is an advisory council of five elected every six months from among the inhabitants of the farm; neither race may have more than three representatives. Under the direction of the council are operated the two cooperatives into which the colony is divided. The Producers' Cooperative supervises production – planting, cultivating, and building; the Consumers' Cooperative has charge of distributing the supplies to the tenants and selling the products to outsiders. After operating expenses and provisions for retiring the capital investment have been deducted, the net returns from all commercial crops and timber are prorated among the member producers according to the kind and amount of work done. Young social workers serve as directors and teachers without salary. On the board of trustees are Sherwood Eddy ; Reinhold Neibuhr, a clergyman; William Amberson, a former professor of physiology at the University of Tennessee; and John Rust, the inventor.

The levee visible (R) between Hillhouse and Beulah was originally built with Irish labor behind wheelbarrows, but has since been improved, enlarged, and sodded many times to give what is now almost complete protection from overflow.

At DEESON, 26.3 m. (153 alt., 30 pop.), are the headquarters of the Delta Planter's Company, a Dutch organization operating a plantation of 8,800 acres, under the management of Oscar Johnston (see below).

At 30.8 m. is PERTHSHIRE (420 pop.).

Right from Perthshire is DENNIS LANDING, 4.3 m., a fishing colony just W. of the levee. The road runs through an extensive cotton field for two miles, meets a green, sluggish slough, and follows it through an Osage orange grove, supposed to have been planted by Indians, to top the levee at 4 m. From the levee is a good view of the low damp land that lies between it and the Mississippi River. The landing is formed by a caved-in portion of the high bluff that is the bank of the river. The people live in frame houses built on a high secondary levee, and fish for a living. Carloads of buffalo and of giant river spoonbill catfish, valuable for their roe, are shipped weekly; the roe packed in ice is shipped in barrels. While Chicago takes a part of the yearly catch which amounts to several tons, other shipments go as far as New York.

At 31.7 m. on State i is the junction with a graveled road.

Left on this road is the BLANCHARD PLANTATION, 0.9 m., that has been in the same family for four generations. Set off the road in the midst of the plantation's cotton fields is the big house, a spreading one-story frame structure typical of the Delta's better types of rural homes. On the place are five Indian mounds from which skeletons have been taken by Tulane University experts.

GUNNISON, 35.5 m. (153 alt., 484 pop.), is larger than the usual plantation town, having several stores instead of one. Artesian wells here have shown traces of gas, the town hydrant shooting a flame 10 feet high when, after being capped for some time, it was ignited. Derricks of prospecting gas wells are visible from the town. On the northwestern limits of Gunnison is the old CONCORDIA CEMETERY, a significant survival of a prosperous river town that was so tough in its day that many of the grave markers bear merely the epitaph "Killed in Concordia."

ROSEDALE, 45.8 m. (143 alt., 2,117 pop.), one of the seats of Bolivar Co., with a one-story cream-faced brick courthouse, is the only town of size on the river between Memphis and Greenville. The force of the currents from the confluence of the White and Arkansas Rivers opposite Rosedale keeps the Mississippi pushing against the Rosedale levee. The view of the river from Rosedale landing, with shanty boats tied up here, is interesting. Catfish caught here are shipped as far N. as St. Louis and Chicago. At MONTGOMERY POINT, on the river, David Crockett is reputed to have crossed on his way to the Alamo. In the spring the town has the appearance of a well-kept garden, worthy of its name. Annually in October a Rose Show is held.

Perhaps the most noteworthy citizens of Rosedale and the surrounding area were Walter Sellers, Sr., who was born here, and Charles Scott, who came to Bolivar County shortly after the War between the States.

BEULAH, 51.4m. (143 alt., 506 pop.), is a fishing resort and farm town on Lake Beulah, which parallels the highway a half mile distant (R); the lake was formed by the capricious Mississippi River as early as 1863. Fishing for perch and crappie is fair.

At 56.3 m. is LOBDELL (75 pop.).

Right from Lobdell on a dirt road to INDIAN POINT, 5 m., one of many points at which De Soto is supposed to have discovered the Mississippi River. At this point the gold seekers from Georgia and Alabama crossed the river in 1849 on their way to California. PRENTISS, on Indian Point, was the first seat of Bolivar Co. Because the old men and boys who remained at home took frequent pot-shots at the Federal gunboats on the river, the Federals burned the village in 1863. Only a few shacks now mark the site.

