

PEACE: Geography & Names

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 06 Nov 2000

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/2442>

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Roy C. Lackey — 06 Nov 2000, 02:03

Hattiesburg, Mississippi (where Doris joined the carnival) is just about as far east of the Mississippi River as Gladewater, Texas (where Doris died) is west of it. Memphis, Tennessee is on the river just above the Mississippi state line, which is where Mab Crawford went looking for her AWOL husband. Lois came from St. Louis, Missouri, across the Mississippi River from Illinois, which is where most people want to put the Kanawessee River. Grandpa Elliot's house overlooked the Mississippi. He lived far enough South that snow was uncommon, but not rare. It seems safe to place his house in one of the four or five states bordering the Mississippi in about a 250 mile stretch below the southern tip of Illinois, probably Tennessee or northern Mississippi.

In his letter Charlie mentions "the Claibourne County Fair in Homer". In northern Louisiana there is a Claiborne Parish (=county), and Homer is its Parish seat of government. It was in Homer that Charlie started in on his matchmaking with Doris and Tom, after returning from his visit with Weer.

So, what does this all mean? Beats the hell out of me, but Charlie Turner had nine copies of LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI, and the river seems to quietly run through and connect various places and people. The traveling carnival that Charlie was with seems to have moved up and down the river, stopping at sites a few hundred miles to either side of it. Weer a few times waxes nostalgic about primitive America, and the Mississippi was and is a part of that.

Julius Smart, the summer after college when he was looking for a job, seems to have confined his search to the Midwest, for all that Weer apparently thinks he wound up in Florida. Smart doesn't say that; it could have just as easily been Texas, or almost anywhere along the Gulf coast. But the magnolia trees along the streets put me more in mind of Louisiana or Mississippi. I don't know if they eat grits in Florida, but they do in the rest of the Deep South.

mantis mentioned:

"Doris" means "of the sea" (like the princess in her tower?), but it might be (if we stretch it really far) "d'Or" (of Gold).

"Arline" is an oath; "Candy" . . .

To that I would add these, fwiw, from an appendix of given names in Joseph T. Shipley's DICTIONARY OF WORD ORIGINS:

Doris: Gr. Sea Maiden.

Arleen, Arlene, Arline: variants of _Eileen_.

Eileen: Irish form of _Helen_.

Helen: Gr. Dawn-bright.

Alden: Teut. Old town.

Denis, Dennis, Denys: French forms of _Dion_.

Dion: Gr. short for _Dionysos_, god of revelry.

Hannah: Heb. Grace.

Olive, Olivia: L. The tree (sign of peace).

Lois: Gr. Desired (or short for _Aloys_).

Charles: Teut. Strong.

Adelina, Adeline: Teut. Little noble one.

Arabella: L. Fair refuge.

Shirley: Teut. County meadow.

Jules, Julian, Julius: L. Light-bearded.

Stewart: Teut. One in charge.

Roy