The True Story Of The Acadians Is Told
The article about the Vigilantes in St. Martin Parish was written by the late Judge Felix Voortrees. After the Frenchman killed an innocent man and went into hiding, the parish, along with others, was terrorized. Finally, an armed party of men, under the leadership of Judge Voortrees, was formed and charged with the task of finding and capturing the Frenchman. Under the direction of Judge Voortrees, they captured the Frenchman and delivered him into the hands of the law. Judge Voortrees, in his autobiography, tells of his experiences with the Vigilantes and of the efforts he made to bring about the downfall of the Frenchman and his gang. Judge Voortrees' account of his experiences with the Vigilantes is a classic example of how one man can stand up for justice and bring about a change in the community.
Tech News, St. Martinville, La., Thursday, August 17, 1921

By J. L. Smith

THE VIGILANTS -

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Tees could marshall from three and four thousand men, well armed and disciplined. The most prominent citizens took the lead in the movement and the work of re-organization worked rapidly. Many of the men were under the penalty of the law; others were arrested, and within six months the whole Atakapas region was on a war footing and in a state of ver- est excitement.

The bands were demoralized, but the insurgents held fast of certain officials and the interference of the law and the state's inflexible new life in the ranks, and a quasi military order which might have had most serious results, ensued. On the 18th the following proclamation was issued by the governor:

Proclamation:

"Whereas official information has been procured by us by the Department Attorney, the 14th Ju- dicial District of Louisiana, that a certain number of persons are the purveyors of Vallum and St. Mar- tin, and having reported to the state authorities, in violation of the laws of the state and of the law.

"Therefore, it appears that the offenders of this type of crime are exposed to the depredations of these bands.

"In this dangerous emergency we are to wait supinely for actions of the courts to check this growing evil, when every one knows that our courts are powerless to arrest the worst criminals, although there be evidence of their guilt.

"No! We must band together for self-protection, and the law of self- protection if supreme, and armed with the sword of justice, we have organized temporary bands for protection against the violation of the law. We have called ourselves vigilance committees and our constitution contain not one word: chauvinism. The law and the courts will be our guide.

"Now, fellow citizens, if you would save yourself from ruin and plunder that you have earned, either by your labor, or if you wish to protect your society and your local government from all the enemies of our order, and a danger to our families, fol- lower our example — join us, fellow citizens, in our holy crusade against vice and immorality, against crime, murder, and iniquity, and let us with the lash point on the back of those wretches as a catalogue of their crimes.

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Photo of an early scene along the beautiful Bayou Teche. The scene shows one of the early type rowboats and the typical oak trees covered with picturesque moss. On the banks behind, St. Bernard's High School can be seen, and from the adjacent Gabriel Oak.

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The Vigilantes

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The battle of Que Tortue, as the battle of the alliance was called, gave a death blow to the pretensions of the anti's and secured forever the supremacy of the law in the Antillogparish. The end aimed at by the vigilants had been accomplished; the bandit organizations had been scattered to the four winds; peace and quiet were restored, and the property of the people was now protected. The vigilants who had spurred the interference of the governor in this crusade against crime, disbanded of their own accord.

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Spicy Cabbage

1 small head red cabbage
1 onion
3 tablespoons ground cloves
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
4 cup vinegar
1 spoonful sugar

Shred cabbage, dice, chop onion. Put 1/2 inch water into saucepan; bring to a boil; add cabbage, onion and spices. Cover, cook until cabbage is tender, about 7 minutes. Serves 4.