At 61.5 m. is BENOIT (137 alt, 438 pop.).

Left from Benoit on a graveled road running along Egypt Ridge to the old J.C. BURRUS HOME, 0.8 m. (R). Egypt Ridge was so called because it was the only place on which corn grew during the unprecedented flood of 1844. The Burrus Home, called Hollywood plantation because of the grove of holly trees planted about the great house, is the only ante-bellum structure in Bolivar Co. It was built of heart cypress with slave labor. A portico with six slender columns having unusual spool-shaped capitals makes the entrance imposing. The pediment has generous proportions but simple detail. During the war it served as headquarters for Confederate officers, among them Gen. John Early.

At 64.7 m. (R) is a view of LAKE BOLIVAR which parallels State 1 for several miles. Fishing here is excellent for buffalo, crappie, perch, and trout. Almost a mile wide, Lake Bolivar is somewhat larger than other river lakes. Cypress trees of great beauty outline its banks.

At SCOTT, 67.4 m. (140 alt., 300 pop.), are the headquarters of the DELTA AND PINE LAND CO. PLANTATION, the country's largest plantation, containing 38,000 acres ; it is owned by the Fine Spinners Association of Manchester, England, and is under the management of Oscar Johnston. Of the 38,000 acres, 11,700 are in cotton; the whole is under the supervision of 12 unit managers, and is worked by 1,000 Negro sharecroppers. The value of the property is about \$5,000,000.

The company maintains a school, church, and hospital for tenants, the croppers paying a 75¢-per-acre hospital fee annually thus a man who worked 12 acres would be assessed \$9 a year for hospitalization. Women are encouraged to go to the hospital for confinement rather than to depend upon midwives. Vaccination for small-pox and typhoid, inoculations against malaria and anti-syphilitic injections are offered as part of the medical service. Tenant cabins, unscreened but stoutly built, are above the Delta average in quality. The tenants eat the usual pork, molasses, and cornbread, but an attempt is made to make up vitamin deficiencies by supplying them with free

yeast. It is estimated that the average tenant here clears about \$300 a year above subsistence (see AGRICULTURE).

Oscar Johnston, a native Mississippian, took over the management of the company in 1928; since then the plantation has shown a notable profit for the first time since its establishment in 1910. Johnston was in 1933 Finance Director of the AAA, and later manager of the Federal cotton pool.

The road leading from State 1 to the Scott railway station is an experiment made to find new uses for cotton. A heavy coat of tar was applied to the old graveled roadbed, over this was laid cotton fabric, and this in turn was overlaid with an asphalt coating. Theoretically, the cotton mesh absorbs moisture, thus lessening the amount of expansion and contraction of the roadbed caused by changes in temperature. These changes are in some part responsible for cracks in paving. The half-mile cotton textile road was built in 1935.

At 74.3 m. is LOUGHBOROUGH, a low clapboarded structure, actually two cottages with long sweeping roofs carried down over its front and rear screened porches. The home was built in 1841 by Samuel Burks. In front of the house, the concrete roadbed is laid on top of the old levee that was built and maintained by the plantation owner before the war.

At 75.6 m. is WINTERVILLE (132 alt, 108 pop.).

Right from Winterville on a trail to CARTER'S POINT, separated from the Delta by a cut-off which becomes a raging channel when the river is up. Since the cut-off forced the abandonment of the old plantations in 1900, duck, squirrel, and bird hunting has been good on the point. The three plantations, Woodstock, Salona, and Tarpley, were settled by the Carters and Randolphs of Virginia before the War between the States. The plantation barns still stand. Because of the river bend here, some Mississippi land is due W. of Arkansas.

At 76.6 m. (R) are the WINTERVILLE INDIAN MOUNDS, a group composed of a great central mound 55 feet high surrounded by an irregular ellipse of 14 smaller ones of various sizes. The view from the top of the tall mound is worth the climb, the mounds being the only elevations in this stretch of flat country.

GREENVILLE, 82.9 m. (125 alt, 14,807 pop.), the seat of Washington Co., spreads at random along the east bank of the Mississippi River and derives a brisk trade from the river. Tugs churn through the muddy water to the dock, and along the levee sweating stevedores strain at heavy cotton bales brought in from the surrounding plantations. The largest city in the Yazoo-Mississippi area, Greenville is a cotton planting, ginning, marketing, and financing center.

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