

Pete Daniel. *Deep'n As It Come. The 1927 Mississippi River Flood*. New York: Oxford Press, 1977, 162 pp.

This book is an historical account of how people reacted to the 1927 flood of the Mississippi River and its tributaries, a massive disaster which put under water 16 million acres of land in 120 counties in seven states and which forced over 600,000 evacuees from 162,000 flood homes. In particular, the author describes the immediate reaction of victims to about 120 major levee breaks, the rescue efforts, the housing of refugees in 154 camps, and reconstruction attempts. Racial discrimination in evacuation and shelter efforts, the sacrificing of rural areas to save New Orleans, the self-serving reporting, if not actual cover-up attempts, of the American National Red Cross “on all of the major problems of relief.” (p. 123), and the failure to use the flood as an opportunity for initiating general social and economic changes in the rural South, are among the interesting points made in the book. The report rests heavily – too much in fact – on interviews with flood survivors nearly 50 years after the event, although such data were supplemented with contemporary photographs, newspapers, magazines, letters, official reports, reminiscences and speeches. No attention is

paid to any of the present-day burgeoning disaster literature, a mistake which prevents the author from seeing that many of the things he discusses were not peculiar or unique to this, one of the largest disasters in American history. As a case study the book falls short of other accounts which are available, but nevertheless it does deserve to be at least available in libraries for perusal by those with an interest in historical research on disasters.

Verta Taylor