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The Clan of Toil: Piney Woods Labor Relations in the Trans-Mississippi South, 1880-1920. (Volumes I-III).

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trans-Mississippi South, 1880-1920. (Volumes I-III)**

Tarver, John Reed, Ph.D.

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col., 1991

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Ann Arbor, MI 48106

**THE CLAN OF TOIL:
PINEY WOODS LABOR RELATIONS
IN THE TRANS-MISSISSIPPI SOUTH, 1880-1920
Volume 1**

A Dissertation

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

in

The Department of History

**by
John Reed Tarver
B.A., Louisiana State University, 1959
M.A., Northwestern State University of Louisiana, 1979
December 1991**

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FOREWORD

When I first decided to undertake this project, I leaned rather heavily on my father's stories of his boyhood in the piney woods and his affiliation in 1912 with the Brotherhood of Timber Workers and the Industrial Workers of the World. Once on a trip to Allen Parish, Louisiana, he pointed out to me the home of the Brotherhood's founder, Arthur Lee Emerson. With a bitterness out of all proportion to the problem, as I understood it, he complained of some vague scandal involving union funds. He also knew that Emerson's daughter, Faye, had become a successful actress in motion pictures. She was born near the Industrial Lumber Company town of Elizabeth, Louisiana, on July 7, 1917, five years almost to a day after her father had been jailed in Lake Charles on a charge of murder. A jury acquitted him, however. To my father's way of thinking, Faye Emerson typified those piney woods people who learned socially upward and outward mobility.

Other than my father's union cards, now in the University Archives at Natchitoches, Louisiana, he did not leave much to indicate the depth of his commitment, if indeed it were commitment, to the radical union movement. By 1916 the union had collapsed. When the nation entered the European war in 1917, he joined the Yankee Division of the U.S. Army. He was the first of my family to take up martial, not merely private, arms since his grandfather had discharged himself from the Confederate Army after the fall of Vicksburg.

My research into this subject, then, has been something akin to self-discovery. Except in the record of dues he paid to the BTW and IWW, my father's name appears nowhere in the papers I have seen that relate to the "lumber war," but several other members of our family hold indelible if modest places in the surviving documents. My great grandfather, old "Whistling Dick" Tarver, unreconstructed Confederate and political radical, appears to have "sympathized," although he was never known to have held a "public" job in his long life. His son George, not to be confused with my father of the same name, found work in the mills along the Calcasieu River south of Comrade Creek, but, blacklisted, he had to support himself as a deputy sheriff in his later years. Another son, Richard David, Jr., was probably a member; at least, he subscribed to The Lumberjack, Covington Hall's fiery sheet. Sam, the most prominent unionist of his sons, attended the BTW convention as a delegate in 1913. Without doubt, every man and boy in the extended family joined the union, mostly, it seems, to spite the lumber companies, purveyors of an alien if appealing culture.

My great great grandfather, Allen Tarver, Sr., a blacksmith, left Brookhaven, Mississippi, in the 1870s, to resettle on Holloway's Prairie in the piney woods of Rapides Parish. There his son Richard David, Sr., joined him after having escaped federal penalties for certain threats and intimidations he and other bulldozers had aimed at freedmen and their political cohort back in Lincoln County. Richard's wife, Ann Dean, brought their sons, Jobe, Allen, Jr., George, and Sam, west across the Mississippi. They went out as blacksmiths and millwrights in a society that counted cotton gins and grist mills, many still powered by water, as factories. Commercialization

of the lumber industry at about the same time brought with it an invasion of skilled workers from the Lake States and other declining lumber districts. Local talent was not much encouraged, and these proud tradesmen refused to perform "common" labor.

Indeed, if any of this generation of my family ever worked for a commercial lumber company, it has escaped my attention. Resident in the "free" towns, those not totally dependent on the largesse of the lumber companies, such men formed the nucleus around which Arthur Lee Emerson built the BTW. My father joined the union at Lotus, Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, a vanished village situated on a ridge above Kisatchie Creek, now nothing more than a road sign on the "Longleaf Trail," one of those self-guided tours offered by the U.S. Forest Service in the Kisatchie National Forest. Having listened to him recount his adventures in company with his two older brothers, I think it unlikely that he would have taken such a drastic step without Luther's and Monroe's company and approval, although the latter two do not appear in the records either. Like their father and their uncles, these young men (in 1911, my father was 16 years old) did not aspire to common labor at the sawmills, although they went out as flatheads (log sawyers) occasionally. Their true occupation, one they had inherited from old "Whistling Dick," was a form of labor contracting that entailed the surreptitious removal of dissatisfied workers from one company-owned mill town to another equally squalid "quarters," without, of course, taking the trouble to pay the man out of his debt to the company store. Company managers were understandably outraged, but at the same time they used the shady talents of such latter-day manhunters. It was exciting work, but it

could be dangerous. In fact, Monroe died in its pursuit, although quite by accident, in the 1920s at Lotus.

In the meantime, the First World War had changed attitudes and expectations. My father left the logging woods and earned a teacher's certificate at the old Normal School at Natchitoches, eventually graduating with a B.S. degree in mathematics. Many years later, after he had retired, he took teaching jobs in several rotting Texas sawmill villages and in another small lumber town in the Cascade Mountains of Washington State. A few miles to the west, Willard Warren in 1914 had built the Snoqualmie Lumber Company mills at Snoqualmie Pass, east of Seattle, now the location for the filming of the popular television program, "Twin Peaks." I know now that my father relived in the mountains of the Northwest his own boyhood as a lumberjack in the great stands of Douglas fir and ponderosa pine along the western slope of the Cascades. I disputed him once, half suspecting that he had exaggerated his ability as a boy, with the ease of a seasoned traveler, to find his way unmolested from New Orleans where he studied automotive mechanics to Canada where he joined units of the Yankee army, from Seattle where he hired out to the logging camps to Boston where he learned the biases of his Celtic ancestors. His answer was the answer of the bonanza lumberman: the railroad, one of which passed the door of his father's house and reached to the ends of the earth. He simply could not withstand the temptation to follow it, and so he abandoned his lessons at Shiloh School on Caney Branch and set out to explore the world. Many others of his generation followed the same paths, which, figuratively at least, I have tried to follow, also.

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ABSTRACT

Lumber boomed in the Reconstructed South, an industrial binge that, by 1920, changed the landscape, first removing the forest then replacing its subsistence economy with consumerism. Men with money made fortunes in lumber. West of the Mississippi and south of the Missouri, it became a bonanza by 1880. Within these boundaries, black and white farmers and field hands sought "public work" in sawmills and log fronts. Most were unskilled. Steam power changed their lives, although all did not respond alike because their traditions differed. They kept their folk ways, consistent with the new industry, despite their bondage to machines. Although most workers voluntarily entered the proletariat, perceptions of capitalist injustice led many "flatheads" to try radical remedies, notably industrial unionism. Others turned to radical vigilantism, creating citizens' committees to fight the union. Company managers hired gunmen to support the Southern Lumber Operators' Association black list of "undesirable" workers, "infected" with unionism. The Brotherhood of Timber Workers did not expand from a base in West Louisiana. Lumbermen congratulated themselves on their costly victory, even as it became painfully apparent that it was hollow. Legislators quickly enacted virtually every union demand. Then war in Europe forced wages, and prices, to exorbitant levels. Although the union soon faded from memory, the lumbermen, nearly as quickly, vanished with the wild timber. They left on the next society marks that can only be described as modern.

INTRODUCTION

Clan of Toil, awaken! Rebels of the World, arise!¹

Late in 1912, desperate for a slogan to revive the sagging spirits of timber workers now in their third year of a losing strike, Covington Hall, the socialist editor of The Lumberjack, coined the phrase, "Clan of Toil," to characterize the flatheads and millhands of the Calcasieu long leaf pine district in Louisiana and Texas. An inspired choice, it recalled the Biblical admonition that honest labor pleases God. At the same time it celebrated the Gaelic instinct for mob violence in the name of brotherhood. Most important, however, it recalled the myth of Southern vigilantism raised up to repel an invader, a convenient substitute for class consciousness of the Marxist school. Unfortunately for the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, Hall's slogan came far too late.² Resort to images of clandestine resistance to the tyranny of lumber capitalists coincided with efforts by company managers to flood the Calcasieu district with a steady stream

¹ Covington Hall, International Socialist Review (1912), p. 471. On October 5, 1912, Hall also published in The Rebel, p. 3, the "Battle Hymn of Toil," a portrait of workers as starving slaves to the lumber industry.

² Ibid. See also Grady McWhiney, "Louisiana Socialists in the Early Twentieth Century: A Study of Rustic Radicalism," The Journal of Southern History Vol. 20 No. 3 (August 1954), 333-334. For an explanation of why the flatheaded beetle, Monochamus titillator (F.), took the name sawyer, and the human log sawyer took the name flathead, see Whiteford L. Baker, Eastern Forest Insects USDA Forest Service Miscellaneous Publication No. 1175 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 1972), p. 203, who describes the noise made by the insect, which approximates the sound made by the drag teeth of a two-man crosscut saw bucking pine logs.

of imported black workers. Although the BTW had bravely proclaimed that they would organize both black and white workers in an industrial union based vaguely on the defunct Knights of Labor of a quarter century earlier, they quickly exhibited racial hostility, a typical American response to black workers who presumed to act beyond white control. By the time Hall assumed duties as editor of the Merryville strikers' newspaper in 1912, the union had already lost the strike to management's superior organization and financial resources. Now the deluge of black non-union workers broke the back of white and black resistance to lumber industry hegemony in the region. The Clan of Toil did not gather in the piney woods after all, but it did anticipate the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan a decade later. The sawmill towns, it turned out, were only way stations on the latter-day underground railroad that facilitated Negro exodus to the nation's urban sanctuaries. Most of the large sawmills, whose owners and managers had contended with Arthur Lee Emerson and William D. "Big Bill" Haywood for control of the piney woods, soon moved away too, leaving the cutover district to the subsistence farmer and the peckerwood sawmill.³

More than thirty years earlier, when 33-year-old John Barber White arrived in the Irish Wilderness of South Missouri to build the first big commercial sawmill in the

³ The connection with the Ku Klux Klan has not been studied well, although vigilantism among striking workers aimed at non-strikers, mostly blacks, is well documented in newspapers of the day and in surviving court records. See Negro Migration in 1916-17, U.S. Department of Labor (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), pp. 93-97; George A. Stokes, "Lumbering and Western Louisiana Cultural Landscapes," Annals of the Association of American Geographers Vol. 45, No. 3 (September 1957), 250-266; Philip S. Foner, Organized Labor and the Black Worker, 1619-1981 (New York: International Publishers, 1981), p. 118.

region, he represented a fundamental change in the society and economy of the piney woods west of the Mississippi River. The lumber district then beginning to form south of the Missouri River was guarded by four great urban bastions at St. Louis, Kansas City, Houston, and New Orleans. Because of its rail connections with the region's principal market for milled lumber on the Great Plains, Kansas City became the principal entrepot. White prospered and grew old in the piney woods and came to think of himself as a Southerner despite his New England ancestry. In 1897 he moved to Kansas City to manage the Missouri Land & Lumber Exchange Company, a sales agency owned by White's Missouri Lumber & Mining Company and several other big sawmill companies, including O. W. Fisher's Cordz-Fisher Lumber Company at Birch Tree, Missouri, Judge J. B. Barnett's Ozark Land & Lumber Company at Winona, Missouri, and the Grandin interest's mills in Louisiana at Clarks, Fisher, McNary, Oakdale, Slagle, Standard, and Victoria. He steadfastly worked to further what he considered the interests of Southern industry. In the process he came to know and like other lumbermen of his era, R. A. Long, William Buchanan, Sam Fullerton, Hans Dierks, even the swaggering John Henry Kirby. By the time White arrived in Missouri, however, speculators had engrossed virtually all important tracts of timberland in the Trans-Mississippi South.⁴

Henry Lutchter and his partner, Gregory Bedell Moore, arrived in Southeast Texas by 1876, the year that Congress repealed the Southern Homestead Act, meant to give land to freedmen, and substituted in its place a system of public auctions for large blocks

⁴ John A. Galloway, "John Barber White: Lumberman," PhD dissertation, University of Missouri, 1961, pp. 19-22, 36.

of the public domain.⁵ Only a few other men made original purchases from the public domain after the Southern Homestead Act of 1866 ended, among them Nathan B. Bradley, a Michigan lumberman, 111,240 acres; Lutchter and Moore who milled lumber and shingles in several mills from New Orleans to Houston, 110,080 acres; Franklin B. Head, a land speculator, 104,800 acres; N. K. Fairbanks, speculator, 56,360 acres; William M. Rice, speculator and founder of Rice University, 47,960 acres; Jay Gould, 26,880 acres; and Alexander Thompson and Seaman A. Knapp, land speculators, 25,510 acres.⁶ The Lutchers and Moores, the Weyerhaeusers, the Goulds, the Dodges, the Packs and scores of others took up the land for a small part of its later value, buying it from both federal and state governments--Arkansas, Indian Territory, Louisiana, and Missouri; Texas had already disposed of its own public domain--and holding it for an increase in value that inevitably followed the railroads, then building at a furious pace throughout the region. Jay Gould pushed the Iron Mountain from its Missouri base to the Gulf Coast of Louisiana, then mounted a campaign to build the Texas & Pacific out of New Orleans into Northeast Texas - the Backbone Railroad, it was soon called. In the process, Gould acquired hundreds of thousands of acres of timberland, principally in Louisiana, for as little as five cents an acre.⁷ Forty years later, his son, George

⁵ For a firsthand account of Henry J. Lutchter and Gregory Bedell Moore's move to the Trans-Mississippi South, see the Moore Diary dated 1876-1877 in the Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company Records [cited hereafter as L&M], Forest History Archives, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas [cited hereafter as SFA].

⁶ Paul Wallace Gates, "Federal Land Policy in the South, 1866-1888," Journal of Southern History Vol. 6, No. 3 (August 1940), 321.

⁷ Annual Report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1877), pp 22-25, 77-79.

Gould, sold what remained of the huge grant to Captain White for \$90.00 an acre, spawning half a dozen new sawmill companies, perhaps the last of the big mills to join the harvest in the region. By the 1930s they too had cut out and faded from memory, identifiable today by road signs on secondary roads marking nonexistent towns.⁸

By 1914, according to reports of the Federal Bureau of Corporations, about a thousand persons, individual and corporate, held half the timberland in the South. Concentration of ownership was more pronounced in Louisiana and Texas, where speculators and genuine lumbermen had operated with virtually a free hand now for 40 years. In the years to come corporate ownership became still more concentrated.⁹

The 1870s and 1880s had been turbulent years, marked by extreme economic uncertainty. The size of business enterprises continued to increase and government to

⁸ The Annual Report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1893 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1893), pp. 11-12, 70-73, 106-127, 180-189. L. G. Hill, "History of the Missouri Lumber and Mining Company, 1880-1909," PhD dissertation, University of Missouri, 1949, pp. 20-21.

⁹ Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of Corporations, The Lumber Industry, Parts 1-3, Standing Timber (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913), pp. 140-141, 148; Ibid., Part 4, pp. 5, 75, 76-77, 126, 129, 131, 138, 143, 149-151, 153, 155, 158-159. See also Michael Williams, Americans and Their Forests: A Historical Geography (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 263-264. Strangely enough, Williams, an Oxford University geographer, is least trustworthy in his geographical references to American forestry, in which he makes a great many errors. His reference on p. 277 to "Bayou Parish" in Louisiana, for example, leaves the impression of fundamental inaccuracy since no such parish ever existed. Even more serious was his placing the 4 L Company logging operations in Natchitoches and Sabine Parishes in the Upper Calcasieu Basin (pp. 257-258), when they occupied the scarp slope of the Kisatchie Wold. Comrade Creek in Vernon Parish heads on the dip slope of the wold and joins the Calcasieu below Devil's Swamp. These inadvertencies, however, should not detract from his sure grasp of other aspects of the forestry industry in the United States.

grow more corrupt. Workers grew increasingly restive, their discontent spilling over into strikes and walkouts despite bureaucratic and judicial efforts to contain them. The courts generally studied ways to overturn much of the Reconstruction legislation on behalf of freedmen, culminating in the novel use of the Fourteenth Amendment to protect corporations. In the South, the nation's economic policies served at once to "cartelize," as Mancur Olson phrased it, the labor force to establish wage differentials between the former Confederacy and the rest of the nation, and to improve public services, particularly railroad transportation facilities, the better to remove the region's considerable natural resources in minerals, fuels, timber, and agricultural products—cotton, sugar, tobacco, and livestock.¹⁰

The most elusive element in the formula for a successful frontier industry was invariably the forms and conditions of labor. It was often slave or some other form of forced labor, including indentured servants and those who lived in peonage. It could also be a form of patronage based on the family or clan or even a common nationality. The manufacture and export of lumber began during the French regime in the lower Mississippi Valley, only to decline in the Spanish period after 1763. After the Louisiana Purchase, the trade revived, with New Orleans serving as the market for massive amounts of lumber, most of which fed the city's building boom and served the plantation country. The region had a variety of mills powered by human and animal labor, by wind and water, and finally by steam. Slave and free labor manned the mills and woods, and

¹⁰ Mancur Olson, "The South Will Fall Again: The South as Leader and Laggard in Economic Growth," Southern Economic Journal Vol. 49 (1983) pp. 917-932.

particularly the river rafts. The Taliaferro, Patterson, and Bowie families prospered in the lumber industry. A white sawyer at the Taliaferro mill in Catahoula Parish, Louisiana, in the 1820s commanded a wage from \$40.00 to \$50.00 a month.¹¹ Negroes, slave and free, worked as axmen in an era when trees were felled by chopping rather than by sawing. The same men made the logs into rafts for shipment to the mills. White workers in the early mills were often transients, or they took occasional work away from their farms. Mill owners found it necessary to provide room and board for their workers, usually at no cost to the workers. Many early lumbermen combined sawmilling with planting, because manufacturing lumber often added to the profitability of their plantations. Not a few lumbermen found it possible to rise to the planter class primarily on the strength of their lumber trade. Still, it was not a calling recommended for the incompetent worker or manager. A successful steam sawmill required capital, hard work, economical management, and a great deal of luck, a formula that remained valid throughout the bonanza period. Sawmillers found laborers where they could; many skilled workers came south from the Northeast and Lake States as early as the 1840s. In 1810, even before any state had been carved out of the Purchase, 34 sawmills operated in Orleans Territory, soon to become the State of Louisiana. At the beginning of the Civil War, 166 mills operated in the State with 1,088 workers at a cost of \$300,706 in

¹¹ Taliaferro Papers, No. 1047, C-15, Folders 1, 3-5, LSU.

labor or \$250 per capita annually. In East Texas at the same time, 192 mills operated with 1,132 workers at a cost of \$362,616 in wages.¹²

In the late nineteenth century, however, labor in America was free, politically if not economically. The Trans-Mississippi South in 1880 had only recently been compelled, along with the rest of the Confederate South, to return grudgingly to the Union, its society and industry--and particularly its peculiar labor system--in total disarray. The coming of railroads and factories introduced the New South, that mental construct of Southern boomers, prophets of a halcyon future based primarily on cheap labor and easily accessible if not entirely free natural resources. Virtually all labor in the South was common or unskilled, terms that, unfortunately, do not adequately describe the talents and manipulative skills of Southerners, black or white. Converting a largely agricultural labor force into industrial operatives, the caretakers of machines, did little to improve the efficiency of Southern workers, let alone any improvement in societal patterns. This was particularly true of the relations between two obscure and primitive peoples, the virtually illiterate black freedmen of the plantations and the functionally illiterate white "plain folk" of the swamps and highlands. All the propaganda generated by New South advocates could not obscure the simple fact that the working people of the South were a miserable lot at best, and time would prove to many an aspiring capitalist that Southern labor could be cantankerous, myth-ridden, avaricious, and irretrievably

¹² John A. Eisterhold, "Lumber and Trade in the Lower Mississippi Valley and New Orleans, 1800-1860," Louisiana History Vol. 13 (Winter 1972), pp. 71-72, 75, 77, 78, 80-82, 84; see also the Taliaferro Papers, No. 1047, C-15, Folders 1, 3-5, Special Collection, Louisiana State University Archives, Baton Rouge [cited hereafter as LSU].

ignorant. Southern workers, they found also, could be loyal, hardworking, accommodating, and cheap. Southerners gleefully left the farms and homesteads of their fathers and cleaved to the new spirit of progress, taking up the ways of commerce and industry, temporarily at least. In the lumber mills, as in most extractive industries, everyone knew that it could not last, the veins of coal or lead or iron ore would run out, the oil and gas wells would run dry, the stands of timber would soon fall to the axe not to reappear for hundreds of years if at all, even the land would wear out and wash away. This was bonanza business; it was also bonanza labor.¹³

The logging woods, the railroad trams, and the sawmills were only means to a distant and often misunderstood end. Chief among the results of the rise and fall of commercial lumber in the region was the urbanization of a rural population. It was not simply a matter of country people moving to the city. Indeed, few of the sawmill towns could even remotely be considered cities, but they were urban in their habits and responses. And with the coming of the rails that soon connected St. Louis and Kansas City with New Orleans and Houston--along with scores of lesser municipalities--the flathead on the remotest lumber front in the piney woods could justifiably consider himself the equal of any denizen of any city in the nation. The interstices remained wild land inhabited by scattered settlers and farmers, but the mesh of steel rails created an

¹³ Thomas D. Clark, "The Impact of the Timber Industry on the South," Mississippi Quarterly Vol. 25 (Spring 1972), 158-161. For a first-hand account of migration west to the piney woods, see the Henry Sloan Reed diary, November 9 to December 25, 1868, cited in Lawrence E. Eichelberger, "A Partial History of Golden Memorial Park, Jackson, Mississippi" (n.d.), mimeographed copy in Author's Collection. Reed and his neighbors left Georgia as a group and made their way into the piney woods of West Louisiana.

extended urban society that functioned on behalf, and at the behest, of great urban capitalists in distant centers, even beyond St. Louis. The individual worker, faced with this complex society and its compelling rewards and punishments, had virtually no alternative except to conform to the dictates of faceless managers housed in great corporate headquarters at the other end of the rail line, wherever it might lead. When Arthur Lee Emerson first appeared, clothed in the mystique of the lodge hall and proclaiming a new departure, a venture that would give individual men a structure for the expression of their own hopes and discontents, the workers of the piney woods and many in the cypress swamps and the hardwood flats hastened to join him. It is clear that most of them did not anticipate the storm of abuse and threats of violence that were to be heaped upon their heads. In short order, they met defeat at the hands of men far better prepared to deal with such a crisis; the ignorance and ineptitude of workers and the hubris of union leaders who cast themselves as creators of a new industrial order left them exposed to the attacks of trained and even talented servants of the corporation, the actual nature of which still confused virtually everyone in America.¹⁴

Lumber, probably riven shingles, shakes, and pickets, was perhaps the first product of the French colony of Louisiane, a province created by wishful thinking to encompass the Mississippi River System from Western Pennsylvania to the Rocky Mountains south to the Gulf of Mexico.¹⁵ In time logs and lumber would become one

¹⁴ James E. Fickle, "The Louisiana-Texas Lumber War of 1911-1912," Louisiana History Vol. 16, No. 1 (Winter 1975), 76-77, 83-84.

¹⁵ John E. Hobbs, "The Beginnings of Lumbering as an Industry in the New World, and First Efforts at Forest Protection: A Historical Study," Forestry Quarterly Vol.4

of the principal cargoes of downriver traffic [little of it ever went upriver]. Sawmills grew up along the rivers and lakes to cut the abundant pine and cypress of the region. Until the advent of railroads, however, the harvest of timber reached no more than a few miles from the streams, leaving in the public domain a vast stand of wild timber.¹⁶ Rails came late to the Trans-Mississippi South, crossing Missouri along the Missouri River from St. Louis to Kansas City soon after the end of the Civil War. By the 1870s, rails had turned south and southwest, crossed Arkansas and the Indian Territory and reached Northeast Texas. At the same time, entrepreneurs on Buffalo Bayou north of Galveston Bay had begun the construction of local railroads that soon became tied into the roads out of Kansas City with the Route of the Crow, the Kansas City Southern Railway. In the 1880s railroads reached into the Arkansas and Missouri Ozarks, crossed West Louisiana diagonally from northeast to southwest, then moved from New Orleans to Northwest Louisiana and Northeast Texas. Until the turn of the century, however, these rail lines had managed adroitly to skirt around the fringes of the vast Calcasieu long leaf pine district in both Louisiana and Texas by clinging closely to the farming districts.¹⁷ In 1898, Arthur Stilwell began construction of the Kansas City, Pittsburg & Gulf Railroad, tying together the States of Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas, Oklahoma,

(1906), 19. See also, Margaret Fisher Dalrymple, ed., The Merchant of Manchac: The Letterbooks of John Fitzpatrick, 1768-1790 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), pp. 38-39, 112, 113.

¹⁶ Michael Williams, Americans and Their Forests: A Historical Geography (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 253, 344.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 297-299. See also, Archer H. Mayor, Southern Timberman: The Legacy of William Buchanan (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988), pp. 3, 7, 14, 15, 21.

Louisiana, and Texas, and reaching the right bank of Sabine Lake in 1900 at Port Arthur, Texas, a town Stilwell had laid out as the Gulf port for Kansas City. With the exception of some secondary tracks and a great many lumber company trans and spurs, Stilwell's road was the last and perhaps the most important in the piney woods. It opened for the harvest the last great stands of wild timberlands in the South, particularly in the Arkansas and Oklahoma highlands and in the Calcasieu and Sabine River basins. Eventually it would merge with William Buchanan's Louisiana & Arkansas, a lumber tram that reached from Stamps, Arkansas, to Jena, Louisiana, the Natchez, Urania & Ruston tram of the Urania Lumber Company, and William Edenborn's Louisiana Railway & Navigation Company line from El Dorado, Arkansas, to New Orleans.¹⁸

The people of the piney woods, used to an independent way of living and working, had in the context of the New South to get used to an industrial sovereignty commanded by some remote and faceless person. This was not unlike the lessons learned in the late Civil War, when they had to cope with the commands of a distant government, Union and Confederate as the winds of war dictated. This did not go down well at all in the piney woods. The people there maintained a classless society by the simple expedient of excluding black people. To be sure there were problems to contend with, but life went on in a time-honored way.¹⁹

¹⁸ Ibid.; see also Kenneth L. Smith, Sawmill: The Story of Cutting the Last Great Virgin Forest East of the Rockies (Fayette: University of Arkansas Press, 1986), pp. 22, 125-126,

¹⁹ William H. McNeill, The Human Condition: An Ecological and Historical View (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. 24-25.

Of the 1.1 million square miles of forests in the United States, the federal government owned less than a third, most of which was in the Far West. By the twentieth century, the federal government owned virtually no land in the South, and the state governments owned only scattered tracts.²⁰ Although the first important lumber industry west of the river was in the Gasconade valley near St. Louis, much of the timber in South Missouri had to wait on the railroads, North of Missouri, however, along the Mississippi, the Missouri, and the Ohio, lumbermen sent down to the river towns at Keokuk and Hannibal, among several others, long rafts of logs and cants to fuel the re-saw and planer mills.²¹ On the rushing streams of the wooded areas of East Texas, other local industries developed. Peter Ellis Bean built a water mill on LaNana Creek near Nacogdoches, Texas, that powered a sawmill and grist mill. Later, he opened a lumberyard in the village and built a mill on Carrizo Creek. Farther south, William and Robert Harris ran a yard at Harrisburg [later called Houston] supplied by a mill on Buffalo Bayou.²² Along the Lower Mississippi, Spanish, French, and Americans developed early sawmills, based on timber supplies stolen from the public domain.²³ It had taken nearly a century for commercial lumbering to reach Shannon

²⁰ William H. McNeill, The Great Frontier: Freedom and Hierarchy in Modern Times (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 7; Henry S. Graves, "Forest Problems in the United States," The Yale Review Vol. 10 (November 1901), p. 238.

²¹ Hill, "ML&MCo," p. 21.

²² Sawdust, pp. 17, 85.

²³ John A. Eisterhold, "Lumber and Trade in the Lower Mississippi Valley and New Orleans, 1800-1860," Louisiana History 13 (Winter 1972), 71-72.

County, Missouri, where a mixed pine and hardwood forest covered a rough terrain, suitable for little else but growing trees, which it did exceedingly well. The railroad reached Shannon County in 1888, opening the towns of Birch Tree, Winona, Bartlett, and Montier. By the turn of the century, the Ozark Land & Lumber Company at Winona held 150,000 acres in Shannon, Oregon, Ripley, and Carter Counties. The Birch Tree plant took timber from a 65,000-acre tract nearby.²⁴ North of Shannon County, the land is broken hills reaching into Texas County, the largest of Missouri's 114 counties. Immigrants from Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee set up sawmills along the Big Piney River in the Osage Indian Cession. In Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, and Drew Counties became lumber areas, based on a mixed pine and hardwood forest. Warren, Arkansas, became an early lumber center.²⁵

With the introduction of commercial lumber mills, the capitalists had little choice but to build their own towns. Highly organized and rationalized, the town served the mill, providing living quarters and a commissary, even churches and schools, to workers and managers, and suffering intrusion by outsiders with exceedingly bad grace. Millhands usually made up the permanent inhabitants of sawmill towns, and sometimes

²⁴ Maida Thomas, "History of Shannon County," pp. 1-3, manuscript in the Western Historical Manuscript Collection, the University of Missouri at Columbia [cited hereafter as WHMC].

²⁵ Milton D. Rafferty, The Ozarks: Land and Life (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), pp. 172-178; State Historical Society of Missouri, Roadside Marker in Houston, Missouri, 1958; Samuel J. Record, "The Forests of Arkansas," Forest Quarterly Vol. 5 (1907), 296-301; Curry; Thomas Nuttall, A Journal of Travels into the Arkansas Territory During the Year 1819 edited by Savoie Lottinville (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1979), pp. 66-67, 80-81, 82, 115.

work gangs of black workers alternated between the towns and the fronts where they worked as flatheads. More often, flatheads who felled and bucked the logs in the woods were sons of farmers in the area. They sometimes lived in the towns but more often in camps and on scattered farms. Flatheads were, regardless of race, the most independent and unpredictable element among sawmill labor.²⁶

Piney woods farm boys flocked to the logging woods and to the mills where they first learned to appreciate the advantages of the urban life. It was not an easy transition for them, of course, because, like black plantation hands, they also appreciated the relative freedom of seasonal farm work. Black hands, having been imported from distant states, often in violation of local laws, did not usually have the option of going back to the farm; white hands did have the option and used it to the utmost. Indeed, white millhands and woods sawyers flowed back and forth between sawmill and farm with amazing ease. Many a farm prospered primarily because the men of the family developed sources of income from the lumber industry.²⁷ The lumber bonanza in the Trans-Mississippi South continued from 1880 to 1920, a rough approximation at best since commercial lumber enterprises long predated 1880 and some continue to the present; the difference is that neither the natural resource, the piney woods, nor the people remained the same. This was a time during which Americans formed branches of both the Red Cross and the Salvation Army, and American farmers, discontented by

²⁶ Ruth A. Allen, East Texas Lumber Workers: An Economic and Social Picture, 1870-1950 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961), p. 165.

²⁷ Galloway, "White," p. 42.

low farm income, acted collectively in Alliances that would spawn the People's or Populist Party before the end of the century. Farmers led the attacks on railroads, monopoly capitalism, and the gold standard. It was a day of trusts, hard currency, and high tariffs, a time of Republican Party hegemony. Throughout the period, strikes and rumors of strikes kept industry in turmoil, which it blamed on the more than five million European immigrants who had arrived in the United States before 1900. Businessmen invited the nation to pay obeisance to individualism, laissez-faire economics, and social Darwinism, concepts that found ready acceptance among capitalists and their sycophants. The South turned to industrialization as a remedy for economic and social dislocation, the results of civil war and cultural habits so complex that they defied either rational explanation or sympathetic understanding.²⁸

In addition to giving a plausible description of the Trans-Mississippi Southern lumber industry, this dissertation attempts to develop a thesis containing several elements. It argues that the Southwest, suffering a labor deficit in the late nineteenth century, had begun by 1880 to attract workers from outside the area. Lumbermen gladly hired foreigners to add to its mix of native black and white workers. It is obvious from anecdotal evidence alone that workers, particularly common laborers, continued their itinerant habits. They moved about from mill to mill, at least in part because an unstable market had by 1910 left mills glutted with lumber they could not sell. At the same time

²⁸ David Montgomery, The Fall of the House of Labor (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 240, 314; James R. Green, Grass-Roots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest, 1895-1943 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), pp. 204-207.

that Arthur Lee Emerson and Jay Smith were quietly organizing the Brotherhood of Timber Workers in December of that year, lumbermen had already begun a general curtailment in their mills. Managers responded to market forces, which demanded retrenchment, long before they recognized the threat posed by Emerson and his Brotherhood. Curtailment, they reasoned, could also be made to combat organized labor. It was not an auspicious time for launching a union in the piney woods.

Workers of whatever race or station accepted, if they did not actively support, the racist traditions common across the nation at that time. Certainly, managers, no matter where they grew up, actively and openly used the prevailing racial attitudes to control their employees, black or white. Jim Crow laws proved important tools in building a labor surplus and controlling wages. This willingness to take advantage of contemporary social reality applied as well to the leaders of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, who, mimicking company managers, hypocritically appealed to black, Mexican, and Italian workers, to entice them to join their ranks. Once it became obvious that most blacks and foreigners had no stomach for labor agitation, the Brotherhood turned on them, at times violently.

The Southwestern worker as such did not rush to join Arthur Lee Emerson's union; rather some workers joined the BTW. Unfortunately, from the union's point of view, not nearly enough workers joined to make much difference in the outcome, and a vast majority of lumber and logging workers actively supported management by organizing and joining vigilante groups camouflaged as citizens associations. If a self-conscious proletariat took root in the region, it certainly did not flourish.

It is equally evident that managers, for their part, did not look for leadership to company owners at the local level, not even John Henry Kirby in Houston, Texas, or Henry E. Hardtner at Urania, Louisiana. Although these two men developed significant public images of leadership among fellow lumbermen, the facts point to St. Louis and Kansas City as the loci of industrial and commercial power that ultimately crushed the union. Day-to-day operations of the blacklist, management's most effective tool, was left to a professional organizer and publicist, who answered directly to a board made up of middle managers. These men, in turn, looked for their directions to an executive committee made up of owners and high level managers, appointed by the officers of the Southern Lumber Operators Association.

It was, after all, an obviously one-sided contest; the BTW never had a real chance to win recognition, apparently the only union demand of substance. Whatever ray of hope it had the Brotherhood lost with the decision to merge with the Industrial Workers of the World. The IWW scared everyone, including management and their commercial allies, but more importantly the Wobbly leadership alienated most workers in the piney woods. The few adherents Emerson had managed to collect vanished with the first serious IWW strike at Merryville, Louisiana.

The most obvious result of union failure in the region was the importation of significant numbers of black workers into the mills, particularly from the plantations of the Southeast. Managers purposefully set out to change the complexion of their labor force. But it was an empty victory for the lumberman, after all, because the First World War created irresistible opportunities for workers, especially blacks, in the industrial

North. Management's efforts to create a labor surplus west of the River went for nothing, in the end, because of the black exodus and the military draft during and after 1917. Wages rose to unbelievable levels by 1919, representing in large measure a continuing inflation. At the same time, however, state legislatures enacted laws to regulate working hours, child labor, frequency of paydays, workmen's compensation benefits, and even the type of rule lumbermen used to measure the lumber a log would likely yield.

The society the lumbermen created in the piney woods soon faded away, leaving behind the flotsam of industrialization. The rotting towns and rusting mills created a depressing portrait for the contemplation of pious reformers and politicians. What most observers of cutover land and cutout towns failed to recognize was the effect the industry had on a generation of black and white rustics who learned their first lessons of urbanization in the protected enclaves of the mill villages. Here they learned to deal with the discipline of the machine, the joys and pitfalls of a money economy, and how to make public labor provide for an increasingly problematical future. Many of these people fell by the wayside in the mad rush to conform and get ahead, but still more survived and prospered after a fashion. Lumber managers and workers sincerely believed that they made up an essential element of the national market; they did much more, actually helping create a more modern and enlightened world. That they did so without conscious forethought does not change the fact that, for all its flaws and injustices, they built amazingly well.

CHAPTER 1

The Flathead Frontier

There are white men, there are Negro men, and there are Mexican men, but no "niggers", "greasers" or "white trash". All men are on the side of the Union, and all greasers, niggers, and white trash are on the side of the Lumber Trust.¹

By the time Nicholas Roosevelt piloted the first steamboat down to New Orleans in 1811, Oliver Evans in Philadelphia had begun to build efficient stationary and mobile engines for use in the South and West. Evans's compact engines weighed less than five tons. Improvement in weight-power ratios, however, cost a great deal in engine fuel consumption; steam engines burned great amounts of wood.² Despite technological improvements, steam engines sentenced workers to perpetual labor to feed them. Except a few favored skilled craftsmen, most men who worked around steam performed the lowest forms of stoop labor. To men who bent their backs to the rhythm of steam cylinders, the steam engine seemed hardly an improvement.³

¹ Covington Hall, quoted in James R. Green, "The Brotherhood of Timber Workers, 1910-1913: A Radical Response to Industrial Capitalism in the Southern U.S.A.," Past and Present, 60 (August 1973): 188.

² David Freeman Hawke, Nuts and Bolts of the Past: A History of American Technology, 1776-1860 (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), p. 83, cites Louis C. Hunter, "The Invention of the Western Steamboat," in Edwin T. Layton, Jr., ed., Technology and Social Change in America (1973), pp. 25-46.

³ M. N. Forney, "American Locomotives and Cars," The American Railway, edited by Thomas M. Cooley, 1889 (Secaucus, New Jersey: Castle Reprint, a Division of Book Sales, Inc., 1988), pp. 103-108, 115-121; Robert T. Kent, ed., Kent's Mechanical

The Trans-Mississippi South remained, by today's standards, sparsely settled. Few people lived in the Ozark-Ouachita highlands of Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma, and in the piney woods along the fringes of the Louisiana-Texas Gulf Coast only an occasional squatter eked out a bare living.⁴ Although the French and Spanish had settled selected sites in the area and claimed still more, British and German settlers did much more. The Austins of Missouri who did more than most to settle Mexican Texas remain the most obvious examples.⁵ These and similar immigrants formed the vast pool of laborers that later supplied the local demands of the lumber industry. Descendants of Negro slaves and of Indian and Mexican peons joined white workers in the mills and logging fronts.⁶ A multi-racial population awaited the coming of the lumber mills and trams in scattered communities along the sluggish rivers of the Southwest. Herdsmen and subsistence farmers for the most part, occasionally they aspired to higher status.⁷

Engineers' Handbook--Power, 11th edition (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1936), pp. 14-07 to 14-17; Ibid, Kent's Mechanical Engineers' Handbook--Design and Shop Practice, pp. 22-09 to 22-14.

⁴ Rupert B. Vance, Human Geography of the South: A Study in Regional Resources and Human Adequacy 2nd edition (New York: Russell & Russell, 1968), p. 53.

⁵ Seymour V. Connor, Kentucky Colonization in Texas: A History of the Peters Colony (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1983), pp. 1, 5, 8-9, 77.

⁶ James S. Laroe diary, typescript, Misc. Papers No. 253, and William F. Moreland Diary, typescript, P-20C, Misc. Papers No. 939, Special Collections, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge [cited hereafter as LSU]; Walker F. N. Boney, Southerners All (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1984), pp. 32, 38.

⁷ Roger W. Shugg, Origins of Class Struggle in Louisiana: A Social History of White Farmers and Laborers during Slavery and After, 1840-1875, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1939), p. 263; U.S., Census of 1860, "Preliminary Report No. 262."

These isolated people seem to have remained largely ignorant of the comings and goings in the larger outside world. In the fastnesses of their forests, they may have escaped the early results of uninhibited competition among industries, or the new technology that formed the cutting edge of the American frontier, and the new and untried forms of business and industrial organization. Slavery based on racial differences fell under the pressure of civil war in the United States, but other racial and ethnic prejudices provided methods for managers to control labor as effectively if not as completely as slavery had. Eventually, the common folk of the Southwest came to learn these things in a harsh and unrelenting school: the mill and the front.⁸

The Southwestern lumber industry faced labor unrest beginning in the 1870s, usually peacefully. Ironically, in many cases both labor and management in the lumber companies of West Louisiana and East Texas descended from the legions of poor and ignorant homesteaders in the Calcasieu long leaf pine district who took up government land only to sell the timber rights to sawmills at head of navigation on the Calcasieu, Sabine, Neches, and Trinity Rivers.⁹ The urge to work permeated the culture of the

⁸ Roger Lane and John J. Turner, Jr., eds., Riot, Rout, and Tumult: Readings in American Social and Political Violence (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978), pp. 218-219. In much of the surviving lumber company records, managers refer to the site on which logging operations were carried out as the front, the leading edge of the clearing of standing timber.

⁹ Annual Report of the Commissioner of the Public Land Office for the Fiscal Year Ending on June 30, 1877 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1877), pp. 12-36. Accounts of timber depredations on government land in the Calcasieu district take up considerable space in House Docs., 45th Cong., 2nd Sess., 22 Vols., VIII (1877-1878), p. 220, and in Senate Docs., 45th Cong., 1st and 2nd Sess., 4 Vols., I (1877-1878), p. 64, cited in Donald J. Millet, Sr., "The Economic Development of Southwest Louisiana, 1965-1900," (Ph.D. dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1964), p. 268.

day. It had something of a religious quality. The poor, regardless of race, manned the mills and fronts of the region with a dedication that bordered on mania, and in the process gave profits and meaning to the harvest of the land's vast wild forests.¹⁰ In the 1870s, Calcasieu district loggers paid choppers 20 cents a tree for felling; a chopper could make from \$2.50 to \$3.50 a day. Raftsmen on the river made \$2 a day, and teamsters received the lowest wage, \$1.50 a day.¹¹

Although the vast majority of Southerners worked for a living, making something of a fetish of the ordeal, they still had complaints that encouraged class conscious actions approximating union activity. After 1870 the National Labor Union tried to organize black and white workers in Texas but failed.¹³ Strikes and labor-related riots swept the nation beginning in 1877.¹⁴ The protests reached deep into the Southwest, where 250

¹⁰ Ada Morehead Holland, Mr. Claude (College Station: The Texas A&M State University Press, 1984), pp. 1-5, 8, 9. For an early description of the country between the Red River at Natchitoches and the Monte Grande, or Big Forest, on the Brazos River, see documents pertaining to the San Pedro de los Nacogdoches, site of the first Spanish mission in Texas, c1690, at a village of Hainai or Texas people, in Herbert E. Bolton, ed., Athanase de Mézières and the Louisiana-Texas Frontier, 1768-1780 (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1914; New York: Kraus Reprint Company, 1970), pp. 119, 163, 306-310.

¹¹ Lake Charles, Louisiana, Echo, November 8, 1879; Charles S. Sargent, Report on the Forests of North America, the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of the Census (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1884), p. 537; Stewart A. Ferguson, "History of Lake Charles, Louisiana" (Master's thesis, LSU, 1931), p. 44; cited in Millet, "Southwest Louisiana," pp. 273-274.

¹³ James F. [sic] Fickle, "Race, Class, and Radicalism: The Wobblies in the Southern Lumber Industry, 1900-1916," in At the Point of Production: The Local History of the I.W.W. edited by Joseph R. Conlin (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1981) p. 98.

¹⁴ Lane and Turner, Riot, Rout, p. 224.

black workers at Harrisburg, Texas, armed themselves and threatened to burn the town. The militia marched on the riot from nearby Houston and put it down with little trouble. Although it is now difficult to discover the cause of the unrest, newspapers, particularly the Galveston Daily News, called it simply another strike, implying that strikes, more or less violent, were a common occurrence. The ultimate peaceful protest was migration, and a great many Southerners joined in the march, usually farther west where labor still commanded a higher wage, if only slightly. Henry Adams, the freedman who led the Colonization Council in 1879, created the Exoduster Movement that eventually carried 20,000 black people from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee to Kansas.¹⁵ Other migrations enjoyed general support of the authorities.¹⁶

Strikes continued, particularly against the railroads. In the 1880s, those led against the Gould rail system in Texas cost 90,000 lumber workers their jobs, because sawmills depended heavily on rails for marketing their products and supplying their mills with raw materials.¹⁷ For the most part, these labor protests were peaceful, although the stress of strikes convinced a great many mill owners and managers that violence was

¹⁵ Eddie Vetter, "Henry Adams -- Looking for a Way Out," in "Freedom's Road," a special supplement to The Shreveport Journal, February 22, 1894; Bailey Thomson and Patricia L. Meador, Shreveport: A Photographic Remembrance, 1873-1949 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987), pp. 13-14; William I. Hair, Bourbonism and Agrarian Protest: Louisiana Politics, 1877-1900 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), pp. 90-91.

¹⁶ H. Ted Woods, Caldwell Parish in Slices: A Brief History of Caldwell Parish, Louisiana, 1838-1971 Vol. 1 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Claitor's Publishing Division, 1972), p. 12.

¹⁷ Ruth Allen, East Texas Lumber Workers: An Economic and Social Picture, 1870-1950 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961) p. 166.

imminent. Some feared their workers, followers of anarchism. The fact that anarchists became active in labor union organizing efforts gave credence to suspicions held by nervous capitalists.¹⁸ Employers made little distinction between trade unionists and anarchists, accepting uncritically the popular press accounts of troubles in the work place. In 1886, the Knights of Labor recruited Louisiana sugarcane field hands along Bayou Teche who struck during the grinding season. Sugarcane spoils easily in Louisiana if it stands late in the fields at the onset of cold weather, a fact that precipitated a violent response from planters. With the help of State authorities, the planters put down the strike.¹⁹ The 70 workers in the Eylan sawmill in Texas had better success in 1886 when they struck without organized union support to get the company to reduce hours of work from 66 to 60 a week with no reduction in wages of \$1.71 a day. After the employees refused to work for seven days, the company gave in and reduced the hours.²⁰

The milling of lumber, operation of locomotives and trains, and logging were dangerous occupations, and laborers suffered injuries and even death in mills and work sites that management had taken scant pains to design for the safety of workers. Fundamentally unsophisticated and largely ignorant of the machinery they used, workers at first made no protest at the lack of safety devices. Company records of the period

¹⁸ Lane and Turner, Riot, Rout, pp. 220-221.

¹⁹ James R. Green, "The Brotherhood of Timber Workers, 1910-1913: A Radical Response to Industrial Capitalism in the Southern U.S.A.," Past and Present 60 (1973): 165.

²⁰ Third Annual Report, U.S. Commissioner of Labor, Strikes and Lockouts, 1888, p. 579, cited in Allen, East Texas Lumber, p. 166.

contain scattered documents relating to the injury and death of workmen, although there does not appear to be any sure way of quantifying the problem. At best, it was serious; at worst, criminal. Injury was only one of the dangers of sawmills, railroads, and logging camps. The Grandin, Missouri, hospital recorded scores of illnesses among loggers and tiemakers from the spring of 1893 to the spring of 1897, including remittent fever, cold, pneumonia (Bronchial), cough, pain in the breast, hives, fever, constipation, cough and cold, fever and bruise, warts, general debility, worms, and La Grippe. At least some of the reported fevers, coughs, and colds, the most common complaints, may have been something more serious but unrecognizable, given the level of medical care of that day.²¹ And when people died in the lumber towns and camps, the company paid for the burial of those who were destitute and then lodged a claim with the county for the cost. In the spring of 1895, the Cordz-Fisher Lumber Company of Birch Tree, Missouri, entered a suit in County Court against Shannon County for the burial expense--\$4.40--for Mrs. Adkins. The next January, the County Court agreed to pay the lumber company \$36.50, the cost of "the inquest over the dead body of Horace Wilcox, a poor

²¹ Dr. W. D. Jones, "Log of Michael Carmody Treatment," October 31 through November 2, 1889; depositions of William Butt, John Conkling, George Nanna, Jeff Troutman, Frank Jones, Melvin M. Hazen, Frank Arnold, and Barney H. Krebs, November 11, 14, and 17, 1889, Missouri Lumber & Mining Company Records [hereafter cited as ML&MCo], No. 2557, Folder 6727, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, the University of Missouri at Columbia [hereafter cited as WHMC]; accident reports for 1889 and 1890, and Hospital Department Camp Service from March 27, 1893, to April 17, 1897, ML&MCo, No. 2557, Folders 6726 and 6728, and Letterpress Book, Vol. 148, WHMC. Dr. Jones's log and several depositions of workers are reprinted in Appendix No. 1.

person." Cordz-Fisher also billed the county for a coffin valued at \$8.50 and a shroud worth seventy-five cents. The county, not the dead, was left to bury their dead.²²

As the lumbermen maneuvered to build their mills in the most profitable situations and the most productive forests, Southwestern farmers responded to the growing industrialization in the South with organizations devoted to joint economic and political pressure. By 1774, Texas farmers had organized the Southern Farmers' Alliance in Lampasas County and Louisiana farmers had created the Louisiana's Farmers' Union, which merged in 1887 to form the National Farmers' Alliance and Co-operative Union of America. Usually called simply the Farmers' Alliance, the group merged again in 1888 with the Agricultural Wheel at a convention in Meridian, Mississippi. Small white farmers, the basic membership of the Farmers' Alliance, knew full well that their efforts would be wasted unless they could organize and control the vast number of black farmers across the South, a dilemma that would confront organized labor in the region in the years ahead. Already, agricultural leaders in the Southeast had begun to worry about the migration of black families to the west.²³ As a result, the Federal Government chartered the Colored Farmers' National Alliance and Cooperative Union in 1888, whose organizers and staff were white for the most part. Precedents for black agrarian protests in the 1880s can be found in the experience of the Knights of Labor, a union that

²² Proceedings of the Shannon County Court, March 1895; Cordz-Fisher Lumber Company vs. Shannon County, Folder 20541, U.S. Works Projects Administration, HRS Missouri, 1935-42, Roll 702, WHMC.

²³ Gerald H. Gaither, Blacks and the Populist Revolt: Ballots and Bigotry in the "New South" (University, Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 1977), pp. 1-2, 4.

recruited widely in the South, even among farm hands. By 1886, however, the Knights had begun to fade for a variety of reasons, most of which concerned competition with other labor organizations, notably craft unions.²⁴

Although the results of those chaotic years seem to have depended on senseless racial animosity, they actually turned on a deep hostility of an agrarian population for the maturing industrial system in the South. The bourbon and branch-water Southern colonel on the postbellum plantation is a purposeful myth; the Bourbon Democrat served industrial capitalism that he called the New South. Virtually all whites, regardless of social, political, or economic status, denied the concept of racial political equality. Populists in particular talked equality and practiced discrimination. In the name of equality populists sought to impose a class solution on a festering economic problem.²⁵

In the Southwest, industry late in the nineteenth century generally meant lumbering or the severance of one of the region's abundant natural resources. Work in the Southern forests seemed easy in comparison with the North woods, but there were unexpected obstacles. Winters were generally wet, and the season was not good for logging. And the lack of snow meant that logs could not be easily skidded any great distance. These disadvantages were balanced by the mild weather that permitted work in the woods and mills for periods from 8 to 10 months a year. Indeed, the labor proved far more strenuous than the same work in the North, which discouraged mass migration South. Southern logging workers averaged earning from \$20 a month in Virginia to \$35

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 15, 43.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 132; see also Hair, Agrarian Protest, pp. 244-248.

in Arkansas and \$39 in Louisiana and Texas. Sawmill wages ranged from \$22 to \$38 across the same area. West of the Mississippi River, lumbermen found the cost of labor consistently higher than in the Southeast, first because of the generally lower population and next because of the lower ratio of blacks to whites; black workers commanded lower wages and remained in heavy demand throughout the period.²⁶

Blacks were not alone in their situation. Immigrants, particularly from Southern and Eastern Europe, joined them. Although the South generally did not receive large numbers of immigrants during the period, Louisiana, Missouri, and Texas had significant foreign-born communities. Missouri received immigrants from the traditional migration route across the continent. Texas carried on a steady exchange in people with Mexico. Louisiana--New Orleans in particular--served as a port of entry to waves of immigrants, French, Spanish, German, Irish, and Italian in addition to black and white Americans from the Southeast and from up the river. A Large number of Italians arrived in New Orleans in the late nineteenth century, many of them clients of padroni, a form of labor contractor who reduced the immigrants to virtual bonded servants. Outlawed by the federal government, by 1897 the padrone system had changed to the boss system, the padrone became a commission merchant, imposing a fee or bossatura. An improvement of sorts, it nevertheless was subject to multiple abuses, occasioned by the immigrant's ignorance of the English language and of American practices and customs.²⁷ Italian

²⁶ Vernon H. Jensen, Lumber and Labor: Labor in Twentieth Century America (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1945), pp. 75, 81-82.

²⁷ John Koren, Bulletin of the Department of Labor, March 1897, cited in "The Padrone System in the United States," The Yale Review 6 (May 1897), pp. 90-91.

immigrants in New Orleans in the 1890s followed the tracks of the Illinois Central Railroad north into the Florida Parishes and Mississippi. As workers on the railroads they quickly found their way into virtually every railroad town in the Southwest. Padroni served as middle men in many cases between immigrants and employers, but the system began to decline by 1900 because of the growing sophistication of the immigrants, the increasing number of experienced Italian families in the region, and because of the large number of Italian immigrants arriving in the early decades of the twentieth century. In 1890, an Italian padrone operated in the vieux carre, then a major Italian colony in New Orleans. Padroni operated in Tangipahoa Parish and at Natalbany, Louisiana, a major lumber center of the period, as late as 1908.²⁸

The 1890s brought a series of violent labor-management confrontations in the North, South, and West, in small towns and in metropolitan areas alike. The period continued the clashes of the 1870s and 1880s between railroad managers and railroad craft unions. On top of the agitations among crafts, proponents of industrial unionism, organized as the Knights of Labor, pressed their claims against management on the one hand and against craft unionism on the other. In Alabama the Knights struck the lumber industry with walkouts. The Illinois Central Railroad about the same time imposed a

²⁸ John V. Vaiamonte, Jr., "Community Life in the Italian Colonies of Tangipahoa Parish, Louisiana, 1890-1950," Louisiana History 30 (Fall 1989), pp. 377, 378; see also Humbert S. Nelli, "The Italian Padrone System in the United States," Labor History 5 (1964), p. 167.

blacklist against striking workers. In Orange, Texas, workers walked out of all the mills there in a dispute over demands for the ten-hour day, a strike that ultimately failed.²⁹

For his part, the worker calculated a different value for his efforts. Time spent at work became the principal issue between company and union. "He may work for two hours with pleasure," J. B. Clark said in 1892, "for four with cheerfulness, for eight with submission and for ten with incipient rebellion."³⁰ Rather than measuring the value of a thing—a product or service—by its advantage to society, as their betters advised, workers persisted in weighing value by the length of time they had to work in tandem with machines. Although most labor-management confrontations took place in the industrial states of the East and Midwest, workers in the South, whether agrarian or industrial, found avenues of protest. The Farmers Alliance or Union was one method; the Populist Party another.³¹ It is the peculiar conceit of each political group that it alone may express the voice and the will of the people, that it alone is truly democratic. And if one group has a monopoly on the voice of the people, it follows that any other attempting to give voice to the popular will is illegitimate. In the piney woods, the gentle, not to say gentlemanly, way to deal with unpopular speech was simply to drown

²⁹ Lane and Turner, Riot, Rout, p. 226. See also Fickle, "Race, Class," p. 98; Gaither, Populist Revolt, pp. 15, 16, 36; Allen, East Texas Lumber, p. 166, cites the Alex. Gilmer Lumber Company records, Letterpress No. 16, and Galveston Daily News, December 14 and 16, 1890; Holland, Mr. Claude, p. 33; Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northwest Louisiana Vol. 1 (Atlanta, Georgia: The Southern Publishing Company, 1890), p. 557

³⁰ J. B. Clark, "The Ultimate Standard of Value," The Yale Review 1 (November 1892), pp. 264.

³¹ Ibid., p. 272.

it out. This device came to be known as "tinpanning," purposefully creating noise by beating on a tin pan or other object to raise the noise level beyond the capacity of the human voice to overcome. Unions used the device to drown out the voice of marshals reading orders of unpopular courts; management used it to prevent union speakers from talking to workers; Democrats used it on one occasion to disrupt the wedding vows of a Democratic bride and a Populist groom. In these and similar organizations there existed a close connection with the concept of the mob.³² In Orange, Texas, in September 1893, Alex. Gilmer wrote a discouraging note: "No mills running, the laborers are intimidated and are afraid to work at the wages they have been getting." In October, he added: "... anarchy prevailing in town."³³ The strike forced Gilmer and other lumbermen to make some changes in wages and conditions of work, but the next year, another general strike shut the mills for three months. Orange, Texas, although a lumber town, was not a company owned town. The city was open, and workers found it fairly easy to organize and to impose a strike, unlike workers in company-owned towns or the small railroad-developed villages along the rights-of-way of trunk lines.³⁴

In 1894, Chicago was shaken by the eruption of violence in the Pullman Strike led by Eugene V. Debs and his fledgling railroad union. The confrontation resulted in 25 deaths and property damage estimated at \$250,000, hardly as bad as the Pittsburgh railroad strike of 1877 when property damage rose to \$5,000,000. In Birmingham,

³² Ibid., pp. 28-29.

³³ Allen, East Texas Lumber, pp. 166-167.

³⁴ Ibid.; E. Benjamin Andrews, "Individualism as a Sociological Principle," The Yale Review, 2 (May 1893), pp. 13-27.

Alabama, on July 16, 1894, coal miners struck, and the coal operators resorted to imported strike breakers, 100 of whom were black men from Kansas. A gunfight near Birmingham left three black strikebreakers and a deputy sheriff dead, prompting the governor to dispatch troops to put down the disturbances.³⁵ And in Houston, Texas, Col. L. A. Whatley, Superintendent of Penitentiaries, sought an interview with John Henry Kirby, even then the operator of several sawmills in the Big Thicket, to "confer with you regarding the employment of convicts."³⁶ They met at the Hutchins House early on January 23, 1894, in time for Whatley to entrain for Galveston at 11 a.m. It was a wise move on Whatley's part, because strike-proof workers were in demand at the time. Most of the Texas prisoners had been employed in state-owned iron mines in Northeast Texas, but they might just bring in more revenue in the lumber camps. The reason is obscure now, but despite efforts of men like Kirby convict labor never caught on in the piney woods west of the Mississippi River.³⁷

Economic depression born of bank panic in the last decade of the eighteenth century temporarily curtailed labor unrest. In the 1890s, lumber companies confidently expected to receive waves of requests for jobs; they were not disappointed. Lutzer & Moore Lumber Company in Orange, Texas, got its share. Charles S. Barry, temporarily

³⁵ "The latest Labor Crisis," The Yale Review 3 (May 1894), pp. 113- 114, 117; Lane and Turner, Riot, Rout, p. 231.

³⁶ Sam H. Dixon, Inspector, State Penitentiaries, Houston, Texas, to John Henry Kirby, Houston, Texas, January 23, 1894, Kirby Lumber Company Records [cited hereafter as KLC], Box 1, No. 86-95, Stephen F. Austin State University Archives, Nacogdoches, Texas [cited hereafter as SFA].

³⁷ Ibid.

housed in the Brunswick Hotel in Kansas City, Missouri, enquired for a job as office man or in sales on the road. He had lost his job with the Tyler Star Lumber Company of Gilmer, Texas, on New Year Day, 1895.³⁸ W. Frickey of Pearsall, Texas, lost his job with the Beever & Hindes Lumber & Hardware Company "because of slack business" and applied to Lutch & Moore for a bookkeeping job or a sales job on the road.³⁹

W. R. Swett of Alexander, Upshur County, West Virginia, asked for a job as lumber inspector, for which he offered ten years experience, but he also offered to take any job available.⁴⁰ R. W. Spotswood had worked six years at the Seaboard Lumber Company mill in Fairford, Alabama, scaling logs, running a gang saw, and inspecting yellow pine lumber. He offered to take any job available.⁴¹ The Isabella Lumber Company went into receivership in the spring of 1895, and Charles A. C. Steinveg of Kentwood, Louisiana, found himself out of work. He had been superintendent of the Isabella planing mill, the stacking yard, the dry kiln, and the shipping department for four years. A German immigrant, he was 36 years old, married, and capable of handling a large crew of workmen. He was expert in yellow pine and cypress, a fact that he

³⁸ Charles S. Barry, Kansas City, Missouri, to Lutch & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, January 26, 1895, Box 1, No. 89-98, Lutch & Moore Lumber Company Records [cited hereafter as L&M], SFA.

³⁹ W. Frickey, Pearsall, Texas, to Lutch & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, February 12, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

⁴⁰ W. R. Swett, Alexander, West Virginia, to Lutch & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, February 8, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

⁴¹ R. W. Spotswood, Fairford, Alabama, to Lutch & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, March 4, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

offered "the best of references" to support.⁴² In a rough handwritten note to "Friend William" [Lutcher's son-in-law, William T. Stark], general manager of Lutcher & Moore's Lutcher, Louisiana, cypress sawmill, the elder lumberman discussed the visit of another displaced person from Fairford, Alabama, George F. Schott. "Give him a trial as clerk before we decide to make him manager," Lutcher wrote, adding: "Get rid of Blum. Very incompetent."⁴³

Lutcher also instructed the Orange sawmill management to find a "good Band sawyer" for the Lutcher, Louisiana, plant. "Ask him to come at once. We pay \$5 a day—try for \$4.50."⁴⁴ Orange replied in late July that they had found a band sawyer, Allen Nelson of Sattus, Virginia, who could cut 50 thousand board feet (Mbf) a day or he would "eat the mill."⁴⁵ H. J. Beam of Big Run, Pennsylvania, wrote to Lutcher & Moore to ask about the level of wages, the prices of land, and the need for hands. "Should you need men let me know or hand this to some reliable firm."⁴⁶ One of the company's own, Ed Webb "resigned because the job had been so disagreeable for the

⁴² Charles A. C. Steinveg, Kentwood, Louisiana, to Lutcher & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, June 13, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA. Steinveg later joined the Louisiana Long Leaf Lumber Company (4 L) as mill superintendent at Fisher, Louisiana.

⁴³ H. J. Lutcher, Lutcher, Louisiana, to W. T. Stark, Lutcher, Louisiana, July 1, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

⁴⁴ H. J. Lutcher, Lutcher, Louisiana, to Lutcher & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, July 19, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

⁴⁵ Lutcher & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, to H. J. Lutcher, Lutcher, Louisiana, July 1, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

⁴⁶ H. J. Beam, Big Run, Pennsylvania, to Lutcher & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, August 26, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

past two months" because of a controversy with his supervisor. He offered to accept another job.⁴⁷ R. H. Lee of Laurel, Mississippi, former employee of Eastman Gardner & Company, wanted a job as checker, grader, machine man, or timber inspector.⁴⁸ O. E. Lasey of Miller, Indiana, was looking for a job as bookkeeper.⁴⁹ G. J. Griest of Aurora, Missouri, wanted to go on the road as a salesman. He had, he said, 11 years experience, two in wholesale and retail yards and nine as manager of retail yards, six of which were with S. A. Brown & Company and three with the Badger Lumber Company, whose yard he had charge of at the time. He referred his prospective employer to A. A. White, Treasurer of Badger in Kansas City, and to N. Duncan of Duncan Lumber Company, also of Kansas City.⁵⁰

Joseph Bevan of nearby Galveston, Texas, asked for a job as bookkeeper, for which he had 20 years experience. He needed a salary of about \$50 a month.⁵¹ D. R. Stewart of Lockhart, Texas, wanted a position for 1896, to replace the job he expected to leave at the end of the current year. He asked for a permanent position with a good firm in the lumber business. He was 35 years old, sober, attentive to business, and a

⁴⁷ Ed Webb, Orange, Texas, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, August 15, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

⁴⁸ R. H. Lee, Laurel, Mississippi, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, August 12, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

⁴⁹ O. E. Lacey, Miller, Indiana, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, August 24, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

⁵⁰ G. J. Griest, Aurora, Missouri, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

⁵¹ Joseph Bevan, Galveston, Texas, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, October 26, 1895, L&M Box 1, 89-98, SFA.

thorough double entry bookkeeper and lumberman. He could supply satisfactory references from the Thompson & Tucker Lumber Company, for which he had worked as company manager since 1890.⁵² W. D. Starbird of Denver, Colorado, cast his job-hunting net wide. "[K]indly let me know what prospects ... for a thoroughly competent Sawyer and Filer (with) ten year experience in fitting, hammering and running saws ... all kinds of steam feeds and other later improved machinery." He had his own tools "for hammering and fitting saws including a Hanchett Bros Automatic swager."⁵³ John W. Warren of Grandin, Missouri, wrote asking for work in the office or on the yard. At 22 years old and single, Warren had already had five years experience in retail business. His reference was Captain J. B. White, General Manager of the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company.⁵⁴ And although an occasional need arose for specialized workmen, such as George Lock's request for a bricklayer to build the ovens in the mill furnace of the Lock, Moore & Company plant at Westlake, Louisiana, declining demand for lumber translated quickly into declining need for labor.⁵⁵

Earlier, when Lutchter & Moore needed workmen rather desperately, Bedell Moore brought a crew of Pennsylvanians from his and Lutchter's former domicile in

⁵² D. R. Stewart, Lockhart, Texas, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, October 5, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

⁵³ W. D. Starbird, Denver, Colorado, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, October 4, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

⁵⁴ John W. Warren, Grandin, Missouri, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, November 6, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

⁵⁵ George Lock, Westlake, Louisiana, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, October 11, 1895, L&M Box 1, No. 89-98, SFA.

Williamsport, Pennsylvania, to Orange, Texas, with the understanding that they would work long enough to repay their railway fares to Texas. The men, finding conditions in Texas not to their liking, went home to Pennsylvania at the first opportunity. Moore enlisted the help of Jack Laedlein of Laedlein & Long Real Estate & Insurance in Williamsport, to collect the debts owed the Texas company. Laedlein had to admit in the spring of 1895 that he could not collect from men who were "not worth a Continental d-m."⁵⁶

As the economy readjusted to the depression, appeals and protests decreased. In the second half of the decade, populism declined sharply, particularly across the South. It had never had much support from blacks, Mexicans, Germans, businessmen in general, and prosperous farmers. The Democratic Party, convened in Chicago in 1896, took over much of the Populist Party platform of previous years, notably the call for free coinage of silver. In the Gulf South by 1898 the populist revolution had been subverted and turned into counterrevolution. In Louisiana, for example, the reaction was completed with the new state constitution of 1898, which established property and literacy requirements for voters generally and the grandfather clause for those who voted right: persons or descendants of persons who voted before 1867 were not subjected to either requirement. In effect, the new constitution removed the black citizen from the body politic, a policy warmly supported by both Democrats and Populists. From 1890 to 1900

⁵⁶ Jack Laedlein, Williamsport, Pennsylvania, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, March 20, 1895; Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, to H. J. Lutchter, Lutchter, Louisiana, July 23, 1895, L&M Boxes 2 and 3, SFA.

black registered voters dropped from 127,923 to 5,320. As late as 1896, black registration had reached 130,344 in Louisiana. Black voters held majorities in 26 of the 64 parishes of the state. By 1900, however, only two years after the new constitution had been adopted, blacks held a majority in no parish, and in four years black registration dropped 96 percent. The pattern was essentially the same for other Southern states. Throughout the South, Bourbon Democrats, Lily-white Republicans, and Populists agreed to remove from political discourse the one disrupting element, the black, whose social and political control each party coveted and feared. Without the black question to constantly agitate the electorate, Populists returned to the Democratic fold, forming the dominant party, while Republicans reverted to patronage mongering.⁵⁷

The Census of 1890 pointed to one of the causes of the new racial system then in the making across the South. Already 1,000,000 blacks in the South had abandoned the plantation and moved to the cities and towns where they found jobs for wages. Pitt Dillingham, a New Hampshire academic, predicted the creation of a "vast urban proletariat" from immigrants leaving the Black Belt and the Mississippi bottom. The black tenant farmer, he added, had failed and had begun to answer the demand from industry for unskilled labor. "Thus by a voluntary and economic displacement and diffusion of the black the race problem of the South will be solved, and a new agricultural black belt will be secured. No race problem will be given to the North, because in no one place is the Negro likely to reach a dominant per cent." In any case, "the Negro is best levelled up industrially and otherwise when he has the maximum of

⁵⁷ Gaither, Populist Revolt, pp. 117-118.

contact with the white man's higher standards."⁵⁸ Dillingham had responded in an article for The Yale Review in 1896, in which he charged that A. A. Van de Graaff had simply applied "the American plan for the assimilation of any given race, viz., diffusion and contact versus isolated colony life either in town or country." After studying county rather than state statistics, Dillingham pointed out "the great size of the so-called 'white man's country' in the 'Upland South' and in the new 'Western South,'" where there was still unsettled land available to black families. Black Americans had become increasingly mobile, and millions of them had already moved into Southern cities and some parts of the North and West, representing a three percent change in their numbers outside the South. Yet he found "nothing strange or unpromising in it all." It is, he said, "a very far 'shout' from such facts to a race migration with complete change of soil, climate and occupation." More prophetic than he imagined, Dillingham saw the situation clearly but could barely bring himself to accept the facts of economic change facing not only the South but the North and West as well. First, however, a quarter-century of preparation would be needed to prepare the black man for his eventual trek North into the great cities of the nation. Meanwhile, Dillingham admitted, "The present uprising in the West and South shows suffering which has become impatient." Agricultural depression, soil exhaustion caused by "chop-down, wear-out, move-away" methods, peonage, tenancy, debtor farming. For the Freedman, "The problem quickly became, how to get this new goddess of freedom to bake bread for him. Almost before the shout over his newly-

⁵⁸ Pitt Dillingham, "Land Tenure Among the Negroes," The Yale Review 5 (August 1896), pp. 190, 192. See A. A. Van de Graaff, "An Unaided Solution of the Race Question," Forum, May 1896.

acquired liberty had died on the air, he felt the ancient despotism of the stomach, the pangs of hunger." In his new freedom, the black man learned to respond as an economic man, rather than as a chattel. It was a difficult lesson, hardly taught.⁵⁹

Only one alternative existed for the failed farmer, white or black, and this was in the mines and forests of the region, where capital had begun to flow into pits and plants, requiring a great deal of back-breaking labor that the unskilled could provide if the worker was lucky enough to avoid accident or disease. For its part, industry management sought the "successively lower orders of labor until now the negro is being introduced" particularly in the soft coal mines.⁶⁰ Despite the human and financial costs, however, industrial capitalism generally ignored the situation, depending for industrial peace on the strained concepts of laissez faire capitalism. On a more human level, Fred Kennedy who grew up in a score of lumber towns in West Louisiana and East Texas remembered the prevailing white attitude toward the Negro worker. "People, back then, were pretty hard on colored people the white people I knowed thought the colored was just a little above cattle -- they was all right if you had some hard work to do but they just done the menial labor, didn't none of them have any of the good jobs."⁶¹

Labor crises roughly corresponded to commercial crises both in timing and in costs. During the nearly fourteen years before 1898 for which the Department of Labor kept records on such subjects, lost wages reached \$190,000,000, an average of

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 195-196.

⁶⁰ John Graham Brooks, "An Impression of the Anthracite Coal Troubles," The Yale Review 6 (November 1897), pp. 306.

⁶¹ Holland, Mr. Claude, pp. 60-61.

\$14,000,000 a year. Employers lost \$94,000,000 in the same period, an average of \$7,000,000 a year. These data do not include the costs associated with violence, destroyed property, police expenses, legal costs, and the like.⁶² "The two most vital characteristics of economic life to-day are the long reach into the future of men's desires and productive efforts and the existence of a true world-market for most goods—the territorial extension of the economic organization," Sidney Sherwood wrote in an 1897 article, by way of an explanation and defense of laissez-faire industrial capitalism as the undertaker, or entrepreneur, that creates opportunities for commerce and gainful employment for merchant and laborer and products for the consumer.⁶³ Undertakers shaped production of goods to fit demand and estimated the goods necessary to meet future demand, thus rendering industry more efficient. Pursuing his theme in a second article in 1900, he argued that scarcity of labor was not a problem because of efficiencies of machines. "It is in the scarcity of competent industrial leadership that the effective limit to the growth of industry is to be found.... The real function of the Trust is to get rid of the weak entrepreneur."⁶⁴ Much later, Vernon H. Jensen agreed that cheap labor was not a primary cause of the shift of lumbering to the South.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, the region had a large supply of unskilled and undisciplined workers, many of whom

⁶² Henry W. Farnum, "Labor Crises and Their Periods in the United States," The Yale Review 7 (August 1898), p. 180.

⁶³ Sidney Sherwood, "The Function of the Undertaker," Part 1, The Yale Review 6 (November 1897), pp. 233-236.

⁶⁴ Sidney Sherwood, "The Function of the Undertaker," Part 2, The Yale Review 8 (February 1900), pp. 362-364.

⁶⁵ Jensen, Lumber and Labor, p. 71.

preferred to work part-time or on an occasional basis. Workers in the declining Lake States lumber industry, in large measure, did not move south, a land of few immigrants and plenty of cheap labor, conditions that did not fit the Northern worker very well.⁶⁶

On the face of it, Jensen's analysis rings true for the entire South, but when the Trans-Mississippi South is considered alone, much of his theory collapses. Cheap, of course, is relative, and relative to the Southeast, labor in the Southwest was expensive, although not as expensive as the skilled workers in the Northern industry. And despite the statistics produced by the Census, the Southwest attracted a sizeable number of foreign workers, notably the Italians through New Orleans and Galveston and the Mexicans through the Rio Grande border towns. The census failed to discover these foreign workers, a factor of the intelligence of the illegal alien not the failure of the census taker. Indeed, labor in the Southwest was expensive enough to compel saw mill managers to hire padroni and labor contractors who located and imported into the region Italians, Bohemians, Swedes, Mexicans, and blacks, only the latter race legally capable of asserting United States citizenship. In the region, Jensen claimed, lumbermen also felt compelled to build a modern infrastructure--the company town, for example--out of a tradition of Southern paternalism rather than from a desire to control labor, a claim that defies logic.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 75, 77.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 78. See also J. E. McCaffrey, Go South, Young Man: An Interview with Elwood R. Maunder (Santa Cruz, California: The Forest History Society, 1974), p. 188. W. W. Davis, "The Yellow-Pine Lumber Industry in the South," Review of Reviews 29 (1904), p. 55; George A. Stokes, "Lumbering and Western Louisiana Cultural Landscapes," Annals of the Association of American Geographers 47 (September 1957),

During the nineteenth century 20,000,000 immigrants arrived in the United States, lured here by the promise of high wages in industry and cheap land in the public domain. Nearly three-fourths of these people came in the 1870s and 1880s, many in apparent response to the Homestead Act of 1862 that changed cheap land to free land. Since 1830, nominal wages of American workingmen had increased steadily for the most part. From 1830 to 1860, real wages increased slightly less than nominal wages, but subsequently to 1861 they rose more. The immigrant class in America profited because he could accept a lower wage, at least for a time. Settled workers resented this, but in good time the immigrant adjusted to higher wages and responded much as any other worker. Generally, then, a workingman's income sets his standard of living, rather than the standard of living fixing his wage rates.⁶⁸

In the Calcasieu long leaf pine district and along the Sabine River, meanwhile, workingmen continued to search for gainful employment in the lumber mills and logging fronts. At times it was a tedious task; at other times sudden demands for labor developed. The Little Boy Lumber Company in Little Boy, Arkansas, early in 1896 felt the need for more laborers and could not find them locally. Almost in desperation, the company appealed to Lutchter & Moore in Orange, Texas, for help in locating workers idled in that much larger lumber town.⁶⁹ In winter and early spring the Orange mills

p. 41; and J. H. Foster, Forest Conditions in Louisiana (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1912), p. 1.

⁶⁸ Emile Lavasseur, "The Standard of Living of American Workingmen," The Yale Review 5 (August 1896), pp. 122.

⁶⁹ Little Boy Lumber Company, Little Boy, Arkansas, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, January 2, 1896, L&M Box 4, No. 1896-647, SFA.

depended on the flow of tributary streams in Louisiana and Texas to provide most of the logs from north and northwest of the town. In February, however, J. H. Dawson in Burkeville, Texas, wrote breathlessly to Lutchter & Moore: "Mr. Hughes is getting out cypress as fast as he can at the present stage of water he will have in the River in 3 or 4 days about 300 sticks that is all he will get this overflow the water has gone down here nearly 3 ft. and falling quite fast I will be at Orange about the first."⁷⁰ The river system proved unreliable as a bulk freight carrier. Company officials looked forward with considerable anticipation to the construction, then underway south of Kansas City, of the Kansas City, Pittsburg & Gulf Railroad, a line under the direction of Arthur Stilwell, a Kansas City promoter, who also had underway a new city on the Texas shore of Sabine Lake to be called Port Arthur to command the export trade through Sabine Pass into the Gulf of Mexico. James A. Goss, who managed the Long-Bell Lumber Company retail outlet in Monett, Missouri, in 1896, wrote to Lutchter & Moore in July to ask about climate and healthfulness of the new town.⁷¹ Goss had received conflicting opinions on Stilwell's new townsite, some claiming it was healthy and others that it was malaria ridden. Mosquito-borne fevers, of course, were endemic to the Gulf Coast, but Port Arthur was no more exposed to such dangers than other cities, including Orange.⁷²

⁷⁰ J. H. Dawson, Burkeville, Texas, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, February 25, 1896, L&M Box 4, No. 1896-647, SFA.

⁷¹ James A. Goss, Monett, Missouri, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, July 16, 1896, L&M Box 5, No. 1896-591, SFA.

⁷² Ibid.

The continuing national depression resulted in, among other things, an unusual flurry of applications from lumber workers in the North and West. Henry Lutch, from the Hotel Northern in Seattle, Washington, in the fall of 1896, sent W. H. Hile, originally of Pauxutawney, Pennsylvania, to Orange, bearing a letter of introduction to W. H. Stark. "Give him a position at whatever you may have," Lutch ordered. "He has had five years experience in the mercantile business. I will be home shortly after he gets there. I will then explain in full, why I want this carried out fast. He will make explanation if you desire."⁷³ From Oconto, Wisconsin, W. E. Davidson applied to Lutch & Moore for a job as filer that fall, also.⁷⁴ And S. F. Gillmore of Lorain, Ohio, offered to come South as a millwright. With 25 years experience building and operating sawmills, running Filer & Stovall feedworks for years, "I have built some of the best mills in Washington"⁷⁵ In Orange, Lutch & Moore had an arrangement with the county to give employment to bonded convicts. "You are hereby notified," County Judge C. L. Goodman wrote the day before Christmas, "that payment Nos. ...1... on Convict Bond of Mr. Henry Laws is now due. Please attend to this matter at once and save extra expense."⁷⁶

⁷³ H. J. Lutch, Seattle, Washington, to W. H. Stark, Orange, Texas, September 21, 1896, L&M Box 4, No. 1896-647, SFA.

⁷⁴ W. E. Davidson, Oconto, Wisconsin, to Lutch & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, November 23, 1896, L&M Box 4, No. 1896-647, SFA.

⁷⁵ S. F. Gillmore, Lorain, Ohio, to Lutch & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, December 24, 1896, L&M Box 5, No. 1896-591, SFA.

⁷⁶ C. L. Goodman, Orange, Texas, to W. H. Stark, Orange, Texas, December 24, 1896, Ibid.

From Collins Ferry, Texas, on the Neches River above Beaumont, William A. Davis, the master of the boom there, wrote to John Henry Kirby in Houston, in effect, asking for a raise. "Everything is moving along nicely at the boom," he assured Kirby, but he had been at the boom now for 12 months and his salary was still \$60 a month. He had "no kick coming," he admitted, but he needed a raise. "I am in the water as much as I am out of it ...," and the Reliance Lumber Company people continued to kick about the service they got from Kirby's boom, which "makes things unpleasant sometimes."⁷⁷ In Missouri, J. B. White cast around for a replacement of Miss Mamie Bunker, assistant auditor of the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company at Grandin, who had decided to return to her home in Silver City, New Mexico.⁷⁸ Economic conditions also brought White to a decision to sell some of the company's cutover lands in the Ozark Highlands. He asked A. W. Ollis of Springfield, Missouri, to look over 30,000 acres that he wanted to sell "cheap." The company, he said, also wanted to sell one of its peach orchards, and he had begun to inventory the company's farm properties, including the Butler Farm, the Beaver Dam Farm, and the Dairy Farm, all dairy operations.⁷⁹ To his kinsman, C. W. White, who had suffered from chronic fevers, Captain White agreed to help him find work. "I believe you should go farther away than

⁷⁷ William A. Davis, Collins Ferry, Texas, to John Henry Kirby, Houston, Texas, March 10, 1897, Kirby Lumber Company Records [cited hereafter as KLC], Box 1, No. 86-99, SFA.

⁷⁸ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to F. C. Cay, Topeka, Kansas, November 8, 1897, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Folder 1, No. 2557, WHMC.

⁷⁹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to A. W. Ollis, Springfield, Missouri, December 23, 1897; White to C. E. Slagle, Grandin, Missouri, December 27, 1897, Ibid.

Grandin, however. A position in a Western retail yard would be the ideal place for you" in a climate entirely free from malaria.⁸⁰

That December, as White and other Current River lumbermen incorporated their lumber exchange, the Missouri Land & Lumber Exchange Company, headquartered in Kansas City, they had already begun to look for buyers for their cutover lands. White spent considerable time and expense to describe to Horace Austin & Company of Galesburg, Illinois, the country between Grandin and Poplar Bluff, Missouri. Austin had offered to handle land sales for White's company, with plans to plant a large orchard, beginning with 60 acres of peach trees that would grow to cover 1,000 acres. The land, White pointed out, was adapted to growing trees, including fruiting trees. He predicted that the country would become a substantial orchard industry within 20 years. White offered to sell 5,000 acres of cutover land, asking only a small down payment.⁸¹ In Carter County, Missouri, as the century drew to a close, the Grandin interests struggled with the problem of cutover lands along the Current River. Homer Reed, lawyer, real estate promoter, and former postmaster of Kansas City, proposed in September 1899 to buy 50,000 acres of cutover land from the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company, taking an option and setting apart 10,000 acres as an experiment. Reed's agents operated mostly in Ohio and Indiana, selling prospective customers on taking a guided tour of the Missouri lands. "The Expert boomer who accompanies the excursion undertakes to get

⁸⁰ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. W. White, Williamsville, Missouri, December 27, 1897, *Ibid.*

⁸¹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Horace Austin, Galesburg, Illinois, December 29, 1897, *Ibid.*

them in such a cheerful condition of mind that they will buy land, and he asked us to furnish teams [of horses] to take about seventy-five or one hundred men onto these lands ... in the Bever Dam district," Captain White told his manager at Grandin. White had agreed to sell 50,000 acres for \$50,000, net. Reed would sell the land at \$2.50 an acre, accepting half in cash and the remainder in credit. Advertising for the scheme would reach \$40,000. Converting the lands to farms seemed at the time the only answer, at least in the short term, despite the nature of the soil that was not at all suitable to large-scale row crops.⁸²

In Upshur County, Texas, about the same time, Mormon immigrants from Utah had founded their initial colony in Texas at Kelsey near Gilmer, not to be confused with Remlig, Texas, Alex. Gilmer's other town, simply Gilmer spelled backward. The Marshall & East Texas Railroad reached the village a few years later, but it and the town declined after the First World War. In this period, religious, nationalistic, and communitarian groups found a great deal of marginal land for sale at bargain prices, although still other lumbermen competed for stumpage and timberlands.⁸³ In Beaumont, the Dies brothers, Martin and Thomas, represented John Henry Kirby in some of his more Byzantine land transactions even then raising the Kirby interests to prominence in Texas lumbering. The Dies firm had accepted a \$500 retainer from Kirby, but now in

⁸² J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Grandin, Missouri, December 27, 1897; White to E. B. Grandin, Washington, D.C., September 14, 1898, Letterpress Book, pp. 121 and 291, *Ibid.*

⁸³ T. Lindsay Baker, *Ghost Towns of Texas* (Norman: Oklahoma State University Press, 1986), p. 69.

January 1898 the partners wanted another \$500 because of the press of Kirby's business. Still another brother, W. W. Dies of Kountze, Texas, agreed to accept Kirby's retainer and to decline any cases against either the Texas & Louisiana Pine Land Association or the Gulf, Beaumont & Kansas City Railway, both Kirby ventures.⁸⁴

In Orange, Texas, and along the Louisiana-Texas state line on the Sabine River valley, Lutchter & Moore still depended on rafted and boomed logs from along the Sabine River. In Almadane, Louisiana, Dave Craft hauled and drove logs down Bayou Anacoco that drained the western third of Vernon Parish. Formed into rafts, drivers moved it down the Sabine to Orange and the Lutchter & Moore boom. J. C. Knight of Almadane was the company's chief representative in West Louisiana and made arrangements for the company to withhold enough of the purchase price of logs to pay river drivers. Knight's logs originated at such places as Rosebud and Miersburg, Louisiana. The rivermen depended on a system of branding logs, usually with company trademarks, much like branding livestock, to establish ownership of logs. Those intended for Lutchter & Moore carried the initials, L&M, for example. Lutchter & Moore scaled the logs at the boom at Orange and paid for them based on log measure. The company undertook to pay each contractor and workman his prorata share of the price of logs driven and boomed on the Sabine for the account of Lutchter & Moore. Independent loggers as far north as Zwolle, Louisiana, the new town on the Stilwell road, periodically boomed logs down to Orange.

⁸⁴ Martin Dies, Beaumont, Texas, to John Henry Kirby, Houston, Texas, January 4, 1898; W. W. Dies, Kountze, Texas, to Kirby, January 14, 1898, KLCox Box 1, No. 86-99, SFA.

In exceptional years, logs arrived in Orange from as far north as Logansport, Louisiana.⁸⁵

By 1898, labor conditions had begun to change, as indicated by the relative number of requests for jobs on the one hand and for information of workers on the other. G. E. Webre, laid off at the J. A. Bentley Lumber Company mill at Zimmerman, Louisiana, on the Red River, applied to Lutchler & Moore in January 1898 for a job as assistant bookkeeper or invoice clerk, an indication of the depth of business dislocation. Bentley & Zimmermann also had a mill operating at Plank, Texas, but it was soon to close, when the partners moved their operations near the rapids on the Red River, at Zimmerman and Bentley, Louisiana.⁸⁶ C. E. Ganniss, general manager of Missouri & Louisiana Yellow Pine Company's Pineland, Texas, Manufacturing Company, headquartered in Kansas City, told "Lecher & Moore" in January that he needed a log scaler, preferably one experienced in the long leaf pine district of Louisiana. "Can you recommend a reliable party for Feb. 1?" He could promise steady employment on the same tract of timber for the next half dozen years in Vernon Parish, Louisiana, on the

⁸⁵ J. C. Knight, Almadane, Louisiana, to Lutchler & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, January 4, 6, 17, and 18, February 1, June 21, July 23, 25, 26, and September 7, 1898; Knight to L. Miller, Orange, Texas, June 14, 1898; Knot Bros., Zwolle, Louisiana, to Lutchler & Moore, January 6, 1898, L&M Box 6, No. 1898-403 and Box 7, No. 1898-765, SFA.

⁸⁶ G. E. Webre, Zimmerman, Louisiana, to Lutchler & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, January 15, 1898, L&M Box 6, No. 1898-403, SFA.

Kansas City, Pittsburg & Gulf Railroad. Incidentally, he added, "what do you pay scalers?"⁸⁷

Wages, of course, were of critical importance, but differences in pay scales were only local, since most large mills adhered to a pay schedule adopted by one of the lumbermen's associations. In 1898, for example, Lutchter & Moore cut an average 65,000,000 board feet (bf) of lumber annually. Its band mill alone was rated at 45,000,000 to 50,000,000 bf a year on the basis of two 11-hour shifts a day. That year the company paid its millhands at the following rates:

Position	Basis	Rate
Foremen	Monthly	\$150.00
Filers	Daily	5.00
Sawyers (mill)	Daily	5.00 to 6.00
Block setters	Daily	2.50
Carriagemen	Daily	1.55
Edgermen	Daily	2.50
Log deck men	Daily	1.65
Trimmermen	Daily	1.50
Engineers	Daily	3.25
Firemen	Daily	2.00
Watchmen	Daily	1.50
Boom men	Daily	2.00
Inspectors	Daily	1.75
Assorters	Daily	1.60
Common laborers	Daily	1.30 to 1.50 ⁸⁸

⁸⁷ C. E. Ganniss, Kansas City, Missouri, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, January 25, 1898, L&M Box 7, No. 1898-765, SFA.

⁸⁸ Bedell Moore, San Antonio, Texas, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, February 25, 1898, L&M Box 7, No. 1898-765, SFA; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin 604, History of Wages in the United States From Colonial Times To 1928, Revision of Bulletin No. 499 with Supplement, 1929-1933 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1934, republished by Gale Research Company, 1966), pp. 463-468, 471.

At the turn of the century, Lutchter & Moore operated three sawmills under one roof, two planers under separate roof, a boom in lieu of a millpond, and lumber kilns and yards that included loading operations for railroads and sailing schooners. The company employed about six foremen for each shift. The sawmills needed three filers; the planers had two filers. Three blocksetters, five carriagemen, four edgermen, three men on the log deck, two trimmermen, two stationary engineers, four firemen, two watchmen, two boom men, two inspectors, four sorters, 25 common laborers stacking and loading lumber worked at the Lutchter & Moore mills. Each shift would have cost about \$160 a day, for a total of \$320 for both shifts. The profits, even when other costs such as sales commissions, contract logging, stumpage, service of the company debt, and so forth, were little short of fabulous.⁸⁹

While wages remained relatively low in the region, particularly in the mills and fronts of the lumber industry, the steam technology proved exceptionally dangerous. As though to warn his workmen that the sawmill was a dangerous place to work, the sawyer in Orange let the mill saw run into a twisted log that required the plant to close temporarily. Bedell Moore, in Lutchter, Louisiana, that February, took note of the accident at Orange: "I expect to hear that the Sawyer was the one probably at fault, he is usually so cool, he must have had his wits at work on something apart from his business as sawyer, am very glad to hear that no one was hurt."⁹⁰

⁸⁹ G. B. Moore, Lutchter, Louisiana, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, February 21, 1898, L&M Box 7, No. 1898-765, SFA.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

At Fields, Louisiana, in Calcasieu [now Beauregard] Parish, Craddock & Arbogast, logging contractors at the Lutchter & Moore front on the Orange & Northwestern Railroad, accounted for its cut of timber. The partnership of J. E. Craddock and J. C. Argogast put in the Sabine River at Nibblett's bluff, the dump at the foot of the railroad, 233,522 bf more than the company had ordered for February 1898, for which they expected no pay until April 20. Lutchter & Moore had ordered 3,000,000 bf for December 1897; 1,500,000 bf for January 1898; 2,000,000 bf for February, leaving 2,623,466 bf due the partnership on March 20. The partners had logged and dumped in the river 1,766,478 bf in March. "Our river man says it is not the logs we are putting in [the river] that takes so much room [in the boom] but the rafted timber you are buying" from independent loggers farther north, Arbogast argued. In addition, he noted that the company had changed the length of logs it needed for the Orange mill from 24 feet to 25 feet.⁹¹

By spring, the lumber business was again in full swing, and at Sabine Pass, the Longshoremen's Society objected to "scab" labor loading the Bark Shawmut, a coal barge making cargo for a back haul to the East Coast. B. R. Norvell, secretary of the J. F. Keith Company, ship brokers and commission merchants of Beaumont, offered to help shippers to "run this class of labor out of Sabine Pass." Cooperation among companies doing business through the pass was necessary, he pointed out. "It will never do to allow this gang to undertake to run our business at Sabine Pass and we must take

⁹¹ Cummer Lumber Company, Jacksonville, Florida, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, February 18, 1898; J. E. Craddock, Fields, Louisiana, to Lutchter & Moore, March 4, 1898, L&M Box 8, No. 1898-334, SFA.

immediate steps as the order is probably growing stronger all the time."⁹² War had also visited the American people again, and lumber workers left their saws to fight in Cuba and elsewhere in the Spanish empire. "I am a state volunteer, W. A. Cox of Hico, Texas, explained to Lutchter & Moore, "and will have to leave to-day [April 26, 1898]. When the orders are filled that I have sent in, you can send check to R. Y. Cox. When I get back from this war, I may have to come to you for some kind of job." Young Cox fortunately survived the hostilities, a fact that his uncle R. Y. Cox hastened to assure the Orange lumbermen: "Dr. sirs. Your favor of late date read and contents noted. The young man who was killed was not Walter A. Cox My nephew. he [sic] is now stationed 75 miles below New Orleans at Fort San Phillipe. he is getting on very nicely. Thanking you kindly for the interest you manifest in Walter, I remain as ever yours very truly."⁹³

In the fall of 1898, yellow fever struck the Gulf Coast again, prompting Henry Lutchter to warn Bedell Moore, then on a business trip to New York, not to return by way of New Orleans because of the quarantine. Despite the presence of yellow fever and other chronic illnesses in the Gulf South, lumber workers in the Lake States and other Northern lumber districts continued to seek employment in the Southwest. In September,

⁹² B. R. Norvell, Beaumont, Texas, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, April 8, 1898, Box 6, No. 1898-403, Lutchter & Moore Records, SFA.

⁹³ R. Y. Cox, Hico, Texas, to Lutchter & Moore, July 29, 1898; W. A. Cox, Hico, Texas, to Lutchter & Moore, April 26, 1898; J. C. Fontaine, Woodworth, Louisiana, to Lutchter & Moore, August 6, 1898; H. J. Lutchter, Orange, Texas, to G. B. Moore, New York City, September 16, 1898, L&M Boxes 6, 7, and 8, No. 1898-334, -765, and -403, SFA.

H. E. Garlock of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, wrote to Lutchter & Moore, asking for a job as a band saw filer. He hoped to get, he said, steady work the year around. The next month, Henry Gagner of Bay City, Michigan, asked for a job as saw filer, either on the band, the gang, or the circular saw. Still another Northern lumber worker, Andrew Myers of Edinburg, Indiana, applied for a band saw filing job, for which he had eight years experience. Nevertheless, the quarantine was a serious impediment to industry and merchandising in the South at the turn of the century. In October, Craddock & Arbogast wrote to Lutchter & Moore in Orange to explain a delay in delivering logs to the sawmill boom on Sabine Lake. Frank Belile had started down river with a tow from Nibblett's Bluff, but encountered the quarantine officers who held him for two days. Then his boiler broke down, which required a tug to bring the pull boat and the tow into Orange. The Mollie Mohr went up and got the logs, but the quarantine officers would not permit Belile to go down the river, not even to get materials to repair his steam engine. The logging contractors, to make up for the lost time because of a lack of logs in the Orange boom, dumped an extra 3,000,000 bf of logs into the Sabine River. A few days later, the contractors reported to Lutchter & Moore that they had cut and boomed 2,500,000 bf in June 1898 and during October 1898, that is "if it all gets to the boom" in Orange. Meanwhile, Frank Belile arranged with one Sealey to tow the logs until he could get his boat repaired. "Please send order for Dec. by 1st Nov. so we can lay out our switches [railroad spurs] to suit am't wanted."⁹⁴

⁹⁴ H. J. Lutchter, Orange, Texas, to G. B. Moore, New York City, September 16, 1898; H. E. Garlock, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, September 29, 1898; J. E. Craddock, Fields, Louisiana, to Lutchter &

Despite the danger of accident and sickness, men had trouble freeing themselves from their dependence on day wages, once they had become used to them. One of Lutchter & Moore's former workmen, W. B. Reid, who had turned to farming in Dacus, Montgomery County, Texas, addressed a plea to W. H. Stark in Early December 1898: "I've tried farming now long enough to convince me that I cant make a living at it and I am very anxious to go back to Orange and when I get back I'll stay. Now will you kindly write me and tell me if work is plentiful, wages etc. Have you still got Charley Parker in Planing mill? And are many of the old hands still there?"⁹⁵ The lumber companies of the region employed only men in most occupations. Few women worked for wages in the lumber company towns and only in the office and commissary in the early days. The raw sawmill towns, especially the logging fronts, were not really suitable for women of the Victorian era. Eventually, however, with the towns developing civilized amenities, sawmill operators turned to female laborers.⁹⁶

In 1899, J. B. White and O. W. Fisher, long friendly competitors on the Current River, joined forces to organize a venture in West Louisiana along the recently completed right-of-way of Arthur Stilwell's road that originated in Kansas City and terminated on the right bank of Sabine Lake in Texas. Fisher became president of Louisiana Long Leaf

Moore, October 22, 1898; Henry Gagner, Bay City, Michigan, to Lutchter & Moore, November 10, 1898; Andrew Myers, Edinburg, Indiana, to Lutchter & Moore, Boxes 7 and 8, No. 1898-334 and -765, Lutchter & Moore Records, SFA.

⁹⁵ W. B. Reid, Dacus, Texas, to W. H. Stark, Orange, Texas, December 10, 1898, L&M Box 6, No. 1898-403, SFA.

⁹⁶ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Mrs. Delia W. Urch, Kansas City, Missouri, December 23, 1898, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, p. 389, Folder 1, No. 2557, WHMC.

Lumber Company (4 L Company), and White served as secretary. Other lumbermen among the Grandin interests participated in the new company. As president, Fisher undertook to manage the new property at the town named for him in Sabine Parish. To help him, White sent along the 23-year-old accountant, William Willard Warren, known by his friends as Willard. Because Louisiana had the reputation for a high level of sickness from insect-borne fevers, White also sent his son, Dr. John Franklin White, to serve as the company physician. The two young men shared a cabin in the raw clearing as millwrights erected the Fisher sawmill, only recently dismantled in Wisconsin and Iowa and shipped by rail to Louisiana for rebuilding. Warren survived these early days in the wild forests of West Louisiana, but Dr. White accidentally shot himself with a shotgun after returning from marching through the outskirts of the town to drive away marauders who threatened the new company's black laborers. He died a few days later.⁹⁷

Earlier, J. H. Perks had served as the company's bookkeeper in Louisiana, as White and Fisher worked out the details of the company organization. In May 1899, White promised Perks a pay roll ledger, but in the meantime: "You can, with the small force you have, rule off some legal cap paper, which will answer the purpose."⁹⁸ Perks had been working at Grandin, Missouri, but in March 1899 he was on vacation. White wrote that the new plant in Louisiana offered a good opportunity for a man who could

⁹⁷ Herman Steen, The O. W. Fisher Heritage (Seattle: Frank McCaffrey, Publishers, 1961), pp. 60-61.

⁹⁸ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to J. H. Perks, Many, Louisiana, May 22, 1899, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol. 2, p. 303, No. 2557, WHMC.

manage a small store, which Perks would be expected to build himself. Because storekeeping would not occupy all of the bookkeeper's time, White wanted him to "keep the time of the men and keep the books, and tend to the commissary."⁹⁹ In fact, White would even let Mrs. Perks have the boarding house to run if it suited her. Problems with Arthur Stilwell's land and townsite companies delayed White's decision to send Perks to Louisiana, but finally in April he wrote definitely to the young clerk that the new company would pay him \$65 a month to go to Sabine Parish to "take charge of commissary and such other work as we may have for you at our saw mill plant at a new station to be called Fisher's Siding, six miles south of Many."¹⁰⁰ There was only one house in the new village, a boarding house. "You know what a new log camp is, and we will put you up a house soon as possible." White agreed to pay half of the railroad fares for Perks and his wife from Kansas City. If Mrs. Perks would agree to keep the boarding house, the company would charge the couple no rent. Then, almost as an afterthought, White showed his hand, which Perks could not have failed to recognize, because at Grandin, Missouri, the older man had cultivated a protegee: "Mr. W. W. Warren may also go to Many, as he has applied for a place there with us."¹⁰¹

By July 4, 1899, White thought Fisher's crew had overcome local resistance to 4 L Company's labor policies, which included employment of a large crew of black

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to J. H. Perks, Grandin, Missouri, March 22 and 27, and April 6, 1899, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol.2, pp. 162, 192, 229, No. 2557, WHMC.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

workers, mostly for menial tasks. Two conflicting conditions characterized the western tier of parishes along the Sabine River. First, the region suffered from a labor deficit, which translated into relatively higher costs. Next, the region lay outside the bottomland plantation region to the east, and thus had few black residents at the turn of the century. White settlers in the area disliked the black workers on two counts, first their race and then for the competition they threatened for jobs and wages. That Independence Day, White congratulated Fisher: "glad you are over your troubles concerning the negroes."¹⁰² It was not over, however, and would not be for many years. A few days after he completed the incorporation of 4 L Company, White wrote to his son in Grandin, who was working for the summer as the mill physician. Earlier, the elder White had discussed the need for a doctor at Fisher's Siding with O. W. Fisher. "He wants you to go to Louisiana in preference to any one else," he wrote to his son. "And he expects you to take summer courses in surgery. So get ready."¹⁰³

On the Current River in Missouri, meanwhile, White faced the usual problems associated with an isolated work force. Mamie Bunker who worked in the office at Grandin under the direction of C. E. Slagle, another White protege, suddenly resigned from the company before she had repaid a \$30 debt. Always the gentleman where women were concerned, White advised Slagle to write off the debt because the lady obviously had no way to raise the money to repay it in any case. And to Captain H. H.

¹⁰² J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, July 4, 1899, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol. 3, p. 267, WHMC.

¹⁰³ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Dr. J. F. White, Grandin, Missouri, July 20, 1899, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol. 2, p. 413, WHMC.

Cummings, one of the major stockholders in the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company and other Grandin properties, White explained that he had offered L. T. Bishop a job at the mill of his choice, but "the wilderness of Missouri or Louisiana is a hardship" on him.¹⁰⁴ White carefully selected the men he employed at Grandin in the mills and those who worked with him for the Missouri Land & Lumber Exchange Company in Kansas City. At times he attempted to reach into the associations of lumbermen, of which he was one of the leaders. Sam Fullerton and R. A. Long, in the spring of 1899, discovered one Humphrey and recommended him for a position with the Yellow Pine Manufacturers Association. Acknowledging that Humphrey knew white pine well, to operate with yellow pine he would need training; maybe he would develop into a lumber grader, but he lacked "executive ability and has not that presence which would be necessary for a man who should occupy the important place" of inspector.¹⁰⁵ White, however, had another candidate in mind. Bill McKinney was 27 years old, a Princeton graduate and "a perfect gentleman, sharp as a tack,"¹⁰⁶ who had had several years experience in his father's Illinois lumber yard. The practical experience meant much more to Captain White than the Princeton diploma, but, above all his other qualifications,

¹⁰⁴ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to O. W. Fisher, Fisher's Spur, Louisiana, July 4, 1899; White to Captain H. H. Cummings, Tidioute, Pennsylvania, December 26, 1899, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol. 3, p. 374, WHMC.

¹⁰⁵ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to L. L. Hunter, Tidioute, Pennsylvania, September 28, 1899, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol. 3, p. 40, WHMC.

¹⁰⁶ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Captain H. H. Cummings, Tidioute, Pennsylvania, December 26, 1899, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol. 3, p. 374, WHMC.

the lumberman appreciated that he was the son of the president of the First National Bank at El Paso, Illinois.¹⁰⁷

By July Perks had left Louisiana, and Willard Warren had begun his climb to prominence in the 4 L Company. Although Fisher served as general manager of 4 L Company, Warren, first as bookkeeper then as manager in Fisher's progressively longer absences, quickly took charge of the direction of the operation. White discussed medical services with Fisher, and "agreed that [Warren] may inaugurate a hospital service similar to the one you have been accustomed to, and charge 75 [cents] to single men and \$1.25 to married men and let the doctor have what he can make out of it up to the sum of \$125.00 a month. When the receipts amount to over \$125.00 the balance goes into the Hospital Fund." The doctor provided all medicines from the assessment. "[B]ut when the fund will pay \$125.00 besides paying for the medicines he will have \$125.00 net."¹⁰⁸ Obstetrical services cost \$5. At Fisher's suggestion, Warren got "the sentiment of the men, which you can do by getting them to sign a paper authorizing the Company to employ a physician, and of course the authority to employ carries with it the authority to discharge in case we should have an incompetent, or a person unfit for the service."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to F. McCullan, St. Louis, Missouri, March 20, 1899, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol 2, p. 145, WHMC.

¹⁰⁸ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, July 4, 1899, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol. 2, p. 343, WHMC.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

Despite White's support and Fisher's growing confidence in young Warren, he had his hands full organizing a team of workmen to clear the site and build first the Dixie then the permanent mill, at the same time he came under emotional and even physical attack from the "settlers" who did not want the company to import black laborers. First, Warren had to make peace among the millwrights. Martin Hardwick was already an elderly man when he moved south with O. W. Fisher to build the mill at Fisher's Siding. Captain White did not like or trust Hardwick, and he warned Willard Warren that he would have trouble with the old man, urging the young manager to stand up to Fisher, an imposing figure who stood nearly six and a half feet tall, particularly to Warren, whose squat figure hardly exceeded five and a half feet. White accused Hardwick of poor workmanship in the Birch Tree, Missouri, mill of the Cordz-Fisher Lumber Company, "a small mill set on piling and they have added to it according to Mr. Cordz's notions until they have a mill with some modern machinery but incomplete in its conveniences."¹¹⁰ Hardwick, White said, would insist on his side of the story, which "his jealous nature will cause him to believe in, and magnify supposed evils."¹¹¹ Without "the old millwright" the company, White believed, would get along better and complete building the mills at Fisher's Siding much quicker and cheaper. Nevertheless, Hardwick remained on the Louisiana job, and he died there several years later. The wonder is that Fisher put up with Warren's continual correspondence with White, at the

¹¹⁰ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, July 28 and August 4, 1899, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol. 2, pp. 431 and 446, WHMC.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

same time Fisher was at the new mill site trying to put two used mills dismantled in Wisconsin and Iowa and rather unceremoniously dumped on the siding at Fisher by the railroad company. Fisher received White's letter at the mill and must have felt the pressure of his partner's meddling. Captain White wanted to hire J. J. Fletcher at \$10 a day to put the mill up. "I don't believe," he said, "Mr. Hardwick will get along with any body and I believe we need a greater man for the place, and I wish you would talk with Mr. Warren about Mr. Fletcher." Hardwick was "in his dotage and wedded to old ideas, and a little stubborn and expensive, and you may have to let him go."¹¹² Fletcher, on the other hand, had helped build the new Grandin mill and was then working for the Knapp-Stout Lumber Company. Fisher was not moved, and in time Warren even came to depend on the elderly Hardwick.¹¹³

In Louisiana, Fisher continued to have trouble with the "settlers" who sometimes objected violently to the company hiring black workers. They usually directed the violence at the black worker rather than at the company or its officers. In October 1899, Fisher went off on one of his frequent business trips, and White took the opportunity to find a solution to the problem. He explained to Warren that "I have given the subject of negro labor further thought and have come to the conclusion that we can not do business and permit parties in our employ to dictate who we shall hire."¹¹⁴ All

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to O. W. Fisher, Springfield, Missouri, December 2, 1899, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol. 3, p. 267, WHMC.

¹¹⁴ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, October 3, 1899, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol.3, p. 40, WHMC.

lumbermen, he said, had been faced with the problem and had to deal with it vigorously. White workers could not do the kind of work required, which left the company with the black population to draw from. Captain White had been in touch with "a party in Texarkana who is used to negro labor, and I intend, in Mr. Fisher's absence, to engage this man as time keeper. He will keep the time of the negro help, see that we are always supplied with negro help, and will further see that they are protected."¹¹⁵ In case the Texarkana "party" were not available, White intended to find "some one else of his caliber." He cautioned Warren not to boast of the plan, "not even tell the sheriff of the County what we are going to do, but at the time that we put in the negro labor under the direction of a man who will be perfectly able to maintain his position, we will then explain kindly and firmly our reasons for doing this, and that there is no malice behind any of our actions, but only an honorable and just desire to do right by every one, and protect our business interests."¹¹⁶ White planned to pay the man from \$50 to \$75 a month but only offered him \$50. There was good economic reasons for looking for a "timekeeper" whose duties would be that of quarterboss. "[I]t is true that it will make a difference of \$10,000.00 per annum to us in the store as to whether we employ negroes or white men; it will make more difference to us in the running of our mill," he concluded.¹¹⁷ To Fisher at Birch Tree, White said that he had heard "that the natives seem determined to have no negro work at our mill. I learn that at Orange, Tex. the

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

other day a large mill was burned because the company insisted upon working negroes. Now, as far as I am concerned, this intimidation does not intimidate." He added that he was willing to pay the right man \$75 to \$100 a month. It was, he argued, absolutely necessary to keep guards capable of protecting both company employees and property. "I don't believe we can succeed when they feel that they have it in their power to decide what help we shall employ."¹¹⁸

Such talk of salaries as high as \$75 or \$100 a month must have shocked Warren, who even in 1899 had the day-to-day operation of the 4 L Company in his hands, and he had been promised only \$75 a month himself. Fisher, White wrote to Warren in November 1899, "does not remember of saying anything to you about salary."¹¹⁹ The company could not afford a higher salary until it began to mill and sell lumber, but White knew there were other perquisites associated with Warren's job. "We mentioned that you were likely getting a commission of the Railroad for tickets sold, which would amount to something, and that likely your [ex-officio position as postmaster] would amount to something, and that if it did not take too much of your time we were expecting that you would get the benefit of it."¹²⁰ In early December 1899, White took up the matter of Warren's salary with Fisher again. "I believe that we will very soon need a man at a better salary than we are paying Mr. Warren," he said. The company needed

¹¹⁸ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol. 3, p. 267, WHMC.

¹¹⁹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, November 10, 1899, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol. 3, p. 154, WHMC.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

someone to look over the country along the Sabine and east toward the Kisatchie hills for likely stands of timber that were available. This would suit Warren quite well in addition to his other duties. "I believe Mr. Warren is one of the most competent book-keepers I ever knew," he said. "He can do as much work on books as any one, but there is not enough of it to do, and if he could look around and get posted he might be able to call your attention to some matters that would be of benefit to the Company."¹²¹

Along the Current River, White, Fisher, and several other lumbermen had begun to "cut out," that is deplete their timber, and they wanted to take a profit from the cutover lands. White had held onto lands around Grandin on the chance that they might be suitable for fruit culture and was slow to sell very much land at any point. By the end of the century, however, it had become apparent that the company would be saddled with the land until it grew another stand of timber, which would require, he thought, the better part of the next century. Particular tracts or farms, the Grandin interests hoped to sell immediately. In January 1900, White explained to L. L. Hunter in Tidioute, Pennsylvania, his reasons for suspecting one Jaque who had been trying to buy the Chilton farm from the company. "I have been figuring with Mr. Jaque for a long time. He is a bright, well dressed gentleman, and for three different pay days he was found at Grandin."¹²² White thought the well-dressed stranger might have another reason for wanting the property. Unable to learn anything about him, White refused "to deal with

¹²¹ White to O. W. Fisher, Springfield, Missouri, December 2, 1899, Vol. 3, p. 267, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, WHMC.

¹²² J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to L. L. Hunter, Tidioute, Pennsylvania, January 1, 1900, ML&MCo Letterpress Book, Vol. 3, p. 375, WHMC.

a man that I could not find out about his business." Jaque then confessed "that he was a Pinkerton man and did not want me to mention it, but that he was away a good deal of the time and his territory was from New York to Arizona, and that he had a German doctor, a friend in St. Louis, who wanted to go to Europe and get a colony to settle in this country, and that he liked the prospects from a stock point of view, and on account of the cheap price of the lands and it being so close to St. Louis, which is a good stock market."¹²³ Pinkerton's St. Louis office confirmed that Jaque "was in their confidence and their employ." Because he did not want Jaque to fail, White sold him the Chilton farm, near which he could locate his colony across the Current River as soon as the company cut the timber. Jaque, he said, wanted to operate a store at Chilton to supply the colony, "and as he is of German descent himself [he] will naturally affiliate with them and have their confidence."¹²⁴ The sale made good economic sense as it turned out. Within a few years, the Missouri lumbermen would move all of their milling operations farther south for the next phase of the great yellow pine timber harvest.

Sawmilling had changed a great deal during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. These changes reflected the growing power of railroads and the increasing mobility of working people, particularly black families moving north and west. Sawmills had become largely industrial. Those who worked in the mills and woods had agreed, at times grudgingly, on occupational classifications that dictated both authority and compensation. Those in authority, of course, took the largest share of compensation,

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

although virtually all lumber workers profited handsomely compared with the returns from other occupations, notably subsistence farming. In 1901 Claude Kennedy and his wife and children lived at Groveton, Texas, a sawmill town southwest of Lufkin in Trinity County, a rectangular jurisdiction lying between the Neches and Trinity Rivers. William T. Joyce, scion of a family of Midwestern lumber yard owners, headquartered in Iowa, had arrived in Texas about 1890, where he bought the Groveton sawmill and 75,000 acres of pine timberland. The Trinity County Lumber Company's Groveton mill was rated at 300,000 bf a day, based on 24-hour operation. Situated at head of track of the Groveton, Lufkin & Northern Railroad, the company tram, the Joyce mill dominated the economy of the county. At the turn of the century, Groveton was racially segregated and wet, that is it permitted saloons, a moral lapse the people of Trinity County would cure in 1902 by voting a prohibition ordinance. Despite their personal connection with lumbering, the people of Groveton nevertheless were also concerned with the Mexican boll weevil and the Spindletop oil field, the gusher at Beaumont. The first reflected a deep interest in the state of the cotton crop, generally to the west of Trinity County in the black waxy prairies, because the price of cotton dictated both the price of lumber and the availability of jobs in the mills and logging fronts. And the developing oil fields of the Gulf Coast could not fail to affect the pulse of the economy, the demand for lumber, the availability of jobs, and thus the level of wages.¹²⁵ A few years later, the Groveton

¹²⁵ Holland, Mr. Claude, pp. 42-43; Robert S. Maxwell and Robert D. Baker, Sawdust Empire: The Texas Lumber Industry, 1830-1940, (College Station: The Texas A&M University Press, 1983), pp. 198-199.

Federated Labor Union Local No. 11444 sent a black delegate to the Galveston convention of the Texas State Federation of Labor. He made a speech calling for cooperation between the races and then sank from sight; his remarks had no discernable effect on the other delegates. Although the town was anything but liberal, in subsequent years, the American Federation of Labor in Texas repeated the story to demonstrate their group's liberal spirit.¹²⁶

By 1901, John Henry Kirby had completed plans for the creation of the Kirby Lumber Company (Kay Ell) and the Houston Oil Company (HOCO), certainly the largest single lumber company in the region. The two functioned as an interlocked unit. HOCO as a timber company held title to all of Kirby's timberlands, containing nearly a million acres of standing timber. Kay Ell operated as many as 21 sawmills in Southeast Texas. Kirby's two heavily leveraged companies began almost immediately to slip into bankruptcy. The "Prince of Pines," as his admirers chose to call him to his obvious delight, knew the uses of a friendly press, and he worked assiduously to perfect the image of a patron of the working man. Strangely enough, historians persist in repeating many of his claims as fact, for example the boast that Kirby reduced the length of the working day in his mills from 11 hours to 10, which is patently false. Stranger still, even his detractors happily repeat Kirby's boasts because they fit so nicely. To Kirby's insufferable claim that he was a "pal" to the workingman, The Rebel replied that he was indeed "the Peon's Pal." Although much of the industrial world had settled on eight

¹²⁶ Texas State Federation of Labor, Proceedings, Seventh Annual Convention, (Galveston, Texas, 1904), p. 32, cited in Allen, East Texas Lumber, p. 168.

hours as the optimum "shift" for a factory or shop, the lumber industry held tenaciously to the 11-hour day until at least the First World War.¹²⁷

The search for workers never ended for the company managers, laboring under the disadvantage of scarcity in the labor market. The demands of the managers themselves would naturally drive wages higher than in other districts.¹²⁸ Charles A. C. Steinweg, for example, moved south from Grandin, Missouri, in 1899 to help build the 4 L Company mills at Fisher, Louisiana, where he remained as mill superintendent. In the spring of 1901 he found his crews shorthanded and appealed to Willard Warren for help in finding workmen. Warren contacted Ben Phillips, a former employee then at Pickering in Vernon Parish, offering to restore him to his old job on the button saw provided Phillips brought with him a number of other workers. "We will withdraw our quarantine from Pickering today," Warren wrote, "and you may come and bring the 8 men you speak of."¹²⁹ Two weeks later, Warren wrote to Phillips again to say that he had arranged for six tickets on the KCS Railroad for Phillips and five men that he

¹²⁷ Allen, East Texas Lumber, p. 181. The author cites The Rebel without date or number as the source of the reference to "the Peon's Pal," probably because the editors managed under some guise to use the term in virtually every issue. For a brief history of Kay Ell, see Robert S. Maxwell and Robert D. Baker, Sawdust Empire: The Texas Lumber Industry, 1830-1940 (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1983), pp. 98-105.

¹²⁸ R. Latzko, Shreveport, Louisiana, to Lutch & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, March 5, 1901, Box 9, 1899-1901 (505), L&C Records, SFA.

¹²⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Ben Phillips, Pickering, Louisiana, June 27, 1901, Box 8979-87, 4 L Letterbook, Fisher Heritage Collection, Louisiana State Archives, Baton Rouge [cited hereafter as LSA].

planned to bring along with him.¹³⁰ He also alerted Martin Hardwick to the arrival of Phillips and his party.¹³¹ Steinweg had offered Charles Weeks at Atlanta, Texas, "your old job" at \$1.75 an hour with the promise of a raise later. "Write me about the men you want to bring--How many so I can arrange passes."¹³² Come by June 19, he wrote "as we are going to have a big celebration and need you."¹³³ Weeks was probably black, and Steinweg was inviting him to participate in the Juneteenth celebration on Emancipation Day.¹³⁴ Willard Warren agreed, telling Captain White that the Juneteenth barbecue on June 19 had "a tendency to make the place liked by that class of laborers." The celebration at Fisher, called "Nigger Day" by some native Southerners, featured a day off for a picnic and oratory by black speakers.¹³⁵ Virtually every job in a sawmill town was labor intensive, including the company store. J. H. Perks who supervised the commissary asked for additional help in the store. Warren responded with the application for work as a clerk that he had in his files. He took the view that an

¹³⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Ben Phillips, Pickering, Louisiana, July 11, 1901, Ibid.

¹³¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. H. Hardwick, Fisher, Louisiana, June 27, 1901, Ibid.

¹³² G. A. C. Steinweg, Fisher, Louisiana, to Charles Weeks, Atlanta, Texas, June 12, 1901, Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to L. D. Stone, Loring, Louisiana, June 10, 1901, Ibid.

¹³⁵ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, June 11, 1902, ML&MCo Letterbook, No. 13, WHMC.

excess of workers for any position would prove less expensive than continued demand for laborers in the region.¹³⁶

Willard Warren, along with all his managers, engineers, millwrights, and skilled laborers, came down to Louisiana in 1899, after J. B. White and O. W. Fisher bought a tract of timber on the KCS in Sabine Parish on the northern edge of the Calcasieu long leaf pine district. With only occasional exceptions dictated by local conditions, Fisher as general manager and then Warren, who became general manager after he married Fisher's daughter, operated much as they had on the Current River road in Missouri. They followed a well-worn path.¹³⁷ In 1880, when Captain White arrived in Missouri to build the Grandin mills, he brought with him his managers, professional operators, skilled workers, and even some common laborers from Pennsylvania. Many of his workers also came from the white pine district in the Lake States and along the Mississippi and its tributaries, attracted by the promise of year-round work. Later, the mills took on native Missourians, called "bushwackers" or "white trash." Virtually all employees of the company were on salaries or contracts, except common laborers who commanded only the prevailing wage, usually set by the larger mills in the region. Salaried employees had some guarantee of their pay, but common laborers received a wage only when the mill or job operated. The fact that Missouri weather permitted the

¹³⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to G. A. C. Steinweg, Fisher, Louisiana; same to J. H. Perks, Fisher, Louisiana, June 13, 1902, Box 8979-87, Letterbook p. 4, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹³⁷ American Lumberman, May 9, 1903, p. 157. The Current River road refers not to the river but to the railroad that paralleled its banks.

mills and logging fronts to operate year-round did not mean, however, that workers were fully employed.¹³⁸

Captain White built not only mills and railroads but also several towns and villages, where employees were encouraged to live in company-owned houses or camps. In 1892, the company's 195 houses rented for \$12,892.08 for the year, an average of \$6 a month for each house. In 1899, the company rented 245 houses for \$18,597.24 for the year, an average of \$7 a month for each house. By 1900, the Grandin company regularly took in about \$18,000 a year in rents from its employees.¹³⁹ The better houses, in which managers and skilled workers lived, were frame houses, built of lumber, produced by the Grandin mill, and painted, a mark of distinction in the piney woods. Common laborers were assigned houses, usually unpainted, according to the size of their families. In Grandin, the managers' houses nestled about the Congregational Church and along the street to the east. On the west side of the church, the company put up unpainted shacks for common laborers, renting for about \$2 to \$2.50 a month in 1895.¹⁴⁰

When Captain White got his mills and town in operation at Grandin in the early 1880s, the vast majority of his employees were men, but he did hire some women, a

¹³⁸ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, April 14, 1903, ML&MCo Letterpress Book No. 17, WHMC; American Lumberman, May 9, 1903, p. 157; Loveland, Grandin, pp. 11-12, 18.

¹³⁹ Leslie G. Hill, "The History of the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company, 1880-1909," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1949, p. 157.

¹⁴⁰ Loveland, Grandin, pp. 11, 12, 18; J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to J. E. DeWeese, Spring Hill, Kansas, December 13, 1902, ML&MCo Letterpress Book No. 17, WHMC.

practice that he continued throughout his career. Most of them he hired on the recommendation of professors in Kansas City business schools, such as Brown's Business College, Spaulding's Commercial College, and the Central College of Shorthand. None of them worked in the mills or in the woods. They were limited to jobs as store clerks, boarding house keepers, and office workers. In the spring of 1901, when Miss M. E. Bunker of Silver City, New Mexico, wrote to Warren asking for a position as stenographer, he had no vacancies. "Not very many young ladies [are] employed in the lumber offices in this part of Louisiana," he wrote. "Probably they have never tried it and do not know of the many advantages." Still in his twenties and a bachelor in 1901, Warren took a great deal of care to write politely to Miss Bunker. "I hope you will have a pleasant trip to California,"¹⁴¹ he said, responding to her expressed wish to move west if she found no work in the lumber district. Generally, the turnover of labor was small, although common laborers got the same wage regardless of experience. Grandin also had three full time doctors after the mills got in full operations. They were paid from \$75 to \$300 a month, depending on their experience. Virtually all employees at Grandin were Americans, but the company did hire a few Swedes who had been working in the North among the lumber camps. The hot weather did not suit them, however, and most of them soon left. Captain White employed no blacks, Italians, or Hungarians, according to witnesses, although by 1907 or 1908, a few blacks were employed to take cross ties out of the Chickopee boom on the Current River. The lack of black workers

¹⁴¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Miss M. E. Bunker, Silver City, New Mexico, June 27, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

did not necessarily indicate a prejudice against them, because as late as 1910, the Census listed only two black people living in Carter County, Missouri. The mechanism for recruiting black workers did not operate well in the Missouri Ozarks.¹⁴²

"We always pay what we think our help is worth to us,"¹⁴³ White wrote to a prospective employee in 1900, a policy not honored, however, in every case. Willard Warren got a salary of only \$75 a month when he first arrived in Louisiana, although he functioned as the general superintendent, a position that usually paid \$250 a month. By 1900, however, he got a salary of \$150 a month, raised to \$183.33 in 1902 and \$333.33 in 1903. A decade earlier, Warren had arrived at Grandin from St. Paul, Minnesota, for an interview with Captain White. When White found that the 19-year-old Warren smoked cigarettes, he told him he would have to quit to hold a job with the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company. Warren agreed, although in later years he smoked cigars and a pipe. In 1913, Warren had climbed up through the organization, married the boss's daughter, and received a salary of \$6,000 a year. In the meantime, he worked as a bookkeeper, helper to the mill superintendent, salesman, and timber buyer.¹⁴⁴ Captain White had also took under his observation three brothers named Slagle who did

¹⁴² J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Brown's Business College, May 17, 1906, Letterpress Book No. 26; White to P. L. Jermaine, Holton, Kansas, November 16, 1900, ML&MCo Letterpress Book No. 7, WHMC; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of the Census, Vol. II, Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910, Population (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913), p. 1103.

¹⁴³ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Helen Young, Leon, Iowa, July 5, 1900, ML&MCo Letterpress Book No. 6, WHMC.

¹⁴⁴ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Helen Young, Leon, Iowa, July 5, 1913, ML&MCo Letterpress Book No. 6, WHMC; Hill, "ML&MCo," p. 157.

well in his organization, but Clarence, the second boy in the family, prospered beyond his wildest imagination. He started work at Grandin as a stenographer in the office in 1890 and became chief clerk in 1894. He became general superintendent at Grandin in 1897. Five years later, Captain White sent him to a site on the Ouachita River in Louisiana to buy a small mill and tract of timber. At Clark's Spur on the Iron Mountain, Slagle built the Central Louisiana Lumber Company plant, adding the Standard Lumber Company a few miles south by 1904.¹⁴⁵

At the turn of the century, Grandin paid common laborers from \$1.25 to \$1.35 a day, but in July 1899, it advanced wages to a range of \$1.35 to \$1.50 a day because of advancing wages elsewhere in the industry. Workers at Grandin went out on strike only once in its 29-year run. In the spring of 1903, remnants of the Knights of Labor began organizing labor at Grandin, at the Cordz-Fisher Lumber Company plant at nearby Birch Tree, Missouri, and at the Ozark Land & Lumber Company mills at Winona, Missouri. White was bitterly opposed to unions in his mills, although he admitted they had a place in other industries. At Birch Tree, Missouri, O. W. Fisher had only a few months left to run, and he decided to recognize the union local's 158 members and shorten his work day to ten hours. White accused Fisher of running the only unionized saw mill in the country. Later, however, in coordination with Grandin and Winona, Birch Tree closed its mill for repairs, effectively shutting out workers at the three towns. Apparently following the precedent set by mills along the Gulf Coast in West Louisiana and East Texas, the lumbermen in Missouri broke the union. In Winona, however, J.

¹⁴⁵ Van Buren, Missouri, Current Local, February 21, 1907.

H. Berkshire turned to violence or the threat of violence to get rid of union members. The leader among union organizers hurriedly left the town "between 11 o'clock and daylight as there were some parties there that he did not want to see."¹⁴⁶ At Grandin shortly afterward, White said, the union local "returned their charter and wrote to the parties at headquarters at Washington that they did not think it practicable to start a union at Grandin, and we started up our mills rather short-handed because quite a number of the prime movers left to look for work elsewhere."¹⁴⁷

Then the Grandin management rewarded its loyal employees with a raise and a shorter workday, although White explained that floods in the company's sales territory made it necessary to curtail production, a claim that he had posted throughout the mills and camps. He even ventured into a sort of overtime pay, giving a ten percent bonus to those who had to work 11 hours a day. Even as late as 1910, about 28 percent of employees in the lumber industry at large worked more than 60 hours a week; 63 percent worked ten hours a day six days a week, and only nine percent worked less than 60 hours. The salary and wage scales at Grandin approximated salaries and wages in the region. The general manager was the highest paid, making about \$5,000 a year; the assistant general manager got \$4,000 a year; the superintendent, \$3,000. Sawyers and filers, the elite of skilled workers in the lumber industry, got salaries equal to superintendents. Timber cruisers and estimators, professionals who were highly prized

¹⁴⁶ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, April 14, 1903, ML&MCo Letterpress Book No. 17, WHMC.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

among lumbermen, commanded salaries from \$2,000 to \$2,400 a year, about the same as a general foreman. Cashiers got about \$1,800; head bookkeepers, \$1,350; clerks and stenographers, \$60 to \$70 a month. Common labor did not get more than \$2 a day. In 1893, the workers at Grandin took a ten percent cut in pay that lasted only a few weeks, despite the depths of the Panic and the resulting depression. In 1899, G. W. Dulany and W. B. Pettibone, both directors from Hannibal, Missouri, convinced White to give his first across-the-board raise of ten percent.¹⁴⁸

By 1903, the Grandin interests employed 2,319 workers in Missouri and Louisiana. At Grandin, 1,211 workers were occupied; at Fisher, Louisiana, 420; at Victoria, 254; and at Clarks, 434. At Grandin, the largest number of workers were employed in the woods and on the railroad. The mills and yards had the next highest number, but only ten men worked in construction. At Clarks, then being built in Caldwell Parish, Louisiana, 168 men worked in construction, more than in the mills and railroad combined. In the next few years, the Louisiana operations would far exceed anything Captain White had known in the Ozarks. White, despite the feverish pace he and his men kept, watched carefully for any hint of union "infection" in the piney woods, and he quickly joined, if he did not lead the organization of, the Southern Lumber Operators Association following the abortive American Labor Union strike of the Calcasieu mills in 1906. It was not supposed to be a secret organization, but White ordered his managers to "keep quiet" about the methods and purposes of the group.

¹⁴⁸ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, December 30, 1903, ML&MCo Letterpress Book 19, WHMC.

Early in the new century, Grandin dominated much of the lumber business in the piney woods, employing more than a thousand of the 5,886 workers in the Missouri mills.¹⁴⁹

Skilled work in the mills, including jobs as filers, sawyers, engineers, blacksmiths, and machinists, usually went to veterans of lumber booms in the North and Midwest. In the spring of 1901 the 4 L Company had a full complement of filers at Fisher and Victoria. At Fisher, however, the company wanted at least one head sawyer. Martin Hardwick, in the absence of Warren, invited Frank Lafferty to come down from Pelican, DeSoto Parish, Louisiana to take the job.¹⁵⁰ Late in June, the foreman in the planer mill at Fisher, A. R. Elliott, resigned "over some unpleasantness." By August, Elliott had applied to the Central Lumber Company at Lincecum, Louisiana, for a job as planing mill foreman. He had been in charge of the Fisher planing mill from January 1 through June 30. Warren described him as a good machine man and thoroughly capable. He had resigned his job at Fisher, Warren noted in his recommendation to Central Lumber Company. Although he needed a replacement, Warren wrote carefully to Harry Smith in Jackson, Mississippi, who had applied for a foreman's job a few days earlier. "May give you a place--if not as foreman. How about running a 20X30 Berlin

¹⁴⁹ J. B. White, Madison, Wisconsin, to Clark & Bates, Kansas City, Missouri, April 6, 1910, Folder 3; White to Gifford Pinchot, Washington, D.C., October 21, 1905, ML&MCo Letterpress Book No. 24; WHMC; U.S. Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, Vol. II, Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910, Manufacturers (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913), p. 498; Twelfth Census of the United States Vol. 9, Manufacturers, Part 3, "Special Report on Selected Industries," p. 809; Kansas City Star, November 2, 1913.

¹⁵⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to John Newton, Hawthorne, Louisiana, June 10, 1901; M. H. Hardwick, Fisher, Louisiana, to Frank Lafferty, Pelican, Louisiana, June 12, 1901, Box 8979-87, Letterbook pp. 12, 32, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Sizer at the Saw Mill? Our planing Mill has 3 machines, a re-saw, rip saw and a Gang ripping machine. All of our machines are of the Berlin make."¹⁵¹ Early in June, J. A. Meriweather, a neighbor of O. W. Fisher in Springfield, Missouri, moved south to Fisher, Louisiana, to locate tram roads for the 4 L Company. His first problem was to estimate the yardage of fill moved on Spurs Nos. 3 and 3A north of Middle Creek by Oscar W. Cole, the grading contractor. On the first of July, Meriweather rode the logging engine over the VF&W's still unstable line to Victoria to retrieve the company's level and rod from C. E. Edwards, company surveyor at Victoria.¹⁵² Earlier Warren had hired an engineer for the company's log engine at \$60 a month. The man had been running an engine in Mexico and earlier on the Rock Island Railroad, but because he had fingers missing from one hand the trunk line railroads barred him from the cabs of their locomotives. The new engineer left a wife and child in Mexico who he planned to send for at the first opportunity.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Harry Smith, Jackson, Mississippi, June 28, 1901, *Ibid.*

¹⁵² J. I. L. [Long?] to M. L. Rhodes, Victoria, Louisiana, June 20, 1901; W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. A. Meriweather, Springfield, Missouri, and to S. G. Warner, Kansas City, Missouri, June [July?] 3, 1901; see also Warren to J. W. Scott and D. D. McCall, Jonesboro, Arkansas, June 24, 1901; same to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, June 28, 1901; same to C. E. Edwards, Victoria, Louisiana, July 1, 1901; same to M. L. Rhodes, Victoria, Louisiana, July 31, 1901; same to W. E. Mange, Shelbyville, Texas, July 31, 1901; same to Central Lumber Company, Lincecum, Louisiana, August 19, 1901, *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, June 10, 1901; same to T. M. McNichol, Zwolle, Louisiana, June 24, 1901; same to G. A. Jackson, Bolinger, Louisiana, July 1, 1901, *Ibid.*

The 4 L Company in its early years operated no logging crews of its own, depending upon logging contractors to supply logs to its mills. The loggers used horses, mules, or oxen, as the nature of the timber and soil they worked in dictated. Generally, oxen, while slower than either horses or mules, worked better in low swampy land or harnessed to wagons. Horses and mules performed best in "snaking" operations, the local term for "skidding" or dragging logs, usually over difficult terrain. Oxen often hurt themselves hauling wagons and skidding logs, else they grew too old to work efficiently, at which point they became "deadhead cattle" or "broken down steers." A special type of stockman "made a business of buying dead head oxen"¹⁵⁴ for fattening for slaughter. In the spring of 1901 when Thalheimer & Company of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, wrote to Warren with an offer to buy such stock, the 4 L Company manager passed on the message to his loggers. The Fisher front at that time had reached the vicinity of Coburn on Middle Creek, one of several tributaries of Kisatchie Creek that eventually found its way into Red River. The company tram, then, had crossed the divide between the Red and Sabine. Although this area presents a sharply differentiated elevation, locally it runs to baygalls and creeks, low and marshy along the streams. Here loggers preferred cattle to horses or mules, not alone because they were sure-footed in the moist soils but also because they were cheaper to buy, principally from settlers in the area who ran large herds of feral cattle in the piney woods. The 4 L Company did keep some livestock, some of it milk cows and even goats on occasion, but mostly riding

¹⁵⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Thalheimer & Company, Pine Bluff, Arkansas, June 12, 1901, Box 8979-87, 4 L Letterbook, p. 26, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

horses for the use of Warren and other executives, particularly the surveyors and woodsmen.¹⁵⁵

Although homesteaders and settlers kept appearing to trouble Warren, he noted that workmen willing to take jobs in the mills and woods in Louisiana were scarce. He had places for common laborers at all levels and occasionally for skilled workers and foremen, and earlier in the year needed a doctor badly. Recruiting workers was one of Warren's chief responsibilities, aside from his duties as general manager of the mills at Fisher and Victoria and the railroad that connected them across the Kisatchie Wold.¹⁵⁶ To C. E. Slagle, then still the general superintendent of the mills at Grandin, Missouri, Warren asked about Warren Richardson who had worked earlier for the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company but had taken up "traveling" for the company as a salesman. Warren had heard rumors that Richardson wanted to return to his former employment. "I need a planer foreman,"¹⁵⁷ Warren wrote. Not content with prospects within the Grandin companies, Warren dispatched a circular letter to the Industrial Lumber Company at Silsbee, Texas, the Warren Lumber Company at Warren, Texas, the

¹⁵⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Fred McGhee, Fisher, Louisiana; Warren to M. L. Rhodes, Victoria, Louisiana; Warren to L. F. Young, Fisher, Louisiana, June 12, 1901; Warren to W. E. Menge, Shelbyville, Texas, July 31, 1901, Box 8979-87, 4 L Letterbook pp. 27, 36, 212, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁵⁶ A. F. Lyons, Assessor of Calcasieu Parish, Lake Charles, Louisiana, on letterhead of Calcasieu Parish Sheriff's office, to Lutch & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, June 7, 1901, Box 12, No. 681, L&M Records, SFA; W. W. Warren to Botsford, Deatherage & Young, Attorneys at Law, Kansas City, Missouri, July 10, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, P. 110, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁵⁷ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Grandin, Missouri, July 5, 1901, Box 8979-87, 4 L Letterbook, p. 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Crescent Yellow Pine Lumber Company in Jackson, Mississippi, Lutcher & Moore Lumber Company in Orange, Texas, asking about the qualifications of Harry Smith who had applied for the job as planer foreman.¹⁵⁸ To Smith, Warren wrote that he could use him as a sizer operator at \$2.50 a day right away and would soon decide about the foreman's job. In any case, he wrote, Fisher, Louisiana, was a healthier location at a higher altitude than Orange, Texas, where Smith had been employed most recently.¹⁵⁹ Later in July, Warren reported to O. W. Fisher in Bozeman, Montana, that he had started running the mills at night, although he still did not have a tally man hired. He began running three planing machines at night until he could get his crew fully manned. "A good many farmers are coming to work, and we have been using quite a number of them on the night force, and I believe they will do all right, as it is not hot and they can get in here on time while they could not do it if they were working the day force."¹⁶⁰ In the sawmill, he added, the Dixie kept busy sawing crossties.¹⁶¹

Sudden demand for workers often meant more complex problems than merely a lack of available applicants. That summer, Warren contacted Jim Grayson in Minden,

¹⁵⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Industrial Lumber Company, Silsbee, Texas, July 6, 1901; Warren to Warren Lumber Company, Warren, Texas, July 6, 1901; Warren to Crescent Yellow Pine Lumber Company, Jackson, Mississippi, July 6, 1901; Warren to W. H. Stark, Orange, Texas, July 6, 1901, Box 8979-87, 4 L Letterbook, pp. 103-105, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁵⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Harry Smith, Orange, Texas, July 6, 1901, Box 8979-87, 4 L Letterbook, p.106, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁶⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, July 18, 1901, *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*; see also, W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. H. Stark, July 8, 1901, L&M Box 12, SFA.

Louisiana, at the William Buchanan mill. He omitted the polite "Mister" in addressing his letter, which usually meant that the person addressed was either black, Mexican, or Italian. In the social scheme of things in the lumber camps, these were men who occupied positions on the social scale lower than "white" men of whatever quality. Still, he saluted Grayson as "Sir," which only confused the issue. "I have yours of July 9th," Warren wrote, "and we will send your money at once. I think you had better come back here and work for us again, as we may want a good man to send out to pick up men for us. I think the nigger [Budd Gill] you fell out with is gone."¹⁶² Grayson seems to have operated as a sort of padrone or labor contractor, one of a great many Warren employed over the years. Shortly afterward, however, Warren contacted Grayson again: "whenever you want to come back here to work we will have a place for you."¹⁶³ Although the mills were not "short-handed now," Warren asked Grayson to send any men to Fisher provided they paid their own way south to the Sabine country. Apparently anticipating a time near at hand when the mills would be shorthanded, Warren continued to make contact with labor contractors. On July 19, he asked L. D. Stone in Loring, Louisiana, to give him the whereabouts of M. H. Jackson of Allene, Arkansas, "the man that delivered the negroes to Mr. Stone last winter."¹⁶⁴ At the same time, he unburdened himself to Fisher in Montana. "We had about 14 negroes last night who

¹⁶² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Jim Grayson, Minden, Louisiana, July 11, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 117, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁶³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Jim Grayson, Minden, Louisiana, July 22, 1901, Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to L. D. Stone, Loring, Louisiana, July 19, 1901, Ibid.

refused to do night work unless we paid them extra, which we refused to do, as the white men prefer to work nights instead of days this kind of weather, and we can get plenty of farmers that are just as good as the negroes for night work as long as it is cool, but they cannot stand the heat." Unaffected by the winds that moderated the heat along the coast, Fisher village suffered under a fierce July sun, reaching 108 degrees "last Saturday on the east side of the office in the afternoon," i.e. in the shade. The dislike of night work, expressed by black workers, reflected a continuing struggle the company was engaged in with the white "settlers," many of whom did not scruple to threaten or actually do violence to those black workers left unprotected.¹⁶⁵

By the late nineteenth century, a tree faller in the piney woods had become generally known by the term, flathead, a romantic occupational nickname similar to roughneck, cowboy, or the synonymous lumberjack. A flathead then was a man who used axe and crosscut saw in the logging woods.¹⁶⁶ Although practices varied among lumbermen, probably most mills depended on contractors to fell and buck trees and to haul logs to the company trams. In July 1901, Fred McGhee had charge of the woods operations at Fisher, and to him teamsters and flatheads applied for agreements to cut and haul logs. J. D. Bashaw of Pickering, Louisiana, and L. E. Balentine, a log cutter

¹⁶⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, July 19, 1901 4 L Letterbook, p. 155, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁶⁶ "Flatheads of Two Kinds," Shreveport (Louisiana) Times, Sunday, January 27, 1903. The flathead beetle, common in the piney woods, attacked the inner bark of the Southern pine when it was felled. The insect was known generally as the sawyer beetle because of the sound it made while feeding that resembled the sound of woods sawyers felling timber. For a scientific description, see Baker, Eastern Forest Insects, p. 203.

and yoke maker, who claimed no particular place as his home, applied to McGhee for contracts.¹⁶⁷ A. F. Kelly of Toro, Louisiana, had an arrangement with the 4 L Company, but it had turned sour. Late in August, Warren dunned him to settle the feed bill for teams he had bought from a previous contractor. The teams had apparently been mortgaged to the company to secure the debt for feed, and if Kelly was not in a position to satisfy the debt Warren proposed to seize the animals. Although his threats were not exactly empty, it seems that they did not have the bite his letters would lead later readers to assume. Several weeks later Kelly was still in arrears for feed for his teams despite the advance the company paid him to get started.¹⁶⁸ In theory, at least, teamsters and flatheads worked only as much as half a mile back from the spurs tracks, which would have meant building spurs off the tram at one-mile intervals. The local elevation along the Kisatchie Wold did not permit such precise railroad building. Indeed, the tram and its spurs described an erratic pattern that defied orderly harvest.¹⁶⁹

The 4 L Company paid teamsters and flatheads on a sliding scale. At the Fisher front, it paid \$1.75 per Mbf log measure for cutting and hauling the first half mile back from the tracks, adding 25 cents per Mbf for each added quarter mile. At the Victoria front, it paid \$1.50 per Mbf for cutting and hauling the first half mile, adding 25 cents

¹⁶⁷ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Fred McGhee, Fisher, Louisiana, July 15, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 138, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁶⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to A. F. Kelly, Toro, Louisiana, October 16, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 490, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁶⁹ For a graphic depiction of lumber company trams, see George A. Stokes, "Lumbering and Western Louisiana Cultural Landscapes, Annals of the Association of American Geographers Vol. XLVII No. 3 (September 1957): 250-266.

per Mbf for each added quarter mile. Where the first quarter mile back from the tracks had already been cut over, however, the company paid \$1.625 for the second quarter mile, with 25 cents per Mbf for each added quarter mile.¹⁷⁰ Teamsters seldom agreed to haul logs at such distances. The difference in wage scales between Fisher and Victoria reflects the rather sharp difference between species of timber along the Kisatchie Wold and species that grew in the area to the north between the Kisatchie and Nacogdoches Wolds. Fisher drew from stands of both long leaf and short leaf pine, but Victoria seldom harvested long leaf pine at all. Cutting and hauling short leaf pine was materially easier and cheaper than cutting and hauling long leaf pine, thus short leaf pine paid less.¹⁷¹

Logging by steam railroads required frequent spurs off a central line or tram. In the early years at Fisher, Willard Warren built the company tram, in all directions from the mill site on the KCS, and he completed the Victoria tram, originally called the Robeline, Sabine & Pacific Railroad, generally west across the Kisatchie Wold to connect with the Fisher tram, renaming it the Victoria, Fisher & Western Railroad. Briefly, company officials considered building across the Sabine River into Sabine County, Texas, but failed to acquire timberlands there because of competition from John Henry Kirby

¹⁷⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to A. F. Kelly, Toro, Louisiana, August 27, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 150, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁷¹ W. W. Warren to Fred McGhee, Fisher, Louisiana, July 18, 1901; Warren to Greenwood & Holmes Lumber Company, Griffin, Mississippi, August 27, 1901; Warren to C. M. Brandon, Pollock, Louisiana, August 29, 1901; Warren to H. G. Wilson, Cooper, Louisiana, August 29, 1901; Warren to W. S. Jones, Arcadia, Arkansas, August 29, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, pp. 299, 300, 312, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

and other Texas lumbermen. Oscar Cole contracted with Warren to "grub the right-of-way" of the VF&W, that is he removed stumps from the roadbed and graded the "dumps" or fills using animals and slips, shovel-like earth-moving instruments. In the fall of 1901, Cole moved to Hornbeck, a railroad roundhouse town serving several sawmills on the western channel of Anacoco Creek, the beginning of the Calcasieu long leaf pine district. Cole left an account at Fisher for about \$400, which his new employer, one Anderson, agreed to guarantee. His move proved to be friendly, however, inasmuch as Warren acquired several log wagons from his former contractor, which Cole had intended to use in a logging operation farther south. "The logging wagons are here and I would be glad to have you write me what disposition you will be able to make of them,"¹⁷² Warren wrote.

It was to Warren's advantage to have independent loggers operating in the area, because his mills depended on them for felling and hauling logs to the company spurs and trams. C. M. Branan of Sand Spur, Grant Parish, Louisiana, had six teams for sale in the fall of 1901. Since he did not want to contract them and the 4 L Company only contracted teams and teamsters, Warren offered to "show your letter to our contractors."¹⁷³ He gave the information to Fred McGhee, his timber superintendent, to find a buyer among the company's loggers. R. E. Wyche of Benton, DeSoto Parish, Louisiana, had 16 yoke of cattle and five log wagons he wanted to sell at about the same

¹⁷² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Oscar Cole, Hornbeck, Louisiana, October 16, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 320, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁷³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Fred McGhee, Fisher, Louisiana, September 6, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 342, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

time. Warren offered to take Wyche on as a contractor, and when his offer was refused, he encouraged Rad Thompson, a log contractor living at Fisher, to buy them.¹⁷⁴ J. G. Leavens of Neame, Vernon Parish, Louisiana, contacted Warren about log contracting. Warren quoted the standard company offer: \$1.75 per Mbf for cutting and hauling the first half mile from the tracks of spur or tram, and 25 cents per Mbf for each added quarter mile.¹⁷⁵ And to P. A. Garner in Holt, Florida, he wrote that "cattle drivers and log sawyers" were in high demand in West Louisiana. "Good sawyers have been getting \$2.00 per day and good drivers the same amount."¹⁷⁶ At Birch Tree, Missouri, "6 or 7 log teams" wanted to go south to Fisher or Victoria, and Warren appealed to Fisher, still operating the Cordz-Fisher Lumber Company at Birch Tree, and to E. E. Smythe, general freight agent of the KCS in Kansas City, to expedite their transportation.¹⁷⁷ And he urged George Beard of Short Post Office, Missouri, to bring "4 or 5 more teams" to Victoria Mills, where Warren promised the log contractor would find "good country."¹⁷⁸ Meanwhile, at Crossett, Arkansas, E. W. Gates declined to accept the logging outfit offered by G. I. Millard of St. Louis, Missouri, because the

¹⁷⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Rad Thompson, Fisher, Louisiana, September 11, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 362, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁷⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. G. Leavens, Neame, Louisiana, September 23, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 411, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁷⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to P. A. Garner, Holt, Florida, October 15, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 468, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁷⁷ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to E. E. Smythe, Kansas City, Missouri, November 2, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 484, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁷⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to George Beard, Short Post Office, Missouri, August 31, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 490, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

mills of the Gates-Crossett-Watzek interests in South Arkansas used only horses and ran standard gauge railroad rolling stock.¹⁷⁹

As the general economy improved after the panic years of the 1890s, commercial lumber interests succeeded in dominating the lumber interests and consolidating it along the trunk lines of major railroads. To the worker the development meant far more stability but much less freedom. Hereafter, the lumber worker, whether millhand or flathead, would be increasingly dependent upon the company and its town for his sustenance. To those who learned to discipline themselves to the shriek of the mill whistle, it was a comfortable arrangement; to those who pined for the leisure of the farmstead, it was confinement of a particularly annoying kind. This was to be the question, whether a man must bow his neck to the power of the mill or retain the option to defy the capitalist money economy. There was never much real choice, after all.

¹⁷⁹ E. W. Gates, Crossett, Arkansas, to G. I. Millard, St. Louis, Missouri, December 31, 1901, Gates Letterbook No. 1, p. 165, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, LSU.

CHAPTER 2

Conditions of Labor in the Piney Woods

A town in this region, with a fortunate location, is like Jonah's gourd, the growth of a night.¹

In an unhealthy region, almost totally bereft of competent medical practitioners, sawmill towns tended to exhibit extreme outbreaks of fevers, plagues, and accidents.² In the summer of 1901, the lumber yard foreman at Fisher, Louisiana, came down with typhoid fever. L. F. Russell of Texarkana, Texas, briefly considered accepting a job with the 4 L Company as a replacement on the chance that the foreman would not recover, leaving the permanent position in his possession.³ Meanwhile, Willard Warren took steps that summer to organize a health service, funded by employee contributions. He conferred with G. W. Loring at Loring, Louisiana, the Bowman & Hicks Lumber Company mill town a few miles north on the KCS. Loring apparently wanted to know the details of Warren's plans. Warren sent him a copy of a petition "presented by our employees to our company, requesting the establishment and providing for the

¹ Flint, Recollections, p. 293.

² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, November 2, 1901; Warren as "Post-master" to W. B. Neal, Peggy, Missouri, July 25, 1901, Letterbook p. 711, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; see also, Galloway, "J. B. White," p. 49.

