

Robert Day,
Life, Oct, 1936



"Every time he reads about New Deal spending, he hits the ceiling."

Gregor Duncan
Life, March 1935



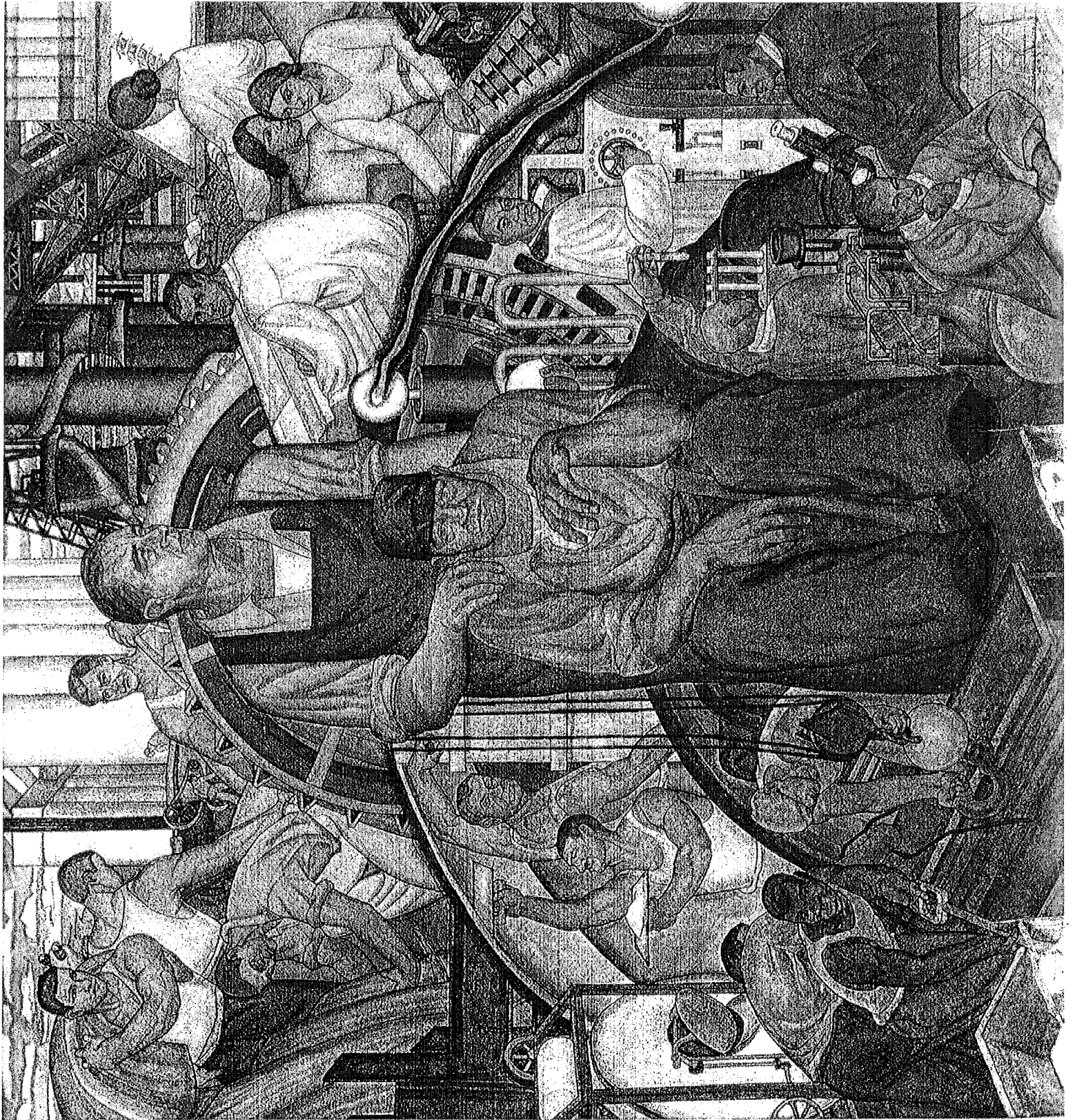
Gregor Duncan

Op' Rockin' Chair

Gregor Duncan, Life
May, 1936



Conrad Albrizio,
mural - auditorium, Leonard da Vinci Art
School, New York, 1934



Sea pickers camp in the rain. California

