

## **Historic, Archive Document**

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FORTUNES

WASHED

AWAY

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"THE STORY OF  
SIDNEY LANIER"

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Broadcast over WLW, Cincinnati,  
December 9, 1939. Demonstration  
broadcast before the Eleventh  
Institute for Education by Radio,  
May 1, 1940.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE  
DAYTON, OHIO



SOUND: Thunder and rain....

ANNOUNCER

Fortunes Washed Away!

ORCHESTRA: I GET THE BLUES WHEN IT RAINS.

ANNOUNCER

This is the true story of Sidney Lanier, the poet, the lover of the soil and all that it nurtures. The ivy still trails along his birthplace in Macon, Georgia. The scented verbena blooms again, the wild olive is old but green, the minosa flowers are a profusion of yellow and pink. His birthplace surveys the old red hills of Georgia, hills not always red, for once they were gray and fertile. Best known is Sidney Lanier for his poem, "The Song of the Chattahoochee".....

ORCHESTRA: Softly behind poem...

NARRATOR

Out of the hills of Habersham  
Down the valleys of Hall,  
I hurry amain to reach the plain  
Run the rapid and leap the fall...

ORCHESTRA: Fade out...

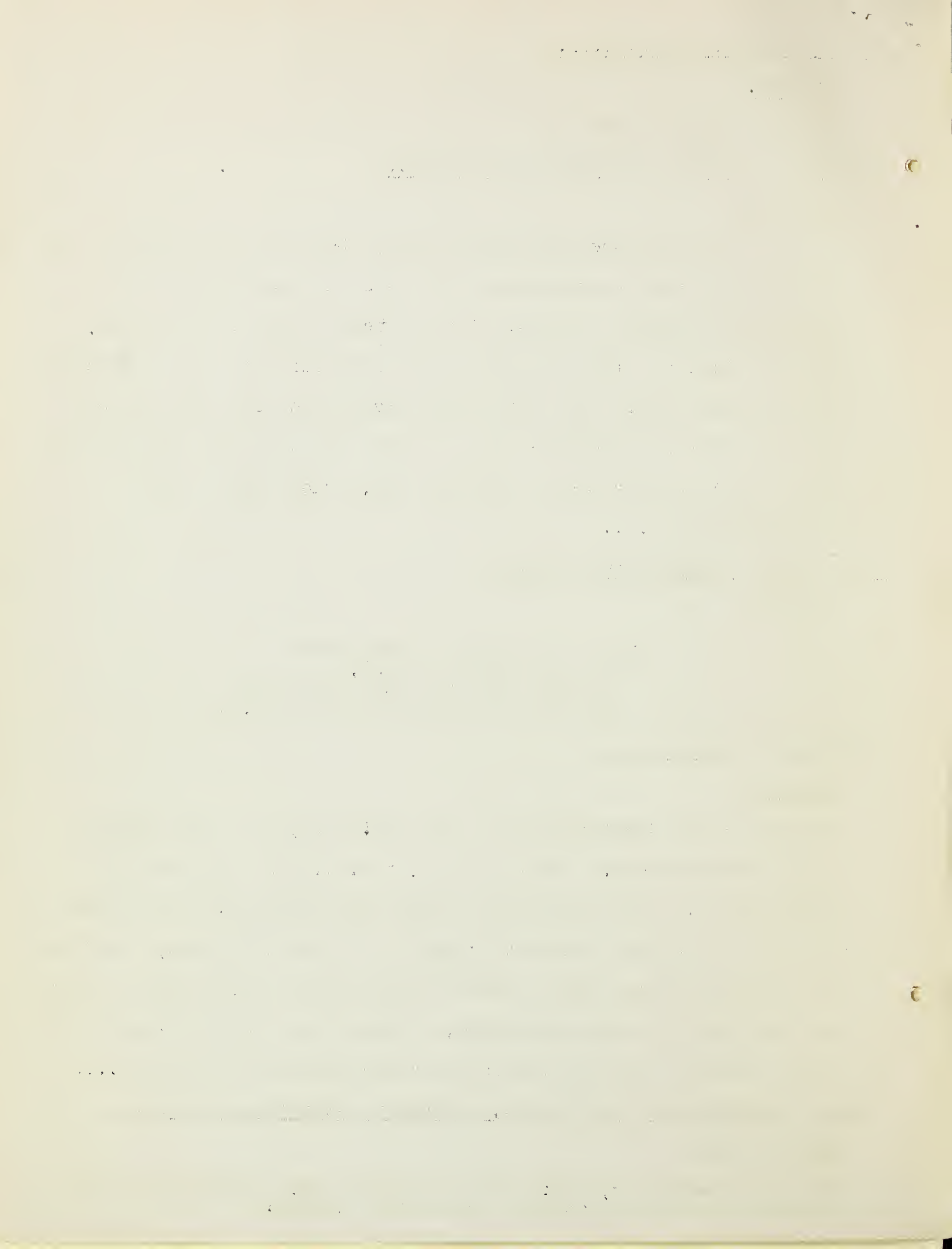
NARRATOR

The song of the Chattahoochee....my song! Yes, I am the spirit of the Chattahoochee. But I am more, too....I am the soul of Sidney Lanier...for the two are inseparably entwined. The Southland had been Sidney Lanier's nurse in the lore of rivers, and for him to sing of them was to place his hand trustingly in hers, as if he were again a youth, eager-eyed, tasting the majestic glories of Mother Earth. There was the day he was married, for instance....

SOUND: Church bells in distance, fading in following sequence...

MAY (jesting)

I'm surprised at you, Sid! On our wedding day, instead of a fine carriage, we go for a stroll through the village!



LANIER

I know, my beloved. But ever since the Civil War ended, and that wretched prison cell, I've wanted....

MAY

Yes, you've wanted to be out in the open.

LANIER

And walk along, and watch the waving trees against the setting sun.

MAY

It's in your soul, Sid. I've known that since the first time you called on me.

LANIER

It's always been that way. Gee, I remember when I was just a boy, I loved to walk along the winding Ocmulgee River, and listen to the thrush...say! I can imitate a thrush with my flute, too! Want to hear me?

MAY

Not here, silly! Always the dreamer...and I love you all the more for it.

LANIER

I guess I'm like my father.

MAY

What was your father? A lawyer wasn't he?

LANIER

Yes, just a lawyer...but he loved the land, the soil, and the trees, just like I do. And how he read!