³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to G. G. Leach, Hornbeck, Louisiana, August 30, 1901; Warren to George Anderson, Hornbeck, Louisiana, October 9, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 551, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

maintenance of a medical department."⁴ Although the workers could not "bind their successors" with the agreement, it was documentary evidence that the company accepted no responsibility for the medical doctors or "their ability or incapacity."⁵ Despite the work of the 4 L Company medical department, the mills were plagued from the start by accidents.⁶ In late 1899, shortly after he and Willard Warren arrived in Louisiana, Dr. White died of wounds from his own shotgun after an altercation with settlers in a controversy precipitated by the employment of black workers.⁷

By the fall of 1901, lawyers in nearby towns had begun to make a market in lawsuits based on injuries received in the mills, the logging woods, at the front, and on the railroad.⁸ Late in August, the general manager of Montrose Lumber Company in Montrose, Louisiana, on the Texas & Pacific line through western Natchitoches Parish, complained to Warren that the 4 L Company had abandoned Navelle Clark, a black millhand, after he had been injured at Fisher. Clark had previously worked for Montrose before drifting west to Fisher where he had friends. "We paid his board while disabled

⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to G. W. Loring, Loring, Louisiana, July 30, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 207, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Fred McGhee, Fisher, Louisiana, September 6, 1901; Warren to J. W. Connelly [sic], Hornbeck, Louisiana, August 29, 1901; Warren to M. L. Rhodes, Victoria, Louisiana, August 31, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, pp. 315, 485, 491, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Mrs. Mary E. Patterson, Attalia, Alabama, October 5, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 456, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to S. R. Self, Hornbeck, Louisiana, July 3, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 79, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

[and] urged him to stay here and get work,"⁹ Warren replied. The 4 L general manager blamed Clark for the accident that lost him one of his hands because, Warren charged, the worker had to sit down on the floor to be in a position to get his hands in the gears of the live rolls. Still, Warren recognized that the company would eventually be required to compensate the crippled Clark, so he asked the Montrose Lumber Company to estimate the size of the settlement Clark would be willing to accept. For his part, Warren was willing to give a "reasonable amount."¹⁰ In subsequent correspondence Warren asked J. L. Rives, the Montrose superintendent, to advise "this negro" of the "bare possibility that he might get judgement"¹¹ in a court of law. To settle matters without the necessity of Clark going to extra expense, the 4 L Company offered to settle for \$50. His company hired lawyers permanently, Warren boasted, so it would not cost him much more to go to court.¹² A week later Rives wrote to Warren with the information that Clark had retained Milton J. Cunningham, a lawyer of Natchitoches.¹³ Warren remained confident in the company's ability to impose a settlement. But he lost his bravado when he came to advise company officers of the situation. To O. W. Fisher,

⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Montrose Lumber Company, Montrose, Louisiana, August 29, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 309, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. L. Rives, Montrose, Louisiana, August 31, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 311, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. L. Rives, Montrose, Louisiana, September 6, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 325, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹³ Ibid.

he wrote that the company would probably be sued by Clark, despite the fact that the company "took care of the negro while he was laid up and offered to give him work as soon as he was well and as long as he cared to stay and behave himself."¹⁴ The injured worker left the mill town, apparently with help from other workers, and went home, where his father took the decision to sue, since Clark was still a minor. Warren led Fisher to believe that the company could get Cunningham "to drop the case by alleging the accident was caused by the negro's negligence," because the young man had been "playing with the live rolls."¹⁵ To Cunningham on September 20, Warren pointed out that Clark hurt himself through "his own carelessness." Furthermore, when he was hurt, the 4 L Company took care of him and would have even paid his way to Montrose to visit his mother "if he had called at the office." Instead Clark slipped away at night, "influenced by others of his own race here." The company was adamant, Warren wrote, and "we are in no way responsible for the accident and very respectfully decline to entertain any proposition for settlement."¹⁶ Two weeks later, however, Warren admitted to Fisher that he had decided to settle the Clark case for \$400 because the company would be paying no more than the cost of carrying on the suit. Besides, he said, he feared the outcome of a trial by a jury made up of farmers who resented the

¹⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, September 14, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 338, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Cunningham & Cunningham, Natchitoches, Louisiana, September 20, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 343, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

lumber mill's ability to dominate the labor market. The 4 L Company had rendered Clark virtually worthless as a field hand. And in any case, he had learned, the Cunninghams were apt to win any lawsuit they brought in the area, where they had connections by kinship with virtually all the planters and not a few of the field hands. "They are a good firm and perhaps the most patronized of any lawyers there,"¹⁷ he wrote. Two days later, Warren sent Fisher a \$400 check and voucher for the president's signature, made out to the Cunninghams to settle the claim by Navelle Clark, Jr., for the loss of his right hand in the conveyor machinery at Fisher. His lawyers sent a receipt from the law firm, signed by both junior and senior Clark "as the injured negro was a minor."¹⁸

At about the same time, Jeff Demfry wrote from Deweyville, Texas, to ask C. A. S. Steinweg, the mill superintendent, for help after he hurt himself falling off the mill tram during the midnight lunch hour. Warren stated the company policy clearly if sternly: "I do not feel that you ought to ask us to assist you in this matter. Had you remained here and under the care of our physicians we would have been glad to have done what we could for you and your Doctor bill would have been paid and when you were well we would have again given you employment. This would have been much better than to have gone away before you were in a condition to take care of yourself.... I think it would be better for you to apply for aid from some one in Deweyville and

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, November 2, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 406, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

when you are well again you can work for them."¹⁹ Still another injured worker, W. D. Colbert, "the crippled negro at Victoria" in Natchitoches Parish, kept Warren upset. "This negro had been quite an expense, but he seems to have the best intentions." They proved not to be quite enough because Warren wrote a few days later that "[i]t seems we have done a good deal for this man already. There is this about it, if we keep him around we are going to be bothered with him more or less all the time. I do not suppose we are in any way responsible for his accident that happened nearly a year ago, but probably to give him the amount he wants, \$75.00, and get him to promise to go away and never come back, we would be getting out of it cheaper than to be troubled with him." The man had injured his knee severely and could not walk, which Warren proposed remedying by having the knee "stiffened so as to make the knee cap heal." Amputation probably was not necessary, he said, and anyway "his blood is in very bad condition for an operation."²⁰ Later in the fall, Warren wrote to Mrs. Mary E. Patterson in Attalla, Alabama, expressing his sympathy at the death of her son on the VF&W Railroad. The company, Warren said, "thought very highly of your son as an employee and should we feel that any blame attached to our Company, or to any of our employees, we should feel disposed to assist you, but we feel that you should regard this as an unavoidable accident, such as it was; no one was to blame, and had his death

¹⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Jeff Dembry, Deweyville, Texas, September 5, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 386, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, September 26, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 387, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

occurred from a natural cause, we feel that you would not ask that we assist you."²¹ In addition, Warren said, the company gave the boy a proper burial, paid the expenses of the funeral, and gave free hotel accommodations to Mrs. Patterson's two surviving sons, who attended their dead brother. To Fisher, however, Warren was blunt in his assessment of the legal responsibility to which the company was exposed. "They are grasping at a straw," he said, when the Patterson family blamed the locomotive engineer for the boy's death. "Her son's dying statement was that no one was to blame, that it was his own fault."²² Nevertheless, the case would drag on a year before the company won by default when it transpired that the Patterson family's lawyer had permitted prescription to run on his client's claim.

Despite Warren's assurances to injured workers that the company would provide medical attention, he actually had no qualified physician or surgeon available until late 1901. Warren engaged the services of Dr. D. Harvey Dillon, who had earned the MD degree at a Memphis, Tennessee, school, qualifying him to practice allopathic medicine. He developed a respectable practice while serving as head physician for the 4 L Company. His brother, Dr. W. E. Dillon, worked as his assistant, and their father operated a drug store in nearby Many, Louisiana, in which both brothers appeared to be financially interested. Warren described Harvey Dillon as about 30 years old with "no

²¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Mrs. Mary E. Patterson, Attalla, Alabama, October 5, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 406, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, November 2, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 421, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

defects of sight," traits he had observed for about two years during which the men had been acquainted. "If he drinks, it is in moderation and I am satisfied he does not use chloral, morphine or other narcotics. His general character for honesty and integrity is excellent."²³ Other than the Doctors Dillon, the town had no physician or surgeon.²⁴ Warren wrote quite gently and uncharacteristically to an aspiring physician, D. O. Willis at Kisatchie, Louisiana, about the doctor's application for a job at Victoria. "I rather think," Warren wrote, "we would prefer some one there that had fully completed the medical course, and had had some outside practice. The responsibility is quite great, and very often the services of a good surgeon are necessary."²⁵

Christmas came that year with the mills operating without interruption. Christmas Day, other than Juneteenth and July 4th, the only holiday taken from work, passed without serious accidents, Warren reported to Fisher at his home in Springfield, Missouri. But on Christmas night, e related, "13 of our best people here waited on the 'blind tiger' people as a law & order committee, and gave them until four o'clock to-day [December 26] to move out their belongings and close up business." Obviously without much success and with no enthusiasm, "I tried to prevent this."²⁶ Still there was no

²³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to National Commercial Agency, New York City, October 5, 1901, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to L. F. Russell, Texarkana, Texas, July 20, 1901; Warren to J. W. Everman, Dallas, Texas, August 21, 1901; 4 L Letterpress Book, pp. 156, 546, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Dr. D. O. Willis, Kisatchie, Louisiana, June 10, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 826, Author's Collection.

²⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Springfield, Missouri, December 26, 1901, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

harm done, and the results were good, although he had taken the precaution of putting on extra guards at the plant. The incident was caused by two boys visiting the saloon and getting so drunk they had to be carried home, which incensed the parents and other good citizens of the town. In a separate incident, Carter, the quarterboss, stopped two country boys on Christmas Day who had come to Fisher to "paint" the black quarters. Carter broke a shotgun over their heads and was making good progress in holding them down to whip them, when one of the "dagoes" who worked there but did not understand English very well, pulled him off the boys in the mistaken belief that Carter was the aggressor. Freed from Carter's grasp, they made for their horses. One of the boys belonged to a prominent family in Florien, Louisiana, a few miles to the south. One carried brass knuckles, and the other had a knife. The shotgun Carter carried belonged to W. E. McNeely, the Sabine Parish Clerk of Court, from whom Warren had borrowed it to hunt quail that fall. Warren apologized to McNeely for damaging his fowling piece, and promptly sent it off to Parker Brothers in Meridian, Connecticut, for repairs. He described it as a double barreled hammerless shotgun "which came too suddenly in contact with a man's head."²⁷ The next day, the Fisher village law and order committee called on the blind tiger again. "The Lewing outfit came into town yesterday," Warren reported to the company president, "and said they knew they had been doing wrong and that they would see there would be no more trouble out there.

²⁷ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. E. McNeely, Many, Louisiana, December 26, 1901, *ibid*.

The other parties objected but faced with shotguns agreed to move out."²⁸ Warren speculated that someone would burn the saloon buildings after the people left, which would give the company a chance to buy the land and end the problem for good. He was gratified early the next year to report that the company would no longer be bothered by bootleggers on the edge of the company block. "As I wrote you a few days ago," he informed the company president, "the 'blind tiger' people have all quit business and left, and last night [January 2-3, 1902] the three houses down the track went up in smoke. I expect to be able to get hold of that 120 acres of land in a very short time now."²⁹

Settlers often found work in the mills, on the railroads, or in the logging woods, but they just as often left the work when it was too hot, too cold, too wet, or too inconvenient. Generally, black laborers were more dependable, although they were apt to bank out of the company office, much to the annoyance of the management. The lawyers, SoRelle & Boone in Many, Louisiana, sought to collect debts from Nathan and Willie McFarland, two black workers at the 4 L Company plants in the fall of 1901. At the end of September, Nathan McFarland had a credit with the company of only \$1.55. Willie McFarland was in better financial shape, with \$8.58 left of his wages. "This is about as much as a negro ever gets ahead," Warren explained, but he promised that "we

²⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Springfield, Missouri, December 27, 1901, 4 L Letterbook, p. 729, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, January 3, 1902, 4 L Letterbook, p. 760, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

will collect the balances as far as possible, but will of course have to let the negroes have a living at the same time."³⁰

Occasionally, the management experimented with the makeup of its labor force. In October 1901, Warren tested white gandy dancers on his tram road at night, primarily because blacks declined to work at night lighted by lanterns that left them vulnerable to waylaying by whites, a popular pastime in the region. "We had the engine out all night," Warren reported to the company president, "and had a crew of white men taking up track. They did not do very much, but I think they will do a great deal better to-night."³¹ He expected to take up from 12,000 to 15,000 feet of track each night, almost as much as crews working during the daylight hours. He seemed correct, because the on the second night white night crews took up 50 percent more track than they took up the first night. Still, the company suffered a heavy turnover of men.³²

In August the conductor on the logging train left to find work in San Antonio, Texas. He had worked for the 4 L Company since August 1900 and proved satisfactory, sober, and accident free. But at the same time, a former Fisher blocksetter, H. H.

³⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Joe Alford, Loring, Louisiana, and to S. J. Ransey, Many, Louisiana, November 9, 1901; Warren to Lee N. Bush, Many, Louisiana, September 21, 1901; Warren to SoRelle & Boone, Attorneys at Law, Many, Louisiana, November 9, 1901, 4 L Letterpress Book pp. 401, 407, 411, and 430, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, October 10, 1901, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, October 10, 1901; Warren to R. H. Innes, San Antonio, Texas, August 17, 1901; Warren to Martin Hardwick, Fisher, Louisiana, September 5, 1901, Letterpress Book pp. 438, 474, and 476, in Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Weems, applied to return to the 4 L Company mills. "Probably," Warren told Martin Hardwick, the mill superintendent at Fisher, "we can commence to get back some of the men we have been furnishing the Bowman-Hicks Co. for the past year."³³ Bowman-Hicks operated mills at Loring and Hicks, Louisiana. At the same time, Hardwick received an application for filer from one A. Williams, a midwesterner, who gave the Simmons Manufacturing Company and Disston Saw Company as references. Warren was not impressed. "[I] Presume they would not be regarded as very good references,"³⁴ he said, despite Simmons' and Disston's reputations as the leading manufacturers of saws in the country.

A steady flow of northern men kept the mills in the region in the labor market. Many of the men at Grandin and Birch Tree, Missouri, followed the Fishers and Whites into Louisiana. A. J. Shelton, the scaler at Loring in 1901, came down from Grandin before the turn of the century. And Wilbur Bush, the sawyer at the Noble Lumber Company, Noble, Louisiana, had worked for the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company several years earlier. In the fall of 1901, Warren offered to hire him to work the mills at Fisher. But on second thought, he decided against the move after talking with Frank Jones, head sawyer in the Fisher pine mill. Jones admitted that "he is a good sawyer, but he will not stay any where very long and if I remember right he would not make us

³³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Martin Hardwick, Fisher, Louisiana, September 5, 1901, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁴ Ibid.

a good citizen."³⁵ The concern with good citizenship usually camouflaged management's constant vigilance against unionism or liquor and sometimes both. The good citizen was a company man. Most applications for work received Warren's personal attention, after which he usually referred them to superintendents and foremen for further consideration. His answers were also usually detailed and quite personal. "Write us an autograph letter," he told Charles O. Johnson, who wanted to leave his work in Leesville, Louisiana, for the security of a company town, "stating how many years experience you have had and the salary you would expect."³⁶ Farther north, at Crossett, Arkansas, E. W. Gates combed the mill towns at far north as Michigan in search of workers. "We are just commencing a large mill," he wrote James Russell in Minot, Michigan, in the fall of 1901, "and can use you at the start at \$1.25 per day and as soon as we get to cutting logs can pay more, we use all horses we have two teams weigh 1450 to 1650 each we want six good horse loggers Pay 1.50 to 1.75 for same."³⁷ To William Scheif in Oconto, Wisconsin, he explained that the company was building a small mill to cut timbers for the construction of a larger mill. He offered Scheif a job within three weeks paying \$2 a day for work in the small mill. When the big mill began

³⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Wilbur Bush, Noble, Louisiana, September 28, 1901; Warren to Martin Hardwick, Fisher, Louisiana, September 30, 1901, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Charles O. Johnson, Leesville, Louisiana, September 30, 1901. See also Warren to R. A. Framtom, September 5, 1901, and A. J. Shelton, Loring, Louisiana, September 23, 1901, 4 L Letterpress Book, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁷ E. W. Gates, Crossett, Arkansas, to James Russell, Minot, Michigan, October 2, 1901, Gates Letterpress Book No. 1, p. 76, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, LSU.

running, he hinted, Scheif would get a better job. Board at the camp was \$15 a month, the mill ran year-round, and payday was once a month.³⁸

The turnover although light continued uninterrupted over the period of the development of the 4 L Company in Louisiana. Warren followed the etiquette of the mill towns and gave those good men who wanted to leave a letter of recommendation to the next employer. "Re. yours of Oct 8," he wrote to the Chicago Lumber & Coal Company at Logansport, Louisiana, on the Upper Sabine River. "A. R. Elliott was planing mill foreman here from Jan 1 to July 1. Makes a good man. Man of good habits."³⁹ C. T. Simpson of Montague, Michigan, offered in the fall of 1901 to send his veteran sawyer, one A. Dailey, south to work the winters in a warmer climate. "We use the cross levers in front of the saw," Warren explained. "The rig is small and light but quick."⁴⁰ The 4 L Company paid sawyers on its Dixie mill \$5 a day, for cutting 50 M to 60 M a day from only small logs. O. H. Ingram and G. W. Dulany in Wisconsin and Missouri, both of whom later associated with the Grandin interests in Louisiana, through their treasurer, M. H. McCarthy, offered in the fall of 1901 to send "one of our head sawyers, R. G. Henderson, [to Orange, Texas] who wants a job in the

³⁸ E. W. Gates, Crossett, Arkansas, to William Scheif, Oconto, Wisconsin, October 30, 1901, Gates Letterpress Book No. 1, p. 84, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, LSU.

³⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Chicago Lumber & Coal Company, Logansport, Louisiana, October 10, 1901, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. T. Simpson, Montague, Michigan, November 7, 1901, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

South in a First Class mill for the winter."⁴¹ The lumbermen recommended him as expert, reliable, industrious, and sober.⁴²

Gates, ensconced in the Crossett logging camp 12 miles from Hamburg, Arkansas, offered Harry Badstrubner of Minden, Louisiana, \$7 for a 12-hour day to build the Crossett mill. "Come Dec. 1 or sooner,"⁴³ he said. The railroad would be completed to the site by February 1, which would facilitate the acquisition of supplies. Crossett paid millwrights \$2.50 to \$3.50 a day, and Gates instructed Badstrubner to hire as many as he could find. Also hire carpenters, he said, offering them \$2 a day. Carpenter rates, he warned, were not as high in Arkansas as in Louisiana. "At present we are comfortable living in new floored tents and have a good cook. There are a few nice families in Camp and several more preparing to come, if you desire to bring yours we can have a tent sch[ool] unless you prefer to have them in Hamburg."⁴⁴ Badstrubner may well have been a veteran of the lumber business in the Lake States, just as many other lumbermen from that region petitioned Gates for jobs. In 1901, the Crossett mill and town had not progressed to the point at which a large work force was needed.

⁴¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, November 6, 1901, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, December 27, 1901, 4 L Letterpress Book p. 730, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴³ E. W. Gates, Crossett, Arkansas, to Harry Badstrubner, Minden, Louisiana, November 20, 1901, p. 164, Gates Letterbook No. 1, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, LSU.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Nevertheless, Gates built up an impressive list of prospective employees.⁴⁵ As the year ended, Warren in Louisiana found a planing mill foreman, originally from Michigan who had been building a mill for Tremont Lumber Company at Joyce, Winn Parish, Louisiana. His former planing mill foreman, he said, had been drinking too much, which presented a constant danger to men and machinery in a mill that employed a succession of razor sharp knives. At years end in Crossett, Arkansas, Gates found he had collected enough men for the time being, and began rebuilding his prospect file.⁴⁶

Labor publicists often mark the year 1902 as the beginning of labor agitation on the Lower Mississippi River. As early as 1905, Eraste Vidrine gave an impassioned account of a strike by black mill hands against the Lutchter & Moore Cypress Lumber Company at Lutchter, Louisiana. By 1903, he wrote, black workers had organized one of the few local labor unions within the Socialist Party.⁴⁷ Because of the dearth of dependable data on labor-management relations in the region, other writers have accepted the Vidrine account uncritically. It seems that workers did, in fact, walk off their jobs, and after a brief rest they returned. Other spontaneous strikes across the Southwest sought to pressure management to reduce the daily hours of work. One writer credits this agitation with reducing hours from 12 to 11, which is almost certainly without merit because all mills used the twelfth hour for cleanup and repair. More serious repairs were

⁴⁵ E. Peterson, Lutchter, Louisiana, to W. H. Stark, Orange, Texas, December 11, 1901, L&M Box 12-681, SFA.

⁴⁶ M. H. McCarty, Hannibal, Missouri, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, November 27, 1901, L&M Box 9, 1899-1901 (505), and Peterson to Stark, December 11, 1901, L&M Box 12 (681), SFA.

⁴⁷ Eraste Vidrine, "Negro Locals," International Socialist Review 5 (1905), 389.

left for Sundays when millwrights had to work.⁴⁸ On June 12, 1902, 600 workers at Ruddock Lumber Company and at the Louisiana Cypress Saw Mill Company in Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, demanding reduction of hours from 11 to 10, struck for a few days. There is no evidence that in either case in Louisiana did the companies permanently change their policies.⁴⁹ In Texas, only two strikes were recorded for the year 1902, one of 23 days, which failed, resulting in no permanent labor organization among the 250 workers involved, and another for 42 days, which seems to have left no discernable imprint in the surviving records.⁵⁰ Throughout the region, native laborers exhibited scant consciousness of class, and the number of foreigners in the work force did not impose the collectivist mentality that immigrant workers were credited with having. As industrialization continued in the region, however, this situation would change, but the time was not yet right for the growth of self-conscious unionism.⁵¹

Gates in his raw lumber camp at Crossett, Arkansas, in early 1902, continued to recruit workers, searching through other lumber towns of the region for bricklayers, needed by March to build the furnaces that would fuel the steam engines of his big mills. He also reached as far north as Colquet, Minnesota, for skilled workers to raise his mill

⁴⁸ Fred Thompson, comp., The I.W.W.: Its First Fifty Years (1905-1955): The History of An Effort to Organize the Working Class (Chicago: Industrial Workers of the World, 1955), p. 67.

⁴⁹ Grady McWhiney, "Louisiana Socialists in the Early Twentieth Century: A Study in Rustic Radicalism," The Journal of Southern History 20 (August 1954), 327.

⁵⁰ Allen, East Texas Lumber, p. 167.

⁵¹ James R. Green, "The Brotherhood of Timber Workers, 1910-1913: A Radical Response to Industrial Capitalism in the Southern U.S.A.," Past & Present 60 (August 1973), 174; Fickle, "Race, Class," p. 99.

buildings and install the heavy machinery. To E. E. Hall in Gainesville, Florida, he explained that "it will be several months before we will get a planing mill started, however you may come now if you want a good hustling \$1.25 per day job until we get the mill going."⁵² Elmer Bailey in nearby Wilmar, Arkansas, offered Gates his teams of horses under contract, but the lumberman declined. Unlike Warren in West Louisiana, the Arkansas lumber company needed "no contract teams at all." But in case Bailey wanted a job, Gates offered \$1.50 a day for drivers of Crossett teams. J. I. Williams of Bastrop, Arkansas, also offered to contract for hauling timber, but again Gates said he had his own teams. Offers from teamsters and contractors flooded the company, which required other office workers to help Gates answer the mail. C. A. Birdwell, stenographer and bookkeeper at Crossett, advised applicants that the mill was not short of teamsters, but they could come to the camp and take the first place that opened. If they proved to be competent, a team and job would open in time. Gates echoed his assistant's advice. "In a business of this size any capable man ought to make his way," he wrote, "his own future in a certain degree [will develop] according to his capacity and opportunities."⁵³ By late January, however, Birdwell had to scurry about

⁵² E. W. Gates, Crossett, Arkansas, to E. E. Hall, Gainesville, Florida, January 2, 1902, Gates Letterbook No. 1, p. 169, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, LSU.

⁵³ C. A. Birdwell, Crossett, Arkansas, to R. B. Dowdy, Gilmore, Arkansas, January 23, 1902; Birdwell to C. H. Robinson, Monroe, Louisiana, January 24, 1902; E. W. Gates, Crossett, Arkansas, to Mrs. Newell, January 25, 1902, Gates Letterbook No. 1, p. 173, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, LSU.

for teams because of a shortage caused by a "hard cold spell" that forced the company's regular teams to take a "vacation."⁵⁴

Crossett's labor pool covered a wide geographic area, but it also crossed social, racial, and ethnic classes. M. C. Jackson had failed in his own sawmill business. He hired out at Crossett with the understanding that Gates would bank his debts, paying them off by withholding payments from his wages. Potential employees wrote to Gates at Crossett from Tip Top, Virginia, and Muscatine, Iowa, and were answered politely. Black labor, however, was recruited in large part by labor contractors who provided gangs suitable for hard repetitive tasks such as stacking lumber or laying rails on the trams roads. Early in January 1902, Gates complained that a group of "darkies" had failed to arrive at Crossett. He needed them badly, he said, and while he recognized the special problems they presented a mill manager in the piney woods of South Arkansas, he also insisted on caution to see that they were protected from irate whites, particularly in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, where blacks riding the passenger trains were not at all safe from harassment and even physical violence. Gates had had his own racial troubles, which he blamed on "whitecaps," whom he proposed boycotting. Other mills in the region had been subjected to the same problems, including Eagle Lumber Company at Eagle Mills, Arkansas, Gates Lumber Company at Wilmar, Arkansas, Fordyce Lumber Company at Fordyce, Arkansas, Sawyer-Austin Company at Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and

⁵⁴ E. W. Gates, Crossett, Arkansas, to C. Murphy, Bon Ami, Louisiana, January 1, 1902; Gates to D. A. Hitchcock, Colquet, Minnesota, January 1, 1902; Gates to Elmer Bailey, Wilmar, Arkansas, January 3, 1902; Gates to Reichman-Crosby Company, Memphis, Tennessee, January 3, 1902, Gates Letterbook No. 1, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, LSU.

the Freeman Lumber Company at Millville, Arkansas. Whitecap troubles, Gates wrote, usually involved young men, almost all of whom came from the "infected districts of Louisiana." Arkansas state law, he said, was "faulty for prosecuting such crimes," which included the intimidation of black workers by threatening violence. "It seems to be working north from Louisiana," where "99% of the troublemakers" originated. Crossett Lumber Company had been victimized by W. G. Morgan, "a beardless youth of about twenty years, light complexion, has tendencies to be a dude, slender and about 5 feet 7" in height. This stripling was the cause of our trouble here."⁵⁵

Meanwhile, Gates busied himself arranging for makeshift tracks for his locomotives, offering J. W. Hughes of Magnet Cove, Arkansas, a job making pole ties for 12 cents each delivered to the track. He promised "a good long job." Pole ties, unlike standard cross ties that were squared by ax or saw, had only one face squared, leaving the rest of the pole untouched. The single face placed on the upper side of the tie accepted the rails, plates, and spikes. Untreated and green, pole ties quickly rotted out, to be replaced with more permanent squared ties. By late January, Gates was desperate for tie makers, promised by the Fordyce Lumber Company, a companion plant at Fordyce, Arkansas. "You may send Mr. Alexander and as many more as possible,"

⁵⁵ E. W. Gates, Crossett, Arkansas, to C. H. Blacknell, Arkadelphia, Arkansas, January 22, 1902; Gates to Fordyce Lumber Company, Fordyce, Arkansas, January 22, 1902; Gates to A. J. Carden, Sweet Home, Arkansas, January 22, 1902; Gates to J. I. Williams, Bastrop, Arkansas, January 23, 1902, Gates Letterbook No. 1, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, LSU.

Gates wrote. "The tie maker that you have sent here has not arrived."⁵⁶ Into his files, Gates also placed the applications for a school teacher, which was much too premature since the camp had no school building or church at the time. From Hamburg, Arkansas, Gates continued to recruit millwrights. "At present we have as many millwrights at work as we are able to keep material ahead to keep busy," he wrote A. J. Carden in Sweet Home, Arkansas. "We expect to be better fixed in this respect in the course of the next three weeks and would then like to hear from you as we would doubtless be able to use you."⁵⁷ At the same time he gave the same advice to W. A. Harris, a Shreveport, Louisiana, millwright. For the time being, too, Gates had enough flatheads or woods sawyers, the fellers of trees who worked in coordination with teamsters in the woods along the company front. As time went on, another office worker, C. A. Buckner, took over the task of answering applicants for jobs. To his associates in the Hamburg office, Buckner bragged that his wife, Addie, liked living in the camp at Crossett. "The tents are more comfortable than the houses at home," Buckner wrote. "The objection to them is that they are too warm and too tight."⁵⁸

⁵⁶ E. W. Gates, Crossett, Arkansas, to Fordyce Lumber Company, Fordyce, Arkansas, January 3, 1902, Gates Letterbook No. 1, Crossett Lumber Collection, LSU.

⁵⁷ E. W. Gates, Crossett, Arkansas, to A. J. Carden, Sweet Home, Arkansas, January 22, 1902, Gates Letterbook No. 1, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, LSU.

⁵⁸ C. A. Buckner, Crossett, Arkansas, to John Norman, Hamburg, Arkansas, February 5, 1902. See also E. W. Gates, Crossett, Arkansas, to F. S. Irwin, Tip Top, Virginia, January 3, 1902; Gates to C. M. Fiffer, Muscatine, Iowa, January 3, 1902; Gates to M. L. Rhodes, Victoria, Louisiana, January 22, 1902; Gates to Fordyce Lumber Company, January 22, 1902; Gates to W. A. Harris, Shreveport, Louisiana, January 22, 1902; Gates to S. A. Duke & Company, Baxter, Arkansas, January 25, 1902; C. A. Birdwell to Eagle Lumber Company, January 26, 1902; Gates to Abb Townsend, Blissville, Arkansas, January 28, 1902; Birdwell to Gus Norman, Hamburg, Arkansas,

Lumber managers kept in close touch on the subject of wages, carefully comparing wage schedules of their own mills with their neighbors. Warren at the 4 L Company in Louisiana readily revealed the wages he paid at the mills at Fisher and Victoria.

Head sawyers	\$6.00 a day
Blocksetters on the set works	2.75 a day
Doggers on the carriage, front	1.75 a day
Doggers on the carriage, rear	1.75 a day
Edgermen on edging saws	2.75 a day
Levermen on edging saws	2.00 a day
Sorting table men	1.75 a day
Graders	1.75 to 1.90 a day
Lumber stackers by contract	0.22 per Mbf
Log loading by contract	0.25 per Mbf
Common labor	1.50 a day
Mechanics	0.30 an hour

A mechanic's wages at Fisher held steady at about \$3.30 for an 11-hour shift, although managers stated it in hourly terms because mechanics often worked for extended periods on weekends and holidays when the mill shut down for repairs.⁵⁹ Late in 1902, Warren suggested that R. H. Wilson of Dunham, Alabama, "come and try us," promising him a company-owned house in a week or two.⁶⁰

January 29, 1902; Buckner to Ed Purdy, Attice, Michigan, February 3, 1902; Buckner to Hance Bros. & White, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 3, 1902, Gates Letterpress Book No. 2, pp. 255, 260, 261, 263, 264, 276, 281, 283, 285-286, 301, 318, 322, 349, 389, 390, 441, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, LSU.

⁵⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Sabine Lumber Company, Zwolle, Louisiana, February 13, 1902, 4 L Letterbook, p. 868, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to R. H. Wilson, Dunham, Alabama, December 4, 1902, ML&MCo Folder 1, No. 3660, WHMC.

At Columbia, Louisiana, the Louisiana Central Lumber Company was still acquiring timberlands in 1902, and Clarence Slagle traded a 40-acre homestead to "Green Wade, the darky," for a tract of timber and a job at the mill. The Grandin interests had just entered the Caldwell Parish uplands, and the local power structure responded to the opportunities offered by the new industry. In neighboring Jackson Parish, the assessor, W. H. Allen, offered to work for the company "in land matters" from his office in Vernon, Louisiana, at that time the seat of parish government. He could, he wrote, sell a large block of Jackson Parish land to LCLC, provided, of course, that the new railroad from Ruston, Louisiana, to a point on the Houston Central Railroad, part of the Iron Mountain, would locate on a line through Vernon. It was not to be, however, and both railroad and parish government soon moved to the more convenient Jonesboro a few miles to the south.⁶¹

J. B. White led the Grandin interests into the Caldwell Parish operation at Clark's Spur under the banner of the Forest Lumber Company, a vehicle for the operation of lumber yards in Missouri, Kansas, and Indian Territory, which he organized in partnership with Clarence Slagle, his private secretary and general manager of the Grandin, Missouri mills. For skilled laborers, White and Slagle combed the Missouri mills, where they found C. S. Dibble of Greenville, Missouri, who had been a sawyer with Holladay Klotz Lumber Company for three years. Victor M. Mason, LCLC superintendent at Clarks, also managed to pull skilled labor from as far north as Tower,

⁶¹ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to R. R. Reddett, Columbia, Louisiana, June 17, 1902; W. H. Allen, Vernon, Louisiana, to Louisiana Central Lumber Company, Clarks, Louisiana, June 17, 1902, ML&Mco Folder 6, No. 3660, WHMC.

Minnesota, north of Duluth on Lake Superior. Uley Welch, who had been sawing for the Tower Lumber Company, wanted to move south because of the weather. He had suffered from the cold weather, he wrote, complaining that the 50-degrees-below-freezing weather lasted six months of the year. Slagle immediately took control at Clarks and placed his new company managers in charge. O. H. Clark, one of the former owners, resigned as postmaster of the company town, a perquisite of management at that time, and Slagle recommended the appointment of Mason to the Postmaster General in Washington, D.C.⁶²

Lumbermen usually insisted on imposing a paternal control over their employees, although they still placed limits on their responsibility for the welfare of workers. While insurance was easily available even in the piney woods, some lumberman did not seek its protection, choosing instead to shirk the moral obligation to protect workers in their charge. Willard Warren explained that he was unsure whether accident insurance was a good thing. Of course, he often wished he had bought it when the mill had an accident, but then such injuries to workmen had only cost the 4 L Company \$400 and some board bills in the four years the company had been in operation. "We have quite a record of accidents too, having had four men killed since we began operations, but in

⁶² C. S. Dibble, Greenville, Missouri, to Forest Lumber Company, Kansas City, Missouri, March 4, 1902; Uley Welsh, Tower, Minnesota, to Louisiana Central Lumber Company, Clarks, Louisiana, April 7, 1902; C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to Postmaster General, Washington, D.C., April 7, 1902, ML&Mco Box 1, Folder 18, No. 3660, Missouri Lumber & Mining Company Collection, WHMC.

no case was their [sic] any liability attached to the Company."⁶³ Mills in the region carried Workmen's Collective Insurance, which cost the men, not the company, \$1 a month. It was a simple accident insurance policy and did not affect the company's liability, but since the mills acted as agents of the insurer, the workers assumed, incorrectly, that the company had made a settlement with them. The Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company at its mill at Loring, Louisiana, was then in court defending itself against parents of a boy struck with axe wield by a larger boy. The parents asked for \$1,200 in damages. Cost of Employers Liability Insurance, Warren calculated, was 75 cents per \$100 of a mill's annual payroll. The 4 L Company in 1902 had a monthly payroll of about \$30,000, which averaged about \$300,000 a year, when contractors were excluded. The annual premium for accident insurance would have been \$2,250, considerable greater than the cost of settlements made in four years. It would be, he figured, cheaper to carry the insurance liability themselves. Still, if the trend to litigation continued, "it will make lots of business for Employers Liability Insurance Companies."⁶⁴

Company managers from necessity studied their men closely and spoke candidly about them with other lumbermen. They constantly strived to build a labor surplus in the vicinity of their mills. Warren encouraged W. T. Poole of Dunham, Alabama, and M.M. Wood of Starks, Louisiana, to move to Fisher. To Poole he wrote that he had

⁶³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, November 22, 1902, 4 L Letterbook pp. 9-10, Author's Collection.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

plenty of men on hand but that he would not go wrong by coming to Fisher on the chance of finding work. "[I]f you come here with the expectation of suiting you can probably get permanent work."⁶⁵ Wood had asked for a job as locomotive engineer, not a position that long remained open, but Warren suggested a way for the applicant to reach his goal. He might get work as a train man, "and in that way we could learn something of your ability and their [sic] might be promotion for you later."⁶⁶ Fred McGhee, the company woodsman who also had charge of the railroad department, would be glad to hear from him. At the same time, Warren was called on to help other managers hire some of his own people. He accommodated such requests without apparent rancor. To S. H. Wilson in Kansas City, he wrote that H. E. Dowell worked for the 4 L Company for about a year in various positions, from log scaler to office clerk. Dowell also had charge of the company office in Victoria after White and Fisher had bought it from John R. Jones of Shreveport. "He is a man of no bad habits, is energetic and honest, but I am afraid that he does not stay long enough in one place, as he has had several different positions since he left here." Now, however, that Dowell had married, he would probably change his habits, although he wanted to leave Raton, Colorado, because his wife could not stand the altitude. "He is a man of sufficient ability and smart enough to make a success at most anything he would undertake."⁶⁷

⁶⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. T. Poole, Dunham, Alabama, November 22, 1902, 4 L Letterbook, p. 12, Author's Collection.

⁶⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. M. Wood, Starks, Louisiana, December 4, 1902, 4 L Letterbook, p. 40, Author's Collection.

⁶⁷ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to S. H. Wilson, Kansas City, Missouri, December 8, 1902, 4 L Letterbook, p. 61, Author's Collection.

Then, after all he had done to cultivate a happy, friendly work force, the threat of labor troubles came from a neighboring mill. To W. A. Shields, superintendent of the Bowman-Hicks mill at Loring, a few miles north along the KCS, Warren offered support and encouragement. Forewarned of the troublemakers at Loring, he would "see that these parties do not go to work here at Fisher, for we do not want any strikers or anybody else trying to run our mill."⁶⁸ And to G. W. Loring, vice president of Bowman-Hicks at Loring, Warren hastened to send a gang of Italian workers, who had been awaiting the return of their padrone. Loring said that he was now prepared to furnish the men with houses, which the members of the stacking gang insisted on before leaving for the new job.⁶⁹

The Italian padrone at Fisher was Frank LaRossa. "Our Italian contractor," Warren called him. In February, the 4 L Company manager had to remind Loring of Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company's debt to LaRossa for organizing a gang of workers to work at Loring Town. The padrone, Warren wrote, "has spoken to me several times about the work he did for your company in getting a crew of Italian laborers for you, and he tells me that it is agreed between Mr. Loring and himself that the amount of the

⁶⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. A. Shields, Loring, Louisiana, December 11, 1902, 4 L Letterbook, p. 90, Author's Collection.

⁶⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. M. Wood, Starks, Louisiana, December 4, 1902; Warren to C. R. Maury, Horatio, Arkansas, December 4, 1902; Warren to S. T. Steere, Shreveport, Louisiana, December 8, 1902; Warren to R. A. Gray, Texarkana, Texas, December 23, 1902; Warren to C. T. Bloodworth, Springfield, Missouri, December 23, 1902; Warren to G. W. Loring, Loring, Louisiana, December 23, 1902, 4 L Letterbook pp. 42, 64, 124, 136, 137, Author's Collection.

expense that he should be paid was to be left to me."⁷⁰ Loring had not said anything about it, and Warren knew only what LaRossa told him. La Rossa had made several trips to Leesville and Lake Charles and several to Loring, and wanted about \$50 in expenses. Warren thought \$30 was enough . "I would suggest that you pay him this amount for the Italians are a little peculiar and he feels that it is due him, and he might cause your men to leave you if it is not fixed up."⁷¹ Apparently on the general assumption that Italians inflated their demands, Loring sent only \$15 to pay LaRossa who, Warren speculated, "will be disappointed."⁷² Nevertheless, Warren paid LaRossa, who protested that the amount only refunded his expenses, leaving him no profit for his time and trouble. Unstated in the exchange was the conviction, supported by experience elsewhere, that the padrone always exacted a price from workers they placed. Loring saw no reason he should pay LaRossa for services that his workers had already paid for. By mid-year, Warren had explained the use of the Italian padrone system to Clarence Slagle, who had been having trouble getting help to stack lumber in the yard and in the kilns. "We have a contractor here who is an Italian, and we pay him 22 cts. per thousand to stack the lumber on cars at the kiln and put it in piles on the yard. It has been a very satisfactory arrangement with us and he usually has enough extra men so that at times when we are a little short of negroes we can call on him and use some of his

⁷⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company, Loring, Louisiana, February 17, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 395, Author's Collection.

⁷¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to G. W. Loring, Loring, Louisiana, February 20, 1902, 4 L Letterbook, p. 407, Author's Collection.

⁷² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to G. W. Loring, Loring, Louisiana, February 26, 1902, 4 L Letterbook, p. 438, Author's Collection.

dagoes."⁷³ A few days later, Warren said that LaRossa had "found a man who will make a satisfactory contractor to do your lumber stacking. His name is John La Sotta." The yard foreman said that La Sotta was "a good steady fellow and is considerably above the average dago in intelligence."⁷⁴ LaRossa had assured the new man that the LCLC operated a similar lumber yard and was a good company that paid well. The lumberman's need for dependable workers that, at the same time, he personally despised for cultural and ethnic reasons, comes through Warren's letters.⁷⁵

Christmas in a sawmill town, always brief and often violent, gave managers the incentive to take only a day for the holiday and to put on extra guards. Nothing about Christmas recommended the day to lumbermen, and they reacted to it much as other managers did. The day after Christmas 1902, Warren hastened to write to O. W. Fisher, who shared some of the worry, assuring him that affairs remained in a rough kind of order. "We got over with our Christmas in very good shape, and so far have not heard of any one getting shot or cut or any serious trouble of any kind, and there were but very few that got drunk," he said. "We had the best Christmas that we have ever had, and this morning we got the planing mill started, the trains and the circular side of the saw mill."⁷⁶ He had intended to start the band side at the same time instead of the circular,

⁷³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, July 20, 1903, 4 L Letterbook p. 932, Author's Collection.

⁷⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, July 25, 1902, 4 L Letterbook, p. 978, Author's Collection.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Springfield, Missouri, December 26, 1902, 4 L Letterbook, pp. 148-150, Author's Collection.

but Frank Jones, the head sawyer in the band mill, got drunk Christmas morning and went to Shreveport. Such an incident was "one of his old tricks," Warren said, and he wired some of the other mills in the area that had an extra sawyer, to see if the 4 L Company could borrow a man. Warren also threatened to send "a party to Shreveport to-day to see if he cannot find Jones and bring him back, because I do not want to have his family left on our hands." He thought he could get the wayward sawyer sober again and let him work for a while. "But I think I have got pretty nearly enough of Jones and it ought to be enough for some of the rest of the people here."⁷⁷ Warren was particularly critical of the elderly Martin Hardwick, who, as superintendent, had charge of the head sawyers in the mills. Hardwick had planned to have repairs made to the band mill carriage during the holidays when the mills would be closed. He had left Jones more-or-less in charge, but when he got drunk and left the village, Warren canceled the work. With Hardwick on vacation, the head sawyer drunk and missing, and the repair crew disorganized, Warren started the mill to hold the crew together. By March of the following year, Frank Jones still held the position of head band sawyer in the Fisher pine mill, although both Warren and Hardwick actively searched for a replacement. Outdone by Jones's recalcitrance, however, Hardwick finally admitted he could do with a less talented band sawyer, and he asked Warren to hire a good man to replace the sawyer. When Warren received applications from experienced sawyers, he

⁷⁷ Ibid.

sent them on to Hardwick, but nothing seems to have changed. Jones was simply too good to turn out.⁷⁸

As lumbermen shifted their operations farther south in the first decade of the twentieth century, they brought with them a basic cadre of workers, "a hard lot of Missouri boys,"⁷⁹ as one manager put it. This should not be construed to mean that lumber workers in the Lake States and Midwest joined an exodus to the Southern piney woods. Many of them, of course, moved south to work for companies, the names of which were familiar from earlier association. But recruiting for work in the mills and woods proved a far more complex undertaking, and men came from all directions to work in the lumber boom.⁸⁰

It was not always easy to fathom the purposely contrived employment histories of journeymen craftsmen, let alone the mass of black and white field hands who sought the relatively higher wages of the lumber mills and logging fronts. Managers created their own network of mutual advice in personnel matters, a practice that would appall today's personnel administrators. Just after New Years Day, 1903, J. W. Martin, manager of Long-Bell's Yellow Pine, Louisiana, mills, asked neighboring lumbermen for information about Parce Barber who had applied for a job as an engineer, in this case probably a stationary engineer. Willard Warren's reply typifies the style and candor of

⁷⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Martin Hardwick, Fisher, Louisiana, March 2, 1903, 4 L Letterbook p. 461, Author's Collection.

⁷⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. L. Rhodes, Fisher, Louisiana, January 10, 1903, 4 L Letterbook p. 221, Author's Collection.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

such letters. "I do not know anything of Parce Barber as an engineer," he wrote. Barber had worked for the 4 L Company as a machinist. "He did not know as much as he let us think he did when he came here," Warren complained, "and after he started to work he saw that he would be expected to do a little more than he really knew how to do, and got uneasy and wanted to leave." Very likely, he would not have stayed long on any job, although "[h]e is a man of good habits and would probably make a good man, but I think perhaps he would rather work for a master mechanic that did not know very much more than he does. He is a very quiet fellow and has nothing to say."⁸¹ Several weeks later, Warren wrote a similar letter to an Alabama lumberman, expressing similar sentiments. Apparently, Barber had not learned from his failure to find work that Warren had, for all practical purposes, blackballed him. Warren told the Kaul Lumber Company of Birmingham, Alabama, that Barber had worked at Fisher for about two weeks in the machine shops. "We do not consider him as an all-round mechanic but he can do certain kinds of work very well when working under the instruction of a practical mechanic. He is a man of good habits but is perhaps visionary and always looking for something better." Generally, "a man of good habits" did not get drunk, and "a very quiet fellow" did not engage in fisticuffs or get in shooting scrapes. Barber would have been judged "a good citizen," provided, of course, that he did not join a labor union.⁸²

⁸¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. W. Martin, Yellow Pine, Louisiana, January 24, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 274, Author's Collection.

⁸² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Kaul Lumber Company, Birmingham, Alabama, March 12, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 511, Author's Collection.

In Caldwell Parish, C. E. Slagle had by 1902 begun transforming Clark's Spur into a model company town to accommodate a large lumber milling operation under the name, Louisiana Central Lumber Company, with J. B. White as president. Because of their interlocking stockholders and directorates, the 4 L Company and LCLC cooperated in most matters, although the managers were fiercely competitive. Slagle called on Willard Warren for help in recruiting laborers, a chore the 4 L manager had a talent for and seemed to enjoy. Like many Southern lumbermen, both Slagle and Warren had come out of the upper Trans-Mississippi West, Kansas and Nebraska. Starting as clerks in lumber yards, they moved back along the corporate structure to primary manufacturing, which found them in West Louisiana's piney woods where they prospered. In expanding the town on the Iron Mountain, Slagle needed accommodations for visitors, drummers, and occasional company officers, supplied until now by boarding houses. He needed a hotel and someone to operate it. Warren's father, mother, and unmarried sister lived in Davenport, Nebraska, where Charles E. Voight operated the local hostelry. In late January, Warren wrote to Voight asking him to consider taking over the Clarks hotel. "Mr. C. E. Slagle, the General Manager, is looking for some one to go down and take charge of the hotel The position would pay you \$75.00 per month they are going to have a very nice town at Clarks, and the owners of the Company are practically the same as of our company here at Fisher."⁸³ To Slagle a few days later, Warren sent along a letter received from Voight of Davenport, Nebraska.

⁸³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Charles E. Voight, Davenport, Nebraska, January 28, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 284, Author's Collection.

"I think if they could succeed in disposing of their property at Davenport you would be able to get them to come South, but they own their hotel there, and would either have to arrange to sell or rent it before they could leave but of course their experience has been in running a different kind of a hotel from what you will have."⁸⁴ Warren's policy seems to have been never to definitely turn anyone away, unless they were not good citizens or had bad habits. A. M. Dodd of Zwolle, Louisiana, wrote the Fisher manager applying for work, to which Warren admitted, "I do not know just where we could use you at present. Sometime when you are down this way I would be glad to see you, and possibly we may have something for you."⁸⁵ When W. Lafayette, a planing mill man, wrote from Beaumont, Texas, asking about the possibility of employment in Louisiana, Warren replied that he did not know of any openings among neighboring mills. His own planing mill superintendent, one Hogus "seems to be getting along all right here." But in case he heard of a vacancy he promised to write to LaFayette. "Am sorry," he added, "that you do not like Beaumont, but cannot say that I blame you for not wanting to live there."⁸⁶

Beaumont, Texas, in 1903, of course, was still a roaring oil and timber boom town, which had outgrown its ability to police itself. Sanitation and public health were its most pressing problems, exacerbated by the city's location on the banks of the

⁸⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, February 7, 1903, 4 L Letterbook p. 331, Author's Collection.

⁸⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to A. M. Dodd, Zwolle, Louisiana, January 28, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 287, Author's Collection.

⁸⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. Lafayette, Beaumont, Texas, January 30, 1903, 4 L Letterbook p. 296, Author's Collection.

swampy Neches River. North of Beaumont that winter, the Kirby Lumber Company did not have enough houses for its black workers in the logging department at Woodville, Texas. F. M. Aldridge, assistant to John Henry Kirby, appealed to Congressman Sam Cooper to sell the company five acres of land east of Turkey Creek on which to build "additional shacks for negro laborers." The term, shack, did not then carry the same connotation of poor dilapidated housing that it later assumed, conveying instead the idea of temporary housing. Nevertheless, Kirby Lumber Company housing for black workers left much to be desired in conveniences such as screened windows, electric lights, running water, plumbing, and sewers, none of which existed. Indeed, the shacks were built in the style known as "shotgun houses" and using construction methods known as "box houses," a rectangular building of one story and two or three rooms in a line, with neither studs nor plates, unceiled with a single wall of board and batten. Most such houses were left unpainted. Kirby Lumber Company, unlike virtually all other lumber companies in the region, owned no land or timber, depending on its companion company, the Houston Oil Company, for timber rights on its million acres of long leaf timber lands. Most of Kay Ell's plants stood on leased land, but at Woodville the company found it necessary to buy a small acreage on which to set shacks for its black workers.⁸⁷

"All of our log hauling and cutting is done by contract," Willard Warren explained to his associate in Clarks, Louisiana. "Most of our loggers use cattle, while some have both, but they all find it to their advantage to have some ox teams, even if

⁸⁷ F. M. Aldredge, Houston, Texas, to S. B. Cooper, Washington, D.C., February 5, 1903, Box 15, No. 02-14, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

they have several mule teams." Mules did not perform well in the winter season if it was wet. Cattle make the best teams for loading rail cars, but when the weather was good and the ground dry, a large team of horses could work faster. One team of ordinary horses or mules could not handle some of the larger logs, and "when the cross hauls are wet and boggy, nothing but cattle can be used satisfactory."⁸⁸ At Fisher, about the same time, Warren asked Fred McGhee to find out if "Mr. Howard the logger is behind in paying his men." Warren feared, he said, that he was, "and as we hold a bill of sale to his live stock, perhaps it might be best for us to get him to sell one of his teams and square up with his men and with us. We carried him all winter, and if he is not going to be able to get square now he never will; so I wish you would quietly see just now he stands with his men."⁸⁹

Policies varied among companies on the extent of formal employment. While the Gates-Crossett-Watsek interests in South Arkansas maintained formal employment relationships with all men associated with the various enterprises at Hamburg, Crossett, Wilmar, and Eagle Mills, Arkansas, and at Florala, Alabama-Florida and in Grant Parish, Louisiana, the 4 L Company contracted virtually all of its woods work. Logging contractors provided crews of flatheads to fell and buck the timber and teams and teamsters to load and haul the logs to the skids on the railroad tram or spur. At the skids, company employees loaded logs onto rail cars for the trip to the mill ponds at

⁸⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, May 2, 1903, 4 L Letterbook p. 710 Author's Collection.

⁸⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Fred McGhee, Fisher, Louisiana, June 3, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 802, Author's Collection.

Fisher and Victoria. The 4 L Company paid top loaders \$2.50 a day and the man in charge of the loading crew \$3; the sending up man got \$2.25 a day; teamsters and chain pullers \$2; taildown men \$1.75. The pay scale at the skids roughly approximated the hazards associated with each job. The top loaders, men who worked on top of the growing load of logs, faced the most danger and had to exhibit keen sight and great agility. Sending up men guided the log up the skid poles and faced only slightly less danger. Teamsters and the men who handled the chain of the cross haul occupied relatively safe positions, while the taildown men who guided the logs with long lines attached to the "tail" end had the safest job and got the lowest pay, which, however, exceeded the pay of most men who worked in the mills.⁹⁰

Compared with such wages, flatheads fared much worse. At Crossett, Arkansas, the Crossett Lumber Company paid its "drivers and sawyers" (teamsters and flatheads at the front) from \$1.95 to \$2 a day. And, although they would later complain bitterly of the practice, many workers took advantage of the company store and the company office to secure their wages against the claims of previous creditors. "We have your favor of the 9th inst.," an anonymous office worker at Crossett wrote, "and are sorry to inform you that of the three parties mentioned therein only one has anything coming to him on the coming pay day. Henry Allen, negro, has \$4.25 but Mr. Sivils and Lindsey Blackman have nothing." Sivils obviously was white, else he would not have been addressed as "Mr." but Blackman, with no title of address, was probably black,

⁹⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Hudson River Lumber Company, DeRidder, Louisiana, January 28, 1903, 4 L Letterbook p. 288, Author's Collection.

according to the code of manners adhered to by virtually everyone in the early years of the century.⁹¹

Managers often helped each other place worthy individuals in jobs in the area on the general theory that a cadre of competent workers would sooner or later be helpful to individual companies. Willard Warren and B. H. Smith, General Manager of Long-Bell's King-Ryder plant at Bon Ami, Louisiana, met in New Orleans in February, where they discussed their labor requirements. Smith badly needed "a good bookkeeper and office man," but Warren knew of no such person available.⁹² On February 6, however, on his return to Fisher, he received an application from John C. Tabor who wanted to move from his position with C. A. Sammons & Co. in Fort Worth, Texas. "[W]hile I know nothing whatever about him, I am inclined to think that he may be a good man, as he writes a very good letter, but of course you cannot always tell by this," Warren wrote in a letter to Smith. To Tabor, he explained his interest in placing him in a job and suggested that he write to Smith.⁹³ Warren did not always find it possible to recommend workers and contractors to his acquaintances. Clarence Slagle needed a brick maker to supply materials for building his furnaces, and appealed to Warren for

⁹¹ Crossett Lumber Company, Crossett, Arkansas, to W. R. Westmoreland, Blissville, Arkansas, February 10, 1903; same to Postmaster E. L. Bird, White Station, Arkansas, Gates Letterbook pp. 16, 19, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, No. 1864, LSU.

⁹² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to B. H. Smith, Bon Ami, Louisiana, February 11, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 317, Author's Collection.

⁹³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to John C. Tabor, Fort Worth, Texas, February 11, 1903, 4 L Letterbook p. 316, Author's Collection.

help in locating a brick contractor. Warren's reply was filled with rancor. "We paid our brick contractor \$5.25 per thousand actual count, for making brick, and we furnished the wood [for fuel]. We furnished him with slabs and cull lumber picked out of our conveyor which we stacked up and had dried. At this price he left here with a profit of \$500 or \$600 at least." The contractor, Warren said, understands making brick, but "he is a thorough rascal, and you would have to lie awake nights, the same as I did, in order to keep up with him." The company got a fine lot of brick, nevertheless, and Warren had no complaint on that account, but the brickmaker was "a very conceited and windy sort of fellow, and we never knew just what he was going to do until after he was through and gone." After all, Warren admitted, "[i]t is a pretty hard matter to find a real good brick maker."⁹⁴ Warren reserved his most heated denunciations for those men who presumed to best him in a business deal, particularly when they managed to make a profit at his expense.⁹⁵ Indeed, brick makers and brick masons, in a country where most men built exclusively of wood, were in short supply. E. W. Gates at Crossett, Arkansas, found his construction of the new mill falling behind schedule and had to accept the high priced services of brick masons from New Orleans to get the boiler house job finished on time. In the middle of February he hired W. J. Deady, a New Orleans brick contractor, and "6 good sober men" at a rate of 65 cents an hour "from leaving New Orleans with no time lost for any delay in materials" not counting

⁹⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, February 16, 1903, 4 L Letterbook p. 382, Author's Collection.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

rainy days. In addition, he paid their railroad fares one way from New Orleans. "We are paying our masons less than this rate without fare," he complained, but "come at once."⁹⁶

Other than the furnaces and hearths in the engine rooms of large saw mills, lumbermen used brick principally for building dry kilns. "Our contract with Glick & McGrath provided for our placing the material to be used by them within sixty feet of the building,"⁹⁷ Warren explained. Company men hauled materials by wagons, unloaded them and stacked the brick closer than six feet to all except the last kiln. On the last one, the men had to carry material more than 60 feet to the job site. Brickmasons did not strike the joints but simply cut the mortar clean. Warren thought it really as good if not a little better than pointing. Few buildings in the lumber towns were built of brick because of the ready availability of lumber for building. Furnaces, of course, had to be built of fire brick, and such things as office safes were often built of brick or concrete, again to resist fire. Insurance carriers insisted that kilns be made of brick because of the ease with which such structures burned, although they did not usually contain furnaces.⁹⁸

Managers of saw mills in company owned towns held virtual dictatorial powers. They served at once as the administrator of corporate, civic, and police affairs, and on

⁹⁶ E. W. Gates, Crossett, Arkansas, to W. J. Deady, New Orleans, Louisiana, February 13, 1903, Gates Letterbook, p. 39, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, LSU.

⁹⁷ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, April 13, 1903, 4 L Letterbook p. 621, Author's Collection.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

occasion presided over what passed for a judicial tribunal without benefit of jury or bailiff. When E. F. Henry of Montrose, Arkansas, asked for a final settlement of wages due him, the Crossett Lumber Company management demanded that he present himself personally to answer to charges that he had misapplied receipts from boarders in the company hotel. "Let us know when you intend to come and we will have opposing parties here also,"⁹⁹ the Crossett manager wrote. In another case, when J. Z. Smith of Wilmar, Arkansas, wanted Crossett to settle his back wages, the company held out until a thorough investigation demonstrated that he was indeed due the amount demanded. "It seems that in Dec. there were two John Smiths working for the Co. and through mistake which could not be rectified at once an amount of \$3.75 was charged to you which proved to be the other John Smith's signature,"¹⁰⁰ the company explained. The Crossett management about the same time made small settlements by mail to Jock Falkner for \$1.55, to W. H. Cobb for \$1.90, and to Millard Barker for \$1.95. Crossett Lumber Company owed Alexander McDonald of Hamburg, Arkansas, \$7 for time put in February 1903; it owed M. R. Robinson of Esau, Arkansas, \$13.65; J. C. Beard of Lake Village, Arkansas, only 45 cents for February time; C. S. Mitchell of Hamburg \$5.40 for January time; John Clay of Bonita, Louisiana, \$2.35 for January time; and "John Davis (colored)" \$8.50 for February time, which Crossett paid directly to J. J.

⁹⁹ Crossett Lumber Company, Crossett, Arkansas, to E. F. Henry, Montrose, Arkansas, February 17, 1903, Gates Letterbook, p. 52, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, LSU.

¹⁰⁰ Crossett Lumber Company, Crossett, Arkansas, to J. Z. Smith, Wilmar, Arkansas, February 17, 1903, Gates Letterbook, p. 53, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, LSU.

Dean of Hamburg, the worker's creditor. Because most managers held some credentials as accountants or bookkeepers, they were, by and large, scrupulously correct, taking pride in their accuracy.¹⁰¹

In the spring of 1903, Crossett Lumber Company still searched for a permanent work force. C. H. Hewell at Crossett offered R. A. McRoberts of Yellow Pine, Louisiana, a position of blacksmith, which he promised would give him regular work. E. W. Gates had advertised the opening at \$6 a day, a handsome salary at the time, but was willing to pay from 50 cents to \$1 more for a talented blacksmith. To the Memphis, Tennessee, supply houses that supplied Crossett's hardware, he wrote, "We don't want to try a stranger nor no one who is not known to be high class."¹⁰² Gates also offered E. M. Stevens of Babcock, Georgia, the job of grader behind the planing machine at \$1.75 a day. The planer mill, he said, would run a night shift after 30 days, when the

¹⁰¹ Crossett Lumber Company, Crossett, Arkansas, to Jock Falkner, Bonita, Louisiana, February 17, 1903; same to W. H. Cobb, Portland, Arkansas, February 18, 1903; same to Millard Barker, Jonesboro, Arkansas; same to Alexander McDonald, Hamburg, Arkansas, March 17, 1903; same to M. R. robinson, Esau, Arkansas, March 17, 1903; same to John Clay, Bonita, Louisiana, March 18, 1903; same to J. J. Dean, Hamburg, Arkansas, March 18, 1903, Gates Letterbook, pp. 56, 57, 84, 104, 195, 213, 214, Crossett Lumber Company Collection, LSU.

¹⁰² C. H. Hewell, Crossett, Arkansas, to R. A. McRoberts, Yellow Pine, Louisiana, March 24, 1903; E. W. Gates, Crossett, Arkansas, to E. C. Atkins Company, Memphis, Tennessee, March 24, 1903; same to Riechman-Crosby Company, Memphis, Tennessee, March 24, 1903, Gates Letterbook pp. 226, 227, 238, Crossett Lumber Company Collection No. 1864, LSU.

company would need more workers. Stevens, he cautioned, should keep in close touch with him.¹⁰³

J. B. White whose contacts in the lumber industry ranged from coast to coast often received requests from northern lumbermen to find work for employees who wanted to move to a warmer climate. Walter Willoughby of Manistique, Michigan, was such a willing emigrant. White recommended him to Warren as a good blocksetter who wanted a job where he could work the year around instead of the seasonal work traditional in the Lake States. By much the same route, Charles Rolland of Muscatine, Iowa, and M. S. Niems of New River, Tennessee, applied for a job as filer, probably the best-paying work in sawmilling. Warren, however, had a permanent filer at Fisher for both circular and band saws, and he expected the Victoria filer to handle both circular and band work when the band mill was installed later.¹⁰⁴

In the middle of April, Warren passed on to J. W. Martin at Yellow Pine, Louisiana, the application of W. A. McGregor, then a sawyer at Neame, Louisiana. After three years there, McGregor was "anxious to make a change, and in making a change is looking for a permanent place."¹⁰⁵ Since Neame was a 4 C plant and Yellow

¹⁰³ E. W. Gates, Crossett, Arkansas, to E. M. Stevens, Babcock, Georgia, March 28, 1903, Gates Letterbook p. 256, Crossett Lumber Company Collection No. 1864, LSU.

¹⁰⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Martin Hardwick, Fisher, Louisiana, March 31, 1903; same to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, April 7, 1903; same to M. S. Niems, New River, Tennessee, April 23, 1903, 4 L Letterbook pp. 578, 586, 674, Author's Collection.

¹⁰⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. W. Martin, Yellow Pine, Louisiana, April 14, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 628, Author's Collection.

Pine a part of the Long-Bell Lumber Company, Warren asked Martin to advise him of McGregor's ability. By June, Warren's problem with a shortage of sawyers had become critical with the departure of the circular sawyer who had moved on west. Because there was not time enough to replace the man, he asked the managers of mills at Pickering, Neame, Bon Ami, Loring, and Noble to consider loaning any extra sawyers they might have in their employ. To D. W. Bartram at Noble, he made a special appeal for "Mr. McGregor who is a circular sawyer," now sawing for Noble Lumber Company. "[I]t occurred to me that as he is a circular sawyer he might be only filling a position with you temporarily."¹⁰⁶ Of course, if he were a permanent employee, Warren would not contact MacGregor, although he needed to find a man quickly "as the party we have is going away in the next two or three days."¹⁰⁷ Warren even turned to J. H. Richardson at Bon Ami who had earlier applied for a job as a band sawyer. "We have a vacancy now for a first class circular sawyer, and we want a man immediately," he wrote. "If you are not employed, perhaps you better come up and see us."¹⁰⁸ And at the same time he invited A. H. Harrison of Orange, Texas, to wire the 4 L Company if he were

¹⁰⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to D. W. Bartram, Noble, Louisiana, June 1, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 798, Author's Collection.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. H. Richardson, Bon Ami, Louisiana, June 1, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 798, Author's Collection.

not working. "The rig cuts logs up to 24 ft. in length and most of the sawing is stock sawing."¹⁰⁹

Willard Warren's experience in lumbering in Louisiana since 1899 qualified him to give advice to his opposite number at Clarks after the Grandin interests invested in sawmills and timberland along the Ouachita River in 1902. Although he was several years younger than Clarence Slagle, he took full advantage of his seniority among J. B. White's apprentices in the Southwest. A man of quick perceptions, Warren spoke with authority in his letters to Slagle. First, he knew no one to recommend as a good railroad grader, although the 4 L Company did a great deal of grading for the locomotives to negotiate the hilly country along the Kisatchie Wold. He used teams costing \$3 a day, which cost less than doing the work under contract to an independent grader. Earlier he had paid 12 1/2 cents a yard for moving dirt, which worked out to be 25 cents a yard because he paid for both cut and fill. A contractor would likely have cost him from 13 to 14 cents a yard. "You asked about Mexicans," he said. "Only the other day I was talking with our road master, Mr. Meriwether, and he seemed to think that they were the best class of labor we have ever had on the railroad. They have given us absolutely no trouble whatever, and we have kept them in the negro quarters."¹¹⁰ For railroad work

¹⁰⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to A. H. Harrison, Orange, Texas, June 1, 1903; see also, Warren to Leo Haslam, Pickering, Louisiana, June 1, 1903; Warren to H. H. Folk, Neame, Louisiana, June 1, 1903; Warren to D. H. Smith, Bon Ami, Louisiana, June 1, 1903; Warren to W. A. Shields, Loring, Louisiana, June 1, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, pp. 790, 797, 798, Author's Collection.

¹¹⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. A. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, April 27, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 687, Author's Collection.

they proved much more satisfactory than either Italian or black workers. In late April Slagle asked Warren for directions in obtaining Mexican laborers. Importing them into East Texas and West Louisiana, while not very difficult, still drew protests from white residents and seldom set well with black workers either. "I think if you will send a man to Beaumont, that perhaps you can get as many Mexicans as you need," he said. "If you send a man there, I would suggest that you have him hunt up a Mexican by the name of Gonzales who runs a Chili con cana [sic] stand. His place is, or was, about one block south from the Southern Pacific depot grounds - I think the street is called Crockett."¹¹¹

Slagle for his part often took Warren's advice. Needing gang labor in the developing mills at Clarks, the LCLC manager sent his assistant, V. M. Mason, to Beaumont, Texas, in May of 1903 to find and hire Mexican laborers. Mason stopped at M. P. Field's Hotel Field, a stately establishment catering to commercial gentlemen. On the hotel's stationary, Mason sent frequent reports of his activities to Slagle in Clarks. On May 25, he wrote that he had seen "Gonzales and arranged with him to try to get us a crew, and will know tonight or in the AM if he will be successful. We have another Mexican Chili dealer out but he reports he can get only five at the rate (1.50)[.] He claims another party is picking them up at 1.75 for the Santa Fe."¹¹² There was plenty of work in Beaumont, including "a lot of street paving [that] will come up in a

¹¹¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, May 2, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 710, Author's Collection.

¹¹² V. M. Mason, Beaumont, Texas, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, May 25, 1903, LCLC Records, No. 3660, WHMC.

week or so."¹¹³ There were not as many Mexicans there as a month earlier because many of them had gone out looking for work in the countryside. Frank Russell had promised to put the Kirby Lumber Company's labor man on the problem of finding laborers, but because of the discouraging reception he received in Beaumont, he planned to "try some other point, say in Shreveport or San Antonio if I have enough funds."¹¹⁴ Men in Beaumont would cost at least \$1.75 a day. For example, he could not get a blacksmith for less than \$4 to \$4.50 a day. The next day, Mason reported more failure, although there seemed to be alternatives. "Señor Gonzales tried his hand today and failed."¹¹⁵ Mason offered \$25 to find 40 to 50 men for the evening train, which satisfied him. He went out to look for men but found that a good many had scattered and many of those left in the city had families and did not want to leave them. When Gonzales had arranged for Warren's men he had only to send word for them to come to his place, Mason said. "I could get Niggers but believe from what I can see the Mexicans would be better, would like to try them." To the west, Gonzales, Texas, was about 250 miles away, but "I dont want to go there unless necessary."¹¹⁶ In desperation, Mason had offered to pay 50 cents each for 40 to 50 Mexican workers delivered at the train. On May 27, Mason returned empty handed, having made the Mexican connection and toured the fabulous Texas oil field near Beaumont.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ V. M. Mason, Beaumont, Texas, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, May 26, 1903, LCLC Records, No. 3660, WHMC.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

Many, perhaps most, of the mill managers and skilled workers in the southwestern piney woods had learned their craft in the Midwest and Northeast. Most were born outside the South. J. B. White, descended from New England lumbermen, grew to prominence in the lumber business in Pennsylvania before migrating to Missouri. O. W. Fisher was born in Ohio and apprenticed to a flour miller but made his way in sawmilling in Missouri. C. E. Slagle grew up in Kansas, joining White as his private secretary in South Missouri, later moving to Louisiana. Warren was a native of Nebraska, later becoming White's favorite accountant. Martin Hardwick, so old in 1903 that he refused to give his year of birth, was born in Warren, Pennsylvania, went to work in sawmills at 15, rafted logs on the Allegheny River, and emigrated to South Missouri in 1880 with White where he built the first mill operated in the region by the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company. He also built Joe Fisher's mill at Horton, Missouri, operated by the North & Ewart Lumber Company; the Ozark Lumber Company mill at Winona, Missouri; the Kansas City Southern Lumber Company plant at Sedwick, Arkansas; and in 1898 he moved to West Louisiana to begin construction of the 4 L Company's Fisher works, remaining to take charge of the sawmill department and steam plant until his death. Henry W. Gardner, the 4 L Company's master mechanic, in charge of the machine and car shops, was born in Syracuse, New York, where he apprenticed as a locomotive machinist for the Syracuse & Binghamton Railroad Company. Later he moved to Kansas City to work for the Union Pacific Railroad. In 1887 he went to work for the Ozark Lumber Company at Winona, Missouri; later he moved to the Central Coal & Coke Company, one of the largest lumber manufacturers

in the region; in December 1901 he moved to Louisiana to join the 4 L Company. I. W. DeHart, born in Vickeryville, Michigan, in 1862, came to Louisiana in 1902 as the general lumber yard foreman and shipping clerk, after service with the Wagar Lumber Company at Fish Creek, Michigan; the Lansing Lumber Company at Clare, Michigan; the Wight Lumber Company in Alabama in 1897; the Sabine Tram Company at Deweyville, Texas, in 1899. Fred McGhee, born in 1871 at Patterson, Missouri, worked for many years for the H. V. Holladay Lumber & Mercantile Company and the Holladay-Klotz Lumber Company of Williamsville and Greenville, Missouri, in the woods and lands departments. He became experienced in surveying, estimating, logging, and railroad construction. He moved to Louisiana in the spring of 1901 to work as the 4 L Company's woods foreman. William E. Hovis was born in 1874 in Iron Mountain, Missouri. He first worked for the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company at Grandin, Missouri, on the lumber yard. Later he worked for the Holladay-Klotz Lumber Company as a grader in their planing mill, then moved in 1899 to Neame, Louisiana, to work for the Central Coal & Coke Company as assistant planing mill foreman. In 1901 he took the job as assistant planing mill foreman for the 4 L Company and in the fall of 1902 took charge of the mill as foreman. J. A. Meriwether, chief engineer and road master of the Victoria, Fisher & Western Railroad, the 4 L Company tram, had, according to Warren, "large and varied experiences ... as a civil engineer." He joined the 4 L Company in 1902¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Bolling Arthur Johnson, Chicago, Illinois, April 27 and May 2, 1903, 4 L Letterbook pp. 681, 715-716, Author's Collection.

As General Superintendent of the 4 L Company, Willard Warren held considerable power, but he also found it necessary to undertake a multitude of chores not strictly part of his job.¹¹⁸ Things would never be quite so simple and people so courteous again. Battle lines between managers and their workers had begun to form. The Kansas City Southern Railroad was struck by the railway unions early in 1903, further exacerbating the 4 L Company's problems with acquiring enough freight cars in which to ship their lumber. In March, Warren visited Port Arthur, the railroad town on Sabine Lake, to talk with railroad officials about the shortage of rolling stock, receiving assurances that the sawmill would not be slighted in the assignment of freight cars. Writing to Fisher, he recognized that the labor unrest would control the situation. "The strike at Shreveport, if not settled early, will of course eventually result in a general tie up, unless they are able to work a force of nonunion men."¹¹⁹ This, they did and "a force of non-union men reached the shops accompanied by twelve United States marshalls [sic] from the Indian Territory." The KCS built "a stockade around the Pittsburg [Kansas] shops and have started in with a force of non-union men there."¹²⁰ Caught in the middle, even if his anti-union bias had not been so evident, Warren quickly offered help to the beleaguered railroad. "We will be very glad to render you any assistance we

¹¹⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to A. H. VanHook, Shreveport, Louisiana, May 16, 1903; same to Fred McGhee, Fisher, Louisiana, June 3, 1903; same to D. O. Willis, Kisatchie, Louisiana, June 10, 1903, 4 L Letterbook pp. 750, 802, 826, Author's Collection.

¹¹⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Springfield, Missouri, March 21, 1903, 4 L Letterbook p. 543, Author's Collection.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

can while you are having trouble at your Shreveport shops, and we will also keep a lookout for any strikers that may show up here, and will do all we can to see that they do not injure any of your property, while in our vicinity."¹²¹ On two occasions, 4 L Company machinists repaired KCS locomotive engines at the Fisher shops. "Strikers, however, are aware of this, and when I was in Shreveport they requested me to discontinue this assistance, but I told them we could not very well do this."¹²² Warren also discussed the car shortage and the labor situation with G. W. Dulany of Hannibal, Missouri, one of the four principal stockholders and a frequent adviser to the 4 L management. "For the past week we have been receiving cars in a sufficient supply, and I think perhaps they are going to be able to keep us running for the next few months. There is no question but what there are lots of empty cars in the country."¹²³

Militant labor also confronted some lumber companies at the time of the railroad strike against the KCS. In Birch Tree, Missouri, a union whose local name has since disappeared threatened O. W. Fisher's plant, but by accepting the conditions of local workers, he kept the situation within his own plant and in time won the strike. Warren congratulated him on his victory in late June and speculated on the ability of J. B. Berkshire and the Ozark Lumber Company at Winona, Missouri, to succeed also.

¹²¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to B. F. Dickens, Kansas City, Missouri, May 11, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 728, Author's Collection.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to G. W. Dulany, Hannibal, Missouri, May 11, 1903, 4 L Letterbook p. 729, Author's Collection.

"Occasionally," he admitted, "we have a little agitation down this way, and I expect sometime it will get a start at Leesville or Lake Charles."¹²⁴

The labor movement in South Missouri, although widespread, had grown precipitously and without apparent plans. A poorly organized union "movement" triggered the standard response from the Grandin interests that spring. On May 25, 1903, L. C. Porterfield, assistant general manager of the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company plant at Grandin, Missouri, reported to J. B. White, the company president, in Detroit, Michigan, for a business meeting that there had been "no particular change in the situation this morning. Quite a steady stream of men have been drawing their pay."¹²⁵ Stone, the union organizer, walked out to a farm about four or five miles from Grandin the day before, where his little boy was living. The boy and his father then walked to Williamsville, Missouri. "The great majority of our men are expressing regret that this movement was ever started and are quite uneasy as to the future,"¹²⁶ Porterfield said. He went through the lists of names of union members and sympathizers and sorted them carefully. As was his habit when he was away from home or office, White turned Porterfield's letter over and wrote on the back of it to C. E. Slagle at Clarks, Louisiana. Slagle had been White's assistant before taking up the reins of the Louisiana Central Lumber Company, of which White was also president. "This relates

¹²⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, June 24, 1903, 4 L Letterbook p. 850, Author's Collection.

¹²⁵ L. C. Porterfield, Grandin, Missouri, to J. B. White, Detroit, Michigan, May 25, 1903, LCLC Records, WHMC.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

to a strike at Grandin," he wrote. "It appears that a man by name of Stone started to organize a labor union. He started a movement that he could not control. He was very sorry, and tried to stop this mischief."¹²⁷ Captain White gave Stone a letter to Slagle to get him work as a carpenter at \$2 a day. "He may not be worth it," White said. "But charge the difference to Mo. Lumber & Mining Co. and say nothing. We will pay you the difference Each month, whatever it is. He will never start another Union."¹²⁸ Stone told Captain White that he wanted to "buy a little bit of land in Louisiana[.] Even if it be but ten acres, he will work on it before attempting to organize another Union."¹²⁹ White believed that Stone would be "worth 1.25 or 1.50 to you or perhaps more. But we will pay the difference. This is desired by Grandin and others of our directors." Grandin town shut its mills indefinitely, and paid off its men. With 148 men in the Grandin local, the labor movement, premature in South Missouri and much of the Southwest, faded with the summer, and the lumbermen resumed their work, having divested themselves of questionable workers.¹³⁰

By mid-summer, the KCS had negotiated a settlement with labor unions representing its craftsmen, and while labor organizing had been ineffectual in the mills the success of the militant labor regime on the railroads frightened lumbermen and

¹²⁷ J. B. White, Detroit, Michigan, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, undated but probably written on May 26, 1903, LCLC Records, WHMC.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ L. C. Porterfield, Grandin, Missouri, to J. B. White, Detroit, Michigan, May 25, 1903; White to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, cMay 26, 1903, LCLC Records, WHMC.

strengthened their resistance. Warren discussed the lumbermen's response with W. H. Carson, a Shreveport lumberman. "I think as you do, that there are a great many questions that could be taken up and discussed by the different mills along the Kansas City Southern to a mutual advantage, and I shall be very glad to make it convenient to meet with them at any time that may be decided upon."¹³¹ Carson had tentatively asked for a meeting of lumbermen on August 1, where, Warren declared, "the question of labor, and the prospective danger of some of the towns on the line of the Kansas City Southern becoming unionized is a question that should be taken up in such a way as to forestall any such efforts on the part of the unions."¹³² Carson was an official of the Central Coal & Coke Company, whose sawmills were located at Texarkana, Texas, and Carson, Louisiana. Carson, the town, would become the center of much labor agitation over the next several years.

Meanwhile, the day-to-day problems continued. On the morning of July 30, a man named Isgit attempted to jump onto the swaybar of a railroad car on the VF&W. He lost his footing and fell under the wheels and was killed. He was not an employee of the company or the railroad and had no pass to ride the train to the front, although he did have a brother working for the Victoria mill. M. L. Rhodes, superintendent at Victoria, assured Warren that "no blame attaches to [the] Company or Employees."¹³³

¹³¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. H. Carson, Shreveport, Louisiana, July 20, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 930, Author's Collection.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Springfield, Missouri, April 17, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 650, Author's Collection.

Although he kept no formal count, the number of people killed and injured by the 4 L Company in its mills and woods and on its trains during the four years of its existence had mounted sharply, and represented at least one dead each year.¹³⁴ The rate of deaths and injuries would quickly become an effective complaint of labor unions in the years ahead. To add to the potential union complaints, deputized company policemen, known in the region as quarterbosses from their original purpose to guard the black section or quarter of the company towns occasionally felt obliged to kill a worker, most often a black worker. Warren reported just such an incident in the middle of April to Fisher. "[S]hortly after six o'clock, Mr. Carter was compelled to kill a negro in self defense,"¹³⁵ Warren said. He went to the parish seat with Carter to see the District Attorney, who assured the lumbermen that there would, in all probability, be nothing said or done, and that he, as District Attorney, would file no affidavits or bills of information against them. Within a few days of reporting Isgit's death to the company president in Springfield, Missouri, Warren took the northbound passenger train to Shreveport "to attend a meeting of the mill men on the Kansas City Southern, who are going to meet to discuss the labor situation, and any other matters that may come up."¹³⁶

The meeting was hardly nonpartisan, and its results encouraged the machinations of such men as Henry E. Hardtner, president of the Urania Lumber Company at Urania,

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Springfield, Missouri, July 30, 1903, 4 L Letterbook, p. 991, Author's Collection.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

Louisiana, and president of the Louisiana Lumber Manufacturers Association. As 1903 drew to a close, Hardtner circulated a letter inviting lumbermen to a meeting to discuss cutting wages "to meet competition." He argued that workers were plentiful because the railroads no longer hired men for road work or construction. The meeting, set for January 5, 1904, drew an immediate acceptance from John Henry Kirby in Houston.¹³⁷ Kirby had had his own troubles with his workers. At the Kay Ell mills in Beaumont, when the payroll failed to arrive in early October 1903, the men refused to return to work for several days, but by the end of the week [October 9-16] only two mills in the town were still closed. The next day, Texas lumbermen called an association meeting in Houston for Friday, October 23, to discuss the threat of unionism, although, publicly, the call for the meeting was based on a proposed change in the freight rates.¹³⁸

Finally, in December, Charles L. Keith, general manager of Central Coal & Coke Company in Kansas City, issued a call to the lumber mills in West Louisiana and East Texas situated on the Louisiana & Arkansas, the Kansas City, Western & Gulf, the Kansas City Southern, the Houston, East & West Texas, the Southern Pacific, and the Santa Fe Railroads for January 6, 1904. Already, Keith wrote, representatives of W. R. Pickering Lumber Company, Long-Bell Lumber Company, Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company, and 4 C had considered the wage scale and conditions of employment of labor. They agreed by unanimous vote that reforms were needed and easy to

¹³⁷ Henry E. Hardtner, Uruia, Louisiana, to the Yellow Pine Manufacturers of Louisiana, December 10, 1903; Kirby Lumber Company, Houston, Texas, to Hardtner, December 21, 1903, Box 31, No. 03-05, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

¹³⁸ Allen, East Texas Lumber, p. 167.

accomplish. Considering the soft markets for lumber and low wages for labor paid by mills east of the Mississippi River, the Southwestern mills should adopt a wage scale and conditions that reflected reality as lumbermen perceived it. The companies invited to the January meeting, Keith noted, manufacture about 85 percent of the lumber from the long leaf pine district of Louisiana and Texas. Common labor, he argued, was paid too much, a result of uninformed competition for labor that traditionally was more scarce west of the river than labor to the east of it. His call asked for mills to submit a description of working conditions and wages currently in force. Keith's message went to the Missouri Lumber & Land Exchange, Long-Bell Lumber Company, W. R. Pickering Lumber Company, Zwolle Lumber Company, the Frost interests, Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company, Nona Mills of Beaumont, Sabine Tram Company, Lock-Moore Lumber Company, Bradley & Ramsey Lumber Company, Emporia Lumber Company of Houston, Kirby Lumber Company, Lutcher & Moore Lumber Company, William Buchanan Lumber Company of Texarkana, W. T. Ferguson Lumber Company of St. Louis, Whited & Wheless Lumber Company of Alden Bridge, Louisiana, Industrial Lumber Company of Beaumont, Crowell & Spencer Lumber Company of Long Leaf, Louisiana, Louisiana Lumber Company of Rochelle, Grant Lumber Company of St. Louis, Montrose Lumber Company, and Big Creek Lumber Company of Pollock, Louisiana.¹³⁹

¹³⁹ Charles L. Keith, Kansas City, Missouri, to Mills in West Louisiana and East Texas, December 23, 1903, Box 31, No. 03-05, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

To complicate the attitudes of both labor and management, there was a fluid social and racial relationship that constantly threatened to break out into open warfare. E. J. Mantooth, a Lufkin, Texas, lawyer, complained to B. F. Bonner, the Kay Ell chief executive officer, about "the animosity between Lufkin people and Nacogdoches" which was characterized by ill treatment of blacks by the people of Nacogdoches. Lufkin was a relatively new town devoted primarily to lumber and oil activities; Nacogdoches was an old Spanish trade center that prided itself on its independence. Mantooth reported frequent shootings and beatings. Citizens entered trains of the Houston, East & West Texas Railroad and threatened and assaulted blacks, he charged, adding that several people in Nacogdoches had been sentenced to the state penitentiary "in the last five years" for murdering blacks in Nacogdoches County, "besides the negros that have been hung first and last without law or the privilege of Clergy. There are more negros killed in Nacogdoches county in 12 months past by white people than were ever killed in this County during its history...."¹⁴⁰

The situation, of course, was far more complex than merely a white rampage against black people. It also reflected the changing policies of the lumber companies toward the conditions of labor and the wage scale. H. A. Herndon, superintendent of the Kay Ell plant at Mobile, Texas, wrote a personal letter in August to John Henry Kirby, explaining a series of violent encounters between white and black, labor and management, company employees and outsiders. At noon the day before, John Jordan,

¹⁴⁰ E. J. Mantooth, Lufkin, Texas, to B. F. Bonner, Houston, Texas, August 14, 1903, Box 29, No. 03-04, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

a millwright building the new planer, was struck and seriously hurt by Dudley C. Leland, a son-in-law of Mrs. Bridges, the boarding house keeper. Jordan was boarding with her and Leland followed him from the house at noon and struck him with some kind of an instrument that cut entirely through his nose. There did not seem to be any just cause for the attack. Leland had a very bad reputation, and he ran with "a crowd of kindred spirits."¹⁴¹ Mrs. Bridges ran a boarding house on Doctor Trotti's property, beyond the manager's ability to control. The doctor had also taken on the task of defending a black man charged with the murder of Mrs. Bridges' late husband, and Leland had been in several minor scrapes in which he directed threats and violence against black workers.¹⁴² Unsure of their own future welfare, whites turned hostile toward their black and Hispanic neighbors and toward foreigners, particularly Italians, for redress of very real grievances for which their victims were in no way responsible. The lumber companies had purposefully and consistently attempted to create a labor surplus by recruiting "cheap" laborers from other areas of the country, and in response white workers rather consistently raised the specter of "Jim Crow." Both groups would use such tactics indiscriminately and effectively in the years ahead.

¹⁴¹ J. A. Herndon, Mobile, Texas, to John Henry Kirby, Houston, Texas, August 30, 1903, Box 29, No. 03-04, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

¹⁴² Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

Union Infection

...there is but one right of property that conduces to the prosperity of the whole community, and that this is the right which secures to the laborer the product of his labor.¹

The Texas State Federation of Labor, early in 1904, sent C. W. Woodman to organize David Joyce's Trinity County Lumber Company at Groveton, Texas, where black workers subsequently formed a local of the Federal Labor Union, often cited to demonstrate the presence of radical labor agitation in the piney woods. The local's strike that year did not succeed, but it did result in the State Convention accepting the first black delegate in Texas history, a school teacher named P. Abner.² He entertained fellow delegates with "a touch of flowery oratory" and then recited the "virtual chattel slavery conditions which today afflict labor in the piney wood[s] of Texas."³ Wages, he said, averaged only 80 to 90 cents a day instead of the \$1.50-wage claimed by lumbermen, because common laborers were not paid when the mills were shut down for any reason. Already, however, the companies had stopped coining metal checks and had

¹ Henry George, Perplexed Philosopher, p. 274, quoted in John Zenas White, Public and Private Property, with Reference to Several Decisions by the Supreme Court of the United States (Private printing, 1935), p. 218.

² Ruth Allen, "Chapters in the History of Organized Labor in Texas," The University of Texas Publication 4143 (November 15, 1941), p. 187; Green, "The BTW," p. 174.

³ Texas State Federation of Labor, Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Convention, 1904, p. 32, reprinted in Allen, Labor in Texas, Appendix, p. 199.

begun to pay wages in paper checks discounted ten percent for merchandise and 12.5 percent for cash. Hours of labor were so long, and distances to the front so far, that married men seldom saw their wives and children. Organized in unions, he added, the black worker had held out on strike until he and his family starved.⁴ The next year, the convention sought to establish its position on union membership for black workers but only managed to parrot contemporary segregationist rhetoric. "The Negro....must be taken in and dominated in a friendly way or he must be kicked out and fought. A Sense of justice, to say nothing of the wisdom of the policy, would dictate organizing the Negro (into separate unions, to be sure) and moulding [sic] him to purposes of honor and advancement along parallel lines with the white workers."⁵ It was an empty victory for black workers. At the same time that labor leaders undertook to control the black worker, piney woods lumbermen met in Kansas City, to consider wage scales for labor without even the faintest reference to laborers themselves. Charles Keith of the 4 C distributed the new wage scale to Louisiana and Texas lumbermen. It would, he said, take effect on February 1, 1904, although he asked them to take up the issue at the annual meeting of the Southern Lumber Manufacturers Association in New Orleans the week of January 16-23. The scale, he explained, was meant to represent the maximum

⁴ Texas State Federation of Labor, Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Convention, 1904, p. 32, reprinted in Allen, Labor in Texas, Appendix, p. 199.

⁵ Texas State Federation of Labor, Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Convention, 1905, p. 48, reprinted in Allen, Labor in Texas, Appendix, p. 188.

wages that any mill would pay its workers. If anyone could get work done for less, of course, he was free to do it.⁶

Hiring black workers, even for the most menial tasks, often prompted a violent white response, which lumbermen piously considered mere outlawry for which they accepted no personal or corporate responsibility. In the middle of February, Clarence Slagle at Clarks, Louisiana, reported to J. B. White in Kansas City that he had put down a virtual revolt among his white workers occasioned by his hiring black workers. It was Slagle's first taste of labor troubles, and he acted with his usual decisiveness. Colonel W. C. Stubbs, senior member of the law firm of Stubbs & Russell in Monroe, Louisiana, and attorney for the Vicksburg, Shreveport & Pacific Railroad, told Slagle that he should ask the federal court for protection against labor agitators at the LCLC mills. The company was a foreign, i.e. an out-of-state, corporation, which Judge Bowman of the U.S. District Court would protect with an injunction against threats or intimidation against "labor," a euphemism, under the circumstances, for black workers. On the railroad between Vicksburg and Shreveport, the VS&P had employed black section hands. On two or three sections of the road, white farmers attacked the black workers and forced them to quit work. Judge Bowman enjoined the mob and sent the U.S. Marshal to serve the court's orders. When the white "farmers" ignored the injunction, the judge sent some of them to prison, "removed them from their friends and beyond

⁶ Charles L. Keith, Kansas City, Missouri, to John Henry Kirby, et al., January 15, 1904, Box 31, No. 03-05, KLC Co Records, SFA.

political influences."⁷ Slagle's case, however, had been scheduled for state district court in Columbia, Louisiana, on March 14, 1904. Several men had been arrested and charged with riotous behavior. In Louisiana, parish court officials feared defeat at the polls, he explained. Fortunately, the district attorney was not running for re-election, and the district judge was a Populist who could not be re-elected in any event. Slagle had the novel idea that such criminal matters did not require a jury, apparently misunderstanding the injunctive powers of courts of law. Whatever the outcome, the arrests alone had had a salutary effect, preventing violence at the mill and preventing the growth of labor unions, which lumbermen denounced as "infection." The company, he feared, would have been helpless before a victorious union had he been "over run and subject to dictation by a lot of men who have no responsibility, excepting to make trouble."⁸

Willard Warren had had similar trouble with white laborers who had migrated south from Missouri to work in the Calcasieu long leaf pine district. White people along the KCS, hoping to avoid competition with black workers who, it was universally believed, had lower expectations and worked for lower wages, protested the 4 L Company's use of imported black workmen at Fisher's Siding. They threatened violence and took apparent delight in their ability to frighten the company's laborers by firing their shotguns into the worker's shacks at night. The company posted rewards for evidence against the white caps without much hope of finding witnesses to the

⁷ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, February 15, 1904, LCLC Records, No. 3660, WHMC.

⁸ *Ibid.*; see also J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, February 17, 1904, LCLC Records, No. 3660, WHMC.

depredations. By the summer of 1899, however, the racial troubles appeared to have ended, and Warren relaxed. But within months all the black workers had left the mill without explaining why. Captain White was concerned with the depth of the opposition to company policies, but he said he would continue to insist on his right to hire whomever he pleased. He held no malice toward native white people of the region, wanting only "to do right by everyone and protect our business interests."⁹ The attacks on the company camp at Fisher's Siding continued sporadically throughout the year and into the spring of 1900, when tragedy struck. After giving chase to the white caps one night in May, the Captain's son, Dr. John Franklin White, accidentally shot himself in the head and chest with his own shotgun. At first the wounds seemed superficial, but within a few days blood poisoning set in, complicated by chronic appendicitis, and he died. The fact that the attacks on the mill village abruptly stopped suggests that the troubles, while racist in intent, really amounted to a rough sort of rustic sport. The death of Dr. White, in a country that badly needed the services of competent physicians and surgeons, shamed the white people into ending their attacks. His death, however, did little to calm the fears of black workers, and Warren was hard put to convince them to stay with the company. By 1902, however, the company had begun to sponsor the annual Juneteenth celebration for its black workers, and, while living conditions continued substandard for blacks, they gradually lost their fear of nightriders.¹⁰

⁹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, July 4 and October 2, 1899, and February 8, 1900, ML&Mco Letterbooks, WHMC.

¹⁰ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to L. L. Hunter, Tidioute, Pennsylvania, May 14, 1900; White to Mrs. Florence Johnston, Galena, Kansas, June 8, 1900; White to

"[H]ad it not been for this Holiness preacher, Tom Call, who is one of our day edgermen, I do not think we would have had so much trouble," Slagle complained in 1904. "He has been preaching some here of Sunday's [sic] and heretofore has shown a disposition to do good."¹¹ A year earlier the company had loaned Call \$50 that he needed to have his daughter treated at a Monroe, Louisiana, hospital. Otherwise, the little girl could not have survived. Call began repaying the loan in monthly installments and had \$20 due him after paying the balance after the labor troubles. "This proves that you cannot depend upon those that you do the most for," Slagle said, "as is shown in this case as he was the first to lead the mob to run away the negro help." The trouble started, Slagle thought, "over a darkey in the mill carrying a revolver and one of the white men took it away from him." The black worker claimed that he brought the pistol to work with him to deliver to the man he had bought it for, but the man did not show up to claim his property. "The negro of course left the mill immediately and run away as they are not very brave in this country,"¹² Slagle said. Instead of disarming the black worker, he argued, white workers should have simply informed the quarterboss who would have arrested him for carrying a concealed weapon and put him in the parish jail in Columbia. The white man, however, took advantage of the situation in an effort to get rid of the company's black laborers. Slagle moved quickly to arrest and remove

Rev. John Brererton, Lamar, Missouri, July 3, 1900, ML&Mco Letterbooks Nos. 5 and 6; White to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, June 11, 1902, Letterbook 13, ML&Mco Records, WHMC.

¹¹ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, February 15, 1904, LCLC Records No. 3660, WHMC.

¹² Ibid.

the leaders of the white mob from the mill town. As it turned out, the trouble was confined to the saw mill itself and did not spill over into the yard and the planing mill. "I am sure that the whiskey that was being drank would have made serious trouble for us wednesday [sic] night had we not gotten these leaders out of town."¹³ On February 15, White asked if Slagle were still having troubles with his workers. "I presume," he wrote, "that if you do not ask white men to work by the side of negroes, and if this is not done, I should think there should be no cause for complaint."¹⁴ Slagle replied the next day that he did not expect more trouble from the white men, "but of course there is no way [of] preventing trouble after dark by them shooting into our [black] quarters or otherwise disturbing our labor."¹⁵ Although the village was quiet, he had been unable to run the mill at night because he was short a blocksetter, two doggers, an edgerman, and six truckers on the lumber yard, apparently the men he had had arrested for causing the trouble in the sawmill. By the evening of February 22, Slagle had the mills running full time again.¹⁶ White wrote again on February 22, noting that Slagle's Missouri men had caused the Clarks plant more trouble and advising the manager "to get

¹³ Ibid.; see also J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, February 17, 1904, LCLC Records, No. 3660, WHMC.

¹⁴ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, February 15, 1904, LCLC Records, Box 3660, WHMC.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, February 16, 1904; White to Slagle, February 22, 1904; G. W. Dulany, Hannibal, Missouri, to Slagle, February 19, 1904, LCLC Records, No. 3660, WHMC.

rid of all of that bad element as fast as possible."¹⁷ When O. W. Fisher's Birch Tree mill cut out that summer, White expected many of his workers to move south to Louisiana. "[A]s they have never worked where negroes have been employed, they will make trouble. Therefore, I would avoid hiring Missouri help. Let them go somewhere else."¹⁸ Slagle's troubles proved to have been more racial than labor related, which is characteristic of much of the unrest in the Southwest in the early years of the century. Indeed, it is virtually impossible to separate the two, although the attempt would be repeatedly made in the years to come.¹⁹

Despite these problems in the piney woods, the truly sick man of the Trans-Mississippi Southern lumber industry during the early years of the century was undoubtedly John Henry Kirby. He had hardly completed the organization of the Kirby Lumber Company and its companion firm, the Houston Oil Company, out of the parts of the Louisiana & Texas Land & Lumber Association, when he went bankrupt, caused primarily by internal dissension among holders of Kirby's securities. Walter T. Burns, U.S. District Judge in Houston, took control of the property, appointed receivers, and set about restructuring Kirby's financial empire. While Kirby's interests were protected, his employees suffered from lost jobs and unpaid wages. In March 1904, the employees at Kay Ell's Call, Texas, mill petitioned the receivers for their back pay, but they got

¹⁷ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, February 22, 1904, LCLC Records, Box 3660, WHMC.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ G. W. Dulany, Hannibal, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, February 19, 1904; J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Slagle, February 22, 1904, LCLC Records, No. 3660, WHMC.

scant satisfaction. It was not until May that the receivers began paying wages for work performed before the receivership. In a circular letter to the managers of Kay Ell mills and to the superintendents of logging camps, F. M. Aldridge, manager of mills and logging for the receivers, decreed that the company would evict tenants holding adverse possession of company houses as quickly as former employees were paid their back wages. When the company failed and sought protection of the federal court, workers left without jobs or wages refused to vacate the homes they occupied as employees. Now, however, Aldridge explained, the company could eject the unemployed workers when they had their back pay without the danger of lawsuits in county courts. At some places, "troublesome tenants" had possession of company houses, against whom Aldridge advised "prompt action." Workers, he noted, were now much more plentiful and cheaper, which meant as a practical matter that the company had the upper hand again.²⁰ Kay Ell, to wring as much profit as possible from the lumber company operations, had felt compelled to extend the working day from 10 to 11 hours. Since the company paid its workers either by the day or the month, the longer hours did not cost any more for labor. By the fall of 1904, however, what Aldridge described as the "Continuance of very unsatisfactory market conditions" resulted in still another wage cut. In an even-handed policy, the company also cut salaries of managers and office workers.²¹

²⁰ F. M. Aldridge, Houston, Texas, Circular Letter No. A-77, May 19, 1904, Box 31, No. 03-05; Aldridge, Circular Letter No. A-114, June 20, 1904, Box 7, No. 01-04-05, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

²¹ F. M. Aldridge, Houston, Texas, Circular Letter No. 140, August 6, 1904, Box 7, No. 01-04-05, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

In Kansas City, R. A. Long was troubled by complaints from his traveling salesmen that they did not receive salaries in the same range as salesmen who traveled for other lumber companies. "We have made \$125.00 per month our limit,"²² he wrote to J. S. Rice, one of the Kay Ell receivers. Rice replied that Kay Ell's pay for salesmen ranged from \$1,200 to \$2,500 a year; Long's salary of \$125 was "about right."²³ Judge Burns and the Kay Ell receivers continued to struggle with the problems of adequate wages for workers in the mills and woods scattered across the million acres of the HOCO timberlands in drab sawmill towns and in logging camps at the timber fronts. Low wages did not always concern them; at times higher than usual pay caused problems with other lumbermen. In the fall of 1904, Keith Lumber Company at Voth, Texas, filed a complaint with Rice that the Kay Ell planer foreman at Voth had hired the sawmill's workers away by offering from 25 to 35 cents more in wages a day. Rice could not credit the report, and replied that the planer managers certainly did not deliberately raid the sawmill of its workers.²⁴ The receivers faced a multitude of problems associated with an operation the size of Kay Ell, including lawsuits for damages. For example, Henry E. Dewberry, a former employee, sued the receivers in the Harris County district

²² R. A. Long, Kansas City, Missouri, to J. S. Rice, Houston, Texas, August 26, 1904, Box 26, No. 03-04, KLC Co Records, SFA.

²³ R. A. Long, Kansas City, Missouri, to J. S. Rice, Houston, Texas, August 19, 1904; Rice to Long, August 22, 1904, Box 7, No. 01-04-05, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

²⁴ J. L. Rice, Houston, Texas, to Judge Walter T. Burns, Houston, Texas, August 26, 1904, Box 26, No. 03-04; D. K. Newsum, Voth, Texas, to Rice, August 31, 1904, and Rice to Newsum, September 2, 1904, Box 7, No. 01-04-05, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

court for compensation for injuries to his hand, from which he had lost the thumb and three fingers when he got caught under the knives of a planing machine at Fuqua, Texas. The accident happened during the administration of temporary receivers in 1903. The state district court in Houston, after a trial on November 14-16, decided for the plaintiff and gave him a judgement for \$9,000. Kay Ell's law firm, Andrews, Ball & Streetman of Houston, promptly asked for a new trial, a motion that was just as promptly overruled, but the lawyers assured the receivers that they would perfect an appeal.²⁵

Kay Ell's basic problem was the same as that of any large lumber mill. The capital outlay was very large compared with the price of the product of the mills, which induced lumbermen to overproduce, forcing prices down and encouraging still more overproduction. Kay Ell had no real choice but to tread this vicious circle. Finally, in December 1904, Cecil A. Lyon, co-receiver with Joe Rice, suggested that the company order its mills that had installed electric lights to operate one quarter overtime daily, which would extend the shift to 13 3/4 hours. Aldridge noted that men at the affected mills had begun to lay off from work simply to rest, a practice that affected the efficiency of the mills. Instead of the extended day, Aldridge wanted permission to operate a night shift at two or three mills and return to the 11-hour day.²⁶

²⁵ Andrews, Ball & Streetman, Houston, Texas, to Cecil Lyon and Joe Rice, Receivers, Houston, Texas, December 10, 1904, Box 29, No. 03-04, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

²⁶ F. M. Aldridge, Houston, Texas, to B. F. Bonner, Houston, Texas, December 23, 1904, Box 7, No. 01-04-05, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

Conditions in the piney woods continued to create problems for lumbermen, many of them merely economic, but social conditions bred a new self-consciousness among laboring men and women, black and white. It was this growing self-consciousness that prompted the warning in the winter of 1904 from George K. Smith, secretary of the Southern Lumber Manufacturers' Association, headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri. Smith offered to act as a clearing house for reports of any attempts to form labor unions or to strike against any member company. The activities of two American Labor Union activists, John W. Davis and J. H. Craighead, Jr., prompted the Winn Parish Lumber Company to report union activity in West Louisiana. Davis had distributed a circular printed in bold capital letters to explain that he wanted to equalize pay scales throughout the United States for lumber workers.

"GET TOGETHER ALL OF YOU, UNITED IN LUMBERMEN'S UNIONS. BE PEACEFUL. ACT QUIETLY. USE GOOD JUDGEMENT. BUT BE FIRM AND DETERMINED IN PROTECTING YOUR OWN MANHOOD AND SELF RESPECT, AND INSIST UPON A MORE HUMANE EXISTENCE FOR YOURSELVES AND YOUR FAMILIES."²⁷

In February 1905, C. E. Slagle at Clarks, Louisiana, forwarded a copy of the circular to George K. Smith, and he also wrote a circular letter to the managers of lumber mills in the region. Davis had attempted to organize workers at Winnfield in February 1905. "We understand that he came from the Arkansas Southern [railroad] here and we also understand that he left our place Thursday night for Rochelle, La.,"²⁸

²⁷ Reprinted in Allen, East Texas Lumber, pp. 168-170.

²⁸ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, February 4, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

the manager of the Winn Parish Lumber Company said. His spies among the workers told him that 37 men joined the new union local, although the company had good reason to believe that only 18 actually signed union papers. Because union rules required 20 members to form a local, Davis charged some of the new members with recruiting two more so that the local could get its charter. "Their meeting was held in a gambling joint about one mile south of us and this probably prevented their getting very many married men in the organization,"²⁹ the company manager said. Davis apparently meant to keep the union organizing efforts secret, at least from foremen and department heads in the plant. Once they had established themselves, the mill manager suspected, they would try to close the plant with a strike. "[W]e succeeded in securing pretty reliable information as to their plans, purposes, and strength Saturday and hence Monday morning we let out four of the leaders at our planing mill, one man on the Yard and three men at the saw mill." When those who had been summarily fired asked the reason, the foreman said only that "they were not wanted any longer but no further explanation was given, however, it is pretty generally understood why they were discharged and we think they feel that they made a mistake by going into this labor movement, and our action in discharging the leaders has probably broken up the organization so far as this place is concerned."³⁰

Many of the union recruits were young single men, which led Slagle to believe the union's efforts were not a serious threat. The men who were fired left for mills to

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

the south to look for work. Davis had also tried to organize a local at Clarks, but J. W. Martin, the LCLC quarterboss ordered him to leave town. Davis moved south along the tracks of the Iron Mountain to Selma, Louisiana, where William Buchanan had that year bought the Grant Lumber Company from the Gates-Crossett-Watzek interests in Arkansas and other investors in St. Louis.³¹

J. B. White reported to his mill managers in Missouri and Louisiana that Davis had actually organized a local in Buchanan's mill in Grant Parish. Keep a watch for "incendiary fires,"³² he warned. Smith took the threat seriously, pointing out that Davis had attempted to organize locals along the Arkansas Southern Railroad a few months earlier.³³ Slagle followed a pattern among lumbermen faced with the threat of organized unions in their plants that would in the next few years grow into an effective weapon against a serious attempt by the Industrial Workers of the World to organize Southwestern sawmill workers and flatheads. C. A. Buckner, representing the Crossett Lumber Company at Crossett, Arkansas, replied to Slagle's circular letter in typical fashion. "We will make a note of the names mention[ed] in your letter as to the organizers and encouragers of the movement and see that they get no employment should

³¹ Ibid.

³² J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, February 9, 1905, Box 85, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³³ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, February 9, 1905, Box 85, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to Slagle, February 8, 1905, LCLC Records, No. 3660, File 173, WHMC.

they appear at this place."³⁴ The Southern Lumber Company, manufacturers of "soft yellow pine," the Weyerhaeuser-Denkman-Lindsay plant at Warren, Arkansas, noted that Slagle "was successful in frustrating the plan of the labor union...we assure you that same will be reciprocated at any time when the condition at our mill warrants."³⁵

Much of the labor that went into the Southwestern lumber industry, particularly in the early years of industrial operations, was itinerant. A significant number transferred from the slack Lake States industry, particularly Michigan and Wisconsin. Few of these people, however, show up in the census figures, primarily because they did not stay long in any one place. Isaac W. Boulware of St. Joseph, Wisconsin, for example, moved south to Louisiana in July 1902 to work for the 4 L Company as a timber grader, a responsible and generally well-paid job. In April 1903, Boulware left Fisher to follow the industry. By early 1905, he had returned to Wisconsin to work in the office of the St. Joseph Gas Company.³⁶ Much the same can be said about Mexican and Italian labor. Italian immigrant workers, in fact, moved about to such an extent that the Southern Lumber Manufacturers' Association felt compelled to keep track of them. George K. Smith, the association secretary, sent out to members periodic reports on the

³⁴ C. A. Buckner, Crossett, Arkansas, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, February 4, 1905, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 8, File 173, WHMC.

³⁵ Southern Lumber Company, Warren, Arkansas, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, February 6, 1905, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 8, File 173, WHMC.

³⁶ U. S. Fidelity and Guaranty Company, Baltimore, Maryland, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 9, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

number of Italian laborers.³⁷ Lumbermen also maintained a network of personnel informants, created from the records of cooperating mills in the region. When George Aldredge was injured at the Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company plant at Loring, Louisiana, J. T. Burlingame, mill superintendent, wrote to Willard Warren to ask for a report on the 4 L Company' opinion of the young black man. Burlingame expressed a keen interest in Aldredge's reputation for resistance to company policies. The Loring company did not seem much distressed by the fact that Aldredge was a minor, inasmuch as Louisiana kept no vital statistics on births, deaths, and other critical events at the time.³⁸ Lumbermen also often loaned workers to neighboring mills, particularly when they needed skilled laborers for relatively brief periods. Clarence Slagle needed a millwright at the new Clarks mill for about a month to help install a gang saw. He wrote to Willard Warren, asking for the services of W. W. Hall who had installed a gang at Victoria. Slagle wanted him within the week.³⁹

The very nature of interlocking stockholders and directorates also served to confound the outside observer of saw mill practices. O. W. Fisher and Henry Cortz had operated the Cordz-Fisher Lumber Company at Birch Tree, Missouri, on the Current River Road, since 1889. By 1905 the mill had nearly exhausted its timber supply, and both Fisher and the Cordz family began to make plans to close the mill and move on to

³⁷ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, Southern Lumber Manufacturers' Association, January 19, 1905, Box 86, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁸ J. T. Burlingame, Loring, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 20, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁹ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, February 2, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

new enterprises, particularly flour milling in Texas and Washington State. As their need for workers decreased, they also concerned themselves with finding suitable employment for their loyal employees. Fisher as president and general manager of the 4 L Company turned to Willard Warren, his assistant in Louisiana and now his son-in-law as well. On January 31, 1905, he wrote two letters from Birch Tree to Warren on behalf of Will Voss and his brother John. Will Voss had been working at Birch Tree for three or four years, "...a truthful, honest, sober man and he has wanted to go down there when we got through here and I think if you can give him a place that you will find him a worthy man."⁴⁰ Still at Birch Tree in early February, Fisher turned his attention to placing another Cordz-Fisher retainer, one Byars, who also had retainers he was concerned with placing in suitable positions. As the activities at Birch Tree slowly stopped, fewer workers were needed at the mill. The night watchman would be the last worker to go, and Fisher was especially concerned to place him in another position. Not yet 30, he was "the best night watchman we have ever had." He was single, sober, quiet, peaceable, and paralyzed in one arm. Because it was one of the few industrial jobs he could handle, "he always seems to think a great deal of his job and is more apt to make a good man than one that can do other work."⁴¹

After arranging for the disposition of mill equipment and laying off his workers at Birch Tree, Fisher took the train to his new home in Bozeman, Montana, where his

⁴⁰ O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, two letters on January 31, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴¹ O. W. Fisher, Birch Tree, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, February 2, 3, and 15, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

sons had for a number of years engaged in the retail trade. With the profits from Missouri and Louisiana lumber mills, the Fishers invested in banks and flouring mills, first in Montana and then in Washington State. Daniel Robinson Fisher, who lived in Montana much longer than his brothers or his father, developed a wide range of connections, some of them associated with the mining industry and the militant unions that contended with the mining companies throughout those years. When O. W. Fisher arrived in Bozeman in late February 1905--the exact date is uncertain because of the confusion in his dating system in his correspondence--Dan passed on to his father the rumors he had heard from members of militant unions. The elder Fisher immediately warned his son-in-law with the 4 L Company in Louisiana. Several years later when members of the Western Miners Union and the IWW arrived in Louisiana to help carry out a series of strikes against the lumber mills in the Calcasieu long leaf pine district, neither Fisher nor Warren was much surprised.⁴²

That February, Clarence Slagle felt that Clarks would be spared more labor problems, and when J. B. White brought the subject up, the LCLC manager gave it as his opinion that the agitation would affect mills on the KCS more than those on the Iron Mountain, probably because the Route of the Crow from Kansas City to Port Arthur had been beset most recently with labor troubles of its own. Nevertheless, White suggested that Slagle visit the 4 L Company at Fisher on the KCS and Victoria on the T&P to study

⁴² O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, February 12[?], 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; Steen, Fisher Heritage, pp. 26, 34, 70-71, 75-76.

Warren's wage scale, his milling tolerances, and his system of scaling logs.⁴³ Meanwhile, the American Labor Union had established locals in the Pine Tree Lumber Company and the Winn Parish Lumber Company, both at Dodson, Louisiana; the William Buchanan mill at Minden, Louisiana, on the L&A Railroad; the Wyatt Lumber Company at Wyatt, Louisiana; the South Arkansas Lumber Company and the Norbit & Nume Lumber Company at Jonesboro, Arkansas; the Bernice Lumber Company at Bernice, Louisiana; the Fred B. Dubach Lumber Company at Dubach, Louisiana; the Huie-Hodge Lumber Company at Hodge, Louisiana; the Grant Lumber Company and the Little River Lumber Company at Selma, Louisiana. J. B. White, concerned with the growing presence of organized labor in the Southwest, asked George K. Smith to circulate an association questionnaire asking how the mills handled the situation.⁴⁴

W. B. Pettibone, president of the North Missouri Lumber Company at Hannibal, and a director of the 4 L Company, made a close study of labor costs at Fisher and Victoria, comparing costs per Mbf for January 1904 with the costs during January 1905. Labor, he pointed out, had begun to rise sharply, a condition that he found intolerable. The implication was clear: the growing labor agitation had imposed a subtle pressure to increase wages, to which the 4 L Company had succumbed. Look at the figures: at Fisher, labor costs for production from the pond to the rail car ran \$3.11 per Mbf in

⁴³ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, February 1, 1905, same to same, February 10, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴⁴ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, March 20, 1905, Box 85, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, and in LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 9, File 178, WHMC.

January 1904; the same costs ran \$3.19 for January 1905. This increase in costs represented excess expenses of 9 cents per Mbf for labor alone. At Victoria, the increase was much worse: \$3.43 per Mbf in January 1904 to \$4.29 in January 1905, an 86 cent rise in labor costs. To make matters even worse, O. W. Fisher had assured Pettibone that Victoria could do business cheaper than the Fisher plant, but the company barely recovered costs from the Victoria mill. Despite inclement weather that spring, there was no rational reason why Victoria did not improve its cut, other than the fear of losing hands to the labor agitation.⁴⁵

By March, White had arrived at a solution to the problem of growing labor agitation, and, typically, it was a simple matter to arrange. To his fellow lumberman in Kansas City, Charles S. Keith, president of 4 C, he revealed his plan, to the latter's great consternation. White wanted to change the pay scale from a day rate to an hourly rate, an action he predicted would keep the unions out of the piney woods. The plan, regardless of the effect on unionism, would certainly mean a sharp increase in wages. White, of course, had an ulterior motive. For years he had agitated among lumbermen to impose some device that would discourage overproduction. He had failed to convince either the lumber industry or the state and federal regulators that cooperation could be accomplished without creating an illegal lumber trust. Hourly wages, however, would impose a heavy cost on the lumber manufacturer who increased production by extending the number of hours his mills ran during a shift, since the company would be required

⁴⁵ W. B. Pettibone, Hannibal, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, March 7, 1905, Box 86, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

to pay its workers for each hour worked instead of a flat rate for each day, or shift, worked. It was a masterly plan, but it received a stony silence from White's fellow lumbermen. In his letter to Slagle in late March, Captain White noted the incidence of labor agitation in Louisiana. "I think this trouble is likely to spread, and personally I am in favor of reducing the hours to ten hours a day," he said. "This is the feeling of the Long-Bell Lumber Co. and also of Wm. Buchanan, Mr. Freeman and some others."⁴⁶ The 4 C opposed granting the shorter hours, he noted, although hiring on an hourly basis at a standard rate, at ten hours a day, the company could, "when cooler weather comes in the fall if we find that we want to work eleven hours, if we paid the men for the extra hour that they would be willing and glad to work."⁴⁷ He recognized the possibility that workers would demand as much pay for ten hours as they had received for eleven, but since lumber mills in the north, on the Pacific coast, and in the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida had changed to a 10-hour schedule, Louisiana mills would, in any case, eventually be forced to do the same.⁴⁸

At the same time, George K. Smith reported from St. Louis on a series of meeting he had held with lumbermen subjected to attack by the unions. At a meeting of lumber manufacturers in Arkansas, Smith said, the sentiment was that "owing to the large number of negroes employed at the various mills, it would be almost impossible to

⁴⁶ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, March 20, 1905, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 9, File 178, WHMC.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Charles S. Keith, Kansas City, Missouri, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, March 18, 1905; White to Keith, March 20, 1905, Box 86, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

effect the organization of any kind of labor union, which would bring about any serious inconvenience to the manufacturer."⁴⁹ J. S. Cargile, general manager of the Southern Arkansas Lumber Company plant at Jonesboro, reported to Smith that a labor organizer showed up at his mill a short time earlier and recruited about 30 out of 250 men he employed. He "never dreaded it at all," he pointed out, but "cleaned them out in a slow easy way." Afterward the men abandoned the union, and it no longer held meetings. Each mill manager, he said, should handle the problem quietly at his own plant and "just go along and saw wood."⁵⁰

R. W. Huie, general manager of the Huie-Hodge Lumber Company, reported that although a union headquartered in Chicago had organized locals all along the Arkansas Southern Railroad he was not uneasy about its effect on his operations. First, he said, the company had attempted to break the union, but it only grew stronger. Since then he had ignored it, and things had grown so quiet that he could hear very little union talk anymore. Louis Frederick, manager of the Winn Parish Lumber Company at Dodson, Louisiana, confirmed that a union had been formed at his plant. Nevertheless, he had had very little trouble with his men, since the first enthusiasm for the union had begun to die out. He had fired several men to control the situation, and the rest seemed to understand that their wages were already better than saw mill workers east of the Mississippi River. J. G. Wepfer, superintendent of the Pine Tree Lumber Company at

⁴⁹ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, March 30, 1905, Box 86, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Winona, Louisiana, a short distance south of Dodson, said no union operated in his plant, despite the presence of one at Dodson. Earlier a union of laborers had formed at the Tannehill plant operated by Hall & Legan Lumber Company, and the Winn Parish Lumber Company at Dodson. Some laborers who worked at Pine Tree also joined the union, he noted, but the union was made up mostly of "idlers, farmers, and bootleggers."⁵¹ To control the situation, he advised firing some workers. In any case, he cautioned, Smith should not pass Wepfer's letter on to the Summit Lumber Company nearby because it was no more than "a public bureau of information for the outside community."⁵²

It took extreme caution on the part of lumbermen to keep out of labor troubles between companies within the same interest group and between interest groups within the lumber industry. Captain White had taken up the problem of raids on the labor of mills within the Grandin interests. The latest case involved one Sam McManus who left Grandin, Missouri, without any notice and went to Clarks, Louisiana, at which time he sent for his family. It was obvious to the captain that McManus knew where he was going and had had "some correspondence regarding the place before he left us."⁵³ It was a perennial problem, and White failed again to solve it. Slagle and Warren continually compared their wage scales so that they did not offer incentives for workers

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., two letters on March 30, 1905; White to Smith, March 20, 1905, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 9, File 178, WHMC.

⁵³ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, March 20, 1905, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 9, File 178, WHMC.

at one company to move to the other company. At one point, Slagle reminded M. L. Rhodes, manager of the 4 L mill at Victoria, of the agreement. "Your mill foreman wired our gang sawyer offering him a job," he wrote. "We have persuaded him to stay with us."⁵⁴ A similar situation had developed a short time earlier when the Fisher mill had inadvertently attempted to raid the Clark's mill. All the foremen and superintendents should have been informed of the understanding among the mills of the Grandin interests, Slagle suggested. Slagle also wrote to Warren to tell him "I am quite sure it was not your intention to make any of your employees undertake to hire any of our men, and likewise it is not our intention to employ your men."⁵⁵ Shortly afterward, Slagle noted that "I have a letter from Mr. Rhodes regarding the attempted employment of our gang sawyer and his explanation is entirely satisfactory. I did not write with any idea of complaint, further than I thought we ought to get together on matters of this kind."⁵⁶ Just as important was the cooperation among mills in districts served by the same rail lines. On the KCS, lumbermen had agreed on a labor etiquette that prohibited a mill manager from making an offer of employment to any men employed by a member of the agreement. The agreement did not always hold, which precipitated quarrels and scandals. In the spring of 1905, Willard Warren complained to Charles Keith that managers of 4 C mills at Neame and Carson, Louisiana, and Kennard, Texas, had

⁵⁴ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to M. L. Rhodes, Victoria, Louisiana, May 23, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁵ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, March 17, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

violated the agreement, particularly the provisions to decline to interfere with another mill's common, i.e. black, laborers. Keith promised to correct the situation, particularly at Carson, apparently the worst offender.⁵⁷

The president of the local of the American Labor Union at Minden, Louisiana, was T. E. Scanlon. He and Jack Davis started organizing locals in Arkansas and Louisiana in 1904 and had a membership of 1,500 by the spring of 1905. The union had a district president, resident in Ruston, Louisiana, while Davis held the title of district organizer. The union, the same as the union to which men in the Western Louisiana mills belonged, had organizers in Arkansas also, but the mill owners fought it desperately. The union wanted a 10-hour day and an approved wage scale that could not be changed for a year. Already, the union had plans to hold its first convention in Monroe on June 1, 1905, at which Eugene V. Debs, Daniel McDonald, T. T. Haggerty [T. J. Hagerty?], and Clarence Smith, "all great labor leaders," would attend. Soon, Scanlon boasted, his union would have every sawmill man from Shreveport to Alexandria, and up and down the Arkansas Southern Railroad, as paid members.⁵⁸ Quickly, however, other figures, at least in Arkansas, had begun to steal the union's thunder. The Arkansas Legislature had recently limited to 10 the hours per day permitted in sawmills and planing mills. But George K. Smith was confident the statute

⁵⁷ Charles Keith, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, two letters on March 20 and April 1, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁸ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, Southern Lumber Manufacturers' Association, April 5, 1905, quoting T. E. Scanlon, Minden, Louisiana, to the Southern Lumber Company, Warren, Arkansas, no date given, Box 86, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

would not survive judicial review, based on the decision of a New York court holding unconstitutional a law limiting to eight the number of hours permitted. The U. S. Supreme Court had already used the contract clause to strike down similar regulations, Smith noted.⁵⁹

On January 4, 1905, with virtually no reference to the plight of the southwestern flatheads and millhands, a group of 32 radical labor leaders, meeting secretly in Chicago for three days, issued a manifesto that called for the organization of a new kind of union, one that would seize the means of production on behalf of the working class, "one great industrial union embracing all industries--providing for craft autonomy locally, industrial autonomy internationally, and working class unity generally."⁶⁰ On June 27, about 200 delegates from a dozen or more labor unions met in convention at Chicago's Brand's Hall to create the Industrial Workers of the World. Chairman of the meeting and the subsequent convention was William D. Haywood, leader of the Western Federation of Miners. Haywood remained the leading spirit of the new industrial union, joined by Thomas J. Hagerty, a defrocked Catholic priest, and by Vincent St. John, known as The Saint. The group eventually purged Daniel De Leon, and Eugene V. Debs withdrew to go his own way, because of a conflict within the group. Debs and De Leon, although not necessarily agreeing with each other, favored a labor-based political organization,

⁵⁹ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to All members, Southern Lumber Manufacturers' Association, April 25, 1905, Box 86, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁰ Proceedings of the First Convention of the Industrial Workers of the World, Founded at Chicago, June 27-July 8, 1905 (New York: New York Labor News Company, 1905), pp. 3, reprinted in Loren Baritz, ed., The American Left: Radical Thought in the Twentieth Century (New York: Basic Books, 1971), pp. 25-27.

while Haywood, Hagerty, and St. John wanted direct action to seize economic power as a means of political control. The Wobblies' manifesto, distributed by the thousands on June 27 as the Convention opened, pointed out the growing weakness of the worker and the growing strength of the capitalist. Such sentiments gave employers a sense of their own righteousness and their own defensiveness, compelling even the most liberal of them to assume a stance in opposition to any organization of workers, no matter how benign. The lines had been drawn for an inevitable confrontation when Haywood declared the IWW a "revolutionary" movement.⁶¹

In the piney woods, people concerned themselves with more life threatening troubles, however, among them the dreaded tuberculosis. It struck without discrimination. In July, the father of the 4 L Company's two physicians, Dr. D. C. Dillon, a druggist (the title was honorary) recognized the symptoms of the disease in his own chest and left for Las Cruces, New Mexico, to find a cure in the West. "Would you let the Hospital Department take what drugs I have," he asked Warren on July 5. "I am out here with consumption ..."⁶² He estimated that he would not be able to work for at least four or five months, but the sale of his supply of medicines, left at the nearby town of Florian, would help him survive until he could get well. Then in August,

⁶¹ U. S. Congress, Senate, Industrial Relations: Final Report and Testimony Submitted to the Congress by the Commission on Industrial Relations ..., 64th Cong., 1st Sess., 1916, pp. 1445-1455, reprinted in Loren Baritz, ed., The American Left: Radical Thought in the Twentieth Century (New York: Basic Books, 1971), pp 25-27, 28-29, 30-31, 42-56.

⁶² D. C. Dillon, Las Cruces, New Mexico, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, July 5, 1905, Box 86, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

"Yellow Jack," the dreaded fever that periodically visited the lower Mississippi Valley, stopped business, labor agitation, even life itself. Communities resorted to strict quarantines, and physicians steeled themselves to serve and suffer. On August 2, 1905, Dr. Harvey Dillon at Fisher wired Willard Warren and J. B. White in Kansas City: yellow fever had broken out at Morgan City on the Atchafalaya River in Southwest Louisiana, and the City of Shreveport had organized a board of health with powers to impose a strict quarantine. There was as yet no excitement in the public, the doctor said.⁶³ Unable to reach Louisiana, Warren went west to Fort Morgan, Colorado, on the lower Platte River, to visit his brother, U. J. Warren, who operated lumber yards in the plains states. His secretary, Annis Judd Eals, reported to him that passenger service on the KCS and the T&P had been discontinued. No mail had reached Victoria for two days, and the KCS only carried mail on Trains Nos. 1 and 4. The whole country was now under strict quarantine, and a good deal of excitement had developed over the presence of yellow fever. The Beaumont Enterprise, Miss Eals said, had thrown its support behind strong quarantines in the Trans-Mississippi South, and a few days later, to Warren now in Bozeman, Montana, she described the detention camp at Fisher and the guards posted to keep out any visitors or stragglers. The mill had virtually shut down, and the KCS had pulled no loaded cars out since the quarantine had started.⁶⁴

⁶³ Dr. D. H. Dillon, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren and J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, August 2, 1905, box 86, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁴ Annis Judd Eals, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fort Morgan, Colorado, two letters on August 4, 1905; same to same, Bozeman, Montana, August 4, 1905.

A government specialist confirmed cases at Bon Ami were genuine yellow fever, Miss Eals told Warren in Bozeman. The King-Ryder Lumber Company at that point subsequently moved "all the dagoes to the woods and have burned the quarters occupied by them."⁶⁵ There were two cases among the Italians in the lumber town, one of them fatal. Also, an acquaintance, Barney Tracy, was in Shreveport convalescing from yellow fever. Meanwhile, the KCS had cut service south of Leesville in Vernon Parish. By the middle of August, Bon Ami had suffered three deaths from the epidemic. There was not so much excitement at Fisher anymore, Miss Eals said, but a great many people would leave if they only could.⁶⁶

J. B. White in Kansas City wrote to Warren in Bozeman to warn him away from Louisiana, in case he attempted to reach the mill town. The fever, he said, kept most workers away from the mill, and several cases had been reported in the press, notably in Shreveport and Bon Ami, to the north and south of Fisher.⁶⁷ William L. McKinney in Kansas City forwarded to Warren in Bozeman a wire received from Dr. Harvey Dillon, stating "All trains discontinued except No. 1 and 4 and they only carry mail situation unchanged."⁶⁸ John Brews at Fisher wrote to Warren at Fort Morgan,

⁶⁵ Annis Judd Eals, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Bozeman, Montana, August 8, 1905, Box 86, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁶ Annis Judd Eals, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Bozeman, Montana, August 8, 1905; same to same, August 10, 1905; same to same, August 15, 1905, Box 86, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁷ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Bozeman, Montana, August 10, 1905, Box 85, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁸ William L. McKinney, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Bozeman, Montana, August 3, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Colorado, that Martin Hardwick had mounted four guards at Fisher, and that Victoria was also guarded and quarantined. The State Board of Health, he reported, had quarantined New Orleans, Shreveport, Bunkie, and Morgan City.⁶⁹ On August 7, Brews again reported to Warren in Fort Morgan. The fever situation had not improved, he said, and there was much excitement over cases discovered at Bon Ami. Dr. Barnett, the company physician, said it was yellow fever and that one had died and another patient was still alive. The authorities thought the yellow fever had been brought in by Italians passing through, and subsequently they organized a detention camp for them, after they burned their houses to rid the area of the disease. The Italians had all left. Dr. Dillon at Fisher put on more guards as a precaution to stop anyone from coming into the town from Bon Ami.⁷⁰ Frank Young, stranded on a visit home to Sweetwater, Tennessee, contacted Warren in Bozeman on August 9, to talk about the quarantine, then continued the correspondence well into September. Warren had managed to find a way back to his work at Fisher by September 19, when Young wrote to him there, to complain of having typhoid fever and bilious attacks while he remained in Tennessee.⁷¹

⁶⁹ 4 L Company as per John Brews, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fort Morgan, Colorado, August 5, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁰ John Brews, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fort Morgan, Colorado, August 7, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷¹ L. F. Young, Sweetwater, Tennessee, to W. W. Warren, Bozeman, Montana, August 9, 1905; same to same, wire with no date; same to same at Fisher, Louisiana, September 19, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

In Kansas City, C. E. McCray applied to J. B. White for a job as a logging superintendent. Quarantined from his home in Magnolia, Mississippi, he sought employment north of the outbreak of yellow fever. For 30 years he had worked as a contractor or superintendent, the last 12 months with the Henderson Lumber Company in Sanford, Alabama. He quit the job because Henderson worked state convicts, even in the woods department. McCray had also worked for J. J. White at McComb City, Mississippi, for six years; the Louisiana & Texas Lumber Company at Kennard, Texas; Lathrop Hoton Lumber Company at Birmingham, Alabama, for four years; Camp & Hinton Lumber Company, supplying four mills, at Lumberton, Mississippi; Sullivan Timber Company and the Bay City Lumber Company, a combined operation, in Mobile, Alabama. "I am done working convict labor at any price," he told White. "I have been getting \$150 to \$200 per month. In the last 3 yrs laid out & Built 200 miles of RR."⁷² Warren was still in Montana, and with the fever on everyone's mind, McCray's application went virtually unnoticed. In Montana, Warren could learn very little about the situation in Louisiana. The newspapers in the region carried very little about the fever in the South, by this time an old story to most readers, in any case. Warren soon found his way to Kansas City, where he got an up-to-date report from Dr. Harvey Dillon, explaining that the quarantine at Fisher had been quite effective in preventing any infections from yellow fever. Dr. D. Tichenor of Bon Ami had reported no new cases

⁷² C. E. McCray, Sanford, Alabama, to Missouri Land & Lumber Exchange Company, Kansas City, Missouri, August 11, 1905; Missouri Land & Lumber Exchange to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, August 14, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

at Bon Ami Camp, where the sickness had first been found among the King-Ryder Lumber Company's Italian workers.⁷³

In the midst of the yellow fever scare, D. C. Pettit decided to throw up his job at the Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company at Loring on the KCS north of Fisher. The company operated two mills at the time, one at Loring and another at Plymouth, Louisiana. Pettit had resigned a good job paying \$75 a month to take the job at Loring for \$85 the first of the year 1905, but the extra \$10 a month was simply not enough to "keep him in the sticks" any longer. Perhaps, he asked, Warren could recommend him to someone in Kansas City. Warren, however, was not in Fisher to help his friend, who must have known the company manager would be busy elsewhere.⁷⁴ J. T. Burlingame, superintendent at Loring, had another problem that he wanted to discuss with Warren. The action of the KCS ending passenger service on its line south of Shreveport and north of Lake Charles in the interest of public health was the only thing that kept Burlingame's workers from leaving. Now that fall was coming on and the railroad was apt to restore passenger service at any moment, the Loring millhands might just leave anyway, and

⁷³ W. W. Warren, Bozeman, Montana, to Annis Eals, August 18, 1905, Box 11634; D. Harvey Dillon, M.D., Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Kansas City, Missouri, August 21, 1905, Box 86, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA. D. Harvey Dillon was physician and surgeon to the 4 L Company; local surgeon to the KCS Railroad; chief surgeon to the VF&W Railroad; Representative for Sabine Parish in the State Legislature; his brother, W. E. Dillon was assistant physician and surgeon to the 4 L Company, the KCS Railroad, and the VF&W Railroad.

⁷⁴ D. C. Pettit, Loring, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 28, 1905, Box 86, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Burlingame wanted to lay plans to discourage the workers from milling about over the piney woods.⁷⁵

But Warren was still not at home in Fisher. In Montana, he wrote to Annis Eals on September 1 that he was still not able to get passage back to Louisiana. A few days later, he advised his secretary in Fisher that he would go first to Ft. Worth, Texas, to find a way home.⁷⁶ By the middle of September, Warren had made his way back to Fisher, although the Louisiana Railroad Commission, for fear of the fever, had canceled its meeting planned for September 19 in Baton Rouge.⁷⁷ Things obviously were getting back to normal, for the 4 L Company had begun to receive applications for positions. Already Fred McGhee had 30 log teams in the woods and was laying more spur track at Victoria front. At Fisher, the company was short of help at the planer and on the yard. While the fever situation was improving, John Brews told Warren in Kansas City, their neighboring mills did not want passenger service restored on the KCS because of a widespread fear that they men would all leave them. In Belgrade, Montana, O. W. Fisher took time to write to Warren, mentioning that he supposed he could not come down to the sawmill town until the fever definitely let up, but he was pleased that the

⁷⁵ J. T. Burlingame, Loring, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 29, 1905; Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁶ W. W. Warren, Bozeman, Montana, to Annis Judd Eals, Fisher, Louisiana, September 1, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁷ Louisiana Railroad Commission, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, To Whom It May Concern, September 15, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Fisher crews stayed at their posts during the excitement. He did not mention the armed guards that made sure they remained quietly at their jobs.⁷⁸

At Bon Ami, Louisiana, B. H. Smith, general manager of the King-Ryder Lumber Company, a Long-Bell subsidiary, expressed a great deal of relief that the fever had subsided. He wrote to Warren in late September to report that yellow fever may have reached within 10 miles of Victoria mills. How, he wanted to know, had the epidemic affected the 4 L Company operations? Were people still scattering from Bayou Natchez in Natchitoches Parish? For his part, he had had enough of the yellow fever scare, and although he had no quarantine guards posted now, if his people began to scatter he planned to put guards back on to keep them at home. As far as business was concerned, King-Ryder suffered the expected shortage of men and cars, but there seemed to be very little uneasiness over the nearness of the fever, and he saw no further need for special precautions.⁷⁹ At Clarks, the fever excitement had been minimal. "As to the yellow fever," Slagle wrote to Warren, "we have a scare about once a week that causes us to lose a few men, but so far have been able to run full time, however, we are short on equipment and are unable to ship lumber to our capacity."⁸⁰ He had also been having

⁷⁸ J. O. Asine, Flat River, Missouri, to 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, September 4, 1905; John Brews, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Kansas City, Missouri, September 5, 1905; O. W. Fisher, Belgrade, Montana, to Warren, September 19, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁹ B. H. Smith, Bonami, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 21, 1905, Box 86, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁰ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 21, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

trouble with the dry kiln doors, a decidedly common complaint, which might indicate that things were back to normal.⁸¹

Probably the best indication that the scare was over were the letters the Southern mills began receiving again from Lake States lumbermen trying to place some of their employees in Southern positions. M. H. McCarthy, treasurer of the Standard Lumber Company in Dubuque, Iowa, contacted the LCLC in October about one of that company's sawyers, John Bargeman, who wanted to work in the South during the winter. He had "been with us several years, and we regard him [to be] a very good man in every way. We expect him to return in the Spring when the ice goes out so that we can resume operations."⁸² On December 1, McCarthy also wrote to Warren on behalf of Bargeman. Standard Lumber was owned by the Ingram-Dulany-Day interests, who had connections with the Grandins in Missouri and Louisiana and with other lumbermen east of the Mississippi. Slagle had a full crew and could not use the northern sawyer, but he did pass the letter on to Warren at the 4 L Company. Warren returned the compliment at the same time by referring to Slagle the application of D. F. Moore for some unspecified position.⁸³

As the year ended, the fever excitement was only a faint memory, and the lumbermen's natural paranoia had returned in full force. Warren had for some time

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² M. H. McCarthy, Dubuque, Iowa, October 25, 1905, Box 11634, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸³ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, two letters on November 2, 1905; M. H. McCarthy, Dubuque, Iowa, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, December 1, 1905, Box 86, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

negotiated with colonizers who came down from the midwestern cities to march across the cutover lands of the southwestern sawmill companies to test the land's fertility and suitability for settlement. In December 1905, a group had offered to buy from 10,000 to 15,000 acres of the company's virtually worthless stump lands. White, however, was cautious. "I do not favor it anywhere near Fisher"⁸⁴ because the settlers would likely start another town, put up stores, take half of the 4 L Company store trade, and cost Warren more in lost profits than he saved in interest and taxes by selling the land in the first place. As long as he could keep a wide belt of company lands around the sawmill towns, he would be safe from intrusion by anyone, friends or foes.⁸⁵

The activities of the American Labor Union in South Arkansas and Northwest Louisiana in the spring of 1905 apparently came to nothing. Based loosely on principles espoused by the Knights of Labor in that group's organizing efforts in the South after 1880, the demands for an industrial union in the piney woods faded before the excitement occasioned by the outbreak of yellow fever in the summer of 1905. When the disease ran its course and disappeared with the coming of cold weather in the Gulf States, the union failed to regain its original momentum. Lumbermen in the region turned to more pressing problems, not the least of which was overproduction and cutthroat competition for markets. In April, J. B. White returned to his idea that a reduction in the hours of work from 11 to 10 would tend to reduce production, thus solving the industry's most

⁸⁴ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, December 29, 1905, Box 85, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

critical problem and ending the threat posed by union organizers in the mills and fronts. Apparently, convinced of the efficacy of the plan by O. W. Fisher, White sought the concurrence of the Dulany and Pettibone interests in Hannibal, Missouri. Quietly on May 1, 1905, with the concurrence of his directors and associates, he established the 10-hour day with no reduction in pay at each of the Grandin mills in Missouri and Louisiana. There was an immediate reaction from W. C. Bowman, general manager of the Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company in Kansas City, whose mills at Loring and Plymouth were situated on the northern line of the 4 L Company block on the KCS. He complained that the 10-hour day would cause trouble for lumbermen later. Good lumber prices would not last, he predicted, which would make it much more difficult to return to the 11-hour day. Bowman also wrote to J. B. White, protesting the change in hours at the 4 L Company, apparently still unaware that White had put the system into effect at several other mills. White wrote to Warren in late May that the 4 L Company could state that the change was the action of the entire board of directors who were willing to bear the burden of any protests. In any event, White had informed R. A. Long and other lumbermen in Kansas City that the Grandin interests supported the 10-hour day, and they did not seem to be much concerned. In any case, White wrote, "I think we are right."⁸⁶ Along with an undated handwritten note to Judge J. T. Boone, a candidate for a seat on the new State Board of Equalization of Assessments and the father of John H. Boone,

⁸⁶ J. B. White, Hannibal, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, April 6, 1906; White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Warren, May 19, 1906, Box 84; W. C. Bowman, Kansas City, Missouri, to Warren, May 10, 1906, Box 34, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

one of the 4 L Company lawyers, Warren sent a copy of Bowman's letter with this ironic message. "Next time I see WCB [W. C. Bowman] I am going to ask him why he is running 10 hrs at 11 hrs pay." To which Judge Boone answered in a still more ironic manner: "Some prophets are without honor even in their own country."⁸⁷

As fall approached, the Grandin interests were busy developing the Grandin Coast Lumber Company in Washington State. Favored employees were permitted to invest in the new venture on an equal basis with earlier investors. Frank Young at Fisher wrote to J. B. White asking for stock in the new company and a job in the West when affairs permitted, which White agreed to do for Young's health.⁸⁸ And C. P. Duncan, who had taken over the reins at Victoria from Rhodes, wrote rather frantically to Warren, visiting his parents in Davenport, Nebraska, that Posey Holland had filed suit against the 4 L Company for \$3,550 in compensation for injuries received in an accident on June 8, 1906, on a rail car in the mill. The suit would arise in the State District Court in Natchitoches, where the company had not had much success in such matters. The company, of course, chose to defend the case in court.⁸⁹

While Warren rested at his parents' home, on September 26, 1906, a group of lumbermen, beset by striking workers, organized the Southern Lumber Operator's Association at a meeting in St. Louis, Missouri. The action by members of the Southern

⁸⁷ J. H. Boone, Many, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 20, 1906; Warren to J. T. B., no date, Box 34, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁸ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to L. F. Young, Fisher, Louisiana, September 26, 1906, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁹ C. P. Duncan, Victoria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Davenport, Nebraska, September 30, 1906, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Lumber Manufacturers' Association, also headquartered in St. Louis, following a series of strikes by mill workers in Lake Charles, Louisiana, that had tied up the Calcasieu long leaf pine district for several weeks. The association elected C. D. Johnson of St. Louis its president; J. A. Freeman, St. Louis, vice president; L. L. Major, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, second vice president; and the ubiquitous George K. Smith, treasurer. Johnson sent out a circular letter to lumbermen throughout the region, in which he reminded them of the group's common history. Early in September, 1906, labor agitators formed union local and demanded ten hours work with eleven hours pay, and a weekly pay day. Every mill refused the demand, and the workers went out on strike. The saw mill operators formed a local organization and decided to jointly oppose the demands of the union. One operator, however, without consulting others lumbermen, started his mill on the union's terms. After this defection, all Lake Charles mills except Long-Bell, reopened on the basis of ten hours work with eleven hours pay and a weekly pay day. Long-Bell held out for two weeks before it shut down. Then it posted notice that the company would start its mills Monday morning, September 17, on ten hours work with eleven hours pay, but it insisted on a monthly pay day. When the mills blew their whistles Monday morning only four men reported for work. The union held out because Long-Bell's terms did not meet the demands of the Union. Four other operators in Lake Charles had previously declared that if Long-Bell mills were not permitted to run on the terms as posted, they would close their mills until all mills on the Calcasieu could run without recognizing the union or answering its demands. The mills of Lock-Moore & Company, Perkins & Miller Lumber Company, J. A. Bel Lumber Company, Hodge

Fence & Lumber Company, and the Calcasieu Long Leaf Lumber Company (Long-Bell) remained closed after Tuesday, September 18, rather than recognize organized labor. The object of the association, as set forth in its constitution, was to support, politically and financially, any manufacturer forced to close a mill because of demands by organized labor. Yellow pine lumbermen took a keen interest in the situation because of the complications likely to grow out of it. The union at Lake Charles, Johnson declared, meant to organize 20,000 lumber mill workers in Louisiana and Texas. The annual output of association mills reached the neighborhood of 1,300,000,000 bf, around which Johnson hoped to organize Southern sawmill owners and managers. On October 1, 1906, most association mills operated in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas; only half a dozen had mills in Alabama and Mississippi. Neither John Henry Kirby and Henry Lutzer in Texas and Louisiana nor William Buchanan in Arkansas and Louisiana joined the association in its formative period. It seems to have been the chosen instrument of the Long-Bell interests and their neighbors in the Calcasieu long leaf pine district, primarily in Southwest Louisiana. J. B. White and the Grandin interests did not get into the SLOA early, possibly because of the residual effects of White's decision to reduce his workday to 10 hours in the spring. The constitution of the association provided for an assessment of 2 cents per Mbf log scale on each member mill, with the object of paying mills shut down by strikes for some of their losses. The group intended to deal with the conditions of labor on its own terms, support the manufacture of lumber, the methods of logging, rates of transportation, and the development of information of mutual benefit. The

association provided for a trust fund, created from assessments, to help members resist the encroachment of organized labor.⁹⁰

Although J. B. White and the Grandin interests were cautious about joining the SLOA, the Exchange mills promptly donated \$1,500 to the association to help pay the expenses of Lake Charles mills shut down by the strike. White cautioned the managers in Louisiana to keep quiet about the 4 L Company and LCLC helping the Calcasieu lumbermen, because he fully expected more such troubles in the future. The Grandin mills and the Ozark Lumber Company mills at Winona, White calculated, had only three or four more years to operate. He had already begun to plan for the transfer of the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company to Eminence, Missouri, farther up Jack's Fork of the Current River. At the same time, Slagle had completed the purchase of the Standard Lumber Company mill and timberland at Standard, Louisiana, a few miles south of Clarks, which would require careful management to succeed under normal circumstances, let alone the problems they would encounter in a time of labor unrest. For these and other reasons, neither the 4 L Company nor LCLC had formally joined the SLOA by late October, 1906.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Constitution of the Southern Lumber Operator's Association, St. Louis, Missouri, September 26, 1906; "Membership of the Southern Lumber Operator's Association," October 1, 1906; C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to Louisiana Long Leaf Lumber Company, Fisher, Louisiana, October 4, 1906, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; Johnson to Louisiana Central Lumber Company, Clarks, Louisiana, October 4, 1906; George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 11, 1906; "Membership of Southern Lumber Operators' [sic] Association," October 1, 1906, No. 3660, Box 13, Files 266 and 269, LCLC Records, WHMC.

⁹¹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, December 5, 1906, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

By November, George K. Smith had begun to write a series of confidential circular letters to the mill owners, warning of the efforts of labor organizers to get onto the fronts and in the mills to cripple the industry. He asked managers to check for such activity and advise him immediately.⁹² By 1911, the SLOA would grow to 87 companies with mills in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Texas. Most of the mills would not be seriously affected by union activity at any time, but the strike in Lake Charles, which included mills throughout "Imperial" Calcasieu Parish, left a legacy that later union organizers would built upon. DeRidder, a Calcasieu town later the seat of Beauregard Parish, was ringed by half a dozen mills, at least two of which belonged to the Long-Bell interests. C. B. Sweet, vice president of Long-Bell, led the resistance to the strike and formed the core of the SLOA that resisted any move of organized labor. He probably invented the trust fund that provided for mills to share the costs of strikes and shutouts. Sweet's frequent critic in the lumber industry was John Henry Kirby, whose investments in timberland and mills often conflicted with Long-Bell's. Kirby was uncharacteristically quiet in 1906, probably the result of his efforts to pull Kay Ell and HOC Co out of bankruptcy since 1903. Despite claims that Kirby "dominated" the Southern lumber industry, he was in no position to make much noise about organized labor, since his properties were under the control of the Federal Courts. In 1906, Kay Ell operated mills at Beaumont, Bessmay, Bronson, Browndell, Call, Evadale, Fuqua, Kirbyville, Mobile, Rogansville, Village Mills, and

⁹² George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, To All Members of the Southern Lumber Operators' Association, November 9, 1906, No. 3660, Box 13, File 279, Louisiana Central Lumber Company Records, UM.

Woodville, with a capacity of about 1.5 billion bf. He was soon to reclaim Kay Ell, when he would become an outspoken critic of industrial unions, while claiming a healthy respect for craft unionism.⁹³

With the end of the year, the stage was set for further conflict in 1907, but, like 1905 when yellow fever in the South turned the region's attention from labor relations to health, economic collapse in the nation's banking system served to change the conditions of business so drastically as to render hostility between management and labor superfluous. The Panic of 1907 actually began in March, although its effects hardly reached the piney woods until the fall.⁹⁴ Meanwhile, Southwestern lumbermen kept the even tenor of their ways, ignorant of the coming catastrophe. Other matters also occupied the lumbermen's minds, the constant search for new timberland, the availability of rolling stock on the railway trunk lines, the possibilities for profit in new turpentine processes that could use Southwestern pines, and the occasional offers to buy or lease stump lands from colonizers and sheep men. On Independence Day the normal quiet of the Clarks front was shattered by an explosion. H. A. Sweeney, the LCLC logging foreman, hastened to report the incident to Clarence Slagle. "I find at our Camp there was 2 portable Houses Blown in Splinters on July 4th which was caused by the Explosion of about 80 # [pounds] of Dinomite under one of the houses which was Exploded by a

⁹³ Allen, East Texas Lumber, pp. 180-182; see also Morgan, Kirby, p. 194, who leaves the distinct impression that the Texas lumberman organized and directed the SLOA. In fact, Kirby was not a "leading founder," and he served on none of the association's governing boards. He did make speeches and give newspaper interviews.

⁹⁴ For a contemporary account of the panic, see Eugene Meyer, Jr., "The New York Stock Exchange and the Panic of 1907," The Yale Review, 18 (May 1909) 34-46.

glancing Bullit that was fired by McBarclay. PS. there was Some whiskey Mixed up with this axcident So I learn."⁹⁵ Slagle turned to J. N. Bennett, superintendent of the Ouachita & Northwestern Railroad, the company tram road, for an explanation, particularly "a report from you showing the amount of company property in this house that was destroyed."⁹⁶

In the summer of 1907, lumbermen also agitated themselves with the problem of equalizing pay scales for railroad section men and other laborers who worked on the trams and spurs throughout the piney woods. At Fisher, Louisiana, Willard Warren paid section men and his surfacing gang at a rate of \$1.50 a day. Men in these jobs worked in gangs. The section gang maintained a section of track, much the same way section gangs on the trunk lines kept up a piece of the railroad right-of-way. Warren had also organized an "extra gang that lays steel and surfaces new track."⁹⁷ Some mills on the KCS south of the 4 L Company block in southern Sabine Parish paid men for laying steel at a rate of \$1.75, Warren noted, "but we have not paid over \$1.50 since about five

⁹⁵ H. A. Sweeney, Clarks Camp, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, July 6, 1907, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 16, File 341, WHMC.

⁹⁶ Slagle to J. N. Bennett, Clarks, Louisiana, July 6, 1907, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 16, File 341, WHMC; see also W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, January 26, 1907; White to Warren, February 2, 1907; White, Bemus Point, New York, to Warren, February 15, 1907; White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Warren, February 27, 1907; White, Clarks, Louisiana, to Warren, March 21, 1907; White to Warren, April 19, 1907; Warren to F. E. Roesler, Immigration Agent, Kansas City, Missouri, May 10, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁷ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, January 26, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

years ago when we laid our main line, and then we paid but \$1.65 to a lot of Mexicans."⁹⁸ Slagle at Clarks paid section and surfacing gangs on the O&NW Railroad at the rate of \$1.60 a day, but he expected that he could not "hold them at that price." South of the LCLC block on the Ouachita River, William Buchanan's Louisiana & Arkansas Railroad paid the same class of laborers at the \$1.75-rate, and, Slagle said, "so long as labor is so short in this section of the country, they will work at something else that will pay them more money. If we can get along until the 1st of October, I do not think there will be any difficulty in holding our men at the present rate from that time on."⁹⁹ It was a prophetic statement, as it turned out, but White, Warren, and Slagle were still unaware of the impending bank panic building up a head of steam in the eastern money markets. White, for his part, thought in July that the labor shortage was seasonal in the South, which would "likely continue until after cotton picking; and I understand that the negroes can make better wages picking cotton than they can in working in saw mills at \$1.75 a day."¹⁰⁰ Superintendent Bennett, White noted, had led the surfacing crews to expect a raise to \$1.75 a day after August 1, which they would likely take as a promise. "There is, as you say, a shortage of labor in the South; but the advancing of wages to the colored laborer does not get any more work out of him, nor

⁹⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, July 23, 1907, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 17, File 348, WHMC.

⁹⁹ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Bemus Point, New York, July 25, 1907, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 17, File 348, WHMC.

