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Martha R. Field

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The Travel Writings of Catharine Cole



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Edited by

Joan B. McLaughlin and Jack McLaughlin

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Martha R. Field : Louisiana Voyages: The Travel Writings of Catharine Cole before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Louisiana Voyages: The Travel Writings of Catharine Cole:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Quality Descriptive WritingBy J. HarrellI enjoy writings about

nature and I enjoy writers whose descriptions can transport me from where I am and into the world of their book. This writer, Catharine Cole, (Martha R. Field, does both equally well. My father's side of the family and I own property in the Greater New Orleans area. Some of the areas described in this compilation still look the same. This book gives me an opportunity to see, with my mind's eye, an idea of how the rest may have looked. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Louisiana Voyages is a fantastic book By Linda J. Smith My cousin told me about this book. I am from Louisiana and I am familiar with the places that Martha R. Field wrote about. I am a history buff and love to read about past times and people who lived long ago. There is actually a book about my maternal great great grandmother Tryphena Blanch Holder Fox it is from a series of books written about Northern Women in the Plantation South edited by Wilma King. I feel very fortunate in being able to read the letters that Tryphena wrote to her family and friends. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Happy By Glenn Falgoust Good service, well priced.

When nature exudes in a swamp in Louisiana it is rich, tropical, juicy, dark, verminy, repellent and lovely all in one," wrote Catharine Cole in 1889. "It is like a coffin crowned with flowers; a death trap baited with roses." Writing under the pseudonym Catharine Cole, Martha R. Field (1855-1898) became the first full-time newswoman for the New Orleans Daily Picayune in 1881. For more than a decade she was the woman's page editor and wrote a Sunday column, "Catharine Cole's Letter," that established her as one of the most popular writers in the South. Cole wrote fiction, essays, editorials on women's issues, and travel pieces. But her accounts of journeys through Louisiana's rural parishes by rail, steamboat, carriage, buggy, and on foot brought her writing to the state's working men and women as well as its plantation aristocracy. Louisiana Voyages: The Travel Writings of Catharine Cole gathers these travel writings for the first time. Touring most of Louisiana's parishes, taking in New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Shreveport, Lafayette, Morgan City, and Grand Isle, Cole revealed in her journalism much about an exotic, unspoiled Louisiana and the Gilded Age South as a whole. A punishing 1,800-mile buggy trip through forests, swamps, bayous, and along the Gulf Coast made her a celebrity writer who, according to her contemporaries, "knew more about Louisiana than any other person alive." Joan B. McLaughlin is a retired associate professor of English at Clemson University. Her work has appeared in Contemporary Literary Criticism, Concerning Poetry, Arizona Quarterly, South Carolina Review, and other periodicals. Jack McLaughlin is a retired professor of English and humanities at Clemson University. He is the author of Jefferson and Monticello: The Biography of a Builder and To His Excellency Thomas Jefferson: Letters to a President. Learn more about Catharine Cole at <http://www.catharinecole.com/>.

From Publishers Weekly Writing under the pseudonym Catharine Cole, newspaper reporter Field undertook a series of trips through Louisiana parishes in the late 19th century for the New Orleans Daily Picayune. Her travels to remote areas frequently included unsafe modes of transportation, emergency farmhouse stayovers and strange foodstuffs; one essay relates an 1891 ferry ride across the Atchafalaya River aboard an unstable flatboat: "One of the horses screamed.... I could see his white eyeball glaring.... I said, almost involuntarily, an abject, cowardly kind of prayer, and wished I hadn't my best black dress on." But even when Cole's buggy is stuck in mud, her love for Louisiana shines through. Cole's affection for Louisiana's landscape and back roads is especially poignant post-Katrina. Although the areas hardest hit by that storm aren't depicted, Cole's writing demonstrates how Louisianians felt then about their homes, and there's a sense that little of that passion has waned in the past century. In the introduction, the editors (both retired Clemson University professors) note that Cole became a celebrity journalist through these literary sketches; it's easy to see why, given her ability to illuminate the "soil, scenery, and life" of each parish. (Mar.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Under the pseudonym Catharine Cole, Field wrote articles in the late nineteenth century for the New Orleans Daily Picayune. She was well known for her travel pieces, especially her chronicles of a series of trips she made around Louisiana in 1891 and 1892. Now a selection of these pieces has been culled from the yellowed pages of that newspaper and collected here, and for contemporary readers, they present a graphic and often lovely evocation of the state of the state back then. Modes of travel lacked the comfort and convenience we know today, and Field traveled alone--unusual for the time and for her gender. From the elegant, socially conscious town of Natchitoches to the beautiful Grand Isle in the Gulf to her hometown of New Orleans, where "every house suggests a romance, every shop a carnival," she paints vibrant pictures of life as it once was and, in many ways, still is. With hurricane destruction on our minds these days, it is good to see preservation of such timeless prose. Brad Hooper Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved. From the Publisher These travel writings are the revelations of a Gilded age woman writing from the South's most rugged and exotic climes. They: *Offer a unique collection of 19th-century, Gilded Age travel writing from a woman's perspective *Provide a glimpse into all social classes across the life and culture of Louisiana *Establish Martha R. Field (Catharine Cole) as one of the most important southern woman writers of the Gilded Age *Cover the entire state of Louisiana and all modes of travel available---steamer, train, pirogue, trolley, horse, mule, and foot