



Banana Wharf, New Orleans

Listen and I'll tell you the tale of a people who know how to live and to let live, where in 215 years out of a sodden wilderness, Latin and Anglo-Saxon and Teuton, Catholic and Protestant, Jew and Gentile, the mighty and the humble have risen together to dominate today the world trade of the nation's inland empire—the vast valley of the Mississippi.

In New Orleans, we've fought the river's perennial floods and we won security . . . but in the meantime we laughed together at Mardi Gras.

All through our lives we've taken a day off for hunting and fishing together in our abounding bayous, lakes and lagoons . . . but in the meantime, we led the fight that banished yellow fever from the Western Hemisphere and have placed typhoid and malaria in the categories of rare diseases in our community.

Our story is a story of people who have had time to master the culinary art with gumbo and crayfish bisque and boullabaisse and pompano en papillote and Ramos gin fiz and Sazerac cocktail and other famed dishes and drinks. But, at the same time, we have built together America's best drained city in a place where there was no natural drainage; no city has today a purer or more abundant water supply where originally we had only the Mississippi's muddy torrent.

With almost mystic reverence we have preserved unchanged the ancient charm of our old quarter with its setting and shadows of the Pirate Lafitte, Andrew Jackson, Lafayette, the Casket girls, Napoleon, Manon Lescaut . . . the heroes of Lafcadio Hearn and Cable, Grace King and O. Henry.

And yet, just step across the glittering expanse of Canal Street and you see 'skyscraping towers' of steel and stone standing on piling driven into the ground. You're in the hum of commerce and the roar of traffic fully fitting the South's greatest metropolis.

We love life and we show it in our enthusiastic way of living. We are patriotic but we are not hypocritical. For 15 long and weary years our restaurants have served Creole meals without wine but all along we have felt something was wrong when Rex toasted his queen with mineral water.

Are you surprised that old New Orleans is herself again? The glory of the romantic city where delicious foods with an accompaniment of proper drinks has returned. New Orleans has come to life again.

It is really remarkable how much there is to see and do in and around New Orleans at any time. In the city, there is the Vieux Carre, the port, the Civil War Home in the Garden District, Lake Pontchartrain, the Chalmette Battlefield, City and Audubon Park, the cemeteries,

Old New Orleans Comes to Life Again

By Wilson S. Callender

the old live oaks and the towering palms, the municipal auditorium, Bayou St. John and too many other places to mention.

Below the city is Buras, near the Mississippi's mouth where they pick oranges in the nation's oldest groves and sell orange wine at 50c a quart.

Or go into the cavern of spreading trees that is Barataria land, the old haunts of the Lafitte pirates. Why not visit the land of Evangeline and see it just as it was painted by the pen of Longfellow? Or go down through a hole into that underground wonderland of salt at Avery Island, Weeks Island or Jefferson Island.

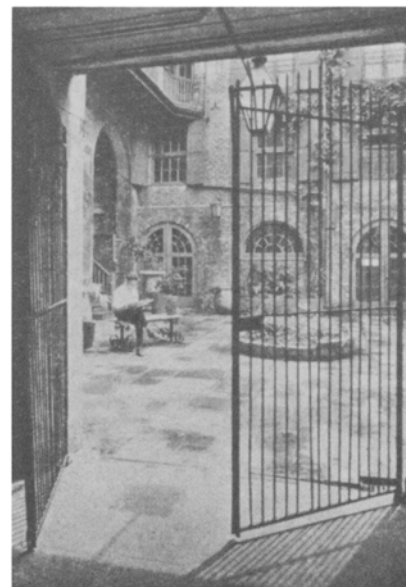
Near New Orleans you can stand in a pirogue and look on as they stamp shrimp out of their shells at Manilla Village. You can see them dredging oysters in Big Four Bayou.

Ruins of more than 20 old forts surround New Orleans, if you are interested in seeing strange reminders of by-gone heroes. Behind mellow old manor houses on the sugar plantations nearby all the darkies am a singing as they cut cane for grinding.

Just above New Orleans you can enjoy the thrill of a couple of modern romances. You can see rising in midstream and from both banks the Mississippi's finest bridge. Thirteen million dollars and hundreds of sure-footed workers are making this graceful web of steel rise as high as any skyscraper in New Orleans.

Nearby you will see the mile and a half concrete gate Uncle Sam has built at Bonnet Carre as a spillway to release the Mississippi's floods into Lake Pontchartrain before they get to New Orleans. It has a flowage capacity greater than Niagara Falls.

Arthur Brisbane says that New Orleans is one of the two most interesting cities in America. The other is your own home town.



New Orleans Courtyard