¹⁰⁰ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, July 25, 1907, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 17, File 348, WHMC.

get any more of them to work; but, of course, you cannot avoid it as others are doing the same and we have got to pay as much as other people."¹⁰¹

There seemed to be an unusual number of unemployed skilled workers hunting work with an equally unusual intensity in the summer of 1907. William Ashcroft, whom White described as a first-class machinist and rated one of the best available, went first to Slagle, then to Warren, and finally to Holladay-Klotz Land & Lumber Company at Greenville, Missouri, without finding work. J. B. White should have recognized the symptoms of economic unrest in September when John T. Henderson, a former scaler at the Fisher mills, failed in the sawmill business in East Hickory, Forest County, Pennsylvania. The timber he had acquired did not produce a profit. Henderson chose to move back to the South to start over again at any kind of job. Failed sawmills, of course, were not new in the industry, but the frequency had begun to increase perceptibly. With their attention drawn to their particularity, lumbermen did not recognize the generality. In Fisher, Warren hired a stenographer finally in September, but he had to pay the handsome salary of \$75 a month, a higher stipend than he received when he came down to Louisiana in 1899 to run the 4 L Company affairs. In Missouri, jobs had become scarcer than ever. George P. Williams who used to run the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company store at Beaver Dam, decided to move to Louisiana to find work after a messy divorce, which, White said, was not entirely the storekeeper's fault. Also, White added, the store man had good habits. At the same time, White and the Hannibal directors had decided to buy still more timberland in Caldwell and Catahoula

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

Parishes to increase the Standard Lumber Company block. To put the deal together, they needed the services of the 4 L Company surveyor because they hesitated to hire a new man.¹⁰²

In Texas, the receivers for Kay Ell struggled with problems of safety in the mills and on the trams. In August 1907 the Aetna Life Insurance Company had paid \$1,382.55 in claims made by Kay Ell employees hurt at their jobs. The most serious was I. G. Jinrat of Silsbee, Texas, who broke his leg on January 31, 1907, for which the insurance company paid \$136.50 in lost time. On the other hand, E. A. Miller's broken leg from an accident at the Call, Texas, plant on June 18, 1907, only cost \$65.60. Most of the other claims were minor. There were some rather bizarre incidents, too. Simon Lewis at Roganville, Texas, for example, managed somehow to stick a nail in his nose, for which the insurance company paid \$2.50. Still other accidents were fatal. In a train wreck at Kirbyville, Texas, on Saturday night, September 22, 1907, 16-year-old John McLendon was killed; Allen Karr, a flathead, received serious internal injuries; and others were battered but alive. The McLendon boy had been riding on the caboose platform, which for some reason was being pushed in front of Engine No. 32, a light locomotive that had no pony truck. The engine jumped the track 12 miles out of Kirbyville at the foot of a steep hill, when it hit a high joint permitting the flanges of the driving wheels to get free of the rails. Engine No. 32 pulled the work train out of Mill

¹⁰² J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 12, 1907; White, Grandin, Missouri, to Warren, September 18, 1907; White to Warren, two letters on September 21, 1907; White, Dulany & Pettibone, wire from Clarks, Louisiana, to Warren, October 21, 1907; Warren to White, Clarks, Louisiana, October 21, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

T [Kay Ell gave each of its mills a letter designation, unlike any other lumber company in the piney woods, possibly because the mills were sometimes dismantled and moved to new locations, along with houses, stores, offices, and railroad depots]; it was dark and the locomotive had no lights. Young McLendon worked for Kay Ell in the woods as the mounted water carrier. He rode a horse with two kegs of water for the refreshment of a great many men. His body, the Houston Post reported, was severely damaged. The boy had been employed legally, it seems, after his mother, a widow, signed a release for him to work; at 16, he was expected to do a man's work, particularly since his father was dead. His brother-in-law, the woods foreman, had given the boy the job, and on the night of the accident, he told him to ride in the passenger cars behind the engine, which the boy refused to do. A few days later, 20-year-old Columbus Hooks died in the wreck of one of the company locomotive engines at Silsbee, Texas. Hooks was not an employee of Kay Ell at the time, and company officials expected trouble from his family, who was influential in Hardin County. The Hookses occasionally exerted the power of their numbers to dictate social policy among their neighbors and presumed to instruct lumbermen on acceptable manners, although so far the Kay Ell people had managed to get along with them.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ Aetna Life Insurance Company, Houston, Texas, to Receivers, Kirby Lumber Company, Houston, Texas, August 1907; Manager, Kirbyville, Texas, to Andrews, Ball & Streetman, Houston, Texas, September 24, 1907; J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, September 23, 1907; Houston Post, September 23, 1907; Herndon to Myer, October 5, 1907; Myer to Andrews, Ball & Streetman, September 28, 1907, Box 1907-11, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

Accidents went along with the availability of alcoholic beverages, Frank Bonner was convinced, and he encouraged his managers in the mill towns to keep an eye out for offenders of the company policy against drinking. In the fall of 1907, W. F. Mantooth at Silsbee reported to the company headquarters in Houston on reports of the Evadale cashier's sometimes strange behavior. Mantooth wrote of one Sicker, the cashier, that although "he drinks a great deal too much, I have never seen him very drunk and dont remember of seeing him very sober, however, Mr. Cox, states that he is sober early in the day sometimes." Sicker was "an awful good man, I think," Mantooth said, although the cashier drank "with any of the mill hands that will drink with him, encouraging them along that line, so Mr. Cox states." Mantooth saw him often in Silsbee "with a big grip packed with something which he carries back to Evadale, and Mr. Cox says it is merchandise that he buys from Mr. Colliers store here, for his own use."¹⁰⁴ These concerns would soon pale into insignificance before the crisis looming over the piney woods.

By March of 1907, the Exchange mills, at White's urging, had joined the Southern Lumber Operators' Association, paid their dues, and submitted to the group's assessments. By late October, however, the cost of maintaining surveillance of labor agitators had begun to seem excessive. At Fisher, Louisiana, Warren cut the mills back to two-thirds time on November 1; at Clarks, Slagle cut back to five days a week in November and planned to run only two days a week in December. The banks in Kansas

¹⁰⁴ W. F. Mantooth, Silsbee, Texas, to B. F. Bonner, Houston, Texas, October 22, 1907, Box 1907-11, SFA.

City, White cautioned his managers, had begun to hold back on the distribution of currency, and the New Orleans mint had refused to send silver coins to Clarks for the LCLC payroll. The New England National Bank in Kansas City, however, may have supplied the mills with gold coin. "The have plenty of gold," White said.¹⁰⁵ In East Texas, Frank Bonner found that he could still get money from the banks to make the Kay Ell payroll, but he decided against it except to pay foreign workers who could not write or read English. The company's English-speaking workers were forced to accept checks instead of coins. In fact, Bonner predicted, bank drafts would soon become the chief trading media. There was some advantage to be had from the situation, he thought, because the panic, which he did not yet recognize as a true panic, would permit the company to reduce wages in line with the oversupply of labor. "For the past two years," he wrote, "labor has been driving us, now we must drive the labor. Otherwise, our accounts are sure to go in the 'red.'"¹⁰⁶

At the end of the first week in November, White told his mill managers that they should not expect to meet the company payroll in currency. "I know of no mills that will pay cash for wages until the conditions are financially improved,"¹⁰⁷ he wrote,

¹⁰⁵ J. B., White, Kansas City, Missouri, to William S. McKinney, Kansas City, Missouri, March 26, 1907; White to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, October 31, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁶ B. F. Bonner, Houston, Texas, to S. A. McNeely, Houston, Texas, November 3, 1907, Box 115, No. 07-09, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

¹⁰⁷ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, November 7, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

suggesting that Warren and Slagle post a notice similar to his notice to the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company employees in Grandin:

Kansas City, Mo., 11/7/07

TO THE EMPLOYEES OF THE MISSOURI LUMBER & MINING
COMPANY:

We regret to announce that the financial conditions all over the country are such that we cannot make payment of our payroll in currency as heretofore. The banks are not paying our currency in sufficient quantity [sic].

The best that we can do is to give you either our own checks or cashiers' checks for what is due you; and we have to announce at this time that, if our mills continue to run four days in the week, we cannot promise cash payment for labor at regular stated periods.

If our employees wish to stay in our employ and wait on us until we can get the currency, we will try and run our mills four days in the week and furnish them provisions and will pay money as soon as we can get it, but it may be several months before the banks of the country are in a position to furnish enough currency to meet a payroll.

Kindly let your wishes be known to your foreman as soon as possible.

MISSOURI LUMBER & MINING COMPANY.

Per J. B. White, President.¹⁰⁸

The situation was still fluid, and lumbermen continued to make every effort to acquire cash, actual metallic currency, which the employees, including the managers, held in very high esteem. In a separate letter to Warren, White went into detail about the crisis, which still had not earned the designation of panic, although no one seemed to be confused by the labels applied. The Company, White said, would not be able to get

¹⁰⁸ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, two letters on November 7, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

currency to pay the men on payday. And while he would prefer closing the mills altogether during the panic, it would keep open its store and run its mills, meeting the payrolls with cashier's checks. "Every bank in the United States, from Maine to California, is refusing to pay out currency," he noted. "It is well enough for us to know ourselves that the worst panic that the United States has ever had is upon us, but it is our duty to look cheerful and cheer others; keep our courage up and thus keep others courage up by telling them the rosey side of things."¹⁰⁹

Shortly after writing to Warren, White went up to Bemus Point, New York, to see about his farming operations there. His dairy still operated, and the season for bleeding sugar maples had come. Still, he kept in close touch with Kansas City and the mill towns. In another letter to Warren, he repeated his dire warnings. "I write to suggest that you prepare for a long siege of hard times. I do not believe that we are going to have a good year next year, and it will take some time to recover from the panic which has now found its way to every bank in the country."¹¹⁰ All he had to look forward to with any hope was the next presidential year, 1908, which would be no help in alleviating "the worst panic that the country has seen since 1873."¹¹¹ Banks across the country found themselves in straitened circumstances, particularly the state banks in the small towns. These left no source of revenue untapped. In early November, White

¹⁰⁹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, November 9, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹⁰ J. B. White, Bemus Point, New York, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, November 16, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

complained that the bank in Many, Louisiana, in which the 4 L Company kept an account, had begun to charge for checks it cleared. In Grandin, Missouri, the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company contemplated closing its mills for a month. "We are having no pay day at Grandin this month and I do not expect we will have one next month. We have stopped tie making and have let over two hundred tie makers go."¹¹² Tie makers or hackers usually did piece work for so much a cross tie squared with a broad axe and stacked in pens throughout the hammock woods of the region. Until Fisher and Clarks began to operate hardwood mills, the companies contracted with itinerant axe men to get out cross ties from the scattered hardwood in the baygalls and creek bottoms that scarred the surface of the piney woods.¹¹³

In Texas, C. P. Myer, manager of mills and logging for Kay Ell, instructed his mill managers and logging foremen to forgive the usual house rents charged employees. Because many men with families would be thrown out of work at the closing of Kay Ell's mills in East Texas, the managers collected rents only from those few employees who still worked at housekeeping chores or from those who were obviously able to pay.¹¹⁴ Still in Bemus Point, White fired off a series of letters to his managers in Missouri and Louisiana, each overlapping somewhat the messages before and after. On November 19,

¹¹² J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, two letters on November 25, 1907; White to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, November 26 and December 5 and 7, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹³ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, November 22, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹⁴ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to All Kay Ell Managers, November 9, 1907, KLCo Records, Box 115, No. 07-09, SFA.

he told Warren that the best the company could do was to run half time, as he had ordered at Grandin. Reducing wages when the men only worked three days a week would be impossible because they could not "make ends meet." Grandin, Fisher, and Victoria, he said, did not need orders at the low prices lumber commanded. Clarks needed to sell lumber at any price to pay its indebtedness, interest, and taxes. "Lumber is the first commodity that feels a depression in times like these," he said, "and it is I think usually the last to respond to improved conditions."¹¹⁵

In late November, White, now back in Kansas City, talked the situation over with the Pettibones and Dulanys in Hannibal, Missouri. These directors of the various Grandin properties wanted to shut all the mills when lumber prices dropped to \$5 per Mbf net. White had his doubts about such a policy. C. J. Carter, manager of the Sabine Lumber Company and the Ferguson Lumber Company, both of Zwolle, Louisiana, on the KCS north of Fisher, was already selling dimension at \$4 net. "But it is expensive to shut down and discharge all your men and board up your mills, and scatter your office force," he cautioned.¹¹⁶ In East Texas Frank Bonner and other Kay Ell officials searched for any policy that would relieve the financial pressure on the bankrupt company. On November 23, he told the heads of departments: "Effective immediately, and continuing until further notice, you will discontinue giving any legal holidays, except

¹¹⁵ J. B. White, Bemus Point, New York, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, November 19, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹⁶ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. B. Pettibone, Hannibal, Missouri, December 23, 1907; White to Pettibone, La Crosse, Wisconsin, December 30, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Thanksgiving and Christmas, and discontinue Saturday half holidays."¹¹⁷ After an inspection tour of the remaining mills in operation, Bonner complained that office employees had been leaving the office buildings and visiting other office workers during business hours, a practice that was to halt right away. Everyone in Kay Ell's employ was to make every effort to improve the efficiency of the company, which would translate into lower costs and a greater chance of pulling through the panic.¹¹⁸ Salaries and worker efficiency also concerned J. B. White in Kansas City. He could not agree to a cut in wages of 10 percent at the same time the mills only ran three days a week, he told Clarence Slagle, particularly since the company was still charging rent for workers' houses. Later, when the mills returned to five or six days a week, the company would take the opportunity to reduce salaries and wages.¹¹⁹ Much the same message, White sent Warren, and then on November 25 he took up a touchy situation, one that affected Warren's family. "I think that President Fisher should give up part of his salary to you, as he is now located so far away that he cannot give the business his attention, and if you would like to have me call his attention to it, or rather, if you know of no better plan I will call his attention to it. I am in favor of paying you \$5,000 per year, and of not paying the President of the Company to exceed \$1,000 per year from the first

¹¹⁷ B. F. Bonner, Houston, Texas, to Heads of Kay Ell Departments, November 23, 1907, KLC Co Records, Box 115, No. 07-09, SFA.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, November 25, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

of January on."¹²⁰ It was not enough to economize, however. Late in the afternoon of Saturday, December 7, 1907, Captain White nearly despaired. The National Bank of Commerce had closed Thursday morning, along with two other banks in Kansas City in which the NBC was financially interested. Although he and others in the area had expected the banks to close at any time, still "things look[ed] rather discouraging" although "I do not anticipate very bad results in general."¹²¹ He wrote to the stockholder mills in the Missouri Lumber & Land Exchange, his own Missouri Lumber & Mining Company at Grandin, J. B. Barnett's Ozark Lumber Company at Winona, Missouri, the 4 L Company at Fisher, Louisiana, and LCLC at Clarks, Louisiana, noting that with the price of lumber so low a meeting of the Exchange mills would accomplish nothing other than closing the sawmills. He would, in fact, close Grandin on Saturday, December 14, 1907, until after New Years, a policy he recommended for the other companies.¹²²

William Buchanan, whose mills dotted the line of the L&A Railroad from Stamps, Arkansas, to Jena, Louisiana, had already closed all but two of his mills for the month of December, leaving two running part time. Kay Ell in East Texas had closed 11 mills entirely and continued to operate only two. Retail yards had been buying lumber for

¹²⁰ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, November 25, 1907; White to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, November 25, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹²¹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, December 7, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹²² J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. B. Pettibone, Hannibal, Missouri, December 23, 1907; White to Pettibone, La Crosse, Wisconsin, December 30, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

ridiculously low prices, some by the Burgner-Bowman Lumber Company of Kansas City as low as \$9 off the Southern Lumber Manufacturers' Association August price list, which meant that it was going for about a third of the wholesale price. When such usually prosperous firms as Enochs Lumber Company of Jackson, Mississippi, offered rough or dressed dimension for whatever the trade cared to offer for cars already loaded in his yards, then "it looks as if we are not going to have settled conditions until January." It would be better to "drift along and try and keep our men together ... about as we are doing," White concluded.¹²³

In Clarks, Slagle had 85 cars loaded and waiting on the siding for the Iron Mountain to haul away so that he could move in a supply of empties. The LCLC had invested \$500,000 in mills, timberland, and railroads that the company valued at \$1,442,655.49. The mill at Clarks owed \$436,000, which reduced the value to \$936,000, but it had paid to capital creditors from earnings \$506,655.49. Slagle had improved the plant at Clarks, built a hardwood mill, and bought timberland valued at \$117,255.96. LCLC had also bought the Standard Lumber Company at Standard, Louisiana, in Catahoula [later LaSalle] Parish, for which it paid \$777,262.93 in September 1906; a railroad that it added to the O&NW for \$41,524.10; invested \$228,697.71 in the new plant and facilities; accumulated \$72,000 worth of lumber; for a total investment of \$1,119,484.74. The problem was that the LCLC mills only ran two-thirds time, and the prospects for 1908 still looked rather grim. The purchase of

¹²³ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. B. Pettibone, Hannibal, Missouri, December 23, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Standard placed the company in a difficult but not an impossible position. Actually it had a good record: on the day before LCLC bought Standard, the Clarks operation had no debt and had \$41,000 in the bank; in the 15 months since buying Standard, LCLC had accumulated a debt of \$1,442.655, of which \$506,000 had been repaid from earnings and stumpage. In trouble but still viable, White meant to carry on at Clarks and Standard with a fair hope of success.¹²⁴

Meanwhile, on the KCS in the Calcasieu long leaf pine district, the Pickering Lumber Company cut wages by 15 percent on December 1, 1907 and shut down two of its three mills; on January 1, 1908, the company planned to cut wages an additional 10 percent. This applied to all salaries in the office, including superintendents. Charles Keith of 4 C and R. A. Long of Long-Bell told White that they would do the same. Mississippi wages also fell by 25 percent, first from \$1.75 to \$1.50 a day, then to \$1.25; men who had been getting \$1.25 dropped to \$1 and at times to \$0.90 a day. Despite the need to reduce labor costs, White did not propose to reduce the salaries of his General Managers--Slagle at \$4,000 and Warren at \$5,000. The 4 L Company had been, in fact, paying wages and salaries that were somewhat below the usual practice for the region, and now that reductions were necessary, Warren could simply leave them alone. At Clarks, the wages of everyone making more than \$2 a day or \$50 a month were reduced, whether they worked in the mill or the office. In East Texas, Kay Ell had begun to cut wages by 25 percent as early as November 12. Flatheads doing piece work get 30 cents

¹²⁴ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to William S. McKinney, Kansas City, Missouri, March 26, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

per Mbf, down from 40 cents. All men who had been paid salaries by the month were transferred to a daily wage basis, and their pay was prorated according to the number of days they were permitted to work.¹²⁵

In Kansas City, White continued to look to the future, and he settled on a strategy based on his observations of business activities in Kansas City, basically a Southern view of the nation's economy. To W. B. Pettibone in La Crosse, Wisconsin, he wrote as the year 1907 came to an end: "Now, it has occurred to us that it was not good policy for us to go to the extreme bottom of what we might imagine the market might be forced down to. It wasn't good policy for us to help force prices down to the lowest point at a time when the yards are not buying and when they are not selling lumber, and when the financial condition is such that people are alarmed because of the banks even in the smallest towns refusing to pay out money; everything is checked as regards building in city and country; people are waiting to see if normal conditions as to currency and credits will resume after the first of the year, as has been promised by those who are most optimistic, as well as by many who are very conservative in their judgment."¹²⁶ White chose instead to "steady the market" by holding up prices although his mills got very few orders as a result. In the long run, he calculated, the Grandin interests would

¹²⁵ *Ibid*; B. F. Bonner, Houston, Texas, to S. A. McNeely, Houston, Texas, November 3, 1907; C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to All Kay Ell Managers, November 9, 1907; Bonner to Heads of Kay Ell Departments, November 23, 1907; Myer to All Kay Ell Managers, November 29, 1907; Myer to J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, December 3, 1907, Box 115, No. 07-09, KLC Co Records, SFA.

¹²⁶ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. B. Pettibone, Hannibal, Missouri, December 23, 1907; White to Pettibone, La Crosse, Wisconsin, December 30, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

make more money "than we would if we had plunged along with some others in a mad race as to who would strike bottom first." As things improved, he would get his share of the lumber business, and prices would have improved. As 1907 ended, events seemed to have conspired against the organization of labor unions in the piney woods, and even some manufacturers expressed reservations about meeting with other lumbermen in their trade associations for fear of creating trusts, then much publicized as a cause of panics and depressions.¹²⁷

In November, the New Orleans Times-Democrat had reported cuts in pay in the Texas mills reaching as high as 25 to 35 percent, and Kay Ell had shortened its manufacturing cut. Workers walked out of the mills in Louisiana and Texas in a spontaneous general strike that proved both short and unsuccessful. This rather mild strike actually centered around Lake Charles, Louisiana, and the Calcasieu long leaf pine district, but it lacked rational leadership and accomplished nothing. Late 1907 simply was not the proper moment to strike against lumber companies whose managers stayed awake nights trying to devise methods to shut down their mills. Some historians have labeled the walkout in 1907 as the first collective action by organized timber workers in

¹²⁷ White to Warren, two letters on December 26, 1907; White to Pettibone, La Crosse, Wisconsin, December 30, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

the region, a position rather difficult to maintain in the face of the severe economic dislocations occasioned by the bank panic of that year.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ The New Orleans Times-Democrat, November 1, 1907; Allen, East Texas Lumber, p. 171; McWhiney, Louisiana Socialists, p. 327; Reed, IWW and Freedom, p. 61; Morgan, Kirby, p. 194; Green, BTW, p. 175; Thompson, IWW, p. 67. Aside from the New Orleans newspaper, these sources should be approached with extreme caution because of their repeated errors of fact and sequence. All of them, for example, asserted firmly that lumbermen in the South formed the Southern Lumber Operators' Association in 1907 when documents easily available prove it was 1906 instead. They also misinterpret the scattered and mostly disorganized efforts at collective action engaged in by sawmill workers, as distinguished from flatheads who worked for logging contractors and seldom protested except to ask for time and leave for another front. None of these sources give any attention to the influence of public health or currency problems on the ability or inclination of mill hands to contest issues of wages and working conditions with their employers.

CHAPTER 4

Depression and Stagnation

Individuals, may be, and sometimes are, reasonably upright--but, bodies of men, I must fear, never. The latter escape responsibility by dividing it.¹

By 1908, the bank panic of the past fall had left business in the piney woods in shambles. Across the Southwest, "a vast army of men are already out of employment and have no immediate hope of resumption."² In protest, workers raised ineffectual strikes in Louisiana and Texas, particularly around Lake Charles, Louisiana and in Lufkin, Kennard, and Orange, Texas. Of all the actions taken by lumbermen to adjust to the depression of business, the one that brought the most negative response from workers was "stretching out" the hours of work while reducing the number of days worked in a week. Paid by the day, workers now put in an average of three days a week, when they worked at all, but a day's wage now required at least 11 hours of work and at times nearly 15.³ The mills along the KCS through Missouri, Kansas, Indian Territory, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas, reduced their wages 10 to 20 percent late in 1907. The 4 L Company delayed its salary cut as long as possible, and by the first of

¹ James Fenimore Cooper, Wyandotte, quoted in Warren Motley, The American Abraham: James Fenimore Cooper and the Frontier Patriarch (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp.228-229.

² Southwest 16 (July 1908), 29, cited by Allen, East Texas Lumber, p. 171.

³ Ibid., 42, 44, 57.

1908 found that it was less than 10 percent out of line with its neighbors. On January 1, 1908, Clarence Slagle notified his office employees that he was cutting their salaries 5 to 20 percent depending on the level of pay received. Those among his office staff, superintendents and managers, paid \$3,500 a year or more, took a cut of 20 percent; those ranging down to \$2,500 took a 15 percent cut; those as low as \$1,000 a 10 percent cut; and those down to \$500 a year took a 5 percent cut. The LCLC mills had been shut down since before Christmas, and Slagle took the occasion of New Year's Day to post an announcement for all other workers, except employees in the store and hospital, who seem to have been exempted, probably because they worked on some sort of commission. The announcement revealed that the company would forthwith cut salaries and wages, effective January 1, 1908, because of the "demoralized condition of the lumber market."⁴ It was really a kind of "stretching out" as far as the workers were concerned, because they would work longer hours for the same pay. Based on these general plans, Slagle turned to the "schedule of salaries paid to our employees ... to give you an idea as to what our present wage schedule, that was in effect prior to the reduction, is, by making the reductions noted in our two circulars of the 1st, it will give you the wages after they have been reduced."⁵ Not included in the schedule was the 10 percent

⁴ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to the Office Employees of the Louisiana Central Lumber Company, January 1, 1908; Slagle to the Employees of the Louisiana Central Lumber Company, with attached scale of salaries and wages, January 1, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA. The LCLC wage scale is reprinted in Appendix 3, below. See also Slagle to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 3, 1908, Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

reduction in "salaries for outside work," which meant basically salaried employees such as surveyors, salesmen, and professionals. "I would be glad to receive from you a complete statement of your wages paid at Fisher and Victoria, so tabulated as to enable me to figure out to what position the salaries apply to,"⁶ Slagle wrote to Warren. The wage and salary cuts went into effect immediately for everyone in the mill, on the tram, in the woods, and in the office, with one important exception. With J. B. White's approval, Slagle at Clarks, and later Warren at Fisher, put the general manager's salary on the company books at \$5,000 a year, although the rate had been only \$4,000 until January 1, 1908. Then, along with his fellow workers, Slagle cut his inflated salary 20 percent, leaving him his original \$4,000 a year. White justified it by pointing out that LCLC had fully intended to raise the general manager's salary to \$5,000 by the New Year.⁷

The affairs of the lumbermen seem to have reached a kind of equilibrium by the first few days of January 1908. Things could hardly get worse, it seemed, and so they followed their normal course. Managers necessarily reached far afield in their relations with workers and others, not excluding the spiritual field. The Rev. Willie Bolton, informed there was no Methodist preacher at Fisher, offered to carry that cross as well as perform his usual duties in behalf of his own flock. Were Willard Warren unacquainted with him and his good works, he could, of course, provide references. The

⁶ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 3, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to O. W. Fisher, Fisher, Louisiana, June 13, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

work of the Lord was much too important to leave such a fertile field as Fisher untilled, he calculated, and in closing his letter he styled himself, significantly, "Yours for souls."⁸ Warren, who usually hired the preachers of whatever persuasion, had other decisions to make that likely kept his concern for souls at a modest level, at least for the time being. In 1907, for example, he had become convinced of the possibilities for profits in hardwood lumber, particularly in hardwood flooring. The 4 L Company owned a great deal of hammock land, particularly in the Crow Claim along the Sabine, title to which it had not yet perfected, to be sure, and even in the best stands of pine there grew some hardwoods, especially oaks, mixed with less desirable species on the hillsides and in the baygalls. By January 1, despite the adverse business conditions, Warren had decided to put his hardwood mill in operation.⁹ J. B. White took to his bed with a fever after New Years Day and when he did not get better decided to spend a few days in a sanitarium. At first he thought he had la grippe but then found he had acute severe colic and indigestion that had inflamed his stomach and liver. Nevertheless while taking the waters in the Arlington Hotel in Hot Springs, Arkansas, he asked the editor of the Hardwood Record to "look out for a good Hardwood Salesman for us."

⁸ Willie Bolton, Alexandria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 1, 1908, Box 11632, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, January 2, 1908; May Wilson, Grandin, Missouri, to Warren, January 8 and 14, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Meanwhile, the Exchange in Kansas City could handle hardwood sales, if Warren preferred.¹⁰

At the same time, the Hub City Employment Agency had been interviewing prospects for jobs in the hardwood mill and had recommended W. A. Pennington as mill foreman.¹¹ For workers experienced in working with hardwood, Warren had to look for them in the traditional hardwood regions, which at that time was still the Appalachian highlands. Early in March, the C. L. Ritter Lumber Company, a hardwood manufacturer of Avoca, West Virginia, told Warren of W. W. Teal, a hardwood sawyer who had worked for Ritter for about two months, his first experience with hardwood, although he developed into a good sawyer. Teal "handles his carriage well but did not seem to know how to get out bill stock."¹² Nevertheless, he kept good habits and could be relied on in his work. He left, Ritter said, because of the night work required.¹³

At the Exchange offices in Kansas City, William L. McKinney, the general sales agent, had concluded that he had to re-hire Joseph E. Johnson as an Exchange salesman. The man, despite the level of his expenses, was an "exceptionally good man." McKinney intended to pay him a handsome salary for the time, \$200 a month, plus his

¹⁰ J. B. White, Hot Springs, Arkansas, to W. W. Warren, January 13, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹ Hub City Employment Agency, Alexandria, Louisiana, to 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, January 1908, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹² C. L. Ritter Lumber Company, Avoca, West Virginia, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, Box 11632, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹³ F. G. Pettibone, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 11, 1909[8], Box 11632, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

expenses on the road. But White objected. Lumber, he said, was selling \$7 off the August list and \$7.50 off for dimension, which meant that average prices of lumber had fallen \$7 to \$7.50 per Mbf from the level reached the month before the panic in October 1907. With business so bad, the salary McKinney proposed was too much. Offer Johnson \$175 plus expenses, White said. In case he declined the lower offer, White agreed to approve McKinney's original proposal. Warren seems to have had some personal objection to Johnson, because he continued to object to the Exchange re-hiring him. In early February, McKinney explained that Johnson, who simply could not be replaced, would work the Texas trade, which Warren had a keen interest in because it was the 4 L Company's closest principal market. Late in February, Warren still had objections to Johnson, but McKinney insisted that he wanted only Johnson for the position, which finally ended the struggle.¹⁴

At the end of the third week in the new year, White checked out of the Arlington Hotel and entrained for New Orleans to attend the third annual meeting of the Yellow Pine Manufacturers Association on January 21 and 22, 1908. Since White crossed the Mississippi river into Missouri nearly 30 years earlier, lumber-related associations had proliferated, and he took an active interest in virtually all of them. In 1905, faced with declining prices and increasing militancy among lumber workers, White had spearheaded the formation of the YPMA and, the next year, warmly approved creation of the

¹⁴ William L. McKinney, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 16, 1908; J. B. White, Hot Springs, Arkansas, to Warren, January 18, 1908; McKinney to Warren, February 2 and 18, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Southern Lumber Operators' Association. White saw the problem as a lack of concentration, which would be cured by designing associations to fit a particular purpose. The Texas & Louisiana Saw Mill Association specialized on problems of transportation and kept a lobbyist in Washington, a lawyer to appear before the Interstate Commerce Commission. The YPMA would dwell on marketing and grading problems, and the SLOA would deal with labor problems. At the New Orleans meeting of the YPMA, the delegates dealt with changes demanded in grades of railroad timbers and congratulated themselves on its traveling display of finished Southern Pine lumber that had appeared in most major American cities during 1907. They also elected a new slate of officers for the association, carefully balancing them by their location east or west of the Mississippi River, another of White's policies designed to end the regional animosity between eastern and western lumbermen.¹⁵

Association did not prove a panacea, however. Some sawmills simply failed to perform well, despite the best efforts of managers and men alike. Victoria mill in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, had never satisfied its owners since its construction on Provencal Creek in the 1880s. And ever since the 4 L Company bought Victoria from John R. Jones at the turn of the century, it had caused no end of problems. Now nearly ten years later, labor costs at Victoria still exceeded costs at Fisher by 15 cents per Mbf. The costs of planing and shipping at Victoria also cost about 20 cents per Mbf more than at Fisher. Warren, other officers of the company, and the directors were baffled. They

¹⁵ Official Proceedings of the Third Annual Meeting of the Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association Held at New Orleans, La., January 21 and 22, 1908, Box 11457, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

studied the books carefully and wrote interminable letters suggesting solutions, but nothing seemed to work. Very likely the nature of the timber at Victoria and the ratings of the machinery retarded productivity somewhat, but at what point? It continued to mystify them. Could it be the result of normal inflation? At Fisher the cost of cutting and skidding logs in 1904 was \$1.60 per Mbf; 1905, \$2.19; 1906, \$2.87; and 1907, \$3.34, but these increases could be explained by the quality of the timber and the lay of the land, which required longer skidding hauls. There seemed to be no rational standard against which to compare the costs of labor.¹⁶

Victoria also had had a rash of legal problems, exacerbated by its location in planter-dominated Natchitoches Parish.¹⁷ First came a nearly illiterate note from Wayne County, Missouri:

feb the 4 198

Mr. dunKins victoria l..a

Dear Sir as we under Stand that Charly greene or trying to make you pay for the loss of poore edna greene i will Say to you that her father and oldest Brother will at tend to Charly greene Soon for the way that edna lost her life this was all a plan laid for the purpose dont you nebbber no neber pay the dirty Scoundel any thing to drink and gamble on we are not going to allow it no Sir, i will direct this to the post mistress as i do not no how to Sign your name pleas write me as Soon as you Read this and let us here what he is doing he wrote here as though him and his mother would Soon be Rich i Beliebe Some Boddy will loose there life ober poore edna greene death yet i can not See to nite But hope you can

¹⁶ W. B. Pettibone, Hannibal, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 27, 1908, Box 11257, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁷ S. F. Steere, Shreveport, Louisiana, to W. W. Warring [sic], Fisher, Louisiana, February 12, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Read it and will anSer Soon as poSSible aS ever a friend Sarah C RuSSell
Bru not wane co Mo¹⁸

Wayne County is situated in Southeast Missouri north of Poplar Bluff, an area formerly cut over by commercial lumbermen at the turn of the century. The postoffice at Brunot and the village itself have long since disappeared.¹⁹ As it turned out "poore edna greene" was not the only member of the Green family to die under questionable circumstances. A year earlier, on January 11, 1907, Chester Green, while working as brakeman on the VF&W logging train at the Victoria front, died under the car he was riding when it left the tracks and turned over. In a law suit brought by J. H. Stephens, tutor [guardian] of Green's minor children, the lawyer alleged that the worker was performing his usual duties aboard "a skeleton log car," which did not meet standards promulgated by the Louisiana State Railroad Commission, that it was improperly loaded with only one toggle chain attached to the center of the load, that it was moving on a railroad spur that was unevenly built and badly maintained, when a log fell from the car struck the ground, bounced from a tree stump along the right-of-way and knocked the car from the tracks. Green jumped for his life, but the log struck him, threw him under the moving train, and killed him instantly. All of the facts, the lawyer argued, added up

¹⁸ Sarah C. Russell, Brunot, Wayne County, Missouri, to C. P. Duncan, Victoria, Louisiana, February 4, 1908, Box 11632, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁹ C. P. Duncan, Victoria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, February 4, 1908, Box 11632, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

to gross negligence. His minor children asked the court to assess the 4 L Company \$20,000 in damages for personal injury resulting in the death of their father.²⁰

The lumber company defended itself by showing that it had no direct connection with the VF&W Railroad, who employed Green as a brakeman, and therefore was not liable for damages. Lawyer Stephens had indeed sued the wrong company, although the officers and directors of the lumber company were the same as the officers and directors of the railroad company. Indeed, Warren served as trustee of the road, a common arrangement for lumber companies with tap lines. Over the years, Willard Warren had built a enviable reputation for his unique defense against law suits; he got a great deal of help, however, from poorly trained lawyers who could not fathom the intricacies of corporate organization. To defend the 4 L Company, Warren turned to M. H. Carver of the firm of Scarborough & Carver in Natchitoches, a competent counsel and a close friend of the company who had enjoyed a business relationship with lumbermen throughout the region. The District Court in Natchitoches tried the case on March 9, 1907, and arguments continued until February 1908. In January, Carver had to defend the company's position that the lumber company and the railroad company were separate entities; apparently the court knew from common knowledge that they were not separated in practice, but de jure they could not be tied together in the absence of documents that neither company was apt to reveal from their company files. In early February 1908, Carver submitted interrogatories to B. M. Musser, trainman for Bowman-Hicks Lumber

²⁰ M. H. Carver, Natchitoches, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 21 and February 7, 9, and 18, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Company at Loring, Louisiana, and two days later he asked Warren for a history of logging accidents involving 4 L Company employees. Mrs. Russell's letter, although a bitter condemnation of Charley Green would have no bearing on the case of Chester Green. Finally, Warren got free of the suit, which he had not dared hope for from the Natchitoches court, where in the past he had been required to made restitution to injured employees. He much preferred the safety of the Sabine Parish court, where he was held in high esteem: both the judge and district attorney had been the 4 L Company's lawyers before ascending to the pinnacle of the legal community in their jurisdiction. But in Natchitoches Parish, commercial lumber, while important on the eastern and western fringes of the parish, had to compete for social prestige and political power with well-ensconced planters established for nearly two centuries in the Red River Valley. In constant competition with the lumber companies for workers, the planters took some delight in defeating the sawmillers in court and at the ballot box.²¹

Not everyone was deeply concerned with wages and working conditions of labor, and in their unconcern provided a measure of comic relief. In Natchitoches, the president of the Police Jury, P. E. Prudhomme of Bermuda, Louisiana, penned an irate note to Warren at Fisher. It seems that one Sam Williams had absconded from the chain gang and had found work at Fisher. "Let me know his whereabouts," Prudhomme demanded. "I had him on the Public Road serving out court sentence and allowed him to go home to see his family--who he claimed was sick--I was kind enough to grant him

²¹ Pleadings of M. H. Carver, counsel for defendant, in J. H. Stephens, Tutor, vs. La. Long Leaf Lumber Co., in Eleventh Judicial District Court, Parish of Natchitoches, La., undated, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

this favor, and for my recompence he never returned." In a penciled note at the bottom of Prudhomme's letter, a 4 L Company clerk wrote "on Pay Roll in Feb. Shipping Labor for Kind in board 1.00."²² Apparently, Sam Williams had gone to Texas, a favorite haven for malefactors and malcontents of all sorts.

At Fisher, Warren continued at the same time to search for men to staff his new hardwood mill. In late February, he received applications for the filer's position from Henry N. Jordan of Montreal, Quebec, who gave as reference the Simonds Saw Manufacturing Company. Late in February, White, still operating the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company mills at Grandin, Missouri, turned to West Louisiana for a prospective general foreman. To W. A. Martin at Leesville, Louisiana, he wrote that the company needed a general foreman for the mills at Grandin, including the sawmill, oak mill, and lath and planing mills. Willard Warren had recommended Martin highly, but Martin turned down the offer, choosing to remain in the Calcasieu district of Louisiana and Texas. The Grandin mill had cut over virtually all the timber within its reach in Carter and neighboring counties, and it would soon move its plant to a site across Jack's Fork of the Current River from Imminence, Missouri, the seat of Shannon County.²³ Although lumbermen kept up a lively correspondence among themselves about the availability of managerial staff and office workers, they usually depended on

²² P. E. Prudhomme, Bermuda, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, March 18, 1908, Box 11632, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; see also Holland, Mr. Claude, for the account of a man who used East Texas and West Louisiana alternately as a sanctuary, depending on which jurisdiction wanted him at the time.

²³ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. A. Martin, Leesville, Louisiana, February 28, 1908, Box 11632, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

employment agencies and collateral industries to supply skilled labor. For his hardwood mill, Warren looked to such firms as the Hardwood Supply Company of Memphis, Tennessee, who kept a roster of skilled workers, sawyers, filers, edgermen, blocksetters, lumber inspectors, and the like. And he received a steady stream of applications from persons looking for all sorts of jobs.²⁴

While affairs were normal at Fisher, Louisiana, at Clarks, the calm of the post-panic spring was ended by fire. Clarence Slagle was away at the time, but his men responded well. To Warren, he explained that the rough lumber sheds caught fire about 2:30 in the afternoon on March 6, and had got a good start before anyone saw it. Within five minutes the workers had unrolled the fire hoses and began the hopeless task of putting out a fire fed by heart pine and fanned by a strong northeast wind. The fire consumed the rough sheds and the north half of the lumber yard, which contained the dry kilns. Early estimates put the loss at 7,000,000 bf, including the mill's finished lumber. The kilns contained about 400,000 bf. The plant and lumber, except the kilns and their contents, were insured. Slagle and his assistants then went about the painful business of collecting the cost of the fire from their insurance carriers, and the sawmillmen shrugged

²⁴ Hardwood Supply Company, Memphis, Tennessee, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, March 1908, Box 11626; C. P. Reagan, DeRidder, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, February 25, 1908, and C. P. Duncan, Victoria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, March 3, 1908, Box 11635; Joseph Harrell, Woodworth, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, March 6, 1908, Box 11630, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

off the loss and went back to work. They thought themselves fortunate that they had not lost the sawmill itself.²⁵

The lumber business, it seemed to Bill McKinney, the Exchange sales agent, had continued to decline through the first quarter of 1908, despite indications that business in general had improved somewhat. "Instead of improving, prices seem to be gradually going lower, until at the present time \$3.50 off our January list is the price that it will take to secure any orders for #1 Dimension in any of the larger cities, and unfortunately this price is working into the country. We have tried to secure a little better price on #2 Dimension, but we hear of some who are making even a lower price than this on #2."²⁶ No. 2 boards went for \$13 per Mbf and No. 2 Fencing for as little as \$11.50. In Dallas on one unfortunate occasion, an Exchange drummer sold a carload for a mere \$10 per Mbf, with freight at \$0.1375, something of a low point for the Grandin mills.²⁷ The winter and spring of 1908 had not dealt kindly with most of the mills in the Trans-Mississippi West. Indeed, a significant number of them had closed for weeks on end. The YPMA, true to its promise to collect statistics for the use of its members, set out to quantify the conditions of mills. For the first two weeks of January 1908, Arkansas's 36 member mills reporting to the YPMA's auditors fell 38,847,000 bf in mill production of lumber; five mills in Indian Territory and Missouri lost 4,100,000 bf; 79 mills

²⁵ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, March 11 and 19, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²⁶ William L. McKinney, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, April 15, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²⁷ Ibid.

reporting from Louisiana lost 99,898,500 bf; and 63 mills in Texas lost 84,710,000 bf. Altogether, it was a devastating blow to the workers who bore the brunt of the losses from lost time.²⁸ By the middle of May, Missouri and Oklahoma mills reported no further loss of production because of downtime attributable to the bank panic and depression of 1907; Arkansas only reported 18,642,000 bf in lost production; Louisiana, 35,241,000 bf; and Texas, 46,905,000 bf.²⁹ Not to be outdone by the YPMA, Oscar S. Tam, secretary of the Texas and Louisiana Saw Mill Association, queried his own membership to gather statistics on which to base predictions of future conditions in the Southwestern lumber industry. On May 16, 1908, he reported conditions for April, 1908. Overall, Tam wrote in a summary, "The average running time of all Saw Mills reporting is about 65% of full time and of Planers about 75% of full time.... The consuming field is well scattered. Texas quite naturally leads the list, with Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma well to the front."³⁰

Although George K. Smith served as secretary to the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association, the Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association, and the Southern Lumber Operators' Association, he did not seem to be much concerned with the costs associated with the wages and working conditions of sawmill labor. Indeed,

²⁸ "Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association Running time of Saw Mills for January, 1908," Box 11257, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; see also Appendix 4, below.

²⁹ "Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association Running Time of Saw Mills for May, 1908," Box 11257, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; see also Appendix 4, below.

³⁰ "Statistical Inquiry No. 2 and No. 3," Texas and Louisiana Saw Mill Association, Houston, Texas, May 16 and June [1], 1908; "Summary of Statistical Reports," T&L Saw Mill Association, June 17, 1908, Box 11257, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; see also Appendix 4, below.

in 1908, employers in field and factory could still obtain the services of foreign laborers, "all speaking the American language," as one immigration agent put it nicely, or they could turn to black workers, still cooped up on the worn out plantations of the South, for the most part. Immigration agents and labor contractors found a rich field for their services among the lumbermen of the Southwest.³¹ In East Texas, with all of its 13 mills closed until business conditions improved, Kay Ell managers set about collecting debts owed the company by former employees and contractors, despite the fact that the company had abolished their workers' jobs, and their wages, and broke their contracts with loggers, hotel keepers, and boarding houses. Frank Bonner probably took the most extreme measures against a Mrs. Robinson who had kept a boarding house for the company at Fuqua, Texas, and owed Kay Ell about \$200 for supplies bought through the company store. Bonner demanded that she give Kay Ell a bill of sale to her Jersey cows to secure payment of the debt. He specifically declined to accept a mortgage on the animals because to foreclose would require expensive litigation, which he hoped to avoid. Mrs. Robinson refused to part with her cows, on which she based the quality of her boarding service, and the company marked her down as "a bad citizen." Bonner

³¹ Alexandre Bouche, New Orleans, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, June 5, 1908, Box 11632; see also the "Official Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Convention of the National Lumber Manufacturers Association Held at Minneapolis, Minn.," June 16th and 17th, 1908, Box 11257, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

defended his action by pointing out that he and other managers were merely agents of the company. "It is not our funds we are handling," he said.³²

As spring blossomed in the piney woods, the management at Clarks watched closely the family of a minor boy killed nearly a year earlier on the O&NW for any indication that they would bring suit against the lumber company or its tram road. To the company's lawyers, Clarence Slagle directed an inquiry about any statute of limitations affecting the parents' right to bring legal action. Stubbs, Russell & Theus answered in early June. "In reply, we beg to advise that the right of action accruing on account of the quasi offence, or rather as it is known under the common law, a tort, is prescribed in one year from the date of the injury or death under the laws of the State of Louisiana, and the law makes no exception where the injured or interested party is a minor."³³ The lawyers' opinion that prescription runs for a tort in a year meant simply that should the parents delay taking action in the courts until a year had elapsed since the accident that killed their son, then they would lose the right to bring a suit for damages against the lumber company or railroad. Prescription was a subject of intense interest among mill managers. At Clarks, Clarence Slagle worried also that the facade behind which he operated the company tram as an incorporated railroad would not stand close scrutiny by the courts. His lawyers "doubt[ed] the technical legal right of the Louisiana Central Lbr. Co., to hold stock either directly or through a Trustee as intermediary, in

³² B. F. Bonner, Houston, Texas, to W. F. Mantooth, Fuqua, Texas, June 8, 1908, Box 115, No. 07-09, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

³³ Stubbs, Russell & Theus, Monroe, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, June 6, 1908, No. 3660, Box 20, File 433, LCLC Records, WHMC.

another corporation... we think it would be the part of wisdom and conservatism to distribute the stock pro rata among the stockholders of the Lumber Company³⁴

Throughout the Southern lumber district, particularly in the former slave states, black leaders did not neglect each year to remember Emancipation Day. Lumber mill managers carried out a program to ingratiate themselves with black workers by giving the day off for "Juneteenth," commemorating President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863, but celebrated traditionally on June 19 each year. Clarence Slagle, a fastidious individual, took some pride in the towns and mills he had built in the piney woods above the Ouachita, and his works had a well-deserved reputation for neatness and order. Still, in his haste, he had neglected to dress up the black quarters in Clarks, but in the spring of 1908, during a project to whitewash the mills imposed by his insurance carriers, he saw the chance to reach out to the black residents of his town. He explained the idea to Captain White. The village had 48 black homes, 25 of which fronted on the Iron Mountain Railroad, which he figured he could have painted for about \$125. Captain White immediately approved: "OK, I say whitewash them at the price," approving the expense by initialing Slagle's letter and returning it for the LCLC files.³⁵ Slagle had on June 3, 1908 already invited his fellow lumbermen to Juneteenth at Clarks. "I presume," Willard Warren wrote, "all the negroes will be there, and a great many white folks will come along to get something to

³⁴ Stubbs, Russell & Theus, Monroe, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, June 4 and 6, 1908, No. 3660, Box 20, File 432 and 433, LCLC Records, WHMC.

³⁵ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, June 16 and 18, 1908, No. 3660, Box 21, File 434, LCLC Records, WHMC.

eat. We used to have such celebrations here, but, usually there would little disturbances arise, and we have gotten along better without them."³⁶ Slagle printed a dodger: "Great Celebration At Clarks," it proclaimed. Juneteenth 1908 passed off without incident, it seems from the lack of complaints from Captain White.³⁷

As late as July, East Texas mills maintained their 25 percent reduction in wages and salaries, and Frank Bonner at Kay Ell refused to make any exceptions. W. F. Mantooth at Silsbee, Texas, began to worry about such employees as the manager of the company store at Roganville, Texas, whose monthly salary had been reduced to \$56.25 from his usual \$75. Sales of lumber had been so disappointing and the prospects of higher lumber prices looked so dim that the company had no choice but to maintain the wage cuts imposed on all employees. Of course, the mill hands who usually worked in Kay Ell's 13 mills had lost their jobs and suffered a 100 percent reduction in wages. Only the company men and those in jobs that generated income, such as the company stores, the railroads and the hospital, remained on the payroll at any salary at all.³⁸

Although the American Labor Union had threatened collective action a year earlier, it maintained an understandable quiet throughout 1908. Strikes were not completely out of the question, however, particularly among skilled workers. In September, the millwrights at the 4 L Company plant at Fisher, Louisiana, struck,

³⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, June 5, 1908, No. 3660, Box 20, File 432, LCLC Records, WHMC.

³⁷ "Great Celebration At Clarks," Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁸ B. F. Bonner, Houston, Texas, to W. F. Mantooth, Silsbee, Texas, July 1, 1908, Box 115, No. 07-09, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

demanding time and a half for working Sundays. Captain White was outraged. He wrote to Warren: "It is not a moral question involved because he is willing to work on Sundays if we will only pay him for time and one-half. If it was a moral question, I would suggest that he be a Seventh Day Adventist and take his Sunday on Saturday."³⁹ Such demands White and Warren found no trouble resisting on principle. While millwrights were considered skilled, they were still in low demand, so that the 4 L Company easily compelled them to return to work.

By the end of 1908, despite the depressed economy in the industry, the Grandin interests made good its earlier decision to give Willard Warren and Clarence Slagle each a 20 percent raise. Warren, who had married O.W. Fisher's only daughter, gave the president of the 4 L Company some concern. He wanted his son-in-law to prosper but he felt somehow that his concern was not businesslike. J. B. White put him at his ease. Both Warren and Slagle accepted 25 percent raises, with their salaries set at \$5,000 on January 1, 1909. As officers and directors in both corporations, White and Fisher could, and often did, make personnel decisions with little reference to other stockholders. Still, it was basically White's decision. Although Warren had married into the Fisher family, he remained, along with Slagle, the surrogate of Captain White, whose talents as a manager made up for his initial lack of investment capital.⁴⁰

³⁹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 28, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; the carbon copy of this letter, sent to C. E. Slagle at Clarks, Louisiana, is in No. 3660, Box 22, File 461, LCLC Records, WHMC.

⁴⁰ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, December 17, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

As the year end holiday season approached, Captain White took the opportunity to plan a shut-down of the Grandin mills, including the Louisiana companies. William Buchanan planned to close his mills along the L&A from December 15 to January 10, and cut down his production by 15 million bf. R. A. Long proposed to close his sawmills in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma from December 20 to January 4, and his planing mills until January 15. The 4 C expected to close at Christmas for about 15 days; Pickering for seven days; Frost-Johnson for 15 days; C. J. Carter for 19 days. Sam Parks of Industrial Lumber Company in Beaumont, Texas, also planned to close his mills, as had other lumbermen in the region. White's "inclination is that we ought to embrace this opportunity of the dull sales period to make such necessary repairs as we should make, rather than to be forced to do it in the busy season, and that possibly we might shut down for this purpose."⁴¹ Nevertheless, he was also nervous about the obvious joint planning underway among mills to act in unison contrary of the anti-trust sentiment then a constant in political discourse. He particularly disliked George K. Smith's circular letter to the mill managers asking how many days they would shut down. "This could look as if there was going to be some sort of an agreement or that the Secretary expected that people would pledge themselves to how much they would curtail their productions. We cannot fill out that form," he asserted. But as a "matter of

⁴¹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Exchange Mills, December 15, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

information, we can inform you that one of our mills is going to be shut down until the first day of February, and that is our mill at Standard [Louisiana]."⁴²

Production of lumber nationwide had fallen since the bank panic several months earlier, which meant varying levels of unemployment in the lumber industry. Probably more than they had since the turn of the century, workers in the Lake States turned toward the South for jobs; not many found suitable employment.⁴³ Salaries and wages of lumber workers in the Pacific Northwest exceeded those in the South and Southwest. The West Coast traditionally enjoyed a slightly higher standard of living. In the fall of 1908, George K. Smith in St. Louis circulated a wage scale published by the Western Pine Manufacturer's Association in Spokane, Washington. While flunkies, handy men, and bull cooks appear regularly in these lists; the popular term, lumberjack, does not appear.⁴⁴

Despite the economic condition then prevailing in the South, workers--particularly skilled workers--turned to the region to take advantage of its clear opportunities. In late December 1908, Captain White sent Slagle and Warren a recommendation for several individuals who had come to his notice. "If you need a good engineer I have an

⁴² J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, December 21, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴³ M. N. Petit, Port Huron, Michigan, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, July 23, 1908, Box 11632, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴⁴ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, To All Members, the YPMA, "Subject: Wages paid employees in Eastern Washington and Idaho," September 29, 1908; Western Pine Manufacturers' Association Circular No. 112, August 24, 1908, and Circular No. 123, September 9, 1908, No. 3660, Box 22, File 461, LCLCRecords, WHMC; Corkhill, Wood, p. 317, defines lumber jack as a fulcrum; see also Appendix 6, below.

opportunity to get you one,"⁴⁵ he wrote. George S. Heath of Saugatuck, Michigan, had worked for 27 years as a marine engineer on the Great Lakes, except that he only worked nine months of the year because of the ice that blocked navigation in the winters. Now 48 years old, he had come south to Grandin, Missouri, to visit his brother-in-law, W. R. Davis, a sawyer in the Grandin mills. "He has no bad habits," the captain observed. White had also found a good machinist, who could double as an engineer "on locomotives or stationary engines or boilers."⁴⁶ Resident in Jamestown, New York, near White's Bemus Point farm, the unnamed applicant was 45 years old and had a "fine family." White was especially impressed with his "high character." With no standard form to follow in making such recommendations, White's letters are filled with enticing bits of information. As the year came to a close, he wrote again to Slagle and Warren with still another skilled worker in tow. J. K. Cannady, formerly of Paola, Kansas, had been in California working as a filer for nearly ten years with the Humboldt Lumber Company on Humboldt Bay at Eureka, California, north of San Francisco. A widower, he had a son in school at Paola. He was 31 years old in 1908, had no bad habits, but had had "plenty of experience on band and gang a man of superior intelligence and a man of conscientious character."⁴⁷ From payroll lists in the 4 L Company records,

⁴⁵ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, circular letter to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, and W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, December 21, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, circular letter to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, and W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, December 29, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

it seems that Cannady moved to Fisher, Louisiana, to take a job with Willard Warren.⁴⁸ After the mill at Birch Tree, Missouri, cut out, Henry Cordz went out to Austin, Texas, to go into the flour milling business, a craft he shared with O. W. Fisher, his principal partner in the Missouri lumber business. In April 1908, he wrote to Warren looking for a place in a sawmill for a Dane who spoke English only well enough to get along. The Dane wanted a steady job inside a mill, apparently because he did not like the heat and humidity of the Southwest. The man had worked for Cordz for a few weeks and was a "first class worker" although he had never worked in a sawmill. "If you can place him I will send him over," Cordz wrote, adding, "He is as strong as a little mule."⁴⁹ Another Texan, H. C. Rudd of Lufkin accepted a job at Fisher as a lumber checker. Hoping to get a house for his family in the new town, he proposed also to bring "2 hands along for any common work," one of whom needed a house.⁵⁰ At the same time, Alexandre Bouche in New Orleans offered gangs of foreign laborers at \$8 a head delivered, plus their railroad fares, which the workers would repay out of their anticipated wages. He also had a cook, a blacksmith, a fireman, teamsters, and log sawyers who were looking for work, all of whom could "speak the American

⁴⁸ Louisiana Long Leaf Lumber Company Payroll Journal, December 31, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴⁹ Henry Cordz, Austin, Texas, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, April 21, 1908, Box 11632, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁰ H. C. Rudd, Lufkin, Texas, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, April 21, 1908, Box 11632, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Language."⁵¹ Also that January, a representative of the Curtis & Company Manufacturing Company of St. Louis, Missouri, from the windows of his car on the KCS as it passed Fisher, Louisiana, noticed that the 4 L Company used flat stackers in its lumber yards. He offered to outfit the mill with edge stackers, which Curtis & Company fabricated in St. Louis, to reduce labor costs. "A negro operator and helper can stack 16 to 20 trucks per day, each truck containing 3500' of 1" boards," he estimated.⁵²

Compared with earlier years, 1908 had not been a good year for the six Exchange mills in Missouri and Louisiana, as it had not been for the Southwestern lumber industry generally. But unlike the Kirbys, the Longs, and the Buchanans in the industry, whose industrial empires were overextended, the Grandins were able to maintain their mills, their timberlands, and their employees without undue hardship. In December 1907, after the effects of the bank panic of October had begun to be felt in the piney woods, the six Exchange mills—at Grandin and Winona, Missouri, and at Clarks, Fisher, Standard, and Victoria, Louisiana—shipped only 265 carloads of lumber, primarily to Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and Texas. In January 1908 shipments picked up slightly to 354 cars, again mostly to the same states, with the addition of South Dakota, which marked the northwestern-most market for the Southwestern mills. Victoria, with connections on the T&P directly to the agricultural lands to the west,

⁵¹ Alexandre Bouche, New Orleans, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, January 6, 1909, Box 11624, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵² Curtis & Company, St. Louis, Missouri, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, January 14, 1909, Box 11624, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

shipped most of the carloads bound for Texas. In February the number of carloads stood at 515; March, 536; April, 825; May, 682; June, 628; July, 778; August, 709; September, 716; October, 799; and November, 446. These figures give only a rough idea of Exchange business for the period because a carload did not necessarily equate in quantity or quality of lumber with any other car. Still, even lumbermen of the time used numbers of carloads shipped as a rough rule-of-thumb to indicate the level of his business.⁵³ Although the mills had produced a respectable amount of lumber and had sold enough to "keep the crew together," they had not made a profit. At Fisher, Louisiana, Willard Warren toted up his books to find that he had lost money at Victoria and broke even at Fisher during 1908.⁵⁴

In the 20 years between 1890 and 1909, the Southern sawmill labor force doubled, reaching 262,000 at the end of the period, but then it began to contract, falling to 235,000 by 1914. By 1910, half of the jobs were filled by blacks. Southern lumber workers were characterized by the predominance of native-born men with families.⁵⁵ From an agrarian background generally in 1880 and even earlier that ordered the social relations of the Southerner, the sawmills had created a proletariat in the piney woods 30 years later. This self-conscious group gave some encouragement to socialists and populists in the region, and they responded with such services as an itinerant press might

⁵³ Typescript of table, "Cars shipped during December, 1907," and a series of tables through November 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁴ W. B. Pettibone, Hannibal, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 14, 1909, Box 11630, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁵ Jensen, Lumber & Labor, pp. 76-77.

have supplied. At Dodson, Winn Parish, Louisiana, socialists published The Forum by 1909, and at Leesville, Vernon Parish, Louisiana, Pat O'Neil published The Toiler about the same time. The choice of these towns in which to situate a socialist press was not accidental, because Winn and Vernon Parishes had led the area in populist and socialist opinion since before the turn of the century and would continue as hotbeds of labor union activities until at least the end of the First World War.⁵⁶

Wages, understandably, became the principal issue between management and labor. For some lumbermen, the issue approached paranoia. The Dierks Lumber & Coal Company, headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, operated mills at DeQueen, Arkansas, Florien, Louisiana, and Waterman, Texas. In January 1909, Herman Dierks, the vice president of the family company, asked Willard Warren at Fisher, Louisiana, to fill out a questionnaire on wages then being paid for various classes of labor and to indicate whether any advances in wages had been made in the last six months. As was his habit, Warren ignored the request as an infringement on the privacy of the 4 L Company, but not necessarily of the privacy of workers. It carried with it a certain level of concern among lumbermen about the actions of their neighbors.⁵⁷ Wages still haunted lumbermen at the time. It was a subject they dwelt upon at great length, writing interminable letters in an effort to keep themselves clear of criticism from their directors

⁵⁶ Grady McWhiney, "Louisiana Socialists in the Early Twentieth Century: A Study of Rustic Radicalism," The Journal of Southern History Vol. XX, No. 3 (August 1954), p. 322.

⁵⁷ Herman Dierks, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 4, 1909, Box 11624, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

and neighbors for paying too much and letting rates get out of line with the industry. J. P. Collins, superintendent of Standard mills for LCLC, wrote a typical explanation of his policy on wage rates. He had had a scaler, for example, who made \$70 a month, but he went to Clarks for \$75. Collins replaced him with a man who had been scaling at the stump at \$65.00 a month, but later had to raise his wages to \$70. In the spring of 1907, Standard paid the foreman of the steel gang \$2.75 a day, but because another foreman got \$75 a month, the first foreman had to be raised, too. The section foreman usually got \$2.25 but was raised to \$2.50, when the general reduction at the first of the year dropped it back to \$2.25 a day. The man who ran the steam log loaded had to have \$125 a month to remain competitive with other logging jobs. Tong hookers at the loader got \$2 a day, about \$50 a month if he worked every day. Standard had tried to work blacks as tong hookers but "could not keep them in our camps on account of a disposition on the part of some of the people who lived in and around our camp." White men would work as tong hookers for \$2 in dry weather, but when the rains started, they left. The mill had to raise the wage to \$2.25 a day to get anyone to work in bad weather.⁵⁸

Such discussions had their uses, but they did not cover those concerns lumbermen often expressed about their workers' loyalty. For this kind of problem, managers often turned to a secret service agent. Clarence Slagle consulted the Cavaroc Investigation Bureau in New Orleans in the spring of 1909 to help him discover the causes of the general malaise he identified at the LCLC mills at Clarks and Standard. P. C. Cavaroc

⁵⁸ J. P. Collins, Standard, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, January 29, 1909, No. 3660, Box 23, File 488, LCLC Records, WHMC.

supervised this "high-grade secret service," charging \$7 a day for each operative engaged in general investigations of such things as incendiary fires and anonymous letters. The price dropped to \$6 a day--\$5 a day for work longer than 30 days--for investigating the internal conditions at mills and in stores, and reporting on such intangibles as employee sentiment, fidelity to the company, competency, thefts, payroll padding, which usually required an undercover man posing as a workman. Wages paid the operative were subtracted from the charges.⁵⁹ Instead of employing Cavaroc, Slagle turned to J. M. DeVere who had served as a company operative to test the employees a year earlier. It did not work out very well. On October 6, 1909, DeVere wrote J. B. White a note from the White Hotel in Clarks. "I have finished what I started last year & have stirred up a hornets Nest At Standard[.]"⁶⁰

DeVere claimed to have gathered evidence that the quarterboss at Standard was bootlegging liquor to the men working there. It was a charge that would have been given a hearing at the time, because most company guards were suspected of such activities. Clarence Slagle answered with a long irate explanation, complaining of the secret agent's activities, particularly his questionable methods. In the first place, Slagle suspected that DeVere would quickly leave the state, probably going back to Kansas City. John Collins charged that DeVere had ordered whiskey shipped in for "treating the men."⁶¹ At one

⁵⁹ P. C. Cavaroc, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, March 18, 1909, No. 3660, Box 23, File 498, LCLC, WHMC.

⁶⁰ J. M. DeVere, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, October 6, 1909, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 25, File 538, WHMC.

⁶¹ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, October 6, 1909, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 25, File 538, WHMC.

point, he got two or three of Standard's workers drunk in the hotel. At another, he sent men to an accomplice stationed in the woods who supplied "a pint or a quart of whiskey, but for what purpose I am unable to learn further than the results have been very unsatisfactory for our business."⁶² Collins had been gone a few days to Missouri to visit his sick mother, and on his return found that DeVere had taken over the village. Collins was especially incensed when DeVere got familiar, calling him "Johnnie," a breach of decorum no lumber manager would permit in a day when all white men were addressed as "Mister." Collins ordered the detective to leave the village "and not let the sun go down on him while he was at Standard and from what I can hear, Mr. DeVere took Mr. Collins at his word and left."⁶³ What was even more reprehensible, DeVere said that he was a nephew of Captain White. Although Collins should not have lost his temper with DeVere, Slagle said, "I believe he is right.... It is no trouble to find all the buyers you want should any one undertake to violate the law by boot-legging whiskey, whether at Clarks, Standard or any other sawmill town, and it therefore is certainly no trouble to find those who will accept whiskey as a gift and under such circumstances it is very easy to get a lot of men drunk."⁶⁴ Because the people in the area remembered that DeVere had been at Clarks and Standard a year earlier, his return cast the company in a bad light among its employees and neighbors, he said. "The handling of labor in Louisiana has been a hard proposition, much harder than it was in Missouri, and if we

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

have any more detective work I am in favor of employing some one not known and requiring him to confine himself to the investigation of conditions as they exist rather than allowing him to manufacture conditions in order to develop human nature in each individual, as I believe that 50% of the sawmill men will drink whiskey if they are given an opportunity to do so."⁶⁵

Slagle had formed a bad opinion of DeVere the year before, and although he agreed for him to return he still had not changed his opinion of the man. Captain White replied on October 13 by his usual practice of jotting down a note at the bottom of Slagle's letter. "Noted," he wrote. "I suppose you settled with the party. His methods are evidently bad.... he is no relation of mine."⁶⁶ In fact, Slagle had complained of DeVere on September 28, 1909, pointing out that the special agent would likely be recognized, which would give workers cause to resent the company for his obnoxious behavior. White had answered October 4, 1909, from Haverhill, Massachusetts. "I think if I were in your place," he wrote to Slagle, "and wished to get reliable reports, I would discredit him and his authority for being there. But quite likely if the men recognize him and believe that you sent for him, or knew of his coming, that it would be best to call him into the office and pay him off."⁶⁷ As it turned out, Slagle had no

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 13, 1909, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 25, File 538, WHMC.

⁶⁷ J. B. White, Haverhill, Massachusetts, October 4, 1909, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 25, File 538, WHMC.

chance to fire DeVere, not even a chance to discredit him, before the special agent had discredited himself and left town.⁶⁸

The Secret Service, as lumber managers called private detective agencies, was not the romantic occupation the public generally assumed it to be. On the contrary, it was a shady calling, at best, and at worst it could descend to criminal conspiracy. Most operatives, as the agencies preferred to call their employees, led a life of deceit in squalid milltowns, among a generally uneducated and uncultured people. Their time was taken up with inconsequential events, for the most part. Although they searched diligently for labor union infection, they spent most of their time spying on minor store clerks whose fingers quite often dipped into the company till. Operatives were also expected to find work in the mills, which meant that they had been recruited from the ranks of millhands and flatheads, exhibiting virtually all of the traits of these workers. The pay of operatives was little better than wages in the woods and mills, about \$2 a day and living expenses. If an operative found work with the lumber companies, the pay he received from his labor was deducted from his pay as a detective. Because they followed a secretive occupation, little of their activities ever came to light, and they remain shadowy figures, the subject of much fictional speculation. J. B. White and his mill managers, however, kept nearly complete files of their businesses, and among the papers of the mills at Clarks and Fisher, Louisiana, the reports of several operatives survive, testifying to the drudgery and frequent failure of at least three Pinkerton men. None

⁶⁸ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 6, 1909, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 25, File 538, WHMC.

were armed with anything more deadly than a lead pencil, with which to make daily reports to the Pinkerton office in New Orleans. Two of the three agents completely failed to penetrate the equally secret Brotherhood of Timber Workers. A third finally discovered the outlines of the local at Clarks, resulting in several workers being fired and blackballed. As Big Bill Haywood remarked about the same time, "The gunman and the deputy sheriff are an expensive innovation in the manufacture of lumber."⁶⁹

Lumber company tram roads presented unusual problems, which required special treatment. Managers kept a constant watch on their railroad employees to detect any peculation and to maintain discipline over the hours and conditions of the work day. At times the lumbermen hired "secret operatives to work as freight brakemen or freight handlers"⁷⁰ in an effort to learn how the road's workers performed their assigned tasks. Private detectives also hired out in the mills as machinists, boiler makers, and carpenters. Most operatives were male, but some agencies assigned females to undertake some jobs not suitable for men. The Railway Audit & Inspection Company in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, charged \$5 a day and expenses for the services of its undercover personnel, which included "two lady operatives." The National Lumber Manufacturers' Association recommended that the Grandin mills hire a female operative at \$10 a day "to

⁶⁹ William D. Haywood, Industrial Worker (June 1, 1911), 3; The Pinkerton Agency reports to LCLC are No. 5 Reports, No. 10 Reports, and No. 11 Reports, May 24, 1911, to October 31, 1911, in LCLC Records, Boxes 31 and 32, WHMC; for examples, see Appendices 9 and 10.

⁷⁰ H. N. Brown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, April 21, June 9, August 1 and 10, 1910, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

make inquiries" on its railroads in Missouri and Louisiana. A. F. Tennille, representative of the Southwestern & Southern Railroad Company and the Ohio & Northwestern Railway, had retained a woman for similar work and found her suitable.⁷¹

By the fall of 1909, managers had again begun to cut back on the running time of their mills. The Long-Bell Lumber Company plant at Longville, Louisiana, had cut back to four days a week by late August. The 4 C mills in Louisiana and Texas had adopted the same schedule. Slagle noted that mills in the Calcasieu long leaf pine district had run full time from May to August, while the 4 L Company and LCLC had held their mills to a shortened work week. As early as May, Captain White and O. W. Fisher had agreed on running short time, and they had had assurances that Long-Bell would run only four days a week beginning May 10.⁷² Other mills, they assured themselves, would surely follow R. A. Long's lead. Lumbermen, O. W. Fisher wrote, "don't want to stand in their own light and slash up the timber when there is more lumber than can be disposed of."⁷³ At Fisher, Willard Warren took advantage of the lull to close the mills for a brief time to install new boilers and engines and catch up on repair work. By late August, however, Fisher had begun to complain that the 4 L Company "should not run short time if the rest are running full time I would do the Same we have bin running Short time So much as you Say our Stock is broken and if any one Should run full time

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² B. H. Smith, Longville, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 1, 1909, Box 11630, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷³ O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, two letters on May 10, 1909, Box 11624, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

it is no they always have Some Excuse for running So I would advise that we run full time if the rest are and get Some Stock for fall traid for if the Crops are good traid this fall and we Should be in Shape to get our Share of it I dont think we Should hold the bag all the while for it cost more to make lumber r[unn]ing short time[.]”⁷⁴ In early September 1909, Clarks mill No. 2 had to shut down because a part of the brick lining of the furnace fell out. Slagle expected to keep the mill idle for nearly two weeks. Even the Dixie mill at Clarks was closed for repairs. Late in September, Slagle took the Iron Mountain up to Kansas City to confer with Captain White. While he was in the city, he attended a meeting of local lumber manufacturers, along with White and Bill McKinney, the Exchange sales manager. The large Kansas City and St. Louis manufacturers, he learned, continued to curtail production because the fall retail trade had been greatly reduced by adverse crop conditions on the Great Plains. Not much lumber had been used during the fall to reduce stocks. The Clarks mills, he thought, could easily run full time and still not build up a troublesome surplus, but Captain White advised his mill managers to continue running short time, to err on the side of caution.⁷⁵

Inevitably, in times of stress, lumbermen began to think of some sort of organized cooperation among mills, i.e. a trust. On September 22, 1909, C. D. Johnson, first vice president of the Frost-Johnson Lumber Company, headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri, and president of the erstwhile Southern Lumber Operators Association, wrote to Captain

⁷⁴ O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 29, 1909, Box 11624, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁵ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 4 and 21, 1909, Box 11630, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

White, suggesting that 21 companies with 89 mills producing more than 10 million bf a day could form a company to control the sales of this production.⁷⁶ Of the 21 large lumber companies, 17 operated principally or wholly west of the Mississippi River where large mills still dominated the lumber industry; in the Southeast, the trend among lumbermen had for some years been toward smaller mills to accommodate the smaller more scattered timber. Nothing came of the idea that "twenty-one interests in the Yellow Pine industry of the magnitude of these should be able to handle their business more intelligently than they have been handling it in the past."⁷⁷

The Long-Bell Lumber Company with 7 mills in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas, led in the production of yellow pine lumber. Kay Ell's 13 mills, when they ran at all, produced nearly as much. William Buchanan's 7 mills equalled Kay Ell, and the production of the Gates-Crossett-Watzek interests in Arkansas was not far behind. The Missouri Lumber & Land Exchange representing 7 mills, the Frost-Johnson Lumber Company with 7 mills, the 4 C's 7 mills, and the Tremont Lumber Company with 6 mills represented the average production. Despite the difficult economic situation brought on by the bank panic of 1907, most lumber companies remained fundamentally healthy.⁷⁸ Kay Ell, however, had been in receivership since 1902, and the panic only made matters worse. In one sense, the panic helped because the receivers were forced

⁷⁶ C. E. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, September 22, 1909, Box 11630, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁷ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, September 22, 1909, Box 11630, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

to take drastic actions to curtail expenses and redesign the company's tactics that they had avoided as long as things went fairly well. But with the depression of late 1907, the Federal Court imposed an austerity program that in the long run saved the company for John Henry Kirby, the self-appointed prince of pines.⁷⁹ Sam Fullerton, the St. Louis lumber dealer (the Chicago Lumber & Coal Company) and manufacturer of long leaf pine in Louisiana, found the situation growing progressively intolerable. The condition of the Gulf Lumber Company had become critical, particularly since Fullerton had bought a large block of expensive long leaf timberland in Vernon Parish, built massive concrete and steel sawmills and a model town, and entered into the production of beams and timbers for the railroad market that had since fallen drastically; he had also placed his faith in the cotton and grain farmers on the Texas prairies, who had not prospered since before the panic. Fullerton assessed the situation as so severe that he offered to cut his production by 40 percent to conserve stumpage that had brought nothing in the present equation; current prices only paid for the cost of manufacture.⁸⁰ By the middle of October, William Buchanan, headquartered in Texarkana, Arkansas, and with a string of seven mills from Stamps, Arkansas, to Jena, Louisiana, had begun the difficult process of curtailing output.⁸¹

⁷⁹ G. W. Phillips, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, October 2, 1909, Box 15, No. 02-06-08-14, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

⁸⁰ S. H. Fullerton, St. Louis, Missouri, to George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, c1909, No. 3660, Box 23, File 498, LCLC, WHMC.

⁸¹ William L. McKinney, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 19, 1909, Box 11630, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

In November, Willard Warren had a brief encounter with his flatheads. It was so inconsequential that only O. W. Fisher even mentioned it, and then only in passing as was his habit, so that no record of the trouble and how it was resolved has survived. In a long rambling sentence in one of his frequent letters from Bozeman, Montana, Fisher spliced in the fact that he was "hopeing your trouble with your woods men are over it Seams Strange we cant get along without these anoyances but I suppose there isnt any way out of it only to take it as it comes...."⁸² Without letup, the unemployed and dissatisfied workers kept up a steady appeal to the lumber mills for places. Of the same order of communications, R. A. Byles of Many, Louisiana, wrote in the fall of 1909 that "while night watching for the Co and coming from No 2 planer to no 1 on Aug the 10th at night I stepped in a hole and was thrown off the Lumber run and badly hurt. I was without any light and unable to get one. I have been laid up every since and am still unable to go to work and of course my expenses have [been] a good deal. I now ask you if you are not willing to pay me something in the way of expenses and for lost time."⁸³ At times, the actions of the lumber companies bordered on peonage. In January 1909, C. C. Carlton, the company's chief woodsman, reported on an arrangement he had made to collect for some sort of timber trespass. "Buck Lilly (Col) got 400 rails on the Rich Mains land. He agreed to pay \$2.00. Buck also cut 2 pine trees for boards [shingles].

⁸² O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, November 19, 1909, Box 11624, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸³ R. A. Byles, Many, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, October 11, 1909; see also Willie Barron to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, January 7, 1909, Box 11624, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

He agreed to pay \$5.00 for them. He will be down soon to work on Section and I will try to collect."⁸⁴ At other times, the mill managers could exhibit humane traits, for which their detractors never give them credit. In November 1909, Ivah Borah, one of the girls working in the office at Fisher, found she had tuberculosis, a dreadful malady in that day and one that created a multitude of social problems in its wake. Willard Warren took it on himself to find a suitable sanatorium in New Mexico for her treatment, and the company agreed to pay the cost of her treatment. In Las Cruces, New Mexico, Dr. B. E. Lane declined to accept Miss Borah as a patient, because he did not have facilities for room and board, which she would require. The Albert Baldwin Sanatorium & Hygienic Hotel offered it services, as did the Emerald Ranch, which Warren selected as the most practical for her situation. Early in December, Warren boarded the passenger train at Fisher with Miss Borah in his charge and made the long trip to New Mexico to get her settled in her new home. O. W. Fisher in Bozeman accepted the charge on the 4 L Company: "now in regards to Miss Borah I dont See any thing rong in Turning the \$200.00 in and let the company pay it I dont think there will be any objection by any one for I think She was a good woman and needs all the help She can get and I hope the change will do hur good and that she may improve So She can make hur own liveing So I would turn it to General Expence...."⁸⁵

⁸⁴ C. C. Carlton, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 6, 1909; see also O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, to Warren, June 21, 1909, Box 11624, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁵ O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, to Warren, December 15, 1909, Box 11624; see also B. E. Lane, Las Cruces, New Mexico, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, November 29, 1909, Box 11630; David G. Baldwin, Las Cruces, New Mexico, to

Christmas came and went in the piney woods with its casual violence and occasional drunkenness, then the mill managers rushed their crews back to work the day after. Lumbermen themselves took few holidays and begrudged the few they permitted to be celebrated in their milltowns. The end of the year, however, was a traditional time of reassessing possibilities and making plans for the New Year. W. B. Pettibone of Hannibal, Missouri, a lumberman in his own right, owned stock in the Grandin mills in Missouri and Louisiana, in Fullerton's mills, and others, in addition to his own interests in the river towns and the Lake States. Accepted as an adviser, if not exactly invited to contribute his opinions, he nevertheless took great pains to exercise oversight of the L Company and Willard Warren. In December 1909, Captain White recommended curtailing production in Louisiana and Missouri as a means to encourage other lumbermen to cut back their own mills to help improve lumber prices. Pettibone agreed fully. The South generally produced too much yellow pine lumber for the limited market, and even now buyers had slyly curtailed their buying in the hopes that prices would fall further. Buchanan, he said, had not been curtailing his production, despite his assurances that he would. By January 1, 1910, however, the Buchanan mills would curtail production by reducing running time. Lumbermen, Pettibone argued, had no choice but to cut back their production. Fisher and Victoria had not run full capacity, he said, but would still produce more than in 1908 and nearly as much as in 1907, the

Warren, December 1, 1909; Ivah Borah, Emerald Ranch, New Mexico, to Warren, December 11, 1909, Box 11624, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

peak production year. The problem seemed insoluble, but lumbermen would do well to follow White's policy of curtailing production for 30 to 60 days into the New Year.⁸⁶

By 1910, although farms created more jobs for common laborers in Louisiana, 60 percent of industrial non-farm wage earners worked for sawmills in the state. Louisiana shares with Minnesota the distinction of straddling the Mississippi River, unlike other River States that occupy only left or right bank and fall into the East and West. New Orleans and the coasts below Bayou Manchac occupy an island of sorts in the midst of the Great Mississippi Delta. To the east, the Florida Parishes form East Louisiana, that portion seized from Spanish Florida as a sort of inheritance from British West Florida, the sixteenth British colony on the North American mainland. This region, much like South Mississippi, produced a bumper crop of long leaf, slash, short leaf, and other pine species. But it is only a tenth the size of West Louisiana, where slash pine, the great turpentine species of the Gulf Coast, had not found a niche in the plant climax.⁸⁷ The forests of the Southwest reached from the Mississippi Delta, with its vast stands of hardwoods and cypress, to the black oak prairies in Central Texas. Between these two geographic features, the number of wage earners increased 202 percent in Louisiana and 89 percent in Texas during the first decade of the twentieth century. In real terms, Texas workers reached numbers much closer to those in Louisiana than these percentages indicate, because Louisiana had been relatively slow in

⁸⁶ W. B. Pettibone, Hannibal, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, Box 11630, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁷ Thirteenth Census, Statistics for Louisiana, p. 654, cited in McWhiney, "Louisiana Socialists," p. 325.

developing industry of any kind west of the Mississippi until very late in the nineteenth century. Modest increases in numbers of workers, then, created impressive percentage changes. By 1910, more than 63,000 people in Louisiana and Texas worked in the mills and fronts of the piney woods. Census statistics for the period reveal trends toward the use of a majority of black workers (reaching 70 percent of the work force) across the South and the virtual absence of foreign workers. Even in Texas with its long border with Mexico, there seemed to be only a few (about 9 percent) foreign workmen employed in the lumber mills. And in Louisiana, despite the attraction of its international port at New Orleans, about 3 percent of lumber workers seem to have been of foreign birth. Census workers apparently avoided making clear distinctions between native and foreign born among those of Spanish heritage in both Texas and along the Sabine River in Louisiana. The use of illegal Mexican immigrants in the period was rampant and obvious, despite the census returns. New Orleans was an important port for the entry of South Europeans into the United States, most notably Italian immigrants in the early years of the twentieth century. In some parts of Louisiana and Arkansas, Italians received scarcely better treatment than blacks had become inured to in the aftermath of the Civil War. In the Grandin mill towns at Clarks, Fisher, Standard, and Victoria, Louisiana, the managers assigned Italian labor gangs housing in the quarters, the black ghettos of the piney woods, and often referred to that section of their towns as the "nigger and dago quarters" over which they set a "quarterboss" deputized by the parish sheriff to keep the peace. In many mill towns in West Louisiana and East Texas, the Mexican quarters were known simply as Mexico. Another trait of lumber workers

across the South was the tendency to reduce the ratio of black to white as the industry moved west. Because of the influence of the port of New Orleans as an entry point for European immigration, the proximity of the Mexican border, and the generally underdevelopment of agriculture and industry west of the Mississippi until well after the Civil War, there were relatively fewer blacks living in the region than in the Southeast. Lumber company managers in the Southwest had to resort to labor gangs and labor contractors to acquire workers at competitive prices. The Census of 1910 describes this ethnic and racial composition of the work force in the Southern pine industry. Nearly 60 percent of the work force in Louisiana and nearly 40 percent of the work force in Texas was black. Of the 40,765 workers in the Louisiana mills and fronts, 14,982 were native born whites; 1,339 foreign born whites; 669 first generation Americans; and 23,829 blacks. Texas employed 22,347 workers in the lumber industry; 10,828 were native born whites; 1,651 foreign born; 376 first generation; and 9,492 blacks. In another place in the same census, statistics for Louisiana and Texas show more white than black flatheads, i.e. "Lumberman, raftsmen and woodchoppers (largely unskilled)." Mills employed more semi-skilled and skilled white workers than black workers in these categories. Only the number of unskilled black mill hands in Louisiana exceeded the number of unskilled white mill hands; in Texas the races were about evenly divided in this work.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ U.S. Bureau of the Census, Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, vol. iv, Occupations, pp. 384-385, cited in Green, "BTW," p. 183.

The early months of 1910 were taken up by a series of industry meetings, most of them among members of various associations. The Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association met in New Orleans January 25-26, while the Southwestern Lumbermen's Association, an organization of retail lumber dealers, met in Kansas City, Missouri, January 25-27. The YPMA met again in April in Memphis, Tennessee, and in July at its semi-annual gathering in Chicago. The Lumbermen's Association of Texas, a retail group, met in San Antonio April 12-14, and the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association gathered in New Orleans April 18-20. Some of the most ardent supporters of the business association was the trade journalist, who found associations convenient sources of information and advertising, and at times subsidies. Early in 1910, the Lumber Trade Journal of New Orleans began promotional activities, mostly publicity, leading to the formation of yet another association, this time for organizing and professionalizing logging superintendents. Tentatively, the associate editor of the magazine scheduled a meeting of logging superintendents in the South at New Orleans on either September 12-13 or 26-27. The new association never organized largely because of the hostility of the lumbermen and their mill managers who saw it as just another device employed by journalists to sell subscriptions and advertisements. The activities of the Southern Lumber Operators' Association apparently did not merit much attention at the time, else lumbermen chose not to emphasize its primary mission, responding to threats from organized labor.⁸⁹

⁸⁹ Frederick H. Waltz, New Orleans, Louisiana, to Logging Superintendent, Fisher, Louisiana, August 25, 1910, Box 88, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; Ferrell, "BTW and Lumber Trust," p. 95.

Race relations remained in uneasy equilibrium as the year progressed. In May, Clarence Slagle began to plan for Emancipation Day. He even contributed \$10 to the organizers of Juneteenth, scheduled for Clarks in 1910, which he thought best to explain to Captain White on May 26. Slagle had made it a practice to donate \$10 each year toward celebrating Emancipation Day on June 19. The mill towns above the Ouachita had a large black population, he explained, who held their Juneteenth picnics alternately at Clarks and Standard. In 1909 they held it at Standard; in 1910 at Clarks. "It is of course impossible to run the mill on this day, the same as it would be impossible to run on the Fourth of July on account of the whites using this as their legal holiday," he said. White replied on May 31: "I think the donation perfectly proper."⁹⁰

It was a different story in Sabine Parish, where Willard Warren had several years earlier declined to hold another Juneteenth because of outbreaks of violence, usually against black participants. Nevertheless, the violence did not stop. In the fall of 1910, John H. Boone, the 4 L lawyer in Many, Louisiana, assured Warren that the district attorney would seek indictments against "unnamed parties for running off labor"⁹¹ from the 4 L Company works. He said he hoped to have the perpetrators imprisoned under provisions of Act 110 of 1908, which made it a crime to coerce or intimidate workers from engaging in their employment. Enacted as a defense for black workers, employers,

⁹⁰ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, May 26, 1910; White to Slagle, May 31, 1910, No. 3660, Box 28, File 593, LCLC Records, WHMC.

⁹¹ John H. Boone, Many, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 24, 1910, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

particularly lumbermen, would soon resort to it to fend off the militant labor unions that attempted to organize sawmill laborers.⁹²

Captain White had never given way to an extreme sense of charity. Since forming the Exchange in 1902, his charity account had been modest by any standards: 1902, \$101; 1903, \$161.50; 1904, \$147; 1905, \$181.75; 1906, \$241; 1907, \$228; 1908, \$217.42 [more than half of which went to the Concatenated Order of Hoo Hoo, a lumbermen's social lodge]; 1909, \$245; and the first half of 1910, \$123. Over the years, he had favored hospitals such as Bethany, St. Luke's, and St. Margaret's; the Young Men's Christian Association; the Door of Hope, a Kansas City industrial home; the Salvation Army; and the Kansas City Provident Association. In eight years, the Exchange had donated \$1,645.67 to charities, including the House of Hoo Hoo. Slagle's donation of \$10 to Juneteenth at Clarks, then, did not exceed the threshold of pain usually associated with charitable giving.⁹³

Lumbermen did, in fact, spend a great deal of money and time in defending their black workers from the depredations of white marauders, usually associated with the White Caps, Bull Dozers, and Knights of the White Camellia, each of them a variant of the Ku Klux Klan. Apparently not well organized, these groups seemed to rise up out of the piney woods for a brief encounter and then fade out. At times, they were obvious larks perpetrated by young men in their cups or responding to the myths of their elders.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to The Directors of the Missouri Lumber & Land Exchange Company, June 23, 1910, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Each mill felt compelled to employ guards, usually called deputies or quarterbosses to serve as the alcalde mayor of the black, Mexican, and Italian sections of the mill villages. In February 1910, B. M. Musser, superintendent of the Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company plant at Loring, Louisiana, received an application from Larry Armstrong of Many, Louisiana, to fill an opening for deputy sheriff. Armstrong had previously worked for the 4 L Company in a similar capacity, and so Musser asked Willard Warren's "opinion as to character of officer he made for you, and if you think he could hold down a position of deputy sheriff at a saw mill plant."⁹⁴ Although deputized by the parish sheriff, that local law enforcement official had virtually nothing to do with his supervision or conduct; the quarterboss took his orders from the mill manager.

At least in the early days, the chief responsibility of the quarterboss was the protection of labor, a word that implied black workers, who generally required organized recruitment and transportation. Throughout the early years of the twentieth century, the Caddo Labor Agency in Shreveport supplied black workers for the 4 L Company. In March 1910, Willard Warren ordered a gang of workers from M. Newman, manager of the agency, paying \$1 a head and refunding their railroad fares. On the evening of March 24, the Caddo Labor Agency planned to send under guard a group of 15 men on KCS passenger train No. 3, but Newman could only get three men. Warren credited the agency's account with \$10.20 and would later collect \$3.40 from each man to pay the cost of his recruitment. Newman promised 15 more men on Sunday night. "Negro

⁹⁴ B. M. Musser, Loring, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, February 15, 1910, Box 88, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

labor, expressly sawmill labor is very scarce,"⁹⁵ he explained. Three days later the agency sent another 15 men on No. 3 leaving Shreveport at 11:25 p.m., reaching Fisher about 2:00 o'clock on Monday morning. "Have everything ready to receive the man,"⁹⁶ Newman wired. Such agencies operated throughout the South, some of them outside the laws against exporting black labor from some Southern states, laws that presumed that black workers as a class were in debt and wanted to avoid paying their creditors. Blacks, before they were permitted to move away from their usual employers, had to demonstrate that they owned no debts. Such peonage laws were struck down by the Federal Courts, but they effectively discouraged many black workers from seeking better wages and working conditions. J. G. Martin managed the Standard Employment Company in Fort Worth, Texas. He promised to "furnish all kinds of reliable help,"⁹⁷ laborers and other workers at no cost to the employer if the lumber company arranged transportation for the men. To get Standard's prompt service, all Warren had to do was state the 4 L Company's wages. For acquiring the names of potential skilled workers in the mills, on the trains, and in the offices, Warren looked to Mack's Organization of Brain Brokers in Kansas City, Missouri. On August 15, 1910, Mack's agency

⁹⁵ M. Newman, Shreveport, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, March 24 and 25, 1910, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁶ M. Newman, Shreveport, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, March 27, 1910, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁷ J. G. Martin, Fort Worth, Texas, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, June 17, 1910, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; for a description of labor agents of the period, see Tipton Ray Snavely, "The Exodus of Negroes from the Southern States," in U.S. Department of Labor, Negro Migration in 1916-17 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), pp. 58-66.

recommended Tim Liddy to the 4 L Company as a logging contractor and woodsman, a job he accepted and kept until his death. The Lake Charles Employment Bureau was also active in the piney woods. On October 28, 1910, the bureau responded to a 4 L Company advertisement in the Beaumont, Texas, Enterprise for feeders and graders. It had a grader listed in its files, also a saw filer, a locomotive engineer for a logging road, a stationary engineer, a blacksmith, and a sawyer. Lumbermen also bought animals--horses, mules, and oxen--for the logging woods and the lumber yards in much the same fashion. Levi and Simon Cooper of Shreveport, Louisiana, often bought the 4 L Company's animals at the Fort Worth, Texas, market. In April 1910, the Cooper Brothers bought 20 mules for Warren, charging the lumber company \$4,780, an average of \$239. Given the fact that feeding a grown logging mule cost about \$0.40 a day or \$146 a year, it is questionable whether mules were not worth more than men.⁹⁸

To keep up with developments in the industry, particularly "all current decisions of all courts in the United States on personal injury,"⁹⁹ lumbermen subscribed to such services as Personal Injury Law Journal, Public Insurance Monitor, Insurance Law Journal, and other publications giving excerpts from court decisions in insurance cases. They also sought to protect themselves in political circles. Such flamboyant lumbermen

⁹⁸ Cooper Brothers, Shreveport, Louisiana, to 4 L Company, April 10, 1910, Box 8979-87; Brain Brokers, Kansas City, Missouri, to the 4 C [sic] Lumber company, Fisher, Louisiana, August 15, 1910; Lake Charles Employment Bureau, Lake Charles, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, October 28, 1910, Box 88, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁹ Ibid.; C. C. Hine's Sons Publishers, Chicago, Illinois, to the VF&W Railroad Company, Fisher, Louisiana, August 17, 1910, Box 11624, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

as John Henry Kirby in Texas and Henry E. Hardtner in Louisiana sought and won political office and developed a public persona for the purpose. Others contributed to the costs of campaigning. Each of the Exchange mills send \$350 to help Congressman Arsene Pujo win re-election in Southwest Louisiana in 1910. Long-Bell Lumber Company contributed \$1,500 to the Pujo campaign. "They have been writing us about it," Captain White explained, "and claim that he has worked so hard for the tariff, that we ought to help in his re-election, and I suppose we ought to do something."¹⁰⁰ At least one of the 4 L Company's political bases disintegrated before it could pay any dividends. Dr. D. Harvey Dillon, once the company's chief physician and surgeon had fallen on hard times by 1910, although he retained his potent political connections in Louisiana. That fall he appealed to Captain White for a loan to help him establish a practice at Covington, Louisiana, in the Florida Parishes on the northern shore of Lake Pontchartrain. White argued that the company should loan Doctor Dillon the money because of his "great political influence," admitting that he had become "somewhat dissipated but comes of a good family."¹⁰¹ Warren objected and declined to loan the money, first because it had been several years since Harvey Dillon had been at Fisher as a doctor, "years of dissipation and broken promises." Clearly, he added, "You would be making a present of this amount."¹⁰² Doctor Dillon had been at Covington

¹⁰⁰ J. B. White, Bemus Point, New York, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, August 24, 1910, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰¹ J. B. White, Madison, Wisconsin, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, October 23, 1910, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, October 20, 1910, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

throughout the summer, recuperating from a long illness, which Warren interpreted as alcoholism. Earlier in the year Warren had declined to loan money to the doctor while he was still the State Health Officer, a job he lost, Warren hinted, because of his drinking. Elected to the legislature in 1904 to represent Sabine Parish in the State House, Doctor Dillon later moved to Springhill, Louisiana, the home of the Pine Woods Lumber Company, one of William Buchanan's mills on the L&A. Here he was elected mayor of the town, and in October 1908 Governor Jared Y. Sanders named him president of the State Board of Health and ex officio State Health Officer. He resigned, citing poor health, in September 1910. Dillon set up a practice in Covington even without the help of the 4 L Company, and he maintained his political influence despite the rumors of his dissipation. In 1936, Governor Richard W. Leche appointed Doctor Dillon the superintendent of the Louisiana Training Institute, a juvenile detention facility. In 1940 he lost the post in the Louisiana Scandals that sent Governor Leche to the Federal Penitentiary for irregularities committed in projects funded by federal programs. Doctor Dillon returned to Sabine Parish and began construction of a sanitarium at the site of a country water mill on Bayou Toro a few miles from Fisher, Louisiana. Before he could complete the buildings, however, he took sick and died.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ J. B. White, Bemus Point, New York, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, August 24, 1910, Box 11262-48; White to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, October 17, 1910; White to Dr. D. Harvey Dillon, Covington, Louisiana, October 17, 1910; Warren to White, October 20, 1910; Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; Gordon E. Gillson, Louisiana State Board of Health: The Progressive Years (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Moran Industries, 1976), pp. 198, 202-204, 207, 209-213, 224-225, 344n.

As 1910 closed, Captain White returned to the subject of curtailment as a method of increasing the prices of lumber. He gave no indication that he even knew of the forces of organized labor building up to the south of his Louisiana mills. To Willard Warren, he outlined his strategy. "Will you please close down the mills at Fisher and at Victoria five days in January. Will you kindly also write other mills near you saying that you are closing down your mills for five days in the month of January. This is all that is necessary to say."¹⁰⁴ White denied that any agreement existed between lumbermen to shut out the workers, but nevertheless, he said, all the mills would close. He and other lumbermen met in Kansas City in December 1910 "as large in point of representation as the one at New Orleans."¹⁰⁵ The lumbermen then published a new price list with an advance in prices on some items. The shut-down would, he argued, correct the oversupply of lumber in the trade. "Mr. Long's mills, Mr.. Kirby's, the Central Coal and Coke Co.'s, and Pickering" would all close five days in January. "But it will make everybody firm if you will notify them just in a few lines that you are doing this. Just notify the mills in you vicinity," he instructed Warren. Then he gave his peroration: "This is our great and perhaps last opportunity to push prices up."¹⁰⁶ Labor troubles were the farthest thing from his mind at the time, although a group of flatheads were even then meeting at the Carson front in the Calcasieu district to create a labor

¹⁰⁴ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, December 31, 1910, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, December 31, 1910, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 29, File 636, WHMC.

union with which to bedevil the likes of John Barber White. Representatives of organized labor would later interpret this shut down as a device to damage the new labor union, the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, organized at Carson, Louisiana, in December 1910¹⁰⁷

Aside from the great strategy sessions lumbermen attended, managers still had the responsibility for operating their mills efficiently. In the spring of 1910, the 4 L Company advised J. P. Towery of the Sabine Lumber Company at Zwolle, Louisiana, that he should pay sawyers on short and long sides the same \$6 a day. It was just short of an agreement on wages for sawyers, but it came to much the same thing. Later in the year, Towery again conferred with Willard Warren, concerned with the quality of his lumber stacking crew and the fact that the men claimed that other mills paid more than the 17-1/2 cents an hour that Sabine Lumber paid. The 4 L Company had paid its stackers 22 cents per Mbf for the same work, rather than an hourly wage.¹⁰⁸ Earlier, Herman Dierks, one of the brothers who ran the family headquarters in Kansas City, had questioned Warren about the wage scale for filers. This skilled worker, probably the highest paid in the lumber industry, usually had filer helpers employed at times by the company and at others by the filer himself. "In case you leave filing to one man and he hires his own filers, what do you pay for the job?" he asked.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.; Green, "BTW," p. 175-176.

¹⁰⁸ J. P. Towery, Zwolle, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, May 13, 1910, Box 8979-87, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA

¹⁰⁹ Herman Dierks, Kansas City, Missouri, to Warren, March 5, 1910; J. P. Towery, Zwolle, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, October 21, 1910, Box 88, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

The year 1910 began inauspiciously for peaceful labor relations between the 4 L Company and some of its workers.¹¹⁰ R. A. Byles, who had fallen from the mill tram and hurt himself on the night of August 10, 1910, turned his complaint over to a claims adjuster when he got no satisfaction from his appeals to Warren. On January 5, 1910, Byles signed a power of attorney giving C. E. Melton, the "Damage Claim Man" of Houston, Texas, the right to collect any damages due the injured worker. If successful Melton would receive half the value of any judgment. Five days later, Melton wrote to Warren, asking for a settlement of Byles's claim.¹¹¹ By the end of 1910, organized labor had come to the notice of the Southwestern lumber industry. On December 3, 1910, Arthur Lee Emerson and Jay Smith founded the Brotherhood of Timber Workers "at a damp logging camp in Carson, Louisiana."¹¹² John Henry Kirby, newly released from the throes of bankruptcy in East Texas, described the two men in unflattering terms as generally ignorant, dishonest, and wrong-headed. He defamed Emerson as "a common criminal," asserting that the new president of the BTW had been fired by the

¹¹⁰ Kalispeel Lumber Company, Kalispeel, Montana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, January 17, 1910, Box 11624; R. W. Wier Lumber Company, Texla, Texas, to the 4 L Company, July 12, 1910, Box 88; Archie Hall, DeRidder, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 17, 1910, Box 11624; Annis Judd Eals, Fisher, Louisiana, to Warren, Bozeman, Montana, August 9, 1910, Box 88; E. E. Fitzgerald, Selma, Louisiana, to 4 L Company, August 12, 1910, Box 88; A. L. Wilson, Warren, Arkansas, to Warren, September 2, 1910, Box 88; J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Warren, September 29, 1910, Box 8979-87; R. S. Price, St. Louis, Missouri, to Warren, October 1, 1910, Box 8979-87; White to Warren, November 28, 1910, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹¹ J. E. Melton, Houston, Texas, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 5 and 10, 1910, Box 88, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹² Green, "BTW," p. 175-176.

Gulf Lumber Company at Fullerton, Louisiana, for "stealing blankets from the boarding house." Smith, he added, was "by nature a criminal."¹¹³ It was clear to Kirby that both Emerson and Smith were Wobblies, members of the Industrial Workers of the World, headed by the notorious and generally-feared Big Bill Haywood. Despite Kirby's loquaciousness, he really did not control the Southern Lumber Operators' Association, and in fact had joined it late, once the Federal Court released the Kirby Lumber Company from the court-appointed receivers who had controlled it since 1902. Nevertheless, publicists for Kirby and for his home state have described him as the mentor of the SLOA. "Kirby had the power to close all the Association mills, which numbered over 300 in 1911,"¹¹⁴ Vernon Jensen asserts. The lumbermen of the region, clearly acting without even the advice of the prince of pines, had decided to contest control of the region with organized labor, whatever form it took. The labor movement owes more to the tradition of populism and socialism in the region than to any actual or presumed control Kirby exercised over his fellow lumber operators. Ironically, labor publicists fell in with this spurious description of Kirby as the lumber baron of the Southwest, because it seemed to dovetail with their own efforts to show the lumber industry as dominated by greedy capitalists who had formed a vicious trust in restraint of trade and good morals. Dubofsky, for example, asserts that Kirby assumed command and dominated the lumber industry's offensive against organized labor, a patently

¹¹³ Morgan, "Kirby," pp. 193-195.

¹¹⁴ Reed, "IWW in Louisiana," pp. 42-43, quotes Jensen, Lumber & Labor.

impossible role for a bankrupt to play no matter what his image in the popular press.¹¹⁵ Kirby's high profile in the counsels of lumber can as easily be seen as an attempt to deflect public attention from the obvious disarray in Kay Ell itself. Much in the same vein, Morgan argues that Kirby "was the leader of the lumbermen"¹¹⁶ and with as much logic. Fickle is nearly strident, as though he fears contradiction: "There is no doubt that as the Operators' Association developed its leading figure was John Henry Kirby of Houston."¹¹⁷ This writer also credits Kirby with a wholly mythical effort to reduce "the hours of labor at his mills from ten to eight hours a day."¹¹⁸ After a series of strikes in 1906, which Fickle incorrectly assumes continued through 1907, Kirby did not openly associate with the SLOA, he writes. This assertion is accurate, but Fickle neglects to state why Kirby was absent from his leadership position with lumbermen, which grew out of his decision to seek court protection of Kay Ell and HOCo under the bankruptcy laws. In all of these accounts, Reed comes closest to the truth when he blamed Kirby with starting a "smear campaign" against the BTW and its leaders.¹¹⁹ Kirby's rhetorical skills had been honed to a fine edge in the courtrooms and on the political stumps of East Texas, and he put them to good use in defaming organized labor. Today, it is nearly impossible to separate fact from fancy, but it can safely be assumed

¹¹⁵ Dubofsky, "IWW," pp. 212-213.

¹¹⁶ Morgan, "Kirby," p. 196.

¹¹⁷ Fickle, "Lumber War," pp. 61-64.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Reed, "IWW in Louisiana," pp. 42-45.

that the leaders of the BTW sympathized with the Wobblies as they did with the Knights of Labor, while they held craft unions in utter contempt. The BTW, although it owed its rhetoric to "foreign agitators," had local and regional roots as well. Mississippi-born Covington Hall, editor of the BTW newspaper, The Lumberjack, had helped establish the United Labor Council in New Orleans under IWW auspices a short time before joining Emerson and Smith in Alexandria, Louisiana, where they had set up union headquarters.¹²⁰ With a Lassalleian background, timber workers "organized independently in eastern Texas and spread to western Louisiana"¹²¹ as the BTW, one writer contends. The question cannot be answered definitely because isolated union activities predating the BTW flared up from time to time throughout the Southwest. It would seem likely, however, that Texas, which had developed an industrial base earlier than West Louisiana, would also develop a self-conscious proletariat first. Since at least the turn of the century, black locals had been formed under the auspices of industrial unionism in Texas.¹²² And since a limited degree of black-white cooperation in union activities characterized the BTW, it does not offend rational speculation to assume that the new union took some of its theories and strategies from earlier Texas experience. In the western mining districts at about the same time, a Swedish immigrant, Joel Haaglund, joined the IWW. As Joe Hill, the author of such poems and songs as "Hallelujah, I'm a Bum," his style quickly reached the lumber workers in Louisiana and

¹²⁰ Green, "IWW," pp. 175-176.

¹²¹ Allen, "Labor in Texas," pp. 187, 191.

¹²² Ibid.

Texas, where Covington Hall tried his hand at writing verses. Hill's style of expression would dominate, and often confuse, the publicity originating in BTW headquarters. Probably as much as the rhetoric of lumbermen, Hall's tone of voice meant that the people of the piney woods would not accept the union's grievances as justified.¹²³

¹²³ Fickle, "Race, Class," p. 99; Foner, Organized Labor, pp. 114, 115; Thompson, "IWW," p. 67; Allen, "East Texas Lumber," p. 173; Roger Kerson, "Ashes in the National Archives," OAH Newsletter (November 1989), p. 3, 23; for examples of Covington Hall's poetry and rhetoric, see any issue of The Lumberjack and its successor papers. and Appendices 20, 22, and 28, below.

CHAPTER 5

Battle Joined

The camp is a diagram of a power that acts by means of a general visibility....to the rather shameful art of surveillance what the dark room was to the great art of optics.¹

The year 1911 severely tested the resolve of lumbermen and lumber workers alike as they struggled to assert their rights and establish institutions through which to maintain control of events. Managers held fast to their isolated towns, which union organizers attempted to invade. It seemed for a time that the moral momentum attained by some workers, union organizers, and an array of sympathizers would carry the day for organized labor, but it quickly became apparent, painfully so, that to the union belonged the responsibility for taking the offensive; mill managers stood on the defensive behind their impregnable corporate moats, sustained by limitless assets, particularly their command of the media of communications. From the very first, the popular press took the side of the owners and managers. And in the employ of the lumber companies, an army of secret agents set out to destroy the prestige and integrity of the Brotherhood of

¹ Michel Foucault, Discipline and punishment: the Birth of the Prison, translated by Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), excerpted in Paul Rabinow, ed., "The Means of Correct Training," The Foucault Reader (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), pp. 189-190.

Timber Workers; indeed, there is some reason to believe that those who mounted an unprecedented surveillance far outnumbered those surveilled.²

The year was only a few days old when the lumbermen's attention was claimed by efforts to organize sawmill labor. On January 6, C. D. Johnson of St. Louis, president of the SLOA, circulated the call for the annual meeting, scheduled for January 19 in New Orleans. The meeting produced nothing of much concern to lumbermen or their employees.³ A. L. Emerson's efforts to create an industrial union in the piney woods failed to get underway before two other groups of workers made bids for recognition as representatives of crafts, until then unorganized. Attempts to organize sawmill filers and sawyers and lumber graders and inspectors, however, failed to acquire either the approval of management or labor. Ed. O'Brien was president of the Filers and Sawyers Association, the headquarters of which either was not recorded or has not survived. The SLOA, however, kept a dossier on O'Brien, who was from 45 to 50 years old in 1911, stood six feet tall, weighed 200 pounds on a medium frame, had a black mustache and black hair tinged with gray, and a dark complexion. Secretary of the union was one Hawkins, 50 to 55 years old, 5'6", 170 pounds and a broad build, a sandy mustache, gray hair, a fair complexion, wearing eyeglasses. The organizer for the union was H. H. Ramsey, 38 to 40 years old, 5'11", 185 pounds on a medium frame, clean shaven, light brown hair, and a fair complexion. Ramsey had a crippling dental

² Ferrell, "BTW," p. 95. Contemporary lists of union members and of lumber managers are reprinted in the Appendices, below.

³ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, To All Members, SLOA, January 6, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; Ferrell, "BTW," p. 95.

affliction that apparently caused him to talk out of one side of his mouth.⁴ Such minute descriptions characterize SLOA correspondence, an indication of the degree managers depended on undercover agents.

W. W. Wilson was the organizer for the Yellow Pine Graders and Inspectors Organization, headquartered in Beaumont, Texas. Newspapers in the piney woods took notice of Wilson's efforts, which he carried out apparently on behalf of the American Federation of Labor. "The movement has its origin at Beaumont and classified advertisements have been inserted in daily papers of Texas and Louisiana asking that all graders and inspectors of lumber interested in organization be requested to send their names and addresses to a postoffice box in that city."⁵ Wilson did not let on about the organization's intentions, although the newspapers assumed it would seek higher salaries and better working conditions. Noting that efforts to organize sawmill labor had failed, newsmen speculated that Wilson would follow the successful methods of organizing craft workers on railroads. Lumber inspectors, when interviewed, expressed doubt that the union would succeed because it only appealed to "those in both departments whose ability precluded their holding continued or steady employment with manufacturing or shipping concerns."⁶ It was then common knowledge that union organizers in Beaumont, Port

⁴ "Officers of Filers and Sawyers Association," ML&Mco Records, No. 2557, File 6966, WHMC.

⁵ Southern Lumber Operators' Association, St. Louis, Missouri, to Those Interested, March 1, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶ Southern Lumber Operators' Association, typescript copy of Yellow Pine Graders and Inspectors Organization correspondence, February 9, 1911, No. 3660, Box 30, File 645, LCLC Records, WHMC.

Arthur, Shreveport, and Lake Charles had been attempting to devise more effective means of organizing sawmill labor than had been tried in the past. Wilson's classified advertisements, perhaps purposefully, appealed to men who were unemployed or wanted to change jobs. Obviously, some of his respondents had scant interest in joining a labor union. Because his appeals took the shape of a "blind ad," he devised an answer that proved equally misleading: "In reply beg to advise the position advertised is now filled, however, if you are a lumberman, the right kind of a man, and wish to get on the 'Band Wagon' and will remit your application fees of two dollars it is very likely we will be able to put you in touch with something at an early date."⁷ In Wilson's reply, he enclosed "our plan of business," suggesting his organization could guarantee "regular employment in the future."⁸

Craft unions, however, held no terror for lumbermen, particularly unions that advertised their social advantages. Militant industrial unions were an entirely different thing. One mill superintendent, receiving notice from the SLOA about Wilson's efforts to organize a craft union, dismissed the attempt as of little consequence: "As to the Graders and Inspectors Union, with their home office in Beaumont, Texas, there is not much doing, but that is not the Union we are worrying about, in this neck of the woods. It is the United Timber Workers of America" that lumbermen should worry about. "They started out in December or January with two organizers, and they have been to all the mills along the L.& A., and the Watkins [the section of the Iron Mountain

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

Railroad south of Alexandria, Louisiana], and around Lake Charles, up the K.C.S. and over the Santa Fe to Oakdale [Louisiana]."⁹ The organizers traveled as insurance agents, he found. Six more organizers had begun working in the William Buchanan mills along the L&A Railroad in Arkansas and Louisiana. They worked the mills so quietly, he added, that, it was nearly impossible to learn whether anyone had joined. The movement seemed much larger than lumbermen supposed. Union headquarters were situated in Alexandria, Louisiana, under the direct scrutiny of the SLOA. Lumbermen quickly began to suspect that the union had the backing of the American Federation of Labor. The AFL would, lumbermen feared, bring the lumber workers union into the national organization as an affiliate, when its membership and treasury had grown to significant levels. At least one manager depended on the color line to prevent the union from succeeding, assuming, with a certain logic, that white and black workers would not get along together long enough to win the rough and tumble strikes necessary to defeat the SLOA. But just to make certain, he complained to the insurance company Jay Smith and Arthur Lee Emerson represented and had their commissions revoked. The two organizers, he said, had returned to Alexandria a short time earlier with the names of nearly 400 new members. George K. Smith, treasurer of SLOA, immediately made copies of the mill superintendent's letter and circulated it among the association members. Systematic publicity proved effective in building both concern and confidence

⁹ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, To Those Interested, March 21, 1911, No. 3660, Box 30, File 656, LCLC Records, WHMC.

among lumbermen.¹⁰ Three days later, C. P. Myer, manager of mills and logging for Kay Ell, wrote to F. G. Weathersby, superintendent of Camp No. 3 at Buna, Texas, about the movement to organize all sawmill and woods employees in a union. Myer, who would later in the month become the chairman of the Texas Board of Governors for the SLOA, considered Kay Ell management's continued vigilance absolutely necessary to "nip it in the bud." Otherwise, the growth of the BTW union "means destruction to all authority."¹¹

Mills throughout the piney woods had already decided to curtail their operation in January by closing at least five days, hoping to force lumber prices up again.¹² The Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association met in New Orleans January 17-19 to make plans to deal with the problems of overproduction. Since its founding several years earlier under the leadership of Captain White, the YPMA had concentrated on economic matters affecting the industry, leaving labor relations to the SLOA, which had scheduled its first meeting of the year for March 31, 1911. President Johnson's call for a general meeting of the SLOA was based on the extent of the "infection" revealed by a letter he had received from a Louisiana manufacturer. The call was stamped IMPORTANT AND CONFIDENTIAL. One man named Jones, discharged because he belonged to the union, told his employer that he was through with the union and gave up his union card. He

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to F. G. Weathersby, Buna, Texas, March 24, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

¹² J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, January 7, 1911; White to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 7, 1911, No. 3660, Box 29, Files 636 and 637, LCLC Records, WHMC.

then admitted that there were 245 locals organized in Louisiana. He did not know the number of men in each local, but he said that the workers in the Fullerton local numbered 235, and that virtually every man there belonged to the BTW. Bon Ami had an equal number. Cravens and Woodworth were solidly organized. At Carson, the union had 81 white and 115 black members. The lumbermen did not yet know the extent of "infection" at Neame, although they were certain it had been organized. "My judgement is that we are sleeping on the situation, and I think that if the truth were known, we would find the situation really much more serious than we have had any idea or reasons to suspect, so far, consequently I ask that a meeting be called in New Orleans not later than one week from yesterday [March 23, 1911]."¹³ At one mill, the manager convinced his black employees to leave the union, but they hesitated because they were afraid white union members would respond with violence. Johnson calculated that were each local to have had only 50 members each, lumbermen would be faced with a union of 11,250 members. The membership would average nearer 100, he calculated. Should every sawmill in the South close until their workers left the union, the SLOA would win in 30 days. Otherwise, he implied, it would mean a long hard fight with an organization that operated in secret, a dark, foreboding, unpredictable, independent force.¹⁴

In a personal letter to Captain White and other directors of the association, Johnson noted that the SLOA had been inactive for three years, since the economic

¹³ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to Members and Manufacturers of Yellow Pine, March 24, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 662, WHMC.

¹⁴ Ibid.

problems created by the bank panic in late 1907.¹⁵ White passed the letter on to Willard Warren at Fisher, Louisiana, with a note asking him to attend the New Orleans meeting and follow the lead of Sam Carpenter, a "conservative and level-headed"¹⁶ lumberman. "Be sure to be in New Orleans next Friday," Captain White urged Clarence Slagle at the same time. "They have got about all the mills organized. Presume you are already in trouble if you only knew it, and they will likely show themselves soon."¹⁷ He continued his discussion of the subject a week later in a letter to Slagle at Clarks and Warren at Fisher, Louisiana. Because he could not be at the Grunewald Hotel in New Orleans for the meeting the following Friday, it was extremely important, he said, that both Slagle and Warren attend. He repeated much of Johnson's information, particularly the description of union locals organized in the Calcasieu district, but he doubled the number of members estimated for each local. "If this is true, there are over 20,000 already organized." The situation called for "cool heads and good, sound judgment men who can look on both sides of the question."¹⁸ A rationale was needed, he said. "If an argument can be produced so that the men will see that there is justice in it, it

¹⁵ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, March 25, 1911, Box 84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁶ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, March 27, 1911; C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to White, March 25, 1911, Box 84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁷ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, March 27, 1911, LCLC Records, Box 31, File 662, WHMC.

¹⁸ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, and W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, March 27, 1911, copies in Box 84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, and LCLC Records, Box 31, File 662, WHMC.

weakens their side of the case very materially, but if no argument is produced but a purely selfish one and they are left to feel that they are mistreated and that their condition is one that is held arbitrarily by their employers, they will feel that there is injustice, and with a feeling of injustice rankling in a mans [sic] heart, he is acting honestly when he rebels, therefore it is absolutely necessary that people of thoughtful minds should examine into the situation and show from the laborers standpoint that this is not in their interests."¹⁹ The opportunity for pay and advancement, he concluded, would be completely lost to both labor and management were control of the lumber industry turned over to a labor union. Captain White typically looked on what he perceived to be both sides of any question, but in this case there was no ground common enough for such niceties.²⁰

Two days before the SLOA meeting in New Orleans, E. E. Fitzgerald, general manager of the William Buchanan mills at Minden and Selma, Louisiana, called Clarence Slagle "over the long distance telephone this morning from Texarkana, regarding the labor situation here at Clarks and Standard."²¹ A talented sawmill engineer, Fitzgerald had come down from Minnesota in the 1890's to install equipment made by the Alis

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to Members, SLOA, March 3, 1911; Johnson to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, March 25, 1911, Box 84; Johnson to Members and Manufacturers of Yellow Pine, March 24, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; W. W. Wright, West Eminence, Missouri, to White, March 22, 1911; Johnson to Members and Manufacturers of Yellow Pine, March 24, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 30, Files 656 and 657; Box 31, File 662, WHMC.

²¹ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, March 29, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Machinery Company of St. Paul. In 1893 he invented an improved band saw and invested much of the proceeds from the sale of his patent in the Bodcaw Lumber Company, becoming a partner of William Buchanan and Arthur Pack. Unlike most mill managers, Fitzgerald was a technician not an accountant. In 1911, as general manager of two of the Buchanan mills on the Louisiana & Arkansas Railroad, Fitzgerald found his mills and Buchanan's plants at Good Pine and Trout, Louisiana, solidly unionized.²² He went up to Texarkana to confer with Buchanan about the situation and decided to call Slagle because he thought the neighboring LCLC plants at Clarks and Standard had likely been organized too. He said the Buchanan interests intended to send a representative to the SLOA meeting in New Orleans before deciding how to handle the matter, but at this point the mills would probably be closed "until they freed themselves of this element."²³ As it turned out, the Buchanan mills did not send anyone to the SLOA meeting and, much in the way that Henry Latcher acted, continued to pursue an independent, although harshly anti-union, course.²⁴

For his part, Slagle assured Fitzgerald that neither the Clarks front nor the mill had been organized by any union, "but that a few days ago a party had attempted to unionize our woods labor at Standard, but he did not undertake to work in the town of

²² A brief biography of E. E. Fitzgerald is in Mayor, William Buchanan, pp. 31, 78; see also, Alexandra Eyle, "Biography of Charles Lathrop Pack," to be published by the College of Environmental Science and Forestry, State University of New York, Syracuse, memoir copy in Author's Collection.

²³ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, March 29, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 30, File 656, WHMC.

²⁴ Eyle, "Charles Pack," pp. 2-16.

Standard proper."²⁵ A man who claimed to be a preacher showed up at Standard front on March 17, 1911, where he held meetings with the workers. Slagle later learned that he had arrived from Urania, offering a union card for a \$1 fee and dues of \$1 a month. At the end of a year, the preacher said, the union would demand that the lumber companies pay higher wages and work their crews shorter hours, the refusal of which would mean a general strike. He bragged that with the union's success at that point, it would organize all Southern lumber mills within a year. John Collins, the superintendent at Standard, sent a man to the first union meeting, who reported what the preacher had said. The next day, Sunday morning, Collins went out to the front, got the workers together and made a speech himself, in which he pointed out the dangers of union membership. The preacher held a Sunday afternoon meeting at a nearby farm, but few men felt it safe to attend. He left the front that afternoon, but after dark he slipped back into the camp and got a room in one of the boarding houses under an alias. When Collins learned the man was still at the front, he had the engineer get steam up in the shay locomotive "and ran an engine out to the camp, but it seems that the party heard the whistle of the engine and getting uneasy grabbed his suitcase and left thru the woods and he had not been heard of since."²⁶ He had managed, however, to sign four new members in the union, if indeed it were not a fraud perpetrated on both company and its work force. "Two of these men quit and left the camp and the other two were discharged, so as the matter stands none of the men that joined the union are in our

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

employ,"²⁷ Slagle asserted. The general manager could give no reason the union had not attempted to organize at Clarks. He had kept a close watch and had satisfied himself that they had not visited his milltown. Union success elsewhere would mean that it would be only a matter of time before he had the same trouble. In the final analysis, he said, Clarks was prepared to close its mills "absolutely until we can free ourselves of the union."²⁸

Slagle's explanation of the labor situation circulated among the Grandin interests and returned to Clarks for filing. "I hope this matter can be controlled," W. B. Pettibone wrote from Hannibal, Missouri, "but the day may come when it cannot be avoided. Of course at this time there would be some benefits from a general shut-down. [But] I notice the Louisiana Central had on skids March 1st. nearly nine million ft. of logs. In the event that a shut down is necessary for any cause, it may prove unfortunate having so many logs in the woods."²⁹ In New Orleans for the SLOA meeting on March 31 and April 1, Slagle and Willard Warren talked over the problems of lumber marketing, deciding "we had better run our mills five days a week as I understand that some of the other mills are finding it necessary to do."³⁰ Their idea was simply to reduce the running time to fit the numbers of orders for lumber because the level of sales

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.; see also, C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, March 29, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²⁹ W. B. Pettibone, Hannibal, Missouri, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, April 1, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 30, File 658, WHMC.

³⁰ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, April 3, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 30, File 658, WHMC.

would not justify running full time. Captain White agreed with them, advising them to follow the practice recently adopted by Long-Bell and Kay Ell to operate only five days instead of six days a week. He added that the Exchange mills might be required "to yet curtail to 4 days if there is more lumber produced than can be marketed."³¹

C. D. Johnson as president of the SLOA notified members of the actions of the association in New Orleans, recommending that "manufacturers in each state make careful investigation of the labor situation around their plant and especially in their woods, and if any evidence is found of an attempt to organize that the facts be reported to the Chairman of the Board of Governors of their state and a statement made of what steps have been taken to prevent the formation of a local lodge or to disband any that have been formed."³² To each of the Boards of Governors in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas, he recommended an early meeting to canvass the progress of the BTW. Any situation too complex for local remedy would be reported to the Executive Committee of the SLOA. M. L. Fleishel, chairman of the Louisiana Board of Governors, SLOA, called the meeting of Louisiana manufacturers in Beaumont, Texas, apparently to escape wide public recognition of the board's activities. With Fleishel in Beaumont were Robert Stack, Woodworth; B. H. Smith, Longville; W. L. Prickett, Bon Ami; W. N. Dodd, DeRidder; R. M. Hallowell, Elizabeth and Oakdale; J. H. Morrison, Carson and Neame; L. F. Haslam, Pickering, Cravens, and Barham; W.

³¹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, April 5, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 30, File 658, WHMC.

³² C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, To Those Interested, April 3, 1911; Johnson to Boards of Governors, April 3, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

T. Woodring, Captain George Locke, J. A. Bel, and W. H. Krause, Lake Charles; M. J. Ragley, Elizabeth; C. T. Allis, Roberts; G. R. Ferguson, Leesville; R. J. Wilson, Kinder, Louisiana; C. E. Walden and John N. Gilbert, Beaumont, Texas. Walden of the Sabine Tram Company, Wilson of Peavy Byrnes Lumber Company, and Gilbert of the Nona Mills Company attended as hosts of their fellow lumbermen but did not vote.³³

The Louisiana group recommended that "a certificate be requested of each employee, stating that he did not at this time, nor would he during the tenure of his employment with his present Company become identified with any labor union."³⁴ Already, the SLOA had voted to require applicants to file complete employment records with a new employer, giving personal and family information, and releasing former employers of liability for information they gave in response to a signed request. This formed the basis of an industry-wide black list, although lumbermen vehemently denied the charge. Now Fleishel's board and a group of mills in the vicinity of Lake Charles, Louisiana, had called up the old yellow dog contract they had imposed with such success in 1906. Fleishel wired the SLOA in St. Louis: "At full committee meeting here today attended also by Messrs Walden, Gilbert and Wilson, have determined to submit certificates reading as follows: 'I hereby certify that I do not belong to any labor union and that I will not join one so long as I remain in the employ of this company.' [A]sking that every employee sign this statement before resuming work Monday morning. Wire

³³ SLOA, St. Louis, Missouri, To Those Interested, April 6, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁴ M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, to Robert Stack, Woodworth, Louisiana, et al., April 6, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 30, File 660, WHMC.

quick if see any objections to this course and if not will you circulate the information to interested parties."³⁵ The SLOA saw no objections, of course, noting that the statement was virtually the same as the one association mills used in 1906. In a circulated letter on April 6, the association distributed a copy of the earlier form:

"In consideration of _____ furnishing me employment, state that I am not at this time identified in any way whatsoever with any labor organization, and further, that I will not interest myself in nor lend my encouragement to nor become identified with any organization of labor during the time I am employed by the above mentioned company."³⁶

Fleishel and the mills of the Calcasieu long leaf pine district set off a rush to cure the yellow pine industry of "infection" by "union agitators." To provide leadership to any manager who exhibited any reluctance "to take prompt and definite action ... with all the strength of its power," the chairman noted that the three mills of the Pickering Lumber Company, two mills of the Central Coal & Coke Company, three mills of the Industrial Lumber Company, two mills of the Sabine Tram Company, and four mills of the Gulf Lumber Company (of which he was also vice president and general manager) had "definitely determined to require a signature to this statement from all of their labor before resuming work on Monday morning, and it is recommended that you do likewise and we trust it will be your pleasure to do so."³⁷

³⁵ M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, to Robert Stack, Woodworth, Louisiana, et al., April 6, 1911, with copies of SLOA application for employment and yellow dog contract, in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, and in LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 30, File 660, WHMC.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

Some managers did not wait on Fleishel to act. On April 6, the same day that the Louisiana chairman asked SLOA headquarters in St. Louis for approval of the Lake Charles yellow dog contract, Willard Warren addressed a circular letter to his employees at Fisher and Victoria, Louisiana:

TO EMPLOYEES:

You will likely be solicited, if you have not been already, to join a labor union that certain agitators are endeavoring to form. These agitators are working in their own interests more than yours.

In order that each individual may have an opportunity of expressing himself, you are asked to sign a card stating your position in the matter.

All employees will have until Saturday noon to return their cards to their foreman.

I assure you that I have only your best interests at heart.³⁸

The visit two days earlier by Amos Thorla, a former employee of the 4 L Company, who came as an "agitator" to work "among the negroes," convinced Warren that he had to act quickly before other organizers for the BTW arrived. At Zwolle on April 1, Warren said, the Sabine Lumber Company "had a meeting where the question was discussed from both sides, and the meeting voted overwhelmingly in favor of not having a union. I believe our plan of a signed statement will be better, although I understand they are having all the men sign a statement since the meeting."³⁹ As it turned out, nearly all the employees at Fisher signed the anti-union cards. The manager at Victoria passed out the yellow dog cards on April 8 and got similar returns, Warren said. "Guess I will

³⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, April 6 and 8, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 30, File 659, WHMC, and in Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁹ Ibid.

sleep good tonight."⁴⁰ The plan had been put into operation with less trouble than he had thought possible. He did not openly threaten those who refused to sign, but surely they must have known that otherwise their presence in the mills and woods would not have been suffered long to continue. "I found that by picking out the busybodies in advance and giving them a talk that it was an easy matter to put them on our side of the fence. I think that if the agitators come here now that they will find very few that will go back on their agreement; not enough to justify their spending their time here."⁴¹

Clarence Slagle felt confident that his mills at Clarks and Standard, Louisiana, had not been organized by the BTW, and he proposed to leave well enough alone until union organizers made an attempt to contact LCLC employees. His greatest concern was the union's apparent success at Trout and Good Pine, Louisiana, in Catahoula [later LaSalle] Parish to the south of Clarks, two Buchanan mills on the L&A Railroad, which had been shut down. The company called it a strike, but the union said it was a shut-out. Given the lumberman's abhorrence of collective bargaining, the union view was likely accurate, but the records are not at all clear.⁴² Union organizers, Warren noted, worked quietly, which left some doubt in his mind about the union's success at Fisher and Victoria. Having his men sign yellow dog cards gave him some assurance, although he also found that union organizers had visited his plants without his knowledge. One organizer visited nearby Many, Louisiana, the evening before [April 9, 1911], inviting

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, April 7, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

"all of the laboring men to attend, but so far as I have been able to learn there was no attendance from here."⁴³ The presence of organizers did not necessarily mean the mills were "infested," Warren cautioned. "It seems to be the plan to drop into a town and talk to just a few parties,- then, later, come back, and even make several trips before coming to the time of organizing."⁴⁴ Such activities could be monitored and dangers growing out of them met and overcome, but it would be a difficult matter to screen those men removed at distant mills for union activity. The best policy for the time being was to keep informed of mills that closed or were in trouble from union activity, "so that we can be on the look out for parties coming from there. Fortunately we have all the men we can use."⁴⁵ When his father-in-law, O. W. Fisher, president of the 4 L Company, returned from a voyage to Honolulu, Hawaii, in early April, Warren explained the labor troubles at Carson, Cravens, and Fullerton, the meeting of the SLOA the last day of March, and the yellow dog cards he had forced employees at Fisher and Victoria to sign. "I think now that there will be no trouble here,"⁴⁶ he said. Mills farther south quite likely would continue to have problems, he speculated, but they would likely win after a brief fight. One of the lumbermen's favorite charges was that union organizers made

⁴³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, April 10, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 30, File 660, WHMC.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, April 10, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

handsome profits from collecting fees and dues. "These organizers are mostly log cutters and ex-gamblers, and they are making a pretty good thing out of it."⁴⁷

Pressure from labor union representatives and the responses of lumbermen naturally affected company policies that did not have anything to do with the wages or conditions of labor, although in the centralized company towns everything necessarily had to do with labor sooner or later. In April, beset by the stresses of labor relations, Clarence Slagle asked for advice on the question of a lodge hall for black employees. Black workers had been demanding the freedom to join a lodge, one not associated with the labor movement, and Slagle was inclined to grant their wishes. Still, he worried that the lodges could provide a vehicle with which the men could cause the company trouble later. Already, about 40 black workers had joined the black Knights of Pythias Lodge at nearby Columbia. If they were to join any lodges, Slagle reasoned, it would be far better for them to associate with one at Clarks.⁴⁸ Warren had his mind made up on the subject of a black lodge hall in his town, pointing out that the 4 L Company always discouraged black employees who expressed an interest in joining lodges, social or eleemosynary. "I don't know what good it would do to us, or even to them, to have these lodges," he complained. "For our part, we have given them a combination church and schoolhouse for those who are religiously inclined, and there is a shack for the use

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, April 11 and 14, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 644, WHMC.

of those inclined to gamble."⁴⁹ At Fisher, Louisiana, there was never any middle ground between sin and virtue, and, for blacks at least, no effort to distinguish between the two. Slagle, never very sure of his principles without the moral support of his peers, quickly changed his mind about a lodge hall for blacks. "Since writing you I have given this matter considerable thought and have about come to the conclusion that we do not want a negro lodge here at Clarks, not but what it would be better to have our men attend those meetings here at Clarks than at Columbia or elsewhere, but because if the lodge is organized here at Clarks a majority of the negroes will want to join, which will make a very strong lodge organization here in our midst and it may be something we do not want later on."⁵⁰

Nevertheless, Slagle did not outright refuse to add a story to the new church building for a lodge hall for blacks. He spoke to Alex Hamilton, superintendent at Clarks, about the matter, and on a trip to Beaumont for a meeting of the SLOA, Hamilton discussed the idea with several lumbermen. All except S. T. Woodring of the Calcasieu Long Leaf Lumber Company [Long-Bell] in Lake Charles and Warren at Fisher and Victoria had lodge halls for blacks. Only Warren spoke against the lodge halls on principle. Woodring had no hall because the company did not own the town of Lake Charles, where such facilities had been otherwise provided. The manager of Carson backed up the complaint voiced by Warren, however, pointing out that meetings

⁴⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, April 12, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁰ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, April 14, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

of the labor organizer and Carson's black employees had been held in the lodge hall there. The managers at DeRidder, Bonami, Fullerton, Zwolle, Pickering, and Elizabeth favored lodge halls. Their testimony, Hamilton said, "confirms the idea that I have always had that it would be a good thing for our colored employees.... [who] are Church men and Lodge men, and I believe that we could handle them to better advantage right here in town."⁵¹ A month later, to prepare Slagle for a meeting of the LCLC board of directors in Kansas City, Hamilton repeated his appeal for "adding a story to the colored Baptist Church, for the use of the colored Lodges." It would cost less now than later, he said, "on account of the fact that we are going to build the Church anyway." He added that "enough bodies will use the Hall to insure an adequate return on the investment, with all depreciation charges added." But far more important were the cultural advantages. "I find that our best and most faithful and competent colored employees are, almost without exception, Lodge men as well as Church members, and I think that membership in Lodges should be encouraged, as tending to lead the colored men away from other means of spending their time, such as gambling."⁵² So the matter was finally dropped, and the black Baptist Church rose no higher than a single story.

Two weeks after establishing the Louisiana Board of Governors, SLOA, M. L. Fleishel sent a circular letter to the managers on the Sabine River stating "that practically

⁵¹ Alex Hamilton, Clarks, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, May 1, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 644, WHMC.

⁵² Alex Hamilton, Clarks, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, June 1, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 671, WHMC. See also W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Slagle, April 12, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

our entire crew have signed the non-union labor certificates; in fact, no one has refused to sign them."⁵³ Unfortunately, however, the Gulf Lumber Company "had in the woods six Bohemian sawyers" or flatheads who declined to sign the yellow dog cards on the advice of their Consul, "so we have discharged these men" and "have not had to resort to this method with any of the balance." Only "a few straggling negroes" had not yet signed nor had they refused.⁵⁴ Furthermore, the company would hire no one who had not signed the yellow dog cards in advance. A. L. Emerson, Fleishel said, spent April 12, 1911, near Elizabeth, but company officials refused to let him inside the town where he would find, in any case, "no material now for him to work on."⁵⁵

By the middle of April, Slagle had given up his resolve to decline to force his employees to sign yellow dog contracts, on the assumption that to do so would only hasten the entry of union organizers into Clarks and Standard. Then Clarks shortly afterward had its first taste of labor "agitation," mostly just talk among the men, but the reports of a labor union organizer coming to the town during the evening of April 13 frightened Slagle so badly that he ordered distribution of Willard Warren's version of the yellow dog cards. "At last some talk is going the rounds on our plant about labor unions, due largely to men coming here from the Buchanan mills" at Trout and Good Pine, Louisiana, he said. After hearing rumors of a visit by an organizer, "we thought the time had arrived for us to have the men declare themselves for or against the union."

⁵³ M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, to S. H. Fullerton, St. Louis, Missouri, et al., April 13, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 30, File 660, WHMC.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

He planned to distribute the cards on April 15, expecting no trouble, "but we are afraid to risk the matter any longer on account of the discussion of this labor movement on the part of our men."⁵⁶

At Barham, Cravens, and Pickering, Louisiana, the W. R. Pickering Lumber Company started up its plants on the morning of April 17, 1911, "with no men who have not signed the non-union cards."⁵⁷ All the men at Pickering signed right away, as did virtually all the men at Barham, but at Cravens several men refused to sign and were fired on the spot. The company would hire no replacements who did not sign the yellow dog agreement, he said. Still, there had been trouble at Barham and Cravens the week before. L. F. Haslam, general manager of the Pickering Lumber Company at Pickering, Louisiana, complained that some mills had not demanded that their employees sign "yellow dog" cards. Haslam's men at the Pickering mill at Barham became so incensed by the apparent discrimination that they went out on strike, closing the plant for two days. Nevertheless, the manager persisted, and by the middle of April he had "all of the men at our three plants who are still employed, signed up, and we anticipate no further difficulty in operating our plants."⁵⁸ Only the Long-Bell mills at DeRidder, Bonami,

⁵⁶ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, April 14, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁷ L. F. Haslam, Pickering, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, et al., April 17, 1911, No. 3660, Box 30, File 661, LCLC Records, WHMC.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

and Lake Charles had not forced their employees to sign such cards, a fact that could have set off the "general dissatisfaction" with the Pickering management.⁵⁹

Willard Warren at Fisher found both the Lake Charles non-union card and the application forms circulated by George K. Smith, secretary of the SLOA, unsuitable for his purposes, so he drafted his own card, which, he said, many lumbermen thought was "more liberal and at the same time answered just as well as the Lake Charles form." The application form failed to meet his standards also. "I don't think [it] is what we wanted, and some of us here are going to try to get up one that will answer the purpose and be less elaborate."⁶⁰ Smith deftly countered with a proposition the frugal Warren could scarcely turn down. "We are receiving orders for these forms and if you have not already had yours printed, we probably could furnish you same at less price than it would cost you to have them set up and printed for your own use,"⁶¹ he said. Despite the liberality displayed on his non-union card, Warren held no brief for union membership. "If some of these trouble makers have to go to some other state to secure employment it will have a beneficial effect on the balance."⁶² To Captain White, in England looking

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, April 17, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 30, File 661, WHMC, and in Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶¹ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, April 28, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, April 30, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 30, File 662, WHMC.

up his family tree, Warren wrote that "the backbone of the labor disturbance is broken,"⁶³ after mill employees throughout West Louisiana signed anti-union cards two weeks before. Even Slagle had undertaken to force his men to sign cards. And although some points south of Fisher had been organized by the BTW, "90% of our Employees had not heard of this movement."⁶⁴

The Industrial Lumber Company kept its headquarters in Beaumont, Texas, but its mills occupied sites along the Santa Fe Railroad from Kirbyville, Texas, to Oakdale, Louisiana. R. M. Hollowell, an original member of the 1906 SLOA, was the general manager of the Industrial plants at Elizabeth and Oakdale, Louisiana. On his own, Hollowell employed a "secret agent," working out of St. Louis, to investigate the union's activities in Allen, Beauregard, and Vernon Parishes. From nearly a month's undercover work in Louisiana, the operative filed a detailed report.⁶⁵ Lumber company managers, usually but not always, under the auspices of the SLOA, flooded the piney woods with

⁶³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, London, England, April 17, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁴ Warren to J. B. White, London, England, April 18, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁵ Operative's Report to the Industrial Lumber Company, May 1, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 644, WHMC, reprinted here in the Appendices. The operative may have been L. T. Mabry, 42 years old in 1912, a millwright and later a detective with the McCain agency of Dallas, Texas, and the Burns agency of Chicago. Working undercover to observe the BTW in the spring of 1911, he joined the union about June 1, 1911, and successively became a union organizer, State Organizer for Texas, doorman at the May 1912 convention of the BTW, and witness in the murder trial of A. L. Emerson and other union leaders at Lake Charles, Louisiana, in the fall of 1912. See "Detective Put on Stand," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Friday, October 25, 1912. See also Allen, East Texas Lumber, p. 178, for a description of Mabry who, while working undercover, helped organized 12 local lodges of the BTW.

secret service operatives, most of whom were millhands untrained in the methods of investigation. Three such operatives appeared at Clarks and Standard, Louisiana, at the behest of Clarence Slagle. After months of watching his men at their work and leisure, the detectives had discovered little "infection" from the union.⁶⁶

Such information, despite its extreme selectivity, spurred the lumbermen to greater efforts to stop the BTW. At Winnfield, Louisiana, on May 3, 1911, C. S. Clark, assistant general manager of the Tremont Lumber Company, transmitted to Clarence Slagle in Clarks "a list of employees at our Camp 22, Curry, La., all of whom are members of the Union. These men have been discharged from our employ on account of their affiliation with the Union and we are sending this list to you for your information so that you will be in a position to refuse them employment should they apply to you for work."⁶⁷ The list included G. C. Simmons, Jack Sartain, Ed Benton, S. Spearman, Tom Hogg, W. Shaw, Ben Tommey, T. T. Wilson, J. Howie, L. Couch, W. L. Strahan, H. Grey, Ed Grisson, W. H. Stephens, M. Price, D. E. Gains, J. C. Sutton, W. E. Roberts, F. Sutton, Tom Williams, W. T. Cox, Tom Mixon, Tom Weems, D. S. Roy, E. T. Davis, J. Mount, and J. Wilson. In late April, the woods crew at Camp No. 22, logging for the company's Rochelle mill, went out on strike, one of scores of brief work stoppages apparently caused by increased surveillance. At the same time Clark had been trying to find a new camp foreman to replace a man who had taken another job

⁶⁶ Operatives' reports for investigations at the Louisiana Central Lumber Company plants are in LCLC Records, No. 3660, Boxes 31 and 32, Files 669 to 740, WHMC.

⁶⁷ G. S. Clark, Winnfield, Louisiana, to Louisiana Central Lumber Company, Clarks, Louisiana, May 3, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 672, WHMC.

elsewhere. J. F. Rogers had applied, and Slagle responded to a request for a recommendation, since Rogers had worked for LCLC earlier. Clark explained Tremont's labor policy to Slagle: "We are forcing all of our men at this Camp to sign the regular contract forms, but have since heard from our Rochelle Office that the organizer in our vicinity is instructing all members to sign these contracts and still remain loyal to their Union. This being the case, we have decided to select a man at each Camp who will be in close touch with the other men, and join the Union, should a branch start at any Camp."⁶⁸ As quickly as the company's operatives reported union members to the Winnfield office, the manager would simply fire them, giving no cause for his action. His old crew, he noted, had been mostly white, supported by a number of black workers, who failed to sign the yellow dog contract for fear of retribution from the whites. After he fired the white workers, he convinced some of the black men to sign the contract and put them back to work. A month later, Clark asked Slagle to return the list of men fired and "also any correspondence relating to labor troubles, as we wish to destroy any outstanding correspondence relating to this subject."⁶⁹ Apparently Slagle returned the originals of Clark's letters, but his office staff made copies that he kept, despite Tremont's display of scruples about the blacklist.

The lumbermen of the region had become so involved in labor-related matters that the SLOA took up most of the time of a meeting of the Yellow Pine Manufacturers'

⁶⁸ G. S. Clark, Winnfield, Louisiana, to Louisiana Central Lumber Company, Clarks, Louisiana, May 5, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 672, WHMC.

⁶⁹ G. S. Clark, Winnfield, Louisiana, to Louisiana Central Lumber Company, Clarks, Louisiana, June 6, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 672, WHMC.

Association in St. Louis on May 9, 1911, where the labor question was the principal subject under discussion. Lumbermen at the meeting agreed. C. C. Sheppard, acting sales manager for the Exchange mills, reported to members of the Grandin interests that the situation was indeed serious and required "strong measures ... to avoid having practically all of the plants in the South unionized."⁷⁰ C. D. Johnson, president of SLOA, had named a five-man committee to prepare resolutions. John Henry Kirby, Chas. Keith, S. J. Carpenter of Tremont Lumber Company, Sam Fullerton, and W. T. Murray of Fordyce Lumber Company in Arkansas, drafted a resolution urging yellow pine lumbermen to curtail their plants and logging fronts to four days a week on May 22, 1911. "It was their idea that this reduction in running time should give the men less money to contribute towards the organization, and would be an effective method of shutting off the further organization of the men."⁷¹ The vote was virtually unanimous, except several mills in Arkansas who wanted to wait until the movement reached them to curtail their operations. Carpenter, noting that his plants had been down a great deal in any case, asked to be exempted, but under pressure from other lumbermen finally agreed to curtail operations. Kirby asked the association to exempt his woods crews from curtailment, arguing that he needed to work his mules six days a week to be able to feed them. Also he wanted to take care of a heavy tie and piling business. After a

⁷⁰ C. C. Sheppard, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, et al., May 10, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷¹ Ibid.

strenuous argument, Kirby gave in and agreed to idle his herd of mules for two days, along with his workers.⁷²

The blacklist and the yellow dog contracts, although effective with the immediate employees of the mills, still did not dissuade others from joining the BTW and continuing to attempt to organize the mills and woods. At Houston, Texas, a new voice was raised for the BTW when Covington Hall, described by the SLOA as an "agitator and editor of the pamphlet called 'REBELLION'" began a speaking tour through Texas on May 7, 1911. "Hall," the association secretary wrote, "is a man about 35 years old, 5'9", weighing about 150#, a crank on the conditions of the working man. If he should visit your vicinity, please advise."⁷³ It was all very well for the association managers to give advice, but actual situations did not easily fit the preconceived instructions. W. B. Williams, a lumberman at Oberlin, Louisiana, grew quite irate because of the superior attitude of the secretary of the SLOA. The problem began when T. J. Pope, BTW organizer stationed in Oakdale, went to Oberlin and asked permission to talk with Williams's workers. The manager saw no reason to fear what Pope might tell his men, and he readily agreed. Pope, however, failed after two attempts to get any new members. Williams blamed the union's failure on incompetence and a lack of a just cause, but quite likely the men knew they were being closely watched and kept quiet.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ SLOA, St. Louis, Missouri, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, May 8, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

The exercise convinced Williams, however, that the association and its leadership had made far more of the labor problem than actually existed.⁷⁴

At Good Pine and Trout, Louisiana, at that time, the two large Buchanan mills there had been running four and five days a week for only the day shift since late April 1911. The Joyce interests, lumbermen from Chicago, Illinois, Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Muskegon, Michigan, operated three mills in Louisiana and two in Texas under the company name, Tremont Lumber Company. The general offices were at Winnfield, Louisiana. Company facilities also occupied the company village of Joyce, just across the Dugdemonia River. By the middle of May 1911, Tremont had stopped making lumber at two of its plants, lost a third by fire, and placed its remaining operations at Rochelle and Jonesboro, Louisiana, on a four-day-a-week schedule.⁷⁵ Samuel J. Carpenter, president of the company and the chief manager at Winnfield, cautioned his neighbors that his mills could not long continue to operate at less than full time. Carpenter agreed to this curtailment reluctantly when "deemed necessary by our neighbors, in order to control their labor." Tremont cut back its running time "in the interest of harmony," but other lumbermen should "not feel that you are being imposed upon when, sometime in the future, we increase our output."⁷⁶ Clarence Slagle at Clarks had not yet decided whether to curtail the LCLC operations, and Willard Warren

⁷⁴ W. B. Williams, Oberlin, Louisiana, to George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, May 11, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁵ W. J. Buchanan, Good Pine, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, May 16, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 667, WHMC.

⁷⁶ S. J. Carpenter, Winnfield, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, May 16, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 667, WHMC.

at Fisher would only say that he would probably cooperate with the majority in his section. All the managers would meet in Chicago within a week for still another SLOA meeting, and the negotiations would help get joint action. Meanwhile, Slagle wrote, labor "agitators" had dumped a great deal of labor union literature from the train as it passed through Clarks, Louisiana, and a week earlier someone tacked up union posters around the plant. The culprits remained anonymous. "Last night [May 15, 1911] we learned that a negro had been approached to join the Union," Slagle complained, "and the organizer said he would be out in the woods near our plant for the purpose of accepting names and we are now looking up this information but so far this morning I have not learned whether there is anything in this story or not."⁷⁷

Willard Warren had similar gossip to pass on. "The labor situation is still interesting over this way," he wrote in the middle of May. "The organizers have discontinued trying to hold meetings at the mill towns, but they appoint local secretaries at the nearest town to a mill town, and they are telling the men that they can go there one at a time, secretly, and be initiated and pay their \$1.00 initiation fee and 50c per month."⁷⁸ The organizers met a few nights earlier at Provencal two miles from Victoria. After the meeting the organizer initiated three workers into the mysteries of the Brotherhood. "I think that the movement is rapidly losing strength for the fact that they are not trying to hold secret meetings at the mills," Warren said, "but they are

⁷⁷ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, May 16, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, May 15, 1911, No. 3660, Box 31, File 667, LCLC Records, WHMC.

handing out socialist literature, and as long as there are available funds in the treasury I presume these traveling organizers will keep moving about."⁷⁹ The union's total membership was only 2,700, and it had only about \$700 in its treasury. Warren's use of the \$700 figure suggests that the Industrial Lumber Company had shared its secret agent's report with neighboring lumbermen. The SLOA, meanwhile, circulated another warning, based on good information that 1,600 yellow pine mill employees were members of union locals.⁸⁰

In Texas, "undesirable parties from the infected territory in Louisiana"⁸¹ began to invade the lumber towns, particularly in the area south of Nacogdoches. Lumbermen in Texas warned each other of the danger inherent in the situation, because, as they perceived union motives, organizers had damaged the lumber industry in Louisiana before anyone realized the danger. They fully expected the same to happen in East Texas. In Jasper County, Tom Glenn organized for the union, holding secret meetings, after which "some parties disappeared after dark that could not be located that night and neither could they be located by train time the next day."⁸² Because they could easily disappear in the piney woods, union agents, unattended by company spies, gave the lumbermen no end of worry. J. A. Herndon, Kay Ell manager at Kirbyville, Texas,

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ SLOA, St. Louis, Missouri, To Those Interested, May 16, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸¹ J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, May 10, 1911, KLC Co Records, Box 197, SFA.

⁸² Ibid.

described still another "agitator," one John "Windy" Lindsey, "5' 8", 125#, clean shaved, wears gray suits on the train, with a broad stripe, light scar on jaw, 3 or 4 large gold teeth, a black hat half worn out, red face inclined to be dished, hair not black but dark, carries cheap suit case, on the works wears overalls worn & washed, hard to identify in overalls, in traveling garb he appears a rounder."⁸³ Lindsey came to Jasper County from Fields, Louisiana, site of the Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company logging front. He found a place to live with his wife's people at Beech Grove, 15 to 20 miles northwest of Kirbyville. In East Texas, he went about the business of organizing, signing a few lumber workers and a significant number of farmers and small tradesmen.⁸⁴

Lumbermen exhibited few scruples against violence if it were exercised in behalf of a good cause and remained below the threshold of mayhem. Unfortunately, company employees, particularly quarterbosses and secret operatives, often gratuitously resorted to physical intimidation of varying degrees. Late in May, 1911, an anonymous writer, signing himself "X-C," likely a BTW member or sympathizer, protested this casual acceptance of violence behind the facade of order. "I see where employes of your place beat up a party who it is claimed they mistook for a labor agitator who was in those parts recently," X-C wrote. "Labor agitators are needed in these sawmill sections. I suppose the employes who took part in this outrage were some of your little 2x4 foreman,

⁸³ J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, May 16, 1911, KLC Co Records, Box 197, SFA.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* See also C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, May 18, 1911, KLC Co Records, Box 197, SFA.

possibly assisted by a few 'pig-headed' laborers who haven't the sense 'Baalam's Ass' is credited with."⁸⁵ Lumbermen, he charged, had for a long time kept workers in virtual bondage, and now that the situation had begun to change the companies responded with violence. It would soon be necessary, he predicted, to rid the country of company managers to make room for a new system. "Just 'put it in your pipe and smoke it.'"⁸⁶ At the same time, private detectives watched the BTW from every possible vantage point. One operative discovered Fred Lund and another labor organizer named Kesterson in the piney woods. They had, detectives charged, taken part in free speech agitation conducted by the Industrial Workers of the World at Spokane, Washington, a year earlier. Lund had moved south through Little Rock and Kesterson through Texarkana, Arkansas. The pair made no attempt to contact lumber workers and soon moved on south. The private detective searched in vain for one Axelson, a member of the IWW executive board "and one of the men who organized the laborers at McKees Rock, Pa. and incited the riots there in 1909."⁸⁷

These and other detectives worked for the SLOA, whose leaders were insatiable for information on the activities of the BTW. C. D. Johnson had called a meeting of the SLOA for May 24, 1911, in Chicago's Congress Hotel, because "the recent

⁸⁵ SLOA, St. Louis, Missouri, To Those Interested, June 2, 1911, with a copy of an anonymous letter of May 26, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 671, WHMC, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Southern Lumber Operators' Association, St. Louis, Missouri, May 26, 1911, extracts from the report of a detective agency operative for May 26 and 27, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 671, WHMC, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

developments showed such activity on the part of the labor organizers in the South that he deemed it advisable to call this special meeting to consider the problem in its various phases and to devise effective means of combating the evil."⁸⁸ Charles S. Keith, president of the 4 C, had hired secret agents to watch the progress of the BTW. Reports by these detectives convinced Keith that the union had organized 35 mills, which called for changes in company policies "to successfully combat... this encroachment of organized labor."⁸⁹ Lumbermen at the meeting voted 42 to 3 to adopt the resolution offered by Keith to shut out members of the BTW. The only other business was enrolling several new members.⁹⁰ The next month, M. L. Fleishel, chairman of the Louisiana Board of Governors, SLOA, called a meeting to respond to "information to the effect that proposed convention of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers is to be held in Alexandria on Monday, June 19th."⁹¹ On Juneteenth, lumbermen recognized, most millhands would be idle because the mills traditionally closed for the celebration, leaving union delegates free to attend the convention. This time, rather than going to Beaumont, Texas, Fleishel chose the Grunewald Hotel in New Orleans for the meeting "especially as it seems impossible to conduct a meeting in Beaumont without having the object of

⁸⁸ Minutes of the Meeting of the Southern Lumber Operators' Association Held at Congress Hotel, Chicago, May 24, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 669, WHMC, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, to L. F. Haslam, Pickering, Louisiana, et al., June 3, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 671, WHMC, and in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

such a meeting anticipated and wrongly represented to the reading public."⁹² At Alexandria, headquarters for both the BTW and the office of the Louisiana Board of Governors, SLOA, union and management kept a constant surveillance of each other. On June 12, 1911, the SLOA in St. Louis circulated a letter from a member in the town, reporting that the union had been actively recruiting black laborers in the mills of the area, although inside information revealed that the union had not been successful because of the close watch kept by lumbermen. "The latest move of this organization is the employment of negro preachers to organize this class of labor," the writer charged. "I would suggest that you notify all the members of your Association to keep a close watch for these sky pilots, as I understand that several have already been sent out by the union to organize at the nearby mills."⁹³

At Carson later in the month, the superintendent of the 4 C mill wrote to I. H. Fetty in Kansas City, confirming a wire about a mass meeting on the evening of June 25, 1911. "About one hundred acknowledged membership to the 'Two Links', including twelve new members."⁹⁴ The group made no demands on the company, and in fact the superintendent attended the meeting without incident. "They have ceased to move secretly, thinking they are strong enough to frighten us," he asserted. "Joe Daniels, Ex-

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Southern Lumber Operators' Association, St. Louis, Missouri, To Members, June 12, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁴ Superintendent, Carson, Louisiana, to I. H. Fetty, Kansas City, Missouri, June 26, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 676, WHMC. "Two Links" refers to the Knights of St. Crispin, a union of New England cobblers that merged with the Knights of Labor in the 1870's. The connection is explained in David Montgomery, The Fall of the House of Labor (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 159.