MAY

So much?

LANIER

Much? He had more books than clients. (starts to laugh, and coughs

The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. J. H. Smith, 123 Main St., New York, N.Y.

The second part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. A. B. Jones, 456 Elm St., New York, N.Y.

The third part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. C. D. Brown, 789 Oak St., New York, N.Y.

The fourth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. E. F. Green, 1010 Pine St., New York, N.Y.

The fifth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. G. H. White, 1212 Cedar St., New York, N.Y.

The sixth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. I. J. Black, 1414 Birch St., New York, N.Y.

The seventh part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. K. L. Gray, 1616 Spruce St., New York, N.Y.

The eighth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. M. N. Blue, 1818 Willow St., New York, N.Y.

The ninth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. O. P. Red, 2020 Ash St., New York, N.Y.

The tenth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. Q. R. Purple, 2222 Hickory St., New York, N.Y.

The eleventh part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. S. T. Yellow, 2424 Sycamore St., New York, N.Y.

The twelfth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. U. V. Green, 2626 Chestnut St., New York, N.Y.

The thirteenth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. W. X. Blue, 2828 Walnut St., New York, N.Y.

The fourteenth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. Y. Z. Red, 3030 Elm St., New York, N.Y.

The fifteenth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, including Mr. A. B. Green, 3232 Oak St., New York, N.Y.



MAY

Oh, Sid! My poor boy.....(he coughs again)

ORCHESTRA: (Softly).....

NARRATOR

The rushes cried, Abide, abide,  
The wilful waterweeds held me thrawl  
The laving laurel turned my tide...  
And the little reeds sighed, abide, abide...

ORCHESTRA: Fade out.

NARRATOR

The dampness of Point Lookout Prison had left a scar of illness worse than a bullet wound. The average citizen turned to the plow and the soil on Georgia's hillsides, something the war had not destroyed. But Sidney Lanier became a schoolmaster at Prattsville.  
..(fade)

SOUND: Door opens and closes.....

LANIER

Hey! All present and accounted for?

MAY

Here I am, darling. Surprise!

LANIER

Dearest May. And....hmm...is that roast partridge?

MAY

Broiled partridge, sho' nuf' sugar and sho' nuf' butter, and spring chicken, quality size!

LANIER

What's the occasion. Let's see...it can't be my birthday...no...

CLIFFORD

Hello, brother Sidney.

