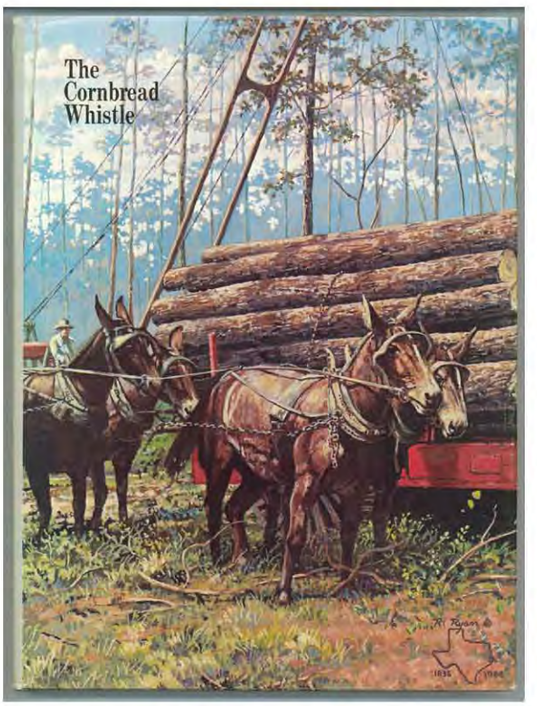
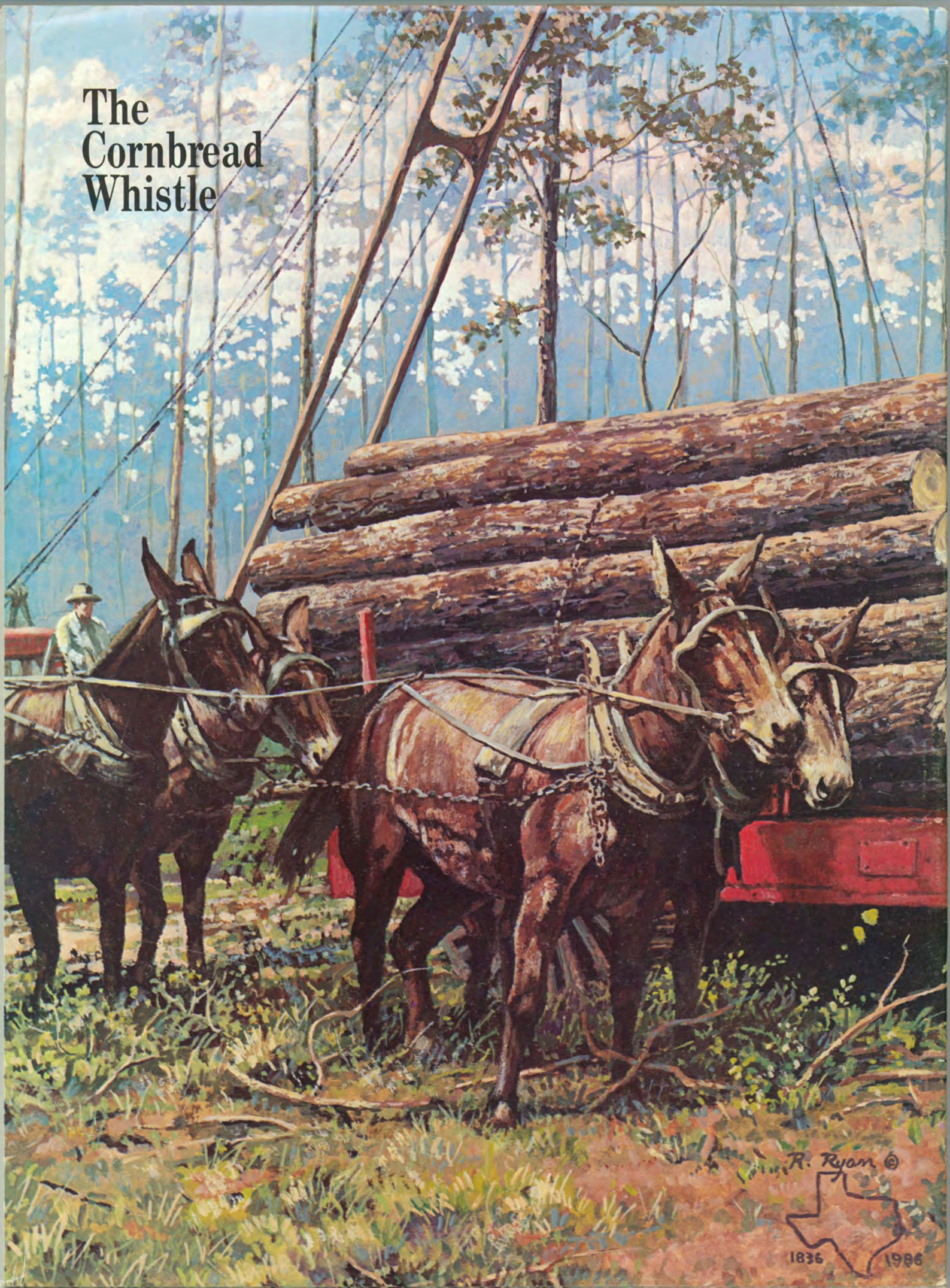
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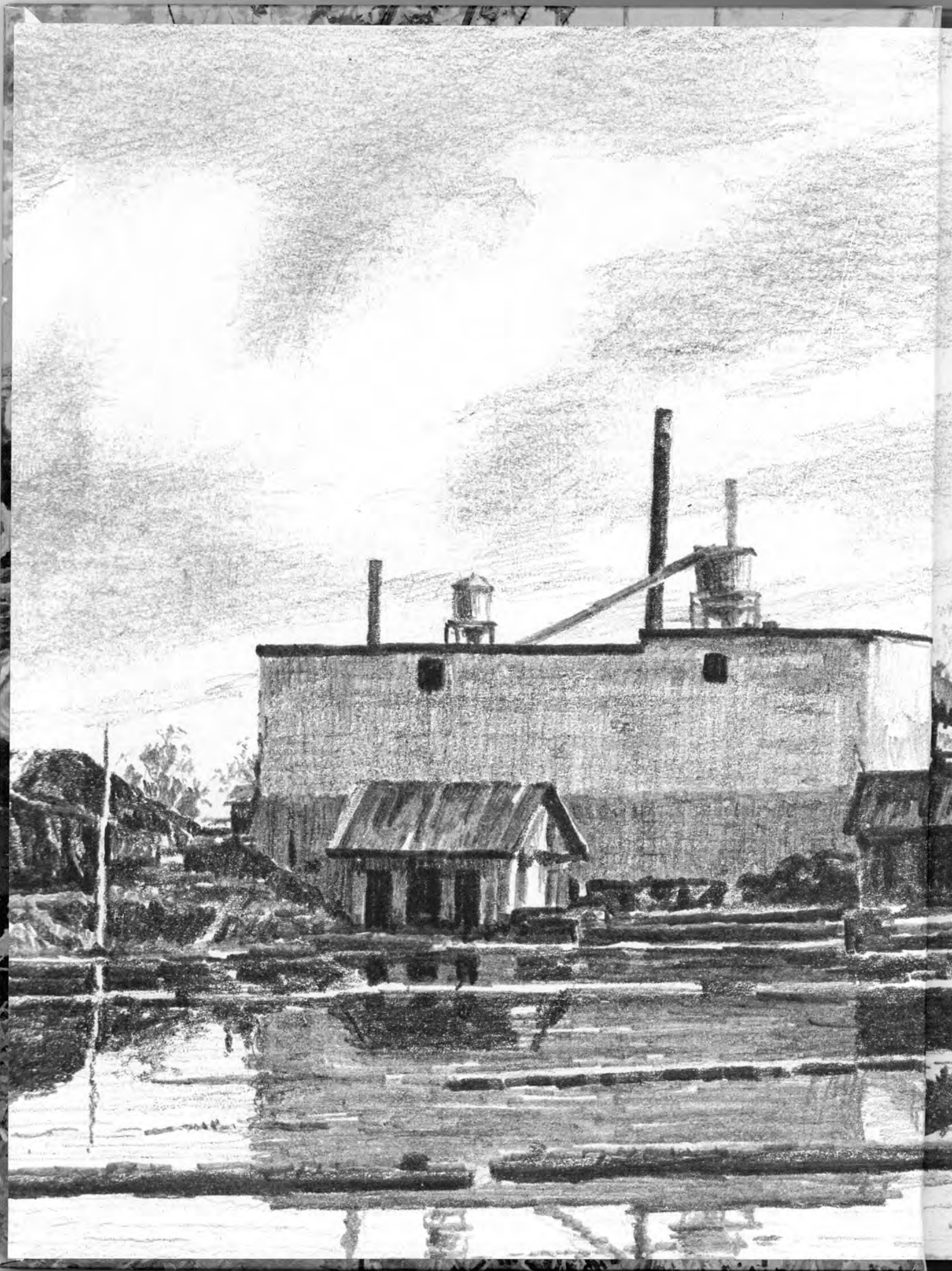
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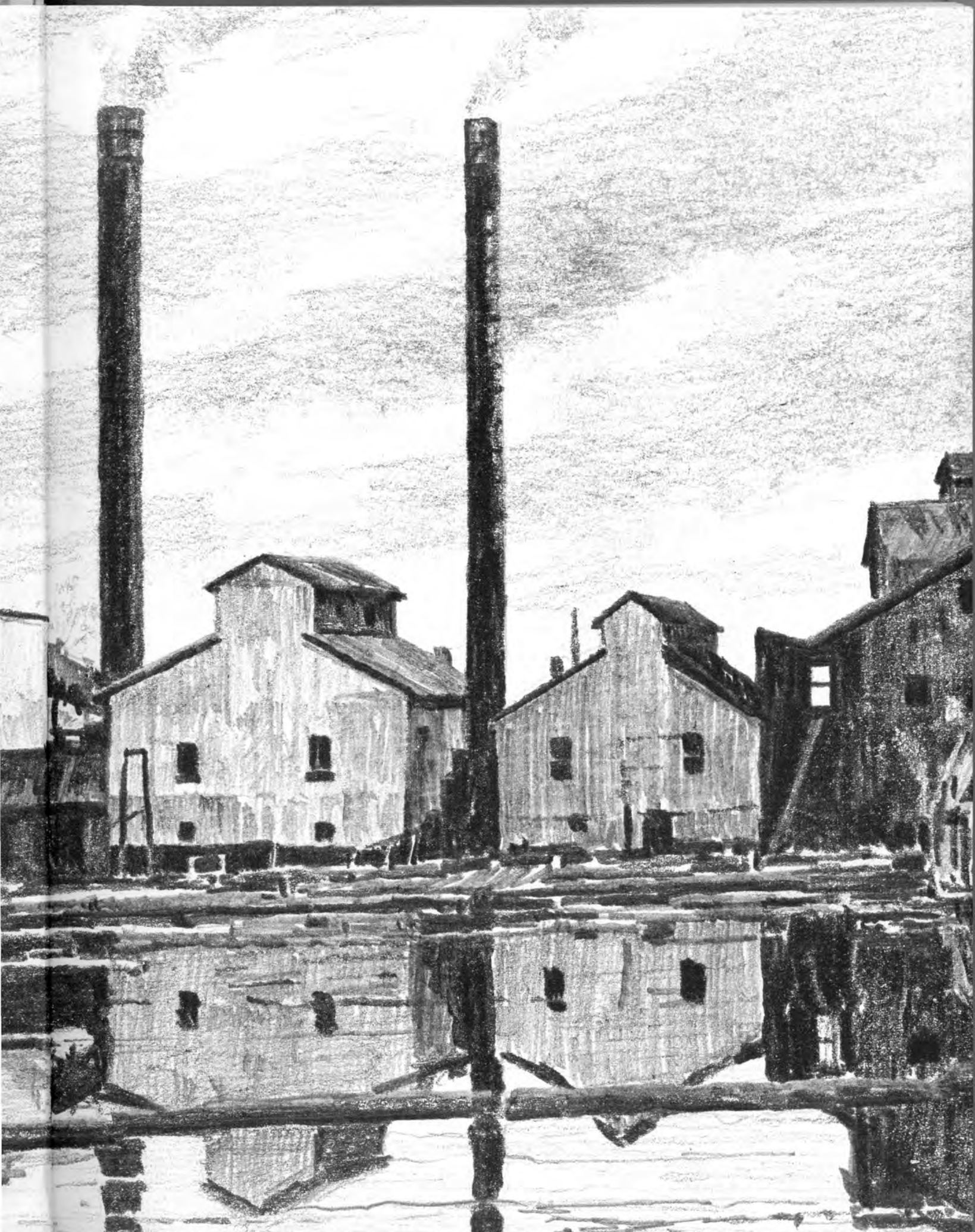
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The Cornbread Whistle:

Oral History of a Texas Timber Company Town

by Megan Biesele
with the Diboll Historical Society

Lufkin Printing Company
Lufkin, Texas

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Dedication

The author and the Diboll Historical Society
dedicate this book to Mrs. Bee Burkhalter
because the book was her idea.

The author dedicates this book to
John David Lambert, who enjoys Texas History,
on his 16th birthday.

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Mrs. Jan Wilson, Woodville, Texas, for word-processing.

The T. L. L. Temple Foundation.

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Interviewees

Following is a list of the people interviewed, the name(s) of the interviewer and the date of the interview:

Interviewee	Interviewer	Dates
Ben Anthony	Marge Shepherd	May 12, 1976
Inez Asher	Megan Lambert, An Sweeny	July, 1984
Wes Ashworth	Megan Lambert, Jo Anne Musick	July, 1984
Marvin Baker	Sandra Ingram	July 11, 1985
Dewey Ballenger	Becky Bailey	June 20, 1984 July 6, 1984
Arthur Beale	Shelia Bellingsley	Feb. 17, 1985
Beulah Beidleman	Becky Bailey	Nov. 9, 1982
Ward Burke	Megan Lambert	Oct. 23, 1985
Beatrice Burkhalter	Becky Bailey	May 25, 1982
Vernon Burkhalter	Becky Bailey	Dec. 31, 1985
E.H. Bush	Becky Bailey, Fenner Roth	July 4, 1984
W.T. Carter Caton	Marge Shepherd	Aug. 30, 1976
Jewel Capps	Billie Jean Capps	July 11, 1985
Rhoda Faye Chandler	Becky Bailey	Aug. 14, 1985 Sept. 3, 1982
Mary Jane Christian	Gayle Beene	July 10, 1985
Dr. J.C. Clement	Becky Bailey, Fenner Roth	June 12, 1985
Ruth Currie	Marie Davis	Mar. 18, 1986
Alice Dale	Jo Anne Musick	July 30, 1980
J. Shirley Daniel	Marie Davis	Feb. 15, 1985
Marjorie P. Davis	Edythe Weeks, Megan Lambert	July 18, 1984
Beth Denman	Marie Davis	March 5, 1986
Joe Denman	Megan Lambert	Oct. 24, 1985
D.D. Devereaux	John Larson	1954
C.C. Diboll	Megan Lambert	1984
James Dover	Vivian Holt	1978
Jim Dunlap	Becky Bailey	July 22, 1985
Estelle Eddington	Marie Cochran	July 11, 1985
Fannie Farrington	John Larson	1954
Opal Franks	Deanna Crump	July 9, 1985
Paul Fred	Self Interview	August, 1984
Josephine Fredrick	Becky Bailey	Oct. 13, 1984
Jim and Marian Fuller	Becky Bailey	Oct. 13, 1984
Frankie Glass	Becky Bailey	Oct. 21, 1982
Laymon Gossett	Marie Davis	Mar. 26, 1985
Amos Harris	Becky Bailey	May 22, 1985
Pearl Havard	Marie Davis	Aug. 8, 1985
Carrie C. Hemphill	Becky Bailey	1983
Joe Bob and Annie L. Hendrick	Marie Davis	June 11, 1985
Oneta Hendrick	Sue Baker	July 12, 1985
Jeff Holberg	Diane Tate	1978
Ervelia Jordan	Marie Davis	Dec. 10, 1985
Dave Kenley	John Larson	1954
Sidney Kenley	Megan Lambert, Linda Maxey	1984
Vena Malone	Becky Bailey	1982
Mamie W. Massey	Marie Davis	Mar. 21, 1986
Willie Massey	Marie Davis Vivian Warner	April 22, 1986
Harold Maxwell	Megan Lambert	Oct. 8, 1985
Gary McGaughey	Becky Bailey	Jan. 3, 1986
Cora Nash	Becky Bailey	Oct. 5, 1982
Kenneth Nelson	Megan Lambert	July 27, 1985 Aug. 17, 1985
Bill Oaks	Ellen Temple	Oct. 5, 1978
Oliver Family: Jackie Morehead Johnny Gibson	Self Interview	1985
Becky Ordaz	Becky Bailey	Aug. 16, 1985
Wilk Peters	Jon Franklin Self Interview	1983 1984
C.A. (Neal) Pickett	Becky Bailey	Dec. 11, 1982 Feb. 9, 1984
Ruth Poland	Martha Carswell	July 10, 1985
Cecil Purdy	Marge Shepherd Marie Davis	July 1, 1976 Oct. 5, 1984
Sherod and Anna L. Powell	Marie Davis	Aug. 16, 1985
Robert Ramsey	Becky Bailey	Feb. 26, 1985 Mar. 12, 1985
James Rhone	Marie Davis L.D. Smith	Apr. 24, 1986
Don Robbins	Becky Bailey	June 7, 1985
Dana Copes Rogers and Margaret Bullock	Marie Davis	Aug. 19, 1985
Jack Rowe	Becky Bailey	Jan. 4, 1983

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Interviewee	Interviewer	Dates
Jim Rushing	Marie Davis	Jan. 13, 1986
Myrtle Rushing	Marie Davis	Mar. 15, 1986
Julia A. Schinke	Jo Anne Musick	1980
Carey Smith	Becky Bailey	Sept. 28, 1982 Mar. 27, 1985
L.D. Smith	Marie Davis	Feb. 13, 1986
J.W. Stovall	Marie Davis	May 8, 1985
Arthur Temple	Megan Lambert	May 8, 1985 July 11, 1985
Gresham Temple	Megan Lambert	Aug. 16, 1985
Latane Temple	Megan Lambert	July 19, 1985
Lottie Temple	Megan Lambert	Mar. 26, 1986
Marie Hudson Temple	Marie Davis	Oct. 27, 1985
Clyde Thompson	John Larson	1954
	Vivian Holt	1978
	Becky Bailey	Jan. 14, 1984
	Megan Lambert	Oct. 26, 1984
Ossie Thompson	Ellen Temple	Sept. 8, 1978
Harold Turner	Becky Bailey	Sept. 9, 1982
Hazel Turner	Becky Bailey	Nov. 4, 1982
Rivie Vansau	Vivian Warner Marie Davis	Feb. 20, 1986
A.F. (Lefty) and Flava Vaughn	Marie Davis	June 19, 1985
Odyesa Wallace	Becky Bailey	Feb. 9, 1985
Howard Walker	Becky Bailey	June 19, 1986
Icie Waltman	Marie Davis	Mar. 25, 1986
Doug Warner	Marie Davis	Feb. 28, 1985
Lucille Warner	Marie Davis	Feb. 14, 1985
Pate and Vivian Warner	Marie Davis	Apr. 24, 1985
Horace Warren	Becky Bailey	Jan. 3, 1986
A.R. Weber	Becky Bailey	Apr. 1, 1985 Apr. 10, 1985
Geneva Ryan Weeks	Marge Shepherd	1976
Edythe Weeks	Becky Bailey	Sept. 2, 1982
Garland Weeks	Bee Burkhalter Herbert Weeks	May 10, 1985
Herbert Weeks, Fenner Roth	Teena Kellam Megan Lambert	Sept. 8, 1984
O'Hara Chandler	Becky Bailey Marie Davis	Sept. 8, 1984
Lela Weeks	Megan Lambert Becky Bailey	1984
Robert Weeks	John Larson	1954
Maurine Weimer	Becky Bailey	Dec. 29, 1985
Claude Welch, Sr.	Becky Bailey	Jan. 5, 1983
Vina Wells and Louise Rector	Becky Bailey	June 28, 1984 Oct. 25, 1984
DeWitt Wilkerson	Megan Lambert Marie Davis	Oct. 23, 1985
Jake Wissler	Becky Bailey	Dec. 18, 1982
Dewey Wolf	Diane Tate	1978
Sadie Estes Woods	Megan Lambert Teena Kellam, Marie Davis	July 18, 1984
Gussie Wright	Marie Davis	Aug. 8, 1984

(Editor's Note: Many of the oral interviews contained in *"The Cornbread Whistle"* were edited to ensure continuity and readability, and to avoid repetition of opinions and historical material. The original oral interviews collected by the Diboll Historical Society are available in their unedited form at the T.L.L. Temple Memorial Library in Diboll.)

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Ben Anthony



Inez Thompson Asher



Wes Ashworth



Marvin Baker



Dewey Ballenger



Beulah Beidleman



Ward Burke



Beatrice Burkhalter



Vernon Burkhalter



Jewel Capps





Fenner Roth and E.H. Bush



O'Hara Chandler



Rhoda Faye Chandler



Mary Jane Christian



Dr. J.C. Clement



Ruth Currie



Alice Dale



J. Shirley Daniel



Marjorie Davis



Beth Denman



Joe Denman



D.D. Devereaux



C.C. Diboll



Jim Dunlap

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Estelle Eddington



Fannie Farrington



Opal Franks



Josephine Fredrick



Frankie Glass





Marian and Jim Fuller



Laymon Gossett



Johnny Oliver Gibson



Amos Harris



Pearl Havard



Carrie Hemphill



Oneta Hendrick



Annie and Joe Bob Hendrick



Jeff Holberg



Ervelia Jordan



Dave Kenley



Sidney Kenley



Vena Malone



Willie Massey



Harold Maxwell



Gary McGaughey



Cora Nash



Kenneth Nelson

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Bill Oaks



Jackie Oliver Morehead



Becky Ordaz



Wilk Peters



C.A. (Neal) Pickett



Ruth Poland



Anna L. and Sherod Powell



Clyde Thompson and Cecil Purdy



Robert Ramsey



James Rhone



Don Robbins



Dana Copes Rogers



Jack Rowe





Myrtle and Jim Rushing



Julia Schinke



Carey Smith



L.D. Smith



J.W. Stovall



Lottie and Arthur Temple



Gresham Temple



Latane Temple

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Marie Hudson Temple



Ossie Thompson



Harold Turner



Hazel Turner



Rivie Vansau



Flava and A.F. Vaughn



Howard Walker



Odyesa Wallace



Icie Waltman





Lucille and Doug Warner





Pate and Vivian Warner



Horace Warren



A.R. Weber



Edythe Weeks



Garland Weeks



Geneva Ryan Weeks



Herbert Weeks



Robert and Nancy Weeks



Maurine Weimer



Claude Welch, Sr.



Vina Wells

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DeWitt Wilkerson



Jake Wissler



Dewey Wolf



Sadie Estes Woods



Gussie Wright



Bob Bowman



Geneva Ard

Members of The Diboll Historical Society



Front Row: (L to R) Rebecca Bailey, Margaret Pickett, Edythe Weeks, Teena Kellam, Bee Burkhalter, An Sweeny, Vivian Warner. Standing: (L to R) Margie Baker, Pate Warner, Herbert Weeks, E.H. Bush (visitor), Fenner Roth, C.A. (Neal) Pickett, Brenda Russell, Marie Davis, Marcia Jones.

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Preface: About The Title

In many of the taped reminiscences about Diboll, the phrase "cornbread whistle" was used to describe a pre-noon whistle that for many years blew for the sawmillers' wives, to remind them to get dinner cooking. Good feelings seemed to cluster around the memory.

When it was decided to use this phrase to title the oral history book, a controversy arose as to whether it wasn't actually *"the biscuit whistle"* instead. Lots of people insisted on *"the biscuit whistle."* Others were equally vehement that it had always been *"the cornbread whistle."* Mrs. Julia Schinke, whose father actually started the practice of sounding the whistle, said at a library board meeting that it had to be cornbread, *"because biscuits don't take that long to bake."*

Sentiment was strong on both sides, and an attempt was made to reach an understanding through historical changes in the term over time. But it was fruitless.

Next we tried to see if the *"hads"* might have a different word preference from the *"had-nots"*; after all, some people *"had not"* enough money to buy white flour for biscuits back in the old days. This approach, too, was inconclusive.

Finally the Diboll Historical Society agreed to stick with the term approved by the majority of faithful Society meeting-attenders.

Long after that decision was made, an interview conducted with Vernon Burkhalter seemed to have cleared up the mystery. To see whether you agree with what he said, you'll have to read through to the very end of Chapter Ten. Meanwhile, in the interests of fairness, we have reprinted as introduction to the book the following column from the March 31, 1949, *Buzz Saw*, published in Diboll.

"The Biscuit Whistle"

Visitors in Diboll are often startled to hear a siren, located high up on the company's 100-odd foot water tower, begin its throaty growl promptly at 11:15 A.M. daily except Sunday. For some thirty seconds it screams in two separate performances, sending its excited voice reverberating throughout the countryside for miles around—just as it (and, in the old days, a whistle) has been doing for more than fifty years.

The signal doesn't mean fire. It doesn't mean that crews are being changed or that it's time for any mechanical switchover in the plant.

It's simply the ***Biscuit Whistle*** *for the town.*

It means that it's time for the womenfolks to start getting pots hot and the bread mixed and the kids corraled from the neighbors' premises. Because in forty-five minutes plus walking time, Pop will be in from the mill ready to eat—and no ifs, ands, or buts about it.

Old timers in Diboll tell us that before 1900 the 11:15 whistle was blown every day as a signal for either the change of shifts or for some other reason in the plant. Then when the reason suddenly ceased to exist, so did the whistle. But not for long.

It so happened that on the first day the whistle was ***not*** *blown, chaos reigned supreme. Husbands came in from work at noon to find their wives taking their morning naps or reading the* ***Saturday Blade****, with junior in the top branches of a pine tree half way to Ryan's Lake and the cook stove as cold as a well digger's shovel in Idaho. To the question about the possibility of some immediate grub throughout the hundred or so houses then in Diboll came the same reply of* ***"Are you CRAZY. Why, the Eleven Fifteen ain't blowed yet!"*** *And as a result nobody got anything to eat.*

So the next day the management decided to resume the whistle to eliminate the noonday husband-and-wife arguments throughtout the community and go back to the old routine of peace in the family during the week and fighting confined to Saturday nights.

And that's why today—after all these years—you hear the siren in Diboll screaming its head off every day at fifteen minutes after eleven. Furthermore, that's why you'll continue to hear it as long as the mill is running.

Because, no biscuit whistle, no biscuits.

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Author's Foreword

It is rare that a book is a true community effort. But that is what this one is. The author has acted as a compiler and researcher, it is true, and to some extent a shaper, but the real content of this book about the Diboll community lies in the words of the people who *are* the community. And much of the real effort involved both in recording those words and in tying them together to make a coherent story has been put forth by the members of the Diboll Historical Society and the many others who helped. These people are listed, with gratitude, in the acknowledgments.

It is also rare for someone who does research on a community to have the advantage of constant community monitoring of her findings. Yet that too is the case here. From the start to the finish of the project, in monthly meetings for two years and in numerous consultations in between, Society members have provided a recurrent check on all the author's information and interpretations.

But perhaps the most important ingredient provided for the project by those from the community who worked on it was enthusiasm . . .enthusiasm and energy, and stick-to-it-iveness, and grit. This was a big undertaking, and it just couldn't have been done if only one or a few people were providing the motivation. As an author joining the project from outside the Diboll community (I live in Woodville, 45 minutes south), I was afraid much of my work would lie in cracking the whip over members of the Diboll Historical Society. But I have found that, even if I could catch up to them long enough to crack any whips, they didn't need it anyway. Long before I arrived on the scene, this bunch was off and running.

I started working with the group in 1984. Some of the interviews we have used were conducted as far back as 1954, thirty years before, by Clyde Thompson of Diboll and John Larson of the Forest History Foundation, St. Paul, Minnesota. Further interviews were conducted from time to time by Ellen Temple, Vivian Holt and others at various times up until 1984. After the T.L.L. Temple Foundation granted the Historical Society funds for the equipment to mount a full-scale oral history project, and after I signed on as author-compiler, the interviewing intensified. At present, the oral history tape collection—from which this book is drawn—contains interviews with over 100 individuals.

Each interview had to be arranged with the interviewee, studied for, traveled to, put on tape under good recording conditions, listened to, sometimes repeated or augmented in another session, transcribed onto paper with a typewriter, retyped for readability, corrected, verified and given the interviewee's okay for use. This size of collection, represented an immense amount of labor. Beyond that, the information in each tape transcription had to be read and reread, assessed both for content and expression, and verified through historical research before it was excerpted for the book we all worked on. The dedication of this group was indeed extraordinary.

We tried to use as many of the interviews as we could in telling the story of Diboll's history. There was just so much more good talk, so many more good reflections, good expressions, than we could possibly use, though, that it was not possible to include something from each and every one. Apologies go to those who were interviewed but not represented here, but all of them have our thanks because *all* the interviews provided us with corroboration, cross-checking and depth.

There is a special sort of excitement that comes from having some fact from history corroborated by oral testimony. When you hear, without specifically asking to hear, something you were already suspecting because of other things you have heard, you get real satisfaction that you have been on the right track. The words of the people *are* the data. You see, people's words show how they have understood the times they have lived through and how they have taken factual occurrences unto themselves. Sometimes a researcher learns a fact

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because of the way more than one person speaks of it; reality lies somewhere in the "dialogue" among the voices.

For example, there would have been other ways for me to learn that Annie Chandler's father was J.W. Taylor, who fired the first boiler for the Southern Pine Lumber Company back in 1894. But as it turned out, I learned it by accident from reading both Granny Taylor's account of her husband in *The Buzz Saw* and Annie Chandler's transcript story of her father—and putting two and two together. I called up Marie Davis for corroboration. Were they one and the same? *"Of course,"* she said. There were other ways for me to find out something like this, but this was a very satisfying way.

Naturally, there are problems as well as satisfactions in using oral testimony. Sometimes people's memories deceived them and we had to be judicious about what we let go by without checking. Memory is also notoriously bad on dates, and it was often a real chore to establish actual chronologies. The bane of our existence became the phrase *"at the time,"* the ordinary circumlocution people use to discuss something they may remember vividly but can't quite put a date to. History takes some real sleuthing, and sometimes the oral history was no help.

On the other hand, the way memory works was sometimes a boon to us in terms of putting together events and conditions which existed in the same time-frame. Memory preserves a whole scene, so that a very relevant fact about a certain historical time may be hung right onto the story someone is telling about events at that time. An example is learning that sales of coffins took place **upstairs** above the old commissary from hearing Mrs. Kenley's story about Chester Willis running **downstairs** after he heard mischievous boys' voices coming out of the coffins saying, *"Chester, the Lord wants you."*

Each memory addresses much more than one topic. Because we wanted to preserve this inclusiveness of memory, we have often chosen to present longer excerpts rather than chop them up into brief *"factual"* bits. Some excerpts, in fact, may even seem to wander off the subject. But there is method in our madness: in each such case, the wandering brings up another salient item of information or preserves a relationship of memories which really belong together. This method also has the wonderful effect of preserving the flavor of a time. Because this is an oral collection, the relish of the telling, and the way individuals filed their own thoughts, has been an important ingredient in how we are trying to retell their story.

As Vina Wells said to Becky Bailey, *"I don't know how to word it, but I can tell you."* People can always manage to tell their own story. Part of the uniqueness of this book is that it takes as an article of faith that there is an important kind of truth in the way each person talks about experience. This seemed to us a useful consideration in preparing a book that is not only **about** a community but **for** it, too.

The book was written for those who have lived here or who have passed through the Diboll community in some way. But paradoxically, for this very reason it has a kind of universality as well. The story of a community is also *"the story of community,"* and because it is, it can have wide appeal.

We think *The Cornbread Whistle* will be of interest to anyone interested in how small communities work, especially how verbal communication keeps *"the community of agreement"* tuned up and functioning. We think it will also interest a public beyond Diboll which may read Texas history, particularly East Texas history, or the history of lumbering and sawmill towns, or the history of great American corporations or oral history in general.

To our knowledge, this is the first oral history of an American "company town" ever published. We are proud to be the pioneers, so to speak, on a project like this. Many of those who worked with us knew that there was *"a Story,"* beyond each person's stories, to be told here, and that this bigger story was the story of Southern Pine Lumber Company and how, along with Diboll, it grew. There are stories and there is *"the Story,"* and each person's perspective should be a part of how history gets made as it is being written down.

I feel, as an author, that this kind of *"proletarianization of history"* is an exciting and important new departure for the field. To paraphrase Arthur Temple, it *"gives people back their dignity"* in a way that is quite profound.

The hardest part of writing a book like this, for an author, is tearing oneself away from the interviews one has fallen in love with.

Some interviews unfold like a beautiful fabric of meaning with each thoughtful or pungent expression seeming more true and revealing than the last. It has been hard to keep from including reams of material from certain special favorite transcripts, like Mrs. Pearl Havard's, for example, or Pate and Vivian Warner's, or Lefty and Flava Vaughn's, or Paul Fred's, or so many others. Vernon Burkhalter, whom Becky Bailey caught up to very late in the continuing game played by the Historical Society called *"catching up with Vernon Burkhalter,"* gave us an interview which is outstanding from start to finish.

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With all this material to work with, it was hard to keep the book to a reasonable length. And when the interviews started holding irresistible dialogues among themselves, it was even harder. Take, for example, Inez Thompson Asher's description of life across the street from Harold Turner, which was told to me and An Sweeny at a time when An had just been talking with Harold and his wife, Hazel.

I said to Mrs. Asher, *"Do you know Harold Turner? I have been working in Diboll for two days now and I have already heard two or three Harold Turner stories."*

Inez said, *"They call him 'Shorty,' Of course, I didn't know Hazel. . .only since I have been here. His daddy was one of the (Fastrill) doctors. In fact, his daddy delivered my youngest brother."*

An said, *"I have gotten bits and pieces from the Turners, Harold and Hazel Turner."*

Inez said, *"Harold Turner. He lived with us. You couldn't get in the car, he was always there.*

She continued, "See, he went with my aunt. The one a couple years older than me. Oh, that Harold was always with us."

Inez said, *"He will stop me in the store and ask me, 'Do you remember?' And I say, 'I can't forget it.'"*

This kind of interchange, building up as more and more interviews are completed, deepens and enriches understanding of how people in the community get along with each other and how they appreciate each other, in fact. Part of the "data" for a book like this consists of that kind of information in addition to others. How people being interviewed relate to the interviewers is also data. For that reason, we have often included interviewers' names and even their questions as part of the quoted material. What they got from the interviews, after all, was partly what they as members of the community were able to put into them.

Even the choice of the book's title was an interactional event. Everyone knows by now about that controversy, which even got Paul Durham and Arthur Temple at loggerheads in print in *The Free Press*. After the smoke cleared on that one, and Paul had outlined all the reasons people in the community were coming down numerically on the side of the title we eventually chose, we held one of our regular Saturday monthly meetings. Becky Bailey said, *"Well, does everyone feel we are safe now in calling it* ***The Cornbread Whistle?*** And O'Hara Chandler growled, *"I don't think we're safe* ***not*** *calling it that."*

I feel a little wistful, when all is said and done, about the many, many good stories which we have not been able to tell in this book. Most of them are just too long — some of them are just too wild. These will have to remain, for now, in the oral history tape and transcript collection, waiting for *"Son of the Cornbread Whistle"* to be written. Stories like Pate Warner's tale of hatching alligator eggs under a *"fluffy chicken"* and the baby alligators were put into the millpond to frighten off swimmers. Mrs. Glass's story of the first automobile to come through Hoshall and how it completely disrupted the schoolhouse. All of Marvin Baker's anecdotes about how to make ends meet on an Angelina County farm during the 'thirties. Kenneth Nelson's story about the hired consultant who liked to *"water Mr. Temple's wheels"* after a night of carousing in Houston. Another story of Kenneth Nelson's about Dred Devereaux, who once was caught reading the newspaper upside down and insisted on interacting loudly with the Tarzan movies at The Timberland. Clyde Thompson and Richie Wells conversing about *"the bitterweeds and the Baptists"*. The famous power saw demonstration at Boggy Slough, when a felled tree got hung in another and took hours to dislodge. The story about finding Avriett Thomas in a shoebox. Wes Ashworth's on-the-job memories of *"getting black as smoke"* in Watson Walker's shop and *"hurrahing all the time."*

And so many more.

Some of these stories are wonderful, and I'd say to anyone who enjoys this book he might want to be sure to spend some time reading in the rest of the collection. Some of the stories, of course, can't be told in a book, and that is perhaps just as well. After all, what we've been doing here is making a permanent record for the future. And that's a selective process.

As Jim and Marian Fuller and Mrs. Josephine Fredrick said in their joint interview, *"Some things we are not going to tell: it wouldn't do Diboll a bit of good."*

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Introduction

The history of East Texas over the last century is to a great extent the history of business enterprise.

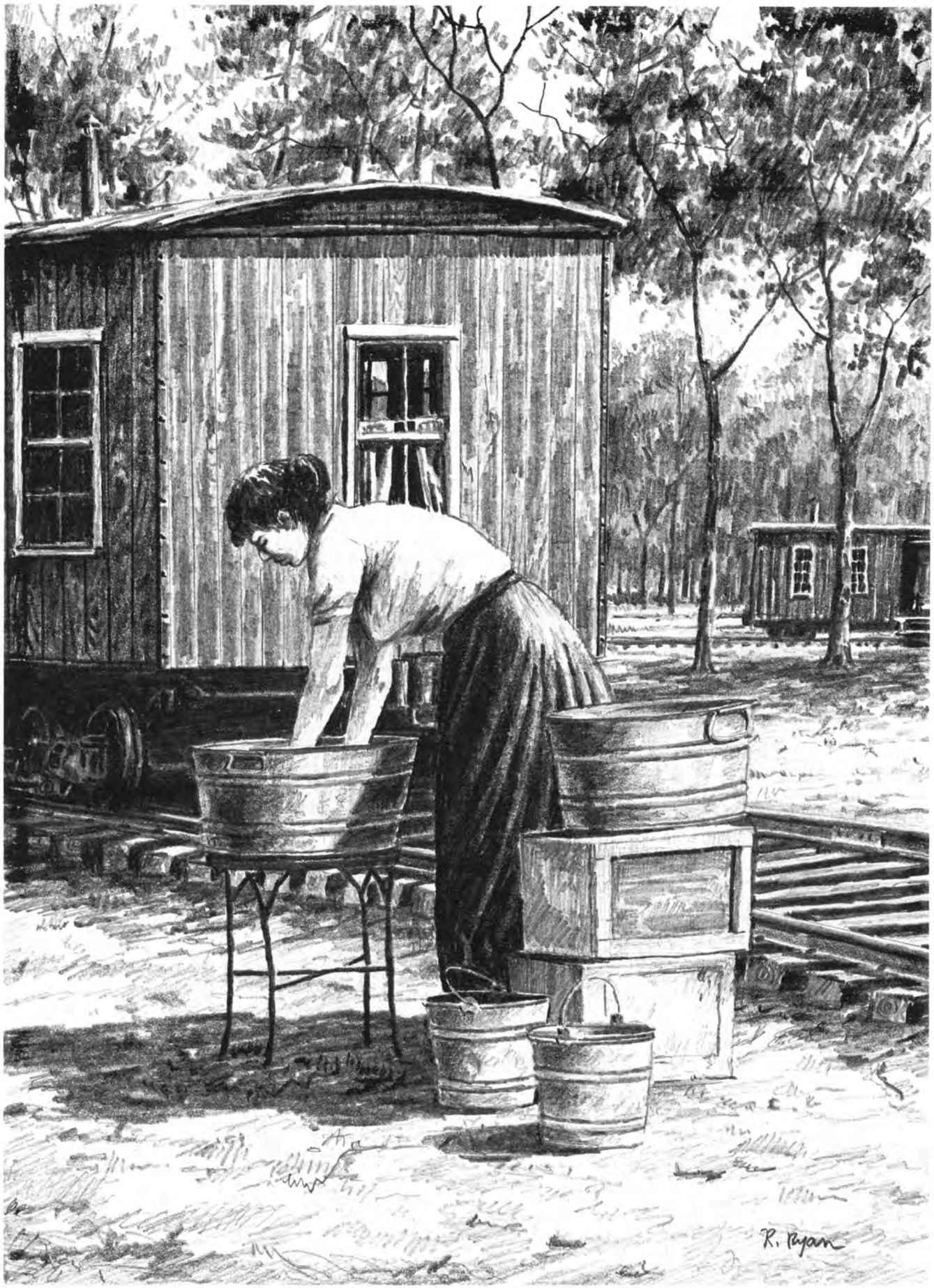
The period in which the development of this area occurred coincided with a worldwide movement toward industrialization. East Texas, like many areas of the western world, grew from self-sufficient agricultural roots into a region with powerful business machinery which could send its products elsewhere. Its people's livelihoods shifted from work on the land and minor local commerce to participation in an international market system based on exporting and importing mass-produced commodities, vastly expanded transportation and communication, and the exchange of daily labor for, in effect, an economic window on the world.

But if East Texas history comes down to business history, East Texas people know it best by getting down to telling and hearing stories. The people of Angelina County know, for instance, that in 1876 or 1877, a young man left a plow mule standing in harness one day in a field outside Texarkana, Arkansas. They know he hiked into town and got a job as a deputy court clerk. Later he worked in a lumber office. His name was Thomas Louis Latane Temple.

In 1893 T.L.L. Temple began the purchase of timbered land in Angelina County, Texas, on which he and his descendants eventually established one of the largest sawmilling and wood products industries in the world. A company town, called Diboll after the heirs of the original owner of 7000 acres of timbered land purchased gradually by Tom Temple south of Lufkin, was begun in 1894.

Today, nearly a century later, and after other timber towns of East Texas have perished or dwindled to almost nothing, Diboll is a thriving small city of more than 5000 people with an excellent standard of living.

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Boxcar Housing

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Chapter I

"With A Satchel And A Dream"

"My grandfather started out with Arthur's grandfather. My daddy came on with Arthur's daddy. And I came on with Arthur. A generation of Welches ever since time started with Temple, Southern Pine Lumber Company, or whatever you want to call it."

Claude Welch, January 5, 1983.

Latane Temple, a grandson of T. L. L. Temple, the founder of Diboll, was interviewed during the summer of 1985.

"You know (in oral history) there can be a lot of inaccuracies and coloration, maybe legend or invention, but it's one of my favorite stories, which I believe came to me from Gresham Temple, of how our people happened to be in this part of the country. My grandfather, T. L. L., was the son of Susan Jones Temple (of Essex County, Virginia). Orlando, her brother, came to southwest Arkansas as a bachelor. He acquired a large holding of land. Gresham Temple tells me it was his grandfather, John Temple, who inherited it. John was the oldest of four brothers. Besides him there were Charles, and Tom (T.L.L.), and William. The three followed him down to that large tract of land, mostly in Hempstead and Little River Counties, in southwest Arkansas, and all started out on the farm. My grandfather soon left the farm and became, I believe, assistant county clerk in Ashdown in Little River County, and then came to Texarkana and went to work for Garrett Lumber Company in their commissary. And that started the lumber thing.

"In the summer of 1933 one of the great experiences of my life was to go to Diboll and work in the mill. And part of that experience was the blacks who would come up to me and tell me about my grandfather. They said when he went through, he never failed to walk through the mill and speak to every one of them by name and shake their hands. They called him 'Uncle Tom;' his name was Tom, and it's just a coincidence that that has a later, bad connotation. I gained a wonderful impression of him in the mill from his contemporaries.

"In my rosy view of my grandfather, the family and of Southern Pine, I felt he was way ahead of his time in his attitude toward blacks and others. We had and do have a company dynasty; I don't know how many you can trace now, but there are second- and third-generation people who worked in the mills after their fathers. My grandfather had a body of people he started with and stayed with. During the Depression, the mills kept running, even though it would have been better to shut the mills down and let the trees grow. To my certain knowledge, when other mills were shutting down, we kept running, because my grandfather didn't want those people to be out."

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This was T.L.L. Temple III, known to his family and to Diboll residents as Latane Temple, speaking shortly after his 70th birthday.

Latane Temple has been a publicist for the family enterprises, a businessman in his own right, a political worker, a productive sculptor and a painter. A practicing Christian Scientist like his grandfather, he takes the long view—the philosophical view—of the human story begun in 1894 when the idea of establishing a sawmill in Angelina County with local labor and an ethic of social responsibility occurred to his grandfather.

Arthur Temple, Jr., Latane's first cousin, tells the story a bit differently. Asked if he thought that his and Latane's grandfather came to Texas with the idea not only of building a sawmill but of founding a town, he answered:

"No. He was the son of an Episcopal minister in Virginia. At a very young age (I'm not sure what age), he came to Arkansas. My father always said he was thirteen, so I will assume that is right. I've heard other ages, but he was just a kid. His father lived in Miller's Tavern, Virginia. His father was an Episcopal minister, and his father before him had been an Episcopal minister. Strangely enough, he must have been a very stern person because he was awfully hard on my grandfather. There was no love lost between my grandfather and his father. He ran away and went and lived with Harry Walker's family, who was a cousin.

"Later he followed his older brothers, William and John, who went down to the area around Texarkana. Uncle John gave my grandfather a job on his farm plowing. He plowed for a few days and one day (and I've heard him tell the story, so I know it is true) he left the mule in the field and walked to Texarkana which was about twelve miles from Ogden. His first position, as he called it, was sweeping out. He worked for the Little River county clerk for a little while.

"I don't know how he got interested in the lumber business. There was no history of lumber in our family. They had all been ministers and that sort of thing. He went to Arkansas over near Spring Hill in Hempstead and established a little sawmill which he called Southern Pine Lumber Company. It went broke.

"Then he came down to Diboll. He had undoubtedly heard about this area that was largely unpopulated with lots of big timber. He came down and bought the first land at Diboll. The mill he put in was a little old rinky-dink mill. He was successful, I guess, because 'the times' may have been a little better. And of course, all the lumber was shipped North in boxcars to Chicago, Kansas City and Indianapolis. It really was a very small operation. He was, by standards in those days, considered quite successful.

"But as to policies, I'd say the only policies he had were to acquire land, grow the business and treat his people well. You've got to remember, they were all isolated. Diboll could just as well have been two hundred miles from someplace."

What kept Diboll from being totally inaccessible was the old Houston, East & West Texas Railroad, a significant factor in the settlement of dozens of sawmill towns in East Texas during the late 1800's. It was the H,E&WT (Sometimes called the *Hell Either Way Taken.*) which brought Tom Temple with, as an unknown author put it, *"his satchel and his dream,"* to the deep woods where he was able to build an empire.

For Tom Temple, the business ethics and the social ethics, it seems, were cut out of the same fabric. Perhaps that is why he appeared to have a genuine gift for both. The list of his business endeavors is as clear, as unconfused and as daring as the details of his own early life.

Born on March 18, 1859, in Essex County, Virginia, he was the son of Henry W. L. Temple and Susan Jones Temple. Both parents were natives of Essex County and came from pioneer Virginia families. Orphaned at an early age (his mother died when he was four and his father when he was eleven), T.L.L. Temple was one of a large family of children. His sisters were Mary, Lula, and Annie and his brothers were John, Charles, and William. Until he was thirteen, young Tom attended Aberdeen Academy in his native county. In September, 1876, at the age of seventeen, he left Virginia for Little River County, Arkansas. There, as we learned from his grandsons, he tried farming and later worked as deputy clerk of the county and circuit court. In 1877 he moved to Texarkana, the home of several pioneer southern lumber operations.

T.L.L. Temple's first formal association with the lumbering industry was with Whitaker and Calloway in Texarkana. He initially worked in the commissary of the old Garrett Lumber Company, probably between 1880 and 1885, and in 1887, he became a partner at Grigsby, Scott, and Temple, operating a large sawmill operation called the Atlanta Lumber Mills, headquartered at Atlanta, Texas. At that time he was 28 years old, already a manager of a business, which was having substantial successes. A few years later, he organized the first Southern Pine Lumber Company with a planing mill at Kingsland, Arkansas. This business was not successful and was quickly discontinued.

The end of this venture in 1891, however, was followed in 1893 with a reorganization in Texas

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under the same name. The *Gulf Coast Lumberman* obituary written at the time of Temple's death said of this second attempt that *"displaying an ability far surpassing his years and a determination to overcome difficulties, the young man went about rebuilding the business structure."* The Diboll mill of the new Southern Pine Lumber Company, with a daily capacity of 75,000 board feet, quickly allowed the debts of the old company to be repaid. It soon went beyond old debts to generate a fortune.

In 1900, T.L.L. Temple joined E.W. and E.A. Frost and G.A. Kelley in organizing the Lufkin Land Lumber Company. They built a sawmill in Lufkin with a 100,000 board foot capacity. Other companies, other acquisitions, followed in quick succession. At the time of his death in 1935 the major business establishments for which Tom Temple was responsible had a combined capitalization of more than $10.5 million.

Socially speaking, Mr. Temple was equally successful and forward-looking. For him it was not enough merely to found a business empire. He made sure, as Arthur Temple, Jr., said, to think deeply of the needs of the employees of that empire—in short, *"to treat his people awfully well."* To explain the relationship between company management and the Southern Pine employees who made up the town of Diboll, Arthur Temple went on to say something about his grandfather's philosophy of living:

"One important area is why the company and the town are so cohesive. I guess it started with my grandfather, who was a Christian Scientist. I don't think he was actually a member of the church, but he practiced it. He was very, very stingy with himself, but very generous with other people. I think that was pretty typical of the whole family."

This social generosity is a theme which runs through everything one learns about Diboll's founder. Though T.L.L. Temple quickly found that farming, with its drudgery and long-deferred rewards, did not suit him, his experiences with the husbandry of land, as well as his early upbringing, seem to have fitted him with an attitude of respect for the working man.

He also gained a healthy regard for both the length and the necessity of natural cycles, so that he developed a positive attitude toward resource conservation long before "ecology" was fashionable. That he was a pioneer in the field of renewable forest resources is well known, and will be discussed at length further along in this book. But his social conscience and its effects were every bit as advanced for their time. In fact, Tom Temple regarded himself as a kind of double steward, on the one hand of the land and its renewable stands of timber, and on the other, of the community of sawmill people for whom he had made himself responsible.

Though he lived most of every year elsewhere, Tom Temple was a vital human presence to the Diboll mill. Dred Dardford Devereaux, who began work for the company in 1910 as a construction engineer, said this of him:

"He was a great old fellow. Mr. Temple used to come down here years and years ago. The majority of officials were just a little bit slow about getting out in the morning, but he was all out and over to work. You'd meet him up in the shop, out always running around mighty early. He was all over the works."

He also transmitted to the men on the shift his concern about the waste of timber resources and his vision that much more could be made of it if everyone were energetically conservative. His concern with milling wastage and its possible economic use was to have far-reaching benefits for the Temple enterprises. E.A. Farley, the shipping supervisor, was interviewed in 1954 by Clyde Thompson. He said,

"One time Mr. Temple came down to the planer at Pineland. He was awfully conservative. He did not tolerate any waste. If he went along the dollyway and saw a piece of lumber, even a short piece of lumber, falling off the truck and lying on the dollyway, he would pick it up and figure what this piece of lumber was worth, if it was worth eight cents, ten cents or what not. He would write on it with a pencil and lay it on my desk. So when he was down in the mill any time, I was always looking for those pieces of lumber laying on my desk. One time he was down there, and he went behind the trawling machine. Of course, running a trawl you have a lot of cut-offs. It was one of the few times I ever saw him lose his temper.

"Mr. Henry Temple was working, but he was in the shipping office with me. We knew Mr. Temple was out behind the trawling machine, but we didn't want to go out there. Well, he kept sending for us, but we would make excuses. Finally, he didn't send for us; he came in there. He brought a bunch of trawl cut-offs with him. He commenced to throwing them down on my desk and asking both of us, 'What did you cut this one off for? What did you cut this one off for?' He got Mr. Henry Temple and me in such a shape we didn't know what to say; we couldn't answer him.

"About that time, we had just installed the first motor jitneys to haul lumber to the planer and one of the jitneys stopped by the shipping office to pick up a bill, so Mr. Temple just walked out and got on the jitney and told the boy to take him

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to his office. We didn't see him any more that day."

Apparently Tom Temple came by his stern work ethic and saving honestly. A Temple forebear in England, while rebuilding the ancestral home of Bishopstrow in 1817, is said to have locked the carpenters in his employ into the room in which they were occupied each day and refused to let them out until sundown.

Tom Temple's distaste for waste extended to his attitude toward what he considered wasteful vices. He made stern moral demands of his workers in areas like liquor and tobacco. Though he was scrupulously courteous to workers of every level, his views on personal indulgence were known to everyone in Diboll.

Yet he could be indulgent with everyone, including himself, in the area of music, learning and the arts. And apparently he loved children, taking a keen interest in their intellectual and moral development. Mrs. Cecil Purdy, a piano teacher in Pineland and Diboll, remembers him this way:

"Oh, my lands! I practiced myself to death to play for Mr. Temple. We gave a program every time he came to Pineland. We would have them over at Mrs. (Henry) Temple's. She would have the crowd. . . and then we would go to practicing for Uncle Tom. I played 'Hungarian Rhapsody' every time he came. He loved it better than anything."

The love of music went back in the Temple family a long way. As Lucy Fish wrote to Arthur Temple, Jr., in a letter:

"The Temples were all musical. Great-grandfather Temple (H.W.L. Temple) played the violin. Some of the colored people used to attend his church at St. Paul's (in Virginia). Suddenly they all stopped attending church. Finally an old colored man told him, 'That we hears you play the fiddle and we is scared that you will dance our souls to perdition.' H.W.L. said, 'If I stop playing the fiddle will you all come back to church?' So he stopped playing the violin and the colored people came back to church."

She also wrote:

"You know your grandfather (T.L.L. Temple) didn't just belong to his immediate family. He belonged to all his nieces and nephews. He held a very special place in our affections. He seemed to really care about us and came back every year to see us. I am very proud to be related to him. And it was a privilege for me to have spent several summers with Uncle Tom at Quogue (on Long Island). . ."

Josephine Rutland Fredrick, a Lufkin schoolteacher, born and raised in Diboll, had this memory of him:

"I remember Mr. Tom Temple when they would come here. They ate at the hotel right next door to my house and then they would come out and sit in our yard and we would all visit. And one night, he was over there, and I think I was chewing gum, and he told me, 'Josephine, if you won't chew gum anymore, I will buy you a bicycle.' So that was the end of my gum chewing. He got me the bicycle. Later, the children at school that I taught always said, 'Mrs. Fredrick, you are the crankiest thing about gum chewing I ever did know,' and I said, 'Well, I learned a long time ago you might get a bicycle one of these days. . .' "

Often Tom Temple's help to young people was even more substantial. For example, he loaned Sadie Estes Woods money enough to go to college. Fannie Farrington gave details about college support provided to several Diboll students:

"Another thing that we did was to find boys and girls who were really worthy and some way or another God managed to let them have a college education.

"And one of the girls was here at the homecoming. She was a very poor girl, but a lovely girl. She had two years of college education. She married a splendid young man and has a lovely home. She won a scholarship, and her clothes and all the things were furnished. . . all but coats. So I told Mr. Tom Temple about it, and he said, 'Well, just pick her out a coat.' And she said, 'I'd just like to meet Mr. Temple and tell him how much I appreciated that. The Southern Pine Lumber Company has meant so much to me, and the workers in the Company'. . .

"There's a young man that went to college on money given him, not even demanding a note. He went to college and when he was established in business, he paid all that money back with interest and it was not a note demanded of him. There's one of our young men."

Fannie Farrington came to Diboll from St. Louis in 1903 with her husband, Frank. She was to provide for the community at T.L.L. Temple's request spiritual uplift through Christian Science teaching and example. She said:

"Mr. Temple was such a spiritual man; his spirituality came first with him because he knew if you were spiritual, the other would be cared for. He often said to me, 'Mrs. Farrington, God, Divine Help, always has and always will meet every human need.' (And) seeds have been sown in the hearts and lives of boys and girls here, that will bring a harvest that only eternity will tell the good. And it was all because one man had a vision; Mr. Tom Temple had a vision. He knew what he wanted Diboll to be."

In the newly created archive wing at the T.L.L. Temple Memorial Library in Diboll, there is a

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fragment in T.L.L. Temple's handwriting on Southern Pine Lumber Company stationery. It says:

"No person, nothing in all the universe, no claim of circumstances, can by any possibility interfere between me, and all joy, and all good. To help ourselves and others we must think God's thoughts after him.

"To affirm anything is to assure its possibility, even in the face of contrary evidence that it is so.

"We can compel ourselves to cease quibbling, and go to work to prove the rule, each one for himself.

" 'Thou shalt deem a thing, and it shall be established unto thee.' "

This attitude of positive thinking permeated Tom Temple's activities at Diboll and it is very clear that he did far more for the community than provide its people with jobs. Shortly after milling operations began at Diboll, he established a public school for the millworkers' children. By 1900 there were both a black and a white school, with attendances, respectively, of 40 and 75 pupils. Houses were provided at very low rental fees and a commissary store was set up to serve the isolated Diboll community.

The years between 1900 and 1910 saw the beginnings of a book club, Boy Scouts, a men's meeting place and a band. By 1906—decades before most of the rest of East Texas—Tom Temple had seen to it that the town had electric power from 5:30 a.m. to 10:00 at night.

By 1908 Diboll had 30 miles of telephone lines and eight telephones connecting key locations. In that year, too, the mill people got their own water system, and a hospital association was formed with two doctors for the lumber company's employees. For many years the company put up a big Christmas tree and gave a present to every child in town.

A city park, a library, new athletic grounds and other civic projects were backed by Temple's community spirit and driving energy. The list is endless. Sometimes he brought in a Chautauqua, or travelling educational program. Christian Science practitioners like Mrs. Farrington were brought in to give lectures, carry out philanthropic services for company employees and give Diboll people an alternative to the Baptist and Methodist faiths. There was little in the way of early twentieth century community improvement that was **not** thought of and put into existence in Diboll by its founder.

But how it started is a story in itself.

Long before T.L.L. Temple came to Texas, the Copes and Diboll families had acquired land in Angelina County. Dr. Joseph Slemons Copes, born in 1811 in Delaware, was an energetic physician, educator, cotton factor and land speculator. Of Scots descent, Dr. Copes was the son of a Presbyterian clergyman, and the activties of his life, like those of T.L.L. Temple, were fueled by an avowed religious zeal.

J.S. Copes graduated in 1833 from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. On graduation, he took an assignment as health officer of a shallow-draft port adjacent to Philadelphia. After one year, he read a government advertisement for a medical officer to the Choctaw Indians.

Joseph Copes and his brother traveled to Jackson, Mississippi, where they settled for awhile. Joseph Copes eventually married there and is said to have written the first health laws of the state of Mississippi.

The medical practice he established, as planned, among the Choctaws, was centered in an area recently acquired from these Indians by the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek. This was not much later than 1834, when Mississippi's Yazoo Valley canebrakes and cypress swamps harbored tropical fevers, poisonous snakes and many other wilderness hazards. Dr. Copes' pioneering medical efforts on behalf of both the Choctaws and the settlers of this area were much appreciated.

While on this tour of duty, Dr. Copes befriended a Choctaw chief named Greenwood LeFlore, whom he later involved in the purchase of large tracts of land in the timber belt of East Texas. LeFlore's father, a French trader, gave his name to LeFlore County, Mississippi, where the town of Greenwood is located. Greenwood LeFlore, who had been one of the signers of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, entrusted the treaty document to the safe of his friend, Dr. J.S. Copes. Like many other treaties made by white American settlers with the Indians, this one too was broken, and many Indians were killed even after they had given up their land.

When J.S. Copes left Mississippi for New Orleans in 1849 he did not forget his friend Chief LeFlore. As an Indian, Copes knew, even though he was one of French descent, LeFlore could not hope to acquire land through purchase from whites to replace what he had lost through treaties. LeFlore gave Copes power of attorney, and Copes began to act as his agent.

After a time in New Orleans dealing with medical associations and other civic affairs, J.S. Copes became the first agent in the southern states for the New York Life Insurance Company. He was interested in buying land, especially land in Texas, and he had ample opportunity to gratify his land hunger while travelling as an insurance agent.

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Land was at that time going for 5 to 10 cents an acre in Texas, and Dr. Copes eventually acquired more than 300,000 acres. Early in his agent's career he bought some 2500 acres in Angelina County. He also bought about 2500 acres there at the same time on behalf of his friend Greenwood LeFlore. However, in stories told by Dr. Copes' descendants, LeFlore is said to have returned the land, saying that he *"didn't have 2500 acorns"* to pay for it.

After this refusal by LeFlore, Dr. Copes bought a "tax title" to the 2500 acres. After the Civil War, Texas declared such claims void unless legally made valid. A lawyer discovered the fault and bought a "quit claim" from the LeFlore heirs, sued and recovered. There was never any animosity between Dr. Copes and Greenwood LeFlore on the subject of this land, merely later among their respective heirs, who according to Collins Diboll, a Copes descendant, *"knew little about it."*

Active as an insurance agent and land speculator until the 1880's, Dr. Copes ranged across Texas as far as Fort Worth. To get to Texas from New Orleans, he probably went overland by way of Donaldsonville, Louisiana, the jumping-off place for Natchitoches, where a French fort existed. A Spanish fort had been built in Nacogdoches, across the Texas border, to prevent further French encroachment westwards. Dr. Copes travelled this dangerous route and carried his business throughout Texas.

Among his purchases were hundreds of thousands of acres in Angelina and Nacogdoches counties which were originally granted to Jose Anselmo Prado, Jose Ramon Chevano and others. He willed this acreage to his two daughters, Asenath Arick Copes and Elizabeth Halsey Copes. Elizabeth married a man named Jason Torrey Diboll, who had come from the Philadelphia area to New Orleans to work for Dr. Copes and wound up marrying the boss's daughter. Diboll was of Flemish extraction, his family of master weavers having emigrated to England from Flanders during the wool trade era. The Diboll family lives on in England today, where their surname is pronounced ***"Die-bull."*** J.S. Copes had no male heirs. The families of his two daughters, Asenath Arick Copes Phelps and Elizabeth Halsey Copes Diboll, supported themselves by the sale of his Texas timber and land. Eventually about 7000 acres in Angelina County were all that was left of his vast holdings in the state.

This land became the basis of T.L.L. Temple's lumber empire. One of the sons of Elizabeth and Jason Diboll was Joseph Copes Diboll, who handled the transaction with T.L.L. Temple for the original acreage in the Diboll area. These sales involved land and timber rights, but much of the mineral rights remain in the Copes and Diboll families to this day.

The first transaction between Joseph Copes Diboll and the Southern Pine Lumber Company was the fee-simple sale of 50 acres around the site of the present-day Diboll on July 13, 1894. This tract was known as the original mill tract. At the same time, a stumpage contract was negotiated for 7,000 acres. Another 50 acres was acquired from J.V. Hanks and his wife on September 12, 1895, south of the original mill tract, and this was known as the Hanks tract. On April 4, 1903 an additional 50 acres was conveyed to Southern Pine by the Copes heirs. On February 6, 1909, 200 acres were sold to the company in the Prado and Chevano leagues. Also in 1909 the Copes heirs sold off building lots in the Prado league north of Diboll for a part of Diboll which was eventually called Copestown.

