

ering the mud. The water is transparent, though tinged of a pale brown-colour, like that of our peat-mosses, and contains abundance of fish. This sheet of water is usually even with its banks, on which a thick and tall forest grows. There is no beach, for the bank sinks perpendicularly, so that if the waters are lowered several feet it makes no alteration in the breadth of the lake.

Much timber has been cut down and carried out from the swamp by means of canals, which are perfectly straight for long distances, with the trees on each side arching over and almost joining their branches across, so that they throw a dark shade on the water, which of itself looks black, being coloured as before mentioned. When the boats emerge from the gloom of these avenues into the lake, the scene is said to be "as beautiful as fairy land."

The bears inhabiting the swamp climb trees in search of acorns and gum berries, breaking off large boughs of the oaks in order to draw the acorns near to them. These same bears are said to kill hogs and even cows. There are also wild cats, and occasionally a solitary wolf, in the morass.

That the ancient seams of coal were produced for the most part by terrestrial plants of all sizes, not drifted, but growing on the spot, is a theory more and more generally adopted in modern times, and the growth of what is called sponge in such a swamp, and in such a climate as the Great Dismal, already covering so many square miles of a low level region bordering the sea, and capable of spreading itself indefinitely over the adjacent country, helps us greatly to conceive the manner in which the coal of the ancient Carboniferous