LANIER

Clifford! Why you old carpet-bagger! When did you get in?

Faint, illegible text at the top of the page, possibly a header or introductory paragraph.

Main body of faint, illegible text, appearing to be several lines of a document or letter.

Continuation of faint, illegible text in the middle section of the page.

Faint, illegible text at the bottom of the page, possibly a signature or footer.

CLIFFORD

Got in from Augusta this morning. May said we ought to surprise you.

LANIER

And surprise me you did! Well! We will feast, now. How about those broiled partridges?

CLIFFORD

I'll wash my hands and be right with you.

MAY

Hurry now!

CLIFFORD (fading out)

Don't worry. Not with roast partridge, and a chance for a long talk.

SOUND: Door opens and closes.

LANIER (coughs slightly)

MAY

How do you feel, Sid?

LANIER

I'm all right. (coughs again)

MAY

My poor boy.

LANIER

May, you still smile as if you weren't worried. Yet I see an occasional tear through the smiles.

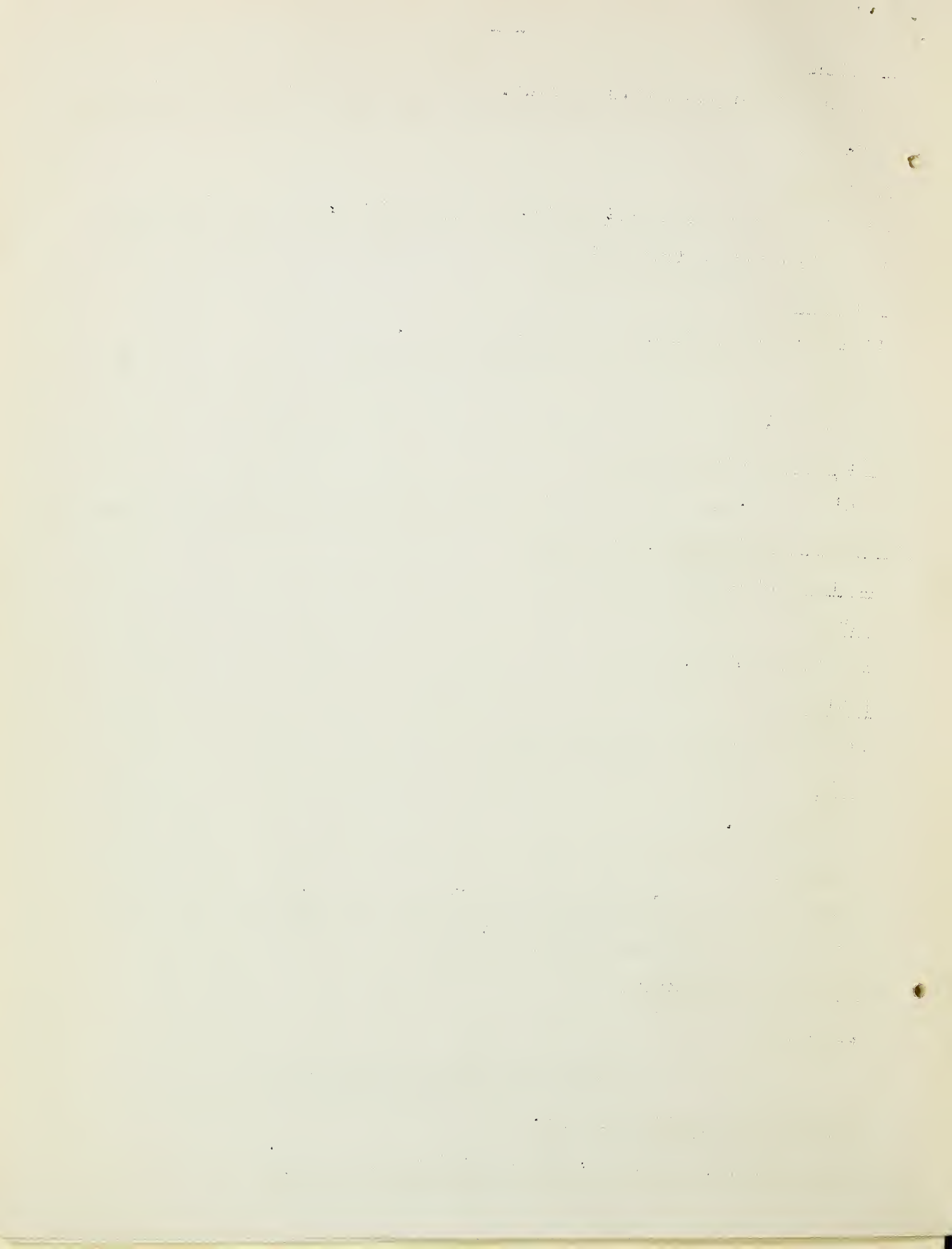
ORCHESTRA: Softly....