All remaining lands of the Copes heirs - the bulk of the approximately 7,000 acres they still owned in Angelina County - were sold to SPLCo, in 1924 with the reservation of mineral rights. Between 1894 and 1924, it appears, Southern Pine had stumpage rights to thousands of acres of Copes' land beyond the 50 acres of the original purchase. The acquisition of the 7000 acres of which many have heard, then, was a gradual process spanning thirty years. However, after the mill was in operation, additional land purchases were made by SPLCo from many parties in addition to the Copes heirs.

In general, the families of the Copes and Diboll heirs had their incomes greatly increased by selling either the timber or the lands originally acquired by Dr. Copes.

One of Dr. Copes' brother's descendants, Dana Copes Rogers, now 85 years old and living in Lufkin, told the story of the arrival of her grandfather, Henry Francis Copes, in Angelina County as an early settler:

"Henry Francis Copes and Cynthia Jeanette Bassett Copes came to Texas from St. Louis, Missouri, because Dr. Joseph Copes owned all this land in the Diboll area and Henry was his nephew. And he (Dr. Joseph Copes) gave him (Henry Francis Copes) so many acres of land as they had an agreement, and would educate his children if he would come to Texas and live and oversee the property. And that is when they came. They came in a covered wagon and they said that Indians would follow them. There were about three different times the Indians followed them, but they never did attack. And Grandma Copes discovered one time (they were staunch

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Christians) that she had gotten the days of the week mixed up and that she was riding along in the covered wagon knitting on Sunday. That really upset her."

When asked what she remembered about her grandfather Copes, she replied:

"Everything that was sweet and good. . . I can just see him standing out at the gate waiting on me to catch up with him to go to Sunday School. It is one of the memories way back that is awfully sweet."

During Tom Temple's first three decades in Angelina County, he gradually bought 7000 acres of virgin land and timber from the Copes and Diboll families. He bought it for amounts which ran about $1 an acre which even in those times, would have been a bargain.

Speaking in New Orleans in 1984, 80-year-old architect Collins Cerre Diboll recalled that members of his family were involved in ownership of the land around the present town of Diboll. He referred to this land gently as *"hog-mill terrain,"* explaining that it was so unchanged by the hand of man that wild hogs had to be run out of the area before the sawmill could be started.

"To my knowledge, it was my uncle, Joseph Copes Diboll, who handled the transaction and signed for the two families. In selling the land and timber to the Temples he retained the mineral rights. I do not know the reason why they named the whistle stop on the branch railroad 'Diboll' but I assume for the amity that existed between the two members of the transaction, Mr. Temple and Mr. Joseph Diboll. It is my understanding that the Temples named the town Diboll; we did not. It is a nice compliment for which we have been very grateful, although in Texas it is pronounced ***"Die-boll"*** and in New Orleans it is pronounced ***"Diboll."***

"There is no evidence I know of in the ownership of lands that was particularly related to Louisiana or New Orleans. Dr. (Joseph Slemons) Copes was merely fascinated with Texas and Texas lands and purchased many hundred thousand acres at five and ten cents an acre.

"When they sold the 7000 acres, the Temples moved elementary sawmill equipment on there. This is a family industry and due to the effectiveness of the Temples they have grown to where they are. This is true of other lumber interests, particularly in the northwest, like Zellerbach and Weyerhauser. The Temples are obviously an indomitable, formidable family with a great sense of leadership and compassion. They seem to have efficiently applied themselves to the advancements and techniques of the industry.

"You see, the country in general was expanding and Texas was prominent in that. What they supplied to build the homes of people was lumber and there was an insatiable demand for that. Early on, they assisted in the financing of homes for which their lumber was used and what may have been a business interest actually came out as a result of being a humanitarian application. 'Luck' is opportunity implemented into action and this is the truth of many successful families."

Collins Diboll went on to say about the Temple family that *"they were unostentatious but would have been justified in ostentation. They really accomplished a lot. They were an excellent example of rugged free enterprise."*

A descendant both of Joseph Copes Diboll and the American writer Wilkie Collins, Collins Diboll seemed to enjoy reflecting on the original sale to T.L.L. Temple and what he built on that foundation.

But there was some wistfulness in his voice when he contrasted the pioneering spirit of his great-grandfather Joseph Slemons Copes with what he called the *"placid ineptitude"* of some of his heirs, who allowed the family land to pass into other hands just in order to pay living expenses. His admiration for the Temple family spirit of development and progress was clear. He compared both Tom Temple's, and his great-grandfather Dr. Copes', visionary strength to that of the Chicago contractor who built the Texas State Capitol and was paid off by a swap of 3,000,000 acres of Texas land for his bill. Musing further on the loss of grand visions in the later generations, Collins Diboll said, *"In fact Diboll itself should have been called Copestown. The Dibolls have had only inheritance to do with it. Although people of education and position, they were never entrepreneurs as their ancestor was."*

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Chapter II

"And Diboll Spread Its Wings..."

Land deals and the beginnings of sawmilling aside, what are some of the earliest memories the people of Diboll have of the town itself?

The earliest landmark in Diboll area history comes in 1866, long before the arrival of T.L.L. Temple and the founding of the town. In that year the Ryan Chapel Methodist Church, which had 19 charter members, was founded during a revival at the newly constructed home of Isaac Ryan north of present Diboll. The first church building was a one-room log structure, measuring 16 feet by 20 feet, *"with limited openings due to lack of hardware to hang the doors or windows."*

The granddaughter of John Ira Ryan (Isaac Ryan's brother), Mrs. Geneva Florence Ryan Weeks, was born in Ryan Chapel Community on August 14, 1884. Before her death, she said the brothers came from Mississippi and

"settled on four hundred acres of land where they lived. My grandfather lived in a log house. The house was already built when he moved there. And his brother, Isaac, built him a new home, a log house. That's where they started their revival meetings and that's what the chapel was named for, Ryan Chapel. He told his wife he thought that would be a good thing to start their new home off with a revival."

Robert L. (Bob) Weeks, who was born in about 1880, and worked for the Southern Pine Lumber Company in the woods and in the mills, said:

"I was born about a mile south of Burke. My folks came from Louisiana right after the Civil War. I finished school at Burke and there wasn't very much work around the country in them days. That was in 1894... pretty tight times. And Frank and Dick Warner had taken a contract to dig a pond for Diboll, which was the first mill pond there.

"I was raised in the country, and I was pretty familiar with the bull language and I drove a yoke of steers to run the scrapers 'till they got the pond done. After we got the pond dug, I went down to Emporia, a mile below there. It was in operation, and I went to work out there in the woods.

"And after the Diboll mill started up in November or December—November, I reckon it was—I went to work at the Diboll mill. That was in the fall of '94. I worked in the woods mostly, drove an ox team and hauled logs.

"The mill was a right smart ways from the pond. The mill and the boilers were near the brick house, by the machine shop, and the mill sat back north towards the pond from there. Well, they overhauled that old mill and made a pretty good-sized mill out of it. I was just considered a helper down in the old mill... but I got a hundred dollars a month.

"When you needed a little groceries, you'd go get a check. You'd use them just like you would money. They was good. They wouldn't cash it for you, but at the company's office you turned in

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what checks you hadn't spent on the twentieth of the month. They'd give you a due bill and on the first of the month they'd cash that. It didn't cost a third as much to live then.

"We lived in a company house and the rent was low then. The first house I lived in was a little box house and I think I paid something like three or four dollars a month for it.

"I remember in 1896 or '97 we all decided to play baseball. We chipped in together and fixed us up a ball ground and hired two old Irishmen to grub the ground out in the thicket. We fenced it and fixed us up a little grandstand and we had about four or five acres there in the baseball diamond. . . we had fixed it up pretty nice for the times.

"We played Lufkin one Sunday evening and in the middle of the game, there was drinking going on and they all got to fighting. And they had the devilest fight around there.

"Old man Tom come in that night from Texarkana. He heard about the fight and closed our baseball down. He took our baseball park and got two old Englishmen to put in a garden there. . . a truck farm. Our baseball season was soon over."

Granny (Mrs. J.W.) Taylor was another early inhabitant of Diboll. Her husband came to Diboll in 1894, the year of its founding. He was a fireman in the first mill, which was located where the T.S.E. shops later stood. J.W. Taylor, according to a *Buzz Saw* article published in 1947:

". . .fired the first boilers in Mill No. 1, blew the first whistle, and got up the steam for the first trip the carriages ever made in that mill. In the meantime, Granny was at Old Michella on the Angelina River where she operated a hotel, and as soon as Mr. Taylor sent for her she packed up her three boys and one girl, bought a ticket on the H.E.&W.T. for 'Southern Pine,' and took off for the wild and wooly timber town. Approaching Diboll the conductor informed Granny that the train stopped only at Emporia and that Diboll was not big enough to warrant even a pause. After a heated discussion he agreed to stop the train here if Granny would agree to have her children and their baggage at the door of the coach, ready to get off without losing any time. She agreed, the train came to a trembling halt and they all leaped off during the fifteen second interval before the engineer started up again to make a fast run for Emporia to make up the unscheduled loss of time.

"That was in the year 1895. Granny says that Diboll wasn't much of a town then. A few scattered shacks, about six houses on the east side of the S.P. (originally H.E.&W.T.) tracks, no schools and no churches. She didn't particularly mind the shortage of living space. She didn't object to the fact that there was just one water supply in town—a well where the planer now is located and where you got what you needed by going after it. The lack of school facilities she figured she could overcome by teaching the children herself. But when she found out there was no church in Diboll she told her husband they were taking off and no two ways about it.

"Pretty soon there was a church (First Baptist, founded in 1897). Her husband and several others got some lumber, took over a little shack located about where the hardwood yard is located now, and built it themselves. The company then built a school (1896 or 1897), then more churches (First United Methodist, 1897; Burke Baptist, 1905) sprang up, people began to drift into town, and Diboll spread its wings and got ready to haul off and be the biggest sawmill town in Texas which it soon did—and still is."

Mrs. Annie Chandler, daughter of J.W. Taylor, was interviewed by Clyde Thompson in her home in Diboll on August 10, 1954. Mrs. Chandler came to Diboll as a girl of 15 years of age in 1895. In this interview she also talked about the early days:

"We came here at four o'clock in the morning on the down train. . . the train from Shreveport. My father had been down here almost a month, but we heard of this Temple Lumber Company; and my brother-in-law knew Mr. Tom Temple and he liked the Temples. Of course, this being a brand new sawmill (it had started up in 1894, and we came here in 1895), it had been running a year when we came to Diboll.

"You know by us being here so long that we are bound to love Diboll, and we love the Temple Lumber Company. They have been so nice to us. We came here as a family of seven. There are two of us left, just my sister and me. She is six years older than I am. She has been here off and on, but I have raised my entire family here. I have seven children, and they were every one raised to be grown men and women before they left Diboll.

"My mother was afraid to leave Diboll; she was afraid to go away for fear she would die away from Diboll. She had lost all of her family here, and she wanted to stay. And the Lord made it possible that she should stay here. He took her away from here. We have just always loved the place; and we have loved the company. And they have just been so nice and so good to us until we don't have no right not to love it.

"Of course, you know the Temples are all human just like we are. You know that, don't you? They are human, sure enough; they are not just

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men and women to be talked about. They have an interest in everybody that works for them. My father worked here eight years. He came here in 1895; and in 1902, the first day of September, eight years to the day, he died. He had lost three boys since we came to Diboll. Our house burned, and everything in the world we had in the house burned up; but still we stayed in Diboll because it just seemed like it was a part of us, I guess.

"Mr. Will Rutland was working in the store when we came to Diboll; and it was just a little one room building, about 14 x 16 feet. Of course, the sawmill was small too. It was a circle saw; that was before the band mills even came in. The new No. 1 Mill is still standing. My father was the first one that ever raised steam in those boilers, and he turned the engines over that day. Of course, we were all proud of that sawmill. We thought it belonged to us, but we loved it just the same. And we still love it."

Mrs. Chandler went on:

"Will Carlisle was the general manager here at the time. He was the brother-in-law of Mr. Rutland. He had married Mr. Rutland's sister. There was just a few of us here at the time. When we came here, we lived in a little two-room building until they could build us a house. We lived there for a year; and then we moved across the street to the next place.

"My husband was here for 42 years, and he died here in Diboll. So our whole family has lived here in Diboll, and we are still crazy about Diboll."

Mrs. Chandler recalled her early arrival in Diboll:

"We got off the train at 4:00 in the morning and the weeds were up to our shoulders. But still that didn't daunt us; we still wanted to come to Diboll. But it was a very small place; but the company was a good company, and that just caused good people to want to come and stay.

"They didn't have a depot here. We didn't even have a post office; the mail went to Emporia. And that is where they were going to take us to before they stopped the train. I had had a congested chill that morning, and my mother and sister had dressed me to come to Diboll. Mama told the conductor, 'Don't take us to Emporia; bring us back to Diboll. My daughter just can't make that walk.' Just out of the goodness of his heart the conductor let us off here. You see, this was just a flag station; and without somebody out there to get on, they just don't stop the train."

Marie Hudson Temple (no relation to the T.L.L. Temple family) who was born July 4, 1894, moved to Diboll in 1908 and lived with her grandfather at Emporia and Diboll. Here are some of her memories of old Emporia (a Carter mill town) and early Diboll:

"There were still a lot of houses at Emporia in 1908. My grandfather was in charge of renting the houses that were left. After the mill was moved, we cleaned up the old lumber yard that was left and cleared the land for a farm (where the Catholic Church is located today).

"After the sawmill was moved, there were puncheons in the ground. It was solid, rich wood, about two inches thick and eight or 20 inches wide. We had a horse and we cleared all of that up, burned it, plowed it up, and planted cotton and a garden with corn and peas.

"Then, the Emporia pond was a big pond. We made us a boat. It is a wonder we didn't drown. My grandparents let us kids have a gun and let us kids go out there and shoot ducks. One time I let two ducks swim together. They told me to do that and it would save a shell. I let two swim together and I killed two at one time. The snakes were awfully bad out there.

"There was no commissary at Emporia, but there was a big feed store. Nearly everybody at Diboll had a cow. They would go to Emporia at the feed store and buy feed. It was owned by Shug Albritton, who would deliver the feed.

"The Diboll school was located in the southeast part of town. It burned at one time. The lumber it was built out of had knot holes in it. The girls would stick notes in there to hide them, and once a boy saw one sticking out. He stuck a match to it and it went off just like powder. The school burned to the ground.

"It was only a three-room school. I was in Professor Allen O'Quinn's room. And we didn't get to go to school until they built another one (where the elementary is now). There were about 25 kids in my room. There was more than one grade in a room. I think the Professor would teach whatever he thought a child could observe. We bought our own books, and when the school burned, it burned all of my books. We had to buy new books when the school house was finished. It burned the first of school and we didn't get to go to school that year.

"We would ride the train (to church). It cost a dime. We could ride from Emporia up to Diboll, but when church was over, we would walk back home. It was a thrill for us kids to ride the passenger train and they would stop there at Emporia and take us on and put us off at Diboll."

"Mr. Bassett Copes had a little bakery. He would bake his bread and come around in a little one-horse wagon at about 11 o'clock and sell his bread for 10 cents a loaf. It was really good bread."

From an early date, Diboll's inhabitants were

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conscious that the town had a future.

Mrs. Fannie Farrington, who arrived in 1903, summed up the spirit of early Diboll well:

"First, we had no other social activities but the church. We had a band at that time and we had an orchestra and, of course, baseball... Diboll has most always been a very progressive little town. It had push behind it, but I might say this, that it was always for the good."

The push behind Diboll came from Tom Temple, whom historians have called *"the man of high-risk ventures who ran, like his saws and locomotives, wide open."* But his enthusiasm and self-discipline were infectious. Diboll started early to put itself on the map of East Texas. The years 1894 to 1908 saw the little town, barely a whistle stop, begin to shape its future. The original mill, Mill No. 1, took nearly a year of hard work and construction under Temple's guidance to build. There were then haul roads to be built, and an entire town to be laid out to provide living accommodations for the mill's employees.

What was the magnet which attracted Tom Temple, and those he inspired, to this rather precarious undertaking?

The lumber industry had long been an important element in the economic health of Texas. Between 1870 and 1929, the lumber industry employed more workers than any other industry in the state. From the beginning, it was "labor intensive," dependent more upon human resources than most of the industrial activities of the time. The occupational skills required were diverse but with some exceptions not too complex. This fact allowed many unskilled workers an opportunity for work to supplement or replace the meager existence offered by farming in East Texas at the turn of the century.

Most of the business establishments in the industry were small individual firms in rural areas which relied upon local consumption or access to larger, near-by cities for sale of their products. Few employed large numbers of workers or produced large quantities and varieties of lumber products. Even fewer had visions about the growth and urbanization that would take place in America over the next few decades.

Whether Tom Temple was consciously aware of these factors is a matter for conjecture. He had been in the lumber business in different capacities for more than 12 years when he established the Southern Pine Lumber Company of Texas. From time to time he had made a little money which had enabled him to buy out his partners in the original Southern Pine Lumber Company in Arkansas. But he had also experienced failures, one in connection with an earlier mill venture in Atlanta, Texas. Perhaps the immediate success and continued growth of the Southern Pine Lumber Company during this formative period were more attributable to his unique individual character than to any extraordinary business sense or bold stroke of luck.

Paul Burka of *Texas Monthly* put it well when he wrote:

"Tom Temple was a different sort of lumberman from most who operated in the Piney Woods. He was neither the biggest, nor the most successful, nor the most innovative, but he brought to the business something that was lacking at the turn of the century...a sense of permanence. Perhaps the crucial difference between him and the others...was his awareness that the world was bigger than the Piney Woods."

With the completion of the initial mill site in 1894, "SPLCo", as it was called, began milling operations in June. It had shipped by year-end approximately 196 carloads of lumber to various locations in the Mid-West, Texas and Oklahoma. Most of the initial cut was from trees which had covered the mill site and town area. The timber was hauled exclusively by oxen-yoked wagons at this time and then deposited in a mill pond. Pond No. 1 initially covered an area of approximately one and one-half acres. Hand dollies and mule teams, were used primarily within the mill itself. The initial sawmill equipment consisted of a used single steam driven circular saw which was constantly in need of repair and sharpening. However, this saw made possible a capacity of about 50,000 feet per day, which was about double the capacity needed under the contract.

Bob Weeks was involved in many aspects of the very early sawmill work. After helping to dig the log pond, he moved on to another job.

"The next work I did for Southern Pine Lumber Company, I worked on the skidway for the fellow that had the contract for running the mill. His name was Herrington, I believe. I rolled logs off the skidway on the transfer truck that carried them up to the mill. I worked there a while; then I went to the woods.

"Manny Atwood was my woods foreman. I worked with the loading crew that operated west of town. Later I went to work in the woods for Dick Warner who was woods foreman. I was driving a log truck (probably a wagon at the time). They paid a loan on a logging company and bought the logging contract they had. I worked for them on the logging company till 1898.

"In 1898, the first day of May, I went to work in the planer. They had a little planer at the old molding shed there. I worked there till the first

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day of February in the planer. They had some short-lived timber over there and moved the teams back the twentieth of June, 1902. I got through over there and moved the teams back out. Then I went back to the planing mill; that was in 1902. I stayed at the planing mill. I was feeding the sizer at the planing mill and helping the planer foreman, W.M. Ashford. They decided to rebuild the mill and was building a new planer.

"After they decided to build the new planing mill, that took up all of Mr. Ashford's time on the construction of that, and I operated the old planing mill while they were building the new one. We moved into the new planing mill October, 1903.

"In 1905, they sent me to Lufkin Land. Mr. Temple owned an interest in that company, and they sent me to Lufkin Land to operate the planing mill there at night for a month. When I came back to Diboll, Mr. Ashford told me that they were intending to make him superintendent and were going to give me the planing mill. So I took the planing mill in 1906, and operated as planer foreman till 1932."

Many of the initial logging hands were local farmers like Tom Vansau who were under contract to cut and deliver timber to the mill pond under the direction of the woods superintendent. Vansau would later play an important role as Dave Kenley's assistant when the company undertook in 1909 a survey of all the SPLCo timberlands.

Rivie Vansau, Tom's daughter, talked about her father's work in the early days:

"I have heard that he started (with Southern Pine) when the mill began to be built. After it was built, he went to work in the woods in the camp areas, where the logs were being cut.

"I don't know whether he ever sawed logs or not. I never heard him speak of it. They are called 'flatheads.' He mostly worked in directing how the wood was to be cut. They laid it off in sections so one sawyer would have a certain place to saw. He scaled logs, too, and helped purchase land.

"It was in securing land, such as working out problems, lawsuits, and things like that that he worked with Mr. Kenley. I guess when they went to buy land, somebody would go and inspect it. They had lots of trouble with people who claimed land that the company claimed."

Tom Vansau was one of many local people who became a SPLCo employee and an asset to the company. It didn't take Tom Temple long to realize that his labor force was the most important element in his operation and he paid attention to retaining it year round.

Most permanent employees received wages, but many of the seasonal or contract laborers, as well as certain full-time positions like fallers and buckers, were paid on a piecework basis. Wages for most workers were between $7.50 and $9.00 a week (six days/11 hours daily) and were paid monthly. Skilled workers such as sawyers, filers, edgermen and similar positions in the mill earned $5 to $10 per day. Skilled positions in the camp such as mule skinners, bull punchers and blacksmiths earned $2.50 to $4.00 per day. Foremen, whether in the mill or camps, and saw filers earned around $125-$150 per month.

These wage scales remained fairly constant throughout the region until around 1910. Executive positions were paid at much higher rates, often four to six times the top skilled wage rates. SPLCo foremen, managers, and executives were able to purchase company stock, but in most cases, as Mr. Kenley said, *"He (Mr. Temple)... let them pay for it when they could and very few of them ever made payment on it. The stock paid itself out."*

Although Diboll required a few years to develop into a real town, it reflected from the start the "permanence" of a real town and vibrated with civic activity. By the end of 1895, Diboll was an established (but often overlooked) bustling community in the middle of the woods. The mill output by that year had increased to almost 700 cars of lumber annually. With the start of economic recovery in 1897 from the "Panic of 1893", annual car shipments would near the one thousand mark.

The fact that Diboll and the Southern Pine mill could be established in the same year the rest of the country was experiencing an economic panic is interesting and instructive.

Many railroad companies, big and small, were defaulting and going into receivership on the national scene, and the number of commercial failures in that year was three times as large as in 1873 with liabilities half again as great. One hundred fifty-eight national banks failed (most of them in the West and South), as well as 172 state banks, 177 private banks, 47 savings banks, 13 trust companies, and 16 mortgage companies. Unemployment and labor troubles ran high and bands of men out of work roamed the country.

In 1894, about 750,000 American workmen were involved in disturbances of one sort or another. That year an important strike took place in the rail industry, beginning with an explosive situation created by George M. Pullman, head of the Pullman Palace Car Company. Pullman was an example of the hard-boiled business magnate currently in economic power. He had strong feudal

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power in his company town, Pullman, where the workmen's complaints about conditions and wages were brutally ignored. A strike there spread to the American Railway Union headed by Eugene V. Debs. In its later stages the larger strike was violent and costly, and it resulted in what one history of the times termed *"an extremely ugly feeling engendered between capital and labor."*

In a landmark decision, the Supreme Court declared the use of the injunction legal, and management had in its hands a powerful new weapon in labor disputes. This strike, whose roots lay in the economically unsettled period around 1893, was part of the general rise in the tide of opposition to big business and big wealth among the laboring class of America.

The situation in Diboll, however, was very different and quite isolated in 1893, and the sawmill venture there created work for many who desperately needed it. The style of business management in Diboll, especially in its human dimensions, was also diametrically opposite to that which had created the Pullman strike and its reverberating strikes in the railway industry. As Pate and Vivian Warner, long-time Diboll residents, expressed:

"The Temples always took care of their people. They were interested in their business but they were interested in the people who worked for them. And while it was for their interest, they wanted them to have all the advantages they needed. The Temple's were loyal to their workers, and their workers were loyal to the company. Instead of drifting about from here to there, working conditions were always good. They believed in treating their people fairly and improved the living conditions in Diboll.

"They were good to their employees, that's the reason the union never came in. Lots of folks would come down there and try to organize unions in Diboll, but they weren't really needed. They paid fair wages as much as anybody else."

While the population of Diboll and the output of the mill continued to increase, Temple was negotiating for adjoining timberlands in Angelina County which were necessary for the continued growth of the company. Most of the initial acreage of stumpage, plus additional acres purchased in 1897, was cut by men working out of the original camp near Lindsey Springs, which was about eight miles east of Diboll. This logging camp was not moved until early 1907 when, now known as "Camp No. 1," it was placed near Rayville in Trinity County. Another camp known as "No. 2" was later established four miles southwest of "No. 1."

By 1902 SPLCo and Diboll had grown far beyond the expectations of not only the company's owners but also many of its competitors.

Reorganization of the company was completed in June, 1902, with the capital stock basis increased from the original $50,000 to $300,000.

In addition, the Texas Southeastern Railroad, which had started as a small spur in 1898 to meet the needs of long hauls associated with the purchase of additional acreage, was now covering more than 15 miles of common bed not including its spurs into the new timber acreage.

Diboll had become more than a flag stop and the mill had been enlarged with the addition of a band saw operation as well as the development of improved planer and edger facilities and storage facilities. Steam driven skidders were beginning to take the place of the oxen teams in the woods while mule and oxen teams continued to be used for hauls within the mill itself. Lumber shipments had risen to over 1400 cars annually and the need for additional mill facilities was readily apparent to most of the management team.

While still quite simple and semi-primitive, Diboll nevertheless showed the beginnings of a cultural center. A Ladies Improvement Society was quite active. So were a number of church groups. A library was established with a donation of $5,000 in books from T.L.L. Temple. Athletic teams from Diboll competed against other town teams in baseball leagues as well as other sports. The general store had grown to encompass a storage building as large as the original store. A store was also operating at the camp location near Lindsey Springs.

Dividing himself between Texarkana and Diboll, particularly in the fall and winter, T.L.L. Temple was finding himself becoming a benevolent baron over a semi-feudal domain in the Piney Woods.

In addition to his personal relation with his employees and his continued interest in day-to-day operations, he found it necessary to expand his sales staff into a number of other states. This was his chance to meet the growing demand for lumber accompanying the increasing urbanization of America.

By 1908, company salesmen were permanently based in Lincoln, Nebraska; Wichita, Kansas; St. Louis, Missouri; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Texarkana. Tom Temple's growing reputation as an astute businessman and a knowledgable timber man garnered him national recognition and the respect of such men as John Henry Kirby of Kirby Lumber and Charles S. Keith of Central Coke and Coal. Both of these men, with T.L.L. Temple, would play

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leading roles in the establishment of the Southern Pine Association, a manufacturers' association that established uniform size and grade specification for lumber as well as acting as an industry service and political interest group.

By 1906 the continued phenomenal growth of the company and the town necessitated another increase in capital stock to $600,000, which was a sizable sum of money at that time. Preliminary construction of Mill No. 2, which included a hardwood facility, was also begun. Electric lighting became a reality in 1906 with the installation of a steam powered 20 kilowatt dynamo-generator. Initial clearing and some construction was also started on the future Pineland facility in September of 1906, under th auspices of Garrison-Norton Lumber Company in which Tom Temple bought a one-third interest and would completely buy out in 1910. The stage was set for what would become bonanza years for Tom Temple, SPLCo, and the town of Diboll. For the next two decades, a dream would become a reality and a legend would be established.

One of the key ingredients in the establishment of both the reality and the legend was the excellent company railroad begun at the turn of the century.

T.L.L. Temple chartered the Texas South-Eastern Railroad on October 9, 1900, as a branch of the Southern Pine Lumber Company enterprises. When first organized, the railway was called the Texas Southeastern (without a hyphen, which was added in 1931). Actually, the Texas Southeastern was organized as a separate entity from the Southern Pine Lumber Company, but it was run by individuals who formed part of the management of Southern Pine. In 1898 the SPLCo had purchased a narrow-gauge railroad from W.N. Atwood of about seven miles in length which became the basis for the Texas Southeastern.

Beginning in 1900 the railroad was built eastward from Diboll in order to provide access to the rich stands of Neches River bottom timber in Angelina County, and to connect with the Cotton Belt Railroad.

The Temple and Frost lumber interests owned extensive long-leaf pine stands in this area, and until 1900 their milling operations at Diboll had been served by the Houston, East and West Texas line. In order to secure an additional source of supply, Temple and his top officials decided to extend their logging road to connect with the Cotton Belt. It was also at this time that the Interstate Commerce Commission was investigating special allowances made by trunk railroads to tram or logging railroads, and SPLCo's managers thought their freight rates would be more secure if they line-hauled their lumber rather than merely delivered it to the Southern Pacific which had earlier been the Houston, East and West Texas at Diboll.

About 1908 the T.S.E. was using eight locomotives and 165 cars, the largest of which could carry up to 60,000 pounds of wood. A machine shop with a rail-straightener, a crane and a great deal of up-to-date maintenance machinery had been built in Diboll. However, by 1908 the timber east of Diboll had already been largely depleted, and the company abandoned the T.S.E.'s original trackage. It was immediately extended westward, however, across the Neches to Vair in Trinity County. It also attained the status of a common carrier at that time.

Construction of the westward extension of the T.S.E. followed economically efficient principles. Its ruling grade was 5/10 of 1% lower than that of any other railroad running into Lufkin. Its maximum curves, of which there were few, were only 40. Trestles and trackage were built to very advanced specifications. They were also very solidly grounded on sand ballast.

Frank Laing, an old-time conductor on the Texas Southeastern Railroad, was interviewed in 1954.

"When I first came here, I didn't have a regular job. I worked in both engine service and train service. They were running a mixed run from Diboll to Lufkin one trip a day, and a log train two trips a day. That is as far as the road went at that time. Later, they built to Bluff City, which was 35 miles, and we made one trip to Lufkin and one trip out there. In 1909, I was regular conductor on the mixed run, and we had quite a job in doing all the work, such as handling the lumber, switching at the planer and the sawmill, and at times we would have to haul logs. But later, in 1913 or 1914 we didn't handle logs. It was just a mixed or local run. All this time, Mr. Walker was superintendent of the mill, and he was the overseer of the log train, but Mr. Durham had charge of them.

"Mr. Tom Temple, the old gentleman, who built the mill, would come down here on a trip from Texarkana and we would make a special run for him.

"When they built the GL&N (Groveton, Lufkin and Northern Railroad), it ran over the T.S.E. from there into Lufkin. They didn't have nothing more than just a mixed run. But later, they hauled logs the T&NO (Texas and New Orleans Railway), and at one time in 1916-18, the GL&N had a log train. T.S.E. put a log train out to White City and turned on the steam cap and ran over the Cotton Belt. There were eight trains a day over the T.S.E."

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In those early years of railroad logging, mules and oxen were used to haul, respectively, long logs on slip-tongue carts and short logs on wagons to the spurs of the T.S.E. branch lines in the woods. These teams worked in all weathers and the railroad was built to do this, too. The Southern Pine Lumber Company worked on a principle of delivering a certain amount of logs every working day, rather than piling up logs in the dry season to be hauled during the wet season. Since the roadbed had to be usable in both wet and dry weather, such a policy contributed to the T.S.E.'s excellent maintenance regime. The T.S.E. even operated its own tie-making department to insure a ready supply of well-cut ties. This woods work was taken on by farmers from the countryside to supplement their incomes.

The T.S.E. was operating in a countryside being changed by the times. Frankie (Mrs. A.B.) Glass told her daughter Marie Glass Davis that Marie's great-grandparents, John A. Massingill and Annie Jane Otis Massingill, lived on land in this area that had been purchased from Joseph Copes in 1880.

"They had a smoke house where they kept pork. They had a big orchard with peaches, plums, figs and pears. Grandma would dry the fruit. She would cut it up, spread it out on sheets and put the pieces in the sun. But before the sun went down, she would take the sheets up and bring them in the house. The next morning she would spread them back out. But she never let the sun go down on the dried fruit.

"They had two big barns with a hall and a cistern. In front of the house they had a building where they kept the surreys and buggies. It had a loft where Grandpa would put the peanuts. It had a ladder and the children would go up the ladder and pick off peanuts.

"Grandma had a big garden. She had asparagus, strawberries, cauliflower and kale.

"In her dining room she had a big, long table, which would sit 12 or 15 people. She cooked great big pieces of ham. She also made the best little biscuits. If Grandpa wasn't there, she would read a scripture and then she would have a prayer. I remember I would nearly starve to death, waiting on Grandma to get through praying so we could eat.

"There was a road that came across the prairie near their house. There was a big tree that people camped under at night. Grandma said they would see a light or before dark you would see a covered wagon down there. She would send one of the boys down there or she would go down to see if they needed anything. . . such as meat or any kind of food. This big oak tree was called the 'Baby Tree.' Sometimes women would deliver a baby while camped there. They told the children the baby came out of the hole in the tree. The old tree was still standing when we moved here in 1927."

Other early memories of country life around Diboll were supplied by Mrs. Icie Courtney Waltman, born in 1895, whose family settled in the Prairie Grove community east of Diboll in 1906.

"It is amazing to me that the land which was open with big trees is crowded now. A long time ago there were many different animals such as squirrels, rabbits and birds which ate seed. People keep them killed out now. They had hogs in the woods that would eat all that stuff and root it up. Now everyone keeps their stock up. Goats and sheep ran wild and the goats would eat the underbrush.

"We never did have a buggy; we had a wagon. My daddy and his brother bought a farm together. Each one took a certain part. After we were kinda settled and I was about sixteen, my daddy told us, 'Now if we make seven bales of cotton this year, we will buy an organ.' He loved music. My uncle told his children, 'If we make seven bales of cotton, we'll buy a buggy.' Everytime they went south, they would pass our house in that pretty buggy with the fringe on top. Papa would say, 'I love the sound of that organ better than the sight of that buggy.'

"We raised everything we ate. Our main crop was corn and cotton. We raised peanuts, peas, beans, potatoes, cane. . . and anything that came along that we could eat.

"We went mayhaw picking and berry picking for mulberries and huckleberries. . . we would eat the mulberries by putting them in milk and put sugar on them. We would put up the blackberries in jars. We didn't do much canning way back then, because people didn't know how. We learned later.

"Another thing I have seen my grandmother do is when our milk clabbered, she would put it in a clean flour sack and put it out in the air and let every bit of that water drain out of it. It made good cottage cheese.

"They would buy green coffee beans and parch them in the oven. Everyone had a coffee mill. They put it in their mill and ground it.

"I have helped my mother spin yarn. She would have cards to card all the bumps out of the cotton, fix it in little rolls and spin it. They would use the thread for crocheting and knitting so many things they needed that kind of thread for.

"One home remedy we used was coal oil, which we burned in the lamps. If you got a sting or a snake bite, they would soak that area in coal oil.

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You could get turpentine in bottles but if you didn't have it, you could use pine rosin. They would take the rosin and mix it with cow tallow and make a poultice for sprains. Sometimes when children had the croup, they would put a plaster of it on their chests.

"Peach tree leaf poultices were used for irritations. Sometimes children would get poison ivy in their hands. They would boil the leaves and crush them up, put in meal to thicken it, make a poultice, and put it on the irritation.

"Another thing was they would break a peach tree limb and strip the leaves off. For diarrhea, you would scrape the bark up, boil it and drink the tea. For vomiting you would scrape it down, boil it and drink the tea.

"They would save every peach seed. Back then we would have something you called yellow jaundice. They would crack the seeds, get the kernels out and eat them. Evidently it worked or they wouldn't have kept doing it.

"Bamboo Briar, they claimed, was good for burns. Mother would lay the leaves down and roll them until they were soft and put them on the burns to drive the fire out."

Mamie Warner Massey has lived in the Ryan Chapel community since her birth in 1901. Her memories were similar to those of Mrs. Waltman:

"My father would butcher hogs, cut them up, salt them down on a big table in the smoke house, and let the meat stay there until it took the salt. He would take it up and wash it and put it out on a roof top to dry. When it dried, he would put it in a barrel. He'd put a layer of meat, then corn shucks until he got all the meat in a barrel, and he would cover it up with a cloth.

"He would raise cane, and when it matured in the fall, we would all strip it and haul it to the cane mill to make syrup. Then he would put it in the barrel. The rock candy would stick to the side of the barrel and we would get to eat that.

"For making hominy, they would shell the corn and put it in a wash pot and put the lye water over it and let it stay awhile. Then they would take it up. I have seen some of them take a rub board and rub the corn on it to rub the eyes off of it. They would wash it real good and put it back and cook it awhile in clear water to make the hominy.

"Most everybody used sassafras tea. And I still love it. They would dig up the roots, wash them, cut them in pieces, boil it and strain it. I always put milk and sugar in mine."

Diboll, then, like other sawmill towns, was an outpost town in the wilderness of turn-of-the-century East Texas. But in that wilderness, there were longtime settlers, mostly farmers, whose families hailed from the southeastern states of Georgia, Mississippi and Tennessee. The area around Diboll had been settled in the early decades of the nineteenth century, and many local residents today possess deed papers dating to Mexican land grants.

For instance, the Stovall family, which settled the Stovall Creek area east of Diboll before Angelina County was formed from Nacogdoches County, lived on 640 acres originally deeded by the Mexican Government to Jose Morin in 1835. Gussie Stovall Wright, the granddaughter of settlers John M. and Caroline Stovall, described rural life around the first decade of the twentieth century outside of Diboll. Born in 1897, Mrs. Wright lived much of her life about 3½ miles east of Diboll near what is now Farm Road 1818. Her childhood was spent as a farm girl who often rode a horse a few miles into a bustling new town with a commissary to get special supplies. And that made a lot of difference:

"I can remember when there wasn't any road the way we go home now. You see, there was just a little space between where my daddy lived and Uncle Tommy's. The old road—they called it the 'Old Beef Road'—from Homer to Moscow ran through there. There was a lot of traffic that way. But they never did build a bridge on that creek. On the west side of Stovall Creek, where they forded it, it was dug down deep, a hundred yards or maybe one hundred and fifty yards on the west, just slanting way out so the team could pull the wagon.

"I don't remember the creek rising to where a person, when they had to go to town for something, couldn't get across. I wonder how that was; now it gets up to the banks sometimes. I went to Emporia that way. At White Oak Creek, near Diboll, they must have had a bridge of some kind because the Emporia people hauled a lot of lumber or timber to Emporia.

"I went to Diboll a lot of times. We had a gentle old mare and she was a good little saddle horse. . . old Minnie. And I had a side-saddle, too. I didn't ride a man's saddle. If they didn't need something more than a dollar's worth, they would send me out there. I could go and come back before they could hardly get the dishes washed.

"Mrs. Farrington worked in the commissary. She was the sweetest person, I thought. I think everybody loved her. . . and Mama could just tell me or write me a note to give Mrs. Farrington to send her material to make a dress. . . so many yards of what she wanted to make it out of. And Mrs. Farrington would know more about it than she would. And I would give it to Mrs. Farrington and she would smile and say 'Honey' this, that,

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and the other. She would cut off material and ways to trim of any kind. . . Mama would want something to trim it. . . and put it in a sack, and I would hang it on that old saddle. It wouldn't take me over two hours to go out there and back on that horse.

"About all I saw of Diboll was right in front of the store. I would usually tie the bridle or hitch it over a post or something. There were several who had fences around there."

Gussie Wright went on to talk about what people did for fun at that time in the rural area around Diboll:

*"For recreation? **Anything.** There was one or two people in the community who had parties. And we thought that was the grandest amusement that we could do. We would play 'Shoot the Buffalo' and all the promenade games. One would call the set. Uncle Amos Courtney was about the best. He would let us move a bed out of the way and have room to play.*

"And in our part of the community, we didn't think anything about walking to church. A bunch of us girls would get ready and by the time we would walk the two miles, there would be a big crowd of us. There was a certain place the Clarke girls would wait for us. They would get there a little early and they would join in with us. We walked to Pine Grove nearly every Sunday. It was a good piece—at least three miles—and Georgia Gann wanted me to go home with her one day from church. Of course, I was wanting to go as bad as she was wanting me to go. I had never been down there. Her sister was sick and after dinner and we had done the dishes, Georgia said, 'Let's walk around a little.' We went up to the old house—Ben Morris had built it but he vacated it so there wasn't no one living there. We sat down on the porch or lay down and she talked me into taking a dip of snuff. That was the first and last I ever took.

"It made me so sick I thought I was going to die, way down there on that little porch. She would spit and she didn't let on like it hurt. I reckon it didn't hurt her. . . she didn't holler like I did. Finally, I got able to go back to the house. I never did take another dip of snuff. . . I took the cure, remedy and everything in one dose."

As a young girl, Mrs. Wright was involved in the farm work done by her family on Stovall Creek. Her father's brothers and sisters had had the original Stovall 640 acres given to them in this way:

"Each child got a certain amount. The three girls' part was out toward Prairie Grove in the piney woods, and the boys got their part up and down the creek. Naturally, they were going to farm and make a lot on creek bottom dirt."

By the time she was fifteen, Mrs. Wright was a substantial help to her father:

"I could take that team down there and harrow off half that bottom field and get it ready to plant just as good as a man would. My father knew what kind of harrow to make. It was a homemade thing, but you had to stay out of the way of that thing. You couldn't walk beside it. You had to walk behind it. Driving it was just like driving to a wagon. It had teeth about a foot long that went into the ground."

Farming was a strong tradition among descendants of Angelina County settlers. Gussie Stovall married Floyd Wright when she was 16. They, too, ended up farming in the Stovall Creek area. She said, *"I thought I was getting a sawmill guy, and he didn't do another day of sawmill after we married."*

J.W. Stovall, Gussie's half-brother, filled in a bit more of the family history. He said that his forefathers came to Angelina County around 1845.

"They come the 'Old Beef Road.' The 'Old Beef Road' run from Natchez, Mississippi, through Angelina County. I think it come across the Angelina River by Brown's Ferry, and crossed the Neches River at Clark's Ferry. My grandpa came through there, and settled on what is now called Stovall Creek. It's about four and a half miles southeast of Diboll. He settled 640 acres. My grandfather was a farmer and a stockman.

"I heard my daddy say that my grandmother told them a few stories. They had this little house and my grandfather had gone east on his horse and a bear came up to the door, and she hit him with a mall, which addled him a little bit but he was able to leave. So Mr. Cherry came by pretty quick with his dogs. She told him about it, and they trailed him and killed him.

"My grandfather had these slave boys and he was friendly with them. When the war ended, he told them, 'Now, you boys can go back to where you came from and I'll pay your way. But if you want to stay here, you are more than welcome to stay.' One of the slaves, Old Dave, told him, 'If it's all right with you, I'll stay because when I left, I looked back and Mama was standing on the porch a 'crying and I'm afraid if I was to go back I wouldn't find her. She would be gone. So if it's all right with you, I'll just stay. You treat me all right and so I'll just stay here.'

"My daddy gave him three acres of land out on the old lane that went down to the Neches River, Dollarhide Lake and Cypress Lake. He farmed on it and he had a few cows and his chickens and cats. . . and a milk cow. He's buried

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at Prairie Grove. That's a white cemetery, but when old Dave died, some of our neighbors said we were going to bury him at Prairie Grove by his old mistress. It didn't make any difference what anybody might think. Said he has been here with us white people a long time. And so we got him a marker out there. His name was Simms. And so we put on his marker, 'Dave Stovall Simms.' He is there by Grandma Stovall."

Mr. Stovall was born in 1912. Marie Davis asked Mr. Stovall what it was like growing up on the creek east of Diboll:

"Well, we would go down on the creek fishing, me and two of my brothers, Jodie and George. Ollie and Nobie were my sisters. My daddy married four times and he had four bunches of children, 13 children. We were by his third wife and Gussie Wright was by his second wife and he had four by his first wife, Levi and Sam and Virgie and Molly...

"We would go down to the creek. In those days, the holes in the creek were deep enough to have water in them. The fish lived in there and in a dry spell, he would go up and down the creek fishing. We had a good time on the creek, a 'gabbing at one another while we was fishing. There was a swimming hole down there back of our field that I remember was about seven or eight feet deep. Us boys would go swimming. I was down there about three or four years ago and I went over to the old swimming hole and it was all growed up and filled up. There wasn't over two of three tubs of water in it. It might come back but I kinda doubt it.

"My dad had hogs in the woods, and we would go in there hog hunting. It was more open woods than it is now. The creek ran into the old river (the Neches) about a mile above the Dollarhide's place. There is a hole of water in the old river, the next bend above the mouth of Stovall Creek, and us boys used to call it the drum hole. We would go down there and fish for drum with crawfish. That's been a club pasture for a while. It is posted; you have to stay out.

"My daddy also raised corn and peanuts. We had a big garden. He had an acre garden that he stepped off one time. He knowed how many steps it would be to make an acre, so he stepped it off. We fenced it with pickets made out of pine timber.

"And generally had a hog for fattening. You gave him corn and peanuts. You could make some good meat out of him. We raised some cotton. And Uncle Tommy Stovall had a pretty big pasture and he had stock in there. So he closed up the pasture by putting a gate across the road. They had a fishing club near what we called Conn's pasture. There was some folks lived there named Foster. And the Foster kids would run out there and open the gate and that fishing club would throw them a little gift, a nickel, a dime or a quarter. But this gate has been done away with, and this Farm Road 1818 is there now. To us kids a nickel or a dime or quarter looked like gold."

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1894-1908



Before Diboll was founded, these children attended a school called "Accident". It was located near where the Municipal Golf course Pro-Shop is today. Many of their descendants live in and around the Diboll area today.

Identified are (bottom row) Lee Massingill, Maud Arrington Kellow, Paralee Warner Stevens and Emmitt Massingill. Middle Row: Debbie Massingill Perkins, William Warner, Jenny Warner, teacher I.D. Fairchild, Willie Warner Wilmoth and Tobe Smith. Top Row: Holly Warner, Nancy Prewitt Weeks, Minnie Arrington Green, Hobby Stovall, Doc Warner, Louisa Smith Warner, Ann Warner and Laura Massingill Warner.



Diboll's first school located near where Dr. Cathcart's office is now on S. Temple. Allen O'Quinn was the professor.



Early Diboll Methodists and Baptists met here. Lodge hall was upstairs. This was the location of various social activities. The building was later made into apartments before it burned.

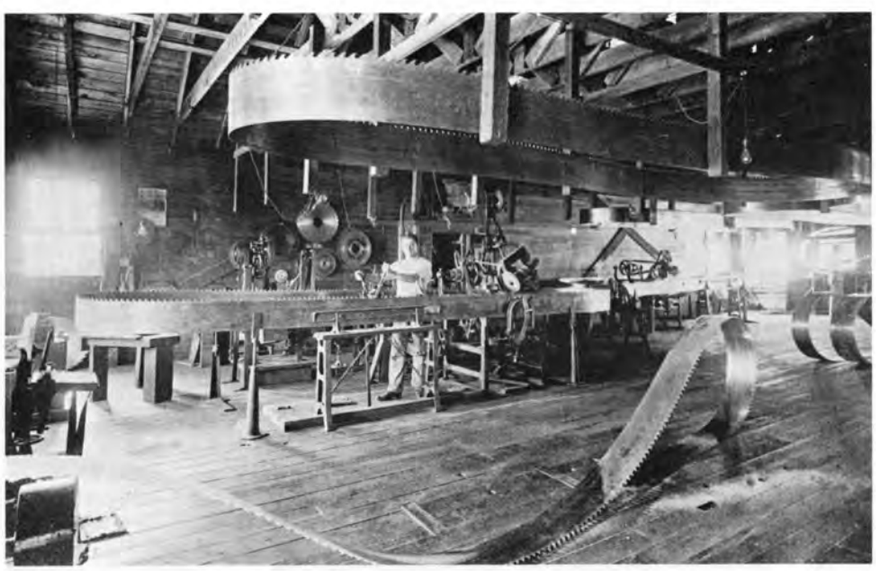
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Commissary. This picture was made in 1919. Notice SPLCo office and "Library" on the right.



Hardwood log on an eight wheeled Martin log wagon. Notice how large the log is.



Filing room where flexible bands were sharpened and set. This was some of the most precise work of the mill.

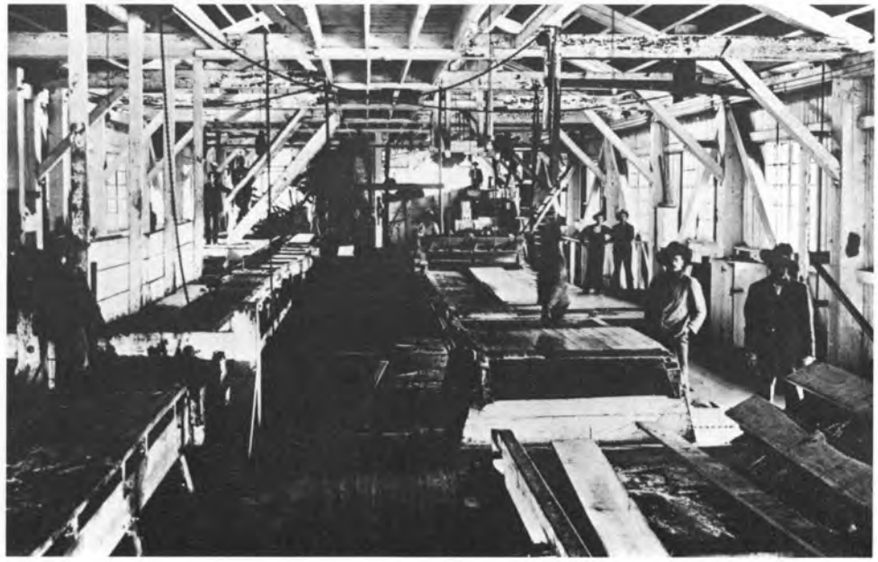
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Inside office taken in 1907 according to calendar on the wall.



Camp #1 store. The converted rail car contained groceries, dry goods and other necessities for camp residents.



A scene inside the sawmill.

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Drivers and slip teams used in logging at Camp No. 2. Oxen are absent in this photograph. In the 1st row John A. Massingill is pictured 2nd from left and Tom Vansau is 3rd.

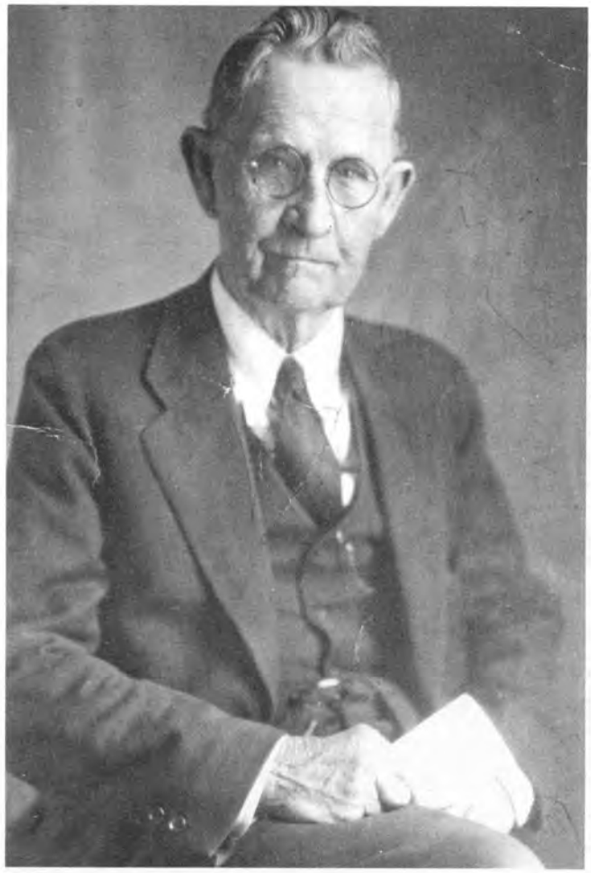


View of the lumberyard with stacks of lumber drying in the open. In the background notice the small houses of the mill workers and the smoke and cinders in the air.



Logging train unloading at the mill pond. Logs were stored in the mill pond to prevent moisture loss and to facilitate their entry into the mill.

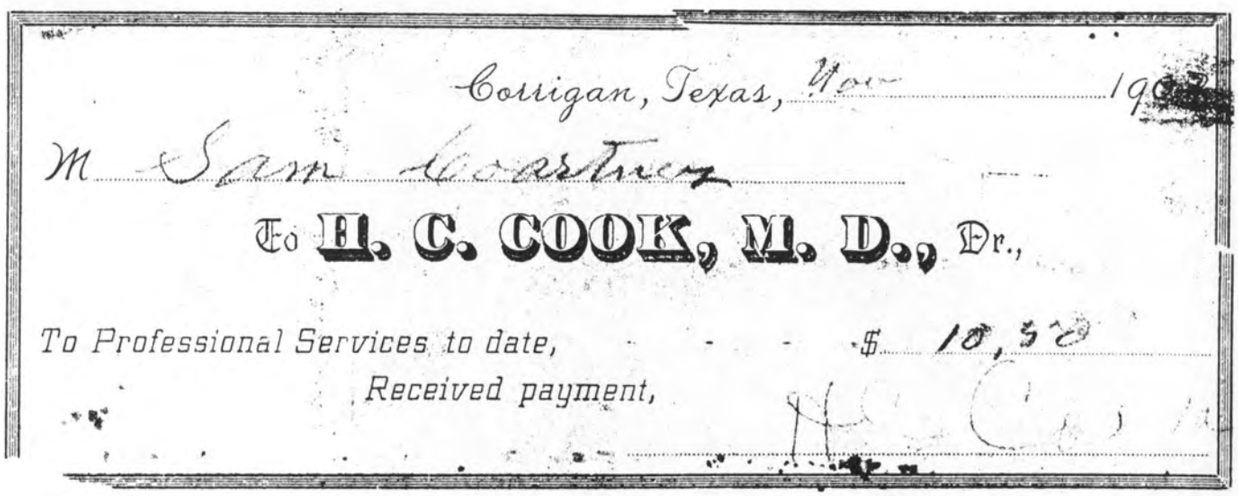
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Dr. H.C. Cook, 1851-1936, served Diboll and the surrounding countryside. He was loved by all.



Diboll Ladies Club. Mrs. W.P. Rutland is second from left.



Corrigan, Texas, Nov 190

M Sam Courtney

To **H. C. COOK, M. D.,** Dr.,

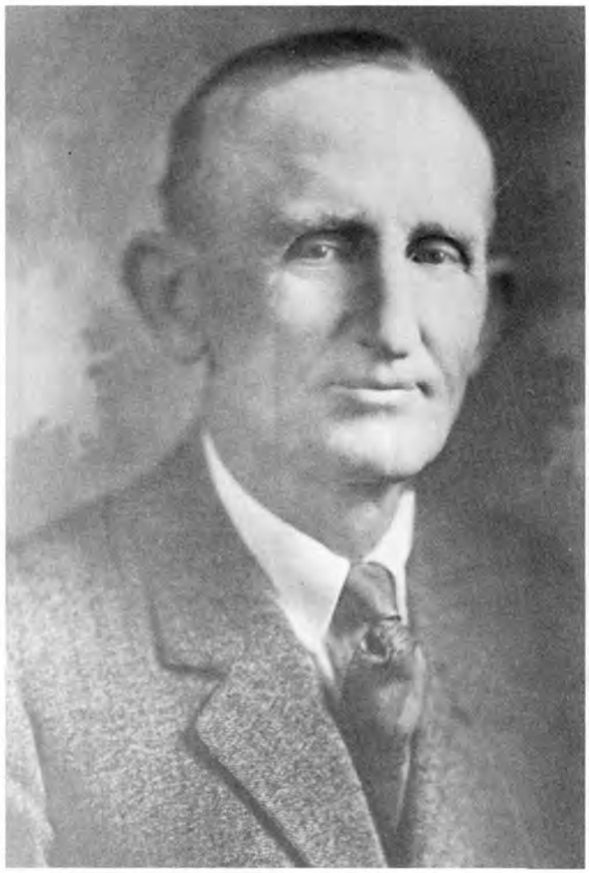
To Professional Services to date, $ 10,50

Received payment,

H C Cook

Receipt from 1903 for $10.50 for the delivery of baby of Sam Courtney family. Signed H.C. Cook.

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W.M. Ashford, 1862-1925, who was the first mill superintendent. He arrived in 1893 with T.L.L. Temple when they built the first mill.



T.L.L. Temple, founder of Diboll and Southern Pine Lumber Company.



Scene at a lumber camp in the woods out from Diboll in 1908. Loggers and their families lived in these boxcar houses. When the timber was cut, the camps were moved to a new woods location.

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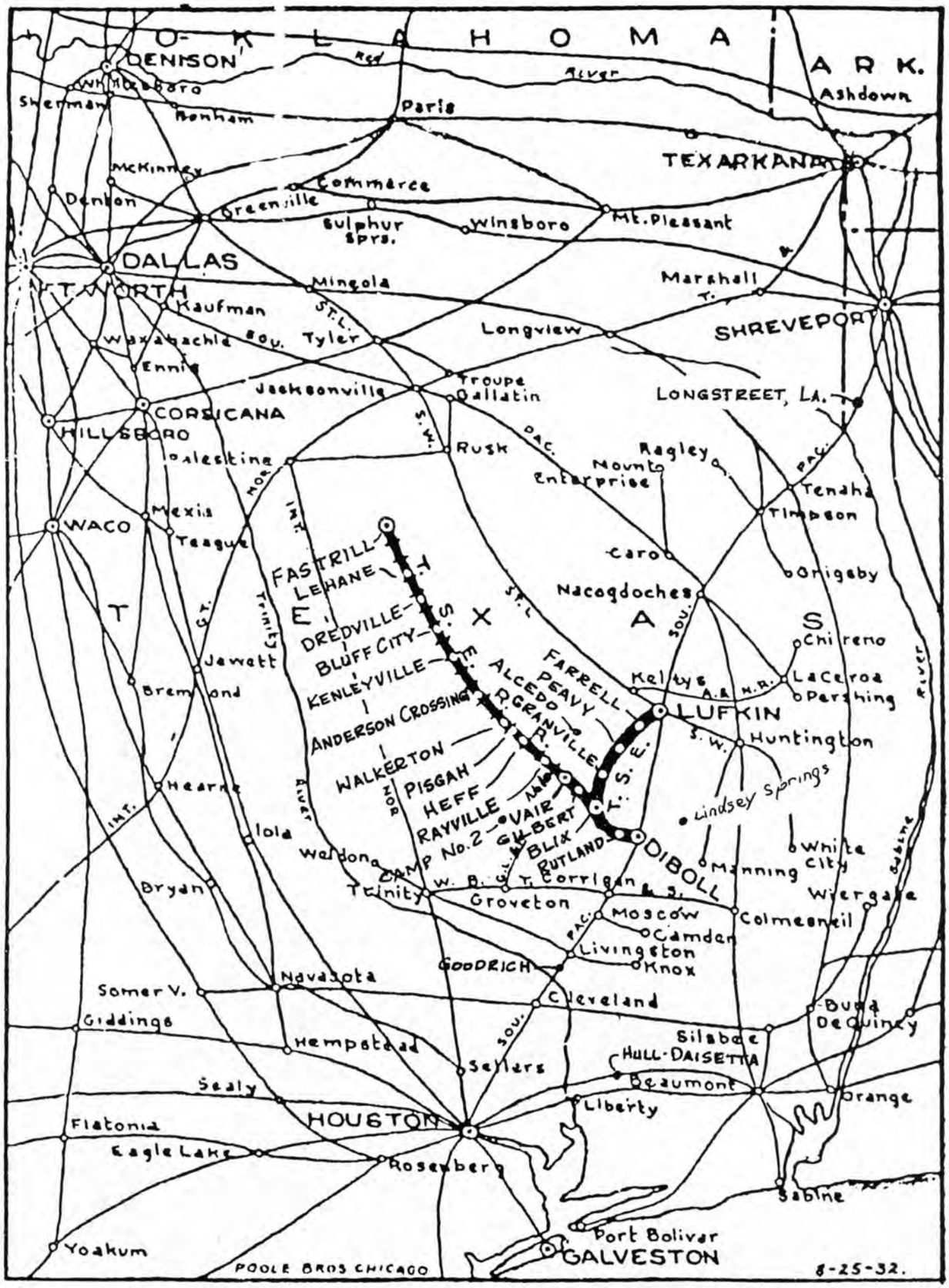


Large hardwood stand being surveyed in 1908. Pictured is John A. Massingill (front center) on horseback.



Negro school. J.W. Hogg was the professor. Notice a ladder was used to climb the "bell tower" to ring the clarion bell.

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Map showing the route of the Texas South-Eastern Railroad and the major camps of Southern Pine Lumber Company.

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Logger

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Chapter III

"A Yellow Pine Barony"

The year 1908 was a watershed year for both Southern Pine Lumber Company and the town of Diboll. The year 1907 ranked—and still does today—as the biggest lumber-producing year in the state of Texas. Tom Temple had been steadily amassing timberland since his original purchases in Angelina County until 1908 when he had 124,563 acres in fee simple and 84,668 in stumpage contracts. By January of 1908 there were 710 names on the company payroll at Diboll.

Each year up to 1908, Temple had seen to it that his company bought more timber than it cut. His policy, in fact, held true far into the 1930's when the Depression brought an end to the timber bonanza. He also required his loggers to saw the trees closer to the ground than many of his competitors were doing. This and other conservation measures were part of the competitive edge gradually being developed by Southern Pine.

Temple's emphasis on conservative logging came about the same time as the two-man crosscut saw was replacing the less efficient axe as the tool of choice in the woods. Today it seems astonishing that East Texas timber empires were thriving decades before the advent of the chainsaw.

By 1908 Temple had acquired, in addition to the mill at Diboll, a one-third interest in another at Pineland, which was originally established by the Garrison-Norton partnership in 1906. Temple hoped to buy out his partners but lacked the necessary capital. It was at this point that the first major effort was made by Southern Pine Lumber Company to attract outside investors. Temple commissioned the *American Lumberman*, a national lumber trade publication, to write a promotional piece about Diboll and Southern Pine. His grandson, Arthur Jr., today refers to this 1908 publication as *"a puff article,"* but it served its purpose. The article contained a lavish amount of pictorial information about Temple's mill at Diboll, a centerfold sketch map of the operation (which incorporated a certain amount of wishful thinking but looked attractive to New York's investors), and a charmingly written account of the industry's history and hopes.

The *American Lumberman* issue, which was reprinted in 1969 by *The Free Press* at Diboll under the name *"A Look into the Past,"* stressed land ownership and conservation-mindedness as cornerstones of Temple's business philosophy. Though it did not mention by name Gifford Pinchot, the first professionally trained American forester who became prominent on the national conservation scene, it contained many allusions to the perpetual forest idea. As it turned out, this clever piece of public relations worked very well. By 1910, Eastern investors had made it possible for Temple to buy out his partners at Pineland and to change the name of the mill there to the Temple Lumber Company.

Diboll, meanwhile, was profiting from the attempt to make it into a model mill town for the

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benefit of investors. The *American Lumberman* article (directed by L.D. Gilbert, the SPLCo General Manager) ended by describing Diboll's improvements under the headings "Electric Lights and Telephones," "Two Dynamos," and "Fire Protection."

