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WALHALLA, S. C.:

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 11, 1908.

FORMATION OF REELFOOT LAKE

Interesting and Startling Events of Long Ago—Scene of Crime.

(Nashville Banner.)

The story of the formation of Reelfoot Lake contains much that is of deep and startling interest. This story is graphically told in a letter that was written in 1826 to Rev. Lorenzo Dow describing the horrible earthquake of 1811 and the consequent sinking of Reelfoot Lake, now the center of interest because of recent disturbances in the territory adjacent to this famous fishing and hunting resort. This letter was found some months ago among some old papers, and reads as follows:

"Dear Brother: I have just received your kind letter, written some three or four weeks ago, requesting me to give you a description of the late horrible visitation of Providence, and the sinking of Reelfoot Lake in this section.

"The morning of December 15th, 1811, was cloudy and a dense fog prevailed, and towards midnight the heavens showed signs of distress. On the following morning, the 16th, about 5 o'clock a. m., we felt the shock of an earthquake, accompanied by a rumbling noise resembling the distant firing of a cannon, which was followed in a few minutes by the complete saturation of the atmosphere with sulphurous vapor. The moon was shining brilliantly, but the sulphurous vapor caused the earth to be wrapped in absolute darkness. The wailing inhabitants, the stampede of the fowls and beasts, the noise of falling timber, the roaring of the Mississippi, the current of which was retrograded for a few minutes—formed a scene too appalling to conceive of. Then until daylight a number of lighter shocks occurred, one that was more violent and severe than the first one, and the terror which prevailed after the first shock was now even worse than before. The people fled hither and yon, supposing that there was less danger at a distance from the river, which was boiling, foaming and roaring terrifically. Men, women and children gave up in despair, some praying and others fainting, so great was their fear.

"There were light shocks each day until January 2, 1812, when one as hard as the first occurred, followed by the same phenomena. From this time until February 4 the earth was in continual agitation, visibly waving as a gentle sea. That day a shock almost as severe as the others occurred, and on the 8th, about sunrise, a concussion took place which was so much more violent than the others that it was called 'the hard shock.' The earth was transformed into total darkness and the chickens went back to roost, the cows moored and the frightened horses pitifully neighed. At first the Mississippi river seemed to recede from its banks, and its waters, gathering up like a mountain, leaving for a short period of time many boats which were passing down the river, during which time the crews escaped to land in safety. The river rose ten to fifteen feet perpendicularly, expanding as it were; at the same time the banks were overflowed with a retrograde current. The river, falling immediately, receded within its banks again with such violence that it took with it whole groves of young cottonwood trees and much cattle and stock.

"A great many fish were left on the banks, being unable to keep up with the water, and an old canoe, antique in construction, was washed ashore. The river was a mass of floating wrecks of boats, and it is said that one was wrecked in which there was a lady and six children, all of whom were lost.

"In the hard shocks described the earth was horribly lacerated—the surface was from time to time covered over of uneven depths by the sand, which issued from fissures, which were made in great numbers all over this country, some of which closed up immediately after they had vomited forth their sand and water. In many places, however, there was a substance resembling coal thrown up with the sand. It is impossible to say what the depths of the fissures or irregular breaks were. The site of New Madrid, Mo., was settled down at least 15 feet, and not more than half a mile below that town there does not appear to be any alteration of the river, but back from the river a short distance the numerous large ponds or lakes, which covered a great part of that country, were totally dried up. The beds of some of them bulge above their former banks several feet.

"The most remarkable feature of all the entire disturbances which was not generally known for some months afterwards was the discovery of a huge lake on the Tennessee side of the Mississippi, upward of 25 miles long and from one-half to eight miles in width. This lake was later called Reelfoot Lake. There are places in it the bottom of which has never been found, though many efforts have been made.

"The lake has communication with the Mississippi river at both ends, and it is conjectured that it will not be many years before the principal part, if not the whole, of the Mississippi will pass that way. In the last year or so an herb, resembling moss, has literally covered the surface of

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the lake and during the winter months wild fowls, such as ducks, geese, cranes, etc., winter on the lake and eat this moss as food. Deer and other animals seem to enjoy it.

"It is said that where the lake was formed was a vast area of fine timbered lands, and in places only the tops of the trees can be seen. The lake runs north and south, and each end has a neck shape, widening out about the center, or nearer the northern terminus than the center. The water in it does not seem to rise or lower to any marked degree, and the lake is destined to become the great hunting and fishing resort of the West.

"It is said that where this lake was formed was formerly the Indians' hunting grounds, and also where they held their annual war dances, but since the terrible visitation of the earthquake it is a rare thing that one ventures in that vicinity. By some method, known only to themselves, they marked a warning on the trees for other Indians to keep away.

