

New Albany Daily Ledger, 19 April 1902: page 4, column 5

An Earthquake.

Sharp Shock and Peculiar Explosion at 3:32 O'Clock This Morning.

Earthquakes in the Ohio Valley Heretofore.

At 3:32 this morning a sharp earthquake shock was felt in New Albany by those who happened to be awake at that hour. The shock was preceded by a low, rumbling sound, and was of brief duration, but sufficiently vibrant to rattle dishes in cupboards and the windows in houses. It ended with a loud explosion like muffled, underground thunder. The *LEDGER* has heard of no damage by the shock.

The Central Ohio Valley is in the earthquake belt. Many shocks have been felt in this city and many other cities along the Lower Ohio in the past. The great earthquake of 1811 was very severe on the present site of New Albany and at Louisville. The shocks commenced early in November, 1811, and continued almost daily until the latter part of March, 1812. At Louisville every brick house and brick chimney was wrecked during the continuance of these shocks, many of which were severe. The stick and daubed chimneys of the many cabins then covering the site of Louisville were also thrown down.

Mr. Robert LaFollette, a pioneer of Floyd county, who settled in what is now Floyd county in 1807, dictated, in 1851, an account of the great earthquake of 1811, for publication in the *LEDGER*. Among other things he said: "Where New Albany now stands was then a dense forest, extending down to the banks of the Ohio river. The trees were mostly large poplar, walnut, hackberry, maple and white oak. Such was the force of the earthquake shocks that the forests swayed like they were moved by the strongest winds. The branches of the trees became so interlaced through the wonderful vibration that they stood like a solid mass from Silver Creek to Knob Creek. And the trees so remained until they were cut down to make the site of the present city, and to clear up the ground for farms for the large number of people that began to come into the county about that time. I saw many of those interlaced trees within the present limits of New Albany as late as 1817."

It was the great earthquake of 1811 that swallowed up New Madrid, Mo., and created Reel Foot Lake in Tennessee on the site of a high ridge of forest-clad hills.