A section called "For the Public Good" described "Physical and Intellectual Comfort," "A Women's Club," "An Athletic Society," "A Dairy and Poultry Farm," "A Magnificent Library Building," and "Private and Public Schools" as some of Diboll's attractions at that time. These improvements were ascribed to company management, *"which is being done,"* it said *"on broad and philanthropic lines that must demand explanation and exploitation in any well balanced account of the operations of the Southern Pine Lumber Company."*

It was not the usual thing, clearly, for lumber towns to be built as enduring as communities. But even T.L.L. Temple's logging camps were constructed with an eye to permanence. Most companies threw up hastily constructed woods camps whose major permanent feature was their portability. As Paul Burka wrote for *Texas Monthly "It was common practice for companies occasionally to send trainloads of prostitutes into the camps, but Temple's camps were built for families. One, at Fastrill, lasted nineteen years."* Ruth (Mrs. Melvin) Currie said, *"We didn't look on Fastrill as a camp. To us it was a small town."*

Diboll, too, was an improvement over most of the sawmill towns in East Texas. Though it did not at first have better housing or sanitation than most, it soon began to enjoy the trappings of permanence because of the wider perspective of its founder. Temple's family was well-educated. He brought to the enterprise in the Piney Woods the perspective of a public-spirited East Coast business-man, and even today Diboll is a demonstration of the benefits of this broader view.

Pearl Havard, born in 1912, came to Diboll for school from nearby Beulah, and remembers Diboll thusly:

"Not many of the houses were painted. Mr. Strauss and the people that ran the office, theirs were all painted: but the others were not. There were dirt streets, and chickens and hogs and things like that in the street and on the school campus, almost everywhere. They didn't have any bathrooms or running water. They had electric lights, but that came from the sawmill. You could see all the outdoor toilets. It was just like anywhere else. Diboll was just as clean as anywhere else. There were a lot of children who grew up and made real fine men and women."

Diboll was plain, but it was growing. There was an early sense of permanence felt by the people of all ages. And there was a feeling of excitement over its potential as a mill town. Edwin Nelson, who has lived in Diboll since 1913, once jotted down some notes he called *"The Daily Life of a Child"* which show the close relationship between the mill and the lives of Diboll children:

"I guess that I was an average child doing the things that I did. I was about three or four years old. They tried a hammer and nails to keep me busy. . . I would run off to the office and my dad would have to quit his work and paddle me on the legs and take me back to the house. Most of the time my mother would miss me and look out and see the collie dog's tail wagging and know that I was on my way to the office.

"One day I slipped off and was on the trestle in front of E.C. Durham's house when it was time for the noon train to run. She (Mrs. Durham) had just caught me and picked me up when the train ran. They built a high picket fence to keep me in the yard. . ."

Later in his life in Diboll, Nelson was still spending time at the company offices, as he wrote in a sketch titled *"The Joys in a Young Man's Life"*:

"Every school day at dinnertime, I would hurry and eat my dinner. Then I would leave to pick up time books at each yard office of the foreman.

"I would go by the shipping office and pick up the time for the shipping, and then go get the time for the planer. I would then go by the dry kilns and get the time for the shed crew and the dry kiln crew and go over to the hardwood yard and get the time for the hardwood crew. I would go by Mill Two and pick up the time for the mill crew. I would hurry to the boiler room as it was then time to blow the quarter whistle.

"I would always make it there in time to get to blow the whistle. Mr. W.E. Chandler would always let me blow the whistle and you would have to spring on the cable to make it blow. I would holler at George Hardin, Curtis Partin or some of the other men that were millwrights. One of them was 'Jabo'—T.J. Johnston, a millwright, and another was Bear Faires who worked at Mill Two. At Mill One I never got to see any of them as they were upstairs and I picked up the time downstairs in E.M. Hamner's office.

"I managed to make it to the depot to catch the T.S.E. switching the planer. I would ride the train down to the store and helped them switch the cars at the planer. I would just make the bell at school before being late."

Dewey Ballenger, born in 1898, remembered some of the details from his boyhood around Burke and Diboll:

"Before we moved (from Burke) to Diboll I re-

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member we had a pot of hog slop, warm vegetables and all, and I set down in it. For chores there was no more than peddling buttermilk and vegetables in the Quarters. We didn't have an allowance at that time and every time we made a nickel we turned it over to our mother. And every day we'd peddle buttermilk, and my mother had milkcows and she tended them outside and always had a hog or two to kill every winter. Mother always made hogshead cheese and Heine Weise would always buy what she didn't use. I remember they tore the old planer down. I remember before it ever turned a wheel. . . I came down the railroad with my daddy. I'd try to go around the bull nettles and always get into them. He'd take a chew of tobacco, he always chewed tobacco, and wipe my feet with it that'd kill the sting.

"When I got old enough, they put me on the lumber yard doing common labor. They put me out there, I didn't know one board from the other, but they put me there to marking lumber anyway. I worked 50 years for Mr. Temple."

Jewel Capps, born in 1902, was an Angelina county farm girl and homemaker during this early time. Her memories show much about the domestic side of life, as she lost her mother at the age of ten and had to be the *"chief cook and bottle-washer"* for her family:

"I had to help Papa do the housework and that's what I did and when I got older, I had other things to do. . . like help in the house 'cause I wasn't old enough to wash. I cooked, washed dishes, made beds, kept house and churned. We had to churn back in them days. We had pure ol' wood floors with big ol' cracks in them. We had to scrub them with shucks. They had a big thick board and they bored holes in them with an auger and they'd put shucks in the holes. You'd get 'em soft and put 'em in them holes and there'd be about 12 or 14 just accordin' to how big you'd want 'em and you'd put the board on a handle and pull it back and forth. I think we used mostly lye water or ashes on our floors to help clean 'em 'cause we didn't have washing powder. We made our own soap.

"Best I can remember you used an eight pound bucket of water and a syrup bucket packed full of meat cracklins, a can of lye and we'd cook that and the lye would eat up the meat and it would get thick and be soap. We cooked it in a washpot out in the yard. That's how we boiled our clothes back in those days, too. It was hard work!"

Granny Capps' grandson's wife, Mrs. Billie Jean Capps, conducted the interview. She asked what children did for entertainment when Granny Capps came to Angelina County, which would have been about 1912. Granny said:

"There just wasn't much to do then. We played with dolls and things like that. The mail was brought on a route. It wasn't a buggy; it was a two-wheel gig. I think that's what they called it then, and it was drawn by a horse. That's how we got our mail. We walked to school. . . about a mile. In later years, it was three miles there and back. We carried baked taters, fried eggs and such as that, in a syrup bucket. We had to carry our water for school, too. . . we took turns carrying water and at school we played dolls and playhouse.

"We played dolls and what we called "over." ("Annie Over") We had a group on each side of the house and if one caught the ball then you'd run around and get them on your side. We also played wolf-on-the-river, stealing sticks, drop-the-handkerchief. . . we had lots of fun."

Next Billie Jean Capps asked her grandmother about her memories of school. Jewel Capps answered:

"Well, when I was little, we'd go get the water I was telling you about and then we'd play in our playhouses at recess but a lot would play ball and stuff. . . we had two recesses and our lunch period. We taken up at eight and turned out at four; that was the school hours.

"I had a reader, a geography book and an arithmetic book and what we called a spellin' and language. . . I think they call it English now. . . and those were the books I had. The old schoolhouse was just one room, more or less like an old barn or old crib barn. The desks was like they used to be at churches. . . long wooden benches, but they had a desk in front of 'em. They had little places put in 'em. Each one had his place and could put his stuff in there. . . about a foot and a half, I guess. . . where we put our books. We were lined up like we were in church.

"The teachers had switches and they used 'em if they needed to. Some always got whippin's. . . my brother was bad to get whippin's. There were more like him because they couldn't do all that by themselves. One of 'em would leap out in the floor on his all fours and the others would get on his back and they'd ride out the door. Oh! I coulda just killed him. And they'd throw erasers on the top of the house. One woman took a switch and just whupped my brother around the back of the neck by the shirt collar, just trying to make it really hurt but they were tough and they didn't care. . . they'd laugh at the poor thing. . . bless her heart.

"We'd stay warm with ol' wood heaters. It stood upright and you'd take the lid off and put the

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wood in. You'd just move them benches round and round that heater and sit there and we kept our coat on. You kept warm.

"Bathrooms? We didn't have none. We went to the woods. Boys went one way and the girls the other. They just wasn't nothing hard about them days."

Granny Capps lived part of her married life near Beulah, east of Diboll. She and her husband Tom raised cotton, corn, peanuts and cane, and pulled their plows and harrows with horses and mules. She talked about how the work was organized and the children cared for:

"I didn't have to carry my kids to the field. There was always somebody to keep them. One girl was sixteen and me and her would take turns going to the house to cook lunch. We all worked. Everybody worked. One year we borrowed money to make a crop and that year we raised enough cotton to pay back what we had borrowed and bought a new car, a hoopy, and then we picked cotton and bought us clothes.

"We canned back there so you could make a living. I don't think you could now 'cause things are higher than they was back then. We canned our meat. We raised our own meat from year to year. We couldn't get by without it.

"You canned the meat off the bones. We all killed hogs. We had two pots. We'd heat 'em up with boiling water, and we'd kill the hog, stick him in his heart, and make him bleed. Then you'd put hot water on him, scrape his hair off, hang him up, cut him open, dig out his intestines, heart and all that; and then they cut him up. If it was a big hog they'd spread him out on a shelf in the smokehouse and let it cool overnight. The next morning, we'd salt it down, cut it up, put salt over it and stack it on top of each other. You'd let it lay there about a week and you'd heat you some more boiling water and scald it and hang it up in the smokehouse and keep smoking it till it dried. Then you would pack it away in jars. It would be cold weather. You'd have to do it in cold weather.

"Now we did kill 'em in the summer but we'd have to cook it up. If we got without meat, we'd have us one we could kill and we'd have to cook all day and put it in jars. It was just good old boiled meat. You could make dressing and season your food with it. You loved all that stuff back then. Wasn't like what we have now but we didn't know the difference."

Billie Jean Capps asked Mrs. Capps to decribe a typical wash day. She said:

"Well, you had to milk all the cows, gather your clothes, then you'd have them clothes tied up in a sheet. You'd put 'em on your back and we didn't have water. We had to go to the creek or pond to wash 'cause our water wasn't good at the house to wash in. There were always some little children to bring up wood and stuff to boil their clothes in 'cause you boiled 'em in a pot and you had a stick to punch them with. We washed those clothes on an old rub board and wrung 'em out. We washed all day long. It took all day to wash for us 'cause we had a big family and even if you didn't have many garments apiece, it was still a lot of clothes.

"You had to go down a steep hill and you carried the water from the pond to put in the tub and you hung 'em out. I've washed where clothes was just like you hung 'em up then that's the way they stayed. They froze when you hung 'em up in the wintertime. And you had to wash often when you was raising children. It was a lot of work back in them days, but they were happy days."

Billie Jean Capps next asked, *"What did you and Grandpa Tom do for fun?"*

"We didn't have no fun, hon. We were just glad to get to set down."

Pearl Havard also grew up east of Diboll, in the Beulah community some seven miles from town. She described a happy childhood when she was interviewed by Marie Davis:

"We had lots of fun. The neighbors all seemed like they were close then. There was more love; I will put it like that. And we played a whole lot with dolls and different things such as playhouses made of straw, broken up dishes and things like that.

"As I grew up and got into my teens, we had a party on Friday nights. The kind of party I am talking about is. . . some people called it square dancing. The games we played were like 'Rare Back Chicken' and 'Ceely' and 'Roxie Ann' and lots more games like that. And we sang ourselves. We made our own music by singing.

"There was one man or boy, if he was there, who would blow a harp. He was real good on the song we called 'Roxie Ann.' It was a whole lot like square dancing. We would go to different houses on Friday nights. At ten o'clock it was over. We had to be home by eleven."

Mrs. Havard went on to talk about a life at Beulah which extended into the wooded countryside:

"We had a creek in the back of our place and my mother liked to go down there and hunt tracks which would be the wild animals of the creek, and look in the water at the fish and there would be a big snake in there running around. We would go swimming. Of course, all the children liked to go swimming.

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"There was a neighbor boy by the name of Ben Weeks, and he was about four years older than me and he made some Tom Walkers, which are stilts. They are a pole with a piece of leather that goes around and you stick you foot in it and balance yourself. He wanted me to have a pair so I could walk over the fence like he did. I learned how and we would walk around. Some of the people around said I was going to break my neck. But I never did fall. Ben would say, 'Come on, you can do it.' So I did it.

"The first time I went to Diboll I can remember. . . I always think about it because I like pretty roads and I like the countryside and I like houses. Just before you get to White Oak Creek was an old house on the left. I don't remember who lived in it. It was just a long house, and the road turned there and went to the right and went through a field and it came out on the main road. There was a bridge there that had banisters, and I remember that.

"Another time, I remember Grannie Scarborough. . . she was a peddler. She peddled buttermilk, butter and eggs. That is why the Buttermilk Road is called that, because there were several people who peddled from the Beulah community in Diboll.

"They got to Diboll in buggies. Everyone of them had buggies with a horse that pulled it. And she told me one day that if I wanted to go with her I could. I went several times. But this one time, she said, 'Get you some eggs and we'll sell them and you can get what you want.' Mother gave me a dozen eggs and that brought enough that I bought me some material and my mother could sew and she made me a beautiful dress. From time to time, I went with Grannie over there and different times, I would carry eggs and buy me different things that I wanted."

Marie Davis asked Mrs. Havard, *"When you were going to school in Diboll, coming from the country, so to speak, did you feel any different going to school with the town kids?"* She answered:

"Yes, I did. Seems like us boys and girls from Beulah stayed together on campus more than we did with the other children. And they were a little bit jealous of us girls from Beulah because the Diboll boys would come out to see us. But we got along just the same."

Then there were the home remedies. Mrs. Havard said,

"Today, I keep remembering those things. Things like asafetida. . . there were two ways we used it. One was to roll it up in a little ball, put it in a little sack, put a string around it, and hang it around your neck and down in your bosom. That was to keep away the whooping cough or any disease that might approach you. My sister, Velma, wore one until she started courting and she got ashamed of it. She said she could smell it and she pulled it off and put it under a board when she went out and when she came back home, she would put it back on because Mama wanted her to wear it all the time. You could dissolve it in water, which was good for pain, like at childbirth.

"And, then, sugar and turpentine may still be used. You would put the turpentine on the cut, put a little sugar on it and pour turpentine back on it and tie it up. That was for cuts. Because lots of times in those days, we were stepping on nails or cutting our feet with a hoe or something, and they had to have something like that.

"Another thing was at night when they would take tallow and you would lay down on your back in front of the fireplace, stick your feet out toward the fire and the bottom of your foot would get hot. They would rub the tallow on your foot and it would soak in and that was for sore throat and things like that. . . if you had a sore throat. And then another remedy. . . my mother did all of these. . . eggshell tea was a bad thing to take. It was for kidney infection; they called it 'gravel' then. She would take the shells and parch them and then put them in water and let them soak a long time, and then you would drink that water.

"This is another thing that fascinates me. When I was about six, Bunker Squyres was a log hauler. He would haul logs on the wagon and mules would pull the wagon. He was cutting timber down around Weaver Bend. That is where my daddy's people were. We were going down there that night. . . there was a big celebration the next day. And so that evening, Bunker says to my mother, 'I'll take Pearl on with me if you will let her.' So I rode that log wagon from Beulah to Weaver Bend through the creek bottoms and all of that and that sticks with me, riding in that log wagon. I was real young then."

Such were children's memories of the Diboll area in those early years. The opening of Mill No. 2 in April of 1907 had been the start of a new era for Southern Pine Lumber Company as well as the town of Diboll. The new mill handled both pine and hardwood and brought a wave of new employment to the area. Continued upgrading of track and equipment for the T.S.E. Railroad made more timber accessible to SPLCo in the surrounding forests.

However, the ownership of the timberlands was often in doubt due to adverse possession (*"squatting"*), original Mexican land grants, and *"clouded"* titles which remained clouded even when the

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parties thought they had clear title, as evidenced by these excerpts from letters written by SPLCo's attorneys, Adams & Adams, in Crockett:

"...W.K. has abandoned the county and is a refugee from justice.

"...there is a problem in release since W.N.L. died in 1895 and his only relative, a son, is in prison on a murder charge."

Legal work to clear land titles began early and lasted many years. Meanwhile, to obtain the additional timberlands required for progress, SPLCo was again reorganized and capitalized at $750,000 in June 1907. Sales grew in response to increased demand for housing in the Midwest and in the Panama Canal. However, lower prices for pine lumber—due largely to heavy production and to the short-lived "Bankers Panic of 1907"—began to take their toll on many mills in East Texas.

Labor unrest and agitation also began to appear on occasion, but were quickly and deftly overcome, often in consort with other lumber companies. These problems did little to dampen SPLCo's enthusiasm. The company was able to offset the downturn in pine prices through the production of hardwood in the new Mill No. 2 (although they only had a day shift in hardwood operation until 1914). The company also picked up unemployed, non-union workers from other mills going through retrenchment. Full time employment at SPLCo reached the 700-plus level during 1907, and another 100-plus part-time employees were hired to keep the two mills operating.

Despite a drop in market price, SPLCo shipped over 3700 carloads of lumber in 1907, which set the stage for its decision to attempt to borrow a million dollars on its sizable existing land holdings. With this loan, it underwrote a continued expansion into Houston, Angelina and Anderson counties while also providing the company with much-needed cash for normal operations.

But 1907 was only the beginning. SPLCo faced the heady task of obtaining its substantial loan from large city banks reeling from the "Banker's Panic."

The loan package brought about some key changes in the timber and land operations which were under the direction of John Massingill, a long time resident of the area. SPLCo had to undertake a complete survey of its land holdings under the Sepulvado land grant, which in 1908 totaled nearly 5,000 acres in Trinity County. This undertaking would prove to be a mammoth task, yet it was completed in a period of about seven months by farmer Tom Vansau, and a one-time schoolteacher named Dave Kenley, who would become a major factor in the development of SPLCo over the next few decades. Mr. Kenley, interviewed in 1954 by John Larson of the Forest History Association, described his first encounter with SPLCo as follows:

"In the spring of 1908, I was going home from teaching school; I had 35 miles to go on horseback. I made all the shortcuts I could and since I was on horseback and going the trail way, I ran into where Southern Pine Lumber Company was cutting timber in Trinity County just south of Cedar Creek. The tops of the trees had stopped the trail up and it being a cloudy day, I got lost or turned around and met the woods foreman, a Mr. Massingill, and he asked me what I was doing there. I was ashamed of being lost, having been raised in the woods, and I told him I was hunting a job. So he immediately began to talk to me about a job with the lumber company.

"After I finished the job in 1908 scaling the timber, I spent about six or eight months in school and came back in 1909, and took the job of surveying all the land they owned, probably 75 or 80 thousand acres. In 1906 they attempted to borrow a million dollars on their land from a concern in Chicago, but the title was so hard to clear up that they only got between a half and three-quarters of a million. They took this money and invested it in more land and timber and built between 20 and 25 miles of mainline railroad. Most of it still stands and is known as the Texas Southeastern Railroad, finishing the railroad in 1908. Also during that time they built what was known as Mill No. 2."

Although it would take until 1920 for the Sepulvado land grant problem to be resolved (SPLCo lost its first court battle over it in 1911), the company was able to obtain continued financing. Dave Kenley, now a contract employee, became part of the legend of SPLCo in the following year based on his performance on the survey.

Arthur Temple provided the details and insights on Dave Kenley:

"He became our land man and he had the job of acquiring land and timber for the company. Of course, the objective was to get the timber but we also wanted the land. Dave would go out either in a buggy or, usually, on horseback, for a week at a time, just riding around looking for timber. (Dave was a stingy person. Well, he was tight). I've heard the old timers tell about it. On these trips he would take a few cans of sardines and a bar of soap and, I guess, a towel. He was an unusual guy; he would stop and bathe in a creek. If a motel room was available, he would not stay in it. You talk about a low budget operation; he was it.

"He would start out on horseback and would always arrange it where he would stop at some

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pioneer's house out in the forests. You can't imagine how remote that was in those days. There were no roads. He would always arrange to spend the night, they tell me, and he would always be well fed; it didn't cost him anything. They would tell him about a place they thought he could buy. Or maybe he bought from the people he visited. But many of our deeds in those early days were written by hand by Dave Kenley on the back of a paper sack and some of those are in our files now up in Nacogdoches (in the Special Collections of the Steen Library at Stephen F. Austin State University).

"Dave went around and bought up what piled up to be quite a little bit of land. I guess there were 190,000 acres when I went to Diboll and I expect Dave bought most of that. Dave was criticized a lot because he accumulated a lot of land himself and a lot of people thought maybe he kept the land and we bought the timber, but that is not exactly true. His critics would say that we paid for the whole thing but I don't think that is true. We got a good deal and Dave did a super job. In the early days, there were a lot of title problems because of squatters. It was impossible. There were no roads, and there were no airplanes. We owned land clear to Palestine, Texas. It presented quite a job to just keep up with what was going on. People would come in uninvited and cut the timber and we would go and try to find out who it was. The laws in those days allowed a man to squat on your land, or settle on your land, and if they 'held it adversely,' that is against any claims (if they stayed there for a very few years), and if you didn't get them off or if you didn't make them sign a lease, they would cloud your title and probably take the land away from you by limitation.

"A person could be back in the forest and nobody would know how long he was there unless somebody told us. So, in order to protect our title, a company like Temple, even though they had the deed, had to hold it adversely against other claimants. In order to do that, one of the evidences of holding it adversely was to fence, or to otherwise occupy it by running cattle on it. Cattle is a good way to hold land adversely. It is much better if you fence it. Dave was successful in selling my forebears on the idea that if they would let him use the lands for grazing for ***nothing*** *and, if we would furnish the fencing materials, he would operate on it so that would help us strengthen our titles.*

"Dave wound up with free leases on a hell of a lot of land, all the fencing material, and he usually wound up, I think, using our labor to do the fences. I used to say 'Dave, we're just operating your ranch for you.' But Dave was a good man, a great friend of mine. The hardest thing I ever did was when I told him our foresters told me we needed to get the cattle off the land.

"What happened was this: there would be a little clearing in the woods and the foresters brought me a bunch of aerial photographs (this was about '52 or '55) to show me this. What happened was the cattle would come to these little grassy plots, where fire or bugs or something had cleared out a little area. These little pockets were all over our forests. When the cows were through eating, they would bed down and these open areas became little centers where they would congregate.

"You could see that all these holes in the forests became larger and larger. I always suspected there were a great many more meadows in our timber land than was absolutely necessary for the growing of timber.

"I'd say, 'Dave, why isn't this field here planted in pine? That's the business we are in.' He'd say, 'Arthur, that field won't grow pine, it's low and we've tried to, but you notice there are no pines there.' Well, I knew why there weren't any pines there, he was mowing it. But let me add this about Dave. He came to work for us as a young man, as a surveyor. I don't think he was ever an engineer but he was a licensed surveyor and a good many of the people who wound up in our land and timber department came from that course. . .as surveyors, that is. Dave was a magnificent woodsman; he could survive under any circumstances. He was very successful because he was tough."

After 1908, it was clear that SPLCo and Diboll were growing hand in hand. The T.S.E. Railroad expanded in numerous directions. Over 20 miles of temporary track were laid into the woods to reach the vast untouched timber holdings. In 1909 SPLCo made a major timber exchange with Jack Tar Lumber, owned by J.H. Kurth, Jr. of Lufkin. Most of the holding consisted of hardwoods, which few of the other mills attempted to exploit. By 1914, hardwood was being processed in Mill No. 2 on a day-and-night basis like pine.

The Pineland mill, originally a personal investment of T.L.L. Temple with Garrison-Norton Lumber to cut small holdings of pine timber near Jasper, became a wholly-owned Temple company and was renamed Temple Lumber Company. The company operated in a semi-autonomous manner since many of its holdings were inaccessible to the Diboll logging camps. It complemented the pine mills at Diboll by allowing additional expansion of both hardwood and pine facilities there, including the ill-fated Mill No. 3 which was built

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in 1910 and burned in 1914.

Diboll had by now grown into a small but energetic city. It's population had grown to more than 1,200 people by 1914, and a number of churches, stores, and public facilities had begun to appear. The Star Hotel (1912-1939) was built and took in boarders. Health care had improved substantially with the appearance of Drs. Lane and Pedigo in 1908 and Drs. Mann and White a few years later. Health insurance for families ran about $1.25 per month while single men paid 75 cents per month. Between 1912 and 1914 on-the-job injuries totaled 606 non-fatal and two fatal. The record was about one-half that of Kirby Lumber Company for the same time period, which indicates that overall working conditions and morale were probably far better at SPLCo than in much of the rest of the industry.

Wages, however, had become somewhat stagnant. Part of the problem was caused by the reduction of the work week to 10 hours in 1908 (after a brief walk-out at the mills under outside union organizers' agitation) instead of the traditional 11 hour day. Most of the basic necessities continued to be provided by the company through the commissary, and low cost rental houses continued to be available. Despite the outcry about the primitive facilities and inhuman conditions in "company towns" raised in the aftermath of the U.S. Government's investigation of East Texas timber towns in 1914, Diboll was a unique and preferable place to live. With its schools, community activities, and family orientation, both SPLCo and the town prospered.

While all of this success cannot be attributed to vision and planning on the part of T.L.L. Temple, it does reflect the character of a man who transcended the age he lived in. Temple understood that people were more than just another input into the business of timber. People were the business of timber and his company's growth and development depended upon them. Perhaps the best overview available of this time and this quite unique man was expressed by his grandson, Arthur Temple.

"He was very stingy with himself, but very generous with other people. The key to the whole thing (was), he liked the people he worked with. He brought in some good managers. He had a lot of good people. He considered the people of Diboll his people, (and) he did have some policies. . . the policy of taking care of people."

During the decade 1910 to 1920, Pate and Vivian Warner, both of whom eventually worked in the commissary, were kids growing up in Diboll. They were born in 1909 and 1913. Here are some of their first memories of the town.

"From my earliest recollection, there were not all that many houses but they were built in rows and they were nearly always built alike. . . three rooms in a row with a little hall and then a room beyond that hall and you always called it 'the room across the hall.' In the beginning they were not painted, but later on they were all white, and the picket fences were painted white.

"If you were going to your friend's house up the row or down the row or across the track, you'd hold a stick against this picket fence as you came along and it was a bump, bump, bump, bump and sometimes when the fences were newly painted, we'd go along and find a blister of the paint that had run down and mash it with our finger."

Vivian Warner remembered company buildings she saw as a child, starting with the old library building near the commissary, established in the early days as a local cultural center:

"There were several bedrooms in the libaray, and men who didn't have a family lived up there. It was interesting. There were stairs in the middle that went up to the upstairs rooms and children would go there and play on that porch and go up the stairs. The stairs were sort of unusual. There were stairs in the commissary store and, well, more than one set of stairs and an elevator and it was interesting to children. It was not an elevator as we know it now but we called it an elevator and you pulled it by a rope on a big wheel that raised it up. It was a freight elevator, that's what it was. This libary had a pretty yard and there was a good bit of space between it and the office."

Mr. Warner said:

"The Temples stayed there (at the 'library'), Mr. Tom Temple, Mr. Arthur, Sr. They stayed there and ate at the hotel when they'd come, but everybody knew when they were there.

"When they came down from Texarkana, I was a little boy and I was always glad they came. They had a tennis court over behind where that truckshop is now, and I'd go over there and chase tennis balls for them. They had a big court and they had a wire on each end but sometimes those balls would go out the side. Sometimes, I'd get 25 cents or 50 cents—I was rich when I came from over there."

The Warners went on to discuss the importance of the town doctor in Diboll. Mr. Warner said:

"I can remember we always had good doctors. The first ones I remember were Dr. Mann and Dr. Talley and Dr. White. I can remember when Dr. Mann used to ride a horse to each person's house. At that time the people paid $1.50 a month.

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They cut your wages $1.50 to pay for the doctor.

"And if you wanted him to come to your house, you went to the drugstore and they had a tablet behind the counter and they wrote down the people's name he was supposed to see.

"Sometimes, if you didn't live very far, the doctors would walk, but most of the time I remember Dr. Mann had a horse and buggy. A lot of times he'd come in the buggy, and he'd tie the horse to the picket fence. I think when Dr. Talley and Dr. White got there, they might have had cars, which you couldn't go so far in because you couldn't get around in the streets. The streets were really muddy.

"They had a doctor's office upstairs (over the commissary) and if you had something kinda bad wrong with you they might carry you up there and do a little something to you that they couldn't do at home."

Mrs. Warner added:

"Something I remember about the doctor, they delivered babies in the home. . ."

Mr. Warner said:

"It cost you fifteen bucks, I can remember that, too. Ten or fifteen bucks; it wasn't much."

Then Mrs. Warner recalled the 1920's and Dr. Dale's deliveries:

"The baby was usually named after the doctor; I'll bet there are 50 people in Diboll with Dale in their name. Your mother would always send the little ones over to the neighbor's or farther away while the baby was being born and when you came home you had a new little baby."

Lucille Warner, a company nurse, remembered that when she worked for Dr. Dale, many people also named their babies for her.

"Dr. Dale wanted to fill out the birth certificate right after the baby was born, even if it was two o'clock in the morning. And he was real unhappy if they didn't have a name. We would go back the first thing the next morning so we could fill out the birth certificate. If they didn't have a name, he didn't like it a bit.

"We delivered a girl and a boy one night. And they didn't have a name for either one of them, so we went back the next morning and they still didn't have a name for the girl. He said, 'Well, I think Lucille is an awfully pretty name.' So they named it Lucille and we started out the gate. And I said, 'Where are we going now, Dr. Dale?' and he said, 'To that other baby.' I said 'It's a boy, isn't it?' When we got over there, they didn't have a name. And I said, 'I think John Richard is an awfully pretty name.' And they named it Richard C. and one of them wanted to name it, John Richard Dale, Jr., but he told them that was against the law."

Pate Warner remembered Diboll's baseball teams, which were begun in 1925.

"Mr. E.C. Durham was the big instigator of this. He was the general manager of the Texas Southeastern Railway and he got Southern Pine Lumber Co. to give the land for a baseball park. It was located where the shopping center now is. At the time that he got it, it was a cotton patch. We'd all go over there in the evening and pull up those cotton stalks and burn 'em, along with any trees that were around. Well, we burned all that in 1925. The first coach we had was R.O. Davis, and his assistants were Pete Hendricks and E.T. Herrington. The people on that team, or playing ball that year, were Robert Berry, Clifford Jordan, Albert Jackson, Edwin Durham, Aden Vaughn, George Wilmoth, Clayton Kelley, Walter Ferguson, Edgar Austin, Frank Austin, Pate Warner, John Hendricks, Buster Grace, Herman Estes, Chester Jones, Joe Stegall, Beamon Russell, Jake Durham and George Johnson.

"This was a high school team; this was the first time that Diboll ever had a high school baseball team and it was the first park that was ever built. By the way, Mr. Durham, being the general manager of T.S.E., and Mr. Devereaux, who worked with the T.S.E., did a lot and got a lot of free work done for the ball park."

Mr. and Mrs. Warner also talked about the Diboll schools. He said:

"I went to school there and I finished in 1928. We had a lot of good teachers; I can remember Mr. Miller was one of them. The superintendent when I graduated was H.F. Moore. K.P. Glass and Miss Armstrong. . . we had a lot of good teachers. A lot of these folks are already gone but here is the list that I graduated with: Bill Agee, Louis Atkinson, Olivette Beard, Elvin Burris, Rhoda Faye Chandler, Minnie Hazel Durham, Edith Burgess, Herman Estes, Archie Ferguson, Johnny Goodman, Mildred Hawkins, Velma Henry, Maurine Jett, Helen Kelley, John Lowe Kent, Tom McWhirter, Morelle Moss, Evie Neyland, P.H. Strauss, Lola Weisinger, Geneva Womack, Thomas Birch. We had a 50 year class reunion at Rhoda Faye's in 1978. We had about 12 or 13 there."

Vivian Warner added:

"Something I remember about school that was fun. Everybody went home for lunch, or for dinner. . . we called it dinner, even the daddy came home from the mill for dinner. It wasn't that far that everyone lived, so the whole school turned out to go home for dinner. In the fall, there were two big hickory nut trees in the school yard. There was a fence around the school yard, and the boys threw sticks up in the trees to make the

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hickory nuts fall and there was a big scramble for the hickory nuts. One day after the bell rang after lunch time, one of the boys was acting bad and the teacher took him out in the hall to give him a paddling. Something made the awfullest noise while she was paddling him... his name was Littleton Weeks...and she asked him, 'Littleton, what is in your pocket?' He said, 'They was hickory nuts, but they're busted now.'"

Mr. Warner had a school story to tell, too:

"Another good thing about people bringing their lunches to school, Bill Agee, P.H. Strauss and I finally figured how to eat if we got hungry. They had what they called a 'cloakroom,' where they would put lunches up on a shelf, and we would find some excuse to go in this cloakroom. We usually knew the people who brought cake or something like that in their lunches and we'd get in that lunch and eat that cake and wrap it back up. That went on about two weeks, and finally, they caught us doing that and that put the quietus to eating the people's cake."

Mrs. Warner added:

"Some of the students came from Burke. And they learned that one girl brought strawberries in her lunch because her parents had a strawberry patch and hers was mostly whose lunch they would get in. Everybody knew everybody."

For fun, Diboll kids acted much like country kids. Pate Warner said:

"We went in swimming down at the creek in the summertime. That's White Oak Creek, which is right behind the office now. There were three or four pretty good holes down there and everybody went down there. You'd have an old pair of overalls, or something like that. You didn't have a bathing suit and didn't have any money to buy a bathing suit.

"We played ball. The coloreds played the whites when I was a little kid; we played them nearly every day when I was 12 or 13 years old. We integrated (in play among themselves) way back there; we knew all of them and they knew all of us.

"At night, you always went up around the store. We had parties sometimes. We had a lot of country parties out on FM Road 1818. I remember Mr. Lee Massingill used to give a lot of parties. Easter Sunday, Mr. Lee Massingill would have an Easter Egg Hunt at his house in Diboll. Everybody would meet out there on Sunday afternoon. Old folks would hide the eggs and the kids would hunt them.

"This was for the Methodist Church, the whole town could come... it wouldn't make a difference."

Mrs. Warner remembered the girls' activities:

"We played dolls, as all girls did, I guess. We had the main railroad track and then we had the T.S.E. railroad track which was for the company business. We would take a stick and each one hold one end of it, and we would walk the railroad tracks. The idea of the game was to see how many rails you and your partner could walk without falling off.

"Another thing we would do on the railroad track was take two nails and cross them. When the train ran over them, that would make us a little pair of miniature scissors. If we had a penny, we might put that penny on the tracks and let it get mashed and make it bigger. When children got bigger, on Sunday afternoon they would go over by the millpond and the railroad tracks over there. There was a motor car that you pumped by hand, and the boys would get it out of the shop, or wherever they kept it, and we'd ride a little ways on that. That was fun to do and we played around the lumber yard. I never will forget the smell of those sheds, the lath mills and where they steamed the lumber. The dry kilns. They had a particular odor.

"Play wasn't considered a hazard although it probably was hazardous. Children were careful; you knew how to play about such things. This wasn't necessarily fun, but when the planer mill would blow off... that's what we called the end of the day... they would blow a whistle that meant the day was over. The people who lived nearest there, or their children, would be ready and your mother wanted you to go to the planer mill's dolly run and pick up pieces of wood to burn in the cook stove the next day. If you had a good friend who was working there, he would have you a little stack all stacked up."

Herbert Weeks, O'Hara Chandler, and Fenner Roth told about Diboll kids meeting the train.

"There were two Sunday afternoon passenger trains, one that came from Houston and the other one from Lufkin. We would meet down at the depot and they had candy that you couldn't buy at the store. It was real tough. It cost a nickel, but it would last all day. The kids would line up for the train man to sell his wares. Sometimes there would be 25 or 30 kids up there buying his wares because we thought it was good because it came out of Houston or Shreveport."

But not all the children in Diboll got a chance to meet the trains; some had strict parents. For Ossie Thompson, who grew up in Diboll and married Clyde Thompson, Diboll's first mayor, things were different.

"The movies were quite different here among the young people. A lot of them on Sundays would meet the train and watch the train go through. I never wanted to do that, but I had one

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sister who wanted to do that, but my father would not allow it. . . I remember that to touch a (playing) card, in my family was just like reaching your hand out to the devil, saying 'Come and get me!'"

Jim and Marian Fuller remembered pranks which took place at the commissary. Josephine Rutland Fredrick, whose father ran the commissary, was a friend of the Fullers. She said:

"He had the store and everybody kinda gathered there, in the mornings. They would come by to buy their groceries and they would gather there and visit with Mrs. Farrington; she had the women's side. Jim had the other. When I was small, I was scared of false faces and when I would come over, they would put one on at the same time and I would leave in a hurry. But you got excellent food and the meat market was one of the best. People from Lufkin came down here to buy their steaks and things of that nature, and a lot of the meat that Taylor Powell raised. But a lot of it was sent in from Kansas City. Mrs. Farrington used to keep this beautiful old handmade Irish lace and we always laughed about people coming from Lufkin and buying lace and buying their steaks.

"We had a drugstore and cute little tables and chairs, and people would meet down there and drink cokes. There was one man there who thought he would hang around all the time. My dad said when he would go in to get a Coke, he would ask this man 'Would you like to come in and a have a Coke?' The man would say 'No, but I will take a cedar pencil.'"

Jim Fuller went on to talk about the fun of working in the commissary:

"Our hearts were right and our customers were patient, too, because we didn't do anything but cut up. I remember one time we had a fellow by the name of William Ruth. We called him Shine.

"He went down to Splendora one weekend to have a good time, ran out of money and decided he would preach. So he did. When he got up to preach, he said he was going to preach on Nora and the ox, and he said, 'The Lord said to Nora, 'Nora I want you to build me an ox.'

"He got enough money to get back home from that preaching assignment.

"We kept caskets upstairs and we had a place up there where we joined stovepipe; we put brads in them to make them hold and we would get Shine and some of the rest of them to go up there with us to hold these pipes while we bradded them.

"But we got the idea that was the same room that the caskets were in. One day, I got up there and got behind the casket and they brought Shine up there to help weld these stovepipes, and I made a little groan and made one of the caskets move a little. About that time, Shine decided it was time for him to leave and he started running. He got to where you had to turn and he couldn't make that turn and he fell down.

"We also had a big wrapping counter and people would sit upon this counter. We got the idea to put a little electricity in it. . . either electricity or a needle that would come up through the counter and stick people, and then we would shock them. I remember one lady who came in there and when we shocked her, she got a pair of pliers and a screwdriver and she tore up our little play pretty."

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Chapter IV

"At The Front"

Any account of Diboll in the first few decades of the 20th century must include the story of Southern Pine's lumber camps. "The Front" was the literal "cutting edge" of the pine forest, where crews lived in camps close to their work. In the case of Southern Pine Lumber Company, these camps were organized for whole families, and, in fact, they became in many cases solid little communities in their own right. Some of them, like Fastrill, lasted for years.

The most striking feature of some camps was portable boxcar houses. Housing was brought to the camp site in the form of railroad cars fitted out for family living, often sitting for years on rails deep in the woods or at "the Front".

The advantage of moving whole families into the woods was to shorten the travel time between home and work, which was naturally of economic benefit to the company, but another, less tangible benefit came to the workers themselves because they could carry on a normal home life for at least a part of each day. Many other lumber companies did not provide for family welfare in this way.

The names of the camps of Southern Pine Lumber Company in Angelina and surrounding counties evoke up nostalgic memories among older Diboll residents. Camps No. 1 and No. 2, Alceda, White City, Bluff City, Lindsey (or "Camp") Springs, Walkerton, Neff, Hull, Gilbert, Buggerville, Gipson, and Apple Springs were far-flung "suburbs" of Diboll. There were smaller camps, too, in the northern ends of Anderson and Cherokee Counties, and as far away as Longstreet, Louisiana.

Perhaps the best-remembered lumber camp was Fastrill, located near the Neches river in western Cherokee County. Vina Wells, whose family moved from White City to Fastrill at its beginning in 1922, said:

"It was a big camp, and it was the most permanent temporary camp they had. It was there longer than any other camp."

Mrs. Wells remembered that the company moved her family to Fastrill on boxcars. *"We had a lot of fun,"* she said: *"We cooked while we were going along. Mama cooked; no matter what, Mama cooked."*

When her family arrived in Fastrill, the camp was still under construction. *"It looked like hell,"* said Mrs. Wells. She remembers watching the men build houses for the camp.

"There were two different size houses. Most of them were four rooms. There would be a porch on the front and a porch on the back with the four rooms all connected; that was it. Later, they built some little two-room houses for the smaller families."

Mrs. Wells' mother ran the boarding house at Fastrill, and that is where the family lived. Mrs. Wells went on to discuss the other building in Fastrill:

"When we got to Fastrill, they did not have

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the store built. It was in boxcars still on the track and parked behind the store building. They would send me to get things from this place, and it had steps leading into the boxcars. They had shelves and all, just like a small store. But when they built the store, it was a huge thing and they had everything under the same roof. It had groceries, meat, dry goods and shoes. Later they put the market in a separate place, but it was still all in the same building. Also the ice house was connected to that. There was a drugstore where the doctor and his wife ran the drugstore and at one time the post office was there too. Later they moved the post office to the main office with the company office, where the workers were paid. And there was a barber shop that my uncle ran. He also had the cleaning and pressing shop and he had the only gasoline pumps in town.

"There weren't a dozen cars in Fastrill. There was a road to Alto and to Rusk. When we first moved, there was no road across the river or into the next county. They later put one through to Slocum, Elkhart and Palestine."

Mrs. Louise Rector, Mrs. Vina Wells' daughter, also remembers Fastrill:

"The boarding house was two stories. That was a big thing. The only other house that was anywhere near as big was the house of the woods foreman. Eventually my dad got that job and me and Mama lived in that house, but that was years later.

"My mother was on the board of trustees at the Fastrill school and she worked like a dog to get the school bus over to Slocum so we would have a place to finish (high) school. The first bus was a model A with a bed they made. And of course the roads weren't paved and we would slip, slide and stick."

Louise Rector remembers the daily routine in Fastrill:

"All the men except a few would go to the woods every day. The train left at six o'clock every morning to carry the men to the woods and my mother and grandmother had to get up at four o'clock. That only left a few men. . . the ones who worked in the store, the shop, and places like that. But the salesmen who came to the store soon learned about the good food (at the boardinghouse) and they made it a point to get there at noon. It was a family style meal on a great, long table. You came in and ate all you wanted for fifty cents, or whatever it was. And they cooked everything. They did not have anybody else to help them cook, but it was good.

"I remember the time they were drilling for oil a couple of miles from Fastrill. We didn't even have enough beds, so they made beds on the porches. And the boarding house was shaped like a 'U' and the porches went all the way around this room, upstairs and downstairs. The men stayed upstairs and there were beds made all around this porch. And each room upstairs had at least two beds and there were two corner rooms that held three or four beds. And every one of those were full and then they had these beds on the porch during the drilling thing. The tables seated fourteen and we had two of those smaller tables that seated eight. And I have seen every one of those full at one time.

"Of course, when they got through with lunch and washed dishes, Mama and Grandmama went to bed. They needed it. I didn't because I was afraid I would miss something. After lunch on Sunday there was no warming anything. We put it on the table just like it was and you could eat it or not. They ate it.

"We had one church building there and it was for any denomination or whoever wanted to use it. They had to take turns so they wouldn't get mixed up. Whichever preacher was coming to preach. . . whether it was Baptist, Methodist or what. . . came to our house to eat and we didn't charge him.

"I would wait until everybody went to bed to study, and I had to study by a lamp because the lights were out. I wanted to study by the fire, but all the men were in the lobby playing forty-two, or something like that.

"Some of the men were bachelors and some of them had families and went home on the weekends. We had two or three young ones who were single, like Ross Walker before he married and several like that who stayed in Fastrill until they married. But most of them were in their thirties because if you got married, you couldn't stand the pressure of that work in the woods. It was really hard."

Louise and her mother remember the bathing arrangements at the Fastrill boardinghouse. Louise recalls:

"In the summer, we had a shower out in the yard. The men would go out there and we would bathe behind the stove, either in the afternoon after everybody was gone or at night after they went to bed. The children, the small ones, could bathe in back any time. At night, the children would put on their sleeping clothes in there where it was warm and run down the screened porch to our bedrooms—it was cold—and jumped into bed. You would carry these irons wrapped up to put at your feet and had covers so heavy you could hardly move. There was no heat. That is the way it was, and when I married and left, they still didn't have a bathtub."

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Mrs. Rector described the layout of the town of Fastrill:

"There were fences. The houses were in rows and there were gardens between the houses. Each family had a garden spot. Everybody had a fence because the cows and other stock ran loose. Or you could build pens out in the back of the house. There was plenty room out back for you to build your pig pens and all that. Everybody wanted to have a cow. And they almost had to have chickens. I don't guess they ever sold eggs at the commissary.

"The store, the barber shop, and all that was on one side. Then the 'Front Row' went all the way from one end of the camp to the other, and it came right on back up to the boss's house.

"The Quarters were out behind all this. The Negroes had this end. The Mexicans had this end. Rosie and Jack had the Negro boarding house. Suzie and Lucy and Mary had the Mexican boarding house. At 'The Hall,' that was the Negro place, they would dance sometimes, and they played 'forty-two' and they served certain kinds of food and every Saturday night, they had ice cream; I mean bought ice cream. We would take a big bowl up there and get a dollar's worth of ice cream. You can talk to anyone who used to live in Fastrill and they loved it. It was kinda enchanted."

The nostalgic feelings about the Fastrill camp were echoed by others. Inez Thompson Asher, who lived at Fastrill for 12 years while she was growing up, said that her father drove back-up mule teams for the company there before and during the Depression. He was later an engineer on the No. 11 and No. 12 trains. The family arrived at the camp in 1922, when Mrs. Asher was seven years old, coming to Fastrill from the camp at Bluff City, where she was born. She remembered that at Fastrill her father

". . . raised three kids practically on $1.25 a day for a long time. We thought we had everything that everybody else had. It was a lot friendlier than Diboll. Everybody was friendly and we didn't know what Depression was. We thought we had plenty. I guess we did. . . clothes and shoes. . . and everybody was good to each other."

Fastrill got its name from three men who had much to do with Diboll and Southern Pine. The FA was from Frank Farrington, Fannie's husband, the postmaster. STR was from P.H. Strauss, who had charge of the lumber camps for the company. The ILL was from Will Hill, the woods foreman.

The community atmosphere remembered by Mrs. Asher pervades the memories of many people about life in that camp. The camp itself was beautiful, located as it was in the heart of the Neches valley. Wesley Ashworth—born in 1899 and who worked *"about 48 and half years for the company"* in the carpenter gang, the repair gang, Mill No. 2, the shop, and the T.S.E. railroad—remembered:

"I know out at Fastrill it was as pretty a logging camp as a person ever went into. It had wide, long streets, sycamore trees up and down the streets. . . and they were really pretty. Of course, it was a sandy hill, but it was certainly a beautiful logging camp. The company had the homes fixed up pretty nice for the employees, both white and colored. And everybody who lived there, will still tell you they had rather live in Fastrill than live in Diboll."

Mr. Ashworth remembers other lumber camps established through the years by Southern Pine Lumber Company:

"The first camp was at Lindsey Springs. The next ones, they called Camp No. 1 and Camp No. 2. They were in Trinity County. One of them was in the Gipson settlement. . . Camp One and Camp Two. Then they moved them both together up to Rayville and that is where the second camp was, out from Walkerton. Next, they went to Bluff City and moved to White City and they logged there from 1917 or 1918, I believe it was, until the 1920's when they moved back to what they called Fastrill. Alceda was a branch of it and after they cut out down there, at Alceda, they brought them to Fastrill. That is when the camp was enlarged."

Mr. Ashworth had a unique perspective on the logging camps—a perspective from the Texas Southeastern Railroad whose spurs linked the camps with Diboll and Lufkin. A network of passenger service held these communities tightly together, at least in later years:

"Going back to Texas Southeastern Railroad, everybody in town called it 'Take it Slow and Easy' because the initials were TSE. The people would say, 'I will take it slow and easy to Lufkin.' There would be a local run to Lufkin and back, and they would run one out to what they called 'The Fair.' The company moved the camp up to Rayville and they ran a passenger train out to there, and they moved to Walkerton and they run a passenger train out to there and then they moved to Bluff City and that was out at the 40 to 45 mile limit and they run a passenger train out there. You could go out there in the afternoon and back after they went to Lufkin. People enjoyed that. Heap of times, when there were no passenger trains and the first trains that came to Diboll, they would get the woods foreman to give them a pass on the log train and they would ride the caboose on the log train."

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Other people also remembered wangling rides on the log train as it clattered through the countryside around Diboll on its way to or from the logging camps. Frankie Glass remembers that her family lived at Lindsey Springs and her mother would bring the children and ride the log train, get off at the Arrington farm and walk through the woods to her grandparents' farm. They would then catch the train and go back to Lindsey Springs.

Methodist Bishop William C. Martin offered a description of Lindsey Springs:

"Of course, my memories of the camp have faded some over the years, but I certainly recall many pleasant memories of the place.

"The camp was built in three sections, all surrounding the natural springs which formed a creek and provided drinking water for the 35 camp families.

"There was a general commissary and the settlement appeared to be set to last a number of years. But according to the best recollections of several local residents, Lindsey Springs logging camp actually served as a camp for about ten years, from about 1896 to 1906 or 1907. . ."

Fastrill was established in 1922 to serve Southern Pine's logging operations in Anderson and Cherokee counties. It had two churches, a post office and a voting precinct. Its population was at one time up to about 600 and its school had four teachers. The company donated land, equipment, and mules for river-bottom farming so that in their spare time the loggers could grow some of their own food. It even built a canning plant for produce. A commissary store provided most other necessities.

Workers at Fastrill were organized into four crews which hauled logs by mule into the camp for shipment by rail to the mill at Diboll. By 1941 most of the timber owned by SPLCo in the area was exhausted, and Fastrill's residents were moved, lock, stock and barrel, back to Diboll. Laymon Gossett told a story about the move:

"The company moved us while we was working; we didn't know anything about it. They told us to come to work and then that night to catch the regular into Diboll, where we would get off. When we got off in Diboll, we didn't even know where we was, that was the first time we had ever been there.

"We got off of the regular at the mill yard and the boss man was there and I asked him 'Richie, which way do we live?' 'Well,' he said, 'Down this street here to Red Town and go down.' . . he give me the house number. . .'on the last street there and you'll be in a certain house.' The company had moved us during the day, and my wife had supper ready when I got there.

"That was in August sometime, and it was some hot. Them red houses didn't have fans in 'em, little old shotgun houses."

Mrs. Asher, too, remembered her sense of shock at leaving the security of the small camp in the woods:

"Really, I loved living in Fastrill. When I came back to Diboll, I said I wished my daddy still lived at Fastrill. But I like Diboll now. I made a lot of friends. But it was so different here. You accepted the people here in Diboll and they accepted you."

Mrs. Asher did have some negative memories of Fastrill, however. When asked what she wanted to do when she grew up, she replied:

"To get away from Fastrill, because my daddy wouldn't let me go to parties and things in Fastrill. It was a sawmill town and it was too rough for his daughter. So I married at 19 years old and moved to Houston."

She also said that upper level schooling was a problem at the camp. She and Louise Rector went to high school in Slocum.

Fastrill did have its drawbacks. . . including limited schooling opportunities. . . but its inhabitants were willing to joke about them. Mrs. Asher told a story which seems to sum up this attitude:

"Before I was married, my husband came to Fastrill and he stayed at the boarding house. He asked Mr. Jordan about the running water and he said, 'Yeah, we have running water. You can run up and down the steps and get it.'"

Transportation to the luxuries and services of bigger towns was also a problem for the isolated camp. Mrs. Asher remembers:

"We didn't have a movie house. We went to Rusk to the movie. And when my grandfather died in Fastrill, they had to carry him on the train through Diboll on some route to get him out near Nacogdoches to bury him. We didn't think nothing about it, because that was the way they did it.

"Just like when we went to Rusk we took cheese and crackers to eat on the way. Gosh, it wasn't very far from Fastrill to Rusk, but we thought we were going a long way."

The lives of women in Fastrill, as in the other camps, had hardships seldom experienced in town. Men's lives, too, had difficulties that made for vivid reminiscences. In 1954, Clyde Thompson interviewed Jesse Parker, who began work for Southern Pine in 1900. After 1912, Mr. Parker worked exclusively in the woods, mostly living in logging camps, and he eventually became a sawboss. He told Thompson:

"I went back in the woods on the 13th day of

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September, 1912. I stayed in the woods until the first day of April, 1954. I was cutting logs part of the time, part of the time I cut live waste. And then I scaled; and I went from that to sawboss. In the mornings, we went to work just as quick as it got light enough for us to see. In the wintertime, we would get back in at 6:30 or 7:00. On some jobs we'd leave camp at 5:00 a.m. and if we got back in at 12:00 at night, we were doing good.

"In that day and time, nobody thought anything about safety-first. We didn't know what it was. There was an old slogan of the sawmill people, 'If we kill a man, we'll hire another one; if we kill a mule, we'll buy another one.' That is about the way we worked.

"(To get to work), we were riding what we called skeleton cars. It was just a car with a frame with no floorboard on it. We got on that, and the engineer pushed it ahead of the engine. It was dark, and we didn't know what we were going into. We didn't see trees or houses or anything else. That is the way we went in, and that is the way we came out.

"The most I ever got per thousand for cutting timber in the woods was seventy-five cents. . . no, I take that back; the most I ever got was $2.00. That was during the First World War when wages went up high, and we got $2.00 a thousand. Up until the First World War forty cents a thousand was high on any job. It generally ran to 32 cents, which was what you got for cutting logs.

"I cut 35 thousand in a day. I cut timber in those days and cut 50 thousand pieces extra. We cut it all, and now we don't do that. We cut now what they call a spot cut. We cut part of it and leave some to grow so we'll have some next time.

"We loaded logs when I first started with Southern Pine Lumber Company; we loaded with two big black mares. They called it the chain gang loading crew. They pulled the logs out and pushed the steel cars from out of the woods. The way they laid that steel, they snaked it off the car with yoke oxen, and then the men laid it themselves.

"When the chain gangs went to work, they would take a pair of skids about twelve feet long. They had a stand-up man, they had what we called a train puller, they had a cross-pole driver, and they had another man who drove the horses. They built a skidway, and they hauled the logs on the skidway.

"The steel gang laid the ties and took the rails out. When the engines came back to pick up a train of logs, we would back in there and load that on the steel. They would load them again; and while they were gone to the mill we would lay the steel. When the steel car was loaded again, we would take the steel car and put it over on the spur. Then the train would pick her up and skid that steel, and we would lay it down with our hands."

Clearly, Parker was not talking about any easy job. It was real, hands-on, puff-and-grunt, sweaty-faced labor. The mosquitoes in the woods didn't make it any easier.

"I chopped pine knots out of there. You had to keep your hat pulled down, your collar rolled up, and your pants down over your shoe tops; and you burned up."

Mr. Parker remembered, too, the times when the company's management came to visit the logging camps and the woods operations:

"Mr. Tom Temple used to come around and look the woods over. I remember one thing that happened one time. I thought it was mighty nice of him. He walked up and looked over in the feed troughs in the corral where we fed the mules. Mr. Hill was with him and there wasn't any feed in the troughs. He told Mr. Hill, 'Will, let's don't let this happen no more. That's all them mules get; is what they eat. We don't know whether they get enough or not 'till they leave some in the trough. Let's leave some; then we'll know whether they're getting plenty to eat.'"

Next Mr. Parker described the moving of the logging camps:

"When moving the camp, the first thing they did was cut around the camp site and cut the trees out. They had to lay down the railroad. They took what we called a gifted loader (McGiffert steam loader). They would take that loader and load the cars on flatcars. Then they would haul it to the camp where they were going. The track would be laid there. They would park each man's house where it was going to be, and they would unload it with those steam loaders. That's where it sat until the next move.

"When the last camp had been moved. . . when they went to Bascom. . . they did away with part of those car houses. They built houses for the white people. For the colored people, they used what we called a car house, something similar to a boxcar, only it was sealed."

Jesse Parker also talked about leisure activities around camp:

"(On our day off) we would go fishing and hunting. There wasn't cars or anything out there. You had to stay around the camp all day. There wasn't any passenger trains. In these present ones, they come to camp once a day. They come out there in the evenings and come back the next morning."

Bill Oaks began work with Southern Pine Lumber Company around the time White City

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was being replaced by Fastrill as the main camp. He started on September 28, 1921.

"I started in White City in the grading gang. The grading gang is where they graded the tram roads and spurs. They had teams, slips, fresnoes . . . one-wheel, I think it was. . . and then they had three fresnoes to work in the slip teams.

"It was mules and horses. We had one pair of horses to work the horses to that wheel. Since then I have graded at Fastrill and helped grade all the spurs. And I found that I had rather work for the company than anywhere else.

"Back during the war, they come up here from Port Arthur and wanted me to go down there and use the foot adze in the shipping outfit. I said, 'Well, I have got all my folks up here and done settled down. I asked what difference it was in the wages down there and the wages up here, I would have to pay it out in the rent and everything, so I stayed with the company.

"White City was at the end of the end of the railroad. That is where they went around the 'Y' and turned and came back and picked up their logs down there, and set them off and brought them back down here with the thirteen engine. I stayed there and worked from September 28, 1921, to June or July, I think it was. We moved to Fastrill, in 1922. Paul Durham was woods foreman at that time. And he was the woods foreman when I went to White City.

"I worked in the woods all the time. I worked on the streets and camp in the roadsides there. With our slip teams and all, we would take slip teams and build a road about six miles. With mules, you had to stoop over and hold the slip around the right way and dressed up, and you turned your slip over to divide it out smooth.

"It was a No. 2 Western slip. It had a handle on each side, and you'd load them up with dirt. Using the mules, they would start at the bottom and drive teams over it. We kept that dirt packed. There wasn't nothing like gravel roads and highways and oil roads back then, whenever they was using teams on the roads.

"They used to find a muddy place and they would put three 3x8's, sixteen feet long, and five cleats under them. They were nailed up where the trucks could just drive under them runways, you called them. And I've waded in water up that high in February. And pried up runways that were bogged down. . ."

Hard work, indeed. It is no wonder that the logging camp system required or demanded that a hot meal and clean clothes be ready for such men when they came out of the woods. The work of women back in camp was a necessary support for this tiring physical labor.

The round of work and rest was similar in all the camps. It was a six-day week, followed by a Sunday of rest. Families went down to nearby rivers or creeks to cool off; men sometimes went hunting or fishing. White City, Bluff City, Alceda and the other camps had routines like Fastrill. Rivie Vansau has memories of several of the earlier camps. Her father kept his family part of the time on their farm at Bald Hill, but many of Rivie's early years were spent living near SPLCo operations in the woods. She remembers:

"The first camp I remember living at was Camp No. 2. It is in Trinity County and the post office was Iris. It was not a big camp. We lived in cars in a row, and we got our water from a railroad car tank they hauled in.

"We went to school when we first went there. It's where the natives (the people who lived there) had their school. It was a mile or more to that school. They also had a church and a cemetery there. I can remember the cemetery. It had lots of colored glass on the graves. That was the first time I had ever seen that.

"In a year or two, they built a school near the camp. I don't remember whether the country children went to that school or not. The families I remember there were the Estes, the Whites, the Bowmans, and the Perkins. When that locality was cut out, they moved the camp to Walkerton.

"It was in Houston County, I believe. They told us they were going to move on a certain day and that we would need to prepare some food. I can remember Mrs. Bowman having some cooked liver hash and it was real good. They loaded our houses on flat cars with the steam loader and moved us over to Walkerton. We got there at night. They set our cars down and we slept that night in our cars. It happened that our car was set in the wrong place, so we had to move.

"We moved out of the car into another one up front, close to where the commissary and water tank were. The water tank was a big wooden one, and they hauled the water from the river. (The house cars) looked much like a trailer house does now, only they were better built. They were substantial. They had small, but not too many windows in them. They were painted a red on the outside, but not a bright red. Inside they were not painted, but they were sealed completely. They were made like real boxcars, but I don't think they were ever meant for boxcars. They were well built, so they could move them.

"One of the main things when we lived at Walkerton was the trains. I guess they came and went pretty often. To us kids, the heroes were the engineers. They blew the whistles on the train for us. We knew by the whistles which train

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it was. There was one train they called 'The Old Shay.' One of the engineers was Les Inge. He was Bert Inge's brother.

"We bought everything from the commissary. And the supplies to the commissary came from the mill. They brought them in on a train from Diboll. And anything that was special-ordered, they brought in on the train, too. In the commissary, we had everything. At Christmas time, they had toys, and in ball season, they had whatever it took for that. I can remember they had a Fourth of July celebration one time and they had barrels of beer.

"There was a regular icehouse where we could buy ice. We did not have any refrigerators, but we could buy ice cream at the commissary. If you wanted more then just a cone, you could carry a bowl down there and buy a bowl full to bring home. I remember we had a flowered bowl. I think it had roses on it. That is the one we took to get ice cream in.

"I remember when we lived at Walkerton, it fell my lot to churn. I didn't like that. I had to churn one day and I didn't want to and I cried. I said that I wished the old churn dasher would break and I wished that I would die. So it happened. The churn dasher did break. Then I got afraid I was going to die.

"The school house at Walkerton was built across a branch on a hill; I would say about two or three hundred yards. The seats were long benches with desks on the top, and they were hand made. They had one plank that was the top of the desk. It was not in two pieces, but one plank wide. We had to sit at the long desk. Mr. Lee Holland was the teacher, and he was very strict. He told us if he caught us talking three times, he would paddle us. He caught me twice, and I was afraid he was going to catch me again."

Harold Turner, whose father worked at both White City and Fastrill as a doctor for Southern Pine Lumber, talked about the differences between Fastrill and less permanent camps:

"Fastrill was really a nice little place to live. They had real nice little bungalow houses and they were all in nice rows and they had streets. It was a regular town. Southern Pine Lumber Company owned it all. You couldn't own anything. But it was a good place to live. At White City, they lived in railroad cars.

"Some of them were thirty or forty feet long. And about eight or ten feet wide. You'd have more than one of those for each house. You'd have a little porch in between two of them. They were little breezeways.

"White City had a school, too. All the grades were in one room. The school and the church were the same building. We had long benches to sit on, but no desks. When we got to Fastrill, they had desks.

"They had a big school at Fastrill with two rooms with a partition with doors that folded up and then it would make a big auditorium if you wanted to have any kind of meetings."

"At Fastrill, they cut (the electricity) on every morning at three or four o'clock because everybody had to get up. They would have lights until daylight or maybe a little after daylight, and then they'd cut it on in the afternoon before dark until nine o'clock. They'd blink the lights at fifteen minutes until 9:00 to let you know that you had fifteen minutes to get into bed."