President of the Carson Local, started from in front of the Store, with about thirty-five members, and went through the town, gathering strength as they went, and from there they went to the nigger quarters. By the time they reached the gun club, where the meeting was held, there were about one hundred and fifty men in the crowd."⁹⁵ Daniels then gave what the lumberman thought a very poor speech, after which he called for new members, signing twelve. The organizer instructed the new members in the practices of their craft, including the hand shake and the sign. Nearly 100 men passed the examination that admitted them to membership. The members were about evenly divided between blacks and whites. They elected Jim Grantham, a log sawyer, as president, and Ed. Lehman, a flathead, as treasurer. Lehman had to make a \$200 bond, but the local made a special assessment to give him a salary. Two black and two white members were appointed to decide the amount of his pay and report to the president on June 26, 1911. "None of our good men are connected with this thing as the members present are the scum of the town," the manager said. "Every department was well represented, in one all the woods crew belong, with the exception of eight white men and two niggers."⁹⁶ The 4 C management responded with the usual intimidations of the workers that had worked quite well at other mills, but here it backfired. From Kansas City, Missouri, I. H. Fetty, manager of the lumber department of 4 C, wrote to the SLOA offices in St. Louis. Company managers went down to Carson, Louisiana, in late June because of a

⁹⁵ SLOA, St. Louis, Missouri, to Members, June 30, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 676, WHMC.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

strike among flatheads and teamsters in the woods. When one of Carson's employees was elected a delegate to the BTW convention on June 19, the company promptly fired him. Almost immediately, the woods crew went out on strike in sympathy. "I immediately wired our superintendent to close down the plant and discharge all men interested and notify them to move out of our houses," Fetty said. "The result is the plant at Carson was closed indefinitely yesterday afternoon at 4 o'clock."⁹⁷ Because the union had organized about 112 of Carson's work force, Fetty suspected that the union had been equally as successful elsewhere in the piney woods. Drastic action was called for, he urged. The loggers and skidders at Carson, including the whole woods force, struck and marched into town after the company fired the woods superintendent for his part in the union and his election as a delegate to the BTW convention. The BTW field secretary or walking delegate convinced about 150 of the men to hold out against threats made by Keith and his management, which forced 4 C to close its mills there. Since then, Keith had been trying to convince R. A. Long to supply the 4 C mills with logs, but Long-Bell declined for fear the strike would spread to DeRidder and Lake Charles, where Long's other mills were operating. "So I am wondering," J. B. White asked, "if we will not be in the same shape soon, but the only thing we can do will be to shut down and await developments, and put double guards at the mills, same as Mr. Keith is now doing."⁹⁸ Willard Warren had no such exaggerated view of the union movement in the

⁹⁷ I. H. Fetty, Kansas City, Missouri, to SLOA, St. Louis, Missouri, June 30, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 676, WHMC.

⁹⁸ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, and C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, June 30, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File

piney woods. By early July, he said, he had not had to fire a single man at Victoria for belonging to the union, which he estimated had no more than 2,000 members across the South. A confidential source put union membership, he said, at 125 at Carson, 26 at DeRidder, 200 at Fullerton, 14 at Elizabeth, 8 at Longville, which could only mean that the movement was on the wane. In fact, he thought it was fortunate that the union was forced to strike at Carson, because the BTW was clearly not ready, financially or tactically, to undertake a serious strike and probably would not be ready for another year.⁹⁹

Nevertheless, the staff of the SLOA in St. Louis kept up a steady barrage of messages to the members, urging companies to use the reference blanks when hiring personnel, the key to the black list. Most of the companies responded to the call. Willard Warren ordered 800 application blanks from the association--500 for Fisher and 300 for Victoria--which indicates a heavy turnover as well as a determination to defeat the union. Nothing deterred the BTW, however. The union published a "dodger" or handbill late in June 1911, announcing that "A. L. EMMERSON PRESIDENT OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF TIMBER WORKERS WILL SPEAK" in Selma, Rochelle, Standard, and Clarks, all on the Iron Mountain, from June 28 to July 1. "LADIES AND GENTLEMEN ARE INVITED,"¹⁰⁰ the announcement proclaimed, a device to assure

676, WHMC, and Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, July 3, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 676, WHMC, and Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁰ Poster announcing A. L. Emerson's speaking engagements, June 28, 29, and 30, and July 1, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 676, WHMC.

that the meeting was peacefully meant and peacefully conducted. Slagle reported the incident to Willard Warren. "He reached Standard yesterday [June 30, 1911] on the local," Slagle said, "and after asking Mr. [John] Collins for permission to speak in front of the store we decided to let him make the attempt, but as there were but three or four people in front of the store at the time he asked for permission to speak in front of the office, which was granted him."¹⁰¹ Collins had a box placed in front of the office for him to use, but for some reason most of the men left without hearing him. He then decided not to talk until he reached the railway station, where some men had gathered. Some of the men at Standard, Collins claimed, "were inclined to be antagonistic toward Mr. Emmerson, which caused him to make the statement that when he came to Standard again he would be sent for."¹⁰² Slagle expected him to reach Clarks June 31 on the local passenger train. "[I]f he asks permission to speak we expect to grant it, but I am of course unable to know what the outcome will be here." Collins, he said, had been "very successful in handling the situation at Standard."¹⁰³ He hoped his men would be as indifferent to Emerson's presence as they were at Standard, but Clarks was a much larger place with more curiosity seekers, which could help the labor leader gather a crowd around him large enough to encourage him to make a speech about labor unions. As it turned out, Emerson canceled his speaking engagement at Clarks after his bad

¹⁰¹ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, July 1, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, July 3, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

notices at Standard. Emerson had gone to Fisher a few days earlier to speak to the workers there. Warren decided to let him speak in front of the commissary. Later, he was glad he made this decision, believing the men were convinced that the company was not afraid to allow labor union men to present their case to the employees. Consequently, Slagle decided to allow Emerson to speak at Standard and Clarks. The BTW president reached Standard first, arriving there on the local about 1 p.m., Friday, June 30. Emerson, Slagle said, "indulged in a great deal of talking in the afternoon."¹⁰⁴ When the north-bound passenger train arrived at Standard, to Collins's surprise "about ten or twelve labor union men got off the train and were inclined to be noisy and make trouble." Some of our men wanted to attack the union delegation, but Collins "told them he would let them know if he wanted additional help."¹⁰⁵ Emerson, Collins claimed, said that his experience at Standard convinced him that he would fail to get an audience at Clarks as well. He recognized that the mill managers had anticipated his visit and had staged the encounter. The failure of the BTW to make his talk at the mills quieted any discussion of the union around the milltowns. Throughout the episode, it seems the cruelest cut of all was the fact that everyone, even his own printer, misspelled Emerson's name.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, April 10, 1911; C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to Warren, July 1, 1911, Boxes 89 and 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

While John Collins toyed with A. L. Emerson on the dirt streets of Standard, Louisiana, the flatheads at Carson in Calcasieu [later Beauregard] Parish went out on strike, tying up the mill and the town. A few days later, however, the BTW described the conflict as a lockout. "At last we are forced into a hard fight at Carson," Jay Smith wrote to all the union locals. "We now call upon you as men of honor to help us in this fight."¹⁰⁷ His plan called for a 10 to 15 cent assessment against each member for the benefit of BTW members out of work at Carson because of the strike-lockout. "Tell all 'union men' to stay away from Carson and keep others away,"¹⁰⁸ he concluded in what proved to be a lost cause. Along with his appeal, he sent the familiar "AN ADDRESS TO ALL WORKERS IN THE LUMBER INDUSTRY," by Vincent St. John, one of the founders of the IWW.¹⁰⁹ The BTW had made plans for its first annual convention, scheduled for the middle of June, but by the middle of May 1911, the SLOA had circulated copies of the union's resolutions, including St. John's address. The copy did not identify St. John as one of the national leaders of the IWW, but the connection was not lost on the lumbermen who proclaimed that the BTW was synonymous with the radical industrial union headed by Big Bill Haywood. The resolutions assumed a self-conscious proletariat among sawmill workers. Attached to the resolutions were

¹⁰⁷ Jay Smith, Alexandria, Louisiana, To All Local Lodges, July 11, 1911, ML&Mco Records, No. 2557, File 6966, WHMC, and in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Jay Smith, Alexandria, Louisiana, To All Local Lodges, July 11, 1911, ML&MCo Records, No. 2557, File 6966, WHMC, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

application blanks and receipts for dues, returnable to Jay Smith, General Secretary and Treasurer at Alexandria, Louisiana.¹¹⁰

In St. Louis, Missouri, on July 12, 1911, John Henry Kirby presided at a called meeting of the Executive Committee of the SLOA. Kirby said that organized labor recently had exhibited "extreme activity, which demanded this meeting to devis[e] means of meeting the situation."¹¹¹ R. M. Hallowell of Elizabeth, Louisiana, on the Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe Railroad, reported that his mills were closed because of serious labor troubles, "their activities reaching to the point of interference of the union men with the non-union labor on the job."¹¹² M. L. Fleishel of Fullerton, Louisiana, also situated on the Santa Fe, noted a great deal of union activity around his plant. Charles S. Keith, president of the 4 C, admitted there was, in effect, a combination strike and lock-out at Carson.¹¹³ The milltown was situated a few miles south of Bon Ami and DeRidder, Louisiana, on the Watkins Road, later part of the Southern Pacific Railroad. After hearing from Keith, the group deemed the situation dangerous enough to call an urgent meeting in New Orleans at the Grunewald Hotel for July 19. C. M. McDaris, SLOA secretary, followed the resolution with a night letter wired to 300 operators on

¹¹⁰ Resolutions of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, Received May 18, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 668, WHMC.

¹¹¹ Minutes of Called Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Southern Lumber Operators' Assn., St. Louis, Missouri, July 12, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

July 13, 1911: "Recent developments in labor situation make immediate action imperative. Your co-operation and presence absolutely necessary."¹¹⁴

At its meeting in New Orleans, the SLOA ordered mills at Oakdale, Elizabeth, Fullerton, Cravens, DeRidder, BonAmi, and Merryville, Louisiana, to close effective July 24, 1911. Other mills had already closed in the Calcasieu long leaf pine district; except for Lake Charles, the district was completely closed. "This labor movement," Willard Warren wrote to his father-in-law in Bozeman, Montana, "is the rankest kind of socialism and some very inflammatory speeches have been made, and it would not be surprising to hear of serious happenings at any time. I believe if the mill owners will stick to their determination to stay closed down until this element is eradicated that the union will be broken up."¹¹⁵ Lumbermen, Warren pointed out, were not all of one mind; there was disagreement in their ranks. The situation had forced them to work in harmony. The 4 L Company had no union men at work at either of its towns, although just to be certain Warren had fired 18 or 20 men at both places. The company's future labor relations depended largely upon the results of the shut down to the south of Fisher; if it were successful, then the 4 L Company would "hardly experience any more trouble. If it does not prove successful it is only a question of time until we have plenty of trouble."¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ C. M. McDaris, St. Louis, Missouri, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, July 14, 1911; W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to McDaris, July 14, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, July 24, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

The large mills were not the only sawmills forced by conditions of labor to suspend operations. The Simmons Bros. Lumber Company at Pitkin, Louisiana, on the Santa Fe, reported in early July that the J. C. Hill Lumber Company of Tillman, Louisiana, had closed, along with 4 C at Carson and Industrial at Oakdale and Elizabeth. In addition to the 11 mills ordered shut down by the SLOA, the Houston Chronicle listed 21 mills closed in the region by August 1911.¹¹⁷ In Houston, Texas, in mid-July 1911, C. P. Myer, manager of mills and logging for Kay Ell, instructed the company's managers and its camp superintendents to see that all employees signed Form 260, a condition of employment with the Kirby mills and woods crews that in effect permitted the company to fire any employee at any time for any reason.¹¹⁸ M. L. Fleishel at Fullerton, Louisiana, noted with satisfaction the heated discussion in the SLOA meeting in St. Louis, which lasted so long that it had to be postponed until Wednesday, July 19, in New Orleans.¹¹⁹ At Jena, Louisiana, the LaSalle Parish seat, the Times ran an appeal for assistance from the public by A. L. Emerson on behalf of the BTW. While such publicity is not unusual, such an appeal in a newspaper virtually owned by Henry

¹¹⁷ John D. Lawor, Silsbee, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA; Houston Chronicle, p. 14, July 23; p. 11, August 12, 1911, cited in Allen, East Texas Lumber, p. 176.

¹¹⁸ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to Managers All Points and Supervisors of Camps, July 13, 1911, Box 196, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

¹¹⁹ M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, July 14, 1911; same to same, July 14, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

E. Hardtner placed his motives in some doubt, a sentiment many of his fellow lumbermen already shared.¹²⁰

The summer of 1911 was a disquieting time for lumbermen and workers alike, whose complex maneuvers still have not been completely sorted out. Several writers have attempted to make sense of the complex activities of managers and union organizers, but by and large they have failed. Fickle in two essays floundered about in the records and came to conclusions that defy all logic. A master of the pleonasm, Fickle never failed to describe SLOA meetings as "secret," when it is well understood that such meetings were invariably confidential in nature, as were union meetings and conventions. He reported that 150 lumbermen from Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas attended the SLOA meeting in New Orleans on July 19, 1911, "dominated by John Henry Kirby," at whose direction the association closed 11 mills in the DeRidder area, a lock out of 3,000 employees. The association, he claimed, empowered Kirby to shut 300 mills in three states, excluding all union men from employment.¹²¹ Fickle took the basic story of the SLOA meeting from Green, who discusses the use of yellow dog contracts and the closing of mills. Green in turn got his information from the New Orleans Times-Democrat of July 20, 1911, and from the Kirby Papers in the University of Houston, first mined by George T. Morgan, Jr. for an article entitled, "No Compromise -- No Recognition: John Henry Kirby, the Southern Lumber Operators'

¹²⁰ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, July 15, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹²¹ Fickle, "Lumber War," pp. 65-66; Fickle, "Race, Class," p. 102.

Association, and Unionism in the Piney Woods, 1906-1916." Green's most significant contribution, however, was the revelation that the SLOA turned to the William J. Burns National Detective Agency for help in overcoming the BTW. Burns who had once vowed never to take strike work, became the chief of the secret service of the SLOA, taking the place once held by the Pinkertons.¹²² Grady McWhiney in his article on Louisiana socialists in The Journal of Southern History claimed that the "Louisiana Lumber War" started when lumbermen decided to curtail the running time of their mills to four days a week. He got the date wrong; it was not May 17, 1911, when the SLOA decided on the tactic, but on May 9, 1911. The curtailment was set to begin on May 22, 1911, but it failed to find favor with more than a few mill managers. Several mills had already curtailed for one reason or another, such as Tremont's five mills and William Buchanan's seven. Three Tremont mills were already closed, and two of the Buchanan mills were down at least part of the time. To meet the letter of the curtailment agreement, Tremont and Buchanan, curtailed their days but started up night shifts at the same time. Nevertheless, McWhiney claims that 11 mills closed right away, which defies all available evidence. He also found reason to state that many workers in the region refused to sign yellow dog contracts, when even the BTW encouraged its members to sign the cards and pay their union dues, too. And finally, McWhiney claims that the attempt at curtailment served only to add strength to the union, an interpretation that

¹²² Green, BTW, p. 176; New Orleans Times-Democrat, July 20, 1911; I. H. Fetty, Kansas City, Missouri, to J. H. Kirby, Houston, Texas, August 3, 1911; SLOA Executive Committee, St. Louis, Missouri, to Kirby, September 5, 1911, Kirby Papers, UH; Morn, "The Eye That Never Sleeps," p. 177.

cannot be supported by the evidence.¹²³ The curtailment failed because the operators would not cooperate with each other, and it had no discernable impact on the BTW, who owed its weakened condition to internal problems and inadequacies: even the affairs of a labor union requires a certain level of training and experience, neither of which was in evidence among those who sought to guide the affairs of the union through this critical period. For his part, Fickle slavishly repeats Morgan's assertions. "There is no doubt that as the Operators' Association developed its leading figure was John Henry Kirby of Houston," Fickle writes, citing as evidence the anomalous claim, also patently indefensible, that Kirby "pioneered in reducing the hours of labor at his mills from ten to eight hours a day." On the contrary, it was Kay Ell, admittedly during the company's receivership and thus beyond Kirby's control, that raised the daily hours to more than 14. Fickle apparently picked up this eight-hour fiction from Allen in East Texas Lumber. Morgan asserts that Kirby "was the leader of the lumbermen," when in fact he was merely a leader. The battle lines in the Kay Ell vs. Long-Bell controversy, Morgan writes, pitted Sweet of Long-Bell and Keith of 4 C against Kirby, Fleishel of Sam Fullerton's Gulf Lumber, Sam Carpenter of "Frost-Jackson [Johnson]," W. A. Pickering, and J. M. West of American Lumber. Sam Carpenter, of course, was general manager of the Joyce family's Tremont Lumber Company, not an official of Frost-Johnson, as Morgan asserts. In Morgan's account also, Kirby's insurgents won the fight and took complete control of the SLOA at a meeting in Sweet's office in Kansas City on July 27 where lumbermen first determined to establish the union status of all sawmill and

¹²³ Grady McWhiney, "Louisiana Socialists," p. 328.

woods workers and to close all "infested" mills. Surviving documents of the SLOA will not support this account; indeed, they point to the defeat of Kirby by such stalwarts as Sweet and C. D. Johnson who remained president of the association throughout the labor crisis. Kirby, Fickle writes, agreed to determine union status of mills before ordering them closed, beginning August 7, 1911, and requiring workers to sign the yellow dog contract or be fired. Fickle based his interpretation on Morgan's paper, but both failed to point out, first, that Sweet rather than Kirby made the "No compromise -- no recognition" remark, which by implication Morgan attributes to Kirby, and, second, Kirby had nothing to do with the SLOA from its beginning in 1906 to its rejuvenation in 1910, principally because his companies, Kay Ell and HOCo, were tied up in bankruptcy proceedings in federal court. Morgan in "Kirby," accepted Kirby's rhetorical style for evidence of a controversy between the prince of pines and C. B. Sweet, vice president of the Long-Bell Lumber Company. It says something about the level of importance such rhetoric held for the participants in this charade that R. A. Long delegated Sweet to carry out the "controversy" with Kirby. "I, alone," Kirby told Sweet, "am upon the ground and conducting the activities of the organization in resistance of the aggressions of the union," a boast that received no more than the tolerant smiles of other lumbermen in the region. Morgan accepted the claim and placed in the literature the spurious argument that "at Kirby's dictation," the SLOA "order[ed] that all 'infected' mills immediately shut down."¹²⁴ Reed identifies the first mills to close as two Long-

¹²⁴ Morgan, *Kirby*, pp. 196-198, cites J. H. Kirby, Houston, Texas, to C. B. Sweet, Kansas City, Missouri, July 21, 1911; New Orleans *Times-Democrat*, July 20, 1911; Kirby wire to J. F. Keith, J. N. Gilbert, L. Miller, and F. H. Farwell, July 18, 1911;

Bell Lumber Company plants at Bombino [probably Bonami] and DeRidder, Louisiana, the American Lumber Company mill at Merryville, and the Gulf Land & Lumber Company mills at Fullerton, Louisiana. Several smaller mills closed also. Dubofsky in his account of the IWW credited Kirby with leadership of the SLOA, repeating the charge that he dominated the group and "directed the offensive." Dubofsky also seems to think the order closing 11 mills in the summer--he mistook the July order for Kirby's mythical August offensive--was the first serious action of the association. Green agrees that the summer and fall of 1911 was the beginning of the blacklist. Eric Foner bordered on the ridiculous with the claims that most workers refused to sign the yellow dog contract, that no black member of the BTW went back to work, and that few black scabs could be recruited. Mills opened, he said, during the period but not with scab labor. Foner also asserts with scant evidence that 350 mills locked out workers, doubtful, if for no other reason, because the region did not have 350 commercial mills in the first place. His estimate of 5,000 to 7,000 workers blacklisted comes closer to the truth and may be too conservative by far. Allen agrees with Reed that union membership reached as high as 35,000, but their sources are questionable. Surviving lists place the number in the hundreds. Allen repeats the demands of the BTW, printed originally in the Rebel in February 1913: 1. a minimum wage of \$2 per day; 2. a work day not to exceed ten hours; 3. pay every two weeks in United States, and not commissary, money; 4. the right

Sweet to George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, July 20, 1911, Kirby Papers, UH; Fickle, "Lumber War," pp. 61-62, 66-67; Fickle, "Race, Class," p. 102; Reed, "IWW in Louisiana," p. 45; Dubofsky, "IWW," pp. 212-215; Green, "BTW," 161-162, 177; Foner, "Organized Labor," p. 115; Allen, East Texas Lumber, pp. 179-180, 182.

to free trade; workers not to be forced to buy from company stores where prices were 33 1/3 per cent to 50 per cent higher than in nearby "free towns"; 5. discontinuance of the practice of discounting wages; 6. reasonable rents; 7. a revision of insurance, hospital and doctor fees; the men to have the right to elect their doctors, to see the insurance policy and to have representatives on a committee that would control these funds; 8. a general improvement of living and sanitary conditions in the lumber towns and camps; 9. disarming and discharge of all guards and deputy sheriffs; 10. the right to free speech, press and assembly. These "demands" appeared after the fact, the issue already having been decided by the early months of 1913.¹²⁵

In 1911, simple recognition was the only real demand, and it was the one that lumbermen found most objectionable. At any time, most lumbermen had accepted most, if not all, of these demands from their workers, but they were determined not to give up their freedom to change the wages and conditions of labor at their own discretion. At the same time, a meeting of workers at the Alexandria Lumber Company condemned the BTW, a frequent event widely publicized, and the Frost-Johnson Lumber Company employees organized the Mansfield [Louisiana] Home Protective League to combat socialism associated with the BTW.¹²⁶

Throughout the period, "loyal" employees or "concerned" merchants acted to support the lumbermen and the SLOA. In marked contrast to union meetings at which

¹²⁵ The Rebel (February 8, 1913), p. 3, reprinted in Allen, East Texas Lumber, p. 179.

¹²⁶ Reed, "IWW in Louisiana," p. 46n.

organizers recommended "prudence, moderation, firmness and obedience to laws," anti-union groups of workers and other dependents set up surveillance committees and mutual protective associations. Allen reports such meetings at Call, Evadale, Bessmay, and Silsbee, Texas, all Kay Ell towns, and at Pineland, Texas, site of a Temple Lumber Company plant.¹²⁷ Some employees of the Long-Bell Lumber Company mill at Longville, Louisiana, met July 21, 1911, "at their own initiative at which they adopted resolutions to discourage any attempt on the part of labor agitators to unionize the men at Longville."¹²⁸ A Mr. Shannon called the meeting to order at 8 p.m. in the Longville schoolhouse then nominated Jas. Goodyear as chairman, who was elected by a unanimous vote of those attending. Goodyear spoke briefly then called on L. Williams, Mr. Richardson, and Reverend Pondrom, a visiting Baptist clergyman who spoke "eloquently urging the necessity of peace and harmony between employer and employee."¹²⁹ Goodyear named a committee consisting of Shannon, Williams, Richardson, and Kemper "to draw up resolutions expressing the sentiment of the meeting." Then "Mr. Clark rose to state that he understood that at least two Union men were present and suggested that they be asked to express themselves. The Chairman requested any union men present to take the floor, if they so desired, and address the meeting, assuring them of a

¹²⁷ Allen, East Texas Lumber, pp. 176-177, cites the Jasper, Texas, Newsboy, November 6, 1911, and July 27, 1912, and the Kirby Papers, UH.

¹²⁸ Oliver O. Bright, St. Louis, Missouri, To All Members, SLOA, July 21, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, reprinted here as Appendix 14.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

courteous hearing. There was no response."¹³⁰ After this bit of pious mendacity, the committee reported a resolution that was promptly adopted unanimously by 90 employees of the lumber company. The Williams talk has the ring of extemporaneous expression, which it undoubtedly was, but it also contains most of the clichés of management and a simplification of management's position: a combination of capital and an individualistic labor force.

In Kirbyville, Texas, later that month, merchants in the town had a circular, "To the Laboring Men of Kirbyville and Surrounding Territory," printed and distributed widely. "We, the business men of Kirbyville," the circular proclaimed, took notice that "an organization known as 'The Union': is now being agitated ... binding together all races and nationalities of labor, and all grades of labor from superintendent down to water boy, in the mills, as well as all merchants and business men who can be persuaded to join."¹³¹ The Kirbyville merchants declared such action was "nothing short of rashness" to trust "parties who might instead use us for their own private gain."¹³² Surviving letters between officials of Kay Ell give convincing proof that this argument originated with J. A. Herndon, manager of the Kay Ell mill at Kirbyville. There was some dissent among merchants, he reported to the company headquarters in Houston, and

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ "To the Laboring Men of Kirbyville and Surrounding Territory," July 22, 1911, KLC Co Records, Box 197, SFA.

¹³² Ibid.

although he had believed he could "handle Tom Choates, the blind tiger man" it turned out that the bootlegger took applications for the BTW.¹³³

In the Calcasieu long leaf pine district, the clerical and skilled workers opposed the BTW, by and large, making one futile effort to organize themselves into a company union, which did not get any more support from management than the Brotherhood itself. On August 5, 1911, C. L. Effinger, auditor at Fullerton, Louisiana, sent a circular letter to mill managers, asking that certain information be passed on to loyal employees, a large delegation of which was invited to a meeting scheduled for Beaumont, Texas, on August 18, 1911. Effinger asked for prompt action by managers: "the first and most important thing is to see how the various mills in East Texas and Louisiana feel in regard to the establishment of this league, which as is explained, is for the sole purpose of combating the BROTHERHOOD OF TIMBER WORKERS."¹³⁴ On August 12, 1911, Effinger wrote again to the mill managers, noting that he had sent out 150 circular letters. He received only 10 replies, 5 of which favored the plan and promised to send delegates. The remainder were signed by managers who opposed the idea of organizing a loyal league. "As this would indicate a representation of only one-thirtieth of the mills solicited, it is deemed advisable to call the meeting of August 18th. at Beaumont

¹³³ J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, July 22, 1911, KLCo Records, Box 197, SFA.

¹³⁴ C. L. Effinger, Fullerton, Louisiana, to the Manager, August 5, 1911; Effinger to "Dear Sir," August 3, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, reprinted here in the Appendices.

off."¹³⁵ Meanwhile, the Louisiana Board of Governors, SLOA, met in Beaumont, Texas, discussed the Effinger proposal and vetoed it as an unmanageable plan. The sharp division between skilled and common labor that such ideas presupposed troubled the lumbermen, who wondered whether they needed such allies. Willard Warren questioned M. L. Fleishel about the matter, pointing out that the mass meeting in Fullerton did not have a single day laborer listed in its report. Did the mass meetings in that country appeal only to foremen and heads of departments or to both foremen and laboring men? The questions answered themselves.¹³⁶

At Rochelle, Louisiana, in late August 1911, Dr. Buffington, the Tremont Lumber Company physician, organized a mass meeting to oppose the BTW, creating an association with the unfortunate name, the Anti-Timber Workers League of Rochelle, Louisiana. Its organization observed racial segregation, and the groups met in separate halls. T. T. Pharris acted as temporary chairman, until the group named Buffington its permanent president. The Rev. Frank Simms officiated at the meeting of black workers. The black section of the league met at the same time to effect its segregated organization. Simms's address earned something akin to popularity among lumbermen, who reprinted it and passed it around from lumber town to lumber town. Its lack of organization or logic demonstrated, at least to white readers, that blacks indeed deserved their inferior

¹³⁵ C. L. Effinger, Fullerton, Louisiana, to the Manager, August 12, 1911; Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹³⁶ John Henry Kirby, Houston, Texas, to C. L. Effinger, Fullerton, Louisiana, August 10, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA; W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, August 10, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

status. The grammatical eccentricities of the black meeting's minutes show through the typescript, obviously prepared by the company clerks, and it is therefore problematical just what educational level Frank Simms enjoyed. There is a good possibility that at least some of these "errors" were manufactured by the typist.¹³⁷

¹³⁷ "Minutes of the Mass Meeting Held at Rochelle, Louisiana, August 29, 1911," LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 689, WHMC, reprinted here in the Appendices.

**THE CLAN OF TOIL:
PINEY WOODS LABOR RELATIONS
IN THE TRANS-MISSISSIPPI SOUTH, 1880-1920
Volume 2**

A Dissertation

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

in

The Department of History

**by
John Reed Tarver
B.A., Louisiana State University, 1959
M.A., Northwestern State University of Louisiana, 1979
December 1991**

CHAPTER 6

The Blacklist

Jeremy learned that property is theft, that destruction is a kind of creation, that the insurrectionary deed is the most efficacious means of propaganda.¹

Oliver O. Bright served the SLOA as its secretary, and for most of 1911 he watched over the whole yellow pine district from association offices in St. Louis, Missouri. In late July he busied himself getting out circular letters with information about the BTW and sending materials for the mill managers to use in combating the union. On July 27, 1911, the Executive Committee met in the offices of C. B. Sweet in Kansas City, Missouri, to rescind the action taken in New Orleans earlier in the month closing several Louisiana mills. In place of the stringent closure orders, the SLOA sent out a letter giving labor relations advice "to all infected mills."² SLOA Executive Committee members Sweet, Kirby, and Carpenter attended, along with Pickering, Hollowell, Fleishel, and Fetty, all of whom "concurred in the new arrangement."³ Since all of the managers of the affected mills were present and agreed to the new plan, they would quickly post a letter to all employees in their mills and require them to sign an anti-union statement or face discharge from their jobs. The plan called for using the two

¹ T. Coraghessan Boyle, World's End (New York: Viking Penguin, 1987), p. 185.

² Oliver O. Bright, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, July 28, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³ Ibid.

letters together, posted in the mills, along with a supply of statements for employees to sign, which would be filed with the company and the SLOA. It is difficult today to understand the naiveté of otherwise worldly businessmen who apparently believed their employees would be gullible enough to fall for such a transparent trap; certainly, every employee, regardless of his union affiliation, could and did gladly sign the statement.⁴ The key to the SLOA's eventual success in breaking the BTW was Articles 6 and 25 of the association's constitution, providing for the assessment of dues from member companies based on a percentage of each mill's production. In July 1911, the association assessed 10 cents per Mbf for the Benefit Trust Fund and 2 cents per Mbf for the Regular Fund. The SLOA prorated payments from the Benefit Trust Fund to "infected" mills that had been forced to close because of union activity. The Regular Fund covered expenses incidental to the operation of the office in St. Louis. The Benefit Trust Fund defrayed the costs of the shutout, the association's favorite weapon against the union, and it spread the costs of opposing the BTW to all members of the association.⁵

The Executive Committee met again in Kansas City on July 27, 1911, at which members frightened each other with speculation of the BTW's plans. The union, the committee announced, was prepared to wage a determined battle to unionize all sawmill labor, and planned to station walking delegates in all sections from Texas to Georgia. The very term, labor, was a euphemism for black workers, of whose loyalty the

⁴ Oliver O. Bright, St. Louis, Missouri, To Those Interested, July 24, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵ Oliver O. Bright, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, SLOA, July 31, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

lumbermen were never certain. Managers west of the Mississippi, where relatively fewer blacks lived at that time, always looked east of the river for danger from the abundant black labor there, while at the same time coveting the relatively more efficient, i. e. cheaper, black worker. Most managers faced these contradictions with a certain ironic good sense.⁶ In early August, then, C. D. Johnson called another meeting of the association, this one at the Blackstone Hotel in Chicago on August 16, 1911.⁷

It was none too soon for the manager of the Sabine Lumber Company at Zwolle, Louisiana. Zwolle was a railroad town, to distinguish it from a sawmill town, that had been promoted before the turn of the century by Frank Hornbeck and others associated with the Kansas City Southern Railroad. Sawmills that built plants there had the relative freedom of the incorporated town to deal with, because there was no way to rid the town of "undesirable citizens."⁸ From the first, the people of the town and surrounding area opposed the mills using black labor, and from time to time racial incidents had flared up, kept down only by the quick response of federal marshals and the careful attention of the companies to the safety of their black workers. In the late summer of 1911, the lumbermen could feel the tension. "The labor situation at Zwolle is bad," one lumberman said. "The Union men have the sympathy of lots of merchants, farmers, all

⁶ Oliver O. Bright, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, SLOA, July 31, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to Manufacturers of Yellow Pine, August 3, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸ Sawmill managers invariably branded workers as undesirable who drank alcoholic beverages, engaged in disorderly conduct, committed adultery, gambled, or joined labor unions. They sprinkled the term throughout lumber company records of the period.

kinds of laborers and some officers, and I believe have more members in other lines than from our crews."⁹ He said the company would soon have to shut the mill, although he hoped to be able to ship the lumber in stock. At the time, the mill only cut special stock to fill orders as much as possible before a shut-down. "It doesn't seem to me that the mills are showing any firmness," he said. "If they don't shut down [an unnamed mill], they will beat us just as sure as the world. You can't imagine the reports we hear down here."¹⁰ Someone circulated the story that Carson, the big 4 C plant, had started up with a union crew and that the mills ordered closed down decided instead to run with union men. "Every bawk [sic] the Operators' Association makes adds strength to the Union and they are now stronger by 200 percent than ten days ago."¹¹ More serious were the threats directed toward black workers, "and it is a question of time until some break is made at negroes and then they will quit."¹² The company kept guards in the black quarters to protect black workers and their families. "Would have been down and out now if I hadn't stayed there and assured negroes. The tension is high."¹³ The next day, M. L. Fleishel circulated a wire to members of the Louisiana Board of Governors, calling a "very important meeting" at the Majestic Hotel in Lake Charles Sunday

⁹ Oliver O. Bright, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Managers, August 3, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 686, WHMC.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Oliver O. Bright, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, August 3, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 4, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

morning to deal with the continuing labor crisis. In a letter the same day to Willard Warren, Fleishel noted that nine mills had been closed at this point because of lockouts or strikes.¹⁴

Willard Warren at Fisher, Louisiana, found his mill caught between "infected" areas in Vernon Parish to the south and the northern section of Sabine Parish to the north. He led an apparent charmed life, showing little or no labor problems. Across the Red River to the east, his friend Clarence Slagle held out in isolation in Caldwell Parish. Warren wrote Slagle one of his frequent letters early in August 1911. John Henry Kirby, he noted, spoke to the laboring men at De Ridder the previous Tuesday without appreciable results. Even his contemporaries recognized Kirby's massive ego and tended to dismiss his theatrics as self-serving. "One day," Warren continued, turning to more serious matters, "I think things are better and the next day I think they are worse,-- something like having every other day chills."¹⁵ Zwolle, he said, was out on "a regular union strike," to distinguish it from the occasional walk-out practiced by workers in the piney woods. The Sabine Lumber Company at Zwolle fired 25 men for union sympathies, prompting the rest of the crew to walk out. The company ran the mill four days a week despite the strike. Bowman & Hicks' Loring mill had shut down because of a strike in the logging camp. All their men except one walked out. The company had only seven or eight union men at the camp, but sympathizers struck when the union men

¹⁴ M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, August 4, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 686, WHMC.

¹⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, August 4, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 686, WHMC.

were fired. The union did not seem to be much interested in the mills in North Louisiana and Arkansas, along the Iron Mountain and Cotton Belt, Warren said. "They are looking after the K. C. S., Santa Fe. and the lower end of the Iron Mountain," he pointed out, "but if they don't get whipped out pretty soon down below here, they will be over your way, making more noise than ever."¹⁶ Kirby, for his part, had indeed addressed the working man in DeRidder on August 1, 1911, in a well orchestrated appearance on the "upper gallery of the hotel"¹⁷ in the manner of a European crowned head. The prince of pines had chartered a special train, gave his own workers the day off to attend, and even hired a marching band in Beaumont, which afterward he stiffed for the price of their talent. Kirby spoke to about 4,000 people on the main street of DeRidder, most of whom had been lured there with the promise of a free barbecue. In apparent fear for his life, the Texan surrounded himself with armed guards and kept well away from the crowd. When the lumberman finished talking, his hired band, still expecting to be paid for their work, kept up a noisy rendition of currently fashionable music, drowning out A. L. Emerson who took advantage of the crowd to try to speak about the BTW. It differed from the traditional tinpanning only by the uniformity of the bandsmen's habits and their standard musical instruments. Finding that he could not overcome the noise of the band, the labor leader led a rump group to the local ball park

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Morgan, "Kirby," pp. 198-199.

where he spoke in relative calm. Then the crowds dispersed and the antagonists parted, each having proclaimed a victory.¹⁸

The BTW had greatly disappointed most lumbermen, particularly John Henry Kirby, back in June when it adjourned its first convention without affiliating with any international union, notably the Industrial Workers of the World, then the only viable industrial union in operation. Kirby's secret agents, however, learned some things that must have sent a delicious chill down the prince's spine. The BTW met in Alexandria, Louisiana from June 19 to 23, 1911, where it placed its officers under bonds, a method of quieting objections that they were only organizing for their own profit. In the convention, the union leaders perfected plans to strike two or three mills at a time in an effort to create divisions in the SLOA. It also claimed to be gaining as many as 1,400 members each month, and by July would cross the Sabine River into Texas in force to organize the East Texas mills. Kirbyville, the secret agents told Kirby, would be the Texas headquarters for the BTW.¹⁹ The union's plans went awry, however, and only a few organizers ever got into Texas, one of whom was John "Windy" Lindsey. He and his wife visited Kirbyville in early July, "but he was called on by 30 or 40 old citizens

¹⁸ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to Managers, All Points, and Superintendent, Camps, July 29, 1911, Box 196, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA. See also Morgan, "Kirby," pp. 198-199; Fickle, "Race, Class," p. 104; McWhiney, "Louisiana Socialists," p. 46; Haywood, "Timber Workers and Timber Wolves," p. 107.

¹⁹ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, June 27, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA; Morgan, "Kirby," p. 200, cites "Number 10 Reports," January 2, 1912, Kirby Papers, UH. This was the style of report usually made by the Pinkerton National Detective Agency.

here who told him to leave. He was run out of Kirbyville last night [July 18, 1911]."²⁰ Lindsey had once worked as an edgerman at Kirbyville and was "known all over the country as 'Windy' Lindsey."²¹ By early August, the BTW had caught one of Kirby's secret agents, one Jess Burwich, and expelled him from the union because union leaders believed him to be employed by J. A. Herndon, manager of the Kay Ell mill at Kirbyville. And in retaliation, Herndon identified Jim Bell, formerly an organizer for the Woodmen of the World, an eleemosynary lodge, as a Louisiana organizer for the BTW. Herndon reported to Houston that "he is a rabbid beast."²² Neither labor nor management spies observed any system of ethics, and most simply awaited the main chance to take advantage of a situation. One of Kirby's detectives blandly reported intimacies with a mill sawyer's wife while her husband was at work. The information he acquired from his conquest he passed on to Kay Ell without further comment. Kirby apparently found a use for it.²³

Lumbermen found a generally favorable press in the Piney Woods, with one or two exceptions. Reporters for the Beaumont, Texas, Journal seem to have been too aggressive for the tastes of Marc Fleishel, for example, although other daily newspapers took a line that roughly approximated the SLOA stance. In Lake Charles, Louisiana,

²⁰ J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, July 19, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

²¹ Ibid. Windy meant both longwinded and mendacious.

²² J. A. Herdon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, August 5, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

²³ Morgan, "Kirby," p. 200.

John Marshall's Daily Times advertised its coverage of "the labor trouble now existing in Southwest Louisiana among the various sawmills." Marshall's sheet, "which thoroughly covers the yellow pine belt of Louisiana and Texas, is the only paper making a special effort to keep in touch with the situation."²⁴ Although the claim was patently exaggerated, Alex Hamilton at Clarks, Louisiana, sent Marshall \$1 "to become a subscriber,"²⁵ a barbaric neologism as false as the publisher's boasts. Probably the only newspaper in the Calcasieu long leaf pine district that openly favored the BTW was the DeRidder, Louisiana, News. Its coverage of the union and acceptance of timber workers' submissions gained it little more than irate exchanges in neighboring newspapers. Under the title, "A Sample," an unidentified editor reprinted "a sample of the form of agitation being resorted to in drawing laborers out of the mills."²⁶ Written by an anonymous timber worker at Fullerton, Louisiana on August 8, the article ridiculed the lumber companies for their yellow dog contracts. By August there had been several to sign, nothing deterring the BTW, the members of which happily signed the pledges and then ignored them. The writer denounced other newspapers for not reporting the companies' sponsorship of mass meetings held to pass resolutions that employees had to sign to keep their jobs. Written shortly after John Henry Kirby spoke from the hotel

²⁴ John Marshall, Lake Charles, Louisiana, to Louisiana Central Lumber Company, Clarks, Louisiana, August 6, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 686, WHMC.

²⁵ Alexander Hamilton's handwritten note, August 9, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 686, WHMC.

²⁶ A Timber Worker, "A Sample," August 8, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 687, WHMC.

gallery in DeRidder, the article claimed his message was not effective. Indeed, such meetings added members to union ranks. People, the writer charged, left Fullerton and Cravens daily on their way to Texas and Mexico, an indication that the gangs of Mexican workers in the piney woods had been forced to retreat to their homeland. There were other means of escaping the situation, he wrote. "The rice harvest and cotton picking is on and we won't be as dependent on the companies as they think we are."²⁷ Closed plants, he calculated, would only help the union and gain it more members.

The Timber Worker had reason to boast. After Kirby's speech at DeRidder, at which the BTW claimed it accepted many applications for membership, differences among the lumbermen reached a crisis. Sam Park, president of the Industrial Lumber Company in Beaumont, Texas, re-opened the American Lumber Company mill at Merryville on August 7, 1911, with an agreement recognizing the BTW. It was the union's first, and perhaps its last, victory. Park met the union demands, including the right of the workers to elect their own physician, Dr. E. E. Shaw.²⁸ According to John

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Morgan, "Kirby," pp. 199-200, note 18; Fickle, "Race, Class," pp. 102-103; Ferrell, "BTW," p. 469. Morgan's paper is the source for most comment on this episode, but he fails to give adequate weight to the role of Judge John W. Terry and the Santa Fe Railroad in negotiations between Park and the SLOA. In fact, he persists in the myth that Kirby was somehow in command of the SLOA and that he had to convince C. B. Sweet, vice president of Long-Bell Lumber Company, to fight the union. As the company records show, Terry's decision to remove Park from control of the American Lumber Company and to reclaim the plant at Merryville from the BTW spelled doom for the union. Sweet's credentials as a strike breaker far antedated Kirby's conversion to the faith, and indeed it was Kirby who had to be convinced and kept in line with the association. In each of the confrontations cited by Morgan, Sweet invariably emerged the winner. After all, it was Sweet who gave the battle cry, "no compromise or recognition," which Morgan misused, leading readers to assume Kirby had called for

Henry Kirby, neither the Sabine Tram Company nor Lutch & Moore Lumber Company was cooperating with the SLOA. On August 8 and 10, 1911, Kirby appealed for help to Judge John W. Terry of the Santa Fe Railroad, charging that Park had betrayed the association. Park, Kirby charged, "entertained Mr. Emerson ... furnished him a saddle horse ... and accompanied Mr. Emerson on some of his errands, and ... when Mr. Emerson went away he had his private porter carry Mr. Emerson's bag to the station."²⁹ At a meeting with Park in Beaumont, leaders in the SLOA forced Park to resign from the SLOA. He retained his position with the American Lumber Company, a virtual subsidiary of the Santa Fe Railroad, which had to depend on Kirby and other area lumbermen for a great deal of its freight. Kirby crowed, in his inimitable style. "[W]e requested him to withdraw [from the association]," Kirby told Terry later, "we forced him out and closed the door in his face."³⁰ Long-Bell's management continued to have problems with the BTW, to require yellow dog pledges from its workers, and to fire the recalcitrant outright. The company operated the King-Ryder Lumber Company plant at DeRidder, the Bon Ami plant, and the Longville plant farther south, which gave R. A. Long and his managers weight enough to pressure the DeRidder News. Their favorite tactic was to suggest that the editor was a drunk or insane or both, and since

class war. See Morgan, "Kirby," p. 200, note 20.

²⁹ E. T. Ripley, President, Santa Fe Railroad, to J. H. Kirby, Houston, Texas, August 10, 1911, Box 221, Kirby Papers, UH, cited by Morgan, "Kirby," p. 199.

³⁰ Ibid.

alcoholism was considered the occupational disease of journalists and printers, the story was generally accepted.³¹

Rather than a general commanding his armies in battle, John Henry Kirby was a terrorized recluse in the East Texas piney woods, awaiting the inevitable onslaught of the barbarians from West Louisiana. His managers at such isolated mills as Roganville, Silsbee, and Fuqua, Texas, kept the company offices in turmoil with their incessant yarns about agitators. Seldom able to identify them, mill managers did find lots of them, and they were invariably troublesome in a region where "most every body of any influence outside of our employees are hot union agitators,"³² including businessmen and small sawmillers. At Fuqua, company millhands, kept at fever pitch in their lookout for agitators, managed to beat an unidentified and otherwise innocent visitor and expel him from the town. The BTW meetings in the vicinity attracted farmers mostly. The Fuqua manager expected a hundred union men from Louisiana to join with local farmers in a mass meeting nearby. The "infection" from Louisiana was spreading far and wide, and apocalypse had nearly arrived unless the lumbermen acted quickly.³³

The meeting in Beaumont that purged Sam Park was actually called and conducted by M. L. Fleishel, chairman of the Louisiana Board of Governors, SLOA. Hardly a garrulous man, he reported by wire to the SLOA offices in St. Louis a "Good meeting

³¹ Fickle, "Race, Class," pp. 102-103.

³² E. S. Stone, Rogansville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Silsbee, Texas, August 10, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

³³ J. E. Dodd, Fuqua, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Silsbee, Texas, August 10, 1911; Dodd to Myer, August 27, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

Beaumont yesterday and practically every one this territory will be represented Chicago meeting. Several Mills report short handed."³⁴ On August 3, 1911, the SLOA called for a meeting for August 16 at the Blackstone Hotel in Chicago. "Believing that it is of the utmost importance that every Operator from Texas to Georgia should be on hand to do everything in his power to aid in handling a situation that is growing more serious every day, and that if definite action is not taken on the 16th the infection will spread rapidly throughout the south, we wish to again urge that you attend this meeting without fail."³⁵ The Louisiana Board of Governors also met at Lake Charles on August 10, 1911, and ordered five plants completely closed in the face of union pressure. The Executive Committee unanimously approved the governors' recommendations that managers close indefinitely all mills of the Central Coal & Coke Company at Carson, the American Lumber Company at Merryville, the Nona Mills Company at Leesville, the Buckley Lumber Company at Yelgar, and the J. C. Hill Lumber Company at Stillman, Louisiana. The Industrial Lumber Company at Elizabeth and Oakdale, the Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company at Loring, and the Hudson River Lumber Company at DeRidder, Louisiana, could operate only their planing mills. "[T]he infection is spreading rapidly,"³⁶ Bright warned.

³⁴ Oliver O. Bright, Kansas City, Missouri, to All Members, SLOA, August 10, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, and LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 687, WHMC. Bright had temporarily moved the SLOA offices to the 6th floor of the Keith & Perry Building in Kansas City.

³⁵ Ibid., August 11, 1911.

³⁶ Ibid.

Clarence Slagle, general manager of the LCLC plants in Louisiana, was then visiting Washington Court House, Ohio, a section of the country where he and his brother had a chain of lumber yards under the name of the Slagle Lumber Company. He had asked Willard Warren at the 4 L Company to attend the Chicago meeting in his place, but Warren could not go and recommended that Slagle take his place on August 16. Warren could not tell just what the labor situation really was at the time because he heard so many conflicting reports from his neighbors, who were more affected by strikes and blacklists. "There are eleven mills I think shut down at this time, and I fear that it is only a question of time until the movement will spread until we feel it here. Loring is not running, Zwolle is badly crippled, Leesville is crippled and De Ridder has been shut down for a week." Still, reports "from down the road" indicated that lumbermen there felt "encouraged."³⁷ With the mills down, the union was badly hurt, Warren told his father-in-law. The mills should stay closed "for a long time, because it is going to take a long time before these head organizers are willing to give up."³⁸ Members of the union in scattered places outside the "infected districts" provided the BTW with "a little money each month, and as long as they have that money they are likely to stay and spend it."³⁹ Slagle, meanwhile, had moved on to Greenfield, Ohio, where a letter from Captain White caught up with him, asking that he attend the Chicago meeting of the

³⁷ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Washington Court House, Ohio, August 10, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 687, WHMC.

³⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, August 10, 1911, Box 89; Warren to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, August 10, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁹ Ibid.

SLOA. "I think it is very important," White said. "Information which I have this morning shows the Union is spreading rapidly, and they now have eight or ten organizers at work in Texas."⁴⁰ White wrote virtually the same letter to Warren, but identified his informant on the labor problem in Texas as I. H. Fetty of the 4 C, who also charged that Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company in Orange, Texas, was running with all union labor.⁴¹

Anticipating action of the SLOA meeting in Chicago, John Henry Kirby asked his attorneys, Andrews, Ball & Streetman of Houston for an opinion on the Texas blacklisting law and how it applied to the SLOA's proposed action to keep central records on employees. On August 16, 1911, while Kirby was in Chicago at the meeting, the lawyers advised C. P. Myer, Kay Ell manager of mills and logging, that the blacklist was illegal in Texas and could only be used within a company. Because Kay Ell operated a score of mills, towns, and fronts in Southeast Texas, effectively dominating the industry in the vicinity, the internal blacklist ordered by Kirby devastated the union and defeated its friends and supporters. For its part, the BTW seemed to have retreated slightly from its Texas offensive. It had called a meeting at Evadale, Texas, on August 18, 1911, to elect delegates to a union convention in Beaumont, but a letter from

⁴⁰ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Greenfield, Ohio, August 12, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 687, WHMC. See also Flora B. Fowler, Fullerton, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 11, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴¹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 12, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Fullerton, Louisiana, had ordered the meeting postponed. No delegates were elected from Kay Ell's employees at Evadale.⁴²

In Chicago on August 16, 1911, C. D. Johnson, president of the SLOA called the general meeting of the association to order, and immediately launched into the business at hand. Lumbermen across the South waited anxiously for word of the SLOA's actions in Chicago to back up its stated resolve to combat the "infection" of the BTW. Willard Warren, unable to attend the meeting because of the press of affairs in Louisiana, wrote immediately to Captain White for news, noting that in time the union would surely begin to "infect" the 4 L Company's work force. At Victoria in Natchitoches Parish he could identify only "two negroes and one white man that belong to the union, but I am afraid that we are in much worse shape here [at Fisher, Sabine Parish]."⁴³ A mass meeting of loyal employees scheduled for the next Tuesday night would "do some good, as it will give us an idea as to who are our loyal men,—although the signatures to the resolutions adopted don't necessarily reflect the truth." Farther south along the KCS tracks, union infiltration was so bad, Warren predicted, that "it is going to take at least six months to stamp this movement out in this district."⁴⁴ He was not far wrong. He clearly expected the SLOA would recommend that he slow down his mills, perhaps by running less than full time, but he was surprised to learn that the association wanted him to close his mills

⁴² Andrews, Ball & Streetman, Houston, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, August 16, 1911; Manager, Evadale, Texas, to Myer, August 16, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

⁴³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, August 17, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 688, WHMC.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

entirely. At the time, he did not even know the attitude of Captain White, company secretary, and his father-in-law, the president, not to mention the board of directors. "Organizers are stopping here every few days--they only stay a little while, but I think they usually get a few names," Warren said. "I think about the best thing that has happened in this Parish was the shooting up of the Zwolle negor [sic] quarters at their logging camp, for the authorities were successful in capturing almost all of the participants, and the U. S. Marshall [sic] took them to Shreveport on Monday, and if the Federal Court will give them all that is coming to them we won't be apt to have any race trouble again soon."⁴⁵ Warren congratulated himself on breaking up an attack on his black employees at the Fisher logging camp a year earlier. The sheriff arrested seven or eight men, "but a sympathizing Grand Jury held the matter in abeyance and did not make a report one way or the other, but several of the parties were in jail quite a while before Court set [sic]." Slagle at Clarks, he warned, "should not rely at all on the laboring class of his men being opposed to the union, because the experience of every one in this part of the State has been that such reliance proved deceptive."⁴⁶ Most of those who joined the union were men and boys, meaning the common laborers. Nevertheless, he had the full support of every foreman in the company. Soon the company would have to decide what to do with those men who remained loyal to the company, and he asked for advice. "Personally, I believe we ought to take care of

⁴⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, August 17, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

them."⁴⁷ Warren enclosed a copy of his letter to Captain White for his father-in-law in Bozeman, Montana. Hundreds of men were out of work to the south, he said, and although Zwolle had its mills running, still some 40 to 50 men were out on strike. All of the men who shot into the homes of black families in the mill village at Zwolle recently were union men, he charged. At Loring, south of Zwolle, Bowman Hicks Lumber Company had closed its mill because of a continuing strike at its logging camp. "These organizers are pretty hard cases, and they are following the business because they can't get work, and they manage to pick up a few dollars every day by going to new fields."⁴⁸ A few dollars, of course, far exceeded the standard wage of \$1.50 a day such men could expect from work in the sawmills and logging woods. The elder Fisher agreed with the lockout. "I am very sorry indeed that things have come to be so serious in regard to the labor situation, but I heartily approve of the method in which they are handling it," Fisher wrote. "I think the only way is for all the mills to stand firm, and I do not think there is any question about the results." He expressed satisfaction that the law had "the fellows that did the shooting in the camp at Zoolee [sic]—they got to be a nuisance, white scalawags shooting down niggers."⁴⁹ White had said that 90 percent of the lumber managers attended the meeting at Chicago. He also noted that Sam Park at Merryville, Louisiana, and Lutchter and Moore at Orange, Texas, had begun to

⁴⁷ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ O. W. Fisher, Seattle, Washington, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 23, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

cooperate with the BTW. "They will be very sorry before they get through with it--it will be impossible to handle niggers and white people in that way,"⁵⁰ he said.

Captain White left Chicago for a vacation in Bemus Point, New York, but quickly advised Warren of the action of the SLOA in Chicago, where 90 to 100 mills were represented. Generally, the association agreed that the only way to defeat labor was to close the mills in the affected district. "Executive committee have ordered Fisher Plant shut down indefinitely next Monday along with twenty-one other mills. I believe it wise policy."⁵¹ White told the general manager to close the sawmill at Fisher but to run the planing mill and hardwood sawmill; he was to continue running at Victoria, as well. Later in the month, White would revise his instructions: close all mills but the planer; put up notices; no half measures. In Bozeman, Montana, the wheat season had just begun. Some farmers had begun threshing, expecting a bumper crop. O. W. Fisher found it next to impossible to get away for a trip to Louisiana during the labor troubles and turned to Warren for the direction of the Fisher interests there. Warren, learning of the SLOA's recommendations in Chicago, quickly let the elder Fisher know of the decision. "I think it is the proper thing to do," the president said. "I cant see what the men Expect to Gain[.] [O]f Course the agitators and organisers are the only ones that are making any thing out of it."⁵²

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ J. B. White, Bemus Point, New York, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 17, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵² O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, to Warren, August 18, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

As early as July 1911, Kay Ell had curtailed the running time of its mills in East Texas, and by August the managers had begun to identify BTW organizers in the piney woods. On August 4, C. P. Myer advised the company's mill managers that Bennett L. Strahan, posing as a representative of the First Texas State Insurance Company, was in fact an organizer for the union. Although he actually sold insurance, he used the insurance company as a blind behind which to carry out his union work. Managers, Myer said, should "look out for him and keep him moving if possible."⁵³ On August 19, 1911, Myer alerted the Kay Ell mills to the shut down at Bronson and Roganville, which were to close that night indefinitely, although the managers should try to place competent and loyal men in jobs elsewhere. "Above all things move every union man off the job, if you have any. When in doubt [about a man's union affiliation] take the benefit of the doubt--move not only the union men but the agitators."⁵⁴

At Fisher, Louisiana, despite Warren's doubts about the efficacy of the mass meeting of loyal employees as a device for combatting the union, he planned one himself. On August 15, 1911, Adolph Richter, acting as temporary chairman, opened the meeting of loyal employees at Fisher, which promptly elected Dr. T. B. Younger, the company physician, as permanent chairman, and C. C. Carlton, the civil engineer who had charge of the 4 L Company's woods and lands, as secretary. J. A. Goss, Frank Brown, R. A. Brown, F. M. Cox, and H. E. Ellis made speeches extolling the good qualities of the

⁵³ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to Managers, All Points, August 4, 1911, Box 196, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

⁵⁴ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to Managers, All Points, Superintendents, Camps 1, 3, 5, & 8, August 19, 1911, Box 196, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

company and defaming the union. Ellis, Cox, and Carlton served as the resolutions committee that drafted an anti-union statement sounding suspiciously like other such statements in other lumber towns. It disapproved of agitators and promoters of the union, pointed to the profits made by union organizers, doubted the claims of union leaders, and pointed to the hardship and suffering strikes cause for women and children when the men did not work. Loyal employees, the statement claimed, had no grievances against the 4 L Company, and each signer pledged to help defeat the BTW. Then the resolution passed by unanimous vote, signed by 72 employees, with all employees in the town to be given a chance to sign later. Although obviously the work of company men, it probably did represent the opinions of a majority of the people who lived at Fisher, since no union man was suffered to remain undisturbed for very long.⁵⁵

Still in Bemus Point, New York, on August 21, 1911, Captain White contacted Clarence Slagle in Greenfield, Ohio, enclosing Willard Warren's most recent letter. "You cannot be too energetic in looking after affairs around our mills," he told Slagle. "It may be that we can stamp [the union movement] out in other places so that we can run the Clarks and Standard mills. If so, it will be very convenient for us, for quite likely Mr. Warren will have to shut down both mills. So you will, of course, have your matters kept well in mind."⁵⁶ At the same time, Warren informed Oliver Bright in St.

⁵⁵ "At Fisher, La. Mass Meeting Adopted Resolutions on Labor Matter," The Enterprise, Beaumont, Texas, August 20, 1911, clipping in LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 688, WHMC.

⁵⁶ J. B. White, Bemus Point, New York, to C. E. Slagle, Greenfield, Ohio, August 21, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 688, WHMC.

Louis that the 4 L Company had closed two saw mills, its logging camp at Fisher, and its hardwood flooring factory. John Henry Kirby, Captain White wrote from Bemus Point, had engaged in his usual histrionics at the Chicago meeting, threatening to resign from the Executive Committee unless the association authorized a general lockout in the affected mills. "The general," as White called Kirby, need not have made such a threat, since virtually everyone at the meeting had been convinced by that time that the policy of closing threatened mills was the correct one to support. In fact, Willard Warren was chiefly responsible, White wrote, for convincing the executive committee to call the lockout. All other mills were willing to pay more into the SLOA treasury to win the fight in West Louisiana, before the union grew strong enough to threaten other states.⁵⁷ At Fisher, Warren watched events closely, but it was too early to tell what effect the lockout had on the union. Loyal men had met, he said, to help weed out union members, although union men had been told by the BTW organizers to swear falsely to their employers, if necessary, to keep their jobs. Such tactics, Warren noted, were hard to deal with.⁵⁸ In a circular letter on August 22, 1911, George K. Smith, SLOA treasurer, informed lumbermen that 22 sawmills with a normal monthly production of 60 million bf B.M. [board measure] had "closed down until such time as they can be operated with labor which is not subservient to or in sympathy with the Brotherhood of

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ J. B. White, Bemus Point, New York, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 21, 1911; Warren to White, August 24, 1911; White to Warren, August 24, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Timber Workers."⁵⁹ To re-imburse mill owners for their losses, the SLOA needed a fund of \$100 thousand, for which the executive committee had authorized a 25 cent assessment on July production (log scale).⁶⁰

By August 21, 1911, Willard Warren at Fisher had closed his mills and laid off his men, according to the recommendations of the SLOA meeting in Chicago. "We are in the same boat, much to my disgust," B. M. Smith wrote the next day. Smith was treasurer and general manager of the Longville Lumber Company at Longville, Louisiana, a Long-Bell mill north of Lake Charles. "This was rather a hard blow to us, as our boys have made a fight and won," he said, "as all of the union men since left us and our crew, both black and white, will not stand for a union man or a union sympathizer being in town."⁶¹ At Bonami, Louisiana, W. L. Prickett, treasurer and general manager of the King-Ryder Lumber Company, another Long-Bell plant a few miles south of DeRidder, had heard that Warren had not closed his mills. Warren wrote to him, however, and Prickett seemed relieved. "I guess misery loves company, and inasmuchas [sic] we are down, there is a disposition on our part to be glad if there are other people in the same boat."⁶²

⁵⁹ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to Louisiana Central Lumber Company, Clarks, Louisiana, August 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 689, WHMC, and in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ B. M. Smith, Longville, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 22, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶² W. L. Prickett, Bonami, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 22, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

In Houston, Texas, Frank Bonner--in the absence of John Henry Kirby, who went on to Boston and New York after the Chicago meeting--expressed Kay Ell's appreciation for Warren's closing the 4 L Company mills. "We have nothing especially new to report in East Texas," Bonner said. "The organizers have made very little progress so far, but they are very busy and are putting forth special efforts in that territory." Two organizers who began to operate at the Silsbee front the day before "were run out by the woods crew and have not been heard from since."⁶³ Bonner expressed hope that closing two of the Kay Ell mills at Bronson and Roganville would have a salutary effect. The Kirby people could find no signs of union men or organizers at Bronson for the past two months, although three organizers appeared in the neighborhood of Roganville "and we considered that it would probably be well to close those two plants. They will remain closed under the direction of the Executive Committee."⁶⁴ Despite Bonner's assurances, nothing could dispel the sense that Kay Ell was posturing, hoping to dissuade the workers in East Texas from joining the BTW, when it grew strong enough to cross the Sabine in force.

Frost-Johnson Lumber Company closed its mills at Mansfield and Noble, Louisiana, on August 21, 1911, at the same time that Warren acted at Fisher. E. A. Frost, president of Frost-Johnson with headquarters in Shreveport, Louisiana, described the process. "We had a meeting with our men and told them we wanted to know just

⁶³ B. F. Bonner, Houston, Texas, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 22, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

where they stood and where they were at on this labor proposition and they are holding meetings to day to get themselves on record," Frost said. "There are no Union men at either of these points to speak of, however, we may find some after going into the matter."⁶⁵ Frost's attitude, Warren's doubts, and Bonner's admissions all point to a lack of serious union activities or sentiments in the piney woods, despite later apologists' need to demonstrate a great groundswell of support for or against the BTW. J. H. Morrison, superintendent of the 4 C plant at Carson, Louisiana, where the "lumber war" was supposed to have started, gave Warren a similar account. "A. L. Emmerson came here last week, and disbanded his local, telling the few niggers he was feeding here that, he could not afford to feed them any longer, but that, they would have to get out and hustle for themselves, as they were whipped at Carson,"⁶⁶ Morrison asserted. All the neighboring mills ordered down by the Executive Committee were down the day before, he said. "I only hope that, Merryville, Ludington and Nona Mills will go down not later than Wednesday, as there was a Committee to see them yesterday or today."⁶⁷

M. L. Fleishel, chairman of the Louisiana Board of Governors, SLOA, had indeed scheduled a meeting of his group in the offices of the Hudson River Lumber Company at DeRidder, Louisiana, on Friday, August 25, 1911, at 1 p.m. The SLOA had scheduled still another meeting in Chicago that day, also, and the Louisiana group

⁶⁵ E. A. Frost, Shreveport, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 22, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁶ J. H. Morrison, Carson, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 22, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

would be called on to recommend actions based on the results of the lockout. The Louisiana Board of Governors had been detailed by the association to keep in close touch with the labor situation in the mills and to make frequent reports to SLOA headquarters in St. Louis. "Things are extremely quiet," Fleishel told Warren, after a "very drastic method [was] adopted." Fleishel believed--had to believe--that the method would "soon work" and "we shall not have to keep our faithful men out of employment but a very short time."⁶⁸ Warren was not so sure. "You will probably find that as a result of this more of your men will join [the BTW] than you expected," he told Frost. "I think there were probably forty that joined here after we closed down, and we had about twenty already."⁶⁹ Union organizers, he warned, will arrive at the Frost-Johnson mills in a few days. Three had been at Fisher for nearly a week, and they were moving in Frost's direction, north along the KCS to Mansfield, then south along the T&P to the Frost-Johnson mills in Natchitoches Parish.⁷⁰

Regardless of the effectiveness of the lockout in fighting the BTW, there can be little doubt of the success enjoyed by the SLOA from the use of its blacklist. With this instrument, the lumbermen hounded suspected workers from town to town without any mercy. Rumors and idle talk sufficed to send a man into limbo. The unfortunate George

⁶⁸ M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, to R. M. Hallowell, Elizabeth, Louisiana, et al., August 22, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, and in LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 689, WHMC; Oliver O. Bright, St. Louis, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 22, 1911; Fleishel to Warren, August 22, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to E. A. Frost, Shreveport, Louisiana, August 23, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

Cunningham was an example of the method at work. L. F. Haslam at Pickering, Louisiana, started the vendetta against Cunningham with a complaint addressed to M. L. Fleishel, chairman of the Louisiana Board of Governors. Fleishel then wrote a stiff letter to Clarence Slagle at Clarks, Louisiana. "I am taking the liberty of enclosing herewith letter just received from Mr. Haslam on the subject of one George Cunningham, from which it would appear that you are continuing to employ this man after having definite and absolute advice from Mr. Haslam to the effect that he is an ardent advocate and member of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers--the organization we are sacrificing so much time and money in an effort to stamp out," he charged. "I cannot bring myself to believe that this matter is thoroughly understood by you and that you are knowingly working this man, knowing that it is in direct contradiction of the recommendations that are made by the Executive Committee, and in fact membership as a whole."⁷¹ Fleishel had actually jumped the gun, a normal reaction for the manager of the Gulf Lumber Company. Slagle had written earlier to Haslam at Pickering asking for advice on Cunningham. Haslam referred Slagle's request to H. E. Stevens, superintendent for Pickering at Cravens, Louisiana. For Haslam's part, "I am not familiar personally, with the circumstances surrounding Mr. Cunningham leaving our employ, except that so far as I know it was not for any connection that he might have had with the proposed Union. However, Mr. Stevens will advise you direct, regarding the matter."⁷²

⁷¹ M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, August 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No., 3660, Box 32, File 689, WHMC.

⁷² L. F. Haslam, Pickering, Louisiana, to Louisiana Central Lumber Company, Clarks, Louisiana, April 25, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 690,

This private letter reached only Slagle at Clarks; Fleishel's "private" letter to Slagle found wide currency among other lumbermen. Even his friend Warren responded with a long kindly letter advising Slagle to take action against Cunningham. "I also wish to call your attention to the fact that George Cunningham is supposed to be in your employ," Warren wrote. "He is a first class union man."⁷³ Haslam at the Pickering Lumber Company told Warren that after he fired "this party," he understood Slagle to say that he worked Cunningham because the Clarks superintendent thought he was a good man. "We all know that he is a good worker and a good 'boozer' and you will find his name down as a union man,"⁷⁴ Warren said. Several people criticized Slagle for keeping the man at work after learning that he was a member of the union. A few days later, Captain White rushed to advise Slagle about his responsibilities to the SLOA and to the fight to defeat the BTW. He was concerned that Clarks and Standard would be closed by the SLOA and that "that kind of leadership" represented by Cunningham would mean disaster. He saw a special danger from arsonists. "You will need all your skill and diplomacy, firmness and wisdom to manage this troublesome affair, and we can do it best by all hanging together under the direction of the Executive Committee,"⁷⁵ he said. As it turned out, Slagle had no personal knowledge of the matter. Busy for several

WHMC.

⁷³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, August 26, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 691, WHMC.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, September 2, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 693, WHMC.

weeks in Ohio, supervising the operation of his chain of lumber yards, he had not been on hand to review the Cunningham case. In his place at Clarks, Alex Hamilton hired Cunningham and conducted the study of his attitude toward the union. He reported in late August to Slagle that the series of letters from the Pickering people stated that the company had fired Cunningham not for union activity or sympathy but for drinking on the job. Cunningham denied the charge, later leveled at him, that he was a member of the BTW, although he did admit knowing and associating with Arthur Lee Emerson. Hamilton was forced by the strength of opinion among other lumbermen to discharge Cunningham, although he persisted in the belief that it was a miscarriage of company justice. In early September, he reviewed the case for Slagle, but Cunningham did not get his job back. The effect of ostracism on the ability of the BTW to organize was devastating, and no one understood this more clearly than the lumbermen, who felt it a small price to pay that they removed men from their occupations with only marginal evidence of a union affiliation. It was a technique built on fear of reprisals and mere suspicion of association and sympathy for the BTW.⁷⁶

Loyalty, to the lumberman, was the most admirable trait in an employee. It was constantly on every mill manager's lips. Loyalty, however, being a duty, demanded no compensation above the regular wage a man earned. Disloyalty, or the mere suspicion of it, received instant and crushing disapproval, dismissal, and ostracism. Some lumbermen, particularly absentee owners, could talk of kindly treatment of loyal retainers

⁷⁶ Alex Hamilton, Clarks, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, August 29 and September 6, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 693, WHMC.

as though they actually dealt with chattel slaves instead of free men. O. W. Fisher, newly arrived in Seattle, Washington, where he and his sons had established their flour milling business, wrote to his son-in-law in Fisher, Louisiana, that "we Should take care of all our lowell men in Some way and Show our appreciation of their Loyate to us[.] however I will leave that to you for I know you will treet them right"⁷⁷ Warren's next letter to his father-in-law crossed Fisher's in the mail, giving the general situation at Fisher. The 24 mills ordered closed by the SLOA "went down promptly Monday morning,"⁷⁸ Warren wrote. For the benefit of the workers loyal to the company, Warren mounted them as a guard for the company property. Salaried employees continued to work at their regular pay. A union organizer had arrived a few days earlier, welcomed by several disgruntled workers locked out of their mill. Warren took the names of anyone he found associating with the BTW organizer, asserting that he had them all written down. The organizer left Fisher on August 23, 1911. Warren expected "more speakers and organizers in the next week, but there seems to be a disposition now on the part of the loyal men to take a hand in the matter and try and help us out."⁷⁹ Given the best possible interpretation, such an attitude suggests a certain sophistry on the manager's part, through which he instigated reprisals against union members and agents.

⁷⁷ O. W. Fisher, Seattle, Washington, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 23, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Seattle, Washington, August 23, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

Rumors ran wild throughout the piney woods. Union organizers and private detectives seemed to lurk in every concealed place. Arsonists abounded. Mythical construction companies had entered the pine district to hire all the men locked out of the mills, giving them free passes for railroad transportation. J. H. Morrison, superintendent of the 4 C plant at Carson, Louisiana, tried to squelch the latter yarn. When A. L. Emerson went to Carson in the middle of August to settle with the discharged black workers after the company locked them out of the mills, he gave each of them \$2.50 and suggested pointedly that they would have to go elsewhere to look for work. There was a problem at Carson with an attempted arsonist, however, which Morrison did not fail to relate to his neighbors. "We had a little excitement here night before last, when a man got into our plant, and was under the Timber Dock, one of our Guards found him, and tried to get him to stop, but he started running," he recounted. "Two of the Guards shot at him seven times, but it was very dark, and could not tell anything about him; however, I got there a few minutes after the shots were fired, and in going over the ground, where he was first shot at, I found a gallon bottle of coal oil, in a sack thoroughly saturated with coal oil."⁸⁰ Among the possible motives of the unknown intruder, arson would naturally come to mind, but given the ubiquity of coal oil or kerosene as a fuel for lights in most homes in the region another more innocent intent could be assumed as well. During the whole of the labor troubles, virtually no fires could be attributed to arsonists. With such disregard for basic safety measures in most

⁸⁰ J. H. Morrison, Carson, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 25, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

mills in the region, it took a certain hypocrisy to blame evil intent for a fire in a sawmill town.

All management activities were not merely defensive, however. Most were willing and able to respond with vigor and overpowering strength. For example, when A. L. Emerson and W. A. Fussell made a brief visit to Beaumont, Texas, on August 17, 1911, to make public speeches, their remarks were promptly reported in the Beaumont Enterprise.⁸¹ To the Texas lumbermen, terrorized by the exaggerated tales of union successes in Louisiana, the effort made by the leaders of the BTW seemed the first wave of a major assault on the East Texas bastion. As though to confirm the managers' suspicions, two BTW organizers appeared on August 21, 1911, at Camp Weathersley near Silsbee, Texas. They planned to speak to any workers who would show up just off the Kay Ell camp property. J. B. Lindsey, superintendent of the front, called out his men that Monday: "I took all of the men who live at camp here and we organized a band, using tin cans and old tubs to make the music, went down and made such a fuss that the organizers were unable to speak and be heard."⁸² Willard Warren actually felt safe after the lockout began: "Things are quiet with us at this time, and if speakers do not come in and get things started I believe we will soon be rid of all the undesirable

⁸¹ W. A. Martin, Beaumont, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, August 18, 1911, citing the Beaumont Enterprise, August 17, 1911, p. 5, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

⁸² J. B. Lindsey, Silsbee, Texas, to C. P. Myer, August 25, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

men."⁸³ Captain White still lingered through the late summer at his farm in Bemus Point, New York, where Warren reached him, still complaining about Clarence Slagle hiring—and apparently refusing to fire—Cunningham. The LCLC should not work union men, he wrote, because trouble with organizers could easily move over to the Iron Mountain and reach Clarks, Louisiana. The BTW was fighting a furious battle right now to establish the union on the L&A Railroad, Buchanan's line between Stamps, Arkansas, and Jena, Louisiana. Emerson, Warren charged, told people in his talks that only two mills had been shut down, that the newspapers were misleading them. Then he passed on the story of an arsonist attempting to torch the Carson mill.⁸⁴ The next day, White reported to Clarence Slagle that the planing mill at West Eminence, Missouri, the new mill town of the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company, had burned, apparently from "natural" causes.⁸⁵

In Kirbyville, Texas, J. A. Herndon, Kay Ell manager, writing on the letterhead of the Peoples State Bank, of which he was a director, complained that the Fleming-Morton Company, operator of the electric light plant across Trout Creek from the mill and in the edge of town, "hires everybody I turn loose."⁸⁶ From his position at the

⁸³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. H. Morrison, Carson, Louisiana, August 26, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Bemus Point, New York, August 26, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁵ J. B. White, Bemus Point, New York, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, August 27, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁶ J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, August 18, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

bank, Herndon made plans to encourage the Kirbyville merchants to pressure the generating company to decline to hire members of the union. Quite a number of the unemployed lumber workers, he noted, had gone to West Texas to pick cotton. At Mill T of Kay Ell, W. T. Gillam, a former fireman, had become an organizer for the BTW. And Tom Choate, the "Blind Tiger Man," was killed at 1 a.m. the previous Sunday "over in our negro quarters" at Kirbyville by "one of his own gang."⁸⁷ Businessmen in Bronson, Texas, meanwhile had petitioned John Henry Kirby to re-open the Kay Ell mill there. Herndon, at the same time, had a man on his payroll who was in charge of the BTW local in Kirbyville who regularly sent false information to the union. Tom Force, the Bronson druggist, was bitter, Herndon said, about the company using "mixed labor." And Hemmingway, the sawyer, was "as crooked as a barrel of snakes." Calvin Spikes, "the one-legged organizer operating on the Saline,"⁸⁸ arrived in Kirbyville on the evening of August 30, 1911. Gillam, meanwhile, went to Magnolia Springs to speak at the Dougherty School House the night of August 31, 1911. Singleterry of DeRidder, Louisiana, came through Kirbyville, leading about 60 blacks and 20 whites on August 30, 1911. His group was joined by 10 or 15 in Kirbyville, who went along with them to pick cotton and work the coal mines out in Texas. Jno. Dougharty, the socialist, spoke at Kirbyville the previous Saturday. He was sympathetic with the BTW. "Our crew in the saw mill has been short this week. The killing of Choate over in the negro

⁸⁷ J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, August 23, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

⁸⁸ J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, August 31, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

quarters demoralized them to a certain extent and they have not yet recovered from it [but] general conditions will probably be improved."⁸⁹

August was not a good month for Herndon or for Kay Ell. It seemed that the invasion of the BTW had begun in earnest. Organizers swarmed across the piney woods, making inflammatory speeches and leading the mill managers on wild goose chases in their efforts to keep track of the union. Early in the month, C. P. Myer, manager of mills and logging for Kay Ell, wrote to Herndon to thank him for his "efforts to assist in throttling this movement."⁹⁰ A week later, however, Myer picked up evidence that the union had not been stopped. J. W. Lewis, manager at Call, accused Jim Bell of DeRidder, Louisiana, of trying to organize Kay Ell employees at Call, Texas.⁹¹ Also a black man named W. H. Stewart who claimed to be a Baptist preacher at Newton, Texas, may have been "working for the union among the negroes"⁹² because he had been seen with a white Campbellite preacher who was suspected of sympathies with the BTW. On August 10, 1911, the black preacher was told to leave the town, and the white preacher would soon be "called upon by some of the citizens here."⁹³ T. M. Jones was

⁸⁹ J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, August 28, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

⁹⁰ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, August 4, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

⁹¹ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, August 11, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

⁹² J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, August 30, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

⁹³ Ibid.

also suspect, Herndon wrote. Myer gave cryptic and unmistakable orders: "dispense with his services."⁹⁴ Herndon also sent a man to Newton late in August, on Myer's orders, over the Orange & Northwestern Railroad, the Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company tram. The BTW organizer Lindsey had been reported in Newton on August 30, 1911. "My party returns Sunday & I will report," he told Myer.⁹⁵

The SLOA Executive Committee scheduled a meeting for Shreveport, Louisiana, on August 30, 1911, as the mills in the piney woods settled down for a long lockout. Many loyal workers remained quietly in the mill towns, living in company houses, fed from company stores. At no time did it seem impossible for most mills to hire a crew and start up.⁹⁶ M. L. Fleishel, chairman of the Louisiana Board of Governors and general manager of the big Gulf Lumber Company mills in Vernon Parish could not stand disunity. He kept up a steady barrage of letters to the Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company management in Orange, Texas, which controlled hundreds of thousands of acres of long leaf timber land in West Louisiana, along the Sabine River. He finally managed to rile Frank Farwell, the Lutchter & Moore general manager. "The truth of the matter is, I did not count the number of men that were on the payroll that were, according to YOUR statement, union men, nor do I know how many of those shown were natives, over whom we have no jurisdiction whatever," Farwell pointed out. "It

⁹⁴ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, August 31, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

⁹⁵ J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, August 31, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

⁹⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Seattle, Washington, August 29, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

is our intention to run an open shop, and we shall continue to do so. I have nothing further to say, because idle words don't count. We shall eliminate as fast as we can the union men and replace them."⁹⁷ This is the first indication that "natives" had been blacklisted by the SLOA.

At Fisher, the stress of the lockout began to affect the company men. Late in August, John Brew, longtime assistant to Warren, and Mr. Eels, father of Warren's secretary, left the company and returned to Missouri. The 4 L Company's loyal men, Warren told Captain White, had "hired a man to meet agitators & interview visitors and invite them to keep away."⁹⁸ By the first of September, lumbermen generally had recognized that the lockout had not worked to their advantage and that it had, in fact, driven hundreds of out-of-work men and their "native" friends into the BTW. Reed writes that the SLOA had met in New Orleans, Chicago, and Alexandria between July and September, 1911, but he overlooked half a dozen other meetings during the same time in Beaumont, Texas, Lake Charles, DeRidder, and Shreveport, Louisiana. The lockout, he said, closed 24 mills and threw 10,000 men out of work, figures that are at least arguable.⁹⁹ Fickle notes that M. L. Alexander, soon to be the manager for the Louisiana Board of Governors and keeper of the blacklist, had a complete list of union

⁹⁷ F. H. Farwell, Orange, Texas, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, August 30, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 690, WHMC.

⁹⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Bemus Point, New York, August 29, 1911; same to same in Kansas City, Missouri, August 31, 1911, Box 8976-84; C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to Warren, August 29, 1911; Slagle to M. L. Fleishel, Shreveport, Louisiana, August 29, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁹ Reed, "IWW in Louisiana," p. 46.

members by late September, developed by Burns and Pinkerton detectives. Actually, things did not go quite so smoothly for Alexander, but he made up for incomplete and unreliable information by insisting that anyone even vaguely implicated with the BTW should be fired and refused future employment in the piney woods.¹⁰⁰ By late August, union organizers—or what were perceived to be BTW agitators—had scattered across East Texas. J. A. Herndon at Kirbyville identified five men in his town as union organizers by August 30, 1911.¹⁰¹ J. L. Britton, Kirbyville superintendent, agreed that some union officials had entered his town, but they had "not much success with sawmill labor"; instead "they seem to be working the farmers north of here more than any one else."¹⁰² Earlier in the month, Britton had fired W. T. Gillam for saying that he would organize for the union if given the chance. Herndon talked with Sam Park about the same time. The Merryville, Louisiana, mill manager denied accusations of his sympathy with the BTW. "Sam Park yesterday said he is not working a single Union man at Merryville,"¹⁰³ Herndon reported with a wink. Early in September, Herndon pointed out to C. P. Myer in Houston, Texas, that all but three of the businessmen resident in Newton, Texas, had joined the BTW as sympathetic members. A young merchant in Newton had already charged that Kay Ell had been starving its employees. By the

¹⁰⁰ Fickle, "Race, Class," pp. 103-104.

¹⁰¹ J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, September 3, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

¹⁰² J. L. Britton, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, August 30, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

¹⁰³ J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, September 1, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

middle of September, Herndon began to feel a shortage of labor. It seemed to be caused by a conscious policy of the union leadership to "pick off men from the mill to go to the cotton fields."¹⁰⁴ Because of the labor shortage, some mill hands had been working day and night shifts. A week later, E. A. Wright, a BTW organizer from Newton, Texas, showed up in Kirbyville. A one-legged man, he was canvassing for a patent coal-oil burning attachment to a cook stove, which usually burned wood in the rural South. Also large crowds of cotton pickers had been streaming through East Texas on their way to the West Texas cotton belt. Also, the Campbellite preacher in Kirbyville, a man named Tate, was suspected of organizing for the union.¹⁰⁵

Captain White did not blame labor agitators with the fire that destroyed his planing mill at West Eminence, Missouri, on Jack's Fork of the Current River. He did, however, advise his managers in Louisiana to take special precautions with the mills there because "you are in danger of fire more than usual ... the extra hazard on account of labor troubles."¹⁰⁶ Although he had begun to rebuilt the planing mill, he admitted he might not be able to run it at all afterward because of labor conditions. He advised

¹⁰⁴ J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, September 16, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

¹⁰⁵ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to J. L. Britton, Kirbyville, Texas, August 21, 1911; J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to Myer, August 21, 1911; Herndon to Myer, September 23 and 30, 1911 Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

¹⁰⁶ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 2, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, and White to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, September 2, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 691, WHMC. See also Slagle to White, August 31, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; C. C. Sheppard, West Eminence, Missouri, to Slagle, August 31, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, Files 690, WHMC.

Warren to have the pine plant at Fisher, Louisiana, reappraised for insurance purposes, which would also help in adjusting the loss later. These were minor nuisances in the greater scheme of things, and no lumberman was in doubt just what the scheme was. S. J. Carpenter as a member of the Executive Committee explained it in personal letters to affected mills in Louisiana and Texas. The Executive Committee and the Louisiana Board of Governors met jointly at the Frost-Johnson Lumber Company offices in Shreveport on Wednesday, August 30, 1911. The committee, the board, and twelve to fifteen members attended. Attempts to organize sawmill labor was the only subject discussed. Everyone agreed that a "more efficient machine must be devised to combat the labor union than we have at present."¹⁰⁷ Although the Louisiana Board of Governors had done "splendid work," the union grew so rapidly and had an estimated five hundred organizers at work, requiring reports from secret service agents, control of their movements "in new fields as they become infected," that the campaign against the union "cannot be well or economically handled by a scattered committee," even were members "to devote practically their entire time to this work."¹⁰⁸

SLOA leaders also worried about the supply of non-union labor available for starting the mills closed by the association. About three thousand men had been fired by the companies because of their affiliation with the BTW. New labor had not arrived in the piney woods, and "it would be a physical impossibility to resume operations, at

¹⁰⁷ S. J. Carpenter, Alexandria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 2, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

the mills now down, at the present time with non-union labor."¹⁰⁹ Many of the fired workers would have to be re-hired. The lumbermen expressed the pious hope that all desirable men would renounce the union and make contracts with their former employers.

The SLOA leaders decided that the association should create "a clearing house for labor where members can get as complete a report on any individual laborer as they could as to the financial worth of a customer through the Dunn and Bradstreet agencies." The group agreed on an office "at some convenient point and a competent office manager put in charge with the necessary clerical assistance to efficiently handle the association's work, including an effort to mould [sic] public opinion."¹¹⁰ Alexandria, Louisiana, was selected, and the joint meeting adjourned from Shreveport to meet at the Bentley Hotel in Alexandria the next day, August 31. Nearly all the group went to the town at the Red River rapids, joined by the local lumber organizations. The Association promptly got five new members. The SLOA took offices in the Hotel and hired M. L. Alexander of Alexandria as office manager. Alexander opened his campaign that morning with predictions of great results. The group also voted to ask all SLOA members to give Alexander "certain information as to past and present employees necessary for the working out of our clearing house plan." Each manager would "designate some member of his clerical force to undertake compiling the information

¹⁰⁹ S. J. Carpenter, Alexandria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 2, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

desired, and to furnish same in as complete a form as possible at the earliest possible moment. This is very important."¹¹¹

Fickle misinterpreted reports of the opening of the SLOA office in Alexandria, Louisiana, asserting that Alexander replaced Oliver O. Bright as executive secretary of the association. The central office of the SLOA remained in St. Louis, Missouri, and Bright remained executive secretary throughout the period. In Alexandria, Alexander filled an office mandated by the Louisiana Board of Governors, chiefly to manage the blacklist, a file, Fickle writes, of 25,000 names of timber workers. The figure probably reached three times that number by the time Alexander completed his service with the SLOA.¹¹² The Alexandria office acted immediately to take hold of the situation. Laird Alexander quickly settled his affairs and devoted his full time to solving the problems of the Louisiana Board of Governors. Meanwhile, S. J. Carpenter, the Winnfield lumbermen associated with the Joyce interests, acted as spokesman in a campaign to get the cooperation of the managers of member mills. On September 5, 1911, Carpenter repeated his position that the Southwestern lumber mills would one day have to rehire many members of the BTW: "This will only be done upon their evidencing in some satisfactory way that they have renounced their allegiance to the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, as was done at Lake Charles before the returning to work of the strikers in

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Fickle, "Race, Class," p. 103, cites S. J. Carpenter, Winnfield, Louisiana, to John Henry Kirby, Houston, Texas, September 5, 1911, Box 221; black list of American Lumber Company workers, Merryville, Louisiana, Box 222, Kirby Papers, UH.

1906."¹¹³ Carpenter stressed the importance of submitting accurate records of such transactions with workers to the Alexandria office where complete records would be kept. Moreover, the concern of lumbermen that the proposed blacklist would violate laws against such massive retaliation was put to rest with the retaining of legal counsel who assured the SLOA that it would be entirely within its rights. Carpenter wanted Alexander to have: "1st. Names of employees who have left the service of your Company since January 1st, 1911; 2nd. Names of all employees in your service at present time; 3rd. Daily report of all new employees. 4th. Names of employees who have been discharged for cause by you or other members, whom you have reinstated."¹¹⁴ Carpenter demanded detailed information immediately, for which the office printed blank forms.

Membership in the SLOA continued to grow slowly, although it lacked important mills in Texas, among the cypress manufacturers in South Louisiana, and in those states east of the Mississippi River, where the threat of labor agitation was not so pressing. Conscious of their lack of support for the SLOA, particularly in the Southeast, the Executive Committee dispatched I. H. Fetty to solicit new members east of the Mississippi River. At Carson, J. H. Morrison, the mill superintendent, kept an eye of on neighboring Merryville, where Sam Park still held out against his fellow lumbermen. Morrison said the matter was serious after the American Lumber Company threatened

¹¹³ S. J. Carpenter, Alexandria, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, September 5, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

to run its mills day and night. Frost at Shreveport and Fullerton at St. Louis had been named to a committee of the association to try to deal with Park and the American Lumber Company, still operating a union shop. John Henry Kirby was up in arms, blustering to anyone who would listen, condemning Park as a turncoat and a traitor to his class. BTW organizers had scheduled meetings at Kay Ell plants in East Texas at Silsbee, Kountze, Fuqua, and Millville. At the same time, secret service operatives had begun to make their first reports after being retained by the Alexandria office a few days earlier. Alexander assured his members that "the machinery of that department is beginning to work."¹¹⁵ The association had acquired the services of J. C. Brown to oversee the work of operatives in the field and to analyze their reports, making frequent suggestions and recommendations based on confidential information. In the process of assigning districts to private detectives, however, Alexander learned that several lumber companies had operatives in the field. In Texas in one infamous episode, two groups of detectives tracked each other through most of John Henry Kirby's scattered mill towns, sowing panic among lumbermen and reaping scant information other than the descriptions of ludicrous disguises assumed by competing operatives. To remedy such situations, Alexander asked that reports of private detectives be sent to the SLOA office in Alexandria also.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 6, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 693, WHMC.

¹¹⁶ S. J. Carpenter, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 6, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 693, WHMC.

Alexander dutifully reported on September 7, 1911, that the J. F. Ball & Bro. Lumber Company had closed their mill at Ball, Rapides Parish, Louisiana, because the flatheads in the fronts had walked out in sympathy with employees locked out of the company's mills at Pollock, Grant Parish, Louisiana. Actually, only the saw mills had closed; the planing mill had not and was still running. The association sent a private detective into the area to investigate conditions. Operatives of the detective agencies had already produced documents that showed 143 local lodges of the BTW organized by September 7, 1911; 113 were in Louisiana, 24 in Texas, and 6 in Arkansas. BTW membership had reached 10,000, and on September 6, 1911, 114 new applications for membership had reached Jay Smith, the union secretary in Alexandria. The average rate of increase in members was 40 a day, Smith estimated. A. L. Emerson, the BTW president, had been taken sick and was recuperating in Kinder, Louisiana, site of the Peavy-Byrnes Lumber Company plant. Henry E. Hardtner, who like John Henry Kirby cultivated a reputation as a "pal" to his workers, announced that he would attend the meeting of the SLOA in Chicago, offering his cooperation to the Alexandria office. Also, C. E. Slagle, general manager of the LCLC mills at Clarks and Standard, had spent the week in the SLOA office in Alexandria, helping get it running smoothly.¹¹⁷

Members of the Louisiana Board of Governors had expressed concern for some time about the potential for trouble in Rapides and Grant Parishes, where whites had

¹¹⁷ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 7, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 693, WHMC. Alexander based his assessment on reports from private detectives who had infiltrated Jay Smith's office.

prevented the Gould interests from hiring black workers to run the lumber mills built along the Iron Mountain Railroad tracks in the 1880's. Without black strike breakers, the mills would be at the mercy of the white workers, many of whom had affiliated with the BTW. Despite its reputation for racial moderation, the union did not scruple to use racial animosity when it suited organizational purposes. S. T. Woodring and J. H. Morrison, both governors of the SLOA, agreed that the Ball plants should stay closed and given the chance to defray expenses from the association's benefit fund.¹¹⁸

Carpenter remained, at least for a time, the guiding force in the efforts of the SLOA to break the BTW. In early September, he circulated copies of a new application blank with a novel provision, aimed at depriving injured employees of any compensation based on company negligence. The only change from the previous form was a declaration by the worker that he was physically and mentally competent to handle the job and the machinery associated with it. One may wonder how a person incompetent mentally could be held responsible for signing such a statement, but these ironies did not occur to the lumber managers, nor to the Joyce interests' lawyers, Blackman & Overton of Winnfield, Louisiana. The counselors had noticed that plaintiffs in personal injury suits nearly always alleged lack of training to operate complex machinery. Carpenter's disclaimer, he asserted, would remove this as a remedy at law. The SLOA office, he added, could furnish free blanks. He urged every member to use the forms in every case, otherwise the object of the SLOA would be defeated. Attached to Carpenter's

¹¹⁸ S. T. Woodring, DeRidder, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 6, 1911; J. H. Morrison, Carson, Louisiana, to Fleishel, September 6, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 693, WHMC.

letter was a standard application blank in which the applicant asked his former employer to give the proposed employer a complete employment record, including names, addresses, and dates of employment. It also asked specifically for the former employer's opinion of the worker's competence, personal character, conduct, and qualifications. Fully half the page was taken up with legal releases in behalf of the company. It also relieved a worker's former employer of any responsibility for damages caused by giving the information.¹¹⁹

Alexander made frequent, often daily, reports to M. L. Fleishel of Fullerton, Louisiana, chairman of the Louisiana Board of Governors. By September 7, 1911, the SLOA manager had learned that the BTW had organized a lodge at Winnfield, Louisiana, with about 35 members, most of whom were employed by the Dalton-Clark Stave Company and the Louisiana Lumber & Manufacturing Company. Neither had joined the SLOA. In the town the Merchants of Winnfield generally opposed the union, he found. At DeRidder, Harry Walston, brother of W. D. Walston, went as a BTW organizer for Mississippi, surfacing first at Bond. Although operatives had reported some infection at Bond, they found none at Slidell, Louisiana. The BTW, Alexander said, had 21 Grand Lodges, for each of which the union had to sign 50 members. Actual membership of the union on September 7, 1911, was 9,500, supported by 16 walking stewards or traveling organizers. About 5,000 to 6,000 members of the union were black. The BTW had elected A. L. Emerson, Jay Smith, and J. A. Russell as fraternal delegates to

¹¹⁹ S. J. Carpenter, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, September 7, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 693, WHMC.

the Convention of the Industrial Workers of the World, scheduled for Chicago on September 18, 1911. The three may have been detailed to represent lumber workers in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas, although the minutes of the convention are not clear on this point. Emerson and Smith earlier has a circular printed and distributed on September 6, 1911, encouraging members of the BTW not to be intimidated by SLOA threats that they would be fired from their jobs because 'the cotton fields of the South and particularly of Texas are even now "'white and unto the harvest' impatiently waiting for the willing hands of the timber workers to gather." On August 31, at a meeting at Mab, Louisiana, Emerson and Smith told BTW members that the union could no longer make payments to striking workers and "advised that they go to the cotton fields to work."¹²⁰ In Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, the Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company had maintained an independent position, which some members of the SLOA interpreted as vaguely pro-union. Actually, the company took great pains to evade any retaliation by either side in the dispute, probably because the company's principal pine mills were situated in Orange, Texas, an incorporated municipality and an open town, beyond the jurisdiction--but not the influence--of the company. Strikes and lockouts had long marked the relationship between labor and management in Orange, but in the woods and at the fronts, most of which lay across the Sabine River in West Louisiana, the company could assert nearly complete control except for the occasional settler or squatter who eked out a precarious existence in the long leaf piney woods. When, in September 1911,

¹²⁰ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 7, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 693, WHMC. See also McWhiney, "Louisiana Socialists," p. 329.

Emerson and Fussell visited Fields, Louisiana, one Sunday, Lutchter & Moore learned that about 90 percent of their employees belonged to the BTW. Frank Farwell promptly instructed the superintendent at Fields to close the logging camps by 6 p.m. September 6, 1911, pay off all the men, and fire all union men and their sympathizers.¹²¹

To the beleaguered lumbermen, having taken actions that led to the very opposite results planned, the BTW had indeed made progress in its organization in Louisiana and Texas. Pinkerton Operative No. 10, reporting through the New Orleans office of the detective agency, listed the names and numbers of local lodges of the BTW for September 7, 1911. Reaction to the list was immediate and, to some extent, irate, because most mill managers did not believe their areas were "infected" by unionism. Clarence Slagle at Clarks reacted at once. He had spent a great deal of money retaining Pinkerton's National Detective Agency, who sent two operatives into Caldwell and LaSalle Parishes to investigate the union and its progress in organizing the lumber workers. The detectives had found only slight evidence of any fundamental organization, and Slagle had withdrawn them. Now he wanted A. S. Cowardin, superintendent of the Pinkerton office in New Orleans, to send them back to check out the report that a local lodge of the BTW was operating at Clarks.¹²² On September 13, 1911, Cowardin suggested sending to the Iron Mountain region his Operative No. 10, then occupied in Arkansas. No. 10 had joined the BTW in DeRidder, Louisiana, and had got inside the

¹²¹ J. H. Morrison, Carson, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 7, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 693, WHMC.

¹²² C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to A. S. Cowardin, New Orleans, Louisiana, September 7, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 693, WHMC.

union organization in Oakdale. A Texas millwright by trade, No. 10 went up to Clarks and looked diligently for Local #281 but could not find it; perhaps, he reported, it had only been planned but not actually occupied.¹²³

At Fisher, Louisiana, Warren still held the line against the BTW, keeping his mills closed essentially to punish his employees of whatever persuasion. The labor situation had been quiet for a few days, Warren wrote. Even minor excitement, of course, gave him a chance to find out who he could depend on among the workers. The union, he said, had gained a bad reputation among the public in the region. He admitted, however, that he was not aware of conditions at other mills in the piney woods. Only two mills on the KCS Railroad still ran, Ludington and Leesville. Dierks, located five miles south of Fisher, closed a few days earlier along with the hardwood mill at Zwolle. As far as he knew, Fisher had no union men. Only farmers and farmers' sons who had worked briefly for the 4 L Company were members of the BTW. Other union members had departed. He had managed to find work for most of his loyal workers who remained when the mills closed. He wanted to keep the mills closed to make an indelible impression on labor. The farmers near the milltown apparently found it reassuring, he thought, that settlers could impose a sort of restraint on the mills by seeing them closed in the face of union agitation. Meanwhile, several men charged with shooting into the homes of black workers in Zwolle, Louisiana, had been indicted, although Warren doubted that they would be convicted. The matter was also still before the Federal

¹²³ A. S. Cowardin, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, September 13, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 695, WHMC.

Court. He said about fifty mills were then closed in West Louisiana and East Texas. Still, downtime bothered Warren and other lumbermen, and they were not unaware that yellow pine mills, particularly in the Southeast, had been running full time. In effect, they profited by the Southwestern mills' troubles. It would have been only right and fair, Warren told Sam Carpenter, for the Mississippi and Alabama mills to cut their hours from 11 a day to a lower figure, which would help with the general curtailment of running time west of the river. The Southeastern mills declined.¹²⁴

In East Texas, union activities continued in the face of stiff opposition by the mill managers. Occasionally, the people of the region gave up their impartiality, coming down on one side or the other. On the night of September 3, 1911, the citizens of Bronson, Texas, engaged in a demonstration, objecting to the Kay Ell Company working blacks and foreigners. Company guards kept the peace, but the managers conferred and called in Kirby's Houston law firm, Andrews, Ball & Streetman. C. P. Myer recalled that the natives had prevented the company from working black employees when the mill first opened several years earlier. The management fired about 20 white men and shipped in Mexican laborers by rail to take their places and make up for the loss of black help. The weekly newspaper at Bronson, Myer said, had editorialized against Kay Ell, but the justice court and the grand jury had prevailed.¹²⁵ Kay Ell's managers kept up

¹²⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, and O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, September 14, 1911, Box 8976-84; Warren to S. J. Carpenter, Winnfield, Louisiana, September 16, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹²⁵ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to Andrews, Ball & Streetman, Attorneys, Houston, Texas, September 6, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

with events in the scattered mill towns in East Texas by the judicious use of such men as E. E. Sapp, who worked under cover against the BTW in the Kirby Lumber Company mills and fronts around Silsbee, Texas. In the late summer of 1911, he ran up a bill of \$43.25 for traveling expenses. Starting work on August 18, he put in 14 days undercover at \$2 a day.¹²⁶

In Spokane, Washington, about the same time, The Industrial Worker, the IWW weekly, reinforced John Henry Kirby's firm belief that the Southwestern lumbermen were dealing with a surrogate of Big Bill Haywood's, the BTW president, A. L. Emerson. Kirby never tired of charging that the BTW was merely another name for the IWW. The Southern lumber "bosses," the paper explained, had engaged in a "Star Chamber" convention in Chicago August 16, 1911,, during which Kirby met with Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, to perfect plans to destroy industrial unionism. The BTW "struggle" in Louisiana and Texas harked back to the last timber strike by the old Knights of Labor 20 years earlier. The conspiracy, the paper explained, was "a note from the book of John H. Kirby—to smash the I.W.W. to build up the A.F. of L."¹²⁷ Such exaggerations found their way into the writings of serious scholars, where they still give Kirby far too much credit or blame, depending

¹²⁶ C. B. Myer, Houston, Texas, to G. R. Christie, Houston, Texas, September 7, 1911; R. L. Weatherby, Silsbee, Texas, to Myer, September 7, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

¹²⁷ "Gompers to Aid Southern Saw Mill Owners, Report of Executive Section of the Southern Mill Owners Executive Committee, From Note of Book of John H. Kirby, to Smash the I.W.W. to Build Up the A.F. of L.," The Industrial Worker, Vol. 4 No. 24 [Whole No. 128], Spokane, Washington (Thursday, September 7, 1911), p. 1; copy in Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

on which side an investigator chooses to come down on. Neither Haywood nor Kirby loomed quite so large as their detractors portray them, but understandably both presented their enemies with irresistible targets at which to cast their proverbial stones. Kay Ell's saw mill at Aldridge, Texas, burned that day, sending shivers through the management in Houston. Arsonists, however, had not been at work in East Texas, after all, and in any case the company did not mean to re-open the plant at Aldridge. A few days later, J. L. Britton, superintendent at Kirbyville, assessed the situation from the field for C. P. Myer and other managers in Houston. The BTW, he wrote, had had more success recently than ever before. He blamed the socialists, who, he said, did most of the talking, primarily among farmers. Britton was convinced that all farmers or at least a majority of them favored socialism, although he did not precisely define the term and left the impression that he did not know just what they stood for other than a generalized opposition to the Kirby Lumber Company. In any event, the people Britton described as socialists had helped the union in every possible way.¹²⁸

Meanwhile, George K. Smith, treasurer of the SLOA in St. Louis, Missouri, worked to provide financial support to mills closed down by the association. The amount due each member who closed down on August 21, 1911, was submitted to the Executive Committee for approval at its next meeting. The amount was based on a statement of each mill's cut over four days running time during August. The cut was figured on log scale on the average daily cut at the rate of \$2 per Mbf. While the mills were idle, the

¹²⁸ C. P. Myer, Houston, to Managers, All Points, Superintendents, Camps 1, 3, 5, and 8, September 7, 1911; J. L. Britton, Kirbyville, Texas, to Myer, September 11, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

managers estimated, based on recent production figures, the amount of lumber they would have otherwise cut, again based on the log scale or estimate of how much lumber would be produced from logs arriving in the mill pond. Log scale generally fell short of the actual amount of lumber produced by a mill, a device to keep their members from over-estimating the potential of their closed mills.¹²⁹ Compensation for closing mills quickly lost its excitement in the larger problem of freezing out the union from the piney woods.

In a short time, natural allies appeared to help the mill managers handle the challenges posed by union organizers and agitators. At Fisher, Louisiana, Willard Warren recruited a cadre of loyal employees and gave them the freedom to mob any organizer with the audacity to set foot on the company property. It was very quiet in the fall of 1911, Warren said, but there were moments. "A little excitement prevailed here yesterday evening [September 7, 1911] when four union men came in from a neighboring mill and in company with the local secretary [probably Will Warmack], who lives in the country near here, undertook to convince a lot of our men that they were going to organize our negroes," he wrote. "The matter terminated in their being booted out of town and they were run probably half a mile beyond the town limits. Of course these things do not indicate a very satisfactory situation, but I feel that I cannot very well undertake to prevent the loyal element from protecting what they believe to be their

¹²⁹ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to Members Who Closed Down Sawmills on August 21st - LLLL Co., Fisher, Louisiana, September 7, 1911, Box 11264-50, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

privilege."¹³⁰ Even considering Warren's propensity in such moments to exaggerate for effect, the encounter did the 4 L Company and the manager no honor, unlike Warren's earlier willingness to allow union speakers to destroy themselves by their ineffective messages. With Captain White in Kansas City and O. W. Fisher in Bozeman, Montana, Warren continued the discussion. The labor situation was virtually unchanged, he said. "I think that there is, however, some change in the sentiment, and I do not think there is much sympathy on the part of outside people except from the more worthless class."¹³¹ Quite a few farmers in the parish had joined this union. Warren called them "professional 'jiners.'" The loyal men had "a pretty strong league and among their number are a good many determined men."¹³² They would do nothing "displeasing" to Warren, who did not insist that they "put up with any abuse or trespassing on their rights by the union element."¹³³ There would be no serious trouble, he assured company officials. Nevertheless, 50 members of the Citizens League formed a mob and laid violent hands on the union organizers before they ejected them from the town with a warning, punctuated by kicking the unfortunate visitors, not to return. For a time, at least, Warren seems to have turned from legalism to vigilantism, a frame of mind that began late in 1911 to permeate the piney woods, and would result

¹³⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to S. J. Carpenter, Winnfield, Louisiana, September 8, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, SFA.

¹³¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, and O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, September 8, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

a year later in the death or injury of scores of people at Grabeau, Louisiana. The same day, in another letter to his father-in-law, Warren was not quite so confident in his ability to hold the line against the union at Victoria mills, the 4 L Company's sister plant in Natchitoches Parish. BTW organizers had been picking off an occasional worker in the woods, although they had not tried to enter the mill town itself, probably because Victoria was still running; a closed mill would mean the workers had no money with which to pay dues. Warren speculated that dues was the important element in generating union organizers. Unemployed lumber workers often went out as union agents, he explained, taking the first \$43 a month he collected in dues as his commission. "There are probably five hundred organizers at work at this time throughout the South,"¹³⁴ he concluded. Back at Fisher, Warren had detailed the work of Alexander's clearing house to Philip Bloomer, erstwhile drummer in Texas for the 4 L Company's line of hardwood flooring. The choice of Bloomer would prove fortunate for the flooring salesman, because it gave access to the higher counsels of the company, from which he vaulted later to a managerial position, in time coming to lead the company itself.¹³⁵

Earlier Warren had submitted a list of employees of the 4 L Company to the Executive Committee, SLOA, and had cautioned Sam Carpenter that Fisher and Victoria would need at least a thousand blanks to write up the men who had left the company's employ since January 1, 1911. North of the Red River, Clarence Slagle had come to

¹³⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, September 8, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹³⁵ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to Members, SLOA, September 12, 1911, Box 11267-53, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

appreciate Warren's enclosed position, as the BTW continued to grow in strength along the Iron Mountain Railroad. Ball's plant at Pollock had been completely unionized, he told Warren in early September. Hardtner at Urania, an all-white town, had fallen to the union, too, he speculated, as he contemplated his neighbors: "the labor trouble in this section is strongest where all white men are employed, and much weaker where mixed crews of white and colored are working."¹³⁶ There had already been two or three anti-black riots at Pollock among Ball's employees, when the company tried to bring in black workers by rail. The union still held out, although Ball himself wanted to bring in black workers guarded by U.S. Marshals. Pollock, Slagle supposed, was probably the worst town in the United States on the race question; indeed, blacks had never lived there or been permitted to work in or even pass through the town unless they were protected in a Jim Crow passenger car on the Iron Mountain. In 1911, Ball employed only white workers, a carry-over from an agreement made nearly a quarter of a century earlier with the Gould interests when they built the Big Creek mills there. It was beyond Ball's control, "which makes the labor trouble a little more serious than if mixed help were employed."¹³⁷

Slagle kept a close watch on his own mills, ready to respond at the first indication of union "infection" among his employees. He was particularly solicitous of the mills

¹³⁶ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to SLOA, Alexandria, Louisiana, September 7, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹³⁷ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 11, 1911, Box 89; see also Warren to S. J. Carpenter, Winnfield, Louisiana, September 8, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

at Standard, Louisiana, a few miles south of Clarks on the Iron Mountain, first because it was somewhat removed from his personal scrutiny and next because it was only walking distance from Olla, Louisiana, a free town where he had no jurisdiction. He kept cautioning John P. Collins, the superintendent at Standard, asking him for assurances that no union man had found his way onto the LCLC payroll. Collins replied that workers at Standard had asked repeatedly for the chance to express their opinions on the BTW, and in the middle of September, 1911, he called for a mass meeting and resolutions in support of the company. He quickly noted that he did not attempt to raise a Citizens League to oppose the Union, because he was opposed to violence that might be directed at any union sympathizer. The trouble was, he could not decide how to name the presiding officer for the league in case of trouble. But since he meant only for the workers to speak for themselves, he let them hold a meeting on September 15, 1911, in Standard with Dr. B. F. Ferguson as chairman and M. M. Hazen as secretary for the white meeting. The simultaneous meeting of black workers adopted the same resolutions as those the white workers adopted but signed them separately. The black meeting did not seem to have a chairman. So far, he said, his men had signed non-union cards and unanimously signed resolutions supporting the company, "ample evidence as to the present conditions and should satisfy the most doubtful ones among out Brother Co-Workers in the Industry."¹³⁸ Collins promptly mailed copies of the resolutions to

¹³⁸ J. P. Collins, Standard, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, September 15, 1911; see also the wire from Collins to Slagle, Washington Court House, Ohio, c/o Terminal Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri, September 16, 1911; Collins to Slagle, September 16, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, WHMC.

Slagle in Clarks, but had to telegraph the message to the general manager, on his way to Washington Court House, Ohio. What appears to be the black workers' committee response lists C. H. Short as Chairman, T. M. Slaughter and T. P. Mitchell, members.

The group addressed a letter to J. P. Collins in Standard:

Having heard that it has been reported that there was a Labor Union Organization in our midst, and that we were all solid Union Men, we the undersigned employees of the La. Cent. Lumber Co. at Standard Camp wishing to be justly understood take this method of informing you that such a report is false, and that we do not belong to any such organization, nor or [sic] we in sympathy with a union of this kind, and that we have been opposed from the beginning to organization in our camp.

Hoping that we will be rightly understood in this matter, we remain,

Yours Respectfully
(Signed as per list attached)

We whose signature does appear on this letter are willing to attest our signatures to a sworn affidavit to the above statement.¹³⁹

The resolutions followed the pattern of other such expressions, free or otherwise, in support of the lumbermen, but they did diverge from the usual by adding that they should not be "construed as in any manner opposed to any Labor Organization other than the Brotherhood of Timber Workers."¹⁴⁰

The woods superintendent at Standard camp, J. W. Webb, joined in the spirit of the non-union rhetoric by hiring a man he knew to be a member of the BTW just to test his regular workers. Immediately, the workers objected that he was a union man,

¹³⁹ C. H. Short, et al., Standard, Louisiana, to J. P. Collins, Standard, Louisiana, September 16, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

¹⁴⁰ J. P. Collins, Standard, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, September 19, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

unwanted in the woods, proving, at least to Webb, that his men were more loyal than he expected. In a postscript to the letter when he passed it on to Slagle, Collins remarked that the union man had "tried to write one of our men about three months ago [and] they spotted him as soon as he arrived in our Camp."¹⁴¹ On September 18 and 19, Collins reported to Slagle in Chicago on conditions at Standard that turned into a story of intrigue and deceit. He had found nine suspicious cases, using several tame workers as spotters, but he could get no direct evidence. He decided to hire a detective who was not known in the mill town. Three days after the detective went to work, he uncovered Jessie [sic] Knighten, who lived in Olla, and received applications for membership in the BTW. Knighten went to Standard, stopped at a house, and called for a drink of water. The man living there asked Knighten where he was from; he said "up the road," apparently a coded message, Collins thought. The visitor wanted to know whether the mill was running full time. From the house, Knighten crossed the lumber yard, according to the nightwatchman's report the next morning. Friday, a young man named Jno. Strain, who said he was from Urania, loitered about the store and office gallery for most of Friday and Saturday. About four o'clock Saturday evening Collins talked with Strain about the labor union. Strain asked some questions, to which Collins gave ironic answers. After the manager left him, the young man told several company men that he was a member of the union. The young man stopped with E. R. Finley, who was also

¹⁴¹ J. W. Webb, Standard, Louisiana, to J. P. Collins, Standard, Louisiana, September 16, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

his brother-in-law. Earlier, Collins had fired Finley "for some talk in regard to labor union, and who moved from Standard Sunday to Beth [Boeuf] River."¹⁴²

Returning from Clarks Monday evening Collins found a report from the detective giving the names of all workers who attended a union meeting the previous Thursday night. He promptly fired all of the men on the list. They had worked at the planing mill. All denied membership in the union. The detective also told Collins that the organizer said that union members should sign any paper the company asked them to sign. After he fired the men at the planing mill for union sympathies, he sent home a non-union man to spy on the unemployed workers. He learned that two more men at the planer were union members. The union plan, Collins said, was to send an innocent country boy or harmless looking man into the mill town to loiter about the streets a few days to tell the location of the union organizer. The manager who judged conditions by what his men told him was likely to be mistaken, he said. The company probably had three or four men who should have been fired for union sympathies, Collins calculated. With this exception no "infection" remained at Standard. Still, he wanted a thorough investigation, because, as he often said, he could not work union men. "My plan of handling labor would only mean trouble for me should there be any, as I am loud spoken against the union." he said.¹⁴³

¹⁴² J. P. Collins, Standard, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, September 19, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

¹⁴³ J. P. Collins, Standard, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, September 15, 16, and 19, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

CHAPTER 7

The Clearing House

You can live without these mills if the mills never turn a wheel but these mills can never turn another wheel without you.¹

M. L. Alexander, as quickly as he had the SLOA office in Alexandria organized, began making daily reports to M. L. Fleishel, chairman of the Louisiana Board of Governors, henceforth the principal group within the association charged with breaking the BTW. Alexander collated information from scattered sources--private detectives, lumbermen, gratuitous informants--and produced a summary of labor conditions in the piney woods. He also kept the blacklist, the existence of which the SLOA leadership steadfastly denied. Although his responsibility was limited to the State of Louisiana, he did not scruple to intrude into Arkansas, Texas, or Mississippi on occasion. On September 13, 1911, the Chicago office of the J. F. Ball & Bro. Lumber Company announced it had closed its mill at Collier's Spur at 6 p.m. on Monday, September 11. Ball now had three mills closed, including its plants at Pollock and Ball, Louisiana. J. F. Ball threatened to keep the mills idle until the BTW gave up the fight. The Hale-Gibson & Driver Company also closed its mill at Zwolle, Louisiana, on September 11, in response to demands by the St. Louis office of the SLOA. Seima-Boston, Louisiana,

¹ Arthur Lee Emerson, speech typescript, January 16, 1912, p. 8, in John Henry Kirby Papers, Rice University, quoted by Ferrell, "BTW," pp. 3-4.

operatives reported, was "rank with unionism" and suggested the situation could lead to incendiary fires in the mills. The BTW local lodge at the Crowell & Spencer Lumber Company plant at Long Leaf, Louisiana, had about 60 members, most of whom were farmers. A "colored lodge" had organized at Winnfield with M. S. Mattlewhite as president; J. White as vice president; and A. Kochinsky as secretary and treasurer. Of the Woodworth local's 36 members, only six worked for the lumber company there, and of the 60 members of the lodge at the Woodsworth front, only two worked for the company; most, of course, were farmers. A. L. Emerson, Alexander's operatives discovered, was opposed to affiliating the BTW with the IWW; Jay Smith favored the plan. Both would attend the IWW convention in Chicago on September 18. At the same time, skilled mechanics had objected to the lack of distinction they enjoyed within the union, demanding instead that they form separate lodges not open to common laborers, "which will be practically impossible to grant."² Emerson had cautioned his members to take care that more plants did not close, throwing more men out of work. Already, the union had more members idle than it could support financially. On September 13, Alexander calculated, 14 mills had sent lists of employees, which would form the basis of his blacklist. Lists from Texas plants would not be included in the files of the Alexandria office until the association settled the question of the legality of the blacklist under Texas law, which apparently prohibited such methods. Alexander had hired three

² M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 13, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 695, WHMC.

stenographers and a file clerk for the Alexandria office to handle the complex index system he had installed.³

The same day, the SLOA met in Chicago for one of its regular strategy sessions. Because Willard Warren could not be there, he appealed to Clarence Slagle for an account of the proceedings. Members listened intently to reports on the progress of the union, Slagle said. R. A. Long and several others vigorously urged that mills should reopen when they could start up with non-union labor. Hallowell, general manager of the Industrial Lumber Company at Elizabeth, Louisiana, wanted authority to start up his mill by October 1. His directors insisted that some of their mills should reopen, although they were willing to close the Oakdale plants indefinitely because that town "needed a good lesson."⁴ Hallowell said that he could start the Elizabeth plant with non-union men, but if the SLOA opposed him, he would let that mill stay down. William Hicks of the Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company also wanted permission to reopen his mill because it would run with non-union labor, but if the association insisted, he would stay down indefinitely. After long discussions, in which some urged that any mill should start with non-union labor and others urged an indefinite shut down, Long offered a motion that three mills, recommended by the Board of Governors and the Executive Committee, be authorized to reopen. Some opposition developed briefly, but the motion finally passed. Then the Board of Governors retired to agree on a report. Members quickly

³ Ibid.

⁴ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 19, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

found that recommending three mills would be impracticable. Instead, they recommended that several mills start as soon as private detectives could justify the action. Detectives would survey the mills in anticipation of a board meeting in about ten days, at which it would decide which mills would start. The board did not designate any mills, although most members thought Longville, Elizabeth, Fullerton, Pickering, Neame, and Mansfield, all in Louisiana, were likely candidates, providing, of course, that the detectives agreed that they could be started with non-union labor. It would have been impossible to agree on three mills, but if these seven mills started, one mill of the Central Coal & Coke Company, one of Long-Bell, one of Pickering, and one of Industrial would definitely be reopened. Because Fleishel, the chairman, would not agree to start any mill unless his Fullerton plant was among the first, the board assigned a detective to determine whether Fleishel could start the mill with non-union labor.⁵

In the meeting next day, Henry Hardtner reported that his plant had organized against him. He had fired several men, he said, but still hoped he could get them in line without a complete shut down. The SLOA already had reports of the union at Urania. Hardtner also charged that the Joyce mill at Rochelle had 100 union men and that Standard was two thirds union. Standard camp, he said, was solidly union. His information, he claimed, came from "the three links and square and compass,"⁶ a reference to the Knights of Pythias and the Masons, and from the union itself. He was

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, September 19, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

confident that the information was correct. Slagle told the SLOA that he had not located a union at either Clarks or Standard, although he had fired men who belonged to the union or were in sympathy with it. The board voted to assign detectives to Rochelle, Urania, Clarks, and Standard for special reports on them. The Board of Governors planned to meet at Alexandria by the next Thursday, September 21, 1911, to review the detectives' reports. Sam Carpenter claimed that his men signed an anti-union petition and that men at Standard signed similar papers and were willing to sign an affidavit that they were not members of the union. Although all mills had some sympathizers and some men in the union, Slagle did not believe that a union local existed at his mills. He had fired nine men at Standard a day earlier with good effect, he said.⁷

At Chicago, Long said that the men had denied that they belonged to a union and signed papers to that effect, purposely deceiving the managers. He said that it might be best to shut down all of the mills in the yellow pine territory indefinitely to crush this impiety. Fullerton and Carpenter heartily agreed, having advocated it earlier in the day. Long had not agreed with them then, but he had changed his mind. Slagle doubted the Board would have enough data at Alexandria Thursday to support starting any of the mills. Long had also asserted that the mills east of the Mississippi River and some west of the river were not cooperating with the SLOA. Some mills, in fact, ran six days a week, he charged. Most of the large operators west of the river had run only four days a week, but unless more mills began to run shorter time, he might decide to start all of his mills full time. This was largely for the benefit of W. H. Sullivan, general manager

⁷ Ibid.

of the Great Southern Lumber Company at Bogalusa, Louisiana, who had run his mill night and day during the labor troubles.⁸ The Executive Committee of the SLOA also met to hear the report of the treasurer of the association and to provide for funds to meet the bills for the August and September lockout. The committee voted to set the assessment on August production at 50 cents per Mbf; 40 cents for the Benefit Trust Fund and 10 cents for the General Fund. George K. Smith, the treasurer, subsequently mailed blank forms for calculating the assessment.⁹

In the middle of September, Alexander found that A. L. Emerson spoke to a large group at Pollock, Louisiana, on the evening of September 13, calling on the workers to persist in their unionism. The situation in Pollock was "one of the most dangerous conditions with which we have to contend as there has always been in that section a certain lawless element that is hard to control. The Pollock lodge is 170 strong, but not all employees of the mill."¹⁰ The mill in Cotton Valley, Louisiana, closed on September 8, 1911, and the William Buchanan plant at Minden, Louisiana, closed on September 9, 1911, after which the employees at both places signed anti-union league cards. Loyal employees at the Davis Bros. Lumber Company mill at Ansley, Louisiana, ran the BTW organizers out of town earlier in September. Threats of incendiarism had been made at Georgetown, Louisiana, a mile or so north of William Buchanan's Grant

⁸ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, September 19, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 14, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 695, WHMC.

Lumber Company at Selma-Boston, situated at the intersection of the L&A and the Iron Mountain. One McMann, a stringer for local newspapers, who kept a store and restaurant at Georgetown, was the most vocal leaders of the BTW local lodge. At Rustville, Louisiana, an undetermined number of black workers had left for the Texas cotton fields, although they had been satisfied with working in the mills until disturbed by labor organizers, Alexander charged. Black workers named Pinchback and McCulloch actively led the union there, promising to distribute rations privately to support the unemployed workers. Major Gill and H. H. Hall, both union men, seemed weaker; W. D. Jackson was loyal; Mrs. Jackson bitter at the BTW; and Donahue and Gaskin loyal personally to Pridgen, the superintendent. The union brought in a man named Kelley to speak at Jena on the question of labor and capitalism, stirring up the men who worked in the William Buchanan mills at Trout and Goodpine, two company towns laid out shoulder to shoulder just west of the new parish seat. Workers and natives in the area had voiced objections to the black and white workers affiliating in the same union. "I believe," Alexander said, "that the color question will eventually be one of the rocks on which this organization will split and go to pieces."¹¹

Across the Mississippi River, the clearing house manager found no "infection" along the New Orleans & Northeastern Railroad from Slidell, Louisiana, to Hattiesburg, Mississippi, among either blacks or whites, who seemed satisfied with their lots in life. West of the river, conditions remained tense and uncertain. Jay Smith, secretary of the BTW, had made plans for a union newspaper to be published at Alexandria, arranging

¹¹ Ibid.

to have it printed by a local shop. A. L. Emerson, president of the union, had issued circulars asking local secretaries not to agitate in a way to cause disorder because it resulted in lockouts. Many of the walking delegates did not succeed in signing new members, according to Emerson, although the union headquarters in Alexandria had received applications from 14 new members in Oakdale, Louisiana, and 22 in Kirbyville, Texas, on September 13. Alexander also returned to one of his favorite recommendations. He had wired Fleishel that association information would produce good results, particularly in opposing the spread of falsehoods by union organizers. "[I]f the sympathizers with this movement were made to understand the true conditions they would hesitate to jeopardize their positions and bring privation on their families by joining this organization."¹²

At the request of Clarence Slagle at Clarks, Sam Carpenter at Winnfield, and Henry Hardtner at Urania, Alexander directed the Pinkerton agency in New Orleans to detail an operative to investigate possible "infection" by the BTW in Clarks, Standard, Urania, and Rochelle, Louisiana. A. S. Cowardin sent the agency's Operative #10, who had accomplished so much in the Calcasieu long leaf pine district. No. 10 had joined the union at DeRidder, Louisiana, the largest local lodge in the BTW with 1,300 members. "A tabulated list has just been made at official headquarters [of the BTW], Alexandria, showing that the organization now has 9513 members; 3116 paid up to

¹² Ibid.

September 1st, 4248 paid up to October 1st; 2149 not in good standing."¹³ The union, Alexander said, had been sending men to the cotton fields of Texas and Oklahoma, although the men usually had to pay their own way. BTW lodges were to be set up at convenient places so the cotton pickers could keep up the organization. All farmers were being persuaded to join, he said. Emerson spoke to about 1,200 people at Pollock on September 13, a Tuesday night, and was well received, secret agents reported. He made special efforts to appeal to black workers, and the union accepted all that wanted to join but gave no receipts, a charge that walking delegates were grafting on their own account. The union, Alexander speculated, would soon mount aggressive campaigns in Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, depending on the availability of organizers. Most of Alexander's information at this time came from an undercover source operating in the union headquarters, either a paid informer or a hired agent, probably a Pinkerton operative. Whether sleuth or spy, the man occupied a sensitive position, and the association manager was concerned that his reports might give away his identity. In his reports, sent only to the Board of Governors, the Executive Committee, and officers and staff of the SLOA, Alexander cautioned them to use the information carefully.¹⁴

In Arkansas, the union "infection" had not spread widely. William Buchanan at Stamps, Arkansas, had convinced black workers who had joined the union to give up their union cards and sign the company's non-union cards. Citizens of the town did not

¹³ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 15, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 695, WHMC.

¹⁴ Ibid.

sympathize with the BTW, probably because Buchanan owned the town. H. H. Richards, secretary and treasurer of the Hurricane Creek Lumber Company at Hurricane Creek, Louisiana, closed his mill after his woodsmen demanded recognition for the BTW. He refused to re-open the mills or the fronts, although the association encouraged him to run his planing mill with loyal men and wait for the Board of Governors to act before opening his sawmill. The Alexandria Lumber Company in Pineville, Louisiana, closed briefly because of anticipated racial trouble following "the murder of a young white man in the streets of Pineville by an unknown negro and the excitement in connection therewith. Many of the negroes left the plant through fear as they were threatened by a disorderly element who were excited by this deplorable occurrence."¹⁵ Once things settled down, the company re-opened its mills, Alexander said.

Arthur Lee Emerson, Jay Smith, and Ed Fussell boarded the Iron Mountain passenger train in Alexandria on Saturday, September 16, 1911, bound for Chicago on the Queen & Crescent Route to attend the IWW Convention. The BTW leaders arrived in Chicago Monday morning. They would stop in Indianapolis, home of Eugene V. Debs, on the way back to Louisiana. "All general information received tends to show that the B.T.W. does not desire to affiliate with the I.W.W. but they may possibly have to do so in order to obtain financial assistance," Alexander wrote. "Emmerson is reported as very much opposed to the affiliation but Smith is in favor of it. The cash

¹⁵ Ibid.

balance of the union in bank on September 1st was \$5,315.00."¹⁶ Before leaving for Chicago, Emerson sent a circular to the ten organizers then in the field with instructions to use the trappings of secret orders such as the Masons and Odd Fellows as a facade behind which to organize for labor interests. In the Beaumont, Texas, Enterprise, Fussell had challenged John Henry Kirby to a joint debate after the Chicago meetings. At Alexandria, the BTW had no local lodge, only the national headquarters, manned by the union's chief officers. Only about ten members of the union lived in the town.¹⁷

That September, H. H. Richards, Hurricane Creek manager, complained that the J. S. & W. M. Rice Lumber Company at Ward, Louisiana, had been hiring union laborers. Pressure against the Rice brothers would have a good effect in Southwest Louisiana. Operatives had reported to Alexander that the BTW had strong lodges at Trout, Good Pine, and Selma, Louisiana, among workers of the William Buchanan Lumber Company, headquartered in Texarkana, Arkansas. Workers in the Buchanan mills were especially secretive, afraid even to let their friends know about their affiliations. They refused even to talk with strangers. Operatives estimated the membership of the union at Trout at about 200; Good Pine, 100; and Selma, 300, figures Alexander admitted were not completely trustworthy. The union had also made tentative efforts to cross the Mississippi River into East Louisiana and Mississippi. The BTW sent Elton McGee down to Isabel, Louisiana, about ten miles by rail south of Bogalusa,

¹⁶ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 16, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 695, WHMC.

¹⁷ Ibid.

between the villages of Enon and Sun. The union then replaced McGee with J. Crawford as organizer at Bogalusa, site of the huge Goodyear family lumber company plant. Union sympathy at Dubach in North Louisiana did not result in organization of the James Bros. Lumber Company mills; at neighboring Bernice, site of another James Bros. mill, the sympathy was against the union. Operatives reported that the Standard, Louisiana, mills of the Louisiana Central Lumber Company showed no sign of "infection," but Henry Hardtner's Urania Lumber Company, a few miles to the south, was organized and would be thoroughly investigated. At the request of C. B. Sweet, vice president of the Long-Bell Lumber Company, the Alexandria office had also sent a special investigator to Lufkin, Texas, one of that state's most important lumber centers.¹⁸

By September 18, 1911, Pinkerton operatives had canvassed much of the area around Alexandria for union "infection." Members of the BTW, they found, had been advised by organizers to cooperate with the lumber mill managers who demanded the men give up their union papers. Under no circumstances were they to give up their jobs. Although the men turned in their union cards, they were still members of the union as long as they kept their dues paid. "It would therefore be well for operators to feel assured of their 'change of heart' before the men are taken on again,"¹⁹ Alexander said. Clarks and Standard, Louisiana, got a clean bill of health from the Pinkerton men. At the first sign of any sympathy of the union, the company fired a worker who voiced such

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 18, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 695, WHMC.

sentiments; concerned that the company would close its mills, the men kept quiet. If any "infection" existed, it was in the woods crews where the managers could not keep a close watch over their men. Operatives reported about 30 BTW members at Long Leaf, southwest of Alexandria, but they kept quiet, too, for fear the mills would close. At Leesville, a union stronghold, the SLOA had operatives keeping watch. Urania, northeast of Alexandria, was then in danger of a strike because of the deep sympathy for the union. The Hardtners averted it only because the company had not demanded the men sign non-union cards. According to secret agents, Emerson in Chicago had remarked that if the BTW affiliated with the IWW, Big Bill Haywood planned to flood the piney woods with socialist speakers to support the union initiative. But, so far, the clearing house concept was working. By September 18, Alexander reported, 29 mills had sent lists of employees for his use in compiling the blacklist.²⁰

The Lumbermen's Underwriting Alliance, a mutual insurance firm operated for member companies by U. S. Epperson & Company of Kansas City, Missouri, frequently expressed concern about the potential for vandalism and incendiarism in the locked-out lumber mills in the Southwest. Epperson sent inspectors into the closed mills to determine if each had an effective guard service. Often they did not, and the inspectors managed to stroll about undetected by sleeping guards, armed with revolvers. Most mills were brightly lighted with electric lights, powered by boilers still on line to maintain equipment for fighting fire and operating the stores and offices. The reports the insurance group received clearly indicated that the mills were vulnerable to arsonists and

²⁰ Ibid.

other criminals; they also indicated that no one seemed interested in burning the mills, else they missed very good opportunities. For the protection of mills and milltowns, the alliance manager recommended that electric lights be extinguished on the assumption that arsonists could not see in the dark; lanterns would be placed at all entrances to mills for the benefit of the guards. Also, where telephone systems were installed, guards should report hourly to a central command post. Companies should arm their guards with shot, riot, or pump guns instead of revolvers because fowling pieces covered more ground; even a nervous guard could hit something with a shotgun. Guards should question and report all strangers on the premises day and night, but most guards should be stationed to protect the principal mill, the vital point in any plant. The water pumps should be manned constantly, keeping at least 80 pounds of pressure on the fire pumps day and night; vandals would naturally strike at the water system if they intended burning the mills. Fire pumps, of course, should be primed constantly in case of emergency. Protective equipment such as hoses should be inspected frequently to discover any mutilation or vandalism. Managers should meet all incoming trains and keep track of strangers getting off. And finally, the insurance company encouraged the testing of guards at irregular hours, particularly at night and early morning when they tended to drop off to sleep. To reinforce the message, the manager sent around copies of two reports from Alliance inspectors at closed mills who found the properties virtually unguarded. Inspectors managed to get into the plants and walk about through the mills and grounds without being challenged. Plant managers paid handsomely for guards and

often failed to get the service, Epperson charged. The savings was an added incentive for plant managers to act forcefully to protect their mills and their reputations.²¹

Jay Smith, in Chicago attending the IWW Convention, wired the BTW headquarters on September 18 that Big Bill Haywood had brought up the petition of lumber workers for affiliation. The BTW officials, however, soon learned that the rank and file of the IWW did not look favorably on affiliation in 1911. In case they failed, Smith said, he, Emerson, and Fussell planned to stop at Indianapolis to investigate some form of cooperation with Gene Debs.²² Back in Alexandria, about 25 black workers at the Caddo-Rapides Lumber Company planing mill joined the BTW on September 17. At another planing mill, the Hub City Lumber Company, in which J. A. Bentley was a stockholder, the employees walked out on the morning of September 19, because the company would not respond to demands from the union for higher wages and weekly paydays. Hub City fired the men and paid them off. The walk-out, it appeared, was a wildcat strike, and the BTW probably had nothing to do with it. Following reports of union activity at Urania, Henry Hardtner fired four or five men who were known to be union leaders. He announced plans to find and fire all union sympathizers. Since he got back from the SLOA meeting in Chicago a week earlier, he had found that Clarks, Louisiana, was clear of "infection," and that Standard had little or none. Hardtner

²¹ Lumbermen's Underwriting Alliance, Kansas City, Missouri, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, September 18, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 695, WHMC.

²² M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 9, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

admitted that some union members may have been working for his woods department, but they were probably farmers of the area, notoriously difficult to deal with in any case. Other detective reports showed such places as Bond, Mississippi, and El Dorado, Arkansas, had no union activity. Rustville and Fullerton, Louisiana, had a few organizers still trying to form locals, but they had met with limited success because black workers had begun to fear that the BTW had betrayed them. At Jena, enthusiasm generated by recent union activities had almost disappeared, although most black workers at the White Sulphur Springs Lumber Company had joined the BTW.²³

On September 19, Clarence Slagle sent the resolutions signed by employees of Standard mill and front to M. L. Alexander at the clearing house in Alexandria. Alexander had obtained a list of all the local lodges of the BTW in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas, giving the total number—but not the names—of men belonging to each local. Only four members of the union worked at Clarks. The list, he added, was authentic and reliable. The Board of Governors, Alexander said, would meet in Alexandria on Thursday, September 28.²⁴ In his daily report to the board, Alexander surveyed the activities of the BTW. The rank and file had shown a great deal of interest in the reports of the BTW officers, after the Convention of the IWW in Chicago, on the possibility of affiliation. A man he identified as Gilroy, but probably Pat, alias A. L. or A. I., Guillory, the BTW treasurer, had advised union members to be patient until Emerson and

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, September 20, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC; copy in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

the delegation returned from Chicago. Meanwhile, the union headquarters continued to function routinely. Singleterry, member of the Alexandria lodge of the BTW, went to Oakdale on September 19 to send about 200 men to Texas to pick cotton. The union headquarters that day received membership applications from 12 Italians at Leesville; 11 unidentified men at Merryville; 18 at DeRidder, Louisiana; and 15 at Orange, Texas. The BTW established a Grand Lodge at Yelgar, Louisiana, at the same time. In Mississippi, the Farmers Union inducted a large number of black and white millhands, operatives reported. The Pinkerton man working the state recognized "some sort of frame-up between the Farmers Union of Mississippi and the B.T.W. of Louisiana and that the BTW are quietly keeping out of Mississippi and allowing the Farmers Union to organize the men, who will ultimately be turned over to them in a body."²⁵ Alexander said he did not believe the theory because all other reports showed Mississippi had no labor organization at all. J. H. Morrison at Carson watched the activities of the American Lumber Company and its union crew at Merryville closely, counting the running time carefully. By September 20, the mill ran five-quarters, a 14-hour day, and would have run night and day if the woods crew had been able to log the mill. The planing mill ran night and day, he said. Morrison may have received this information from Sam Ballard's New Orleans Item, one of the city's afternoon dailies. In a special from its stringer, probably in DeRidder, The Item proclaimed:

²⁵ Ibid.

MERRYVILLE MILL I[S] STILL IN OPERATION

Town is Feeling Good Effects of Not Being Affected by Unions

Merryville, La. Sept. 20. Merryville is one of the fortunate towns having escaped the tie-up of the labor union. Sam Park, President of the American Lumber Company, has used every method toward keeping things moving. He has at present got the planer running day and night and the mill running five quarters. The building of the new mill is being speedily constructed.

Merryville feels the effects of the new addition of the mill. Merryville will soon be one of the important industrial towns of south Louisiana.²⁶

The SLOA's official list of BTW locals showed 480 members at Merryville; 350 of them in good standing. In Leesville farther north on the KCS Railroad, the BTW had 455 members, but at Whitford, there was "little or no infection" with only 16 members indicated by the official list. At the request of the Executive Committee and the Board of Governors, Alexander sent Pinkerton men into Longville, Elizabeth, Neame, Pickering, and Mansfield, Louisiana.²⁷

Lumbermen exercised a degree of moral suasion to maintain a common front against the BTW. The guardians of the SLOA mandate were, for the most part, volunteers. On September 20, for example, Willard Warren called the Frost-Johnson

²⁶ The New Orleans Item, September 20, 1911.

²⁷ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 20, 1911; W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, September 20, 1911; Extract from New Orleans Item, September 20, 1911: "Merryville Mill I[s] Still in Operation", LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

Lumber Company office in Shreveport to ask why its mill at Mansfield, Louisiana, had started running, despite the prohibition imposed by the SLOA. It had only sawed a few timbers for repairs to the mill, the manager assured Warren; the mill was down and would stay down. To avoid trouble, the managers in Shreveport agreed to write to all the mills along the KCS to explain reports in the Shreveport Times that the mill had reopened. The newspaper, Alexander said the next day in his daily report, "reports the Mansfield plant of the Frost-Johnson Lumber Company in operation; this is denied by a telegram from the manager, R. T. Moore, who states that the report was without foundation that the mill only sawed fourteen hours for the purpose of cutting some emergency repair timber and that the paper would retract the announcement in tomorrow's issue."²⁸

The "infection" of Standard, Warren told the LCLC manager, demonstrates the lengths to which radical unionists would go to subvert the employer-employee relationship. "You deal with a bunch of liars in this B.T.W. union,"²⁹ he said. A few days later, Slagle sent Warren a copy of the BTW Obligation, a sort of oath a member took before the president, secretary, and organizer of the local, in which he swore never to break his vow. Warren had already seen a copy of the oath and found it ironic that men could accept it. "Funny, isn't it, that the obligation calls attention to their being

²⁸ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 21, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

²⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, September 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC; "Obligation of Brotherhood of Timber Workers," Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

called perjurers or sworn liars when they break it, when they advise their members to perjure themselves or to sign any kind of resolution that the company may request."³⁰ The 4 L Company manager, however, did not see the irony in his and his fellow lumbermen's position, having hired professional undercover agents who sought out the BTW to join it and take its oaths with the full intention to perjure themselves and inform the enemies of the order. In a contest often described as a war, the use of subterfuge was not only acceptable, it was expected of everyone involved; everyone happily obliged their opponents with a vast tissue of lies and falsehoods, which no one of any perception would believe for a moment. Warren's objections were merely gratuitous.³¹

Other lumbermen acted equally as arbitrarily when dealing with workers. Take Dell Tomlin, a lumber grader by trade, who appeared at Clarks on September 20 asking for work. Alex Hamilton, the superintendent, had Tomlin fill out the SLOA application blank, asking George H. Boyd at the Germain-Boyd Lumber Company in Atlanta, Louisiana, for a recommendation. Tomlin had worked as a grader at Atlanta from September 5 to 16. "I let this man go," Boyd replied, "because he left our Hotel and went down by the Station at Atlanta and boarded at the 'Union Hotel' and I understand did some union talking[.] Don't know anything about him as he was only here a few days."³² Atlanta was not a company owned town, and the lumber company took great pains to keep the patronage of their employees at their own retail stores, boarding

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Dell Tomlin, Clarks, Louisiana, to George H. Boyd, Atlanta, Louisiana, September 20, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

houses, and hotels. Boyd did not mention the relative costs of the two establishments, but it can be inferred from the exchange of correspondence that Tomlin found the union hotel at least as reasonably prices as the company hotel.³³

DeRidder, the stronghold of the BTW, according to the SLOA's official lists of union membership, had 1,306 members on September 21, 1911; Fullerton, 302; Fields, 322; Carson, 242; Cravens, 146; Leesville, 455; Merryville, 480; Oakdale, 267; Pollock, 221; Ball, 144; Woodworth, 111; Zwolle, 199; Winnfield, 72, all of whom had joined since July 1. Of the 1,306 members of the BTW at DeRidder, 1,077 had joined since July 1, 1911, and 396 had not paid their dues. At Carson, 167 had not paid their dues; at Fullerton, 99; at Fields, 136. At Good Pine, 278 joined but only five had paid their dues. At Oakdale, 178 had not paid; Merryville, 130; Clarks had only four members, two of whom had paid dues; Standard had no members of the BTW; Bonami had two; Longville, 28, 12 of whom had not paid dues; Long Leaf had 13 members, all in good standing; Neame, 16; Mansfield, 27; neither Elizabeth nor Pickering appeared on the list of members, but Kirbyville, Texas, had 32 members, all in good standing. Rochelle, Louisiana, had 72 members, of whom 61 paid dues; Urania had no BTW lodge, but Tullos, Louisiana, a short distance south of the Hardtner mill, had 16 members and Olla, just north of Urania, had two members, neither of whom had paid dues. On September 20, 11 new applications arrived in BTW headquarters from Carson;

³³ Ibid.

seven from Converse, Louisiana; and 21 from Saratoga, Texas.³⁴ Managers of mills not mentioned in Alexander's report quickly responded with requests for numbers of BTW members found in their own plants and towns. Willard Warren noted that 30 union members lived at Provencal on the T&P two miles south of the 4 L Company plant at Victoria; none worked for 4 L. At Fisher, "a great many farmers and some questionable characters belong,"³⁵ he said, but they did not work for the company. Moreover, he detected strong feelings against the union because any workers who joined the union had since left under duress. Alexander placed BTW membership at Fisher at 38 workers, 29 of whom had paid dues to September 1, eight paid to October 1, and one in bad standing. Provencal had 37 members paid to September 1; 26 to October 1; and nine not in good standing. Victoria itself had no local lodge. The clearing house did not have the names of BTW members, but Alexander agreed that a "large proportion of same are made up of farmers & doubtful and worthless characters,"³⁶ no more than 50 percent of whom actually worked for lumber companies. In his work with private detectives and confidential reports, Alexander quickly developed a form of bureaucratic paranoia, permitting him to view the larger public as fundamentally ignorant of significant events and channeling his ire toward the newspapers of the region who, in the nature of things, obviously took his opponents' rhetoric as gospel truth. "It appears to me from all

³⁴ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 21, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

³⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, September 22, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁶ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 25, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

information gathered that there can be only one policy to pursue in this fight and that is the policy already adopted, namely, the closing down of the mills that are badly infected and a refusal to employ members of the union," he wrote. "I am also more and more impressed as I go into this work with the fact that there should be a greater degree of publicity given the operators' side of the question."³⁷ Even from his own reports, it is clear that the BTW leadership could agree with Alexander's assessment of the effectiveness of the lockout and blacklist, although they would naturally disagree with the idea that the newspapers were prejudiced in favor of the union.

The lockout and the SLOA benefit trust fund caused some uncertainty in the business affairs of the piney woods mills. Willard Warren decided to keep "the amounts that may be paid us by the Southern Lumber Operators Association sep[a]rate, and also the extra expense on account of guards and night watchmen, so that we can have some idea as to the net cost of the close down."³⁸ Clarence Slagle had asked Warren to give him the 4 L Company's position on the lockout, which the LCLC manager would present to the next meeting of the Louisiana Board of Governors, postponed recently until September 28. "I do not think it would be wise to start any mills on the Kansas City Southern at this time," Warren said. "The effect of the shut down is just beginning to be felt as it should, and to pick out an occasional mill over here and order them to resume would result in other mills losing some of their loyal men and make it that much

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, two letters on September 21, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

harder for them to find crews when they got ready to start."³⁹ The mills on the Iron Mountain above Little River swamp had escaped the lockout and, to some extent, the effects of the blacklist, a condition to which Warren alluded often during the time his own mills were closed at Fisher, Louisiana. He predicted a time when his plants would operate without hindrance and the Iron Mountain mills would be forced by union activity to close.⁴⁰

Henry Hardtner, like John Henry Kirby, had acquired a reputation for political chicanery. In 1911, he was busy with the creation of a new parish in Louisiana, cut from the western side of Catahoula Parish. The new political subdivision followed lines that gave it virtually none of the low lands to the east and all of the high lands to the west, a nearly perfect bailiwick for the political aspirations of a lumberman. He perfected the new parish, became its first policy jury [county commission] president, and later its state senator. Politics would bestow upon him other honors as the years passed, but in 1911, his fellow lumber operators firmly believed that he was pro-union, much in the mold of Sam Park in Merryville. Hardtner vacillated, then he cast his lot with the SLOA, not an unrealistic decision under the circumstances. He explained his position to his neighbor, Clarence Slagle. "No, I am not a Union man," he said. "I have discarded sentiment and politics so far as the Union is concerned."⁴¹ Two weeks earlier, before he knew of the union men in his mill, he said that "Yes, we are all Union

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Henry E. Hardtner, Urania, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, September 21, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

men--there is a Union between employer and employe," by which he meant that he and his men understood each other and were satisfied with their relationship, which did not depend on the BTW. He asserted that now "no bond of sympathy or friendship exists between me and my employees any longer--Hereafter they must hew to the line." Of course, there were exceptions, he said. "I love the loyal more and we have a few loyal men--very few. A number of good men have recanted--a dozen bad, have been discharged--" He threatened to "shut down any minute [and] may all have to follow Long[']s suggestion" for a lockout of all yellow pine mills in the South. Rochelle and Standard, he said, were as solidly union as Urania, and Buchanan's mills at Good Pine and Trout were "rotten."⁴²

The Hardtner family took the lumbermen's hard line and hewed to it. Slagle had asked Urania to check out a man named Tom Whitten, working as a fireman on a locomotive on the Ouachita & Northwestern Railroad, LCLC's tram road. "We have just learned indirectly that he was a member of the union at [Urania] and we are writing to inquire if you have information that would lead you to believe that he was a member of the union before coming to Clarks."⁴³ Q. T. Hardtner, secretary and treasurer of the Hardtner Lumber Company and the operational manager of the mills and woods, answered for the company: "This man was one of the leaders in the Union at our

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to the Urania Lumber Company, Urania, Louisiana, September 21, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

logging camp and we were glad to get rid of him, as we considered him an undesirable. The above is from reliable information."⁴⁴ The Hardtners had also recanted.

By September 22, waves of unemployed lumber workers had begun to invade Mississippi and East Louisiana, trying to escape the effects of the lockout in West Louisiana and East Texas. They began to show up in the operatives' reports as tramps on the Gulf & Ship Island Railroad. Two operatives in the Mississippi lumber district determined that generally they came from "the infected territory, and that it is reported that organizers will be put actively in the field next week."⁴⁵ Alexander waited patiently and fruitlessly in his clearing house for some news of the Chicago convention of the IWW, but could get no information of the outcome of the BTW officers' fraternal visit with Big Bill Haywood and the One Big Union. Willard Warren's prognostications seemed to have come true. "I would be glad to see the manufacturers East of the River take an interest in this matter," he wrote, "because they are going to have it to contend with surely."⁴⁶

W. C. Bowman, president of Bowman-Hicks Lumber Company of Kansas City, Missouri, operated a mill at Loring, a few miles north of Many, the seat of Sabine Parish, Louisiana. In the labor troubles, the SLOA ordered it closed to lockout the

⁴⁴ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to the Urania Lumber Company, Urania, Louisiana, September 21, 1911; Q. T. Hardtner, Urania Lumber Company, to Ouachita & Northwestern Railroad Company, Clarks, Louisiana, September 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC, UM.

⁴⁵ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, September 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, File 696, WHMC.