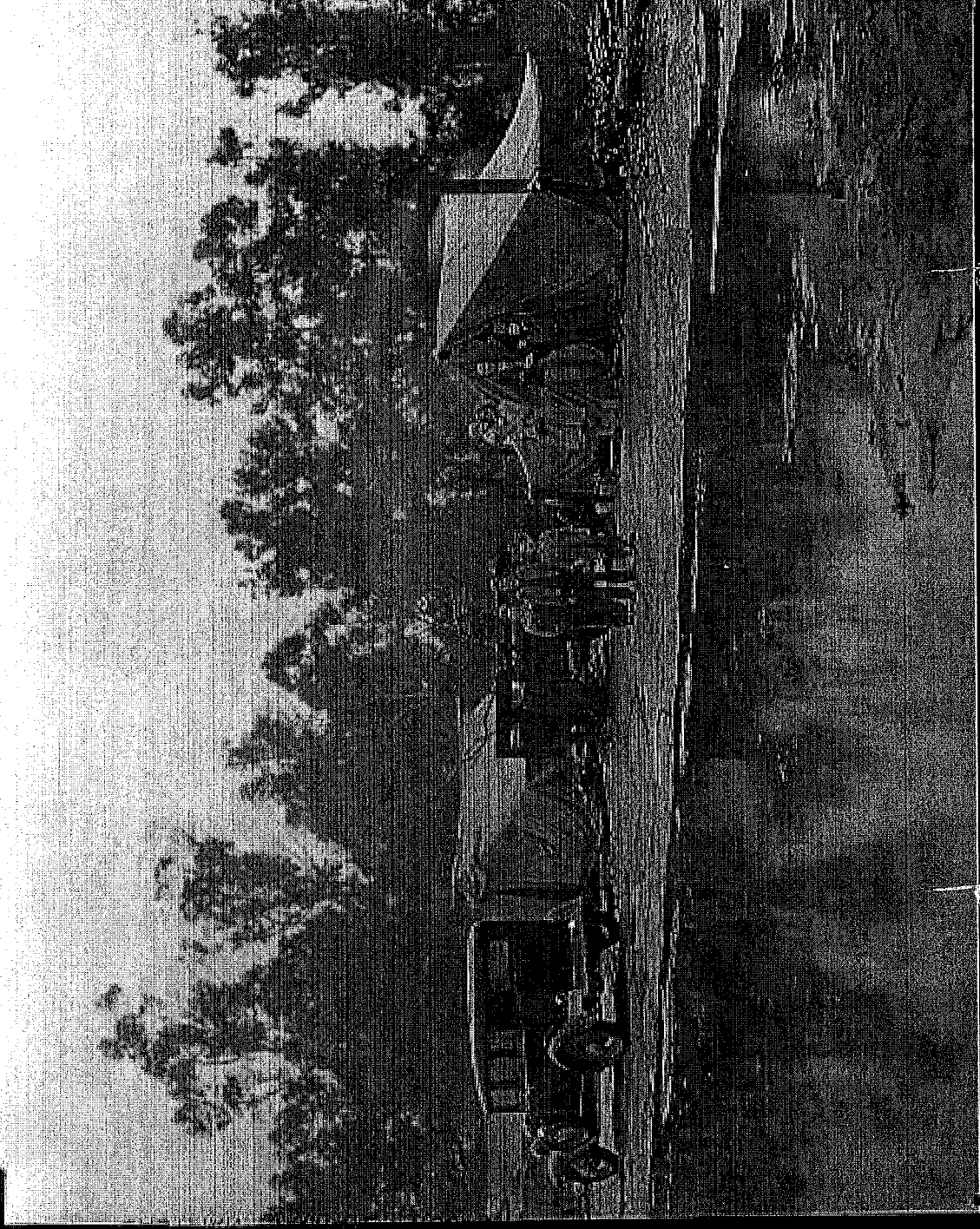
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n Security Administration (FSA) camp for migratory laborers, Farmersville. Seen from water tower, showing pre-fabricated st
ver left holds toilet unit. Large building in center is camp laundry. This camp is situated in a cotton, grape, citrus area. Califor