Logging and living, however, were not the only activities in the deep wood of Angelina, Cherokee and Trinity Counties during the first few decades of the century. There was also a lot of hunting. Arthur Temple remembered how the game had been depleted by the hunting, and how it was gradually restored through careful conservation efforts.

"Gene Shotwell, who is now dead but who was one of my early woodsman friends and a great hunter, told me that when he was a boy they used to hunt deer. They would go out with dogs to run them because there weren't enough to hunt any other way. They would have to have the dogs find the deer.

"Back in the 20's, there really wasn't but one old buck and maybe two doe over in the area we now know as Boggy Slough in Trinity County, which is where most of our hunting is. Dave Kenley, along with Captain J.J. Ray, protected those few deer against all invasions by the 'nesters.' They protected those deer from poachers and nesters and they demonstrated that with a little bit of protection, the deer would actually explode in population. Today there are more deer in East Texas than there were in the days of the Indians. Dave really protected those deer and started the first deer herd, which later propagated all of East Texas with white tail deer.

"About 1935, there were enough deer that hunting became a very interesting pasttime. There was a good bit of demand from people to lease land from us for hunting rights, which we let them have for nothing.

"For many years we never charged a cent and we usually had a 5,000 acre area we would lease to a group of people. We would insist that they had rules which created good sportsmanship, as well as protected the game against slaughter.

"We conceived the idea of having 5,000 or 6,000

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acre hunting clubs all around Boggy Slough, which was the cradle of all those deer. We did one thing that I think was really smart. In each area, we selected leaders in that community and sometimes some from other communities. We have a motto to be a good neighbor and we try to do the neighborly thing, so we started letting these people hunt on our lands and that created a certain amount of public support for what we were trying to do, which was to grow game and take care of the forest. These people would take on the obligation to protect the deer and other game, to help prevent forest fires, to report any vandalism or pilferage, or stealing of timber which was a big thing then.

"As a result we had hundreds of people helping us. This gradually expanded until we had 300 or so hunting clubs. Each one is operated by those individuals, who are members. They have a responsibility to us, and we look over their shoulders from time to time, and if we think they are not operating properly, we have the right to cancel the lease any time. In most cases, we didn't charge for those leases, feeling that the public relations effect was more valuable. Today I think we probably get both; we get the money but we also get the good public relations because they don't charge the full market price. It has been very successful; it rebuilt the deer herds in East Texas. You couldn't be in the forest business without hunting."

Temple went on to talk about the company's hunting club at Boggy Slough.

"When we first started protecting the deer, Boggy Slough was where it began. As a result they built up a pretty good small herd of deer there. Well, no sooner had that happened than the people liked to go through there, not only to hunt in season but also to see the game, because they were still fairly scarce. Then we started having requests and we entertained some of our customers out there. Then in 1941 or '42, I wasn't working in Diboll but I got Henry Temple, (who didn't want to fool with game or hunting) to let me take over the supervision of Boggy because I really liked to hunt and all my friends did. Then I persuaded the company to build a clubhouse, and it was a dandy. We started having organized parties. We used it in season for hunting parties. People would come in for three days to wine, dine, play cards and go hunting. Then we started using it between hunting season as a sort of place to have community functions. If the Boy Scouts wanted to have a dinner, we would send our crews out there. It got to be a big operation. One year, we served 5,000 meals out there.

"Then it caught fire. I think it was an electric fire. It burned down. We decided not to rebuild it because it had gotten to be such a burden. Then we decided we would keep Boggy Slough itself as a place for the top people in the company to hunt. Next we organized another club at Diboll for our employees. We had a clubhouse west of Diboll that was turned over to the people who worked in the mills. We had another east of Diboll that we turned over to the foremen. We had more foremen later, so we had another one called Fag-Lea. Each group had its own club and they ran their own club, conforming to general principles laid down by the company.

"Boggy Slough got its name back in the early days when Captain Ray lived out there. His job was to manage a ranch. My grandfather thought it would be good to take some of this land, fence it and raise cattle. At one time I think they had several thousand head of cattle on that area and there was a big cleared area they called 'Rayville' after Captain Ray. Captain Ray was very high-principled and tough as leather. He was what you would imagine a Texas Ranger would be, and he looked after the ranch and he protected it. He also protected the game. It was named Boggy Slough after the slough that ran through the land."

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1908-1929



Watson Walker, general manager. He was described as a "real southern gentleman" who wore white linen suits in the summer. He was highly respected by the employees.



1913 Bluff City Camp School located in Houston County. Some of the families recognized here are:
1. Sadie Estes
2. Herman Estes
3. Lee Estes
4. Jimmie Chandler
5. O'Hara Chandler
6. Amesses Chandler
7. Ed Chandler



The "Beanery", a boarding house for single men. It was located across the road from the depot; S.A. Brannen and later Mrs. Della Williams ran it.

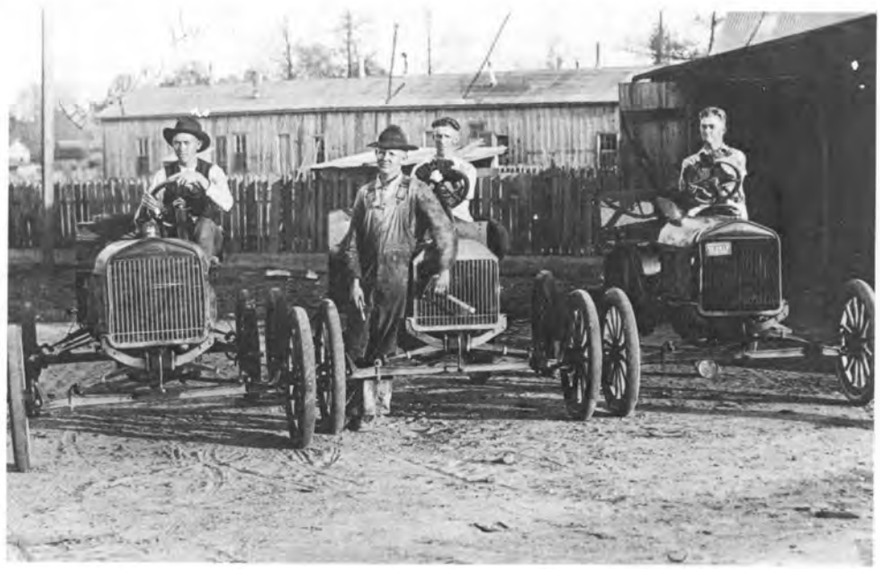
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The Star Hotel, located across the street from the Commissary. Mrs. Emily Estes ran it. She served meals and rented out rooms.

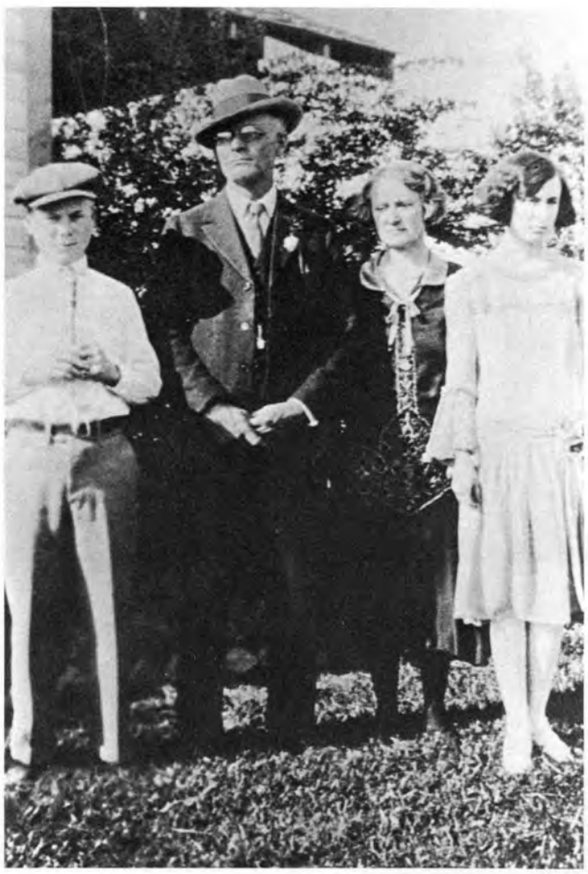


Band of Diboll citizens. Seated: (L to R) Hansford Brannen, Ernest Rutland, unknown, P.H. Strauss with his daughter Meta, E.C. Durham, Frank Farrington. Standing: (L to R) Alonzo Brannen, Claude Tucker, unknown, John Weeks, O.H. Weise, T.L.L. Temple, Jr., unknown.



First lumber jitneys for carrying lumber on dolly runs from dry sheds to the planer. The Ford chassis was shortened to handle better in the mill yard. Pictured (L to R): Bryant Hays, Lee Estes, Grady Steed, Willie Rogers.

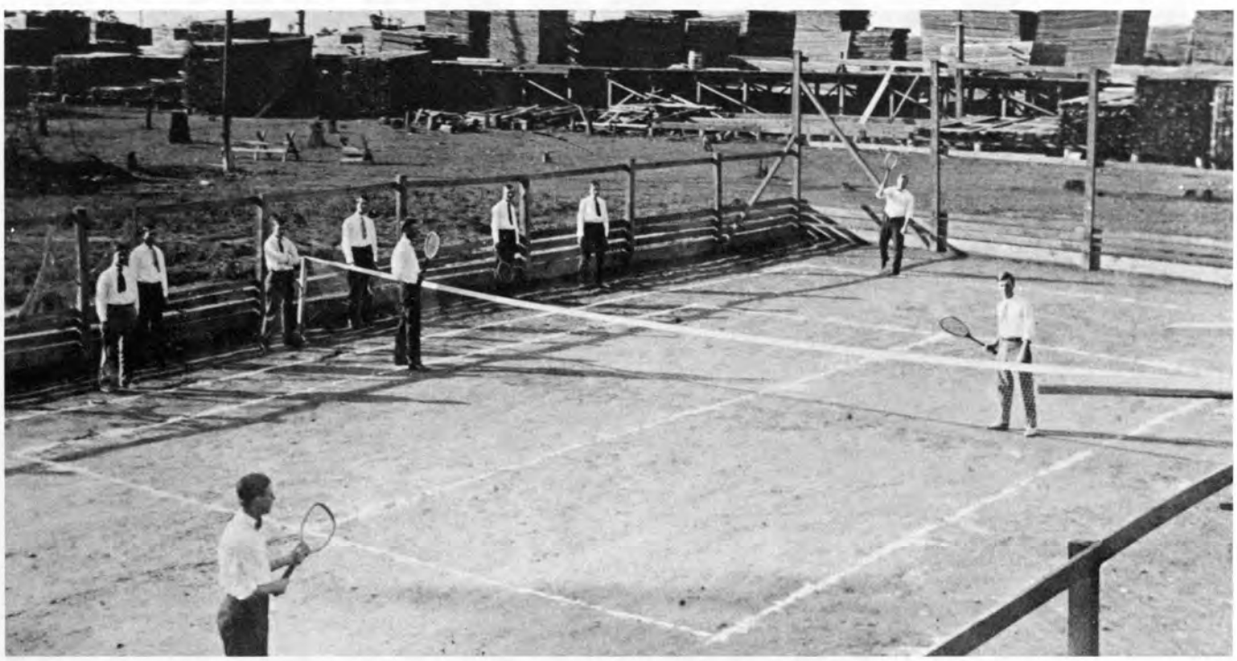
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Dr. R.G. Turner, Mrs. Turner, Laura and Harold. Dr. Turner was a company doctor at White City and Fastrill.



The Chandlers: Ed, Jimmie, O'Hara, Rhoda Faye, and Amesses. They are grandchildren of Granny Taylor who came to Diboll in 1895 with their mother, Annie Chandler.



Tennis Court of the Diboll Athletic Society for young executives. It was located where the loading dock is, west of the old depot.

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First graduating class of Diboll High School—1922. Pictured (L to R): Myrtle Copeland, Franklin Farrington, Beatrice Coan Burkhalter, Herbert Stegall, Marcille Stegall, Ed Burris, Beatrice Jones Sanders, Cleo Agee.



District Basketball Champions in 1922. They played for the state championship in Austin. It took a full day to drive to Austin over dirt roads. Back row (L to R): R.O. Davis (coach), Ed Burris, George Wilmoth, J.D. Green, and Carl Fairchild. Front Row (L to R): Ernest McCarty, Franklin Farrington, Wyatt Cross, and Herbert Stegall.



Inside the Commissary, showing men's and women's departments. The man pictured is George Hunt. Just about anything could be bought in the company commissary from overalls to iceboxes to a bill of groceries.

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W.H. (Will) Hill family: Mrs. Will Hill, Billie, James and Gilbert. Mr. Hill was a long-time woods foreman, living at several camps and in Diboll.



Miss Elodie Miles pictured in the coat T.L.L. Temple gave her. The story is recounted by Mrs. Farrington in the book.

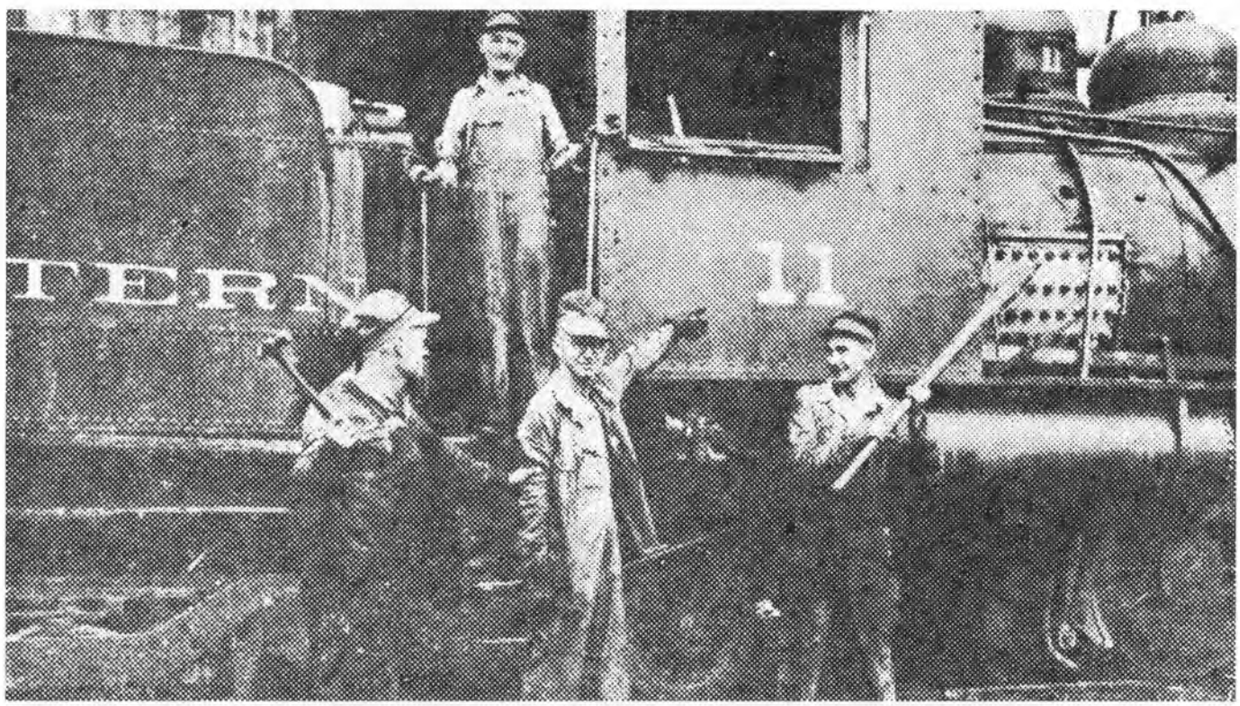


Strauss Bible Class of First Methodist Church. (1928) A record of the members is available at the Temple Library in Diboll.

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The second commissary was built in 1923. It included an ice house, meat market, grocery, men's and ladies' departments, drug store, barber shop and post office. Upstairs was the doctor's office and furniture store. At the dedication the statement was made that it was built to last 30 years. Local belief was that by that time the timber would be gone.



Raymond Willis and Wes Ashworth are shown forcing famous engineer, Bob Cook to get on board T.S.E. Engine No. 11. Joe White is in the cab. Bob Cook's Engine No. 14, his coffee pot on wheels, had served him well and he boarded No. 11 under protest. Bob Cook was also famous for playing the "blues" on the train whistle. Many years after this picture was taken an elderly gentleman in Tenaha was telling Becky Cook about an engineer from Diboll who played the blues on the train whistle, and she excitedly replied, "Oh, that was my grandfather."

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1928-1929 faculty of Diboll schools. L to R: E.H. Bush, principal; Elodie Miles; Mary Jane Agee; Marian Wilmoth; Jewel Kelly; Barry Miller, superintendent; Ruth Weise; Sadie Estes; Effie Mae Carter; Irene Harriot; K.P. Glass.



Old Auditorium located on the school campus. A lodge hall was upstairs. During the depression a soup kitchen for children, a sewing room, and a library were here. Later seats were removed and it became the first school cafeteria. It was finally torn down in the '50's when a new school was built.

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Commissary

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Chapter V

"Just A Little Cardboard Check"

1929. Some people called what happened that year the "Panic." How Diboll managed as a timber town during the thirties is one of the most interesting and important phases in its history.

These are the ingredients of the story: individual and family grit, community cohesiveness, corporate policies and finances, national work programs and the East Texas oil boom. Telling the story means listening to many stories: one man's Depression may be, like one man's war, far different from the next man's.

The idea of telling the story of this period in Diboll by presenting excerpts from many memories was a main impetus for this book. Becky Bailey, a Diboll schoolteacher, took an oral history course at Stephen F. Austin State University under Dr. Bobby Johnson and Dr. Jere Jackson in 1980-81. Her two-semester project was a paper based on taped interviews with Diboll residents who remembered the Depression. Mrs. Bailey went on with others to found the Diboll Historical Society. The rest is—well, oral history.

Though the scope of Mrs. Bailey's historical inquiry has expanded in both directions in time, the Depression story remains at the heart of the narrative. It is one which involves community feeling, galvanizing of the spirit in the face of adversity, and sheer *managing* by the skin of one's teeth.

Compared to many places in the United States, Diboll did not have things bad in those years. And that, too, is part of the story. These next two chapters are devoted to an understanding of this period, in terms first, of the national scene and second, the local response.

In the late 1920's, Diboll was a community of 1500 people, almost all of whom owed their presence and their livelihood to the local sawmill. Physically, the town was made up of clusters of company houses. Copestown was situated north of the mill and was named for the Copes family heirs who had sold lots to individual purchasers. All of the homes in this area were privately owned. Located south of the sawmill were the "Quarters," where black employees lived. Another area was called "Box Factory". It was located west of the mill and adjacent to the box factory.

None of Diboll's streets were paved at this time. The main street ran parallel to the railroad tracks in front of the commissary. Across the tracks was what later became Hines Street, often called "Stocking Road" or "Silk Stocking Row" because of its row of management-level company houses. Other informally-named areas of town included "Snuffy Road" or "Snuffy Ridge," "Tin Can Alley," and "Smoky Ridge." As Pate Warner said:

"Where I lived it was called 'Tin Can Alley' and below it was 'Snuffy Ridge.' Around the planer, they had a lot of houses, and they called that 'Smoky Road' where all those cinders fell. If

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somebody asked where they lived, well, he said he lived on Tin Can Alley, such a house, and if he lived on the back, he lived on 'the last dip of Snuffy.'"

Livestock roamed freely in Diboll so each house was fenced to keep cows, chickens and hogs out of the yards. Animals could go anywhere in the streets—and did, in both senses of the word—as well as in the surrounding woods. Dewey Ballenger remembered how close the pine forest and the thickets were to the town at one time:

"It used to all be in woods. I've toted many a pine knot out of where the high school is now. That used to be woods and you couldn't see where we lived, the old Ballenger house. You couldn't see down to the highway then, it was so thickety. Me and a fellow, Nolan, cut wood for old man Walker's heater out of that pasture. . . great big fine old oak trees. There used to be a bunch of woods between here and Copestown."

O'Hara Chandler, in fact, remembered that when you went to Copestown, *"you were considered out of town."*

Most households owned cows for family use. The cows learned to come home from their wanderings each evening to be fed, milked, and penned up for the night. The company encouraged milk cow ownership and helped many families who couldn't otherwise afford one. Rhoda Faye Chandler said that the company would buy a cow and let the men pay it out by the month. T.L.L. Temple brought in a herd of blooded Guernsey cattle and a fine bull so that the milk cow stock could be upgraded.

The commissary (1894-1953), conveniently located near the railroad tracks at the center of town, was the hub of business and social life. Called "the original mall" by Mrs. Ellen Temple in a *Free Press* article (*"Diboll Commissary May Be Last One in East Texas,"* Nov. 17, 1977), it was a general merchandise establishment on a grand scale, serving literally all the commercial needs of Diboll's inhabitants. Mrs. Temple described it as:

". . .designed for one—stop shopping. A person could stop first at the post office; stroll next door to the barber shop; go upstairs to see the doctor; then walk down the steps and next door to pick up his medicine and perhaps a soda at the drug store.

"Next, he or she would shop in the main store which was an impressive two-story room with a balcony overlooking the first floor. Groceries and dry goods (gents,' ladies,' and children's furnishings) were located downstairs while furniture and wooden coffins were located on the balcony floor.

"Bacon and salt pork were available in back of the grocery section, but a shopper would have to go next door to the meat market for fresh meat. The final stop was the ice house where you could get a chunk to keep food cool in the icebox at home. A person could shop right there at the commissary for almost any of the goods he or she would need in a lifetime."

Mary Jane Christian, who described herself as *"sawmill bred with pine rosin in my veins,"* was a young girl in the late 1920s. Her memories of the commissary include taking the change (in company money) she got from her father's pay envelope each payday and going to the big company store where *"Mrs. Farrington had anything to wear. In the center part was the men's department. You could buy anything in the world there from hats to hose, shoes, men's suits. . . any kind of food."*

Lefty (Mr. Aden) Vaughn, who went to work in the commissary in 1929, remembered:

"Mr. Rutland was over the store but the first manager I remember was Mr. Hunter. When they would draw their checks, he would wait on somebody. They would want a dime's worth of beans, a dime's worth of rice, a dime's worth of coffee, or a dime's worth of blackeyed peas. It was scooped up and weighed. . . a dime a pound, I think. When he would get one waited on, he would holler, 'Get it and get out, ole dude. Who'll be next, please?' He would take them one right after the other. Nothing was self-service; we had to get everything everybody wanted. They weren't allowed to come behind the counter."

Mrs. Vaughn, being a little younger, remembered the candy counter better than the beans and blackeyes:

"The drug store was in one department and the groceries in the other. The candy counter was in the grocery department. There was a clerk there named Ed Day. He loved kids and the kids loved him. We would go in the grocery department and hang around. We wouldn't let any clerk wait on us because we knew Mr. Ed Day would give us a little more than five pieces for a nickel, because he loved the kids. We'd get more for our money by waiting around for Mr. Day."

Mr. Vaughn remembered the high quality merchandise carried by the commissary:

"We handled the best things you could buy. In the men's department, we handled a fine line of clothes. We handled Stetson hats and another hat (Davis); every man wore a hat back in those days. We handled Nunn Bush shoes and Edgerton, and we handled a line of work shoes. . . the kind of

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work shoes men bought. We had Test overalls, but Lee was the best overalls. It was a kind of knockabout overall as it was nicer than Test; most of our people wore overalls in those days. We also handled Arrow shirts and Wimbeley ties. . . "

Prices at the commissary were about the same as in Lufkin, ten miles to the north. Selection was excellent and if a special item was needed, the store would order it for customers.

Mrs. A.B. Glass said anyone was welcome to use the commissary, even if they were not employed by Southern Pine Lumber Company.

"Everyone went to the commissary because. . . there weren't any little grocery stores. There was just the commissary and a little store at Burke."

As an added bonus, the company store also extended credit to the mill hands on a monthly basis. Harold Turner recalled:

"If you were any good at all, you could charge stuff at the store. On pay day or draw day, everyone was expected to settle his accounts before making any additional purchases."

The commissary also housed the Southern Pine land and timber department, which was upstairs next to the doctor's office. There was a close and constant association in those days between the company's business and *everybody's* business. The high-sounding words of the 1908 *American Lumberman* article seemed like a prophecy coming true: *"The manufacturer of lumber is not a manufacturer only. Store, dwellings, offices and other necessary facilities must be provided. (The sawmill owner) is a railroad builder and operator, a storekeeper, and the ruler of an estate equal in area and complexity of difficulties encountered in many counties."*

Edwin Nelson remembered much about the appearance during the twenties of the area around the commissary and "library building," later the offices of Love Wood Products.

"The library was surrounded by a fenced flower garden on the north of the building and a flower garden on the south. The gardens contained shrubbery, cannas and different colored periwinkles. The grass was kept cut with man-powered lawnmowers.

"The area in front of the long store building was made up of two yards. At the front entrance to the merchandise store was space with a flag pole at the half distance to the track from the store. There were benches where people could sit and pass away the hours. In the hot summer nights when it was too hot to sleep, you could sit in the flag pole yard and wait until it got cool around eleven o'clock. The 'Old Glory' always flew from the pole every day. They would take it down every night.

"It was a beautiful sight to come to the store and see the yards. The people on the passenger trains would see the yards from the coaches and they would perk up. It was hot on those trains, and the yards were a sight to see when you were riding a hot, dusty train all day."

Since Southern Pine Lumber Company furnished most of the housing in Diboll, there were few private dwellings. The houses were wooden and varied in size from the very large homes for the managers to the smaller ones rented to the mill hands. But even the smaller homes generally had five or six rooms and might include a sleeping porch. The rent varied from about four dollars to seven dollars per month, depending on the house. Miss Rhoda Faye Chandler said:

"We lived in a company house which was quite comfortable. However, all of them weren't painted, but ours happened to be painted. We didn't have a bathroom. It was a good size house, but we had a pit-type toilet."

Mrs. Cora Nash, too, recalled, *"going out to the privy "* for many years.

The company maintained the houses and had a crew available for repair work. Once a year each house was checked and torn screens and broken windows were repaired. Some of the papering and painting was contracted to individuals. The dwelling crews also repaired houses and did plumbing. Longtime members of these crews included carpenters Grover Atkinson, Jake Weisinger, C.B. Otis, Louis Landers, Marvin Moore and E.A. Stephens; painters and paperhangers Watt Avriett, A.B. Glass, L.B. Warner, Shelly Bateman, Marvin Lee Warner, Bill Weeks and Harvey Glass; plumber Doyle Glass. W.W. Jackson was in charge of the dwellings for many years.

Southern Pine Lumber Company also provided boarding house lodging for the single men at the Beanery and the Star Hotel. Mrs. Della Williams, her daughter and husband lived at the Beanery and managed it for the company. It was located next to the railroad tracks below the commissary. Mrs. Nash was the only cook there for 17 years, making $4 to $6 per week. *"I cooked dinner and I cooked supper. Miss Della always fixed breakfast,"* she remembered. The boarding house had regular meal times and Mrs. Nash *"served on the table in dishes,"* family style. The cooking was done on a large wood stove and the fare was simple. Pinto beans and greens such as mustard and turnips, and fried steak or chicken were the usual items on the menu. Supplies came from nearby farms and the commissary.

Mrs. Nash later went to work at the Star Hotel, where she remained seven years. The Star Hotel

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was built to be the "Waldorf" of Diboll. *"Somedays,"* said Mrs. Nash, *"I served about 80 or 90."* It was a large two-story building with a dining room, kitchen and several bedrooms downstairs and more upstairs. According to Mr. Harold Turner, who lived there, the hotel had approximately 20 rooms and two bathrooms. Mrs. Emily Estes, Ike Estes' widow, ran this establishment with the help of her daughter, Ruth Olly Estes Pickel. Mrs. Emily Estes was known to everyone as "Big Ma."

Mr. Turner recalls:

"There wasn't but about a dozen of us. About a dozen people lived there (in the Star) then."

Most of the boarders were truck drivers. Other rooms were available for visitors such as salesmen, known as drummers, and others who might pass through town.

Mrs. Marjorie Pickel ("Sis") Davis, who lived at the Star because she was the granddaughter of Emily Estes, remembered that

"...one of the cooks was named Eula Clark. She did the cooking and her husband Jim Clark did the dishwashing. The stove was about seven feet long. My father and Jim chopped the wood for it. They had coils inside a fire box, and that was how they got hot water. We had two bathrooms, one upstairs and one downstairs.

"They were cooking all day, three meals a day. They had to get men out to catch the train to go out in the woods at four o'clock , so we got up about two-thirty or quarter-to-three, and fixed their lunches.

"You'd get up in the mornings and make rice sausage, pan sausage, and they always had desserts. We'd make a sweet sandwich, a sausage sandwich, and an egg sandwich (one for each man)...our skillets were 24 inches.

"And they had an old safe. It was an old timey safe with a screen on it. We didn't have a refrigerator, so you'd put your food in the safe, even milk. And you didn't have roaches then. I don't know why.

"The bathrooms had bathtubs in 'em, but no commodes. And you'd have to go up and get the slop jars and carry them downstairs way out back. And cuss them all the way back in..."

Electrical and water service were also provided by the company. Miss Chandler, who was born in 1910, remembers the coming of electricity. It would be turned on at 3:00 or 4:00 a.m. and turned off again at approximately 7:00 a.m. The electricity would be turned on again in the late afternoon and would stay on until 9:00 p.m.

Myrtle Rushing remembered a story about the coming of electricity:

"We had a big laugh about it. One family near me...the lady was so scared she grabbed all of her children and ran outside. She told them to stay out of the house, that it was liable to kill them. A lot of people just couldn't understand. We can never forget that. They finally convinced her that it would not hurt her."

Water for the town came from the boilers at the mill. Mr. Turner recalled that condensed steam was collected in two large wooden tanks, cooled, and piped to the houses. He told of steam coming from the faucets at times. Sometimes in the summer, he had to add a twenty-five pound block of ice to his bath water to lower the temperature enough to make it bearable.

In a sawmill town, there was no shortage of fuel for the boilers that generated steam to power the sawmill, the dry kiln and electric generators. Sawdust, shavings and "hog fuel" were in abundant supply. Hog fuel was coarsely ground chips produced by a machine called a "hog". All large scraps were fed through the machine to produce fuel for the boilers. Mr. Turner said, *"They had plenty of it (fuel) at all times. In fact, they had it running out their ears."*

Paul Burka wrote in *The Texas Monthly:*

"At the sawmill, the incinerator burned day and night, getting rid of wood waste in bark, sawdust, tips and the outer part of the trunk, anything that couldn't be made into lumber: half the tree, half the company's assets, going up in smoke."

The smoke would blanket the town, especially during the damp winter weather. It also deposited a layer of cinders in the lofts of the houses. Any slam of a door would cause a layer of cinders to sift down to the floor. Myrtle Rushing, whose house faced the mill, remembered the cinders well:

"When we would wash and hang our clothes out, I had to wash them over lots of times. We lived right next to the mill. We tried to pick days when the wind would not be blowing. They would even come through the screens. Housekeeping was really hard."

The work at the mill itself was largely physical. From the time the trees were cut in the woods until the finished lumber was stacked on the truck for shipment, many human hands had touched the wood. Men cut the trees with crosscut saws and removed the limbs with axes. Skidders, drawn by mules and horses, dragged the felled trees to the railroad spurs.

At the mill, the logs were dumped into the log pond behind the sawmill to keep them from drying out. Conveyors were used to send the logs one by one into the steam-powered saws. At this point

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the lumber was stacked and sorted by hand by men in "the green lumber chain." The lumber was then loaded onto small carts called dollies and taken to the dry kiln, called an "Arkansas kiln."

"Dolly runs" conveyed the lumber between all the steps of the operation. Many young men began working for the company on the dolly run. They would load the lumber on these carts and then would push them into the planer. It was hard and physically demanding labor.

The planer was the last step of the process before the lumber was shipped.

The lumber was dried in the dry kiln and stacked in the lumber yard or the storage sheds. Carey Smith recalls moving and stacking the lumber without labor-saving machines:

"Back in my day, it took three men to pick up. . . go out and pick up a 12x12x24 and put it on a buggy."

Everywhere, wood shavings, sawdust, hog fuel and other waste products piled up. Workers were paid to gather and burn the waste by-products before they swamped the plant. A fireman constantly stoked the boiler with the waste, day and night, six days per week, to produce the steam to power the mill and town. Miss Chandler's father, as superintendent of the boiler, didn't even get Sunday off as a day of rest because *"he had to wash the boilers out on Sunday and that took just about half a day."*

Men worked long and hard to support their families, and the families saw little of their menfolk. In Miss Chandler's opinion men aged early and died early, leaving widows and children to support themselves.

Despite the long hours and poor pay, jobs were at a premium. Many of the parents of the employees of the late 1920's had also been employed by Southern Pine. In fact, it was not uncommon for a young person to work for a time without pay just for the experience. When an opening became available they would then be hired for the position. Mrs. Hazel Turner recalls:

"I worked for the T.S.E. (Southern Pine Lumber Company's railroad) for almost a year just for experience. The only time I got any pay was when someone went on vacation or something like that."

For much of its history, the company paid its workers not in cash, but in a special company currency. Generally known in the United States as "scrip," this tender was known in Diboll as "chits" or "doolies" (also pronounced "doogies" and "doobies"). Common during the Depression but also in use much earlier, these checks were considered to be as good as money by SPLCo workers. Miss Chandler described the scrip as:

"Just a little cardboard check with different sizes and different colors for different amounts. There was a lady that sewed them around the edges and they were signed. My first job was dipping them in wax. We had trays and we would stand them up and let them dry."

The plant superintendent signed the checks. The sewing and dipping in wax reinforced the cardboard disks and made them last longer. An article in *The Free Press* by Ellen Temple (Nov. 17, 1977) described the checks and the pricing in the commissary.

"Checks were for five dollars, two dollars, and one dollar, fifty cents, twenty-five cents, ten cents and five cents. According to Lefty Vaughn, all prices in the commissary were purposely even so that giving change was not a problem."

Mary Jane Christian said that a later form of scrip in Diboll was made of metal. Southern Pine paid every 15 days and the employees were 15 days behind in their pay. The Monday following pay day was called "draw day." The workers could then draw on their next pay day. This pay was issued in "checks" or "doolies" and debited against their account in the office. A man could draw all but one of the 15 days owed him. The checks could be used at full value at the commissary or boarding houses. There were also people who would give the workers cash for a percentage of the face value of the check. Employees could draw their pay in cash in cases of emergency.

The subject of currency used by Southern Pine Lumber Company provides a good place to step back into history for a broader look. This and almost every other aspect of life in Diboll had for a long time been in some way involved with, supported by or bounded by the company. The relationship between sawmill workers and the outfits they worked for—especially in isolated situations like Diboll sometimes been called "feudal." In many ways, Diboll fit that characterization, but the Lord was in this case a benevolent one fired with humanitarian zeal.

In the January 23, 1915, issue of *Harper's Weekly Magazine* a man named George Creel published a scathing account of sawmill town economics called *"The Feudal Towns of Texas."* In it he detailed living conditions and wages in Kirbyville and Jasper, comparing them unfavorably to northern workingmens' communities. He went on to say that *"similar conditions prevail in nearly all of the lumber towns. In Pineland, for instance, home of the Temple Lumber Company, the community of about 2000 is even more firmly in the corporate grip. Lands, houses, churches and schools, are owned by the company, and its will is above all law."*

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It is important to evaluate statements such as Creel's in the context of the general economic situtation in rural East Texas at the time. In many ways this kind of characterization is too harsh. Yet, there was a truth underlying its harshness that could not be denied, a truth about the inherent paternalism of the relationship between employer and employee which in time demanded revolutionary changes. Eventually, Tom Temple's grandson, Arthur, made such changes.

Pineland, Diboll's sister town, had come under explicit attack. Yet the actuality of the supposed grisly living situtation at Pineland may be gauged by the fact that employees of Temple Lumber Company developed vigorous anti-union activities among themselves. They set up a committee of 13 to report at regular meetings anything that might indicate encroachment by the Brotherhood of Timber Workers.

Creel's article seems to bear some relationship to a federal investigation which took place the previous year. The United States Department of Labor had sent an investigator to the three Texas lumber towns to see what was going on. Peter Speek spent the three days between October 19-21, 1914, finding out all about conditions in Kirbyville, Jasper, and Pineland. Judging from his stationery, he spent a fourth day in the Majestic Hotel in St. Louis writing up his findings in longhand.

Speek obtained a great deal of pertinent information in those three days. The picture delivered to the National Archives was not a pretty one, by national standards: wages were quite low, on the average, often only half as much as for similar jobs elsewhere. Hours, too, were longer. At Diboll, for instance, in the twenties, mill hands began work at 6:00 or 6:30 in the morning and worked until 5:00 or 5:30. If traveling out to a job in the woods was required, the hours away from home might be even longer. A workday in excess of ten or eleven hours was common.

Indeed, at Diboll, rewards for efforts in the mill *were* few. There were no paid holidays, no vacations and little in the way of financial gains. Mill hands received from a low of $1.25 per ten-hour day for a black worker such as Mr. Carey Smith to slightly more for white workers. These wages were about average for the East Texas sawmill worker, but low on a national scale. The hourly wages for all wage-earners in the industry in Texas was 22.1 cents, compared with 25.6 for the nation.

John R. Commons in *The History of Labor in the United States 1896-1932* reported:

"The average weekly earnings of 1929 in the industries reporting to the National Industrial Conference Board were above $28.05."

These industries, of course, were only the ones which reported *voluntarily.* Yet even with this fact in mind, it is hard to account for the wages in the sawmill towns, which were only about half what the others reported. By northern standards, wages at Diboll *were* low during the '20s, but Temple management was aware of this fact, and the company tried all along to make higher wages possible.

In many places in the United States, such wages and such hours might have made for an already highly explosive situation when the crash came. But several factors mitigated against that at Diboll. One was that Southern Pine Lumber Company, though participating in the generally paternalistic practices of the time, was also a genuinely benevolent organization. It had philanthropic priorities for a long time. As Rhoda Faye Chandler remembered company aid to employees, which had always been generous, was continued —even increased—during the hard times.

Yet, the company found ways for people to maintain their dignity while receiving aid, such as asking them to pay back loans *"when they could."* Becky Bailey, interviewing Miss Chandler, put it well when she asked if *"the company managed to take care of people and yet it wasn't charity."* What happened in the Southern Pine situation, it seems, is that the company took the measure of its employees well, seeing that their background fitted them with a certain amount of native pride which would not be squelched, even in desperate circumstances. It established and maintained a balance between giving to, and demanding from, its workers, which carried everyone through the lean years in the best possible shape.

Here is Miss Chandler's description of the arrangements for help to sawmill families:

"I interviewed the people and visited in their homes to see if they actually needed help. We had a Coke fund and all of our surplus money went into this fund. The company helped if we didn't have any money. We would visit these people, see what they needed, and help them with groceries, doctor bills and even clothing.

"These were former employees or the families of former employees. The company seemed to always take care of those who had taken care of them.

"If they were working they were charged rent but they didn't always collect because the people just didn't have the money. But they didn't move the people out. At that time the company also owned the light company and they furnished them with light and water and they wouldn't cut

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those services off either.

"I imagine they were helping an average of 25 families at one time, and if they needed to go to Lufkin to the doctor, the company would see that they got there. But usually the people went to the company doctor.

"The company would carry the medical insurance until later on... maybe they could pay it back; they didn't cancel the insurance.

"If they got too far behind in their bills, they would write it off but usually the people—if they could possibly afford to pay it—they went ahead and paid it. At that time, your light and rent were taken out of your pay check.

"If someone got hurt at the mill, they had compensation insurance and they drew a small weekly check but the company took care of their families.

"They told me to go see about it, so I would explain to them. At that time, everyone knew everyone else regardless of whether they were white or colored. We were all friends. I'd been born and raised here. I asked them what they needed and how long they had been sick, and how many were in the family.

"The churches and the company worked together. We were recognized as one big family, and color didn't make any difference. If one person was in trouble, we were all in trouble."

Another factor working against social disaster in Diboll during the thirties may have been that East Texas in the early part of this century was never prosperous even before the Depression. As Mrs. Bee Burkhalter said, *"We always laughed in our family and said the Depression didn't hurt us because we never had anything anyway."* To some extent, too, the isolation served as a buffer against the more damaging effects of the sheer *numbers* of the needy found in cities and metropolitan areas. A small community can to a great extent shift for itself, even under duress, when not pressured by endless tides of outsiders. This isolation effect was even more marked in the lumber camps than in Diboll. As Inez Asher remarked, *"I didn't know we had a Depression (in Fastrill). That's the truth."*

But perhaps the most important factor in Diboll's survival through this difficult decade lay in the heroic attempts made by the Southern Pine management to keep the mill running and provide the workers some employment, even if only a little. Scores of other sawmill towns in East Texas closed down abruptly after the stock market crash. Manning, southeast of Lufkin, was one Angelina County example. Of the ghost towns dotting the county today, many can be attributed as much to the Depression's effects as to the exhaustion of the timber.

But as Latane Temple said, *"My grandfather didn't want his people to be* ***out.***" So, even when lumber orders dropped off severely and even when other companies were finding it more profitable to shut down and let the trees grow, Tom Temple's mill provided two or three days a week of work for everyone as long as it possibly could. Wes Ashworth said:

"It was rough back in those days; it certainly was but the company was really good to employees. They wanted them to stay because they knew what sawmill hands were back in those days. And those they had were already trained; they knew what it cost to train a new hand. And the company did all they could to hold their people together. They were really nice to them. You couldn't ask for anything better. They didn't bring the Depression on. We don't know who brought it on."

The crash, of course, came in the fall of 1929. The crisis of one of the greatest stock-exchange panics in the history of the world came on October 29. Within a week, brokers' loans, which had stood at the figure of $8,500,000,000, decreased nearly $1,100,000,000. The speculating public had come by that time to include people from all walks of life, and loan figures such as these had enormous and ramifying repercussions.

When the Depression deepened, in the early thirties, it was clear that the nation's terrible losses in the 1929 stock market, combined with the business depression, were giving rise to great pessimism and loss of confidence. In December, 1930, President Hoover said in his message to Congress that the number of unemployed had been 2,500,000 *"on April 1"* and had *"increased since."* His public face was undismayed at this figure; he kept assuring the nation that all would be well in a couple of months. The same assurances sounded more and more hollow as the unemployment figures rose to six, seven and even eight million.

Through the thirties the national situation, and the world situation, grew steadily worse. The earnings of great U.S. business enterprises seemed to be melting to nothing. Banks throughout the entire country had been failing by the hundreds, and many communities were left entirely without banking facilities.

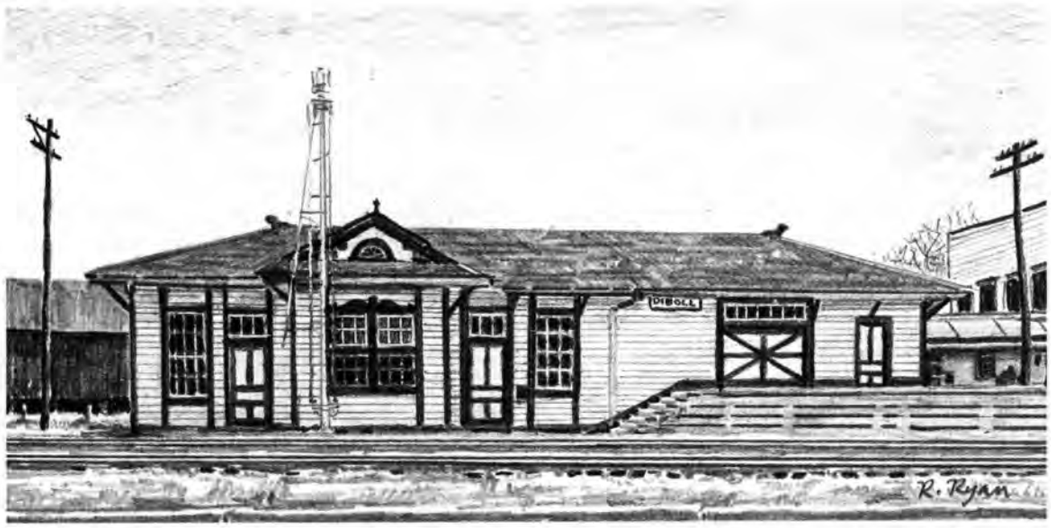
In the summer of 1932, the panic had reached its peak. Universal bankruptcy for even the strongest business concerns loomed close at hand. Conditions were unprecedented in some of the agricultural states. In a single day in April of that year, fully one-quarter of the entire state of Mississippi is said to have been sold at auc-

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tion for non-payment of taxes and debts. The lands sold included 20% of all the farms in the state and 12-15% of all the town property. The state had to take over as the owner of 400,000 acres previously owned by individual farmers at that time.

Timber companies in Texas hardly fared better. In Diboll during these years, SPLCo could provide *"a living and that's about all,"* Lefty Vaughn said.

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Chapter VI

"A Living And That's About All"

Far from being immune to the effects of the Great Depression, the timber industry in Texas was peculiarly vulnerable. A housing boom which had created a rising new market for southern pine lumber ceased with the failure of banks and lending institutions, and with unemployment. Other businesses which had provided outlets for pine lumber production also curtailed construction. Southern Pine Lumber Company was one of many in the south desperately threatened by the national economic situation. As Ellen Temple wrote in her article on the Depression years for *The Free Press* on October 7, 1976, *"Timber became less than worthless; its manufacture couldn't bring enough to pay production costs... Southern Pine was not as diversified as Temple-Eastex is today. It was strictly a lumber operation, and when folks had no money to build, it suffered."*

From an average cut of more than 1.35 billion feet per year during the bonanza period in the early 1920's, the national annual output dwindled to 1.1 billion board feet in 1929 and less than 900 million in 1930. These figures were closer to those of the 1880's than they had been to any of the decades in between. Partly due to wasteful forest practices, Texas became a lumber-importing state. The great East Texas virgin pine forest had been decimated. *"The end of an era had been reached in Texas lumbering,"* wrote Robert Maxwell and Robert Baker in *Sawdust Empire. "The industry had turned full circle."*

T.L.L. Temple's *"sawdust empire"* remained, as Ellen Temple explained, vigorous longer than those of many of his competitors. Until the stock market crash, both Southern Pine Lumber Company and Temple Lumber Company had been *"running wide open,"* continuing to acquire land, invest, and expand retail operations. But by the time the lumber industry in Texas hit bottom in 1932—which was also the time of the greatest depth in the Depression—Temple's enterprise stood on ground as shaky as that of other sawmill businesses. As former Diboll mayor Clyde Thompson said, *"Mr. Temple had lots of headaches then."* The company operated in the red in 1931 and 1932.

At that time, the headquarters for all the Temple businesses was Texarkana in the Texarkana National Bank Building. Besides the Pineland and Diboll operations, Temple retail yards existed throughout Texas—*"from the Red River to the Rio Grande"*—with division headquarters in Houston. There was also Temple Cotton Oil and Manufacturing Company (in which Southern Pine owned 90% of the stock), which ran box factories in Diboll and Dallas.

Ellen Temple outlined in her *Free Press* article, *"Temple Empire Almost Folded During the Great Depression,"* the cast of Temple family members, managers, and employees who played a part in the crisis:

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"Some of the leading characters in the 1930 Depression drama were Arthur Temple, Sr., T.L.L.'s son, who served as president; L.D. Gilbert, general manager in Texarkana; P.H. Strauss and John J. O'Hara, co-managers in Diboll, with Strauss in charge of logging, including log ponds and machine shop and the office, while O'Hara was in charge of mill operations and the company dwelling houses; Henry G. Temple, vice-president of the mill division and manager of Temple Lumber Company; I.B. McFarland, general manager of the retail yard division; E.C. Durham, ran the T.S.E. Railroad; plus all the employees who struggled and sacrificed to keep those corporations running."

The first indications of panic came when orders began falling off. Mrs. Hazel Turner remembered that she was hired as a secretary for the company in December, 1929—before the crash really made itself felt in Diboll. But she and fellow-secretaries, her sister, Mildred Winder, and Rhoda Faye Chandler, watched as *"the orders started slowing down in the latter part of 1929 and 1930. Then the mill shut down to two or three days a week. As the lumber orders came in, they would fill them."*

Arthur Temple, Jr., the son of Arthur, Sr., recalls that in 1931 the company owed a great deal of money, and that his father and his grandfather experienced agonies over this debt and their responsibilities to Temple employees. Of T.L.L. Temple, he said in an interview, *"The Depression just about wiped him out. My father had to take over the operation because my grandfather by that time couldn't cope with it. He had been used to being successful, and he just couldn't face the problem."* Arthur Temple, Sr., filling in for his father, took the debts he inherited seriously. As Arthur Temple Jr. said:

"That was a long and tough period, and I was just a kid. I was born in 1920, and I guess the Depression was about 1930-31. The depth was in '32. I used to sleep out on the sleeping porch with my father. We were very close. Out on that sleeping porch in Texarkana, Dad never slept. For two or three years he almost didn't sleep at all because he was worried sick about the debt that had been created in the expansion. . . Dad's entire role was to pay off that debt."

Mr. Temple went on to describe the financial condition of the company at the time of the Depression and what his father tried to do about it:

"L. D. Gilbert was general manager of the company prior to that time. . . chief operating officer is what we would call him today. He is the guy who spent so much money when the Depression hit in '29, and reached the bottom in '32. That's the guy who left my father with the job of paying back a lot of money. He died about '32 and my father took it over. Mr. Gilbert had gone through the twenties when everything looked pretty good and, relatively speaking, they were making good money. He had gone through a big expansion; they had bought some land. It wasn't really all that big of an expansion, but it seemed to be big, on the scale of things at that time. So when the Depression hit, we owed a couple of million dollars and we didn't have any way to pay it back. Dad would call the bankers, and they wouldn't even talk to him.

"We had a terrible time and the people who worked for us had a terrible time during the Depression. The housing and everything was intended to try to help the people get by. Somewhere, I have some really heart-rending letters. . . I remember the commissary, of course, extending credit to the employees to keep them going. Of course, they made practically nothing.

"People don't understand that we actually didn't have any money. We had a good bit of land, but other than that, we didn't have any money. To keep people eating, we would let them have flour and whatever people bought in those days—mostly flour, sugar, salt, probably salt pork, and things like that. We would extend credit to them. We got to the point where we couldn't pay ***our*** *bills! I've seen letters that Dad wrote to Bewley's Flour Mills, asking them to extend us credit. They had written and said they couldn't extend us any more credit. He told them of the fact that we were trying to help our people—and tried to get them to ship one more car load of flour.*

"I never will forget one of the banks involved. It was Boatmen's Bank in St. Louis. They were going to throw us into bankruptcy. I'll never forget how nervous Dad was. The bankers wouldn't let us have any more money and they called a creditor's meeting. Dad went down and put on his best act for all the big bankers we owed at the time. The three principal ones were Boatmen's Bank in St. Louis, South Texas National Bank in Houston, which was represented at the meeting by a Mr. Gossett, and Republic Bank represented by Fred Florence.

"They heard the story, and Boatmen's National Bank said that we ought to get rid of the retail lumber yards we had around the state at that time. Dad said, 'Well, Mr. Boatwright, there is no way in the world we can sell those.' Nobody would buy anything. There wasn't any money. Nobody had any money. Even though the yards had value, you couldn't sell them. People today can't understand that, but I can remember it.

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*There was **no** money.*

"Mr. Boatwright said, 'Well, get rid of them; they are losing money.' Dad said, 'We can't get rid of them.' Mr. Boatwright said, 'Well, anyway get rid of them; throw them in the Gulf.' My dad quoted that to me a hundred times.

*"Mr. Gossett supported Dad, but Mr. Florence was the wonderful banker, and I suspect we owed Mr. Florence more than any of them. He said, 'No, I'll tell you what let's do. These people **are** honest. There is no money, and we have a choice of taking them over and throwing them into bankruptcy. We don't know a damn thing about running sawmills' (which is all we were then). He said, 'These people are honest and they will do everything that they possibly can. They will do a better job than we can. I vote we stay with them, damn it.'*

"They did, and that turned the day. Within two years of that day, by making tremendous sacrifices, Dad had paid off what seemed like an awful lot of money then... two million dollars.

"Of course, he never forgot Mr. Boatwright either, but he never forgot Fred Florence and Mr. Gossett. Today, the Republic Bank is our principal bank, even though we normally wouldn't be located there. We probably would be doing business with a New York bank. But today Republic is our principal bank, and I'm on their board and executive committee.

"I didn't know Mr. Florence then... I was just a kid... but some years later before I was in Diboll, I was at a meeting and Mr. Florence was there and I told him that story. He remembered it. I told him, 'Mr. Florence, I know that you have done a lot of favors for a lot of people, but I just want you to know that most people forget when they don't need you any more. They forget the favors you have done for them in the past. But I just want you to know that I won't ever forget it.' I think it impressed him.

"The way Dad paid off the debt was to sell timber to the government. They came in and in an almost unmerciful way... they knew how badly we needed money to keep our people eating... they bought probably the best timber we had for the national forest. It had beautiful timber on it. They just robbed us. But that was the only place we could sell it. We had to have the money. We sold them, I think, a hundred thousand acres at two dollars an acre. But the two hundred thousand dollars probably was one of the most important things that could happen to us."

The company was also able to borrow from a number of private individuals during the Depression, and the kindness has never been forgotten. One of the people who lent money to Southern Pine Lumber Company at that time was John Oliver, a farmer who had several businesses in Diboll and later ran the sawmill at Hoshall. Jackie Oliver Morehead, his daughter, recalled:

"I remember the money my daddy let Southern Pine Lumber Company borrow. I remember very vividly my mother telling us. But they did not make an issue of it. But we knew that he had loaned Southern Pine Lumber Company some money at that time. The reason I remember it is that Maurice and I were coming home in the afternoon and we would make a sashay through the commissary. One afternoon we were doing that, and there was a big bin of red apples, and Maurice said, 'Gee, I sure would like to have one of those.' And I said, 'Well, why not? Our daddy loaned them some money, so surely we can have an apple.' We picked up one. And Mr. Day saw us, and I went up and told him. He said, 'Okay.' I don't remember if we ever paid for the apples or not, but I am sure we did. If our mother found out about it, I am sure we took money back... we thought we had a little privilege there. The company later repaid the money. Daddy was happy to help out."

Dr. J.C. Clement remembered how happy Arthur Temple, Sr. was when John Oliver renewed the loan:

"Mr. Oliver, who lived back of the Negro Quarters, had loaned the company $40,000 or $50,000, and he said, 'If we don't get that man to renew this note, I don't know what we're going to do. We're in awful shape; we're at the bottom.' And so he went over, and Mr. Oliver said, 'Oh, yes, Mr. Temple, glad to do it, just go on and renew it.' And he came back the happiest man I ever saw. That was Arthur's daddy, and shortly after that he died."

Clyde Thompson told Mrs. Ellen Temple a story about borrowing money for Southern Pine from Sam Hyman of Lufkin. Money was tight but Thompson, as the company emissary, was expecting to receive a check for the agreed-upon $25,000.

"Instead Hyman summoned Clyde to the men's room where he promptly pulled off a money belt bulging with $25,000 in cash. Thompson was astounded. He said he wasn't going to carry the money around, so he marched into Lufkin National Bank to make the deposit for the company. Roy Kurth, Sr., the bank vice-president, saw him coming and laughed, 'Well, you've been borrowing from Sam, haven't you?' (***Free Press,*** *"A Satchel and A Dream: a Brief History of the Town of Diboll", October 7, 1976)."*

But local borrowing of small amounts by the company had been going on, according to Edwin

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Nelson, since Tom Temple's day:

"Many employees reciprocated the intense loyalty the company had shown them by lending small sums of money they had saved during good years to help keep the company going through the difficult years.

"Some kept the notes that Tom Temple signed. Later, when it came to a showdown, they produced the notes and the interest had grown to such a sum that they were given a position with the company."

Borrowing and economizing wherever possible, Arthur Temple, Sr. vowed to keep the company going for its employees. He knew, with the layoffs and shutdowns in the industry as a whole, they could find no other jobs. Mrs. Ellen Temple wrote in her *Free Press* article on Diboll, the company and the Depression that:

"He set out to liquidate assets to pay off the bank notes. According to W. Aubrey Cannon, a long-time employee, former secretary-treasurer of Temple Industries and now (1976) assistant secretary-treasurer of Temple-Eastex, Southern Pine liquidated timber rights on more than 15,000 acres in Red River and Bowie Counties, and sold off real estate in Houston and Dimmit Counties.

"In 1934, Temple Lumber Company sold 80,974 acres of cutover timberland to the National Forest Service. In Pineland with Arthur Sr. present, L.L. Bishop of the U.S. Forest Service offered the Temple Lumber Company negotiator D.C. Kenley $2.75 an acre. Kenley tried to hold out for $3.00 but finally settled for $2.75. That 80,974 acres is now part of the 179,000 acre Sabine National Forest.

"His efforts to reduce company debt in the 1930's influenced Arthur Sr.'s company policies for the rest of his life. He operated on a conservative basis and didn't seek any notable expansion or growth. He made his economic philosophy clear in a May 23, 1951, letter to Latane Temple concerning a proposed expansion of Temple Cotton Oil Company: 'I went through hell in the early 1930's paying off debts which had been made through expansion policies in the 1920's, and I resolved never to get caught in any such tight spot again.'" ***(Free Press,*** *Oct. 7, 1976)*

Another reason the lumber industry declined so precipitously in Texas after 1929 was the drop in lumber prices. The cost of producing lumber had remained stable during the decade after the First World War, ranging from $23 to $25 per thousand board feet.

If this lumber could be sold at $28 to $30 per board foot, some profit could be made. But in 1930, the price dropped to $24. In 1931 it was $18 and in 1932 it was $14.65. Most sawmill owners had decided by then to hold on to their inventories until prices recovered.

Other owners increased production and offered cut-rate prices, further depressing the market. Still others shut down and abandoned the cutover lands they had nearly exhausted. Employees of such companies were left unemployed, and county governments saw a decline in their tax bases as cutover lands became tax-delinquent.

Several mills besides Southern Pine operated on reduced work schedules in an effort to help employees keep body and soul together. The Angelina County Lumber Company, run by the Kurths at Keltys, north of Lufkin, gave all its employees some time each week. Frost-Johnson did likewise, though each man might work only a few days a month. This company also established vegetable gardens which were worked by employees for the community. Lutcher and Moore in Orange was forced to close its mills for 15 years due to the Depression. The John Henry Kirby empire, centered in Tyler and Jasper Counties, experienced total bankruptcy.

Reduction of work schedules was carried out by Southern Pine Lumber Company in response to lower orders and to reduce costs. Wages were cut, according to Ellen Temple's *Free Press* article,

"...as much as each man could stand. Correspondence among managers in the fall of 1931 reveals the agony that accompanied the need to cut wages. Mr. Gilbert, the general manager, wrote: 'God knows this (wage cuts) is no pleasant matter to deal with, but it is either that or close down, which you know we can't do.'"

The Free Press article by Ellen Temple went on to say that:

"E.C. Durham, T.S.E. Railroad manager at the time, painted a poignant picture in his worry over wage cuts. He wrote from Diboll October 31, 1931: 'How some of these men can pay rent, hospital, etc., feed and clothe their families on what they earn is a mystery difficult for me to solve. The fact is, in many cases they are not doing it. The number of under-nourished children to be seen at the school is almost unbelievable, and the teachers report that some of their lunches are so meager as to make one doubt they are living in a land of plenty. Some of those children are from the country but we have ample quota right here in town. I am not reciting these things as sob stuff... they are grim facts which should not be lightly considered. Of the men who are making the best wages and salaries it must be said that they have given generously and helped in many ways to relieve suffering and to hold the community together.' In his letter, Mr. Durham

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continued on about some of the employees' wage cuts. He noted that P.F. Sullivan, a shop man, earned $52.95 a month in 1911 but dropped to $29.27 a month in 1931. A log train engineer in 1931, making 200 miles a day besides switching, earned $69.11 or about 70% of what he earned 20 years before."

Carey Smith recalled what it was like working the reduced schedule:

"Sometimes we would work two days a week. Sometimes we worked three, according to how the orders come in. You had to get orders from Mr. Farley. He was my foreman and he was shipping clerk. Sometimes he'd get an order at 12 o'clock in the day and we worked that evening, and be off in the morning. We done pretty well, just off and on. We'd have from 12, 14 dollars a payday. If you had 29 dollars payday, you were doing pretty good in those days. It was tough, I'm tellin' you."

Fannie Farrington spoke in 1954 about the visible effects of the shortage of work and money in Diboll:

"During the Panic, money was scarce. I've seen men that would be glad to get a dollar a day if they could get work. I've looked into faces of children who were hungry and I've wrapped them with old coats somebody'd bring in to keep them from freezing; it was the only way. One day, I went to our manager and said, 'I don't believe I can stand this any longer. There's a man over there and he's barefooted and it's cold. He's come to me and asked me what to do?' The tears rolled down his cheeks and he said, 'Tell them to give him shoes.' And the company had all this background, you know. They had all this timber and all, but you couldn't get hold of any money."

Lefty Vaughn remembered the effects of the crash on the people who worked in the commissary:

"We had to cut down on our buying; everybody made a living and that's about all. If it hadn't been for the store, though, the company would have had a hard time paying off. The people would come and buy from us, and then the money went right back into the office, and that kept the mill running. During the Depression, that's when the NRA (National Recovery Administration) started. If it hadn't been for NRA, we would have worked from daylight until dark for a dollar a day, but that helped in that it caused the companies to give the people some time off.

"We got along with less people (at the commissary) during that time. We didn't stay open as long. When I started to work, we opened at 7:30 every morning and we had a noon break. Then about four or five o'clock we'd have a 30 minute period off and then we would work until 8:00 or 8:30. That was our day. I started to work over there for $60.00 a month in the drugstore and that was in 1929. That was when the Depression started and I got cut back to $43.00 a month. Then later on, I got some time off when the NRA came in."

The NRA code of fair competition for the lumber and timber products industry provided not only for time off, but established regulations for the employment of minors in sawmills. In response to a study by the Childrens' Bureau in 1930, which found Texas mills employing minors in unacceptably high numbers, the NRA provided in 1933 that *". . . no individual under 18 years of age shall be employed except that boys 16 years and over may be employed in the wooden package division and in non-hazardous occupations during school vacations or if there are not wage earners of 18 years or over in their families."*

Leaving school to go to work was one way young people had tried to help their families survive. Others managed to attend school during the Depression in the hope of providing a better future for their families. Mrs. Bee Burkhalter's experience was like this after the first shock of the Depression. In 1929, she said, she had been:

". . . just a housewife. Vernon was born in '28 and I was left in 1930 with this little fellow. I had never worked, so I did not have any kind of way of making a living. But it was in the very middle of the Depression in 1930. Everybody was out of work. I could keep house and cook because that was what I had done. Mr. Leasley lost his wife and he had a four year old. So I went and kept house for him and kept his child for a year. I got room and board and 25 dollars a month. That was good money.

"He was superintendent of the box factory. He was a real nice gentleman and the child was a nice child, too. I enjoyed taking care of them.