⁴⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, September 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

BTW. Actually, Bowman had closed the plant on July 28 in response to union pressure for recognition. The company, by the standards of the West Louisiana piney woods, was small, operating only one mill and town with a small tram road in the rough hill lands of the Nacogdoches uplift. When Loring closed, then, it cut Bowman-Hicks' production 100 percent, imposing perhaps a greater hardship and loss than other mills were called on to sustain. On September 22, Bowman wrote to the Louisiana Board of Governors, pointing out that his company had only 21 million bf in stumpage left in Sabine Parish, which he and his associates planned to cut over by early 1912, so that they could move the plant to a new site farther south in Vernon Parish. More delay would mean disaster for the company, Bowman explained, so he had "quietly [made] our arrangements to start operations at Loring October 5th with strictly non-union labor and we do so with every confidence that you will fully endorse our position."⁴⁷

In 1911, W. B. Vanlandingham was the general sales agent for the Missouri Lumber & Land Exchange Company, the sales company owned jointly by the Grandin interests in Missouri and Louisiana. In the popular imagination, however, the Exchange owned the constituent mills, and Captain J. B. White in Kansas City commanded these Grandin interests as a single unit. Captain White was, in fact, general manager of the West Eminence mills, president of the LCLC mills, and secretary of the 4 L Company, but several other figures joined him in a business oligarchy, outwardly benevolent but decidedly despotic. When Captain White requested Vanlandingham not to attend the

⁴⁷ W. C. Bowman, Kansas City, Missouri, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, et al., September 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC, and Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

sessions of the SLOA meeting in Chicago on September 13 and 14, he simply did not attend, and was in no position to advise Clarence Slagle on the actions of the association at that part of the meeting he had missed. The sales agent did, however, discover that Sullivan of the Great Southern Lumber Company at Bogalusa had recently begun selling lumber in a buyer's market, informing his Chicago sales representative "to sell lumber and to make his own prices in order to do so."⁴⁸ The Chicago market for lumber generally, he said, reflected prices throughout the country. Chicago prices continued weak, and Sullivan had taken business from commission men in the city at lower prices than he made to his own sales agency there. Other sales agents had found much the same soft market for lumber. Frost-Johnson had sold off the association list; Forest Lumber Company had placed orders even lower; the Borgner-Bowman Lumber Company bought dimension at still lower prices from a company whose product was "invoiced by the commission men in order to cover up the sale by the manufacturer."⁴⁹ Vanlandingham knew price cutting when he saw it, and he looked deeper for explanation. "Now it does look, with the number of mills which are shut down entirely and the others running only four days a week, that the market should be stimulated somewhat, but as yet the dealers have not felt the result of the curtailment," he said. "It may be that a little later they will, but as yet it is too early as so many of the manufacturers had large surpluses at the time the mills were shut down."⁵⁰ Small mills across the South ran at

⁴⁸ W. B. Vanlandingham, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Kansas City, Missouri, September 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 696, WHMC.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

full capacity and had even resorted to smoke drying their stock to ship every possible board while they could. Larger manufacturers had held up the market while small mills ran full time. They cut prices enough to get business and still made more money than they had a year earlier. Lumbermen had begun to learn that producers of staples in a wide national, and even international, market could not with any degree of accuracy control supply and demand. This was particularly true of a decentralized industry such as lumber in which advanced technologies were essential. Small mills still made a local market in lumber and other wood products using relatively crude machinery and a great deal of hand labor and animal power. At a time such as this, when the advanced mills arbitrarily cut themselves off from their manufacturing capacity, the less efficient elements in the industry pushed forward with a ready supply of lumber, often still smelling of smoke from their crude kilns.⁵¹

At the end of the first week in October 1911, George K. Smith circulated a copy of a letter from a manufacturer who was not a member of the SLOA, expressing sentiments strangely in agreement with the association's position on the lockout. "This is to inform you that on September 28th, we closed down our mill for an indefinite period and that all reports will now cease, in regard to cut, running time and etc.," he wrote. "Our shut down was not caused by any trouble with labor but was mostly on account of weather conditions and also the condition of the lumber market. We will ship out the lumber now on hand, clean up our yard, do some repairing and we will not start

⁵¹ Ibid.

up again until conditions all along the line seem to justify."⁵² He said he knew that several mills, closed because of labor troubles, wanted to resume operations. "If this is the case they will be compelled to operate with union labor thereby recognizing the organization, which we think is purely socialistic, in which event conditions for the mill man will be well nigh intolerable."⁵³ He preferred to remain closed indefinitely rather than tolerate the union. If it would help any, the anonymous author said, Smith was free to read his letter to the meeting at St. Louis. No one ever accused Smith of inventing such anonymous missives, but taken together they seem passing strange, the way they always seemed to appear just at the moment the association position needed support from an independent lumberman. Internal evidence, such as the way he always spelled Saint Louis as StLouis, suggests that he dealt in parables, to put the best face on the practice, rather than in actual correspondence. Willard Warren at Fisher, Louisiana, apparently finding the letter gratuitous, wrote to Smith, asking the name of the "party" who wrote the supportive letter. Not to be so easily caught out, Smith identified the writer as a Mr. Duhig of the Talbot-Duhig Lumber Company of Lemonville, Texas, whose self-interest was all too apparent.⁵⁴

The Louisiana Board of Governors met late in September 1911, assailed by demands from SLOA members to permit them to re-open their mills; none seemed to

⁵² SLOA, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, October 7, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, and LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 699, WHMC.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, October 10, 1911; Smith to Warren, October 13, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

think they would have any trouble getting non-union workers enough to operate. Willard Warren disagreed, contending that opening a few mills would soak up available non-union labor and draw loyal men from closed mills to find work. No one bothered much with the plight of the unemployed workers of whatever persuasion. To W. C. Bowman's appeal to permit the Loring mill to re-open to complete the "cut out" of its available timber in Sabine Parish, Louisiana, Clarence Slagle, speaking for the board, opposed the idea, citing Warren's objections.⁵⁵ The lockout had settled into a pattern with its own logic; mills closed on the Iron Mountain south of Little River swamp, on the KCS south of Shreveport, on the Louisiana & Pacific, Long-Bell's trunk line from DeRidder to Lake Charles, Louisiana, and on the Colorado, Gulf & Santa Fe line from Kirbyville, Texas, to Oakdale, Louisiana where the Santa Fe intersected the Iron Mountain. Basically limited to Louisiana, washing over into East Texas, the lockout continued primarily because, as Bolling Arthur Johnson implied, no one knew how to stop it. In Call, Texas, the Kay Ell manager kept track of the long coffles of out-of-work flatheads moving west into the cotton districts of Texas. In late September 1911, there had been no new union activity in the piney woods, but someone had scattered dodgers about Call: "Wanted 500 Cotton Pickers at 75 cents per Hundred, also Some Compress and Oil Mill Hands. Phone or Write A. J. Dossett, President, Cameron Commercial Club, Cameron, Texas." J. W. Lewis, manager of the Call, Texas, plant, noted that "Town Flooded with these,"

⁵⁵ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. C. Bowman, Kansas City, Missouri, September 25, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

which he suspected came by way of Orange, Texas, a collection point for forming gangs of field hands.⁵⁶

As the day for the next meeting of the Louisiana Board of Governors approached, mill managers busied themselves with efforts to position their companies to best advantage. Willard Warren operated two pine mills, a planing mill, and a hardwood flooring mill at Fisher and a pine mill and planing mill at Victoria. The SLOA had closed the pine mills at Fisher, primarily because the site was surrounded by mills under threat of strike by union workers, notably those in Zwolle and Loring north of him and at Leesville and DeRidder to the south. He still operated the pine mill at Victoria and both planing mills, but the hardwood mill at Fisher had also been closed. Because the company tram, the VF&W Railroad, ran between Fisher and Victoria, with an extension reaching nearly to Texas on the west, Warren had no trouble logging the Victoria mills, and since he had a tremendous stock of rough lumber in his yards and sheds at both Fisher and Victoria, he had no trouble supplying materials to his planing mills. At best, the lockout by the 4 L Company was only partial. Still, Warren and his directors wanted to maintain their relative position in the industry, and they were especially concerned to re-open the hardwood flooring mill, which had very little to do with the BTW campaign against the yellow pine manufacturers. On September 26, M. L. Alexander assured Warren that the Louisiana Board of Governors would take up the matter of his flooring mill, which the manager had asked the board to permit to run again with non-union

⁵⁶ J. W. Lewis, Call, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, September 25, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

labor. He still thought it "unwise to start our sawmills now--not only here, but at any other point on the Kansas City Southern or Santa Fe."⁵⁷

M. L. Fleishel, chairman of the Louisiana Board of Governors, wired SLOA headquarters in St. Louis, asking for a joint meeting with the SLOA Executive Committee to decide what mills would be permitted to re-open. Then he changed the meeting site from Alexandria, Louisiana, to St. Louis to accommodate the Missouri lumbermen. He charged his committee not to fail. Then began a confusing array of conflicting meetings. The joint meeting of the Louisiana Board of Governors and the SLOA Executive Committee, set for October 3, was delayed until October 4 in St. Louis. C. D. Johnson, president of the SLOA, called a full meeting of the Executive Committee with members whose mills had closed for the Grunewald Hotel in New Orleans at 2:30 p.m. on October 31. Meanwhile, a general meeting of the SLOA was set for 10 a.m. on October 20, at the Mercantile Club in St. Louis, Missouri, at which the Board of Directors of the SLOA would meet at 2:30 p.m. Willard Warren had attended still another SLOA meeting--probably the Louisiana Board of Governors--at Alexandria in late September. "I don't think we want any mills to start up," he told Captain White, "unless it is Longville and Mansfield, and I think we are going to be able to keep the balance of them down and even keep the above two down if it is necessary to control the

⁵⁷ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, September 22, 1911; see also Alexander to Warren, September 26, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

situation."⁵⁸ Unlike the 4 L Company, who had prospered by the foresight of Captain White and O. W. Fisher when they built their tram road to connect with two major railroad trunk lines, neither Long-Bell at Longville, Louisiana, nor Frost-Johnson at Mansfield, Louisiana, had a back door mill such as 4 L's Victoria mills to ease the strain of the lockout. "A fight of this kind can't be won in a few weeks," Warren reasoned. "It took the [Current River] Missouri mills quite a while, as I remember, and that was a local situation."⁵⁹

Clarence Slagle gave a full report of the abortive meeting of the Louisiana Board of Governors in Alexandria on September 28 and 29. Willard Warren was also there. Because the meeting reached stalemate after two days of talking, the committee finally gave up, and M. L. Fleishel wired the Executive Committee in St. Louis: "At Full meeting the Board of Governors has spent all yesterday afternoon and this forenoon in an effort to reach an agreement with reference to starting of the mills that are now down," he wrote. "It is therefore imperatively [sic] necessary for a joint meeting of the Board of Governors and Executive Committee at Alexandria Tuesday October third."⁶⁰ The meeting was so important that each member of the executive committee was

⁵⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, September 30, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*; see also, M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, wire to SLOA Executive Committee, September 29, 1911; Fleishel wire to C. E. Slagle, September 30, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 704, WHMC; M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to Members, SLOA, September 30, 1911; George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 30, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁰ M. L. Fleishel, Alexandria, Louisiana, to Executive Committee, SLOA, St. Louis, Missouri, September 29, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 704, WHMC.

absolutely necessary. C. D. Johnson, SLOA president, quickly delayed the meeting until October 4, and invited the Louisiana Board of Governors to St. Louis. "I believe," Clarence Slagle wrote, "that Mr. Kirby, Mr. Carpenter, Mr. Sweet, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Fetty, who is acting for Mr. Keith, and Mr. Bonner, who is acting for Mr. Kirby in his absence will consider it important that we go over this whole question on Oct. 3d."⁶¹ Five of the six members of the Louisiana Board of Governors had agreed that Longville and Mansfield deserved to re-open first because they had been asked to close in the first place out of sympathy with other affected mills. The objections of the Industrial Lumber Company and the Pickering interests made it impossible to start the Long-Bell and Frost-Johnson mills without starting others in West Louisiana at the same time: "and, of course, should the Elizabeth mill start up then Fullerton wants to start; and if Fullerton starts, they all want to start; and to start them all at this time means that we will be working union labor and this is what we want to avoid, hence the importance of having a full attendance of the Executive Committee to go over this matter with the La. Board of Governors."⁶² Hollawell of Industrial Lumber, whose plants at Oakdale and Elizabeth had been closed since early July, told the board that he absolutely had to start his mill when other mills re-opened, although he was willing to wait until October 9 before doing so and secretly would agree to wait until October 16. Fullerton agreed to wait no longer than a week later than Elizabeth re-opened. The situation was made even

⁶¹ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, September 30, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶² Ibid.

more difficult, Slagle pointed out, because "there is not enough labor in the district to start all the mills at once."⁶³ Industrial Lumber had agreed to keep the company's two mills in Oakdale down indefinitely, which probably meant the first of 1912. Long-Bell had expressed a willingness to close the Hudson River mill at DeRidder until January, but it would probably close the plant in any case for other reasons. Warren wanted the mills to stay closed at least another month, which would have improved the labor situation, but he obviously could not stay down at Fisher if the mills around him re-opened; he would be forced to reopen with the rest.⁶⁴

Early in October 1911, the Ball mills at Pollock, Louisiana, re-opened with non-union laborers without any troubles, Alexander said in his daily report. J. F. Ball told the SLOA manager that he believed "the backbone of the organization is broken [but] I must confess, however, that I am somewhat skeptical as to the strong reversion of sentiment at that point and will keep same under close surveill[a]nce."⁶⁵ BTW headquarters had failed to receive October dues from several thousand members and it seemed to Alexander that the union's only hope for funds was the effort of organizers in Arkansas and Mississippi. The Pinkerton men had begun to pick up hints that the union rank and file had become depressed and discouraged. "The negro question is

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, October 7, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 699, WHMC.

constantly cropping up and appears to be one of the problems which they will have to overcome before they can possibly hope for a more complete organization."⁶⁶

Henry E. Hardtner, although president of the Urania Lumber Company at Urania, lived in Alexandria, Louisiana, his home town where his father had immigrated from his native Germany. Henry left the mill and town of Urania to his brother, Q. T. Hardtner, to manage. In fact, Henry was not much as a manager, specializing instead on politics and merchandising—buying and selling land and timber, raising money, recruiting investors—for which he was admirably suited. As a result, he often struck his fellow lumbermen as erratic and untrustworthy, traits he shared with such men as John Henry Kirby. Hardtner, unlike Kirby, however, delayed responding to the challenge of the BTW, and he often denied that Urania harbored any union men at all, an exaggeration that the Pinkerton operatives quickly exposed. In time, Hardtner came down on the side of the association, and then he over-reacted, becoming something of a super patriot in the lumber industry. After having accused Clarence Slagle of working union men at Clarks and Standard, Louisiana, Hardtner conducted his own "investigation," finding that "Standard is free from infection. No union at your mill or camps. Urania is also free[.] If the Union is not growing in other places it is dead[.] So you can rest easy about Standard."⁶⁷ On the same day, Q. T. Hardtner addressed another letter to Slagle. "I have been informed that Jno. Hinton has gone up to your camp at Clarks to organize

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Henry E. Hardtner, Urania, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 7, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 699, WHMC.

labor," he said. "This is same man who gave us trouble by organizing our men. We will not give him work & I was told he would go to your camp for above purpose."⁶⁸ Alexander shared the general distrust of the Hardtners. When Slagle sent him copies of his and Urania's correspondence relating to the union, Alexander, while finding them encouraging, nevertheless concluded that Henry Hardtner was "mis-led as to the true conditions existing at his plant, which I propose to have investigated again at an early date, or as soon as we can spare an operative for that point, and which investigation will also include your plant at Standard and its woods camp."⁶⁹ Alexander also found J. F. Ball untrustworthy. "As to the starting of Ball's mill at Ball, La., it is a mistake as this mill has not started and Ball claims that it will not be started until January 1st; how much confidence, however, we can put in this statement I am not prepared to say."⁷⁰ In East Texas, meanwhile, John Henry Kirby had his managers issue orders to All Points, Kay Ell's mills and fronts, that he had decided to give all his men a day off to go to Beaumont, Texas, to see the Ringling Bros. Circus. To most lumbermen, however, it was plain coddling.⁷¹

Early in October 1911, the SLOA again paid damages to those member mills that had closed down on its orders, and it authorized some minor mills to re-open. The 4 L

⁶⁸ Q. T. Hardtner, Urania, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 7, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 699, WHMC.

⁶⁹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 9, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 699, WHMC.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to Managers, All Points, Superintendents, Camps 1, 3, 5, and 8, October 6, 1911, Box 196, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

Company at Fisher, Louisiana, received voucher No. 183 for \$1,886.78, covering eight days lost time in August. M. L. Alexander also noted that the association at its St. Louis meeting on October 4, had authorized the 4 L Company to start its hardwood flooring mill immediately.⁷² The clearing house had been in operation for 30 days now, and Alexander took the opportunity to make a progress report. His diligence had resulted, he said, in defeating the sentiment for unionism to an encouraging degree. It would only be a matter of time before the SLOA would finally win. It had become readily evident that the stronghold for the BTW was the district served by the KCS Railroad and its tributaries, particularly in DeRidder and Leesville, the heart of the organization. The union had spread slowly throughout West Louisiana and East Texas, although the lockout had weakened the union in its ability to raise funds and in the confidence the workers had in its future, which meant enthusiasm for it was fading out. At the first of September, the BTW rolls carried about 10,000 names of members, but membership had in the last month begun to fall off. Not more than 50 percent of the members actually worked in the industry; the rest were farmers, merchants, and anyone the union organizers could get to pay dues. Alexander firmly believed and frequently argued that the large percentage of black members would eventually destroy the BTW. Arthur Lee Emerson and Jay Smith had depended upon affiliation with the IWW to rejuvenate their fortunes, but when this ploy failed their cause was materially weakened. Organizers had also spread out across Arkansas, Mississippi, and East Texas to find enough members to keep

⁷² George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, October 6, 1911; M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to Warren, October 7, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

the union going in Louisiana, where the final battle would be fought. The conclusion was clear to Alexander: the association had only to "adhere strictly to the policy adopted and for its members to give their full co-operation in order to ultimately clear the territory of socialistic agitators and to resume operations free and unhampered."⁷³

On the same day, Alexander reported to M. L. Fleishel in Fullerton that Emerson had returned to Alexandria from his extended tour of Southwest Louisiana. The Pinkerton operative working undercover in BTW headquarters had also produced a copy of the official report of the Committee on Affiliation, printed as a leaflet and issued at Alexandria on September 30. The report, signed by Emerson, Smith, and Fussell, acknowledged that the BTW leaders had failed to accomplish affiliation with the IWW, arguing that BTW adoption of the preamble to the IWW constitution "would increase the bitterness and intensity of the opposition to their progress out of proportion to the increase in strength and assistance gained."⁷⁴ The report noted also that the BTW was half as strong numerically and stronger financially than the IWW and that at their present rate of growth they would surpass that order both numerically and financially within the next twelve months. The union, of course, was still quite strong in DeRidder, although organizers had been having trouble raising money. Collectors of assistance to out-of-work members and their families had not found much encouragement, and the rank and

⁷³ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, October 9, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, and LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 342, File 699, WHMC.

⁷⁴ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, October 9, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 699, WHMC.

file were "getting pretty tired of living on wind and promises."⁷⁵ Union sentiment remained strong in Leesville, where adherents had planned a public barbecue at the Prairie Creek Bridge, north of the town, on October 14, when Emerson, Smith, and Fussell would speak. Zwolle also exhibited a strong union sentiment and a large, active membership. Dillon, erstwhile saw filer for the Iron Mountain Lumber Company at Pollock, Louisiana, and an active organizer for the BTW, with headquarters now in Alexandria, dismissed the union at Pollock as a farce. The work was not so easy as he had supposed it would be, and he had made only \$6 above expenses during September. It was no surprise then that investigations of New Willard and Doucette, Texas, revealed no union organization or sentiment.⁷⁶

The joint meeting of the Louisiana Board of Governors and the Executive Committee in St. Louis on October 4 had ordered the Little River Lumber Company to close its Manistee plant because of union "infection" of the area. Alexander, however, argued that permitting the Ball mill to run at Pollock, only a few miles away, would be unfair; moreover, Manistee had "only a short life ahead of it, possibly five or six months cut, and that it is largely dependent upon good weather conditions to operate" because of the nature of the swamp lands it logged. The SLOA manager had not suggested the Little River people close their plant, particularly when they could probably "weed out the union men and operate with a non-union crew."⁷⁷ Most of the Louisiana Board of

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, October 9, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 699, WHMC.

Governors, however, would have none of it. L. F. Haslam of Pickering charged that the plant was virtually organized and demanded it be closed down, regardless of special conditions, "since our prime object at this time is to cut off all of the revenue possible, and there seems to be no question but what the present financial support being given the union movement is coming from members now employed."⁷⁸ S. T. Woodring of Lake Charles objected that "the situation at Pollock has nothing whatever to do with conditions prevailing at Manistee." Everyone admitted, he said, that Little River Lumber Company worked a union crew; consequently, "the only thing to do to properly combat organized labor is to shut the plant down until the labor organization at that place is entirely out of the way."⁷⁹ J. H. Morrison, superintendent at Carson, came to the defense of Little River, arguing that if the plant did not work a union crew, as seemed possible, then it should be investigated again to see that the company had fired all union members in its employ; otherwise, "the plant is badly infected, would suggest he shuts down."⁸⁰

Four union organizers in Southwest Louisiana had been charged in early October 1911 with mishandling union funds by not sending to the secretary the proper returns, which required Arthur Lee Emerson to investigate, according to the undercover Pinkerton agent in the BTW headquarters. He also reported that men discharged from their jobs in Louisiana for union activities and sent out to Rosebud, Texas, to pick cotton for a

⁷⁸ L. F. Haslam, Pickering, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, October 10, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 699, WHMC.

⁷⁹ S. T. Woodring, Lake Charles, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, October 11, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 699, WHMC.

⁸⁰ J. H. Morrison, Carson, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, October 11, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 700, WHMC.

living had been keeping up their union dues promptly. The black workers who joined the BTW at Zwolle and were subsequently fired before going off to the farms and cotton fields of the Southwest had failed to send in their dues, despite the fact that the Zwolle lodge had supported them with \$70 in assistance in relocating. The local at Zwolle had later discontinued all support to "the colored brothers and they are pretty sore at their lack of appreciation."⁸¹ The union sentiment had apparently weakened at DeRidder, but Arthur Lee Emerson had rushed in to encourage the men to stick it out. Sources in the DeRidder local lodges placed organizers on the Illinois Central Railroad in Mississippi and the Cotton Belt Line in Arkansas. Alexander concluded from the mass of reports he received from the piney woods that "the situation is slowly but surely clearing, and that there is considerable weakening as to Unionism at various points."⁸²

Vanlandingham, the Exchange's general sales agent, continued his musings on the state of the lumber market the second week in October, noting with approval that the locked-out mills in Louisiana would not re-open before November 1. Slagle told Vanlandingham earlier that the Louisiana Board of Governors had agreed to reopen the Frost-Johnson mill at Mansfield and the Bowman-Hicks plant at Loring, both on the KCS Railroad, and the Industrial Lumber Company mill at Elizabeth on the Colorado, Gulf & Santa Fe Railroad in Allen Parish. He wrote that he hoped the mills would succeed in ending the labor problem. Of course, the closed mills would help support the market.

⁸¹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, October 10, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 699, WHMC.

⁸² Ibid.

There was no possibility of an advance in prices, he added, and the business climate was not good, but curtailment of the mills' production kept the market from declining further. In August, he noted, 258 mills reported to the YPMA that lumber stocks in the South had decreased by 32.9 million bf; stocks had surely decreased even further during September 1911, although he had not yet seen the official YPMA report. William Buchanan's mills along the L&A Railroad in Arkansas and Louisiana posed a problem, Vanlandingham speculated, since virtually all yellow pine manufacturers except his mills had been cutting prices. Buchanan's sales manager, Rodney Browne, confirmed that the company had a large stock of lumber on hand, which it would have sold below the market had Buchanan officials known that most manufacturers had secretly cut prices. Had Buchanan dumped the accumulated stock from his six mills on the market at cut rate prices, it would have severely depressed the market at a time when most of the region's larger lumbermen had begun to suffer from lack of production caused by the lockout. Buchanan always made it a policy, Vanlandingham said, not to cut lumber prices unless he announced to every one. At Clarks and Standard, Louisiana, Clarence Slagle suffered from a shortage of both laborers and railroad cars at a time when he had planned to ship a great deal of lumber. Because he had been running steadily, although curtailed to four days a week for most of the last several months, he had developed a surplus of most grades. With exceptions, the same conditions prevailed throughout the Southwest.⁸³ At the same time, the Exchange mills looked forward to some relief in their continuing

⁸³ W. B. Vanlandingham, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 9, 1911, LCLC, No. 3660, Box 32, File 699, WHMC.

surpluses, as the Ozark Land & Lumber Company at Winona, Missouri, approached the time for its cut out. The company, one of the Current River mills, would soon "disband their saw mill and woods operations and their yard and planing mill operations as soon as they have shipped out their lumber on hand. It is our understanding that they are nearly through running their saw mill now."⁸⁴ Slagle could hire their men as soon as the Winona mills cut out, he said. Some of their men had already left during the previous month. Some went west, but many of them looked for places at West Eminence, Missouri.

W. B. Pettibone, one of the Hannibal, Missouri, members of the Grandin interests, had watched the labor situation develop and grow rancid in the Southwest. Noting with approval that Clarence Slagle had continued to make large shipments of lumber despite the instability in both the labor relations in the region and the lumber market nationally, he offered advice on how to manage what seemed at the time to be an inevitable shortage of reliable and desirable laborers. "It would seem probable from what you say that you were likely to have quite a little trouble in securing men enough," he surmised. "If this should get serious what would you think of first shutting down the little Mill at Clarks?"⁸⁵ That would give Slagle a few extra men for Standard. Later, if the shortage seriously interfered with operations at Standard, he could close it for a short time. "I agree with you that when those Mills that are now shut down resume

⁸⁴ C. C. Sheppard, West Eminence, Missouri, October 9, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 699, WHMC.

⁸⁵ W. B. Pettibone, Hannibal, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 11, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 700, WHMC.

operations and endeavor to employ none but Non-Union men, that there is likely to be a shortage in Labor, but with the large number of idle men throughout the Country and Winter coming on, it would seem as if many of them would drift South," he reasoned. "Of course there is the unknown quantity of whether these men will sympathize with the Union movement and join it or not."⁸⁶

By the second week in October, the necessity for a lockout and a blacklist had driven a wedge between yellow pine operators west of the Mississippi River and those east of the river. R. A. Long had developed a deep resentment against the Goodyear interests of Buffalo, New York, who operated probably the world's largest saw mill at Bogalusa, Washington Parish, Louisiana, on the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio Railroad in the piney woods north of Lake Pontchartrain and a few miles east of the Pearl River. The mill got its timber from a vast area of long leaf and slash pine in Louisiana and Mississippi. Long believed, with good reason, that Bogalusa had run its mill full time, night and day, to built up a surplus during the labor troubles west of the river, with which to undersell the Southwestern mills. The policies of the Goodyear interests resulted in lumber prices continuing to fall despite the lockout at scores of mills in the Calcasieu long leaf pine district. "But the impression that I had from talking with them this morning," Captain White wrote of Long-Bell, "is that they are in favor of getting

⁸⁶ Ibid.

orders regardless of price, if necessary to even up with certain mills in the South that they claim are running extra time, and are full of orders."⁸⁷

At Leesville in October, the Nona Mills Company had about 40 union members on the payroll, the Pinkerton operative insisted, although the company managers denied they had any BTW members working for them. The information came from several sources "and it would therefore appear to be in a measure authentic."⁸⁸ In DeRidder, a man named Harris and his son set out "on the road feeling the situation in Arkansas, having visited Texarkana, Hope, Gurden, Daleville, Malvern, Hot Springs and Little Rock."⁸⁹ The elder Harris may have been A. D. Harris, listed by the Kirby Lumber Company as an organizer for the BTW; the 4 L Company identified J. H. Harris and C. E. Harris as members of the union in DeRidder. In either case, the Pinkerton operative working undercover in union headquarters reported the Harrises "very much encouraged at the situation in that state and now propose, if Emmerson agrees, to open a grand lodge in Arkansas at Malvern that Harris is to be president and his son secretary."⁹⁰ Harris senior proposed to buy with his own money a piece of property in the town on which to establish the union lodge, so they could spend all their time organizing. Emerson had apparently discovered that the SLOA had put private detectives onto him and his

⁸⁷ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 11, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 700, WHMC.

⁸⁸ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, October 11, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 700, WHMC.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

associates, which angered him, but he was not in any position to discover the operatives. In Mississippi, the BTW had managed to set up a small lodge in Lyman with about 10 members, and at least three organizers had worked the mills along the Gulf & Ship Island Railroad.⁹¹

After an investigation of some organizers who had followed irregular procedures in accepting dues from the rank and file, Emerson established a policy in the BTW that all organizers would have to make a performance bond. The union headquarters had at the time several men in training for the work expected to begin soon in Arkansas and Mississippi, Alexander said. One of the organizers destined for the Mississippi organization was a man named Walston of DeRidder. The Hardtners were unwilling hosts to W. A. Fussell, vice president of the BTW, on October 10, 1911, but he left without getting permission to hold a meeting or talk with any of the Urania workers. His next stop was Georgetown, Louisiana, a few miles south on the Iron Mountain. Challenged with the rumors of Pinkerton operatives investigating the BTW, the organizer Dillon replied that it did not matter how many detectives the SLOA hired, the union would still win because it had nothing to hide. Mayor Johnson of Leesville, who was also the yard manager for Nona Mills, denied the company worked any union men, but two or three sources, however, placed the number of union men working in Leesville at 40 to 50. Merchants and businessmen along the KCS had earlier voiced some encouragement for the BTW, primarily because union members were their customers; by October, however, they were feeling the effect on their businesses, a good indication,

⁹¹ Ibid.

Alexander pointed out, of their concern for their profits. There were still anomalies, however. Foreman Wilson of the Clio Lumber Company at Clio, Arkansas, spoke in favor of the union, asserting that his workers wanted to join. Sources claimed that he threatened to fire any man that did not join when the BTW organizer appeared in Clio. Operatives reported that Ed Coats, foreman of the planing mill at Clio, said the same thing. Clio Lumber did not belong to the SLOA. It was one of the plants of the Bluff City Lumber Company of Pine Bluff, and it presented Alexander with a challenge: "I would be pleased to have you advise me how far I could go in taking the matter up with them direct."⁹²

At Fisher, Louisiana, the Pinkerton operative had been followed about the countryside the first week of October by a native who identified himself as Perry Lewing, nightwatchman at the 4 L Company plant. Lewing had talked openly about his membership in the BTW, showing the Pinkerton agent his receipt for dues to the union. He said he had joined the brotherhood at Florien, a few miles south of Fisher on the KCS Railroad. The operative gained the distinct impression that Lewing had "merely tested him to find out if he was an organizer."⁹³ In fact, Perry Lewing did not work for the Fisher mill and never had, Willard Warren said. He was the "son of a farmers [sic] about 2 miles east of Fisher"⁹⁴ and probably a member of the BTW. Very likely,

⁹² M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, October 12, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 700, WHMC.

⁹³ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, October 13, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, October 14, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Lewing approached the operative to learn his business, since members of the union had been alerted to the presence of Pinkerton men in the piney woods. Any stranger, of course, was immediately suspected, and Lewing obviously had nothing to lose by revealing his affiliation in the hopes of uncovering the activities of the detective. Warren was not impressed with either Lewing or the Pinkerton man: "If your operatives are Schurz and Callahan," he told Alexander, "their operations here were not a success."⁹⁵

The Ball brothers' mill at Pollock had finally reopened earlier with a non-union crew; by October 13, the management reported that it was running smoothly, with no problem with imported, i.e. black, laborers. J. F. Ball said the union strength had been broken. John Pennington, manager of the Little River Lumber Company, had also reopened his mill with non-union workers and had the laborers under control. The Little River mill at Manistee ran only three or four days a week, and the owners looked forward to cutting out in a short time, when the mill would be dismantled and moved. Dillon, the BTW organizer, spoke at that time in Bentley, site of the J. A. Bentley Lumber Company plant in Grant Parish. Unfortunately, Dillon "got drunk and fell off the stand and otherwise discredited himself, and ... he did not accomplish anything."⁹⁶ Dillon had promoted the idea of organizing skilled sawmill laborers--sawyers and filers--into an separate class of workers within the BTW, but the idea had not caught on, largely because it flew in the face of the fundamental tenets of industrial unionism. Sources in

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, October 13, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 700, WHMC.

DeRidder claimed that the younger BTW organizer named Harris had recruited a large number of new members between Hot Springs and Texarkana, Arkansas, on the Missouri Pacific Railroad. The information, however, was not too reliable, the operative warned. DeRidder and Leesville, Louisiana, remained the center of union strength, he said.⁹⁷

Alexander's blacklist, not yet complete, had become effective as early as October but it also make gross mistakes, against which there was no appeal for the worker. O. P. Hauser, describing himself as an old friend of the prince of pines, wrote to John Henry Kirby to complain of being fired for belonging to the union. He had not, he asserted, joined the BTW and was the victim of gossip. Kirby in turn told Frank Bonner to reinstate Hauser, and when the Kay El general manager asked C. P. Myer about the case, he received a wordy justification based on dire necessity: "It is unfortunate in labor matters that we must act on hearsay, as we are never able to get positive proof, and with the Brotherhood of Timber Workers annoying us on one side and the Operators' Association on the other endeavoring to show that we are working some members of the union, it seems impossible to handle the matter without making some mistakes."⁹⁸ Two weeks later, after Myer had investigated, he contacted R. D. Thomas, inspector of Measurements for Kay El, looking for Hauser, but the frustrated worker had already moved to Louisiana, disgusted with East Texas and Kay El.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to B. F. Bonner, Houston, Texas, October 14, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

⁹⁹ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to R. D. Thomas, Houston, Texas, October 25, 1911; Thomas to Myer, October 27, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA.

On October 13, C. D. Johnson wired all mills in the association, calling a general meeting of the membership for Friday, October 20 in the Mercantile Club in St. Louis. The meeting was important enough that every member should attend, he said. In fact, it was essential, because the fabric of the group was about to unravel.¹⁰⁰ Captain White got right to the point, as was his manner in most dealings with difficult people. Member companies had not been paying assessments, and the association was short of funds. Nevertheless, the SLOA had charged the Grandin mills 50 cents per M for September, he said. He also wanted to know from Warren whether the SLOA had paid the 4 L Company \$2 per M for closing its plant. White had paid every assessment except the last, and because other lumbermen had not paid, he proposed to complain to George K. Smith. Clarence Slagle had paid the association 50 cents per M for August and had received a statement calling for 50 cents per M for September.¹⁰¹ He had not--nor had Willard Warren at Fisher--included them in his monthly cost statements to the board of directors. Captain White, as was his habit, scrawled a message in pencil on Slagle's letter and returned it: if other mills failed to support the association, the Grandin mills simply could not pay the cost of the opposition to the BTW.¹⁰² Warren, who had closed his mill on Association orders, had received \$2 per M on his August cut from the Benefit Trust Fund of the SLOA. The mill had not yet received compensation for

¹⁰⁰ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 13, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 700, WHMC.

¹⁰¹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 17, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 702, WHMC.

¹⁰² C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, October 17, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 810, WHMC.

September, however. At the St. Louis meeting earlier in October, Warren was not worried about the matter, although since then some companies had declined to pay the assessments. Send Emerson to the recalcitrant mills, he suggested, and they would quickly pay their assessments.¹⁰³ On October 26, Captain White complained again about stubborn lumbermen. This time R. A. Long had declined to pay the assessment made against the Long-Bell Lumber Company for September until the company was paid for August. Despite this turn of events, White assured Smith that both the Louisiana Central Lumber Company and the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company would pay the September assessment immediately, with the understanding that the money would be used to pay the benefits to Long-Bell. The SLOA would meet in New Orleans within a week, where the matter could be thrashed out.¹⁰⁴

Meanwhile, the SLOA met in St. Louis in general session on October 20, with C. D. Johnson in the chair and 40 members present. M. L. Alexander reported on the status of the BTW. "We have made investigations in Louisiana, East Texas, Arkansas and Mississippi and are now making re-investigations in Louisiana and East Texas, keeping particularly in touch with the situations at Leesville, DeRidder, Oakdale, Pollock and Merryville, and from the general information received we are led to believe that,

¹⁰³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J.B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, October 18, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁴ A. T. Hemingway, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 20, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 810, WHMC; J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, October 16, 1911; White to G. K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, October 26, 1911; White to Warren, October 26, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

whereas the union organization is fighting hard for recognition and whereas in many points they still have a great many sympathizers, they are not making any perceptible headway, in fact, we take it that they are losing ground more rapidly than they are gaining," he wrote breathlessly. "The situation at Pollock is the best illustration of this; the organization had gained considerable strength at that point, with a membership of something like 250 or 300, with practically the entire citizenship of the town in sympathy with them, and still the mill has started with imported labor and a non-union crew and no clash or disorder of any sort has resulted and the men at that point openly admit their defeat."¹⁰⁵ At Leesville and DeRidder the union was still very much alive and recent meetings held in that vicinity demonstrated that they still had a great deal of strength. These were towns of some size and because farmers, merchants, small store and restaurant keepers made up most of the membership, the reduction was not as perceptible as at other strongholds where the members were mostly sawmill employees. "This same condition would apply to a considerable extent at Oakdale, which also appears to have been one of the storm centers, but, from recent reports has qui[e]ted down very much."¹⁰⁶

Earlier, a barbecue held near the Kansas City Southern north of Leesville, with Emerson and Fussell speaking, attracted about two thousand people and generated about two hundred applications for membership that day. The union planned another mass

¹⁰⁵ Minutes of the General Meeting of the Southern Lumber Operators' Association held at St. Louis, Missouri, on October 20, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 702, WHMC.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

meeting in the same area on October 29.¹⁰⁷ Reports from Kirbyville, Texas, described many attempts to gain access to the Kirby mills in East Texas. The union appeared to think that control of one of the Kirby plants would be a great victory for them. At Neame, Loring, Longville, Mansfield, Elizabeth, Fullerton, Fisher, and Pickering, conditions were unchanged and well under control, Alexander said. At Zwolle the union was still alive. The situation on the Iron Mountain Railroad was the most encouraging to lumbermen. The union had managed to spread very little, if any.¹⁰⁸ At Urania, Hardtner reported that the union was completely demoralized. In the very near future, he said, there would be very little evidence of it in his vicinity. The SLOA had had no recent reports from the Buchanan mills on the L&A Railroad, which the Buchanan interests owned. The reports from Jonesboro that if an organizer went there he would be highly successful proved equally exaggerated. In fact, when the organizer did arrive he had little or no success.¹⁰⁹ Investigation in Arkansas indicated virtually no union organization in that state. Reported activity from Malvern south on the Missouri Pacific Railroad and of a grand lodge in Malvern could not be verified. In Mississippi some attempts at organization in the Eastern part of the state were not successful. Alexander's detective planted in union headquarters reported that the general campaign in Mississippi and Arkansas would not take place until about the first of 1912, at which time Emerson, Fussell and Smith planned personally to take the field. Advance agents, however, would

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

test the general feeling among mill employees to find the best point to attack.¹¹⁰ The Crowell-Spencer Lumber Company at Long Leaf joined the Association that fall, Alexander noted. The SLOA Benefit Trust Fund had paid \$11,000 for July and \$39,000 for August to mills shut down by association order. The treasurer estimated the cost to the Benefit Trust Fund for September would be \$75,000, for a total of \$125,000 in benefits alone. The association's bank balance was \$55,000 in the Benefit Trust Fund, and assessments on August production had been paid by all except 16 member companies, from which the treasurer expected payments before the end of October.¹¹¹

Despite his assurances about Jonesboro, Alexander found himself retracting the statement a few days later, when Sam Carpenter at Winnfield ordered the Tremont Lumber Company's Jonesboro plant closed indefinitely. Carpenter told Alexander he had become convinced that the Jonesboro operation had been infiltrated by union organizers with the help of sympathizers in the town. Tremont would not reopen the plant until the association directed the company to do so, he declared.¹¹² J. A. Herndon, manager of the Kay El plant at Kirbyville, Texas, thoroughly enjoyed the contest with the BTW, devising intricate theories of defense against union agents and passing on rumors of undesirable character traits of the BTW leadership. The union president, Herndon charged, was afraid to come to Texas because he did not want to face a Texas court in which some former breach of the law would come out. On the other hand, the BTW had

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, October 23, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 702, WHMC.

begun to score some successes, he said, quoting a rumor that the Industrial Lumber Company, with mills at Oakdale and Elizabeth, Louisiana, had sent for A. L. Emerson to reach a compromise with the union. To whet his appetite for confrontation with union men, C. P. Myer sent Herndon frequent suggestions of methods to use in unmasking BTW organizers. He could, for example, make a "goat" of the BTW organizer by pointedly talking in a confidential manner, and in full view of the employees, with a known BTW member just before he fired other members from the same crew. The employees and union members among them would quite naturally assume that the first BTW man was a turncoat. It was a good device, he said, for sowing dissension in the ranks of the union at no expense to the company.¹¹³

C. P. Myer had also acquired a list of officers, organizers, and members of the BTW in East Texas, which he circulated to all of the managers and superintendents of the company. At the same time, the Louisiana Board of Governors had made a list of known members of the BTW and had passed it out to members of the SLOA as a quick reference. The list was admittedly incomplete and was not designed to take the place of the blacklist that M. L. Alexander was compiling in the clearing house. Willard Warren got a copy of the list for the 4 L Company and apparently used it extensively to check on names of men applying to him for jobs in his mills; it was dog-eared and had been

¹¹³ J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, October 24, 1911; Myer to Herndon, October 25, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

briefly annotated.¹¹⁴ Once it had served its purpose, the manager filed it carefully in the 4 L Company vault.

¹¹⁴ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to Managers, All Points, and Superintendents, Camps 1, 3, 5, and 8, October 23, 1911, with attached membership lists of Brotherhood of Timber Workers in East Texas by town and alphabetically, Box 196, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA; M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, October 26, 1911, with Membership List, Brotherhood of Timber Workers, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, SLA. These lists are reprinted in the Appendices below.

CHAPTER 8

The Wobblies Take Over

To commit murder you have first to kill a human being,
and a gunman or Burns' detective is not a human being.¹

In the winter of 1911-1912, the contest between the SLOA and the BTW continued unabated, although the antagonists were not evenly matched. The lumbermen held strong, virtually unassailable positions, sustained by large revenues from surplus stocks of rough lumber in the yards of the closed mills. In the local BTW lodges, the dues gradually dried up. To man its defenses, the SLOA hired the nation's two largest private detective agencies: Pinkerton and the William J. Burns. At Pollock, Louisiana, for example, M. L. Alexander assigned one detective from each agency to keep watch over the mills built by the Iron Mountain Railroad 30 years earlier. Inevitably, perhaps, the reports of the two competing agencies did not always agree. "It is evident, however," Alexander wrote in October 1911, "that much unionism is still in evidence and possibly a few union men are in the company's employ but they are being gotten rid of as fast as their affiliation becomes known."² Operatives at Jonesboro, Louisiana, reported a great deal of sympathy with the union although closing the mill had dampened

¹ Ed Lehman, quoted by Covington Hall, "Revolt of the Southern Timber Workers," The International Socialist Review 13 (July 1912): 51-52.

² M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 702, WHMC.

worker enthusiasm for organized labor. Most of Winnfield's 98 BTW members worked for small stave and hardwood mills around Winn Parish. At the time, BTW organizers also showed up at Meridian, Mississippi, to contact farmers and laborers in the area. Many of the SLOA's sources reported that train crews on several railways had expressed sympathy with the union movement. Members of the BTW had no trouble getting on local trains, particularly on the KCS and L&A. The union also quickly learned of the clearing house operated by Alexander and its purpose. Jay Smith, BTW secretary, warned his organizers about SLOA spotters, whose purpose was to identify and report names and addresses of members of the union and of sympathizers, who had only to associate with a BTW organizer or member to qualify for the association's active blacklist. Alexander, for his part, suspected that the union had its own spotters, who attempted to identify and warn the BTW of association spotters and operatives. On October 24, the BTW bank account stood at only \$2,610, Alexander said. Still, the SLOA leaders believed the union would soon make a concerted effort to invade Arkansas and Mississippi.³

The clearing house kept close watch on individual workers, demanding careful hiring practices by SLOA managers. In late October, for example, the case of George Cunningham reached the notice of the SLOA. Alexander wanted information about the "white, shop man, married, forty years of age, family residing at Clarks, La."⁴ Still,

³ Ibid.

⁴ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to LCLC, Clarks, Louisiana, October 24, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 702, WHMC.

Clarence Slagle was not sure just what information the SLOA office wanted, but was willing to give all he had. "He has worked for us at different times in various capacities: as assistant millwright, as engineer, as extra man in the shop, and as pipe man, he wrote of Cunningham. "He has also worked for the Ouachita & Northwestern R.R. as engineer and loaderman. During the time of his service with the O. & N.W. R.R. he resided in Clarks, as he did when he was working for us [the Louisiana Central Lumber Company]."⁵ Cunningham was a hard worker, and, Slagle thought, had always been impatient under the stress of his work. The superintendent had fired him as pipe fitter in Clarks because he neglected a detail. The company had heard that Cunningham had joined the BTW at Cravens, Louisiana, first from the worker himself. The W. R. Pickering Lumber Company had also passed on rumors about the man's union affiliation. Cunningham told a friend of his, when he learned that his name was listed as a member from Cravens, that he had never signed papers of the BTW. If his name was on their list, he said, it was not with his consent. The company chose not to employ Cunningham at the time, Slagle said, because his name had been connected with the union. He wanted to avoid all chances that an employee could be identified with the union movement.⁶

Alexander also wanted information on "one John Ferguson, age 45, white employed as wood hauler" who had been "discharged from the Sabine Lumber Co. on

⁵ LCLC, Clarks, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, October 25, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 702, WHMC.

⁶ Ibid.

Jan. 1st for being a strong Union man."⁷ A few days later, however, Alexander wrote again to Slagle, admitting some confusion in the SLOA blacklist. His record of employees fired by the Sabine Lumber Company showed John Ferguson, Mexican, age 45, married, employed as team driver, and a strong union sympathizer. The employee at Clarks was John P. Ferguson, wood hauler, also age 45 and married. Alexander thought there was a connection between the two men. After receiving Slagle's letter, however, he gave John P. Ferguson a clearance on his records.⁸ In early November 1911, the manager of the Frost-Johnson Lumber Company mills at Noble, Louisiana, asked the 4 L Company about "one F. S. Selton, age 26 Col. not married,"⁹ to which Willard Warren answered promptly that "so far as our records indicate there is nothing against F. S. Selton."¹⁰ Such practices, to which the Association would turn again with disastrous results, smacked of private justice, a form of vigilantism, to put the best face on them.

At least one manager expressed some doubt about the fairness of the blacklist and for a time, at least, resisted efforts of radical elements in the association to discharge employees merely on suspicion. In the middle of November, Clarence Slagle complained

⁷ SLOA, Alexandria, Louisiana, to LCLC, Clarks, Louisiana, October 25, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 704, WHMC.

⁸ SLOA, Alexandria, Louisiana, to LCLC, Clarks, Louisiana, October 28, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 704, WHMC.

⁹ SLOA, Alexandria, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, November 4, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to SLOA, Alexandria, Louisiana, November 6, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

to Nicholas Greener, manager of the Tremont Lumber Company plant at Rochelle, Louisiana, that Greener had kept on his payroll two men--Ed Cole and Henry Smith who, Slagle said, were members of the BTW. Greener defended his record as an anti-union lumberman. His own investigations had resulted, he said, in firing nine men at Tremont's mills. Ed Cole and Henry Smith had openly and, from all appearances, honestly, applied for work at Tremont. After questioning them, Greener was satisfied that they did not belong to the union. Slagle replied that Ed Cole had been fired at Clarks after an informant turned him in as a member of the BTW. Greener objected that such information was not conclusive evidence and chose to wait for Cole to demonstrate union affiliation or sympathies. He said he would not retain anyone who belonged to the union.¹¹ Greener's attitude infuriated the radicals in the association, particularly members of the Louisiana Board of Governors who took the view that an occasional unfortunate mistake was the price workers had to pay for a union-free work place. R. M. Hollowell, general manager of the Industrial Lumber Company mills at Oakdale and Elizabeth agreed that Slagle had taken "the proper position in this matter and I am satisfied that Mr. [Sam] Carpenter will not approve Mr. Greener's actions; and that as soon as the matter is put up to him he will correct the trouble."¹² Hollowell had recently re-opened his mills with what he hoped was a non-union work force, but he

¹¹ Nicholas Greener, Rochelle, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, November 18, 1911; see also R. M. Hollowell, Elizabeth, Louisiana, to Slagle, November 23, 1911; Greener to Slagle, November 23, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC.

¹² R. M. Hollowell, Elizabeth, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, November 23, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 709, WHMC.

admitted he had had to rid his company of some unionists who had slipped past his defenses, something every mill would face for several months before conditions improved. Hallowell's interpretation of Carpenter's response to his manager's attitude at Rochelle proved accurate. In late November, Greener knuckled under, writing to Slagle that "it is not our wishes to retain in the service anyone belonging to the Union, and as long as you are satisfied these men are members, we do not want them."¹³

Although the dispute with the BTW took up an inordinate amount of the lumbermen's time and energy, they still had other matters to attend to and other labors to perform. All sawmill labor was not necessarily common, in the usual sense of that term; some required a rather high degree of education and skill. Not every well educated man suited the lumbermen; indeed, mill managers tended to favor experience to the almost total exclusion of formal education. Captain White who sprang from a long line of New England entrepreneurs probably spoke for most lumbermen. "I realize how difficult it is for a young man with a good general education to get a position because he is not educated for any particular business in life," he wrote. "Our college boys, a great many of them, are working for \$25 to \$30 a month because they have nothing but a good classical education."¹⁴ The Pratt Institute of New York, the Drexel Institute of Philadelphia, and the Westinghouse School in Philadelphia were the exceptions, he said. All graduates of these institutions promptly got jobs because of their practical business

¹³ Nicholas Greener, Rochelle, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, November, 23, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC.

¹⁴ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Sam Dinning, Poplar Bluff, Missouri, October 26, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 703, WHMC.

training. Even the agricultural colleges had developed a demand for their graduates. White had employed some college graduates, however, including one a graduate of the University of Wisconsin. "All the man could do was stack lumber at \$1.50 per day," he said. Later, as a time keeper, he made \$2 a day. "He is not worth any more [simply] because he graduated at Wisconsin University."¹⁵

By late October, the BTW had reached complete confusion in its headquarters. The muddled records kept not only their own organizers in virtual ignorance of their members, their activities, and their organizers, they also left the SLOA's operatives in a state of complete frustration. It turned out that information the Pinkerton and Burns men lifted was questionable at best. In the winter of 1911, however, the Grand Lodge in Alexandria bought a patented card index cabinet with 150 compartments, each representing the membership of a local lodge. With the filing system, the union systematized the records of its members and made the private detectives' work much easier and more efficient. Installation of the filing system merited a special mention in the SLOA's daily newsletter. The union, in fact, seemed to be at a plateau in its organizational activities; its leaders hoped to offer little or no challenge to the association until after the mills had reopened. The BTW was "trying to play a sort of a waiting game ... to establish their finances [because] they realize that they are not strongly

¹⁵ *Ibid.* See also J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 25, 1911; White to George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, October 26, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, Files 702 and 703, WHMC.

enough organized, either numerically or financially, to make a good fight."¹⁶ J. A. Buchanan, a brother of William Buchanan and an officer in several of the Buchanan companies in Arkansas and Louisiana, agreed with Alexander's position although the company did not always cooperate with the SLOA in its efforts to destroy the union movement in the piney woods. The Buchanans had organized a strict surveillance. When they suspected a man was an organizer or member of the union they immediately fired him. Buchanan's mills at Stamps, Arkansas, were then idle. The association had operatives in Arkansas to detect any union activity or sentiment, finding none of the former and very little of the latter. At the time, the country along the tracks of the KCS Railroad was uncharacteristically quiet.¹⁷

The next day however, Alexander reported that Jay Smith, secretary of the BTW had circulated a memorandum to all local lodges, to explain the new independent union.

BROTHERHOOD OF TIMBER WORKERS GRAND LODGE

To all locals and the membership of the B. of T. W.:

After November 1st all Local Lodges will be placed upon a more independent footing. Their Treasurers will be bonded and will retain half of all the dues collected.

Each Local will issue its own receipts, which will be sent out from the Grand Secretary's Office with the seal of the Grand Lodge on each receipt. No receipt will be recognized without the Grand Lodge Seal on it. All Local Secretaries are urged to make a special effort to collect all

¹⁶ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, October 26, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 703, WHMC.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*; see also George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, October 25, 1911; "Payments Made on September Production to the Southern Lumber Operators' Association," October 25, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 702, WHMC.

back dues, all dues for the month of October and report same as they have in the past. Clean up the docket and be ready to start anew. This will place all Locals in a position to handle local affairs, subject only to the approval of the Grand Lodge.

It must be understood that we are now in an organizing period, and all local disturbances should be adjusted without friction, and without strikes or walkouts. We can not afford at this stage of the game to be contentious, and to demand concession from the employers. Go on with your work and be content with present conditions.

Organize. Get every member available. Then educate. Systematize your work. Study the relationship of unionism to business and industry. Teach the membership to be thoughtful, to be considerate, and to be reasonable. Discourage idle talk, and idle bo[w] strings. Confine your conversations on the order and its purposes and designs to closed Lodge Meetings. Strive to make your Local the best in the State. Be watchful and study for the good of the Order. Avoid hot discussions and foolish arguments. Convince the world by your talk, by your walk and by your life that unionism is a business proposition. Stand by the Order and it will stand by you.

Yours for victory,
GRAND SEC.¹⁸

A more reasonable communication cannot well be imagined, but the lumbermen took it for what it probably was, an attempt to quieten some of the more radical proposals by organizers and members for retribution against the companies when the BTW had finally won its recognition. But lumbermen did not want peaceful dialogue—or dialogue of any sort—with their employees. A. L. Emerson and Ed Fussell had gone to Southwest Louisiana to hold a series of meetings at Lake Charles, West Lake, and Goosport on Charles Lake. Alexander reported that Emerson had been drawn into a personal altercation at Lake Charles with Superintendent Bridgewater of the Industrial Lumber Company and had lost. Without doubt, he admitted, the labor leader deserved the

¹⁸ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, October 27, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 703, WHMC.

beating at the hands of Bridgewater's guards, but the incident gave Emerson a chance to play the martyr and get public sympathy for himself and the BTW. In fact all across the piney woods, SLOA detectives had been active. The operatives found several union men at Urania, despite Henry Hardtner's assurances to the contrary, but at Rochelle, just a few miles south on the Iron Mountain, they found none. Leesville had expressed less sympathy and confidence in the union. A black organizer named Hargess, who claimed to represent both the BTW and the IWW, convinced some black workers at Crossett, Arkansas, to join the organizations, but when some of them failed to receive cards they decided that they had been defrauded. Private detectives investigating labor conditions at Beaumont discovered that F. C. Fountain, a young man formerly employed by the Kirby Lumber Company but "now employed as a solicitor for the Beaumont Enterprise, appears to be quite active and states that he has written to Emmerson for permission to organize a lodge there and that he can sign up at least three hundred members."¹⁹

On November 6, M. L. Fleishel circulated a letter to board members calling a meeting of the group for the following Friday afternoon, November 10, in Alexandria. On Thursday, however, he postponed the meeting until the next Tuesday, November 14. The meeting took up the matter of reopening locked-out mills with non-union labor. A few of the mills were still down although most had reopened during the fall, at least for trial periods. Four mills had started again on November 1, and 12 more would reopen during November. George K. Smith, keeping watch from St. Louis, predicted that

¹⁹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, October 28, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 704, WHMC.

another 13 mills would probably get enough non-union laborers by the first of December to be able to reopen. John Henry Kirby, still strutting through the East Texas piney woods, announced to his world that several mills would be allowed to begin running again but without the union's interference.²⁰ It came as an afterthought, Captain White noted.

Not only did the lumbermen not follow one fugleman such as Kirby, they exhibited sharp differences between individuals born of competition for land and timber, not to mention markets and skilled workers. Competition, in fact, far outweighed the occasional cooperation among lumbermen themselves, their companies, and their regional industries. In early November, William Bowman called on Captain White in Kansas City. Bowman had only recently left his mill town of Loring, Louisiana, and took the opportunity to commiserate with White about the sorry condition of the 4 L Company mills at Fisher, Louisiana, of which, he knew full well, White was secretary. White, of course, immediately fired off a letter to Warren at Fisher. "I saw Mr. Bowman yesterday, and he just came from Louisiana, and says he hears that you are in trouble and cannot get men to start your mill. Will be glad to hear about the situation."²¹ Obviously, Bowman's charge was a challenge to Warren, who took the opportunity the conflict offered to shore up his own defenses with Captain White and his board of

²⁰ M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, to Members, Louisiana Board of Governors, November 6 and 9, 1911; George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to the 4 L Company, Victoria, Louisiana, November 9, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; see also McWhiney, "Louisiana Socialists," p. 329; Reed, "IWW in Louisiana," pp. 46-47.

²¹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, November 9, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

directors, since all such correspondence was routinely copied for all members of the Grandin interests. "Mr. Bowman has been misinformed if he thinks we have any trouble," Warren wrote. "Of course we do not know what may be in store for us, but we started our mill Wednesday morning,--that is, one side of the pine mill, and there has been no interruption of any kind so far, and I see nothing on the horizon to indicate that we will not be able to operate entirely according to our own ideas."²² Also, he noted, Alexander had said that the situation was clearing up considerably. Bowman's mill had had trouble in the logging department because of accidents with the log loader, but not with the labor union, he said. Warren had plenty of men to run both sides of the pine mill, although he would be short of common labor to handle the lumber after it left the mill. His logging crew could not log the mill to full capacity, convincing him to proceed slowly, only increasing capacity as non-union workers became available. It would probably be the first of January or later before he started the hardwood mill, he said. Some union men, he admitted, may have got in at the Victoria front but not at Victoria mill itself. In fact, all mills that locked out their employees on August 21, 1911, had begun running again, with crews the managers perceived to be non-union. In large measure, they were not affiliated with the BTW or any other labor union, if not from conviction then from simply common sense: until a labor leader arose in the piney woods who had the financial strength to sustain a long and bruising campaign, it was useless to affiliate with any labor organization that threatened the social, political, and economic

²² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, November 11, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

hegemony of the lumbermen.²³ On November 18, George K. Smith circulated a list of reopened mills to the members of the SLOA. Opening the mills would, Smith wrote, reduce the costs of operating the Benefit Trust Fund and increase revenues by the amount assessed for November, no more than 25 cents per M, log scale.²⁴

News of the mills reopening created a less confident attitude among union members in the ultimate success of the BTW. Opinion within the group seemed to waver. Workers criticized the leaders for following faulty principles. Alexander congratulated himself on the dissatisfaction. Because of detectives at Loring, Neame, and Fullerton, reports on the labor situation were quite good. The situation at Pollock was also encouraging to the association. Only a few workers actually belonged to the BTW, which rapidly lost strength there. Alexander had visited Pollock in the middle of November for an agricultural meeting. He talked to a number of people who convinced him that the town was basically anti-union. There was not much chance of more union organizational activity, he noted. At Elizabeth and Oakdale, the association's work had been effective, Alexander said, although the union still had a hold on Oakdale and a few union men succeeded in getting hired at the Elizabeth mill when it resumed operations. Emerson led four organizers into lumber's stronghold at Lake Charles earlier that fall, but they had virtually no success, Alexander said. Emerson even cut union dues from \$1.50 to fifty cents to induce the mill hands to join. The gesture failed, however. The

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to Members, SLOA, November 18, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 709, WHMC, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

SLOA manager was encouraged that the merchants, a very potent factor in helping the union in the smaller towns, had given no encouragement to the BTW in the cities. Lumbermen in East Texas--mostly in the Kirby organization when not Kirby himself--kept reporting union recruiting successes, although no viable local unions emerged. Alexander sent his best detective to Texas for authentic information. It had become painfully clear that sawmill workers in East Texas were even more benighted than in West Louisiana, and they were never able to rebel against such figures as John Henry Kirby. His secret agents literally ran over each other hunting for union sentiment in the piney woods and, in desperation, invented conspiracies among spurious organizations. At the same time, Kirby's managers did not find the union powerful enough to force them to lockout their employees except at two small mills, at Bronson and Roganville. The big mills at Kirbyville, Silsbee, and in Beaumont never stopped cutting lumber. It was Kirby himself, as well as other lumbermen east of the river, to whom R. A. Long referred when he castigated big lumber mills for their overproduction and price-cutting at the same time the West Louisiana mills were virtually all closed.²⁵

The union local at Leesville, Louisiana, originally had 460 members, but by November paid-up membership had dropped to about 160. At a meeting there a few days earlier, 123 members showed up, along with five visitors, a total of 58 blacks, six Italians, and 64 other whites. Twenty-seven were farmers and outsiders and 37 were mill men from Stables, Hawthorn and Merryville. President of the local was one

²⁵ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, November 17, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 709, WHMC.

Coverdale, editor of the Leesville Toiler, a socialist paper, and the secretary was T. W. Wade, a carpenter.²⁶ Some of these men did, however, work in the Nona Mills Company plant at Leesville. Ferguson of the Nona mills, described, like Kirby and Hardtner, as a politician, said that things likely would be tighter there after the 1912 election than earlier.²⁷ He said he fired union men when their affiliation came to his attention, but he did not especially want to have such information. A. B. McElvin who had a deputy's commission from Sheriff Wingate of Vernon Parish also worked as a union organizer, Alexander said. Farther north, Zwolle, a storm center of union agitation earlier, was now quiet. The mills ran without a union presence. Overall, the morale of the union leadership had dropped to a new low, as they became convinced that their only hope of success was to get their members back in the mills as they opened again. They had no option but to advise their members to seek employment with the mills under any pretext and if necessary even new names. Alexander pointed out that the change in attitude gave lumbermen a rare opportunity to freeze out the union, but

²⁶ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, November 18, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 709, WHMC.

²⁷ Ibid.; in January 1912, Democrats in Louisiana nominated, which was tantamount to election, Judge Luther E. Hall for Governor. Congressman Arsène J. Pujo campaigned on Hall's ticket for election to the U.S. Senate, at that time required in Louisiana in anticipation of passage of the Seventeenth Amendment the next year; he lost and retired from the House to private law practice, counting among his clients many of the prominent lumbermen in the region. Late in 1912, Pujo would become ad hoc prosecutor in the murder trial of A. L. Emerson and scores of BTW members in Lake Charles, Louisiana; see J. Zack. Spearing, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, November 23, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC; also, Ann Wakefield, "Notes and Documents: The Broussard Papers of the University of Southwestern Louisiana: New Light on Progressivism," Louisiana History, Vol. 31 (Summer 1990): 293-300.

they would have to keep a close watch on the plants. He asked urgently that mill managers continue to use the employment blanks supplied by the association and to give him all possible data to add to his blacklist. "We also earnestly urge that the information contained in these reports be handled with the utmost caution and discretion."²⁸

Occasionally, the small independent sawmiller stumbled unawares into the trap laid by the SLOA for the union, paying a penalty out of all proportion to his economic importance to the industry or the economy of the region. In 1911 Erastus Cole ran a small sawmill at Longville, Louisiana, dependent almost entirely on the largesse of the Long-Bell Lumber Company and other large manufacturers. Early in the year D. H. Smith, a Long-Bell manager, forced Cole to close his mill on the charge that all his employees were natives and members of the BTW. Cole had little choice, but late in the year he appealed to the SLOA to permit him to reopen. Smith, however, short of competent non-union mill workers, opposed reopening the small Erastus Cole plant. Charles S. Keith joined him in his opposition. M. L. Fleishel, not one to feel any sympathy for a small manufacturer, asked the members of the Louisiana Board of Governors for recommendations. R. M. Hallowell at Elizabeth placed the problem squarely in Smith's lap. He thought the Long-Bell people could "handle Erastus Cole and convince him that he should not use Union Labor,"²⁹ therefore Long-Bell should help Cole find a non-union crew. Since, he said, "it is a small mill and requires only

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ R. M. Hallowell, Elizabeth, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, November 23, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC.

a few men and ought to be able to pick up a sufficient crew to operate without using union men; and I recall Mr. Smith stating very emphatically at one time that the farmers in his vicinity did not go into the Union, so at this season of the year, they have little work to do on the farm, and would probably be glad to have a position in the Mill."³⁰ L. F. Haslam at Pickering found the solution quite simple: Cole should try to get "strictly non-union labor, whether it be native or not, and to start his mill at the earliest possible moment, if this can be done without serious friction." Otherwise, "a waiting game for Mr. Cole might be unduly prolonged."³¹ S. T. Woodring at Lake Charles shrugged the matter off because "the plant is very small" and used "none other than union men prior to the time it was shut down."³² Cole's plant remained closed, a hostage to the good behavior of the BTW.

Haslam, general manager of the Pickering mills at Pickering, Cravens, and Barham in Vernon Parish, considered himself something of an individualist, based primarily on the resistance he encountered from his fellow lumbermen to his suggestions; he did not neglect to tell them later that he had told them so. On November 16, Fleishel had suggested to C. D. Johnson, president of the SLOA, that changes in the Alexandria office might be in order, inasmuch as the fight with the BTW was virtually won.³³

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ L. F. Haslam, Pickering, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, November 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC.

³² S. T. Woodring, Lake Charles, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, November 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC.

³³ L. F. Haslam, Pickering, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, November 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC, UM.

Hallowell disagreed: "personally I would not consider it advisable to consider any changes in the Alexandria Office at this time, or at least until January 1st."³⁴ When the lumber mills locked out its employees in August, he said, competent workers gradually drifted away; now that the mills had re-opened the demand for labor was fierce; the demand for competent non-union workers was downright cutthroat. Leaders of the BTW had, he pointed out, advised their members to "resort to any tactics in order to secure work."³⁵ Some mills would inadvertently hire union members under the stress of competition, a condition that Haslam believed would continue for at least 30 days, during which he did not "consider it good policy for us to, in any way, relax out efforts at the present time."³⁶ Consider the political situation, he said. The January elections would change the sentiment among farmers who had joined the union and after the mills had demonstrated they could operate with only non-union workers, sawmill labor would quickly conclude that their best interest was to leave the BTW. Only by doing so could they hope to work again in the sawmills of the piney woods. Until then, lumbermen should keep the clearing house open to keep the plants safe from unionism.³⁷

Hallowell, general manager of the Industrial Lumber Company plants at Elizabeth and Oakdale, agreed. From his own experience with organized labor, he asserted that

³⁴ R. M. Hallowell, Elizabeth, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, November 23, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ L. F. Haslam, Pickering, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, November 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC.

³⁷ Ibid.

the mills would find their old non-union employees gradually returning. Within three or four weeks, he said, Industrial's mills would have fairly complete non-union crews by using care in hiring.³⁸ The union people at Oakdale, he said, were worn out and rapidly approaching the point where they would give up completely. Lumbermen had fought hard against the union and spent a great deal of money, and now it would be foolish to close the clearing house. It would simply mean that lumbermen would leave a situation that organizers could fan into life again. The Alexandria office should be continued indefinitely either there or elsewhere in the vicinity, he said, but certainly not as far away as St. Louis. Each mill should continue secret service work by hiring confidential employees to locate union men. This would cut out the heaviest expense to the SLOA. The detectives were high priced and frequently unreliable, he charged. Hallowell had laid off all his white secret service men because they drank too much whiskey and made too many inaccurate statements. On the other hand, he was pleased with the work of his black detective, although he planned to fire him too. In any case, he had a nearly complete crew of non-union workers on hand and anticipated no further problems with the BTW. His suggestions would not carry much weight with the rest of the Committee, Hallowell charged, because his views were entirely opposed to the views of the other members of the Board of Governors and the Executive Committee. He reminded his fellow lumbermen that he had taken the position on two occasions in September that it was time to start some mills on the first of October 1st. Had this been

³⁸ R. M. Hallowell, Elizabeth, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, November 23, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC.

done at the time, he argued, four or five mills could have started, and a few more after two weeks, thus getting all in operation gradually and without competition for men.³⁹

The idea of cutting the cost of professional secret service men at first appealed to M. L. Alexander's sense of economy, then he began to consider the ramifications of the change, particularly as it impinged on his own position with the association; he quickly changed his mind. At the meeting in Alexandria of the Board of Governors on November 14, someone--probably Hallowell--suggested that he should employ detectives recommended by members of the association. Backed by the reputation of the member companies, the men would certainly be as reliable as Pinkerton or Burns men and would cost only half as much. Now Alexander saw clearly that "the operatives that we have in our service are men who are trained to the work, they are backed by agencies of repute and responsibility and if the men that they give us are not satisfactory we can get rid of them immediately without question or trouble."⁴⁰ On the other hand the men who were recommended were not trained and not responsible to the whole organization. So far, he said, his operatives had given good service although there had been some criticism of the methods of a few of the men. These were promptly fired. Generally, the investigations were valuable. With success in their grasp, he would not take the responsibility for hiring untried men. It would have been a millstone around his neck, he said. In so many words, then, Alexander would much prefer to resign the position

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, November 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC.

with the SLOA rather than to try to manage an unmanageable situation; the Board of Governors accepted his decision and the blacklist continued to grow until Alexander had perfected an effective weapon against incipient unionism.⁴¹

The next day, Alexander circulated copies of a union document that he interpreted as "clearly indicat[ing] to me the failing strength of the organization and the desperate straits which they are in and their final struggle for supremacy."⁴² This was the time, he said, for cooperation among lumbermen, "for the slightest relaxation might enable them to get a foot-hold that would destroy the effect of so many months of hard work just at the time when success is within our reach."⁴³ He then sent out "a general letter" to the members urging that precautions be taken to protect the plants and to keep them clear of union influence. The black list, in other words, was working well.⁴⁴

The General Executive Board of the BTW appears to have sent a long message to its members on November 16 from Alexandria. The source of this document and the use of excessively folksy language call its authenticity into question, although it does not seem to misrepresent union sentiment and tactics at the time.⁴⁵ In any case, the dodger and broadside were the only effective communications devices the union had available

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, November 23, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ General Executive Board, BTW, Alexandria, Louisiana, to BTW members, November 16, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC.

to it, and it composed and promulgated scores of such appeals. The fact that the SLOA had copies of these communications indicates how weak the union efforts really were, even for the early years of the century. By the end of November 1911, Alexander had reason to congratulate himself and his employers on the progress his office had made since it opened on September 1. He had, he said, worked diligently in lumber's service, compiling valuable records for use against the BTW. The success of the clearing house had plainly shown that the lockout was the right policy. In all previous union strongholds BTW membership had decreased dramatically. It had, however, reached a critical period, which depended on continued support and cooperation from member companies. The question, he said, was whether to completely stamp out the union or to permit socialism to survive in the piney woods. The future was promising, in any event. Union organization had failed; membership, from conservative estimates, had reached 12,000 members. Now it was no more than 4,000 paid-up members. Although some new members joined daily, the loss of old members far exceeded gains. What was worse, he pointed out, members included some legitimate sawmill workers, along with farmers, merchants, Mexicans, Italians and blacks. At no time had more than 50 per cent been actual mill and woods workers. Already dissension had grown in union ranks mainly because of the question of social equality. Some organizers had misappropriated membership dues, fostering a spirit of unrest and dissatisfaction. On the other hand, however, the union had by no means given up the fight, although their methods of operation were more secretive than before. Union leaders had instructed workers to get employment under any pretext, even if they had to deny the union and sign anti-union

oaths required by the companies, as long as they paid their dues. Alexander saw a more subtle and dangerous union, one harder to combat. He also found that the BTW had not given up the idea of organizing mills in other states. East Texas was the center of union agitation in the fall and winter of 1911, he thought, and Mississippi and Arkansas would be the next points of attack. Such conditions required cooperation and vigilance to succeed. He also made an appeal for reports on employees of Louisiana mills. He needed full and complete information on union affiliation, union sentiments, associations, and the usual work related information on workers, which he then made available to other mill managers. This kind of data he compared with information in his files, thus perfecting the blacklist. Managers of mills in other states, he urged, should maintain surveillance of their plants, since the blacklist was illegal or questionable in Texas and Mississippi.⁴⁶

The SLOA office in Alexandria did, in fact, operate as a clearing house, but it dealt principally in gossip and innuendo, hearsay and spite. "On May 16th I. M. Knippers left your service and is reported as being a Union sympathizer,"⁴⁷ an office memorandum informed the 4 L Company at Fisher. On November 24, the company had re-instated Knippers and gave no reason for doing it. The SLOA cared a great deal more about the precision of its records than it did for the welfare of the men whose livelihoods they affected. "Kindly advise if you think this man is all right so that we may make the

⁴⁶ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to All Members, SLOA, November 27, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴⁷ SLOA, Alexandria, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, November 29, 1911, Box 11264-50, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

proper entry on our record of him,"⁴⁸ Alexander wrote. Some writers have supposed that the labor-management dispute centered on a difference in belief systems, when, in fact, it was chiefly a matter of wages. Few workers in the piney woods ever had the chance to demonstrate their fundamental concern for wealth, but lumbermen had no such inhibitions. The position of Kay Ell in East Texas demonstrated this for all to see. The prince of pines had launched an invasion of West Louisiana back in the summer of 1911, when he spoke from the balcony of a hotel in DeRidder to several thousand people, enticed there by the promise of a free picnic. To guarantee that he arrived in state in the Louisiana stronghold of the BTW, John Henry Kirby arranged for the Silsbee, Texas, Brass Band to accompany him on his private train. Kay Ell promised to pay the band members' expenses, which the musicians managed to run up to \$78. Kirby declined to pay the costs, although the band did yeoman's service by vigorously drowning the words of A. L. Emerson when he tried to speak. Faced with elaborate, if musical, tinpanning, the labor leader then led a well-fed group of BTW members and sympathizers off to the local baseball park where he assailed Kirby and his kind without noticeable effect. R. L. Weatherby, logging superintendent at Silsbee, Texas, felt personally responsible for the expenses of the volunteer band, and so he offered to pay the debt when the company declined. A few days later, however, shamed into parting with the money, Kirby sent his personal check to cover the band's expenses.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ R. L. Weatherby, Silsbee, Texas, to C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, November 27, 1911; same to same, November 30, 1911, B x 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

Although most of the mills had gone back into production by late November, the SLOA still collected assessments for and made payments from the Benefit Trust Fund. George K. Smith, SLOA treasurer, called for member mills to pay an assessment based on their October scales, a total of \$2,386.39 on the cut of the Louisiana Central Lumber Company at Clarks and Standard, Louisiana; only \$734.68 on the production of the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company at West Eminence, Missouri. The 4 L Company at Fisher and Victoria received about \$1,800 for time lost in August, and about \$3,500 for time lost in September. By December 1, the association had not paid the 4 L Company for time lost in October and the early part of November. The association pushed its collections of assessments on October sales into early December to pay for the October downtime. There was \$65,000 in the Benefit Trust Fund, Smith said, but not enough to pay all the bills. He declined to begin issuing vouchers until he had enough money in the Trust Fund to cover all bills for October, about \$75,000. The Executive Committee would meet on December 12, to levy assessments on the November cut, to be charged to all mills that ran during November. Smith speculated that the association would pay the October benefits by the middle of December.⁵⁰

The Benefit Trust Fund, although an inspired measure at the time, created dissension and animosity in the ranks of the lumbermen. One of the most belligerent members was the "Father of Southern Forestry," Henry E. Hardtner of Urania,

⁵⁰ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, November 28, 1911; Warren to White, December 1, 1911; George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to Warren, December 4, 1911, Boxes 122 and 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Louisiana. In the middle of December, George K. Smith, struggling to cope with the exigencies of the SLOA treasury, complained to M. L. Fleishel at Fullerton and Sam Carpenter at Winnfield that Hardtner had not cooperated with the SLOA in providing the necessary information on downtime but then demanded payments from the Trust Fund. Smith could not pay him for the simple reason that Hardtner had not disclosed how many days his mills were idle because of trouble with the BTW. The Urania Lumber Company had sent only one communication to the association. It was terse to a fault: "I would be glad to receive from you a check for the balance due us from the association for the time lost during our shut down."⁵¹ Smith was not impressed with Hardtner's attempt to evade the central question. "We do not find that we have ever had any bill from you covering lost time or any statement of the number of days your plant was down, and the average daily production, log scale, when running," Smith replied. "We have never received any remittance from your company towards the Benefit Trust Fund and were under the impression that you were figuring on letting your bill for lost time offset the remittances due the Benefit Trust Fund."⁵² Smith asked Hardtner to make a full statement of the amount of lumber Urania produced since the first of August and the number of days the mill was idle since then because of labor troubles so the SLOA treasurer could take it up intelligently for the Executive Committee. Hardtner, like other

⁵¹ Urania Lumber Company, Urania, Louisiana, to George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, December 11, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 718, WHMC.

⁵² George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to Urania Lumber Company, Urania, Louisiana, December 13, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 718, WHMC.

recipients of the largesse of others, had the insufferable capacity for acting arbitrarily and capriciously, then blandly blaming the lack of success on his neighbors.⁵³

As Christmas approached, activities among union organizers seemed to decrease, the contest was at a standstill. Still, individual BTW members had begun to find their way into the ranks of the employed. "[W]e should be absolutely on the alert if we are to stamp out this infection," Alexander warned. "[A]s careful as you can possibly be there is always the opportunity for agitators to get into the various plants and these are the opportunities that they are seeking. Our men who are placed at various points have been able to locate a number of members of the organization who have been considered by the management of the mills as being absolutely all right."⁵⁴ Managers, Alexander cautioned, should be aware of the union's particular desire to organize black workers. Black organizers were in the field, he said, although a meeting at Alexandria in the middle of December was not a success. Late in the year, Emerson sent out a circular letter to build subscriptions for an official publication. Response proved light, leading Alexander to question whether he would ever get enough to launch it. He was wrong, but not far wrong. The Lumberjack, with Covington Hall as editor went to press and continued publishing until well after the lumber war had ended. While not large, the subscription list was respectable under the circumstances. Even the United States mails

⁵³ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, and S. J. Carpenter, Winnfield, Louisiana, December 13, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 718, WHMC.

⁵⁴ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, December 14, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 718, WHMC.

were denied it in many places because the postmasters and the mill managers were the same men; a subscriber to The Lumberjack could expect instant dismissal from his job.⁵⁵

In addition to such esoteric data as subscription lists provided to members of the SLOA by the Alexandria office's operatives working undercover in the union headquarters, Alexander's staff each day checked as many as 500 names of new employees against the clearing house files. The clerks then made new cards for men with no previous record on the blacklist. The files on December 15 had about 22,000 names of workers who had been reported or investigated, many times both. Alexander was proud of the fact that, in about eighty per cent of the cases, he could promptly give the records of workers. He was pleased, he said, with the response he had received to his requests for confidential information for the blacklist. Most lumber mill managers, he said, had made regular daily reports of all men they employed.⁵⁶

At the union headquarters, the quiet was deceptive; the BTW had not given up by any means. The Pinkerton men reported routinely that Jay Smith, the secretary of the Grand Lodge, had gone to Chicago recently and bought a great deal of stationery, which, of course, he would hardly need were he and Emerson to be contemplating surrender. Smith also consulted with other union leaders to learn more about administrative methods. "You see," Alexander argued, "their expenses are not very large and if they

⁵⁵ Ibid. For a list of subscribers to The Lumberjack, see the appendices below.

⁵⁶ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, December 15, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 718, WHMC.

can keep from twenty five hundred to three thousand members actively paying their dues it will give them enough money to keep them going and retain the easy jobs which they hold."⁵⁷ Although the BTW membership was decreasing, the union still had a course to run before becoming defunct. The association had a good man in secret service at Zwolle in the Sabine Lumber Company. The detective told a one-sided story that, nevertheless, reveals a great deal about the union and its leaders. The union's original 250 to 300 members in the town had by December 16 "dwindled down to about forty and they decided to discontinue holding regular meetings and voted to give up their cards, leaving it optional with the majority of the members as to whether they would continue to pay dues or not."⁵⁸ Many would do so for a time, Alexander speculated. Emerson came to Zwolle on December 13 to speak at the union hall. He advised BTW members to give up their union cards and go back to work. The union, he said, was just about finished and that the BTW did not expect to win now because the sawmill owners had too much money. Although he regretted the men's hardships, he believed that in the future sawmill labor might organize successfully. After the public meeting, the BTW local went into executive session, excluding non-members. In the secret session, Emerson told the men to give up their union cards, stop their meetings for a year, and not to discuss unionism with anyone, but to continue as though the BTW had ceased to exist, although they should continue to pay their dues. He promised to continue

⁵⁷ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, December 16 and 20, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 718, WHMC.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

organizing in Louisiana and neighboring states until, in about a year when the BTW had recovered somewhat, the union would make its demands on the mills with some hope of success. Members in the Zwolle local were divided on what course to take; some wanted to disband entirely while others wanted to continue to pay dues and await a better day.⁵⁹

A. L. Emerson had for several days been holding meetings along the line of the KCS Railroad; his crowds had been sparse because of severely inclement weather for the past ten days, drawing not more than 20 listeners on the average, not a very good reception at any place. The import of Emerson's messages was that the BTW wanted to be strong enough to call a general strike by March; the association took it for what it undoubtedly was, a bluff to encourage members to pay dues. The Association had also investigated Neame, Carson, Pickering, Loring, Mansfield, Fisher, Cravens, Woodworth, Pollock, Tioga, and Lake Charles, all in Louisiana, and found them in good shape, meaning, of course, that they were running with non-union workers.⁶⁰

Alexander also had a thorough investigation made at Kinder, Louisiana, which produced the names of about 175 active members of the BTW. Very few of them, however, worked at the Peavy-Byrnes Lumber Company mills in this Allen Parish town on the Calcasieu River. In a short time, Alexander predicted, the lodge would be gradually destroyed. He also sent a black secret service man into Lake Charles to investigate attitudes of blacks toward the BTW. The Lake Charles operative was not the

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, December 15, 1911; Warren to B. F. Bonner, Houston, Texas, December 21, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

first black detective employed by the association, however. "One of our colored operatives, as the Chairman of this Board [M. L. Fleishel] is aware, was injured at Fullerton [Louisiana], having his feet crushed while at work and having to have the toe amputated: this man I have had to keep on the list until he recovered sufficiently from his accident to retire."⁶¹ The association finally paid its members who had been obliged to close their plants during the lockout. On December 18, operators received checks to cover downtime in October, leaving only a few days in November not yet paid for. The 4 L Company received \$4,000 in compensation for losses incurred in October, and the manager expected to get from \$800 to \$1,000 more when the association paid its November bills. The 4 L Company mills at Fisher had been idle for four or five days before starting operations again in early November. Assessments against the operating mills had also dropped to only 25 cents per M, log scale.⁶²

L. F. Haslam, true to form, objected to continuing the operation of the SLOA's Alexandria office, convinced that the BTW had ended active organizing. At a recent St. Louis meeting of SLOA leaders, John Henry Kirby had claimed that the union was particularly active in East Texas. Haslam, impressed by Kirby's claims, believed that Emerson had turned his attention wholly to East Texas and had given up in Louisiana. The labor leader's speech on a street in DeRidder a few nights previously attracted a

⁶¹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, December 18, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 719, WHMC.

⁶² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, December 18, 1911; White to Warren, December 21, 1911, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

small audience, and he found little support from the local populace. Haslam and his neighbors had not seen any organizers or agitators since re-opening their plants in early November. Agreeing that interest in the union in the Calcasieu long leaf pine district of West Louisiana had waned, he believed this was true only of the former infected district. Logic decreed that Emerson would continue organizing as "long as they can induce two to three thousand men to pay them 50 cents each month."⁶³ Haslam repeated his suggestion, made at the recent St. Louis meeting, that the association should move its clearing house to East Texas if it were legally possible, where the Texas Board of Governors and the Texas lumbermen could take their turn at managing the SLOA battle, much in the same way that Louisiana lumbermen had for the past several months.⁶⁴

Haslam seemed to be correct in his assessment of union strength in Louisiana, although he was obviously gulled by Kirby about conditions in Texas. The secretary of the BTW lodge at Oakdale, probably W. M. Singleterry or Singletary, admitted that his members had either lost interest or had left the area. The lodge had been one of the strongest in the BTW, but an audit of the local's books revealed that "at least about two thirds of its members had not paid their dues." Singleterry pinned his hopes on the January elections, which he thought would place union sympathizers in office "when things will be better for them and a great revival of interest will occur." Alexander,

⁶³ L. F. Haslam, Pickering, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, December 20, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

however, saw "the beginning of the end" of the BTW, if only the lumbermen "keep the plants clean."⁶⁵

The BTW acted the part of villains, particularly in their public discussions. Officers of the Grand Lodge printed a circular addressed to black workers in Louisiana and Texas, which found its way into the hands of M. L. Alexander and the Louisiana Board of Governors, SLOA, virtually before it reached its intended readers. "I take it that this circular is a clear indication of weakness," Alexander wrote, "and knowing the negroes as well as I do, I do not believe that it will meet with their enthusiastic response."⁶⁶ Whether the SLOA manager knew black people well, the fact remains that they did not respond positively to the union's appeal for racial harmony. Many of them obviously did not see the circular, or seeing it could not read it, and those that saw and read it most often had the good common sense to choose the side with the strength to protect them from white workers who often turned on black workers with murderous fury. "There is a move on foot among the Saw Mills that have been shut down to fool up all the negroes who would listen to them and pit them against the poor, unfortunate white men who have been kicked out of their jobs, because of their affiliation with the Brotherhood of timber Workers," the message began. "Now, we have this to say to you colored people: If you allow yourselves to be made tools of by these men who hold out flattering promises of good wages and good treatment, you are doing the very thing that

⁶⁵ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, December 20, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 719, WHMC.

⁶⁶ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, December 26, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 721, WHMC.

our organization proposed to prevent and forever put a stop to."⁶⁷ The BTW, the writer continued, was the only union in the South that accepted black workers on an industrial basis. He concluded with an appeal for help. Still another circular by the Grand Lodge apologized for their officers not being able to visit the locals more often, which they knew was being used to discredit them and the union as a declining effort. Actually, the union leaders maintained, the area of conflict had grown so wide that they had trouble getting around to everyone as they might have wished. The Governor of Louisiana, the circular claimed, had promised protection for the union and its members. The BTW expected the next legislative session, scheduled for 1912, to enact laws that would end the struggle in the piney woods. Workers should then hold out and keep fighting. Alexander thought that such talk was at best naive, because "after the election they will find that these promises of laws and special acts will dissipate in thin air."⁶⁸ Emerson had in his speeches talked about promises made by politicians for the protection of members of the BTW. Alexander had some reason to know that his friend, Luther Hall, who would be Governor during the next legislative session, would forget such promises and ignore the lumber workers.⁶⁹

At union headquarters in Alexandria, Smith, the secretary, and Fussell, the vice president, had been busily engaged in re-organizing the office filing system and installing a new card index system. They had little clerical help, however, and were forced to do

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

most of the work themselves. They expected delivery of their order of stationery from Chicago at any time now and had ordered all local secretaries to report their activities by January 15, 1912. The situation had not changed in East Texas, where several union organizers were still at work. They met with scant success, largely because of the precautions taken by Kay Ell management to guard against union men. The BTW leadership intended to organize the black workers, and to take in anyone willing and able to pay the dues to develop financial strength, which meant the mills were in for a long siege before the "infection" could be stopped. There were SLOA successes, however, particularly among small and medium sized mills. M. Burke, general manager of the White Sulphur Springs Lumber Company at Jena, agreed to cooperate by declining to hire union men. "Jena has been quite a [BTW] stronghold in the past and we are very glad to have this assurance ... as it will have the tendency of breaking the local at that point."⁷⁰

McCrocklin, foreman of the Frost-Johnson Lumber Company plant at Campiti, Louisiana, told the SLOA office late in December that the union had organized a local there with 12 members, only three of whom worked at the mills. Alexander ordered an investigation by detectives. About the same time, the Enterprise Lumber Company began to have trouble at its front near Pineville, where union members had threatened black employees with a loss of their jobs unless they joined the BTW. Alexander sent another investigator. East Texas remained calm, giving little encouragement to the

⁷⁰ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, December 28, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 721, WHMC.

union. DeRidder was also calm, and the big Hudson River Lumber Company mill, a Long-Bell subsidiary, planned to re-open by the first of the year.⁷¹ At Fisher, Willard Warren expected to start his hardwood flooring mill on Monday, January 1, 1912. "We have several hundred thousand feet of hardwood logs on the track, and will probably be able to run that mill quite steadily for a while,"⁷² he told his father-in-law. On the other hand, the pine mill would not run much because of rains that continued through late December and into January, making it impossible to cut timber or load logs. Heavy rains in December had prevented the loggers from getting any logs on the skids because it was impossible for teams to move about in the woods. A few days of sunshine with some wind would dry the woods so his crews could catch up, however. "Christmas passed off very quietly," he added, "and we hear nothing at all of the Union any more."⁷³ As the year ended, Alexander sent out another general message to the members of the SLOA, summarizing the situation as improved but not by any means won. The secretiveness of the BTW made it difficult to determine just what the union meant to do, but internal evidence--new office furniture and fixtures, a large amount of stationery, a new card index system, and continued payment of at least some dues--

⁷¹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, December 29, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 721, WHMC.

⁷² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, December 29, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷³ Ibid.

indicated the union leaders were preparing for a long campaign. A membership of 1,500 to 2,000 would be enough to keep them active and take the fight into the new year.⁷⁴

After the holidays, Alexander returned to work at the clearing house, with the conviction that although the labor situation was well under control, it would still take months of work and watchfulness to finish the job of destroying unionism in the piney woods.⁷⁵ Sometimes the job was complex to the extent that it confused the keepers of the blacklist. Alexander got onto the activities of D. C. Turner, an organizer for the BTW, in January 1912, and he had some reason to believe that Turner worked for the 4 L Company in Sabine or Natchitoches Parishes. Willard Warren admitted that Turner had organized for the BTW around his plant in January, but Curtis Turner, as he was known at Fisher, was never on the 4 L Company payroll. In fact, Warren had not sent Turner's name in to the Alexandria office of the SLOA because his activities predated the existence of the blacklist. He could have been working for some neighboring mill, Warren surmised.⁷⁶ In the second week of January, Alexander complained to Warren that the 4 L Company had not made its regular reports on employee changes at its two plants. The BTW was not dead after all, Alexander warned. The lapse on Warren's part was easily explained, he replied: he was out of reporting blanks. The company had

⁷⁴ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to All Members, SLOA, December 30, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁵ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 3, 1911 [1912], Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, January 6, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

ordered the blanks from the Alexandria office but had not yet received a supply for 1912.⁷⁷ Warren and the 4 L Company had nothing at all to apologize for in its relations with the SLOA and the lumber industry generally. It had cooperated closely with Alexander and other officials of the association in its attempts to break the BTW, including paying assessments to the Benefit Trust Fund when its mills ran and closing them under threat of union organization for three months in 1911.⁷⁸ The Louisiana Board of Governors, the local source of authority for the blacklist, had scheduled a meeting for Monday, January 15, but had to postpone it until the following Friday. Meanwhile, C. D. Johnson, president of the SLOA in St. Louis, scheduled the annual association meeting for New Orleans at the Grunewald Hotel on Tuesday, February 6, when lumbermen would take stock of their efforts to dislodge unionism from their mills and woods.⁷⁹

By 1912, however, the activities of the SLOA inspired blacklist and lockout had gained the attention of not only the local newspapers in the county-seat towns but also the radical national press. Willard Warren was particularly incensed by an article written by a staff correspondent, which really meant by an anonymous contributor, in the

⁷⁷ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, January 10, 1912; W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Alexander, January 11, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, January 13, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 15, 1912; C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, SLOA, January 15, 1912; Alexander to All Members, SLOA, February 1, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

January issue of The National Rip-Saw. The writer got onto the Lumber Trust, a fictitious entity that bemused a generation of magazine readers with exaggerated accounts of the conditions of Southern wage slaves. Largely ideological in tone and content, the article served no good purpose, Warren said. "It is real racy reading."⁸⁰ The charges by the unknown author did serve, however, to put lumbermen on their guard. Warren, a Midwesterner by birth and training, suggested a remedy dear to the hearts of many Southerners over the years of conflict with a self-righteous Northeast: "It is simply awful that such things are printed and allowed to be sent through the mails."⁸¹ Technically a postmaster himself, he knew a sure method of preventing its circulation, although his fellow lumber mill managers did not take up his suggestion as a serious proposition. Closer to home, lumbermen had suffered the slings and arrows of small town editors throughout the lumber war, and they had tried various ways of silencing them. Perhaps the most obnoxious editor, in the opinion of mill managers, was one Smedley, editor of The DeRidder News, who had joined the BTW. Unfortunately for the union movement, however, Smedley suffered from the occupational disease of printers and journalists: alcoholism. Clarence Slagle told the editor's sister that lumbermen had heard that Smedley had quit the union, which she confirmed. She said her brother's drunkenness had been accentuated by his union activities. Miss Smedley offered to pay the expense of sending him to a hospital for treatment, but the Odd Fellows had been asked to take

⁸⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, January 9, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸¹ Ibid.

charge of him. Committing alcoholics and psychotics to virtual prison helped such eleemosynary institutions as the Odd Fellows and the Masons to deal firmly with members who strayed too far from accepted codes of conduct. The practice had the added advantage of ridding polite society of one of its sharpest critics.⁸²

Results of the state elections--actually the Democratic Party primaries--in January could not have been more to the lumbermen's liking. On Tuesday, January 23, voters went to the polls and returned to office the lumbermen's tickets at the parish level. In Sabine Parish, Sheriff Cranford was re-elected; Leo Vandegaer returned as Clerk of Court. Still, it was close--"it looked for a while that Socialists and the insurgent element backed by some of our old friends at Many would get control, but now we are safe for four years."⁸³ It was unfortunate, however, that socialists and timber workers in Vernon Parish, just to the south, had elected "a sheriff that is a pretty bad sort of man."⁸⁴ But above all, the Good Government League helped elect Luther E. Hall as Governor. In fact, Hall carried the state with 50,581 votes to 984 for the Socialist candidate, J. R. Jones, a member of the IWW, who had been a delegate to the National Socialist Party Convention, during which he voted to expel advocates of violence and sabotage from the party. Warren had been wrong about the election of a Socialist sheriff in Vernon Parish. Actually, the Gulf Lumber Company elected all its candidates except

⁸² C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 16, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, San Francisco, California, January 25, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

one police juror. The results in Vernon Parish, Warren speculated, would ruin the union's reputation in politics. The 4 L Company manager had also succeeded in removing one of the persistent thorns from his own side. That January, he bought from Lem Lewing 40 acres on which a blind tiger had operated for years virtually on his doorstep, where his men could find vice and sin on which to spend their pay. Now, he said, there was nothing "close enough for such a profitable business."⁸⁵

The Lewing family had been a constant source of worry to Warren. Early settlers in the region, they homesteaded land east of Fisher on a branch of Toro Creek long before the lumbermen arrived. They had no fear of the rich landowners, a typical response and one that frustrated the designs of the mill managers. For a variety of reasons, not the least of which was to maintain some sort of peace with the settlers, Warren often employed farmers and their sons at common tasks. Alexander in the SLOA office did not always appreciate the subtlety of the manager's tactics. "We note by your daily report of men entering service that you have given employment to R. P. Lewing, white age 24, in the capacity of lumber trucker: we presume that you have satisfied yourself that this man has given up his affiliation with the union as he was reported by your company in a former report as having left your employ June 16th, 1911, at which time you stated that he was a union man."⁸⁶ Warren obviously had struck a deal with

⁸⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, San Francisco, California, January 29, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA. See also McWhiney, "Louisiana Socialists," pp. 323-325.

⁸⁶ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, January 30, 1912, Box 53, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

the Lewing family, one that recognized the inherent independence of the settlers from both company and union, which called for occasional employment of the sons of the family at jobs such as lumber trucking, moving the small wheeled hand trucks about the lumber yard, from which lumber stackers removed the green lumber in the dry sheds or at the kilns.⁸⁷

That winter the lumber mills in the piney woods ran to their full capacities. The 4 L Company pine mills at Fisher, Louisiana, ran six days a week. Its mills at Victoria had not run quite so steady but only because of the relatively longer haul from its front and the conditions of the woods, which had been wet for most of the winter.⁸⁸ In late February, two former employees signed forms asking the 4 L Company for clearances. J. H. Garner who worked at Fisher from December 1911 to January 1912 applied for a job as a laborer with the Longville Lumber Company at Longville, a Long-Bell company. Before working at the Fisher plant, Garner had been making ties nearby. J. L. Ferrin, a night watchman at Fisher from April 2, 1911, to August 17, 1911, and from November 8, 1911, to December 2, 1911, had asked for a job as common laborer with the Industrial Lumber Company at Oakdale. Although the communications originated with the lumber companies, the forms of the letters indicated that the workers themselves had written them, a fine display of penmanship for men who could barely write. The

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Seattle, Washington, February 19, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

answers, although addressed to the workers, actually went directly to the employing company for its files. The 4 L Company promptly relayed the necessary records.⁸⁹

In a display of defiance, A. L. Emerson made a bid in early February for the support of skilled laborers in the mills of the district. He threatened a strike by the following May, which was merely a ploy, M. L. Alexander said. It was, he added, only a pretext to recruit new members. The sawyers, however, took no interest in the union, although Emerson had made several special appeals to them. At Fisher, one of Warren's sawyers had a letter from Emerson announcing the strike May 1 of sawyers and loadermen whose pay scale would henceforth be set at \$8 and \$6 a day, respectively.⁹⁰ Alexander, completely convinced of the union's decline, nevertheless cautioned members of the SLOA that the BTW could revive if lumbermen did not maintain their disciplined opposition. Combined investigations and surveillance would sap the strength of the union. "We are now entrenched in a very strong position and are able to size up the situation very accurately, particularly in Louisiana: to gain this position we have found it necessary to put on some additional men and now have in our employ eight operatives," he explained. "This number will again be cut down as quickly as possible and we sincerely trust that our action in this matter will meet with your entire approval as I am especially desirous of cleaning up the situation as quickly as possible and this is

⁸⁹ J. H. Garner, Longville, Louisiana, to Longville Lumber Company, Longville, Louisiana, February 22, 1912; J. L. Ferrin, Oakdale, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, February 28, 1912, Box 11266-52, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁰ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, February 27, 1912; Warren to Alexander, February 21, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

the only way in which it can be done successfully."⁹¹ Two of the special agents were in Texas under the special direction of C. P. Myer, manager of mills and logging for Kay Ell, preparing for a more active campaign there. Alexander at this time began to report directly to C. D. Johnson, SLOA president, recognizing a decision taken by the association in New Orleans a few day earlier to give him the job of policing both Louisiana and Texas. Alexander ended Report No. 90 to Johnson with assurances that the Alexandria office had reduced its expenses significantly, a clear indication that lumbermen had begun to tire of war.⁹² In East Texas, B. F. Bonner, Kay Ell vice president and general manager, gave it as his considered opinion that the BTW was dying out. Bonner, long time associate of John Henry Kirby's in oil and timber ventures, was not as apt to panic as his employer or as likely to posture. Bonner's view was clear, primarily because he knew the people of East Texas, having come out of Tyler County where his people had homesteaded in the days of the Republic.⁹³

Much of the talk about a declining BTW was mere wishful thinking. Other men kept stumbling over union organizers and rank-and-file. Pinkerton's operative No. 6, a man named Boyd, worked the mills along the Iron Mountain in the winter and spring of 1912. At Pollock's Iron Mountain Lumber Company, Boyd located several union members employed in the mills, and Alexander had them fired. The detective continued

⁹¹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, February 28, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 34, File 734, WHMC.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, London, England, March 4, 1912, Box 84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

inspecting mills as he moved north, reaching Clarks in early March. "I have instructed this man to drop in at your plant for a few days in the course of his inspection in that territory and he will probably call on you when there,"⁹⁴ Alexander wrote. Although the SLOA manager did not expect to find union "infection" at Clarks or Standard, he said, he wanted "a thorough inspection of that territory."⁹⁵

A. L. Emerson had gone down to New Orleans on the first of March to establish contact with labor unions in the Crescent City and to build a following among sawmill workers in the vicinity, primarily cypress timber workers along the rivers, lakes, and bayous. In New Orleans, Emerson made several speeches, usually described by newsmen as socialistic. From the city he would follow the old Queen & Crescent line north to Natalbany in Tangipahoa Parish, site of a large pine mill operated by the Natalbany Lumber Company, then on to Bogalusa in Washington Parish, site of the Great Southern Lumber Company plant. His rhetoric had also convinced Alexander that Emerson planned to run for Congress as a Socialist from the state's Third District, the Broussard stronghold around Iberia Parish, the Louisiana "sugar bowl" that contained some of the country's largest cypress shingle and lumber mills. "Let us hope that he will,"⁹⁶ Alexander told Johnson. J. R. Jones of Georgetown, Socialist candidate for governor in the general election in May, spoke in Alexandria Monday night, March 5,

⁹⁴ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, February 29, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 34, File 734, WHMC, UM.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, March 7, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

to an audience of working men. He got about 20 applications for membership in the BTW. At the same time in Lake Charles, workers of the Lake Charles Planing Mill Company struck for a nine-hour day, an action without any apparent connection with the BTW. The local lodge of the union met in DeRidder Tuesday night, March 6, drawing a large crowd who expected an address by A. L. Emerson, but they were disappointed. The local in DeRidder still had the reputation as the BTW's leading lodge, but Alexander estimated it had not more than 125 paying members. New applications and renewals of monthly dues came into the Alexandria headquarters very slowly, he said. Confident of the union's failing condition, the SLOA manager admitted that the union had kept enough interest alive to finance the movement, if only for harassment. The union's bank balance on March 1 was \$550. Unless the lumbermen relaxed their vigilance, the union had virtually no chance to restore their fortunes. A meeting of the Louisiana and Texas Boards of Governors, Alexander said, would be helpful to give him some direction on further activities.⁹⁷

Indeed, the SLOA manager wrote, March and April would be the critical period in the lumber war, and it was "absolutely necessary that the strictest surveillance be maintained for some time to come."⁹⁸ To Captain White in London, Warren passed on the news: the union's financial strength had fallen to only \$550, and it had lost members rather steadily. Wet weather had continued into March, becoming so serious that he had

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, March 7, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

closed his woods operations. Both Fisher and Victoria were without logs, and unless the March winds came in force there was little to be done about it. All the news was not bad, however; Warren had not heard anything about the union from his own men, indicating a complete lack of interest.⁹⁹ Meanwhile, the blacklist worked its silent mischief:

We note by your report of men entering service that you have given employment to one, Henry Vines, White, age 30, married, in the capacity of Railroad grader; date of entering service Feby 26th, 1912: Beg to advise that our files show the following record on this man. HENRY VINES: White, married, employed by the Hale-Gibson & Driver Company, Zwolle, La. as tie checker at \$2.00 per day: date of entering service 1910, date of leaving service July 14th, 1911: They state that they have reason to believe him to be affiliated with the B.T.W.

This for your information and investigation.¹⁰⁰

And again:

Your report of men entering service shows that you have employed one, William Johnson: beg to advise that our files disclose the following record:

WILLIAM JOHNSON: Colored, age 35, lumber stacker, married: family residing near Victoria, entered the employ of your company at Victoria on March 6th, 1911 and left 8-22-1911: Discharged: they state they have reason to believe him to be a sympathizer with the B.T.W.

This for your investigation.¹⁰¹

These records were kept on all workers employed during the period by the lumber mills, their railroads, and their contractors.

⁹⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, London, England, March 11, 1912, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁰ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, March 9, 1912, Box 53, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰¹ SLOA, Alexandria, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, April 1, 1912, Box 53, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

The blacklist did not seem to apply to those men who had risen to position of authority with the mills, although the mill managers still took extreme pains to learn the most minute details of their records. George W. Webb, a woodsman, applied for the job of superintendent of logging operations with the Iatt Lumber Company of Colfax in Grant Parish in April. He gave Captain J. B. White as a reference, but White was then in England looking up his family tree. The Exchange Company in Kansas City, not having any knowledge of Webb, circulated the request for information among the Exchange mills: C. C. Sheppard at West Eminence, Missouri; C. E. Slagle at Clarks; and W. W. Warren at Fisher, Louisiana. W. B. Lurry, manager of Iatt Lumber Company, needed a man to look out for 15 miles of tram road and the equipment to log 75,000 bf a day. Warren answered the inquiry. Webb, he told Lurry, had worked at Victoria for the 4 L Company as team foreman. He was a good workman, he said, and he had been told that Webb had also worked for the Buchanan interests on the L&A Railroad. He knew nothing more, and Iatt did not question Webb further.¹⁰²

In late March, Johnson, in his role as president of the SLOA, called a general meeting of the association for the Mercantile Club in St. Louis on Wednesday, April 10.¹⁰³ Alexander wanted most lumbermen to attend the meeting in St. Louis to take up matters that he would present personally. Willard Warren had written to him on

¹⁰² Missouri Lumber & Land Exchange Company, Kansas City, Missouri to C. C. Sheppard, West Eminence, Missouri; W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana; C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, April 12, 1912; Warren to W. B. Lurry, Colfax, Louisiana, April 17, 1912, Box 89776-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰³ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, SLOA, March 29, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

March 30, asking about the labor union, since things appeared so quiet. Alexander was not at all satisfied with the situation, suspecting that the BTW had begun to get strength at mills that had made little effort to control the union. Emerson, the SLOA manager pointed out, had engaged in unaccustomed actions, appearing at Lake Charles and West Lake, Louisiana, and at Port Arthur, Texas, in addition to his speaking tour of New Orleans, where he was given a respectful, if fruitless, hearing. Also, rumors, at first discounted, persisted that Emerson would call a strike at selected mills in the coming summer. Although the union still did not have enough strength to carry off such a strike, the BTW could quickly gain that strength unless the members of the association kept close watch and declined to employ any union members. Despite Alexander's appeals, Willard Warren did not attend the St. Louis meeting. From Alexander's warnings, Warren surmised that the union was increasing its pressure on the lumbermen, although he had heard nothing. South of Victoria at the village of Provencal, an open railroad town on the T&P, the union had mounted sporadic protests. The SLOA had to watch the BTW closely in the summer or there would be more trouble, Alexander warned.¹⁰⁴

At the general meeting of the SLOA in St. Louis, M. L. Alexander reported that his operatives had detected union agitation spreading not only through Louisiana and Texas but also into other states not yet affected by the labor troubles. Pinkerton and Burns detectives had produced information indicating that the BTW had picked up significant strength, particularly in some mills on the KCS. Alexander also had

¹⁰⁴ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, April 1, 1912, Box 122, Fisher, Heritage Collection, LSA; Warren to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, April 2, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 34, File 744, WHMC.

circulated a call for a meeting of the Louisiana Board of Governors on Friday, April 26. He made a special effort to convince Willard Warren to attend the meeting.¹⁰⁵ To O. W. Fisher in Seattle, Washington, Warren hinted broadly about a secret the secret service men had uncovered. "The Union movement seems to be reviving again, and I should not be at all surprised if we did not have to contend with some pretty serious things this summer," he wrote. "I hope I am mistaken, but they are undoubtedly going to make a strong effort to try and do something."¹⁰⁶ The IWW was causing trouble in the Northwest, he noticed from the newspaper accounts. Warren had tried to keep in close touch with the labor situation at home, he said, and he thought he was in fairly good shape, but, of course, he could have been mistaken. The BTW had planned a convention in Alexandria on May 6, at which they would likely make plans for the future. Union membership was big enough to raise sufficient funds to pay the salaries of the chief officers, which would keep them active, he speculated. The union strategy appeared to call for organizing flatheads, which would permit a shut-down of the mills with a few men. A big strike at two or three mills not willing to compromise with the union would be a good thing, he said. But the union would not call such a strike, because the BTW could not close enough mills to force an end to the blacklist.¹⁰⁷ Warren sent a copy of his letter to Captain White and, in a cover letter, expressed his

¹⁰⁵ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to All Members, Louisiana Board of Governors, April 15, 1912; same to same, April 22, 1912; Alexander to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, April 22, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Seattle, Washington, April 30, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

doubts about the ability of the association to maintain peaceful labor relations. "I hope I am mistaken, but there seems to be an undercurrent running through the ranks that indicates a feeling of unrest, and there is, more than likely, something going to happen down in the southwestern part of the State."¹⁰⁸ His concern would soon prove prophetic.

Clarence Slagle agreed. "I have been in close touch with this situation on account of being one of the members of the Local Board of Governors," he noted. "I also attended the meeting at Alexandria a few days ago with Mr. Warren and others and this question was carefully gone into. The trouble now seems to be centered along the K.C.S. in southwest Louisiana and eastern Texas."¹⁰⁹ The information at his command convinced him that trouble was overdue, although everything seemed quiet around Clarks and his workers seemed to feel that the labor union was dead. A strike, however, would disturb his own workers to some extent, depending on how far union sentiment had spread among the southern sawmills.¹¹⁰ Early in May, the Louisiana Central Lumber Company got its mills operating at peak capacity, loading out a record number of boxcars of lumber for the Midwest and Plains regions. Warren did not do so well, he said. "We were short of labor and were not able to do anything of this kind. We have an abundance of labor now, as we shipped in quite a bunch of negroes from Monroe this

¹⁰⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, April 30, 1912, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁹ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, May 6, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 755, WHMC.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

week, and, singular as it may seem, they are all working. None of them run away."¹¹¹ Warren usually negotiated gang labor with the Caddo Labor Agency of Shreveport. In a telegram, Caddo Labor warned: "Transportation not received yet men waiting."¹¹² Shortly afterward, the agency sent another telegram: "Wire transportation fifteen Laborers Leave tonight men ready." And again: "Wire transportation. Ten men short money today men ready."¹¹³ Warren paid the agency a flat fee per head and advanced the cost of railroad transportation, plus a fee for an armed guard to protect the men from unruly citizens along the way and incidentally to prevent the men from absconding before they reached the mills in Sabine Parish, where they could be more efficiently watched by the quarterboss.¹¹⁴

Through April and into early May, the BTW leaders prepared for the union's annual convention in Alexandria. The Pinkerton agent inside union headquarters passed on the union's plans to the SLOA office in Alexandria. "During the past ten days or two weeks a great deal of activity has been displayed by the Union organization for the purpose of making a good showing at their annual convention which is to be held at Alexandria next Monday May 6th," Alexander noted. "We are also concentrating our

¹¹¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, May 4, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 755, WHMC.

¹¹² Caddo Labor Agency, Shreveport, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, three telegrams not dated, but c1912, in Box 11266-52, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

efforts along the same lines."¹¹⁵ William D. "Big Bill" Haywood, president of the IWW, would deliver a public speech at the Opera House on May 7. "Haywood is a radical socialistic leader and is the man who recently led the striking Textile Workers of Lawrence, Mass.,"¹¹⁶ Alexander reminded Johnson. The union at Alexandria would, he thought, place organizers in Mississippi, Arkansas, Georgia, Alabama and Florida. News of Haywood's visit to Louisiana restored some of the lost confidence of the BTW leaders in the righteousness of their cause, and they actively communicated this to their adversaries, the lumbermen. Alexander felt the response of mill managers to the heightened self-esteem of union rank and file. They promised to cooperate more closely with the clearing house in Alexandria. There was, Alexander said, a new awareness among lumber interests. To respond to the greater receptiveness of his members, Alexander posted one of his auditors, a man named Luckett, to tour the mills in the "infected" district to gather data on union membership and sympathy. "It is becoming more evident each day that the system adopted by this office is the only correct system to safeguard the interest of the subscribers,"¹¹⁷ he said. Translated, it meant that the blacklist was working. The system included espionage by hired operatives who gathered information of interest to the SLOA to enable it to successfully deal with the union, particularly during the BTW convention. Ed Lehman, one of the delegates to the

¹¹⁵ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, May 4, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 755, WHMC. See also McWhiney, "Socialists in Louisiana," p. 55, quoting Covington Hall's unpublished memoirs.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

convention, managed to identify and expose a Burns detective named Vogel, posing as a union delegate. Vogel, a member of the Merryville lodge, and three other SLOA spies—one white and two black operatives--were ejected from the meeting.¹¹⁸

Willard Warren was not willing to concede Big Bill Haywood a single thing, least of all the dignity of a successful labor warrior. To Captain White, he fumed and fussed about the labor agitation in Louisiana. "I understand the notorious W. B. Haywood, from the West, is now in Louisiana, and attending the convention of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers at Alexandria this week, and I believe he expects to take quite a part in the union movement in the South this summer," he wrote. "I was informed that he expected to make a speech at Alexandria last night [May 7, 1912]. As you know, he is a very dangerous man, and there are quite likely going to be some interesting developments down here this summer."¹¹⁹ Haywood arrived in Louisiana from Massachusetts where he had engineered a victory for workers in the cotton mills. At least, he claimed the honors, Warren complained. The 4 L manager held the novel opinion that the textile workers owed their successful strike to the American Federation of Labor. If the mills in the Southwest remained firm and did what they started out to do, he said, there could be only one outcome. If, because of higher prices and a high demand for lumber, they should continue to operate their mills at full capacity and not take precautions against working union members the way they did the year before, quite

¹¹⁸ M. L. Alexandria, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, May 6, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 755, WHMC.

¹¹⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, May 8, 1912, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

likely the union would take hold. "But I believe, that at almost every mill where they were shut down last summer, that the men had enough of it, if the management will still remain firm."¹²⁰

On Monday morning, May 6, the Brotherhood of Timber Workers convened in Alexandria with about 50 delegates and visitors present, including William D. Haywood and Covington Hall, representing the IWW. Undercover detectives described the sessions as harmonious; A. L. Emerson and Jay Smith controlled the house and dictated union policy. SLOA officials who watched the union sessions closely considered affiliation of the BTW with the IWW a virtual certainty. They expected the merger to make further trouble for the SLOA. On the evening of May 7, about 65 of the delegates and their guests formed in ranks and columns to parade behind a brass band and under a red flag through the streets of the city to the Opera House. There they joined an audience of about 250 to hear speeches by Haywood and Hall. The union leaders surprised their critics by giving mild speeches, although they spent a good deal of time and rhetorical skill in denouncing R. A. Long and John Henry Kirby. The delegates heard a tribute paid to Sam Park's Merryville mill, then gave the lumberman's name a standing ovation. Park had only recently advanced his workers' wages, placing the American Lumber Company squarely on the side of the union. Both labor and management understood this, and future plans necessarily revolved around Park's stand for a negotiated peace with his employees. His fellow lumbermen did not understand or agree with him and made it their first order of business to destroy him economically; it

¹²⁰ Ibid.

is also possible that Park used the labor unrest to improve the price for a mill that he wanted to sell anyway. The DeRidder lodge of the BTW held the leading position among locals because of its size; Merryville was second. "We do not believe," Alexander wrote, "that any strikes will be called by this convention but they will now adopt a waiting policy, using every effort to strengthen themselves. We are also led to believe that the convention will instruct the organization of the entire lumber territory and that organizers will, at an early date, be sent into six or eight other states."¹²¹

By the end of the three-day convention of the BTW, agents and officers of the SLOA had begun to repeat themselves in their criticisms. Although the convention voted to affiliate with the IWW, Alexander speculated that a majority of delegates at first opposed the idea, but Haywood and Hall persuaded them to change their position. Affiliation, however, would be delayed until September, when a branch office was to be set up at Alexandria to administer the National Industrial Union of Forest & Lumber Workers, successor to the BTW. Rumors among delegates to the convention held that not even a majority of the BTW officers approved of the merger at first, although A. L. Emerson apparently approved, because he was responsible for inviting Haywood and Hall. A year earlier, it seemed that Emerson opposed affiliation and Smith was its chief proponent. Nevertheless, Alexander said, the lumbermen were not discouraged, believing their organization to be in better shape than ever before. Now they knew their enemy for what he really was, a socialist agitator bent on causing as much unrest as

¹²¹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, May 8, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 755, WHMC.

possible. The SLOA was confident that once the rank and file learned the real meaning of the affiliation, they would turn against the union leadership. The union was not strong in numbers or in funds. At least fifty per cent of their members, Alexander estimated, were not employed by the mills. Many of those induced to pay extra dues just to make a showing at the convention would soon drop out, he said. The union leaders seemed to feel that they could not take the chance of a strike because there were too many idle people; the odds were against them. It was time that the operators should stand solidly together "and if they will do so we feel safe in predicting a successful finale."¹²²

It was not lost on Alexander or his clients that the NIUF&LW, as an affiliate of the IWW, was the same group that had caused so much labor trouble recently in the State of Washington. The lumbermen were not encouraged that the union convention reelected its same officers and most of its trustees. They knew that Haywood and Hall had actually framed future policy for the 35 accredited delegates who attended the convention. Although the BTW laid plans to send organizers into several other Southern states, it would not call a strike, certainly not a general strike. Still, Alexander believed that individual locals, anxious to show their strength, would likely call wildcat strikes on their own authority. The developments within the union were sufficient warning to the wise, he said.¹²³ Clarence Slagle was not at Clarks when the BTW met in

¹²² M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, May 9, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 756, WHMC.

¹²³ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to All Members, May 11, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; copy in LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 756, WHMC.

convention, but he read carefully the reports Alexander sent out. He even admitted that, had he been at the mills, he would have accepted Alexander's invitation to hear Haywood, although it would have done him scant good except to make him more uneasy. Furthermore, Slagle could find no reason for alarm as far as his own mills were concerned, but he was not too easy in his mind about Southwest Louisiana and East Texas, from which labor trouble could spread to those not having trouble with the union.¹²⁴ Slagle must have been relieved, then, when the next day he received a brief message from Alexander, enclosing a list of delegates to the BTW convention. Apparently only one Texas lodge sent a delegate, and the six locals designated for black workers does not agree with later assertions that half the members of the BTW were black. In fact, the union did not attract the larger part of its members to its convention, probably because of the expense involved. More important was the inherent danger for the worker who showed up at the union hall, because he would surely lose his job once his presence were known by his employer; Alexander would see to that.¹²⁵

Immediately after the BTW met in convention in Alexandria, M. L. Alexander sent out to the lumbermen of the region a call for a joint meeting of the Louisiana and the Texas Boards of Governors for New Orleans on Thursday, May 16, at which he planned to give a full report. The meeting, he said, was so important that all lumbermen should attend. His clients understood, of course, that all meetings with Alexander were

¹²⁴ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, May 13, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 756, WHMC.

¹²⁵ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, May 13, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 757, WHMC.

deemed important, and this one at the St. Charles Hotel would be no different. To Willard Warren At Fisher, Alexander pointed out that a strong local was operating at Provencal, a mile or so south of the 4 L Company's plant at Victoria, on the T&P. And to whet his appetite, the SLOA manager sent along a copy of Big Bill Haywood's speech at the BTW convention. Captain White in Kansas City, hearing of the activities of the BTW and the IWW from his lieutenants in Clarks and Fisher, found them unfortunate because labor troubles would very likely take all the profit out of the lumber business.¹²⁶

Meanwhile, the mill managers had businesses to run, payrolls to meet, and people to deal with, some of them beyond any hope of salvation, it seemed. Despite such distractions, mill managers continued to dwell on the BTW, hiring workers and pondering their possible affiliation with the dreaded union. C. P. Duncan, for a number of years the superintendent of the Fisher plant of the 4 L Company, had taken control of the company's mills at Victoria in Natchitoches Parish. He was in constant touch with the office at Fisher, trying to keep ahead of the union "infection." The paperwork was staggering. "I enclose herewith request for reference from J. M. Knippers and from John Lacy. Kindly give me any information you can which you think would be of benefit to me in considering their applications. Do you know what their feelings are as

¹²⁶ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to All Members, SLOA, May 13, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; copy in LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 757, WHMC. See also Alexander to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, May 13, 1912, Box 122; J. B. White, West Eminence, Missouri, to Warren, May 13, 1912, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

regards the Timber Workers Union?"¹²⁷ That was on May 13; a week later he wrote again to the main office asking for the same information. It was a demanding task, this combing the files for union sentiment, and there is no reason to believe that they found it all.¹²⁸

To many piney woods lumbermen that spring conditions had reached what to lumbermen was the unimaginable, the unthinkable: faced with certain defeat by the SLOA, the BTW had joined forces with the country's--perhaps the world's--most notorious criminal conspiracy, the Industrial Workers of the World. It was serious enough to cast Samuel Gompers and the American Federation of Labor in misty nostalgic hues of the good old days when labor was tame and fortune awaited the man who devoted himself to honest toil. The association responded to the crisis with the obvious: the Executive Committee called a meeting. But this time they were serious, they meant business. On May 20, the Executive Committee formally voted to call a general meeting of all members and to invite all lumber manufacturers to the Blackstone Hotel in Chicago on Tuesday, June 25. The affiliation of the BTW with the IWW called for a drastic response from lumbermen, because it had "revived the energies of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers and they will carry on an active campaign during the summer and may make demands and call strikes in certain chosen localities."¹²⁹

¹²⁷ C. P. Duncan, Victoria, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, May 13, 1912, Box 11266-52, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹²⁸ C. P. Duncan, Victoria, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, May 18, 1912, Box 11266-52, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹²⁹ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to Members and Others Interested, May 22, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

In late May, S. J. Carpenter of Tremont Lumber Company and other members of the Louisiana Board of Governors, alarmed at progress of the BTW in the mills along the line of the Colorado, Gulf & Santa Fe from Kirbyville, Texas, to Oakdale, Louisiana, sent Alexander to Kansas City to confer privately with members of the Executive Committee, including Johnson, Sweet, White, Keith, Fetty, Pickering, Fullerton, Woodring, and George K. Smith. The committee approved Alexander's latest project, to infiltrate the union movement in the DeRidder area, including mills at Ludington, Bon Ami, Merryville, and Grabeau. The Executive Committee sent Alexander on to Chicago to make an appointment with Ripley of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad, parent company of the orphan line, the CG&SF in Louisiana and Texas. The Executive Committee wanted Ripley to hear Long, White, and Alexander talk about the progress of the union in the piney woods, particularly along the route of his line in Southwest Louisiana. Ripley was not in Chicago, but his assistant make arrangements by wire for the group to meet in Chicago on June 7.¹³⁰

In the days following affiliation, A. L. Emerson toured the long leaf pine district with Covington Hall, the IWW organizer from New Orleans. They were joined later by two IWW staff members from Chicago, George Speed and E. F. Dorée. Alexander congratulated himself on the cold reception the people of Bon Ami gave the union organizers at the Long-Bell plant south of DeRidder. Hall went back to New Orleans after the tour. Emerson accompanied a group of Farmers Union members to Baton

¹³⁰ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to S. J. Carpenter, Winnfield, Louisiana, May 24, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Rouge to lobby the legislature, but it had adjourned for the weekend a few hours after they arrived and they failed to get much done. Just to be certain, however, the SLOA manager sent his brother, J. E. Alexander of New Orleans to Baton Rouge to keep close watch on labor and industrial legislation. He also solicited W. W. Whittington, Jr., of Alexandria, a friend of the state administration, to keep the SLOA posted on dangerous legislation. On Wednesday, June 7, M. L. Alexander went up to Chicago to interview Ripley of the Santa Fe, along with R. A. Long and Captain White. On the way back, he visited with Governor Hall personally to explain the radical nature of the BTW. At Merryville, the employees of the American Lumber Company were becoming increasingly unhappy, and Alexander fully expected something to happen there at any moment, preferably a Santa Fe takeover. Private detectives had found their way inside the plant and discovered that Sam Park had raised wages by 25 cents a day for common labor. In the Calcasieu long leaf pine district, virtually all common labor was black, and references to pay raises for black workers seemed designed to inflame racial hatreds. At the Executive Committee meeting in Kansas City earlier in the month, the Galloway Lumber Company of nearby Grabeau, under pressure from a BTW wildcat strike, had successfully petitioned for membership in the SLOA. The association promised every possible assistance for the Galloway brothers. Alexander reminded the association leaders of the importance of "absolute co-operation of the Galloway Lumber Company

and that they be kept from conceding to the striking B.T.W. employees anything. It will never do to let them win out on this strike."¹³¹

Carefully and shrewdly, Alexander had laid a trap for Emerson and his rag-tag union. For all practical purposes, access to workers in the piney woods had been denied to the BTW at virtually every place, except the mills along the CG&SF in upper Calcasieu Parish, later that year to become Beauregard Parish. Sam Park at Merryville, had treated with the union and had run his mills wide open throughout the troubles, selling lumber in the Texas market and expanding his milling capacity. Other lumbermen saw this as treachery, profiteering at their expense during a war to the finish against the forces of unrest. From this point, the union hoped to expand throughout the piney woods, but forces were gathering that would break the union offensive and drive it from the field. First, the association had to recruit irregular troops. To a disinterested observer they would have appeared as vigilantes, armed civilians bent on taking the law in their own hands. Alexander laid the groundwork for raising vigilance forces. First, he circulated a news story from The San Francisco Call, purporting to summarize the teachings of the IWW: workers should use any tactics; do not consider right and wrong; unsheathe the avenging sword; workers have the right to help himself to their employers' property; no agreement with an owner is inviolable; sabotage the mills; slow down the work; be ready to confiscate the mills and drive out the owners; cause national paralysis; take possession by force; disobey and treat with contempt all judicial injunctions. To

¹³¹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, May 26, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA and LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 762, WHMC.

combat such evil, special arrangement must be made right away.¹³² "After a careful consideration of the matter, and after the same has been submitted to the Executive Committee of this Association, it is deemed advisable that a campaign of education be carried on amongst the employees of the sawmills, and that they be made familiar with the 'tactics' of the I. W. W., which Organization the leaders of the B. T. W. decided to affiliate with, and whose 'tactics' they have decided to adopt," Alexander wrote. "We believe it will be greatly to the interests of all Mill Operators, to make these facts known to their foremen and to their employees through their foremen; and if possible to form in their ranks a Mutual Protective Association which we consider that all well-meaning employees would be glad to join; and that they would cheerfully assist the management in keeping all undesirable parties away from your plants."¹³³

SLOA leaders did not want to create a monster they could not control, so they insisted that vigilantes operate in strictly local groups, with no coordination between them. Only employees of the mills would be admitted to membership. "This, with a view of avoiding any consolidation of Associations of a like character at any other point," the notice ran. "For example, the Mutual Protective Association of Rochelle--membership to include only the actual mill employees of that particular mill."¹³⁴ The

¹³² Extract of "San Diego War is Sifted by Weinstock," San Francisco Call, Sunday, May 19, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 762, WHMC, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹³³ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to All Members, SLOA, May 27, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 762, WHMC, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

association would form a plan of organization for each mill's approval, "but in the meantime would suggest that you take the matter up freely with your employees, taking them into your confidence, for their protection, as well as yourselves."¹³⁵ Most of the mills in the "infected" district had long employed small armies of guards and good citizens to secure the plants against intruders and to run out of town any union "agitators" and other "undesirable characters." Fisher employed such a citizens committee to rid itself of the blind tigers that lurked on its land lines and to protect its black quarters from white attackers and union organizers alike. Other mills quickly adopted the scheme, among them the village of Grabeau, where armed men waited for A. L. Emerson to appear at the head of a regimental tatterdemalion. It would not be long, now.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

CHAPTER 9

The IWW Strikes

We have nothing to arbitrate. We want the earth.¹

One of the first attempts the BTW made to strike a lumber mill was at the village of Grabeau, Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, on May 17, 1912. A detective that C.P. Meyer ran in Texas for M. L. Alexander alerted Kay Ell to the danger across the Sabine. The mill, he wired, closed at 1 p.m. on a Monday, when the union surrounded the plant with pickets, which the detective called guards. Local union leaders went to the elder Galloway brother, who owned the mill, and told him they would not permit him to run the mill until he met their demands. He replied, the detective said, that Galloway had come to the Calcasieu district as a tramp in a box car and would leave the same way before they made him do anything he did not want to do.² Emerson, after he recognized that the SLOA had planted spies in his midst, had returned to his tactics of secrecy adopted from the freemasons, hoping to keep the union's activities quiet long enough to gain a measure of financial strength from the recent affiliation with the IWW. Local leaders at Grabeau, however, clashed with the Galloway brothers over the frequency of paydays, hardly one of the BTW's most important demands. Emerson then had little

¹ William D. Haywood, Industrial Worker (May 16, 1912), p. 2.

² Ferrell, "BTW," p. 90, quotes the report of an anonymous operative in the John Henry Kirby Papers at University of Houston.

choice but to support the rank and file. He threw up pickets and held mass meetings, at which he encouraged women and children to attend as an indication of the union's peaceful intentions. Union activities took on the trappings of religious revivals, for which the people of the area held a deep reverence. The CG&SF Railroad tracks ran through the village of Grabeau, alongside the public road, maintained after a fashion by the Calcasieu Parish police jury. Both the dirt road and the railroad tracks were considered neutral ground, open to visitors, even when the company town and the mills were off limits to union members. Beyond the parish road stood the Grabeau commissary with its false front bearing a Star Tobacco advertisement. On its left stood the company office building, a frame structure of nondescript design. A spur of the CG&SF ran behind the store and office, and behind the spur stood both the sawmill and planing mill. Even for a milltown, Grabeau was insignificant, a collection of box houses, unpainted, and obviously temporary. Neither the Galloways nor their employees intended to stay very long.³

Ironically, lumbermen in Louisiana, at the same time they contributed to a blacklist of their workers, worked in the State Legislature for a Workmen's Compensation Bill. Willard Warren asked his brother in law, O. D. Fisher, in Seattle, Washington, for a copy of that state's law on the subject, which he intended taking up with the state senator representing Sabine Parish, who incidentally was the 4 L Company attorney, John Boone. "This Legislature," Warren wrote, "will pass some law--and

³ Reed, "IWW in Louisiana," pp. 48-49; McWhiney, "Socialists in Louisiana," p. 65, reprinting a photograph of Grabeau, Louisiana, from Covington Hall, "I am here for Labor," p. 224.

employers should see that it is fair."⁴ Captain White expressed his approval of the Washington State law on workmen's compensation, although he thought companies would likely have to pay too high a percentage when workmen were out of work because of injuries in the work place. "We do not want to encourage people to get injured,"⁵ White wrote. Senator Boone had confided to Warren that the administration would insist on passing some sort of compensation act. The senator assured the 4 L Company that he would see that the lumber interests got a law that was satisfactory to them and that they should not oppose its passage.⁶

The mill managers busied themselves making plans to attend the various association meetings planned for June. Warren would attend the 4 L Company's annual meeting in Kansas City on June 12, then go on to Chicago for the semi-annual meetings of the Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association, and the called general meeting of the SLOA, also in Chicago. In between meetings, he would visit his parents in Nebraska for a few days.⁷ Clarence Slagle, in addition to meeting with the Louisiana Board of Governors, the SLOA, the YPMA, and the stockholders of the LCLC, fully expected to be an alternate delegate to the Republican Convention to nominate Theodore Roosevelt

⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, May 24, 1912, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, May 27, 1912, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, May 27, 1912; Warren to White, May 30, 1912; handwritten note by White to Warren, May 30, 1912, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, May 27, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 762, WHMC.

for President. "This is all right," Captain White said when informed of Slagle's selection, "and in my opinion, if Roosevelt gets the nomination, he will get the election, and business will not suffer at his hands."⁸ He got neither, of course; instead the lumbermen got the progressive Democrat Woodrow Wilson, under whose tutelage business did not suffer, either.

Spring had brought with it a booming business in lumber to the piney woods. The mills had both orders to fill and cars to haul it north and west, primarily into the plains, where the hopes of farmers pushed them steadily west into the semi-arid region of the continent. Still, the weather held good and prices for lumber were excellent. Because of the increase in trade, and as a result of both lockout and blacklist, common labor was in sharp demand. "We have shipped in three bunches of negroes this month,"⁹ Willard Warren explained. Early in June 1912, Warren added the Shreveport Labor Agency to his suppliers, in addition to the Caddo Labor Agency in Shreveport. The agency actively solicited lumber company business, Agent M. Newman wrote a few days later. "In regard to the reliability of the negroes, of course you know, what negroes are, but we will use our judgement in selecting the men, and would ship nobody, of whom we think, that they would not stay, of course you are liable to loose [sic] some of

⁸ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, May 27, 1912; W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to Slagle, May 27, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 762, WHMC.

⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, May 30, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

them."¹⁰ Other lumber companies usually lost about 2 men out of each 14 transported, he said. Newman asked his clients to tell him the "wages you are paying, also if you can use families as we will not misrepresent to the men wages, we also inform them in regard to transportation and office-fee[.]"¹¹ In early August, the agent contacted Warren again to inform him of "a good bunch of sawmill negroes, we could bring them tomorrow Sunday if you need them. Kindly wire us on receipt of this, if you want them, as other wise, we will send them somewhere else."¹² From the tone of his messages, Newman had no trouble placing black sawmill workers.

Newman apparently had changed agencies, because Warren remembered having worked with him several years earlier in recruiting black and Italian gang labor; Mexican labor he acquired through contacts in Beaumont, Texas. Late in June, Newman wrote again. "We understand, that you are in need of common labor at your plant, and we would like to bring you a bunch over at our usual terms: we advance transportation and on delivery of men you pay us transportation plus \$1.00 for each delivered and R.R. fare for man in charge both ways," he explained. "If there are any lost on the road, we suffer the loss."¹³ The next day, the Caddo Labor Agency billed the 4 L Company: "We send you 9 men as per your order, two men in the lot are lumber-stackers the balance

¹⁰ M. Newman, Shreveport, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, July 3, 1912, Box 11267-53, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² M. Newman, Shreveport, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, August 10, 1912, Box 11267-53, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹³ M. Newman, Shreveport, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, June 29, 1912, Box 11267-53, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

common laborers Please get our man a ticket back to Shreveport and pay him one dollar a piece for each man and oblige."¹⁴ On July 2, Caddo Labor delivered another nine men: "Saw Mill Hands. Office Fee \$9.00. Please pay our man Albert Simmons one dollar per head of men delivered to you and kindly get him ticket to come back on."¹⁵ Judging from the surviving documents, the process had little to distinguish it from the antebellum domestic slave trade, when men were counted by head like cattle, and armed guards accompanied them on public conveyances.

By the end of May 1912, the leaders of the SLOA had met with Ripley of the Santa Fe--apparently without M. L. Alexander's presence after all--and Captain White came away in good spirits. "There is no doubt but what we will have great help from the Santa Fe people on this labor question, and that it will come promptly,"¹⁶ he told the Exchange managers. Warren alerted Alexander that help was expected from the Santa Fe Railroad right away. The conference in Chicago with Ripley had been a success, he said.¹⁷ The YPMA, met in Chicago at the same time for its mid-year convention. The 286 mills reporting for April 1912 showed an excess of sales and

¹⁴ Caddo Labor Agency, Shreveport, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, June 30, 1912, Box 11266-52, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁵ Caddo Labor Agency, Shreveport, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, July 2, 1912, Box 11266-52, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁶ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Managers, Exchange Mills, May 30, 1912, box 84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁷ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to managers, Exchange Mills, May 30, 1912, Box 84; W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, June 1, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

shipments above the mill cut of 35.5 million bf.¹⁸ In early June 1912, M. L. Alexander sent an official copy of the minutes of the BTW convention in Alexandria to Willard Warren at Fisher, probably as part of a general mailing of such materials to all SLOA members. Warren replied, however, that he did not need the copy because "Mr. Emmerson passed through here one day last week and threw one off the train."¹⁹ The exchange described a standing joke among lumbermen that the union leader made his speeches from the doors of moving trains, tossing off printed literature at stations, rather than stopping to face what the lumbermen congratulated themselves was a hostile cadre of workers.

Increased union activity, however, prompted an increase in the activity of the blacklist, as well. Alexander estimated that by early June, from 300 to 500 names of suspected employees were being fed into his office files each day. He said he had "something like forty thousand names in our files and when we get through checking up the territory it will probably run to fifty thousand."²⁰ Alexander had also laid plans to disrupt the existing cooperation between the BTW and the Farmers Union. Once perfected, he would activate it, hoping for the withdrawal of BTW support and endorsement of the farm group, which would in turn weaken the union. He had also

¹⁸ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, YPMA, May 28, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 762, WHMC.

¹⁹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, June 6, 1912; Warren to Alexandria, June 7, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²⁰ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, June 6th, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

discussed with Governor Hall the inner workings of the BTW and the IWW. Otherwise, things look promising for the association. Discouragement had set in among BTW members at DeRidder recently, and only 12 showed up for the last lodge meeting. The local probably had given up the idea that they could impose demands on the Hudson River Lumber Company at DeRidder, a Long-Bell company. Nor would the union make demands on the American Lumber Company at Merryville until the middle of June 1912, which probably would not be accepted by Park in any case. From all accounts the Galloway Lumber Company at Grabeau would hold out against demands made on it, and they would soon resume running the mills with non-union labor. At Atlanta in Winn Parish, the local BTW lodge asked the Germain-Boyd Lumber Company on June 10 to increase wages by 25 cents. The SLOA manager had urged Germain-Boyd not to give in, but trouble erupted at the plant a few days later. It was not exactly a strike, the SLOA manager ruled. After union organizers had convinced a large number of the company's black workers to join the BTW, Boyd had simply fired those who refused to recant.²¹

Early in June, Haywood had announced to the press that he would speak at a Fourth of July celebration at Kirbyville, Texas, after Emerson returned from a tour of the piney woods west of the Sabine. The union president had called off a local strike against the American Lumber Company at Merryville, Alexander explained, because Sam Park was the best friend the union had in Louisiana. Emerson limited demands to a 25 cent raise; the doctor's fee of \$1.50 a month to cover all medicines, and the men to elect

²¹ Ibid.

the doctor; Emerson declined to demand wages paid at two-week intervals, possibly because he believed the Legislature would require it by law in any event.²² Most union agitation had been confined to Louisiana and Texas, Alexander noted, but organizers had moved recently into Arkansas. Haywood's itinerary for July 1 through 4 included speeches at Leesville, DeRidder, and Merryville, Louisiana, the heart of the "infected" district, and Kirbyville, Texas, where Big Bill intended to tweak the nose of the prince of pines.²³

Meanwhile, H. G. Creel, special correspondent of The National Rip-Saw, sorely offended lumbermen in the piney woods with an article in the June issue. "This article," Alexander fumed, "is a general tirade against what he terms the lumber trust and the SOUTHERN LUMBER OPERATORS' ASS'N. in particular."²⁴ What really bothered the SLOA manager, however, was photographic copies of letters Alexander had written to Sam Carpenter and to the members of the association, giving confidential information on the operation of the clearing house office. The magazine also printed photographic copies of various reporting forms used in compiling the blacklist. The copies Creel used to illustrate his article came from the Little River Lumber Company at Manistee, Louisiana. Creel also threatened to publish still more such material in the future. Alexander found it "unfortunate that these papers should have fallen into the hands of

²² M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, June 18, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²³ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to All Members, SLOA, June 19, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²⁴ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, June 7, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

people who are go[ing] to take advantage of any opportunity to attack the lumber interest of the south, and who would willfully put the wrong construction on same and use them as the basis of an article that is bitter and misleading."²⁵ He had been careful, he added, to protect the SLOA against negative publicity and could not really be blamed for this unsolicited attention. Alexander did not even try to deny the existence of the blacklist that Creel complained of, likely because he would not have been believed by the men who were even then busy contributing to that list.²⁶

Late in June, Alexander went down to Baton Rouge to interview the Governor, hoping to explain the true basis of the resolution addressed to him by the BTW at its recent convention in Alexandria. The SLOA manager called it a tirade against the lumber industry.²⁷ Alexander got a friendly hearing from the chief executive who assured him that he clearly understood the situation and the character of the people involved. Alexander was confident that the administration supported the lumber industry.²⁸ Governor Luther Hall was neither a dupe of such rhetoric nor a stooge of the lumber companies, but he did recognize political power when he met it; the BTW had virtually none, while the SLOA was both rich and powerful. The administration had gone into the Legislature in 1912 demanding passage of workmen's compensation laws,

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, June 20, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²⁸ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, July 23, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

which, as a lawyer and a former judge, the Governor fully understood the need for; he also wanted and got a law prescribing paydays every two weeks for wage workers in Louisiana. The law, however, applied only to public service corporations and did not affect general corporations such as lumber companies, unless the state courts would stretch a point of interpretation. In a roundabout way, however, the payday law in practice applied to lumber mills in practice, largely because most large mill companies also owned or were closely associated with railroads incorporated as public services, under the jurisdiction of the Railroad Commission, the rate-making body at the intrastate level. Bookkeepers found it convenient to set up payrolls every two weeks for both sawmill and railroad companies, which finally removed one of the chief grievances of flatheads and sawmill hands. The 4 L Company, and doubtless other lumber mills in Louisiana, made an effort to determine what practice their neighbors would follow in light of the new law.²⁹ Most of them had opted for the monthly payday. The Ludington, Wells & Van Schaick Lumber Company, whose mill lay just across the south fork of Flat Creek from DeRidder on the KCS, answered that the company made a payroll every two weeks.³⁰ Clarence Slagle was aware of the law requiring paydays twice a month, and inquired of Warren when he would begin to comply with it. Warren,

²⁹ M. L. Wuescher, Bogalusa, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, July 10, 1912; Gulf Lumber Company, Fullerton, Louisiana, to 4 L Company, July 10, 1912, Box 11266-52; W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, July 26, 1912; Slagle to Warren, July 24, 1912; Warren to Slagle, August 3 and 8, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁰ Ludington, Wells & Van Schaick Lumber Company, Ludington, Louisiana, July 10, 1912, Box 11266-52, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

however, delayed, he said, because he was trying to find out whether the bill had passed and in what form. At first, Senator John Boone said it had not passed. Later the Senator sent Warren a copy of the act as it was passed by the Legislature, and Warren did not think it applied to lumber companies except those in the public service. Slagle countered with the advice that the law did apply to their public service railroads and asked if the VF&W could comply. Finally driven to the wall, Warren said he would defy the law and refuse to pay his railroad employees twice a month. The bill had originated in the House of Representatives, was passed by the Senate, and signed by Governor Hall on June 26, 1912.³¹

Late in June, about 40 men walked off the job at the Lee Lumber Company at Tioga, Louisiana, demanding the reinstatement of their foreman, fired because of union sympathy. Lee Lumber did not belong to the SLOA, but it quickly pledged cooperation with the clearing house. The union also held out against the Germain-Boyd Lumber Company at Atlanta, Louisiana, where Boyd defied the BTW and searched for non-union men to replace the striking crew. The SLOA's operatives always kept a sharp eye out for agitators, and in late July they discovered Florence Vargas, described as a Mexican and secretary of the Sulphur, Louisiana, local lodge in Calcasieu Parish. The BTW had promoted him to traveling organizer, one of the walking delegates who had no steady employment with a lumber company from which he could be fired, thus rendering him immune from intimidation. Vargas had visited Fullerton, Carson, Ludington, DeRidder,

³¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, July 26, 1912; Slagle to Warren, August 8, 1912; Lumber Trade Journal, July 1, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA

Bon Ami, Merryville, Louisiana, and Call and Kirbyville, Texas. He was 5 foot 7 inches tall, weighed 135 pounds, had a dark complexion, a crossed left eye, and spoke fluent English, which meant, of course, that he was likely an American citizen. Briefly, it seemed, the BTW had made some progress and even had a chance to survive. The agitation at the local level and the publicity the association had given the BTW's affiliation with the IWW apparently changed Emerson's mind about the Wobblies. The union president quietly suggested to members that they should vote not to approve the affiliation when it came up for a vote of the rank and file.³²

Even some lumbermen had taken up the anti-Wobbly strategy. As the time for Haywood's speaking tour approached, Alexander appealed to Willard Warren: "I especially ask you to throw as much cold water on the speech of Haywood at DeRidder as possible to keep the crowd small." It was, he explained, "the best way to dampen the ardour of he [sic] and his sympathizers."³³ On July Fourth, Haywood launched his most ambitious speaking campaign across the piney woods in Louisiana and Texas. He planned to visit Leesville and DeRidder, Louisiana, and Kirbyville, Texas. "I presume Mr. Haywood has now made all the speeches that he expects to make on this trip," Willard Warren complained. "I talked with a party who heard him speak at DeRidder, and he said his talk was very dangerous."³⁴ Ferguson at the Nona Mills plant at

³² M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, July 23, 1912, Box 122; Editorial, Lumber Trade Journal, July 1, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³³ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, July 5, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 773, WHMC.

³⁴ Ibid.

Leesville said, however, that few mill employees heard Haywood, although the town's socialists attended in full force. Still, the union movement was not a subject of open conversation among mill employees. Nevertheless, the union still existed underground in DeRidder. At Merryville, Sam Park and the American Lumber Company maintained their independence and their special attitude toward the BTW. At the SLOA convention in Chicago in late June, several members expressed interest in Park's success. A. L. Emerson had gone to Merryville to caution the BTW local not to make a mistake and strike Park's mills. He succeeded in postponing any strike because of Park's recognition of and cooperation with the union.³⁵ At Chicago, Alexander summarized the work of his office in Alexandria, the progress of the blacklist, and the activities of Emerson and Haywood. The Executive Committee authorized an assessment of 2 1/2 cents per Mbf on the June production of member mills, the first assessment since February 1912. The money would support the activities of the Alexandria office alone, since all the mills had now opened. The Benefit Trust Fund was idle, and there were no other expenses.³⁶

Haywood spoke at Leesville on Monday, July 1, to a small group that dispersed when it began to rain. Afterward, the IWW leader took the train south to DeRidder where he spoke on Tuesday to a large unenthusiastic audience. At Merryville, the next day, Wednesday, he drew still more listeners who, however, showed a great deal of enthusiasm. Merryville, he joked, could not be called a union town, strictly speaking,

³⁵ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, July 5, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 773, WHMC.

³⁶ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to Members, SLOA, July 5, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

because 17 men there did not belong to the BTW, although they would likely join before nightfall. At the last minute, Haywood canceled his planned appearance in Kirbyville on the Fourth of July, he said, because the passenger train service could not provide a sufficiently large crowd; he went to Lake Charles instead, where he was met by about 200 people who showed little interest in IWW rhetoric. Emerson and Covington Hall spoke at Kirbyville Thursday anyway but found that Haywood had been correct about the chances of raising a crowd. They also tried to speak at Bon Ami and Carson, Louisiana, "but failed to get a hearing at these points, having been met by the Carson Band whose noisy welcome made speech-making impossible."³⁷ H. G. Creel also spoke during the Independence Day period in the piney woods. Lumbermen branded Creel and the labor leaders as extremists whose speeches were aimed at creating unrest in those who came to listen to them. By July Fourth, the only active labor problems in the lumber district lay north of Red River at Atlanta and Tioga, Louisiana. Boyd at Atlanta had simply fired the union members and sympathizers among his employees, hired non-union men, and went back to work with a full crew. The Alexandria Lumber Company had been struck by flatheads at its woods camps near Tioga, to satisfy demands so insignificant that they were not even recorded by the company. The managers fired the workers who walked out and hired a new crew.³⁸

³⁷ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, July 8, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 773, WHMC.

³⁸ Ibid.

On Monday morning at Fisher, Willard Warren reported to the president of the 4 L Company that the lumber business was better than at any period since the 1907 bank panic. Prices for lumber were higher than at any time in the last four or five years, and Warren had all the orders he could handle. His mills ran at full capacity. At Victoria, however, he still had trouble logging the mills there, mainly because of the distance he had to haul logs on the VF&W. Each week the plant lost as much as a day because it did not have logs in the pond. The dry kilns also had trouble drying sappy lumber, which Warren blamed on the fast-growth loblolly pine he had been forced to cut at Victoria. The labor situation had not changed, he told O. W. Fisher, although the union leaders had made a lot of noise. Sam Park's arrangement with the BTW at the American Lumber Company plant at Merryville concerned other lumbermen although they had been assured by John Henry Kirby and Captain White, among others, that the Santa Fe Railroad would remove Park even if it had to buy him out.³⁹

Indeed, the attention of lumbermen had been riveted on Southwest Louisiana. "There has been of course, lots of noise down in Calcasieu Parish this last week," Warren wrote in early July, "but, while I have not heard from there directly, I do not think that any good results were secured by the agitators."⁴⁰ Before he mailed the letter, however, he paused to scrawl across the bottom of the sheet the startling news from Grabeau: "Big fight at Galloways mill 7 miles west of DeRidder. 3 or 4 killed and

³⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Seattle, Washington, July 8, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, July 8, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 773, WHMC.

a number wounded last evening. Understand militia there and Emerson in jail."⁴¹ At the same time, M. L. Alexander was getting out his daily report. "Probably as a result of the incendiary speeches which have been recently made in this territory by Haywood, Hall, Emmerson and others, serious trouble occurred at Graybow at the plant of the Galloway Lumber Company last evening [Sunday, July 7, 1912], at which time there was a clash between the Union organizers and their sympathizers and the employees and citizens of Graybow," he intoned. "Our information is meager as to details at the present time, but we understand that four men were killed and some six or eight wounded."⁴² Hostilities erupted because of the aggressiveness of the union forces, he charged. The excitement ran so high, he added, that Governor Hall, at the request of local authorities, ordered a company of militia to control the situation. At the bottom of his letter in his own hand, he wrote: "Emmerson in Jail at DeRidder without benefit of Bail."⁴³ On Tuesday, July 9, 1912, the Louisiana Board of Governors convened in Lake Charles. After the violent Sunday afternoon, things grew very quiet in the long leaf pine district. Leaders of the BTW, the IWW, and their sympathizers were understandably excited, but their activities were aimed at supporting the jailed union members. The center of the

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, July 8, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 773, WHMC.

⁴³ Ibid.

contest between lumbermen and union moved to the courthouse in Lake Charles where it would remain for most of the year.⁴⁴

Warren told his father-in-law the lumbermen's side of the story. Other than scattered quotations of their remarks in the newspapers of the day and accounts published years later, there seems to be no adequate source of the union's version of events that Sunday. The union leaders bristled at the claim of lumbermen that the Grabeau incident was a union riot; the BTW asserted that it was a massacre. With this fundamental difference in mind, a neutral observer will arrive at a fair rendition of events. Warren, it will be remembered, firmly believed in his own and other lumbermen's version. "Referring to the labor riot that took place at Grabow Sunday evening, I am just in receipt of a letter from J. H. Morrison, the superintendent of the Central Coal & Coke Co., Carson, La., in which he states that the Timber Worker's [sic] started from DeRidder on Sunday afternoon with two hundred and seventy-one men and possibly twenty-five or thirty women with the full intention of speaking at Bon Ami and Carson 'even if they had to wade through blood to do it,'" he wrote. "They came armed with Winchesters, carrying them in their hands."⁴⁵ The group stopped briefly on the edge of Bon Ami, he added. Because Bon Ami had scheduled a baseball game, the company had ordered all workers to the baseball park. "On Sunday morning they had notified

⁴⁴ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, July 9, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 773, WHMC.