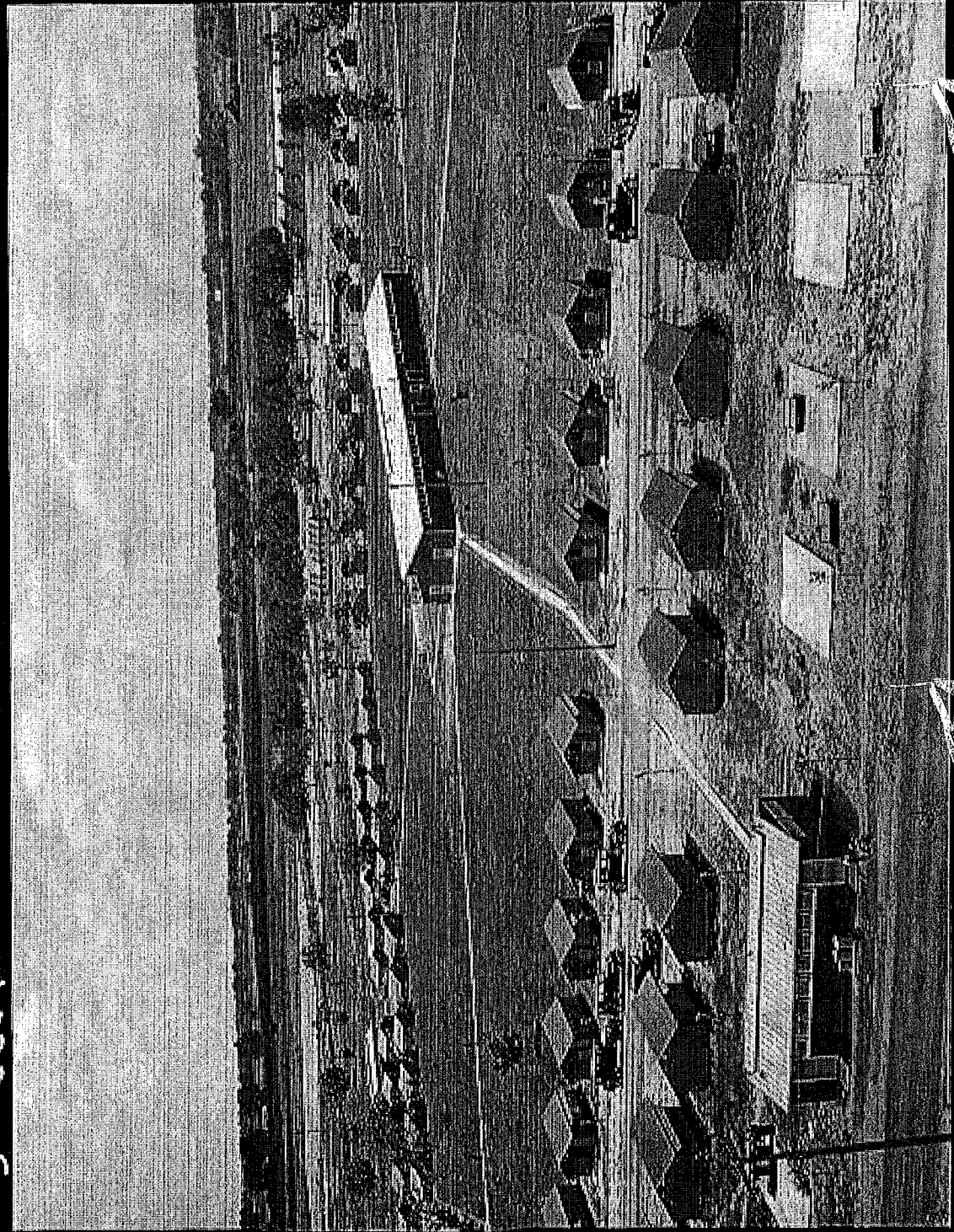
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1833-C





"The slogan of the Civilian Conservation Corps is 'We can take it!' Building strong bodies is a major CCC objective. More than half the enrollees who entered CCC the last year were seventeen years of age. Work, calisthenics, marching drill, good food, and medical care feature the CCC health program."