"I stayed there maybe a year and a half, then I decided that I wanted to go to college. About that time in '32, I went up (to Stephen F. Austin State Teachers' College in Nacogdoches). I lived with the dean of women and kept house for her, and did all her work for my room and board. I didn't get any money from her. So I went to college and I worked at the Mizes' dress factory.

"I would get through with my college work and everything by noon. Then I would go home and fix Mrs. Mays' lunch and wipe up the dishes and put on my working clothes and hot foot it downtown. I lived on Starr Avenue, better than a mile. I walked downtown and I would be there at three o'clock. I worked from three until eleven; then I walked home. I wouldn't do that now. I wouldn't

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walk across the street! But then I didn't think anything about it.

"I got paid by the piece. Different pieces were worth different things. . . 10 or 15 or 20 cents. You didn't complete a garment. You did your little part. It was piece work, so we got paid for each piece. I didn't make much money according to standards now, but it was a lot of money then because it kept me in school.

"Kids going to school today have to have a wardrobe to haul with a U-Haul trailer. I went to school with two blouses and two skirts. Every night, I washed. And I think the most tragic thing that happened to me that year was that I forgot to wash my blouse. I was so tired when I came in that night that I forgot to wash my blouse out. So the next morning I got up to wash my blouse out. I washed my blouse and hung it up over the gas heater and it caught fire and burned up!"

Mrs. Bailey asked Mrs. Burkhalter about what people did in Diboll to make ends meet:

"Everybody had a garden and a cow. And we had community gardens. The ones who didn't have a place, they had a community garden. That was the way they made a living. And they'd swap out different vegetables. But we never did that because we were fortunate enough to have a garden at the house. Our house during that Depression was where the Temple-White office is now. That's where I had a cow, chickens and a big garden. We had plenty of vegetables. We always had a cow. I guess as far back as I can remember we always had a cow and our own milk.

"We had a hard time paying for clothes because we didn't have much. We used to laugh about our sack dresses. Papa always bought his cow feed in a sack. It would have a pretty print on it. It was good material. Everybody would say, 'Now, Papa, when you buy feed next time, get a sack with a certain kind of a pattern on it so we can have two sacks and and make a dress.'"

Mrs. Burkhalter's memories of managing during the Depression ran back seamlessly into her memories of growing up and managing at an earlier time around Diboll. Annie Hendrick's father ran a cannery during the depression. She said:

"This was put in during the early '30s, I believe, and he had charge of it. This was put in for the purpose of giving work to men who were on relief. They had these gardens called community gardens and these men who were on relief would plant the garden, work it, and gather the produce. It was brought to the cannery to can for these people and they got the food that was issued to them later.

"Mrs. Ray Kimmey was the first lady who had charge of the cannery and, about 1932, she was unable to work that year, so my daddy, who had charge of the gardens, put Erma and me to work there. It was such long hours and it was a hot job and we would go to work early every morning. I remember we had a pressure cooker that held 56 No. 2 cans and we would pressure that many at one time.

"We had two large gardens that my daddy worked, and there were plots that the company put out in sections, over where the high school is now. Anybody could go there and get them a plot, and work it to raise food for their family."

Ward Burke, longtime attorney for Temple Industries and now executive director of the T.L.L. Temple Foundation, remembers the hard times of the 1930's around the Burke community, three miles north of Diboll:

"My father's store was already going down before the Depression. The Depression wiped him out because he was buying cotton, plus he carried all the farmers from spring until the crops were gathered. It is hard to imagine that literally thousands of acres around here, where you see timber, were cotton and corn fields. We picked cotton and there were a lot of gins. There was one at Burke behind our house. It ran day and night for a couple of months.

"We raised cotton. My dad raised cotton, as well as running that store, and he did a lot of things. He bought and loaded cross ties on railroad cars for shipment. Of course, the Depression hit in '29 and that fall he was buying cotton and he was paying 25 cents a pound; that's $125 a bale. He customarily stored it in Houston. And he paid storage and then sold it because usually the price would go up in the spring because most of the crops were sold in the fall. There was no government support. It was strictly a free market and he would sell in the spring and get his money and maybe a little more than what he had paid for it. In the fall of '29, the price went to a nickel a pound.

"Well, he had all that he had taken in, part of which he had taken in on debts. He had a good many hundred bales suddenly reduced in price from $125 to $25 and he couldn't even pay the storage. So he lost everything. It almost cleaned him out.

"You can't imagine how bad it was. People can't picture that. I forget which year they started issuing surplus commodities just to keep people alive. They used our store as one of the storage places. They would store them in the back of the store. It was cornmeal, bacon and beans.

"People who made a living farming worked hard, but didn't make any money. But they

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wouldn't come in the front of the store to get those commodities. They'd go around to the back. They were ashamed to come and get them, but they were starving.

"I was in the midst of it, I was there in our store and we would sell a little stuff. My aunt sold most of it on credit. They couldn't raise cotton, and even if you did it all within the family, you couldn't raise much more than 40 acres of cotton. It was hard then. If you had your wife and man working, maybe a couple of kids, you could maybe handle 40 acres of cotton but that was about all. I think a lot of people can't realize and, really there's no way you can put it in words. But the government had to do something. We were on starvation."

As contractor and Simmental cattle breeder Boots Havard put it, *"Farming and making bootleg whiskey were about the only ways to make a living around East Texas back in the '30's. . . I've seen the time when a piece of cornbread looked like angel food cake."*

DeWitt Wilkerson said,

"It was hard to tell how many bootleggers there were. There were several making it down in that pasture (off FM 1818). I've seen where the sheriff chopped up their stills and shot holes in the barrels in that pasture when I was squirrel hunting. It would be hard to guess but I imagine there were 10 or 12 at that time. They would buy sugar by the hundred pounds and make up their mash in a barrel, let it set and work, and whatever it has to do to go through. When it got ready, they had to cook it. There were a lot of people who didn't have much of any way to make a living except to make whiskey and sell it bootleg.

"What was coming out of that coil was warm; it was white lightening, I mean it was hot, too. I didn't taste enough of it to get me drunk, but I took a swallow of it.

"They used to make lots of home brew around here (and in the Quarters) and that was when whiskey wasn't legal. Beer, you couldn't get it just anywhere. So they'd get home brew and get it for a nickel or a dime a bottle, and get on a bender.

"I drank a little of it. When me and an old boy got off work one evening, we were tired, so we went by a fellow's house in the Quarters. I knew him pretty well, and he made pretty good home brew. This old boy had an old Cadillac touring car with a cloth top. We got two bottles a piece, we opened it and smoke would come out of it. That was a pretty good sign it was good.

"He opened his; sometimes it would foam over; and he rammed this stopper down in there and it blowed it out and it hit the top of his car. This old boy was pretty high up; he was a superintendent's nephew."

Bill Oaks told a story about some shootings connected with bootleg whiskey, and several other people interviewed expressed the opinion that "moonshiners" around the Angelina County area were responsible for a good deal of crime. Wilk Peters said,

"Prostitution and bootlegging presented some problems. I feel that some of the prostitution was due to the fact that there were a very few work opportunities for women. And the liquor traffic was due to the fact that the country was dry at that time."

Doug Warner remembered that bootleggers:

". . . had to sell it to each other for a long time and wear badges. I drank a little of it myself. Yes, there was quite a bit of bootlegging going on in the '30's, into the '40's. But they finally got rid of all of it. There was some good people who made it to make a living for their families. But you couldn't find work, so they made a little whiskey and sold it.

"I remember one night a man woke me up about twelve or one o'clock. The wind was blowing out of the north and it was raining and freezing. He wanted to know if I had something to pull him out of the mudhole below my house. I told him I had a pair of mules.

"I said, 'Man, it is too bad to get out there.' He said, 'Well, if you will get me out, I will give you ten dollars.' And I said, 'Yes, sir. It ain't too bad.'

"So I hooked the mules up and pulled him out. He said, 'Would you like to have a drink?' And I said, 'Yes, I will take a little sip.' I was freezing. He had an old van with some heavy wire on the side and curtains over it. I got up in that truck and he had about five 55-gallon drums of whiskey and about six five-gallon 'Jimmy-Johns' full. He was going bootlegging up to the East Texas oil fields, and that was why he could afford to give me ten dollars to pull him out."

J.W. Stovall, too, recalled a bootlegging story from the Stovall Creek area:

"I was in the woods hog hunting. And I was walking and I saw them down at Squyres' Spring. I saw a little thing they ran off some booze with. I was walking and hog hunting, so I was looking at them from down behind a tree. I was off about 40 or 50 yards. And I thought it was two of my neighbors. And I thought that I am going to have a little fun out of them. So I set my gun down behind a tree, and I ran up to where they were at and they started to run. They saw who it was and they stopped. One of them said 'Johnnie, you

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did a dangerous trick then.' I said, 'Yes, I guess I did. Ya'll passed that gun sitting there.' So I waited around awhile and they gave me a drink. They were our close neighbors and friends. They gave me this drink, then everything was pretty for a little while. . ."

Though pay cuts were drastic enough to turn some people to bootlegging and making home brew for a living, most people who had jobs didn't quit: they were glad to be employed. As Harold Turner put it, *"People wasn't afraid of work: there just wasn't any work."*

Mrs. Becky Bailey asked Mr. Turner how he ended up in Diboll. *"Starving to death,"* was the reply. *"This company, Southern Pine Lumber Company, was in debt and in need of orders for lumber. And when the East Texas oil field opened, they got a lot (of orders). They needed a lot of trucks and they needed a lot of drivers. So I came in as a truck driver hauling lumber to the East Texas oil field."*

Edwin Nelson wrote a column called *"Diboll Owes Debt to Old Dad Joiner"* in the July 7, 1983 *Free Press.* In it, he said:

"Diboll might not be here today if Dad Joiner had not struck oil to start the rich East Texas oil field back in October, 1930. Southern Pine Lumber Company was reeling through the Great Depression, dangerously close to bankruptcy. The company was paying 16 2/3 cents an hour for common labor and men were often working only two or three days a week. . .Then when Dad Joiner struck oil, the company started getting orders for large green lumber and timbers to build oil derricks and roads, mostly for the Fox Rig and Lumber Company. They hauled night and day to Joinerville, Turnertown, Kilgore, and other spots in the boomtown area.

"Wages jumped up to 27 cents an hour. Upwards of 100 trucks were hauling from the mills here, 24 hours a day. The company had no trucks, so it leased trucks or contracted with others for the hauling. These were little six-cylinder Chevrolets, Fords, and Internationals. They had only log pole trailers, which made hauling timbers dangerous.

"But this was the boost the company needed to pull it and its employees out of the Depression. Later the company started getting orders for highway bridges, for housing, and from local businesses such as Norris Fence Company in Lufkin. You all know the rest. But it could have been a different story if the East Texsas oil field hadn't come in when it did."

Harold Turner remembered as a trucker that:

"They wanted you to go and come. They didn't want you to fool around, 'cause they had lots of orders. And anytime you'd come in here, they'd load you right up and send you right back if you'd go. I've slept in the boiler room while they were loading my truck so I could go right back lots of times."

Mr. Turner boarded at the Star Hotel during this period. He said, *"They had a regular meal time. And if we were there, we would eat the meals, but if we weren't, we wouldn't. Finally, the truck drivers who stayed there didn't . . .we just didn't take any meals there at all, because we were never there."*

The East Texas oil boom was good for many Texans. It provided employment for many directly and indirectly involved in the drilling. The Beidleman family was one of thousands who moved to the boom area. They had lost jobs due to the failure of a bank and of their oil business elsewhere. With two small children, they had lost their house and had no car. Mrs. Beulah Beidleman said that, *"Many a tear was shed in wondering what to do. My husband was desperate because he could not furnish us anything."* The East Texas field gave them an alternative at a very difficult time.

In an Oct. 7, 1976, article in the *Free Press* Ellen Temple wrote:

"Besides taking advantage of the oil boom for lumber orders, there were many other ways in which Temple Industries tried to cope financially. Beginning in 1929, Southern Pine stockholders, most of whom were Temple family members, took no dividends for some years. Arthur Sr. drew no salary for himself. He also took Southern Pine Lumber Company out of the Southern Pine Association in 1931 because it couldn't afford to spend any of its funds on the dues. He saved money wherever possible, even curtailing unnecessary advertising.

"Efforts to economize extended to an effort to keep purchases at the commissary to necessities only. A system of 'white horses' was developed, in which a commissary customer would write down the items he needed on a white slip of paper. The commissary clerk would send the 'white horses' to the company timekeeper for approval before filling the order. The timekeeper would try to save the company-owned commissary money by approving only essentials. Calvin Lawrence, who was timekeeper in Hemphill in 1930, recalled that a man who drove mules on a dollyway once began his 'white horse' with a 10-cent box of snuff. The list continued with items like beans and bread. Trying to eliminate frills, Mr. Lawrence scratched the snuff off the list. The customer requested that he scratch off the beans instead. He said 'I can go a day with

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snuff, but not without it.'"

Another economy practice, one which developed in Diboll, was that of *"trade acceptances."* Clyde Thompson told Ellen Temple that:

"...because the banks couldn't take more notes, Southern Pine Lumber Company issued "trade acceptances" to its suppliers for merchandise purchases. These were then discounted by the suppliers at the bank and after a certain number of months, they were paid by the company. The company bought preferentially from the few supply companies that would deal this way, such as Lufkin Foundry and Machine Company, Nacogdoches Grocery Company, Norvell-Wilder Hardware Company in Beaumont, Woodward-Wright Company in New Orleans, and Peden Iron and Steel Company in Houston."

Edwin Nelson wrote in *The Free Press* about another economy measure which was proposed:

"There's nothing new about efficiency experts. Southern Pine Lumber Company brought in a group of such experts many years ago, in the 1930's, to try to reduce the cost of manufacturing lumber. The experts introduced a number of ideas they thought might accomplish this. One idea that worked was to put movable tongues on lumber buggies so that jitneys could couple up to the buggies without the driver getting off to make the hook-up."

The company saved further at this time by not repairing the company houses. Mrs. A.B. Glass whose husband had a contract for this sort of work, said that he was out of a job because *"they didn't do anything for several years"* in the way of repair. Mr. Glass turned to cotton farming to make a living. Mrs. Glass made extra money by helping people can vegetables. She said:

"We would take our canner and sealer and go in the wagon and maybe can all day long for $3.00. That was a lot of money.

"Not too many people had canners. I would blanch my food... beans, peas or corn. If it was corn, you would cook it, put it in the cans while it was hot, and seal it. With corn and peas, you cooked them an hour on ten pounds pressure. After you sealed them, then you had to put it in cold water and cool the can completely before you put them away. It was a lot easier than jars. You could do 150 to 200 cans a day.

"One Sunday morning we were getting ready to go to church in Diboll at the Methodist Church. We didn't have a car, so we walked. Somebody knocked on the back door. It was a man. He said 'I know you go to church, but I am in a tight.' he said, 'We broke our sealer. Could we get you to bring your sealer and come over and can some beans? We have two No. 3 washtubs full of beans ready to can.' I said, 'Yes, the ox is in the ditch, and I'll help my neighbor.'

"I went over there and I canned all day long. Late that afternoon when I started home, she gave me 12 sugar sacks. I worked all day for twelve sugar sacks. But you can't imagine what I could make out of those sugar sacks. They were washed and pressed. I made sheets and pillow cases, and made the children little panties... I put a little lace on them and made little blouses. I would starch them and iron them...and they would look pretty, just like linen."

Neighbor did help neighbor. And the company helped its employees. Churches kept missionary funds for emergencies, and no family ever got completely beyond the ability to cope. Harold Turner said, *"You could go to the store and they would feed you. They would let you have some groceries. You couldn't buy anything else but they would let you have something to eat."* There was no organized relief beyond the company philanthropy administered by Rhoda Faye Chandler from the office, but the combination of that, the church "poor folks" treasuries, and genuine fellow-feeling pulled everybody through.

Cora Nash said that it was like this in Diboll's black community, too:

"(Even during the Depression) I ain't been hungry in my life, I've always had food. The Lord has blessed me that far. Everybody was able... (even) nearly old people who were nearly dead. All of them, like Carey Smith. Lord let us live through it just fine. Like he's going to do this time. I think maybe we will make it." (This interview was conducted during the 1982 recession.)

Larger cities in Texas may not have fared as well as a place like Diboll, largely because size may have prevented this degree of community self-help. The problems were naturally of a larger scope, as well. Neal Pickett, one-time mayor of Houston who now resides in Diboll, told us that conditions in Houston were very poor from 1930 until after 1936. Mr. Pickett was president of the Houston Junior Chamber of Commerce in 1932 and 1933. The Jaycees sponsored a fund drive and distributed no less than 30,000 charity tons of coal during *"that terrible '32'33 winter,"* he said.

Many people blamed President Hoover and his hands-off policy for the suffering and demoralization experienced by the country as a whole. In Texas the armadillos (and sometimes rabbits) were called "Hoover Hogs." Diboll, like other towns in Texas, had precious few of any other kind of hog at the time. Neal Pickett, a Democrat, remembered a party slogan of the time: *"President Hoover was a great engineer. He ditched and drained the United States in just four years."*

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When Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected, America was ready for a new deal. Mrs. Beidleman said, *"People were so distressed and he gave us hope."* Immediate action in the form of work programs gave a lift to even the remotest parts of the country.

Some of the programs initiated by Roosevelt affected Diboll. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) built roads in the area. Mr. Turner recalled that the CCC built roads through *"the company land to the Nigton road. It was a good road, and they built a bridge on the river. Then they built a road all the way through this (Dollarhide) pasture to Manning."*

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was also important to Diboll, both as a source of employment and of improvements to the town. The company furnished a portion of the materials and the government supplied the labor to dig and cement new pit-type toilets for Diboll residents. Projects such as these helped to boost the economy of the area. Harold Turner remembered that:

"The WPA was usually for older men. I don't mean real old men, but in the working age. The CCC was mostly young boys. They could be from all over the country and they were sent from one place to another. Actually, it was kind of like being in the army. You had a certain discipline you had to follow and a certain time you had to be in, and things like that. They furnished your food and your clothes and your lodging.

"They had barracks built. . . little camps they built for them. They had one in Nacogdoches. I wish you could ask Claude Welch Sr.; he was in the CCC; he could tell you all about it. . . I know they had one in Nacogdoches because that's where my daddy was." (There was a camp of the CCC at Lufkin, as well, and the first inductees there came in during May of 1933.)

Claude Welch, Sr., born in 1913, described trying to get by as a young man on the outskirts of Diboll before he joined the CCC.

"I imagine I got about a third or fourth grade education. And then I went to work. I had to go to work; you had to work if you ate. Back when I was younger, about 15 or 16 years old, before I went to CCC camp, I had some good friends at what we called the Whitlock place by the name of Landrum. When the crops were laid by, you had to do something to make a living to eat. So we built us a little ol' house on the river at a place called the McCarty campground. We stayed in and out of that house for about three years and fished. We killed hogs regardless of whose they were, because we was going to eat.

"And we come out at Burke. Burke was a pretty nice little place. There were two or three stores where we'd swap them fish for meal or syrup. Anything to get something to eat, because it was rough. I've eaten corn; I've taken the corn off the cob and run it down one of them things that cut it off. I've eaten corn and syrup, and been glad to get it."

Becky Bailey asked Harold Turner if he recalled many hobos coming through Diboll.

"Yeah, there were a lot of them. Sometimes if you gave them anything to eat, they put egg on your gate so that the next man would know that he could get something to eat there.

"They were all ages. I don't guess we ever asked one of them to do any chores. But I suppose they would because people weren't afraid to work in those days. They just didn't have any work to do."

It wasn't just hobos coming through Diboll during the thirties. One time the town had some pretty dangerous transient visitors. Edwin Nelson wrote in *The Free Press* about the visit of Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow—the shoot-'em-up team of yesteryear—who made their way through the East Texas area in the mid-1930's. The setting was the Believe It or Not Cafe (est. 1928) on the old Diboll Highway.

"It was the summer of 1934, about 7 p.m. E.J. Clause and I ran the cafe. I was about 19 years old at that time.

"I was in the front part of the cafe listening to the 'Atwater Kent Radio Show' and I had the shortwave button turned on. They were broadcasting that Bonnie and Clyde helped Raymond Hamilton break out of the Texas Prison in Huntsville.

"The evening Chronicle had already been delivered and a friend was sitting at the counter, reading about the Hamilton breakout. Bonnie and Clyde and Raymond Hamilton were pictured with the story. I didn't see it.

"Two men came into the cafe just then to get something to eat. Clause took their order. Clyde Barrow knew him and spoke to him.

"The radio continued to broadcast the Hamilton breakout while, at the same time, Clyde explained to Raymond how the radio worked on short wave.

"I noticed my friend who was busy reading the newspaper getting up and leaving the cafe. Another person got up and left also. And in the back part of the cafe, others left out the back door. They looked scared and I was wondering why they were leaving. I just didn't think to ask anyone.

"Clyde and Raymond would look as each one left and watched where they went. I looked around and everyone had left the cafe and I was

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in there with Clyde Barrow and Raymond Hamilton alone. They were congenial and I went on with my business.

"They had a light green, older model Chrysler coupe. I'm sure it was a Chrysler. I know that Clyde wrote the Ford Motor Company a letter that he was crazy about Fords so he always stole Fords. But, that night he had a Chrysler.

"The car's motor was left running and the muffler badly needed repair. The car made a loud noise left idling like it was. I don't know if Bonnie was in the car or not. Nobody bothered to examine it! I don't know where else they could have left her. They didn't take a sandwich for her.

"The men finished their sandwiches and they paid me and left. They were in no hurry to leave. After they had gone I asked Clause, who was hiding in the kitchen, why everyone left the cafe. It was then that I learned that the two men were Clyde Barrow and Raymond Hamilton."

But such occurrences were rare adventures. Most of what went on during the thirties in Diboll and elsewhere, was trying to make ends meet.

Jack Rowe, who went into the CCC in the Panhandle, said that he joined up because:

"I could not find anything else, whatsoever. Even at that time if you could find a job, there was nothing that was very steady. You might find a day or two's work. But even at that, it didn't pay as much as that 30 dollars a month with room and board, which you could get in the CCC's. Actually I had worked, during that summer at probably half a dozen different jobs for a day or two at a time. So I went into the CCC."

Things soon began to be a little better for the United States through programs like the CCC, and gradually the effects were felt in places as remote as Angelina County. Many people were left with scars of anxiety, however, from the difficult times. Some people around Diboll still talk of the Depression, as if it were only last year or so, and they shake their heads at the innocence of those too young to have lived through it. Some, like J.W. Stovall, have regrets to incorporate into their philosophy about the Depression.

"Well, in a way, the Depression hit us pretty hard. It was about the time that I began to. . . I was about 20 years old I guess. . . look for a helpmate. So you couldn't find a job nowhere. The thing (the papermill where he had been working) shut down and they laid people off. Of course, that was about the time that the East Texas oil field went to opening up. But I didn't have get-up enough about me to go up there and get a job.

"We were all staying on the farm, it didn't bother too much because we had stuff we could eat. It didn't take many clothes to wear. But, still, if a person wanted, a boy wanted to find him a wife, well, he couldn't find no job.

"I was about that age, too. . . but, anyway that is a thing of the past and now we just have to look ahead and go on and do what we need to do."

Others feel, however, that the thirties built character, and that people today would not be able to withstand the effects of a similar occurrence because they are made of less stern stuff.

More than one interviewee told Becky Bailey that if it happened today, the suicide rate would go up, because people do not have the experience in coping. It was genuinely rough. As Mrs. Beidleman said, *"It was a lot of hard work. But it didn't hurt us. We were younger then. I couldn't do it now, but I did it then."*

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1929-1939



W.P. (Bud) Rutland (1871-1938), manager of the commissaries at Diboll, Pineland, and in the camps. He came to Diboll in 1894 and worked 43 years for the company until his death. He was also the first postmaster for Diboll and a director of SPLCo.



Walter Allen who was an early Negro foreman of the mill pond. In Diboll a housing project and a park have been named for him.



Jitneys were stripped-down Fords. Mufflers were kept wet to prevent fire among the logs and wood. In the yard jitneys were used to haul wood to the kiln or to stacks. Today a forklift is used.

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Chester Willis worked in various capacities, but was best remembered as being delivery man for the commissary. He knew everyone in town. Everyone was fond of Chester.



Temple home built for H.G. Temple in 1938. Today it is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Temple, Jr.



Backside of the planer. Note the whistle at the left. The whistle was blown at 11:15 each morning to alert the women of the impending lunch hour. It became known as the "cornbread whistle".

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Dred Devereaux's crew, pictured in 1936, while working on the fuel house and the power plant. They worked 5 ten-hour days plus one-half day on Saturday. Wages were $13.80 a week. Pictured (front row, L to R): Herbert (Ya Ya) Jordan, Richard McClendon, Doug Crager, Ernest Bounds, Clarence Lowe, Dred Devereaux's grandson, Dred Devereaux, Garvie Walker and Brian Williams. Back row (L to R): Bryant McCarty, J.T. Curry, Garland Fairchild, Vernon Kerr, Cecil Hogue, Dewitt Wilkerson, Mozelle Martin and Clyde Hall.



Foremen and Supervisors of Southern Pine during the late 1930's. Top Row: G.M. Lee, Clyde Thompson, J.J. O'Hara, H.G. Temple, P.H. Strauss, E.A. Farley. Middle Row: Bruce Christian, Ben Donahoe, Hamp Byerly, Arthur Porter, Ed Strickland, W.D. Fogg, Hobbs Kelley, Albert Jackson. Bottom Row: Virgil Milner, D.D. Devereaux, C.E. Bowlus, Ray Kimmey, Thompson Broker, Marvin Hamner, Dewey Ballenger, Jeff Jayroe, Paul Durham, Sr.



Baseball team in the 1930's. Top Row: Charles Lee Otis, _____ Russell, Rayburn Carroll, Franklin Christian, Jimmy Dale Taylor, Ray Rector, Bethel D. Lester. Bottom row: Gordon Drew, Bobby Farley, H.C. (Sonny Boy) Carroll, R.F. Cook, Jr., J.P. Cannon, Hulen George, Fenner Roth (coach). In front with bats is L.D. Smith.

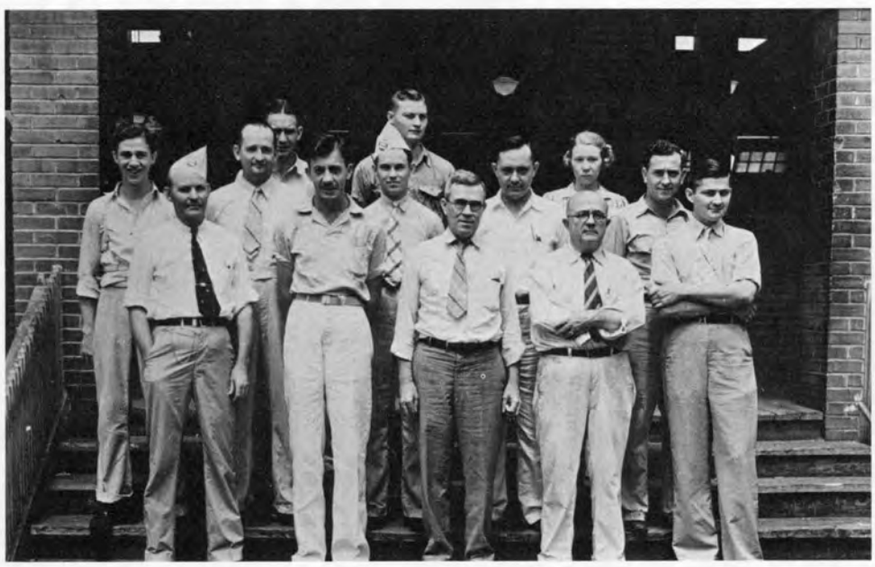
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Meat market in the Commissary. Pictured are H.A. Cruthirds (market manager), Leslie Cruthirds, and Betty Hines.



W.F. Purdy, long-time planer foreman, and Bruce George.



Commissary, market and drug store employees pictured in 1934. Bottom row (L to R): H.A. Cruthirds, Aden Johnson, K.A. Drew, W.H. Agee, Jim Fuller. Second row: Eugene (Little Gene) Wright, Bernice Hines, Leslie Cruthirds, Lester Hicks, Aden Vaughn. Top row: Pate Warner, Eugene (Big Gene) Wright, Vivian Smith Warner.

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Logging in Woods

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Chapter VII

"The Town That Hits The Ground Running"

T. L.L. Temple died on October 2, 1935. Two days later, he was unanimously memorialized by the Texas Senate during the First Called Session of the Forty-fourth Legislature for his contributions to the civic and economic progress of the state. By the time of his death, Southern Pine Lumber Company was beginning to recover from the Depression. As early as 1933, it had realized a small profit, and in 1934 its profits were once again approaching the levels of several decades before. By 1935, wages had begun to rise.

New Deal programs begun under Roosevelt in the early 1930's were paying off on the national level. Renewed fiscal confidence due to the FDIC, which was begun in 1935, made banking and borrowing a viable growth strategy once again. Social Security in 1936 and a minimum wage of 25 cents an hour begun in 1938 gave hope and assurance to wage earners scarred by the Depression years.

The population of Diboll, though declined slightly from 1500 after 1929, remained fairly constant at about 1400 during the decade of the 1930's. This continuity in population contrasts sharply with much of the rest of Angelina County, which experienced great population loss and dislocation. Ward Burke said:

"In the '30's and '40's, people left. They couldn't farm; when the war came, plants opened up on the Gulf Coast, and people who didn't go to war flocked there. If you look at the ***Texas Almanac,*** *at the census in those years, in the '30's, the population of these counties plummeted. The whole (of Angelina) county did that. Then after the war, people didn't come back and the economy here didn't get good until the '60's. The late '40's and '50's were not good years."*

Arthur Temple, Sr., took over the helm of Southern Pine, then at a time of both great liability and great potential. He inherited a company debt of millions, but his employees were in place. And by that time, they were fiercely loyal to the company. Employees and management alike had weathered the worst of the crash as a community. Diboll people had a local source of confidence to bolster the ones being established nationally.

Both the Temple family and the people of Diboll had great confidence in Arthur Temple, Sr., when he succeeded his father, T.L.L. Arthur's older brother, T.L.L., Jr., known as 'T.L.', had been groomed by his father as the inheritor of the Temple businesses, but as it turned out, T.L. was not temperamentally suited for leadership. He was in many ways closer to the working man, having worked as a laborer in the Diboll mill before World War I.

T.L.'s son, Latane Temple, said his father wasn't as close to the family as Arthur Temple, Sr.

"My father was sent off as a small child to a boarding school. He never had the warmth and association with his father as Uncle Arthur had. He told me he was far away from home, and that

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he was hazed. . . he had to climb a tall pine tree with no clothes on. When his mother died, he wasn't allowed to come home to her funeral; he never forgot that.

"His one happy memory, he told me, was when his mother sent him to the store for something. When he brought it back, she said, 'You're my little man.' He told it as if she had said, 'You're the product of divine conception and Jesus Christ himself.' That was his sustaining memory. He saved a letter from his headmaster to his father that said, 'T.L. is a nice boy, but I don't believe he will ever kill himself with work.' Well, he didn't and he was proud of it."

But there were stories that T.L.L. Temple II worked harder than any man, black or white, on the yards at Diboll. But he would often disappear and his supervisors would find him under one of the stacks of lumber, shooting craps for company chits. Latane Temple says he has a photograph of his father with E.C. Durham and others in the company band. The other band members were dressed in their derby hats, but young T.L.L. wore a working man's cap because *"when they got ready to take the picture he wasn't there, so they had to send for him."*

Temple also played on the Diboll baseball team. One year when the big July Fourth game with Lufkin rolled around, Temple went to the company safe, took that week's payroll and went to Houston to hire some of the players from a professional team in the old Texas League. He brought them to Diboll anonymously and had them play for Diboll. He bet the payroll on Diboll, and when the team won, he collected the money, paid the pros and put the money back into the safe.

Despite his carefree youth, young Temple did have a role in starting Temple Lumber Company. *"His business ideas were always good, but he had no follow-through. . . he started the company and was running it when he was drafted into the Army in World War I. At one point, he was also assistant manager of the Diboll sawmill."*

Latane Temple says of his father:

"I've always said he was overshadowed by his father's reputation, who was successful. He felt he would make his own (reputation) on one business he would start, or on one gamble, one horse that he'd bet on, or one throw of the dice. He was aware of his reputation for notoriety."

When Arthur Temple, Sr., took over the family's operations, he inherited a far-flung empire of retail yards, 29 of them, in fact, *"from the Red River to the Rio Grande."* With these and with the mills at Diboll and Pineland, he was able to hold together a corporation, even with its debt, that successfully expanded beyond the Depression and carried on, flags flying, through World War II.

Many have characterized Arthur, Sr.'s business policies as conservative. Yet some of the things he did were enterprising. Not content merely to consolidate Southern Pine's holdings, Arthur, Sr., participated in ambitious side ventures such as the promotion of Southland Paper Mill in Lufkin. Together with Ernest Kurth of Angelina County Lumber Company and Paul Sanderson of the Texas Long Leaf Lumber Company, Temple pledged 108,000 acres of timberland in exchange for stock in the experimental paper mill. Based on the chemical research of Dr. Charles Holmes Herty of Savannah, Georgia, the venture was the pioneer in the use of southern yellow pine for commercial newsprint. It made possible the subsequent development of the newsprint industry in the South.

Holding the company together through the difficult years of challenge and opportunity was not achieved without strain. Arthur Temple, Sr., made sacrifice after sacrifice during those years. Katherine Sage Temple, his wife, remembered they spent their honeymoon in Diboll and Pineland to save travel money. Arthur, Sr., told his son, *"the company is the family and the family is the company."* Unfortunately the stress of those years of dedication took their toll on his health, but with Arthur Temple and his family, the employees' well-being came first.

James Rhone was for a time a driver for Katherine Sage Temple. He described her this way:

"She was really concerned about the welfare of the people of Diboll—and not only Diboll, but anywhere there was a need. She always would talk to me about the condition of the schools and the condition of the children. She decided they would put up the money for a day-care center. And the Temple Foundation was set up so they would help not only people in Diboll but in other communities with libraries, schools, giving land, and so forth. The Temples were not only concerned about the people who worked for them, but anybody."

E.A. Farley, a shipping clerk, recalled:

"There were two families in Diboll which had large families, and they all had T.B. Mrs. Arthur Temple came down and found out about it; and she went to the house. She cleaned the house up, and talked to Mr. Henry Temple and had him send new mattresses and things up there. And for years, everytime Mrs. Temple came down, she would go see about those families.

"She didn't stop at that. About once every

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month she would write to Mr. Henry Temple to find out if he was living up to what she had recommended that he do. In fact, all the children got well. In one family I think there was six children. They were poor and scrawny and looked like they were right on the verge of stepping in the grave. Every one of those children got well.

"Today, they are normal people; they've got jobs. There are none of them here any more; they've all left and are doing fine. In fact, I had not seen the oldest one in about 10 or 12 years. He came through here about three months ago and came by to see me. He was such a robust, healthy-looking guy I didn't recognize him. But he remembered all that."

By 1935, Diboll was the second largest city in Angelina County. It was already considered "modern" with two churches, a high school, a grammar school, and a "colored" school. Some of the prominent citizens of the time were Lee Estes of the Diboll Motor Company; I. (Ike) M. Green, constable; Dr. C.L. Jackson, company physician; Miss Zettie Kelley, postmistress; and P.H. Strauss and J.J. O'Hara, co-managers of Southern Pine Lumber Company which was by then known as "Texas' largest lumber manufacturing mill."

By 1940, Diboll was not much larger in population than it had been during the worst years of the Depression (1400 as opposed to 1363), but it was reorganizing and prospering. In that year there were 15 businesses in town. There was also a community house in Diboll for employees of Southern Pine, Temple-White Manufacturing, Temple Manufacturing Company and the T.S.E. Railroad. The commissary was still going strong under the management of K.A. Drew, who took over when Mr. Rutland died in 1938. In the late thirties the commissary was described as the largest in the Texas sawmill country.

The rebuilding period of the late 1930's and the 1940's saw the beginnings of several of Diboll's most beloved institutions. These included the Timberland movie theater (1937), the *"Tonk"* (1939) the Antlers Hotel (1939), and, significantly, the first power saw in town. An interview with J. Shirley Daniel, a one-man powerhouse involved in all these developments, covered them well. Mr. Daniel started with his arrival in Diboll in 1937:

"We came through Corrigan on the way up here and I knew there was a river that we had to cross, and I could start looking for Diboll. So when we got here, there was Lee Estes' garage and a little cafe. We turned and I didn't see anything else, so I turned around and went back. The old crossing was right at the edge of the old building where the office and the commissary and everything was. I pulled up there that Sunday afternoon, and I said, 'Can you tell me where Diboll is?' The man said, 'Mister, you are standing right in the middle of it.'

"I thanked him and we drove on, and I said, 'Well, I am going to the first house where I can see a little activity.' And I drove up to Virgil Milner's house and he was my only contact here...

"We started to work on the theater and opened it on August 26, 1937. (At first, to attract patrons), we had 'Pot of Gold' until they outlawed it. I put silver dollars in the pot and the lucky number won that. We had 12-cent night. Business would get a little slack and we would run a show for 12 cents and stack them in there for two shows. Quite often we did that, but during the war there wasn't much of anything anybody could do but go to the show. They didn't have the gasoline to get out of town.

"The first show at the theater was 'Wild and Woolly' with Jane Withers. Junior Cook and I drove to Dallas to pick up the film; I couldn't have it shipped because I didn't know exactly when we were going to complete the show. But it looked like we would make it on that Saturday, so we drove up there Friday night and picked up the film. The theater was full that night. I never will forget. I took in $84.25.

"But I was flat broke. I didn't have change enough to make change on the first ticket, and I had to sell some ten cent tickets first so I would have some change. Tickets were ten and twenty-five cents. We had three different shows a week. We showed on Saturday midnight, Sunday and Monday; and then on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday; then one on Friday and Saturday.

"There was also a notorious place down on the river at the time. It was known as 'The Tonk.' They sold beer... bootleg more or less. We started out with a candy case in the lobby of the theater and there just wasn't enough room for the candy case and the popcorn machine. So I went to Henry Temple and asked him if it would be all right if I put a building on the side at my own expense. And he said, 'No. We will furnish the lumber and you pay for the labor of putting it up.' So we put the first addition on the side of the show, where we had a fountain and sold hot dogs, hamburgers, candy and cold drinks. Later we put the other addition on it, where the kids could go in and dance. That was added about two years later, in 1939.

"Well, one night somebody said they were goin' honky-tonking up at the picture show. The name just kinda stuck. It was called 'The Tonk.'"

Marie Glass Davis was interviewing Mr. Daniel. She said, *"I know that this was the major source*

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of employment, 'The Tonk' and the show. . . for a lot of teenagers. You were good to many of us; we remember you for giving us our first start. Do you have any idea how many teenagers worked for you through the years?" Daniel replied:

"I believe maybe. . . 75. On opening night we had LaRue Warner selling tickets. John Singer was the operator. Junior Cook took up the tickets. Ferris Sturrock took up the tickets upstairs and at that time it was segregated. And then we had quite a few who came in and swept out at different times. Cecil Seekings was one of the ones who worked for me. Paul Durham went to work for me when he was so small that he had to stand on a Coca-Cola crate to pour corn into the hopper. He popped corn for years. Joe Homer Jones; Willis Jordan's boy, Billy Jordan; Ray Kimmey; Carl Weber Ferguson; Geraldine Martin Pouland. And the Clarke girl, Jerry Clarke. That is just some of them. And then, of course, I had Marie Glass."

Marie also asked about the Antlers Hotel, which Mr. Daniel ran from 1943 to 1945. He said:

"The company was running the hotel at that time. It was losing money every month and Henry Temple called me one day. By the way, there was only five telephones in Diboll at that time. Mr. Temple had a phone, Eddie Farley had one at his house, there were two in the office, one in the general store and I had one in the my house because I had to have it to book pictures. They ran me a line over there.

"Anyway, Mr. Henry called me one day and said, 'I am coming up there and get you in a few minutes. I have something I want to talk to you about.' I knew something was up, but I didn't know what it was, and we rode around a little while.

"I said finally, 'Well, Mr. Temple, what is it that you want to tell me?' And he said, 'Well, Arthur and I have decided we want you to run the Antlers Hotel.' I said, 'Mr. Temple, I don't know anything about running a hotel. And I don't want to do it because it is a losing proposition.'

"We finally came back and he let me out and he said, 'Well, you think about that.' So I thought about it. I was eating out of Temple's pot. I thought I had better take it. And I did, but with the understanding that I would get three months' free rent and make some changes. So we went in and changed up the breakfast deal. We would do all our cooking out front for hotcakes and eggs. . . and not have all that kitchen help. We ran it for quite awhile."

Daniel talked about the first power saw:

"One night, my wife and I were in the movie. This man came down the aisle and squatted down beside me and said, 'I have a new saw and I would like for you to see it.' And I said, 'Well, I heard that they were building a power saw. If you will sell it to me, I will be glad to go out and look at it, and listen to your story about it.'

"So we went out and he cranked it up. We went out beside the show and we cut down a small oak tree about eight inches big. When that saw started running, everybody started running out of the show. They didn't know what it was. John Singer, the operator, didn't know what was happening, so he shut down the show, and everybody came out and watched the demonstration of the power saw. After it was finished, the man sold me the saw. I still have pictures of it. After that was over, everybody went back in and we continued the show.

"That was the early '40's. I remember the two-man saw that is in the museum at Lufkin. We were running it out on Highway 94 and we were in the woods and we heard the explosion of Texas City. I know we were using that saw and had been using it for quite awhile on that day (April 16, 1947). I remember that very well."

Ellen Temple, who has researched the history of Diboll and published on her findings in *The Free Press* and in *The Land of the Little Angel: A History of Angelina County* wrote this description of the same period:

"According to Paul Durham, lifelong resident and ***The Free Press*** *editor, the period from 1937-1950 marks one of the best chapters in Diboll history. It was a rough, tough sawmill town in which activity revolved around the three public places. . . the Timberland Theater, the Tonk, and the Antlers Hotel.*

"Mr. Daniel did well with the Timberland because 1937-1950 marked the height of the motion picture boom. Everyone in Diboll went to shows at least three or four times a week. That was the only thing to do. According to Mrs. Della Lewis, the Timberland movie theater got its name in a drawing. All in the community who were interested put prospective names in the pot, and 'Timberland' won. Today, long after it was torn down, 'Timberland' remains the name of Diboll's one movie theater.

"Just across the street was the Antlers Hotel, operated by Mr. and Mrs. J.P. Cammack. It opened in 1939, the year the Star Hotel (1912-1939) was closed and razed. The Antlers was conveniently located on the Houston-Lufkin Highway, Number 35 (today, the corner of Hendrix and Hines).

"The Cammacks made The Antlers a showplace in East Texas. Designed and built by Mr. Cammack, the hotel was constructed entirely of native pine logs, following the typical East

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Texas style with a wide porch across the front, peaked roof and rugged exterior. The interior was richly decorated with Mr. Cammack's stuffed animal trophies, Indian blankets, and old coach lamp fixtures. Mrs. Cammack's antiques furnished the halls, lobbies and first-floor sitting room.

"Everything of importance in Diboll could be seen in front of The Antlers. It became the scene of many a nighttime fight, and the town got quite a reputation. That was why general manager Henry Temple brought in a Texas Ranger named Jay Boren to put things in order.

"John Hannah, State Representative from 1966 to 1972 (one of the famed 'Dirty Thirty' who ousted Gus Mutscher after the Sharpstown scandal) and also one-time Angelina County District Attorney, grew up in Diboll in the 1940's. He recalls that most of the loggers didn't have cars then; they'd unhitch the trailer from the cab of a truck, park at the Antlers, send the kids to the Timberland Theater across the street and visit at the hotel until the movie was over."

Here's how writer Bob Bowman, in a piece called *"A Boyhood in Diboll"* written for this book at the request of the Diboll Historical Society, remembered Diboll back then:

"During my boyhood years, there were few stores or commercial establishments in Diboll with the exception of the theater, the hotel, the Tonk, the beauty parlor, a barber shop and a few others. Most of the town's business enterprises were housed in the Southern Pine Lumber Company commissary store, which stood beside the railroad tracks not far from the sawmill. There we picked up my father's pay envelope, bought groceries and hog feed, purchased ice for our iceboxes, received our mail and made other purchases. The town doctor had his offices across the street, and we used his services for a flat monthly fee.

"However, of all the landmarks I remember, the Antlers Hotel and the old Timberland Theater, with its adjoining 'Tonk,' evoke the greatest memories.

"The Antlers, a massive, two-story log structure, had the town's only overnight lodging facilities, as well as the only restaurant in town. Dibollians who could afford to eat out went there on Saturday nights for fried chicken and hamburgers. The Antlers was also well-known by salesmen and other travelers who used the Lufkin-Houston highway, and many people stopped there to take pictures of the building and view the numerous stuffed animals hanging in the lobby.

"There was also an air of mystery about the Antlers. Diboll's teenagers had been told that some of Lufkin's wealthy men would drive down to Diboll for discreet poker parties, and we were positive that the Antlers was housing all sorts of illicit secrets, including wild women and illegal liquor. I remember one night that a few of us sneaked up to a window on the Antler's west side and peered inside the room where Lufkin's big rich were supposed to be gathering. All we saw, however, was a bunch of old men sitting around a table playing dominos. There wasn't even a can of beer on the table. It was the biggest disappointment of the year.

"Across the road from the Antlers stood Shirley Daniel's Timberland Theater, which brought all the film classics to Diboll. The dream of every young boy in Diboll in the late forties and early fifties was to work at the theater so he could see all the movies free. During my early high school years, I occasionally ran the projector, which was housed in a cramped little room behind the balcony for Diboll's black patrons. My brother Larry later assumed the projectionst's job, and eventually purchased the theater from Shirley Daniel in 1969; it had been relocated to the Village in 1953. The Timberland was our center of culture in Diboll, and we eagerly awaited the appearance of the colorful movie posters announcing upcoming attractions. The Timberland showed thousands of movies during its lifetime at the old site, but few evoked the excitement of a horror classic called "The Thing," which was about a creature found in the Arctic wastelands around the North Pole. The movie made its debut in Diboll one Saturday midnight, and at the height of the film, when the creature appeared on the screen, young girls dashed screaming from the theater, the older girls hugged their boyfriends, and the boys slid behind their seats and into the aisles, covering their eyes.

" 'The Thing' created so much excitement in Diboll that a rumor soon began to circulate that a 'thing' had been seen in the millpond northwest of town. Several of us sneaked out to the millpond late one night, intent on discovering the 'thing,' but all we found for our troubles was a few large bullfrogs.

"Next door to the theater, on its west side, was a small beauty parlor and on the east side was 'the Tonk,' a small cafe that served as Diboll's unofficial teenage hangout. The Tonk offered a menu of hamburgers, hotdogs, french fries and other foods, but its greatest attraction was a dancehall, a facility frowned upon by the town's conservative preachers.

"For a long time, even after we entered high school, my classmates and I were fearful of set-

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ting foot inside the Tonk's dancehall, fearful that God, in his judgmental wrath, would strike us dead. Before we grew to accept dancing as a normal teenager pasttime, we used to sneak a look inside the dancehall door, wondering which of Diboll's high school students would go to hell for dancing in the Tonk."

Another popular entertainment of the post-Depression era in Diboll was softball. Edwin Nelson reminisced about the company teams in a sketch he called *"The Days of Home Entertainment"*:

"Back when Southern Pine Lumber Company was coming out of the deep Depression, the people organized the Southern Pine Softball League. There was the office and store on one team, the planer on another, and the sawmills on another. Last but not least, the truck drivers.

"All that could play were on the teams and we would have some very warm games. The store and office would play the saw mills. The truck drivers would play the planer. Then we would swap about; each team would have the bleachers full.

"The diamond set below the depot and store, across the tracks. It set on the old Beanery lot where the hotel had been. We had bleachers built and one night I remember real well the best of each team got together and made a team for Diboll and we played West-End-Baptist out of Houston. We won the game by 3 or 4 points and it made our shirts swell out with pride."

Mr. Nelson recalls the nicknames of players:

"There was 'Lightning' Burrows, because he moved so slow. There was 'Hack' Wilson he had a movement at the plate of hacking at the ball. There was 'Bull' Green; he was large and strong as a bull. There was 'Lefty' Vaughn; he was left-handed.

"This was about the only wholesome entertainment that the people had to enjoy and everyone not too tired was out there to root for their team."

Lefty Vaughn said:

"I'll tell you about baseball. I played five years in high school. Back then, it was before Interscholastic League, I played from 1925 through 1929; that is, in high school. I started out in seventh grade and played up to the eleventh. I pitched baseball all those years and I remember pitching one baseball game here against Timpson. I struck out seventeen, but we got beat two to nothing. We had a shortstop who made an error and let two men in; those were the only two runs scored.

"I was also with the old Miller team. We played a lot of teams out of Houston. We played the Valley League All Stars. I can remember old Muleshore Vaughn and then there was another boy by the name of Hass who went up to the Texas League. Back then they were paying $150.00 a month for the Texas League; that was the top wage. It was pretty hard to make a living.

"The company didn't sponsor us. We had a team within ourselves. That was a big attraction back then. Every Sunday we played baseball, and we charged, and that kind of took care of the equipment. We didn't get any money for it, we just loved the game.

"The manager of our team, the first one, was Joe Garner; he was a butcher here. Then years after Joe Garner, we had R.V. Honea as manager, but that was when I was going out of baseball. I played some for them. I remember one time in 1940 we had written on the store porch with crayon; it said 'Lefty Vaughn coming back.' So they had a game with a bunch of college boys out of Beaumont. They came up here and, of course, I had to start. He said, 'I'm going to have to start you' and I said, 'Well, all right, you just keep someone warmed up because I'm not going to last.' The first man got up, I threw one and he hit that thing. Billy Hill... it nearly took him down... but he finally threw him out and he came running over, and he asked, 'Where are you throwing that ball?' I said, 'High outside.' He said, 'Don't let one slip and get inside, I'll get killed sure.' He said it was like a shotgun shot at him. I finally got three men out. Jack Sweeny was backed up against the left field wall, and finally caught the last ball. I got the third man out and I said, 'Is that man ready? I'm ready to come out of there.' But that was really something, that was when I was going out.

"I remember another time I really got a beating. We went to play the prisoners at Huntsville. We got over there and they told Joe Garner, 'Don't start a lefthander; they will pound him to death.' He said, 'Leave that to me and we'll take care of that.' So I got out there. The first three men I threw nine pitches and struck three of them out. My catcher patted me and said, 'Listen, we've got them on the run.' But they made six runs before I could get anybody out the next time. I would throw one and look at the dugout to see if he was sending a man out there but he kept waiting. But I was beat that time. They whipped me. But just about all of our games we'd win by one run or somebody else would win by one run; they were really close games.

"On Sunday afternoon, sometimes, we would play a double header. We'd play on Saturday and Sunday and on the 4th of July and things like that when we had special events. A lot of times we played double headers. Lufkin was

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rival with us. Pitser Garrison and those boys. I remember a catcher named Garr Stevens and Old Red Wells. It was later years that Hellburg came along. But, back then in high school there's so many. . . old Goofy Gorden, they come to me one at a time. But, anyway, their coach, back in the early days was Coach Kellam. Before me was Buster Jackson who pitched for Diboll. I remember Lufkin came down here and played one day. Tommy Massingill was pitching for Lufkin and one of them pitched a nine inning ball game and Buster Jackson hit one over the fence in the ninth inning. And we won that one 1 to 0. I think the same thing happened to us in Lufkin; Tommy Massingill hit a home run and won that game up there. It was a rivalry and we really enjoyed playing them."

Diboll also had the distinction during this period of organizing Texas' first six-man football team. In 1938 the team won a conference championship. The team of 1939, coached by J.Y. Allen, was rated by the sports editor of a large Texas newspaper as one of the best in the state.

L.D. Smith described the sport for Marie Davis:

"It was six man football. And before a person could run with the ball, they had to make a two yard lateral in the backfield. . . but the rest of it was more or less the same as 11 man football. Our uniforms were old baggy pants; they looked like they were made out of canvas. The shirt just had a number on it and nothing else. The helmet was leather. But we had shoulder pads and hip pads . . . that was about the only protection we had.

"The coach was J.Y. Allen. They called him 'Doorknob' Allen.

"The field was in the old baseball park. The best I can remember, the park was located where the highway is now, opposite the old Diboll State Bank.

"We had a one room shack to dress in, about 14x14. There were no lockers, one shower and two long benches to sit on. That was all you had. You put your clothes on the wall on a nail. That was at the school yard and we had to walk all the way to the ball field.

"There were five teams, including us, and we played each other twice; eight games a year. . . Hemphill, Shelbyville, Pineland, Indian Village and us.

"Some of the boys on the team, probably not all of them, were Junior Cook, Franklin Christian, Bobby Farley, Doogan Agee (Jack Douglas), Bill Kelley, Hulen George, Eddie and C.W. Shaw, Cullen Vaughn, Willie Bishop, Gary Victery, Slick Thompson. . . I can't remember what his name was. . . Elzy Thompson, and Charles Devereaux. That is all I remember.

"This six man football was something new; it was for smaller schools. Of course, Lufkin had 11 man for a long time."

There was a section of town known as Red Town, which stretched from today's football stadium to north of City Hall. This subdivision was created after the people at the Fastrill camp moved back to Diboll. All the houses in the section were the same three-room design, and all were painted barn red. North of the Red Town section was an area of town populated mostly by Mexican-Americans, about 20 families who lived in Diboll in the 1940's.

Bob Bowman lived in Red Town with his family when they first moved to Diboll. Bowman described his memories of the town in the 1940's:

"Looking back on my boyhood years in Diboll, I was fortunate in that I had the experience of literally growing up between two eras and witnessed the evolution of Diboll from a company town into a progressive and modern East Texas community.

"My boyhood years in Diboll are filled with rich memories of the old Diboll schools, the commissary store, the Antlers, the Timberland theater, baseball games at Miller Park, swimming and rafting in the millpond, hotdogs and french fries at the Tonk, and Boy Scout meetings at the old log Scout house.

"My parents, Weldon and Annie Mae Bowman, moved their children—myself, two brothers, Larry and Billy, and a sister, Dicy, to Diboll shortly after World War II when my father, a mechanic, who had worked for Southern Pine Lumber Company at East Mayfield near Hemphill, was transferred to the company's main repair shop in Diboll.

"Our first home was a small red 'shotgun' house in Red Town, a community of similar houses which stood north of what is now the high school football field. We lived in Red Town about a year before we were able to rent a larger home on the street immediately behind what is now the ***Free Press*** *newspaper office.*

"This house, which my parents rented from Southern Pine Lumber Company for $10 to $15 a month, was to be our home throughout the years I lived in Diboll. We came to know it as 'the brown house' because the company once sent out a crew of painters and changed its color from white to brown. It was the first time we had ever seen a Diboll home any color besides white, but we appreciated the transformation because it set us apart from our neighbors. Years later, my father asked the painter why he used brown paint. He had a simple answer: 'We ran out of white.'"

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An ambitious manuscript written by Henry Fox, who was an eighth-grader at the time, was called *"Diboll Country."* Fox described company housing during this time. *"According to Oran Burchfield,"* he wrote, *"the company houses included such amenities as electric service and wallpaper, and they rented for $6 to $12. The company made no charge for water, weekly garbage pick-up, or cleaning outhouses."* Company houses that have been bought by individuals and modernized are still standing. Some of the larger ones line Hines Street. In 1940 a major improvement occurred in Diboll with the enactment of a new "Hog Law" against loose livestock.

Also in the forties, a youth worker was hired by the company. Along with Shirley Daniel, he organized a Boy Scout Troop, which went on several memorable camping trips. One of the trips was a full two-week outing to San Antonio, which opened up new horizons for some lucky Diboll boys. About the same time, Diboll men organized the Lions Club.

Other improvements included the town's first newspaper. In 1947, Henry G. Temple brought in Jake Durham to start *The Buzz Saw.* As Jake's successor, Paul Durham (no relation) wrote in the January 6, 1977 *Free Press* (the successor to the *Buzz Saw*):

"It was to be a house organ of Southern Pine Lumber Company, but it also reflected the town itself, because the company and town were so closely intertwined. . . Shirley Daniel was the photographer. In no time at all, Jake and Shirley put out the first monthly edition, an eight-page tabloid filled with pictures of employees, "safety-first" columns, and stories about the several projects that Mr. Temple had planned for the plants."

"However, publishing a newspaper turned out to be expensive. We tried selling advertising and that helped, but in early 1952 it was decided that ***The Buzz Saw*** *had served its purpose and it fell silent.*

"Most things happen for the best, I suppose, because it was October, 1952, that the old ***Diboll News-Bulletin*** *was born as the town's first commercial newspaper. I was the one who, probably foolishly, started it, with no financial backing except for what support Arthur Temple Jr., could summon without getting the company back into the publishing business."*

The Diboll News-Bulletin was the origin of the *Free Press.* The newspaper was operated by Jack Tinsley (now editor of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*) and others while Paul Durham was in the Army from 1953-55. Paul and his wife resumed publication of the paper in 1955, operating it on a part-time basis. The business was incorporated in 1957 and a downtown office established.

The publication name was changed at that time and by 1959 circulation began to grow. *The Free Press* began winning awards from regional and state press associations. But the financial strain of publishing the newspaper was too much for the Durhams, and in 1960 it was sold to Temple Industries. Arthur Temple became the publisher and Durham remained as editor and general manager.

A printing plant was opened in January, 1962, and *The Free Press* became one of the pioneers to print by the offset method. The first issue in January, 1962, created considerable interest in the newspaper industry for a number of reasons: Color was brilliant; pictures were razor sharp; strike-on composition (which has since been replaced by photo composition) wasn't nearly so bad as most printers had thought it would be; and the absence of column rules simply stunned everyone who thought a newspaper wasn't a newspaper without them.

The Free Press was on its way. Circulation grew and the newspaper won awards by the half dozen in every contest it entered. . . more than 100 in a ten year period, including an unprecedented five sweepstakes awards in the Texas Press Association. Today it is one of the best known and best loved weekly newspapers in Texas.

But to go back to the 1940's, when the first newspaper began in Diboll, is to go back to a small town just opening its windows on a fascinating world beyond.

Diboll had music in the 1940's, too. There was a black man named W.J. "Professor" Jackson who had taught Harry James to play the trumpet years before in a circus band. On July 17, 1947, *The Buzz Saw* carried *"professor"* Jackson's life story. Bob Bowman later wrote of him in *They Left No Monuments*:

"Age had knife-creased his ebony face, thinned his frame and bent his back. But nothing had taken his memories. He still had those.

"He rose early in the morning, long before the breakfast whistle stirred Diboll's sawmill workers, whispered a prayer to himself and dressed for the day. The uniform was always the same: black suit, black vest, a black bow tie that lilted a little to one side.

"Occasionally, he'd unwrap a black leather musician's case, produce a silvered trumpet, and bring it to his cracked lips.

"When he did, the era that midwived the blues . . . the era of Handy, Christy and Armstrong . . . came alive in the bony fingers and sweet music of William James Jackson, the man Diboll knew simply as The Professor.

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"He came to Diboll in the 1920's, a quiet man with few attachments or friends. He signed on with the Texas and Southeastern Railroad as a porter and mail clerk and worked there 20 years before retiring as a beloved, respected fixture in Diboll.

"In the early 1900's, the Professor was leading a sideshow band with Christy Brothers Circus when the son of the big top's bandmaster started hanging around his coattails. 'The boy... he was just a little fellah eight or nine... had been given a trumpet by his daddy, and he was always pesterin' me to show him how to blow it. I fooled around with him and, pretty soon, he was playing better'n me,' he remembered.

"The boy the Professor taught to play the trumpet was Harry James.

"The Professor played a lot of instruments during his life... piano, fiddle, coronet, saxophone ... but his favorite remained the trumpet.

"There's nothing as sweet as the full, long notes of a well-filled trumpet," he once said. *"It's the horn I'd like played at my passing away."* The Professor died on November 19, 1972, in Diboll shortly before his celebrated 103rd birthday."

The story of Diboll in the 1940's would not be complete without Clyde Thompson, who came to Diboll in 1916 with a few dollars in his pocket. By the time the Depression was over, he was a major force to be reckoned with. Originally a stenographer, he became purchasing agent for Southern Pine, handled all the company's insurance, oversaw the woods and logging operations, and managed the shops and retail yards. After Diboll was incorporated in the early 'sixties, he became its first mayor.

During the 1940's *"Mr."* Clyde was all over the place.

A story in *The Buzz Saw* in 1948 describes what happened when *"Ruby Clyde"* (too beautiful, as a baby, to be named for his grandfather Reuben) was asked to become head of logging operations. A very capable man, he had the knack of making what he did seem as easy (and sometime as foolish!) as falling off, well, a log:

"...Which brings us now to the present day Thompson, the man, who, in a red bathing suit, looks like an apple with legs. ***Thompson, The Superintendent Of Logging Operations.***

"Arthur Temple, Jr., manager of Southern Pine Lumber Company, called Thompson into his office in March of this year for a consultation.

"'Ruby, we've got to streamline and modernize our logging operations. Do you know anything about the woods?'

"'They're mighty pretty in the spring of the year,' replied Thompson, gnawing on his new Sears and Roebuck necktie.

"'I mean do you know anything about ***logs?****' roared Temple—no amateur at roaring.*

"'Ain't them cut up trees?' asked the prospective superintendent.

"'Yes, yes, them's cut up trees! Now get out there and see how many ***you*** *can get cut up and hauled in here!'*

"Thompson rushed out of the office, found Richie Wells. 'Richie,' he said excitedly, 'Arthur just appointed me superintendent of logging operations out the woods. I want to ask you a question. Where are the woods?'

"Wells dropped his upper lip off the end of his nose, looked at Thompson. 'Come on, I'll show you,' he said.

"They drove out across the river on Highway 103 and stopped the car. Wells began slowly, 'See those things out there?' he said. 'Well now, they're trees. ***Trees.*** *Cut 'em up and you have logs. Saw them into boards and you have lumber. Let a long rainy spell hit you and you have* ***H_____!*** *Any questions?'*

"Thompson's eyes bulged. 'Well, I'll be dadblamed. So ***that's*** *the way it works!'"*

Clyde Thompson could be lampooned this way by *The Buzz Saw* because his knowledge and efficiency were well known to all.

Dave Kenley, who managed the Land and Timber Department was active during this decade as well. The stinginess of Dave Kenley was legendary. Gresham Temple of the Temple Oil Company in Lufkin said Kenley once fed a hungry woods crew near Apple Springs on sandwiches made from a loaf of bread and a cabbage. Kenneth Nelson, who worked for Mr. Kenley in the Land and Timber Department as secretary, surveyor and accountant, told a string of stories about how he pinched pennies. Many of them concerned the cattle partnerships Mr. Kenley ran on the side. Mr. Nelson finished by telling us that Mrs. Sidney Kenley, Dave's widow:

"...is 101 or 102, or pretty close to it. Finest lady I ever saw...she used to tell me she wouldn't eat any of the meat he brought home because she said he never would kill a calf that was healthy. She used to laugh and tell me she wouldn't eat it."