⁴⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Seattle, Washington, July 10, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, and LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 774, WHMC.

every man and woman in town at Carson, that the Good Citizen's League had had a meeting and decided it was best for every one to stay away from the crowd that came from DeRidder--then they stationed four or five men at the lower end of the white town and about fifteen in the quarters and three or four in the dago quarters,"⁴⁶ he said. Three hundred or more union members and sympathizers later stopped on the public road near the schoolhouse. Some of the leaders spoke for nearly an hour. They repeated the performance on the public road by the black workers quarters, offering to take the men into the union free if they would come out to listen. They failed to get anyone out so they turned toward Grabeau. Shooting started in Emerson's wagon, Warren said. A Galloway man and two union men died, three were not expected to live, and sixteen were wounded. "Monday morning the militia arrived in DeRidder from Leesville, and later in the day a company from Lake Charles reached DeRidder," he added. "Emerson and eighteen of the others have been arrested on a charge of murder, and I understand that warrants are out for every one that went to Grabow. They made threats Sunday night to go back and burn Carson and Bon Ami, but extra guards were put on, and nothing showed up."⁴⁷ Mills to the south ran with full crews at that time, although some logging jobs were short of flatheads in the woods. The general manager of the Hudson River Lumber Co., at DeRidder, told Warren that only about one hundred people took part in the trouble at Grabeau. "It seems that a party in the wagon or buggy with Emerson drove up in front of the Company's office, and there saw a young man by the name of

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Brown," he related. "He was asked what he was doing, and said that he was scaling logs. The party with Emerson asked him how much he got, and he said \$1.50. Then the party who was with Emerson called him a scab, and said he had a notion to kill him, and did kill him in a very short time--then a party who was in the office ran out of the office with a shotgun and killed the man who killed Brown--and later, was killed himself."⁴⁸ The Hudson River manager seemed to think that Grabeau would break the union. Warren identified Covington Hall as an IWW leader from New Orleans who had made the most union speeches to piney woods audiences. Hall left DeRidder the evening before the Grabeau incident, because there was no profit in it for him, according to gossip among lumbermen. Haywood had been in DeRidder during the previous week and also at Merryville, Lake Charles, and Leesville. "It seems the trouble at Grabow really started Saturday evening when fourteen men came over from the union mill at Merryville and started talking," Warren said. "This, I presume created considerable feeling, so that when the Union bunch arrived Sunday they were all ready for them."⁴⁹ The best information Warren could get, or cared to listen to, indicated that the shooting started from Emerson's wagon, was answered from the office, and developed into a general fight. Emerson, he said, escaped, disguised in another worker's clothes. The

⁴⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, July 10, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 774, WHMC, and Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

district court in Lake Charles, seat of Calcasieu Parish that then included the country around DeRidder, empaneled a special grand jury to investigate the unrest.⁵⁰

When Covington Hall reached New Orleans Sunday, July 7, Emerson and his entourage had set out on their fateful parade past the lumber mills around DeRidder. He must have learned of the Grabeau gunfight late that Sunday or early Monday, and he spent much of the next day organizing a mass meeting in Lafayette Square on Tuesday evening. "Socialists and labor unionists," according to The Daily Picayune, condemned the lumbermen for killing members of the BTW at Grabeau and called on Governor Hall to send the attorney general to investigate the causes of the conflict.⁵¹ An audience of about 200 men and a few women were not very sympathetic, the Picayune reporter wrote. Enthusiastic responses to the speakers came from the audience close to the platform, however. John Breen, president of the Louisiana State Federation of Labor and secretary of the Typographical Union, presided. Breen complained that New Orleans newsmen had sneered at the BTW as socialistic. The union, he declared, had 18,000 members in the South despite claims of the SLOA to the contrary. He denied that the BTW wanted bloodshed or violence, although conditions in the piney woods, he asserted, justified almost anything. Hall told the group that working conditions in the lumber mills and camps were infamous. Based on his recent tour of the district, he asserted that

⁵⁰ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to G. W. Dulany, Hannibal, Missouri, and C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, July 10, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 774, WHMC, and Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵¹ "Haywood's Mass Meeting Small," The Daily Picayune, New Orleans, Louisiana, Wednesday, July 10, 1912, copy in LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 774, WHMC, and in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

gunmen threatened anyone who ventured near the mills or the workers. He called sawmill owners thieves, murderers and hypocrites, and asked who could help being a criminal under such conditions. Hall, the reporter explained, talked down to the audience. He was given an ovation at the end of his talk when he declared: "Let us all stand together in this fight. You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have your liberty to gain."⁵² Two other speakers--T. J. O'Hara, a member of the Typographical Union, and T. J. Brennan, described as a Socialist--addressed the crowd. The audience then raised a small donation for the defense of Emerson and other unionists charged with murder in the incident. The mass meeting adopted a resolution, likely drafted by Hall, which gives in rather stilted terms the union side of the argument. Ironically, the resolution accepted the term, riot, to describe the Grabeau fight. Alexander collected copies of press reports of the Grabeau incident and circulated them among mill managers in the area. From the news story, it seems that Hall expected Haywood to attend the New Orleans meeting. By July 9, however, Haywood had left Louisiana, never to return.⁵³

Clarence Slagle went down to Lake Charles on the southbound Iron Mountain passenger train for the meeting of the Louisiana Board of Governors on Wednesday, July 10. The board went over the situation carefully but reached no conclusions. J. H. Morrison, superintendent at Carson, had to leave the meeting early that evening to get back to the mills in case of trouble. He expected a walkout by his woods crew.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

Accounts of the Grabeau affair conflicted, Slagle said, but surely the Grand Jury, scheduled to meet in a few days, would be able to get at the truth. In addition to indicting Emerson and those with him at Grabeau, a coroner's jury had found that one of the Galloway brothers had killed a man named Hall. Only 11 persons were then in jail, one of which was a Galloway. B. H. Smith of Longville Lumber Company said that 37 persons had been wounded during the affray. Those only slightly hurt had kept quiet so far to keep from becoming involved further in the legal wrangles. The whole truth would probably never be known, Slagle said, but one thing was certain. "There seems to be no question but that the recent socialistic speeches of Haywood and Covington Hall have created considerable feeling between the union employees of B.T.W. and the mill owners, ending in this deplorable affair at Grabow Sunday; and it is generally believed that if the Grand Jury succeeds in returning some indictments in these cases, that the affair will tend to greatly clarify the situation,"⁵⁴ Then he introduced an element of mystery into the story. Some matters he was not in a position to write about, he said; but others would go over them with Warren, personally, if he wanted more information. Obviously, the board's decisions would no longer be entrusted to letters, some of which had recently turned up in The National Rip-Saw. Unfortunately, no record of the meeting exists, and it would be only speculation to suggest what the board's reaction to Grabeau was in those troubled days just after the event.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, July 11, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; copy in LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 774, WHMC, UM.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

M. L. Alexander did not hesitate to speculate and even to exaggerate in his frequent letters to SLOA members. Grabeau, he said was the direct responsibility of Emerson and his associates. He faulted them for marching to the Grabeau plant in strength and armed with pistols and shotguns, where jeering of Galloway's guards prompted a BTW member to open fire, wounding one of the Grabeau employees, a man named Brown. The Galloways, although heavily outnumbered, won the fight, killing three union men and wounding 37, he boasted. Incendiary speeches by Haywood, Hall, and Emerson were the direct cause of the trouble, because they had stirred up passions to commit almost any crime. Characteristically, the SLOA manager did not again mention his own part in recruiting vigilantes in the piney woods milltowns, including Grabeau. As quickly as he could report through secret service channels, one of the association's private detectives, who was in the Grabeau fight, would give members information about the guilty parties, he promised. Finding Grabeau quiet and the union parade already dispersed, the militia withdrew within a day or so of its arrival, but the Galloways' employees left with them, closing the plant. On July 11, Emerson and several of his associates were in jail in Lake Charles, but so were John Galloway and his brother, Paul.⁵⁶

Haywood left immediately for Chicago, it was charged, to avoid the trouble at Grabeau. Back in his office, he set to work on articles on Southern labor conditions for three of the nation's most prestigious general magazines, Collier's Weekly, Leslie's

⁵⁶ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, July 11, 1912; Alexander to All Members, SLOA, July 12, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, Files 774 and 775, WHMC.

Weekly, and Pearson's Magazine. Willard C. Howe, editor of the American Lumberman, had received a warning of the impending publication of Haywood's projects. He editorialized bitterly against Haywood, and suggested to lumbermen that they should protest the proposed articles to the editors of the general magazines.⁵⁷ Willard Warren saw the situation clearly and starkly. Public sentiment, he asserted, was so opposed to the IWW that the union movement in the piney woods was doomed. Riot, bloodshed, and fire—or even the threat of these—had alienated thinking people, among whom he obviously placed himself and his fellow lumber managers. He was also thinking, however, of other people in the region, most of whom had nothing directly to do with the lumber industry. Their attitude toward the union would dictate the outcome. "I understand that the mob that left DeRidder last Sunday was composed of people that came there for that purpose, and was made up largely from the farming class and dago truck growers, and a few small restaurant keepers and people of that kind around DeRidder, and that the saw mill [work]men of that vicinity were not concerned in it at all."⁵⁸ Meanwhile, things seemed quiet in Calcasieu Parish as everyone awaited the action of the Grand Jury in Lake Charles.

Although it is difficult to distinguish between the social and economic classes accepted or at least believed in by contemporaries of Warren and Slagle, it is clear they

⁵⁷ Willard C. Howe, Chicago, Illinois, to Subscribers, July 13, 1912; "Labor V. Anarchy," The American Lumberman, July 13, 1912, Reprint, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 775, WHMC.

⁵⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, July 13, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 775, WHMC.

these men knew full well just who they were talking about, because they declined no opportunity in their frequent letters to defame some group, race, or nationality. Most of these were common assumptions, based on popular mythology, but they might just as well have been physical laws for the respect they received. O. W. Fisher, president of the 4 L Company, was generally considered by his associates and employees to be a kindly man with the welfare of others, particularly those who worked near him, at heart. Still, in his breathless style, he accepted many of the social stigmas of his day. To Warren he wrote about the Grabeau affair: "Your letters of the 9 and 10 received this morning and was gla[d] to here from you and was pleased to Know that the mill men did not Start the riot and hope that Mr. Emmerson and his followers will get justis meeted out to them and I also hope this will Stop Some of there radical moves for it looks like it is high time to Stop Some of this anarky disposition on the part of Some of them at least the weather is fine here and things looks good for this falls Business hopeing you all well and business good there[.]"⁵⁹ Of course, Fisher only reflected information he had received from his son-in-law in Louisiana. Still, his capacity for uncritical acceptance of the myth of lower class addiction to socialism boded ill for the welfare of the very people who had made him a wealthy man in comfortable circumstances far from the scene of battle.

M. L. Alexander virtually abandoned his Alexandria office to be on the scene of action in Lake Charles during the deliberations of the grand jury, investigating the

⁵⁹ O. W. Fisher, Seattle, Washington, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, July 15, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Grabeau affair. The lawyers wanted him to be on hand, apparently because he commanded a large force of private detectives, to do everything possible to prosecute Emerson. Things in the piney woods were tense, he said, but he expected nothing unusual to happen until the grand jury presented its findings to the District Court. He fully expected indictments of several people, including the BTW president. Meanwhile the Galloways had retained a lawyer to represent them in case they faced indictment. The most discouraging news, he said, was information from his operatives that "secret forces are being organized in the various union lodges, known as the Fighting Forces, composed of the most desperate of the members that belong to said lodges, and that it is the idea of these squads to do as much devilment as possible, and I firmly believe that if the leaders of the Grabow mob are turned loose, that a great many outrages will be committed by these bands of irresponsible agitators."⁶⁰ Alexander saw no irony in the threat of vigilantes aimed at lumber companies by those victimized by Loyal Citizens Leagues and other irregular forces who guarded the lumber towns. As it turned out, of course, the BTW was in no position to organize, let alone finance, a paramilitary force to contend with the secret agents and loyal leagues, paid for by lumbermen in a rising market.

Alexander, after a few days cleaning his desk in Alexandria, returned to Lake Charles on July 17, planning to stay in Calcasieu Parish several days. The people in the mill towns in Southwest Louisiana, he said, felt uneasy, which required very close

⁶⁰ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, July 16, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 775, WHMC.

surveillance by private detectives to uncover the sources of a great many threats. Meanwhile, Covington Hall had taken over the BTW headquarters in Alexandria to distribute circular letters to labor unions throughout the country, asking help in defending Emerson and his companions in Lake Charles. The union, Alexander said, bitterly denounced the massacre of Grabeau. Union members and sympathizers, the SLOA manager charged, had left nothing undone in their effort to influence the grand jury. Alexander and his cadre of undercover operatives had in turn taken every step necessary to present evidence that the union forces were the aggressors and that the first shot came from union ranks. At other places in Louisiana, the association took charge of matters and beat back the half-hearted attempts of union locals to make demands on sawmill management. In the woods camp of the Alexandria Lumber Company, the manager fired the leaders and returned to production. Atlanta, Louisiana, had improved after Boyd broke the back of the union there. In addition, there had been reports that unionists appeared at Huttig, Arkansas, to organize sawmill laborers. Alexander promised to investigate, but clearly he thought it a nuisance and a waste of time and resources. The fate of the union rode on the outcome of legal action against Emerson, and the SLOA manager knew that the success of the association would be decided there as well.⁶¹

On Friday, July 19, the Calcasieu Parish Grand Jury visited Grabeau to inspect the site of the violence on July 7. The group thoroughly investigated the premises, but did not make a report until Monday. Not only did Alexander and his secret agents lend

⁶¹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, July 17, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, and LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 775, WHMC.

their assistance to the prosecution of Emerson and the BTW, individual lumber mill managers, notably Sam Carpenter of Winnfield and B. H. Smith of Longville, pitched in to help. Alexander reported to C. D. Johnson on Saturday, July 20, that evidence, gathered from witnesses, would be strong enough to justify indictments. The union forces had been working equally as hard to clear their leaders, he declared. On the surface, at least, the two sides were quiet, not expecting to engage in or be subjected to any special trouble until after the grand jury made its report. The SLOA's undercover men kept particular watch over the union's appeals to other unions for funding the defense. There had been, they learned, liberal donations. Alexander cautioned that the prosecution of the BTW defendants was critical to their success, which of course depended on the findings of the grand jury and the verdict of the petit jury. Everything was being done in the interest of justice, he wrote. The Louisiana Board of Governors had scheduled a meeting for the next day, Sunday, July 21, when the manager of the clearing house would explain the situation in depth. A committee of the Cypress Lumber Association would also meet with the Board with a view to joining the SLOA in a body. Such an addition to the forces of the association would be a great help in fending off the BTW and the IWW. "We have accurate information that already six organizers of the worst type of the I.W.W. have landed at Merryville, and more of them are to follow."⁶²

⁶² M. L. Alexander, Lake Charles, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, July 20, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 776, WHMC.

On Monday, July 22, the Calcasieu Parish Grand Jury accepted the evidence presented by Alexander's secret agents and brought in 65 indictments against Emerson and his associates for murder and highway robbery; it found no true bill against either John or Paul Galloway. Alexander found the indictments "a splendid victory for right and justice," but he regretted "that not sufficient evidence was obtainable to indict Haywood and Hall."⁶³ By the time Willard Warren got around to writing to his father-in-law the next day, the indictments had apparently grown to seven against Emerson. Conviction, he said, would mean the end of the BTW. "I do not think there is any question but that the District Attorney is provided with ample evidence to secure conviction."⁶⁴ This bit of wishful thinking Warren obviously got from Alexander. Then the correspondent for The St. Louis Republic filed a dispatch when the grand jury returned the indictments in District Court in Lake Charles. The BTW was guilty, and the Galloways were innocent, he wrote.⁶⁵

The SLOA took the opportunity to make a particular effort to recruit members, dwelling especially on cypress lumber mills. The committee of cypressmen included R. H. Downman, A. T. Garrans, and George E. Watson, all of New Orleans. They visited Alexandria at the invitation of Sam Carpenter to investigate the SLOA offices and to study Alexander's methods. At the end of the meeting, they said they would all

⁶³ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, July 23, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, and J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, July 24, 1912, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

recommend that the entire membership of the cypress association join the SLOA, which would mean the addition of about 30 new member mills.⁶⁶ The SLOA also announced its new slate of officers, who had actually changed very little. C. D. Johnson remained as president; Bill Pickering as first vice president; John Henry Kirby as second vice president; and George K. Smith, treasurer. Johnson and Kirby remained on the executive committee with Sam Carpenter, C. B. Sweet, and Charles Keith. The Boards of Governors did not change.⁶⁷ The new Executive Committee, along with the Boards of Governors, met the next day in Chicago to hear Alexander expound on the affairs of his clearing house and regale the lumbermen with tales of the secret service. In Lake Charles, the sheriff had made more arrests based on grand jury indictments, bringing the total number of BTW members and sympathizers charged to 65; all were housed in the Calcasieu Parish jail. They would probably face prosecution at the first term of District Court about September 15, Alexander speculated. Meanwhile, the defendants retained eight lawyers, including the firm of Hundley & Hawthorne of Alexandria as the leading counsel; Cline, Cline & Bell of Lake Charles; Stewart & Stewart of Lake Charles; and "Judge" E. G. Hunter of Alexandria. Hunter would soon dominate the defense and serve as the chief spokesman for Emerson and the BTW. "The District Attorney will also have assistant counsel of ability and prominence to help conduct the prosecution and the trial

⁶⁶ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, July 22, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 776, WHMC.

⁶⁷ SLOA, St. Louis, Missouri, to Manufacturers of Lumber, July 25, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

promises to be a most notable one in the history of the State,"⁶⁸ Alexander said, neglecting to name Former Congressman Pujo as the assistant counsel; in fact, he took over the prosecution on behalf of the lumber companies. Alexander would virtually transfer his headquarters to Lake Charles for the duration of the trial, where he could pay personal attention to convicting Emerson. As the preparations were underway for the trial of Emerson and his men, the daily newspapers began to sense an emotional story. The New Orleans daily Times Democrat sent a staff correspondent into the "infected" territory to investigate the causes of the lumber-labor war. His first dispatch appeared on Sunday, July 28, which Alexander carefully copied and sent to member mills too far away to subscribe.⁶⁹ Necessarily, the expenses of the association's office in Alexandria and Alexander's outpost at Lake Charles increased dramatically. At its July 28 meeting in Chicago, the Executive Committee approved an increase in assessments from 2.5 cents to 5 cents per Mbf, log scale, on the member mills' July cut. Superior organization and unity of interests of the lumbermen far surpassed the BTW or the IWW in the ability to raise funds. In the long run, money and organization dictated the success of the SLOA.⁷⁰

On August 1, Sam Park announced that he was pulling his offices out of Houston, Texas, and transferring his managers--George J. Gardner, secretary and treasurer, and

⁶⁸ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁹ See newspaper clippings of the series of articles in Ibid.

⁷⁰ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, SLOA, August 1, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Adair Lockman, the sales manager--to Merryville, Louisiana, site of the American Lumber Company mills, "to develop more intimate and effective co-operation between Manufacturing, Selling and Shipping Departments."⁷¹ Park could see into the future as well as any lumberman, and he agreed that the days of the BTW were numbered. No longer would his alliance with the union protect him from harassment; no longer would he be able to operate unmolested while other mills had shut down rather than hire union men. Totally dependent on the Santa Fe Railroad for marketing his lumber and hauling in supplies, he could see, at least dimly, the day when his lines of communications would be completely severed. Now was the time to take precautions.⁷²

Also on the first of August, the staff correspondent for the New Orleans daily Times-Democrat arrived in the piney woods.⁷³ The BTW released a statement, widely reported in New Orleans and east of the Mississippi, that the union had begun a campaign to organize lumber workers in the Southeast, primarily to support the defense of A. L. Emerson and his associates in criminal court against charges of murder, robbery, and conspiracy. All parties to the controversy seemed to welcome the attention

⁷¹ Sam Park, "Announcement," American Lumber Company, Merryville, Louisiana, August 1, 1912, Box 11266-52, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 3, 1912, Box 89; see also "Blacklist is Alleged," the New Orleans daily Times-Democrat, August 7, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

of the big city press, although the reporters added little to the debate. Generally, their copy ran to clichés and unsubstantiated charges of fraud and mayhem.⁷⁴

On Friday, August 9, Clarence Slagle, as a member of the Louisiana Board of Governors, was scheduled to attend a board meeting in New Orleans, but he could not get away from his duties at Clarks. He asked Willard Warren to go in his place. On the day of the board meeting, M. L. Alexander issued a confidential general letter to SLOA members. Briefly he summarized the Grabeau incident, noting with relish that 60 members of the BTW, including its president, were in jail in Lake Charles, charged with murder, conspiracy, and inciting to riot. John and Paul Galloway had gone free. Doubtless the bitterness left by the Grand Jury action would guarantee that the trial of Emerson and his friends would be sensational. The BTW had begun a huge mailing campaign throughout the United States to raise money for the defense of those charged and held in jail in Lake Charles. Covington Hall chaired a relief committee, and Ladies Auxiliary Societies had begun a campaign to gain public sentiment and contributions. The defendants had hired legal counsel and might expect to spend \$25,000 in legal costs. Union funds were low, however, although they would appeal to public sympathy for subscriptions. The IWW played an important part in these activities. In fact, the two organizations were virtually one. Jay Smith had issued a circular on July 31, advising that all lodges had voted unanimously to confirm the convention's decision to affiliate with the IWW. The IWW prepared to put its organizers in all sections of the piney

⁷⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, August 3 and 6, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

woods. At the same time, Alexander also cautioned members of the SLOA to avoid solicitations from a Chicago firm calling itself the Corporations Auxiliary Company. Actually, it was a small detective agency, whose blanket mailings had reached several members of the association. Alexander, who handled all secret service agents employed by the mills--mostly Pinkerton and Burns agents--feared that another agency would only harm the undercover operation he had in place. Pinkerton and Burns operatives had insinuated themselves into the union organization, reaching from the locals to the national headquarters, and Alexander quite understandably did not want his network disrupted.⁷⁵

The staff correspondent of the Times-Democrat began his tour of the piney woods on the first of August, and he quickly demonstrated that he knew little about the structure of the industry or the arrangements of its scattered parts. First, he visited the lumber mill towns and discovered preponderant pro-SLOA sentiment, as well he might, since every known member of the BTW had long since been unmasked and run out of town. At Cravens, he discovered that sentiment was slightly against the Brotherhood of Timber Workers. His was the last resort of the ignorant and slothful journalist, public opinion. Union members had complained, he recounted, that the SLOA had created a blacklist that reached from West Louisiana into East Texas. Mill owners blandly admitted that they would not employ members of the BTW if they knew it but denied they used a blacklist, a blatant falsehood that the reporter accepted as gospel truth. Union machinists, union locomotive engineers, and members of other union crafts regularly worked in the lumber

⁷⁵ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 5, 1912, Box 89; M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to Members Only, August 9, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

mills and woods, managers pointed out. Organized skilled labor along craft lines was one thing, what the SLOA objected to was industrial unionism, particularly the organization of common labor. Since common labor made up as much as 85 percent of the workers in the industry, industrial organization of labor posed the threat of total control by the workers. Moreover, the BTW contained a large number of people who did not then and had never worked in the mills or woods. "They are simply sympathizers of the organization," the reporter said. These things, however, paled into insignificance when compared with the arrival of Haywood and Covington Hall, both of the IWW. With A. L. Emerson jailed in Lake Charles and effectively silenced, Hall became the chief spokesman for a union he had nothing at all to do with creating and nurturing. His rhetoric helped destroy it, perhaps more effectively than did the bragging of John Henry Kirby. The Times-Democrat printed a sample of Hall's speaking style, which gave fodder to the SLOA. That Hall indulged in a great deal of wishful thinking as he spoke was lost on the reading public and the lumbermen as well; the one believed his fantasies, the other used them against the union. A native of Mississippi where he claimed he grew up in the lap of plantation luxury, Hall found his way to New Orleans, joining the IWW when it engaged in the dock strikes there. He set about quite early to build himself a reputation as a Southern left-wing radical. The plight of the BTW gave him the chance to claim a place in the future socialist order; the welfare of the members did not much matter after all, since they would survive simply because the mills could not operate without them. What mattered to Hall was establishing a base on which to proclaim the socialist message. He had found what appeared at the time to be the perfect

platform from which to speak to the general public; later he found to his dismay that the masses were not listening.⁷⁶

It became readily apparent, early in the newspaper staff correspondent's series, that he got most of his material from the lumbermen, whose towns he visited. In DeQuincy, Louisiana, north of Lake Charles, he undertook the study of the IWW's methods, which he noted had not pleased many people there. They did not like violence, destruction, and confiscation of property advocated by the group, and they did not approve of the war the IWW waged against the American Federation of Labor. Most people believed the IWW was revolutionary; they condemned the union's creed, a classic expression of Marxist rhetoric. Now, many people in the piney woods looked back on the original BTW as preferable to the organization that apparently captured the timber workers' original union. The correspondent reprinted without benefit of attribution a list of IWW methods that included sabotage, disobedience to court orders, and several types of strikes, none of which seemed very fair or honest to a population devoted to a work ethic. The sit-down strike seemed the most pernicious because it called for confiscation of the property of others. Jay Smith's declaration that the BTW rank and file had unanimously voted to affiliate with the IWW struck newsmen as a questionable action based on a questionable canvas of the membership. Nevertheless, Smith called for each local lodge to send a delegate to Chicago on September 16 to help form the National Industrial Union of Forest and Lumber Workers of the World, the projected branch of

⁷⁶ "Blacklist is Alleged; Sawmill owners Deny the Charge of Union," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Wednesday, August 7, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

the IWW to serve lumber industry workers. The new union would coincide with the general convention of the IWW. The newspaper also printed long quotations from IWW pamphlets attacking the AFL, including an attack launched by Vincent St. John, the "Saint" of the IWW. All of these excerpts accurately reflected IWW rhetoric that preached class warfare; they did not sit well with residents of the piney woods, either capitalist or laborer.⁷⁷

On his way back to New Orleans, the reporter stopped off at Patterson, center for much of the cypress lumber manufacture in Louisiana. Here he found relations between employers and employees peaceful. The BTW and the IWW had not even tried to organize locals in the region, and their success would be seriously in doubt, the reporter gathered from talking with the mill managers. Things were different here, basically because the timber milled was virtually all cypress from the vast swamps along the distributaries of the Mississippi River. Two large cypress mills operated in Patterson, the F. B. Williams Cypress Company and the Riggs Cypress Company. Williams worked about 250 men, both white and black.

Williams Cypress Company Pay Scale

Loaders, common labor, lumber yard, daily	\$1.25
Pilers, common labor, lumber yard, daily	\$1.50
Common labor in the planing mill, daily	\$1.25
Machine men, daily	\$1.50
Machinists, monthly	\$75 to \$85
Shipping clerks, monthly	\$85
Common labor in sawmill, daily	\$1.50 to \$1.85
Edgermen, daily	\$3.00

⁷⁷ "I.W.W. Loses Sympathy; Residents of De Quincy Section Oppose Methods," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Thursday, August 8, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Carriage men, daily	\$2.60
Graders and millwrights, daily	\$3.00
Master mechanics and mill foremen, month	\$150.00
Engineers, monthly	\$110.00
Assistant engineers, monthly	\$80.00
Night watchmen, daily	\$1.50 to \$1.75

Paydays were twice a month in cash, with advances between paydays when needed.

Williams operated a commissary but did not require workers to trade there. The company gave checks in its store but did not discount them. It rented houses to black workers for \$6 a month; to white workers for \$16 a month, but white houses had running water, baths, electric lights, and other advantages. The company carried insurance under a blanket policy, charging each man \$1 a month for accident and illness benefits. Injured workers got \$25 a month compensation, and the services of a physician in the company hospital. When ill, the worker drew compensation only after five days. The Riggs Cypress Company worked 175 men in its mills, 50 white and 125 black.

Riggs Cypress Company Pay Scale

Common labor, daily	\$1.00 to \$1.75
Skilled labor average, daily	\$5.00
Range of skilled labor	\$2.25 to \$8.00
Average payroll, daily	\$2.00

"In the lath and shingle mills and at the factory or planing mill the company uses a number of boys seventeen to nineteen years old, which accounts for the low average paid. These boys cannot do a man's work and are paid accordingly,"⁷⁸ the account revealed. Riggs had only a few houses for rent, ranging from \$3 to \$10 a month. All

⁷⁸ "Patterson Not Troubled; Cypress Mills Have Had No Labor Disturbances," The New Orleans Times-Democrat, Friday, August 9, 1912, clipping in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

workers paid 75 cents a month for the services of a surgeon in case of accident, when they also would go on half pay. The company had no commissary, but between paydays issued trading coupons, based on accumulated time worked during the pay period, that were accepted by one of the stores in the town. It paid no commission on coupons and used no coercion to compel the men to use the store, the reporter said. "Ordinarily the Riggs Company employs in the swamps and on its steamboat fifty men paid an average of \$2 per day ... housed and fed by the company at no expense to the workers. [All workers were non-union and] satisfied with conditions and have made no complaints."⁷⁹ Compared with the sugar mills, a seasonal occupation at best, the lumber companies paid better wages. At Bowie, Louisiana, 40 miles east of Patterson on the Southern Pacific Railroad, the Bowie Company operated a large cypress mill.

Bowie Cypress Company Pay Scale

Common labor in the mill, daily average \$1.50
Common labor in the woods, daily average \$1.75
Band sawyers, daily \$7.00
Saw filers, daily \$6.00 to \$10.00
Engineers, monthly \$100.00 to \$167.00
Foremen, monthly \$100 to \$225.00

"Conditions at Bowie are about the same as at Patterson," the newsman said. "The employees are all nonunion men and are satisfied with conditions."⁸⁰ The reporter obviously expressed the opinion of company managers because, significantly, he found no worker willing to discuss the situation. F. B. Williams Cypress Company at Patterson, along with cypress mills at Arabi, Bowie, Des Allemands, Houma, Jeanerette,

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Ludwine, Moberly, Morgan City, St. James, and Whitecastle, Louisiana, joined the SLOA in 1912. East of the River, however, the association still did not attract much support, and in fact had lost what it once had in Mississippi.⁸¹

By the middle of September, the BTW would cease to exist, replaced by the National Industrial Union of Forest and Lumber Workers, IWW. To recruit members in the Southwest, the headquarters in Alexandria, still under the direction of Jay Smith, printed and distributed a great deal of partisan literature. One piece deeply concerned the SLOA, the union's proposed wage scale. The union defense committee had been extremely busy for several days drawing up and circulating messages to other unions and sympathizers in an effort to raise funds for Emerson's defense in Lake Charles. "We, the B.T.W., are in a life and death struggle with the Southern Lumber Operators' Association, a local branch of the International Lumber Trust,"⁸² one writer, probably Covington Hall, proclaimed, apparently hoping to strike a chord from American distrust of foreign intervention, a charge that had been regularly leveled at the union. It was not by accident that the term, industrial, in the IWW name quickly became international in the public mind. The union and its supporters were desperate. Contributions came in slowly, the undercover agents revealed, "and they will have to get a considerable move on them to raise the \$25,000 which they claim is necessary to conduct the defense."⁸³

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, August 15, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 36, File 787, WHMC, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸³ Ibid.

At the same time, the association had planted the seeds of dissension in union ranks, encouraging members to speak out against the IWW and the proposed affiliation with Big Bill Haywood's brand of unionism. This project, Alexander said, "will be carefully fostered."⁸⁴

At the same time, Alexander had startling but agreeable news, which he hastened to relate to M. L. Fleishel and the Louisiana Board of Governors, SLOA. "I beg to advise that I was called to Baton Rouge yesterday by the Governor, who much to my surprise, tendered me the Presidency of the Conservation Commission of the State of Louisiana," he announced. "This Commission formed under a recent act of the Legislature, consisting of three members, has entire control of all the natural resources of the state, both as to their fisheries, oyster beds, game preserves, minerals, forestry, etc....it carries with it a very handsome salary."⁸⁵ He had not solicited the appointment, he asserted, and at first declined it. On the "urgent request of the Governor, I finally accepted the position, provided I should have ample time to so adjust the affairs of this office as to not jeopardize its interest in any way, all of which I desire to discuss with the Board at their next meeting."⁸⁶ He wanted the board to see that he had the interest of the lumbermen at heart and would keep them safely in his own hands even if it meant making a sacrifice. As an example, he related how he discussed the

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, August 15, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 36, File 787, WHMC, and in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

labor situation, its causes, its leaders, and the work of the SLOA with the Governor. His conference changed the Governor's mind about the conditions of the sawmill employees. An unbiased reader cannot escape the conclusion that either the Governor was a fatuous dolt or Alexander was a talented liar, or both, which is entirely possible, given the fact that the SLOA manager had been commanding a private police force who had invaded the privacy of scores of the state's citizens, proscribed still more of them, and the Governor knew it. Yet, he found it good policy to turn over to this hireling of the lumber companies the care of the state's natural resources. If Governor Hall had an impression of any sort in his mind, it was certainly not contrary to the interests of the lumbermen.⁸⁷

The fate of A. L. Emerson and his associates, jailed in Lake Charles through the sweltering weeks of late summer, was never far from the minds of anyone in the piney woods. Members and sympathizers of the BTW were bitter at the injustice of the prosecution; the lumbermen and their allies sulked at the prospect of acquittal. The trial would get underway in the middle of September, not at all too early for anyone concerned, including the lumber managers who could not keep their minds or the minds of their workers on anything else. Still, they told themselves time and again, conviction could not fail, barring a union organizer sitting on the jury. Now with more than 60 union members and sympathizers jailed for murder in Lake Charles, Willard Warren said, "it would be surprising if anyone could acquit them, if for no other reason because

⁸⁷ Ibid.

a taste of jail had a way of loosening tongues. It will be very remarkable indeed if some of them do not squeal."⁸⁸

Then the defendants got bad news; the court set their trial for October 7, nearly two months until they got a break from prison routine. Then if the trial took several weeks, as the lumbermen had anticipated, it might be Christmas before they got out of jail, if at all. The prosecution intended making good use of the delay. The Galloway family attorneys, having removed them from danger of indictments, joined forces with the District Attorney to help prove Emerson guilty of murder and conspiracy. Covington Hall who had occupied the BTW headquarters to launch his drive for a defense fund left for New Orleans in the middle of August where he planned to stay until after Labor Day. Activities declined, creating a lull throughout the Calcasieu district, Alexander said. But he kept his operatives busy checking for agitation, overlooking nothing. The events at Grabeau had encouraged SLOA members to increase their cooperation with the clearing house and to improve their responses to requests for information. "We have had an enormous amount of detail work to look over, but everything is being kept up in good shape with the records well up to date," he said. "There are many things being done in the interest of the work which we will discuss with the Board at its meetings, from time to time, all of which we feel quite sure will meet with your approval."⁸⁹ Alexander still could not bring himself to trust confidential information to the postoffice, after his

⁸⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, August 17, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, August 19, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

unfortunate experience with the journalist, George Creel. That did not stop members of the SLOA from flooding the office in Alexandria with congratulations on his appointment as president of the Conservation Commission. At first, he believed that he would resign as manager for the SLOA, but as the Board of Governors took up the subject, he changed his mind. He would continue to care for the Association, he promised, until conditions dictated otherwise. Meanwhile, he went on the state's payroll at the "handsome salary" the law provided.⁹⁰

Alexander did not sit alone in his office in Alexandria. He often went out into the field to survey the scenes of battle. On August 23, he went down to Lake Charles on the Iron Mountain to look over the situation, meaning the prosecution's case against Emerson and friends, before moving on to Houston, Texas, on Saturday, August 24, to meet with the Board of Governors in session with the Texas Board of Governors and as many of the Executive Committee as could attend, very likely John Henry Kirby and Sam Carpenter. Alexander's private detectives had gathered a great deal of evidence against the defendants in the Grabeau trial, he said, which he passed on to counsel for the prosecution. "At the present time we have a considerable force of assistants in the field and our expenses will be large for the months of August and September," he explained. "After that, we will be able to reduce same very materially."⁹¹ The undercover operatives devoted virtually all of their time digging up testimony against the

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, August 23, 1912, Box 120, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Grabeau defendants, because there was virtually no activity going on at the time except Hall's efforts to raise a defense fund. The Emerson Relief Committee had less than \$1,000 in the fund at the end of the third week in August. Union membership, however, had increased to 6,971, although not more than half were in good standing, Alexander estimated. Actually, membership in the BTW had increased because of the organization of women's auxiliary clubs, members of which paid only \$1 a year, not much help to the union treasury. In Hallettesville, Texas, The Rebel, a socialist paper, published a special edition on August 17, which lumbermen considered rabid. It carried articles by Hall, Haywood, and Emerson, among others. Alexander bought 150 copies for distribution to members of the SLOA. Operatives investigated Arkansas meanwhile and found no evidence of "infection" by the union, although organizers had tried repeatedly. Even Merryville was especially quiet, waiting for the outcome of the Grabeau trial. Otherwise, conditions were satisfactory elsewhere in the piney woods, enough, it seemed, to compel the W. H. Cady Lumber Company of McNary, Louisiana, to join the SLOA in August.⁹²

On Saturday, August 24, a joint meeting of the Louisiana and Texas Boards of Governors convened in Houston, Texas. Alexander gave "a general verbal resume of the workings of the Alexandria Office for the benefit of those present who were not entirely familiar with same, and a written report covering important matters which have

⁹² Ibid.

occured since the last meeting of the Board."⁹³ Both verbal and written reports disappeared from the record, probably at Alexander's hands. He explained the unusual expenses incurred by his office and the necessity for them, which the joint boards endorsed. Alexander described the meeting as both successful and gratifying. And well he might. The boards also asked him to remain as manager of the clearing house while he undertook the work of the president of the Louisiana Conservation Commission. He readily agreed because of his "great familiarity with every detail of the work."⁹⁴

The only things really bothering lumbermen like Williard Warren was the prospects for a successful prosecution of the BTW leaders. He recalled Alexander's repeated letters claiming that the union had not been successful at raising a defense fund. Still, "the trouble is [not] over, and it will not be unless convictions are secured in some of these cases. I understand that no stone is being left unturned to secure conviction of some of the leaders."⁹⁵ Alexander, the chief stone turner, would see to that, Warren hoped, but his frequent references to the problem suggests that he knew the case was problematical, to say the least, and downright fraudulent in the eyes of the defendants.⁹⁶ Big Bill Haywood had, after all, been laying his plans from his headquarters in Chicago.

⁹³ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, August 26, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, August 27, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁶ C. C. Dey, Victoria, Louisiana, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, August 29, 1912, Box 11266-52; J. B. White, Bemus Point, New York, to Warren, August 30, 1912, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

By September 1, the SLOA had become aware that new blood had been infused into the BTW organization. Alexander put out a frantic warning for lumbermen to be on the lookout. "E. F. Dorée, organizer for I.W.W. has been at Alexandria for sometime getting posted and has now left for the territory between Alexandria, Lake Charles and DeRidder: description: 5'10", weighs, 135#, clean shaven, florid complexion, light hair, blue eyes, wears pince glasses, German or Swede accent, 23 years old."⁹⁷ What seemed to bother Alexander the most was that Dorée moved directly into the Calcasieu long leaf pine district, the "infected territory," where anything might happen. He had visions of a revolution, and incidentally an end to his string of successes in the clearing house. He might not have worried had he known that Dorée quickly found the situation too far gone to salvage, staying on to learn the lesson first hand.⁹⁸

Alexander's undercover operatives in the union headquarters still functioned efficiently, giving him detailed information of the activities--successes and failures--of the BTW and its leaders. They acquired exact figures, for example, reflected in the Emerson defense fund, showing that the BTW had raised only \$872.30 to pay for the defense of union members accused of murder at Grabeau. The undercover agents of the clearing house also had more serious work to do. "I am very encouraged at the status of our operation at the present time," Alexander said. "The information which we are gathering is being formulated in a most systematic manner and is being made very

⁹⁷ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 1, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

complete, and we expect at the time of the trial, October 7th, to have our part of the work in perfect shape and we expect the final result to justify the efforts which we are putting forth."⁹⁹ The work was expensive, so much so that the SLOA doubled its assessments against member mills, and it far outweighed the meager funds raised by the union defense fund. The union leaders kept very busy during this period. Ed Fussell, vice president of the BTW, worked untiringly in behalf of the defense fund. He went to Merryville on August 28, to ask black workers to help. Dorée had canvassed the territory, speaking at Pollock a few days earlier in a campaign to solicit funds for Emerson's defense. Speed, organizer for the IWW, had canvassed Texas before returning to Chicago. Covington Hall returned to Alexandria at the first of September to take over the office chores at headquarters. Ed Dyess, special organizer for the BTW, had been in Arkansas, appearing in Camden on August 29. He traveled with one Scrayder, about whom Alexander sent out a warning to Arkansas mills. BTW organizer Mitchell was at Laurel, Mississippi, holding meetings a few nights earlier to invite members to join the union; he planned another meeting in a few days. The BTW had elected two of three delegates scheduled to attend the IWW convention in Chicago, later in the fall, one from Fields, Louisiana, and another—Mr. Fullilove—of Merryville. One of the trustees, not yet named, would be the third delegate to carry out the affiliation with the IWW. BTW organizers Peavy and Hutchinson opposed affiliation, and they made speeches against it, which got the attention of the SLOA if no one else. Alexander

⁹⁹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, September 2, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

went back down to Lake Charles on September 3, to inspect the work of his operatives in the field.¹⁰⁰

The Executive Committee of the SLOA had already raised its assessments to 5 cents per Mbf on the August cut of its member mills, mostly in response to needs of the Alexandria office after the Grabeau incident. By early October, however, it would raise assessments still another 2 1/2 cents per Mbf, a total of 7 1/2 cents per Mbf on September production, because the association needed "quite an additional sum at this time," Clarence Slagle explained.¹⁰¹ Part of this increase was called for when lumbermen reacted to the threats of Haywood to call a general strike of all lumber and timber workers across the country. The evening New Orleans Item estimated that 40 thousand workers would be affected in Louisiana if the strike were effective. Haywood announced his plans for the general strike in New York Saturday, September 7, "as a demonstration against the treatment of Ettor and Giovannitti, imprisoned since the labor troubles at Lawrence, Mass., last winter."¹⁰² The strike would "center chiefly in the Southwestern section, the scene of bloodshed between capital and labor recently,"¹⁰³ the paper speculated. Because the Central Trades and Labor Council in New Orleans,

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 4 and October 12, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰² "40,000 Timbermen in State to Strike; Haywood Lays Plans for Nation-Wide Demonstration; Labor is Aroused at Eastern Courts," the New Orleans daily Item, Saturday Evening, September 7, 1912, clipping in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

representing 30,000 workers, was affiliated with the AFL, it would not respond to Haywood's call for stopping work. The IWW and Haywood had fought the AFL, the story explained. Covington Hall, leader of the industrial movement in the state, was busy in Southwest Louisiana at the time and did not comment for publication. J. D. McLean who traveled in hides and leather told the Item that he had just come from Massachusetts, where conditions would help Haywood succeed with his general strike, but this did not apply to other states such as Connecticut and New Jersey. The treatment meted out to textile workers by the courts had upset everybody in these states, McLean said. Industrial warfare was endemic there, where the strike would affect the textile unions, the Western Federation of Miners, the steel and iron workers, and others, he said. "Every section of the textile country is on the verge of a general strike in protest against the Lawrence [Massachusetts] affair,"¹⁰⁴ McLean said, noting that the Haywood strike would begin in Lawrence. Apparently, the IWW had forgotten, or simply failed to mention, Emerson and his 60 associates jailed in Lake Charles on capital charges.

New England and Haywood were both a long way off and, as it turned out, as far out of mind. Other more pressing concerns intervened in the piney woods. C. D. Johnson, attempting to direct the affairs of an organization with its chief object hundreds of miles to the south, understandably wanted to get the leaders of the SLOA together often; he wanted to get them together in St. Louis whenever possible. In the middle of September, he called another meeting of the officers, directors, and boards of governors at the Mercantile Club in St. Louis on September 19. Although M. L. Alexander in the

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

clearing house was obviously making headway against the union movement, Johnson argued, the BTW still had a great deal of life about it. In his last report to Johnson, Alexander noted that "the whole strength of the union organization is working for an increased membership for a solicitation of funds to assist Emmerson and his crowd."¹⁰⁵ Earlier, the undercover operatives had acquired an account of contributions showing between \$800 and \$900 in the union treasury, but since then the leaders of the BTW had tapped other sources, collecting as much as \$2,700, up to September 1. "Three delegates have left for Chicago to attend the I.W.W. convention, Dr. Shaw of Fields, La., Fullilove of Merryville, La. and a colored delegate by the name of Gordon from Lake Charles: these delegates are instructed to vote for the final consummation between the two organizations but to demand the continuance of the Alexandria Office and for said office to have control over the situation in the South with its present officers at the head,"¹⁰⁶ Alexander reported. Damaged or, at least, discouraged by the turn of events in West Louisiana, the Galloways suddenly sold their plant at Grabeau to J. L. Peninger and H. M. Richards of the Hurricane Creek Lumber Company at Guy, Louisiana, and to "a party by the name of Moses of Beaumont, Texas."¹⁰⁷ Alexander had some reason to believe that the plant would be operated in the future with a union crew, which "will

¹⁰⁵ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, September 15, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to Officers, Directors and Board of Governors, September 14, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

create an undesirable complication at that point."¹⁰⁸ Later, the Bradstreet Company of New York listed the successors of the Galloway Lumber Company, Ltd., at Grabeau, Louisiana, as the Anacoco Lumber Company, although this may have represented merely a change of names, since Peninger and Richards followed the usual practice of mill owners to name their companies rather consistently: Richard Long favored the names of towns; Captain White the names of states; John Henry Kirby the names of railroad spurs and stations; the Kurth family the names of counties and parishes.¹⁰⁹

Nearby, there was better news: Sam Park's American Lumber Company at Merryville had been having trouble logging the mill and had to shut down part of the plant several times recently. Many of his black laborers had left for the Texas cotton fields to pick cotton, where a good man could make twice the money he could command in the lumber mills or logging woods; it was seasonal, however, and most of them would be back later in the year. But Park had been deprived of much of his surplus labor that had buoyed him in the past. Still, the BTW was active in the town, although the local had been subjected to a great degree of discord over internal policies. Dorée and Whitten, two IWW organizers, had been making speeches and collecting funds throughout the piney woods of late, playing on the public sympathy for the jailed union members in Lake Charles. "Everything," Alexander cautioned, "is now hinging on the

¹⁰⁸ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, September 15, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁹ The Bradstreet Company, New York City, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, October 30, 1912, Box 11266-52, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

trial at Lake Charles and much depends upon its outcome."¹¹⁰ Although he was satisfied with progress in the undercover program, the association could not afford to relax for a minute. His undercover operative in union headquarters had reported that since January 1, the BTW had registered 7,342 union cards. Some cards were given for no dues and some merely given to anyone who would accept them, but Alexander estimated that 40 percent, or about 3,000, of the registered members maintained their standing by paying dues to the union. These members could, in theory, supply the union with about \$1,500 a month, sufficient to keep the BTW alive until rescued by the IWW.¹¹¹

The most serious result of the lumber war was a persistent scarcity of common labor; two things operated here, first, the nearly wholesale blacklisting of anyone even remotely associated with the BTW, and next, the fear, logically based on racial troubles, of black workers. M. Newman at the Shreveport Labor Agency in early September failed to deliver a gang he was to have assembled for trucking, stacking, and loading lumber at Fisher. Either Newman was out of his office early searching for recruits or he was dodging the 4 L Company, because Phil Bloomer could not reach him by telephone on September 16.¹¹² A month later, Newman still had nothing except excuses. "We have been unable to get you up a bunch of negroes, they seem to be

¹¹⁰ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, September 15, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.* See also C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to Officers, Directors and Board of Governors, September 14, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹² P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 16, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

getting scar[c]er, but we think, that we can bring you some Sunday night," he said. "We have here one man, who wants to bring his wife, and has a good many things to move and want[s] to have a house if possible, and we will bring them along, except you write us no[t] to do it."¹¹³

At that time, the 4 L Company finally decided to begin a semi-monthly payday. Warren's associate at Clarks had earlier begun paying employees of the Ouachita & Northwestern Railroad, the company tram, twice a month; he paid employees of Louisiana Central only once a month. Warren sent letters to his neighboring mills to learn how they handled paydays, and J. P. Towery, secretary and treasurer of the Sabine Lumber Company at Zwolle, Louisiana, replied that his firm had only recently begun the practice, so the old system had only been made to fit. "On the 25th of each month, we simply pencil all the accounts, including the time for the 24th, and advance cash up to the full amount due, less the accounts, and less House-Rent, Insurance and Doctor Fee for the full month," he explained. "Then on the 10th of the following month, we have a 'clean-up' pay-day to the 1st of that month."¹¹⁴ If the workmen had drawn heavily against their "25th pay-day," the following "10th pay-day" would be very little. "But it is our opinion, that after the "new" wears off, that there will be a comparatively few

¹¹³ M. Newman, Shreveport, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, October 1, 1912, Box 11267-53, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹⁴ J. P. Towery, Zwolle, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, October 1, 1912, Box 11267-53, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

that will draw up in full on the 25th, hence are going to try it a few months before we make any change in our Time-Book."¹¹⁵

Late in October, two of Louisiana Central's sawyers went up to the office to see Clarence Slagle about raising their wages from \$6 to \$7 a day. Until the Panic of 1907, the company had paid \$7 a day for head rig sawyers, then had cut it to \$6 with the understanding that the cut was only temporary. At the same time, Slagle had, with Captain White's approval, given himself a \$1,000 a year raise, then cut his salary back by 20 percent to the original \$4,000. Still later he had quietly begun paying himself the full \$5,000 salary, but he had neglected to adjust his workers' wages with the return of good times. Warren told him that the 4 L Company had raised its sawyers to \$7 a day from \$6 at Fisher and \$6.50 at Victoria. Mills south of him, he said, paid from \$7 to \$7.50 a day; he knew of two sawyer who made \$8 a day. Slagle had also reduced the wages of filers to \$9.50 a day for the two band mills and the circle saws except in the lath mill. In case he increased the sawyers' wages, he figured that he would have to pay filers at least \$10 a day, along with corresponding increases for setters, edgermen, and trimmermen. Warren said that he paid filers only \$6 to \$7 a day, but this meant that he paid filers separately for a total of about \$13 a day; most mills paid the head filer and expected him to employ his assistants and helpers out of his own wages. The 4 L Company also paid setters from \$2.60 to \$2.75 a day; edgermen, \$2.75 to \$3; trimmermen, \$2.15; hardwood mill trimmermen, \$1.90. Slagle, in making adjustments in wages for his skilled labor, ran into controversy with the filers; they wanted

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

compensation for the use of their tools—swages, shapers, and hand tools. Warren, however, furnished all filings tools, even the gauges. "This," he said, "is a matter of contract."¹¹⁶ Early in November, Slagle raised band sawyers wages from \$6 to \$6.50 a day and the band saw filer from \$9.50 to \$10 a day. In a letter to H. P. Minard, superintendent at Standard mills replacing John Collins, the general manager authorized similar raises at the LCLC's second plant situated in LaSalle Parish. "I would advise considerable caution in doing this, because it is not intended to make a general advance in wages," he said. "Perhaps, it might be well to notify them to not be surprised to have their wages figured at the above schedule for November, and that we would not care to have the matter discussed generally among our employees."¹¹⁷ Managers and other bureaucrats always seem ready to protect the privacy of workers' salaries, wages, and working conditions when their own actions might suffer from public scrutiny. Common labor was treated wholly differently. It came in gangs, and it responded directly to demand. Common laborers had only their muscle power to sell, and managers took great pains to boast of their liberal wage scales. Not everyone agreed they were quite so liberal, however.

"Negroes also perform most of the labor in the sawmills and woods of the pine regions of Central Louisiana, where they receive from 50 cents to \$1.50 per day,"

¹¹⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, November 13, 1912; see also Slagle to Warren, October 10 and 31, November 1, 5, and 21, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹⁷ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to H. P. Minard, Standard, Louisiana, November 6, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 818, WHMC.

according to a U.S. Forest Service bulletin by J. H. Foster, assistant chief forester in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. "They may in fact occupy responsible positions such as sawyers in the mills."¹¹⁸ Mill managers were outraged. B. H. Smith called it a "gross misrepresentation of facts, and in view of the present labor agitation may work great harm."¹¹⁹ L. F. Haslam worried about "that important factor generally referred to as 'public sentiment'." He said the paper was "obviously erroneous and prejudicial to the interests of the industry in as much as the maximum wage named is in fact the minimum wage, and the average wage paid the negro labor of the sawmills and woods operations of this territory is considerably more than the maximum amount named in the Bulletin." The minimum amount, he continued, was "so obviously out of all reason that it requires no comment."¹²⁰ Still, he said, there was really nothing to be done to correct the error except guard against similar misstatements in the future. B. H. Smith quoted figures on wages based on one days' pay at Longville. Minimum wage was set at \$1.50 a day; average wages for 272 black men was \$1.90; average wages for 139 white day laborers was \$2.58; average wages for 55 white salaried men was \$3.68; average wages for all 194 white men was \$2.89; average wages for 466 men, black and

¹¹⁸ J. H. Foster, "Forest Conditions in Louisiana," Bulletin 114, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1912), p. 5.

¹¹⁹ B. H. Smith, Longville, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, November 26, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹²⁰ L. F. Haslam, Pickering, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, November 30, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 824, WHMC.

white, was \$2.31.¹²¹ None of which answered Foster's critical point, that average wages for the year were much lower than the pay scales exhibited by lumbermen.

Meanwhile, lumbermen and workers still had to contend with the *corvée*, particularly in Louisiana, where it provided most of the construction and repair of the public roads; the model road movement had not yet abolished it. In Ward 5 of Jackson Parish, northwest of Clarks, however, Road Supervisor B. L. Anders of Chatham, insisted on collecting \$2 a head for the men who worked for LCLC at its woods camp. Slagle made arrangements to comply. "I have your letter of October 15th advising that our men can be released from road duty at \$2.00 per capita," he wrote. "Our pay roll man at our camp has been instructed to see the men and secure an order for this charge."¹²² Two or three men refused pay the road tax. The foreman at the camp gave the road supervisor the names of men who were not willing to be assessed for the tax. If subject to the duty, they could either tell the payroll clerk to charge them with the \$2, "or you can give them proper notice and force them to work the roads or pay you direct."¹²³ The company sent a check for \$40. Such cooperation by the lumber company at the expense of its workers harks back to an ancient scutage, although most of the men it affected did not seem to object very much. They readily signed an order for the company to pay their taxes and deduct it from their pay, although, significantly,

¹²¹ B. H. Smith, Longville, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, October 30, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹²² C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to B. L. Anders, Chatham, Louisiana, October 16, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 809, WHMC.

¹²³ Ibid.

all of the signatures of those who agreed to pay the tax were written in the same hand. These annoyances soon worked themselves out, and the mill managers could return to their paranoid contemplation of socialists and anarchists.¹²⁴

¹²⁴ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana to Union Saw Mill Company, Huttig, Arkansas, November 5, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 816, WHMC.

CHAPTER 10

Trial and Acquittal

God made you a Union man.¹

The trial of Arthur Lee Emerson and his associates was only two weeks away, and the mill managers grew increasingly tense. They watched the BTW closely and sharply questioned its motives. Late in September 1912, some members of the Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association, who were virtually interchangeable with those of the SLOA, made an abortive attempt to withdraw from the National Lumber Manufacturers Association. Sam Carpenter was president of the YPMA in 1912, and he apparently scheduled the vote. Captain White opposed the move and voted against it because, he said, he followed the old rule, "when in doubt, don't." Southern pine mills made up the largest group within the NLMA, and White wanted to keep the organization together. After all, he was probably the person most responsible for organizing the YPMA and taking it into the national association. He told George K. Smith that he believed in association and community work and "the great good of getting together."²

¹ Arthur Lee Emerson, speech typescript, January 16, 1912, in the John Henry Kirby Papers at Rice University in Houston, Texas.

² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, September 25, 1912; White to George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

For several months now, prominent lumbermen throughout the nation had grown increasingly concerned with the images of peonage and vigilantism projected by the SLOA's harsh response to the BTW. Members of the NLMA had expressed misgivings at the meetings of directors, conventions of affiliated associations, and among its own Board of Governors, a group of prominent lumbermen from across the nation, including J. B. White in Kansas City. Sam Carpenter, irate at what he considered hypocrisy in the responses of the mill managers in other sections, launched a drive to withdraw the YPMA from the NLMA, and its ten other affiliates. On October 12, the YPMA directors in New Orleans wired Leonard Bronson, manager of the NLMA office in Chicago: "Yellow pine directors believe you originated the idea of national committee investigating mill conditions," it read. "If they are correct you should immediately advise all directors."³ George K. Smith, secretary of both the NLMA and the YPMA, not to mention the SLOA, said that the subject had never come up at any meeting of the YPMA board of directors until October 14, when the telegram arrived from New Orleans. On October 15, Bronson wrote that he found it insulting to have his honor questioned. "But to correct a false impression on the part of any director, I will state that the suggestion of the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association investigating mill conditions did not originate with me, and my connection with it was merely in the line of my duty," he said. "It originated with one of the most prominent Yellow Pine Manufacturers, Mr. J. B. White, of Kansas City, who, on July 20, made the suggestion

³ Leonard Bronson, Chicago, Illinois, to The Board of Directors, the Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, October 15, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 809, WHMC.

to [NLMA] President [E. G.] Griggs [of Tacoma, Washington]."⁴ Griggs instructed Bronson to discuss the idea with the board of the national association, which he did on August 2 by circular letter to S. J. Carpenter, president of the YPMA, R. A. Long of Kansas City, C. I. Millard of Norfolk, Virginia, John Henry Kirby of Houston, and to John L. Kaul of Birmingham, Alabama. After discussing the idea with other lumbermen, Griggs decided by the middle of August, with White's approval, that under the circumstances the NLMA would take no action. The correspondence was confidential, and Bronson said he gave it no publicity. But some Southern mill managers circulated the information among members of the SLOA to prompt a negative response. White supported Bronson in a wired reply and took responsibility for the suggestion for an investigation of Southern pine mill conditions, particularly of labor conditions.⁵ Bronson demanded that Southern lumbermen retract their objections and circulate what would amount to an apology. Understandably offended, he missed the point of Carpenter's telegram. It was more than an accusation; it was a demand for support against organized labor, a force that lumbermen generally misunderstood. An unruly and quarrelsome crowd at best, they looked for enemies even among their friends. At least, in this case, they neglected to dispatch Pinkerton or Burns detectives to investigate.

About the same time, rumors began to circulate that the owners of the Ludington mills, a group of Michigan investors, wanted to sell the property. Willard Warren gave

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Leonard Bronson, Chicago, Illinois, October 14, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 809, WHMC.

the rumors credence, because the Van Schaick interests had tried to sell the town and mills several times over the years. "I understand they have a fine body of timber and I presume they have a very good plant, but those people have never made any fight against the Brotherhood of Timber Workers and as a result, the majority of their men belong to that organization," he complained. "They are only one and a half miles distant from DeRidder, which is the hot-bed of the organization, and any one who takes up that proposition, would either have to handle it just like Stevenson [manager of Ludington] has been doing or else he would probably have a big scrap on his hands."⁶ The property was simply not worth the bother, Warren and Captain White agreed. Also, there was a negative political situation there to contend with, after the northern half of Calcasieu Parish was separated to become Beauregard Parish. "The lumber people are going to pay about ninety-nine per cent of the taxes and they are going to do about nine per cent of the voting."⁷ A large number of socialists in the area would discourage Warren from moving there, he said. Anyone spoiling for a fight in business or politics would be apt to get it by going into the lumber business there.⁸

The situation in Lake Charles required constant supervision if the law were to succeed in convicting Emerson and his friends of murder, Alexander concluded. In Chicago the week of September 26, the IWW had approved the affiliation of the BTW,

⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, September 25, 1912, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA. See Bernard Karsh, Diary of a Strike (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1958), p. 16.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

agreeing to Emerson's conditions: retain an office in Alexandria with the same officers, maintain local self control, and prorate seats on the executive board of the IWW. The convention elected P. Eastman of DeRidder to the executive committee, and named Ed Lehman, one of the BTW members still in jail awaiting trial in Lake Charles, Dr. E. E. Shaw of Fields, and D. R. Gordon of Lake Charles, the black delegate, to the advisory board of the union. The IWW also called for a 24-hour general strike no later than September 30, in sympathy with Etta and Giovanitti who were in jail because of union agitation in Massachusetts, and Emerson, jailed in Louisiana. "We hardly think that this can be made to affect our immediate territory,"⁹ Alexander said. He was also pleased to note that the treasurer of the IWW showed a bank balance of only \$457.40, but he cautioned that the union must have had a significant cash flow each month. And finally, Alexander passed on the agreeable information that a Calcasieu Parish Deputy Sheriff Del Charlan shot and killed Charles (Leather Britches) Smith, when he resisted arrest for highway robbery. Alexander described Smith as "the man who was a most desperate and lawless character, and one of the leaders in the Grabow trouble."¹⁰ Later commentators called it a judicial murder of a hapless mental defective.¹¹ On the morning of October 15, Calcasieu Parish Sheriff Henry Reid arrested S. G. Deeney of DeRidder in the district courtroom on a charge of helping Leather Britches Smith hold up and disarm two

⁹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, September 26, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ "Charles 'Leather Britches' Smith Killed by Deputy Sheriff on September 25, 1912," the Baton Rouge, Louisiana, New Advocate, September 26, 1912; see also McWhiney, "The Socialist Vote in Louisiana, 1912," p. 74.

Grabeau quarterbosses, Deputy Sheriffs W. T. Grantham and Wheden. During the incident at the mill on July 7, a group of BTW men overpowered the two deputy sheriffs, who were actually employed by the Galloway Lumber Company. Smith apparently still carried Grantham's gun at the time of his death. The grand jury had not indicted Deeney, but Burns detectives had connected him with the holdup.¹²

At Lake Charles, Alexander found that his private detectives had accumulated a large store of information, carefully tabulated and cross referenced in anticipation of the Grabeau trial when it would be put before the court. Union leaders, he predicted, would demonstrate its strength at Lake Charles when the trial began to get public sympathy. The BTW had called for a Union Holiday on Monday, October 7, a sort of one-day strike during which workers would converge on Lake Charles. Alexander did not expect much response to the call, although the association could expect some BTW members to show themselves. Union activities had fallen off for the time being because of the trial. Future organizing efforts, he said, would depend on the outcome. Meanwhile, one Walling, confidential agent of Ripley of the Santa Fe Railway visited Merryville to investigate labor conditions at the American Lumber Company plant. The effects of a strong BTW organization in practical control of the mills there had begun to affect the railroad's business. Secret service operatives had learned that Walling would recommend the stockholders close the plant. The sawmill company would soon learn, Alexander predicted, that it would be impossible to operate successfully under the control of the

¹² M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, October 15, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 809, WHMC.

BTW or IWW. Affiliation of the BTW with the IWW had convinced many members of the union that they had made a serious error, he said, which was then a matter of debate among union leaders and a source of suspicion and dissatisfaction among the rank and file.¹³

Independent actions by locals complicated the work of union leaders, who were increasingly occupied with the Grabeau trial as they lost control of events in the field. The union men at Flora Post Office in Natchitoches Parish on the T&P south of Victoria, presented demands to the Weaver Bros. Lumber Company on Saturday, September 28. The negotiation was handled by the sawmill foreman, who was president of the BTW local. The workers wanted a 10-hour work day and semi-monthly paydays. "Mr. Weaver told them that he did not object particularly to either, but as he was not dealing with the Union, and wanted to continue running his own business, that instead of waiting for them to shut him down on Tuesday [October 1, 1912] he would not start up any more after Saturday night."¹⁴ All Weaver Bros. employees except two appear to have belonged to the BTW, despite the careful scrutiny of Alexander's secret service agents.

Then on October 3, the Santa Fe representatives visiting Merryville said the mills there would close because the Company was not able to conduct business with the union men interfering with non-union men. A lockout seemed the only course left to the

¹³ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, and Alexander to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 30, 1912, Box 122; Warren to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, October 3, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, October 3, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

company.¹⁵ Willard Warren read about it in the Beaumont papers and relayed the story to Captain White, with a copy to Clarence Slagle,¹⁶ who replied that he heard the same thing from the SLOA office in Alexandria, apparently the source of the news account in the first place. "If that Company decides to rid themselves of the union," Slagle wrote, "I believe it will go a long way toward clearing the situation in that section. We hear very little talk of this trouble over this way, further than discussion of the outcome of the trial of the union men arrested for the Grabow riot."¹⁷ Alexander had indeed noted the story of Merryville closing. "We believe that this is authentic [sic],"¹⁸ Alexander said. A week later, however, he had to retract his statement. "A telegram from Merryville, La. printed in the New Orleans Daily States of October 11th, denies that the plant of the American Lumber Company is closed down on account of labor troubles but that it will continue to run, denouncing statements to the contrary as false,"¹⁹ he admitted. Since he circulated the report on October 8, the day after the Emerson trial began, he found that he had to depend upon hearsay for his information, mostly from the daily

¹⁵ Clipping of news story in the Beaumont, Texas, Enterprise, October 3, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 808, WHMC.

¹⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, October 4, 1912, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, and LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 803, WHMC.

¹⁷ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, October 4, 1912; Slagle to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, October 5, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 807, WHMC.

¹⁸ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, October 5, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 807, WHMC.

¹⁹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, October 11, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 808, WHMC.

newspapers in Louisiana and Texas. More than that, however, he considered it a minor matter. "Operatives which this office had detailed at Merryville were withdrawn sometime since to assist in the investigation at Lake Charles: this prevented my having authentic data as to the happenings at that point, and as the mill did not close down, I have been justly criticized for having sent out incorrect information," he explained. "I have since detailed another representative to that point and will keep better posted in the future."²⁰ Park gave the correspondent of the New Orleans Times-Democrat a prepared statement contradicting much of the propaganda circulated about him by the SLOA. "In some way the rumor has been circulated and gained credence in print that the American Lumber Company was favorable to union labor," he told the reporter. "This was a mistake for which I cannot account. Our company has never been favorable to union labor."²¹ At the time Park opened the Merryville mills a year earlier, he asserted, he required new workers to sign a yellow dog contract, certifying that they were not members of the BTW and pledging that they would not join the union. Firing about 100 men during the past month probably caused some people to believe the company had changed its policy, but it was the same except the decision to be more careful. Reports that the Merryville mill had closed the previous Saturday night were not true, he said.

²⁰ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, October 14, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 808, WHMC.

²¹ "Merryville Mill Going; Sam Park Denies That It Closed Down," The New Orleans Times-Democrat, Monday, October 14, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 808, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

"We have not lost a day's time, and we are now getting ready to start the mill running day and night, and we have the night crew already engaged."²²

The Grabeau trial was shaping up to be a great battle, Alexander wrote on October 5. The Union's defense committee had made a final appeal for funds. From an assessment report by the union leaders, which fell into Alexander's hands, the SLOA learned that the local lodges had contributed \$1,310.85; \$209.80 by workers at Merryville, \$248.35 from DeRidder. The New Orleans Daily States reported incorrectly that 6,000 rifles had been sold in the lumber section and that union men were drilling for a march on Lake Charles. While Alexander did not for a moment believe such exaggerations, he did warn mill managers to expect a large number of unionists to appear at the trial Monday, October 7, probably, he added, to intimidate jurors and witnesses. His own force of private detectives, he believed, would not be at all intimidating.²³

District Court convened in Lake Charles as scheduled on October 7, to try A. L. Emerson, Jack Payne, Ed. Lehman, John Helton, F. E. Ezell, W. A. Chatman, Dock Haynes, Edgar Hollingsworth, and Louis Brown in what the prosecution hoped would be only the first round of trials. Attorneys for the defendants "fought desperately for a change of venue; for two weeks postponement and against the severance, believing all should be tried at once, which if granted, would have given them 696 preemptory challenges [during jury selection]; all of these motions were overruled by the Judge and

²² Ibid.

²³ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, October 5, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 803, WHMC.

the motion for a severance by the prosecution prevailed and the trial is now on."²⁴ The evidence against the nine major defendants, Alexander considered exceptionally strong. The town was crowded with visitors, many of them attending the trial; delegations of union sympathizers came down by train from DeRidder and Merryville. Covington Hall, now in control of the union, held long conferences with the defense counsel. He seemed to be in charge, and, operatives had learned, was on the BTW payroll at \$120 a month. IWW organizers Edward F. Dorée and C. L. Feligno were there, also. The defense had already spent \$3,200 of its defense fund, and, Alexander hoped, would likely break the union treasury, although the union had several thousand dollars in the bank at the time. "The evidence which has been compiled from our Lake Charles office for the benefit of the prosecution is as near perfect as it could be made and we are certain of convictions if an honest jury can be obtained," Alexander boasted. "If the nine defendants that were placed on trial by severance be convicted it will be an easy matter to handle the balance of the bunch. We feel that nothing has been left undone that should have been done and we are very hopeful of the final result."²⁵ Also, it seemed that the union's call for a holiday in sympathy with the defendants on the opening day of the trial did not get much attention, although some groups of sympathizers organized picnics.²⁶

Alexander's report contrasted sharply with Jay Smith's account of the trial, which he called a conspiracy. Like other dodgers before it, Smith's circular was chiefly an

²⁴ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, October 8, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 805, WHMC.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

appeal for financial support, but it also told the story the way the BTW wanted it to be heard by friends and supporters. The Grabeau trial got underway at 11:40 a.m. on Monday, October 7, in Lake Charles District Court with Judge Winston Overton presiding. The court permitted, after a great deal of argument, the prosecution to sever the cases of Emerson and eight of his fellow prisoners from the other 58 defendants who waited in jail. These were the men the SLOA chose to use to destroy unionism throughout the South, Smith said. E. G. Hunter of Alexandria, who had earned the courtesy title of judge, was the chief counsel for the defense, and he demanded time to ask the State Supreme Court for a writ of mandamus setting aside Judge Overton's order severing the cases. Overton admitted Judge Hunter's position was valid before the law, but refused to grant his motion on the ground that it would have been impossible to try all the accused together, because the law permitted them 1,044 challenges to the seating of petit jurors. Hunter contended that the situation was not the fault of the defendants, not having indicted themselves. The man to blame was District Attorney Joseph Moore or Congressman Arsène P. Pujo. Nevertheless, the court ordered the nine men to stand trial for the murder of A. P. Vincent.²⁷

On October 8, the court could not seat a member of the jury, but Hunter created some excitement with his tirades against the Burns Detective Agency. Nothing of interest happened in court, Smith asserted, "except the evident intention of several

²⁷ "Eighth Is Chosen For Grabow Jury; Defense Demands Names of Burns Detectives When Juror Says He Was Approached," The New Orleans Daily Picayune, Tuesday, October 15, 1912; M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, October 15, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, and LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 809, WHMC.

Association suckers to do their best to get on the jury, many of them testifying that they had hardly heard anything of the case, were not prejudiced, even against Emerson, and this tho' they lived in the heart of the 'infected territory,' as the Association calls Union country, worked for such notorious labor haters as the Industrial and Long-Bell Lumber Companies, were or had been members of that lawless organization called 'The Law and Order League' and 'Knew what their bosses' wanted done with the boys.'²⁸ All of these tactics failed, Smith claimed. The fear of public reaction reduced their eagerness. Judge Overton dismissed anyone from the jury venire who was a member of the SLOA or of the BTW. On October 9, the court accepted the first juror, John Hagin, a farmer, at 10:25 a.m.; Albert Derouen, also a farmer, entered the jury box at 11:29 as the second juror; the third, S. W. Mack, a farmer, at 2:30 p.m. By 3:00 p.m., the lawyers exhausted the venire. Court was adjourned until the next morning, when Sheriff Henry Reid was required to produce a new panel of 225 de tailbus jurors. Earlier on October 9, Hunter accused the Burns Detective Agency with trying to fix the jury, creating a sensation.

Pujo jumped to his feet, Smith wrote, "wildly protesting ... proclaiming Burns a tin angel of purity, the saviour of society and demanding that the 'Old Roman' [Hunter] produce 'proof' of his charges, this tho' Burns' local manager had sat back of the Prosecution all during the trial with a list of some sort in his hands, which he consulted every time a fresh set of jurors entered the box, mysteriously whispering to the State

²⁸ Jay Smith, "The Graybow 'Conspiracy,'" BTW dodger in M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, October 15, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 809, WHMC.

every time a doubtful juror was under examination."²⁹ W. E. Kinney, the Burns manager, also professed innocence. After a debate between opposing counsel, the court ordered the District Attorney to supply the names of detectives helping him make his case. "The balance of the session was as uninteresting as usual,"³⁰ the New Orleans correspondent reported.

Late Monday, October 14, the court finally succeeded in seating the petit jury. Alexander was pleased but doubtful of the outcome. "Every effort has been made to obtain an honest and unprejudiced jury for this trial but it is problematical as to what the results will be," he wrote. "We have had enormous odds and subtle influences working against us and if a [guilty] verdict is obtained it will be a victory indeed."³¹ He was not pleased, however, with acquittal, because in that event unionism would blossom. The area, he said, had filled with IWW organizers, who brought word that funds earlier raised for Ettor and Giovannitti in Massachusetts would be used to defend Emerson. He noted strikes had begun at the Weaver Bros. Lumber Company at Flora, Louisiana, and at the Simmons Bros. Lumber Company at Kirbyville, Texas, which he blamed on the lack of cooperation among SLOA members and indifference among lumbermen who were

²⁹ "Eighth Is Chosen For Grabow Jury; Defense Demands Names of Burns Detectives When Juror Says He Was Approached," the New Orleans Daily Picayune, Tuesday, October 15, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 809, WHMC.

³⁰ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, October 15, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 809, WHMC.

³¹ Ibid.

not members, plus a shortage of labor. As a result, the union was growing gradually into a force to be "reckoned with."³²

By October 15, the petit jury to hear the Emerson murder trial had been empaneled: John Hagen, 52, Hecker farmer; Albert Derouen, 36, Hayes farmer; S. W. Mack, 42, Lake Arthur farmer; Duffy Holland, 28, Hayes farmer; J. E. Whitfield, 41, Lake Charles collector; J. H. Martin, 38, Jennings truck farmer and dairyman; Frank Vincent, 32, Sulphur restaurateur; G. L. Freeman, 28, Lake Charles manager of the Coco Cola Bottling Works; A. Labauve, 27, Lake Charles motorman; C. A. Hulbert, 30, Iowa, Louisiana, farmer; M. A. Sharpe, 40, Woodlawn farmer; William T. King, 47, Lake Charles machinist. All were married men except Vincent, Freeman, and Labauve. The lawyers for both sides quarreled until the very end, accepting and then rejecting D. Bouzemoire as the twelfth juror when he admitted a prejudice against circumstantial evidence.³³

The correspondent for the Daily Picayune speculated that the prosecution's first witness on Thursday, October 16, would be Bud Hickman, shot through the lungs during the Grabeau trouble as he drove past the mill in his wagon. The Burns detectives dropped hints to the newspapers that several of their number who were present at the riot-massacre would be called, also.³⁴ Hickman did not make it to the witness stand

³² Ibid.

³³ "Grabow Jury Is Finally Secured," the New Orleans Daily Picayune, Wednesday, October 16, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 810, WHMC.

³⁴ C. N. Adams, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, October 16, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 810, WHMC.

next day. Instead, the court heard Coroner W. L. Fisher, a medical doctor, who reached Grabeau a day after the fight; Professor Alex Thomson, a civil engineer who posted a map of the Grabeau area in the courtroom and explained it to the jury; and B. F. Havard, identified by the newspapermen as a former Texas Ranger. Undoubtedly, he was also a Burns or Pinkerton operative assigned to the mill by the association. Doctor Fisher testified that he had not reached the scene of the shootings until 2:00 p.m. on the day after the incident. He said he found three dead men lying side by side on the back gallery of the Galloway mill office.³⁵ A. T. Vincent, a company guard armed with a shotgun loaded with buckshot, was killed by buckshot that entered the right side of his neck and his left groin. The other dead men were Decatur Hall and Ulrich Martin, BTW members. Hall died from a .38 caliber bullet, shot in the back. Martin had been hit by six bullets, three to the stomach, two the his right chest, and one in his left breast. Dr. Fisher said that he emptied seven shotgun shells from Martin's pockets, although he could not say how they came to be there. Havard, who worked for about ten days as a log scaler for the Galloways, told of watching the beginnings of the clash. He said he saw the union parade, about 200 people, approach the Grabeau office, and he walked over to see what would happen. A. L. Emerson began to speak, and as Havard approached Will Estes, one of the BTW group, spoke to him: "Hello 'Happy,'" said Estes, addressing Havard, "what are you doing here."³⁶ He answered that he was

³⁵ "Sensational Day in Grabow Trial," the New Orleans Daily Picayune, Friday, October 18, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁶ "Grabow Riot Described," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Friday, October 18, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 811, WHMC.

scaling logs for Galloway, and that he was making \$1.50 a day. A man carrying a shotgun broke in, "kill the _____ scab," and he raised his gun. Estes stopped the gunman, "don't shoot 'Happy,' he's all right, I know him."³⁷ Suddenly a shot was fired by another man in the crowd, then general firing began from both sides. Havard, who testified that he was not armed, dropped to the gallery floor and was not hit. Afterward, he found Phillip Ferro fatally wounded on the ground; a pistol lay beside him. Vincent was dead at the corner of the office, lying near the gallery. He helped pick up two more men, one dead and another badly wounded. He insisted that the first shot came from the union side, when a man armed with a pump shotgun fired from the crowd standing beside Emerson's wagon, from which he had been speaking. The defense charged that Havard had earlier told J. A. Haywood of Kirbyville, Texas, that the first shot actually came from the mill office, although he would testify to the contrary; Havard denied it. Defense lawyers also charged that Havard told Joe Hackett of Kirbyville much the same thing; he denied this, also. Havard told the defense attorneys under oath that he had worked a total of 15 days for the Galloways, responding to charges that the mill owners kept him on the payroll to keep him as a witness. He also admitted that he had been drinking cider the day of the killings, but when defense attorneys asked whether all mill employees were drinking to get their courage up for the

³⁷ Ibid.

coming conflict with the union, the judge sustained a prosecution objection to the line of questioning.³⁸

Bud Hickman finally reached the witness stand Thursday, October 17, where he testified that he saw Ed Ezell, one of the defendants, fire the shot that wounded Hickman and killed Uriah Martin at Grabeau on July 7. John Henry Blackman, another prosecution witness, testified, however, that Ezell's shot killed Decatur Hall and wounded Hickman. Hall was one of the striking BTW members. Emma Smith, standing in the door of the boarding house where she worked, said she saw the shooting start after union men threatened to close the mill. The young woman was about 20 years old, the daughter of Mrs. O. P. Davis, operator of the boarding house situated across the road from the commissary. "A man was speaking from a wagon to a crowd of men," she testified. "Many of them had guns. The man speaking said, 'We're going to close down this mill.' Somebody in the crowd shouted, 'How are we going to do it?' 'By the muzzle of the gun,' the speaker said. When he said that they went to shooting, that's all there was to it."³⁹ All three witnesses said the first shot fired in the melee came from the wagon, from which A. L. Emerson was speaking. Defense lawyers on cross examination failed to break their testimony. Correspondents for the New Orleans newspapers, however, differed slightly in their reports. The Daily Picayune said John Henry Blackman testified that Ezell killed Hall and wounded Hickman; The Times-

³⁸ C. N. Adams, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, October 18, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 811, WHMC.

³⁹ "Sensational Day in Grabow Trial," the New Orleans Daily Picayune, Friday, October 18, 1912.

Democrat said George Henry Blackman killed Uriah Martin and wounded Hickman. They agreed that the State's witnesses gave damaging testimony and that the defense lawyers were unable to shake the witnesses from their accounts.⁴⁰

On Friday, October 18, Frank E. Powell, a DeRidder attorney and investor in the Galloway Lumber Company, joined the District Attorney's team of prosecutors, further confirming Jay Smith's charge of an SLOA conspiracy. The State's first witness of the day was James W. Ross, driver for Gus Martin's livery stable in DeRidder, who drove the carriage that took Emerson and other union members first to Carson then on to Grabeau. Leather Britches Smith and another union member had hidden guns that they wanted to take along. Emerson tried to dissuade them: "Boys, leave your guns behind; we have no use for them; we are going out to hold a nice, peaceable meeting."⁴¹ At Bon Ami, Ross said, when Emerson realized there was a chance that a confrontation would grow violent, he told his men, "Drive on, boys, these people are looking for trouble and we are not."⁴² Leather Britches Smith, armed with a shotgun and a six-shooter, said at one point, "We do not want any trouble, but if they start it we will end it."⁴³ Marzook Galloway, Sr., was superintendent of the Galloway Lumber company at the time of the trouble. Earlier, A. L. Emerson and Covington Hall had visited him

⁴⁰ Ibid. See also "Grabow Riot Described," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Friday, October 18. 1912.

⁴¹ "State's Witness Aids Grabow Men," the New Orleans Daily Picayune, Saturday, October 19, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

in his office, along with a committee of the BTW, including Fred Fisher, Jack Payne (or Gibbons), and a black ex-employee. The company declined to grant their demands. On Saturday, July 6, Galloway testified, a group of 12 to 16 armed men left the Santa Fe passenger train at Grabeau and gathered in the Cooley home nearby for a meeting that day.

Charles J. Daley, a machinist at Carson, with his wife and two children, had begun to drive away from Grabeau after a visit to Jim Galloway and his family, when the fight broke out at the office. "It looked like trouble and I turned the mule and started back to the Galloway home, driving between the commissary and office," he explained. "As I got near the office somebody shot from the vicinity of the crowd. It did not come from the office."⁴⁴ Then began a bizarre struggle to control the frightened mule. His wife grabbed him around the neck and screamed something about men shooting at the family, Daley testified. One child tried to get out one side of the buggy and the other out the other side. Then the mule tried to run away. Daley held his children under and between his legs, pushed his wife away, and managed to control the mule. As soon as he got the animal under control, he let him run around the office and back to Jim Galloway's house, staying there until his wife and baby calm down enough to go to DeRidder. Mrs. Daley told much the same story, and on cross examination denied that

⁴⁴ Ibid.

she told a group at the home of A. F. Baird in DeRidder on the day of the trouble that the first shot came from the company office.⁴⁵

Burns detectives, hired by M. L. Alexander for the SLOA, had begun to encounter resistance from potential witnesses, some even refusing to talk with them. Much of this reluctance to cooperate with private detectives, the Burns agency quickly traced back to the BTW and IWW organizers, which the detectives interpreted as illegal interference with a criminal investigation. They took their complaints to Sheriff Reid, who dispatched his deputies to arrest and jail Edward F. Dorée and C. L. Feligno of the IWW and Clarence Edwards of the BTW. By Wednesday, October 23, the three men were locked up in the parish jail. Newsmen speculated immediately that a sensation would result from the arrest of the union representatives for bribery and intimidation of witnesses. Burns detectives charged that Dorée and the others had encouraged witnesses to leave the state jurisdiction, causing added expense. Several union organizers, including Dorée, Feligno, ("alias C. T. Felig," the New Orleans correspondent wrote), and Edwards, had been employed to help defense attorneys collect evidence, in much the same way Burns detectives helped the prosecution. The Wobblies were, by definition, sensational. Dorée and Feligno, the reporter found, had traveled a great deal with the likes of Emma Goldman and Dr. Ben Reichman. Dorée came to Louisiana from Portland, Oregon, to help defend Emerson and the BTW. Feligno was an Italian and came from Chicago. Edwards, a meat cutter at Merryville, came to Calcasieu from

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* See also C. N. Adams, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, October 23, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 812, WHMC, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Oklahoma. He was a member of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers and helped in the defense of the case against Emerson. The faintly derogatory implication of the word, "alleged," marked the news reports of the trial and may have swayed the jurors had they read the accounts, which is not very likely.⁴⁶

In the courtroom that day, Arsène Pujo tried again to get into the record the testimony of witnesses to circumstantial evidence showing the attitude of unionists that would support the charge of conspiracy. George H. Sheets, a ferry operator on the Sabine River, was on the stand, when Pujo asked him what he was told on the day before the incident by Curt Bowers, a member of the BTW and a union participant at Grabeau. Hunter objected on the grounds that Emerson and his fellow defendants then on trial were neither present during the conversation nor approved of any of Bowers's statements. Congressman Pujo argued that only such evidence would prove a conspiracy. He said that, if the State were limited only to testimony of overt acts by union members, it would be impossible to establish a conspiracy. He wanted to give the jury otherwise insignificant facts that on reflection would prove a conspiracy. District Attorney Moore said that statements by anyone who knew what was going to happen should have been admitted into evidence, but the court sustained the defense objection and dismissed the

⁴⁶ "Charge Jury Tampering," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, October 24, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 814, WHMC. The editor who wrote the headline erred, not an uncommon event, in his interpretation of the narrative filed by his correspondent; intimidating or bribing witnesses is hardly jury tampering. See copy of the BTW circular entitled, "Impartial Justice," appealing for help in defending Dorée, Filigno, and Edwards, in LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 824, WHMC.

witness.⁴⁷ Denied the right to solicit such testimony, the prosecution returned to eye witnesses of the Grabeau incident. James C. Broxton, a company guard stationed at the planing mill along with Taylor Blackman, told about his going on duty at 5:50 p.m. on July 7, armed with a rifle and 51 cartridges, none of which he fired, possibly because a line of railway cars stood between the planing mill and the scene of the gunfight. Broxton did, however, testify that he could see the confrontation clearly because the freight cars were open, i.e. the doors were open on either side, permitting him to see through them. He stood in the planing mill 75 to 100 feet away. He swore that John Helton, one of the defendants, fired a double-barrel shotgun from behind a pine tree, testimony that brought a smile to Helton's face. Hunter, in cross examination, revealed that the defense would prove that Helton was not even in Grabeau at the time of the fight. Before he left the stand, Broxton denied that he had rehearsed his testimony with Burns detectives, although he admitted that he had visited the agency once or twice a day since the trial began. He also denied telling a man named McFellan while they shared a jail cell in July that he had "shot Alabama's wing off."⁴⁸

J. E. Kerr of DeRidder who had been woods foreman for the Galloway Lumber Company at the time of the gunfight at Grabeau testified that someone had set fire to a bridge on the company tram after the BTW called a strike at the mill. At the site, the foreman said, he found an axe, wood fuel, and lightwood splinters for kindling. The

⁴⁷ "Wants Broader Scope," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Thursday, October 24, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 814, WHMC.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

bridge had been completely destroyed. Fortunately, a neighbor warned Kerr of the fire and no one was hurt because of it. Kerr also implicated Covington Hall in the conspiracy, testifying that the IWW organizer had at a union meeting urged BTW members to use guns to win their strike against Galloway. Emerson, he said, had only defamed the mill owners at the same meeting. On cross examination, the defense succeeded in getting into the record accounts of the tinpanning Emerson and his men received at Carson and Bon Ami on the Sunday immediately before the incident at Grabeau. The lawyers also got prosecution witnesses to admit that Emerson had counseled peaceful picketing and speaking. D. H. Whitford of Carson, after he testified that the BTW entourage had guns among them, admitted he had taken part in tinpanning the union meetings. The union members called the workers scabs and cursed them, Whitford swore. But on cross-examination, the reporter said, the witness admitted participating in the tinpan reception of the union men the previous Sunday. Whitford said he was just having a little fun but admitted he knew of plans to give the unionists a noisy reception if they came there. Anthony Gisch of Carson, in charge of hiring for 4 C, said the union men threatened the company tin pan reception committee with violence but admitted that Emerson told the union men to keep the peace. Gisch took part in tinpanning the union meetings a week before the Grabeau incident and followed the BTW parade to Bon Ami, "beating on a wash boiler." He said he did not know until afterwards that the men had a right to use the public road for a meeting. He admitted belonging to the Good Citizens League, a nonunion organization at Carson and elsewhere in the district, and declared it was formed by men who wished to work and wanted the

mills to keep running. He denied any guns had been distributed at Carson on the Sunday of the Grabow riot. Two men among the BTW paraders got out of a wagon on the way to Grabeau to retrieve two shotguns hidden in the roadside bushes, R. E. Hill of DeRidder testified, but he added that Emerson told them to put the guns down. After the shootout, E. B. Wyrick saw Emerson and a man named Golden drive away from Grabeau. Emerson had exchanged his coat with another man, apparently as a disguise that did not work very well. H. F. Adams, who ran a livery stable in DeRidder, rented two surreys and a team and wagon to the union for the trip to Grabeau. One of the horses was wounded in the gunfight, but its owner recovered it later, apparently not seriously harmed.⁴⁹

Finally, the prosecution called its principal witness, L. T. Mabry, a Burns detective and a former McCain operative, working out of Dallas, Texas. Mabry, an experienced millwright, joined the BTW in Calcasieu parish, became an organizer for the union, and served as doorkeeper for the Brotherhood's second convention in Alexandria in May 1912. Arsène Pujo had hoped to use Mabry's testimony to prove a conspiracy at Grabeau among union supporters, asking the detective to describe the use of dynamite in a strike at Warren, Texas, and other violence at West Lake, Louisiana, allegedly perpetrated by members of the BTW. Defense counsel objected, and the judge sequestered the jury while lawyers argued the merits. The prosecution worked to gain the latitude to present circumstances that would prove the conspiracy, and the defense contested it at every point. Judge Overton severely limited the prosecution's ability to

⁴⁹ Ibid.

present evidence of a general conspiracy, although he agreed to permit Pujo to put before the jury any testimony that showed any of the accused had conspired before their incarceration. Mabry's testimony about violence in Texas and Louisiana was effectively ruled out. Pujo stated the case succinctly. The prosecution had clearly shown the attitude of union members at Grabeau, how some of them had been armed, and that Vincent had died in the gun battle on July 7. The prosecution had presented evidence that members of the BTW had marched to Grabeau to close the Galloway Lumber Company plant. But Pujo knew, also, that such evidence would not be enough to convince the jury of Emerson's guilt of murder and conspiracy. He wanted to be able to show that the BTW meant to destroy the plant, by dynamiting if necessary, to win the right to dictate wages and working conditions in the piney woods. He wanted to prove that the union leadership preached violence in private although they prayed for peace in public. Judge Overton interrupted to ask if the State was prepared to show that Emerson or any of the defendants had participated in dynamiting. After studying his notes, Pujo said that he had no evidence that Emerson knew or approved of a dynamiting plot, but that he had agreed to other forms of violence.⁵⁰

District Attorney Moore joined in the argument. Even if the unionists went to the Galloway mill only with a contingency in mind, but with weapons, and that contingency presented opportunity, and men were killed, then they are guilty of conspiracy. He said that he was entitled to show that the BTW taught violence as a practice in the inner circle

⁵⁰ "Detective Put On Stand," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Friday, October 25, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 814, WHMC.

of the union. Hunter answered that Emerson was the only man the prosecution wanted to convict. He asserted that violent talk would not make the defendants guilty of murder. The defendants could not be held responsible for what was said or done by others out of their presence. Judge Overton ruled that, had Moore produced evidence connecting the defendants with the dynamiting in Texas, it might have been admissible, but since the prosecution could not show such evidence, he would sustain Hunter's objection. He added, however, that the district attorney could place in evidence proof that union leaders advised violence and that members used violence in closing other mills. Whether Emerson and his associates acted lawfully, only the jury could determine. The judge added that he wanted the prosecution to show that the defendants were connected directly with any circumstantial evidence admitted under the ruling. The prosecutors claimed that they were extremely pleased with the ruling, but it effectively ended any chance they might have had to prove their conspiracy theory.⁵¹

Mabry told the court that Covington Hall and W. D. Haywood attended the second convention of the BTW. Haywood spoke of the use of tactics, which he denied meant violence but rather that workers should use techniques to slow down the job, disabling machinery, cutting logs shorter than required, putting abrasives in lubricants, loosening bolts, removing nuts and carrying them away, driving spikes into trees and logs, and cutting power belts in the mills. The BTW convention decided to keep their tactics secret, which must have been one of the most incompetent efforts ever undertaken, because the newspapers of the period often published accounts of such talk

⁵¹ Ibid.

incessantly. The judge permitted testimony about the BTW convention as it informed the jury only about the attitude of Emerson and Ed Lehman, the only two defendants present. Mabry also testified that Lehman told him that the wrong man was in jail, because he had carried the shotgun loaded with buckshot that killed Vincent. Lehman, the detective testified, said the union group had enough guns but not enough ammunition.⁵²

The next day, the prosecution called its last important witness, F. N. Harrell, a Burns detective who had infiltrated the BTW. The New Orleans correspondent compared Harrell's testimony with dime novel fiction. Born in New Orleans, this 46-year-old former traveling salesman for the American Tobacco Company, had worked briefly as paymaster for the Morely Cypress Company. He joined the Burns agency in June 1912, moved to Merryville, Louisiana, where he joined the local BTW lodge on June 19. The agency instructed him to report any plots to do violence against life or property. At a union rally at Merryville on June 3, at which both W. D. Haywood and A. L. Emerson spoke, Harrell heard the BTW president call for volunteers to go to Grabeau on July 6 to take part in a demonstration. At a private meeting with participants, Emerson said 50 men planned to go to Grabeau from Merryville, to take this "opportunity to finish the business they had with the Grabow people; he put it that way. He said, too, that there were things he didn't like to tell them himself, but that 'Billy' Haywood would tell them.

⁵² Ibid.

He called Haywood down there. Among other things Haywood said, 'tie tin cans to the dogs' tails,' then he used some unprintable language, 'and see them run.'⁵³

On Saturday evening, July 6, 1912, Harrell took the night train to Grabeau. Charles "Leather Britches" Smith came over from Kirbyville, Texas. From Merryville, there were Will Goodman, L. F. Johnson, Charles Genis, George Monk, and defendants Dock Haven and Lewis Brown. Charles Jones and defendant Ed Ezell met the group at Grabeau. That evening, Harrell went to a secret meeting of the Grabeau lodge in a schoolhouse about two miles from the mill. Charles Jones announced to the meeting that members of the Merryville lodge had come to offer help to the Grabeau lodge. Haven repeated the offer. On the road after the meeting, members talked about what to do about the situation at the mill. Leather Britches Smith wanted to destroy the mill by fire or any other means, he testified. Dock Havens suggested the use of tactics, said the witness, which meant doing anything to shut down the mill. Putting spikes in logs and corundum in bearings was suggested. At DeRidder the next day, Emerson told his group that they were going to Carson and Bon Ami to speak publicly and that they did not intend to start trouble, but if the mill men wanted trouble they would be ready. Harrell boarded a wagon along with Emerson, Haven, Lehman, Lewis Brown, and about 20 more men. He said he saw two guns in the wagon, and that two men joined the group on the way with guns. Emerson tried to get them to put their guns down, but they refused. Exasperated, he washed his hands of the problem. As far as he cared, the men

⁵³ "Tells Thrilling Story," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Saturday, October 26, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 814, WHMC.

could shoot if they wanted to take the responsibility. Lehman had a gun hidden under a canvas on the trip. When Emerson opened his grip to get out a bottle of petroleum jelly to grease the squeaking wheels of the wagon, Harrell saw he carried a pistol.⁵⁴

At Grabeau, Harrell stepped down from the wagon and stood beside it. Haven spoke first, saying they had come to Grabeau to shut the mill. Someone asked how the union would do it. Emerson interrupted: he wanted to answer the question. Harrell did not recall Emerson's next words, because some company men who had been arguing on the commissary steps ran toward the office. Harrell said that Leather Britches Smith called out that the mill men had gone for their guns. Then someone fired a shot directly in front of him. A few seconds later, general firing began. Either Uriah Martin or L. F. Johnson, BTW members, fired the first shot, he said. Lewis Brown stood in the wagon aiming a pistol at the office when a shot cut him down. Ed Lehman aimed a shotgun at the office. Harrell saw a man standing in the door of the office. As Lehman fired, the man in the door fell forward. He seemed to recover briefly, but then another shot hit him, and he fell back into the office. Harrell remained at the wagon only for a short time, he testified. He did not know what Emerson did in the meanwhile. To find safety, Harrell hid behind the commissary, staying until a cross fire developed threatening his position. He moved away from the scene to the safety of box cars spotted on the mill spur. He saw Emerson and Charley Deany there, he said. Emerson was reloading his pistol. Shooting started from near the planer, and Emerson moved away

⁵⁴ Ibid.

with Harrell and Deany following. Emerson told him that he meant to hide out in the woods until it was safe to leave.⁵⁵

Harrell made his way back to DeRidder and found lodging in the hotel room occupied by Lehman; in fact, they slept in the same bed that night. Lehman, Harrell swore, told him he had shot Vincent. Under cross examination, Harrell denied that he had taken an oath when he joined the BTW, admitting, however, that he too had an alias, Harry Thomas. He had not been indicted for any crime, he testified. He had earlier written to Jay Smith in Alexandria that Harrell would be arrested if Smith divulged his name. He wrote the letter, he said, as a ruse. The defense produced a signed statement by Harrell given to Charles Klein, one of the defense attorneys, while Harrell was under arrest shortly after the shootout. As Klein's questions were read, he said each of his answers were untrue. He denied being armed at Grabeau and of running away when the fight started. Firing from the planing mill actually came from Ed Lehman, L. F. Johnson, and other BTW members, he testified. The company men in the office fired ten or twelve times, he said. Emerson had offered, he said, to testify that Harrell had no gun with him in the wagon on the way to Grabeau, although the union president could not remember Harrell being there.⁵⁶

The State rested its case at mid-morning on Saturday, October 26, after calling D. W. McFatter, Grabeau postmaster and office manager for the Galloway Lumber Company, who corroborated testimony of John Galloway and other prosecution

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

witnesses. In his account of the court proceedings that day, the correspondent paused to recapitulate: "In its case the State has presented a dozen or more witnesses who have sworn absolutely that the first shot was fired from the union crowd by a man near the wagon from which Emerson was speaking. One witness has sworn that Uriah Martin fired the first shot, anot[h]er that it was either Martin or a man standing beside him."⁵⁷ Some witnesses said that the trip to Grabeau was planned in advance. A Burns detective became a member of the union's leadership and testified that violence was planned. The question the jury had to decide was who told the truth. Prosecution and defense theories contradicted each other throughout the trial. Witnesses swore to contradictory sets of circumstances and events. The state took nearly two weeks, and the reporter predicted the defense would need four days to a week. The rebuttal would occupy several days. The State's circumstantial evidence required much more time to present than the case of the defense, composed almost altogether of direct evidence. The prosecution had promised a surprise during its rebuttal.⁵⁸

The defense then called D. W. Ellis as its first witness, who said he went to Grabeau on July 7, in a buggy. Emerson spoke about unionism, an ordinary sort of talk. When he decided to move on from Carson because of local hostility, Emerson invited the crowd to go to DeRidder. Ellis swore that John Galloway fired the first shot of the battle from the office door as Emerson attempted to speak at Grabeau. There was no disturbance in Emerson's wagon at the time, he said. Four men fired from the office,

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

two or three from under it, and another from the west side of the commissary next door. Under cross examination, he repeated his assertion that John Galloway opened the office door and that other company men followed him inside before the shooting began. Wiley Green, an elderly farmer, took the stand. He had been at Grabeau during the gunfight and was indicted along with Emerson and the others for murder. He told the court that Emerson insisted that some of the union men leave their guns at home because they did not want to have any trouble. Uriah Martin and B. H. Havard, he said, had settled their quarrel before the trouble started, but John Galloway approached the office door with a rifle. Green took cover behind a wagon, and a moment later Galloway fired from the office, followed by two more shots. E. Bryant, a logger and BTW member at DeRidder, said Emerson told the crowd to behave, and if anybody started anything the troubles would be on their own heads. They did not stop at Bon Ami that Sunday but moved on to Carson, because Bon Ami was not friendly. At Grabeau, Emerson began to speak: "I hear the boys over there asking how we're going to shut down these mills. I'll tell you how, by organizing these men and calling them out," the witness swore. "At that four or five men on the commissary porch walked rapidly to the office, and two of them came out with guns. One fired and then the other. Lewis Brown, who was standing in the speaker's wagon, dropped at either the first or second shot,"⁵⁹ he said.

On Monday, October 28, the defense continued to call its list of witnesses, several of whom were women and girls who had been caught in the cross fire at Grabeau. S.

⁵⁹ "Defense Shows Its Hand," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Sunday, October 27, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 814, WHMC, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

O. Cooley, a farmer living near the mill, testified that he had John Helton, one of the defendants, and J. D. Golden of DeRidder as guests for supper Sunday evening while the BTW demonstration was underway. The three men watched the fighting from a nearby railroad track. Cooley directly contradicted witnesses for the State who testified that Helton took an active part in the affray. One of the State's witnesses, Jim Whiddon, was under indictment for a robbery, a charge preferred by Cooley. Prosecutors tried to break Cooley's testimony but failed, although the New Orleans correspondent thought Arsène Pujo had forced him to make damaging admissions. Golden corroborated Cooley's testimony. The best witnesses for the defense were several women who were in the union crowd during the demonstration and gunfight. Christine and Nannie Cooley, both members of the BTW since the union had voted to accept women to membership at the May convention in Alexandria, corroborated their father's and Golden's testimony. Dolores Lebleu, 20-year-old daughter of Cayo Lebleu, one of the BTW men indicted for murder, and a member of the BTW, accompanied Emerson on his trek from DeRidder, to Bon Ami, Carson, and finally to Grabeau. She said that she, several women, and their children were standing near the scene of the battle, within easy range of rifles and other guns when the gunfight began. "The shooting began in the mill office," she testified. "Someone said, 'Watch out, boy, they're going after their guns!'"⁶⁰ First, two shots were fired from the office, then the shooting became general. She said she did not

⁶⁰ "Girls Members of Union Aid Grabow Case Defense," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, October 29, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 815, WHMC, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

see who fired the first shots from the office, and that she did not hear a pistol shot from the union crowd.

"Did any shots come close to you?" Mr. Cline asked.

"One of 'em like [lacked] to have shot my nose off," the girl replied.

"How did you know it came so near?"

"Why, it whistled right across my face."⁶¹

She saw no firing from the planing mill, she testified. Eight or ten women came with the union demonstrators. "Mrs. Burge and Mrs. Johnson were near me. Mrs. Foley was in the wagon with me."⁶² When the shooting started, the women jumped from the wagons and ran away. "Bullets whistled all around them as they heard the rattle of a hundred rifle shots,"⁶³ the New Orleans correspondent wrote. Next, the defense called 13-year-old Minnie Tilly. She said that on Saturday, July 6, she and her uncle Len Tilly attempted to go to the commissary but Martin M. Galloway turned them away. Asked what Galloway said to them, Minnie said he had a gun and yelled for them to leave, or he would shoot them. Flora Bailey who lived a mile west of Grabeau then testified that Leather Britches Smith gave a gun to Andy Denby for protection just before the trouble started. Claude Peyton, another BTW member who was in the crowd with Emerson, testified that the first shot came from the Galloway office. Later he saw shots fired from Zook Galloway's house and from the lumber yard to the rear of the office. The defense set great store by the danger the lumbermen exposed women and children to in the

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

gunfight. Only one of the Galloway boys was known to have sustained a wound. Defense lawyers sought to demonstrate that unionists fired only in defense of their own lives and of their wives and children. Already, the defense had leaked to the press its confidence in acquittal for their clients. Prosecutors, however, said they had made a good case against the nine defendants and that they were prepared "to spring some additional sensational evidence with new witnesses in rebuttal."⁶⁴

E. G. Hunter, chief defense counsel, narrowed the scope of the trial to only two issues, first that the trek to Grabeau had not been planned or foreseen by the BTW, and second that the first shots of the gunfight had been fired by company gunmen from the safety of the Galloway office. On Tuesday, October 29, six more defense witnesses swore under oath that the first shots came from the office, and one of them identified John H. Galloway, son of the president of the Galloway Lumber Company, as the man who fired the first shot. Still another witness testified that he heard John Galloway say on Saturday evening July 6, that union speakers would not talk in Grabeau until he ran out of bullets. Eight of the nine witnesses, however, were BTW members.⁶⁵

Finally, the defense began to call as witnesses for the nine defendants now on trial their fellow prisoners in the Lake Charles jail. Here, the lack of foresight by prosecutors became abundantly clear. The wholesale arrest of participants in the Grabeau

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, October 30, 1912; "Defense Makes Headway," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Wednesday, October 30, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 815, WHMC, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

demonstration provided the defense with at least 58 self-interested witnesses without their having to call a single defendant to testify in his own defense. Hunter had identified the central issues, which witness after witness supported with a litany of innocence. Defense lawyers let newspaper reporters assume that all 54 prisoners and several defendants would testify. The prisoners refused to deviate from the defense theory of the riot, the reporter wrote. All of them went to Galloway's mill accidentally. The first shots came from the mill office. None of them had fired a shot. One did admit he had a revolver. The defense dwelled on the fact of their long confinement for something they had not done. Albert Cooley, sixteen years old, a resident of Grabeau, and a member of the BTW, took the stand in the morning of Wednesday, October 30, to swear that Ed Ezell had not killed Uriah Martin or wounded the bystander Bud Hickman. G. M Green, a farmer and prisoner; J. W. Bowers, a prisoner; Robert Parham, a prisoner; Dane Parrish; Archie Thomson; Thomas Cryer; and J. D. Bland, constable at Ludington followed Cooley to the stand. They offered nothing new.⁶⁶

Next day the defense called P. A. Clark, chairman of the Merryville lodge of the BTW, who testified that Emerson never announced a union gathering at Grabeau; rather he announced a meeting in Carson to hear H. G. Creel speak. As it turned out a hotel keeper in Oakdale tried to kill Creel a few days earlier, and the radical writer quickly followed Big Bill Haywood back north to safety. Emerson then decided to take Creel's

⁶⁶ C. N. Adams, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, October 31, 1912; "Prisoners Put On Stand," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, October 31, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 816, WHMC, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

place as speaker at the meeting planned for Carson. The union president had told listeners after the Haywood speech at Merryville that anyone who could not get a ride any other way could go to Grabeau by train Saturday night, spend the night with some of the BTW members there, then walk to Carson Sunday morning. Emerson, Clark swore, said nothing about 50 volunteers for the meeting at Grabeau, directly contradicting T. N. Harrell, the Burns detective who testified to his membership in the BTW. W. R. Briggs, the livery stable operator who had testified about technical points for the State, corroborated Clark's testimony completely, after he was called for the defense. On cross examination, he denied that Emerson had said anything in his Merryville speech about the strike at Grabeau as Harrell had testified. J. N. Phillips, was elected chairman of the Carson meeting, he testified, and Emerson and Lehman as speakers, the only actions taken at the secret meeting at Merryville. Just before noon on October 31, Hunter asked for a recess. When court reconvened in the afternoon, the defense abruptly rested. Afterward, Arsène Pujo put only two witnesses on the stand despite his claims to the newspapers earlier that he would have several surprise rebuttal witnesses with startling revelations. Martin M. Galloway swore he had fired no guns during the incident at his mill and said he had not cursed Lem and Minnie Tilly the day before the gunfight. His brother, Marzook Galloway, Sr., took the stand to deny that he had fired a weapon during the Grabeau incident. With that the State rested. After a conference of the lawyers for both sides, the court announced that each would have ten hours in which to develop their arguments in summation. Each of the defense lawyers planned to make statements, but Hunter would deliver the main argument. District

Attorney Moore planned to close for the State. Arsène Pujo began the State's summation, however, speaking until adjournment at 5 p.m. The prosecution depended upon constructive conspiracy for its case against Emerson and his associates.⁶⁷

By 10 a.m. on November 1, there was only standing room left in the courtroom, which as the day wore on accommodated many spectators. By noon, the prosecution had completed its summation, and when the court reconvened in the afternoon, Jerry D. Cline opened arguments for the defense. Methodically, the lawyer restated the defense theory: the Grabeau visit was not premeditated; Emerson had counseled peaceful demonstrations; most testimony at the trial demonstrated that the first shot of the gun battle came from company men hidden in the office. U. A. Bell, another defense attorney, took up the argument for a defense of each of the defendants as individuals. Nothing presented to the court, he argues, would justify holding any one of the nine now on trial. F. H. Jackson, a DeRidder lawyer and the youngest of the defense team, argued the side issues. "Judge" A. B. Hundley of Alexandria spoke last on Friday, attacking the credibility of the State's witnesses, showing them to be in conflict with other testimony. Hundley would continue the next morning, followed by Hunter. Correspondents said the court expected the case to go to the jury before noon the next day, Saturday, November 2.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ C. N. Adams, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, November 1, 1912, enclosing clipping of "Stop Taking Evidence," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Friday, November 1, 1912, in LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 816, WHMC, and in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁸ C. N. Adams, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, November 2, 1912; "Jury To Get Case Today," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Saturday, November 2, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 816, WHMC, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Judge Overton began his instructions to the jury about 2:30 p.m. and the jury retired to deliberate an hour later. After another hour, the jury returned to hand the court its decision. The clerk read the verdict: not guilty. There was no noise or demonstration. Arthur L. Emerson, 32 years old, single, Alexandria; Counsely "Dock" Havens, 29, single, a log cutter, Merryville; Jack Payne, alias Charles Gibbon, 46, single, log cutter, DeRidder; William A. Chatman, 46, single, log cutter, DeRidder; F. Edward Ezell, 40, log cutter, married, Merryville; Jack H. C. Helton, 36, married, a barber, DeRidder; Louis G. Brown, 29, single, log cutter, Merryville, and Edward Lehman, 28, single, log cutter, DeRidder were freed after nearly four months in jail. The District Attorney, responding to Judge Overton's order at the beginning of the trial, moved for dismissal of the indictment against others charged with Emerson in the Grabeau incident, which freed 43 more of the prisoners. Charges remained against Andy Denby, Henry Simpson, Alf Berge, Robert Berge, Bud Stacey, C. S. Deeny, and Helton, charged with robbing Willis Grantham, deputized guard at Grabeau, of his gun during the incident at the mill town. Helton, one of those acquitted of murder, was later admitted to bail on the robbery charge. The sheriff released 52 prisoners from the jail. When Emerson emerged, a crowd surrounded him and held a celebration. Later he talked with newspaper reporters. "Throughout the entire proceedings," he said, "I felt that it was all a huge farce. They had trumped up the charges against us and put every union man they could find into jail."⁶⁹ He said he had been confident throughout that

⁶⁹ "Union Men Plan New Fight Now After They Are Freed," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Sunday, November 3, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 816, and Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

he and his associates would be promptly acquitted by the jury. The lumbermen wanted him and his men jailed because he had planned a strike for all the mills along the KCS. The SLOA was desperate, he said, so its leaders manufactured charges against scores of innocent men. The other defendants would either become BTW organizers, Emerson said, or go back to work, probably at Merryville. Actually, his time in jail had left Emerson behind the times. Park was no longer entirely sympathetic with the union and had been making plans to abandon the union shop in exchange for SLOA support in a fight with the BTW. Meanwhile, the prisoner release continued. C. F. Dorée, described by Burns detectives as a bomb thrower, stood in a barred window on the ground floor of the jail, a bright red tie showing through the bars, shaking hands with departing prisoners, while above him on the second floor, a chorus of black prisoners sang spirituals. It was a moving scene, lavishly described, not to say embroidered, by newsmen for an avid readership. That evening released prisoners and about 200 friends gathered in the union hall where Emerson, Covington Hall, and Ed Fussell spoke to a cheering crowd. Lumber mill operators were not at all impressed with the quality of justice in the Lake Charles courtroom. One operator told reporters he would double his seven-man guard force at his mill, fearing further trouble for the next ten years. Newsmen calculated that at least 500 spectators crowded the courtroom for the final day, all of whom were connected with the lumber industry by blood or trade. Two-thirds were members of families of the defendants. Prosecutors claimed that civilized society was in danger of being overrun by criminals. Bloodshed and disorder would follow the acquittal. Defense attorneys ridiculed the prosecution theory and asserted that conviction

of the defendants was just and a guarantee to free men that they could not be denied free speech and self defense. As it would turn out, both sides were wrong.⁷⁰

At the end of October, C. D. Johnson, president of the SLOA, informed members that the association would continue the assessment on October production at the same rate, 7.5 cents per Mbf, log measure. At least two-thirds of this contribution by operating sawmills would be used to pay for the prosecution of Emerson and his BTW activists, particularly the retainer paid to private detective agencies and to several lawyers. Some of these otherwise hardheaded businessmen must have wondered whether the cost was justified by the results. Alexander hastened to put as good a face on his defeat in Lake Charles as he possibly could. The day after the decision he told Johnson and through him the leaders of the industry that the court decision was unfortunate and a miscarriage of justice. It was likely, however, that the BTW had learned a salutary lesson, which would give the union pause in the future. Emerson and his attorneys returned to Alexandria Sunday, November 3, expecting to be met by congratulations but were disappointed after a meeting scheduled for the Rapides Parish Courthouse failed to attract more than a few people. Emerson doubtless would hold a meeting shortly, Alexander speculated, to give a forum for self-congratulations. The union president claimed victory in the courtroom meant victory in union organization, and that he would

⁷⁰ Ibid.

begin immediately holding meetings at Merryville and DeRidder to plan for a membership drive.⁷¹

Johnson wired SLOA members on Tuesday, November 5, that the association would hold a general meeting at the Jefferson Hotel in St. Louis that Friday. Willard Warren, writing to his father-in-law in Seattle, said that workmen no longer migrated to the area for work. Those who left were sorely missed, he added. The 4 L Company was short of men, but with the winter coming on, he had breathing space, but in the spring when the men could attend open-air meetings, the union might get a new start, and organize a new strike. All was not lost, however. Merryville's plant had changed hands. Sam Park had sold his interest to the majority stockholders, the Santa Fe people. The railroad management wanted the SLOA to run it or shut it down. Warren seems not to have recognized the significance of the development, but it spelled the end of the BTW and its affiliation with the IWW. To Captain White, Warren still expressed a deep pessimism: "I suppose you know that the union men were acquitted at Lake Charles by the jury. it is a gross miscarriage of justice and I expect we will have hot times by and by."⁷²

⁷¹ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to Members, SLOA, October 31, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, November 3 and 4, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 816, WHMC.

⁷² W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, November 5, 1912, Box 8979-84; Warren to O. W. Fisher, Seattle, Washington, November 5, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

When jailed employees of the American Lumber Company and those who had testified for the defense in Lake Charles returned to their homes in Merryville, they learned that their friend Sam Park had abandoned them and that their jobs were forfeit. In fact, they found that all members of the BTW were being systematically fired and forced from their homes in the company town. Now known as the National Industrial Union of Forest and Lumber Workers, the union local ordered a strike of its 1,300 members at Merryville on November 11. The American Lumber Company had closed its mills on the previous Monday, and the Santa Fe would get rid of all the union workers. A strike might be good, Warren said, because it would deprive union members of money to donate to Emerson and his union organizers. The BTW would undoubtedly lose the strike, further damaging the union. It was already broke and in debt to its lawyers, he said, despite fundamental sympathy among people throughout the lumber district. Sympathy was difficult to gauge and to overcome, he said. Nevertheless, the Board of Governors had conferred with Judge John W. Terry of the Santa Fe in DeRidder and Houston about the future of Merryville. The meeting in Houston of the Louisiana and Texas Boards of Governors opened with Frank Bonner in the chair. After a discussion of the application of the American Lumber Company for membership in the SLOA, S. T. Woodring offered a resolution:

RESOLVED, that a Committee of two be chosen from the membership of the Executive Committee and two from the membership of the Louisiana Board of Governors be appointed by the chairman to confer with Judge J. W. Terry, representing the American Lbr. Co., at Houston, Tuesday, Nov. 19th, with the end in view of reaching an agreement with reference to the handling of the Merryville situation and that the Committee so appointed be clothed with authority to make an agreement binding the Southern Lbr. Operators' Association.

The Committee appointed to confer on the subject being C. D. Johnson, J. H. Kirby, M. L. Fleishel and L. F. Haslam.⁷³

Representing the Louisiana Board of Governors were Fleishel, Woodring, R. M. Hallowell, J. M. Morrison, Slagle, and Haslam, along with Alexander; for the Texas Board of Governors, B. F. Bonner, Howard Davis, and George A. Kelley. Also present at the meeting were Kirby, Weiner, Vidor, Walker, Morris, Kurth, Peters, Martin, Myer, Weir, and others from Texas, and Prickett, Smith, Warren, Ryder, and Reynolds of Louisiana.⁷⁴

The new management of the American Lumber Company in Merryville, Alexander wrote, meant to run the mills without union participation at any level. The company fenced its property and increased the number of guards. Governor Hall was quoted by the state's daily newspapers asserting his determination "to see that law and

⁷³ "Minutes of Meeting of the Louisiana and Texas Boards of Governors of the Southern Lumber Operators' Association at Houston, Texas," November 16, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* See also Dubofsky, *IWW*, p. 218; W. W. Warren, Fisher Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, November 13, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA. The union circular Warren sent to Fisher was probably entitled, "They Will die!" and appealed in graphic terms for help in defending the Grabeau defendants. "They have been guilty of the crime of crimes in the eyes of the Southern Oligarchy -- they have led a revolt against peonage and they have sought to organize all the Workers in the Lumber Industry into One Big Union, regardless of the race, creed or nationality. For two long years they have stood in the vanguard of the battle, have led the regiments of labor that were blazing freedom's pathway through the jungles of the South." The circular charged the lumbermen with keeping hired gunmen, with overlooking John Williams's attempted assassination of George Creel, with murder, with suppressing law and order, free speech, free assembly, all civil rights, and all constitutional guarantees. See copy in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

order prevail and that life and property is protected,"⁷⁵ which seriously questioned the Governor's neutrality, particularly after he appointed Alexander to the Conservation Commission in New Orleans. When the Santa Fe bought Sam Park out at Merryville, Governor Hall had sent the State militia to cow the union men but the town was so quiet that he recalled the troops. On the first day after the strike began, only 38 out of 719 employees reported for work at the plant.⁷⁶ Meanwhile, C. D. Johnson called a general meeting of the SLOA for Chicago on Tuesday, December 3. Alexander, still in Alexandria, reported to Johnson on November 26, that he had made the necessary arrangements for moving the clearing house offices to New Orleans by the first of December, the better for him to manage the affairs of both the lumbermen and the state administration. He had rented quarters in Room 712 of the Whitney Bank. Otherwise, very little activity was being undertaken by the union, in part because Emerson had been sick at his home in Alexandria, a condition he claimed was the result of long confinement in the Lake Charles jail. Since the sale of the American Lumber Company to the Santa Fe Railroad, the union moved The Merryville Times to Alexandria where Covington Hall would edit it under the new name, The Lumberjack, the official organ of the timber workers affiliate of the IWW. Dorée, released from confinement in the Lake Charles jail, had begun to hold regular organizational meetings at Merryville and DeRidder. The lockout of the Merryville plant, Alexander speculated, had been a severe blow to the

⁷⁵ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, November 18, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Seattle, Washington, November 19, 1912, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

union. In addition, Alexander's auditor had acquired a complete list of the employees of the American Lumber Company, which he made a part of the blacklist. Mill managers made good use of the list. C. E. Slagle, for example, sent a copy of it, based on the November pay roll in Merryville, to H. P. Minard, superintendent at Standard, Louisiana, instructing him to "keep this list before you, and if any of that Company's employees apply for a place, you will know by consulting this list whether or not he was a union man."⁷⁷

At the end of the first week in December, the Union still held out at Merryville, although the company had run its planing mill without any trouble from the workers who had been locked out. When the company began its logging operations and started its sawmill, Alexander expected opposition from the timber workers. IWW organizers had held daily meetings in Merryville to keep the striking workers' courage as high as possible, but still a great many--black and white--had left because they had become discouraged. Emerson, Alexander reported, was out of the hospital and expected to go to Merryville. About all the unionists could accomplish at the time was to distribute IWW literature and make appeals for funds. A week later, the Executive Committee of the union met at Alexandria on a Saturday, but could do nothing because Emerson was sick again, this time in Merryville. The committee postponed its deliberations until Monday, December 16. The full membership of the committee attended. The IWW ran

⁷⁷ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to H. P. Minard, Standard, Louisiana, November 30, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, File 824, WHMC. See also C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to members, SLOA, November 22, 1912, and M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to Johnson, November 26, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

the organization now, Alexander pointed out, and Emerson had been reduced in status to chief organizer for the Industrial Union of Forest and Lumber Workers. The union's finances were not in good shape, and the Merryville strike was a severe drain on their human and financial resources. At Merryville, the planing mill ran without reference to the union, employing from 50 to 60 men. The plant was well guarded, which gave the union some grounds to charge the company with peonage in one of its more flamboyant circulars. It reached print in the New Orleans papers and was distributed widely in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Texas. When the Merryville plant came to open its sawmill, Alexander recommended that it only start with a loyal crew who meant to continue running. The association could not afford the bad publicity of a retreat.⁷⁸

The union's Executive Committee met for three days, from December 14 through 16, at the Alexandria headquarters. The union gave Emerson a leave of absence with pay to go to the Tennessee mountains to recover his health. He retained the position of chief organizer of the IWW affiliate and planned to take up the organization of Arkansas, South Louisiana, and Mississippi on his return. An attempt to raise his salary failed. The union's audited books showed less than \$1,000 in the treasury, much less than its debts, particularly the money its owed its lawyers for defending the Grabeau strikers. The balance due the lawyers was put at about \$7,500, representing the second half of the account. Ed Fussell resigned as vice president, and Jay Smith, along with Covington Hall, appeared to take charge of the day-to-day operations under the overall direction of

⁷⁸ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, December 9 and 16, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

the IWW. To meet the expenses of the Merryville strike, the union dispatched representatives to solicit funds in New Orleans, Shreveport, Lake Charles, and Alexandria, Louisiana, and Beaumont, Houston, Galveston, and San Antonio, Texas. Adherents of the Socialists, the IWW, and the BTW had begun to compete for dominance, and "this friction between the orders is losing many members for the B.T.W. and I.W.W." Alexander expressed himself "fairly well pleased with the situation at this time and feel that we are working along the right lines."⁷⁹

⁷⁹ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, December 22, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

**THE CLAN OF TOIL:
PINEY WOODS LABOR RELATIONS
IN THE TRANS-MISSISSIPPI SOUTH, 1880-1920
Volume 3**

A Dissertation

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

in

The Department of History

**by
John Reed Tarver
B.A., Louisiana State University, 1959
M.A., Northwestern State University of Louisiana, 1979
December 1991**

CHAPTER 11

Defeat at Merryville

Intellectuals felt good contemplating the handsome worker, healthy, strong, ready to remake the world. And now, as you've seen for yourself, workers exist, but not the working class.¹

To pass from the folk theater of the Grabeau trial to the Merryville strike was to move from fantasy to reality. In the meantime, the people of the piney woods created a new parish, called Beauregard for Louisiana's great Civil War soldier, General P.T.G. Beauregard. The people set up local governments and called the grand jury into session. DeRidder, the parish seat and an open town, was surrounded by lumber mills: Neame, Rosepine, Ludington, Fullerton, Cravens, Dido, Carson, Singer, Longville, Bon Ami, Grabeau, and Merryville, among others. On December 30, Judge Overton and District Attorney Edwards returned to Lake Charles from a trip to Merryville to inspect the American Lumber Company mills to determine whether the operators were in violation of the laws, particular those that prohibited peonage. Newspaper accounts of the strike had earlier described the labor situation as tense, but the judge disagreed. "I found no evidence of any bad intentions on the part of either side; the members of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers are peaceable and seem to desire no trouble, while nothing is being done by the mill men to bring about strife. The union people hold a meeting every day,

¹ Umberto Eco, Foucault's Pendulum translated by William Weaver (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989), p. 236.

in the afternoon, at the church, but the meetings are well regulated."² Overton and Edwards toured the planing mills and talked with some of the 175 non-union workers there. They worked behind a fence that enclosed the mill property, "but it is not a stockade with portholes [but] a low fence, for the ordinary protection of the mill property," the newspaper stringer wrote. The non-union workers denied that they wished to leave the mill or that they remained only through fear, a frequent charge made by the IWW, particularly by the union's editor, Covington Hall. In an article entitled "The Bullpen," published in The Lumberjack, Hall ridiculed the inspection tour and Judge Overton's conclusions. Illustrated by a photograph of the American Lumber Company mill, the fence, and a "scab" entering the compound in a cart drawn by a horse, the fence appears to have been rather high, about ten feet judging by the photograph. It was made of boards standing upright on palings, presenting a solid surface. Along the top of the wall, live electric wires suggested a stockade, Hall wrote. "This is the same stockade that the Capitalist press quoted Judge Overton and District Attorney Edwards as declaring did not exist, save in the fervid imagination of the strikers and their publicity agent. Inside this stockade were gathered the lowest of the earth, gunmen, prostitutes, scabs, suckers and blindtigers, and from it, in alliance with the 'Good Citizens League,' poured the brutish mob that was turned loose on the defenseless unionists of Merryville." He invited his readers to look again at the picture and to read the sworn statements of "outraged workers" and ask who lied: "The Merryville News (?) to whose editor we

² "All Quiet At Mills," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Wednesday, January 1, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

commend this sentence: 'And Judas went and hanged himself.'³ A master of invective, Hall obviously preached only to the converted.

Willard Warren expressed the feeling of most of his fellow lumbermen in early January when he urged the industry to utterly destroy the labor movement in its weakened state; otherwise spring and warm weather would revive the BTW in scores of open air meetings. As the weeks passed, however, he began to regain his usual confidence in the righteousness of his cause. The situation looked better by the third week in January than it had at any time since the union first organized in the piney woods. If lumber managers kept up their pressure on union members for a month or two, by spring it would be dead. Indeed, it quickly became apparent that the union had failed in its effort to organize the flatheads and millhands of the region; they would not soon return. Already, things had changed in the piney woods to the extent that managers and owners no longer had the privacy to conduct their affairs without government interference. In late January, the State Commissioner of Labor and Industrial Statistics, called on Warren for information about his company's business. The statisticians had caught up with the lumbermen, and things would never be the same again.⁴

The year 1913 opened with company and union forces still in their relative positions. Although the controversy continued, fewer people than ever before felt

³ "The Bullpen," The Lumberjack, March 1913, from microfilm collection of The Alexandria Daily Town Talk, Alexandria, Louisiana.

⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, San Francisco, California, January 8 and 21, 1913, Box 90; James Byrnes, New Orleans, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, January 24, 1913, Box 11268-54, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

personally concerned with the outcome. In the lumber towns, life went on despite the fears and frustrations of the managers. The SLOA periodically dispatched auditors to report on living and working conditions at its member mills. In January, Roy M. Lisso reported that Victoria, the smaller of the 4 L Company mills, employed 200 men, evenly divided between white and black workers.

Victoria Pay Scale

Average wages, all workers, daily	\$1.976
Common labor wages, daily	\$1.35 to \$2.00
Skilled labor wages, daily	\$2.50 to \$5.00
Head sawyer, daily	\$6.50
Filer, daily	\$9.50

They were paid monthly in cash, i.e. in currency. Black workers paid \$3 a month for a two-room house; \$4 for three rooms; \$5 for four rooms, the largest available in the "quarters." Whites paid \$3 for a two-room house; \$5 for three rooms; \$8 for four rooms; \$9 for five rooms; \$10 to \$12 for six rooms, the largest available in the white residential section of the town. There was no water works or electricity for the homes, although the mill had a stand pipe and electric lights. The commissary supplies were good, but so were prices. The company issued coupons in anticipation of earnings for workers to trade in the company store. The town did not employ a scavenger to care for the outdoor toilets, but the company supplied residents with free disinfectants. The doctor's monthly fee ranged from 75 cents to \$1.25 and covered all charges for visits and for drugs. A mile or so to the south, the railroad town of Provencal served the region as the principal depot and postoffice. The 4 L Company owned much of Provencal,

having acquired it by purchase along with a tract of timberland, but the village harbored a significant number of unionists. This pattern applied to most lumber companies, varying in size and conveniences but not in spirit.⁵ L. M. Wade, another SLOA auditor, had looked at Fisher with the same intensity. He found white men paying from \$2.50 to \$4.50 a month for a three-room house; \$6 to \$8 for four rooms; \$10 for five rooms; \$12 for six rooms. In the "negor quarters," families paid \$2.50 for two rooms; \$3 for three rooms; \$4 for four rooms; there were no larger houses for black workers. The company charged workers nothing for accident insurance, but single workers paid \$1 and married workers \$1.50 a month for medical and hospital attention; the company kept doctors on its staff. The company had recently completed construction of a large hospital building of several "large wards for white and black, male and female."⁶ Wade described the wards as "large and well ventilated and arrangements in every particular are first class."⁷ Patients at Victoria were transported aboard the work train to the hospital at Fisher when the need arose, he added. Houses in the white section of the town were screened, and a scavenger made regular rounds twice a month. Two hotels catered to white guests, charging \$6 to \$7 a week for room and board at one; \$4 to \$4.50 a week at the other. Black guests paid \$3.50 a week for room and board at the hotel reserved for them. Water for households and the offices and stores came from cisterns or surface

⁵ Roy M. Lisso, New Orleans, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, January 22, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶ L. M. Wade, New Orleans, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, August 26, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷ Ibid.

[shallow] wells. Most of the houses in the town were ceiled. The parish held schools in the town for white and black, male and female students, although the races were stringently segregated. The company operated "a moving picture show."⁸ By August 1913, at Victoria, the work force had grown to 275 men, 140 white and 135 black workers. The company paid accident insurance premiums, as it did for workers at Fisher. Costs of medical services were also the same. "I found on my inspection of white quarters at this plant that the houses were good and in good repair as a rule; they are all sealed [sic] and painted or practically all."⁹ Rent for houses had not changed, nor had the method of supplying water to homes and offices. Most of the houses were screened. The general sanitary condition of the white quarter was not good, he said. "I found the closets [toilets] were not very clean and quite a lot of tin cans and other refuse in streets and alleys and lots of weeds." He also "found the houses in negro quarters in fairly good repair, but sanitary conditions were not good." Water came from shallow wells. The hotel for black guests was not kept properly, he wrote. "The kitchen was not clean, nor were the sleeping rooms or grounds, including closet [toilet], which was in very unsanitary condition." He found the hotel for white employees below the average for cleanliness. He rated rooms only fairly clean, but the kitchen, pantry, outhouses, and yards were "very uninviting."¹⁰ The hotel was a large two story building and could have been, he said, a very attractive structure. He found a well at

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ L. M. Wade, New Orleans, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, August 27, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰ Ibid.

the hotel near open drainage from toilets. The water in the well stood about two feet below the surface and the well was about 8 feet lower than ground on which the closet stood.¹¹ Toilets used by workers at the sawmill planer was in unsatisfactory sanitary condition. There was still no scavenger employed at the plant. The company provided schools and churches for blacks and whites, he said. The hotel for whites where the office force dined was clean and neat, he noted. Commissary prices compared favorably with prices in nearby towns; the store supplied a number of country people, too.¹² Attractive surroundings and clean, sanitary conditions would, he said, attract better workers. What was more important, better health of the employees would foster efficiencies and reduce agitation and unrest. Labor conditions seemed good.¹³ Although they had been vilified and intimidated, the labor agitators had had their effect on the attitudes of the SLOA and its members. Such labor oriented inspections had never been countenanced before and would not be again until the State demanded the right to regulate sanitary conditions in the workplace.¹⁴

The American Lumber Company, as the new year opened, reported virtual victory in the strike of the timber workers at Merryville. "[W]e started the operation of the short side of the big mill on the 20th, this including the gang make the mill now in

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid. See also C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 2, 1913; Warren to Slagle, January 6, 1913, Box 90 Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

complete operation, with the sawmill and both planing mills with full crews as well as the logging front; from all appearances we have the strike won," new company officials wrote. "However, the strikers are still holding daily meetings but we are keeping a close watch on them. They are gradually dwindling in numbers. At this time everything seems favorable to us."¹⁵ The association, recognizing the opening of the non-union operation of the Merryville mills, settled on the Company payments under the SLOA trust fund for a 30-day shutdown, giving 20 percent in cash and the rest in notes to fall due over the first six months of 1913. It smacked of bribery, but no one complained. The settlement, C. D. Johnson explained, avoided heavy assessments against association mills during a single month. The receipts from the assessment of five cents per M, after several months, would retire all obligations. The total expenses of the association would not exceed \$4,000 a month. The National Industrial Union of Forest and Timber Workers, which succeeded the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, had lost ground, he said. It was heavily in debt to its attorneys and elected officers. The situation was more encouraging than it had been for two years, Johnson boasted. The union would not likely improve its standing anywhere west of the Mississippi River, he said. The association would hold a conference to coincide with the annual meeting of the Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association in New Orleans from February 11 through 13, at which Johnson would give members a full report on the labor situation.¹⁶

¹⁵ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, SLOA, January 31, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Even those mills that did not cooperate with the association had begun to assert their legal rights. The Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company never joined the SLOA or took any part in the blacklist of timber workers, although not from any special sympathy with unionism. Henry Lutchter and his sons-in-law held enough land and had access to sufficient transportation facilities by sea and railway that they could follow an independent course. After the Santa Fe Railroad bought the American Lumber Company at Merryville and fired all the union employees, it installed W. A. Martin as general manager, who scoured the countryside looking for union men and their friends. The American Lumber Company pushed its tram roads southwest toward the Sabine River in late 1912, where it soon ran across Fred Fisher, one of the BTW organizers, living on patented land that Martin assumed Lutchter & Moore owned. The general manager promptly wrote to William H. Stark, then the president of L&M, at Orange, Texas, naming Fisher a squatter on L&M land near Merryville's logging front. Martin wanted Stark to force Fisher to move because he was a "very undesirable citizen,"¹⁷ a euphemism for union membership. Stark turned the problem over to F. H. Farwell, the manager of L&M at Orange, who wrote to Fisher at Merryville asking him to vacate company land, which had been patented to W. L. J. Eaves on November 25, 1889, who had sold it to L&M. Fisher quickly replied that he had bought the improvements from his wife's uncle and her late grandmother, who had acquired a "lifetime lease before

¹⁷ W. A. Martin, Merryville, Louisiana, to W. H. Stark, Orange, Texas, January 21, 1913, Box 124, Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company Records, SFA.

witnesses still available by your agent in charge at that time."¹⁸ The uncle still held the claim, and Fisher lived there and operated under his lease. Fisher, although a flathead, was an articulate and intelligent workman who took pains to stay within the property laws. After informing Frank Farwell of his legitimacy, Fisher launched into a tirade, heaping abuse on both Farwell and the American Lumber Company. "I am satisfied that Mr. Lutchter or Mr. Stark will after knowing the facts of case, condemn the low down part that you as a Lickspittle of the American Lumber Company and their thugs are playing," he said. "If you had any principle about you you would have told those men to do their own dirty work." Lutchter & Moore, he pointed out, had "always been fair to us settlers and thereby insured protection to their timber," but Farwell would "soon find out that militant retaliation will follow [their] change of policy and every dollar of trouble given those settlers will mean tens of thousands of Dollars loss to companies trying to bulldoze the settlers." He had come perilously close to making a criminal threat against company property, but he rushed to assure Farwell that he did not want it "taken as a threat by me but I am just stating of what I think will follow naturly the step that you and others are taking."¹⁹ There was still fight in the class warriors, although the campaign against squatters continued unabated. Indeed, many of the first cases to come before the district court in the new parish of Beauregard dealt with the rights of squatters. The response of Lutchter & Moore was to demand of settlers on questionable

¹⁸ W. A. Martin, Merryville, Louisiana, to W. H. Stark, Orange, Texas, January 21, 1913; Fred Fisher, Merryville, Louisiana, to L&M, February 6, 1913, Box 124, Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

¹⁹ Ibid.

homesteads a signed lease, which could be and often was later rescinded, leaving the farmers no option but to pick up their improvements and quit the farms they had assumed were theirs.²⁰

Such men as Fred Fisher, blacklisted in the lumber industry, drifted away from the BTW and the IWW that replaced it just at the time that the new timber workers affiliate began its first public relations campaign. The tool the new labor leaders chose was The Lumberjack, edited by the self-styled Mississippi plantation aristocrat Covington Hall and published under the auspices of Jay Smith, still the secretary of what was left of the BTW, now called the NUF&LW, Southern District. Even the name of the union paper was alien to the South, so by mid-year, Hall changed the name to The Voice of the People and moved to New Orleans, presumably a more congenial atmosphere for a radical sheet. Although its subscription and press run were both low—a few thousand, at best—Hall created something of a spirit of revolt among other groups. In July 1912, the repeated publicity, apparently inspired by the SLOA, in the daily newspapers drew a determined response from the state's socialists. S. D. Turner denounced a story entitled "Saw Mill Strike." He particularly attacked the SLOA for its tactics. "The blacklist not only dirks the victim, but his family as well," he asserted. "It is a crime and a violation of the law."²¹ The question was whether the trust would own the government or the government own the trust, he asserted. "Capitalism is reeking with

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ S. D. Turner, "Reply to 'Saw Mill Strike,'" The Alexandria Daily Town Talk, Monday, July 15, 1912.

the blood of millions whose lives have been sacrificed on the altar of its greed."²² Socialists never seemed to recognize the ill effect their rhetoric had on the public they wanted to badly so influence in their own favor. Frankly, they scared most people.²³

Socialists were merely frightening; Covington Hall was downright dangerous.²⁴ Like much of Hall's homiletics, his statements may be questioned for their lack of accuracy and their fulsome exaggeration, but he often told the truth: the mill managers wasted no kind thoughts for the union and none for Hall in particular. He did not tell the worst of it: they actively hated him. At least one mill manager, who was incidentally the postmaster in his company-owned town, found Hall and his publications "bad enough to cause the post-office department to deny them the privilege of the mails."²⁵

A. L. Emerson and his associates in the leadership of the BTW had not spelled out their demands, other than to ask for recognition of the union as the bargaining agent for employees in the mills and woods. They talked vaguely about better wages and working conditions, but they declined to be specific, which on the one hand did not burden management with exorbitant demands, but on the other served as a focus of fears of still heavier employment costs. When the IWW took over the leadership role in late 1912, the Forest and Timber Workers Union published in Hall's paper a long list of specific demands, in addition to basic recognition of the union, although it denied that

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Covington Hall, "Don't Forget," The Lumberjack, January 1913, n.p.

²⁵ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to the SLOA, New Orleans, Louisiana, March 6, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

it would even need recognition. First a 40 to 60 percent increase in the wages of unskilled labor in the mills, which translated to \$2.50 an hour for an eight-hour-day. "Boys" were to get the same wages as men, which, in the Jim Crow style of the day, meant that black, Mexican, and Italian workers would be paid the same wages as white workers. Such shorthand won Hall no friends among the lumber managers and scarcely any among white people generally. Overtime wages, according to The Lumberjack would be calculated at time-and-a-half of regular wages. Flatheads would get 75 cents per Mbf, true scale for cutting pine logs. Tie hackers would get 25 cents per finished cross tie when worked out in good timber but an unspecified increase for ties made from cull logs. Wages of workers in the hardwood and cypress mills would have a parity with pine mill workers. For workers in stave mills and other wood producing mills and in turpentine woods and stills, the union demanded a general 25 percent increase in wages. Union leaders also demanded an end to "the practice of discounting wages, wages to be paid every Saturday night in United States money."²⁶ This apparently referred to the common practice of advancing or loaning money or credit to workers against their coming wages; the discount served as interest on the loan. Most lumbermen insisted that they advanced credit against wages as a convenience to their workers, but the practice offered wide opportunities for fraud and deceit, which the workers deeply resented.

The union wanted the companies to end forced trading with company stores, enforced by the time check system. This form of company money was similar to other

²⁶ Covington Hall, "Union Demands," The Lumberjack, January 9, 1913, in microfilm collection, The Alexandria Daily Town Talk, Alexandria, Louisiana.

systems of wage discounting and had been outlawed in most states, although the laws were infrequently enforced, if at all. The union also wanted reasonable rent for company-owned houses and the addition of free water, electricity, and sewer services. It demanded that a modern sanitary system be built in all company-owned towns and camps with the object of ending "the terrible diseases now prevailing thru out the timber belt."²⁷ Of all the charges lodged against the lumber industry, this is the most serious and the easiest to document. Most of the larger lumber companies provided accident and health insurance programs for their workers, which the workers paid for through automatic deductions from their wages. The union leaders suspected that the companies profited from these deductions. They demanded that such funds be controlled by a committee chosen by workers and that workers have the right to elect their own doctors, who were then merely employees of the companies. Hall added that the companies should guarantee the civil rights—free speech, press, assembly, and organization—of workers and their chosen leaders. In addition, the SLOA was called on to build a union hall in every town. He wanted neither time contracts nor recognition on the theory that they were neither wanted nor permitted by the IWW. To the extent that these represent the actual expectations of the new union leadership, they could hardly be taken seriously by lumbermen in a region in which housing was universally substandard and sanitation technology virtually nonexistent. The demands for wage increases were the most reasonable among them, and there was simply no reason for raising wages to such an extent. Cheap labor was simply too easy to come by in the area, and black workers were

²⁷ Ibid.

too willing to migrate from areas, generally east of the Mississippi River, of even lower wages, to the relatively well-paid Southwest. But while he was in the mood for making demands, Hall added a chilling proposition: "These demands are all we can think of today and are subject to revision at any time as willed by the vote of the membership affected."²⁸

This was the lumberman's worst fear, that he would be placed at the beck and call of his workers better wages, working conditions, and other benefits, which together would place him at such a competitive disadvantage that he would simply close up his mills and retire to Kansas City or St. Louis. Besides the opposition this kind of talk generated among lumbermen, there was simply no grounds for the union to make demands that it could not enforce. The Association had lost its battle in court, but it still had the blacklist and the money with which to survive while it enforced its hiring policies. Lumbermen correctly interpreted Hall's outpouring of union rhetoric as bombast and bluster.²⁹

At Merryville, for example, the American Lumber Company had succeeded in ejecting all members of the union among its employees, fencing them out with a high wooden fence, and hiring non-union workers to replace them first in the planing mills and then in the sawmills. By the middle of February 1913, the Association moved to throw the union out of the town itself by turning to the vigilantes organized as a citizens'

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, March 6, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

committee. On February 17, vigilantes gave key unionists only hours to leave town, then the committee members marched on union headquarters about 11:30 a.m. on February 18, removed the books and papers of the BTW, packed it in cases, and shipped it to DeRidder. The vigilantes sent along a message to the effect that the people there would not permit more labor activities--strikes, marches, demonstrations, assemblies, and the like--aimed at the American Lumber Company, which refused to recognize the BTW. As many as 40 men, described as prominent citizens of the town, took part in the vigilance activities. They warned H. W. Lawrence and John Hill, who, they claimed, had recently arrived, to leave immediately and not come back. Lawrence had been running the union's soup kitchen in a tent.³⁰ The union denied that Hill was a recent migrant to Merryville--"he has lived there, respected by all who have known him, white and colored, nearly ever since the town was built."³¹

What was even more reprehensible, the vigilantes searched the union's records and kept the local's minute book. "How 'leading citizens' expect to so grossly violate their own law of property as regards others and then expect others to respect their property is beyond a sane man to imagine," Hall wrote. "But the imported citizens are wonders in more respects than one, and so is their master, the Santa Fe Railroad." Next, he resorted to sarcasm. "Of course, there was 'no violence' -- John Hill and all others simply left their homes (?) because they wanted to," he said bitterly. "But we are

³⁰ Untitled stories in the Lake Charles Times and the Alexandria Daily Town Talk, February 19, 1913, reprinted in Covington Hall, "No Violence," The Lumberjack, February 20, 1913, microfilm collection of the Daily Town Talk, Alexandria, Louisiana.

³¹ Ibid.

glad to hear that the 'deputy sheriffs' took no part in this violation of all law; that they just stood ready armed to see that no harm came to the 'leading citizens' who were setting such a splendid example of respect for 'holy property rights' to the 'lawless' working class." Then, he lashed out in righteous indignation. "Gentlemen, it is a damn good thing for you that the workers are not one half as 'lawless' as you are, for you would be in overalls, doing honest labor, in less than thirty days were you not lying."³² And finally he turned to another issue. "And there 'is no peonage in Merryville.' O, no; they simply destroyed our kitchen to give our colored fellow workers the option of starving to death or going back into the mills as scabs," he charged. "That is all there is to it, for so say the 'leading citizens,' and 'leading citizens,' like gentlemen, can do no wrong. 'The effects of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers' were not 'shipped to De Ridder' until someone in Merryville got sober enuf to partially realize that not even the 'leading citizens of Merryville' could enter on a saturnalia of lawlessness without giving an account of themselves, hence their clumsy excuses If there has been any 'intimidation and coercion' of the American Lumber Company's miserable scabs it has been by 'their (?) guards,' not by the Union, as the 'Citizens (?) Committee' well knows"³³

Vigilante activity at Merryville apparently succeeded in ridding the company of much of the union agitation that it deemed undesirable. M. L. Alexander had sent out

³² Ibid.