NARRATOR

The rushes cried, Abide, abide,  
And the little reeds sighed, Abide, abide...

ORCHESTRA: UP gently and out.

SOUND: Clatter of dishes, then dishes pushed aside.



CLIFFORD

There! I couldn't eat another bite. Sid, May is a wonderful cook.

LANIER

Yes, that was a real meal.

CLIFFORD

A feast for a king! And it all came from Georgia's precious soil.

LANIER

And yet...Clifford, do you know what is happening to Georgia's soil?

CLIFFORD

I know that much of it is washing away.

LANIER

Not long ago I walked through Wilkinson County...through an unbroken forest of oaks and pines, vivid emerald, and the brilliant green of the young buds and cones....

CLIFFORD

It must have been beautiful.

LANIER

Then I came to Greene County....

CLIFFORD

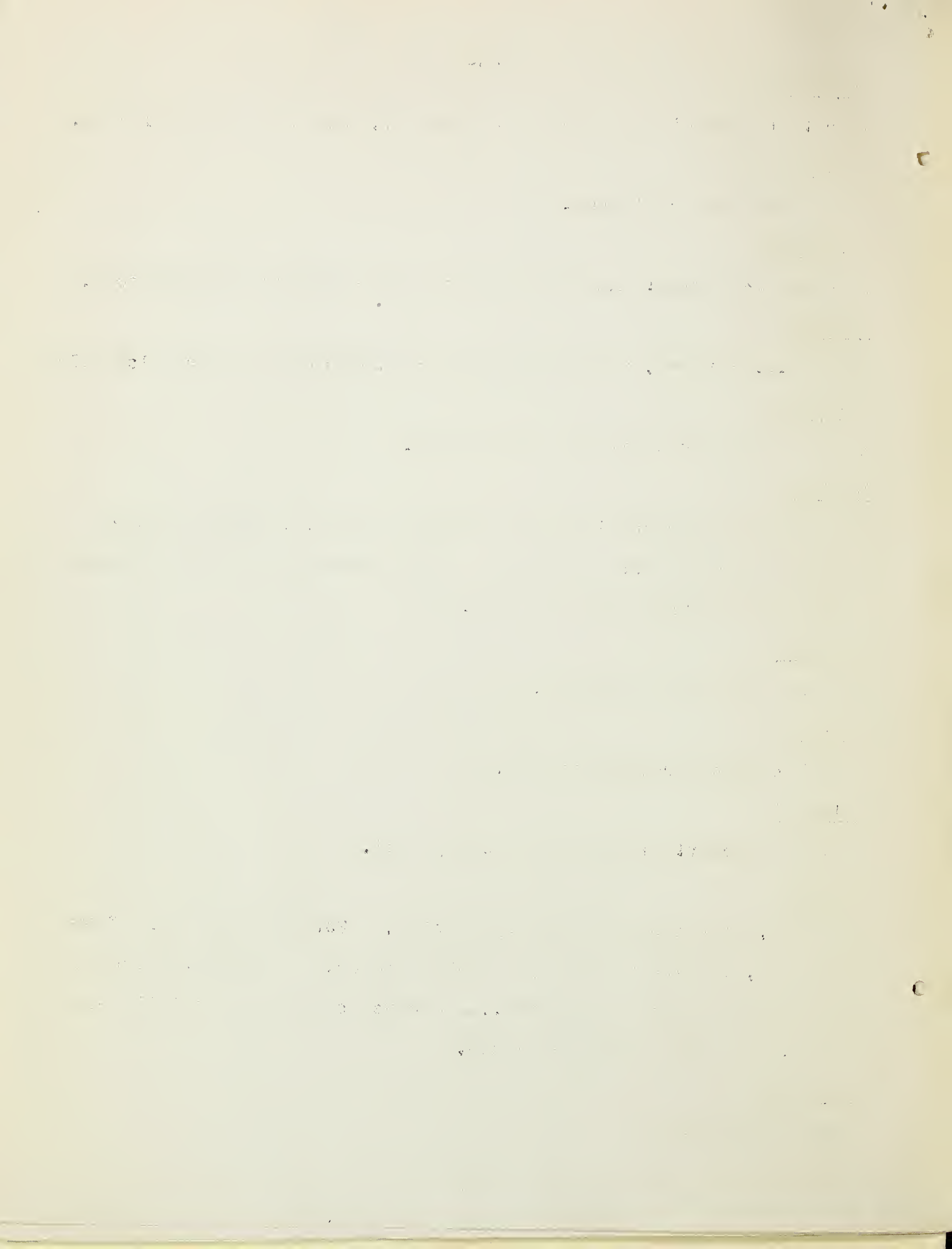
What a contrast! I know that county well.