Other Diboll characters from the forties include Dred Devereaux. Mr. Devereaux was in charge of the T.S.E Railroad's "B. and B." department—bridging and building. He *"put a big steel bridge across the Trinity River,"* he told John Larson in 1954, and *"supervised some big jobs for Southern Pine Lumber."* Edwin Nelson made a list of Mr. Devereaux's crew members over the years and said you'd have to consult all of them to get the

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full story on the man:

"Jess Nelson, Garvie Walker, A.C. Walker, Charley Bateman, Fukes Fairchilds, Douglas Warner, Douglas Crager, Morris Warner, Hershel (Wimpy) Womack, Clyde Robinson, and (Red) Burkhalter were just some of the men to work for Dred Devereaux. To learn all that Dred Devereaux did in Diboll and for Southern Pine Lumber Company you would have to have the different men who worked for him tell you about what he did.

"For instance, they wanted to move the water tank on the railroad at one of the camps to a new camp. Dred had the men take it down whole and load it on a flat car. He moved it and put it back up again.

"Doug Warner said the men didn't want to move into Diboll from Fastrill, so they burned the Weches bridge on the river. Dred had the men rebuild the bridge and they moved the camp into Diboll.

"Then, they needed to build the Neches River bridge; it was rotten and gave away. Well, Dred rebuilt the bridge and Titus Mooney (the T.S.E. engineer) never missed a load on the log train."

Perhaps the most famous Dred Devereaux story, though, took place in the 1940's. Shirley Daniel told it:

"We had a man in charge of the railroad, D.D. Devereaux. It was always said of him if you needed a 2"x4" on a job, he always put a 4"x4" and that was how thorough he was in everything he did. The handle factory had been built here (1939) and they were putting the blowpipe from the handle factory over to the fuel shed so they could use more dry shavings. Mr. Dred had a crew of men. That pipe was way in the air. They were using a hoist to pick up the pipe and join it together. When they got up close to the fuel shed,. . . the fuel house was about three stories high. . . and they needed a line to run over from the top to help guide the pipe so the wind wouldn't blow it so they could make the connection. He sent Doug Warner to the top of the fuel house and told him, 'Doug, I don't want you crawling that ladder everytime I need you. I want you to go up on top and stay up there. When I need you, I will holler.'

"Doug went up and Mr. Dred swung the pipe around and they made that connection. In a few minutes he was ready to put another one on. It was on a hot August afternoon, and I'm sure it was shortly after lunch; Mr. Dred hollered for Doug to pull the line so he could hold the piece of pipe they were going to fit in there next.

"No Doug. They couldn't see him. He wouldn't answer. Finally he sent a man up the three story ladder to find out what was the matter. As the man reached the top, he looked over and Doug was asleep on the dog house up there. He turned around and hollered to Mr. Dred, 'He's asleep.'

"Mr. Dred turned around and he said, 'All you men, take off your hats and bow your heads.' Mr. Dred took his hat off and with his grey hair streaming down his face, he looked up to the sky and said, 'Oh, Lord, I know that I have been a sinner, but Lord, I want you to just grant me one request. Please let me live until five o'clock so I can fire that S.O.B. that is asleep on top of that building.'"

As it turned out, Doug was never fired. He and Mr. Dred remained dear friends until Devereaux died.

Shirley Daniel told another story about the shortage of hot water in Diboll during this era:

"We were used to having hot water when we came here in 1937. Naturally, there was no natural gas here and butane hadn't been invented yet, but I wanted hot water. So I took an old hot water tank that used to sit behind the kitchen stove. I took it out and laid it down on the ground and dug a trench and put it on some iron bars and heaped the dirt on top of it. I hooked it up with water on the hot water pipe and we would put a pine knot fire under it and heat it up in the morning. We had hot water all day long.

"I was only three doors from Lee Estes' garage and Tommy Cosey was one of the kids. He and Joe King were two black boys who worked for me off and on. It was their job to come down and put that fire under it. When it was Tommy Cosey's time to do it, he sent his little brother to do it and he kept pouring the pine knots to it, and you know what a hot fire they made.

"There was no check line on the line at the time. Lee Estes came over to see me and said, 'I want to know what is happening over at your house.' 'Why?' 'A lady came out of the restroom a while ago and said when she flushed that toilet, steam came out of it. From that boiler, we had backed steam all over that end of Diboll."

Mr. Daniel's string of reminiscences, starting with the Timberland theater, prompts a question about the racial mix in Diboll. He mentioned that the theater was segregated at one time. How welcome were black people at the civic and commercial improvements as far back as the 1940's? What about times even earlier than that? What were black/white relationships actually like in Diboll through the years? A report on the Timberland's precursor, the old Airdome theater which was built in Diboll in 1914, may help to introduce this topic.

The Airdome was built by E.W. Rutland with

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the help of B.F. Tucker and others. It was originally an open theater, but according to Henry Fox, a roof was added later. So was a balcony for black people. *"Since then,"* wrote Mr. Fox, *"the rights movement has come about and made black people be treated as equals and not as lowers as we have treated them so long. Now that things have changed, they sit where they want, and that is the way it should be."*

Perhaps it is even possible to see the beginnings of what became good race relations in Diboll at the close of the Civil War. People from the north are usually surprised at anecdotes like the one about Dave "Stovall" Simms. The close, almost familial ties which developed between black and white families in the south are most often dismissed by outsiders as necessarily exploitative. Some of them were, but others weren't. Paternalistic, more likely, or patronizing. But some relationships weren't even that. Some of them were very special, with mutual respect and admiration.

This is not to deny the historical presence of the Ku Klux Klan in Angelina County, nor to pretend that the Klan had no representation in Diboll. Josephine Rutland Fredrick explained that the KKK concerned itself with what it considered "right living," black or white:

"I can tell you of a man who was tarred and feathered. He lived down around Emporia. He was trifling on his wife; they wouldn't have enough tar and feathers now, would they? They couldn't make that many; the chickens couldn't produce that many feathers. I remember one time, and it was about dark. I was coming across that little bridge and I looked up and saw that flaming cross coming down this track; scared me to death and I ran home...

"Their policy was at every other house, they would leave a cross. They had to leave one in the corner of our yard and so about two weeks after it had been left there, Chester was cleaning the yard and my mother told him, 'Now, Chester, I have told you twice to move that cross.' He said, 'Miss Fannie, I have done everything you have ever told me to do but I ain't going to touch that cross.'

"Really, it was horrifying. I saw all these men in white sheets and it was a long line. They came down the train track. Then they got off and marched down there. They would march up here and leave all these signs. That is the only time I remember that I can absolutely remember it because I think after that it didn't shock me so."

This is not to imagine that wages and benefits were always equal for black workers and white workers. This is not to say that there did not exist a black part of town and a white part of town, nor that there was not *de facto* segregation in many areas of community life in Diboll. What it says is that in the context of East Texas life in the first half of the twentieth century, Diboll had a racial situation that was comparatively comfortable and humane.

Wilk Peters is a black man who worked for Southern Pine from 1919 to 1924 in the shipping service and flooring shed. He later went to college and became largely self-taught, a highly educated scholar, speaking many languages, including Russian. His educational odyssey was written up in *The Reader's Digest* some years ago. Wilk Peters now lives in Baltimore and provided a *"self-interview"* tape, describing his work and life in Diboll. The tape is remarkable not only for its clarity and detail but for the fairness and perspective with which it outlines race relations here during the 1920's.

"There was always a friendly attitude between all workers. There were three main ethnic groups: whites, Italians, and blacks. And I know of no friction. There were very few Italians, probably less than 20. The good relations probably emanated from T.L.L. Temple, whose philosophy was to respect every man, regardless of his station in life. There were no ethnic slurs but before coming to Diboll, I had heard many and especially the vulgarization of 'Negro'...

"For blacks, living conditions were fair. We had electric lights, running water and there was a picket fence around each house. The electricity was turned off each Saturday night at ten p.m. in order to repair dynamos. There were no telephones, nor radios. The streets were not paved. Some people had second hand cars. A few had new ones and most were 'T'-model Fords. There were several flats due to sharp objects hidden in the sand of the unpaved streets. The school was fair, but I do not think there was ever a grade higher than the eighth and there was only two teachers. As I remember it was the principal that helped me do some skills in grammar, do some geography, physical geography and math books which I studied religiously during my stay in Diboll.

"Some few (black) young people had studied at Texas College, Bishop College, Conroe College and Mary Allen Seminary. This was my first time to meet blacks other than teachers who had studied in colleges. And this had a positive influence on me. Most of the people, however, were dropouts who never returned to school.

"I did not know the conditions of the whites. However, the houses which I could see, were superior to those for blacks. And were painted,

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but the houses for blacks were not. The blacks and Italians lived on the other side of the tracks, or the west side. The businesses, planing mill, the lumber yard and shed and two mills were also on this side. Plus the mule barn and team and garage. As I remember, my house, and all houses for blacks and Italians, were very inferior. I think that many were built with one by four. . . twelve lumber with weather stripping. However, drop siding might have been used, I'm not sure. The inside walls were shiplapped.

"And as I remember, there were no bathrooms. There were no bathrooms and water faucets were used outside by the side of the porch where there was a shelf with washpan and soap. We used outhouses which were cleaned and limed periodically. This was the same at the mills, planing mills and the yards. We had wood stoves and wood heaters and kerosene lamps that were used when the electricity was cut off each Saturday night.

"The number of rooms varied from four to six, as I remember, in the houses. And the rent was moderate, from $5 to $8 per month. We had ice boxes instead of refrigerators. I made ours and some for other people. There were no grass lawns, as I remember. There was a boarding house for blacks and some families accepted one, two, or three boarders and usually they stayed in one room.

"The housing on the west side of the tracks was very dissimilar to housing on the east side. . . (but) Mr. Temple respected every worker and that seemed to have been the attitude of each foreman. Politics seemingly existed in the labor force, but I was not totally aware of it, except to notice that only the inhabitants on the other side of the tracks held the few high positions. . ."

Horace and Flossie Warren, a black couple, told Becky Bailey about the black part of Diboll, including the boarding house on the west side of the tracks.

"(The boarding house) was long and it had a hallway and rooms on both sides. The other part, where the lady lived, had some rooms with the kitchen and everything on that side. But this other part they didn't have a cook kitchen or anything; it was just rooms and had a hallway with rooms on both sides. It was pretty large; we thought it was a big place.

"The part the lady ran was the part that had the rooms which she rented out. If they ate, they had to go to the other part where the kitchen and dining room were. She had some bedrooms over there and they lived in that part; it had a porch and everything."

Mr. Warren next described what Diboll's colored town, the Quarters, looked like at the time:

"There were a bunch of people here. In front of our church (Shiloh Baptist) there were houses. . . nothing but houses, there where the plywood plant is."

Flossie added:

"There was also a domino shack, a little place there by Mr. Dan DeBerry. The first one was at the Red Stand. There was another little cafe called the Red Stand, about middle ways of the Quarters. And then there was another little old stand that Artie DeBerry had, just a little domino shack."

Horace said:

"They showed up there playing dominos; they had fun playing dominos. But they were nice cafes; they were real nice. The 'South Side'. . . that was a cafe and a hall, too, a dance hall together. *There was a little cafe, but there used to be a pressing shop and on the front part was the cafe."*

Mrs. Bailey asked what they specialized in:

"Hamburgers."

"Potato pies and things like that," said Horace. *"I could eat more of them potato pies than anybody."*

Flossie said:

"There used to be a barber shop in there, too, because my mother's husband was a barber and he barbered there. In the Red Stand, they had a barber shop and they had a pressing shop, and the little cafe part on the front."

Willie Massey remembers the early attitudes toward black people in Diboll and surrounding communities, like Apple Springs:

"When I was a little boy, my father used to carry us to the little town of Apple Springs. We'd pick a bale of cotton and sit up on the wagon on top of the cotton. When we got to town, we had to pull our caps off. He'd say, 'Boys, pull your hats off, we are gettin' into town, now.' And then you were not permitted to wear your hat inside a store. You had to pull your hat off. . . I remember one incident where a black man walked into a store in Apple Springs and got shot. . . and this sort of thing prevailed over here in Diboll. In fact, I remember very well, when I first came to Diboll, they had the meat market down where the people go to pick up their checks now. . . the pay office. The meat market had two doors. The door on the right was for white customers and the door on the left was for black customers. The white customers would go in on their door and you'd find pork chops, steaks, sausage, and that sort of thing. Over on the side for the blacks, you'd find pig's feet and chittlin's, and all kind of scrap meat. But the interesting thing about it was

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that it didn't make a lot of difference because the men would get together on the outside of the store. If a white man wanted some chittlin's, he'd give a black man the money to get him some chittlin's. If a black man wanted some pork chops, he'd give a white man some money to buy him some pork chops. And then they'd bring it out and swap meat."

Massey, a black school principal, came to Diboll before integration. He described the black school at that time in 1955:

"We had an old frame building here, and I went into that building (during the summer before school started) to see what we had to work with. Everything in the school building we had to work with was stored in an old barrel. Some of the classrooms. . . the boys in the community were using them for gambling. . . there couldn't have been very much equipment; we didn't have anything like typewriters and that sort of thing."

Carey Smith, a black man who worked for Southern Pine 65 years, talked about black and white relationships in Diboll. A Deep Water Baptist, Mr. Smith has been a preacher in the black community for many years:

"I started preaching when I was eight or nine years old. I'd get out in the cotton fields and preach to the breeze. . . if you just believe, that's the only way you can be saved. My dad was a Baptist deacon, and he taught me a right smart about the Bible when I was growing up. I've never been arrested and never been in jail. At my age, lots of people can't say that. I've always been trying to tend to my business and let the other fellow alone. And try to be honest and pay my bills and all like that. I never had no trouble with nobody. Been here these 85 years and had no trouble with nobody.

"That's a pretty good record. And I have quite a few friends, white and black. More white than there is black because the black people some of them cuss a little. I got a lot of white friends. Anything I want, I can go to Lufkin and tell them I want this and this; anything I want, I don't have to have no money. 'Put that in the truck or car and go on, Carey. I know you'll pay me. . .'"

Amos Harris, a black millworker and logwood department employee who came to Diboll in 1930, described racial attitudes as getting better and better in the decades since then:

"Blacks are treated a lot better; they are treated real nice. Since Mr. Arthur Temple, Jr. took over, we commenced to living good. Like it is now, we hardly ever have any stir.

"Diboll wasn't so rough (back in them days), but it was pretty rough, too. They made shinny. . . bootleg shinny. We'd come across here; it was all woods. . . and buy that whiskey and come back through the woods, go home, drink it and get drunk.

"It was pretty rough here then. Afterward it got to be a nice place to live. It stopped in '42 and commenced getting better in 1946. That's the year I came out of the service. I stayed in service two years. That's the only time I left Diboll after I came here in 1930."

Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Thompson talked about the black people in Diboll. They emphasized the respect that existed, at least some of the time, between the black and white.

Ossie Thompson said:

"They didn't make a lot of money, but they kept their self respect. They had a plan; you would work today and if you needed your money, you could come and buy at the store. A lot of them did, and it was kinda like when Mr. Walker died . . . and they said. . .'I always felt like I never worried about where the money was coming from.' They said, 'I always thought Mr. Walker would take care of it."

Paul Fred, a black man now living in San Bernardino, California, sent us a self-interview about life in Diboll in the 'thirties and early 'forties. He said:

"The white section was on one side of the town, and we were on the other side of town. Where I stayed, it was called the 'Pipe Line' and we had two bedrooms, no hot running water, a faucet outside where we drew the water. . . no refrigerators and nothing like that. . . we had iceboxes and the icemen would come around sometimes. . .

"They had the colored section of town and they had the white section of town; they had a school for the whites and a school for the colored. Sometimes for recreation they would have the whites visit the coloreds and play ball. . . it was pretty good, some of it.

"They had the 19th of June and the company would contribute to the people. The 19th of June, everybody would be off; they would have big dances, big parties, and contests. They had the county fair in Lufkin. They had special days for the blacks to go, but you could go anytime. But they had one day put aside for nothing but blacks."

How to explain that Juneteenth was a big day in Diboll for everybody, black and white? Many whites we interviewed remembered "bodacious" barbecues on that day which involved the entire community. It seems possible that the whites were interested in more about that day than just the good barbecue sizzling away on the other side of the tracks. Many whites described real friend-

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ships, and plenty of admiration too, especially in the work place.

Amos Harris, a black millworker, remembered a Juneteenth speech given by Arthur Temple, Jr., shortly after Temple arrived:

"It was at the old school house. He was on a trailer; they backed a trailer up there and he got on it. He made his first talk to the colored people. In his talk he said, 'Now, I'm the new manager. I love all of you... I'm coming to tell you today Diboll won't be like it used to be. I'm going to make a sweetheart town out of this place.' It was pretty rough in those days."

James Rhone is a black superintendent of road trucks for the company. He serves on the Diboll School Board. Like Amos Harris, Rhone remembers the Juneteenth speech Arthur Temple gave to the black community:

"... It was right after he got over here. And he told everybody, 'you know, a lot of them are going to California.' At that time everybody was moving around because everything looked better in California with better jobs. And he said, 'Y'all just stay in Diboll. We're going to have a city here in Diboll. You'll have some of the same things in Diboll they have in California. You'll have good schools; you'll have good jobs; the streets will be paved, just like they are anywhere else, and it will be a model city.' Which it has been. He's done what he said he was gonna do."

Things today appear to be rather relaxed as far as black-white relations go in Diboll. One of the town's more modern aspects is the length of time its schools and other public places have been integrated.

The Diboll schools began integrating as early as 1965, years before those of surrounding communities. In May, 1965 and May, 1966 the School Board voted for freedom of choice. In April, 1967, they voted to integrate the high school for the following school year. By the 1968-69 year, full integration had been achieved. There was also a change in school administrators. Wilbur Pate retired in 1968 and was replaced by David Foster. Mrs. Burkhalter retired as elementary principal in 1969 and was followed by Bill Greer.

Willie Massey, a black school principal, told about integration of the schools:

"When we first integrated, the students were given a choice to go to the white school or, if they wanted, to attend the black school. The first year, about a third of the students wanted to integrate and see what it was like. The second year it was mandatory."

Asked if he thought integration could have started earlier than 1965 in Diboll, Massey replied:

"That all depends. I think that if Mr. Temple wanted it integrated, he could have integrated it anytime. That's the way Diboll was. But I'm sure he didn't want to constitute a lot of confusion among his workers, so he let it go until the state started requiring that the schools integrate. And when they did, he went right along with them, and we had no problems...

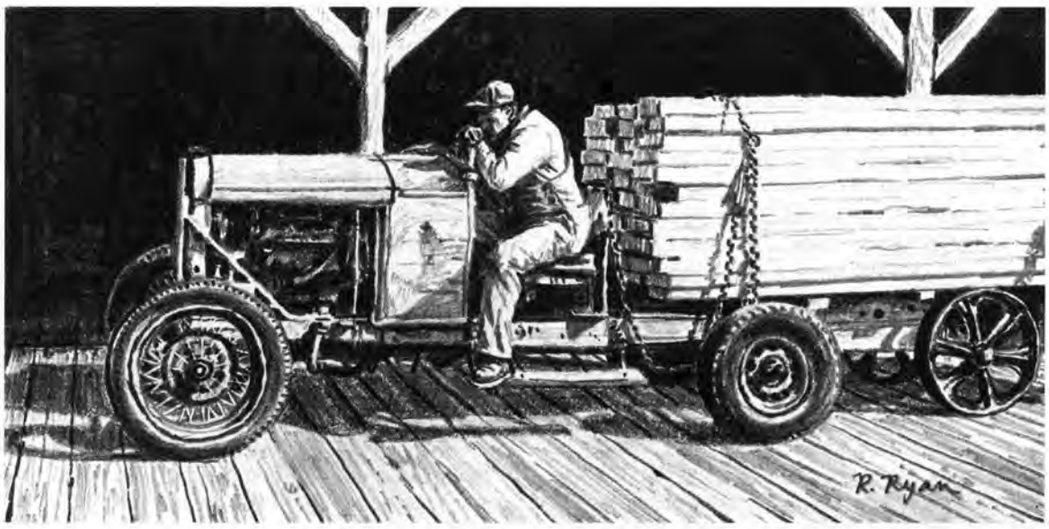
"I noticed that in most school districts where they had integration, they took the black schools and tore them down and went on with their school program without a black school building being involved. But in Diboll, the black school was improved and was dedicated as the intermediate school."

James Rhone wrote an article in *The Free Press* called *"As I See It."* In it he discussed the pro and cons of school integration. One of his concerns was how the policy would affect black teachers' jobs. He said integration has turned out for the best. He feels that black children have benefited from integration because they now have the same books and equipment as white children.

The integration of other public facilities in Diboll was accomplished with similar ease. In his *Texas Monthly* article Paul Burka recounted the story of the integration of the Pine Bough Restaurant, which Mrs. Byrd Davis was still running for the company:

"Before the Civil Rights Act of 1964... (Arthur Temple) got a telephone call in his office one day from the proprietor of the Pine Bough. Black freedom riders were blitzing East Texas, she said, going into segregated restaurants and staging sit-ins after they were refused service. What should she do if they came to Diboll? 'Serve 'em,' he said. If the staff wasn't comfortable about it, he added, he'd come over and work the cash register and bring his wife to wait tables. When the riders showed up, the staff handled it alone."

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Chapter VIII

"A Handful of Gasoline"

On the eve of World War II, less than a third of the workers in the Texas lumber industry were classified as non-white. Few blacks held skilled or even semi-skilled positions. And wages were low—a result of the Depression—for black and white alike.

In 1937, with passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act, the average annual wage in Texas lumbering was $643—a full $380 less than the average for 11 manufacturing groups in the state. After 1938, with the minimum at 25 cents, the average hourly earnings in the industry rose to 31 cents.

However, the discrimination and the non-competitive wage were ameliorated by the fact that lumber was a vital war industry. The pressure for an increased supply of lumber for a nation at war had a positive effect on wages. In 1940, the minimum wage was raised to 30 cents per hour. Two years later, it stood at 35 cents. By November, 1941, according to Ruth Allen in *East Texas Lumber Workers*, the average in the Southern lumber industry was 38 cents and shortly afterwards, 42 cents. By the time the war ended, average hourly wages had increased 70 per cent, compared to 50 percent in other manufacturing areas.

In mid-war, May of 1943, the policy of the United States that there should be *"no discrimination in the employment of any person in war industries. . . by reason of race, creed, color, or national origin"* was re-affirmed by executive order. Shortly after that, the National War Labor Board ruled that wage classifications based on differences in race were invalid. In other words, it called for equal pay for equal work. Many war industries were compelled to reorganize their pay scales and in some cases black workers received upward adjustments.

The increase in pay in the lumber industry during the war did not in all cases, however, draw enough labor to fulfill military needs. Some 1000 sawmills, as a result, closed down in the Southern pine area. Since manpower shortage was most frequently the cause of the inadequate production, the Federal Government took action to help the industry. In 1942 the War Manpower Commission went into effect in twelve states, one of which was Texas. A worker had to get a certificate of separation before leaving a lumber job.

The Southern Pine mill at Diboll ran throughout the war, and maintained an excellent production—to August, 1944, the mill ran a day and night shift every twenty-four hours. Because of the war labor shortage, one ten-hour shift was cut out. Millworkers, loggers, and CCC workers from Angelina County departed in droves for the armed forces. Some 140 of them eventually lost their lives overseas.

Despite the labor shortage, pine lumber production at Diboll increased during the war. Just before World War II the output had been 100,000

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feet of pine and 40,000 feet of hardwood daily. During the war, pine output increased to 150,000 feet and hardwood remained the same as it had been before the war.

The war increased production, but it demanded sacrifices. Everyone has a story about the moment he or she learned that the United States was going to war. Mary Jane Christian, a Diboll schoolteacher who was at college in Nacogdoches at the time, echoed the sentiments of many in her memory of that day:

"I was very disturbed. It was a Sunday. It will live in my mind as long as I live. . . I turned the radio on, and about ten minutes later there came this bulletin that said Pearl Harbor had been bombed. We were sure to declare war. My very best boyfriend at that time was already in service and to me this was doom! I felt my little world had fallen apart."

With many men gone from Diboll and Angelina County, the lumber industry and other industries turned to women to keep the wheels turning. Many women were employed during the war years in Diboll, especially in the box factory—which produced ammunition boxes for the war effort—and in the broom handle factory.

The handle factory, known as the Temple-White Company, was built in February, 1939, and employed about 75 men and women. It was capable of producing 20 million pine handles a year. This company was organized by H.B. White, H.G. Temple and H.C. White of Diboll. Besides making handles of all sorts, it turned out washboards and various other small woodware items, using waste wood from the mill which had once been consumed as fuel. A.R. Weber, who managed the Temple-White plant, described the operation at the handle factory:

"They used to make lath here and what wouldn't go into lath they would burn. After we came, they started to kiln dry the lumber and send it over to us in dry form. We turned it into handles. . . broom and mop handles.

"They had special lathes. What they called a Westcott broom handle turning lathe made a shaped handle. Back in those days, they sold a lot of broom handles that were shaped. Being shaped meant that you have a nice small handle at the top and a heavier handle where the straw went onto the broom. Most broom companies were very particular about the shape of a handle, and at one time White Wood Products and Temple-White were the criterion by which other handle companies were judged.

"We were considered number one. Mr. White said in an article in the paper that we made about ten percent of the broom handles that were used in the country.

"We were operating five broom handle lathes and operating five dowel machines. Dowel machines turn a straight handle. . . a handle 7/8" diameter or 48" long. Or it could be an 1⅛" by 10, 12, or 14 feet long. We got timber for all of them.

"During the war we made what they call 'The Decontamination Handle' for shipment overseas. They heard the Germans were going to use mustard gas to drop on our soldiers, so they supplied them with what they called 'decontamination handles.' They made a brush; we painted it. We made it out of oak and hardwood handles and painted it with clear lacquer. . . about three coats of lacquer. . . and then treated the end of it, in which they screwed a brush. The soldiers used it to wash down the buildings where the gas was supposedly sprayed. All the buildings, the inside and outside, were supposed to be washed with a disinfectant to neutralize the poison gas. That was what was called a 'decontamination handle.'

"Then we made Navy mop handles during the World War II. We made a good many of those."

Oneta Hendrick's decision to work at Temple-White was typical:

"I worked at the handle factory office from when Don was about two, I believe, when we thought Dick, my husband, was going into the service."

Pearl Havard worked at the box factory in the latter part of the war and remembered:

"I worked with a lady called Irene, and we matched boards. That was to make boxes for ammunition. The boards were cut by the saws and then they were put on a flat and rolled over to our machine. Irene would run it through a machine and make a groove on one end. I would turn it over and send it back to her and she would make a groove on the other end. We matched those boards together, put them on a flat, and sent them back to the nailer. They nailed them together and made a box for ammunition.

"They also made boxes for fruit and sent them to California and to the Valley for vegetables and fruit. This was one of the first industries to employ women in Diboll. I remember a friend; when she was young she had to get work somewhere to help out at home. She went to the box factory and worked. It was about '45 or '46 when I worked over there; and I got 35 cents an hour."

At nearby Lufkin Foundry and Machine Company, women took welding and machine-shop jobs vacated by men who went to war. Both men and women who contributed to the war by staying in the home industries in Angelina County showed their patriotism in a willingness to work over-

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time to meet quotas.

Those who stayed home in Diboll helped feed the community with a huge Victory Garden. This garden was planted on the site of the community gardens of the Depression, where the high school now stands, between Highway 59 and the Diboll city park.

Industries with defense contracts, such as sawmills, were required by the government to maintain plant security. Companies had to have trained, uniformed guards on duty 24 hours a day. At Southern Pine Lumber Company, Federal espionage statutes were posted in prominent places within the plant on December 29, 1941. By February, 1942, lights had been placed on the mill's smokestack to keep military planes from hitting it. Such efforts served as reminders of the importance of the lumber industry in the war effort.

Many Dibollians remember the details of gasoline rationing during the war. They also remember rationing of other vital supplies, such as coffee and nylons. Mary Jane Christian talked about the careful use of gasoline and sugar:

"My mother was such a good manager that we never ran out. Sometimes she didn't put any sugar in some of the things that required a lot of sugar. Sugar and gasoline were the two most important things I remember. To me, if you take my gasoline away from me, you are taking my best friend away from me. I have always felt that way about gasoline. Perhaps it hit me harder than sugar."

Estelle Eddington, who lived with her husband in Lufkin until 1960 when they came to Diboll to manage a furniture store, remembered:

"You couldn't get gasoline, but we never had any trouble because we knew so many of the soldier boys and we had an old 1936 model Chevrolet which had two gasoline tanks. We had tickets for gas. There was rationing. The food part never did bother us, because it was just Sherman and me. The gasoline didn't bother us, because somebody who didn't need it was always giving you a handful. For a lot of people, it was real bad because they had no one to give it to them. We wouldn't have had any gas if we weren't given ration stamps."

The teachers' dress code at Diboll was also affected by the unavailability of nylons, according to Mary Jane Christian. During the war teachers wore loafers and socks instead. Mrs. Christian finished her teacher's course at Stephen F. Austin during the war, married, and started to teach school at Diboll. She recalled that before she left Nacogdoches the teacher's college had become *"very much a girls' school for awhile,"* and that an all-girl band was organized there while the boys were in the service.

Bennis and Opal Franks came to Diboll as teachers late in the war. Opal told about their decision to come:

"Teacher's pay was very poor and they could make more money at other jobs: teachers were very scarce. Bennis was offered several good jobs which paid more than what he was making at Mt. Enterprise. He had several people ask him to come to their schools. I'll have to say here and now, we did not come to Diboll for the money—that was not important to Bennis.

"Robert Ramsey, his brother-in-law and my brother-in-law, had been principal here for about a year and they needed a basketball coach and social studies teacher. So Robert insisted that Bennis come talk to Mr. Pate, the superintendent. Bennis knew Mr. Pate, so they began to point out the good things about Diboll. . . cheap rent. . . you have to remember that housing was very scarce. There had been no building during the war and the fact that the company would furnish a house at a low rate of rent, and the fact Bennis knew Mr. Pate and Robert, made the difference. So we chose to come to Diboll."

Schools in Diboll during the war required more of their teachers beyond ordinary teaching duties. Because they had to clean the classrooms and the grounds, as well as teach, it may have been just as well they didn't have nylons to wear. They also had to make do with creaky equipment, as Mrs. Christian, a veteran now of some 40 years in the Diboll school system, can attest:

"The thing we needed the most was the mimeograph. We take it so for granted now. When I first started, there was no such thing as a mimeograph in Diboll schools. We bought this little piepan. . . cookie sheet, I guess would be a better description. We got us a can of liquid that we had to heat and pour in this pan and let it get cold. Then we would make a special stencil using a special pen. We'd press it down, being sure every detail was there. Then we'd take it up very carefully. One at a time, we'd put a sheet of paper down, press our hands over it, rub it up and down and take it off very carefully. We'd do this until we had a set we could run off. A second grade teacher and I did this together for years. You could only run off one a day.

"So we put that set of papers away, and we'd use it the third year because the next year the second grade would come into the third grade. They couldn't use the same stencil, so we had to have two sets. . . one for one year, and one for the next. I think of all, the mimeograph machine is the greatest luxury we have today."

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Bob Bowman, who was in school at Diboll during the forties, gave us a long description of the Diboll campus area in his sketch, *"A Boyhood in Diboll":*

"I have very special memories of the boys and girls I grew up with in Diboll. We went through the schools as a class, graduated as a class, and we still see each other at class reunions. For some of us, the nicknames we used as kids are still relevant as adults. Shirley Ann McKinney, whom we knew as 'Moose,' will always be Moose, and Robert Landrum will never be known by anything except 'Tweet.' Looking back on those years, I find myself appreciating those boyhood friendships even more as I age.

"The brown house, our house, was just down the street (which was then the main highway running through Diboll) from Diboll's white school campus. The campus was a cluster of big, high-roofed white buildings heated by an ancient, cantankerous steam system kept in running condition by a lovable maintenance man, Oscar Davis, who probably had more rapport with Diboll's school children than any teacher on the campus. When things went wrong in the classroom, many of us would flee to Oscar's domain in the steam boiler room beneath the study hall and pour out our troubles. He would often lead us around the corner to Pop Jordan's campus candy stand and treat us to a Baby Ruth or Butterfinger, or walk us over to the school cafeteria, where his wife, Sally, would magically produce a cookie or piece of cake.

"The old schoolgrounds were dominated by the school gymnasium, the only original building still standing on the site. Here, traveling performers often shared their talents with Diboll families on a wooden stage across the basketball court from a solid wall of hard bleachers. The 'gym,' as we knew it, also served as Diboll's auditorium, hosting high school graduations, band concerts, school plays, company meetings, revivals, political gatherings and a variety of other events.

"These events, however, seldom attracted the kind of crowds that came to watch Diboll's high school Lumberjacks compete with archrivals Lufkin, Huntington, and Central on the basketball court. When these schools came to town, the gym was filled to the rafters, and the noise was deafening.

"The rest of the buildings on the campus included a structure housing the study hall and library, journalism and English classes and other high school departments. Another building served additional high school classes, a third functioned as what would be considered a junior high school today, a fourth building housed the elementary grades, a fifth served the shop classes and Future Farmers Club, and another building functioned as the cafeteria, where meals sold for 15 to 20 cents apiece. There also were several smaller buildings, including one where Superintendent Wilbur Pate and his staff had their offices. A band hall, the last building built on the original campus, was erected in the early fifties.

"When the school board approved the creation of a high school band program, the announcement generated widespread interest among Diboll's parents and their children. There was a rush on Lufkin's music stores for instruments and, because many of the sawmill families could not afford band uniforms, it was decided to equip the fledgling band member in red cowboy shirts, red cowboy hats and bluejeans. Our first band was a motley group of students garbed in shirts that ranged in hues from pink to purple.

"When I expressed to my parents a desire to play in the band, my father looked at me with some doubt, as if to say, 'Good grief, this kid can't even whistle.' But he somehow managed to scrape together enough money to buy what I thought was the finest trumpet man had ever fashioned from metal.

"However, I never did learn to play the instrument properly. During practice and concerts, I would simply sit on the back row, silently blowing into the mouthpiece, rarely creating a single note. Fortunately, the noise of the other instruments around me was loud enough to cover my deficiency. To this day, I still don't know if our bandleader ever discovered my secret or not.

"The Diboll school campus had another landmark beside its frame buildings. A thick wooden bench spanned the distance between two oak trees near the study hall, and every boy who passed through the campus must have whittled his name on the bench at one time. . ."

School kids in Diboll in the early 1940's were joined rather suddenly by a new bunch of children—the kids from Fastrill. The company had closed its last lumber camp, and the entire settlement at Fastrill was moved one day in 1941 into town. Mrs. Farrington recalled that a certain amount of adjustment was necessary, both on the part of the Fastrill children, who were new to the "big town" of Diboll, and on the part of Diboll residents:

"I had worked with the First Methodist Church for 18 years as a superintendent of the children's division, but I knew before they brought that logging camp in here. . . that I was going to work (with those children). . .

"They had moved the logging camp here and built all those little houses. They built all those

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houses just like little shacks. But I'll tell you why. They expected to move into another logging camp, but for some reason they had different means of handling the logs and they didn't move them. So when Mr. Arthur came, he had all those little shacks moved out.

"There was a new set of problems at Diboll before Fastrill moved in. Diboll was well churched; we had gotten rid of our saloons years ago; and the people here were making a salary. We didn't have very many to care for. When they moved the camps in, we had new work.

"We helped care for them in clothes and we cared for them spiritually. And we cared for them when they were sick and needed help. Before we had the ambulance and everything we have now, we would see that they had the proper medicine and the proper care. We worked with them until now there's not very much need over there because they are gone. Most of them are buying their own homes over on the other side.

"Arthur Temple is letting them pay $10 a month and that applies as a payment on the house instead of rent. And people are owning their own buildings and they're improving them and it's just lovely. And they're building another mission over there because they are moving all the ones I worked with on the other side. . ."

By *"another mission"*, Mrs. Farrington was referring back to the first "mission church" built after the Fastrill people came to Diboll. Church was held first in the Boy Scout hall, but later Henry Temple had a chapel built in Red Town. Mrs. Maurine Weimer remembers that early mission:

"Mrs. Farrington went to Mr. Henry Temple and asked for a place for the church. They had a good number of families who attended at the time. They had been holding prayer meetings in this house on Thursday evenings. Different groups would use it. They felt a need for a church, so Mr. Henry built a small church. It held 14 benches in front and four small rooms in the back.

"In the front there was an altar and a place for a choir. They had a bench in the front and they had a piano. Mrs. Farrington. . . Mrs. Frank Farrington, Mr. and Mrs. Gus Ballenger and Mr. and Mrs. Rufus Tatum and their families went over there.

"There were three Mexican families in that part, Mr. and Mrs. Miranda. . . Rosie and her husband; Mrs. Becky Guerra and her family; and Mrs. Losana and her son. Some of the other families were Henry Evans, the Louis Mintons, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Ruby and their family, J.D. Burchfield and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Sims, Mr. and Mrs. Greer, Mr. and Mrs. Bryce and their family, the Terrells, and E.J. and Ruth Harrison and her children. Shirley Terrell and her brother attended. And the Chris Landrums, the Fate Patricks, William Welch, Bill Powers and his family, and the Saxton girls were some of the members.

"There were others who would come in from time to time. At Christmas, we would have them standing on the little porch. It would really be full. Mr. Henry would go from church to church and it was not unusual to see him sitting on the end of the pew with a little child on each knee.

"It was built somewhere around 1942 during Rev. Ben Roper's stay at Diboll. He was there for two years and during the time, he was there he went down to the scout house and preached and then he preached in the Little Church. He was the first preacher. Rev. Edward Gentry was there; Charles Weimer was there from '47 to '49. Then Charles Woodard was there two years. Then Charles Weimer went back for one year in '51."

The fact that the lumber camp was not moved to another camp was due to technological changes occurring in the lumber industry. The labor-intensive camp system. . .with its mules, oxen and men in the woods. . .was being replaced by mechanical methods of harvesting timber. During the 1940's, and especially after the war, manpower use by Southern Pine Lumber Company was increasingly concentrated in Diboll itself, where many improvements were being made to the sawmill operations.

Efficient, modern additions were made to the mill during the decade. An automatic lumber stacker and unstacker, electric kiln, transfer cars, a new steel cooling shed, automatic trailers and other improvements increased the quality of the lumber produced. Wide distribution of high-quality lumber and wood products by the Temple enterprises was due both to the overseas war and to new expanding market within the U.S.

The conservation practices of modern forestry introduced before the war were also paying off for the Temple companies. Kenneth Nelson became manager of the Land and Timber Department at Diboll in 1948, and he described the development of these practices:

"In those days, we had in 1939 about 239,000 acres in fee lands; that is, land and all. We wanted to find out if we actually had enough land and timber to go to a "sustained yield" program; that is, to keep growing as much as you are cutting, perpetual, because we were just cutting to a diameter everything on the tract. If everything was above that diameter it was clearcut.

"When we completed a survey and inventoried the property we found that we did have enough

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timber to go on a sustained yield basis. That is, instead of going in and cutting a diameter, we'd mark the trees to be cut. In 1940, this fellow Slater with the U.S. Forest Service and myself, we marked the first tract of timber on company land to be cut under the new program. From then on, everything that was cut on company lands was marked to be cut. We didn't let the loggers cut like they had been doing in the past. That program continued until we merged with Southwestern Timber and Eastex Paper Company in 1973.

"They had a program of doing both . . . of marking timber and also clear-cutting. After the merger, we started doing both on the whole million acres of land. I was a little skeptical and so was Mr. Temple about clear cutting. I don't know that he is still sold on it a lot and I'm not either. We know you've got to grow timber and you have to help it out. Anyhow, I was in charge of all the timber and land and over the surveying crews. I wasn't over the logging; I was just over the areas which told loggers where they could log. Clyde Thompson was actually the logging superintendent, and Richie Wells was the woods foreman."

The sawmill business in the late forties was becoming more economical and diverse, and financially more interesting. In Diboll, Southern Pine Lumber Company was poised at the beginning of an unprecedented period of expansion led by a third generation of Temples.

Just before this period, in 1947, Arthur Temple, Sr., was president of the Southern Pine Lumber Company, which he brought successfully through the Depression and the war. Henry G. Temple, his cousin, was general manager and oversaw the working of the mill and its employees. R.L. Waite was secretary-treasurer, Temple Webber was sales manager, and Clyde Thompson was purchasing agent. Fannie Farrington summed up a widely shared feeling when she described company management up to and beyond that time. She said,

"Every manager who has been here since I've been with the company has been wonderful. After Mr. Watson Walker died, we had our joint-managership, Mr. O'Hara and Mr. Strauss . . . they were both brilliant men. After they died, Mr. Henry Temple came back. He came here, he and his wife as bride and groom from Virginia, and they lived in our home for two years. We became very close friends. I knew Mr. Henry Temple better than anyone because he had lived in our home. They came here from Virginia and he worked from pushing dollies; we didn't have electric trucks like they have now and we didn't even have the horse truck. The men pushed the lumber on the dolly, and Mr. Henry Temple started that way.

When he passed away, he was . . . I think . . . vice president and general manager; he was the same Henry Temple that he was when he was pushing dollies . . . always doing something nice. They helped people. They did everything in their power to lift everybody. Coming down, Arthur Temple . . . the one here today . . . is one of the most progressive men. He's the same way."

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1939-1949



Street repairs on what is today First Street, located parallel and west of the railroad tracks. The buildings were (L to R) the Green Lantern Cafe, 2 dwellings, and the First Baptist Church.



G.P. (Rat) Johnson, serving at a barbe-que, was well-known for his column "Rat Tales" in the *Buzz Saw.*



Hack Wilson selling ice at the ice house located on the south end of the commissary.

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Professor Jackson, seated, and his band. (L to R): R.L. Covington, Jim Henry Garrett, Freedom Golden, _____ Hodges, Professor Jackson, Freddie Randolph, Jr., Jack Ligon, John Calvin, Henry Ligon.



A.C. Phipps, in front, at a Juneteenth Celebration.



This building was known as "The Library". It became the office for Love Wood Products. It had the first indoor bathroom in town, installed by Z. Vaughn. When the Temples came to town from Texarkana they stayed upstairs.

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Volunteer fire department (pictured in front of Antlers Hotel). (L to R): Edwin Nelson, James Wiley, Vernon Kerr (driver), Garvie Walker, E.A. Stephens, Edgar Austin, Sr., Mr. Wilson, Jim Fuller, Frank Austin, "Shorty" Wickinshrimer, Wes Ashworth, Colman Weisinger, D.M. Clarke, Nolan Hall.



Southern Pine executives at Boggy Slough hunting lodge. (L to R): H.W. Walker, Sr., Temple Webber; Arthur Temple, Sr., Arthur Temple, Jr., E.A. Farley.



Richie Wells, woods foreman, standing in front of an employee bus. Buses were used to carry workers out to the woods. Notice the SPLCo logo on the bus. It was used in the 1940's and was designed by Elnoree Daniel.

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J. Shirley Daniel and the first power saw in Angelina Co. The first demonstration took place outside the Timberland Theatre and the noise of the saw motor completely disrupted the movie.



Inside the drugstore in the commissary. Pictured are (L to R): Jake Durham, Bernice Hines, H.G. Temple, Ed Strickland, G.M. Lee.



Baseball team. Standing: unknown, Freddie Randolph, Jr., M. Lee Overstreet, Billy Cade, Herbert Allen, Willie Trimble, Smoky _____, Otis Spikes. Bottom row: unknown, Okee Hubbard, George Hodges, Jelly _____.

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Antlers Hotel, a showplace built by J.P. Cammack in the late 1930's at the corner of Hendrick St. and Hines St. It was the center of Diboll's social activities until the early 1950's when it had to be burned down because of termite infestation.



Paving of the first street in Diboll. In the background is the Southern Pine Office. This is Hines Street today. On the right is Bernice Hines.



Planting trees at Boggy Slough with tree planter. Driver is Willie Neal and the planter is Bill Nichols.

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Ruth Gaddy and Floyd Frankens with a new puppy. A log truck killed Ruth's dog. When Jake Durham heard about it, he bought a new puppy and gave Floyd Frankens the joyful task of delivering it.



Billboard listing the servicemen and women who served in World War II. The sign was erected north of the Antlers Hotel.



Leonard Harris seated on trash wagon. Notice the rubber tires on the wagon.

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SPLCo truck drivers Bill Jones, Floyd Frankens, and Archie Carrier. Notice the logo on the door.



SPLCo employees or their wives waiting in the payroll line at the Rutland office building. Employees still receive their checks today at the payroll window in the old commissary building. The building pictured on the left was the fire station.

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Walter Broker, a sawyer.



Jim Rushing, a brakeman and long-time employee of the shop and TSE.

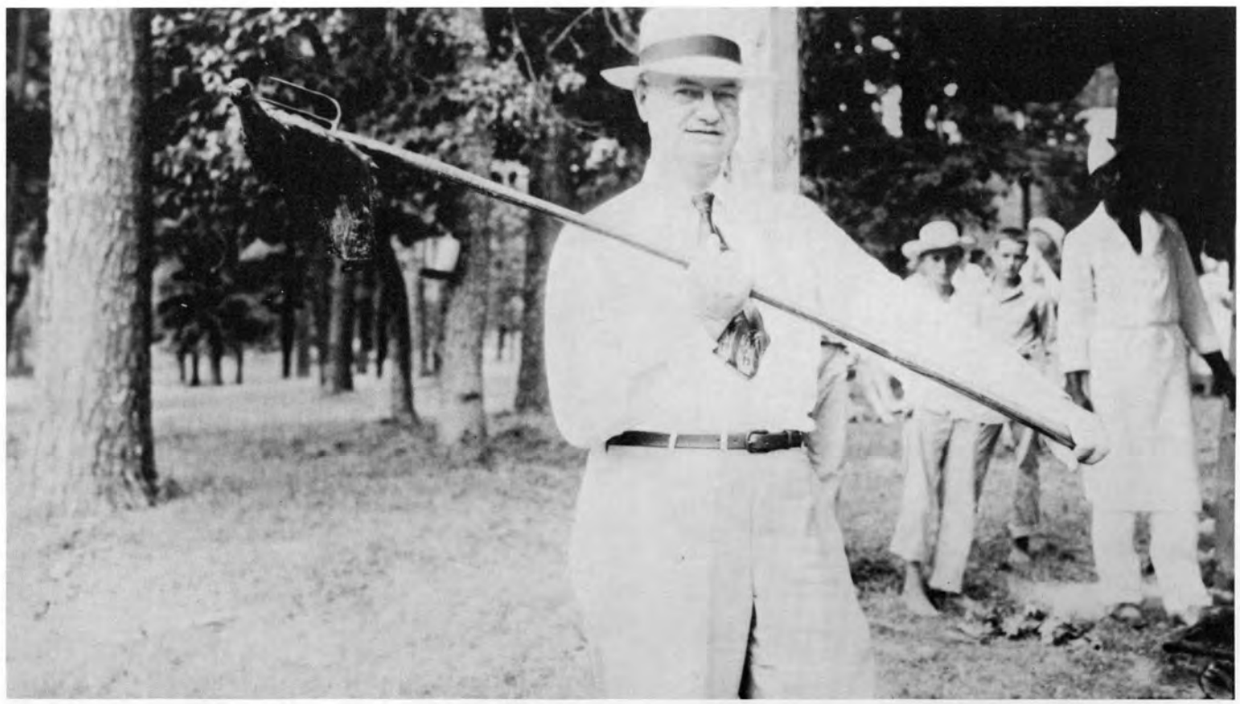


Sage Ward, a millwright.

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SPLCo employees Buell Small, Carey Anthony, Finis Ashworth and Arthur Sturrock show cash in their pay envelopes. It took hours for the payroll department to count out the cash exactly and stuff it into the pay envelopes. The payroll clerk knew each employee personally and was sure to give the pay envelope to the right person. Payday was every two weeks.



George Smith, an officer of Temple Lumber Co. and SPLCo in both Pineland and Diboll. Pictured at a bar-b-que at Boggy Slough.

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Jay Boren was a "special" Texas Ranger brought here to keep the peace. There was no police force.



1939-1940 high school seniors pictured dressed as first graders. There were only 2 boys in the class. The seniors are seated on the famous wooden bench which was carved with the initials of most Diboll students; Bob Bowman tells the story of the bench in this book. Pictured 1st row (L to R): Jackie Oliver, Elaine Gardner. Second row: Mavis Smith, Rowena Kimmey, Winnie Lou Carroll, Frankie Jackson, Mary Lee Thompson, Effie Jane White. Third row: Earl Smith, Annette Burrows, Opal Girlette, Adelle Grimes, Iona Glass, John Rector.

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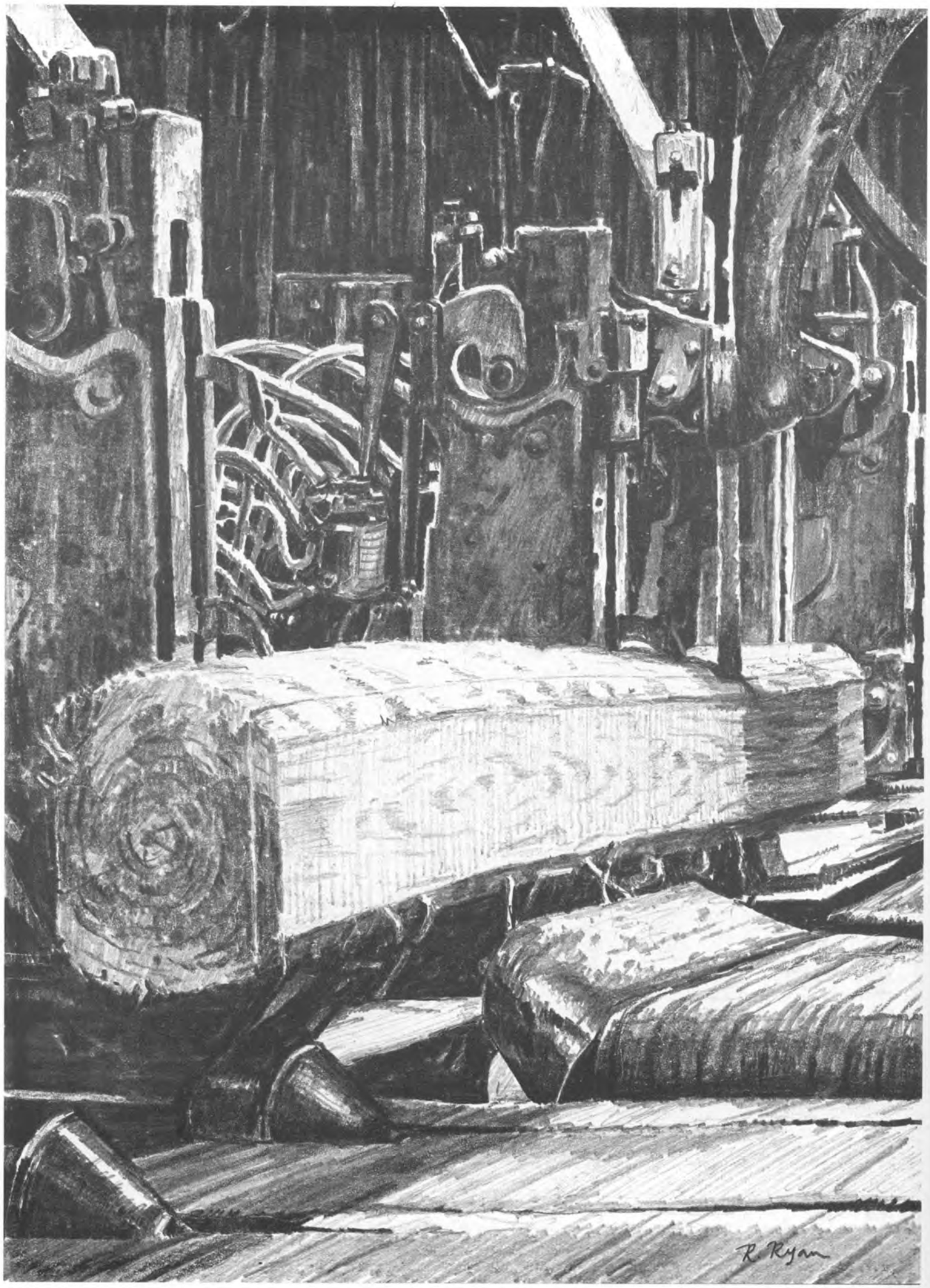


Logs were brought from the woods by mule-drawn wagons. Clyde Thompson is riding the mule.



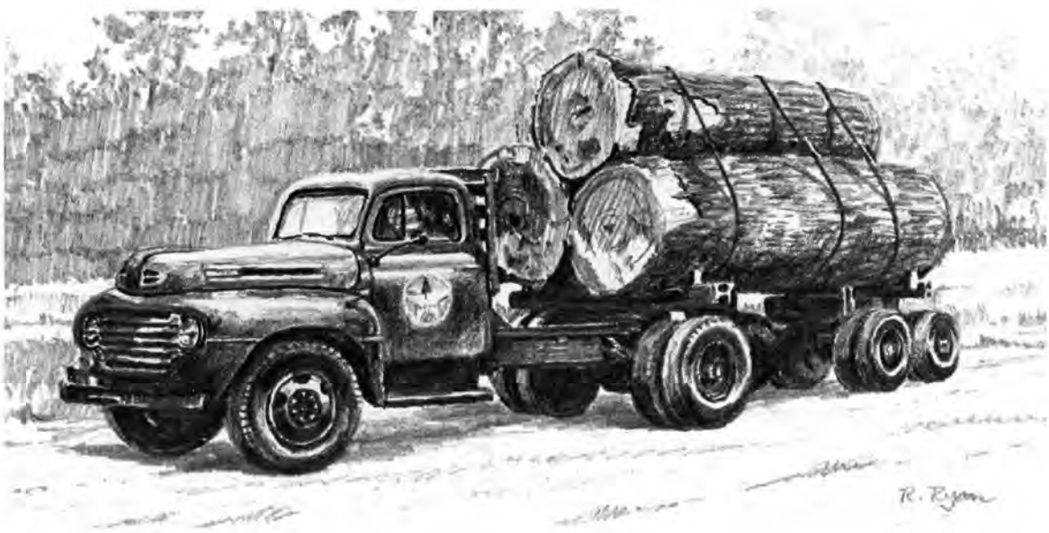
Work crew laying a railroad spur into the woods.

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Mill Scene

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Chapter IX

"Giving Sawmill People Back Their Dignity"

When Fannie Farrington said Arthur Temple, Jr. was *"the same way"* as all the Temples had been she paid him a big compliment. She was referring in 1954 to Arthur Temple, Jr., affectionately known to Diboll residents as "Little Arthur."

Well, Little Arthur, who is far from little, no longer uses the Junior after his name. But he hasn't in any way forgotten his father, Arthur Temple, Sr.

He tells interviewers his father taught him that *"the family is the company and the company is the family."* His every action since he took that to heart has illustrated the lesson.

When Henry G. Temple died suddenly in 1948, Arthur Temple, Jr., took over as general manager of Southern Pine. After his father's death in 1951, he was made president of the company. An extensive correspondence between Arthur and his father from 1946 to 1951—collected into three large volumes and shelved in Arthur's office near Crown Colony Country Club—testifies to the mutual affection and respect they held for each other.

The correspondence chronicles a sense of family responsibility and warmth which had everything to do with the successful passing on of power in 1951. It is a document of a working relationship in the best sense, which aired—if not always shared—views on the best way to proceed with the family business.

Sometimes they wrote almost daily, when separated, from places like Texarkana, Little Rock, Diboll or New York. Telegrams, too, are included, containing family news interspersed with business decisions. Arthur, Sr. was clearly comfortable with his fatherly role, counseling his sometimes impatient son to keep control of his ambition in the service of careful management. In 1946 he wrote to Arthur, Jr., asking that he make his father a Christmas present of *"elevating his conversation,"* which was *"a little bit rough at times."*

But the bulk of the correspondence concerns both general and detailed discussion of business plans between father and son, plans often involving social and ethical issues. On March 25, 1946, Arthur, Sr., wrote:

"...On the other hand, I do want you to consider your indebtedness to me just as you would your other obligations, and I know that is what you will do... I was just a little disturbed about your statement out at the house the other day that you were going to spread out and do some big things which would either make a lot of money or break you...You are already pretty heavily involved and while I do think that we will have a period of inflation for perhaps several years, at least another year or two, no one knows when the bust will come, and... I am inclined to think that it would be well for you to begin now to pull in your horns. I would like to see you, too,

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give more of your time, energy, and thought to. . . preparing yourself to go on up either in Temple Lumber Company or Southern Pine Lumber Company and somewhere down the line, when I pass out of the picture, to be prepared to take over the responsibilities which you will inherit. . . Making money is not the most important thing in the world and should not be anyone's exclusive ambition. Service to your fellow man, whether limited to family interests or to society as a whole, is far more important. . ."

Two months later, commenting to his father about a pricing question on housing in Texarkana, Arthur, Jr., wrote:

"If you will check on prices at the time that project was built I believe you will find shiplap was selling for $27.50 to $30. It is now wholesaling for $51 average delivered from Diboll and approximately $54 average delivered from Pineland. As you can see this is an increase of more than 85%. Our prices have not increased on quite that ratio. I would certainly be the last person to write you and tell you that you were being accused left and right of profiteering. Neither would I tell you 'a good name is more to be desired than great riches.' I would realize that you already have the good sense to know this and instead I would tell your critics the true facts in the case and that you were a grown man who had a certain amount of lumber to sell and that you were selling it on the market or a little below. I would also tell them that you were not forcing anyone to buy your lumber and that if they didn't want it they didn't have to buy it. . .The fact that our product was manufactured at a time when wages and materials were relatively inexpensive does not mean we should sell our present inventory which have held in anticipation of increased prices, at a sacrifice price. I hope that you will understand my position in this case; I have told you many times that I am not in favor of excessive prices. As long as I know our prices are in line with the general market and as long as I know that our houses are considerably better than those being sold for even higher prices than we are charging, I don't give a darn if everybody in the country raises cain. If they want somebody to give them something I will instruct Mr. Anthony to refer them to the Salvation Army."

The Mr. Anthony mentioned was Ben Anthony, a former car and real estate salesman who came to Southern Pine in sales and in 1948 became Housing Director in Diboll. This position was held in connection with a final New Deal program, the Federal Housing Authority, begun before the war but only implemented after it was over. President Roosevelt had convinced Congress to create a program to construct low cost housing and to make low interest housing loans available. The construction industry, prostrated by the Depression, was greatly improved by the measure, and the Texas lumber industry was similarly revived.

In turn, things got better for lumber workers in terms of benefits, hours and wages. Cash replaced merchandise checks in most of the industry, the minimum wage was in place, and the eight-hour day became the rule. With the FHA then, and the improved conditions in the industry that it stimulated, the start of the 1950's saw the possibility for real consolidation and modernization for a progressive lumber town like Diboll. It was into this atmosphere of potential that Arthur Temple, Jr., came when he took over the company at his father's death in 1951.

With the help of its employees Southern Pine began to make Diboll over from a sawmill camp into a modern town. At that time, the company had two mills, a planer and a woods department, which together employed about 1,000 people. Diboll also had the handle factory and the box factory, a subsidiary of Southern Pine. With postwar distribution, the products from these industries were sent to all parts of the world. As Clyde Thompson said to Archie Birdsong Mathews in 1950, *"the sun never sets on Diboll products."*

In the early fifties, Southern Pine owned land in seven or eight East Texas counties, with timber that promised to support the mill for many years. Selective cutting and reforestation were carefully practiced by the company, making it possible for land to be recut every few years on a regular basis. The resources were there for the company, and for the company and Diboll to move forward, and these had already made available a new level of finance to support it.

In 1950, after his cousin Henry Temple died but before his father died, Arthur had gone back to his father's banker, Fred Florence of Republic Bank in Dallas. He had not forgotten that Florence had had confidence enough in the Temples' sawmills to help them through the Depression. Enthusiastically, Arthur told the story of what happened then all over again:

". . .We wanted to expand. It was the first big expansion (outside of the lumber business) that we had ever done. It was going to require six million dollars, which was more money than we had ever talked about spending on anything. I went up to see Mr. Florence about the money. He called in Oran Kite, who was the number two man in Republic Bank, which was a big bank by then. He listened to my story about two-thirds of the way through, and he said, 'Oran, I've got to go to a meeting. But I have heard all I need

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to. These are good people.' (I guess I was about thirty then; it was soon after I went to Diboll.) 'This boy is going to be important to this bank. You let him have the money. You let him have it at the prime rate, fixed or whatever he wants. Let him have it to float with the prime rate, to go up or down. You take care of everything he needs.'

"Then he turned to me and said, 'Arthur, you go make the deals. I'll furnish the money.'

"He was an important part of our success. I mean his attitude, both in Dad's day and in my day. To say that to a kid was certainly not typical of a banker. Now bankers will let you have the money if you can prove that you will pay them back. I mean any of them will. Most of them say, 'Well, we will let you have that.' But then they spend about five minutes impressing you with how good they are being to you, and what they are doing for you. He was such a wise person, though, that he undertook to flatter me, thinking I was important enough to flatter. Now I ***knew*** *he was flattering me at the time. I wasn't fooled about that. For him to go to the* ***trouble*** *to flatter me was the great thing. He really did think that I could do something for the bank. Believe me, I have been breaking my neck ever since to prove that he was right, even though he is dead. That is beside the point except that it did have an important effect on the company. He kept us from going into bankruptcy."*

Temple knew just what to do with the money from Republic Bank. As Wes Ashworth said:

"When Mr. Arthur came and took over, he had the authority to spend the money and do something. Those other fellows ahead of him didn't have the wherewithal or the authority to spend like Mr. Arthur had because when he took over he was the whole chief. He wanted them all to know that, and he was a good one, too. And he is still just as nice as a man can be. . . If you wanted to speak to him. . . all you had to do was to go down and tell them that you wanted to see Mr. Arthur. . . I think from his idea of listening to people out on the works, he has become one of the greatest managers that a sawmill company could have. He took different people's ideas about it and he worked it all up together.

"When Mr. Arthur came, it was a pretty rough place to get around in. But he certainly has improved it. . . good concrete streets and all. He went to improving the town and people said, 'Oh, this is going to be the prettiest broke sawmill town you ever saw.' But I think it has grown every day since."

One of the things Arthur Temple knew he had to change was the paternalism of the old sawmill system. People's lives were surrounded by the company—their homes, the services to those homes, their medical security, the timing of their days, the very currency in which they conducted their business—all were determined and run by Southern Pine.

Southern sawmill workers were isolated, conservative and less educated than their northern counterparts. For the most part they were family men with rural ideals and attitudes. So the paternalistic stance on the part of many sawmill employers was self-perpetuating. As Vernon Jensen quoted in *Lumber and Labor:*

"The lumber manufacturer. . . in the South knows that his workmen are dependent entirely upon the continued operation of the mills for food and shelter. They are 'his people.' He is usually mayor of the mill town, and arbiter of the differences that arise between the men. The relationship between management and plant employees is entirely different from that found in industry generally."

