Account of Bayou Lafourche
Scenic Trip Set Down in 1889

Cruise Showed Beauty of Stream

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(T-P Bayou Lafourche Bureau)

THIBODAUX, La. — The beautiful setting of Bayou Lafourche has long attracted enthusiastic comment from those fortunate to look upon it.

Some have described the scene in uttered words that were swept away by the bayou breeze, while others put down on paper what they saw and gave them to coming generations.

Such an account was written back on June 29, 1889, by Silas Grisamore in his Thibodaux Sentinel column after he had returned from a steamboat trip up the bayou to Donaldsonville. He wrote, "To comprehend and appreciate the grandeur and magnificence of the country lying on both sides of Bayou Lafourche, passage must be taken on some good steamboat."

He had accepted the invitation of Captain L. F. Schnelder of the Belgrade and embarked on a late June Sunday morning under a cloudless sky at six o'clock. As he got underway, he noted that the "wonderful beauty and agricultural magnificence of the adjacent country appeared to the eye."

Comparing that trip to one taken years before, he saw "Upon ground once occupied by small sugar houses now stand magnificent structures, containing machinery and apparatus which cost fabulous sums." On either side of the bayou he found fields of sugar cane, rice and corn.

He saw "ladies and stalwart youths" in the shade "of some gigantic live oaks which have been standing for centuries, children playing under the shadows of great pecan trees," and farther along, "lovers promenading in the deep recesses of enchanting grottos."

Impressed with changes "that continually occur," he noted that Labadieville had "shown some progress, but its improvement in size has been slow." At Napoleonville, Assumption Parish seat, he saw evidence of growth and improvement.

Plattenville, a quiet settlement on the bayou, appeared to be on the verge of an expansion as he recorded that it had "grown materially" and there was "evidence of prosperity."

He saw no advancement at Paincourtville, "no increase in size or population," and in a business point of view, he noted, "it seems to have fallen back."

Then he pointed out that none of the towns he passed "have banquettes." Pedestrians in rainy weather had to battle mud and "there is only an occasional plank walk."

The newly-established Klotsville drew from him a prediction yet to materialize that "It will probably be a large town.

Some names, long since gone from memory, were in his narrative. Franklinville, Dogtown, Shrimptown, of which in his memories of 40 years, "not a vestige remains."

As he ended the 34 miles back to Thibodaux "the seven deep rings of the town clock told that a day of pleasure" had come to its close.