Bone-Rattling Coffins Found at Atchafalaya

HANDMADE CYPRESS COFFINS, containing human bones, were discovered Sunday at the edge of the Atchafalaya river, about three miles north of Melville, by Tony Morrow of Route 2, Melville, while looking for his cows. Melville Mayor James E. Soileau reported that the cypress wood of the coffins is in good condition, but the appearance of the bones, he said, indicated they were very old. The bank along the levee, washed by the swift current, caused parts of the river bank to erode; some of the coffins fell to the river's edge, where they were discovered by Morrow, Soileau said. It is believed that a cemetery was once near the site where the coffins and bones were found. Right photo is closeup of remains discovered. -- (Soileau Photos)