"Most of those who fled from the vicinity during the hard shocks have returned, but always become greatly alarmed at the slightest trembling of the earth. We have since their commencement in 1811, occasionally felt light shocks. Hardly a week passes but we feel one. There were two the past winter, much more severe than we have felt them for several years before. Since then, however, they are lighter than ever, and as the months and years pass the inhabitants are becoming more and more reconciled to the surroundings.

"One circumstance worthy of mention is: This section was once subject to severe thunder, but for a long time previous to the first shock there was no thunder at all and but very little since.

"I have now complied with your request for a description of the earthquake—imperfect, it is true, but just as it occurred to the best of my memory. If you will come out here, you and myself will take a two or three days' tour of inspection of the country most affected by the earthquakes, and especially of the lake I have described in the foregoing history, which in my mind is the wonder of the age.

Respectfully yours,
E. Bryan.

"New Madrid, Mo." In the case of Webster vs. Harris, growing out of the Reelfoot Lake controversy, Judge McAllister of the Supreme Court, delivering the opinion of the court, quoted from an opinion of Judge W. H. Swiggart, giving the origin, history and description of Reelfoot Lake, the opinion shows that the lake is in Obion and La. counties, with 1,000 acres, or more, in Kentucky. It covers 25,000 or 30,000 acres of submerged land, not including the arms or pockets, which cover several hundred more. It is 15 to 20 miles long and from two to seven miles wide. Several islands cover about 1,500 acres. The outlets of the lake are at its Southern end, consisting of sloughs and bayous. These carry its waters south into and through other smaller sloughs or bayous into Obion river, about fifteen miles from the main body of the lake, and thence to the Mississippi river. The small streams called "Reelfoot River" and "Bayou de Chain" passed through the territory now composing the basin of the lake. It was on the banks of Bayou de Chain that Capt. Rankin was recently killed by night riders. These streams come together at a point now in the lake towards its eastern and southern shore, three quarters of a mile from its eastern banks, at the village of Samberg, where the State troops are now in camp, and which is said to be the center of the disturbed district. Bayou de Chain, where the tragedy was enacted, enters the lake near its extreme northeastern corner, and bears to the southwest and then back across the lake towards its eastern side, where it empties into Reelfoot River, which enters the lake on its eastern shore. The channels of these streams are still traceable through the waters of the lake. Bayou de Chain is thought to be 12 or 15 miles in length.

"There are many logs, trees and stumps in the lake, deadypress mainly. The lake is subject to Mississippi river overflows.

"The lake extends along the entire eastern boundary line of Lake county, the eastern banks, according to the government maps, forming the Lake and Obion county lines, though other maps place the great body of water partly in both counties. It extends north and south from the Dyer county line up and into the Kentucky line.

"While it seems indisputable that the lake was formed by the earthquake of 1811, the authorities vary in some minor details as to the phenomena. Dr. J. M. Safford, in his "Geology of Tennessee," says: "This lake had no existence previous to the 'shakes' of 1811-12. Its origin appears to have been due to the filling up of the old channel of Reelfoot Creek during the convulsions of that period.

"This dammed up the water that before ran without obstruction into the Mississippi, until it overflowed a large area, and formed the lake as we now find it. The waste water of the lake now escapes southward into Obion river, with a fall of at least 40 feet. In its course it passes through several smaller lakes. The northern

end of the lake projects a short distance into Kentucky. Its length is about 18 miles. Its width varies from three-fourths of a mile to three miles.

"The violent earthquake that destroyed in March, 1812, the city of Caracas, in South America, appears to have had some connection with the shocks felt at the same time in the valley of the Mississippi."

Judge Joseph Gullid gives a characteristic account of the earthquakes of 1811-12 in his "Old Times in Tennessee," now out of print. In this interesting volume he says:

"The earthquakes of 1811 commenced on the 16th of December, at half-past two o'clock in the morning, and were felt at intervals up to 1819, and as late as July, 1822. For two or three months the shocks were frequent, almost every day. Then they gradually decreased in frequency and took place at longer intervals, which continued to lengthen until they finally ceased.

"The water in the Mississippi near New Madrid rose in a few minutes 12 or 14 feet, and then fell like a tide. Some lakes were elevated, as the bottom raised above the common surface of the earth in the neighborhood, and still remain so. The country near New Madrid was everywhere broken up in furrows six or eight feet wide and as many deep."

An historian gives what purports to be the evidence of an eye-witness to the formation of the lake as follows:

"Col. Walker, of Missouri, who, in company with an Indian, came over the Mississippi river into Tennessee for the purpose of hunting on what was then called Reelfoot Creek, in December, 1811, stated that while there hunting the earth began to shake.