LANIER

Clifford, it has been ruined by erosion! Farmers are moving from the state, leaving untilled, forsaken fields. A beautiful land is becoming an abandoned cemetery...a decayed county of red hills and stones. We must have a New South.

CLIFFORD

What do you mean?



LANIER

I mean we must abandon the old idea of cotton, cotton, cotton. We must go in for diversified farming. This large farming isn't farming at all....it's mining for cotton, and mining the soil.

CLIFFORD

You're right, Sid. When the land decays the town goes down.

LANIER

And after all, a farm is a miniature United States. Rice grows alongside of wheat, clover alongside of corn, apples alongside of forests. The valleys run with living waters, all asking for the right kind of treatment. (coughs loudly and moans)

NARRATOR

Lanier was forced to travel for his health, to Texas, to Florida, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, breathing pine cones and clover blossoms. At his cottage in North Carolina, his wife placed his chair every morning by the window that faced the east. He watched the sun daily as it climbed over the cleft of Howard's Gap and Pacolet River. (fade)

MAY

Are you comfortable, dear?

LANIER (feebly)

Quite, thank you. Did I tell you what little Charley said?

MAY

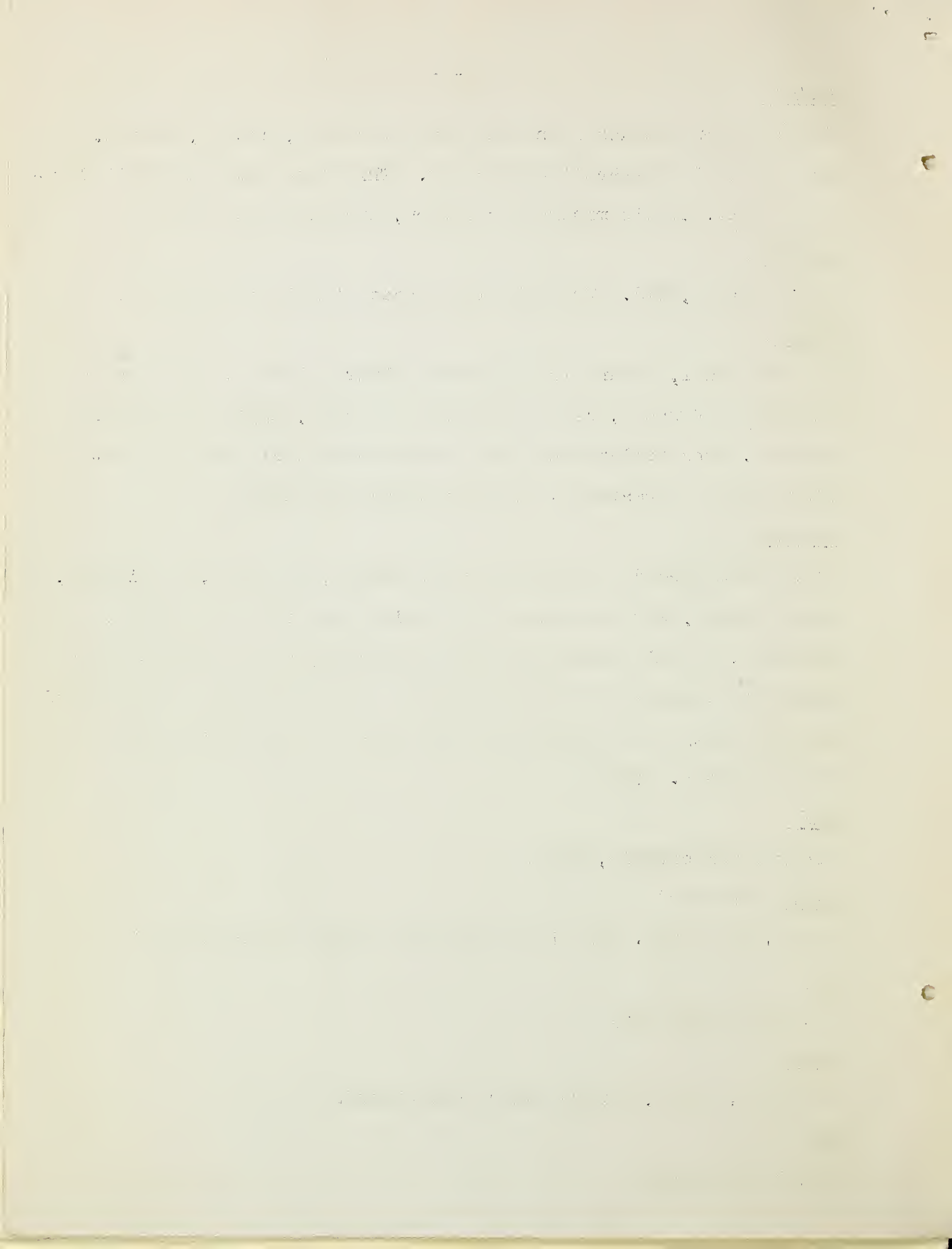
No, what did he say?

