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Indians Alone Here 3 Centuries Past

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(The T-P Bayou Lafourche Bureau)
DONALDSONVILLE, La. — Spring comes softly and almost silently to Bayou Lafourche. One day the trees that border its banks are bare. The next day they are alive with leaves and blossoms.

So swiftly does the change come that the bayou resident, aware of the speed with which the bayou side invests itself of winter trappings and dons the gay raiment of spring, begins to look for it early.

The madcap wind dance that brings March to the scene is the signal to get ready for the season that poets and song writers transform into words.

Looking back over the centuries to the spring of 300 years ago, the viewer can see a bayou unshackled, mingling freely with the great Mississippi.

In three years, the people who lived on this spot would witness the boat and trappings of strange men, who fought the mighty waterway as they passed Bayou Lafourche on route with Robertavelier de La Salle to claim the land on its shores for the King of France.

In time, these Indian inhabitants would be dispossessed as Europeans took over the land, but the spring of 1667 on Bayou Lafourche belonged to them.

The spring of 1667 found the expell’d Acadians in possession here, and they, recovering from their exile from Nova Scotia, were about to find a bit of warmth in their hearts as they awaited the beauty to come on the scene.

It was still a bayou unrestrained, one that overran the land and muddied their floorless cabins, but Spring holds promise and they needed a promise of a better life.

Another century elapsed, and the spring of 1867 was about to dawn on a devastated land. The freely-flowing bayou and its countryside had been scarred by battles, and its people were faced with a challenge to rebuild what had been lost.

Even as they sorrowed over what had been done to their fields and gardens and homes and to the men who had gone into battle, they felt a surge of hope as March came in and kindled warmth within them.

And in this year of 1967, even though the bayou is now contained and prevented from visiting the river at will, it continues to give its all to the spring that is approaching.

In the distance can be heard the hum of new industries that have come to the bayou country. But on the bayou itself, there is quite anticipation, and the portion of the plant kingdom that resides on Bayou Lafourche is readying itself for the day it will burst into bloom.