By Wilfred J. Mead, Civilian Conservation Corps, undated

National Archives, Records of the Civilian Conservation Corps
(35-G-830)

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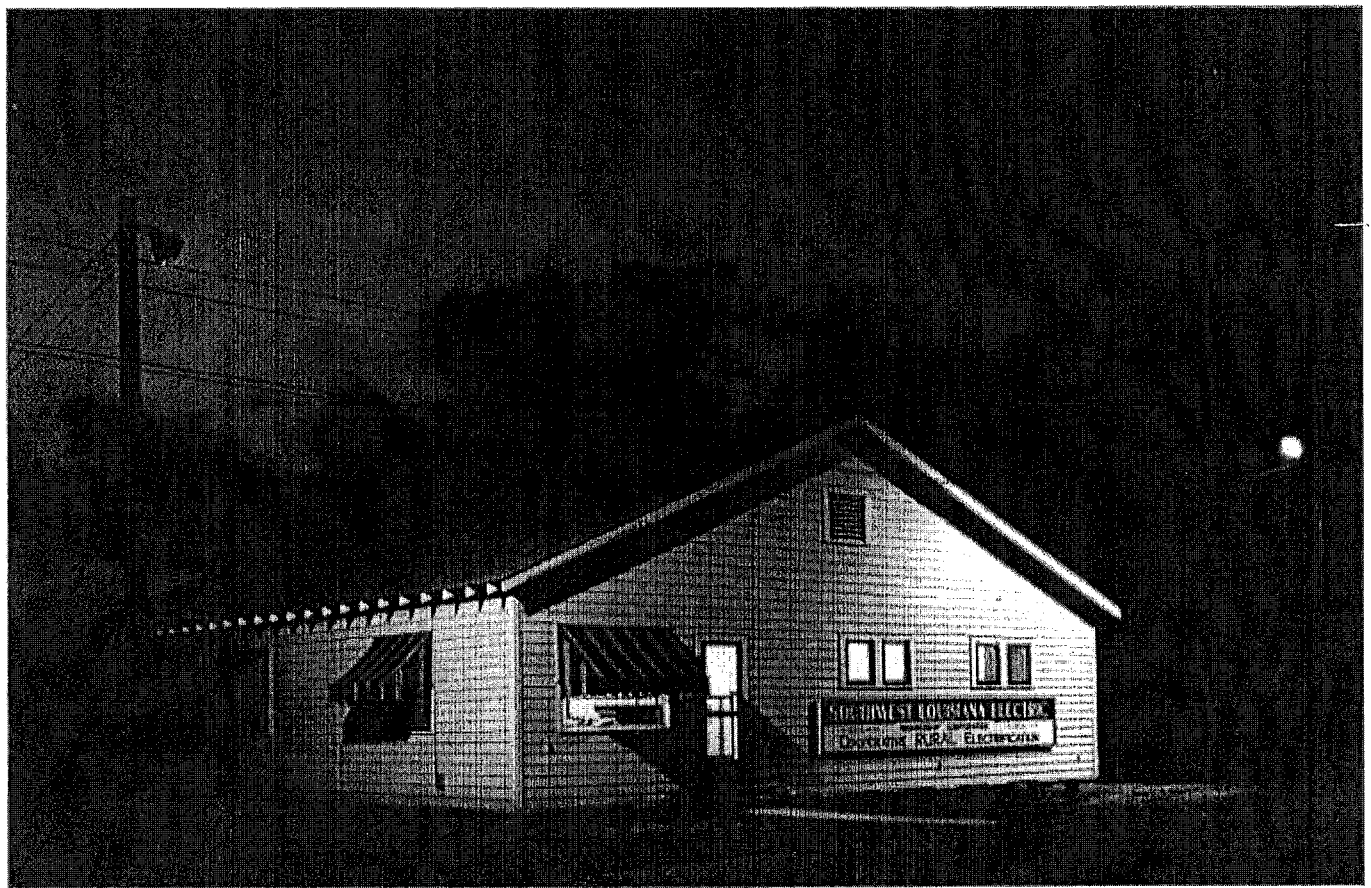
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**THE WIDOW OF A QUALIFIED
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CASES, AN AGED DEPENDENT
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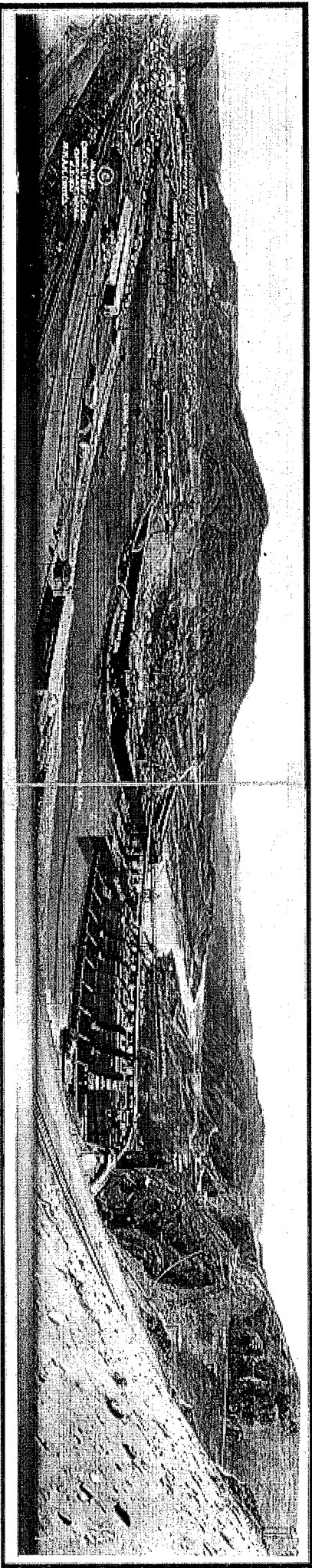