"Becoming much alarmed he and the Indian started to return, and upon reaching the place on Reelfoot Creek where they had left their canoe, they found that the earth had sunk, and that the waters from the Mississippi had rushed in and formed a great lake, which they afterward found to be 25 or 30 miles in length, and from one to ten miles in width."

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We are Dead, Says Chaffin.

Chicago, Nov. 4.—Eugene W. Chaffin, Presidential candidate of the Prohibition party, after scanning the election returns, made a statement, concluding as follows:

"The Democratic Bryan party is dead. The fight from now on will be between the Prohibition party and the whiskey (Republican) party and we will elect a Prohibition President in 1912."

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Miss Marie Stoltzman, of Laurel, Ia., writes: "I was in a run-down condition, suffering from depression, indigestion, and poor circulation. Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound made me well and strong."

Miss Ellen M. Olson, of 117 N. East St., Kewanee, Ill., says: "Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound cured me of backache, side ache, and established my periods, after the best local doctors had failed to help me."

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Mrs. Pinkham invites all sick women to write her for advice. She has guided thousands to health. Address, Lynn, Mass.

BRYAN CONGRATULATES TAFT.

The Defeated Candidate Sends Telegram to Successful One.

Lincoln, Neb., Nov. 5.—Mr. Bryan this morning sent the following message:

"Hon. Wm. H. Taft, Cincinnati, O.: Please accept my congratulations and best wishes for the success of your administration. W. J. Bryan."

Mr. Taft in Reply.

Cincinnati, Ohio, Nov. 5.—Mr. Taft sent the following reply to Mr. Bryan's message:

"I thank you sincerely for your cordial and courteous telegram of congratulation. Wm. H. Taft."

Raw Lungs.
When the lungs are sore and inflamed, the germs of pneumonia and consumption find lodgement and multiply. Foley's Honey and Tar kills the cough germs, cures the most obstinate racking cough, heals the lungs and prevents serious results. The genuine is in the yellow package. J. W. Bell, Walhalla; Stonecypher Pharmacy, Westminster.

Help for Aged Ministers.

We are requested by Miss Shelor, State Leader of the International Sunshine Society, to announce that one of her sunshiners, Mrs. E. D. Wells, Leed's, S. C., wife of Rev. E. D. Wells, of the Baptist church, paints lovely post cards and sells them to help the aged ministers' fund of her church. You send \$1 to Mrs. Wells, sell the cards she sends, return her fifty cents and give the rest to aged ministers' fund. Mrs. Wells helps "shut-ins" in the same way.

Charles Joseph Magness, a musician of the navy, aged 20 years, who recently married Miss Ada Gorman, aged 40 years, daughter of the late Senator Gorman, of Maryland, is under arrest at the Philadelphia Navy Yard on a charge of desertion. Magness will probably be sentenced to three years in the naval prison at Charlestown, Mass.

SOME RARE BARGAINS!

Dress Goods, Dress Goods.

Big lot of mill ends in Dress Suitings and Broadcloths in solids and plaids. Serges, Henriettas and Brilliantines, worth \$1, \$1.25 and \$1.50 per yard, to close out at 75c. at 85c. One lot of All-Wool, 54 inch wide, worth 65c. and 75c., to close at 50c.; also big value in 15c. and 20c. goods. Calicos—blue, red and black—at 5c.; best grade 6c. Outings, 5c. up.

Clothing, Clothing.

Our Clothing Stock is brand new and the best values and styles. Do not fail to see what we have to offer you before you get your Fall and Winter Suit. Big Stock of Men's and Boys' Overcoats and Raincoats and Ladies' and Children's Cloaks and Jackets at lowest price.

Shoes, Shoes.

Men's Fine Shoes in Patent Leathers, Tans, Gun Metals and Calfs, heavy weights for winter. Ladies' Fine Shoes in Patents and Tans on all the newest lasts and toes. Children's Shoes in fine quality and heavy weights for winter.

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P. S.: NOTICE.—With each and every bill of Dry Goods, Clothing and Shoes, amounting to \$10, we will sell you a 25-pound sack of New York Standard Granulated Sugar for \$1.25.

Tragedy in Georgia.

Danielsville, Ga., Nov. 5.—Charles Griffith, a well known Madison county citizen, lies cold in death, and his brother-in-law, Clifford Graham, languishes behind the bars of the county prison as a result of a bitter quarrel over a business affair. In anger, it is said, Griffith advanced upon Graham with a drawn weapon, when the latter fired one shot in self-defense. Griffith dropped dead and Graham surrendered to the sheriff.

Winter blasts, causing pneumonia, pleurisy and consumption will soon be here. Cure your cough now, and strengthen your lungs with Foley's Honey and Tar. Do not risk starting the winter with weak lungs, when Foley's Honey and Tar will cure the most obstinate coughs and colds, and prevent serious results.

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