

THE 1927 FLOOD PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

PI/1992.0002

<http://da.mdah.ms.gov/series/1927flood>

The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 inundated roughly 27,000 square miles of land and displaced some 700,000 persons. Property damage was estimated at \$400 million, and 246 people died in the flood waters. Particularly hard hit by the disaster was the Mississippi Delta region. The 124 photographs in this collection were taken by the flood committee of the Illinois Central Railroad Company in April, May, and October of 1927. Arranged geographically, north to south, the images document flood damage along the route of the Illinois Central Railroad from Memphis, Tennessee, to Delhi, Louisiana. The collection also includes one map of the Illinois Central Railroad throughout the flooded area.

Subjects that can be addressed within this Digital Archive:

- The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927
- Railroads and transportation
- Flood control and levee construction
- Race relations in early twentieth-century Mississippi
- Emergency planning
- The 1928 Flood Control Act

Directions: Use items from the MDAH Digital Archive entitled 1927 Flood Photograph Collection found at <http://da.mdah.ms.gov/series/1927flood> and <https://mississippiencyclopedia.org/entries/mississippi-river-flood-1927/> to analyze and interpret the following items.

Note: Navigate to items by going to <http://da.mdah.ms.gov/series/1927flood>, clicking on the first picture, and then entering the desired item number in the box below the image.

Questions:

- 1. Navigate to Item 8.** This is a photo of flood refugees standing in line at Birdsong Camp. Why are these refugees standing in line?

- 2. Navigate to Item 21.** This is a photo of two males standing on the porch of houses surrounded by flood water. Some people chose not to evacuate and some were unable to evacuate the flood zone. What would you have to do to flood-proof your house and prepare your family to wait out the flood?

- 3. Navigate to Item 50.** This is a photo of flood water surrounding the depot at Egremont railroad station. Why would railroad tracks make a good place to escape flood waters? Who and what are using the tracks in this image?

- 4. Navigate to Item 61.** This May 2, 1927, photo of a flood area at a levee in Vicksburg shows the levee with two very different water levels on either side. What does this tell you about the status of flood waters two weeks after the levees broke?

5. **Navigate to Item 67 and Item 74.** The first photo shows railroad tracks lined with sandbags and the second photo shows men filling sandbags. What is the purpose of the sandbags? Who put them there?

6. **Navigate to Item 71 and Item 103.** These images show a camp for flood victims set up by the Red Cross, known as Tent City. What would be some of the challenges of living here?

7. **Navigate to Item 104 and Item 105.** The first image shows cotton bales on rail cars and floating in flood waters. The second image shows a panoramic photograph of flooding in Yazoo City. How would the Great Flood have impacted Mississippi's economy?