LANIER

He said, "Papa, can you whistle backwards?"

MAY

Whistle backwards?





LANIER

He meant, could I whistle by drawing my breath in, instead of forcing it out.

(they both laugh, then Lanier coughs)

MAY

Here, lie back a little. You must rest.

LANIER

Yes, I must rest. I must give that lecture on Shakespeare at Johns Hopkins next month.

NARRATOR

Sidney Lanier's strength ebbed, yet he went ahead in the same inevitable way that his beloved Chattahoochee ran unceasingly to the sea. After his lecture at Johns Hopkins, his memory lingered, but his footsteps died in the corridor.

LANIER (coughs)

SOUND: Footsteps on marble hall, gradually dying...

ORCHESTRA: Softly....

NARRATOR

...the dry fields burn, and the mills are to turn,  
And a myriad flowers mortally yearn,  
And the lordly main from beyond the plain  
Calls O'er the hills of Habersham,  
Calls through the valleys of Hall.

The Chattahoochee River still winds its way to the sea, twisting and weaving through the red hills of Georgia. But Sidney Lanier's life span had run its course.

ORCHESTRA: UP and OUT.

ANNOUNCER

That is the true story of Sidney Lanier, the Southland's own poet, and a lover of the land and the soil. And now, once again we turn to the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture and here is Ewing Jones.

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JONES

Thank you, \_\_\_\_\_. The Chattahoochee still runs to the sea, but it isn't the cool, tumbling stream that we might suppose. It carries a red cargo of silt, washed from Georgia farmlands.

ANNOUNCER

Then soil erosion really is serious in Georgia.

JONES

Not only Georgia, but over most of the country. But speaking of Georgia, a reconnaissance survey of the state shows that from one-fourth to three-fourths of the topsoil has been lost from 16 million acres, virtually all topsoil lost from 6 million acres, and 2 and one quarter million acres have been essentially destroyed for cultivation by gullying.

ANNOUNCER

That's a rather harsh indictment of Georgia's farming methods, Ewing.

JONES

Past farming methods, we should say. For Georgia's farmers are taking the bit in their teeth and doing what they can to rectify this appalling condition. They've organized 12 soil conservation districts, and four more other districts are in the process of organization. These two groups combined equal approximately half of the state's area, so you see, Georgia farmers are already working to stop these soil losses --- through soil conservation districts. Another thing, \_\_\_\_\_, a good many Georgia farmers have been studying that new bulletin, "Saving Soil With Sod."

ANNOUNCER

I've heard of that bulletin, Ewing...**all** about pastures and meadows, isn't it?

The first part of the document is a letter from the Secretary of the State to the President of the United States, dated January 1, 1865. The letter is addressed to the President and is signed by the Secretary of the State.

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JONES

That's the ticket. It's well illustrated, and is chuck full of information about grassland farming.

ANNOUNCER

You know...I imagine my Uncle Mortimer would like to have a copy of that bulletin.

JONES

Then you tell him to write to Soil Conservation, Dayton, Ohio, and ask for the pasture bulletin. A penny postcard will do.