"Rural Electrification Administration co-op office. Lafayette, Louisiana. 1939"
By Peter Sakaer, Rural Electrification Administration

National Archives, Records of the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture
(16-G-112-2-S-3522A)

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Grand Coulee Dam

Library of Congress,
1937

9. Virginia Durr Reflects on the Depression's Lessons, ca. 1930s

Oh, no, the Depression was not a romantic time. It was a time of terrible suffering. The contradictions were so obvious that it didn't take a very bright person to realize something was terribly wrong.

Have you ever seen a child with rickets? Shaking as with palsy. No proteins, no milk. And the companies pouring milk into gutters. People with nothing to wear, and they were plowing up cotton. People with nothing to eat, and they killed the pigs. If that wasn't the craziest system in the world, could you imagine anything more idiotic? This was just insane.

And people blamed themselves, not the system. They felt they had been at fault: . . . "if we hadn't bought that old radio" . . . "if we hadn't bought that old secondhand car." Among the things that horrified me were the preachers—the fundamentalists. They would tell the people they suffered because of their sins. And the people believed it. God was punishing them. Their children were starving because of their sins.

People who were independent, who thought they were masters and mistresses of their lives, were all of

a sudden dependent on others. Relatives or relief. People of pride went into shock and sanitoriums. My mother was one.

Up to this time, I had been a conformist, a Southern snob. I actually thought the only people who amounted to anything were the very small group which I belonged to. The fact that my family wasn't as well off as those of the girls I went with—I was vice president of the Junior League—made me value even more the idea of being well-born. . . .

What I learned during the Depression changed all that. I saw a blinding light like Saul on the road to Damascus. (Laughs.) It was the first time I had seen the other side of the tracks. The rickets, the pellagra—it shook me up. I saw the world as it really was. . . .

The Depression affected people in two different ways. The great majority reacted by thinking money is the most important thing in the world. Get yours. And get it for your children. Nothing else matters. Not having that stark terror come at you again. . . .