Vernon Burkhalter talked about labor activities which might have affected Southern Pine:

"There has been a lot of union activity. But I think the company was always able to do for its employees as much or more than any union could offer, and I'm not all that anti-union. I have no quarrel with a fellow belonging to the union. I worked for the railroad and I quit because of the union and the company fighting each other. Here's the company who has to survive and the union, which is the people, totally at each others' throats and that's not good atmosphere; it's not worth a damn. And I blame the union and I blame the company.

"I think when unions began they were badly needed. They did a good thing; there were a lot of companies, most of them up east, which took advantage of people.

"But then the union becomes what it accuses the company of. Why can't I do for myself what they are saying they can do for me? Mr. Temple was the salvation of that; he had an open door policy. Oh, God, it would run you nuts sometimes; anybody who wanted to could go in there and see him. That defeats the union. If as an employee on the lower end of the ladder, I can get to the president of the company and have my say and be heard, and have something done about it, even if I'm not 100% right, what the hell do I want with a union?

"We have had every kind. . . AFL-CIO, Woodworkers, the old CIO Woodworkers, the Boilermakers in Lufkin. . . to try us. There have been a bunch of them. They came down here and tried to tell these people one time that they were going

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to pay them the same wages they were paying at the papermill. Anybody that's got two cents' worth of brain knows better than that. There's a difference in margin and a difference in profit and the papermill is different. They never would pay the same wages; it wouldn't make any difference if they had nine unions up there. The guys saw that. These people here are smarter than most people think they are."

Indeed, the relationship between management and labor organizing at the Temple sawmill was summed up in a statement made by Harry Hubbard, president of the Texas AFL-CIO. He said, *"If employers had respect for the rights of workers, there would be no need for labor unions, and this has certainly been the case in Diboll."*

Despite the fact the unions made no headway at Southern Pine, many company people knew the time had come for a change. As Arthur Temple told us, Diboll was *"a company town."*

"It was paternalistic in the extreme. It was a family. And it was almost as if (everybody) were blood kin. . . It was so paternalistic that it wasn't good. For instance, the average rent on a company house was four dollars a month. At one time, prior to that, electricity was free. As a result of this total paternalism, people wouldn't think for themselves. As a result, they didn't have the initiative to do the things I wanted them to do in the mill. I wanted them to develop into the really great people they could be. But they were used to being treated as children.

"So we sold everybody the houses if they wanted them. The ones that didn't, we sold the houses to somebody else. They thought at first that we were trying to take advantage of them. The story got out that we were going to shut down the mill, and we were trying to get rid of the houses. We sold a perfectly good house for a thousand dollars and financed it fully. The purpose was to get them to own their own homes and understand the problems. These people who were paying four dollars a month for rent would come in and want me to spend $500 to add another room because, perhaps, a daughter had come back after a divorce. There was no self-reliance; it carried over into their jobs."

"In those days we had company doctors. . . incidentally, it worked pretty damn well. . . but there were a lot of hypochondriacs, as you can imagine. They would call the doctor out everytime they had a toe ache. . . (so) we discontinued it. We built and sponsored a little clinic and gave it rent-free to a doctor we brought in. We encouraged him to have a private practice. In the meantime, you had health and accident insurance and all those things that took the place of our little socialized medicine scheme."

Beth Denman, Joe Denman's wife, corroborated what Mr. Temple said about the overuse of the company doctor.

"Dr. Dale was there. We paid, and we could go to the doctor everyday if he wanted to see us. Not that we did it, but some people went pretty often."

She also remembered being doctored by the druggist, Bernice Hines:

"I thought the commissary was neat. It was all there together. Everyone was so friendly. Mr. Hines must have been the postmaster at the time, but if anything was wrong with us, he had been the druggist, and we would just call Mr. Hines, 'I'm dying, what can I do?' He would tell us what to get, and he cured most of us."

Diboll still had the flavor of a company town. Mrs. Hogue's boardinghouse, where many workers boarded, was located not far from the commissary on the corner of what is now Hines and Ballenger Streets. The boarding house was torn down in 1986, having been vacant several years.

When Arthur Temple became manager of Southern Pine, Diboll looked much as it had for 40 years. The only paved street was the main highway to Lufkin. There were no gutters, storm sewers or curbs on the roads. Smoke and ashes were everywhere, spewing forth from an incinerator that ran day and night.

Shortly after his arrival, the company began paving the streets. Arrangements were made for an ice plant to provide for the employees' iceboxes. In 1951 some employees were startled to receive notification that the houses they had been renting now belonged to them. Other company housing was made available for purchase at favorable rates. In all, 675 tenant houses were sold or torn down. A new spirit of independence based on pride of ownership in housing was born in Diboll, and the stage was set for the arrival in the 1960's of John F. Kennedy's new Federal Housing Authority.

Meanwhile, Southern Pine Lumber Company was growing and diversifying, and the improved housing brought improved performance among plant workers. Ward Burke said:

"I remember Vernon Burkhalter telling me that after people moved into the better housing, he sensed a better attitude on the job and he knew absenteeism had dropped. . .

"Arthur was trying to diversify both at the mill and in other places because the lumber business has always been a cyclical business. You have your peaks, and then it will go down, and there is nothing you can do about it. Due to the cheapness of gas, we changed from wood-fired

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boilers to gas-fired boilers. . . but now you see we had to go back the other way. When gas got high, we transformed the boilers back to burn wood waste. Love Wood Products used some of the sawdust. The fiberboard plant (which opened in 1958) used chips, and the particleboard plant used a different type of chip. The type of lumber that had earlier been left over to sell to Temple-White could no longer be sold that way. It wasn't profitable and Temple-White had to start getting its raw material from Central and South America.

"(Then) they started the creosote plant to widen the market. In those years we brought in a plant called Tex-Lam that built those arches out of pine which were used for churches, etc. It didn't do well, eventually didn't make it. Then, we merged with Temple Associates, which was another of Arthur's independent construction firms which he had started before he went back to the company as president when his father died. They bought Woodward Furniture Company in Austin. They bought Texas Gypsum Company in El Paso and moved it to Dallas. Then we got the mine in Oklahoma with it. Then we closed the Dallas plant and moved to West Memphis because that was a better market. Then they bought Afco, a specialty company that sells products used in home improvement markets. We bought Chattanooga Container Company. . . there was a constant movement of buying and acquiring or consolidating in an effort to get the best economical mix. . ."

Also during the fifties, a number of technological advances were introduced to the milling enterprises at Diboll, the results of a fact-finding trip to European sawmills in 1952. From Sweden was brought a modern debarker which allowed the development of techniques and markets for pine bark mulch. The outside slabs from the trees, once the bark was removed, could then be used to make chips. Chips could be sold to paper plants like Champion in Pasadena. European techniques in making fiberboard and particleboard were also brought to Diboll and they, in turn, made it possible to use still more chips and sawdust waste from the mill.

As Paul Burka wrote in *Texas Monthly:*

"The company that once used less than half the tree found ways to use almost all of it. The liquid that the fiberboard chips cooked in was routed through a still and the sap extracted to yield wood molasses, used in cattle feed; the remaining water was recycled to cook more chips. At the plywood plant the cores that were left after the logs were peeled became fence posts and construction studs. Not even the fine dust at the particleboard plant was allowed to escape; it was burned to produce the gas that heated the ovens. . ."

Technological change inevitably led, of course, to some reorganization of jobs and personnel. Automatic machinery made some jobs redundant, freeing management to move employees to other sectors of the operation. Management policy, however, made layoffs a last resort, preferring to relocate workers whose jobs became obsolete. This policy was in contrast to that in force in many similar industries in the northern U.S., where massive layoffs in response to automation —especially computerization—were frequent. Vernon Burkhalter spoke about this issue:

"The more you change into technology and mechanization the more support people you have to have. Everytime we mechanized and improved an operation and cut out a bunch of people, we started up something else and had a place to move the people and keep them working."

These changes weren't always easy, Burkhalter explained. He described the change from logging crews to contractors, which brought a lot of people out of the woods and into shift work at the plant. Many of them were not used to a 7 to 5 day, nor to giving up some Saturdays and Sundays, and there was some grumbling. But in general, he said, the necessary changes were accepted with good grace.

"You appreciate old timers even if they don't pitch in. They'll tolerate you making all these changes, and doing things different. You really have an appreciation for people like that, who say, 'Well, I don't think this will work but if you want to try it, we will try it.' Those guys are what brought this place to where it is, for the new breed of experts to run it."

Prominent among this new breed were the technicians of the information revolution. Burkhalter explained:

"We are doing things differently, totally computerizing the sawmill. When I first started, if somebody had even told me that in 1986 you would have the computerization of your sawmill, I would have wondered. But it is out there. Everything used to be done by hand, the block setters sat on the carriage and set the dials that moved the logs. . .all that was done by hand. All the lumber was handled by hand; now it is handled mechanically and electronically in bundles. . .and it's better."

Cora Nash, whose husband worked on the green lumber chain pulling the lumber off before it was dried, echoed Burkhalter's assessment:

"Pulling the lumber off; that's what they used to do a long time ago. Now they're doing the work with a button."

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The major advances in computerization at Diboll have taken place since 1978, and were estimated in 1984 to have boosted production by as much as 30%.

John Turner, lumber operations manager, said that mill updating was essential to keep the operation competitive. It was the same message from Ward Burke and Vernon Burkhalter—essentially there was no decision to make when it came to deciding between technological growth and economic death. Turner said:

"Our costs kept going up, and that hurt us in more ways than one. In this business, the cost of raw materials has increased so drastically that if you don't get every square inch of good lumber you can out of every log, you don't survive. We were faced with some tough decisions. Replacing inefficient equipment was just one of the necessary steps we had to take.

"One of the most useful aspects of the computer is it doesn't get tired. Normal human fatigue increases the possibility of judgment errors and cuts down on speed. The computer can make fast, accurate decisions throughout the shift."

Turner went on to say that the computer doesn't replace people, *"but it sure makes their jobs a lot easier."*

Seeing to it that in the process of modernization, the employees were not forgotten was consistent with the Temple family. In particular, it was consistent with Arthur Temple's desire to ensure the dignity of sawmill people. One of the most important episodes in the evolution of modern Diboll and a modern work force was the revolution in housing. A second phase of the revolution started to make itself felt in the early 1960's when President Kennedy's new Federal Housing Administration message arrived in Diboll.

The message was brought by energetic C.A. (Neal) Pickett, a former mayor of Houston who had been appointed by John Kennedy to head the Houston FHA office.

The idea and the ideals behind the FHA offer of low-cost house financing for qualified families were exactly in line with what Arthur Temple felt; it was the logical extension of what he had begun when he announced the company was *"getting out of the real-estate business"* in favor of employee-owned homes.

The National Housing Act of 1961 had one of its earliest and most successful results in the Walter Allen Housing Project in Diboll, which was completed in 1964. The project was designed for low-income families who lived in substandard rental housing. Section 221-d-3 of the new housing laws contained provisions for *"BMIR"* (Below Market Interest Rate) financing for such people. Pickett said. *"This low interest rate was the first key in the success formula for the Walter Allen Housing Project."* The other keys were a good location and a benevolent sponsor willing to invest in the project. Pickett recalls:

"I knew this project would work the minute Arthur Temple told me, and followed it up in writing, that his company would provide the management know how, and pledge its financial help when needed to tide over any lean months. From there on, it was mainly a matter of working up house plans, developing the economics, and coming up with a sensible value to tie our mortgage into."

Horace Stubblefield, executive assistant to Temple, worked closely with the project. By 1964, 210 new houses had been federally financed in Diboll, and the old company shacks were razed. The rental part of the Walter Allen Housing Project was financed from 1965 with a 40-year loan from the Lumbermen's Investment Corporation. This loan was sold to the government's secondary mortgage agency and carried there at 3%. FHA's mortgage insurance guaranteed the soundness of the loan, making possible its generous terms.

Today there are 42 houses in the project, with 2-, 3-, and 4-bedroom models. They are well-constructed and modern, and rents have been controlled and kept low. In recent years, a step beyond renting has been taken: tenants can pay on a purchase contract, *"spun off from the original mortgage,"* to become home owners.

Like the rest of the low-cost housing made possible in Diboll by collaboration between the company and the federal government, the Walter Allen Project houses are a testimony to the theory that good housing develops good people. Merit Rating advancements among employees who moved into this project were real and substantial. It was a matter of human dignity.

The impact of the FHA, a part of Housing and Urban Development, was to make it possible for many people all over the country to own their own homes. The market rate of interest was 7%. Pickett said:

"President Kennedy declared that his generation was indebted to the generation that had gone before. One of the finest things that has ever been done was to create the agency that made it possible for more people to own their own homes. My generation now, 54% of us, own our own homes because we were able to get a loan at 7%.

"Kennedy said. . . that the sky was the limit. Now, I don't mean that credit was easy. You had to be of good character and the mortgage company had to be sure it was going to get its money.

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(But) I don't know how these people are paying 11, and 13, and 15% now."

Because of the company's sponsorship of the FHA loans in Diboll, a number of other advantages were possible as well. One of these was that the company's substantial secretarial and personnel force could do much of the screening for potential purchasers. Another was that the company not only had knowledge of prospective applicants, but the power to insure that their initiative to work and make payments remained constant.

During the 1950's and 1960's, the company was involved in another significant housing action in Diboll. This was the clearing up of titles within the city in order to facilitate low-cost loans. Ward Burke, who acted as attorney for the company and later for the City of Diboll when it incorporated in 1962, handled the legal details which made getting low-cost loans possible. A problem came up when it was discovered that a restriction had been placed on some of the land. The Copes heirs who sold the land had honored their Presbyterian ancestors by stipulating that no liquor could be sold on this land. This clause stated: *"It is further part of the consideration of this conveyance that the sale of intoxicating liquors shall not be carried on or permitted on said premises; and in the case of violation of the consideration the premises shall revert to the grantors herein or their heirs."*

Mr. Burke stated that it was not the intention of the company to promote liquor sales there, but in order to facilitate the needed loans, all restrictions had to be removed.

"We got abstracts on it. I did all the examination and determined which tracts were restricted and which were not. We then got the complete history down to the date of the Diboll family. Then, we prepared documents releasing these restrictions and explained to them why. It wasn't that we intended to sell liquor. It's a dry county anyhow. But it was going to absolutely stymie progress in Diboll. You couldn't do anything with that land; the people just wouldn't take the chance. Certainly no loan institution is going to loan you money with that kind of restriction.

"So I circulated (a release) and all the family signed it. . . for the entire tract of land. We tried to open up areas where people would buy their homes."

Other improvements besides those to housing were made to the physical appearance of Diboll in the 1950's and 1960's. Joe and Beth Denman remember how much the state stock law of the late '50s improved the quality of life. Joe said:

"We had this same (Highway) 59—two lanes when I first moved to Diboll. I lived in the Farley addition, and Beth and I decided to build a house in Diboll in the early '50s. It was the first that was not red or white. Beth liked turquoise. . . so people referred to that little funny painted house down in the Farley Addition. Beth and I had a garden beside our house, and I remember one night Beth woke me, and there was a hog in our garden. . . cows and stock ran free, even then when the highway was coming through in the early '50's."

DeWitt Wilkerson, who lives on Farm Road 1818, connected the enactment of stock laws to the deaths of animals on the faster, new highways being constructed.

"Lots of people owned their cows. . . pretty milk cows, and the cows would go back to Diboll for their feed every night. (But) it got to where with all these paved roads so many of them got killed, so people quit owning them. I've had as high as three yearlings killed at a time by a truck on the old highway. That made us go to fencing and we took them off of the outside range."

With the stock laws and the removal of wandering stock from the town, much of the dilapidated fencing surrounding many of the houses was torn down. The town's appearance was further improved with paved streets, one of which was Loop 210, the first concrete street in Diboll.

The company also began a town beautification project, which involved weed removal and filling in open ditches. This was actually a continuation of a company activity which had been going on for a long time. Vernon Burkhalter was part of a crew of boys who did summer work of this sort during the war years when adult male labor was scarce.

"Every summer the boys who really tried could work by cutting weeds in the alleys. You had fences around all the houses and you had alleys where you could get through. People would pick up trash; they had a trash man who picked up trash, but everybody had a fence around their garden and around their house and you had to cut all these weeds out of the ditches and out of the alleys. Diboll was a clean town.

"One summer, we worked pouring old burnt lube oil in all the ditches to kill the mosquitoes. We had a whole crew of school boys doing that. Then the war came along and a lot of the men were gone. One summer we spent the entire summer painting as many houses as we could paint. We worked for Beeder Glass and W.W. Jackson. Mr. Jackson was over the dwellings, as they called them, because the company owned all the houses. Beeder Glass was paint foreman. In one crew there was myself, Harold Brashear and

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Buck Weisinger. That's the main two I remember. We spent the whole summer painting houses. We also painted Mr. Snelson's prize bird dog with green paint. . ."

Further improvements also made at company expense in the 1950's, included a 24-hour-a-day employees' ambulance service, an air-conditioned medical clinic for employees, a new fire station and fire-fighting equipment, and sewer pipe to drain the former open ditches. One of the most far-reaching changes, however, was a planned shopping center, which was intended to bring in outside merchants to offer Diboll citizens an alternative to the old commissary. The commissary was discontinued in 1953, and the company worked actively to encourage the arrival of new businessmen.

Sherod Powell, a store owner, pointed out that local businesses had always been encouraged.

"It is hard for an outsider, especially a manufacturer, to come in and set up. But if a person is looking for a place to live and be treated right, I don't think he could find a better place. We have enjoyed it and people have been good to us.

"We didn't have any competition from the commissary. Mr. Drew, the manager, never gave us any trouble. He always treated us nice when we met him and talked with him. Our customers were made up of the majority of people who worked around the box factory and the handle factory. We had quite a few people from Southern Pine to trade with us, along with the country people."

Lottie Temple, who came to Diboll as a secretary in 1948 and married Arthur Temple in 1963, remembered how the transition was made from company-owned to privately-owned businesses in Diboll:

"Once (the employees) got to handling their own affairs, it was a totally different town. People began to want to put in businesses. Until that time there were practically no businesses except the ones the company owned. Nobody felt that Diboll was going to be a thriving, growing little town. Arthur started encouraging other small industries to come in, mainly through the Chamber of Commerce.

"One of the first things Arthur wanted to do was get a bank in the town. People couldn't actually do banking because a lot of them didn't have transportation. So he organized a bank in the early '50's. And I remember the state passed a law that to drive a car you had to have liability insurance, but there was no insurance agency in Diboll. So Arthur encouraged me to go get an insurance license, which I did, and I started writing insurance.

"I (also) ran the credit union. There was a lot of excitement and it spilled over, you know, into the surrounding towns, and people began to realize Diboll was really a little town, not a camp. People realized the company did not want to run their business. They were eager to establish businesses, management soon built a shopping center. . ."

The shopping center was Joe Denman's first project—the one which put him, as an A&M architecture graduate, on the payroll of SPLCo. He remembers doing the drafting work for the shopping center during the sweltering summer of 1950, working in the engineering department above the old commissary, which at that time was still in operation.

"One of the first times I kind of began to appreciate the things that happened through Arthur was when he called me one day to come over to his office. I said, 'I'll be there as soon as I can get my clothes on.' It didn't dawn on him until I walked in, and he said, 'What's this business about you having to put your clothes on?' I said, 'Well, it's so damn hot over there every morning when I come to work, I get in my shorts. I draft in my shorts. All I've got is a ceiling fan.' He said, 'Well, go buy a damn air-conditioning unit.' So that's the way I got my first air-conditioning unit."

Joe Denman was a member of the so-called *"Class of 1950"* of young engineers and other experts brought to Diboll at the start of its technological revolution. The "class" also included Bob Musslewhite, John Booker and Horace Stubblefield.

Today, Joe Denman is the president of Temple-Eastex, Southern Pine's successor, and sits at a desk in one of the loveliest office suites in East Texas. His enthusiasm for Arthur Temple and the way he has done things through the years has not diminished since the summer of 1950.

One of the themes Denman stressed was the creative management that characterized Temple's business style.

"Every person is reviewed at least once a year in relation to their compensation. Now, if they do not receive an increase on that basis they are reviewed again six months later. We make a lot of effort to be sure that our people are paid equal to or better than our competitors."

Another feature of management which has been important for the Temple companies is the system of replacement lists. Joe Denman explained that:

"Everybody has an opportunity to do better. Even today, before we go outside, we make sure we don't have someone in the organization. We

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have a program where everyone in the company determines if something happens to him, who would take his place. As part of the program, they are expected to have that person trained to take his place. Once a year, I ask each of our foremen and superintendent to update their replacement lists. Harold Maxwell, who is group vice president now over solid wood products, goes back to when he was a salesman. He was determined by Henry Holubec that, if anything happened to Henry or if he was to move up, Harold would move up. It's amazing how it has worked out in so many cases."

A third ingredient in creative management in Diboll has been the inclusion of employee opinion and input to increase the free flow of useful information. Arthur Temple discussed this aspect of company policy:

"One of the hardest things to do in an organization is to sincerely encourage people to express themselves. The tendency was to wait and see how I felt about something and then they would usually agree...and in some cases disagree. The technique I used in those (Saturday planning) meetings was to present a problem, or maybe someone else would present it. I would deliberately argue the other side of the thing to encourage people to take the other viewpoint. Then we would finally get down to the point where people would really express what they thought.

"(So) we had not only freedom of expression, but we had a practice of bringing in additional people...people who wouldn't ordinarily be included in those meetings...to try to get some more viewpoints. It wasn't just the officers of the company who attended. Frequently we would go pretty far down into the operations in order to get fresh viewpoints. We made a very big effort to get ideas coming up from the bottom...from people who were actually handling lumber and stacking lumber...because everybody out there secretly knew some things we could do better.

"The trick was to get them to feel it is important to contribute their ideas. Once you get it started—the process of bringing ideas up from the bottom—it feeds on itself and flows. Let's say a lumber stacker, if he has an idea of something that would improve the operation, even if it didn't involve his particular job, he's generally afraid that he will look ridiculous if he suggests it. The important thing is to take the good ideas and let them know you appreciate it, and at the same time don't flatter people who bring up bad ideas because they can see the insincerity of that."

Joe Denman remembers the Saturday sessions in Arthur Temple's office:

"I always felt I could tell him the way I felt. Lottie used to tell us we were like Mr. Dithers and Dagwood. We'd get down on the floor and fight, but when we were through, we always pulled together."

Candid airing of ideas extended to an attempt the Temple management made to show employees they were welcome to ask questions. Arthur Temple said:

"We made a big thing of saying 'We have no secrets.' We tried to talk up the fact that we don't have any big shots in this company and nobody has the right to hide behind his position. It worked very well for us."

These management techniques contributed to a creative use of manpower and talent. Diboll is still benefiting directly from this open-ended managerial style, which included contributions from everyone involved. Joe Denman said:

"I think there was something instilled, not only in the community, but probably everyone involved at that time. There was the excitement of everyone realizing that there is something new being created. There was the enthusiasm that we are going to be the best. And we were recognized. My friends, growing up in Lufkin, today say, 'You know, it's just amazing what you people do in Diboll. You get it together some way.'"

But not all of Lufkin, 10 miles north of Diboll, stood in admiration of what was happening in this upstart little neighbor town. Southern Pine's traditional foe there, Ernest Kurth of the Angelina County Lumber Company, opposed Arthur Temple in many public arenas. There was opposition to Temple's participation in the FHA loan program for Diboll housing. Some criticized the company for using public money for its own benefit. The opposition in Lufkin set the stage for a great deal of public criticism.

In 1970 *The Dallas Morning News* picked up on a story Paul Durham had published in *The Free Press* the previous year, which stated *"Long harried by a lack of housing for its growing number of industrial workers, Diboll appears now to have broken the ice in doing something about the housing shortage...When the 90 elderly units of the Fair Acres Housing Unit are completed in 1971, Diboll will have a total of 404 public housing units—a fantastic total for a city of 3500 population."*

Indeed, by that time, federal funds in excess of $4 million had come into Diboll through the housing program. The *News* article commented that *"Since Diboll is a 'company town,' the flow of cash from Washington has benefited Temple Industries financially,"* and concluded that some observers regarded *"the federal grants and loans*

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as an indirect government subsidy for an industrial giant."

Many other observers, however, saw Diboll's *"magic road to millions in U.S. funds"* (as the *News* put it) as a progressive marriage of citizens and industry in a common endeavor. Federal funds not only built housing and provided low-cost loans in Diboll, but were responsible as well for a park and recreation center with a lighted baseball field, a nine-golf course with underground sprinklers, recreational lakes and other amenities. These projects were funded through the Deep East Texas Development Council, which covered the 13 counties where Temple had timber holdings. Neal Pickett left his FHA post to become director of the DETDC, and Temple Industries provided an office, utilities and transportation.

But the outside criticisms did not slow progress in Diboll. So sure were Diboll residents that they were doing the right thing, that criticism rolled right off their backs.

The logo of *The Free Press*, St. George challenging the dragon, was intended to portray the "good fight" being fought by a small new industry against the "dragon" of large entrenched lumber interest in the area. Implicitly, it underscored the humanitarian possibilities and opposed profit for profit's sake, as well. St George as a Christian symbol, stood well for the spirit of Temple Industries and Diboll. It drew attention to the fact that business can build an empire but it can also build an independent community. In the words of a recent Temple-Eastex advertisement, *"America's most renewable resource is people. We want to be a good neighbor."*

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Chapter X

"The Good Old Times Are Now"

The money which came through the Federal Housing Authority and the Deep East Texas Development Council ushered in the contemporary era for Diboll. In important ways, the town quickly became part of the twentieth century after these grants—making up for decades of slow progress. E.H. Bush, school superintendent and coach during the 1930's, said, in 1984, *"Well, it is a modern town now. I used to tell the kids when I was down there, one of these days you will see houses up and down here. And it will be a modern town."*

Starting in the 1950's, many improvements were made, one after another. Besides housing, beautification, a shopping center, paved streets and banking and insurance services, Diboll saw radical school improvements in this decade. Superintendent Wilbur Pate built a new high school and elementary school. Robert Ramsey, the high school principal, put together a football field. Ramsey, who also coached and taught five classes, described the school program at Diboll in the early 1950's:

"We had good schools but we weren't like we are today. We didn't have the high school course offerings we have today. We had the basic courses. . . English, science and math. We had typing and shorthand, history, vocational ag and homemaking. That was just about all the course offerings we had. We had 18 credits required for graduation.

"But the kids who went to our school and went on to college did quite well. I remember one or two who were the highest ranking students.

"I think it is primarily the teachers. It is the teaching staff. It doesn't matter what kind of principal or superintendent you have, as long as you have good teachers.

"It was in 1952 when Diboll voters voted to go independent (from being a common school district with the whole county). Then we were responsible to the state for the conduct of our school. Our tax evaluation in Diboll then was about three million dollars. Today it must be fifty million. I know one thing, we didn't have any money back then. Mr. Pate was hard worker; I think he ran a good school with the amount of money he had. He would have implemented more programs for our kids, (but) he just didn't have the money.

"There was a ditch which ran through the campus where the elementary school is now. It was an open sewage ditch that ran right by my office. Before we left that campus, J.D. Winder, who was the big engineer here, built a concrete culvert all the way across that campus and we were able to cover that ditch up. That was about '50 or '51."

Mr. Ramsey remembered many changes that occurred in Diboll in the decade of the '50's. When he first came to look at the town in 1946, he didn't want to work in such a place. *"It was a spitting image of a sawmill town. . . it looked terrible to me. The school was composed of a bunch of build-*

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ings of wood that were already looking very old. All the buildings were steam heated. You had overhead pipes running from one building to another.

"Most people had washhouses outside in the back yard. The water was terrible. It stunk like you could hardly stand it. We would go to Lufkin to get water to make our coffee."

During the first few years the Ramseys lived in Diboll, however, many of these problems were eliminated. One big problem—the lack of an alternative route through town besides the overcrowded main highway—was solved early:

"Shortly after we came, I believe in '50 or '51, the loop was built around Diboll by the Highway Department. The loop turned at the Gulf Station and went up close to the railroad track, and then came back into the highway. That was the first paved street other than the old Diboll Highway, which came through what is now Hendrix Street. It came by the elementary school. That was the main highway to Houston."

Those years also saw the conversion of the old commissary building into company offices. The original commissary, built in 1894, was replaced by the present building in 1923. The commissary was closed in 1953, and the company offices were in the building until 1979 when a new corporate office building was constructed. The years also saw the organization of Little League and the baseball park, the construction of a new sewer system and an improved water system, the introduction of dial telephones, and the founding of KSPL Radio Station. Bob Bowman remembered some of the improvements made to town facilities in the '50's. He described them from the perspective of the young man he was at that time:

"Not far from the Timberland and the Tonk, near what is now the site of Diboll's bank, the company had built a large baseball field for use by Dibollians. Constructed entirely of lumber milled in Diboll, Miller Park was one of the grandest baseball parks I had ever seen and it was a favorite hangout on Sunday afternoons when the Diboll Millers, a semiprofessional team, played teams from Lufkin, Huntington, Camden and other nearby towns. Every young boy in Diboll wanted to sit inside the announcer's booth, along with the scorekeeper and operator of the public address system, and he would faint with joy when permitted to utter a single word on the PA system.

"Miller Park also afforded me my first opportunity to meet a real live sportswriter, a young man named Bill Morgan, who often came from Lufkin to cover the Millers' games for the Lufkin Daily News. Morgan, always nattily dressed in brown sportscoats and sportshirts, became one of my early idols because of his lively writing. He and Paul Durham, who later hired me to write sports for the ***Diboll News Bulletin,*** *were largely responsible for my writing career.*

"Another landmark I remember was the old Scouthouse, a two-story, fort-like log structure built by Diboll's men as a meeting place for the local Boy Scouts. The Scouthouse, which was located where Temple-Inland's corporate offices now stand, may have been the finest scouthouse in East Texas. It had a large stone fireplace, a museum for Scout exhibits, a number of individual meeting rooms upstairs, a large main room, offices for Scoutmasters, equipment rooms, and even a secret passageway which permitted you to slip behind a false wall and sneak out of the building through the floor.

"Our Scout troops frequently pitched tents around the Scouthouse, where we worked on outdoor skills and wandered through the woods at night, generally becoming a nuisance to our Scoutmasters. My first awareness of many of Lufkin's leaders today, including friends George Henderson, Jr., and Claude Smithhart, were through Scouting events at the loghouse.

"One night, as we pitched a tent near the Scouthouse, one of the poles fell on me and several other Scouts, inflicting a gash in my forehead. My Scoutmaster, Billy Jordan, plopped me on the handlebars of his bicycle and furiously pedaled us to see old Dr. Dale. He sewed up the wound with a few quick stitches and sent me back to the campground, where I spent the rest of the outing enjoying my role as "the fallen hero." For weeks, I kept combing my hair backward so everybody could see the scar I had sustained in the cause of Scouting.

"While Scouting was one of the major youth activities in Diboll, many of us also formed neighborhood clubs, which did absolutely nothing except raise cain, raid other clubs, agitate the neighbors, and cause our parents general grief.

"Behind our brown house, there stood an old washhouse, which our family rarely used, so my parents permitted me to turn the building into a clubhouse. Inside it, my friends and I stored our prize possessions, including a pair of iron German helmets brought home from World War II by an uncle; a cache of comic books; homemade furniture, lanterns, and the like.

"We also stored inside the washhouse a hefty supply of rubber guns, which were made by fashioning a pistol or rifle from pieces of wood and attaching a clothespin to the area where the hammer would have been. To arm the gun, we would stretch a short piece of rubber from the

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end of the barrel to the clothespins. When the clothespin was depressed, the rubber would fire itself toward our enemies, usually members of rival clubs, and hopefully inflict a painful sting or blister.

"Rubber gun battles raged all around our neighborhood, and the mark of a successful rubber gun protagonist was someone who had a callused thumb and a minimum number of blisters on his body.

"The rubber for our guns came largely from strips of rubber discarded from the handle factory in Diboll. The strips, which had several holes down the middle, were used at the factory to strip away paint from handles and, because they were inflammable, they made great bonfires, although they generated a stench that infuriated the neighbors.

"On one occasion, one of my best friends, Harvey Wilson, Jr. and I made several cots by stretching the handle factory's rubber strips across a platform of two-by-fours, creating a webbing of rubber. One night, as Harvey Junior slept on one of the homemade cots, one of the strips snapped, blistering the southernmost part of his body. It was the first time I knew that Harvey Junior could cuss.

"As a boy, I had several favorite places in Diboll, one of which was the cavernous repair shop where my father and his co-workers repaired trucks, steam locomotives, and other machinery for the company. Watching the big locomotives being pulled into the shop for repairs was a special treat, and I always enjoyed going to the shop, especially during the winter when the men would gather around a large stove or the blacksmith forge, spinning stories about the woods, hunting and fishing.

"It wasn't until the early fifties when the company built the Village Shopping Center, complete with a new department store and drugstore, that the old commissary system in Diboll began to fade from our lives and language.

"During my last year in the Diboll schools, we moved into the new high school building across the highway from my parents' house. The building was enormously different from the old steam-heated buildings. There was excitement and enthusiasm among the teachers and students, and we felt that something special had happened."

Another improvement added to the town in the decade of the 1950's was a restaurant, the Pine Bough (1952-1977), put in by the company and run by Mrs. Byrd Davis. Paul Durham wrote a piece in the May 15, 1986, *Free Press*, called *'Pine Bough's Importance,'* and here are some excerpts from it:

"The Pine Bough played a integral role in the history of our town. For many years it was THE meeting place in Diboll. Everybody ate there, and often. Everybody went for coffee there, and often.

"What made the Pine Bough so great was that it allowed and prompted an homogenous society. There were no societal ladders. Executive mingled with workers, especially prior to Diboll Day when those great weekly planning sessions were held. Actually, they were more like bull sessions, with everybody having a great time. There was no trouble getting people to attend those meetings, because it was an opportunity to eat chicken and dumplings and other fine food.

"Many a deal was cut there over coffee. People you might have trouble getting on the telephone would show up, and it was common for business people to conduct some pretty important matters over coffee.

"...Clubs and groups automatically met at the Pine Bough and a good many Lufkin organizations came down here for their meetings. In fact, it was difficult to get in the place on Sunday because of all the Lufkin people who drove down here for lunch. We've seen the line backed up for 300 feet outside the door on Sunday.

"In addition to the food, people liked the Pine Bough for its relaxed atmosphere, friendly help, and most of all, Byrd Davis. People loved her and she loved people. She remembered names and made folks feel at home. People from all over the state, and other states, timed their trips so they could stop there to eat.

"Nobody ever understood how Byrd could stand the strain. She arrived at the restaurant about a quarter to six in the morning and stayed there usually until about 9:30 that night. The only break was when she got her hair fixed, or when she took a short nap after the lunch crowd cleared out.

"...Apparently nobody was able to make it profitable after Byrd left and Temple-Eastex finally got out of the restaurant business.

"That was a sad day for Diboll. Even with Byrd gone, the restaurant remained a gathering place. We don't blame the company for getting out, but we knew at the time it meant the death of a fine restaurant and an important piece of Diboll history.

"In my mind, Byrd Davis dying and the Pine Bough closing meant the end of an era in which Diboll people worked in closer harmony than they had before or since that time."

In the 1960's, Mexican-Americans from the Texas Valley were brought in to ease the labor shortage in Diboll, and many families have stayed. Rebecca Ordaz, whose family arrived in 1969

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when she was 14, is now a teachers' aide in the Diboll Independent School District. She remembered that her mother liked Diboll from the beginning:

"When we moved to Diboll, there was only the drugstore, the Village and Baskins. It was where Brookshire Brothers is now. There was a Dairy Creme; it was not a Dairy Queen. There was the theater. And that's about it, except for Pavlic's which was owned and managed by Carl Pavlic. There was a little grocery store across the track. And Mr. Lea had a store, the Jiffy Mart where State Farm Insurance and Pouland's are. Before Perry's came, it was Brookshire's, and before Brookshire's it was Piggly Wiggly. Dick's Pharmacy and the Pine Bough were in that area, too.

"There was no Tinsley's; there was no Dairy Queen; there was no Western Auto, and City Hall was where the police department was. There was no Jiffy Mart, no Okay, and, of course, Max-Pac, the Sonic and car wash. So, it is growing.

"It was a small city, a small town and very quiet, nothing like South Texas. . .When we first came the only people I can remember living here were the Martinezes, Mirandas and Guerreros, maybe altogether 10. When we came there were a couple of families who came with us; they were named Morales. When Temple sent one of these big trailers to move us, he told us they were building a government project here. He said we would have a house as soon as we got here. So we moved into the housing authority on Avalon St. which were just being built. In fact, the ones across from South First were not even finished at that time."

Within a few years, the Ordaz family had spread into other homes all over town. The areas where they bought their own homes were Highway 59 near Dr. Cathcart's office, Dennis Street, and the Ryan Chapel area. Rebecca remembered adjusting to the Diboll schools and her new friends quickly, despite an initial period of loneliness. Nevertheless, she had strong feelings about about how Mexcan-Americans were perceived, not as Americans but as Mexicans:

"Not just in Diboll, (but) in the East Texas area. . . if a Mexican-American were to ask for a job, like me. . . they would see me as a Mexican . . . but I'm an American."

Despite problems of how they are perceived, there are today, according to Vernon Burkhalter, about a quarter of the original 25 Mexican-American families left in Diboll.

"They bought homes, they live here, their kids go to school here, and some of their children are working here. Some of their grandchildren are working here. The younger members of these families speak perfect English along with the Spanish they speak with their parents and grandparents at home."

In general, there has been a feeling that Diboll provided the kind of atmosphere which kept a separate Mexican community from coalescing. As Burkhalter said:

"Industries around us wanted them to come in and work and get out of sight. But the difference with us, we didn't want somebody to come up here, just live out here in the woods and come to work. If you are going to come to Diboll, we want your kids to go to school and we want you to buy homes. We want you to put your roots down and we want you to stay there. We told them that. You've got to be part of the town. Don't come up here and be a separate Mexican community that has nothing to do with the whole town; we're not going to create a little barrio like they've got in Los Angeles. You've got to be part of the town of Diboll.

"It worked here; that first group did fit in. They did a good job of fitting in. But we didn't know all the others were going to flood this place. They said, 'What a wonderful place to go to. You're treated equal and decent, let's go up there and get a job.'"

Diboll's appearance in the 1960's and 1970's was greatly affected by what is perhaps the proudest moment in its history—its incorporation as a city. This event took place in 1962, and Clyde Thompson became Diboll's first mayor. An earlier attempt at incorporation, in the late '40s, had failed: Diboll's voters had not yet been ready to take the step away from dependence on the company. Ward Burke said:

"People didn't want a city then. They didn't want to face paying taxes and running a city government, owning their own utilities; they would rather the company do it. They were used to it."

But by 1962, with the population over 2500, the winds of change were blowing hard enough to get Southern Pine out of the city-running business. The members of the first city council were Calvin Lawrence, Nolan B. Hall, Doyne Rich, Dr. E.L. Hoot, and Charles Hanks, In 1964 Wil Cockrell became the first city manager. Clyde Thompson, who was mayor until 1975, said that when he became mayor he already had plans for improving the town.

"I had great ambitions, among these being free delivery of mail, providing paved streets to all our city, abolishing all substandard housing and providing standard housing and living conditions for all, especially in the new housing growth. (Also a) modern sewage treatment plant with

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adequate capacity for the present and future needs, extension of water lines and sewage lines to all citizens, adequate fire and police departments, municipal library, city hall and police station, improvement of drainage systems, a municipal park and golf course, a municipal tennis court. I am happy to say that all of these have been accomplished."

Former City Manager James Dover supplied information on citizen participation in the all-important city budget:

"We have a public hearing on our budget prior to it being installed for the coming fiscal year. Time is then set aside whereby the citizens from the town can come in and review the budget and ask questions before it is finally adopted. So I feel in this way most of the problems are corrected before they become finalized. The people ask several questions and I think this is good. Most places you find the people rarely voice themselves like this. They do criticize the way their town is run, but they never take time to go down to city hall and voice these opinions.

"Diboll is above average when it comes to comparing with the average population of another town our size. Temple Industries is a large contributor to the difference in this factor. Financially, the City of Diboll is very sound. The only areas that I can see for improvement would be the downtown section. Maybe a little more housing. But financially the city is in very good shape."

Sherod Powell, once a storekeeper, became the Diboll city judge in 1970. He talked about his duties and about Diboll:

"The city judge has the responsibility on everything that the police make a complaint against. . . on speeding tickets, running stop signs, bumper dumping or any such like, or fighting and having trouble. There are always complaints and you have to process that complaint to the best of your ability.

"We have court every seven weeks. If you get a ticket, there has to be something done with that ticket. It has to be processed one way or another within 60 days or it runs out. So the people who don't want to pay their fines have to come to court at least within seven weeks. We pick jurors just like the county or the state. We take the names of the people who live here in Diboll, they have to be in the city limits, put them in a bowl, shake them up and draw out a name and whatever name we get goes on that list for three years, as long as he lives in the city limits.

"I never had any real trouble. I have had a few nasty people but, as a rule, when people come to the courtroom, they are very cooperative."

Powell felt incorporation of the city has helped Diboll.

"Oh, it has made the city. It would be a terrible place to live without it."

Despite the move away from a "feudal" relationship with Temple's company, which incorporation represented, the infrastructure of the new city government was for some time still closely tied to Southern Pine. Ward Burke, who worked as an attorney not only for the company but for the cities of Diboll and Pineland, said:

"After the city was organized, we kept all the city records in our legal department. We were the city officers."

In 1964, Mayor Thompson told the City Council that the company had *"a new policy for use of their employees in city maintenance work"* and would be charging the city for time plus overhead.

The City Council Minutes Book at City Hall shows that for the first few years of Diboll's existence as a city, council meetings were held at the Directors Room, Southern Pine Lumber Company and at the Temple Memorial Library. The first meeting held at the new City Hall was in 1967.

After the city was incorporated in 1962, city offices were housed during the formative years at the SPLCo offices. The first city offices, which opened in 1964, were located on Loop 210 or Hines Street, west of Dick's Pharmacy, next to Pop's Barbershop, which was owned by A.J. Popham. The offices were in a small two-room, white frame building with a porch on the front. The city operated in this location until October, 1964, when the building was moved to its new location at 303 Hendrix where Security Finance is now located. For some time city meetings were held at the Temple Memorial Library meeting room after the library opened in 1964.

In 1964, Wil Cockrell was hired as the city administrator and assumed all the duties of the city, including city secretary duties. He signed all the city bonds, took minutes at the City Council Meetings, etc.

The city administrator plan was different from a city manager type of government. A manager/council type of government had to be introduced into law by ordinance passed by city council. Cockrell asked the council to pass this type of ordinance in 1967. At this time, his title was changed to city manager and Geneva Sides Ard was appointed the new city secretary.

Services of the city at its beginning in February, 1964, included water at a $2.00 minimum charge for 3,000 gallons of water and sewer at a

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rate of $1.50 per month. In August, 1964, garbage pickup was added at $1.50 per month.

For the first year (1964), there was only one main employee beside the administrator. Doyle Glass was responsible for the water/sewer operations of the city. If the paved streets needed any maintenance, he would patch those as well. In August, two people were hired to pick up garbage: George Carrell and T.W. Worthy.

H.E. Whitman, who worked at the fiberboard plant, would read water meters after work and on weekends. After he left, Buck Mitchell was hired to read meters and do other maintenance work as needed.

Geneva Sides Ard, longtime secretary for the city, supplied the following information on city activities in the early days of incorporation.

"In 1965, under the leadership of Mayor Clyde Thompson and Manager Wil Cockrell, a $1,363,000 bond issue was passed. At this time the streets were not paved in most residential areas and the city was furnishing water from one water well that had been purchased from Southern Pine. Within the next two years about 85% of the streets were paved, a second water well drilled and an overhead and ground storage tank erected, giving a million gallon storage capacity.

"Also, by this time 174 units of public housing had been completed. Many houses with no indoor plumbing and one cold water faucet were eliminated. The city was in a state of fast growth. Of course, all of this tremendous change did not come without its problems and hard work. We all felt at the time that it would not have moved as smoothly as it did without Mr. Thompson, Wil Cockrell and the first city council composed of Charles Hanks, Dr. E.L. Hoot, Doyne (Pop) Rich, Calvin Lawrence and Nolan Hall. These men were dedicated and had strong convictions about the right and wrong way to get things done. Dr. Hoot resigned before his first term was completed, to practice in another city, and Dr. Frank Eddins was appointed to this position. He also was an integral part of the city's beginnings.

"In 1966, a new city hall was built at a cost of $77,000, and it was quite a complex for its time. It housed the city's first firetruck, firemen's quarters, and police department. Both of these departments were organized under the direction of Wil Cockrell.

"In 1967, Manager Wil Cockrell resigned and Alton B. Shaw was employed as the second city manager. Mr. Shaw had been employed as public works director for the city since 1965. Before that he was with the engineering firm responsible for all the 'new designs' the city had. This made him especially valuable to the operations of the city.

"During these formative years, the city sent out the first regular water and sewer bills and soon added garbage collection and taxes. Even with all the vast improvements, however, taxes only accounted for about 25% of the revenue brought in. City services were expected to pay their way.

"Before the end of Alton Shaw's tenure, extensive work was done to determine if Diboll was ready for the one percent sales tax. Response was favorable and so a referendum was called. Sales tax became a part of business on January 1, 1970. Since then it has been a major source of revenue for the city.

"I guess what I remember most about the ***early*** *days of city government is the hustle and bustle and all the important projects that were going on all the time. There was never a dull moment and always something new to look forward to. Oh yes, citizens resisted a lot of the change but in the first five years of city government seeing a small sawmill town turn into an efficiently-run business made them know it was here to stay. Had it not been for the cooperation and generosity of the company and Mr. Temple, the city could not have moved as swiftly nor boasted the accomplishments that it has.*

"The "oldtimers" in that first year or two would meet at the post office every morning to "decide" what needed to be done over at city hall. Few of them recognized Manager Wil Cockrell on sight, so he had an inside track on what to expect by just listening while he was picking up the mail every morning. One particular morning two old gents were discussing what a mess everything was in because Diboll was trying to be a city. One remarked to the other, 'I believe the best thing would be to get that girl (which was me) out of there and blow the whole thing up.' Mr. Cockrell, who was busy at the box all this time, turned and replied, 'I believe you're right,' and then quickly exited the post office. We laughed at that remark later, but at the time wondered if maybe that really could have happened!

"Surely, the city has come a long way, starting its first office in a small two-room frame building which operated a five-grate gas heater in winter and a window-unit air conditioner in the summer. We swept our own floors, brought our water from home, if we had any, and never thought about being late or leaving early.

"Since 1964, the city has employed six managers: Wil Cockrell, Alton Shaw, James Dover, Jeff Holberg, Terry Roberts, and Vernon Cupit. Oscar Crawford and Herman Brown have been

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interim managers. The city now operates a police department 24 hours a day and has one of the best volunteer fire departments in the state with trained paramedics and modern equipment. There are now four water wells in operation along with overhead and ground storage facilities."

Much can be said about the contribution of those early leaders who had not only a vision but the knowledge and perserverance to see those visions become a reality.

When the city was discussing the erection of an elevated water storage tank in 1964, *"Mayor Thompson. . . told the Council the necessary construction would cost approximately $21,000 more than the $225,000 bond issue but that he and Mr. Cockrell (the City Manager) had talked to Mr. Temple and other officials of Southern Pine Lumber Company and they had given their approval to go ahead with the engineer's recommendations."* This kind of thing was typical occurrence in the early days of Diboll as a city. Few others of its size are lucky enough to have such resources to fall back on. Not surprisingly, the city reciprocated the kindness. In 1965 Joe Denman, representing the Southern Pine plywood plant, requested and got a special water rate for the plant.

Nevertheless, the company, and especially Arthur Temple were delighted to relinquish control of city business as it gradually became possible to do so. Ward Burke remembered that Temple had always felt the paternalism of the earlier situation was:

". . . bad for both business and the people. Some people thought it was a bad idea. They said, 'Arthur, if these people form a city and pass tax laws, you don't know who is going to be on the city commission. They might levy heavy taxes on the businesses.' His position was—'Well, the taxes are going to be equal and uniform. If they make taxes high on values that they are obligated to do under the law, the rates are the same on a house as they are on our mill.' He said, 'We can't complain, but I dont believe people are going to put a business out of business that is supporting the town and the people.' He was willing to take that risk."

It turned out to be worth the risk. The mutual agreeable relationship which had always characterized Diboll and its parent company prospered further under the new arrangement. Southern Pine Lumber Company, and the successive business entities it has since become through changes and mergers, has benefited from the new spirit of independence in Diboll. The town has seen measureless benefit from having established and maintained a modern, opportunistic distance from its powerful partner.

The business advances seen by the company since the town incorporated have been staggering in scope. When Temple Industries was created from Southern Pine Lumber Company, the company adopted the T-wheel logo. Jack Sweeny said that the logo was eagerly adopted because it not only had *"T's"* in a wheel, but also *trees*—something the artist had not even realized when he was drawing it. By the time, Temple Industries included construction operations, mortgage banking and real estate along with its timber and wood products.

A major but brief setback to the company occurred in January of 1968 when the sawmill at Diboll burned. The destruction was tremendous, but as Joe Denman said, the outpouring of help from both within the Diboll community and from the surrounding countryside enabled the industry to stay alive and to move into a new mill by September of the same year.

"I got to the sawmill and the fire was already of some magnitude in 20 degree weather and wind blowing like hell. Immediately, I recognized that we had a very serious problem, possibly losing the whole operation. So I went directly to the City Hall and asked them to call Lufkin and Corrigan to help us. Everyone in the community was out there helping fight that fire. We almost lost the whole operation that day. Fortunately, all we lost was the sawmill. That evening I was out at the sawmill and an old black man came up and said, 'Mr. Joe, do I still have a job?' I said, 'You be at work in the morning.' We met that night and I asked Paul Durham if he would be sure the radio got the message to tell everybody to report to work the next morning. Everybody that worked in the sawmill started to work cleaning up. In the next 24 hours, we reshuffled our people. Some of them had to ride to Pineland, which was a good hour and a half each direction, to pull a shift. We put an extra shift on at Pineland to keep some of our people working. We put people in the fiberboard plant, operating an additional shift to be sure people kept working and making at least 40 hours a week.

"Not a person lost his job, and it could have been bad. Nolan Atchley had a sawmill down at Livingston, and on Monday morning I had a call from Nolan. He said, 'Joe, I know your problem, You can furnish the logs, I'll start my sawmill up another shift for you. You take all the rough green lumber and maybe it will help take care of some of your customers so you can get started.' An engineering company said they would take approximately 15 to 18 months to build the sawmill,

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but we said 'that's not good enough.' We said, 'we are going to work on this around the clock.' We put it back in operation in nine months from the date of the fire. There was a spirit there, and I never heard one person bitch about what they had to do. They were all willing to make a contribution to this company to see that we got rolling again."

Then, there was the merger of Temple Industries with Time, Inc. Time was engaged in publishing newspapers, magazines, books, records, in producing pulp, paper board, paper, and paper products, in marketing information and graphics services, and in radio and television broadcasting. Temple Industries had long felt its diversification should extend into the paper business, but lacked the necessary capital. As Solid Wood Products Group Vice President Harold Maxwell put it, *"They complemented each other and it made a natural merger."* Mr. Maxwell then went on to describe subsequent corporate developments:

"Temple Industries was acquired in '73 and merged with Eastex later forming Temple-Eastex. Eastex was a pulp/paper company owned by Time. That was your Temple-Eastex. In 1979, Time acquired another company called Inland Container Company and in '83, ten years after we were acquired, Time spun this company off called Temple-Inland. Temple-Inland is a holding company and under Temple-Inland there are three legs for Temple-Inland: Temple-Eastex, which is located in Diboll; Inland Container which is located in Indianapolis, Indiana; and our financial services group, which is located in Austin. Those are the three operating legs of Temple-Inland. Temple-Inland is the holding or parent company, and we've got three operating divisions."

The close relationship between the town of Diboll and the company continues to exist. Characteristically, Diboll Day—the town's biennial festival of achievement—inextricably links the two. Investigating the origins of this celebration, which began back in 1953, has brought up a question as to just how the idea began. Getting it straight may have Joe Denman and Arthur Temple down on the floor again Dagwood-and-Mr. Dithers style. But here goes:

Arthur Temple said it was Latane Temple's idea in the first place. Latane said it was Arthur's. Joe Denman said that the idea was born at the Antlers Hotel one morning over coffee, and that the three people present were Ed Price, John Lea and himself:

"There was a fellow named John Lea who ran a department store in Diboll and a fellow named Ed Price who was in our sales organization. We were usually down at the old Antlers Hotel, and in the early days most of us got to the hotel around six in the morning. Byrd (Davis) was running the hotel at that time. We were discussing that the only club we had then was the Lions' Club, but the time they met was not really convenient to us. So we all decided. . . we said, 'Look, it's not convenient for us to meet in the evening, why don't we see about getting a bunch of guys to meet for lunch and maybe form a booster group for Diboll. Maybe we can get everybody interested in it and get the program going.' So we decided to get together at a place called "The Tonk". We all met at the Tonk that particular day. We decided as part of a homecoming program we would get together as many interested people (as we could) and create a program and raise money for a kids' youth program. Any money raised would be for kids. We didn't have a charter, by-laws or anything; we were just doing it on the fly. It was amazing at the second meeting how many people showed up. . . there was a lot of enthusiam."

On September 24, 1953, Arthur Temple wrote a letter *"To All Employees"* which said, *"The Company itself is behind (Diboll Day) 100% although the Booster Club is putting on the program without the Company's help."* He urged participation for all in the new program as an important contribution to Diboll's future.

Funds raised over the years through a very effective system of competing teams have helped build and operate two swimming pools, the Temple Memorial Library, the Katherine Sage Temple Day Care Center, the golf course, a summer recreation program including Little League, Pony League, girls' and women's softball and Boy Scouts, and various smaller projects including help for the deserving (needy) persons. The first president of the Booster Club was Jack W. Sweeny and the first chairman of Diboll Day was Joe C. Denman.

The next year Joe C. Denman was president of the Booster Club and Jack W. Sweeny was chairman of Diboll Day.

In the early years, Diboll Day was held each year. Then it was set at every two years with Pineland Day being held in between.

In the last few years, the Booster Club president has also been chairman of Diboll Day.

The list of Presidents of Diboll Day from 1953-1986 is as follows: 1953, Joe C. Denman; 1954, Jack W. Sweeny; 1955, Pop Rich; 1956, H.G. Stubblefield, Jr.; 1957, Ralph Magill; 1958, Calvin Lawrence; 1960, Vernon Burkhalter; 1962, Lamar Collins; 1964, C.H. Shepherd, Jr.; 1966, Don Wier; 1968, Buddy Temple; 1970, Woodrow Wood; 1972,

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A.B. Conner (resigned); 1972, Henry H. Holubec; 1974, C.H. Shepherd, Jr.; 1976, Ray Paulsey; 1978, Pete Smart; 1980, John Shepherd; 1982, Jack C. Sweeny; 1984, David Kellam; 1986, Jim Dunlap.

Funds raised by Diboll Day activities have totaled as follows: 1953, $2,828.06; 1956, $5,296.47; 1958, $3,089.17; 1960, $6,871.82; 1962, $5,018.02; 1964, $9,810.14; 1966, $20,939.14; 1968, $25,780.30; 1970, $32,181.66; 1972, $53.885.58; 1974, $51,000.00; 1976, $82,400.00; 1978, $105,639.00; 1980, $129,316.53; 1982, $115,000.00; 1984, $162,255.00 (Totals for 1954, 1955 and 1957 were not available.)

Diboll Day has not only been fun for everyone but has generated a substantial contribution to the community. It is recognized as one of the most effective fund-raising events in Texas.

Mrs. Lottie Temple told how she viewed the celebration:

"You can't believe the spirit it generates in the community. I've seen a lot of young people working in the office who really became recognized through their community effort. A lot of it was Diboll Day which was a proving ground, in a way.

"You saw how enthusiastic they got over doing these things. It gets to be a real chore but everybody keeps grinding. It really ties people together and the reason it has been so successful is that the company has always allowed the people to participate on company time. It's just part of the operation. Other little towns have tried it; they've tried to copy it and it just doesn't work. It's got to have the support of industry and everybody to do what we've done because we have raised lots of money.

"For about a month, it is hectic but fun. It's not only making money. . . we do a lot of things which are fun to do and people start playing pranks on each other. It just gets to be a circus more or less.

"We'll do anything. . . cheat, lie, steal, whatever. . . to produce for our division when we are working. I've even had people go through my mail and take checks that were addressed to me. Once you get your hot little hands on the money, there's no turning it loose. But it all goes into the same place. That's the reason it is fun; it's very much a carnival atmosphere everyday."

Diboll Day speakers have included Gov. Allan Shivers, Martin Dies, Jr., U.S. Representative Charles Wilson, Gov. Dolph Briscoe, Gov. Price Daniel, and U.S. Senator John Tower. John Hannah spoke in 1978. A former U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District in Texas, he was the first Diboll boy to make the Diboll Day speech.

Besides the Booster Club, many other clubs and organizations have formed in Diboll. Their names and histories are given in Appendix II.

Civic club work has been augmented in Diboll and the surrounding area of East Texas by philanthropic work supported by the T.L.L. Temple Foundation. Georgia Temple Munz, Arthur Temple's aunt, gave 600,000 shares of Time stock to create the new foundation. As Arthur Temple tells the story:

"Aunt Georgie lived in Texarkana. She was my father's sister. She owned, of course, a good part of the company. She had two mongoloid children, which was a real tragedy. Her husband had died. In the late fifties, she probably didn't spend three hundred dollars a month, although she was a very wealthy woman. In fact, she had always kept chickens. Because she had chickens, she had eggs and she sold the eggs to her neighbors. She didn't go out with a pushcart or anything like that, but she wanted to dispose of the eggs to her neighbors, so she sold them to them. She always drove an old car until my father finally made her get a Cadillac. She was a marvelous person, just tight as Dick's hatband with herself and her family, but generous as she could be with others.

"So one day we were riding down to Diboll from Texarkana. Temple Webber and I and Aunt Georgie were riding down and she was getting pretty old. I said, 'Aunt Georgie, what are you going to do with all your money when you pass on?' She said, 'Well, Arthur, I thought since everything I have came from the company, I thought I would just give it back to the company.' I said, 'Well, Aunt Georgia, I think I understand what you mean, but nobody gives money to a company. You are a very rich woman. I know you don't like to talk about it, and you don't need much for your family. You have already taken care of the girls with trusts. But the rest of it, I would like to see you give to the Temple Foundation,' (which was a little bitty foundation my dad had established in the 40's).

"I said, 'I'd like to see you give the money to the Foundation to be used first, to help our employees; and second to create a better life in the towns in which we are involved, where we are an important part. And beyond that to help the people in the counties in which we have very large land holdings.' She said, 'Yes, that's what I would like to do. That's wonderful. That's just what I would like to do.' So we drew up her will. Sure enough, she left it to the Foundation. That's worth about 200 million dollars now. Every bit of that money, with very few exceptions, goes into this 30 county area and into the places where we now have operations. Some goes to Austin where we have a presence and a little goes to Houston. Some goes to the hospitals and to the Anderson Foundation because our people go down there. But everything has some relationship to the welfare of our neighbors and our

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employees, principally our employees. It really has been a wonderful thing because East Texas is a relatively poor area, even though Lufkin is a wealthy town. East Texas as a whole is really quite poor and there aren't many foundations to help."

The T.L.L. Temple Foundation has supported worthy projects of every description throughout the East Texas area—from hospitals to rehabilitation centers. It has grown so famous that recently it received a request for funds to buy garbage trucks for the city of Nairobi, Kenya (which it had to turn down). Lately it has promoted historical research in the East Texas area by supporting a T.L.L. Temple Scholar-in-Residence to write entries for *The Handbook of Texas* now being revised by the Texas State Historical Association.

The Foundation has also supported the oral history project from which this book has been drawn. The book project was centered at the modern T.L.L. Temple Memorial Library in Diboll.

The Friends of the Library organization began on September 26, 1961, in the school cafetorium under the leadership of Jim Love, president of Love Wood Products. Mr. Love brought about 20 people together to sponsor a temporary library begun in 1960 by Latane Temple and to promote a permanent library. The collection was begun with book donations and processed by volunteers.

The Diboll Booster Club, which sponsored the "Friends," appointed a nine-member library board in April, 1961, consisting of A. Jewel Brown, Paul Durham, Calvin Lawrence, William Massey, Julia (Mrs. Maynard) Schinke, Clarence H. Shepherd, Jr., Mrs. H.G. Stubblefield, Arthur Temple and James L. Love, who was made chairman.

Financial assistance to the library has been supplied since 1962 from Temple Industries (now Temple-Eastex and Temple-Inland), Love Wood Products Company, the T.L.L. Temple Foundation, proceeds from the Booster Club's Diboll Day, federal grants, residents' pledge drives, and from many individuals.

A handsome building, which won the Southern Pine Association award for use of wood, was constructed by architect John Desmond of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and was dedicated April 18, 1964. This building was awarded the *"Library Project of the Year"* award by the Texas Library Association in 1968. From a modest beginning it has grown to in excess of 26,000 volumes and it circulates about 2000 to 3000 books per month. Library services include Inter-library loan with the Houston Area Library System, children's story hours, telephone reference, audio-visual and microfilm equipment, and copying facilities.

Joe Bob Hendrick, who kept the library yard, described the Bicentennial Liberty Trees project in Diboll:

"In '76, Diboll celebrated the Bicentennial with the planting of 200 oak trees. I had retired about a week before the trees arrived, so they got me to do the work here in Diboll. A crew of young people from A&M, came down and looked over the place and made a drawing of where the trees should be put. Of course, there's a lot we didn't plant according to the drawing because of the high lines and things like that. But we had to decide what kind of trees to grow. They suggested redbud or two or three other kinds. We had tried that two or three years before. George Johnson had put out trees up and down this row a long time ago during wagon and mule days. They didn't grow, so I suggested we put in live oaks. A bunch of ladies started the program and Ellen Temple was the leader. She contacted me and I told her at first I didn't believe I wanted to help and then I got to thinking; I could do it as well as anybody else around here. So I met with her, and we staked all the places out. We ordered the bushes and they came in and they weren't the right size. We got them from Fred Walker; he unloaded them, but they weren't what we ordered. He had to take them back. We went down to Floresville and bought 200 trees. They shipped them up here, and we started putting them out. We got a machine that would dig a hole. The company let us have two or three men and we started putting them out. It didn't take too long. We put out 200 and we didn't lose over six or seven."

Diboll today is full of change and promise. Its new mayor, James Simms, was elected May 5, 1986. As a hometown boy and an executive vice president of the Diboll State Bank, he has pledged to work for a progressive future for the city. A beautiful new town hall, for example, is in the works.

James Rhone, a black man who has served on the Diboll School Board for eight years and was its president in 1985, talked about current plans the School Board has:

"You've probably seen in the paper here lately about a bond election. There's a need for expanding the schools, and that's all three of the schools. Right now, we're studying the land situation and we're not going to call a bond election right now, but we're making plans and studying."

All these projects, and others too numerous to mention, contribute to a sense that Diboll is a "can-do" community. Visitors are struck by the energy of the town, and by a feeling that here is

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a place where American values are made truly tangible in everyday life.