³³ Covington Hall, "No Violence," The Lumberjack, February 20, 1913, in the Town Talk microfilm collection, Alexandria, Louisiana.

to the Louisiana Board of Governors an urgent request for a meeting in New Orleans on February 26 to discuss the Association's responses to the situation in Merryville with Judge John Terry, general counsel for the Santa Fe Railroad and the American Lumber Company. Things in Merryville had improved so much during the next week, Clarence Slagle decided, that there was no longer a reason for a meeting, so he cancelled it.³⁴ About the same time, the first grand jury empaneled by the new Parish of Beauregard, reported on conditions at the Merryville lumber mills. At heart, of course, it was a white wash. The jury blamed disorders, which it admitted, grew out of a controversy between the BTW and the Citizens League, but it assumed there was no connection with the American Lumber Company. In any event, it concluded, it could identify no guilty party. It seems now irrational that the grand jury did not know of the connection between the American Lumber Company, the SLOA, and the Citizen League in Merryville, and the affiliation of the BTW with the IWW. The lumber industry, of course, quickly used the grand jury report to demonstrate its honesty, which only later revelations would call into question.³⁵

By early spring, lumbermen in the Louisiana and Texas piney woods had concluded that the union movement was a lost cause because IWW policy defeated itself. The Wobblies, however, had begun a final desperate drive to establish the BTW in the region. Lumbermen and newspapermen told each other that the union had no chance of

³⁴ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, February 24, 1913, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁵ "No Cause For Action," Report of the Beauregard Parish, Louisiana, Grand Jury, reprinted by the Lumber Trade Journal, March 1, 1913.

winning at this point and that public disappointments would continue. Both M. L. Alexander and Martin, the manager at Merryville, could, by March 1, credit constant vigilance as the price of defeating the union and stopping labor trouble.³⁶ Victory in the labor war had already exacted a high cost, however. The mills were chronically short-handed, despite the managers' brave words. Willard Warren at Fisher reached over to Clarks to hire David L. Cook, a native of Jamestown, New York, who was working for LCLC as a common laborer. The name of his hometown suggests that he was one of the young men recruited by Captain White from his ancestral home at Bemus Point, New York. Cook was, at the time, working on the green chain at the drying sheds, Clarence Slagle said, meaning that the young man worked at the end of the conveyor belt that delivered lumber, which he stacked on trucks for transfer to the planing mill. He came to Clarks to get some lumber experience before entering Biltmore Forestry School, Slagle said. He and his partner, one Cheney, had almost decided to give up the idea of going to school in exchange for the chance to learn the lumber business through experience in the piney woods. Some of the work was much too practical, as the young men learned at their first job cutting logs in the woods. After ten days, they asked for work in the plant at Clark. The mills, however, could not depend on occasional workers migrating from the north, particularly when such men could not stand up under the

³⁶ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, San Francisco, California, February 22 and March 3 and 12, 1913, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

hardships suffered daily by the Southern flathead, not the least of which was the heat and humidity.³⁷

Mill managers had to look elsewhere, and they preferred docile workers acclimated to the weather of the region. Generally, this meant black laborers. But M. Newman at the Shreveport Labor Agency was hard put to supply enough to meet the demand in West Louisiana and East Texas. In early March, the mills needed railroad track crews to put the trams back into good shape after a hard winter. Newman struggled with the complex system of recruiting black workers from plantation fields east of the Mississippi River and transporting them by rail to the west. Finally, on June 6, he admitted defeat. Unable to get men to repair and build spur track, he gave it as his opinion that it was extremely difficult to convince black workers to go to the piney woods. He did not know why black workers declined to go into the long leaf pine district, he said. He could, however, get men from farther away, but it would cost more, an added \$3 a head in expenses.³⁸ Newman's competition in the labor agency business was C. C. Walker of the Caddo Labor Agency, also of Shreveport. In the middle of June, he shipped several workers, for which he felt shortchanged. Warren sent him a check for \$25.05, a shortage of \$3.95, he said, because the agent lost one man. Apparently, the agency had delivered not seven but six men. The agency's man returned

³⁷ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, February 24, 1913, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁸ M. Newman, Shreveport, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, March 3 and 10, April 17 and 19, and June 6, 1913, Box 11269-55, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

to Shreveport with the information that the 4 L Company did not want more men shipped until after June 19, 1913. "We have a chance to get two mill crews from different places that is [sic] going out of business and we think we can get you any kind of men you may need Kindly let us know your wants," the agency insisted. "And we will get buisy [sic] after the 19th. The places we intend getting the men from is not very far from Shreveport."³⁹

By the spring of 1913, the timber workers union faced total disaster. Its membership had fallen to levels that did not sustain the limited staff and office overhead required for keeping up a minimum front. The immediate challenge union organizers faced was pulling together enough delegates to hold a respectable convention, scheduled for May 19. With this event in mind, IWW organizers Dorée, Filigno, Edwards, Jacobs, and several others made final appeals for members but met with little success. Emerson, however, still had a following, "particularly from the interior hamlets,"⁴⁰ SLOA leaders noted. He still drew crowds and enjoyed some respect from the workers, but other organizers got no encouragement at all. The situation from the union point of view appeared bleak, Alexander said. The union leadership meant to elect someone to replace Emerson as chief organizer for the IWW affiliate at the May convention. The new group that had taken over the affairs of the union since the Grabeau incident seemed to believe

³⁹ C. C. Walker, Shreveport, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, June 6 and 18, 1913; see also Walker to 4 L, wire dated July 1913, Box 11268-54, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴⁰ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, April 12, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

that an IWW operative would have a better chance than Emerson in re-invigorating the movement. Emerson, they thought, did not project the militancy of a Big Bill Haywood. Filigno, they argued, was the man for the job. M. L. Alexander, who had watched the union movement from its early days and with sources within the union leadership itself, doubted that Filigno or any IWW man could keep the union together. Electing Filigno would, he wrote, "go a long way towards disrupting the organization altogether, as Emmerson is undoubtedly the chief factor in it."⁴¹

Indeed, naming an Italian to head the union would be the end of any kind of solidarity, but the IWW men, including Covington Hall, who should have known better, failed to appreciate the multifaceted color line that regulated social, economic, and political affairs in the Southwest, particularly in Louisiana. They seemed to be familiar with the racial problems between blacks and whites that grew out of slavery, but they seemed not to know of similar problems between natives and foreigners--American whites and various other ethnic groups, including Bohemians, Mexicans, and Italians. It did not seem to matter that members of these groups, by and large, were American born. The largest and most threatening of these groups was Italian in heritage. These otherwise inoffensive people suffered much of the discrimination and hatred that black people suffered, and they labored under the disadvantage of an ethnic slur; they were known almost without exception as Dagos, which marked them just as surely as color marked the black man. Filigno had been identified from the first day he arrived in the piney woods as an Italian, a Dago, and his election to the leadership of the union would

⁴¹ Ibid.

pose no less a problem than electing a black worker. On top of the peculiar prejudice of the white people of the region, blacks and Mexicans lost no love on the Italians. The combinations of racial and ethnic hatred seemed infinite, and presented the SLOA with an array of responses, all keyed to Filigno's nationality and to the common belief that Italians tended to be bomb throwers and murderers. Filigno's identification with the IWW, if people needed any further evidence, convinced the public of the fundamental criminal intentions of the union.⁴²

A month later, Alexander reported that the union's activities had further decreased, for which he took full credit. The National Industrial Union of Forest and Lumber Workers, IWW, would still meet in convention in Alexandria within ten days, bringing together "a score or more of the rank agitators of the southern district, and reinforced by a number of I.W.W. leaders from various sections of the country."⁴³ The union's financial strength had been sapped by the Grabeau trial and by the Merryville strike, which shut off its most lucrative source of dues. It still had heavy debts and virtually no income. Other branches of the IWW that had earlier supported the activities of the NIUF&TW-IWW could or would no longer contribute funds from California, Oregon, Washington, and Colorado. While Emerson still had a larger following among the rank and file of the union, the new leadership fully intended to replace him. Covington Hall, the only other Southerner among the leadership, had been having trouble

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, May 7, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

with The Lumberjack; the Alexandria printer who had printed the paper had refused to continue, and Hall was forced to move his operation to New Orleans where the American Publishing Company published it. Efforts to acquire a printing plant for the union in Alexandria had so far not been successful, chiefly because of a lack of funds. Filigno had also been in New Orleans for a week, speaking nightly to labor groups in an effort to raise money. He did not have significant success. "Altogether," Alexander said, "the outlook is rather discouraging for a larger organization in the future, in fact, I would not be surprised at a complete demoralization of their forces in the near future."⁴⁴ For its part, the SLOA had inaugurated an inspection service, aimed at improving the living and working conditions in the lumber towns of the district. Victory, Alexander said, was in view, if the mills continued to cooperate with the SLOA and to improve the conditions of their loyal workers; in this way, "the troubles can be entirely eliminated."⁴⁵

The Timber Workers convened in Alexandria as planned on May 19, and were still in session on May 24. Emerson, Hall, Filigno, Jay Smith, Guillery, and 30 delegates attended from local lodges in Rosepine, Osborn, Starks, Oakdale, DeQuincy, Provencal, Oberlin, Leesville, Pollock, Alexandria, Woodworth, Six Miles, Lake Charles, Kinder, Mystic, Bentley, DeRidder, and Merryville, all in Louisiana. No delegate appeared from Texas or any other state in the South. Pollock rated the strongest lodge, earning three delegates. Because of the disorganization within local lodges and among the rank and file, only eight delegates appeared with proper credentials; the

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

convention seated all those who came with the right to participate in deliberations. Hollingsworth of DeRidder was named permanent chairman, and Mrs. Fredonia Stevenson of Merryville became permanent secretary of the convention. The treasurer reported that the union had \$120.08 in the bank as of April 30, and liabilities of \$7,696; apparently, the union had not yet paid its lawyers for the defense of Emerson and his associates in Lake Charles. Emerson and Filigno argued that the union should call off the Merryville strike, cut its losses, and reorganize, which set off a great deal of wrangling among delegates about strike policy. Fredonia Stevenson led several other radicals in denouncing the idea. The chairman named a committee of five to investigate the Merryville situation and report to the union after the convention adjourned. Delegates declined then to accept Emerson's claim against the union for his salary while he was jailed in Lake Charles, although it did accept responsibility for a few expenses he had during the same time. Emerson was not much concerned with the vote against him because he was not likely to collect his back pay in any event; the treasury was virtually empty. Because of the state of its finances the union was forced to limit its Alexandria office force to only one man. At this point in the convention, the SLOA operative among the union membership reported that Emerson would likely retire from his leadership role or be forced to withdraw. In moments of relative calm and optimism, delegates called for a campaign to organize the cypress mills along the tracks of the Southern Pacific, the Texas & Pacific, and the Yazoo & Mississippi Valley railroads. Cypress manufacturers had generally escaped the attention of the BTW and the

NIUF&LW, although the remote prospect of union organization in the cypress swamps brought many mills into the SLOA.⁴⁶

By May 26, as the Pinkerton infiltrator had discovered, A. L. Emerson resigned from active participation in the union movement that he and Jay Smith had begun in December 1910. The SLOA leaders looked on Emerson's withdrawal as virtual victory in their struggle with the timber workers. Further activities by the union, Alexander predicted, would be scattered and ineffective. Before the former union president moved on, however, he had scheduled one last speech, at Singer, Louisiana, one that he would regret not having cancelled. Delegates to the convention discovered to their dismay that the union treasury was empty; there was not even enough to pay their expenses. Even The Lumberjack fell victim to economies; the convention agreed to pay Covington Hall, the editor, \$75 a month in salary, but it simultaneously asked the Western District of the IWW to take over the paper. The convention did not fill the position vacated by Emerson, and the title fell to Jay Smith. Guillory was named treasurer-manager for both The Lumberjack and the general headquarters but without salary. And finally, the delegates voted to continue the strike at Merryville, advocating direct tactics, an empty threat because no union member held a job at Merryville, from which to exercise tactics, and in any case only about 50 of the original 1,500 strikers remained in the mill town.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, May 24, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴⁷ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, May 26, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Early in July, Alexander went up to Alexandria from SLOA headquarters in New Orleans to see to some problems in the area personally. While he was there he looked over the union headquarters from a safe distance. The place had taken on a desolate appearance. Only Jay Smith was left there now since A. L. Guillory, the bookkeeper, resigned. With continued active surveillance of the lumber district the union would not be able to make any headway at all, Alexander predicted, despite the fact that unionism survived around Pollock, Merryville, and DeRidder, which required watching. At the SLOA meeting in Kansas City, he had reported the union's paid membership at about 700. Now, the BTW had been further reduced to about 500. Also The Lumberjack was in serious trouble at New Orleans and again had to change printers, which usually meant that it has exhausted its credit with its current printer. The union newspaper not only changed printers, within a week it changed its name to The Voice of the People, apparently in an attempt to widen its appeal beyond the lumber industry employees to include the significant percentage of socialists in the region. "The policy," Covington Hall wrote, "will be as heretofore, free, scrappy and open-forum-like."⁴⁸ Nor had the motto changed, he assured his readers: "Let the priests and preachers have heaven, send the politicians to purgatory, give the capitalists hell and take the earth for the workers."⁴⁹ No one, least of all the lumbermen, was a bit amused. For his part, Alexander was, in effect, proclaiming victory, and also giving notice that his usefulness

⁴⁸ Covington Hall, "Our New Name," The Voice of the People, July 17, 1913, in the microfilm collection, The Daily Town Talk, Alexandria, Louisiana.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

was coming to an end; he would remain in charge of the blacklist for several months now, but he devoted less and less time to the interests of the lumbermen.⁵⁰

The Association office in New Orleans kept up the pressure against union workers and the occasional mill manager who let a union member slip through the blacklist. The 4 L Company reinstated one black worker named Dennis Horn, although both Fisher and Victoria had earlier reported him to the SLOA as a member of the BTW. Alexander asked whether the worker were not now affiliated with the union and hinted broadly that the company could not trust the man to be loyal.⁵¹ Of course, relations between worker and manager was far more complex than merely the rate of pay and the length of the work day. In Budconnor, Texas, R. J. Hughes's wife died. Because he was virtually destitute at the time, the camp superintendent bought a casket and shroud in which to bury the woman, according to the custom of the Kirby Lumber Company. George R. Christie, Kay Ell auditor, wanted to balance his books, but a purse made up by public subscription at Budconnor paid most of the cost to the company except \$12.30, he wrote. Hughes left the Budconnor camp not long after his wife's funeral still in debt to Kay Ell. He apparently crossed the Sabine River into West Louisiana, where he found work at Fisher with the 4 L Company. Christie asked Warren to collect the debt if Hughes still

⁵⁰ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, July 8, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵¹ SLOA, New Orleans, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, May 26, 1913, Box 11269-55, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

worked there. Christie was too late, however; Hughes, a drifter, had moved on. In a penciled note, a 4 L Company clerk noted "No R. J. H. J. Hughes Gone."⁵²

Managers also continued to recruit black workers from across the South through such intermediaries as the Caddo Labor Agency in Shreveport. "We are sending you to day By our man Gus Williams negros you will find bill attached," C. C. Walker wrote. "Give our man three dollars in cash and check for ballance."⁵³ He attached the bill, of course, not to the black workers but to his letter. Despite such distortions, Walker and his kind ran booming businesses. Lumbermen also depended on employment bureaus to find and recruit white workers. J. C. Kuebler was the manager of Mack's agency in Alexandria, Louisiana, supplying competent men for industry. Early in July, for example, Mack's sent B. A. Wright to the 4 L Company as a planer helper, asking the managers at the lumber company to deduct \$19.20 from the worker's first week's wages to pay the agent's fee. It is doubtful a planer helper earned as much as the fee in a week, but the company doubtless made arrangements to pay the fee and deduct it from the worker's wages, along with other costs—insurance, doctor's fees, store purchases, and the like. It may have taken Wright months to get even with the company, a condition that tended to keep him working steadily at Fisher.⁵⁴

⁵² George R. Christie, Houston, Texas, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, June 10, 1913, Box 11268-54, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵³ C. C. Walker, Shreveport, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, June 10, 1913, Box 11268-54, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁴ J. C. Kuebler, Alexandria, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, July 2, 1913, Box 11268-54, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

In Chicago in late June, lumber manufacturers from all sections of the nation gathered to discuss the eight-hour-day, with the result that most were willing to compromise at the nine-hour-day, a far cry from 11 hours of backbreaking labor in the logging woods and lumber yards of the industry. It may have seemed a victory for workers, but it protected the managers' right to manage company affairs without reference to labor union demands. Throughout the labor troubles in Louisiana and Texas, the SLOA had spent a great deal of money to employ private detectives, the cost soaring during the Grabeau incident and the resulting trial of A. L. Emerson and his associates. By June, the cost of Burns and Pinkerton operatives had fallen to only \$1,500 a month, still enough to pay the salaries of about 30 detectives. Labor union affiliation, of course, was not the only undesirable trait that managers watched for among their workers. Drinking, gambling, smoking, and failure to "draw the color line"⁵⁵ would also get a man fired and blacklisted.

P. A. Bloomer, who took over management of the 4 L Company after Willard Warren went out to Seattle to run the Snoqualmie Lumber Company for the Grandin and Weyerhaeuser interests, reported regularly to Warren on the affairs of the company. In the summer of 1913, Warren still held the title of general manager and would soon be elected vice president, and Bloomer was still on trial as manager. Warren worried about a brakeman named Prather, whose behavior had prompted the manager to transfer him to the surveying gang laying out the spur lines. "He is still working right along with Mr.

⁵⁵ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, June 23, 1913, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Gibson, surveying," Bloomer said. "His hand has apparently mended, but there is still a sore spot inside of it which causes him to be unable to do any kind of work." Prather, the assistant manager said, was not "saving his money, and he is gambling and does not draw the color line. Unless something unforeseen happens, I believe we can handle this situation."⁵⁶ After the labor excitement among lumbermen had subsided somewhat, managers occasionally discovered they had committed injustices, and occasionally they tried to make amends. J. H. Leggett, a storekeeper in Oakdale had gained the reputation as a union sympathizer because of an operative's report. R. M. Hallowell at nearby Elizabeth, found later that Leggett actively helped the SLOA in its contest with the BTW. "There is no question they set his store afire,"⁵⁷ Hallowell said, which resulted in a loss of \$9,000, only \$4,500 of which was covered by insurance. Hallowell suggested the Louisiana Board of Governors recommend to the Association that the industry help Leggett recoup his losses.⁵⁸

In the spring of 1913, M. L. Fleishel resigned as a member of the Louisiana Board of Governors. C. D. Johnson appointed W. W. Warren to take his place on the board. At its meeting in New Orleans on July 25, the board elected R. M. Hallowell, general manager of the Industrial Lumber Company of Elizabeth, as the new chairman,

⁵⁶ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, July 7, 1913, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁷ R. M. Hallowell, Elizabeth, Louisiana, to the Louisiana Board of Governors, SLOA, July 14, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* See also George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, SLOA, July 1, 1913, Box 122; New England National Bank, Kansas City, Missouri, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, July 2, 1913, Box 11269-55, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

replacing Fleishel who had served in the position since early 1911. The board now consisted of Hallowell, S. T. Woodring, J. H. Morrison, Warren, C. E. Slagle, and L. F. Haslam who was absent on July 25. Others who attended the meeting included B. H. Smith of Longville; W. L. Prickett of Bon Ami; J. W. Martin of Ludington, all Long-Bell mills; and Laws of Westlake. Alexander reported on the labor situation, which showed steady progress in the association's programs but, he emphasized, called for continued vigilance on the part of lumbermen. The association, Alexander boasted, had beaten the IWW in its efforts to organize the sawmills of the region, although the union could still mount a campaign to organize timber workers on some basis. The best plan was to watch affairs closely to prevent the union gaining another foothold. The board resolved to keep the New Orleans office open and to keep enough men employed in Association work to keep the industry posted on events. Only three men would be necessary in the New Orleans office, Alexander estimated, but he wanted the authority to employ one or two more when the need arose. Such sudden strikes as the one mounted by employees of the Sweet Home Lumber Company, one of the Ball Bros. mills, on July 5, gave credence to Alexander's request for discretionary powers to act independently on behalf of the board. Workers at Sweet Home front demanded a 25 percent increase in wages and paydays every two weeks. Because the labor trouble seemed to be restricted to the camps and fronts in the area, the board authorized sending L. M. Wade, the auditor, to make an investigation. Alexander also appealed for cooperation from member mills. Of the 86 mills that subscribed to the work of his office at the time, only about 40 percent followed the clearing house procedures, which meant

simply that less than half of the mill managers consistently used the blacklist. The board also committed the SLOA to paying the Industrial Lumber Company \$2,000 as reimbursement for expenses on behalf of the Association, most of which represented payments to private detective agencies for undercover work in 1911. Alexander had the board reduce his salary to only \$300 a month from \$500 a month; but it also paid him a lump sum of \$2,200 in back pay, "bringing his salary to an amount equal to \$500.00 per month for the period of his service with the Association, up to August 31st, 1913, and that beginning September 1st, the salary of the Manager be placed at \$300.00 per month."⁵⁹

Wade went up to Balls Mill and to Pollock to investigate the strike reported at the two mills and found the area infected by unionism. J. F. Ball, president of the J. F. Ball & Bro. Lumber Company, Ltd., gave him a signed statement, dated August 2, about conditions at the Sweet Home Lumber Company, the plant at Balls Mill. "Mill closed down July 5th and resumed operations July 28th," he related. "Woods Men walked out on morning of July 5th, demanding 2 week pay day, on same day mill men demanded increase of 25 cents per day. Woods men returned to work on old basis. New men were secured at mill to replace the 23 strikers none of which were allowed to return to work. Mill now in full operations and we anticipate no further trouble."⁶⁰ Nevertheless,

⁵⁹ Minutes of meeting of the Louisiana Board of Governors of the Southern Lumber Operators' Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, July 25, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁰ L. M. Wade, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, August 3, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Wade characterized labor conditions at both the Sweet Home mill at Ball and the Iron Mountain Lumber Company at Pollock as unsatisfactory, largely because workers at both plants had asked for pay days at two-week intervals. Not many employees at Pollock expressed an interest in the demand, but at Sweet Home things were more serious. J. F. Ball immediately refused all demands and closed his mill at Ball, Louisiana. Wade got a list of the 23 strikers in the Sweet Home mill and sent it to Alexander in New Orleans to add to the blacklist. Wade also found out in the countryside about 75 to 100 members, mostly farmers, half of whom had paid their dues to the NIUF&TW. General conditions at both Ball and Pollock were disturbing, principally because the farmers of the area who often worked as flatheads and teamsters in the logging woods were sympathetic with the union, even the IWW. He could not discover the exact number of days the Sweet Home Mill had been shut down, and was not fully satisfied the mills had been down as long as Ball reported. Conditions were improving, however; plenty of workers were available. Wade did not hesitate to take full credit for ending the strike and to recommend close consultation with Alexander as a preventative for future strikes, when, in fact, Ball himself had rid his mills of union members and got back into production without the assistance of Alexander's office. It is difficult to escape the suspicion that both Alexander and Wade welcomed the Sweet Home strike as a way to extend the life of the clearing house and their own jobs.⁶¹

Alexander promptly attached Wade's letter to his next report to C. D. Johnson in St. Louis. He left with Johnson the impression that he had broken the Sweet Home

⁶¹ Ibid.

front strike summarily, when, in fact, the strike had ended by the time he heard about it. Other than the problems at Ball and Pollock, he wrote, the union continued to decline in the piney woods. It had virtually lost its organization in Merryville, Lake Charles, DeRidder, Ludington, Fullerton, and Oakdale. In July, Jay Smith, secretary of the Southern District, NIUF&TW, received only \$165 in dues from the rank and file, indicating an active membership of 330 timber workers. Still, this level of income would pay Smith's salary and give him funds for the purchase of postage, rendering him dangerous. The example of the Sweet Home strike demonstrated the need for continued vigilance among SLOA members and other lumber manufacturers.⁶²

The lumber industry associations, most of which George K. Smith served as secretary, provided a range of services to the mills and their managers. Generally, they espoused cooperation among mill owners and managers, but they resisted to the very last any form of cooperation among workers, land owners, or suppliers of materials and services upon which the mills depended. Their hypocrisy was palpable and wholly consistent with their interests. The associations even helped in resisting the state, particularly as laws impinged on wages and working conditions. That working conditions were hard and dangerous could not be successfully denied; lumbermen seldom even tried to justify their lack of concern for the safety of their workers, although men fell victim to machines almost daily.⁶³ When not concerned with fighting the labor union, the

⁶² M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, August 5, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶³ The 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, to SoRelle & Boone, Many, Louisiana, August 29, 1913; SoRelle & Boone to the 4 L Company, August 30, 1913, Box 11269-

company managers acted in predictable ways, usually through the mails, to recruit and hire workers. Early in September, after having received a recommendation from the Dierks Lumber & Coal Company in DeQueen, Arkansas, the 4 L Company offered C. L. Laughsford of Ironosa, Texas, a job as blacksmith at Fisher for \$3.25 a day, a rather straight-forward arrangement, to which they asked the incumbent to respond immediately.⁶⁴ It was not quite so civilized when Phil Bloomer tried to hire Ira R. Avant as the resaw filer at Fisher. Avant had asked by wire sometime in early September about a job, which prompted Bloomer to make the usual inquiries of Avant's references. W. L. Prickett, general manager of the King-Ryder Lumber Company at Bonami, Louisiana, irascible and bilious, sent a recommendation nothing short of hostile. "Avant worked on & off for Bonami 3 or 4 years and was generally satisfactory except that he is not troubled with any too much energy and is rather slow to move or take hold and use his head," he complained. "More than likely by good supervision and coaching you will be able to obtain fairly satisfactory service from him for a while, at least."⁶⁵ Phil Bloomer, who was no stranger to dyspepsia himself, would have had to reach far beyond his limited capacity for sloth to hire Avant after such a recommendation. Bloomer needed a resaw filer and offered Avant \$3 a day, to which the filer responded

55, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁴ The 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. L. Laughsford, Ironosa, Texas, September 4, 1913, Box 11268-54, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁵ W. L. Prickett, Bonami, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, September 9, 1913, Box 11268-54, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

that he was paid more than that at Bonami, choosing to remain in the employ of the quarrelsome Prickett.⁶⁶

The Pinkerton man in the union organization reported in early August that A. L. Emerson had moved permanently to Lebanon, Tennessee, his home state. And Fredonia Stevenson, secretary of the union local at Merryville and a member of the general executive board of the NIUL&TW, had resigned her union positions and made ready to move to Colorado. Fredonia Stevenson played the role of Passionata to the BTW; based on her experiences and Hall's propaganda, the timber workers union got the reputation for engaging women in the affairs of an otherwise male-dominated calling. By late August, however, the lady union organizer had changed her mind. She did in fact sell her property in Merryville, but she had been persuaded to move to Oakdale, where she rented an eight-room house in which to operate a boarding house exclusively for IWW members and sympathizers.⁶⁷

In 1913, the Grandin interests and others had underway several new sawmills in the vicinity of Oakdale, which drew a great deal of itinerant labor for their construction and later their operation. M. L. Alexander fretted that the lumber industry was being infiltrated by union activists. Many of the IWW men had moved over from Merryville, including one John Hereford, a machinist and the secretary of the Merryville lodge of

⁶⁶ Ira R. Avant, Dutton Hotel, Bonami, Louisiana, wire to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, September 1913; Avant to the 4 L Company, September 10, 1913, Box 11268-54, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁷ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, August 13, 14, and 21, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

the BTW in its better days. Alexander also claimed to have evidence of sabotage in the mills, and he quoted Ed Lehman on the practice as a device to renew interest in unionism. Union men had been noising about their plans for an elaborate Labor Day celebration at Merryville, which also bothered Alexander, who feared the union would create an incident for the day. Despite the fact that undesirables had moved into Oakdale and nearby McNary, the situation was still quiet.⁶⁸

A few weeks later, the SLOA manager found that cooperation had succeeded in defeating the machinations of the undesirables who had gathered in Oakdale. The district apparently had no union members left to disturb the rest of mill managers. The association, Alexander argued, had to cope with degenerate human nature, an unfortunate fact of life. "There are a certain number of men who are, and probably always will be, undesirable: wherever they stop incipient trouble arises but if promptly handled is comparatively unimportant but if not promptly handled would soon spread and result in confusion and trouble,"⁶⁹ he said. The McNary mills, a case in point, sent in their employment records for the first time in months, and other mills in the area had begun to respond to Association appeals for information. Even the Labor Day celebration at Merryville failed, a keen disappointment to Jay Smith, the principal speaker, who kept his talk within the bounds of propriety, making no threats and calling for no violence against the lumbermen. Obviously, Alexander noted, the union movement lacked

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, September 12, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

leadership. The loss of A. L. Emerson took the heart out of the rank and file, "a fatal blow to the organization in this territory."⁷⁰

Lumbermen in the region frantically cast about for ways to ingratiate themselves with their loyal employees, barring a general increase in wages. Many of them found a suitable method in various moral and civic organizations. The Committee of Management of the Young Men's Christian Association at Bon Ami, Louisiana, invited Captain White, among others, to attend the formal opening of its new YMCA building on Sunday, September 14. White scrawled a note across the invitation, asking Slagle and Warren what progress they had made in gaining the services of the YMCA. Slagle responded on September 18 that he was waiting on Warren, who had been planning to convert his store building to a YMCA facility at Fisher. It was not until October 6 that Warren admitted that he could not bring himself to build a new store just so the YMCA could use the old building. Including the YMCA in the lumber towns was one of the remedies recommended by labor relations experts to calm the troubled waters of radical unionism. Robert A. Long of Long-Bell Lumber Company was particularly enamored of the YMCA and YWCA, the women's association. At Bon Ami, the YMCA had a hall for blacks and a building for whites that housed a theater, soda fountain, bowling alleys, and a barber shop. These pale into insignificance when compared with Long's contributions to the YMCA and YWCA in Kansas City, where he helped build hotels for boys and girls. Still later in Longview, Washington, the Long-Bell town, Long supported construction of a community house, which he finally permitted to be

⁷⁰ Ibid.

transferred to the control of the YMCA. "The best interests of Long-Bell employees, and the company itself, demand that anything which looks like paternalism ... be put aside," he wrote. "To many radicals and many others in the labor ranks any community house when built and operated by a company, is looked upon in the light of a 'sop' to the workman in lieu of wages, or an anesthetic to put him to sleep. The YMCA on the contrary is looked upon generally as an independent ... organization in which workmen themselves have a voice through community services."⁷¹ Although he deeded the property to the YMCA in Longview, a town meant as a lasting memorial to Long himself, conditions in Louisiana and Texas remained fundamentally practical. The YMCA was obviously a ploy, one that worked well.

Assiduously pursuing unionists throughout the piney woods, Alexander and his operatives finally found 46 individuals who had occasionally associated with the union, thus showing what cooperation among association members could accomplish. One of the former Merryville unionists with a reputation for violence had since leaving Louisiana been indicted by a Federal Grand Jury in Texas for running guns into Mexico to help the rebellion there, Alexander reported. In addition, the IWW was in convention in Chicago that fall, with more than 40 delegates, one of which was from Louisiana. Of the 276 votes in the convention, Louisiana had been allotted 134, an indication of the importance

⁷¹ John M. McClelland, Jr., R. A. Long's Planned City (Longview, Washington: Longview Publishing Company, 1976), p. 154. See also J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. A. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, September 16, 1913, handwritten on YMCA announcement of Bon Ami opening, September 14, 1913; Slagle to White, September 18, 1913; W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to White, October 6, 1913, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; Bradley, R. A. Long, pp. 49, 116, 145, based on George Alwin Stokes, "Lumbering in Southwest Louisiana," LSU Dissertation, 1954.

the union attached to the lumber industry. Jay Smith had written to the convention to plead for help in reversing the downward spiral of shrinking membership since Emerson withdrew. With the former president of the BTW absent, his stock with both unionists and lumbermen improved; even Alexander had begun to spell his name correctly. The SLOA manager could show magnanimity since conditions in the piney woods remained definitely favorable to the Association.⁷²

The IWW met in Chicago for ten days. Although few delegates showed up, those who met there seemed determined to carry out their original purposes, Alexander noted. Southern Wobblies, however, were left to fend for themselves. Alexander congratulated himself on his part in creating the situation that required this exception. Despite the clearing house manager's pride in the blacklist, the IWW did not mean to abandon the South entirely, merely to state that the union would have no financial support to offer. Clarence Edwards, member of the IWW General Executive Board representing the South, said that he would visit the region frequently to continue organizational activities. At the same time, B. H. Fletcher, a black delegate from Philadelphia, announced that he would go South to organize among his race. Were M. L. Alexander's signature not affixed securely to this message, a casual reader might well assume that it was written by a Wobbly agitator. The SLOA manager still faced a dilemma: he needed badly to proclaim victory over the timber workers union on the one hand and to convince lumbermen that his services were still much needed, on the other. In Chicago, the IWW convention

⁷² M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, September 20, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

named William D. Haywood, J. J. Ettor, and F. Isler the union's general organizers; Vincent St. John retained his position as secretary. The industrial union movement continued in the same direction as before. In New Orleans, Alexander could not resist boasting that his detectives had infiltrated the IWW convention to get accurate and detailed information. The SLOA had, he reminded association officials, fought the union to virtual victory, bringing credit on the Board of Governors and the leaders of the association. Still, occasional outbreaks of union activity must be expected, which the clearing house was prepared to deal with promptly. "This will largely be our work for the future,"⁷³ he concluded.

Nationally, and even internationally, the labor movement was growing. The labor question, Roger W. Babson wrote in his syndicated newsletter in the fall of 1913, was of vital interest to the businessman. Babson urged his readers to watch for the workers to become class-conscious when they would surely rule the country. Captain White read Babson and saw to it that his associates saw those offerings of the economist that seemed to refer to the lumber industry. Whether he and his managers agreed with Babson, it is clear that they took his warnings of class conflict seriously.⁷⁴ The most successful champion of class consciousness that they knew first hand was A. L. Emerson who had led the timber workers in that union's formative stages. A convincing speaker and

⁷³ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, October 3, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁴ "Roger W. Babson's Weekly Report: The Labor Outlook," September 23, 1913, copy sent to subscribing mills of the Missouri Lumber & Land Exchange Company, Kansas City, Missouri, October 3, 1913, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

organizer, Emerson personified the idea of collective action to many men who had never even heard of the concept of social class. He posed such a threat to the SLOA in general and M. L. Alexander in particular that lumbermen kept watch over his movements. It seemed for a time that he had merely retreated to Tennessee to recuperate from injuries received at the hands of vigilantes in Singer, Louisiana, but in October good news arrived for the managers of lumber mills. Emerson, the Association operatives discovered, had enrolled in a law school in Lebanon, Tennessee. In fact, he had gone out for sports and broke his ankle playing football, which was not beyond the capacity of a 29-year-old man. It seemed, Alexander wrote, that Emerson was "strenuous even when pursuing so mild a course as that of studying law."⁷⁵ Now that he was gone and not likely to return, lumbermen could look on the former president of the BTW with something akin to nostalgia.

About the same time, one of the association's detectives fell in with several Wobblies in St. Louis from whom he learned that five IWW organizers had been sent to Louisiana to help Jay Smith at Alexandria in his organizational work. This action probably was a response to Smith's appeal to the IWW convention for help. The IWW organizers included: Robert Lee Warwick, former editor of The Social War and former general secretary and treasurer of the Marine Transport Workers National Industrial Union, another branch of the IWW, about 5'7" tall, weighing 135 pounds, black hair, dark eyes, dark complexion, smooth shaved, wearing a blue and gray Norfolk suit, a

⁷⁵ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, October 20, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

machinist by trade; John Rhine of Pittsburg [sic], formerly worked for the Westinghouse Company as a machinist, active in the free speech controversy in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, in the spring of 1913, about 5'6" tall, weighing 145 pounds, brown hair and mustache, blue eyes always twinkling, wearing black suit, talked with a slight brogue accentuating every word; Yeager, former marine fireman, 5'7" tall, weighing 175 pounds, black hair, several days growth of heavy black beard, blue eyes, wearing blue overalls; Nicholson, 5'7-1/2" tall, brown hair and eyes, smooth shaven, fair complexion, weighing 165 pounds, wearing Norfolk suit similar to army cloth although darker, suit contained large pockets; Sartell, a laborer, 5'7" tall, weighing 135 pounds, black hair, dark eyes, fair complexion, wearing a black suit, a Finn who spoke good English with an accent, also spoke Swedish. The men planned to stay in St. Louis a short time, take the first good opportunity to move gradually south, and appear in Louisiana without arousing suspicion among lumbermen.⁷⁶ How anyone wearing Norfolk suits and speaking in Irish, Finnish, and Swedish accents could escape notice in the piney woods defies logic.

Meanwhile the labor contractors continued to conduct a thriving business recruiting black workers for the lumber mills. Newman of the Shreveport Labor Agency specialized in the traffic in workers. "There are here at the present a few more negroes here than usual," he wrote to the 4 L Company, "and if you are still in need of labor,

⁷⁶ SLOA, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, October 29, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

kindly advise us at once, and we will try to make you an early shippement."⁷⁷ Men like Newman got into the business in good time to profit from the great migration of black Southerners into the industrial Northeast in the years just ahead. Lumber company managers easily resorted to their old practices in finding skilled workers, based on personal relationships with other lumbermen. C. C. Hall applied to the Aldredge Lumber Company in Aldredge, Texas, for a place as head sawyer. The manager at Aldredge promptly wrote to 4 L for some idea of the man's talents. Hall, the 4 L manager replied, appeared at Fisher just at a time when the mill had need of an extra sawyer. Still, he was not a talented sawyer, but he was useful as a temporary replacement for carriage crew, swampers, and regular sawyers. Hall, then, spelled other workers who needed breaks from the steady routine of the mill, and he filled in for anyone sick or injured. The 4 L manager said that he had not noticed Hall drinking to excess. It was not the sort of recommendation that would get Hall a good job, but then it was not the blacklist, either. Lumber mill workers, under the circumstances, took what they could get.⁷⁸

By late November, some of the leaders in the Southern lumber industry had begun to tire of Alexander. His job had obviously been done, and he was expensive. The earlier vote of the Louisiana Board of Governors to pay him an extra \$2,300 for his

⁷⁷ M. Newman, Shreveport, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, October 28, 1913, Box 11269-55, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁸ Aldredge Lumber Company, Aldredge, Texas, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, November 8, 1913; the 4 L Company to Aldredge Lumber Company, November 12, 1913, Box 11268-54, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

services prompted a groundswell of criticism. Captain White told C. D. Johnson that Alexander's salary and expense bills probably were justified in view of the 75,000 records of timber workers he had collected in the clearing house. Johnson replied that nevertheless the extra pay for Alexander had set off an unseemly squabble among SLOA members. White turned to Clarence Slagle, a member of the Board of Governors since its creation, for an explanation. Johnson had called a meeting in St. Louis between the officers of the SLOA and Alexander to resolve the matter of the manager's salary, which had been set earlier under the threat of increased tax assessments by the State. Everyone regretted it, but there seemed no other way out but recommend the increase. As a close friend of the Governor and President of the Conservation Commission of Louisiana, he was essential to the lumber companies operating in Louisiana. SLOA members did not want to take a chance on losing Alexander's influence, particularly during the labor crisis of recent years. At first, Governor Hall opposed the lumbermen on the question of unionism, but after Alexander talked with him, the Governor agreed to take a neutral position. The lumbermen, Captain White said, could certainly find no fault with the Governor's actions during the Grabeau incident. Such influence was valuable even to lumbermen outside of Louisiana, he declared. The Executive Committee would have agreed to the same salary for Alexander had they acted under similar conditions. Alexander, then, had been guilty of what would long afterward be called influence peddling. At the time he undertook to influence Governor Luther Hall on behalf of the

region's lumbermen, it was not illegal and was not considered particularly unethical. It was, however, the margin of victory against the BTW.⁷⁹

By December, the timber workers union had collapsed. It lost the Merryville strike early in the year, although it persisted in keeping a presence there. Eventually, the pickets had simply faded away, never to return. After a brave start, the IWW also lost the Sweet Home front strike, but it would continue to fester for several months. The lumber mill owners quickly returned to their previous interests. Meanwhile, sawmill labor returned to its natural equilibrium, regulated by supply and demand, as Roger Babson had predicted. An occasional stranger appeared in the piney woods looking for experience or from a distorted sense of the romantic. In December 1913, T. R. Lewis, president of Buirnet-Lewis Lumber Company, a retail lumber yard, in Indianapolis, Indiana, sent his 20-year-old son and a 22-year-old companion to Victoria, Louisiana, "to tackle anything" the piney woods had to offer. These additions to the labor force were rare and idiosyncratic. In Baton Rouge, the state capital, Governor Hall created a volunteer body called the Employers' Liability Commission for the study of the problem of workmen's compensation laws, an issue the state legislature had been struggling with for years. Lumbermen piously contributed to the commission's upkeep; Willard Warren, still general manager of the 4 L Company with a surplus capital in the millions of dollars, graciously subscribed \$25, along with other Louisiana lumber mills.

⁷⁹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, November 25, 1913, Box 90; Johnson to White, November 26, 1913, Box 122; C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to White, November 28, 1913, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Lumber mill managers had been meeting occasionally to look over the workmen's compensation bill then under consideration by the Employers' Liability Commission in New Orleans. At a meeting in November 1913, the lumbermen listened to lectures by Louisiana and Missouri lawyers, including the partner of Arsene Pujo of Lake Charles. Their advice was to modify the Washington State Act, or to accept the Wisconsin Act or even the New Jersey Act. Finally, however, the group agreed to use the bill designed for consideration in Missouri as a model from which to work out a law suitable to Louisiana conditions, which the group would submit to the commission. The employers' committee would include ten members appointed by yellow pine manufacturers, five named by the cypress mills, and five by other manufacturers, such as the sugar planters. Each group would recommend one of their number to serve on the executive committee. Each company operating in Louisiana would be assessed a small fee to pay the costs of hiring legal counsel, a man named Lehman from New Orleans, whose fee was set at \$2,500 and expenses. The commission was under the day-to-day direction of H. L. Hutson, the secretary.⁸⁰

Although the attention of management had turned to other pressing matters, the Association still maintained its clearing house to prevent any new union infection. J. W. Martin, general manager of the Ludington Lumber Company after Long-Bell bought the place, wrote to Phil Bloomer at Fisher in early December, asking for information of M. J. Thorley [Thorla], a stationary engineer, circumventing Alexander's office in New

⁸⁰ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, November 28 and December 19, 1913, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Orleans. Ludington needed a man in the planing mill, Martin said. Thorla said he had worked for the 4 L Company at Fisher for three years under the supervision of Henry Gardner and Martin Hardwick, leaving of his own free will in May 1910 to move to South Dakota. Martin was suspicious, having received independent information on Thorla's past union affiliation. Alexander had told Martin that Thorla was an organizer for the BTW and the IWW. He denied it and said that his brother, J. H. Thorla was the union organizer. The new management of the Ludington mill did not want to hire a man who had been a member of the BTW or its successor. Martin had indeed got the brothers confused; neither M. J. nor J. H. Thorla was an organizer for the BTW. The mistake, however, did nothing to enhance the workman's reputation with the 4 L Company. Phil Bloomer replied that the time of Thorla's service with the company was correct. Thorla was competent to handle stationary engines, Bloomer said, and he had no reason to believe that he had been a member of the IWW, but during the labor conflict, his actions gave the union aid and comfort. "He is a disagreeable, surly workman, grossly immoral and we would consider him a dangerous man to have around," Bloomer said. "He operated a gambling joint near Fisher during our labor troubles. A. L. Emmerson and other organizers made it their headquarters. Thorla seemed to be one of them. His brother, (Amos) was an active organizer."⁸¹ Martin would have had to be desperate for help to hire Thorla after such a scathing denunciation. Of course, Bloomer did not mention that vigilantes from Fisher held up

⁸¹ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. W. Martin, Ludington, Louisiana, December 5, 1913; see also Martin to Bloomer, December 3, 1913, Box 11268-54, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Thorla and his guests one night at the muzzles of shotguns and burned his establishment, which Willard Warren described as a blind tiger and gambling hell.⁸²

As the year ended, trouble erupted again at Sweet Home front, closing the Sweet Home Lumber Company mill at Ball. The management had decided to hire a new woods crew to log the mill. The Rapides Lumber Company also had miner trouble with its woods camp, where the managers suspected sabotage. Other incidents were reported from Oakdale, but nothing serious had come to light. In Haslam, Texas, there was a fight between white and black workers, but it seemed to be of local origin and had no real connection with the IWW. The leaders of the union, Alexander charged, had turned to secret campaigns of harassment, which made it more difficult to spot trouble before it got a good start. The answer, of course, was more cooperation from mill in the district. Meanwhile The Voice of the People had been reduced to printing a two-page issue, down from the recent four pages, which gave a good indication of the condition of the labor movement.⁸³

The strike at Sweet Home front turned out to be far more serious than Alexander thought possible, given the apparent weakness of the union. Alexander had sent one of his operatives to Ball, Louisiana, to look into the situation at Sweet Home Lumber Company, but J. F. Ball asked for more men because the situation was endemic among the native population of the area and because the strike had turned violent. The strikers

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, December 29, 1913, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

were natives of the neighborhood of the logging camps for a number of years, but since the union organized there, they constantly pressed the manager for recognition. They also closed the mills and logging fronts several times, he wrote. This time they wanted to show their strength more than anything else, which sorely offended Ball. Immediately after the walkout, he charged, the strikers began a campaign to destroy property, tools that they found in the woods, railroad bridges, and structures. Because they seemed determined to destroy everything possible, Ball put together a crew and began work just to have workers on the railroad and in the camps as a protection to the property. The strikers had waylaid them after work when they were on the way home. They fired at them to scare them away from work, on two occasions seriously wounding a man, he said. Four men had been arrested and put in the parish jail, against whom Ball believed he had positive proof enough to convict. Ball still did not know the identity of others who had shot at his workers, but if they were permitted to continue such depredations they would eventually scare away all workmen from the company. He wanted the SLOA to send in several private detectives to investigate. Alexander sent two operatives, and he appealed to the Association for support of Ball's mills in their conflict with the remnant of the union.⁸⁴

Alexander's office continued its surveillance into 1914, responding to a complaint by the Eagle Lumber Company at Eagle Mills, Arkansas, that the 4 L Company at

⁸⁴ J. F. Ball, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, February 14, 1914; Alexander to S. T. Woodring, Lake Charles, Louisiana, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA. Woodring had recently succeeded R. M. Hallowell as chairman of the Louisiana Board of Governors, SLOA; Hallowell had been elected president of the SLOA.

Fisher, Louisiana, had hired two of Eagle's former workers, C. Cole and Leon Cole, despite a warning that the men had declined to sign a non-union petition when given the chance. Willard Warren made light of the situation; he saw no cause for alarm. The 4 L Company had sent a recruiter to Nashville, Arkansas, in December, to recruit men for the logging camp, after the Nashville plant had closed for the winter. All had been recommended as free of IWW taint, he argued, after the black workers had refused to sign the petition merely out of ignorance. Quite likely the men did not fully understand the import of the petition they were asked to sign and exercised some prudence in withholding their signatures from a document that they probably could not read anyway.⁸⁵

S. T. Woodring, as chairman of the Louisiana Board of Governors, reluctantly agreed to help J. F. Ball rid his mills and fronts of the union. Convinced that the Balls had not cooperated with the SLOA to any great extent, which resulted in the brothers having serious labor problems, he instructed Alexander to keep a close watch over the situation and remind Ball that the Association expected careful attention to ending the activities of the strikers in exchange for support of fellow lumbermen.⁸⁶ Alexander went north right away to supervise SLOA policies as they took effect in the field, he said. Although organizers for the IWW had appeared in some parts of Arkansas and

⁸⁵ SLOA, New Orleans, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 15, 1914; Warren to SLOA, January 17, 1914, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁶ S. T. Woodring, Lake Charles, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, February 18, 1914, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Louisiana, the Sweet Home front strike posed the greatest threat.⁸⁷ At Ball, the company and the Association operatives quickly brought the situation under control, and Alexander saw to it that every precaution was taken against a resurgence of the infection. He also launched other investigations into the constant reappearance of union organizers, who moved from place to place to build a following among lumber workers and their allies on the farms and in the villages. These investigations required him to have more investigators in the field. Although the IWW had virtually no strength in the area after the defeats of 1913, Jay Smith, Covington Hall, and A. A. Rice, now leading the union in Louisiana, managed to raise enough money from month to month to pose a problem to the lumber towns. Alexander felt the need to keep a constant watch over their movements and recruits. Members of the Association, Alexander pointed out, had responded to the situation with greater cooperation and fuller reports than they had bothered to make for a year.⁸⁸ By the middle of March, it had become apparent that the IWW and its affiliated timber workers union in Louisiana had virtually no control over or responsibility for the Sweet Home front strike. At the same time the Grant Parish Grand Jury indicted the strikers in the lumber camps of the Ball Lumber Company, who had been accused of shooting and wounding non-union workers from ambush. The J. F. Ball & Bro. Lumber Company kept guards at its plant and other facilities, but the mill operated without hindrance, which gave the lumber towns the

⁸⁷ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to R. M. Hollowell, Elizabeth, Louisiana, February 19, 1914, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁸ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to R. M. Hollowell, Elizabeth, Louisiana, March 2, 1914, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

appearance of quiet. Alexander noted that as spring arrived in the piney woods, the labor agitators would be able to get out among the workers comfortably. Lumbermen taunted the organizers with the charge that they continued their useless organizing because they wanted to continue to support themselves in idleness. Alexander admitted, however, that the union had almost no organized strength in the region. In fact, the union headquarters in Alexandria had been virtually abandoned. Still, minor outbursts of unrest occurred occasionally at isolated points in the lumber district, accompanied by attempts at sabotage, which meant that the association had to remain alert as a protection of the industry.⁸⁹

Two weeks later, Alexander found that the plant of the Sweet Home Lumber Company was quiet and that the mill operated without any open union opposition. Jay Smith and A. A. Rice, it was true, had been touring the piney woods lecturing and showing moving pictures on behalf of the IWW. Naturally, they claimed to have had a successful drive, but nothing significant resulted. At Rosepine on April 1, the organizers called a meeting to present their talk and pictures to a group of about sixty people, most of whom were women and children. The use of motion pictures was a truly inspired idea, except that it came much too late to influence the people who made the decisions on union membership, the working men and women of the region. Alexander was doubtless correct when he observed that the union had lost its appeal. The average sawmill worker seemed depressed by the very thought of unionism. Alexander blamed

⁸⁹ M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, to R. M. Hallowell, Elizabeth, Louisiana, March 17, 1914, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

continued problems on a few agitators who wandered about over the lumber district, stirring up trouble. They were materially helped by Covington Hall's newspaper, which was a tissue of lies, he wrote. All of which made it absolutely necessary to keep a constant alert, because their doctrines, if successful, would mean the destruction of private property, he insisted. Members of the association, he added, continued to cooperate with the clearing house, and occasionally the association reached out to help solve problems other than union agitation.⁹⁰

Still more serious problems faced the mill managers and their workers. There was the constant threat of physical injury in the mills and in the woods. Lumbering had always been a dangerous occupation, and nothing had been done seriously to reduce the danger to life and limb. Diseases had become a serious problem in the mills and mill towns, where sanitation was not very high on the lumbermen's agenda in any case. Perry Frost went to Fisher to install electric wiring in a new addition to the store building, but came down sick with measles. E. W. Mitchell, another worker, got sick about the same time with chicken pox.⁹¹ A week later, the measles epidemic at Fisher had become serious. Johnson, the store clerk, came down with the virus on April 8, joining virtually all the children in the town. Trammel also had the sickness, so that

⁹⁰ O. O. Oxley, Warren, Arkansas, to M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, March 14, 1914; P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to Alexander, March 24, 1914; Alexander to R. M. Hallowell, Elizabeth, Louisiana, April 4, 1914, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹¹ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, April 4, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Clark could not leave for his vacation.⁹² By late April, the true nature of the epidemic became clear. The village had seven cases of smallpox in the black quarters, and Bloomer hastened to place the stricken in the shack, a kind of isolation ward. Most of those infected with the pox had suffered only light cases, the manager said, and the measles no longer caused much alarm. Bryan, manager of the commissary, was recovering, although he was still quite weak. But this would prove to be only the beginning of a series of epidemics that would last several years.⁹³ By the end of the months Bloomer felt the full impact of the situation. He had twenty-one cases of smallpox in the black quarters, all transferred to the shack. The State Board of Health and Dr. Oscar Dowling, the State Health officer, ordered that the expense accounts be kept, which the Police Jury would be required by law to pay. No one was at all happy with the situation; many people slipped off to seek a protected area. The cook who usually served the hospital went away before the end of April with her husband, but the mill doctor simply turned the cooking chores over to the nurses.⁹⁴

The association, meanwhile, scheduled another meeting in Chicago for Monday, May 4, to be held in conjunction with the Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association convention, then under siege by the State of Missouri for its alleged restraint of trade as a trust. At the SLOA meeting, C. D. Johnson, vice president of Frost-Johnson Lumber

⁹² P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, April 8, 1914, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹³ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, April 21, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁴ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, April 30, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Company and former president of the Association, and Sam Fullerton, president of the Gulf Lumber Company, with its principal mills in Vernon Parish, refused to submit to further assessments for the trust fund. Sam Carpenter, Bill Pickering, R. M. Hallowell, Clarence Slagle, and George K. Smith were present at the meeting. They agreed to keep the clearing house in New Orleans open but cut expenses by limiting Alexander to one operative on the road; Wade, the auditor, lost his job. These actions would reduce expenses of the office to about \$900 a month from current costs of \$2,000. Bloomer, who attended the meeting to represent the 4 L Company in Willard Warren's absence, found the lumbermen strangely pessimistic. Some lumbermen told him they expected the association to disband. The Frisco Railroad timber bill at St. Louis was, he added, a fresh source of discontent to Kirby and others, which did nothing to gain further cooperation from those lumbermen who failed to share in the sales. The Frisco had let a contract for a large order of special timbers (i. e. lumber measuring more than three inches thick) several months earlier, and a few mills operating out of St. Louis had kept the whole bill for themselves, instead of sharing the sales with all those yellow pine manufacturers capable of producing such material. Nothing could cause dissension quite so quickly among lumbermen as the loss of lucrative business caused by what they considered underhanded business practices. Frost-Johnson, the Fullertons, and Kirby specialized in manufacturing construction timbers from their holdings in the long leaf pine district, and the loss of the Frisco order understandably upset managers in the Calcasieu district, particularly when most of it went to R. A. Long and his mills in Louisiana and Texas. Captain White in Kansas City had decided to turn the Exchange

mills to the production of specialized material, such as lumber for building silos, a line that produced much more income than most yard stock because of the constant demand for structures for the storage of grain on the farm and on the railroads. At Fisher, meanwhile, the small pox epidemic abated, and all the patients except one were released from quarantine in the shack. Phil Bloomer thought "they were practically well, and we anticipate no further trouble on this score."⁹⁵

Bloomer and the 4 L Company was also under pressure from the SLOA clearing house to make more frequent reports of personnel actions. Bloomer passed the pressure on to C. P. Duncan at Victoria, because "a number of undesirables are traveling through the State, [and] the Association is desirous of keeping in touch with them."⁹⁶ In Seattle where he was getting ready to take over the Snoqualmie Falls Lumber Company, a joint venture of the Grandin-Coast Lumber Company and the Weyerhaeuser Lumber Company, Willard Warren took the long view of labor conditions. "I think so far as the I.W.W. is concerned, it has run its course in the lumber district, and as long as Jay Smith is in control that he likely will not be able to stir up much trouble," he speculated. "But I think the [SLOA] organization should be kept intact for any future emergencies, and it would seem to me that possibly one field man would be sufficient, simply to keep on the lookout."⁹⁷

⁹⁵ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, May 8, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁶ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. P. Duncan, Victoria, Louisiana, May 8, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁷ W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, May 13, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

In Fisher, Bloomer had settled into the job of assistant manager, dealing with events as they happened.⁹⁸ Then in June, smallpox returned to the mill towns, particularly among the black workers and their families, huddled in the quarters. Willard Warren, for some unexplained reason, thought that hot weather would serve to end small pox epidemics; to him it was a cold weather disease, probably because people tended to live indoors much more during the winters and were thus more likely to be exposed to the virus.⁹⁹ Germain & Boyd Lumber Company at Atlanta, Louisiana, looked to the 4 L Company about this time to recommend a black worker, returning to the traditional method of personnel actions among lumbermen: "Pls advise if you have in your employ Either at Victoria or Fisher one L. GARDNER colored--If so advise when he entered service."¹⁰⁰ To the south, along the Sabine River, Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company had begun its campaign to rid its vast holdings of squatters, an outgrowth of the labor union agitation since 1910. Trespassers, i.e. people who cut timber on company land, were also at work.¹⁰¹ In Fisher, Bloomer fired six black men for soldiering and

⁹⁸ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, May 18, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁹ W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, June 30, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁰ Germain & Boyd Lumber Company, Atlanta, Louisiana, to the 4 L company, Fisher, Louisiana, May 20, 1914, Box 11270-56, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰¹ D. D. Blue, Farwell, Louisiana, to Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company, Orange, Texas, May 22, 1914, Box 124, L&M Records, SFA.

because he suspected the leader, A. M. Murdock, of banding together to reduce the number of logs cut at the front, which smacked too much of tactics for comfort.¹⁰²

Then came Juneteenth, when all the mills shut down for the celebration of Emancipation Day. Bloomer, looking back on the changes he had made since he was placed in charge of the 4 L mills, had recently changed team bosses at Victoria from white to black. Eventually, he planned to put on a complete crew of black laborers. For the next few weeks, the woods crews would be logging in brush heap timber, which would also call for adjusting the labor to fit the job. "Brush heap" referred to small timber with a great many limbs, recalling the clearings settlers made in the forests exhibiting piles of cleared tree limbs; a brush heap was a good indication of poor timber and low profits.¹⁰³ That July was particularly hot, evoking images of waves washing over the central and southern United States. It did not help the epidemic of smallpox in Louisiana. The disease persisted among black workers and their families at Fisher, despite all Bloomer could do to control it. He tried to isolate the infected from the healthy, but it proved rather mild, after all, which made it nearly impossible to confine patients to the pesthouse. He said he had eight cases in the black village beyond the mill pond, but he had not yet found someone to guard them. The welfare of black workers was of much concern to the lumber company managers at this point, because they had made a policy decision to "change the complexion" of their workers, meaning, of course,

¹⁰² P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to SLOA, New Orleans, Louisiana, June 2, 1914, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰³ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher and W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, June 19, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

that they meant to replace white workers with black workers because the latter were far more tractable and, incidentally, more susceptible to coercion and intimidation, than the white workers who were more likely to have connections among the settlers and squatters in the piney woods. By late July, Bloomer had hired 18 black flatheads and three black teamsters. "I feel very certain," Warren argued, "that this will result in a reduction of the cost of logging."¹⁰⁴

Black workers, who also were tenants of the company, tended to cost less to pay and to keep, because they did not demand the same level of conveniences as that required for white workers. Victoria did not supply any of its workers with electric lights or with running water, let alone modern sewerage facilities; at Fisher, only those houses occupied by whites west of the KCS tracks had lights, water, and sewers, and the company did not want to extend electric lights to any houses east of the tracks, which included virtually all of the white residences, including the school and church. The black quarters were situated on the old public road northwest of the village, across the mill pond from the mill and white quarters. The company had built in 1899 an assortment of two- and three-room cabins to house its black workers, any light in the windows of which was apt to draw the fire of neighboring white settlers. The houses were of the shotgun variety, built as boxes with holes for doors and windows. These box houses had single walls; with no studs or plates in either ceiling or floor, the joists served as the only structural support for the building. After a few years occupancy, box houses tended

¹⁰⁴ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, July 7, 1914; Warren to Bloomer, July 20, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

to weaken, leaning dangerously, which gave the village a look of terrible fatigue. These structures followed the traditional building methods in the region, so that expectations among workers for anything better tended to be rather low, in any case.¹⁰⁵

Also in July 1914, the Missouri Supreme Court handed down a decision in the Missouri Trust Case that required Missouri companies to withdraw from associations such as the Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association that the court deemed in violation of the Missouri anti-trust statutes. In this case, the state court far outdistanced the Federal courts in prosecuting trusts. Each of the managers among the Grandin interests promptly withdrew his affiliation with the YPMA and other groups, such as the Hardwood Manufacturers' Association. Willard Warren had just been elected a director of the YPMA for a two-year term, but he resigned his office and his membership, giving as a reason his change in residence to Seattle, Washington, although as vice president of the 4 L Company, he still qualified for the office. The court order hit Captain White particularly hard, because he had been a founder and guiding light in the association for many years. The Kansas City lumberman would not admit defeat for his ideas on industrial cooperation and economic democracy; after all, he was a professional manager rather than an entrepreneur or investor. In the days ahead, along with other like-minded lumbermen, he helped create the Southern Pine Association, incorporated under the laws

¹⁰⁵ W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, to C. B. Duncan, Victoria, Louisiana, June 30, 1914; P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to Warren, July 7, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

of Missouri but domiciled in New Orleans, to avoid some of the pitfalls of the YPMA.¹⁰⁶

On July 1, the Louisiana Legislature adjourned sine die, leaving the lumber industry strapped with the Burke-Roberts Employers Liability Act, requiring manufacturers to provide for a workmen's compensation program, underwritten by company-sponsored insurance. The Act would take effect on January 1, 1915. Company lawyers turned to a close reading of the Act in anticipation of requests for opinions on its constitutionality and its provisions. Meanwhile, Phil Bloomer had been promoted to permanent general manager of the 4 L Company; Willard Warren took the title of vice president.¹⁰⁷ In New Orleans, M. L. Alexander learned that Covington Hall would move The Voice of the People to Portland, Oregon, after the first week in July, its final Louisiana publication date. To Willard Warren in Seattle, Phil Bloomer expressed an ironic loss: "We regret to lose this valuable publication, and congratulate you on the acquisition." Warren replied in an equally jocular voice. "I am glad to note that the 'Voice of the People' had to move from New Orleans, although I do not know that it is needed in Portland, but I do not believe it will amount to as much out here as it did in the South," he said. "I suppose that so far as the I.W.W. is concerned, it is practically

¹⁰⁶ W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, July 20, 1914; Warren to George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, July 20, 1914; Warren to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, July 20, 1914; a second letter from Warren to Bloomer, July 20, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁷ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, July 21, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

a lost cause, and that J. Smith is hardly getting in enough money to keep from working."¹⁰⁸

Early in August, R. M. Hallowell called a special meeting of the SLOA in Chicago's Auditorium Annex, for Friday, August 14, to consider amending Article 2 of the constitution to meet the demands of the Missouri Supreme Court in the Missouri anti-trust case. The constitution of the Association had permitted a wide range of activities, including making policy on labor questions. The new provision limited the group's activities to dealing with "the conditions of labor."¹⁰⁹ August also brought with it war in Europe, which, added to the troubles in Mexico, threatened to virtually end the yellow pine export trade. By August 18, the export trade, other than coasting vessels, was at a standstill. Willard Warren saw a way out, however. "If the Mexican trouble is really settled at last a considerable quantity of lumber will be required down there, and while Europe will not be taking any lumber the United States will begin to consume more just as soon as its foreign products can be marketed, which may offset the loss in lumber business in Europe,"¹¹⁰ he wrote.

¹⁰⁸ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, July 25, 1914; Warren to Bloomer, August 15, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰⁹ R. M. Hallowell, Elizabeth, Louisiana, to Members, SLOA, August 8, 1914; "Constitution of Southern Lumber Operators' Association as Amended August 14th, 1914, Adopted in St. Louis, Mo., Sept. 26, 1906," p. 3, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹⁰ W. W. Warren, Seattle Washington, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, August 18 and September 4, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Belatedly, Act 294 of the 1914 Louisiana Legislature condemned the blacklist and the yellow dog contracts, on which the SLOA blacklist was based, that denied jobs to men who joined or sympathized with unions. Violators would be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine of not less than \$50 and a term of not less than 30 days in the parish jail. The new law was ineffective; it had loopholes that any lumber company and even the SLOA could and did jump through with ease. M. L. Alexander in New Orleans got his lawyers in Alexandria to give him an opinion on the law's applicability to the SLOA clearing house. Not surprisingly, Hundley & Hawthorn, who had helped defend A. L. Emerson on a murder charge, found that the law did not apply to the operation of the SLOA clearing house. Alexander had apparently told the lawyers that his office and his clients did not require prospective employees to disclose his affiliation with a union, which was patently untrue. He also told the lawyers that neither he nor his clients required prospective employees to agree to a yellow dog contract, which also was patently untrue. Finally, he told the lawyers that neither the Association nor its members had ever done either of these prohibited acts, which was flagrantly untrue. In effect, the lumbermen of Louisiana ignored the law and continued the blacklist.¹¹¹

The legislature also passed Act 108 of 1914, requiring lumber companies to adopt a standard scale for measuring saw logs. Bloomer readily agreed to adopt the new scale

¹¹¹ SLOA, New Orleans, Louisiana, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, September 18, 1914; Act 294 of 1914 Session of the Louisiana General Assembly; Hundley & Hawthorn, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, New Orleans, Louisiana, September 8, 1914, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

and to abide by the new law, but he meant to use the new scale in such a way that it did not disturb the rate of overrun the company enjoyed at the expense of its workers and the owners of stumpage. His attitude prevailed over the law, and the overrun continued in the industry as a hidden profit for the companies. In their defense, it must be understood that adopting the state's required scale would not have affected the scale differential very much; indeed, no dimension scale has ever been entirely satisfactory to buyer and seller of stumpage, not even scaling by weight, which varies with the seasonal flow of sap in the trees. Anyone who works with timber knows it is an imperfect world, particularly in the piney woods.¹¹² To Bloomer, Willard Warren recommended a practical policy. "I note by yours of the 22nd ult., that the General Assembly has passed an Act providing for a standard scale of saw logs," he said. "As practically all of our work is done by our own teams it probably makes no difference to us. On the other hand, I think if we prefer to use a certain scale when we are doing our own work, that the law will not matter, except that in payment of taxes on stumpage basis there might be some room for criticism."¹¹³

Although A. L. Emerson and Jay Smith had disappeared from the area and from the industry, the State Legislature in 1914 enacted one of their favorite demands with Act 25, which extended the provisions of Act 27 of 1912 to all manufacturing firms in the state.

¹¹² P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, September 22, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹¹³ W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, October 6, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana, That every corporation, company, association, partnership, or individual person engaged in manufacturing of any kind in this State, employing as many as ten (10) or more employees, and every public service corporation doing business in this State, shall be required to make full payment to employees for services performed as often as once every two weeks, or twice during each calendar month, which pay days shall be two weeks apart as near as is practicable, and such payment of settlement shall include all amounts due for labor or services performed up to not more than seven days previous to the time of payment, except that public service corporations shall not be required to make payment for labor or services performed up to not more than fifteen (15) days prior to the time of payment, provided that, except in the cases of public service corporations this act shall not apply to the clerical force or salesmen.

Stubbs, Russell, Theus & Wolf, attorneys at law of Monroe, Louisiana, advised Clarence Slagle that he would be required to pay his employees bi-monthly, except clerks and salesmen. The lumbermen of the state seem not to have opposed the bill as it made its way through the legislature, despite M. L. Alexander's warnings of disaster if any lumber mill gave in on the point.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Stubbs, Russell, Theus & Wolf, Monroe, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 2, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA, contains a copy of Act 25 of the 1912 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature.

Chapter 12

Empty Victory

And I have seen a ship sweeping fast ahead
Across the sea along its given course,
And perish at the end on entering port.¹

By the summer of 1914, Willard Warren had followed his father-in-law to Seattle, where the 4 L manager took over the joint operations at Snoqualmie Pass formed by a partnership of the Grandin-Coast Lumber Company and the Weyerhaeuser Lumber Company. Since he would no longer actively manage the mills at Fisher and Victoria, he accepted promotion to vice president of the company, joining O. W. Fisher and Captain White as officers of the corporation. In Louisiana, his old position was taken by Phil Bloomer, the Texas hardwood flooring salesman who had almost singlehandedly made Warren's venture into hardwood milling successful. From Seattle, where Warren established his general offices, he kept a weather eye on conditions in the industry. Several months earlier he was something less than elated to learn that Covington Hall had moved his newspaper, now called The Voice of the People, to Portland, Oregon. On October 9, Bloomer was able to inform his associate in Washington State that Hall had left his editorial chores in Portland to return to New Orleans. Hall announced in his grandiose style that he intended to reorganize the BTW, enlisting the help of A. L. Emerson, who apparently had no more desire to take part in the editor's schemes than

¹ Dante Alighieri, La Divina Commedia, translated by Louis Biancolli (New York: Washington Square Press, 1966), III Paradiso XIII, 51:34-36 [n.p.]

Warren did. Warren expressed mock regret that the union editor had chosen to quit the Pacific Northwest. Lumbermen in the Gulf States, he said, had nothing to fear from such men. Moreover, Emerson would find it extremely difficult to return to organizational work in the piney woods.²

Fred McGhee, the 4 L Company superintendent, took sick that fall, suffering from an illness of undetermined origin. The disease was characterized by the swelling of lymph nodes and turned out to be a strain of measles. Bloomer expressed some concern for McGhee's health, but Warren thought the McGhee only needed a tonic to purify the blood. Such illnesses came and went rather quickly, he advised. Despite his optimism, the company and the entire industry had entered a period of raging epidemics, some of them quite deadly.³ The industry also had entered a period of increasingly more serious business failures and corporate dissolution. Late in October, for example, the Kingston Lumber Company at Kingston, Louisiana, closed its doors, and its employees had to scramble to find work in the area. Workers and their families engaged in sudden and rather widespread dispersal carried with them any communicable diseases they may have had at their former residence.⁴

² P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, October 9, 1914; Warren to Bloomer, October 14, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³ W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, October 16, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴ D. G. Harber, Kingston, Louisiana, to C. P. Duncan, Fisher, Louisiana, October 14, 1914, Box 11270-56, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

At the same time, however, the SLOA kept a steady watch over the affairs of the lumbermen, jealously guarding the sanctity of the workplace. M. L. Alexander called on the Pinkerton agency again that fall to investigate one C. A. Blythe who kept offices in the New Orleans Contractors and Dealers Exchange at Number 26 Perdido Street. Blythe had been quietly asking sawmill timekeepers and other lumber company operatives for lists of names of flatheads—he called them lumber fallers or woodsmen, however. Pinkerton Investigator C-25, assigned to New Orleans Operating (Case) #28, went around to Perdido Street to surveil Blythe. He found, however, that the young man was actually employed as a sales representative by the Lyon Cypress Lumber Company, operating through the New Orleans Exchange. Next C-25 called at the headquarters of the Southern Cypress Lumber Association in the Hibernia Bank, where he confirmed that Blythe worked for Lyon. Answering a note C-25 left for him at the Exchange, Blythe met the detective at the Exchange in the afternoon of October 20. Blythe turned out to be an energetic young man who was running a mail order business in hand-made axes.⁵

Two months earlier the nations of Europe had turned in desperation to force of arms to settle their long-standing problems after a century of peace. America had determined to stay out of it, but commerce suffered, not the least of which was the disruption of trade in lumber. Willard Warren in Seattle found the international situation discouraging and the likelihood of protracted troubles in Europe probable. Warren was just then building a lumber camp at Snoqualmie Falls on the western slope of the

⁵ "Investigator C-25 Reports," New Orleans, Louisiana, October 20, 1914, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Cascade Mountains on which to base a new lumber mill and town. His lumberjacks would arrive there within days, but now he thought it best to delay his plans for a few days.⁶ At Cady and McNary, Louisiana, on the Iron Mountain in southwest Rapides Parish, W. M. Cady, president of the two lumber companies, had taken advantage of the lull imposed by war in Europe to repair and overhaul his mills in anticipation of reopening them after the first of the new year. He shut down his double circular rig in August and curtailed night operations of the single circular mill. Late in October he shut down the single circular mill entirely, which meant he had no mills running as the year drew to a close. Because he had built up a supply of 33 million bf of rough lumber in his drying sheds, Cady continued to run his planers to prepare yard stock for shipment. He told his associates that he planned to start both mills on January 1, 1915, to run day and night. Such erratic operations, of course, would depend a great deal on his ability to keep competent workers, which he probably had no trouble finding in hard times, but the time would soon come when he could find no one, competent or incompetent, willing to work in a sawmill.⁷

By November 1914, the lumber mills had begun to cut back heavily on their expenses, chief among which was the cost of labor. At Clarks, Louisiana, Clarence Slagle had reduced his work force in late August and early September. In the first week of November, however, he again combed the mills, the woods, and the railroad for

⁶ W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, October 24, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, October 23, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

places to cut back operating expenses. He gave strict instructions to all LCLC foremen that they had to cut out every possible job that was not entirely essential. It was, he told his men, absolutely necessary to ruthlessly remove all excess workers if the company was to continue to operate. To achieve this improvement in his monthly statement, Slagle fired 20 men in the shipping department, including nine from the planing mill and the extra oiler. Seven of them had worked on the loading platform; one was the tallyman whose place the foreman had to take in addition to his usual duties. The manager fired four from the send-in crew, and he got shed of one mule and its driver. The company saved \$27.65 a day in cost of wages. Slagle estimated that the three machines that he had closed ordinarily produced 40 thousand board feet of planed lumber a day, a loss in productivity that was made up for by a simultaneous savings in power, enabling the planing mill foreman to speed up the remaining machines to reach a higher productivity, especially the fast feed machines. Fewer operators would simply have to work faster to keep up with the high-speed planers. The shipping department soon reported that the mill had now reached the same capacity as before the layoffs. The planing mill had seemed to be a bit short of power when all the machines were in operation, and the savings in power would give the mill the chance to get results, except when it was running ceiling stock. The company was, in fact, short of ceiling stock, which could be remedied with the extra power now available. Slagle expressed optimism that the mills would function adequately. In the future, he planned to remove more machines, substituting another fast feed planing machine, for a total of five in the mill. With this

improvement, the company would reach still higher productivity with a reduction in labor costs.⁸

At sawmill No. 1, Slagle fired one man who tended the hog; he kept the other hog tender but cut his wages to \$1.50 a day. He also combined the duties of clean up man and night watchman, since clean up should be completed by 10 p.m., when the same man could watch the yards and plants the rest of the night. He also fired six men who had worked in the dry kilns. He calculated that should an extra man be needed to substitute for someone who took sick, and he could not find a man right away, then it would be easy enough to catch up with the work when the sick man got well. To effect reductions in labor costs at the kilns, he took two men from the sorting room, two from the truck that carted lumber to and from the rough sheds, and two from the stacking crew, saving about \$9 a day. In the lumber yard he fired two more men to save \$3.25 a day. Should a bottleneck occur in the movement of lumber in the yard and at the kiln, he could temporarily move a man from either department to keep from hiring an extra man. At sawmill No. 2, Slagle fired two men to save \$4.50 a day, not a great deal of money, he admitted, but then he had fired two men from the small mill back in September. In the shops, Slagle dismissed one blacksmith to save \$2.50 a day, then he fired a wheelwright and turned over his duties to the car repair man who normally kept the lumber carts in repair. He turned then to the railroad maintenance crew, firing seven men and the water boy from the steel gang to save \$12.55 a day. The reduction left the

⁸ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, November 7, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

steel crew almost shorthanded, but if not enough men could be found to handle rails in taking up and laying down trams and spurs, then the gang could surface the roadbed. Things were even worse at Standard, where all the mills had been shut down; at Clarks the mills and trams were still operating. The railroad used steel rails that weighed from 56 to 62 pounds per linear foot, requiring a 23-man crew to take up and lay down rails at an average rate of six and a half rails per man per day. Because of the distance the steel crew had to travel—at the time, it had to travel from 25 to 35 miles from Clarks—it only worked from seven to seven and a half hours. The track-laying crew was then working in a section where the company did not dare leave black workers overnight for fear of retribution from local whites. The crew left Clarks aboard the work train at 6:30 a.m. and returned at 5:30 p.m., with the round trip requiring about three hours, two hours of which were counted as company time, being part of the standard 10-hour day. At Clarks, the company used oak ties, the weight of which required two men to handle. The Forest Lumber Company at Oakdale, on the other hand, used yellow pine ties, which were lighter, at least when they had seasoned, requiring only one man to handle. Such timbers weighed from 150 to 250 pounds each, depending on length and species of wood. In Oakdale, the steel crew routinely laid down nine rails per man per day, probably because the actual hours worked were longer than at Clarks, and because the tram used lighter steel, from 52 to 56 pounds.⁹

⁹ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, November 7, 1914; Slagle to C. C. Sheppard, Oakdale, Louisiana, November 19, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

The uncertainties in the lumber business created an atmosphere for non-traditional proposals to reduce the cost of labor. V. W. Thompson, resident of Trout, Louisiana, and former employee of William Buchanan's Trout Creek Lumber Company, proposed to the 4 L Company that they enter into a contract for the operation of the green lumber yard at Fisher. Thompson said he could bring his own crew. Phil Bloomer did not think the proposition well founded and did not answer Thompson's letter. The 4 L manager had already fired several of his yard men. One of them, Frank Jackson, found a place with the Industrial Lumber Company at Elizabeth, Louisiana, where he had signed his SLOA application with an X, which D. D. Dodd, an Industrial manager, witnessed. Jackson apparently did not find the upheaval unusual, because he normally worked only a few months at one place, the last job in the dry kilns at Fisher from December 18, 1913, to June 30, 1914. By the time he reached Elizabeth, he had not worked at a public job for four or five months. His unemployment coincided nicely with the traditional West Louisiana and East Texas cotton harvest, which suggests that he alternated between the farm and the sawmill for his livelihood.¹⁰

This was in no way unusual for unskilled laborers in the piney woods, but in the continuing crisis in the lumber mills the uncertainties also affected skilled workers. I. M. Thompson, for example, applied to LCLC at Clarks, Louisiana, for a filing job at the Standard mill, considered the most highly skilled and best paid job in most sawmills.

¹⁰ V. W. Thompson, Trout, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, November 14, 1914, Box 11271-57; Industrial Lumber Company, Elizabeth, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, November 17, 1914, Box 11270-56, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Clarence Slagle, remembering Thompson as a former employee of the 4 L Company, sent his application for Phil Bloomer to look over. "In a general way I have understood that you did not consider him a good filer,"¹¹ Slagle wrote. On the contrary, Bloomer replied, "we always considered him a competent filer when he would work" Thompson, Bloomer charged, habitually turned his work over to his helpers, some of whom were incompetent, and he would leave the mill for much of the day, a situation the 4 L Company permitted to continue for several years. Such uncharacteristic liberties were not standard practice at Fisher or Victoria under the watchful eye of Willard Warren, unless Thompson was a contract filer rather than an employee, which was probably the case. If this were all the objection Bloomer had, it would not amount to much, "but at the time the labor trouble started here when our men were either for or against us, we were surprised to find this gentleman lined up with the opposition."¹² Thompson probably took no active part in the BTW or the IWW, Bloomer admitted, but the filer bestowed his sympathy on the union, exerting from his important position in the mill considerable influence against the company and the SLOA. Later, Thompson left Fisher, probably at Bloomer's urging, although it is unclear from surviving records who made the request. It was likely Thompson himself who resigned his position because management had much difficulty in securing the services of trained filers to keep their saws and knives in shape for efficient production. Few mill managers felt easy on the

¹¹ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, November 25, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹² P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, November 27, 1914, Box 90, LSA.

wrong side of a filer, but technology had changed enough for managers to do without the services of skilled workers of doubtful loyalty. Thompson had not been able to find work since he left the 4 L Company and, knowing the company reputation for slanderous recommendations, blamed the Fisher manager for his situation. "I want to say, however, that at no time have we ever written or said anything to his discredit until this letter to you, and I would not write this if our Companies were not so closely associated," Bloomer wrote. Since he left Fisher, Bloomer added, Thompson may have "learned to take a different view of things and he might make you a very satisfactory man. Ordinarily, he was a very good citizen, but we never could feel that he had our interests at heart."¹³ Slagle understood Bloomer's wish not to prejudice LCLC against Thompson, but he decided not to hire the man after all "as we would certainly not want to take anyone that lined up against the sawmills during the recent labor troubles, as in the future years, should a like trouble arise, we might be greatly injured by acts of one man who was in an important position and was in any way against us and for that reason we would not care to consider the application at this time."¹⁴ Such sentiments, of course, hardly obscured the obvious fact that sawmill managers had mounted a campaign to punish anyone who had as much as sympathized with the aspirations of workers by exercising their civil rights to free speech and association.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, November 28, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Although labor agitation had apparently failed to gain anything for workers, it had in fact influenced changes in the relationship of the state to the growing population of wage-earners. On January 1, 1915, Louisiana's first Workmen's Compensation and Employers' Liability Act would take effect, the culmination of a great deal of consultation and negotiation between political, industrial, and labor leaders. The Act was part of a national movement to provide compensation for workers injured on the job. Louisiana acted through the General Assembly in the 1914 biennial session of the state legislature. Washington State, where Willard Warren now managed a growing lumber operation, had earlier established a compulsory system of workmen's compensation. "If we are going to have to pay for accidents differently from what we have in the past," he told Bloomer, "it will probably be advisable to carry liability insurance."¹⁵ Confessing that he was not familiar with Louisiana's new law, Warren pointed out that Washington State paid all workmen's compensation claims from a fund into which employers had paid a percentage of their payrolls. Managers had only to sign workmen's claims for compensation and had nothing further to do with the procedure. At the time, he was under the impression that employers in Louisiana had to settle directly with their employees according to a schedule when both parties agreed to settle the affair under the Act. If either did not want to settle, he lost some rights when he went into court. After reading the new Louisiana law, Warren found it less satisfactory than the Washington Act, where the courts had nothing to do with the process unless the worker chose to sue

¹⁵ W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, November 25, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

the state if he were not satisfied with the award he received. The employer completely escaped responsibility, other than to pay assessments and report injuries. Under the Louisiana Act there was a great deal of room for litigation. In Washington, Warren had an employee who cut his foot with an axe, which the Snoqualmie Falls Lumber Company dutifully reported. The state paid the man about \$12 for his injury, which ended the matter.¹⁶ For Clarks and Standard, Clarence Slagle carried liability insurance with T. H. Mastin & Company of Kansas City, on a \$10,000 and \$20,000 liability basis, which cost the company \$1 per hundred, based on estimated payroll. Mastin went down to Fisher and quoted Bloomer \$1 per hundred on actual monthly payroll on all his operations, requiring 95 percent in cash on the estimated payroll as a deposit to draw interest at 4 percent per annum. Principal and interest would be rebated when the company thought fit to cancel the policy. Since Slagle at Clarks and C. C. Sheppard at Oakdale had decided to take the Mastin proposition, Bloomer accepted it too.¹⁷

Lumbermen in the crisis of late 1914 responded in differing fashions. The Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company with hundreds of thousands of acres of yellow pine timberland in West Louisiana and East Texas, not counting a vast amount of cypress timberland along the lower Mississippi River, began a campaign in the winter of 1914 to eject squatters from its lands along the Sabine River. Although the company had taken scant pains with the SLOA fight to break the BTW, it now went to the law to rid its

¹⁶ W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, December 14, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁷ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, December 19, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

lands of families, many of whom had actively fought the lumber companies. To carry out its belated campaign against squatters, it chose former Congressman Arsene Pujo, the SLOA's attorney who prosecuted Arthur Lee Emerson and his associates after the Grabeau incident. William Stark, son-in-law of Henry Lutchter and manager of the family properties, sent T. G. B. Cox, the Lutchter & Moore landsman, to Beauregard Parish in December 1914 to direct the physical destruction of squatter houses. The company even wanted the lumber from the houses carted away. Pujo sent Cox along with sheriff's deputies to physically occupy the dwellings until they could be destroyed. Beauregard Parish Sheriff W. A. Martin, former manager of the American Lumber Company at Merryville and an example of the lumber industry's control of local political institutions, had little choice other than to serve and execute the company's writs of possession, which it had acquired from a compliant district court.¹⁸

Piney woods lumber mills kept receiving appeals from men thrown out of work because of a declining lumber market. J. T. Wright left Victoria in September to take a job at the Fullerton mill at Shamrock, Louisiana, but he was left without a job when the mill closed soon afterward. "I would be willing to work extry until I could get a Study Job,"¹⁹ Wright told C. P. Duncan, the mill superintendent at Fisher. Duncan had been at Victoria as manager when Wright worked there, and he wanted to help his

¹⁸ Pujo & Williamson, Attorneys at Law, Lake Charles, Louisiana, to T. G. B. Cox, Orange, Texas, December 19, 1914; same to Sheriff W. A. Martin, DeRidder, Louisiana, December 19, 1914, Box 124, Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company Records, SFA.

¹⁹ J. T. Wright, Shamrock, Louisiana, to C. P. Duncan, Fisher, Louisiana, January 2, 1915, Box 11273-59, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

former employee, but there were no jobs available, even "extry" work, by which Wright meant night work. Earl Cunningham, another acquaintance of Duncan had moved to Boleyn, Louisiana, on the T&P in Natchitoches Parish, but when he lost his job he moved across the Mississippi to Holden in Livingston Parish. The mills at Holden, however, did not run full time, and he was having a difficult time making a living. Duncan had to turn him down. At this point, the effects of the labor unrest were fading from memory, although M. L. Alexander continued to demand the mills send his SLOA office in New Orleans their association reports. Duncan ignored him when he could get by with it.²⁰

George Creel, the publicist usually associated with The National Ripsaw, a radical journal published in St. Louis, never returned to the piney woods after he fled in panic from the violence directed at him a few days before Grabeau. But in 1914, he wrote an article for Harper's Weekly called "Feudal Towns of Texas." The SLOA found the piece a serious misreading of the facts, in no small part because Creel had summarized the data nearly three years earlier from the files of the Little River Lumber Company in Grant Parish, Louisiana, after that firm had gone bankrupt and disbanded. The company town and offices, virtually abandoned, were opened, lumbermen charged, by dishonest former officials, for Creel's inspection. The writer also carried away a large number of documents from the company files. The association's own studies of conditions in the lumber towns revealed that lumbermen "generally have dealt fairly and honestly by their

²⁰ Ibid.; Earl Cunningham, Holden, Louisiana, to C. P. Duncan, Fisher, Louisiana, January 30, 1915, Box 11272-58; SLOA, New Orleans, Louisiana, to Duncan, February 1, 1915, Box 11273-59, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

employees; that their surroundings are generally good; that their employees are contented and that the prices charged in the commissaries are fully as cheap or cheaper than prices charged in stores at competing points."²¹ SLOA officials stooped to even notice Creel's article, they wrote at the time, only because it was not only "a rank injustice" but it also demonstrated that "even reputable journals" were willing "to publish sensational or socialistic material without regard to the true facts of the case."²² Creel would soon turn to war mongering in a large way as a partisan to President Woodrow Wilson in his conduct of the war to end war, but a simultaneous publication had far more serious implications for lumbermen and their employees. Still other outsiders had begun to scrutinize the piney woods. On January 25, 1915, the U.S. Supreme Court held a Kansas coercion Act unconstitutional. The Kansas law, along with similar laws in several states, sought to prohibit employers from making union affiliation a valid reason for firing a worker. The court, in effect, gave employers the right to require workmen to renounce union affiliation, the SLOA gleefully reported to its membership. "This decision is certainly in line with exact justice and will, no doubt, be helpful rather than harmful to labor in that it will curb, to a large extent, the activity of the walking

²¹ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, December 26, 1914; see also P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, December 25, 1914, Box 90, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²² SLOA, New Orleans, Louisiana, to Members, February 3, 1915, Box 11273-59, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; see also George Creel, "The Feudal Towns of Texas," Harper's Weekly, January 21, 1915.

delegate, who after all is the greatest enemy of organized labor as well as employers of labor."²³

In Beauregard Parish, William Davis had raised the ire of William Stark and the management of the Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company in Orange, Texas, by resisting company pressure to either leave company land he was apparently squatting on or sign a lease with the company, which in effect admitted company ownership and gave Stark the right to throw Davis off the land at his whim. Tom Cox, the company landsman (he used the title, Land Commissioner), was particularly angry with Davis, and he wanted to throw the man and his family off company property immediately. W. B. Williamson, law partner of former Congressman Arsene Pujo who represented Lutchter & Moore in Louisiana, advised Cox to be magnanimous to the settlers, excellent advice under the circumstances that permitted one man with a firebrand to destroy a great deal of unguarded property in the right season of the year. Somehow, Cox became convinced that Davis was the ringleader of the squatters, who had generally refused to sign the company leases. Williamson met Davis in DeRidder and found him reasonable and forthright. The squatter leader, he told Cox, was not as bad as they had feared. Davis denied that he had recommended that other settlers refuse to sign leases, and he indicated that he was willing to cooperate with the company lawyer. At the same time, Thomas C. Wingate of Leesville, Louisiana, another company landsman, talked J. J. Cooper into leasing his homestead in Vernon Parish. Cox persisted in his pressure against the squatters, instructing Williamson to bring suit in a large number of cases. He even

²³ Ibid.

wanted to keep the people's improvements--the houses, fences, barns, and outhouses of one sort or another. The lawyer, however, explained that Louisiana law did not permit the landowner to arbitrarily take buildings and other such items. The company, in fact, had three remedies at law, Williamson said. First, it could send a crew out to the squatter's place and demolish the buildings, but this would prompt resistance. Next, the company could take the buildings and pay a fair price for them to the squatters, who enhanced the land's value. Finally, the company could eject the squatter and his improvements from the land, provided it had obtained the proper order of the district court. The reasonable approach was to lease back the land to the squatters, at least until they had made a crop and prepared to move on to an acceptable situation. William Davis, for example, made affidavit acknowledging company ownership of the land he occupied, made a lease paying the company \$10 for his occupancy of 40 acres of land near Mystic, Louisiana, and finally agreed to take his improvements and vacate the land within a year.²⁴

In Natchitoches Parish that winter, the 4 L Company went into district court to defend itself against a suit brought by one Ohr, lately the sizer feeder in the Victoria planing mill, who had been injured seriously when his hand and arm were pulled into the knives of the machine by a balky board he was handling. The plaintiff took the stand first for about four hours and acquitted himself well, according to Phil Bloomer's

²⁴ W. B. Williamson, Lake Charles, Louisiana, to T. G. B. Cox, Orange, Texas, February 17, 1915, Box 120; Thomas C. Wingate, Leesville, Louisiana, to Tom Cox, Orange, Texas, February 20, 1915, Box 124; Williamson to Cox, February 26, 1915, Box 120; same to same, March 1, 1915, Box 120, Lutchter & Moore Lumber Company Records, SFA.

estimate. He showed obvious honesty, sincerity, and intelligent coaching. Ohr's attorneys had him disrobe to show the court his injuries. The company doctor was surprised to find that the accident had dislocated the biceps muscle of his right arm. The plaintiff's lawyers had kept it a dark secret, and it was decisive in bringing the company to a settlement. Bloomer complained that one witness for the plaintiff perjured himself and that the company's best witness, the planing mill foreman named Roark, had not seen the accident after all and was not available to inspect the machine immediately after the incident. With such witnesses, Bloomer calculated that the company could hardly prove contributory negligence on the part of Ohr and disprove negligence on the company's part. Taking into consideration the added expense of keeping the planing mill crew at the Natchitoches Parish courthouse while the mill stood idle, he thought it best to accept a compromise for \$2,000, twice as much as the company had originally offered. The crew returned to work at Victoria. "Everything is running in good shape over there now,"²⁵ he said.

North of the 4 L Company mills at Fisher, someone in early March 1915 posted notices across the countryside threatening black workers. For several days, Bloomer was on full alert, because of the occasional outbreak of violence against black workers and their families in the piney woods. He made a thorough search for the identity of the parties responsible but could not find who put up the notices. He speculated that country boys may have been pulling pranks, but still he suspected at least two men, one of whom

²⁵ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, February 11, 1915, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

he named--Bill Nettleton--otherwise unidentified, although Warren seemed to have known him. The threat faded in a few weeks, and the incident was forgotten.²⁶ At the King-Ryder Lumber Company plant at Bonami, Louisiana, W. L. Prickett, the Long-Bell manager there, had begun to worry about the loyalty of Shields Washington, now the King-Ryder store delivery man. Washington had earlier stacked lumber for Fisher for five years under Foreman Will Vase. "What kind of citizen was he?"²⁷ Prickett asked. Bloomer replied that he had been a loyal employee at the 4 L Company, by which he meant that Washington avoided any affiliation with the BTW.²⁸ In their own way, the mill managers had tried to bind up the wounds inflicted during the union troubles. The Galloways had lost their mill at Grabeau to a fire soon after the shooting incident in July 1912, losing property valued at \$4,100, which the lumbermen insisted on blaming on the IWW, suggesting that union men had turned to arson in revenge. At a meeting earlier in New Orleans, the large mill companies had agreed to raise a fund to restore the Galloways' losses at Grabeau. Long-Bell, Fullerton, Frost-Johnson, Kay Ell, 4 C, Pickering, Industrial, and Tremont agreed to pay two cents per Mbf on their average monthly cut. The Missouri Lumber & Land Exchange Company mills at Clarks,

²⁶ W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, March 2, 1915; Bloomer to Warren, March 9, 1915, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²⁷ W. L. Prickett, Bonami, Louisiana, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, April 10, 1915, Box 11272-58, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²⁸ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. L. Prickett, Bonami, Louisiana, April 12, 1915, Box 11272-58, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Standard, Fisher, and Victoria had agreed to pay only \$248.50 toward the SLOA compensation to the Galloways.²⁹

Business continued slack in the piney woods as spring came on. Captain White recommended to the Exchange mills that they begin running only four days a week until the company directors met in June 1915. The mills should also maintain the 10 percent cut in wages already in effect, which, he believed, the workers would accept, provided other mills ran only four days a week. Long-Bell quickly agreed to curtail production to four days a week except for special timber orders in its long leaf pine operations, most of which was exported to Europe and South America. The 4 C lumber operations curtailed to a running time that corresponded to what the company sold in the market. Captain White continued to complain from his position as manager of the Exchange mills sales force working out of Kansas City that he was receiving no orders. He threw out the question for general discussion among mill management: should he cut prices? R. A. Long had remained steady in his pricing, and C. J. Carter had circulated the lowest price list in the industry. The Exchange had in the past tried to hold up prices, while other mills sold at cut rates. This strategy, Captain White pointed out, had not always satisfied the Exchange mills, but it gave better profits. Some of the leading lumber companies often sold cut-rate lumber through commission men, White said. He had never cut rates even as a ruse, but he was sorely tempted now because he suspected that

²⁹ W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, March 2 and 9, 1915; J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Exchange Mills, Clarks, Standard, Fisher, and Victoria, Louisiana, April 21, 1915; White to William H. Lucas, Kansas City, Missouri, April 24, 1915, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

other salesmen would quickly drive prices down to the bottom. Perhaps, he mused, they would do better if they followed the example of the Great Southern Lumber Company at Bogalusa, Louisiana, east of the Mississippi. The Goodyear family plant converted its lumber into portable hog pens and chicken coops, among other retail items, which workers painted before sending them out in about forty railcars a month, he said. Frost-Johnson, he added, had terrorized the industry with their low prices. His idea was to sell lumber only on established order, taking no advance business, because cancellations would eat away any profits from large sales at low prices, so the mills would gain nothing. Bloomer quickly responded, pointing out that the 4 L Company needed orders of any kind, at least enough to give workmen enough hours to make a living. For several months, it had been a struggle for some of them to get in enough time to pay their board, he said. The Fisher manager was particularly concerned with keeping his crews together, and at Victoria where the storage space was limited there was scant room to saw any more lumber on speculation. As for setting prices, he was content, he said, to leave the whole matter to Captain White.³⁰

Workers in the mills around Lake Charles and along the Calcasieu River seemed unconcerned with wages and conditions of labor until bad times, when their strikes and showdowns only served to help the companies reduce production. In 1905, workers in the Lake Charles district went out on strike just at the wrong time, serving only to force the creation of the SLOA to fight the union infection. Ten years later, on July 1, 1915,

³⁰ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Exchange Mills, April 28, 1915; White to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, May 18, 1915; White to Exchange Mills, May 22, 1915; Bloomer to White, May 24, 1915, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

they struck again at Lake Charles in an abortive attempt to shut down the Krause & Managan Lumber Company in Westlake, across the lake from the town of Lake Charles. Workers in the planing mill planned the strike. At a prearranged signal, the strikers shut down the steam engine, but then the truckers and others on the yard, most of whom were black workers, hesitated; the moment was lost. The incident ended so suddenly that the leaders had no chance even to make their demands, although they seemed to have wanted to force the company to pay higher wages. With a show of efficiency, the manager fired four white men--D. Y. Gammage, Oscar Lutz, Press Mims, and Jesse Ellender--and one black worker named Joe Morris. The SLOA reported the incident in a private communication to member mills, listing the strike leaders for the protection of management.³¹ Throughout the Calcasieu long leaf pine district, it had been a trying but uneventful year. Managers and workers alike had taken the usual amounts of quinine to ward off malaria, and the usual number of saw mills and planers had burned. The weather turned blustery as the fall came on, and otherwise careful workers hurt themselves in careless accidents, some of them fatally.³²

In 1916, the BTW finally disappeared. One authority placed the number of workers blacklisted by the SLOA at 5,000, when in fact the number was 15 times as large if Captain White is to be believed. Former members of the BTW, another observer wrote, went west to organize oil field workers in Oklahoma. The union simply faded

³¹ SLOA, New Orleans, Louisiana, to Members, July 6, 1915, ML&MCo Records, No. 2557, File 6966, WHMC.

³² P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 30 and December 16, 1915, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

away; it was not a union anymore. Then in the spring, the SLOA excitedly reported to its members that their old nemesis, Covington Hall, author of the pamphlet, Rebellion, had planned a speaking tour through Texas, beginning with an address in Houston on May 7. Still the advocate of secret operatives, Alexander described Hall as though he were a spy for a foreign country: "Hall is a man about 35 years old, 5'9", weighing about 150#, a crank on the conditions of the working man. If he should visit your vicinity, please advise."³³

In the time allotted to lumbermen to restore normal relations with their workers before war overtook them all, it seemed that affairs had indeed returned to the status quo ante.³⁴ Young people got married and started families. Romantic visionaries visited the region looking for adventure. Old lumbermen organized memorials to the wild forests and to their fearless ancestors. Churches held old home week with singing all day and dinner on the ground, a sure recipe for drawing a crowd. The war in Europe seemed very far away.³⁵ In the winter of 1916, however, inflation that followed in the wake of demands in Europe for American trade goods reached the piney woods. R. A. Long in Kansas City decided unilaterally to raise the wages of his millhands throughout the Trans-Mississippi South. The Beaumont Enterprise on November 21, announced that

³³ Thompson, "IWW"; SLOA, New Orleans, Louisiana, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, May 8, 1916, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁴ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, February 1, 1916, Box 91; W. R. Robinson, Many, Louisiana, to J. H. Vanlandingham, Fisher, Louisiana, Box 11281-61, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁵ "Observance of 'Old Home Week' Opened at First Methodist Sunday," Houston Daily Post, Monday, March 19, 1917, p. 1.

Long would raise wages of common laborers in 11 of the company's mills in Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri, and Texas on December 1. The company gave no indication of the rate of increase but noted that it would cost Long-Bell \$250,000 a year. Other lumbermen were offended by the publicity. Still, most of them grudgingly admitted that lumber workers had become acutely dissatisfied. Phil Bloomer gave a gloomy assessment of prospects. At Fisher and Victoria, the men engaged in the shipping department did not work enough time for them to make a living. Much the same conditions prevailed among the flatheads and teamsters at the fronts along the railroad spurs, in large measure because most of them worked contract or piece work, wholly dependent on the company to maintain a viable level of production.³⁶

Captain White excused the actions of his fellow lumberman: "I suppose Mr. Long justifies it by feeling that he is doing great good to men who are suffering because of the high cost of living."³⁷ In any event, White recognized that wages would rise, despite anything the piney woods lumbermen chose to do. He and his associates had talked about the problem for several weeks, and Long's pronouncement had only galvanized their thinking. Most lumbermen recognized "that we have got to do this, that our men cannot live with the constant increase in food stuffs and running the mill only

³⁶ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, November 23, 1916, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁷ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Directors of the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company, Directors of the Missouri Lumber & Land Exchange Company, and Managers of the Mills, November 22, 1916, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

three or four days in a week."³⁸ Some lumbermen seriously considered shutting their mills entirely simply because their yards, sheds, and kilns were full of unsold lumber. This problem was caused primarily by the lack of rolling stock on the railroads, a national shortage that the railroad managers did not know how to relieve. Captain White proposed alternative pay packages and asked his associates in the Exchange mills in Louisiana to help him decide the best to adopt. "I think ten percent will not quite reach the point of relief needed if we do not run over three or four days in a week; but ten percent would be all right on five days in a week, in my opinion."³⁹ But if the mills could only run four days, then he proposed reducing house rent in the company towns by 50 percent for all workers receiving less than \$3.50 a day in wages, which included the vast majority of the company's employees. The pay plan adopted would go into effect on December 1, to coincide with Long's increase in wages for Long Bell people.⁴⁰

J. A. Bentley's mills in Alexandria, known as the Enterprise Lumber Company, White learned to his chagrin, had been running six days a week because the mills received plenty of freight cars and some river barges, a factor of the company's location at the intersection of the river and seven railroads. Crowell-Spencer Lumber Company's three mills in the Alexandria area had also been running six days a week. Despite the

³⁸ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Directors and Managers, November 23, 1916, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.; J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, November 23, 1916, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

problems associated with transportation, the lumbermen knew full well that they had to "raise wages in comparison with the high cost of living, and I think we better be among the first."⁴¹ Long-Bell had adroitly assumed the leadership in raising wages for hard-pressed workers, and as a result Long "is going to keep his labor and get labor coming his way, for the South has been losing a great many of its colored population as they have been going by the hundreds to the North where these munitions plants are located."⁴² Phil Bloomer promptly proposed a wage increase linked to "the number of hours per week the men are permitted to work; those that are employed for five or six days a week should have little, if any, advance as compared with those only working three or four days."⁴³

The 4 L Company had earlier, because of falling prices for lumber in 1916, cut wages by 12.5 percent for team bosses, drivers, and cutters [flatheads], most of whom did piece work. The company also cut the wages of track laborers on the railroad from \$1.50 to \$1.35 a day and the wages of the steel gang from \$1.75 to \$1.50 a day. Similar cuts in pay were made by the Pickering Lumber Company, the 4 C mills, and Long Bell. Wage increases, then, would only restore rates of pay long enjoyed by the workers in the piney woods. Rising prices for cotton, Bloomer said, had "affected the colored help in the woods somewhat, as some of them have little farms and a colored man is not

⁴¹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, November 25, 1916, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴² J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, November 27, 1916, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴³ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, November 28, 1916, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

likely to worry about work as long as he has a little money."⁴⁴ The part of his work force who had been most affected by low wages and high prices was the planing mill crew and those working in the shipping docks. The problem of short running time, Captain White replied, would soon solve itself, since it was apparent that no mill would either shut down or curtail operations. "[I]f we are the only ones that do the curtailing we might just as well stand in with them and pile up the lumber and run five days in the week."⁴⁵ Thus, Long's wage increase proposal was dangerous. White preferred to give the workers hours to work rather than free or reduced rent, because it would be nearly impossible to restore the rate of rents once it had been reduced or abolished. In any case, he said, "it is a bad idea giving employees rent, it is better for them to work for it."⁴⁶

Other lumbermen generally agreed with Captain White's assessment. Schopflin of the 4 C operations complained that publicity made it difficult to deny his company's workers a suitable raise. Lumber prices had been rising, along with the cost of other supplies, and W. B. Pettibone advised that men paid less than \$2 a day were entitled to a raise, based on the market. Schopflin did not know how to avoid it. The whipsaw effect of rising prices, low wages, increasing demands for labor, and a clogged transportation system might soon mean that lumbermen could not run their mills profitably, Captain White mused, but at the moment the industry had no reason for

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Managers, November 29, 1916, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

cutting wages and a great many for raising them. Long-Bell apparently meant to raise its lower-paid employees, those receiving less than \$2.50 only moderately, based on a five cent raise for men receiving \$2.45; men paid \$1.50 would get \$1.70 a day, for example. Captain White agreed to match the Long-Bell wage rates generally but not slavishly, recognizing that "it is an humanitarian thing to do I know everyone of our Directors will agree--I do not think we should be dissatisfied with Mr. Long. I think he is right." Because employers, as a group, could never agree on wages, trade unions were necessary, he admitted. "Comparatively few men would voluntarily raise wages of the poor working man, and finally good organizers had to get together and organize trade unions; and fairminded men have agreed that labor has the right to organize the same as capital has the right to organize." Long's proposed wage increases only affected common laborers. "It is like No. 1 common lumber as a basis in lumber. We grade above and below No. 1 common."⁴⁷ The captain's associate in Seattle, O. W. Fisher, lent his support: "I think this is a good idea, for common labor certainly has a hard time to live at the present prices of food stuffs, and I would keep the common labor especially, in line with other mills."⁴⁸ With these arguments, the lumbermen in the piney woods accepted the fact that their labor costs would continue to rise in an inflationary market. "Don't wait," White wired C. C. Sheppard at the Forest Lumber

⁴⁷ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Managers, November 27, 1916, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁴⁸ O. W. Fisher, Seattle, Washington, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, November 29, 1916, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Company in Oakdale, Louisiana. "Quietly put in Long's scale of wages on Dec. 1. Do not exceed Long's scale."⁴⁹

By 1917 the socialist excitement in the piney woods had begun to fade, never to return. One of the best indications of its demise was the lack of respect it commanded at the polls since the peak year, 1912. In 1917, J. R. Jones, perennial Socialist candidate for Governor and for Congress, ran for District Attorney in the Seventh Judicial District of Southwest Louisiana and got two votes. If one assumes he voted for himself, the other vote may logically be dismissed as a mistake, which would leave him no comfort whatsoever.⁵⁰ Indeed few Socialists or radical labor activists found the period very comfortable. Many of their demands had quietly been met by government and industry, effectively stealing their thunder. Workmen's compensation, for example, was an established fact in the piney woods, as it was in much of the nation and the industrial world. Aside from the aid it brought to injured workers, it also served to create a picture of a dangerous workplace, one that increasingly came under pressure to reform itself. As in many other areas, it was left to the surveillance of insurance companies to point out and force correction of many of these hazards. By the spring of 1917, also, most of the mills had been forced by increasing scarcity of workers to send out agents

⁴⁹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, wire to C. C. Sheppard, Oakdale, Louisiana, November 27, 1916; see also P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to White, November 24, 1916; White to Bloomer, November 27, 1916; White to Slagle, Bloomer, and Sheppard, November 27, 1916; White to W. B. Pettibone, G. W. Grandin, J. L. Grandin, F. W. Wright, and A. T. Hemingway, November 27, 1916, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA. See also The Kansas City Times, November 22, 1916, for an account of R. A. Long's plan to raise wages.

⁵⁰ McWhiney, "Louisiana Socialists," p. 330.

in search of men willing to change their employers. At the 4 L Company, for example, Bryant Lindsay undertook this tiresome, and often dangerous, chore; despite the well understood federal law against wage peonage, sawmill town quarterbosses guarded their labor, a euphemism for black workers, with pistols and brass knuckles. Lindsay toured the KCS railroad towns and sawmills towns like Pickering and Neame on the lookout for workers. Another operative tirelessly moved up and down the T&P north and south of Victoria, recruiting men willing to move from their present employers.⁵¹

Lumbermen were also at pains to administer their part of the new Workmen's Compensation law. Cases ran the gamut of possibilities, from mashed fingers to instant death. In early April 1917, for example, the 4 L Company filed an accident report for Joe Wilson, a black worker, with the Alexander, Bolton & Lewis Insurance Agency in Alexandria, Louisiana, who had placed the company's liability insurance with the U.S. Fidelity & Guaranty Company of Baltimore, Maryland. Wilson had crushed two fingers, which the company physician, Dr. T. B. Younger, treated. The insurance company then reimbursed the 4 L Company for the medical treatment and the few dollars Wilson drew in wages while he was laid up. Later that month, Sam Cooper returned to work after laying off because of injuries received on the job with the 4 L extra gang on February 21, 1917. Cooper received a weekly salary of \$6 to \$7, off and on, until he died on October 8, 1917. His mother received his final settlement of \$3.50, after the insurance company balked at paying death benefits to his survivors on the plea that Cooper had

⁵¹ The 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, to Charles Stevenson, Fisher, Louisiana, April 19, 1917, Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

died a natural death, not in any way connected with his injuries. The company responded with an affidavit signed by Ed Teasley, foreman of the extra gang, about Cooper. Teasley, who was white, deposed before notary public C. C. Carlton, the company landsman: "That on January 1, 1917, one nigger named Sambo Cooper was working under him ..."⁵² Cooper went back to work on April 30, 1917, after apparently recovering from the injury, and continued working normally until his death from unknown causes. That Teasley's testimony was biased goes without saying; it is not clear, however, to what extent the company brought pressure to get the foreman to swear to a version of events that left Cooper's dependents without redress.⁵³

Most injuries were relatively minor. Three men hurt on the job at Victoria in early May 1917 were paid compensation for a short time. Sylvester Flems received \$28.12; Henry Turner, \$16.87; and James Richards, \$12.80. Jake Hooper drew a total of \$51.75 about the same time for injuries that were more serious but not life threatening. On June 15, at 8:30 in the morning, A. M. Price, a 21-year-old clerk in the company store at Victoria, disobeyed instructions of the locomotive engineer and tried to board the tank car or tender of a moving engine. His foot slipped from the rungs

⁵² The 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, to Alexander, Bolton & Lewis Insurance Agency, Alexandria, Louisiana, November 8, 1917, Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵³ The 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, to Alexander, Bolton & Lewis Insurance Agency, Alexandria, Louisiana, April 2, 1917; the U.S. Fidelity & Guaranty Company, Baltimore, Maryland, to the 4 L Company, April 2, 1917; The 4 L Company to Alexander, Bolton & Lewis, April 25, May 7, 10, and 18, June 11, 21, and 27, July 6, August 7, September 7, 15, 19, and 21, October 15, 18, and 22, 1917, Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

of the ladder, and the front truck ran over his foot, severing it from his ankle. Dr. W. F. Sibley, the company physician at Victoria treated Price and then moved him to the West Louisiana Sanitarium at Fisher. The young man joined the store on October 1, 1916, at a salary of \$50 a month; by the following June he was earning \$65 a month, on which his compensation would be calculated.⁵⁴

Meanwhile, Phil Bloomer, as general manager of the Victoria, Fisher & Western Railroad, in addition to his duties as general manager of the 4 L Company, had to deal with the statisticians at the Interstate Commerce Commission in Washington, D.C. M. O. Lorenz, acting statistician with the Division of Statistics, criticized Bloomer's report of the Price accident. He asked Bloomer to complete ICC Form T "under 21(b) in addition to letter and number symbols trespassers should be classified as follows: (1) Under 14 years of age; (2) 14 to 21 years of age; (3) Adults--hoboes or tramps; (4) Adults--others."⁵⁵ The injured party, Bloomer replied, was an Adults--other. "Party was injured to such an extent that amputation of the limb was necessary, thereby causing permanent disability,"⁵⁶ he dutifully reported.

Still, Price was more fortunate than others hurt in the sawmills, in the woods, and on the railroads. C. S. McMillian was making about \$15 a week, about the same as

⁵⁴ C. C. Dey, Victoria, Louisiana, to Casualty Claim Department, U.S. Fidelity & Guaranty Company, Baltimore, Maryland, June 21, 1917, Box 11272-58, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁵ M. O. Lorenz, Washington, D.C., to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, October 17, 1917, Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁶ VF&W Railroad, Fisher, Louisiana, to M. O. Lorenz, Washington, D.C., October 24, 1917, Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Price made in the store when he was injured in October 1917. McMillian, however, died from his injuries. In December the 4 L Company bought a casket for \$50 and a shroud for \$5 from LCLC at Clarks, in which to bury McMillian, an expense that the insurance company later reimbursed the company. At the time of the accident, the company had not succeeded in finding McMillian's parents, although Bloomer wired James M. McCoy at Creston, Louisiana, to notify William McMillian that his son had been in an accident and was in the hospital at Fisher. The telephone was out of order at the time, otherwise he would have called right away. The same afternoon, young McMillian died, and Bloomer again wired McCoy, asking that he notify McMillian's parents and ask what arrangements that he should make. McCoy sent the wire to John McMillian, apparently a kinsman of the deceased. John McMillian sent the wire on to William McMillian, who claimed that his son was not absent from home. There had been some sort of mistake in names, and, unable to sort it out in the time permitted to him, Bloomer had the boy buried at Fisher. From the point of view of the worker, the fact that compensation was virtually automatic seemed to solve most problems. The company, on the other hand, found that it had to advance the cost of the compensation until the insurance company could reimburse it for covered expenses, usually within a few days, but the goodwill and peaceful relations easily made up for the minor costs of administering the provisions of the law.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ The 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. C. Dey, Victoria, Louisiana, May 3, 1917; W. R. Lewis, Alexandria, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, May 10, 1917; the 4 L Company to Alexander, Bolton & Lewis, October 8, 1917; Lewis to the 4 L Company, December 8, 1917; Invoice from LCLC, Clarks, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, marked paid on December 10, 1917, Box 11282-62; the 4 L Company to Jim

Goodwill had become critically important in an industry that could hardly attract any new workers. Lumber companies assigned clerks to the job of recruiting labor. For example, the Lindsays came to West Louisiana from Vredenburgh, Monroe County, Alabama, black men engaging in the great migration from the cotton lands of the Southeast. Bryant Lindsay became a recruiter for the 4 L Company, a valued operative in the black quarters of scores of lumber company towns along the KCS in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. His kinsman, Walter Lindsay still worked at Vredenburgh in the southwest section of the state just east of the Alabama River in early 1917, but he was an important contact for M. R. Bettis, the 4 L Company functionary in charge of finding a steady flow of black labor to replace the men who invariably moved on north and west. The Lindsays recruited another Vredenburgh workman, Frank Stallworth, in the spring of 1917.⁵⁸ Bettis wrote to Frank, living then at Tinela, Alabama, and his brothers, Henry and Harvey Stallworth at Coy, Wilcox County, Alabama, looking for flatheads at \$2.25 a day, paid twice a month. He also promised good houses for workmen and home delivery of groceries from the company store each week. Henry expressed an interest in helping Bettis find men in Alabama but wanted to know what he would get for each man he secured for transportation to Louisiana. Also, what about transportation,

McCoy, Creston, Louisiana, November 17, 1917; J. M. McCoy to the 4 L Company, November 17, 1917, Box 11272-58, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁸ M. R. Bettis, Fisher, Louisiana, to Frank Stallworth, Tinela, Alabama, April 4, 1917; Bettis to Harvey Stallworth, Coy, Alabama, April 4, 1917; A. W. Johnson, Clarks, Louisiana, to the Missouri Lumber & Land Exchange Company, Kansas City, Missouri, October 26, 1917; the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, to the Magnolia Petroleum Company, Dallas, Texas, November 5, 1917, Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

on what conditions will be company pay their fares. Strangely, Henry did not seem much concerned with the wage rates in Louisiana. Bettis wanted eight or ten log cutters and agreed to furnish rail transportation from Alabama, neglecting to add that the company considered the cost of tickets as an advance against wages.⁵⁹

As the pressure to find flatheads mounted, the 4 L Company raised wages to a minimum of \$2.50 a day. Despite good wages, the men in Alabama hesitated. Bettis fired a barrage of letters, listing the enticements the company offered. Late in April, Frank Stallworth finally agreed to move to Louisiana with three or four others. "Will you send me a pass or i hafta spend my money to come this is from Frank Stallworth."⁶⁰ Bettis then agreed to buy railroad tickets for the men, and "you can work out the cost after you get over here."⁶¹ On May 17, Bettis asked the depot agent in Fisher, G. H. Burtham, to wire the KCS offices in Kansas City for eight tickets from Corduroy, Alabama, to Fisher, Louisiana. The General Passenger Agent for the KCS, however, refused the "ticket order in favor of Frank Stallworth, colored, for eight parties" because of the "Alabama State Law prohibiting the exporting of colored

⁵⁹ M. R. Bettis, Fisher, Louisiana, to Henry Stallworth, Coy, Alabama, April 4, 1917; Henry Stallworth to Bettis, April 9, 1917, Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁰ Frank Stallworth, Vredenburgh, Alabama, to M. R. Bettis, Fisher, Louisiana, April 26, 1917, Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶¹ M. R. Bettis, Fisher, Louisiana, to Frank Stallworth, Vredenburgh, Alabama, April 27, 1917, Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

laborers."⁶² Prepaying tickets would technically constitute exporting, the passenger agent reasoned, and suggested that Bettis handle the transaction by Postoffice money order, which, made out to the railroad and sent to Stallworth, would serve the same purpose as a railroad ticket. Because it was a transaction involving the federal government, the Alabama authorities would not be much disposed to interfere. On May 24, Bettis wrote to Stallworth again, urging him to borrow the money for fares, which the company would reimburse to the lender as quickly as the workmen arrived at Fisher. If he could not borrow the money, Bettis would send cash through the mails, but, in any case, "come right away."⁶³

Bettis heard nothing else for two weeks, then Frank Stallworth decided to move to Louisiana. "I am ready and willing to come an work for you now," he wrote on June 5, "but now about my fair I dont have it and have not as yet been able to borrow it."⁶⁴ Because of concerns about the war in Europe, he explained, "people are a fried to loan their money but if you will send me the money I will come at once and also bring with me my two brothers and Bro. in law who are as good as I by name George Pryer, Dixie Stallworth, H. G. Stallworth."⁶⁵ On June 9, Bettis anxiously sent Frank Stallworth

⁶² General Passenger Agent, Kansas City Southern Railway, Kansas City, Missouri, to G. H. Burtham, Fisher, Louisiana, May 19, 1917, Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶³ M. R. Bettis, Fisher, Louisiana, to Frank Stallworth, Vredenburgh, Alabama, May 24, 1917, Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁴ Frank Stallworth, Vredenburgh, Alabama, to M. R. Bettis, Fisher, Louisiana, June 5, 1917, Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

"\$70 in currency which is \$17.50 apiece for you, Dixie, Harvey and George."⁶⁶ Bettis calculated that the advance would be enough to pay fares for the men and to provide meals for the trip. The Alabama recruits likely did not realize just how desperate the company was to get their services. Bettis, a migrant from Vredenburgh himself, almost gave it away. "Save a day by getting to Pine Hill for the early train,"⁶⁷ he advised Frank Stallworth.

That part of Alabama must have been a productive area for the company manhunters, because late in 1917 Bettis still maintained contact with Walter Lindsay in Vredenburgh. Bettis knew the Alabama town well enough to indicate the "colored" race on his letters to Stallworth and Lindsay, to keep his intentions from the notice of whites of the same names. Bettis also sent Frank Stallworth back to Alabama to recruit others for the 4 L Company. Frank was in Vredenburgh in late November 1917, when he talked with L. E. Strickland, the white foreman of the steel gang at Camp No. 4 for the Vredenburgh Lumber Company. Strickland promptly wrote to Bettis applying for a job and sending along a long list of names of men he recommended. He said he wanted to change jobs because of the low wages in Alabama. Bettis was not much interested in white workman and may have held a low opinion of Strickland from the time they worked together in Alabama. In either case, he replied to the steel gang foreman that the 4 L Company had no vacancies for men of his occupational field at the time. But,

⁶⁶ M. R. Bettis, Fisher, Louisiana, to Frank Stallworth, Vredenburgh, Alabama, June 9, 1917, Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

hoping that Strickland would help him recruit black workers, Bettis pointed out the difference in wage rates. "Wages in this country are much higher than over there," he wrote. "We are paying our Section hands \$2.00 per day; our Steel Gang hands \$2.25; log cutters, \$2.75; drivers, \$2.65; Engineers 35 cents per hour; Firemen, \$2.75 per day; Log loadermen, \$4.75, and Section foremen \$65.00 per month."⁶⁸ Desperate to get out of Alabama, Strickland persisted in his appeals to Bettis, even offering to find black workmen willing to move west, but the 4 L Company did not need white help of any sort. Bettis finally broke off the correspondence with a promise to contact the foreman if an opening developed later. The scramble for black workers continued without letup. Lumbermen were not above "stealing" workmen from neighboring or associated mills. John Lewis had worked for the 4 L Company at Fisher from July 1913 until July 1917, but in September 1917 he showed up at the LCLC plant at Clarks, Louisiana, looking for work. "This negro worked for us for a good long time as lumber stacker on our yard and was a good hand," Bettis wrote. "We really wish you would run him off and have him come back to Fisher, as we could use him pretty well."⁶⁹

⁶⁸ M. R. Bettis, Fisher, Louisiana, to L. E. Strickland, Vredenburgh, Alabama, November 24 and December 12, 1917; Strickland to Bettis, November 20 and December 4, 1917, Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶⁹ M. R. Bettis, Fisher, Louisiana, to LCLC, Clarks, Louisiana, September 22, 1917; see also LCLC to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, September 18, 1917; Bettis to Henry Stallworth, Coy, Alabama, April 14 and 25, 1917; Bettis to Frank Stallworth, Tinela, Alabama, April 25, 1917; Frank Stallworth, Vredenburgh, Alabama, to Bettis, April 26, 1917; Bettis to Frank Stallworth, April 27, 1917; Frank Stallworth, Burleigh, Alabama, to Bettis, May 14, 1917; Bettis to Frank Stallworth, Vredenburgh, Alabama, May 17, 1917; Bettis to Charles Stevenson, Fisher, Louisiana, signed receipt for \$70.00, June 9, 1917; Bettis to Walter Lindsay, Vredenburgh, Alabama, August 7, 1917; Box 11282-62, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

The year 1917 had ushered in changes, principally economic, that the lumbermen in the piney woods would adopt with barely a hint that they would deeply affect their control of sawmill society in the region. Bolling Arthur Johnson, the ubiquitous lumber industry journalist in Chicago, pointed out, for example, that motor trucks had begun to find a place in the logging woods, presaging an end to the logging tram road. Many of the sawmill railroads, separately incorporated to take advantage of the laws relating to public utilities, had found it more profitable to sell their paper organizations to their parent mills and operate as mere units of the lumber companies. By the spring of 1917, the Victoria, Fisher & Western Railroad had given up its separate existence and no longer carried passengers, baggage, or independent freight; its trains no longer ran on a daily schedule and pulled only log cars. Much the same fate had overtaken the Salem, Winona & Southern Railroad Company in Winona, Missouri; the Ouachita & Northwestern Railroad Company on the Ouachita River in North Louisiana; and the Oakdale & Gulf Railway Company in Southwest Louisiana. Scores of others in the region joined them in changing management and function. In April 1917 the United States formally entered the European war that had raged since August 1914, setting off irreversible and quite revolutionary change in the piney woods. In May 1917, the Congress passed the Selective Service Act that would create a driving demand in the South, as it did elsewhere, for labor. Black men found places in the Expeditionary Force in the still segregated Army, along with white Southerners, leaving their women to take many of their jobs in industry. The civilians of the home front were also asked to take part in some small way in the crusade in Europe. Finally, on December 26, 1917,

President Wilson proclaimed all railroads and terminal facilities in the United States essential industries and appointed William G. McAdoo director general to exercise government control, in effect taking private property for public use, for which the federal government was constitutionally bound to make restitution and pay damages. McAdoo took control of the railroad system for operational purposes at noon on December 28, 1917, but, for purposes of accounting, at midnight on December 31, 1917. The American Short Line Railroad Association, in early January 1918, called on its members to display loyalty and efficiency under the new wartime arrangement.⁷⁰

By New Years 1918, the 4 L Company had lost 25 men to the Armed Services-18 from Fisher and seven from Victoria. The Missouri Lumber & Mining Company, now headquartered at West Eminence on Jack's Fork of the Current River in Shannon County, Missouri, had lost 25 men. LCLC at Clarks and Standard, Louisiana, had lost 59, and the Oakdale operation of the Forest Lumber Company had lost 11 men. Captain White wanted to get American flags for each of the Exchange mills to fly from their offices to commemorate their contribution to the war effort, and probably in emulation of the Keith & Perry Building in Kansas City that had a flag flying bravely from its

⁷⁰ Bolling Arthur Johnson, Chicago, Illinois, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, January 18, 1917; VF&W Railroad, Fisher, Louisiana, to N. E. Welch, Pine Woods, Louisiana, June 27, 1917; Elizabeth Whitman, New York, New York, chain letter to American industrialists, April 12, 1917; H. H. Rhodes, West Eminence, Missouri, to F. R. Watkins, Kansas City, Missouri, April 16, 1917; the 4 L Company to the Sabine State Bank, Many, Louisiana, May 1, 1917; F. C. Broadway, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. G. Buechner, Kansas City, Missouri, June 18, 1917; the 4 L Company to C. Paul Leach, Cravens, Louisiana, January 10 and October 30, 1917, Box 11282-62; Presidential Proclamation, December 26, 1917; T. F. Whittelsey, Washington, D.C. to Members and Others, January 8, 1918; Bird M. Robinson, Washington, D.C., to All Members, January 8, 1918, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

entrance. R. A. Long, not to be outdone, had the Long Building, also in Kansas City, draped with a flag containing 150 stars, one for each of the men the Long Bell Lumber Company gave up to the Armed Services.⁷¹

Other matters impinged on the immediate purview of most lumbermen. One of the most pressing matters was the federal tax on excess profits made by businesses in large part because of the inflation occasioned by the war in Europe.⁷² Many lumbermen naively assumed that their profits were indeed excessive, and they reported such conclusions to the Southern Pine Association, the leaders of which had volunteered to testify in Washington on the subject. Captain White again urged caution. Managers of the Exchange mills had not included the corresponding increase in the value of stumpage. Their reports showed the Exchange mills had made excess profits under the government definition, because they had not taken the value of stumpage into consideration, White wrote. Mill managers promptly recalculated their profits and, not surprisingly, now found their annual statements showed a net loss. In February 1918, Captain White turned down an offer of \$75 thousand for the timber on Section 34, T7 R7, in Louisiana,

⁷¹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, December 31, 1917; Bloomer to White, January 2, 1918; White to Bloomer, January 17, 1918, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷² H. Q. Weare, "Some Problems of Colonizing Cut-Over Lands," "The Dawn of a New Constructive Era": Being the Full and Complete Report of the Cut-Over Land Conference of the South Held Under the Auspices of the Southern Pine Association; Southern Settlement and Development Organization; New Orleans Association of Commerce; In Co-operation with the United States Department of Agriculture; Department of the Interior; Southern State Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations (New Orleans: Southern Cut-Over Land Association, 1917), pp. 172-173; J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, January 1, 1918, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

which contained an estimated 6.4 million bf stumpage. It was an isolated section, a mile from the nearest VF&W spur, containing a mixed stand of pine, cypress, and hardwood. The timber, Captain White argued would be worth to the 4 L Company from \$12 to \$15 per Mbf, and the company would likely cut out a 20 percent overrun, or 8 million bf, worth to the mill about \$100 thousand if it were valued at \$12.50 per Mbf stumpage. Twenty years earlier when White and his partner, O. W. Fisher, bought most of the land and timber for the 4 L Company, they paid from \$3 to \$9 an acre, or from \$2,000 to \$6,000 for a section of timbered land. Obviously, much excessive profits could have been, and doubtless were, hidden in the inflated values of land and stumpage. Indeed, Captain White and other lumbermen had complained bitterly that mills in the piney woods often sold lumber far below the value of stumpage. The Long-Bell Lumber Company concluded that management needed experts to advise them how to avoid some of the problems inherent in the new income and war taxes. Many of the lumbermen in Kansas City turned to the accounting firm of Arthur Young and Company and the law firm of Baker, Botts, Parker & Garwood. "The question is," Captain White warned his mill managers, "what is the government going to require and what do they intend."⁷³

To show their loyalty and to stand in with the government, mill managers turned their excess cash into government bonds or notes, although there was a continuing discussion about the denomination of government securities that would be acceptable in payment of income and war taxes in June when the taxes then came due. The Forest

⁷³ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Managers, February 2, 1918, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Lumber Company, for example, bought \$25,000 in 4 percent Treasury notes. The New England National Bank in Kansas City advised buying 4.5 percent notes. Captain White opted for the former for his personal taxes. The latter apparently related to the purchase by manufacturers of Liberty Bonds, which were meant as a inducement to involve employees in the war effort. Employers in the piney woods quickly turned the program into a device for keeping employees from leaving their jobs for better positions. Andrew Bacon, a black workman, was employed by the Industrial Lumber Company at Elizabeth, Louisiana, in the fall of 1918. On September 1, he wrote to his former employer, the 4 L Company at Fisher. "Dear Sir," he began. "Pleas Trainfer my Libely Born hear or send me my \$20.00 Dowlers i have paid on it Thats two much money to luse in that way it will oblige me."⁷⁴ Phil Bloomer answered with oily piety. "Andrew:," he began. "We do not understand just what you mean as we have no mill at Elizabeth, therefore cannot transfer the bond," he explained. "If you will send us \$30.00 we will send you the bond. We do not want you to lose the \$20.00 you have paid on the bond. On receipt of the balance due, we will send bond to you by registered mail."⁷⁵ Shortly afterward, Jim Calhouns left Fisher to take a better job at the Peavy-Wilson Lumber Company about ten miles to the southeast. On December 5, Calhouns, another black worker, asked about his Liberty Bond at the 4 L Company and received much the same answer. He owed \$32. The stenographer absent-mindedly wrote "Mister" in the

⁷⁴ Andrew Bacon, Elizabeth, Louisiana, to LLLL Company, Fisher, Louisiana, September 1, 1918, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁷⁵ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to Andrew Bacon, Elizabeth, Louisiana, September 4, 1918, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

salutation of the letter to Calhouns, but Bloomer caught the mistake and crossed it out before signing it. Aside from the racism inherent in the correspondence, the practice, apparently condoned and even encouraged by the Treasury Department, of holding workmen's investment hostage convinced a generation of workers that they were being systematically robbed by their employers and their government. These cases involved black workmen who made up the vast majority of the company's wartime employees, but there is no reason to believe the 4 L Company would treat their white workers any more fairly.⁷⁶

The year 1918 did not deal kindly with anyone in the piney woods. First, it was a dry year, and by May many of the upland branches and prongs that supplied water to the mills had gone dry. At Fisher, Midkiff Branch was dry early in the year, and the 4 L Company had to pipe water from Lewing Creek farther down the Bayou Toro system. At Victoria in Natchitoches Parish and Kurthwood in Vernon Parish, the baygalls were already dry by spring, leaving only stagnant pools in the stream beds, a perfect breeding ground for disease carrying insects. The health of the people in the company towns was a constant concern of the company doctors. Robert Midkiff, a grocery clerk, smoked too much, which his employer was convinced would hurt his

⁷⁶ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana; C. C. Sheppard, Oakdale, Louisiana, and H. H. Rhodes, West Eminence, Missouri, January 18, 1918; White to Slagle, Sheppard, and P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, February 2, 1918; White to W. B. Pettibone, Hannibal, Missouri, Slagle, Sheppard, Bloomer, and A. T. Hemingway, Kansas City, Missouri, February 28, 1918; White to Slagle, Bloomer, Sheppard, and Hemingway, February 28, 1918; White to Bloomer, February 28, 1918; the 4 L Company to Jim Calhouns, Peason, Louisiana, December 6, 1918, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

heart. Captain White asked Dr. Younger to advise the young man to cut out smoking. White very likely was also concerned with the threat of fire at the mills in the tender-dry weather. The region suffered other debilitating diseases, not the least of which was mental illness. In West Eminence, Missouri, young George Dulany lost his mind, as it was termed in that day. Dulany was the son of one of the owners of the Grandin mills, and he had come south from Hannibal, Missouri, to get himself straightened out. Another mental case, A. L. McAlpin left West Louisiana and moved to Laurel, Mississippi, to work for Eastman, Gardiner & Company, a large sawmill in the long leaf pine district. The company auditor, W. H. Sullivan, put McAlpin to work on a temporary job because he seemed to be unbalanced. Bettis at the 4 L Company wrote to C. C. Dey, superintendent at Victoria, that Sullivan considered McAlpin insane. In the new industrial order, such unfortunates had nowhere to turn, not even the comfort of the traditional extended family who had, likely as not, broken up and scattered to the company towns of the region. As cooler weather moved into the region in the early fall, ending the continuing threat of malaria and yellow fever, a new scourge arrived with the first colds of the season. An epidemic of Spanish Influenza had crippled business, Bloomer told one of his customers. The 4 L Company plant operated only about a third of its capacity. By the next month, it had nearly shut down. Sometimes, of course, workmen died from disease or accident, and although they were partially protected financially by the new Workmen's Compensation Law in most of the piney woods states, the amount of settlements seemed exceptionally low to their survivors. E. W. Mitchell was injured at Fisher, Louisiana, sometime in the spring of 1918, and the 4 L

Company's insurance agent paid him \$5 a week in compensation. Later, Mitchell died, apparently from his injuries, and his father, Jesse Mitchell, pressed the case, seeking a final settlement of \$276.70; the company offered \$200, but the elder Mitchell refused. Finally, the insurance agent got agreement for a compromise figure of \$225 for the young man's life. Other men suffered injuries in the same mills. J. E. Isgitt in February; J. W. Osborn in March; and Sam Cooper in October. Isgitt was the only one to return to work promptly.⁷⁷

The SLOA in New Orleans, with its purpose steadily disappearing in the piney woods, filled the idle moments of its staff by clipping interesting news accounts from the daily papers and sending copies to its prominent members. The association seemed unaware of Bryant Lindsay, the modern black manstealer who operated throughout the long leaf pine district on behalf of the 4 L Company. In April, he submitted a request for reimbursement of \$2.65 for the railroad ticket that brought John Morgan, a black worker, from Shreveport. Morgan also asked the company manager to withhold \$5 a week from his wages to pay a bill he owed Dr. E. W. Coffee of Shreveport. On May 18, the company sent Dr. Coffee \$15 on behalf of Morgan, dispelling the charge that

⁷⁷ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, May 25, 1918; J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to Dr. Younger, Fisher, Louisiana, February 27, 1918, Box 91; H. H. Rhodes, West Eminence, Missouri, to F. R. Watkins, Kansas City, Missouri, April 16, 1917, Box 11282-62; H. B. Justice, Laurel, Mississippi, to M. P. Bettis, Fisher, Louisiana, July 29, 1918; Bettis to C. C. Dey, Victoria, Louisiana, August 2, 1918; the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, to Century Lumber Company, Des Moines, Iowa, October 24, 1918; the 4 L Company to Central Lumber Company, Shreveport, Louisiana, November 15, 1918; W. R. Lewis, Alexandria, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, November 16, 1918; the 4 L Company to Alexander, Bolton & Lewis, Alexandria, Louisiana, February 4, March 6, August 14, November 20 and 21, 1918, Box 11283-63, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

black workers were shiftless and dishonest. Bettis was still active in recruiting black workers from Alabama. In February, he contacted Joe Morgan in Nadawah, Alabama, to ask about the labor situation in the area. The 4 L Company, he stressed, was not especially shorthanded, but it could use some additional common labor provided demand for labor was still relatively low east of the Mississippi River. In January, Captain White had proposed a scheme to offer annual bonuses to workers who remained at their jobs for a full year, during which time a man could lay up five percent of his annual pay. Actually, it was not really a bonus but a deferred payment of wages, and even his own men distrusted the proposal. Phil Bloomer, exhibiting a nearly universal racism, admitted that white workers would appreciate a bonus, but not black workers who, he believed, were not intelligent enough to compute the increase in pay. Nevertheless, Bloomer told Willard Warren, labor demand in the Southwest was critical, and there was a good possibility that operations would be curtailed because of a shortage of hands. He barely had a crew, he said, when all of his men were working. On top of the lack of men, the company had to replace the loss of experienced men with untrained men, which cost the mills in efficiency. When it rained very hard that winter, he had to shut the mills because he could get only half a crew. Wages were not the problem, he argued, because his workmen seemed to make enough to live by working about half time. Despite his efforts to gather a steady crew for the mills, Bloomer had found it necessary to depend upon farm boys who were notorious for their absenteeism. Peavy-Wilson Lumber Company, just beginning a new mill to cut a 50 thousand acre tract to the southeast on the Christie Eastern Railroad, would very likely take more of Bloomer's

men when they started running its mill at the foot of Eagle's Hill in Sabine Parish. And on top of all that, Clarence Slagle displayed his basic paranoia about incipient labor troubles. One of Slagle's men on the Iron Mountain told the LCLC manager that his entire plant was organized by labor unions. One man in each department acted as organizer, planning to demand a 50 cent per day advance in wages for all men up to and including those making \$2.50 a day. Higher paid men would be raised proportionately. In 1911 and 1912, Slagle had these same nightmares, but they failed to materialize. Nevertheless, his reaction was drastic and immediate. He fired anyone he even suspected of disloyalty to the company. Now, however, this was not a viable option; no sawmill manager could afford to fire anyone except for extreme moral turpitude. Bloomer worried that the company had erred in firing its white workers and replacing them with a predominantly black crew as a defense against organized labor. The company had felt secure with mostly black workmen, which, Bloomer believed, had served the mill quite well in the past, but finally even the faithful black retainers had begun to take advantage of the labor shortage.⁷⁸

Every day some other mill sent recruiters into Fisher's or Victoria's mills and fronts to solicit Bloomer's workmen to leave him. Although he made it worth their while to stay put, the solicitation caused a certain degree of unrest among both workers and their families. Still, he did not consider the 4 L Company to be in worse shape than other mills in the region; in fact he felt he was in better shape than most, but the whole

⁷⁸ M. P. Bettis, Fisher, Louisiana, to P. A. Bloomer, New York, New York, wire dated March 25, 1918; Bloomer to Bettis, wire dated March 26, 1918, Box 11283-63, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

situation bothered him. He distrusted prosperous workers because his experience had taught him that men will work only under financial duress. "There is simply too much prosperity and too much bidding for common labor," he complained.⁷⁹

Reading Bloomer's accounts of problems with labor in Louisiana, Warren shrugged it off. He had mellowed since leaving the South and had become accustomed to labor troubles in the Pacific Northwest. "I am not surprised that there should be restlessness and a shortage of labor and also inefficiency and this inefficiency will increase as wages advance and labor becomes more scarce."⁸⁰ He advised Bloomer not to let his best men leave for better wages, because the 4 L Company could afford to pay wages as high as any business. Give the men a daily bonus of 25 to 50 cents for working a full month, he suggested. "Your pay day not coming until the 10th and in this way these men would have from the 1st to the 10th of the month enough due them in bonuses that they would probably continue."⁸¹ Warren paid common labor \$3.50 and expected to raise wages to \$4 a day for eight hours of work; Bloomer still paid common labor about \$2 for ten hours of work. The eight-hour-day, Warren warned, was

⁷⁹ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, February 16, 1918, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA. See also "Standard Oil Company's New Labor Democracy," the New York Times, Sunday, April 7, 1918, p. 5; "What Senator Wesley L. Jones Thinks of the I.W.W.," the New Orleans Times - Picayune, Sunday, April 21, 1918, p. 1, tearsheets in Box 294, Kirby Lumber Company Records, SFA; the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, to Dr. E. W. Coffee, Shreveport, Louisiana, April 29 and May 18, 1918; the 4 L Company to Joe Morgan, Nadawah, Alabama, February 18, 1918, Box 11283-63, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁰ W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, two letters on February 23 and one on March 11, 1918, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸¹ Ibid.

inevitable on the West Coast and would surely reach the South. Southern mills might delay for a while, but if it came to Oregon and Washington as it had already come to Idaho, by legislative Act, then labor unions would force the same length of work day in the South. It was the better part of wisdom, he said, for the Southern mills to anticipate the reduction in hours, which would serve to prevent agitation for unions. "I think the Southern lumbermen have a pretty good opportunity of getting themselves in the proper position," Warren said, "and I have no doubt they will not take advantage of the wind but will wait until they are probably later forced to make a change."⁸²

At Fisher, Louisiana, Bettis reported to Phil Bloomer, on a trip to New York, that the mills had more hands at work than it had had for three weeks. The Victoria mills were well manned, too. The company had begun to receive orders for timbers--ties and small beams--from the railroads, including the T&P and the New York Central. Business was almost too good. The 4 L Company had been casting about for some device to avoid the new excess profits tax, even considering the creation of a new corporation to buy the assets of the existing company. Unfortunately for their plans, they would also have to more than double the number of stockholders, which would water down control to an unacceptable level. Many companies had decided to file their taxes based on the valuation of their assets on March 1, 1913. Other chose January 1, 1917 as the best date. The Weyerhaeuser Timber Company planned to file with an appraisal of invested capital and timber lands as of the first of 1917 to take advantage of the

⁸² Ibid.

difference between present cost and reappraisal. Weyerhaeuser would also protest its taxes to the Commission on Internal Revenue.⁸³

Otherwise, business was good in the region. The 4 L Company had a large order file at substantial prices. Freight cars had become plentiful recently, Bloomer noted, and he expected no shortage. His only serious problem was the lack of laborers, in their quantity and quality. The situation had become so bad that Chicken Haynie, Ferd Thorla, and Perry Small were considered some of his best men. The fact that these men were notorious as member of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers and the Industrial Workers of the World during the troubles in 1911 and 1912 clearly indicated the seriousness of the labor problem in the region. Bloomer struggled to withstand depression, he wrote to Warren, still he found himself near the edge of sanity, himself. The mills lost three days the week before when he had to close the big sawmill and put all his hands to stacking lumber that had accumulated in the yards. The same situation was building up again because he could not find common labor to work as stackers anymore. By April 26, the military draft had taken fifteen more of his black workmen. He managed to get exemptions for some of them through the Emergency Fleet Corporation, the shipbuilding authority, but replacing draftees was only one of his problems. A great many men not subject to the draft had left Fisher and Victoria for better paying jobs in other industries. C. C. Dey, superintendent at Victoria, had been

⁸³ Chas S. Keith, Kansas City, Missouri, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, May 2, June 2, and October 24, 1919; Southern Pine Association compilation of Income and Excess Profits Taxes for 39 lumber companies, October 24, 1919, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA. Keith was president of the Central Coal & Coke Company, called 4 C in the region, and president of the Southern Pine Association.

getting along quite well, but he could not get men to load freight cars, another hand operation. The lack of men seriously curtailed his operations. Even the plentiful farm labor melted away that spring. The year began as a very dry season, which encouraged many farmers to apply to the mills for work, expecting a bad crop. A week of spring rains, however, gave the farmers some hope of better crops and reduced the appeal of the mills and logging fronts. On top of all the other troubles, the mills had been running short of water in the mill pond. The creeks and baygalls throughout the region had nearly dried up that spring, and the ubiquitous dug wells, 40 to 50 feet deep, did not provide as much water as expected. Bloomer considered the possibility of building another dam north of the town to make a storage pond, with which to resupply the mill pond, but the job would be difficult and expensive, given the problem of finding laborers. Instead, he began to study the feasibility of drilling deep wells. In Zwolle that spring, the Sabine Lumber Company had begun drilling for deep water. Both Bloomer and Warren suspected but could not have known at the time that their mill was situated over a deep aquifer that contained water with heavy sodium content, not fit for use in steam boilers. The mills would never solve the problem.⁸⁴

From Fisher, Bettis continued his frantic recruiting efforts, hoping to find a supply of laborers. It was no longer a matter of costs, and wages rose dramatically. "We wonder if you would like to come over and take a job loading buggies on our yard," he wrote to Chester Bradez at Natchitoches in June 1918. "We are paying 18

⁸⁴ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, April 20, 1918, Box 91; the 4 L Company to Whom it May Concern, September 14, 1918, Box 11283-63, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

cents per thousand and 22 cents per thousand for 1X4 and anything shorter than 10'. The loaders are making from \$4 to \$5 per day. Please let us hear from you."⁸⁵

In New Orleans, the SLOA still functioned after a fashion, but its activities no longer had much relevance to labor relations as practiced among its membership. It kept track, however, of its old enemies, taking comfort in their downfall. In August 1918, it gleefully reported the conviction in Chicago of a hundred members of the IWW, including Big Bill Haywood. The incident posed some danger to lumbermen, the SLOA speculated, because IWW radicals had been on their best behavior during the trial for fear of prejudicing the court against their fellow unionists. Now, however, they no longer had any inhibitions, and lumbermen could confidently expect all sorts of revenge. The SLOA was particularly upset at the possibility of secret IWW operatives spreading the infamous Australian methods of sabotage and destruction of property. Lumbermen, the association urged, must be vigilant, keeping a constant watch on their properties by trusted men. Any incidents should be reported promptly to the SLOA office, Alexander cautioned. By September, the courts had sentenced Haywood and his associates to prison for terms ranging from 12 to 20 years.⁸⁶ No one seems to have paid more than casual notice to the warning, and both SLOA and IWW were quickly pushed to the back of people's minds.

⁸⁵ M. P. Bettis, Fisher, Louisiana, to Chester Bradez, Natchitoches, Louisiana, June 11, 1918, Box 11283-63, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁶ SLOA, New Orleans, Louisiana, to Members, August 23 and September 6, 1918, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Also in September, Long-Bell raised wages for all common labor to \$3 a day and gave all other workers, including salaried men, a 10 percent raise. Long-Bell was short of labor, except at DeRidder, which forced the company to respond to demands by its workers for a raise to 30 cents an hour for a ten-hour-day from the previous 27.5 cents. When the advance in wages became public, Captain White urged his mill managers in Louisiana to adopt the same wage scale. The directors of the Forest Lumber Company, the Grandin mill operating at Oakdale, Louisiana, met a few days later in Chicago to consider this and other matters, but they soon found that they had little choice but to follow Long's lead. While he was attending the Chicago meeting, Phil Bloomer got bad news from home. On September 5, both plants were running, and Victoria ran all day. It had sufficient men at the mill and in the woods but it had received no empty freight cars. Fisher shipped 50 thousand bf on September 4, but Tim Liddy, the woods foreman, had only two saws--four men--operating at each camp. He sent word he expected more the next day. Next day, however, the small sawmill was shut down because it could not be logged. Liddy had only 12 flatheads in the woods, which meant only six saws were at work at the Fisher front. C. C. Carleton had gone up and down the KCS looking for workmen, but he had not found any. Victoria, on the other hand, had plenty men in the woods and at the plant but only two empty freight cars on the spur. Fisher, short of men in the woods, had plenty of empties. The next day, the big sawmill was in danger of closing because of the lack of logs in the mill pond. Liddy scoured the countryside looking for flatheads to man his woods operations. Fred

McGhee offered the opinion that the labor situation would improve within the week, but he gave no reason for thinking so except a native optimism.⁸⁷

The Fisher section still had men, but the little sawmill had closed. The car situation at Victoria was still critical, although mill and woods crews worked. By the middle of September, however, Victoria ran full time with plenty of men, but it needed more cars. Fisher's little mill was down two days, but the plant had plenty of cars. Liddy had six saws in the woods--12 flatheads. Ballard and the sections crews had set up three new camps at the Shawneytown [Shanty Town] front. The Washington Emergency Bureau helped out, taking steps to exempt from the draft essential employees of the lumber mills. By early November, heavy rains had begun to give the mills problems, but the big sawmill at Fisher and the Victoria plant were running. Victoria had plenty of empty cars but Fisher needed more each day. Victoria was then loading ship's timbers on the T&P, but Fisher had no car capable of hauling such items that it had milled. Liddy had only eleven saws--22 flatheads--working in the logging woods, and Fred McGhee had completed hauling timber from the Muese tract, near Old Shanty Town. All the sick in the towns were reported getting better. Fisher was shipping six cars; Victoria five. The uncertainty continued throughout the year with one or the other mill down because of lack of logs, freight cars, or lack of men. It was a hectic situation; the demand for lumber insatiable. That day as Bettis struggled with the complexities of sawmilling under government orders, he had no way of knowing that the warring parties

⁸⁷ M. P. Bettis, Fisher, Louisiana, to P. A. Bloomer, Chicago, Illinois, September 5, 6, and 7, 1918, Box 11283-63, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

in Europe had signed an armistice; things should have got back to normal, but they never would. Indeed, after the revolution in government-industry cooperation, they could not.⁸⁸

"I notice copy of your letter to Mr. Fisher," Willard Warren wrote to Bloomer, "stating that you are obliged to pay \$3 per day for common labor and I know this makes your men feel that it is almost necessary to lay off and spend the money."⁸⁹ The mill at Snoqualmie Falls had passed the \$3 rate more than a year earlier and now paid common labor at least \$3.75 a day, he added. In fact, Warren revealed, he had hired about 20 women to work in the mills on eight-hour-shifts for \$3.20 a day. He also had trouble finding log cutters—he had dropped the name, flatheads—just as Bloomer did in Louisiana. Most of his fallers and buckers were soldiers, he said. Bloomer had not had to resort to the use of women in the mills so far, and soldiers were not available to him. The war did bring to the mills more women stenographers and clerks. Captain White and his wife served as interviewers of female applicants for jobs in the mills. The Whites usually sent the young women on tours of the mills to acquaint them with conditions in the mill villages. Most of the women spent at least a few weeks working in the Exchange office in Kansas City before they moved on to one of the mill offices.

⁸⁸ J. B. White, Bemus Point, New York, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, C. C. Sheppard, Oakdale, Louisiana, and P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, September 2, 1918, Box 91; M. P. Bettis, Fisher, Louisiana, to P. A. Bloomer, Chicago, Illinois, wires dates September 5, 6, and 7, 1918; Bettis to Bloomer, Kansas City, Missouri, wires dated September 14 and November 9 and 11, 1918, Box 11283-63, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁸⁹ W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, February 1, 1918, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Miss Conkling, a distant cousin of Mrs. White, went down to Fisher in early 1918 to give dramatic readings, similar to those she gave to soldiers at Camp Funston, Missouri, and Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. When her father, the district attorney in Kansas City, died, she went into business giving entertainments.⁹⁰

By December 1918, about 5,000 women worked in office and woods operations from Georgia to Texas. World War I had reduced the available work force by 25 percent, most of whom were replaced by women in less strenuous roles. Very few white women took work in the woods, black women worked in team logging as hostlers, teamsters, skidders, and road-repairers, also in machine or steam logging as firemen on skidders and loaders, and wood-choppers. They handled the axe quite well. They also worked as signalmen and teamsters on overhaul lines. Women proved only about 60 percent as efficient as men in the role of fellers and buckers. On the logging trains, the filled almost all jobs from running the engines to laying track. The work in the mills seemed too heavy for women in most cases, except on the live conveyer chains and at bundle tying machines. White women worked well in the planing mills, where operators preferred them to black men; instead of using black women, the operators hired white boys. Black women worked in the clean-up gangs and stacking gangs in the lumber yards. Black women did not perform well as loaders, but white women excelled men as passers, timekeepers, tallymen, and checkers. Black women also worked in the boiler rooms as firemen. Generally, women were limited by their lack of strength to do heavy

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*; J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, February 1, 1918, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

work. Their need for shorter hours was considered a natural weakness, therefore, it was not wise to work women longer than eight hours at heavy tasks. A few exceptionally well-developed women could do any task usually assigned to men. At the beginning of the use of women in the industry, they received much less pay than men, more on a par with boys and sometimes less, but by the end of the war, they were making nearly as much as men. Lumbermen would not work a black woman alone with men around, because they thought the distractions of the sexes was too much for them to cope with. White women tended to worry about the stigma of manual labor, but they quickly proved superior to men in some types of work because they seemed more agile mentally and quicker at mastering mechanical skills. In any case, lumbermen insisted they were superior to black men.⁹¹

With an abiding belief in the efficacy of hand labor for young men, White kept sending unsuitable but deserving men south to work in the woods and mills in Louisiana, where they found they were hardly welcome. David Hornstein wanted to go to Fisher and the other mills in January 1919, hoping to grow hardened in the rigors of the lumber camps. White told his mills managers that the boy needed "out door service," which was certainly available at the woods camps where employees did not return to the town at night, but "as your perhaps know, most of our employees are colored and there are no facilities for the ordinary whitemen to live in the camps." The managers agreed to look

⁹¹ Edward N. Munns, "Women in Southern Lumbering Operations," Journal of Forestry, Vol. 17 (1919): 144-149.

for a suitable place for young Hornstein, but, Bloomer said, "I do not believe we can encourage him to expect a place of this sort here."⁹²

The woods that winter and spring turned soft in the rains, giving no footing to the draft animals and leaving the trams virtually impassable. The loggers had severe problems logging the mills. In most cases, it was not possible even to snake logs to the tracks for loading. The mills also needed flatheads in the worst way. Many of them had begun to return to the farms, expecting a good crop year with the return of the rains. Most of the regular logging crews in the region were manned by black log cutters, but the mills depended on white farmers to fill out the logging crews in peak periods. It was a convenient arrangement. Flatheads slipped quietly across the line from their farms in slack periods and returned to farm work when the crops needed tending. The lumber companies paid them on a piece work basis. They did not fear any unrest; dissatisfied flatheads made no trouble, they simply melted away to reappear on someone else's logging crew or on their own small farms. The mills had a number of men available, who Bloomer called surplus, but they adamantly refused to cut logs. It was not necessarily a matter of laziness, as the lumbermen often charged; although flatheads were considered common or unskilled labor, there was nothing either common or unskilled about the talents of an efficient faller or buckler in the logging woods. An inexperienced man could and often did burn himself out by relying too much on brute strength and excessive speed. A well-trained flathead exercised a subtlety with his saw and axe that

⁹² P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, January 7, 1919; see also White to Stockholders of the Louisiana Sawmill Company, Inc., Glenmora, Louisiana, January 6, 1919, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

saved him energy, and he never tried to match his strength with the weight of the trees he felled or the logs he rolled. It took a great deal of knowledge and experience and no small use of manual dexterity. For its Fisher mill, the 4 L Company was then logging the area south of Fort Jesup, around the camps situated near the old camp-follower hamlet of Shanty Town in Sabine Parish (Secs. 28 and 36, T7 R10). To reach it, the track crew was laying a line out from Holt's Switch to scrap up scattered stands left by earlier logging contractors. The Fisher crews had also been trying to log the gumbo lands on the headwaters of Middle Creek (Secs. 16, 17, and 18, T6 R9), but the rains had about forced them to give it up for the season. Victoria's logging crews had crossed the T&P north of Provencal (Sec. 23, T8 R8), moving through the short leaf pine stands west of Natchitoches. They had also begun cutting timber north of Flora on the T&P (T8 R7) and between Hagedwood and Natchitoches (T9 R8).⁹³

Three months after the end of the war in Europe, the lumber mills had still not received any large number of returning soldiers to the ranks of their employees, but by January 1919 the government had begun selling large numbers of Army mules. It would help a great deal, Bloomer said, if he could extend electric service to more houses in the village. The expense could surely be justified, even if it meant some changes in the power plant at the mill. "Water, lights and entertainment are the three things we are so

⁹³ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, C. C. Sheppard, Oakdale, Louisiana, and P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, January 30, 1919, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

short on,"⁹⁴ he complained in much the same terms as the disgruntled laborers in the region. To the south, at Orange that January, black workmen at the plants of Lutch & Moore Lumber Company and Miller-Link Lumber Company went out on strike, demanding an eight-hour-day, time-and-a-half pay for overtime work, and other improvements in their conditions and wages. The SLOA moved to control the situation, but the association was strapped for funds and lacked general cooperation of the lumbermen in the area. The Filers & Sawyers Union, organized under the auspices of the American Federation of Labor, had also contacted sawmill filers and sawyers in the piney woods, soliciting their membership and support. Bloomer could not predict what effect the effort would have on his own skilled workers. A few soldiers had returned from the war and most of them had gone back to work at their old jobs in the sawmills and at the timber fronts, but the lumbermen worried about the philosophies they may have exposed to, affecting their views of the relationship between capital and labor. Most of the American troops sent to Europe, of course, had not returned by early 1919, and some would not get home until 1920 and even later. The lumber mills in the region opened the year 1919 with stocks depleted and few orders for lumber or timber. Wet weather posed a continuing problem that spring, but the real cause for alarm was the relatively low production of lumber during 1918, which still affected prospects in the new year. Willard Warren, since he had been on the West Coast, had mellowed in his attitude toward both the wages and conditions of labor since his experience with the BTW

⁹⁴ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, February 2, 1919, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

in Louisiana. Now, he advised Bloomer to consider looking for log cutters in the Northern lumber districts. The eight-hour-day, he said, was inevitable in the South, just as it was earlier in the Northwest, a change that would in the long run be helpful to mill managers. The strike at Orange, he said, was probably caused by the difference in hours between lumber mills and local shipyards that honored the eight-hour-day. He had visited St. Paul, Minnesota, recently, where he heard a great deal about the Filers and Sawyers Union, which would likely grow. Southern lumbermen were justified, he thought, in being uneasy about the attitude of the returned overseas soldiers, particularly black veterans. Many blacks would probably not go back to their old homes, which was fortunate both for them and the South, he said. There was no solace, he seemed to say, for the sawmill in the presence of returning heroes who had seen the world and imbibed all sorts of foreign ideas and developed all sorts of unfortunate aspirations.⁹⁵

Labor unrest was ubiquitous. At Clarks, Clarence Slagle discovered cards circulating among his employees for their signature, warning management that workers would "not stand... for any reduction in wages until the cost of living is lowered."⁹⁶ Slagle and Bloomer were worried, not knowing how far or how deep the agitation had gone or who sponsored it. The wording of the cards suggested to Slagle some local talent had produced them. Log cutters were still hard to find in the piney woods that

⁹⁵ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, February 2, 1919; Warren to Bloomer, February 10, 1919, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁶ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Seattle, Washington, March 3, 1919, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

spring, although the situation had been slightly relieved by spells of good weather. Necessarily, the flatheads worked at widely scattered stands, accessible because they were well drained. Still, the logs remained in the woods, for the most part, because the ground was still far too wet to support teams to move them. As warm sunny weather returned, lumber mill managers became more optimistic despite all their troubles.⁹⁷

Lumbermen in the piney woods had under the pressure of the increased demand for labor converted generally to advocates of the eight-hour-day, in preference to raising wages any further. Bloomer had expressed such sentiments to W. B. Pettibone in Hannibal, Missouri, a man not given to pampering workers. Captain White agreed that it was inevitable and probably a good thing. R. A. Long and other big lumbermen favored it. White also suggested it would be a good thing to pay by the hour, rather than by the day. These were positively revolutionary ideas and not at all consistent with positions taken by lumbermen in the region during the past decade when they opposed organized labor with such vigor. At Wequetonsing, Michigan, White was recuperating from one of his bouts with some undiagnosed respiratory illness at the time. He had time on his hands to regale his associates with his philosophical ideas. "There is a false idea in regard to the value of lumber and the prices we are getting for [it] in proportion to it's [sic] cost. And if wages are raised just now while these fictitious values prevail,

⁹⁷ Ibid.

we are not going to get full value in a day's work. But if we give them eight hours, which is ultimately sure to come, we will get better service for the eight hours."⁹⁸

The lumberman could see the trend to the shorter work day all over the country, he said. Manufacturers were disposed to accept the shorter day in conciliation. It might be postponed, he mused, because there could be reasons he had not thought of, but since the government had long ago signaled its approval of the shorter day, it seemed that a law would certainly be passed limiting hours of labor. "I am in favor of making industries as efficient and as profitable as possible considering that the eight hour day law seems to be upon us. I would be in favor of modifying this law by having it understood that we have a right to work ten hours if we can make arrangements with our men and pay extra, but make the basis eight hours."⁹⁹ The Snoqualmie Falls plant in Washington, under Willard Warren's management, and sawmills elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest paid \$4.80 per eight-hour-day. O. D. Fisher, vice president of the company, said Warren got about as much lumber in two eight-hour-shifts as he got earlier in two ten-hour shifts. O. W. Fisher's son David made a study of the Southern lumber industry and gave it as his opinion that within five years, about 1,667 sawmills would have cut out of timber and be out of business. In 1919, he calculated that the South would lose 538 mills; in 1920 another 539 mills; the next year 221 more; and the next 120

⁹⁸ J. B. White, Wequetonsing, Michigan, to P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, July 19, 1919, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

mills.¹⁰⁰ Such a change in the industrial landscape would absolutely require a change to the eight-hour-day, White said. A few days later, in a letter to Gilbert Grandin in Cleveland, White went over the arguments for the shorter work day again. The fact that every worker in the vast majority of industries, and even in government, were working eight hours argued for the eight-hour-day in the South. R. A. Long assured White that the industry could come to an agreement on the change within a month and a half, although there were some details yet to be worked out. All the brave talk, however, had virtually no effect on the ingrained habits of the region; the ten-hour-day continued unabated.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to O. W. Fisher, Seattle, Washington, July 23, 1919, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

¹⁰¹ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to G. W. Grandin, Cleveland, Ohio, August 4, 1919, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Chapter 13

The Aftermath

Their villages are Nameless Towns, their monuments huge
piles of saw dust, their epitaph: "The mill cut out."¹

"It looks pretty bad," Captain White wrote in the fall of 1919. "I see they are organizing the negroes and establishing Unions led by the negroes. This will undeniably interfere with the lumber work of the South."² One of White's lieutenants had just sent him a complimentary report on the labor situation by a detective agency confidently predicting a fire storm of union activity. At his desk in Kansas City in the Long Building, John Barber White looked out on a world that, alternately, seemed basically good and utterly evil. He could propose that the lumber industry accept unions, collective bargaining, and the eight-hour-day, only to turn about a short time later and see any kind of union as rank disloyalty. A violent reaction by lumbermen to a strike by the American Federation of Labor, its locals led by and indeed manned principally by black workers, outraged lumber managers. The Pinkerton agent in New Orleans who made the complimentary report did nothing to calm their fears, but White, who had no high opinion of hired detectives, must have known the man wanted a retainer. Still, he fell into a deep depression. "This is the work of the Unions, this matter of organization,

¹ R. D. Forbes, "The Passing of the Piney Woods," American Forestry Vol. 29 (March 1923): 185.