And there was a small number of people who felt the whole system was lousy. You have to change it. The kids come along and they want to change it, too. But they don't seem to know what to put in its place. I'm not so sure I know, either. I do think it has to be

responsive to people's needs. And it has to be done by democratic means, if possible. Whether it's possible or not—the power of money is such today, I just don't know. Some of the kids call me a relic of the Thirties. Well, I am.

Studs Terkel,
Hard Knox

1970

1. Ed Paulsen Describes the Transient Life, ca. 1934

We catch a train into Kansas City, Kansas, that night. At the stops, colored people were gettin' on the trains and throwin' off coal. You could see people gatherin' the coal. You could see the railroad dicks were gettin' tough.

Hal and I are ridin' on the top of the boxcar, it's a fairly nice night. All of a sudden, there's a railroad dick with a flashlight that reaches a thousand miles. Bam! Bam! He starts shooting. We hear the bullets hitting the cars, bam! like that. I throw my hands up and start walking towards that light. Hal's behind me. The guy says, "Get off." I said, "Christ, I can't." This thing's rollin' fifty miles an hour or more. He says, "Jump." I says, "I can't." He says, "Turn around and march ahead." He marches us over the top. There's a gondola, about eight feet down. He says, "Jump." So I jumped and landed in wet sand, up to my knees.

We come to a little town in Nebraska, Beatrice. It's morning. I'm chilled to the bone. We crawl into a railroad sandbox, almost frozen to death. We dry

out, get warmed up, and make the train again. We pull into Omaha. It's night. All of a sudden, the train is surrounded by deputies, with pistols. The guy says, "Get in those trucks." I said, "What for? We haven't done anything." He said, "You're not going to jail. You're going to the Transient Camp." . . .

It wasn't a big thing, but it created a coyote mentality. You were a predator. You had to be. The coyote is crafty. He can be fantastically courageous and a coward at the same time. He'll run, but when he's cornered, he'll fight. I grew up where they were hated, 'cause they'd kill sheep. They'll kill a calf, get in the chicken pen. They're mean. But how else does a coyote stay alive? He's not as powerful as a wolf. He has a small body. He's in such bad condition, a dog can run him down. He's not like a fox. A coyote is nature's victim as well as man's. We were coyotes in the Thirties, the jobless.

No, I don't see the Depression as an ennobling experience. Survivors are still ridin' with the ghost—the ghost of those days when things came hard.

2. César Chávez Recalls an Eviction, 1934

Oh, I remember having to move out of our house. My father had brought in a team of horses and wagon. We had always lived in that house, and we couldn't understand why we were moving out. When we got to the other house, it was a worse house, a poor house. That must have been around 1934. I was about six years old.

It's known as the North Gila Valley, about fifty miles north of Yuma. My dad was being turned out of his small plot of land. He had inherited this from his father, who had homesteaded it. I saw my two,

three other uncles also moving out. And for the same reason. The bank had foreclosed on the loan. . . .

But this had quite an impact on my father. He had been used to owning the land and all of a sudden there was no more land. What I heard . . . what I made out of conversations between my mother and my father—things like, we'll work this season and then we'll get enough money and we'll go and buy a piece of land in Arizona. Things like that. Became like a habit. He never gave up hope that some day he would come back and get a little piece of land.

I can understand very, very well this feeling. These conversations were sort of melancholy. I guess my brothers and my sisters could also see this very sad look on my father's face.

That piece of land he wanted . . . ?

No, never. It never happened. He stopped talking about that some years ago. The drive for land, it's a very powerful drive. . . .

Labor strikes were everywhere. We were one of the strikingest families, I guess. My dad didn't like

the conditions, and he began to agitate. Some families would follow, and we'd go elsewhere. Sometimes we'd come back. We couldn't find a job elsewhere, so we'd come back. Sort of beg for a job. Employers would know and they would make it very humiliating. . . .

Did these strikes ever win?

Never.

We were among these families who always honored somebody else's grievance.

Studs Terkel, *Hard Times*
1970