Trying to get at the enthusiastic spirit of Diboll, we asked old-timers and younger folks alike what their philosophy of living was, and how they felt about the quality of life in this special little town.

Answers ranged back into the past in some cases, with people referring to historical period like the Depression to explain how they felt. In others, there was a projection into the future... hopeful glimpses of what might be in store for Diboll in the coming years.

Myrtle Rushing remembered the community spirit during the Depression when her daughter Jakie Bob was in school and she was a PTA room mother.

"We had plenty to do. There were a lot of underprivileged children we had to see after. The room mothers would feed children every day. They didn't have lunch rooms. We would bring them home at lunch and feed them. When they needed shoes, we would take them to the store and get them shoes and the PTA paid for it. We also bought supplies for them.

"We raised our money with the PTA Halloween Carnival. I always helped with the Mulligan Stew. The Carnival was the main project. For the stew, different parents would furnish chickens, beef, canned goods and we would put it all together and made a big stew. Everybody wanted stew cooked in the washpots."

Marvin Baker, a truck farmer during the Depression, was one of the ones who concentrated on the past to illustrate his philosophy:

"I don't know how to say it, but I really truly love the ground 'cause I'm not a very decorative type farmer. A lot of fellows seem to do the work all neat and all. Mine is kind of rough-shod, but I usually come out with a good production. I guess the secret to all of it is East Texas. I was raising a certain vegetable, and they would say, 'Baker, how in the world did you do that? I planted two times and never did get nothing.' I said, 'Well, the difference was I planted four times.'

"It's all the way that you look at it. I'd say that most all Americans are gardeners. But if they haven't gardened, they have missed a lot. I think everyone ought to have a little time to work in the old good earth."

Pearl Havard was thoughtful when she compared the past with the present. She said:

"People were happier then and they were not as nervous as they are now. People would sit down and talk and enjoy one another and they visited. We were a great hand to go and visit a night, sit awhile and talk. Seems like nowadays people don't have time to visit."

Arthur Temple reflected:

"Everything we did was fun. It was mainly fun because we had this great combination of wise old country people who were really good sawmillers, counterbalanced by young folk who were trying to make a mark. They could see what the potential was. The arguments went back and forth. You had the old guys pulling back, not wanting to step out. And you had the young guys pushing ahead. It was a marvelous combination."

Lefty Vaughn echoed many other people when he said:

"Diboll has been a boon to me. I always thought when they say Diboll, they're talking about me because I am a big part of it. I've enjoyed every minute of it. If I pass away tomorrow, everybody can say, 'He really enjoyed life.'"

Clyde Thompson thought about things the city of Diboll might do in the future:

"Further equipping of city parks with more playground equipment, paved trails for pedestrians and bicycles, trails for horseback riding, more tennis courts, increasing the golf course to eighteen holes from the present nine holes...The park is extensively used by many people and all for the comfort and pleasure of our citizens. We also need to redo some of our water lines and sewage lines. We would like to have an opportunity to beautify a creek that runs through our city. We need many things and could find lots of uses for almost any amount of money."

Then he added,

"But the good old times are the times we're living now."

Vernon Burkhalter said:

"I agree with Ray Rector, the biscuit whistle was at 5:30 in the morning and the 11:15 was the cornbread whistle...That's the way I remember it. The 5:30 whistle was the time to get the biscuits in the oven right quick because they were fixing to go to work. They blew a whistle at 5:30 every morning. They cook the biscuits; you're talking about something four inches across. You could put a slab of salt pork bacon in there and pour syrup on it and you have a good sandwich...people talk about the good old times...I'm like Clyde Thompson; we are living the good old times right now. I think we have a good life."

Since the end of the last century, much of the popular mythology of Texas has centered around oil—"black gold." In 1986, with oil prices plummeting and with them the economic security of many Texans, the myths of the state may be about to turn in new directions.

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One of these directions may be toward renewable resources like timber. As Professor Wallace B. Diboll, Jr. of the University of Missouri wrote to the Diboll Historical Society:

"From what we read of the economy of Texas, it seems that wood products might be the most stable industry!"

The growing, harvesting and production of pine lumber and other forest products seems clearly to be a big part of the industrial future of Texas. Yet, it can be a part of the future only insofar as timber resources have been conserved and renewed in the past. The vision of men like Thomas Lewis Latane Temple has come to fruition in the growing and regrowing forests of East Texas.

To make the dream come true, a town had to be created, a town of workers for an industry broader in scope and implications than any other that had been tried.

Diboll has endured. In doing so, it has gone far beyond its origins and become an independent community with a bright future. It is clear that Diboll, where "Ole Glory" still flies above the plant and company office every workday, will be around for a long time to come.

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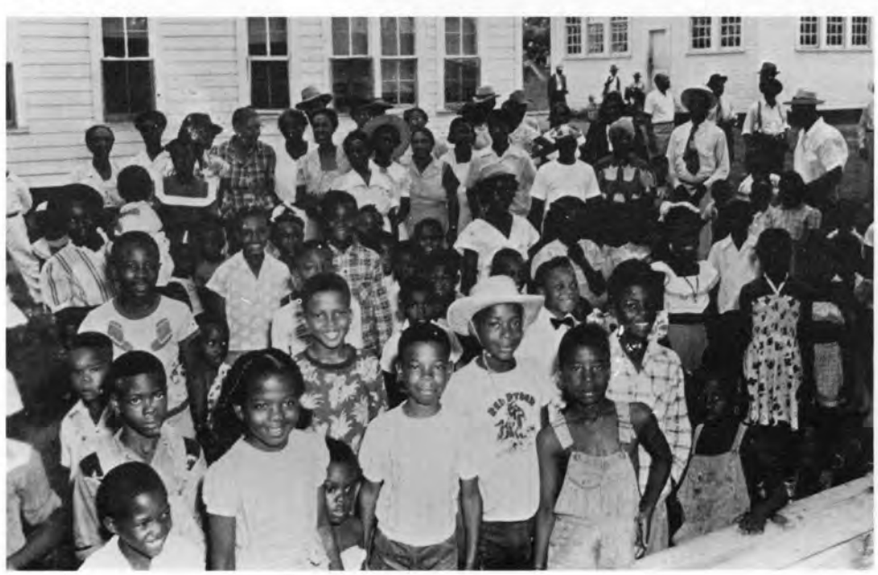
1949-Present



Snow scene on Hines Street. On the left is old Library building and a row of company houses.



One of the oldest houses for mill workers still standing. Notice the uneven box siding. It is located on Saxton Street.



Black school before integration.

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Black choral group. Seated (L to R): Cora Nash, Philicia Tripplett, Ida Robinson, Minnie Manor, Jack Manor, Joe Bailey. Second row: Josie Jones, Frank Smith, Charlie Andrews, Lillie B. Littles, Lola Mae _____, Melissa Davis, Fred Louis, Jimmie Jones. Third row: John Calvin, William (Shine) Ruth, W.D. Jones, Maceo Andrews.



Chopper used for aerial spraying of the woods in 1957. (L to R): Wayne Townsend, Jack Mims, Carrol Allen, Kenneth Nelson, unknown, unknown.



A favorite fund-raiser of the Diboll community was the *"womanless wedding"* sponsored by the Pilot Club. Pictured here are the bride and groom Calvin Lawrence and Lon Smith. The baby is Joe Denman. Others in the picture are Dewey Ballenger, Ed Hoot, Foster Davis, Dred Devereaux, Welby Jackson, Bob Cook, Jessie Carr, Sherod Powell, Wilbur Pate, and Willard Hickman.

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Bishop W.C. Martin (in front) and Doug Warner, Rev. Stanley Vodicka, and Clyde Thompson pictured at the location of the first SPLCo camp, Lindsey Springs located 8 miles east of Diboll. As a child Bishop Martin had lived at the camp. He is shown here describing the different aspects of the camp.



Last logging crew for SPLCo. Pictured in 1962 are (L to R): Clyde Thompson, Fred Powers, Oran Burchfield, Jack Gibson, Frank Farris, Richie Wells. Second row: "Preacher" Elliot, "Shine" Burchfield, Henry Kilgore, Raymond Salmon, Leslie Moyers, Third row: Hugh Tims, Asa Permenter, Bud Sides, Namon Calhoun, and Bill Howard.



For over twenty years the Diboll Garden Club has been active in community service projects. Pictured here in 1962 are Marge Shepherd (on the floor) and (L to R) Beth Denman, Carolyn Wood, Eloise Hanks, unknown, Virginia Nelson, Johnnie Barrington, Esther Weber, Pearl Hoot and Alice Dale.

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Latane Temple, Arthur Temple, Jr., and Jack Dempsey, the fighter, pictured at the Pine Bough Restaurant.

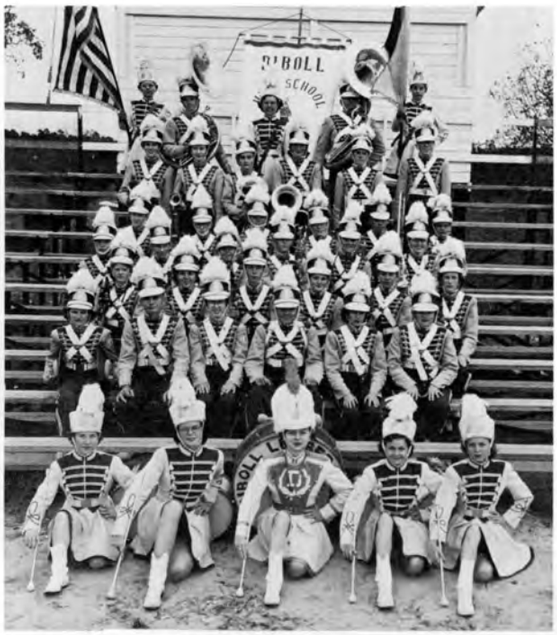


Diboll's entry in the Forestry Parade in Lufkin in the 1940's.

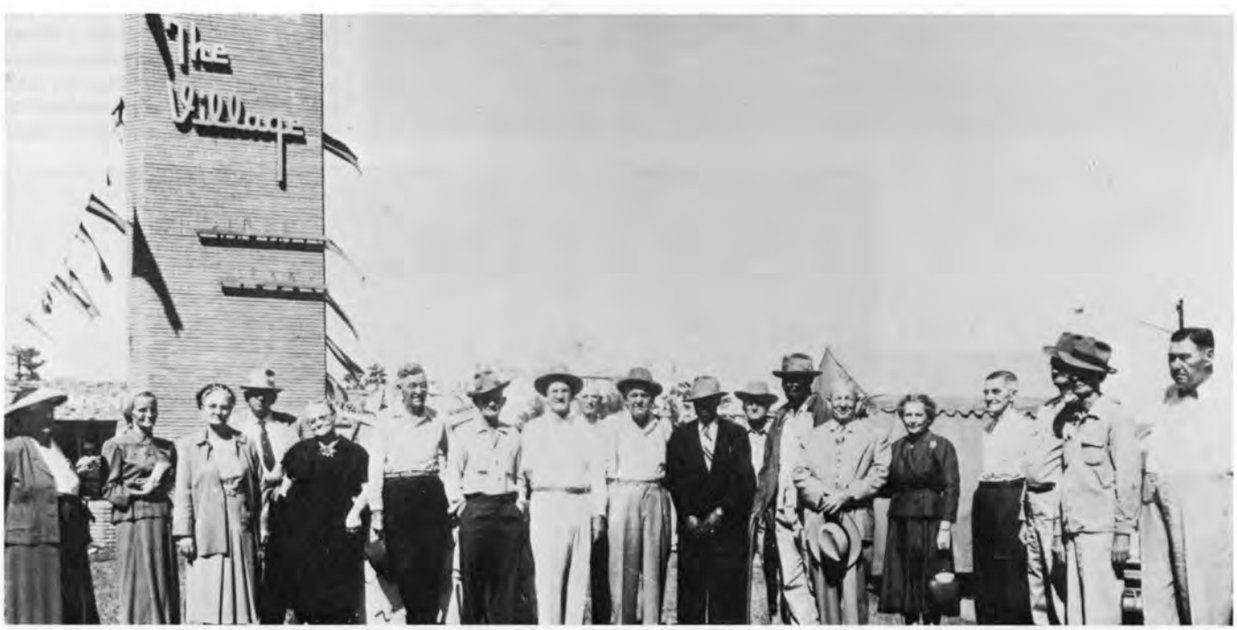


Boy Scouts parking cars at an early Diboll Day celebration.

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Diboll High School Band, 1955. Pictured (L to R) Bottom row: Betty Brown, Carolyn Kelly, Mary Katherine Richmond, Elaine Bunch, Betty George. Second row: Nell Burchfield, Claude E. Welch, Willie Mae Hickman, unknown, Helen Parish, Juliette Smith. Third row: unknown, Mary Alice Bunch, Prentiss Carter, Judy Jordan, Cindy Salmon, Sandra Ashworth. Fourth row: Kelly Welch, Hal Wayne Greer, Tony Richardson, Leon Reeves, John Estes, Ruby Ann Ashworth. Fifth row: Bill Stivers, unknown, unknown, Billy Frank Pate, Travis Parker, Cloyce Evens. Sixth row: Pat Jordan, Shirlene Holcomb, Donnie Weeks, Frances Wells, Larry Goins, J.T. Weimer. Seventh row: Phyllis Salmon, _____ Havard, Barbara Carter, Robert Bennie Rector, Lillie Fay McKinney.



The Village shopping center, 1954. Pictured are (L to R) unknown, Mrs. Albert Shatta, Mrs. Robert Waller, Richie Wells, Mrs. W.E. Chandler, Tom Anthony, S.O. Bishop, Talmage Arrington, unknown, John Dial, Willie Jones, Sam Wilkerson, Jack Armstead, Louis Ashford, Mrs. Ruth Weise, Ed Steed, Talley McCall, Jess Parker, and Paul Durham, Sr.

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Governor Allan Shivers proclaiming the first Diboll Day in 1953. On the left is Clyde Thompson and on the right, Jack W. Sweeny, representing the Diboll Booster Club.



Diboll Day Parade float demonstrating chain saws. Notice how large they were. In the background is the old depot located at corner of Hines and Thompson.



Mrs. Annie Chandler, Governor Price Daniels, and Mrs. Fannie Farrington at Diboll Day, 1962.

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T.L.L. Temple Memorial Library opened in 1964.



After over four weeks of fund raising activities, the Diboll Day celebration culminates with a Saturday of various activities at Old Orchard Park. Speeches and the announcement of the queen are made from the bandstand. Seats of boards or logs provide a comfortable area under the pecan trees for the crowd.



Katherine Sage Temple was a longtime benefactress for the Diboll community. She is pictured with Arthur Temple at the 1982 Diboll Day activities.

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Fund raising activities take on all forms during Diboll Day. Pictured are James Simms, Joe Denman, Milford Ruby, Charles Havard, and Henry Holubec.



Ladies' Tug-of-War team at Diboll Day, 1980. Representing Katherine Sage Temple Day Care Center are Thelma Scott, Verna Hamilton, Carolyn Ellison, Carolyn Stover, Nelda Kilgore, Regina Porter, Janice Seekings, and either Sue Chandler or Nettie Mann.



For years C.H. Shepherd sponsored a fiberboard men's Tug-of-War team. "Shep" is shown here in 1984 receiving his jersey from Jack Beaty. Other members of the team were Robert Esteves, Glenn Chaney, Terry Markle, Johnny Lesley and Fred Arceneaux.

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The Diboll Tug-of-War contests are as well-fought as any celebrity matches on television. Joe Sample is shown refereeing this straining team.



Diboll Day begins with a morning parade through town. In 1980 First Methodist Church sponsored this float of *"little fishermen down by the creek bank".* Pictured (L to R) are Chris Wells, Erin Kellam, Jennifer Sweeny, Jennifer Hendrick, Andrea Crump, Rachel McBride, Sean Hendrick, and Scott Black.



In 1982 this group of senior citizens celebrated the 50th anniversary of their high school graduation with this entry in the parade. Pictured are Franklin Weeks (with his back to the camera) and then counter-clockwise from the left rear: Claudine Scarborough Rice, Artimese Weeks Deen, Gladys Lily, Ruthie Wright, Chloe Oliver, Ruby Scarborough Berry, William Price, and Aden Jayroe.

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Each year an outstanding citizen is honored during the Diboll Day program. In 1984 Paul Durham, editor of *The Free Press* was chosen. James Simms presented the award.



Diboll has been recognized by the state of Texas for its beautification efforts. One of the best known gardeners in the area is Joe Bob Hendrick. Known as *"Johnny Appleseed"* of Diboll, he is shown standing in front of the first of the 200 *"Liberty Trees"* planted in 1976. He was the supervisor of this project as well as many other beautification projects in Diboll.

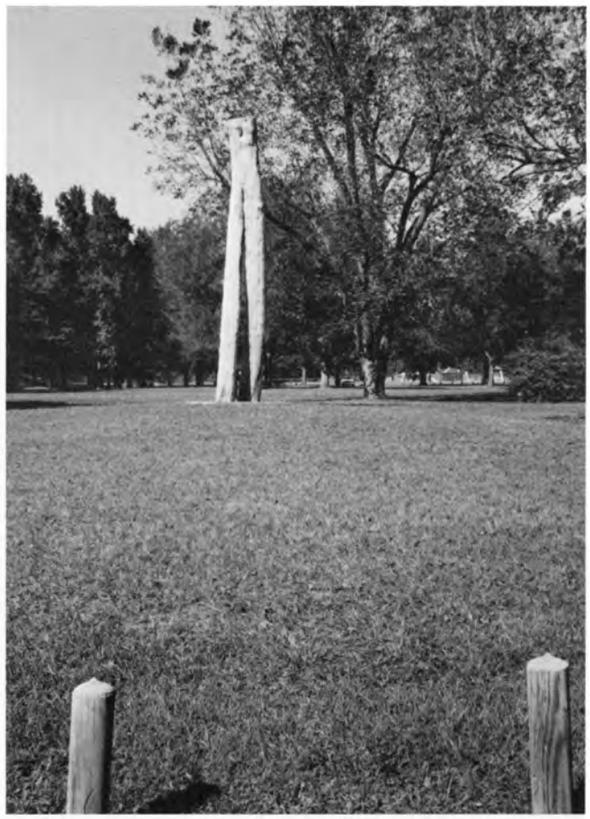


One of the most unique school mascots is the Diboll High School Lumberjack mascot. In 1984 Joe and Beth Denman donated a larger-than-life lumberjack statue to the school.

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Doug Warner is shown in an earlier photo in the woods standing beside the pine tree with the split trunk. The pine tree grew about 300 yards north of the Stovall Creek bridge on the Buttermilk Road. When Warner was a small boy, he rode between the trunk on a small pony. His father, a logger, had protected the tree earlier by roping it off. When the tree died in the early '70's, Warner cut it. It was then pentatreated and placed in Old Orchard Park.



One of the most unusual natural statues in Texas stands in Old Orchard Park. Pictured is the preserved pine tree with a split or double trunk. Many old-timers remember the tree growing out in the woods.



It has become a tradition for Temple employees and friends to sing Christmas songs for the community in the Corporate Office atrium each December. Howard Daniel is shown directing the choir in 1985.

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That Diboll has a thriving economy is illustrated by the Diboll State Bank building completed in the early 1980's.



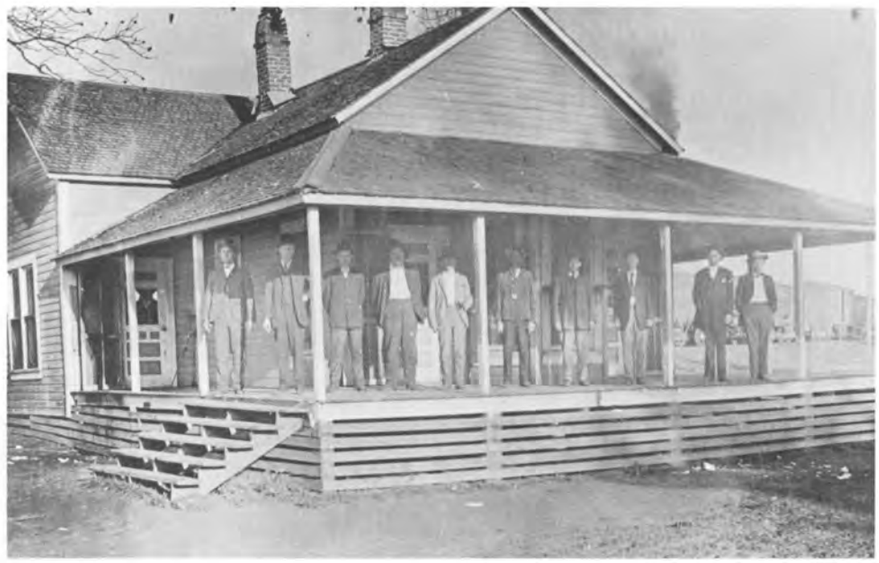
In 1986 a statue dedicated to the working man was placed on the Temple-Inland grounds. Ronnie Wells created the statue from a photograph of Albert Mitchell, a long-time SPLCo employee. In the background is the Temple-Inland corporate ofice building.

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City of Diboll today with the original 50-acre mill tract drawn in

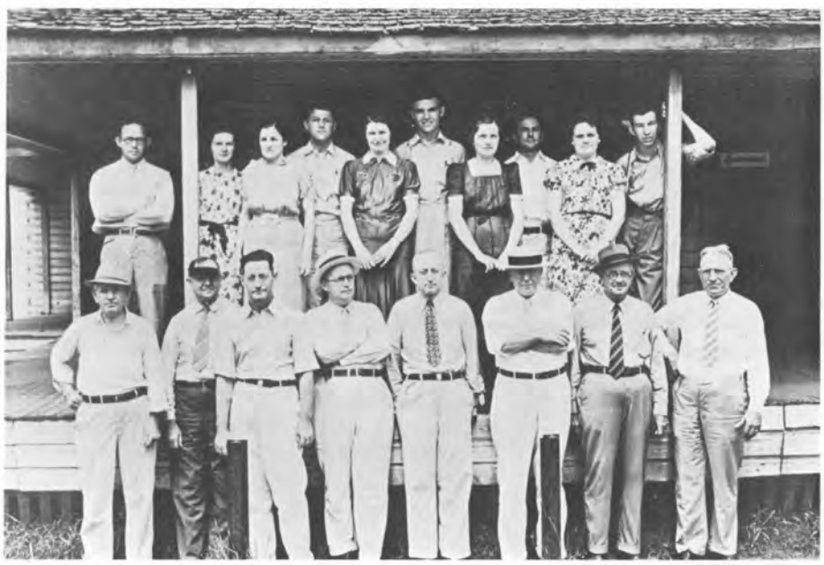
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COMPANY OFFICES AND PERSONNEL 1894-1986



COMPANY OFFICES
AND PERSONNEL

Southern Pine office building in early 1900's located north of the commissary. Identified on the left is John A. Massingill; the third person is O.H. Weise; the fifth person is W.M. Ashford.

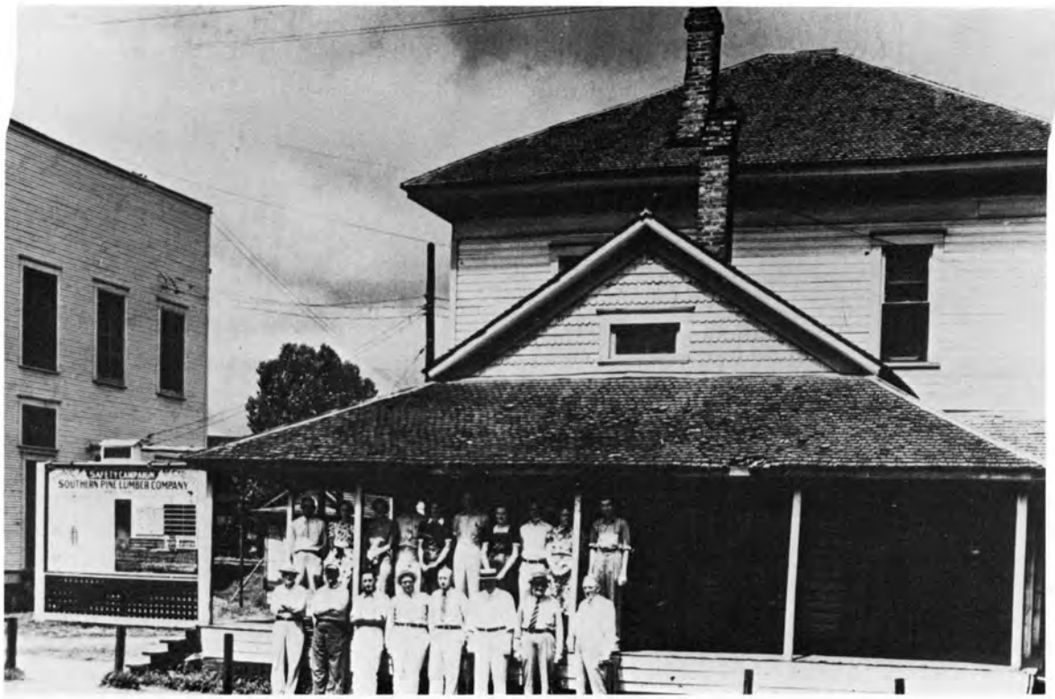


SPLCo office employees in 1930's and 1940's. Front row (L to R): C.C. Mathews, F.N. Nelson, Luther Breazeale, Clyde Thompson, O.H. Weise, H.G. Temple, J.J. O'Hara, and P.H. Strauss, Sr. Back row: F.H. Smith, Pauline Smith, Mildred Richards, Edwin Nelson, Bernice Garrison, Kenneth Nelson, Hazel Richards, E.H. Bush, Rhoda Faye Chandler, and Noah Horn.



Other employees of the mid-'40's. First row (L to R): Marie Fogg, Hazel Kerr, Flava Ward Vaughn, Freddy Fogg, Dorothy Cruthirds, Betty Ruth Richie. Second row: Frank Smith, Gladys George, Rhoda Faye Chandler, Mildred Richards Clark, Ruth Green, J.J. O'Hara. Third row: P.M. Anderson, E.S. Scoggins, H.G. Temple, Calvin Lawrence, Clyde Thompson, O.H. Weise.

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SPLCo first office building used until the early 1940's.



Mr. Rutland's home which was used as an office from the mid-40's to the early '50's.

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Temple Industries office used from the early 1950's to the late 1970's.



Corporate headquarters of Temple-Inland, built in late 1970's.

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Historical Events Calendar, Diboll, Texas, 1893 to 1986

by Megan Biesele and Kenneth Nelson

1893: T.L.L. Temple began purchase of 7000 acres in Angelina County.
Sawmill and town of Diboll located on H.E. & W.T. Railway.
Southern Pine Lumber Company of Texas organized.
1894: Milling operations began in June.
Public school began in Diboll.
Commissary established.
1897: Next big land purchase (8000 acres) of Southern Pine Lumber Co.
Annual lumber shipments number 1,000 cars.
Post Office established, May 25.
1898: Tram purchase from W.N. Atwood forms basis for T.S.E. R.R.
1899: Diboll's second public school building.
1900: Lufkin Land & Lumber organized with Frosts and Kelley.
White school, 75 pupils; black school, 40.
Ladies Improvement Society founded: raised money for schools.
T.S.E. R.R. incorporated, Sept.-Oct.
T.S.E. constructs 15 miles, Diboll to Lindsey Springs.
1902: Reorganization of SPLCo stock, $300,000.
1903: Second sawmill, double band.
Arrival of Farringtons to start civic organizations.
Boy Scouts, band, etc.
1906: Stock increase to $600,000 by SPLCo.
T.S.E. extended to Everett, Blix, and Lufkin.
Pineland mill site cleared.
Diboll Public Schools expanded for two lower grades.
Electric generator for power, 5:30 am. to 10:00 pm.
1907: Hardwood mill built; opened in April.
Stock increase to $750,000 by SPLCo.
Logging camp moves from Lindsey Springs to Rayville.
Up to 1908, Temple bought more timber each year than he cut.
1908: T.L.L. Temple gets one-third interest in Pineland mill.
Inventory at Diboll: 1,150,000,000 board feet pine, 175,000,000, hardwood.
Eight telephones in Diboll, railroad depot, steam shovel.
American Lumberman article.
710 names on SPLCo payroll; population of Diboll, 2500. Two dynamos for mill and town, 85 KWT electric lights.
Water systems for mill people.
T.S.E. had eight locomotives, 65 cars.
150 students in school.
Two doctors at Southern Pine.
Dave Kenley begins work as a lumber scaler.
Company houses rented for $6-$12 per month.
Conservative cutting policies adopted.
Mules, oxen and skidders used in woods.
1909: Copestown lots sold by Diboll family.
Original school burned.
SPLCo undertakes survey of all its timberlands in Trinity county.
1910: Temple purchases rest of Pineland mill, forms Temple Lumber Company.
Dred Devereaux begins work as construction engineer, SPLCo.
Purchase of Jack Creek timberlands.
1912: Hardwood mill built.
1913: Texas Workmen's Compensation passes.
1914: Hardwood mill burns.
Diboll population 1,200.
Baptist and Methodist churches, livery, jeweler.
Airdome Theater is built.
First retail unit of Temple Lumber Company at Houston.
Federal investigation of East Texas mill towns.
1915: Texas Forest Service established to conserve forest.

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1916: Opening of Brambles Park, May.
Arthur Temple, Sr., joins company as bookkeeper.
1917: War declared April 7: guards at plant against sabotage.
War production; Victory Gardens.
1918: School Superintendent Stegall began adding grades.
1920: Company adds retail yards across Texas; huge increase in acreage.
Town Christmas tree, present from SPLCo for each child.
1921: Temple Cotton Oil organized, October.
1922: First graduating class of seniors.
Fastrill Camp set up.
1925: New athletic grounds.
Mill workers getting 40-75 cents an hour.
Box factory established at Diboll.
1926: Chautauqua in Diboll.
1928: SPLCo discontinues use of horse skidder.
1929: "The Panic".
1931: Texas Southeastern Railroad becomes Texas South-Eastern Railroad.
1932: Destruction of part of Diboll school by fire.
SPLCo operating in the red, 1931-1932; wage cuts.
1934: SPLCo begins using trucks in logging operations.
1935: 29 retail yards, "Red River to Rio Grande."
Death of T.L.L. Temple, Oct. 2.
Arthur Temple, Sr., elected president.
Wages began to rise again.
1936: Federal government buys timberland at $2.75 an acre for National Forests.
1937: SPLCo buys first "speeder loader" for woods work.
Timberland Theater begun by J. Shirley Daniel.
1938: SPLCo exchanges acreage for stock in Southland Paper Mill.
Death of commissary manager Rutland.
K.A. Drew takes over commissary.
6-man football team wins conference championship.
Temple home built in Diboll.
1939: Inventory of forest lands for Sustained Yield Program.
Four graduate foresters employed.
Temple White Company, the handle factory, built in February.
Arthur Temple, Jr., receives first company bank loan.
The "Tonk" gets started.
1940: Southland Paper Mill opens.
15 business firms in Diboll.
Community house in Diboll for employees.
1941: SPLCo discontinues use of logging camps.
Fastrill camp moves back to Diboll.
Juneteenth picnic for black and white millworkers.
Library, drug store, community center.
Federal espionage statutes posted in plant.
Blue paint used to paint timberland boundaries.
1942: First crawler tractor used to skid logs.
Lights on company smokestack to warn planes in blackout.
Plant guards fingerprinted for protection.
Black high school plans.
Outhouses are painted "barn red."
1944: War output increase.
1948: Death of Henry Temple.
Arthur Temple, Jr., becomes manager and vice-president.
Bank loan from Republic Bank, Dallas, negotiated by Arthur Temple.
By summer, streets being paved, other improvements.
Ben Anthony came as housing director.
1949: Two sawmills, planer, woods department employing 1000.
Handle factory, timber treating plant, wood flour plant.
"The Sun Never Sets on Diboll Products."
Selective cutting program in place.
1950: SPLCo opens six new ventures.
Box factory rebuilt.
First power saws used by logging crews.
Joe Denman is hired to draft new shopping center.
1951: Arthur Temple, Sr., dies.
Arthur Temple become president.
Sale of all company houses initiated.
1952: Diboll Common School District becomes DISD.
Arthur Temple brings technical innovations from Europe.
The Free Press begun.
1953: Diboll Day begun.
Timberland Theater moved to Village Shopping Center.
Commissary closed. Building converted to SPLCo offices.
1954: Antlers Hotel burned down.
1956: SPLCO and Temple Lumber Company merge to form new SPLCo.
1958: Fiberboard plant constructed in Diboll.
1962: Company goes to all-contract logging; discontinues trams.
Stationary chipper installed at fiberboard plant.
Incorporation of Diboll; population 2500.
Clyde Thompson installed as mayor.
Clearing of liquor clause from lot titles.

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Neal Pickett arrives with FHA message.
1963: Company name changed to Temple Industries, Inc.
T-wheel logo adopted.
Beulah consolidates with DISD.
1964: Burke consolidates with DISD.
First city manager Wil Cockrell.
Opening of T.L.L. Temple Memorial Library.
Plywood plant opens.
210 new houses financed by FHA: old shacks razed.
Completion of the Walter Allen housing project.
Integration of Pine Bough, etc, prior to Civil Rights Act.
Pilot particleboard plant built.
1965: Diboll schools begin "free choice" integration.
1967: Neal Pickett goes to Deep East Texas Development Council.
First meeting of City Council at new Diboll City Hall.
Arthur Temple promotes cutting moratorium for Big Thicket.
1968: Diboll schools are fully integrated, earlier than most in area.
Temple Memorial Library wins "Project of the Year" from the Texas Library Association.
Company begins use of "whole log chipper."
Sawmill burns in January, but rebuilds by September.
1969: Temple Industries becomes a public stock company.
Arrival of Mexican-American workers from Texas Valley.
1971: 404 public housing units.
1972: $4 million in US funds spent on housing.
Diboll population—3,500.
1973: Merger with Time, Inc., to form Temple-Eastex.
1,069,000 acres of timberland.
1974: Particleboard plant built.
1976: "Liberty Trees" project.
1977: Presidency passes to Joe Denman.
Pine Bough closes.
1978: Arthur Temple becomes vice-chairman of Time, Inc.
Time acquires Inland Container Corporation.
Computerization of sawmill operations begins.
1982: Company plants 40,000,000 pine seedlings in its nursery.
Company plants total of 52,000 acres in seedlings.
Georgie Temple Munz gives 600,000 shares of Time stock to T.L.L. Temple Foundation.
1984: Temple-Eastex announces "spin-off" from Time.
Temple-Inland, Inc. formed.
1986: New Town Hall in planning stages for Diboll.
Bond issue passes for new high school for $5.5 million.

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Appendix I

"The Churches Of Diboll"

The Methodist and Baptist faiths have predominated in the Diboll area since its early settlement. A survey of Angelina County Protestant churches in 1888 showed a similar picture with Baptist congregations outnumbering the Methodist. In 1976, Angelina County had congregations of Assembly of God, Baptist, Catholic, Church of Christ, Jewish, Methodist and Pentecostal worshippers. In that year the city of Diboll had churches for the following congregations: Assembly of God, Baptist, Catholic, Church of Christ, Methodist and Pentecostal. At present, Diboll's churches are as follows:

Shiloh Baptist Church, Bible Baptist Church, Burke Baptist Church, First Baptist Church, Lakeview Baptist Church, Mission Bautista Lakeview, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, Diboll Church of Christ, Perry Chapel C.M.E. Church, Diboll United Pentecostal Church, Diboll Missionary Baptist Church, Church of the Living God, St. Thomas Methodist Church, Church By Christ Jesus, Diboll Congregational Methodist Church, Pine Valley Methodist Church, Ryan Chapel Methodist Church, First United Methodist Church, Burke Methodist Church, and First Assembly of God Church.

Just as the border between Texas and Louisiana is credited with bringing Catholicism to Texas, it was also a factor in the establishment of East Texas as the first home of Protestant religion in the state. In the decade before the revolution for Texas Independence, Protestant missionaries risked encounters with Catholic authorities by crossing the Sabine River to preach in the Roman Catholic territory of East Texas. In *Two Centuries In East Texas* (1932), George Louis Crockett refers to the region of San Augustine and the surrounding counties as the cradle of the Methodist, Presbyterian, Cumberland Presbyterian and Baptist churches in Texas. This East Texas locale is the site where Protestant preachers would naturally have had the easiest access to the then Catholic and Spanish territory, and would have first ventured into Texas to establish congregations.

Baptist churches outnumbered other churches in Angelina County as early as the 1880's by more than 2 to 1. However, despite the fact that Texas Baptists dominate other Protestant denominations, they were not the first to enter the state. Methodism seems to have preceded it by more than half a century. The first official Methodist services were held in Texas in 1832. Following this initial introduction of Methodism, it seems that a long line of Methodist preachers, revered in East Texas religious history for their determination and strength of character, managed to build up large congregations throughout East Texas.

The earliest records of Methodism in Angelina County appear in the 1850 census wherein Calvin Askins declared himself to be a Methodist clergyman. The Diboll First Methodist Church, begun in 1897 as part of the Palestine District, had a church and parsonage in Diboll in 1917. Another Methodist church, the Diboll Congregational Methodist Church, was founded in 1955 with a charter membership of twenty-four.

The Methodist churches—Ryan Chapel, Burke Methodist and First United—were all started before the turn of the century. The Burke and Diboll churches were carved from the Ryan Chapel membership, as was the Pine Valley Methodist Church. Ryan Chapel's present sanctuary, completed in 1937, is the fourth building to be erected on the same site. The structure is still made of logs, in memory of the original Chapel. A state historical marker was placed at Ryan Chapel in 1964.

Services at the Burke Methodist Church were held during the 1890's, though the church building was not completed until 1901. Early pastors included Reverend W.W. Graham, Reverend J.S. Wilson, and Reverend James Dowen Burke, Ward Burke's grandfather. In 1920, the church building was moved back from the street and in 1940 it was remodeled by member volunteers, by adding

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classrooms and a choir. In 1957, a new church building and educational building were built.

The First Methodist Church in Diboll began holding meetings in the afternoons under the old planer shed in 1897. The congregation sat on stacks of lumber. The preacher in charge was Reverend W.W. Nunn. Diboll was in the Homer Charge, Palestine District and East Texas Conference. The next meeting place was downstairs in the old Lodge Building where the Baptists met in the morning and the Methodists in the afternoon.

In 1914 a building program was started for a Methodist church. Miss Rosa Diboll, as agent for the Copes heirs, leased the congregation a piece of land for $1.00 a year. The trustees who signed the lease were H.C. Cook, W.M. Ashford and J.B. Weeks.

At Quarterly Conference on March 27, 1914, a building committee composed of P.H. Strauss, H.C. Cook, J.M. Fairchild, J.E. Woods, I.O. Warner and O.H. Weise was appointed and authorized to erect a church building. Mr. Strauss, a long-time Sunday School teacher, designed the building, which was finished in November of 1914 at a cost of $3,000. Reverend L.F. Smith dedicated the church. In 1917 the parsonage site was moved to Diboll and a parsonage was built.

In 1922 the Copes heirs gave a deed to the land on which the church was built. In the deed was this clause: *"It is further a part of the consideration for this conveyance that the giving away or selling of spiritous vinous, or malt liquors shall never be done or permitted about on said premises, and in case of any violation of this consideration then this deed shall be null and void and said premises shall absolutely revert to the grantors."*

In 1958, the building of 1914 was torn down and a new church erected.

The Churches of Christ do not have as long a history in East Texas as do the Baptists, Catholics and Methodists. It has been suggested that this is due, in part, to the fact that they were somewhat later than other Protestant denominations in becoming established in the U.S.

The date of the initial entry of the Church of Christ into Angelina County is uncertain. However, it is known that revival meetings were held prior to the Civil War and that by 1903 and 1904, a Brother Dunn was teaching Bible classes in Lufkin and that in 1907, as a result of a tent meeting conducted in Lufkin by Evangelist J.W. Chism, an area Church of Christ was formed. In 1916, after conducting services in Angelina County Courthouse for eight years, the congregation was finally able to construct its own church building.

It was to this church that Diboll Church of Christ members traveled for services until the late 1940s. By that time the local membership had grown to such a point that it became apparent that a local meeting and worship place was both feasible and needed. The old community center building near the Diboll elementary school served this purpose for some 25 members until 1951 when a Lufkin house was moved to the site on Highway 59 in South Diboll and the Diboll Church of Christ established itself in its own facility. In 1980 a new church was built on Arrington Street.

In 1897 Mrs. J.W. Taylor got together with Eunice Mann, Nancy Weeks and others to solicit funds to build the First Baptist Church. They secured the land for the church from one of the Copes heirs, Asenath Arick Copes Phelps. It was located on what is now First Street in Copestown. When it was decided to build a new church, Arthur Temple offered to give the land for the new location. First Baptist Church stands on this location today. As Wes Ashworth said:

"George Smith was chairman of the deacons at that time. And he said, 'I think that is one of the best moves that we ever had in Diboll.' To get a building off the highway because Mr. Temple wanted to keep it for commercial property . . . I always give Milton Bradford credit for getting this land because he went to Mr. Temple and talked to him and nobody else even thought about it."

According to church records, the Burke Baptist Church was first organized as a missionary Baptist Church in 1889. In 1901, it affiliated with the General Convention of Texas. In 1905, the County Baptist Association showed the church with 39 members. The first building was located just north of where the old Burke Post Office used to stand. That building wsa moved to its present location in 1921 and still serves as part of the auditorium The first pastor was W.T. McMullen in 1901. The present church building was built in 1956 and 1957.

Bible Baptist Church was founded January 28, 1973, with Brother Austin Grandgeorge as pastor. In March of 1973, land at the present site on Highway 59 was loaned by Jack Carnley and was later bought by the church. Every June, Bible Baptist has a homecoming with dinner after morning church services and special music.

The Catholic Church, Our Lady of Guadalupe, is a mission church of St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Lufkin. The Diboll mission was established in 1971.

Angelina County records show that a Pentecostal congregation founded the Diboll United Pentecostal Church in 1928.

(Note: The church history material presented in this appendix was furnished by the churches which responded to the appeal made by the Diboll Historical Society for information. All churches were contacted.)

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Appendix II

"The Clubs And Organizations Of Diboll"

Besides the Booster Club, other civic clubs formed in Diboll and nearby Burke include the Lions Club, the Diboll Garden Club, the Band Boosters, Diboll Rotary, the Volunteer Fire Department and Auxiliary, the Masons and the order of the Eastern Star, a 4-H Club, the Jack Backers, the Pilot Club, the Fair Acres Chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons, the Fair Acres RSVP Craft Club, the Historical Forum (later the Diboll Historical Society), Cub Scouts, Brownie Scouts, and a Parent-Teachers Association.

Diboll also had an active Jaycees Club until the late 1970's. One of its major projects was to create a park and build wooden playground equipment. The C.H. Shepherd Park is west of the plywood plant.

Shirley Daniel, reminiscing about clubs and organizations of the 1940's, said:

"We once had a youth worker the company hired. We organized a Boy Scout troop and I took them on two or three camping trips. Then we organized the Lions Club. I was a charter member of the Diboll Lions Club and now I am a Rotarian."

A.R. Weber became Deputy District Governor for the Lions in 1940, and the founding club officers were George Smith, president, and A.R. Weber and Calvin Lawrence, vice presidents. Founding members also included Harold Turner, Kenneth Nelson and Foster Davis. In 1986 the Lions Club has 16 members, including President Thomas Lowther, Vice-Presidents Don Hendrick and Frank Mitchell, Secretary-Treasurer Richard Martinez, and "Tail Twister" Sam Glass.

The Diboll Garden Club, which celebrated its 25th birthday in 1985, was founded in 1960 at the home of Mrs. C.H. Shepherd, Jr. The purpose of this club was the beautification of Diboll. The first officers were President Marjorie Shepherd; Vice President Eloise (Mrs. Charles) Hanks; Secretary Pearl (Mrs. E.L.) Hoot; and Treasurer Gertie (Mrs. Calvin) Lawrence. Charter members were Mrs. J.R. Dale, Mrs. Ben Donahoe, Mrs. J.C. Denman, Jr., Mrs. Paul Durham, Mrs. W.B. Fulmer, Mrs. Ralph Magill, Mrs. F.S. McGee, Mrs. Ulman McMullen, Mrs. George Smith, Mrs. R.M. Neville, Mrs. A.R. Weber, Mrs. E.P. Ramsey, Sr., Mrs. Gresham Temple, Mrs. A.F. Vaughn, and Mrs. Lowell Wood. Activities of the club have included monthly gifts to the T.B. hospital in Tyler, beautification of Diboll school campuses, and tree plantings on Arbor Day. Current (1986) officers are President Sim (Mrs. Benny) Gowan; Vice President Edythe (Mrs. Charles) Weeks; Secretary Jean (Mrs. Jack) Rowe; and Treasurer Glenda (Mrs. Mark) Shepherd.

The Diboll Band Boosters was formed during the 1950's to advance the band program of the DISD. Rita (Mrs. Robert) Ramsey was an early officer of this club, which in 1986 had as officers President Dolores Hodsden; Vice President (Senior High) Vivian Glass; Vice President (Junior High) Bessie Furgurson; Secretary Kay Gage; and Treasurer Nettie Mann.

The Diboll Rotary Club, organized on November 14, 1972, had as its founding officers President C.A. (Neal) Pickett; Vice President Joe W. Elliott; Secretary E. Howard Daniel; Treasurer David G. Foster; and Sergeant-at-Arms Spencer Knutson. Charter members included Vernon Burkhalter, Perry Carter, Paul Durham, Nathan Edwards, Burl K. Griffin, C.M. Harbordt, Richard G. Hendrick; Russell W. Ingram, Frederick Wm. Kanke, Jr., Bert D. Lindsey, Ray G. Lloyd, James L. Love, Jimmy L. Lovelady, Robert G. Lutrell, W.J. (Bill) Oates, Ray Paulsey, Kelsie O. Roach, Charles J. Schmidt, Arthur Temple, Arthur (Buddy) Temple III, Arnold G. Tompkins, Arthur F. Walton, Herb C. White, Jr., and Ben Hite Wickersham. At this writing (1986), officers are President Louis E. Wagner; Vice President Ryan Sorrell; Secretary Felton Burt; and Treasurer John Minsinger. Activities over the years have included sponsoring scholarships, an annual fish fry and selling barbecue at Diboll Day.

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The Diboll 4-H Club was founded *"to help guide children to become better adults"*. Its first president was Lisa Burkhalter; its vice president was Cary Cheshire; its secretary-treasurer was Suzanne Burkhalter; its council delegate was Gina Donovan; and its adult leaders were Dick Donovan and Clyde Cheshire. Activities through the years have included livestock showing, fashion shows, and a foods and nutrition program. Current club officers (1986) are President Melinda Linton; Vice President Michael Linton; Secretary-Treasurer JonAnna Bradford; Reporter Shaune Martinez; and Council Delegete Bobby Cheshire.

The Burke Chapter No. 1098 of the Order of the Eastern Star promotes "fellowship and benevolent work for the wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters of the Masons." Founding officers of this organization included Judy and William F. Carrier as worthy matron and worthy patron. Current (1986) matron and patron are Mrs. Billie George and Richard Williams. The secretary is Mrs. Wanda Baker, the treasurer is William F. Carrier, the conductress is Jeanette Hurst, the associate conductress is Mrs. Lorena Ivey, the associate matron is Mrs. Sadie Jones, and the associate patron is J.T. Jones.

Fair Acres Chapter No. 110 of the AARP, founded June 19, 1972, carries out Medicare and Medicaid assistance free of charge as its service project. Founding club officers were Wallace McCurdy, president; Ernie Mae Simonds, vice president; and secretary, LaReine Anderson. Current (1986) officers are President Albert H. Cook; Vice President Miriam Windsor; Secretary Mrs. Beulah Beidleman; Treasurer C.G. McGlothlin, and Committee Chairpersons Mr. and Mrs. C.A. (Neal) Pickett.

The Fair Acres RSVP Craft Club, founded in February, 1973, provides an opportunity for fellowship and volunteer service for retirees over the age of 60. Sponsored by The Deep East Texas Council of Governments, the club pays an insurance premium on each volunteer. The Diboll Housing Authority gave a $300 donation for the club's initial funding. Founding officers were President Katie Schmidt, Vice President Velma Hogue, and Secretary-Treasurer Ruth McCoslin. In 1986, Katie Schmidt is president and Beulah Beidleman is secretary-treasurer. Approximately 25 volunteers donate their time to help non-profit community-related agencies such as the Diboll Housing Authority, the T.L.L. Temple Memorial Library, the Katherine Sage Temple Day Care Center, the South Meadows Nursing Home, the Wilson McKewen Treatment Center and the Diboll branch of the Angelina County Senior Citizen's Center. Early funding for this organization was raised by the making of quilts. Help provided to the elderly of Diboll by the club includes grocery shopping, transportation, easier mail service and a covered dish luncheon the first Thursday of each month.

Cub Scout Pack 128 is currently (1986) led by Wendell B. (Barry) Cook. Den leaders are Pat Grigson, Bobby Grigson, and Betty Barkley. Funded partly by the Rotary Club, the pack has had as major activities a father/son cake bake and a monthly cake raffle.

The Diboll Elementary PTA started out, according to Carrie Hemphill, as a Mother's Club during the 1930's under the leadership of Mr. E.W. Rutland. Mrs. Myrtle Rushing helped with the early membership drives. On August 21, 1978, it was rechartered by the PTA office of the State of Texas with Rita Shepherd as local president. Today (1986) it is active not only on a local level but also on a district level. Jan Wilkerson, the first vice president, is also District Program Chairman on the District PTA Board of Directors. Other current officers include Geneva Ard as president, Wanda Ford as second vice president, Glenda Tobias as secretary, JoAnne Musick as treasurer and the following as committee chairpersons: membership, Joyce Treadway; legislative, Fran McClain; publicity, Vickie Paulsey; and child protection, Becky Harmon. This organization, which has received membership awards for its increases, now numbers approximately 350. Activities have included Identichild, which fingerprinted 455 children in 1984, Santa's Secret Shop held each December, the Spring Fling held in April or May, and "Treat the Teacher Week" every February.

The Pilot Club of Diboll was founded in February-March of 1965 after an organizational meeting in The Pine Bough Restaurant. Its original roster of officers was Maron Parr, president; Pat Hill, first vice president; Kitty Glover, second vice president; Rose Havard, secretary; Emily Hickman, treasurer; and Jewell Smith, Flava Vaughn, and Lucille Warner, directors. The Pilot Club's two main projects have been a kidney dialysis machine purchased for Woodland Heights Hospital of Lufkin in 1971 by collecting green stamps, and a fund for youngster Jennifer Bowman to help with her congenital heart problem. Other projects have included a community birthday calendar, cookbooks, nail care, monthly bingo games, wheelchairs and Christmas fruit for the nursing home. Another project is the Maron Parr scholarship for graduates of the Diboll schools. Present officers (1986) are Jessie Conner, president; Dianne Tate, vice president; Katherina Trout, secretary; Oneta Hendrick, treasurer; and

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Vivian Holt, Celye Grissom, and Geneva Ard, directors.

The Diboll Little League was founded in 1950. In 1973, it was expanded to include girls. At first it was a Booster Club project completely, but now the Booster Club only supports 75% of the expenses. The rest is made up in fees. The Little League provides training and competition experience for 400-600 youngsters per year now, or over half of Diboll's school children. The adults involved at present (1986) include Felton Burt and Jack Cook Sweeny. Past sponsors include Jake Cobb and Milford Ruby.

The Diboll Memorial Auxiliary to VFW Post 8933 has recently been organized. The Veterans of Foreign Wars post in Diboll was formed on June 28, 1985, taking the formal name of Diboll Memorial V.F.W. Post 8933, with 32 charter members. Beginning officers were Carl Halsell, commander; Marvin Hunt, quartermaster; Clifford Conner, senior vice commander; Ray Rector, junior vice commander; Edgar Smith, judge advocate; Ben Bailey, chaplin; A.A. Thacker, surgeon; Melvin Abbott, service officer; J.D. Patrick, officer of the day; Jessie Malanders, three year trustee; Levy Ellison, two year trustee; and J.B. McConnico, one year trustee. The installing officers were Earl Lord, District 19 commander; Johnny Sims, Lufkin V.F.W. Post; and Gene Cherry, Henderson V.F.W. Post. The members meet twice monthly, on the second and fourth Tuesdays.

On May 5, 1986, Temple-Eastex, Inc., Diboll, Texas, presented the deed on two acres of land located on FM 1818 in Diboll to Commander Cal Halsell and Quartermaster Marvin Hunt for the post building. The mailing address for the post will be Route 1, Box 611.

A Ladies Auxiliary to V.F.W. Post 8933 was formed on Septemer 10, 1985, with 31 charter members. Begining officers were Ora Hunt, president; Helen Rogers, senior vice president; Betty Thacker, junior vice president; Ruth Bailey, treasurer; Alice Halsell, chaplin; Lois Ellison, conductress; Mildred McFadin, guard; Bobbie Conner, one year trustee; Clarcie Harris, two year trustee; Molly Martin, three year trustee; Margie Rush, patriotic instructor; Gladys Rector, historian; and Wanda Clark, secretary. Installing officer was Gloria Cherry, Distrit 19 Ladies Auxiliary president. The purpose of the Ladies Auxiliary is to help support the post activities. The members meet twice monthly, on the second and fourth Tuesday.

The Diboll Historical Society formed in 1984. The charter officers were Rebecca Bailey, president; Teena Kellam, vice president; Marie Davis, treasurer; and Edythe Weeks, secretary. The initial project of the society was the creation of a collection of taped interviews of long-time Diboll area residents. The taped interviews are the framework for this oral history book. The tapes and the transcripts are stored at T.L.L. Temple Memorial Library in Diboll.

(Note: The clubs and organizations discussed in this appendix responded to the Diboll Historical Society's appeal for information. All clubs and organizations were contacted.)

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Appendix III

"The Postmaster's Of Diboll"

The Diboll Post Office was established in 1897. Postmasters who have served are:

William P. Rutland	May, 1897
Watson Walker	April, 1901
William P. Rutland	September, 1904
Frank Farrington	December, 1908
Zettie Kelley	December, 1925
Anna L. Powell	March, 1953
Bernice Francis Hines	August, 1953
Edythe H. Weeks	December, 1966
Bobby Battles*	June 1978
Dixie Shaw*	January, 1979
Gerald Kerr	February, 1979
Harold Sutton*	January, 1982
Jim Bodenchutz*	December, 1982
Gerry Griffith	May, 1983

*Officer in Charge

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Appendix IV

"Diboll City Councilmen From 1963"

D.R. "Pop" Rich
Dr. Edwin Hoot
Charles Hanks
Nolan Hall
Eddie Shaw
Calvin Lawrence
Dr. Frank Eddins
Ward Phelan
Beatrice Nogle
Henry Holubec*
Richard Hendrick
James Simms*
Charles Schmidt
Darwin "Bo" Smith*
Samuel Coleman*
Fred Weeks, Sr.
Dr. R.W. Ingram*
Carl Pavlic
Merrell B. "Skip" Richardson
Carl Halsell

*Have served twice.

Mayors

Clyde Thompson	1962-1975	James Simms	1986-
C.H. Shepherd, Jr.	1975-1986		

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Appendix V

"Diboll Population*"

1914	1200
1929	1500
1931	1363
1933	1363
1936	1363
1945	1400
1964	2506
1982	5227

*Figures are from *The Texas Almanac*

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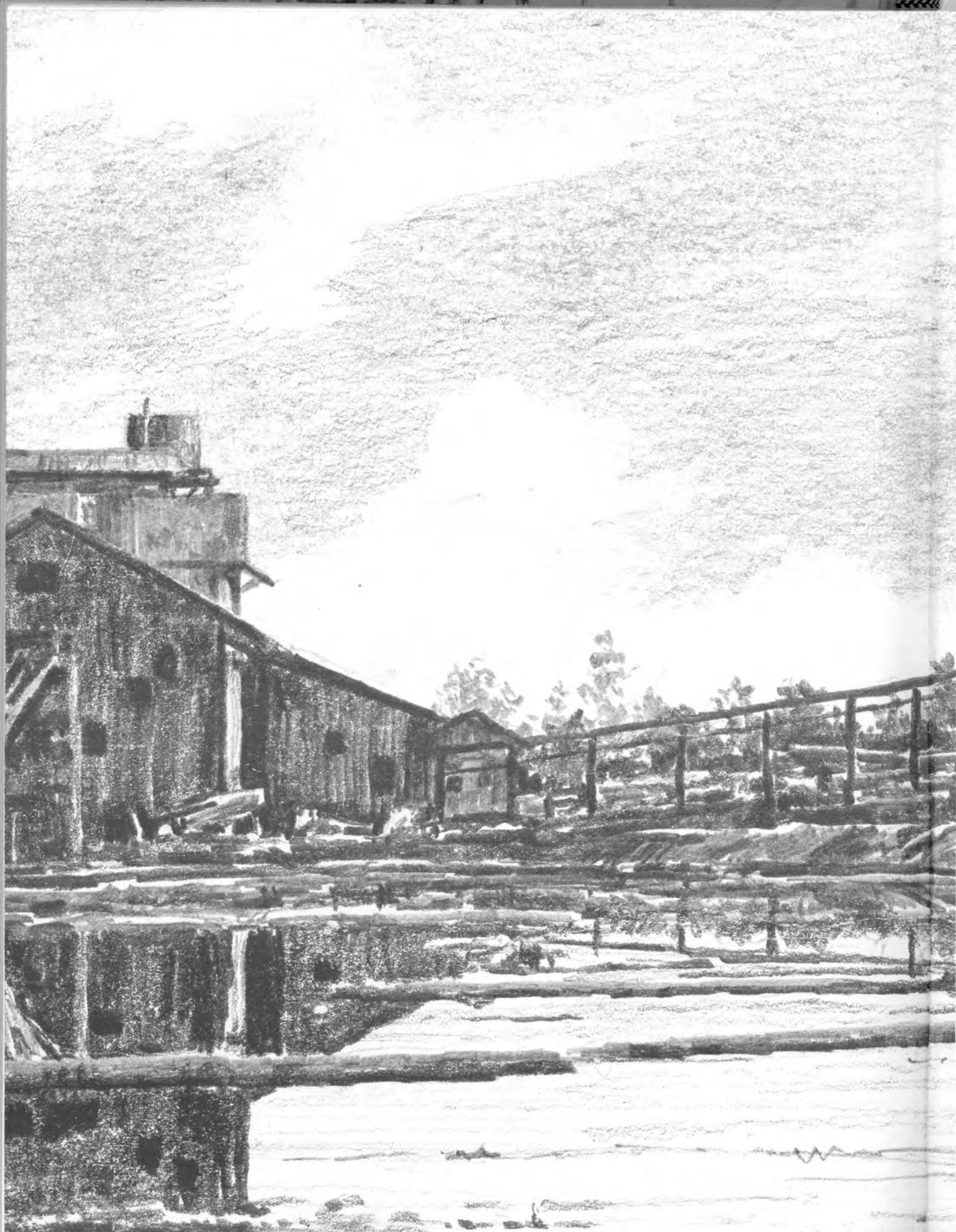
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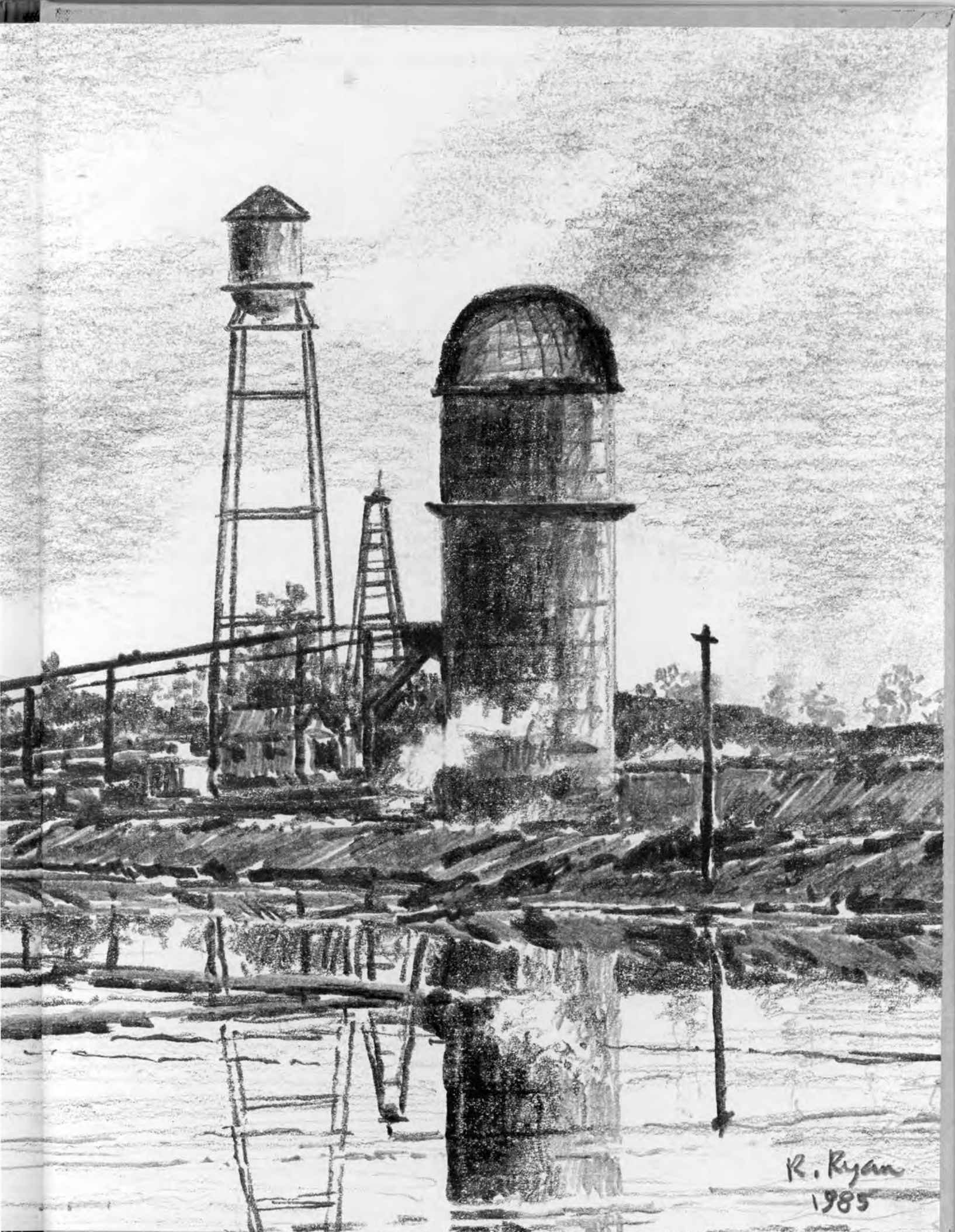
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The Cornbread Whistle is a 9 x 12 hardback book with over 100 pages of reminiscences from the interviews. It also includes seventeen sketches by local artist Raymond Ryan and over 100 photographs of the town and its people. Bob Bowman is the editor.

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