ANNOUNCER

I'LL remember that...Soil Conservation, Dayton, Ohio.

SOUND: Telegraph key clicking...

ANNOUNCER

News in the conservation world!

JONES

Here's an editorial from the Oklahoma Farmer-Stockman, \_\_\_\_\_ .

You're an old newscaster, so, please.



ANNOUNCER

Certainly. It's entitled, "Owner, Try Once More" and it reads:  
"This is special to those who own rented farms. Can't you, and  
won't you, do something next year to start the job of soil  
building on your farm?"

"Make at least one final appeal to your renter for cooperation.  
Work with him to build some terraces. At least start the job with  
one well-built terrace at the top of the hill. Pay him for build-  
ing that first terrace. Help him to get the job done exactly  
right.

"Pay him on an acre basis to grow one or two acres of some  
legume. Pay him to plow under the entire growth.

"If the renter stays on the farm another year, let him farm  
that acre in comparison with other land and note the increased  
yield. If you have a new tenant in 1941, explain what was done  
and point out that acre. Ask him to keep his eye on the crop.

"Do this one thing. Make this one more try. A duty rests on  
you as the owner of land to preserve it for posterity. All of our  
land is now broken out, save some small and scattered areas. We  
and those who follow us must live from what we now have. If we  
commit it to ruin without making every possible effort to reclaim  
it, the hungry in generations to come will rise up to curse us for  
the soil robbers we have been. "

SOUND: Boom of cannon.....

ANNOUNCER

This week we salute!

Dear Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst.

in relation to the matter mentioned therein.

I am sorry to hear that you are not satisfied with the result.

I have, however, done my best to comply with your wishes.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,

J. H. [Name]

[Address]

[City, State]

[Date]

I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,

J. H. [Name]

[Address]

[City, State]

[Date]

I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,

J. H. [Name]

[Address]

[City, State]

[Date]

I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,

J. H. [Name]

[Address]

[City, State]

[Date]

I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,

J. H. [Name]

[Address]

[City, State]

[Date]



JONES

This week we salute Mr. J. A. Parks, farmer of Mayfield, Kentucky. Five years ago Mr. Parks bought two badly eroded farms. In co-operation with the Mayfield CCC camp, he worked out a complete soil-saving plan to include crop rotations, terracing, and strip cropping. But the outstanding feature of his soil-building program is his pasture improvement. His pastures five years ago were nothing more than broomsedge and poverty grass. By using lime, superphosphate, contour furrows, and reseeded, Mr. Parks built up his pastures until today they are among the best in Graves County. Pastures that once required four or five acres to support one animal unit will now graze an animal unit per acre. A salute to J. A. Parks, of Mayfield, Kentucky.

ORCHESTRA: SCHOOL DAYS.

SOUND: Rap on desk...

TEACHER

Oscar Murphy!

OSCAR

Yes, teacher.

TEACHER

You just march right up here to the desk. Didn't I see you hand a note to Mary Brown?

OSCAR

Well, I, yes...I....

TEACHER

Well, I, yes, I, nothing! You know better than to pass notes in school. The very idea, a boy of your age writing silly love letters.

The first part of the paper is devoted to a general  
 introduction of the subject. It is shown that the  
 theory of the present paper is a special case of  
 the more general theory of the previous paper.  
 The second part of the paper is devoted to a  
 detailed study of the special case. It is shown  
 that the theory of the present paper is a special  
 case of the more general theory of the previous  
 paper. The third part of the paper is devoted to  
 a study of the special case. It is shown that  
 the theory of the present paper is a special case  
 of the more general theory of the previous paper.  
 The fourth part of the paper is devoted to a  
 study of the special case. It is shown that the  
 theory of the present paper is a special case of  
 the more general theory of the previous paper.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

1950

OSCAR

Honest, teacher, it wasn't a love letter. It was just a note...

TEACHER

Just a note! I know you, you young whippersnapper! And just for that I'm going to read it out loud. Give it here, Mary!

OSCAR

If you're going to read it out loud, why don't you let, \_\_\_\_\_ read it. Then everybody can hear what it says.

TEACHER

Very well. Here, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_. Read it nice and plain.

ANNOUNCER

If you would like a copy of the illustrated bulletin on pastures and meadows, send a letter or a penny postcard to Soil Conservation Dayton, Ohio.

ORCHESTRA THEME: I GET THE BLUES WHEN IT RAINS.

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1870

1871

1872

1873

1874

1875

1876

1877

1878