² J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 18, 1919, Box 91, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

and they are evidently succeeding. If they are led by cool heads that have an interest in the industries of the South it will be all right, but they will not be uniformly so led. This information is valuable simply to show what is coming."³ It would be Armageddon, the forces of law and order, of production and efficiency, pitted against the violent assaults of anarchy and riot. White saw the future as hopeless, all he had worked for these 40 years in the piney woods threatened by violent socialistic schemes. Already, the South's largest sawmill, the giant facility of the Great Southern Lumber Company at Bogalusa, Louisiana, on the east side of the river, was now in the control of the unions. Timber workers, White worried, could be "more easily led into the I W W than are the regular Union men who get their charter from the department of labor."⁴ White had long held the opinion that the organization of workers in suitable unions could be good for everyone, and he had settled on the AFL as suitable without really knowing much about Mr. Gompers' federation, which was, he thought, vaguely reminiscent of the political federation created by the Founding Fathers nearly 150 years earlier. Instead of the IWW, now virtually destroyed by federal prosecution during the war, the black workers in East Louisiana were members of the AFL, a fact that pushed White farther into his depression. "At heart they are all together," he grumbled. "It is only a matter of expression of the degree they will ultimately go to."⁵ Even Mr. Gompers could not be trusted in the final analysis. It was all beyond human understanding, why men would

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

choose disorder rather than order, why they would turn violently on their benefactors, the men they depended on for their sustenance, why men could not be wise and economical in their personal affairs, so that they too would create their own capital, the lodestone from which men gained mastery of affairs. White nearly despaired. "I do not know of anything we can say. It is important to the lumber industries that the wisest course be taken, but it is hard to tell what that course is, because we do not agree. The Unions, being organized, have a sort of agreement. The operators are not organized as to an effective, wise policy."⁶ It was only good sense to take the matter up in the annual meetings of the trade associations, he pointed out, but from where he sat in the offices of the Exchange sales agency, he could not decide on the proper response. It was rank ingratitude on the part of the men the mills employed, of course. The unions seemed to have sufficient funds with which to pay their organizers, into whose hands the mills had played by raising wages occasionally in the piney woods so that union men had even more money on which to base even more onerous demands. "I think," he concluded, "the most efficient work against disloyal combinations against industries is being worked by the steel plant at Gary [Indiana]."⁷ These disloyal combinations were actually a leaderless migration of both white and black workers from the South and the Appalachians into the industrial North. Hundreds of thousands of black Southerners abandoned their accustomed pursuits in exchange of the promises of a measure of

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

freedom and economic success.⁸ They found, however, a mixed welcome. Race riots often became the standard response of white natives with proprietary interests in protecting their jobs and their neighborhoods. In Gary, Indiana, political and industrial leaders imposed a strict segregation of the races in the workplace and in public services. Black workers, armed to some extent with their experience in the unsuccessful Southern strikes in the piney woods and elsewhere, tended to concentrate in a few industries, notably steel, meat packing, automobiles, and Pullman's facilities. Although these industries had enticed poor black and white Southerners into migrating north during the war and good financial times, the day would soon come when they were no longer wanted, but the way home was strewn with personal hazards, even disaster.⁹

When sawmill managers mentioned labor as a class, they usually meant black workers. Lumber companies usually recruited managers from northern industry or the better educated levels of Southern business. Led by its business and industrial elite and enlightened Northern opinion, the South made a place for the black worker on the lowest rung of the industrial ladder. Far from being a conspiracy among Southern yahoos and rednecks, the social ostracism of the black worker grew out of speculative research among the nation's intellectuals. Although black slavery had ended with the Thirteenth

⁸ For a contemporary study of the black migration, see W. T. B. Williams, "The Negro Exodus from the South," in Negro Migration in 1916-17 edited by J. H. Dillard (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), pp. 97, 100. Edmund DeS. Brunner, Church Life in the Rural South (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1923), pp. 80-84, describes the movement in relation to the church.

⁹ David Montgomery, The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925 (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 381-382.

Amendment, most whites firmly believed that blacks were inherently suited to stoop labor. Mentally and physically, he was fated to be the servant of others. It was obvious for all to see. The black was physically strong, docile, cheerful, carefree in the face of life's ups and downs, and responsive to kindness and justice. Southern employers insisted, because of their personal relations with black workers, that the "Negro's place, first of all, was in the South."¹⁰

The second source of labor in the Southern lumber industry was the subsistence farm, particularly in the piney woods, where white hunters, farmers, and stockmen had carved out patches in the forests. At the risk of exaggerating his condition, it can be said that the white subsistence farmer occupied a favored political and social position in the region, although he was not averse to doing even better. His kind farmed a range of holdings, from mere patches in the big woods to substantial bottomland farms. Virtually all of them raised some cotton. In 1920, agents of the U.S. Department of Agriculture interviewed hill farmers in Northwest Louisiana. Each farmed about 100 acres, with about 85 acres in crops. Cotton was the chief commercial crop, many times the only crop that produced cash at harvest. Cotton, the agents found, required 100.3 man hours and 41.5 mule hours per acre. Corn needed only 37 man hours and 34.4 mule hours per acre. The farmer worked about 117 and his mule about 69 hours per acre to produce cotton that sold for about \$50 to \$150. Gross income ranged from \$812.50 to \$9,750,

¹⁰ I. A. Newby, Jim Crow's Defense: Anti-Negro Thought in America, 1900-1930 (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1965), pp. x, 49, 59. As an example of the scientific sources of anti-Negro thought, Newby cites Alfred Holt Stone, "The Negro in the South," in The South in the Building of the Nation Vol. 1 (Richmond, Virginia, 1909), pp. 166-169.

based on the cultivation of 65 acres of cotton. It required, however, the labor of a grown man for each 15 or 20 acres, so that the gross income for an individual could be as low as \$187.50 a year or as high as \$3,000.¹¹ By contrast, a flathead or millhand who worked the full year, could expect wages ranging from \$500 to \$1,500 if he were classified as common labor. Skilled workers—head sawyers, edgermen, cutoff sawyers, stationary engineers, firemen, and filers—could make from \$3 to \$12 a day, a range of \$1,000 to \$4,000 a year. Few mills, however, operated a full 310 days a year, just as few farms managed to raise two bales of cotton to the acre. Managers quickly designed their operations to shift the cost of downtime to the wage worker. This was one of the lumber worker's chief complaints, that he did not get in enough time, not that he worked too much.¹²

Logging, of course, was labor intensive, requiring men and animals to fell and haul logs to the skids on the railroad spurs. Labor-saving devices such as log skidders and loaders, operating on steam power from the spurs changed the balance somewhat, but they worked best in relatively flat country with relatively pure stands of a single species of timber. Machinery took the place of men at many tasks in the saw mills and planers, but hand labor was required for sorting and stacking lumber in the yards and

¹¹ M. Bruce Oates and L. A. Reynoldson, Standards of Labor on the Hill Farms of Louisiana, USDA Bul. 961 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1921) pp. 2-28.

¹² "Wage Rates for January 1, 1908," and "Wage Scale of the National Industrial Union of Forest and Lumber workers, IWW, August 15, 1912," LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 36, File 787, WHMC; copied in Appendices, below. See also, History of Wages in the United States From Colonial Times To 1928, Wages and Hours of Labor Series, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Bul. 604, Revision of Bul. 499 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1934), pp. 463-468, 471.

kilns.¹³ By the beginning of the third decade of the twentieth century, the South still had 260 thousand square miles of merchantable timber, much of it west of the Mississippi River. Although the region contained four widespread botanical systems, the most important economically was the piney woods. In 1880, the South had standing 650 billion board feet of sawtimber. For four decades, the region had been the mainstay of lumber markets in the Northeast, Midwest, and the Great Plains. Despite the continuing manufacture of lumber in the South, the bonanza period had probably peaked before United States entry into the World War, brought on in part by the opening of the Panama Canal that created a supply-driven demand for Western lumber on the East Coast at modest prices. West of the Mississippi River, the South met the West, Rupert B. Vance writes. This was the new Southwest in 1880, which differed a great deal from the Southeast and from the Pacific and Desert Southwest. From the end of the Civil War until 1900, about two million immigrants crossed the river from the old cotton region into Arkansas, West Louisiana, South Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas, many of them joining the growing numbers of sawmill laborers in the region.¹⁴

Although unions met with general acceptance among workers in the South, at least in the late nineteenth century, the ratio of union members to non-members in the general population continued to decrease after 1897 when it stood at 1.2 percent. It peaked in

¹³ S. B. Detwiler, "Comfortable Camps as a Means of Increasing the Efficiency of Woods Labor," Forestry Quarterly Vol. 9 (1911): 15-16.

¹⁴ Rupert B. Vance, Human Geography of the South: A Study in Regional Resources and Human Adequacy 2nd ed. (New York: Russell & Russell, 1968), pp. 9, 109-111, 316-318, 348-350.

1900 at 3 percent, falling to 1.3 percent in 1910 and 0.9 percent in 1914. The BTW was a union that had clearly missed its time. Moreover, Southern workers faced a variety of threats to their welfare, particularly to their health and safety. More than half of Louisiana's factories in 1914 were substandard, qualifying it to join the industrial northeast as the nation's least healthy industrial region.¹⁵

Louisiana west of the Mississippi and other southwestern piney woods districts failed, however, in accumulating the wealth from industrial enterprise that would help assuage the evils of industrialism. If industrial production and the standard of living depend largely upon the available supply of the dearest element of production, what factor in the economic equation did the piney woods lack that so restricted its ability to efficiently turn its resources into wealth? Land and natural resources—timber, petroleum, minerals—were plentiful, compared with scarce labor and capital, which mandated heavy pressure on land and resources. From an immediate economic perspective, the decision to waste land and resources in the absence of plentiful labor and capital made sense, then. Federal land policy urged settlement of the public domain at a rate far exceeding the ability of the market to respond, which led to speculation, inflated resource values, and overproduction of products severed from the land.¹⁶ The advantage of

¹⁵ W. Jett Lauch and Edgar Sydenstricker, Conditions of Labor in American Industries: A Summarization of the Results of Recent Investigations (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1917) pp. 19, 324-325; see also U.S. Public Health Bul. 76 (1917), p. 10.

¹⁶ Robert E. Galliman, ed., Recent Developments in the Study of Business and Economic History: Essays in Memory of Herman E. Krooss, Research in Economic History Supplement No. 1 (Greenwich, Connecticut: JAI Press, 1977), p. 163.

exceptionally low prices for minerals, petroleum, and timber rested with consumers rather than with producers. Government policies did not result in public revenues as great as had been confidently expected by those who promoted the dissipation of the public domain. Placing the lands in commerce did not much help the nation's poor. Rather than orderly development of the land, it encouraged financial speculation, panic production, and eventual abandonment. In the 1920's, State and local governments took up thousands of acres of cutover land in lieu of taxes left unpaid by companies that had moved on west to the next bonanza timber stand. Extractive industries, which include lumber production from wild lands, evaded most models of technological businesses in the nineteenth century.¹⁷ Traditionally, industry has been divided into only two sectors, agriculture that uses only labor and land and manufacturing that uses only labor and capital. The production of minerals, petroleum, and timber, of course, requires land, labor, and capital. What was even more important in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the extractive industry faced a definite life span; when its natural resource ran out, the industry disappeared, leaving in its wake a resource famine, shrinking tax base, deserted towns, increasing unemployment, and economic dislocation.¹⁸ Fortunately for the timber industry there was a remedy although few men could agree on exactly how it was to be applied. Dr. B. F. Fernow, the nation's chief forester, charged in 1917 that his colleagues in the South were wasting time with half

¹⁷ Krooss, "American Economic Policy," pp. 57-58; also Williams, Americans and Their Forests, pp. 279-280.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 82-86.

measures, such things as dendrological instructions, shade-tree lectures, magic lantern shows, marketing data, tree nurseries and "sylvan recreation grounds for a public that promptly proceeds to peel all the bark off the trees, or burn the whole business up," despite efforts "to prove to an unimpressed public the quite undemonstrable proposition that because the State is growing trees on untaxed land ..., it will assuredly pay the private forest land-owner to do likewise."¹⁹

After 1911 the federal government brought a series of prosecutions of trade associations that were not decided until the 1920's, when the Supreme Court permitted businesses to exchange price and other information through associations. To some extent, these governmental actions colored management's responses to the demands of organized labor. Business groups could not explicitly agree to set prices or to control production or distribution; they could not exclude competitors. Managers easily extrapolated from government antitrust policy to a mythical labor policy based on the theory of restraint of trade. By 1918 about 1,000 trade associations operated in the United States, many of which toyed with open pricing, based on a mutual posting of prices for circulation.²⁰ The great lumber companies of the region often found comfort in close association with other industries, particularly railroads, oil companies, and coal mines. Development of the commercial lumber industry in the region had to wait on the arrival of the railroads and then virtually every lumberman doubled as a builder of trams

¹⁹ B. F. Fernow, "The Situation," Journal of Forestry Vol. 15 No. 1 (1917), cited in R. D. Forbes, "A Forest Policy for Louisiana," Ibid. Vol. 17 (1919), pp. 503-504.

²⁰ Sklar, Corporate Reconstruction, pp. 150-157.

and spurs, many of them acting as public utilities. John Henry Kirby was famous for his association with both the Kirby Lumber Company and the Houston Oil Company. Several large sawmill companies also mined and marketed coal, including Long-Bell, the Dierks Lumber & Coal Company, the Central Coal & Coke Company, and the Chicago Lumber & Coal Company. The Missouri Lumber & Mining Company, when it built its big mills at Grandin, Missouri, intended also to mine iron ore, although the attempts generally failed. Captain White and his managers in Louisiana searched carefully for oil and gas, finally succeeding with the Clarks Oil & Gas Company, based on LCLC lands in Caldwell and LaSalle Parishes.²¹ William Buchanan formed the Louisiana & Arkansas Oil Company in 1920 to enter the drilling business in the Tullos and Standard fields.²² Lutchter & Moore, headquartered in Orange, Texas, also had mills on the Mississippi River and among the Bayous of Southwest Louisiana. It operated cypress mills at Lutchter and Donner, Louisiana, sold shingles through the Red Cypress Door & Sash Company, built its commissary into a full-fledged department store, the Orange Mercantile Company, along with the Orange Ice Company and the Orange Light & Water Company. It owned at least half a million acres of land in Louisiana and Texas, operated three railroads, ran a rice farm of several thousand acres, followed its front with the L&M Turpentine Company, the Export Shipping Company, a fleet of timber schooners and freighters out of the ports of Orange and Port Arthur, Texas, and New

²¹ Maxwell, "Unity of the Sabine Valley," p. 115.

²² Mayor, William Buchanan, p. 123.

Orleans, Louisiana, and built a yellow pine paper mill, called the Brown Paper Company, one of the first to use Southern pine for the manufacture of craft paper.²³

By 1920 the sawmill town had become an integral and accepted part of the piney woods landscape. Generally, the towns owned by the lumber companies were neatly kept and peaceful, largely due to the discipline imposed by the company managers and enforced by company-paid deputy sheriffs, known familiarly as quarterbosses, a term that had a vaguely racist connotation. Although the word had a currency approaching the occupational title, flathead, it, too, was seldom ever written or used in polite company. Most respectable company towns exhibited orderly rows of painted houses and offices, at least in the white sections. Each company manager used a color scheme that was distinctive. Willard Warren at Fisher, Louisiana, chose a light brown, almost yellow, paint for the basic color, trimmed with a burnt orange about the doors and windows. His associate at Clarks, Louisiana, had his town painted white, even the black section along the Iron Mountain tracks.²⁴ The Caddo River Lumber Company had its town at Mauldin, Arkansas, painted a bright red and white. Because the early buildings followed the outmoded box house construction method, its exteriors were primarily board and batten. Red boards alternated with white battens, giving the whole town the appearance of a collection of peppermint candies. Nearby Glenwood, Arkansas, had much the same

²³ Maxwell, "Lumbermen," pp. 14-16.

²⁴ George A. Stokes, "Lumbering and Western Louisiana Cultural Landscapes," Annals of the Association of American Geographers Vol. 47 (September 1957): 262-263.

color scheme, which earned its principal thoroughfare the name, Candy Street. The inhabitants of Mauldin called the village Candy Town.²⁵

The 1920's saw not only the demise of the bonanza lumber industry in the piney woods, it also marked the passing of many of the industry's most famous entrepreneurs. Captain White, born in New York in 1847, had nearly reached his allotted span, having dominated the yellow pine business for much of his adult life. He was in his office at the Exchange Company when he learned of the death of his protege, W. W. Warren, at Seattle in 1921. Warren, only 45 at his death, had come to work for White at Grandin, Missouri, in the early 1890's as a boy. The next year, O. W. Fisher, J. B. Barnett and H. H. Smalley, all members of the old Humansville, Missouri, group, died within a few days of each other. White survived the year but died in January 1923.²⁶ William Buchanan's mills had nearly cut out of timber in Arkansas and Louisiana by the early 1920's, and he made tentative plans to move his operation to the Pacific Northwest where R. A. Long, the Dierks brothers, Captain White, the Fishers, and other Southern operations had preceded him. His health failed and he died in the fall of 1926. John Henry Kirby, born in 1860, survived to 1940, although he had long since lost control of his companies in the late 1920's.²⁷

Not only the leaders but also the industry had changed significantly. The concept of forestry, the production of a continuous supply of timber and lumber, had begun to

²⁵ Smith, Sawmill, pp. 90-93.

²⁶ Galloway, "J. B. White," p. 4; Steen, O. W. Fisher, pp. 202-203; Hidy, et al., Timber, p. 402.

²⁷ Todes, Labor & Lumber, p. 42.

dominate the operations of companies that had been devoted to bonanza production. Paper manufacturers invaded the lumber districts, taking over the Pack, Buchanan, and Grandin lands in Arkansas and Louisiana. East of the Mississippi the Great Southern Lumber Company turned to the production of pulpwood, as did Lutchter & Moore in Texas.²⁸ At Fisher, Louisiana, in 1921 Clarence A. Quillen joined the 4 L Company as a bookkeeper. For the next 35 years he helped guide the company into an era of sustained yield, which carried it into the 1960's, when he supervised its merger with the Boise-Cascade Lumber Company.²⁹ Throughout the United States, however, sawmills still flourished, reaching 35 thousand in 1920, ranging all the way from the ubiquitous portable twin flue mills to million dollar plants. More than 1,500 of them were considered large mills.³⁰ In the South, lumbermen and timberland owners courted the rising forestry profession, centered at the time at the Yale Forestry School. Companies in the South provided camps for summer study of forestry methods. Professors H. H. Chapman and R. C. Bryant led the students in their tour of the Southern lumber camps, the first in Shannon County, Missouri, in 1907, associated with the Missouri Lumber & Mining Company. In 1920, the school moved to a permanent site on lands of the Urania

²⁸ Goodman, "Price of Lumber," p. 12.

²⁹ William E. Skaggs and J. B. Lux, eds., Louisiana Business and Professional Directory (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Publishers, 1968), p. 420.

³⁰ J. Richards, A Treatise on the Construction and Operation of Woodworking Machines, reprinted in Forest History Vol. 9 (January 1966): 16-23; Asa S. Williams, "Logging by Steam," Forestry Quarterly Vol. 6 No. 1 (March 1908): 22.

Lumber Company, where they experimented with fire and hogs, two of Henry Hardtner's pet peeves.³¹

For a time, the region's resources gave only a bare subsistence, although several lumber companies survived intact. These, however, combined hard-headed management and cold-hearted efficiency. Company-owned towns survived in West Louisiana, East Texas, Arkansas, and South Missouri. Labor in the piney woods remained unorganized long past the bonanza period. Workers did not show much interest in unions, and union leaders seemed to think sawmill jobs were not worth the effort needed to organize them. Labor remained common, or unskilled, an organizational vacuum in the labor movement. Mills continued to cut out, scattering their workers to the four winds. In one case, the company, its mill, and town of about 3,000 people, moved as a group west to Arizona.³² The forest reclaimed the town sites, leaving nothing to remember them by except the occasional refrain of an iron gang laying track, singing of the Iron Mountain Railroad, railroad builder James Hill, and two company gunmen:

Oh! tha's Oakdale on the Mountain,
And tha's Slagle on the Hill!
Mista' Mart'n, he don't kill ya,
Mista' Jamie sho'ly will!³³

³¹ "Yale Helping to Save Louisiana Forests," the New Orleans *Item-Tribune*, June 16, 1929, in Murphy A. Tannehill Papers, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston.

³² Stokes, "Lumbering and Cultural Landscapes," p. 255, n. 12.

³³ Interview with Allen Crowell, Crowell-Spencer Lumber Company, Longleaf, Louisiana, April 24, 1991. Grandson of the founder, at 84 Allen Crowell works a six-day week, a family tradition, while he guards the relics of the last company-owned town in the region, still mostly intact despite the ravages of time and the depredations of antiquarians.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Depositions, November 1889

William Butt, tail sawyer:

The whistle had been blown, and I had just turned round to step off the carriage, when I heard Mr. Nanna, the setter, hollo. At the same time I felt the carriage move. I do not remember to have heard the setter hollo more than once. The carriage was moving very slowly. If Mr. Carmody had stood still, I do not think th [sic] saw would have touched him, though the carriage might have pinched his leg. He doubled his knee up to jump, and in doing so he struck the carriage with the back of his heel, and he fell in front of the carriage. The whistle had been blown to change off for quartering time; but had not given the signal to stop, and the saw was running at full speed. The carriage was moving very slowly, I think it would have taken it nearly a quarter of a minute to reach the saw at the speed at which it was going. I could not see from where I stood which hole Mr. Conkling put the pin into but if he put it in the right hole the carriage could not have started. Carmody's right foot struck the carriage when he jumped. I think his heel struck one of the plates. From what I remember I think the carriage struck his foot, and the saw his knee, about at the same time. Before he jumped his whole weight was on his left foot, and his right leg was bent, and placed so as to balance him. His right foot was on the husk of the band wheel. His left foot was in the carriage [t]rack. The carriage did not strike his left leg at all. I do not think that the jointer had struck the saw at the time of the accident.

John Conkling, head sawyer:

At quartering time, Mr. Carmody came to me, and said he would joint the saw. I said "All right", and finished sawing up the log that was then on the carriage. Then the whistle was blowed for quartering time, when we stop to change saws. The fact that there were two holes in the lever, I noticed the first day I was there; but on this occasion, I accidentally put the pin in the wrong hole. I made the same mistake once before, I think it was the second or third day after I started work there, and the carriage moved the same way then. I then made up my mind that I would be very careful in future about that, but unfortunately, I failed to place the pin right on this occasion. There was a large plank placed to keep the water from flying over me, and I was stooping down to move this when I heard somebody hollo. I started up and grabbed the lever, and at the same time, Mike jumped. As he jumped, he caught his foot behind on the block, and

his knee was thus jerked into the saw. I did not hear anyone hollo more than once. Judging from the position he occupied, I do not think the carriage would have struck him if he had stood perfectly still, and I think if he had not heard anyone hollo, he would have been all right. When the pin which holds the lever is not placed in the hole provided for it, when the lever is left it will stand upright for three or four seconds, but the steam working below will cause it to tip over, and the weight of the lever opens the valve. On such an occasion the carriage would statr [sic] very slowly; but would gain speed as the lever fell. The lever is perfectly safe when the pin is in, and is as safe as they are usually made. This is with a Prescott steam feed [on] a Stearns mill. I have worked at a Stearns mill before. I do not think a pin is supplied with the mill; but am under the impression that mill men have to furnish their own pin or whatever fastening they use. During the two weeks I was there, I had never placed the pin in the wrong hole but once before. I saw Mr. Carmody jump, and saw his knee go into the saw. He fell over the end of the carriage on to the track. The carriage did not push him towards the saw; but in coming back it jerked him away from the saw. It is not usual for filers to turn up the saw on the mandrel when they have a machine on which to do it. One of the advantages of the Covell machine is that by its use the saw does not have to be jointed while on the mandrel. On the machine also the work can be done much better. Jointing on the arbor is the old time way; but I have not seen a good filer do it when he had a good machine. I have seen Mr. Sisco do so; but the machine he had could not be depended on. This covell machine was in good working order at the time Mr. Carmody was injured. I do not think the arbor is the proper place to joint the saw, and it is a long time since I saw it done there[.] Mr. Carmody had been filing on the circular nine or ten days. From where I stood in front of Mr. Carmody, it looked to me that his right knee was resting on the saw guide, and that probably his right foot was resting on the casing or cover of the lower band wheel.

George L. Nanna, block setter on the carriage:

Mike Carmody had been filing on the circular only for a short time, but was previously employed on the gang saw. Saw Mike Carmody go in front of the saw, to joint the teeth. When he was there the carriage started, and deponent hollared, to him, and he jumped to get out of the way, and in jumping, his right foot caught in the block or bedplate of the carriage. Carriage would not have struck his foot if he had stood still. He then fell on the end of the carriage, and then rolled off. Th[e] carriage stopped before it got to the saw. There were two holes to receive the pin which holds the carriage when not in use, and the sawyer placed the pin by mistake in the wrong hole. The lever by which the carriage is worked

was thus left free, and gradually fell of its own weight, thus opening the valve which works the carriage, and the carriage commenced to move, though very slowly. On seeing the carriage move, I hollared to Mike. The first time he did not seem to hear me, and I hollared again. The carriage is liable to move if the sawyer lets go of the lever; but cannot start if the pin is put in the right hole. Carriage had to run about six feet before reaching the saw. At the speed at which it was going at the time, it would take a quarter of a minute to reach the saw. When we picked Mike Carmody up, he was not on the carriage; but on the floor, I think on the carriage track. If he had stood perfectly still, the carriage would not have struck him. When he was in front of the saw, he had his right foot on the husk of the band wheel, and his left foot down in the carriage track. The duties deponent as setter require him to ride on the carriage, and carriage had just been backed to end of track and stopped for the purpose of changing saws, it being what is called quartering time at 3:30 P.M., and deponent had not stepped off the carriage. Did not see the sawyer [unclear] in pin; but saw him stoop down for that purpose, as usual when mill stops. The sawyer, Mr. Conkling heard me hollo, and quickly reversed the carriage before it struck Mr. Carmody. But he caught his foot against side of block and bedplate in jumping. Upon Examination I find that Mr. Carmody could have rested his right knee on saw guide, and probably did do so, while his right foot rested as I saw it on the cover of the lower band wheel.

Jeff Troutman, Holliday & Klotz Lumber Company filer:

I had been at work previously for Messrs. Pettibone & Hicks of Hannibal [Missouri]; but have worked eight weeks and a day for Mr. Holliday. I was standing five or six feet to the left of Mr. Conkling at the time of the accident. I saw the carriage when it started to move, and wondered at Mr. Carmody being where he was. I do not see how he could help seeing the carriage. I was afraid to hollo. I heard someone I heard only one hollo, and could not say where it came from, owing to the noise of the mill. Mr. Carmody jumped, and I saw his right heel strike the wing of the block. If he had stood perfectly still just a second, he would have been safe. The carriage was going the other way [sic] as he jumped; but he jumped just as the rest of us would. When before the saw, he was standing with his knee on the husk, and his whole weight on his left leg. I saw the saw strike his leg just after his foot struck against the wing of the block. I wonder at a man of his age standing there. I never joint my saws on the arbor when I have a machine. It is not the place to joint a saw. I have never seen any who use the machine joint on the mandril. They do at Holliday's, because they have no good machine there, and I was always very careful to see that the leverman had hold of the lever at

the time. It is very hazardous to go in that place to join a saw, and it is unnecessary. I have worked for Pettibone & Hicks nine seasons off and on. I am very positive that when Mr. Carmody jumped, the carriage had started the other way. My position for seeing Mr. Carmody was I am sure better than that of anyone else, and I was, besides, watching him at the time. I am positive the carriage was moving at the time he stepped in there; but he was joking with one of the other men, and I do not think he noticed it. I do not think there was anyone actually watching him except me. I was surprised at him going in there. As he put his foot up on the husk, I am sure the carriage was moving though very slowly. He could not have been there a quarter of a minute before the accident happened. I do not think he had got the jointer in position.

Dr. W. D. Jones, Missouri Lumber & Mining Company physician at Grandin:

3:30 P.M., October 31, 1889. Right leg cut through knee joint, severing lower end of femur at L, saw causing downwards mangling bone and flesh and part of leg throughout upper third.

Patient seen by me at 4:00 P.M. Pale and pulse weak and 90 per minute. Stimulants administered. At 5 P.M. pulse full and 75 to 80 per minute - less palor. Requested to take morphine but refused. Operation proposed and advised; - danger from delay fully explained patient. Would not listen to advice and obstinately refused to have operation performed. "Want Dr. Pettitt of Winona, Mo., to consult with you and won't have anything done until he comes." 5:15 patient suffering pain and takes morphine 1/2 gr.-

In explaining dangers of delay to others I said: ("It is Mr. Cannedy's leg and, although contrary to my judgement and good surgery, we are compelled to respect his requests. It will also be his funeral.) Morphine to be given as indicated by pain & suffering. Left patient a[t] 3:30 P.M. Pulse good - Suffering pain. Patient seen at 8 P.M. - resting easy most of the time - occasional twinges of pain. Complained of tourniquet being tight - slightly relaxed - patient complained of less pain. Tourniquet was left no tighter than was necessary to control hemorrhage. Constant but slight oozing of blood from severed end of femur.

Patient in good spirits - respiration 22 - Pulse 90 per minute and growing weak.

At 9 P.M. resting quietly, respirations 24 per minute - shallow and regular - pulse some weaker and 120 per minute. Stimulants continued and morphine omitted. Patient had no more morphine until morning of Nov. 2/89 at 6:20 A.M.

Dr. Pettitt arrived at 2:00 A.M. Nov. 1/89. Saw patient with Drs Williamson & Pettitt at that hour. Patient resting easy - cheerful and

rational when spoken to - recognized every one. Pulse 140 per minute and weak - Easily compressible. Slight oozing from wounded femur.

Deemed [unclear] to operate on account of [unclear] and symptoms. Ordered hot coffee and whiskey, and left at 2:45 A.M. Nov. 1/89.

8 A.M. Nov. 1-89. Respiration 22 and pulse 150 per minute as near as could be calculated - scarcely perceptible at wrist and intermittent. Ordered Digitalis & Whiskey. At 12 [P.] M. Pulse a little stronger and 140 per minute. Patients appearance bad. About 9 ounces of urine drawn by catheter.

Nov. 1/89

Seen at 2:30 P.M. indications worse - Mrs. Cannedy and children arrive. Patient recognizes all and takes baby and fondles him. Tells little boy and wife not to cry.

Prognosis explained to Mrs. Cannedy. If she and husband requested, leg would be removed, but that there were 999 chances against patient to 1 for him. Left to consider what we had told her.

Saw patient at 6 P.M. Pulse very weak and 145 per minute - irregular. Patient Easily aroused and talked rational, but with some difficulty. Ordered Digitalis and Whiskey continued, supplimented by sweet milk. Hands cold. Aspect of patient bad.

At 9 P.M. pulse slightly improved - other conditions unchanged, Digitalis, Milk & Whiskey continued.

Nov. 2/89

6:20 A.M. patient so revived as to be conscious of pain. Ordered 1/2 grain morphine -

Seen at 8:15 A.M. and after Explaining his condition to Mrs. Cannedy and reiterating the bad prognosis and telling her that we would do the operation at her request but would assume no responsibility, - she and husband requested that the operation be performed.

Patient put upon table at 9:50 A.M. and operation commenced at 10:00 A.M. under Ether. Patient took Ether well.

Operation completed at 11 A.M. pulse Extremely weak but revived by hypodermic injection of Digitalis and Whiskey. Removed from table to bed and surrounded by hot bottles of water.

Patient revived so as to speak once and died at 3:30 P.M.

Recorded by

W.D. Jones M.D.¹

¹ Log of Carmody treatment by Dr. W. D. Jones, October 31 to November 2, 1889; depositions of William Butt, John Conkling, George Nanna, Jeff Troutman, Frank Jones, Melvin M. Hazen, Frank Arnold, and Barney H. Krebs, November 11, 14, and 17, 1889, ML&MCo No. 2557, Folder 6727, WHMC; for a description of a modern

APPENDIX 2: C. D. Johnson Circular Letter, September 26, 1906

On September 26, 1906, a group of lumbermen, beset by striking workers, organized the Southern Lumber Operator's Association in St. Louis, Missouri. The action by members of the Southern Lumber Manufacturers' Association, also headquartered in St. Louis, following a series of strikes by mill workers in Lake Charles, Louisiana, that had tied up the Calcasieu long leaf pine district for several weeks. The association elected C. D. Johnson of St. Louis its president; J. A. Freeman, St. Louis, vice president; L. L. Major, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, second vice president; and the ubiquitous George K. Smith, treasurer. Johnson sent out a circular letter to lumbermen throughout the region:

The necessity for this organization will be better understood by placing before you the history of labor trouble in Lake Charles, La., which is as follows:

Early in September, after some agitation, a Labor Union was formed, and a demand made on the Saw Mills operating there, of ten hours work with eleven hours pay, and a weekly pay day. In every mill the demand was refused, and the employes "struck". A local organization of the operators was formed and it was decided to stand together and oppose the demands of the Union. However, one of the operators, without consulting the others, decided to start his mill on the terms stipulated by the Union, and, after this defection, all of the mills there, except the Long-Bell interests, one by one, started up on ten hours work with eleven hours pay and a weekly pay day. The Long-Bell interests still held out, and, after two weeks shut-down, posted notice that they would start Monday morning, Sept. 17th, on ten hours work with eleven hours pay and a monthly pay day. Their whistles blew Monday morning, and only four men reported for work, because their terms were not in accordance with the demands of the Union. Four of the other operators

sawmill, see Nelson C. Brown and James S. Bethel, Lumber 2nd ed. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1958), pp. 10-13, 24-33, 53-131; a contemporary description is in "Selections from 'A Treatise on the Construction and Operation of Woodworking Machines by J. Richards, 1872,'" Forest History Vol. 9 No. 4 (January 1966), 16-23.

in Lake Charles had previously stated that if Long-Bell mills were not permitted to run on the terms they posted, they would close down their mills until such time as all mills could be started without reference to any recognition or demands of the Union. The Mills of Lock-Moore & Co., Perkins & Miller Lumber Co., J. A. Bell [sic] Lumber Co., Hodge Fence & Lumber Co., and the two mills of the Calcasieu Long Leaf Lumber Co. have been closed down since Tuesday Morning, the 18th of September and are still closed down, refusing to recognize organized labor.

The main object of the Operators' [sic] Association, as set forth in its constitution, is to stand behind manufacturers who are called upon by organized labor to run their plants in accordance with demands made by the Union.

We believe that every manufacturer of Yellow Pine is vitally interested in the present situation, and any complications which are likely to grow out of it, unless it is handled with a firm hand.

The Union at Lake Charles proposes to send organizers into Louisiana and Texas, and, at an early date as possible, bring 20,000 men under its jurisdiction.

The annual output of those [mills] who have already joined this Association is in the neighborhood of 1,300,000,000 ft., and with this nucleus, we hope to gather in to our support sufficient manufacturers to make the membership practically represent the entire output of Yellow Pine in the eight southern states.

We trust you will consider this letter and the enclosures confidential, and will give us favorable reply with the return of signed application at your early convenience.

The association enclosed with the initial letter a list of members on October 1, 1906.

Most operated in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas; only half a dozen had mills in Alabama and Mississippi. The original list included:

Mills in Arkansas

Arkadelphia Lumber Company.	Arkadelphia
Crossett Lumber Co.	Crossett
Dierks Lumber & Coal Co.	DeQueen
Edgar Lumber Co.	Wesson
Fordyce Lumber Co.	Fordyce
Freeman-Smith Lumber Co.	Millville
Grayson-McLeod Lumber Co.	Girdon
Ozan Lumber Co.	Prescott
Union Saw Mill Co.	Huttig
Wisconsin & Arkansas Lumber Co.	Malvern

Mills in Texas

Keith Lumber Co.	Beaumont
La. & Texas Lumber Co.	Kennard
Lufkin Land & Lumber Co.	Lufkin
Thompson Bros. Lumber Co.	Doucette
Thompson & Tucker Lumber Co.	Willard

Mills in Louisiana

Antrim Lumber Co.	Antrim
J. A. Bel Lumber Co.	Lake Charles
Bernice Lumber Co.	Bernice
Black Lake Lumber Co.	Campti
Calcasieu Long Leaf Lumber Co.	Lake Charles
Central Coal & Coke Co.	Neame and Carson
DeSoto Land & Lumber Co.	Mansfield
Davis Bros. Lumber Co.	Ansley
Globe Lumber Co. Ltd.	Yellow Pine
Gulf Land & Lumber Co.	Stables
Hodge Fence & Lumber Co.	Lake Charles
Hudson River Lumber Co.	DeRidder
Industrial Lumber Co.	(Oakdale, Vinton, Seale, (Calcasieu and Elizabeth Bonami
King-Ryder Lumber Co.	West Lake
Lock-Moore Co. Ltd.	(Pickering, Barham & Cravens
W. R. Pickering Lumber Co.	Woodworth
Rapides Lumber Co.	

Mills in Mississippi

Finkbine Lumber Co.	Wiggins
J. J. Newman Lumber Co.	Hattiesburg

Mills in Alabama

E. W. Gates Lumber Co.	Yellow Pine
Kaul Lumber Co.	Birmingham
Marbury Lumber Co.	Marbury
Sumter Lumber Co.	Sumter

Neither John Henry Kirby and Henry Lutchter in Texas and Louisiana nor William Buchanan in Arkansas and Louisiana joined the association in its formative period. It seems to have been the chosen instrument of the Long-Bell interests and their neighbors in the Calcasieu long leaf pine district, primarily in Southwest Louisiana. J. B. White

and the Grandin interests did not get into the SLOA early, possibly because of the residual effects of White's decision to reduce his workday to 10 hours in the spring. The constitution of the association provided for an assessment of 2 cents per Mbf log scale on each member mill, with the object of paying mills shut down by strikes for some of their losses. The group intended to deal with the conditions of labor on its own terms, support the manufacture of lumber, the methods of logging, rates of transportation, and the development of information of mutual benefit. The association provided for a trust fund, created from assessments, to help members resist the encroachment of organized labor.²

APPENDIX 3: Notice of Wage Cut, January 1, 1908

The sawmills along the Kansas City Southern Railway through Indian Territory, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas, reduced their wages from 10 to 20 percent late in 1907. The 4 L Company delayed its salary cut as long as possible, and by the first of 1908 found that it was less than 10 percent out of line with its neighbors. On January 1, 1908, Clarence Slagle notified LCLC office employees that he was cutting their salaries from 5 to 20 percent depending on the level of pay received. Those among his office

² Constitution of the Southern Lumber Operator's Association, St. Louis, Missouri, September 26, 1906; "Membership of the Southern Lumber Operator's Association," October 1, 1906; C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to Louisiana Long Leaf Lumber Company, Fisher, Louisiana, October 4, 1906, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; Johnson to Louisiana Central Lumber Company, Clarks, Louisiana, October 4, 1906; George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 11, 1906; "Membership of Southern Lumber Operators' [sic] Association," October 1, 1906, No. 3660, Box 13, Files 266, 269, Louisiana Central Lumber Company Records, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM.

staff, superintendents, and manager paid \$3,500.00 a year or more took a cut of 20 percent; those ranging down to \$2,500.00 took a 15 percent cut; those as low as \$1,000.00 a 10 percent cut; and those down to \$500.00 a year took a 5 percent cut. The LCLC mills had been shut down since before Christmas, and Slagle took the occasion of New Year's Day to post this announcement for all other workers, except employees in the store and hospital, who seem to have been exempted, probably because they worked on some sort of commission.

Clarks, La. Jany. 1st, 1908

TO THE EMPLOYEES OF THE
LOUISIANA CENTRAL LUMBER COMPANY.

Gentlemen:-

We regret to have to announce a general reduction in salaries and wages effective Jany. 1st, 1908. This reduction is forced upon us on account of the demoralized condition of the lumber market. Many of the lumber companies throughout the country have shut down while others have reduced wages and are trying to keep their men employed by running short time. Our Company has delayed this reduction in salaries and wages until we are among the few mills that have not, until this date, made any cuts, but find it neccessary [sic] if we sell any lumber, even at very low prices, to announce this temporary reduction. We have therefore, decided to start up our mills upon the following scale of wages,-

\$4.00	Reduced to	\$3.50 per day.	
3.50	"	3.00	"
3.00	"	2.75	"
2.75	"	2.50	"
2.50	"	2.25	"
2.35	"	2.10	"
2.25	"	2.00	"
2.00	"	1.75	"
1.85	"	1.65	"
1.75	"	1.55	"
1.60	"	1.45	"
1.50	"	1.35	"
1.35	"	1.20	"

Based on these general plans, Slagle turned to the "schedule of salaries paid to our employees ... to give you an idea as to what our present wage schedule, that was in effect prior to the reduction, is, by making the reductions noted in our two circulars of the 1st, it will give you the wages after they have been reduced." Not included in the schedule was the 10 percent reduction in "salaries for outside work," which meant basically salaried employees such as surveyors, salesmen, and professionals. The old schedule for Clarks appears here with handwritten notes of reductions in brackets:

[CLARKS] SAW MILL

Foreman	F. W. Carr	\$175.00	Repairs [155.00]
2 Millwrights		3.50 each	[90.00/2.75]
1 " Helper & Bill Checker		2.50	[2.00]
Fractional 1/2 days			
Band Saw Filer	F. A. Minard	11.00	\$2.50
Do.			
Gang " "	H. F. Conliff	5.00	2.50
Fireman	I. M. Hogg	2.50	
Fuel House Man	Geo. Scott	1.50	
Engineer	J.D. Colquett	110.00	[10%]
" Gang	W.D. Dawkins		2.50 Special to him only
Oiler down stairs	Henry Ball	1.75	1.60
Clean up men down stairs		1.60	[1.65]
Pond Foreman	L.B. Greeley	2.25	1.75 [2.25]
" Men Regular Crew		1.75	[1.65]
" " Extra		1.60	[1-1.75]
Scaler	G.W. Thomas	2.00	1.75 [2.10]
Deck Man			1.60
Fractional 1/2 days			
Sawyers		7.00	2.50
Do.			
" extra and Oiler up stairs	J.L. Chester	4.00	2.50
Block Setter, Short Side		3.00	2.00
Doggers " "		2.00	1.75
Block Setter, Long Side		2.75	2.00

Doggers	" "	1.85	1.75		
Gen. Extra Man	Jess McCoy	2.35	"		
Swamper, short side		2.00	"		
" long "		1.85	"		
Gang Sawyer	Ed Doolittle	4.00			
Cant Setter	Pannel Royal	2.00	1.75		
" " asst.		1.75	1.60		
Off Bearer for Gang	Ed Williams	2.00	1.75		
To keep up all rep'rs on edgers					
No Sunday or over time allowed	4 Edgermen		3.00	2.00	
Trippler to Edgerman	Long Side	1.75	1.60		
" " " Short "		1.60			
Strip Catchers				1.75	1.60
Slasherman	Pleas Davis	1.75	"		
Trimmermen			2.00		
Feeder Machine #4	R.C. Elledge	1.75			
Grader " "	A.P. Fuller	1.75			
Feeder " #5	E.L. Kraft	1.75			
Grader " "	S. VandenBerg		2.00		
Feeder " #6	Bernard Williams	1.35			
" " #7	N.E. Colquett	1.35			
Grader " #6&7	J.W. Rucks	2.00			
Feeder " #9	Powell Elledge	1.50			
Grader " "	Hnery Naron	1.75			
Feeder " #10	Tom Curry		1.50		
Grader " "	W.F. Greeley		2.00		
Feeder " #11	P.F. Smith	1.60			
Grader " "	W.S. Smith	2.00			
Feeder " #12	Joe Pharis	1.60			
Grader " "	W.J. Kraft	2.00			
Feeder Rip Saw	L.P. Wimer	1.85			
Grader " "	W.J. Massey	1.60			
Feeder Re-saw	Wm. Rinehart		1.75		
Grader			1.60		
Clean up man			1.60		
MACHINE SHOP					
Foreman	Rob't Smith	165.00		[\$150/100]	
Machinist	Jac Smith		4.00	[36c]	
"	J.R. Hill	3.80	[35c]		
Blacksmith	Jim McAlister	3.00			
" Helper	J.W. Couch	1.75	Regular	\$2.00	
Other Helpers				1.75 and 2.00	

Car Repair Foreman	F.A. Bentley	2.25		
" " Helper	J.S. Smith	2.00	Regular	1.75
Elec. Light & Telephone	D.M. Calhoun	60.00	[10%]	
Supply Clerk	M.R. Powers	60.00	Position	
	discontinued			
DRY KILN & KILN TOWER				
Foreman	T.P. Estrada	\$ 75.00	[10%]	
				Other Work
Green Lumber Grader		2.25		\$ 1.75
Man at foot of Separator Chain		1.60		
Separator Liverman [leverman]		1.75		
Graders at Kiln		1.75	1.60	
Sorters & Truckers		1.60		
SHIPPING DEPARTMENT				
Shipping Clerk	T.T. Pharis	175.00	[160.00]	
Clerk in Shipping Office	E.C. Abrams	75.00	[10%]	
Send in Foreman	C.T. Breville	75.00	[10%]	
Platform "	W.L. Campbell	85.00	[10%]	
Tallyman	Gus Miller	2.25		
"	Albert Henry	2.25		
Car Loaders for Sizers		1.75		
" " others & Truckers		1.60		
Wagon Loaders, two head men		1.85		
" " other men		1.75		
" " Head man on Machine #1 & 4		1.75		
" " others		1.60		
Teamsters			1.75	
PLANING MILL				
Foreman	W.M. Graves	175.00	[\$160.00]	
Helper	R.A. Graves	2.75		
"	S.L. Bass	2.50		
"	J.T. Conn	2.50		
Fireman	D.C. Sandidge	2.50		
" Night	J.N. West	2.00		
Oiler		1.75		
Feeder Machine #1	R.R. Williams	1.60	Regular	\$1.75
Grader " "	R. Barnett	1.75		
Feeder Machine #2	J.R. Lackett	2.00		
Grader " "	A.T. Jones	2.00		
Feeder " " #3	G.V. Kinnard	2.00		
Helper " "		1.60		
STANDARD SAW MILL				
Mill Foreman		\$175.00	[155.00]	
Millwright		100.00	[10%]	

Asst. "	2.40	
Band Saw Filer	11.00	
Fireman	2.50	
Asst. "	1.75	
Engineers	100.00	
1 oiler up & down stairs	2.50	
Pond Foreman	2.75	
3 men	2.00	
Scaler	2.00	
Log Deck	1.75	
Sawyers	7.00	
Block Setters	2.75	
Doggers	1.85	
Extra man, setter & sawyer	5.00	
Swampers	2.00	
Tippers	1.75	
Edgerman	3.00	
Strip Catcher	1.75	
Slasberman	1.75	
Trimmer Men 3	2.00	
Clean up Man	1.60	
" " "	1.25	
Pump Man & Burner	75.00	[10%]
Night Fireman	2.50	
Helpers	2.00	
MACHINE SHOP		
Machinist	3.50	
Blacksmith	3.00	
" Helper	2.00	
Car Repair	2.50	
" " Helper	1.75	
(To Keep up repairs and)		
Hog Man (change his own knives)	\$ 2.00	\$ 1.75
(G. M. Morrison)		
(Also Watch Conveyor and)		
" " asst.(kindle fire in refuse)	1.75	
(burner)		
Fireman Night	S. E. Colquett	2.50
" asst. "	G.E. Hillerbrand	2.00
Clean up Man Night	R. Hogan	2.00
Fuel House " "	F. B. Ferguson	1.75
STORE		
Foreman [Buys for all our stores and also makes weekly visits]		\$200.00

C. E. Parker [Grocer foreman]	\$ 65.00	
Jas. Boyd [Dry Goods side]	80.00	
J. C. Cox		60.00
E. C. Anderson [Butcher]	60.00	
J. L. Kilgore	55.00	
Roue V. Lowry		50.00
P. B. Allbritton	60.00	
Miss Nina J. Skinner [Cashier]	60.00	
" Alma L. Brown [Stenographer & Asst. Clerk]	60.00	
Geo. Calvin [Driver (Col'd)]	40.00	
Jas. Edwards [Porter (Col'd)]	45.00	
HOTEL		
Manager D. F. Crane	83.33	
Cook Arch Sheppard		40.00
Other Help	16.00	to \$20.00
WATCHMEN		
R. P. Ware [Marshal]	75.00	[10%]
R. L. Holloway		2.00
W. J. Futch	1.75	
[OUTSIDE WORK]		
Sorting lumber on chain pulling off trucking to yard and stacking	.70 per M	[65c]
Stacking lumber at head end of dry kiln	.90 per car	[81c]
RATES AT CAMP		
"STORE"		
F. W. Beauchamp store Mgr. & Time Keeper	100.00	[10%]
S. O. Terran	40.00	[None]
HOSPITAL		
Dr. I. H. Beacom	100.00	
WOODS BLACKSMITH SHOP		
H. Bouvington	3.00	
Helper	2.00	and \$2.25
MULE TEAMS		
Team Foreman G. W. Clark	85.00	[10%]
Feeder J. G. Jones	2.00	
4 Mule Drivers		2.25
Bummer "	2.25	
Swampers		1.75
Skidway Men	2.00	
OX TEAMS		
Foreman	75.00	[10%]
Feeder	55.00	[10%]
4 yoke Drivers	2.25	

Skidders		2.00	
Water Wagon Driver "Boy"	1.25		
LOG LOADING			
Loaderman		100.00	[10%]
Tong Hookers		2.25	
Top Loader	3.00		
CO. CUT			
Foreman & Filer	G. W. Roper 3.00		
Other Men		2.25	
RAILROAD REPAIRS			
Foreman		2.25	
Other Track Men	1.50		
GRADING GANG			
Foreman		2.50	
Other men		1.60	
STEEL GANG			
Foreman	S. J. Manis 80.00		[10%]
Other men		1.75	
STANDARD PLANERS			
Foreman		\$100.00	[10%]
Engineer		2.50	
Night Fireman		2.00	
Mch. men same as clerks			
SHIPPING			
Shipping Clerk		100.00	[10%]
Tallymen & Platform Foreman	2.50		
Tallyman		2.25	
Send in Man	2.50		
Truckers		1.60	
DRY KILN			
Foreman		65.00	[10%]
Grader		2.00	
Labor	1.60		
Dry Kiln Stacking Contract	.20 per M		
YARD			
"Contract" Sorting, Trucking, Stacking	.70 per M		
TRAIN DEPARTMENT			
Engineer #99		2.75	
" #101	2.50		
Fireman		2.00	
Brakeman		2.00	
Conductor		2.50	
STEAM LOADER			
Loaderman		110.00	[10%]

Tongue [tong] Setters		2.25		
Top Loaders		2.50		
TEAMS				
Woods Foreman		125.00	[10%]	
Team "		65.00	[10%]	
Feeder		2.25		
Teamsters		2.25		
Log Cutters		2.25		
Scalers & Time Keepers		75.00	[10%]	
LATH MILL				
Foreman		3.50		
Bolterman		2.00		
Tailing Bolter		2.00		
Lath Feeder		1.75		
" Grader		2.00		
" Tier		2.00		
Slab Catcher		1.60		
Extra Man		1.50		
BARN				
Foreman	J. L. Barnes	55.00	[10%]	
Teamsters	2 mule	1.75		2.00
Teamsters	4 mule	2.25		
CARPENTERS				
D. E. Watson	Foreman	3.00		
A. W. Colquett		2.25		
D. W. Miller		2.00		
J. W. Martin		2.00		
W. J. Dunham		1.75	Painting	2.50
LOG CUTTERS ON NORTHWEST SPUR				
Foreman & Filer	W. M. Roney	2.75		
Labor		2.00		
LOG LOADING				
Loaderman		100.00	[10%]	
Top Loader		2.25		
Tong Hookers		2.25		
O. & N. W. Ry. Co.				
Conductors		2.75		
Brakemen		1.75	\$1.85 &	2.00
Engineers		2.50	2.75	3.00
Firemen		2.00	2.25	
Round House Men		1.75	2.00	2.25
GRADING				
Foreman		\$75.00	[10%]	
Men		1.75		

		SECTION		
Foreman			2.50	
Men			1.75	
		CARPENTER		
Foreman			90.00	[10%]
Men \$2.00 & \$2.25			2.00	
			2.25	
		BARN		
Feeder in town			1.75	
Drivers			1.75	
		MARSHAL		
[Quarterboss]			75.00	[10%]
SALARIES OF OFFICE EMPLOYEES				
[reduced to]				[from]
150	E. W. Jones	Chief Clerk	166.66	
125	A. Johnson	Cashier		135.00
None	F. A. Sweeney	Asst. " & Invoice Clerk		90.00
105	R. A. Black	Auditor		135.00
50	Miss L.C. Sweney	Store Auditor	80.00	
None	J. L. Sine	Acting Book Keeper	100.00	
--	K. L. Porter	Stenographer & Voucher		
		Clerk & Clerk		100.00
50	Miss May Johnson	[assistant stenographer]	75.00	
50c	Ralph C. Sweeney	Office Boy	45.00. ³	

APPENDIX 4: Yellow Pine Manufacturers Association mill time

<u>Running Time of Saw Mills for January, 1908</u>			
Arkansas	Hrs/day	Days/wk	Remarks
Ark Lbr Co, Warren	10	6	Not running resaw
Bodcaw Lbr Co, Stamps	0	0	One mill running
Coleman Yount, Booneville	0	0	Mill shut down
Cotton Belt, Bearden	8	6	Quit logging
Crossett, Crossett	10	6	Only running one mill
Eagle, Eagle Mills	10	6	Two weeks in January
Edgar Lbr Co, Wesson	0	0	Mill shut down
Fordyce Lbr Co, Fordyce	10	6	

³ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 3, 1908; Slagle to the Office Employees of the Louisiana Central Lumber Company, January 1, 1908; Slagle to the Employees of the Louisiana Central Lumber Company, with attached scale of salaries and wages, January 1, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Fourche River, Fourche	0	0	Start January 16
Freeman Smith, Millville	0	0	Start January 15, run 3 days a week
Gates Lbr Co, Wilmar	7	6	Shut 10 days, repair
Grayson-McLeod, Gurdon	0	0	Mill shut down
Gulledge Bros, White	10	3	
Herr & Helvie, Faith	0	0	Mill shut down
Hilson Jacob, Pinnacle	9	3	
Johnson & Spencer, Pike	9	4	
Kirkland, Fulton	0	0	Mill shut down
Lester Mill, Lester	0	0	Mill shut down
Magnolia Mfg, Magnolia	0	0	Mill shut down
Malvern Lbr Co, Peria	10	3	
Mansfield Lbr, Mansfield	2	4	
Nashville Lbr, Nashville	10	5	
Oak Leaf Mill, Stroud	8	5	Shut when logs gone
Ozan Lbr Co, Prescott	10	6	Cut out night run
Ragan Bates, Waldron	0	0	Mill shut down
Red River, Frostville	10	4	
Sawyer-Austin, Pine Bluff	0	0	Mill shut down
Southern, Warren	0	0	Shut 3 weeks, repairs
Standard Novelty Works, Texarkana	0	0	Mill shut down
Stewart-Alex., Gifford	10	6	
Stout Greer, Thornton	10	3	
Union Saw Mill, Huttig	10	6	Cut out night run
Valley Pine, Havanna	0	0	Mill shut down
Louis Werner, Griffen	0	0	Mill shut down
Watkins Lbr Co, Mena	10	5	
Wisconsin & Arkansas Malvern	0	0	Mill shut down
Missouri and Indian Territory			
Frisco Lbr, Bokhoma, Ok	0	0	Mill shut down
King Lbr, Eubanks, Ok	0	0	Mill shut down
Mo. Lbr, Grandin, Mo	10	6	Shut gang January 6
Ozark Lbr, Winona, Mo	10	6	Every other week
Poteau Lbr, Poteau, Ok	0	0	Mill shut down
Louisiana			
Alexandria Lbr	10	4	
Bastrop Lbr	8	3	
Bell-Edwards, McCoy	0	0	Mill shut down
Benoit, Calhoun	8	2	

Bentley, Zimmerman	11	6	
Bering Lbr, Pawnee	0	0	Mill shut down
Bienville, Alberta	0	0	Mill shut down
Big Pine, Colfax	10	4	
Bolinger, Bolinger	0	0	Shut till January 15
Bridges, Pleasant Hill	0	0	Mill shut down
Brown Lbr, Shamrock	11	6	
Calcasieu, Lake Charles	0	0	Mill shut down
Caldwell-Norton, Boleyn	11	6	
4C, 3 mills, Kansas City	0	0	Mills start later
Cordz, Robeline	0	0	Mill shut down
Crowell-Spencer, Long Leaf	0	0	Mill shut down
Enterprise, Alexandria	10	6	
Florien Lbr, Ayers	0	0	Mill shut down
Gallemore-Martin, Holly	10	3	
Germain-Boyd, Atlanta	8	4	
Globe Lbr, Yellow Pine	0	0	Mill shut down
Grayling Lbr, Monroe	10	6	
Greenlaw Lbr, Ramsey	6	6	
Hart-Adams, Bentley	10	3	
Hawthorne, Hawthorne	8	5	Close in 10 days
Hawthorn, Logansport	0	0	Mill shut down
Hodge Fence, Lk Chas	10	4	
Hudson River, DeRidder	10	4	14 days in January
Huie-Hodge, Hodge	0	0	Mill shut down
Iatt Lbr Co, Colfax	0	0	Mill shut down
Industrial (4 mills)	0	0	Mills shut down
Jackson Lbr, Loring	0	0	Mill shut down
King-Ryder, Bon Ami	0	0	Mill shut down
Kingston, Kingstown	9	4	
Lands, Winnfield	0	0	Mill shut down
Longstreet, Longstreet	0	0	Mill shut down
Lee Lbr, Tioga	0	0	Mill shut down
Little Pine, Emden	8	2 1/2	
Little River, Manistee	0	0	Mill shut down
Little River, Selma	0	0	Mill shut down
Lock Moore, Westlake	0	0	Mill shut down
LCLC (2 mills), Clarks	10	5	
4 L Co, Fisher	10	4	
4 L Co, Victoria	10	4	
La. Saw Mill, Whitford	10	3	
Midway Lbr, Seale	0	0	Mill shut down
Minden Lbr, Minden	0	0	Mill shut down
Noble Lbr, Noble	10	4	

Nona Mills, Leesville	10	4	
Norris-Cain, Westlake	9	5	
Ouachita, West Monroe	0	0	Mill shut down
Phoenix, Lake Arthur	0	0	Mill shut down
Pine Tree Lbr, Winona	0	0	Mill shut down
Pine Woods, Springhill	0	0	Mill shut down
Porter Wadley, Cotton Valley	0	0	Mill shut down
Rapides Lbr, Woodworth	5	6	
Sabine Lbr, Zwolle	0	0	Mill shut down
Short Leaf Lbr, Ruston	10	5	Cuts out this month
Simms Lbr, Simms	11	6	
Star & Crescent, Montrose	0	0	Mill shut down
Tremont (5 mills)	10	6	3 mills shut down; 2 cut out night runs
Trout Creek, Trout	0	0	Mill shut down
United Lbr, Quitman	0	0	Mill shut down
Urania Lbr, Urania	11	6	
White Sulphur, Jena	11	4	
Whited & Wheless Lbr, Alden Bridge	0	0	Mill shut down
Texas			
Angelina Co, Keltys	0	0	Shut till March 1
Avinger Lbr, Avinger	0	0	Shut Jan. & Feb.
Barber Lbr, Hartburg	0	0	Mill shut down
Beaumont Saw Mill Co	10	4	
Cameron (4 mills), Waco	0	0	Mills shut down
Carlisle, Onalaska	10	4	
Carter Kelly, Manning	10	6	Stopped night run
Castelberry-Flewellen Longview	10	3	
Clevenger, Clevenger	11	3	
Commercial, Gilmer	0	0	Mill shut down
Davidson & Ingram Lbr (2 mills) Houston	0	0	Mill shut down
Dayton Lbr, Dayton	10	6	
Driskell, Woodlawn	0	0	Mill shut down
Fouke Lbr, Hawkins	0	0	Mill shut down
Gilmer Lbr, Remlig	0	0	Mill shut down
Glen Lbr, Jefferson	0	0	Mill shut down
Glen Lbr, Pine Ridge	11	5	
Harris Lbr, Center	0	0	Mill shut down
Jones Lbr, Reklaw	0	0	Mill shut down

Kay Ell (13 mills) Houston	0	0	Mills shut down
Knox Lbr, Knox	0	0	Start Jan. 20
Lake Creek Lbr, Houston	8	5	
Lanana Lbr, Lanana	0	0	Mill shut down
Leaverton, Crockett	10	6	
Lodwick Lbr, Lodwick	10	6	
Lufkin L&L, Lufkin	10	3	Run 15 days in Jan.
McFarland, Bland Lake	10	1	Shut down in 4 days
Marrow, Magnolia	0	0	Mill shut down
Martindale, Cushings	0	0	Mill shut down
Nona Mills, Odelia	0	0	Mill shut down
Orange Lbr, Orange	0	0	Mill shut down
Pegoda Lbr, Wilburton	0	0	Mill shut down
Pine Grove, Alonzo	0	0	Mill shut down
Ragley Lbr, Ragley	10	3	
San Jacinto, Dodge	0	0	Mill shut down
So. Pine, Diball	10	6	Cut out night runs
Thompson & Tucker Lbr, Willard	0	0	Shut until Jan. 13
Trinity Co, Groveton	0	0	Mill shut down
Trinity River Lbr, (2 mills) Houston	8	4	
Union Mills, Pollock	0	0	Mill shut down
Walker Co Lbr, Elmina	0	0	Mill shut down
Waterman, Waterman	0	0	Mill shut down
West Lbr, Westville	0	0	Mill shut down
Whaley, New Boston	0	0	Mill shut down
Whiteman-Decker, Caro	0	0	Mill shut down
Williams, Clevenger	10	5	

For the first two weeks of January 1908, Arkansas's 36 mills reporting to the YPMA's auditors fell 38,847,000 bf in mill production of lumber; five mills in Indian Territory and Missouri lost 4,100,000 bf; 79 mills reporting from Louisiana lost 99,898,500 bf; and 63 mills in Texas lost 84,710,000 bf. Altogether, it was a devastating blow to the workers who bore the brunt of the losses from lost time.⁴ By the middle of May,

⁴ "Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association Running time of Saw Mills for January, 1908," Box 11257, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Missouri and Oklahoma mills reported no further loss of production because of downtime attributable to the bank panic and depression of 1907; Arkansas only reported 18,642,000 bf in lost production; Louisiana, 35,241,000 bf; and Texas, 46,905,000 bf.⁵

Oscar S. Tam, Secretary
Texas and Louisiana Saw Mill Association
May 16, 1908
Conditions for April, 1908

3 mills report	Saw Mill ran	100%	of full time
1	"	83%	"
2	"	80%	"
2	"	75%	"
1	"	66-2/3%	"
1	"	65%	"
6	"	50%	"
1	"	40%	"
1	"	20%	"
1	"	12%	"
1	"	10%	"
3	"	00%	"

7 mills report	Planers ran	100%	of full time
2	"	80%	"
2	"	75%	"
1	"	66-2/3%	"
1	"	65%	"
1	"	60%	"
3	"	50%	"
1	"	33-1/3%	"
1	"	30%	"
1	"	25%	"
2	"	10%	"
1	"	00%	"

A month later he reported statistics on mills running time for

⁵ "Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association Running Time of Saw Mills for May, 1908," Box 11257, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

the month of May 1908:

8 mills report Saw Mill ran			100%	of full time
2	"	"	95%	"
3	"	"	90%	"
1	"	"	75%	"
1	"	"	60%	"
5	"	"	50%	"
2	"	"	33-1/3%	"
1	"	"	20%	"
1	"	"	10%	"
3	"	"	00%	"
11 mills report Planers ran			100%	"
1	"	"	95%	"
3	"	"	85%	"
4	"	"	75%	"
1	"	"	66-2/3%	"
1	"	"	60%	"
2	"	"	50%	"
2	"	"	40%	"
2	"	"	00%	"

Overall, Tam wrote in a summary, "The average running time of all Saw Mills reporting is about 65% of full time and of Planers about 75% of full time."⁶

APPENDIX 5: C. E. Slagle to J. B. White, June 1908

We have completed the whitewashing of the interior of our saw, planing and hardwood mills as requested by insurance companies, and we will complet[e] all of the work we have for them by Thursday night and will be ready for more work we have for them Monday or be disbanded.\

This crew came here from another mill where they had been doing like work and they seem to understand their business. They have been wanting to contract to white wash some of our negroe's [sic] houses along the railroad. I think that I can get them white washed for \$2.00 a house

⁶ "Statistical Inquire No. 2 and No. 3," Texas and Louisiana Saw Mill Association, Houston, Texas, May 16 and June [1], 1908; "Summary of Statistical Reports," T&L Saw Mill Association, June 17, 1908, Box 11257, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

all around. There are 48 of these house[s], 25 of them front the railroad and the balance of them are built immediately back of the front row. If these houses were whitewashed it would greatly improve the appearance of the town. This would make the labor cost \$92.00 and the material would probably run up the total cost to about \$125.00 to \$130.00. If these buildings were white washed it would not only preserve the houses but it would greatly improve the looks of the town especially to the passengers on the train when passing through Clarks. I realize that this is a bad time to consider expenditures of this kind; but I just call your attention to the matter and what it would probably cost so that you would know should you decide to have the buildings whitewashed at this time.

Captain White immediately approved: "OK, I say whitewash them at the price." But before White could answer, Slagle had fired off another missive to his president:

I have investigated the cost of white washing the negro and dago quarters and find that it will take three gallons of white wash to a house, and the white wash will cost 5c a gallon or 15c for each house. The negro white washing crew will take the contract for whitewashing them at an average of \$2.00 per house, including the closets. There are 47 houses and the whitewash and the labor for the same will cost just \$101.05. The brushes required will cost extra, making a total cost of about \$105.00 instead of \$125.00 or \$130.00 as reported to you a few days ago. This includes the large boarding house as the average was to be \$2.00 per house.

This will improve the negro and dago quarters, also the appearance of the town and I believe that it will be worth the cost not only to us, but that it will encourage the negroes to take a little more pride around their premises.

Captain White promptly approved the lower cost by initialing Slagle's letter and returning it for the LCLC files.⁷ Slagle had on June 3, 1908 already invited his fellow lumbermen to Juneteenth at Clarks. "I presume," Willard Warren wrote, "all the negroes will be there, and a great many white folks will come along to get something to eat. We used

⁷ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, June 16 and 18, 1908, No. 3660, Box 21, File 434, Louisiana Central Lumber Company Records, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM.

to have such celebrations here, but, usually there would little disturbances arise, and we have gotten along better without them."⁸ Slagle printed a dodger: "Great Celebration At Clarks," it proclaimed.

"We are going to have a big time at Clarks on the 19th of June. The Iron Mountain Railroad has made a reduced rate from all points, Alexandria to Monroe inclusive, of one and one-third fare for this date. All the Churches, Sunday Schools and every one else is invited to come and help us celebrate

EMANCIPATION DAY.

I reckon about a thousand people are coming and well dressed people too, for we are going to give a prize to the best dressed Lady and Gent.

Several of the best speakers of Caldwell Parish will be here, and we are going to have the greatest time that has ever been held in this part of the State.

There will be foot-races and horse-races and everybody will have a chance to catch the greasy pig, or if you don't like pigs you can climb the greasy pole.

The prizes will be on exhibition in one of the show cases of the Louisiana Central Lumber Comyany's [sic] store at Clarks.

Dinner Will be Free to All. Don't Miss It.

In addition to all our friends near Clarks, we cordially invite those from all the neighboring Parishes to come and be with us. Remember the cheap rate on the Railroad.

MUSIC FROM MONROE HAS BEEN ENGAGED FOR THE DAY

The greatest event of the day will be ball games between Clarks and Standard, and Columbia and Selma.

Committee on Arrangements:

Spencer M. Parker, Chairman	Will Jones
James Edwards	Ed. Cole
	Moses Wimms
Deputy Sheriff, R. P. Ware	

Refreshment Committee:

D. W. Wright	Windsor Collins,
Ed. Williams	Lee Johnson
Champ Berryman, Standard	E. C. Simmons
Sherman Johnson	John Caroway, Standard

⁸ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, June 5, 1908, No. 3660, Box 20, File 432, Louisiana Central Lumber Company Records, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM.

Charles Reed
Aarch Sheppard
Pictures will be taken by Mr. A. McLeod, Photographer
Don't Forget the Big Free Dinner.⁹

J. Starks, Kelly
Jim Hollins, Standard

APPENDIX 6: Western Wage Rates for Forest Workers

WESTERN PINE MANUFACTURERS ASSN

Office of Secretary

Spokane Wn., August 24, 1908

Circular No. 112

SUBJECT: Wage Scale Mill Operations

The circular recently mailed you inquiring what wages were being paid mill-hands was responded to by 32 members with the following results:

Sawyers..... 2 members report \$6.50, 2-5.75, 4-4.00, 4-7.00, 5-5.00, 7-6.00 and 4-5.50 per day.

Setters..... 14 members report \$3.00, 7-2.75, 1-2.50, 1-2.25, 3-3.50, and 2-3.25 per day.

Edgemen..... 5 members report \$3.25, 15-3.00, 3-3.50, 2-3.75, and 2-2.75 per day.

Trimmermen..... 3 members report \$2.75, 11-3.00, 6-3.28, 10-3.00, 1-2.00 and 1-2.60 per day.

Engineers..... 12 members report \$3.00, 4-3.50, 4-2.50, 1-3.25, and 5-4.00 per day. 2-\$125 and 5-90 per month.

Firemen..... 7 members report \$2.75, 3-2.00, 6-2.50, 2-3.00, 1-3.50, 3-2.25, 1-\$10 (furnishes help), 1-3.50, 1-2.30 and 1-2.95 per day.

Filers..... 1 member reports \$16.00, 1-10.00 (they furnish helpers) 9-6.00, 4-5.50, 1-4.00, 1-8.00, 4-7.00, 2-4.50, and 1-5.00 per day.

Millwrights..... 3 members report \$3.00, 3-4.00, 3-2.50, 2-3.50, 1-3.25, 2-5.00, and 1-2.25 per day. 1-85, 1-125, 2-100, 1-9-[90], 1-130, 3-115, and 1-110 per month.

Tally-men..... 5 members report \$2.25, 3-2.75, 2-2.00, 7-3.00 and 1-2.50 per day, 1-\$85 per month.

Graders..... 4 members report \$2.75, 16-3.00, 3-2.25, 4-2.50, 2-3.50 and 1-2.60 per day. 1-\$75 per month.

Shippers..... 5 members report \$2.50, 3-2.75, 5-2.25, 1-2.00 and 3-3.00 per day. 1-90, 1-85 and 1-75 per month.

Machinists..... 1 member reports \$4.25, 2-3.00, 1-5.00, and 1-2.75 per day. 1-115 per month.

⁹ "Great Celebration At Clarks," Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Planing Mill Men. 9 members report \$2.50, 5-2.00, 4-3.00, 2-3.50, 3-2.75, 8-2.25, 1-3.25 to 4.00 and 1-3.25 per day. 1-100, 1-75 and 1-150 per month.
 Lumber Pilers.... 6 members report \$2.50, 5-2.00, 3-3.00, 1-3.25, 5-2.75, 1-2.25 and 1-2.00 per day. 3-25c, 4-30c, 1-40c, 1-27c and 1-21 to 40c per M.
 Boom men..... 6 members report \$2.25, 5-2.75, 9-2.50, 1-3.00 and 1-2.00 per day.
 Offbearers..... 14 members report \$2.25, 4-2.00, 8-2.50, 1-2.65 and 1-3.00 per day.
 Blacksmiths..... 4 members report \$3.50, 4-3.00, 3-4.00, 2-2.75, 2-2.50 and 1-4.50 per day. 1-50 and 65 and board per month.
 Laborers..... 14 members report \$2.00, 8-2.25, 1-2.10, 3-2.40, 2-2.50, 1-1.75 and 1-1.85 to 2.25 per day.
 Board..... 1 member reports \$4.75, 1-5.25, 6-4.50, and 9-5.00 per week. 1-16 and 1-20 per month. 3-75c per day. 1-5.00 and 1-7.00 per week for board and room.

Yours for information
 Western Pine Manufacturers Association
 R. A. Kellogg, Secretary

A second table, Circular No. 123, listed wages for workers in the logging woods:

WESTERN PINE MANUFACTURERS ASSN.
 Office of the Secretary
 Spokane, Wn., Sept. 9, 1908

Circular 123.

SUBJECT: WOODS WAGES

Gentlemen:

The report compiled from information furnished in circular blanks No. 106 showing the wages being paid in woods operations gives the following results. The number of replies received was 11.

ENGINE LOGGING

Yarding Hook tenders	1 member reports 2.75, 1-2.50 per day.
Rigging Slingers	1 member reports 2.75, 1-3.00, 1-2.25, 1-2.50 per day.
Yarding Engineers	1 member reports 2.75, 1-3.00, 1-2.50
Yarding Firemen	2 members report 2.25, 1-2.00 per day.
Wood buckers	2 members report 2.25, 2-2.00 per day.
Chasers	1 member reports 2.25 per day.
Signal men	1 member reports 2.00, 1-2.25 per day.
Choker men	1 member reports 2.25, 1-2.50 per day.
Head Loaders	1 member reports 3.50, 2-2.50, 1-2.25.
Second Loaders	3 members report 2.25 per day.
Snipers	1 member reports 2.00, 1-2.25 per day.
Swampers	2 members report 2.25, 3-2.00 per day.
Buckers	1 member reports 2.50, 1-2.00, 1-2.25.
Head Fallers	1 member reports 2.60, 4-2.25 per day.
Second Fallers	4 members report 2.25 per day.

Under Cutters	1 member reports 2.25, 1-2.00 per day.
Road Engineers	1 member reports 85 per mo. 1-3.50...
Brakeman	1 member reports 2.50, 1-2.75, 3-2.25
Loco Engineers	1 member reports 85 per mo., 2-3.25, 1-3.50, 1-4.00 per day.
Boom Men	2 members report 2.25 per day.
Skid Road men	2 members report 2.00 per day.
R. R. Graders	5 members report 2.00 per day.
Section Men	4 members report 2.00 per day.
Landing Builders	2 members report 2.00 per day.
Flunkies	2 members report 2.00 per day, 2-25.00 and 1-35.00 per month.
Cooks 18 to 40 men	1 member reports 75.00 per month.
Cooks 40 to 75 men	1 member reports 100.00 per month (75 to 125 men)
	1 member reports 110.00.
Bull Cooks	1 member reports 35.00.
Blacksmiths	1 member reports 90, 1-75, 1-100 per mo.
	2 members report 2.75, 1-3.00 per day.
Blacksmith Helpers	1 member reports 2.25 per day.
Night Watchmen	3 members report 2.00, 1-2.25 per day.
Board	1 member reports 20.00 per mo, 1-5.25, 1-5.00 per wk,
2-75c, 3-69c per day.	

SLEIGH & WAGON LOGGING.

Foreman	4 members report 100, 1-125, 1-85, 1-65 and Board, 1-75 and bd. per month.
Cooks	3 members report 50, 1-60, 1-80 per mo., 1 member reports 60.
Flunkies	1 member reports 35, 12-25 & Bd per month, 2-2.00 per day.
Bull Cooks	2 members report 25, 1-35, 1-60 per mo., 1-2.00, 1-2.75 per day.
Stable men	1 member reports 40, 1-60 per mo.
Blacksmith	1 member reports \$60, 1-100 per month, 4-3.00, 1-2.75 per day.
Handy Man	1 member reports 3.00, 2-2.00, 1-2.50.
Filer	1 member reports 2.50, 3-2.75, 1-3.00.
Clerk	1 member reports 2.50 per day, 1-75, 1-60 and board, 1-75 and board per month.
Scaler	1 member reports 60 per mo., 2-2.25, 3-2.50, 1-2.75 per day.
Teamsters, Hookmen & Sawyers	6 members report 2.50, 5-2.25 per day.
Swampers & Common Labor	8 members report 2.00, 3-2.25, 1-1.75, 1-2, 1-2.00 per day.

Very truly yours,
 Western Pine Manufacturers Association
 R. A. Kellogg, Secretary¹⁰

APPENDIX 7: Union Appeal for Membership, 1911

Beaumont, Tex.
 YELLOW PINE GRADERS AND INSPECTORS.

As a yellow pine man, we presume you are interested in a proposition that will better your working conditions. You are, of course aware of the fact that we are the only skilled labor in the country unorganized, and it is manifestly essential that we should be.

It is a self evident truth that in organization there is strength.

In Union there is power, but the fact we would impress upon your mind is that fundamentally our organization is social, embodying no antagonistic features to the manufacturer, at the same time progressive in our own interests.

Our application fee is two dollars (\$2.00), which will be the only cost in the premises until the election of officers on the first day of May 1911, at the organization headquarters here. This will entitle the payee to a vote, either personally or by proxy, in the election of officers, the adoption of by-laws, etc.

We will then decide by a majority vote whether or not we will affiliate with the American Federation of Labor or continue as an independent organization. We propose to advocate the following principles, which should appeal strongly to every man who has ever stood behind a machine.

1. A uniform scale of wages.
2. To urge with the manufacturers the preference of our men in the matter of employment.
3. That ten hours constitutes a days [sic] work.
4. That all over time should be double pay.

The matter of paramount importance to our members, will be the "Department of Help", that will be inaugurated for the benefit of any man

¹⁰ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, To All Members, YPMA, "Subject: Wages paid employees in Eastern Washington and Idaho," September 29, 1908; Western Pine Manufacturers' Association Circular No. 112, August 24, 1908, and Circular No. 123, September 9, 1908, No. 3660, Box 22, File 461, LCLC Records, WHMC.

who needs assistance, any member out of employment, or sick, providing his dues are fully paid, will be advanced a sum consistent with the facts in the case, and we will not require a man to be confined to his bed to partake of these benefits, or make any kind of affidavit. Deception could not be practiced but once, and we don't believe that anyone would sacrifice his reputation for a few dollars.

We want every man in this organization to make the Beaumont Office his headquarters when in town. The carpenter, the bricklayer, the printer, paper hanger, or any other trade that can be imagined, has his union hall to visit in any town of considerable size in the United States. Why not the lumber man? ["]A friend in need is a friend indeed." The monthly dues will be fifty cents, no other assessment or expenses. We propose that the social inducements will be worth this to any man and more. At frequent intervals, we will give public entertainments and dances at which all the men will be welcome and have a good time, and make new acquaintances and friends.

The strongest argument, however, a fact that no one should overlook, is THAT IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF A LITTLE TIME WHEN IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR YOU TO JOIN US. AS THE MATTER IS BEING PUT UP TO THE MANUFACTURERS IN SUCH A WAY THAT THERE IS NO DOUBT BUT THAT THEY WILL GIVE OUR MEN THE PREFERENCE IN THE WAY OF EMPLOYMENT.

Understand the monthly dues do not become effective until after the election of officers on the first day of May. Once a member when you pay the application fee, if you should loose [sic] your position from any cause, or desire to make a change, notify the Beaumont office at once, and our good offices will be used at once to put you in touch with another job. When you consider our unexcelled facilities for knowing the vacancies that exist, you should not hesitate one moment in getting in on the "Band Wagon."

"COME IN BOYS THE WATER IS FINE."¹¹

APPENDIX 8: SLOA Response to Union Organizational Efforts

One mill superintendent, receiving notice from the SLOA about Wilson's efforts to organize a craft union, dismissed the attempt as of little consequence: "As to the

¹¹ Southern Lumber Operators' Association, typescript copy of Yellow Pine Graders and Inspectors Organization correspondence, February 9, 1911, No. 3660, Box 30, File 645, LCLC Records, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM.

Graders and Inspectors Union, with their home office in Beaumont, Texas, there is not much doing, but that is not the Union we are worrying about, in this neck of the woods.

It is the United Timber Workers of America" that lumbermen should worry about.

They started out in December or January with two organizers, and they have been to all the mills along the L. & A., and the Watkins [railroad], and around Lake Charles, up the K.C.S. and over the Santa Fe to Oakdale [Louisiana].

As stated before, they have been traveling under the guise of insurance agents. I also understand they have started out six more organizers, and they are now working in the vicinity of the [William] Buchanan mills.

They have worked the mills so awful quiet that, it has been impossible to get a word out of anyone, whether they joined or not.

I believe candidly, the thing is of greater magnitude than we realize. Their home office is in Alexandria, La. and they have information from the Federation of Labor that, just as soon as they can show a certain percentage of the men belonging to the Union, and have so much money in the treasury, that they will take them in.

I wrote Mr. _____ telling [sic] him what was going on here, and who the organizers were, and to be on the lookout for them, and I received a letter from Mr. _____ saying that there was nothing going on there, and that he did not believe it would amount to anything, as the color line would prevent it; however, the day before I received this letter, a man came over here from there and I immediately put a man on his trail and before he had been there two or three hours I had a copy of his card, which gives the number of his local lodge at above party's mill.

This shows you how secretly the whole thing is being worked, and unless the lumbermen take more interest in this matter they will be thoroughly organized before we know what we are doing.

As soon as I found out what insurance company the two organizers, Jay Smith and Emmerson [sic] were representing, I immediately took the matter up with the Company, and had their commission taken away.

I also learned they returned to Alexandria the other day, from the trip up the L. & A. with nearly four hundred names. If this is a fact you can readily see how important it is we should be doing something, instead of all sitting still and saying: "Well there is nothing doing at my mill".

I am afraid that the mill men do not realize how serious a union of this kind would be.¹²

Mills throughout the piney woods had already decided to curtail their operation in January by closing at least five days, hoping to force lumber prices up again.¹³ The Yellow Pine Manufacturers' Association met in New Orleans January 17-19 to make plans to deal with the problems of overproduction. Since its founding several years earlier under the leadership of Captain J. B. White, the YPMA had concentrated on economic matters affecting the industry, leaving labor relations to the SLOA, which had scheduled its first meeting of the year for March 31, 1911. His call for a general meeting of the SLOA was based on the extent of the "infection" according to a letter he had received from a Louisiana manufacturer:

IMPORTANT AND CONFIDENTIAL

"Mr. _____ has just been in my office and I have gone over the labor situation in the South with him.

He informs me that one man, by the name of Jones, whom he discharged yesterday, advising him that he was discharged because he belonged to the Union, told him that he was through with the Union and handed Mr. _____ his [union] card. He then opened up and told Mr. _____ all he knew in this connection.

This man stated that there were 245 locals organized in the State of Louisiana. He did not know the number of men in each local, but he said that the local number at Fullerton was 235, and that practically every man on the job belonged to it.

Bon Ami is in the same shape.

At Longville there are 110 white men, but the number of negroes is not known.

¹² C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to F. G. Weathersby, Buna, Texas, March 24, 1911, Box 197, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

¹³ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, January 7, 1911; White to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 7, 1911, No. 3660, Box 29, Files 636 and 637, LCLC Records, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM.

Cravens, La. is unionized, solid.

Woodworth is solid.

At Carson they have 81 white men and 115 negroes, and they also have an organization at Neame, but the extent at the latter point is not known.

My judgment is that we are sleeping on the situation, and I think that if the truth were known, we would find the situation really much more serious than we have had any idea or reasons to suspect, so far, consequently I ask that a meeting be called in New Orleans not later than one week from yesterday. I would like to have it earlier, if possible, but feel that if a meeting is called for any earlier date we will not be able to get all of our people out.

Mr. _____ returns to the mills tonight. He advises me that he has practically induced the negroes to give up their local and send him their papers. They are fearful, however, of taking any action, because of what the white men might do to them.

If each of the above locals had a membership of only fifty, it means that there are 11,250 men belonging to the organization at present, and the chances are that the memberships will average nearer 100 than 50, so that you can easily realize what this means.

I believe that if every sawmill in the South would shut down and notify their men that they positively would not re-open until the men had given them proof, positive, that they had given up and discontinued their organization, we could control the situation in thirty days.¹⁴

In a personal letter to Captain White and other directors of the association, Johnson noted that the SLOA had been "active" now for three years, since the economic problems created by the bank panic in late 1907. White passed the letter on to Willard Warren at Fisher, Louisiana, with a note asking him to attend and follow the lead of S. J. Carpenter, a "conservative and level-headed" lumberman. "Be sure to be in New Orleans next Friday," Captain White urged Clarence Slagle. "They have got about all the mills organized. Presume you are already in trouble if you only knew it, and they

¹⁴ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to Members and Manufacturers of Yellow Pine, March 24, 1911, No. 3660, Box 31, File 662, LCLC Records, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM.

will likely show themselves soon." He continued his discussion of the subject a week later in a letter to Slagle at Clarks and Willard Warren at Fisher, Louisiana:

I cannot be in New Orleans next Friday to meet with others at the Grunewald Hotel, but it is very important that you and Mr. Slagle be there. I just came from Clarks to-day [March 27, 1911].

I find that there are 245 Local Union Organizations in the State of Louisiana, and that at Fullerton there are 235 employees [in the union] and at Bonami, at Longville, Cravens, Woodworth and Carson they are thoroughly organized, there being approximately an average of nearly one hundred men to each organization. If this [is] true, there are over 20,000 already organized. Whatever you decide to do will be satisfactory to me, but you will require cool heads and good, sound judgment. They will require men to decide this who can look on both sides of the question, so that there will be an argument on our side from their side of the case. If an argument can be produced so that the men will see that there is justice in it, it weakens their side of the case very materially, but if no argument is produced but a purely selfish one and they are left to feel that they are mistreated and that their condition is one that is held arbitrarily by their employers, they will feel that there is injustice, and with a feeling of injustice rankling in a mans [sic] heart, he is acting honestly when he rebels, therefore it is absolutely necessary that people of thoughtful minds should examine into the situation and show from the laborers [sic] standpoint that this is not to their interests. They should feel that the opportunity for advancement, the opportunity for those who are really capable to distinguish themselves and to get pay and credit for genius that may be developed within them is wholly lost under the domination of union labor.¹⁵

Thirty-two members of the SLOA attended the meeting in New Orleans, joined by 44 other lumbermen representing 48 sawmills:

¹⁵ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to Members, SLOA, March 3, 1911; Johnson to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, March 25, 1911; White to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, and C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, March 27, 1911, Box 84; Johnson to Members and Manufacturers of Yellow Pine, March 24, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; W. W. Wright, West Eminence, Missouri, to White, March 22, 1911; Johnson to Members and Manufacturers of Yellow Pine, March 24, 1911; White to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, March 27, 1911; White to Slagle and W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, March 27, 1911, No. 3660, Box 30, Files 656 and 657; Box 31, File 662, LCLC Records, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM.

MEMBERS

W. C. Bowman	Bowman Hicks Lbr. Co.	Kansas City, Mo.
Hans Dierks	Dierks Lbr. & Coal Co.	Kansas City, Mo.
Herbert Dierks	Dierks Lbr. & Coal Co.	DeQueen, Ark.
F. G. Dickman	Finkbine Lumber Co.	Wiggins, Miss.
J. H. Eddy	Kaul Lumber Co.	Birmingham, Ala.
M. L. Fleishel	Gulf Lumber Co.	Stables & Fullerton
S. H. Fullerton	Chicago Lbr. & Coal Co.	St. Louis, Mo.
I. H. Fetty	Central Coal & Coke Co.	Kansas City, Mo.
H. H. Foster	Wis. & Ark. Lbr. Co.	Malvern, Ark.
E. A. Frost	Frost Johnson Lbr. Co.	Shreveport, La.
E. W. Gates	Crossett Lbr. Co.	Crossett, Ark.
L. F. Haslam	Pickering Lbr. Co.	Pickering, La.
Geo. R. Hicks	Bowman Hicks Lbr. Co.	Kansas City, Mo.
W. B. Harbison	Lacey Lumber Co.	Carriere, Miss.
R. M. Hallowell	Industrial Lumber Co.	Elizabeth, La.
C. D. Johnson	Frost Johnson Lbr. Co.	St. Louis, Mo.
R. Krause	Krause & Managan	Lake Charles, La.
Chas. S. Keith	Central Coal & Coke	Kansas City, Mo.
Geo. Lock	Lock Moore & Co.	Westlake, La.
J. W. Martin	Globe Lumber Co.	Yellow Pine, La.
C. J. Mansfield	Arkansas Lumber Co.	Warren, Ark.
W. T. Murray	Fordyce Lumber Co.	Fordyce, Ark.
W. H. Pickard	Lacey Lbr. Co.	Carriere, Miss.
W. L. Prickett	King Ryder Lbr. Co.	Bonami, La.
W. A. Pickering	Pickering Lbr. Co.	Kansas City, Mo.
Robt. Stack	Rapides Lumber Co.	Woodworth, La.
C. E. Slagle	La. Central Lbr. Co.	Clarks, La.
C. B. Sweet	Long Bell Lbr. Co.	Kansas City, Mo.
Alex. Thompson	Thompson & Tucker	Douchette, Tex.
S. T. Woodring	Calcasieu L.L. Lbr. Co.	Lake Charles, La.
W. W. Warren	La. Long Leaf Lbr. Co.	Fisher, La.
F. J. Womack	Foster Lumber Co.	Houston, Tex.

MANUFACTURERS

J. T. Burlingame	E. W. Gates Lbr. Co.	Yellow Pine, La.
R. L. Boyd	Alexandria Lbr. Co.	Alexandria, La.
S. J. Carpenter	Tremont Lumber Co.	Winnfield, La.
John N. Gilbert	Nona Mills Co.	Beaumont, Tex.
W. D. Harrigan	Scotch Lumber Co.	Fulton, Ala.
W. J. Haynen	J. J. Newman Lbr. Co.	Hattiesburg, Miss.
E. J. Hurst	J. J. Newman Lbr. Co.	Hattiesburg, Miss.
John H. Kirby	Kirby Lumber Co.	Houston, Tex.
S. R. Lee	Lee Lumber Co.	Tioga, La.

L. Miller	Miller Link Lbr. Co.	Orange, Tex.
J. G. McGowin	W. T. Smith Lbr. Co.	Chapman, Ala.
C. M. McDaris	A. J. Neimeyer Lbr. Co.	Little Rock, Ark.
C. P. Myer	Kirby Lumber Co.	Houston, Tex.
C. W. Neihuss	Edgar Lumber Co.	Wesson, Ark.
F. R. Pierce	Louis Werner Sawmill Co.	St. Louis, Mo.
A. J. Peavy	Peavy Byrnes Lbr. Co.	Shreveport, La.
J. W. Reynolds	(Thompson & Ford Lbr. Co.	
	(Sabine Lumber Co.	Zwolle, La.
	(Big Pine Lbr. Co.	
M. J. Ragley	Bucley Lbr. Co.	Yelgar, La.
B. H. Smith	Longville Lbr. Co.	Longville, La.
H. R. Swartz	(Brown Lumber Co.	
	(Athens Lumber Co.	St. Louis, Mo.
	(Little River Lbr. Co.	
C. E. Walden	Sabine Tram Co.	Beaumont, Tex.
R. J. Wilson	Peavy Byrnes Lbr. Co.	Kinder, La.
Dr. Brown	Lutcher Moore Lbr. Co.	Orange, Tex.
J. D. Butler	Alex. Gilmer Lbr. Co.	Remlig, Tex.
B. H. Bolinger	S. H. Bolinger & Co.	Shreveport, La.
N. M. Cudabac	Howze Lbr. Co.	McLain, Miss.
J. S. Foley	Brooks Scanlon Co.	Kentwood, La.
F. R. Gilchrist	Gilchrist Fordney Co.	Laurel, Miss.
A. G. Little	A. G. Little Lbr. Co.	Richardson, Miss.
H. R. Loranger	Genesee Lumber Co.	Genesee, La.
John Mason	Natalbany Lbr. Co.	Hammond, La.
N. B. Noble	Austin Lumber Co.	Jamestown, Miss.
O. C. Pantell	Natalbany Lbr. Co.	Hammond, La.
W. D. Reimers	Easterling Lbr. Co.	Ora, Miss.
R. Lester Smythe	Natalbany Lbr. Co.	Hammond, La.
F. Salmen	Salmen Brick & Lbr. Co.	Slidell, La.
T. E. Tregemba	Glen Lumber Co.	Kansas City, Mo.
W. W. Whittington, Jr.	Enterprise Lbr. Co.	Alexandria, La.
T. L. O'Donnell	Ship Island Lbr. Co.	Sanford, Miss.
W. A. Graves	Chesbrough & Graves LC.	Amite, La.
A. S. Hinton	Hinton Bros. Lbr. Co.	Lumberton, Miss.
Phil. Gardiner	Eastman Gardiner Co.	Laurel, Miss.
Geo. W. Reed	Amos Kent L & B Co.	Kentwood, La.
Guy V. Fuvay	McShane Lumber Co.	Omaha, Neb.

C. D. Johnson, partner of E. A. Frost in the Frost-Johnson Lumber Company, of St.

Louis, Missouri, presided at the SLOA meeting, explaining that "it owes its existence to

the necessity for coping with labor troubles that arose at Lake Charles and vicinity along about August or September 1906,—a situation that threatened dangerous and far-reaching possibilities" The association succeeded, he said, "in its primary undertaking." Lumbermen "now confronted with a similar situation ... of far greater magnitude" would want to "re-organize this body or modify its workings to properly meet conditions as we now find them." Since the winter of 1906 the SLOA had been more or less dormant, he said, but now must deal with agitation at several places by "locals of the International Timber Workers of America." Twenty-one lumbermen at the meeting who had not previously been members of the SLOA joined the association; 23 more asked for time to consult their home offices before formally joining. Accepted for immediate membership in the SLOA:

E. W. Gates Lumber Co.	Yellow Pine, La.
Alexandria Lumber Co.	Alexandria, La.
Tremont Lumber Co.	Winnfield, La.
Nona Mills Co.	Beaumont, Tex.
Scotch Lumber Co.	Fulton, Ala.
J. J. Newman Lumber Co.	Hattiesburg, Miss.
Kirby Lumber Co.	Houston, Tex.
Lee Lumber Co.	Tioga, La.
Miller Link Lumber Co.	Organge, Tex.
W. T. Smith Lbr. Co.	Chapman, Ala.
A. J. Neimeyer Lbr. Co.	Little Rock, Ark.
Edgar Lumber Co.	Wessen, Ark.
Louis Werner Sawmill Co.	St. Louis, Mo.
Peavy Byrnes Lbr. Co.	Shreveport, La.
Thompson & Ford Lbr. Co.	Grayburg, Tex.
Sabine Lumber Co.	Zwolle, La.
Big Pine Lumber Co.	Colfax, La.
Bucley Lumber Co.	Yelgar, La.
Longville Lumber Co.	Longville, La.
Brown Lumber Co.	Shamrock, La.
Sabine Tram Co.	Beaumont, Tex.

A committee of lumbermen, made up of C. B. Sweet of Long-Bell Lumber Company, W. A. Pickering of Pickering Lumber Company, and C. S. Keith of the Central Coal & Coke Company drafted a resolution that, in effect, mandated the SLOA's major response to the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, the blacklist. Moved by Willard Warren and adopted unanimously, the action:

RESOLVED, that all members require from each applicant for employment that he sign a written application, addressed to his last two employers, requesting information as to length of service, character, habits, capability and reasons for leaving service, said applicant to release past employers from any and all liability on account of having furnished such information.

A printed form of said application to be adopted and recommended by the Executive Committee.

The association also added 14 new members to its board and provided for the president to appoint still another to represent Louisiana. The new directors included John H. Kirby, John N. Gilbert, Alex. Thompson, S. J. Carpenter, C. B. Sweet, C. S. Keith, W. W. Warren, S. H. Fullerton, H. H. Foster, W. T. Murray, J. B. White, John L. Kaul, W. D. Harrigan, and W. J. Haynen. New Officers for the SLOA during 1911 were C. D. Johnson, president; W. J. Haynen, first vice president; W. W. Pickering, second vice president; and Geo. K. Smith, treasurer. Smith held a similar position with the YPMA and the National Lumber Manufacturers Association. The board of directors in a post-convention meeting named C. D. Johnson, chairman and ex officio member of the Executive Committee. The board also appointed John H. Kirby, S. J. Carpenter, C. B. Sweet, and C. S. Keith to serve on the committee. It created subcommittees for each state, which it designated Boards of Governors. For Arkansas, it named as chairman H. H. Foster, Malvern; and members, E. W. Gates, Crossett; C. J. Mansfield, Warren; A.

C. Ramsey, Nashville; W. N. Bemis, Prescott; and R. M. Johnston, Pine Bluff. For Louisiana, it named as chairman M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton; J. H. Morrison, Carson; L. F. Haslam, Pickering; S. T. Woodring, Lake Charles; C. E. Slagle, Clarks; R. M. Hallowell, Elizebeth. For Texas it named as chairman Clayton P. Myer, Houston; Howard Davis, Kennard; Alex. Thompson, Doucette; J. M. West, Houston; and Geo. A. Kelly, Manning. For Mississippi, it named as chairman W. J. Haynen, Hattiesburg; F. G. Dickman, Wiggins; and J. F. Forsyth, Lumberton. For Alabama, it named as chairman John L. Kaul, Birmingham; W. G. McGowin, Chapman; and J. T. Burlingame, Yellow Pine.¹⁶

APPENDIX 9: Report of "Secret Agent" on Union Activities

The Industrial Lumber Company kept its headquarters in Beaumont, Texas, but its mills occupied sites along the Santa Fe Railroad from Kirbyville, Texas, to Oakdale, Louisiana. R. M. Hallowell, an original member of the 1906 SLOA, was the general manager of the Industrial plants at Elizebeth and Oakdale, Louisiana. On his own, Hallowell employed a "secret agent," working out of St. Louis, to investigate the union's activities in Allen, Beauregard, and Vernon Parishes. From nearly a month's undercover work in Louisiana, the "operative" filed a detailed report:

INDUSTRIAL LUMBER COMPANY

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¹⁶ "Southern Lumber Operators' Assn., Minutes of Meeting of the Southern Lumber Operators' Association Held at New Orleans, La., March 31st, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

On Saturday, April 1st, 1911, the operative left St. Louis en route to Elizabeth, La., where he arrived on Tuesday, April 4th, having a conference with Mr. Hallowell during the evening of this last mentioned date. He was directed to proceed to Marionville on the following day, at which point he employed the time up to Thursday, April 6th, at the boarding house used by employees of the woods and mills at that town, it being his purpose to gather such information as was possible among these employees in regard to the strength of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers. Matters were very quiet, however, at Marionville, and about all the operative was able to learn was information to the effect that Supt. Sam Lee had discharged a number of employees- four or five- for their connection with the labor organization mentioned, and others for various causes. Most of those former employees who had been discharged had left the camp however, and no one was doing any agitating at Marionville. There was some ill feeling, however, expressed by the workmen against the present foreman of the right of way, as he is known, it being claimed that this employee sacrificed his fellow employees and his allegiance to the union by informing on the men who were discharged, notifying the company of the fact that some of its employees were in the organization of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, and also his predecessor in the position of foreman of right of way. Conditions at Marionville, however, were such that no trouble was anticipated on any account. No organizers were in that field and none was expected.

On the evening of Thursday, April 6th, the operative left Marionville for Elizabeth, where he reported to Mr. Hallowell, returning to Marionville on the following day.

On Friday, April 7th, and up to and including Monday, April 10th, the operative put in his time in the woods at Marionville. He became acquainted with one Frank Ames, who was away from Marionville at the time organizers for the Brotherhood of Timber Workers were in the district. Ames did not become a member of the organization, but appeared to be heartily in sympathy with its principles, and said that it was the intention to thoroughly organize the lumber workers and when hot weather came on and there was a shortage of men, demands would be made on the lumber companies for improved conditions and better wages, but on account of somebody turning informer, these plans had been defeated, and Ames did not look for any further activity anyways soon.

From another employee of the company whom the operative described as the man who was laying off on the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th of April, and who was suffering with an injured arm, the operative obtained the same information as he received from Ames.

On the evening of Monday, April 10th, the operative, having ascertained that the mills at Oakdale were shut down because some of the employees refused to sign an agreement presented by the company, the

operative proceeded to Elizabeth in order to consult with Mr. Muth, to whom he was instructed to report in the absence of Mr. Hallowell, it being the intention of the operative to go to Oakdale to determine what could be learned at that point. Mr. Muth, however, requested him to remain at Elizabeth with a view of ascertaining what the situation was at that point, especially in reference to the union.

While at Elizabeth on the evening of April 10th, the operative met two men who had refused to sign an agreement to have nothing to do with any union or labor organization while in the employ of the company. These two men, whose names the operative was unable to obtain, inquired of the operative what the situation was at Marionville, and when he informed them that it was impossible to do anything with the woods gang, one of these men, who was about 23 or 24 years of age, 5 feet 7 inches in height, had light hair and a gold tooth in front and wore a sailor straw hat, who had been employed at the planing mill, remarked that the only way to bring the companies to time would be to burn down two or three mills and kill two or three superintendents, he saying that such action as this would learn the companies a lesson or two.

At Elizabeth the operative ascertained that four men had refused to sign the agreement not to affiliate with any union or labor organization, and he found that there were three or four who were actively agitating in favor of labor. He was unable to get the names of these parties, but pointed them out by description to Mr. Muth.

On Tuesday, April 11th, the operative left Elizabeth for Oakdale, and just as he boarded the train at the depot, a man who had on apparently new overalls and the appearance outwardly of a lumber company employe, stepped off the train and engaged in conversation with some of the men around the depot. The operative calculated from this fellow's general makeup that he was an organizer. When the train was ready to pull out, this man again got aboard, but before he did so, the operative pointed him out to Mr. Payne, superintendent, saying that he had overheard the fellow talking about labor troubles and inquiring what the situation was at Elizabeth.

On the way to Oakdale the operative kept close to this man and got off the train at Oakdale with him, riding in the 'bus to the Harrison Hotel, and when they reached the hotel, by chance, noth [sic] this fellow and the operative were assigned to the same room. This man later proved to be Arthur L. Emerson, an organizer for the Brotherhood of Timber Workers. After the operative became acquainted with Emerson, the latter informed him that it was the intention to thoroughly organize the entire south, including longshoremen, dock laborers and all other crafts, and whenever the time came that the Brotherhood should become involved with the lumber companies, the longshoremen and dock laborers would refuse to handle any lumber until the lumber companies had met the demands of

their employes. Emerson stated that Vincent St. John, head of the Industrial Workers of the World at Chicago, Ill., had furnished him through correspondence, with a considerable number of ideas which he was to pursue in the formation and organizing of locals in the lumber camps.

On Wednesday, April 12th, the operative called on the superintendent at Oakdale and applied for a position. He was sent to the mill, going to work at noon, and later in the day paid Organizer Emerson \$2.50 for a membership card in the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, Emerson having solicited the operative to join on the preceding night, but the operative declined on the ground that he would not join until he had secured work in the morning.

On the evening of this date Emerson proceeded to Alexandria he advising that he had an appointment to meet J. Smith, the recording secretary, at Oakdale. On the proceeding [sic] night, Emerson addressed a meeting at the Woodmen's Hall, the subject of his speech being "Capital and Labor" or "Master and Slave". At this meeting he announced that it was the purpose of the timber workers' organization to get out and fight in the open henceforth. At this meeting, so far as the operative was able to learn, the only company employes present were one foreman, one saw filer and one sawyer, they being from the river mill, but the operative could not learn their names. After the close of Mr. Emerson's speech, a committee of five citizens was appointed by Emerson to take steps to unionize the town. Anderson, Pope, Callihan, and two others, whose names could not be obtained, were appointed on this committee. The number of the local at Oakdale is 219. There is no local at Elizabeth.

On Thursday, April 13th, the operative did not go to work but instead reported at Elizabeth to Mr. Muth, and returned to Oakdale at night.

On Friday, April 14th and Saturday, April 15th, the operative worked at the planing mill with Mr. Sol White, whi [sic] is an organizer at Oakdale. White was strongly suspected by the employes of playing double, and White, perhaps in his own defense, had cautioned the men against the operative, but later apologized to the operative for forming any suspicion against him, explaining that as he was a stranger in the locality, he did not feel safe in trusting him.

On Sunday, April 16th, the operative met quite a number of the employes of the company and also citizens of the town, but did not learn anything of importance until evening, when he overheard Anderson, one of the committee appointed by Emerson to unionize the town, say to Mr. White, the organizer, "If he comes maybe we can get this thing straightened out." The operative took this to mean that there was some trouble brewing, and on Monday, April 17th, he laid off from work to ascertain who White and Emerson were expecting, and it proved to be J.

Smith, secretary and treasurer of the organization, Smith arriving on the afternoon train, and he immediately proceeded to the Harrison Hotel and entered same by way of a back door without registering. During the afternoon Anderson came to the hotel and made inquiry as to whether or not Smith had arrived. Mr. Berry, proprietor [sic] of the Hotel, and a member of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, had ascertained that Smith was in the hotel and he took Anderson to him. He also volunteered to introduce the operative to Smith. Smith was accompanied to Oakdale by another organizer named Preston, and Berry introduced the operative to both of them. Smith talked to Anderson, the operative, Berry and two or three others who came in later, laying special stress on a statement to the effect that anyone who betrayed the organization to the company would be digging his own grave. During the evening Emerson returned to Oakdale, he and Smith having a conversation over conditions at the various camps. Emerson told Smith that he had been taking in new members at every place he stopped, and that the Company had been making matters easy by the stand it had taken.

On Tuesday, April 18th, Emerson left Oakdale, going north to Alexandria, while Smith went south on the Santa Fe road to some point not know[n] to the operative. On this date and also on Wednesday, April 19th, the operative learned nothing of any importance.

On Thursday, April 20th, and Friday, April 21st, he worked at the planing mill with Mr. White. White confided to the operative the intelligence that he distrusted J. Smith, advising the operative that he did not think Smith was honest, and he saif [sic] that if somebody would go with him, he (White) was in favor of auditing Smith's books at Smith's headquarters at Alexandria. White explained that Smith claimed he had \$700 in the treasury and that his books were open for inspection at any time. White contended that he saw a list showing that the organization had one thousand members, he having seen this list when he was at Smith's office on business either on the 10th or 11th of April. This gave the operative opportunity to remark that a membership of one thousand who were supposed to pay a fee of \$2.50 would naturally be expected to place in the treasury about \$2500, and it looked like a large discrepancy to have only \$700 in the treasury, whereupon White said that Mr. Smith explained that the stationary bill was very expensive, endeavoring to plead that this explained why there was only \$700 in the treasury.

Smith returned to Oakdale on the night of April 21st, and when the operative saw him he remarked that Organizer White appeared to be getting very much dissatisfied with his position as organizer, and claimed he was not being treated right, saying that he had sent in eight or nine applications which had not been acted upon, and that as a consequence he was going to turn in his credentials and have nothing more to do with the Brotherhood of Timber Workers. Smith said he did not know what White

meant by making these assertions, suggesting that possibly White was a little bit unreasonable, and that the matter would be looked into and White could rest assured that he would be taken care of.

On Saturday, April 22nd, Smith examined the secretary's books at Oakdale and found where Mr. white's [sic] applications had been recorded properly, and Smith requested the operative to see White and inform him that everything had been straightened out and for White to see Mr. Berry, who would explain things satisfactorily.

In speaking with the operative, Smith stated that in order to perfect the timber men's organization, it would require eighteen months hard work and the principal difficulty to be met with would be the controlling of the rank and file, who through their impatience, might disrupt the organization, and all he (Smith) desired to do would be to hold them in line, and when the various lumber camps were thoroughly organized, the Brotherhood of Timber Workers could make their demands and be reasonably sure of compelling the companies to meet them. He said that there were not twenty-five organizers at work in Texas and Louisiana, and two in Arkansas, and he was instructing them all to have the one thing before them and that was to keep all the members in the organization and lay stress upon the fact that it would require eighteen months' hard work to thoroughly complete their organization, and that the most successful work that could be done would be to prevent the men from deserting.

On the morning of April 22nd, the operative proceeded to Elizabeth and met Mr. Hallowell during the afternoon, relating to him his meeting with Mr. Smith, and information gathered from Smith. In the evening he returned to Oakdale and met Mr. Berry the local secretary and under proper pretense, ascertained where Berry kept a record of his list of members.

On Sunday, April 23rd, the operative found opportunity to get hold of Sect. Berry's books and copied the names of the members, they being as follows:

M. R. Bass	Russell Bass
W. M. Singletory	R. Vidrine
W. T. Ferguson	J. A. Dickens
J. D. Morgan	J. E. Johnson
A. M. Mortan	Arvie Fon[t]enot
Geo. R. Monk	Mark Johnson
Milton Hamilton	Edw. W. Young
Will O'Connor	Archie Wilct
A. T. Morgan	Joe Mencinill
W. S. Trotter	Duprey Johnson
J. F. Stalsby	Duruis Artigo
Thos. Johnson	J. A. Henry
A. J. Thigpin	C. A. Baker

S. W. White
 Frank Bass
 Will Baker
 Essau Branby
 Sam Carroll
 Jas. Thigpin
 H. M. Clark
 J. D. Stalsby
 J. W. Barker
 V. Cole

W. J. Pare
 Chas. Weber
 Austin Johnson
 Arstel Fontenac
 Geo. W. [T]arver
 A. E. Johnson
 James (or Joe) Flinington
 W. E. Western
 Jos. Clark

A copy of this list was turned over to Mr. Hallowell later in the day and Mr. Hallowell informed the operative that he expected to take immediate action on the information furnished him, suggesting that the operative return to St. Louis, so that the operative made preparations for leaving Elizabeth, he going by way of De Ridder on the morning of Monday, April 24th.

At De Ridder he met two organizers, Daniels and Preston. They claimed that they were not doing much in the way of bringing in new members as the lumber companies had so many company men attending meetings and reporting things back to the companies that other employees who were interested in the union were afraid to attend meetings. Neither Daniels nor Preston appeared to be in possession of very much money. Daniels is a blacksmith by trade, is about 5 feet 7 inches in height, 150 lbs. in weight and 25 or 30 years of age, while Preston is about 25 years old, 155 pounds in weight, 5 feet 5 or 6 inches in height. He is dark complected and on this date wore a blue serge suit and a light fedora hat. Daniels informed the operative that an organizer named Wiggins was working around in the territory near DeRidder.

During the afternoon the operative proceeded to Texarkana and after his arrival at that point, he remained on Tuesday April 25th, and Wednesday, April 26th, trying to locate a man whom Supt. Payne at Elizabeth described as a fellow with a heavy scar across his nose. The operative eventually located this fellow, who stated that Jeff Davis, Del Martin, Thomas Warner, Oscar Caple, and Robert Townley were taking active part in the securing of members for the B. of T.W., Caple supposedly [sic] being an organizer at Woodworth. Jeff Davis is the man that the operative pointed out to Mr. Payne at Elizabeth on one occasion on April 22nd, who wore a blue serge suit and a Panama hat. The others are strong agitators, moving from place to place. This scarred faced man said that Felix Ballard, a foreman and engineer, and also a local organizer at Ward [Louisiana], claimed to have a membership of 150 on April 10th.

On Thursday, April 27th, the operative left Texarkana for St. Louis, where he arrived late in the day of Friday, April 28th.

St. Louis, May 1st, 1911.¹⁷

APPENDIX 10: Pinkerton Detective's Report, 1911

The Pinkerton Operative No. 5, S. Van den Berg, came down for breakfast at Standard, Louisiana, Sunday, June 4, 1911, at 6:55 a.m. Earlier--about 5:30 a.m.--he had heard three revolver shots from the Negro quarters. "This seems to be a frequent occurrence," he wrote, "as I have heard shooting many times in the evening toward dusk, especially." Loitering around the Iron Mountain station, No. 5 watched several men board the train for Columbia to attend a Woodman of the World unveiling and picnic. They included Little, engineer at the saw mill, the send-in man at the planing mill, and "a young man who when working wears a leather cap, white shirt and gray pants; he works on the log train as a brakeman I believe." Van den Berg sat on the steps of the store and the hotel porch all morning without hearing anything worth relating. He continued in much the same vein:

I then walked past the barbershop down the side-walk until I arrived at the North-east section of the town, turning down the first street

¹⁷ Operative's Report to the Industrial Lumber Company, May 1, 1911, No. 3660, Box 31, File 644, LCLC Records, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM. The operative may have been L. T. Mabry, 42 years old in 1912, a millwright and later a detective with the McCain agency of Dallas, Texas, and the Burns agency of Chicago. Working undercover to observe the BTW in the spring of 1911, he joined the union about June 1, 1911, and successively became a union organizer, State Organizer for Texas, doorman at the May 1912 convention of the BTW, and witness in the murder trial of A. L. Emerson and other union leaders at Lake Charles, Louisiana, in the fall of 1912. See "Detective Put on Stand," the New Orleans Times-Democrat, Friday, October 25, 1912.

to the right past house #84. This yard was in a very filthy and bad condition, having paper and tin cans all about it. It looked as if the people living in it had never cleaned the yard and had just thrown empty cans and paper out of any window or door into the yard. Walking to the next corner I turned to my left to the next street, going back to the church, and arriving there turned to my right, passing the school-house. The door was wide open. This was the last house on the street but I followed the dirt road until I arrived at what seemed to me to be the public road. Taking the left hand side I crossed to the St. L.I.M.& S.R.R. track, arriving in the negro quarters; passing through them in a Northwesterly direction brought me to the new pond where the boys generally swim. I noticed Claude Cane and the boy who got discharged Thursday at the planer, swimming. I sat down on the watergate watching them and hoping to hear some news. About ten minutes after my arrival a man wearing a black alpine felt hat with small black cross lined shirt, wearing a collar and pink tie, which was badly torn and tied, dark, small in build, about 5' 5", has dark hair and shallow [sic] features, stood next to me a few minutes then he remarked about the hot weather and speaking a few words regarding the boys swimming. He then said it was hot and said he would go home again. I said I was tired and would sit in the shade. We walked back towards town a few hundred yards sitting at the bottom of the hill on a log. I asked him if he was working at the mill and he stated he got fired the other day but did not know why but got another job right close to home now. I suggested that it might have been due to the union as I had heard about several men being let out on that account. He stated that "We," his family I suppose, "Run a hotel at Olla and a couple of union men were stopping there." That the capitalists had been running things long enough and it was about time for the laborers to do something and 65% of the saw mill men were now members of the I.W.W. and that Rochelle would soon be black-balled. That trainmen and locomotive engineers were all members of the I.W.W. That Buchanan had some lumber in New Orleans now and he had gotten word to send down some scabs to unload the cars as the men would not unload them. That I should have been at the meeting last night at Olla and should come down; there would be another one to-night. Inquiring where the meetings were held and professing a belief in unions [sic: grammar], he told me that they hold them any time and that they were held in the woods or any old place. I asked him if they had many members and he again repeated that 65% belonged to it; that he did not himself but that a number of Olla and Standard men belonged to it. Things took a bright outlook for me and I was about to make a date with him when Mr. Warren came along; we had stopped talking on seeing him approach. Mr. Warren on coming up opened his shirt and pulled a fine looking blue steel gun out, pointing it at both of us. I stepped over to one side to see who he meant it for but

he was not long in telling us. [H]e said to this man I had been speaking to, "You got settled with the other day and you have no business here; now you get out of town at once and leave our labor alone." This man certainly was frightened. He threw up his hands and said, "Yes sir, yes sir, I'll go, come along and you will see me go to the railroad track right away." He did leave in a hurry, looking back at the gun a couple of times. Mr. Warren walked back toward the pone. Claude Baker and those boys who had been swimming had come up and saw the whole thing. Mr. Warren only went a little ways and came back, following us closely. I stopped to speak with him and told him he had frightened me by pointing the gun towards me. I asked who the man was and he said he worked here but got in the union and was fired. He asked what the man had said and I told him we had just met and were talking about the weather. He told me I had better stay out of it and not have anything to do with those union men as it would hurt me.

I went to the hotel at 4:40 P.M. When I arrived there and while sitting on the porch I noticed Mr. Warren speaking to Mr. Collins a little later. Mr. Collins came up to the hotel and had supper with us and after supper nodded for me to come with him and after arriving at the gate said, "You and Warren had a run in did you?" I told him not that I knew of but gave him the particulars about Mr. Warren's arrival and behavior. He asked me if I was in with this man. I stated that I had met him at the water gate and that we had spoken of the weather when Mr. Warren came along and interrupted us. He said that was one of the agitators and they advocate burning down mills, etc., and for me to have nothing to do with them. I later heard Mr. Collins make a little speech to a number of men at the railroad track about promotion of employes. I did not go to Olla as I was afraid to attract suspicion of Messrs. Warren and Collins, who were keeping an eye on me, but went to church.

After leaving the church, van den Berg returned to the hotel. He spoke in German to Steik, the extra sawyer, who was sitting on the porch. Steik said he was considering "going away next Saturday to Natalbany or New Orleans, but for me not to say anything about it." No. 5 retired at 10:15 p.m.¹⁸

¹⁸ #5 Reports: Standard, La., Sunday, June 4, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 31, File 672, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM.

APPENDIX 11: No Lodge Hall for the Prince Hall Masons

For the past year our negroes have been joining various lodges at Columbia and Copenhagen [Louisiana]. I have carefully investigated this lodge movement and are now convinced that their joining the K. P. and other lodges has no connection with any labor movement. We have about 35 or 40 members of the K. P. Negro Lodge here at Clarks who belong to the Columbia Lodge and applications which will run up the membership to about 50. We are going to build the negroes a church and there has been some talk of their want[ing] a lodge here at Clarks. It occurred to me that if we should build a second story to the church and let them use it as a lodge hall and rent it to them that it might be better to do so rather than encourage them to join lodges in neighboring towns like Columbia and Copenhagen. There is no question but what they will join some kind of lodge and if they are encouraged to stay at home it will be better for us, but on the other hand I have been wondering what effect it might have if they were organized in a lodge should a labor organizer undertake to work thru them as lodge members. I write you to ascertain if you have had any experience or have learned the results of these negro lodges among the sawmills. I am inclined to favor the plan but do not want it to make us any trouble later on, hence my reason for writing you fully about the matter.

Warren had his mind made up on the subject of a Negro lodge hall in his town, pointing out that the 4 L Company always discouraged Negro employees who expressed an interest in joining lodges, social or eleemosynary. "I don't know what good it would do to us, or even to them, to have these lodges," he complained. "For our part, we have given them a combination church and schoolhouse for those who are religiously inclined, and there is a shack for the use of those inclined to gamble." At Fisher, Louisiana, there was never any middle ground between sin and virtue, and, for Negroes at least, no effort to distinguish between the two. Slagle, never very sure of his principles without the moral support of his peers, quickly changed his mind about a lodge hall for Negroes:

Since writing you I have given this matter considerable thought and have about come to the conclusion that we do not want a negro lodge here at Clarks, not but what it would be better to have our men attend those

meetings here at Clarks than at Columbia or elsewhere, but because if the lodge is organized here at Clarks a majority of the negroes will want to join, which will make a very strong lodge organization here in our midst and it may be something we do not want later on. When the matter was first brought to my attention and was favored by some of those in authority, it impressed me that it might be best to have the men attend their lodges here at Clarks rather than elsewhere, but there is another side to the situation that makes it objectionable and for the present anyway, we will not give them lodge quarters.

Nevertheless, Slagle did not outright refuse to add a story to the new church building for a lodge hall for Negroes. He spoke to Alex Hamilton, superintendent at Clarks, about the matter, and on a trip to Beaumont for a meeting of the SLOA, Hamilton discussed the idea with several lumbermen. All except S. T. Woodring of the Calcasieu Long Leaf Lumber Company in Lake Charles and Warren of the Louisiana Long Leaf Lumber Company at Fisher and Victoria had lodge halls for Negroes. Only Warren spoke against the lodge halls on principle, because Woodring had no hall because the company did not own the town of Lake Charles, where such facilities had been otherwise provided. The manager of Carson backed up the complaint voiced by Warren, however, pointing out that meetings of the labor organizer and Carson's Negro employees had been held in the lodge hall there. The managers at DeRidder, Bonami, Fullerton, Zwolle, Pickering, and Elizabeth favored lodge halls. Their testimony, Hamilton said, "confirms the idea that I have always had that it would be a good thing for our colored employees.... [who] are Church men and Lodge men, and I believe that we could handle them to better advantage right here in town." A month later, to prepare Slagle for a meeting of the LCLC board of directors in Kansas City, Hamilton repeated his appeal for "adding a story to the colored Baptist Church, for the use of the colored Lodges."

It would cost less now than later, he said, "on account of the fact that we are going to build the Church anyway." He added that "enough bodies will use the Hall to insure an adequate return on the investment, with all depreciation charges added." But far more important were the cultural advantages:

I find that our best and most faithful and competent colored employees are, almost without exception, Lodge men as well as Church members, and I think that membership in Lodges should be encouraged, as tending to lead the colored men away from other means of spending their time, such as gambling.

So the matter was finally dropped, and the Negro Baptist Church rose no higher than a single story.¹⁹

APPENDIX 12: SLOA General Meeting, 1911

In Chicago on August 16, 1911, C. D. Johnson, president of the SLOA called the general meeting of the association to order, and asked for a roll call.

"The following were present:

O. O. Axley	Southern Lumber Co.	Warren, Ark.
J. T. Burlingame	(E. W. Gates Lbr. Co.	Yellow Pine, Ala.
	(S. H. Bolinger Lbr. Co.	
Geo. H. Boyd	Germain & Boyd Lbr. Co.	Atlanta, La.
John H. Baber	Tyler County Lbr. Co.	Warren, Tex.
B. F. Bonner	Kirby Lumber Co.	Houston, Tex.
W. N. Bemis	Ozan Lumber Co.	Prescott, Ark.
Horace Bemis	"	"
W. C. Bowman	Bowman Hicks Lumber Co.	Kansas City, Mo.
C. A. Buchner	Freeman Smith Lbr. Co.	Millville, Ark.

¹⁹ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, April 11 and 14, 1911; Alex Hamilton, Clarks, Louisiana, to Slagle, May 1 and June 1, 1911, No. 3660, Box 31, Files 644 and 671, LCLC Records, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM; Warren to Slagle, April 12, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

S. H. Chatten	(S. H. Chatten Lbr. Co. (Southern Lbr. Co.	Kansas City, Mo.
S. J. Carpenter	Tremont Lumber Co.	Myrtis, La.
R. H. Downman	Bowie Lbr. Co. & Others	Winnfield, La.
E. A. Emery	Bentley & Emery	New Orleans, La.
J. W. Embree	Richton Lumber Co.	Richton, Miss.
J. W. Ferguson	Sabine Lumber Co.	Richton, Miss.
M. L. Fleishel	Gulf Lumber Co.	StLouis, Mo.
S. H. Fullerton	Chicago Lbr. & Coal Co.	Fullerton, La.
E. A. Frost	Frost Johnson Lbr. Co.	StLouis, Mo.
J. S. Foley	Brooks Scanlon Co.	Shreveport, La.
I. H. Fetty	Central Coal & Coke Co.	Kentwood, La.
H. H. Foster	Wis. & Ark. Lbr. Co.	Kansas City, Mo.
G. W. B. Gallogher	McClure Lumber Co.	Malvern, Ark.
L. D. Gilbert	(Sou. Pine Lbr. Co. (Temple Lumber Co.	Wagar, Ala.
R. M. Hallowell	Industrial Lumber Co.	Diboll, Tex.
L. F. Haslam	W. R. Pickering Lbr. Co.	Pineland, Tex.
J. W. Hobbs	(Thompson & Tucker L. Co. (Thompson Bros. L. Co. (Thompson Bros. Lbr. Co.	Elizabeth, La.
C. D. Johnson	Frost Johnson Lbr. Co.	Pickering, La.
John H. Kirby	Kirby Lumber Co.	N[ew] Willard, Tex.
J. F. Keith	Keith Lumber Co.	Doucette, Tex.
N. R. Loranger	Genesee Lumber Co.	Trinity, Tex.
J. H. Morrison	Central Coal & Coke Co.	StLouis, Mo.
L. Miller	Miller Link Lumber Co.	Houston, Tex.
W. T. Murray	Fordyce Lumber Co.	Beaumont, Tex.
A. L. Mitchell	Ingram Day Lumber Co.	Genesee, La.
C. M. McDaris	A. J. Neimeyer Lbr. Co.	Carson, La.
C. J. Mansfield	Arkansas Lumber Co.	Orange, Tex.
F. R. Pierce	Louis Werner S.M. Co.	Fordyce, Ark.
E. S. Peck	J.J. Newman Lumber Co.	Lyman, Miss.
A. J. Peavy	Peavy Byrnes Lbr. Co.	Little Rock, Ark.
J. W. Reynolds	(Big Pine Lbr. Co. (Thompson & Ford Lbr. Co.	Warren, Ark.
A. C. Ramsey	Graysonia Nashville Lbr. Co.	StLouis, Mo.
H. R. Swartz	Col. Lbr. & Tbr. Co.	Hattiesburg, Miss.
C. E. Slagle	La. Central Lbr. Co.	Shreveport, La.
C. B. Sweet	Long Bell Lbr. Co.	Colfax, La.
Cash Smith	Ocmulgee River Lbr. Co.	Grayburg, Tex.
H. E. Welch	(Lathrop Lumber Co. (Lathrop Hatten Lbr. Co.	Nashville, Ark.
Peter Vredenburgh, Jr.	Vredenburgh Sawmill Co.	StLouis, Mo.
		Clarks, La.
		Kansas City, Mo.
		Lumber City, Ga.
		Lathrop, Ala.
		Pine Hill, Ala.

T. T. Walker	Fourche River Lbr. Co.	Chicago, Ill.
Eli Weiner	Angelina County Lbr. Co.	Keltys, Tex.
J. B. White	Mo. Lbr. & Land Ex. Co.	Kansas City, Mo.
	Mo. Lbr. & Mining Co.	West Eminence, Mo.
	La. Long Leaf L. Co.	Fisher, La.
Geo. K. Smith	Treasurer, SLOA	StLouis, Mo.
Oliver O. Bright	Secretary, SLOA	StLouis, Mo.

Mr. John H. Kirby was asked to review the situation as it now stands, he having spent considerable time in and around the infected district. He gave a synopsis of a talk made by him on August 1st at DeRidder, La. and impressed upon those present the necessity of adopting measures that would forever discourage future attempts on the part of the leaders of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers to unionize sawmill labor.

Messrs. J. B. White, C. B. Sweet, S. H. Fullerton, I. H. Fetty, H. H. Foster, H. R. Loranger, M. L. Fleishel, L. Miller and others, also spoke of the seriousness of this movement and urged that definite action be taken at once.

A motion was made and carried, at 1:30 P.M. that the meeting adjourn until 7 P.M. and allow the Executive Committee to bring in a report.

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The members of the Executive Committee, consisting of Messrs. C. D. Johnson, I. H. Fetty, C. B. Sweet, J. H. Kirby, and S. J. Carpenter, met with the members of the Louisiana Board of Governors, at 5:30 P.M. and prepared a series of resolutions for presentation to the adjourned meeting.

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The meeting was again called to order at 7 P.M. and the following resolutions, which had previously received the unanimous endorsement of the Executive Committee, were presented by Mr. John H. Kirby, and after a thorough discussion, were adopted unanimously:

WHEREAS, the promoters of the organization known as the Brotherhood of Timber Workers are concentrating their efforts in Western Louisiana, where such organization was conceived and started in the endeavor to take the management of the sawmills of that district out of the hands of the owners and of capable men, responsible to the owner, and

WHEREAS, the President and other officers of said Brotherhood advertise their intention and purpose to continue such efforts even over the protest of the wage-earners engaged in and about said milling plants, and

WHEREAS, the success of said President and his associates can have but one result, viz., to destroy the lumber industry with consequent wanton waste of the capital invested in the sawmills and logging plants, bringing idleness and resultant [sic] hardships and suffering to thousands

of freemen and their families, now engaged in or dependent upon such lumber industry, and

WHEREAS, the protection of the thousands who are engaged in said lumber business and earning a livelihood [sic] from their daily toil therein, make it imperative that every lawful means be employed to check the activities of the agitators who daily nag at and annoy the employees of milling plants in said district, and

WHEREAS, said agitators announce that so long as said mills operate such agitation and annoyance will continue,

THEREFORE, Be It Resolved by the Southern Lumber Operators' Association that certain sawmills and logging plants in said Western Louisiana and in Eastern Texas, some of which are already closed by strikes fomented by said Brotherhood of Timber Workers, and others, of which are threatened by them, be closed, Saturday, August 19th, 1911, and be kept closed until in the opinion of the Executive Committee such mills may resume operations without the aid of any member of or any sympathizer with said Brotherhood. The milling plants embraced in this resolution are as follows:

Longville Lumber Co.	Longville, La.
Central Coal & Coke Co.	Carson, La.
King Ryder Lbr. Co.	Bonami, La.
Hudson River Lbr. Co.	DeRidder, La.
Central Coal & Coke Co.	Neame, La.
Pickering Lumber Co.	Pickering, La.
Gulf Lumber Co.	Stables, La.
Pickering Lumber Co.	Barham, La.
Louisiana L.L. Lbr. Co.	Fisher, La.
Bowman Hicks Lumber Co.	Loring, La.
Sabine Lumber Co.	Zwolle, La.
Frost Johnson Lbr. Co.	Noble, La.
Frost Johnson Lbr. Co.	Mansfield, La.
Pickering Lbr. Co.	Cravens, La.
Gulf Lumber Co.	Fullerton, La.
J. C. Hill Lumber Co.	Tillman, La.
Industrial Lumber Co.	Elizabeth, La.
"	Calcasieu, La.
"	Oakdale, La.
Buckley Lumber Co.	Yelgar, La.
Kirby Lumber Co.	Rogen[ville], Tex.
"	Bronson, Tex.
Cole & Nichols	Longville, La.

Considering that a number of mills in Southwestern Louisiana will discontinue operations indefinitely after Saturday, August 19th, and will be re-imbursed in accordance with the provisions of the constitution, the

Executive Committee authorized an assessment of twenty five cents per thousand for the Benefit Trust Fund on the log scale production of July, and this action was unanimously ratified by all present.²⁰

APPENDIX 13: SLOA Reaction to Union "Infection"

W. W. Warren to J. B. White, August 1911:

Organizers are stopping here every few days - they only stay a little while, but I think they usually get a few names. I think about the best thing that has happened in this Parish was the shooting up of the Zwolle negor [sic] quarters at their logging camp, for the authorities were successful in capturing almost all of the participants, and the U. S. Marshall [sic] took them to Shreveport on Monday, and if the Federal Court will give them all that is coming to them we won't be apt to have any race trouble again soon. We broke it up in our Fisher logging camp last year by having seven or eight men arrested, but a sympathizing Grand Jury held the matter in abeyance and did not make a report one way or the other, but several of the parties were in jail quite a while before Court set [sic].

Mr. Slagle should be watching very carefully at his mills, and not rely at all on the laboring class of his men being opposed to the union, because the experience of every one in this part of the State has been that such reliance proved deceptive. I think that so far the majority of the joiners here are among the men and boys. We have I am sure absolute support in every foreman from section boss up.

The question of what we will do with our loyal men will likely arise, and I will be glad to know your opinion. Personally, I believe we ought to take care of them.

Warren enclosed a copy of his letter to Captain White to his father in law in Bozeman, Montana. Hundreds of men were out of work to the south, he said, and although Zwolle had its mills running still some 40 to 50 men were out on strike. All of the men who

²⁰ "Minutes of General Meeting of the Southern Lumber Operators' Association, Blackstone Hotel, Chicago, Illinois, August 16, 1911," LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 688, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM; copy in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

shot into the homes of Negro families in the mill village at Zwolle recently were union men, he charged. At Loring, south of Zwolle, Bowman Hicks Lumber Company had closed its mill because of a continuing strike at its logging camp. "These organizers are pretty hard cases, and they are following the business because they can't get work, and they manage to pick up a few dollars every day by going to new fields." A few dollars, of course, far exceeded the standard wage of \$1.50 a day such men could expect from work in the saw mills and logging woods.²¹

O. W. Fisher answered on August 23, 1911 from "Seattle, USA," home of the Fisher Flour Mills Company, "Domestic and Export Millers." Fisher was president of the company, Captain White the vice president, and two of Fisher's sons the other company officers. The elder Fisher agreed with the lockout:

Your letter of the 17th with copy of letter to Mr. White, just received, and I am very sorry indeed that things have come to be so serious in regard to the labor situation, but I heartily approve of the method in which they are handling it. I think the only way is for all the mills to stand firm, and I do not think there is any question about the results. Of course, not being on the ground, I have no suggestions to make, for I know that you are doing everything you can to bring matters to an amicable settlement and I hope the other mills are doing likewise.

I am pleased to note that they got the fellows that did the shooting in the camp at Zoolee [sic] - they got to be a nuisance, white scalawags shooting down niggers.

I have just received a letter from Mr. White in which he says he attended a meeting at Chicago and it seems that about 90% of the lumber manufacturers were present at the meeting. It looks like they are pretty firm and I hope they will stay in the same mode until the thing is wound up.

²¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, August 17, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 688, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM; copy in Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection; Warren to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

I note from Mr. White's letter that Sam Parks has joined in with the union element, also Lutchter and Moore. They will be very sorry before they get through with it - it will be impossible to handle niggers and white people in that way.²²

Captain White left Chicago for a vacation in Bemus Point, New York, but quickly advised Warren of the action of the SLOA in Chicago, where 90 to 100 mills were represented. Generally, the association agreed that the only way to defeat labor was to close the mills in the affected district. "Executive committee have ordered Fisher Plant shut down indefinitely next Monday along with twenty-one other mills. I believe it wise policy." White told the general manager to close the sawmill at Fisher but to run the planing mill and hardwood sawmill; he was to continue running at Victoria, as well. Later in the month, White would revise his instructions: close all mills but the planer; put up notices; no half measures. In Bozeman, Montana, the wheat season had just begun. Some farmers had begun threshing, expecting a bumper crop. O. W. Fisher found it next to impossible to get away for a trip to Louisiana during the labor troubles and turned to Warren for the direction of the Fisher interests there. Warren, learning of the SLOA's recommendations in Chicago, quickly let the elder Fisher know of the decision. "I think it is the proper thing to do," the president said. "I cant see what the

²² O. W. Fisher, Seattle, Washington, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 23, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA. This is a good example of a letter that O. W. Fisher dictated to a stenographer, easily distinguished by its standard grammar and spelling.

men Expect to Gain of Course the agitators and organisers are the only ones that are making any thing out of it."²³

On July 27, 1911, the Executive Committee met in the offices of C. B. Sweet in Kansas City, Missouri, to rescind the action taken in New Orleans earlier in the month closing several Louisiana mills. In place of the stringent closure orders, the SLOA send out a letter "to all infected mills." SLOA Executive Committee members Sweet, Kirby, and Carpenter attended, along with Pickering, Hollowell, Fleishel, and Fetty, all of whom "concurred in the new arrangement." Since all of the managers of the affected mills were present and agreed to the new plan, they would quickly post a letter to all employees in their mills and require them to sign an anti-union statement or face discharge from their jobs. Furthermore:

The Executive Committee urges you to consider this plan with care and it is believed it would be beneficial for all mills, whether infected or not, to post the letter in their mills, and require the signature of their employes to the "statement", just as the infected mills are requested to do. This is only a recommendation of the Executive Committee for your consideration, but they are unanimous in the belief that action on your part on it will be beneficial without waiting the actual spread of the infection to your plant.

The plan called for using the two letters together, posted in the mills, along with a supply of statements for employees to sign, which would be filed with the company and the SLOA:

(Letter to be addressed to employes and posted in mills.)
TO ALL EMPLOYES:

²³ J. B. White, Bemus Point, New York, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 17, 1911, Box 8976-84; O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, to Warren, August 18, 1911, Box 89, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

We are in receipt of the following communication from the Executive Committee of the Southern Lumber Operators' Association, of which Association this Company is a member:

StLouis, Mo., July 28th, 1911

(Name)

Gentlemen:

The Executive Committee of the Southern Lumber Operators' Association is fully aware of your attitude toward the brotherhood of Timber Workers, an organization now being promoted in southern mills.

We have made careful investigation of this matter and have information which we assure you is reliable that there are contributing members of the proposed union in your employ.

We beg to request that you carefully investigate, and take the necessary steps to assure us that your employes are not in sympathy with the proposed union, or that in lieu thereof, you close down your plant indefinitely, beginning the seventh day of August 1911.

Yours truly,

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

We cannot believe that it is the wish of our men to encourage the proposed Brotherhood of Timber Workers, the ultimate effect of which will necessarily injure the men engaged, and seriously affect the industry itself.

We do not believe that the information reaching the Executive Committee, touching our employes, is reliable, and we ask your co-operation in assuring the Southern Lumber Operators' Association that the proposed union is receiving no encouragement at this plant.

You are aware that we are unalterably opposed to this union, both upon your account and our own, and that we shall not employ about this plant any members of the proposed Brotherhood.

In order that our mill may not close down in accordance with the direction of the Executive Committee, whose letter we quote, we ask you to aid us in continuing operations by signing a statement which will be presented to you to the effect that your are not members of the Brotherhood, and do not propose to become such, or contribute thereto.

The signatures of those signing such paper will be accepted, we think, by the Executive Committee, in good faith. Those who do not sign will be presumed to be members of the Brotherhood, and they can call at the office and get their pay.

Yours truly,

(To be signed by the company.)

I _____, in consideration of
_____ furnishing me employment,

state that I am not at this time identified in any way whatsoever with any labor organization, and further that I will not interest myself in, nor lend any encouragement to, nor become identified with any organization of labor during the time I am employed by the above mentioned Company.

Signed _____

Witness _____

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At the Sabine Lumber Company at Zwolle, Louisiana, a railroad town, in the late summer of 1911, lumbermen could feel the tension:

The labor situation at Zwolle is bad. The Union men have the sympathy of lots of merchants, farmers, all kinds of laborers and some officers, and I believe have more members in other lines than from our crews. I believe it will come to shutting down the sawmill soon, but we may be able to ship what we have in stock and orders along. Are running mill cutting to special stock to fill orders as much as can so as to be ready when it comes to a shut-down.

It doesn't seem to me that the mills are showing any firmness. If they don't shut down [an unnamed mill], they will beat us just as sure as the world. You can't imagine the reports we hear down here. They had it that Carson had started up with Union men. That the mills ordered closed down reconsidered and decided to run with Union men.

Every bawk [sic] the Operators' Association makes adds strength to the Union and they are now stronger by 200 percent than ten days ago. More- They threaten our negroes every way and it is a question of time until some break is made at negroes and then they will quit. Are keeping guards in quarters now to assure ngeroes [sic] of protection. Would have been down and out now if I hadn't stayed there and assured negroes. The tension is high.²⁵

Willard Warren at Fisher, Louisiana, to his friend Clarence Slagle on August 4, 1911:

I have yours of the 2nd. Mr. John Henry Kirby spoke to the laboring men at De Ridder last Tuesday. One day I think things are better

²⁴ Oliver O. Bright, St. Louis, Missouri, To Those Interested, July 24, 1911; Bright to All Members, July 28, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

²⁵ C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, to Manufacturers of Yellow Pine, August 3, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

and the next day I think they are worse,- something like having every other day chills. There is a regular union strike at Zwolle at the present time. They discharged about twenty-five men and the balance of the union crew walked out. They are running their mill four days per week, however, and I believe they will get straightened out all right. The Loring mill is shut down because of a strike in their logging camp. I understand that all of their men, with the exception of one, walked out. It seems that they had only seven or eight union men at the camp, but sympathizers struck when the union men were discharged.

I don't think that right at this time very much attention is being paid your part of the country by the organizers. They are looking after the K. C. S., Santa Fe. and the lower end of the Iron Mountain, but if they don't get whipped out pretty soon down below here, they will be over your way, making more noise than ever.²⁶

Kirby had indeed addressed the working man in DeRidder on August 1, 1911, in a well orchestrated appearance on the "upper gallery of the hotel." The Prince of Pines had chartered a special train, gave his own workers the day off to attend, and even hired a marching band in Beaumont. Kirby spoke to about 4,000 people on the main street of DeRidder, most of whom had been lured there with the promise of a free barbecue. In apparent fear for his life, the Texas surrounded himself with armed guards and kept well away from the crowd. When the lumberman finished talking, his hired band, still expecting to be paid for their work, kept up a noisy rendition of currently fashionable music, drowning out A. L. Emerson who took advantage of the crowd to try to speak about the BTW. Finding that he could not overcome the noise of the band, the labor

²⁶ Oliver O. Bright, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, SLOA, August 3, 1911; M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 4, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; Bright to All Members, SLOA, August 3, 1911; Fleishel wire to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, August 4, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 686, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM.

leader led a rump group to the local ball park where he spoke in relative calm. Then the crowds dispersed and the antagonists parted, each having proclaimed a victory.²⁷

APPENDIX 14: Identifying Union "Infection"

In Houston, Texas, Frank Bonner, in the absence of John Henry Kirby, expressed Kay Ell's appreciation for Warren's closing the 4 L Company mills:

We have nothing especially new to report in East Texas. The organizers have made very little progress so far, but they are very busy and are putting forth special efforts in that territory.

The only report we have to-day is of the effort on the part of two organizers at our Silsbee front yesterday and last night. They were run out by the woods crew and have not been heard from since.

I rather think the closing down of two of our mills - Bronson and Roganville - will have a very wholesome effect. Although we had no signs of union men, or organizers, at Bronson during the past two months, there were three organizers in the neighborhood of Roganville and we considered that it would probably be well to close those two plants. They will remain closed under the direction of the Executive Committee.

Reports from East Texas to-day are very encouraging. Our Mr. [C. P.] Myer, Manager Mills and Logging, who is now out among the mills, phones me that reports from all plants to-day are very encouraging.²⁸

²⁷ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to Managers, All Points and Superintendent, Camps, July 29, 1911, sent free tickets for excursion train to DeRidder, Louisiana, for any employee who wanted to hear John Henry Kirby speak on the labor question, Box 196, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA; W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, August 4, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 686, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM; Morgan, "Kirby," pp. 198-199; Fickle, "Race, Class," p. 104; McWhiney, "Louisiana Socialists," p. 46; Haywood, "Timber Workers and Timber Wolves," p. 107.

²⁸ B. F. Bonner, Houston, Texas, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, August 22, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

The SLOA met in St. Louis, Missouri, in general session on October 20, 1911, with C. D. Johnson in the chair and 40 members present. M. L. Alexander reported on the status of the BTW:

We have made investigations in Louisiana, East Texas, Arkansas and Mississippi and are now making re-investigations in Louisiana and East Texas, keeping particularly in touch with the situations at Leesville, DeRidder, Oakdale, Pollock and Merryville, and from the general information received we are led to believe that, whereas the union organization is fighting hard for recognition and whereas in many points they still have a great many sympathizers, they are not making any perceptible headway, in fact, we take it that they are losing ground more rapidly than they are gaining. The situation at Pollock is the best illustration of this; the organization had gained considerable strength at that point, with a membership of something like 250 or 300, with practically the entire citizenship of the town in sympathy with them, and still the mill has started with imported labor and a non-union crew and no clash or disorder of any sort has resulted and the men at that point openly admit their defeat.

At Leesville and DeRidder the spirit of unionism is still apparently very much alive and recent meetings held in that vicinity have demonstrated that they still have a great deal of strength at those points, but as these are towns of some considerable size and as much outside material has been used in the general make-up of the organization, such as farmers, merchants, small store and restaurant keepers, the falling-off is not as perceptible as at other strong-holds where the material was largely of sawmill employees. This same condition would apply to a considerable extent at Oakdale, which also appears to have been one of the storm centers, but, from recent reports has quieted down very much.

Recently a barbecue was held at a point off the Kansas City Southern, near Leesville; the chief speakers being Emmerson and Fussell: about two thousand people are reported to have been in attendance and about two hundred applications for membership taken that day. Another big meeting is to be held in the same territory on the 29th.

A recent report from Kirbyville, Texas states that many attempts are being made to break into the Kirby mills as they appear to feel that if they can get a good hold on one of the Kirby plants it will be a great victory for them.

At Neame, Loring, Longville, Mansfield, Elizabeth, Fullerton, Fisher and Pickering the conditions appear practically unchanged and well under control.

At Zwolle much union spirit is still in evidence.

The situation on the Iron Mountain Railroad is apparently most encouraging, with very little, if any, spread.

At Urania Mr. Hardtner seems to think that the union is entirely demoralized and that in the very near future there will be very little evidence of it in his vicinity.

We have no recent reports from the L & A Railroad of the Buchanan mills.

The last reports from Jonesboro were most encouraging: we had been led to believe by previous reports that if an organizer went to Jonesboro he would clean up everything in sight but when the organizer did arrive he met with little or no success.

Our investigation so far in Arkansas would indicate that there has been practically no organization as yet perfected in that state. It has been reported that considerable activity was evidenced from Malvern South on the Missouri Pacific Railroad and that a grand lodge was to be instituted in Malvern, but so far this has not been verified.

In Mississippi there appears to be some attempt at organization in the Eastern part of the state, with not much success so far. It is reported from headquarters [of the BTW] that the general campaign which is to be made in Mississippi and Arkansas, will not take place until about the first of the year, at which time Emmerson, Fussell and Smith will personally take the field. Advance agents, however, will be sent out to enlist the general feeling among the mill employees and for a test of conditions in those states and to ascertain the best points for attack.

We are pleased to advise that the Crowell-Spencer Lumber Company at Long Leaf, La., have decided to become members of the Association.

Our records are still very incomplete, as a great many of the mills have so far failed to respond to our request to send in their information.

It is hard to give you a clear insight of true summary of the situation but we feel justified in saying that up to the present time the situation is encouraging for the ultimate overthrow of the movement to organize sawmill labor in this territory: it is going to take time, however, and absolute co-operation on your part and a greater amount of co-operation than we are at present receiving from the territory east of the River as that appears to be the next Point of attack.

The SLOA Benefit Trust Fund had paid \$11,000.00 for July and \$39,000.00 for August, 1911, to mills shut down by association order. The treasurer estimated the cost to the Benefit Trust Fund for September would be \$75,000.00, for a total of \$125,000.00 in benefits alone. The association's bank balance was \$55,000.00 in the Benefit Trust

Fund, and assessments on August production had been paid by all except 16 member companies, from which the treasurer expected payments before the end of October. At the end of a general discussion of association business, W. W. Warren moved and Herman Rock seconded a resolution to maintain the policies of the Executive Committee and to limit assessments for any month to 50 cents per Mbf log scale. On a roll call vote every member present voted to pass the resolution.²⁹

C. P. Myer of Kay Ell had also acquired a list of officers, organizers, and members of the BTW in East Texas, which he circulated to all of the managers and superintendents of the company:

BROTHERHOOD OF TIMBER WORKERS.³⁰

A. L. Emerson, Pres.

Jay Smith, Secy-Treas.

ORGANIZERS

Bean, Ed.
Browning, Edw. D., Preacher
Wright, Ed.
Chisholm
Cunningham
Daniels, Joe
Harris, A. D.
Paumburr, Shorty
Merriwether
Worley

Humble, T. J.
Duke, R. R.
Thompkins, W. C.
Ford, W. R.
Greer, W. F.
Harrell, E. T.
Fussell [W. A., W. D., Ed.?]
Welch, Insurance Agent
O'Connor
Turner, Ira

²⁹ Minutes of the General Meeting of the Southern Lumber Operators' Association held at St. Louis, Missouri, on October 20, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, File 702, WHMC, UM.

³⁰ C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to Managers, All Points, and Superintendents, Camps 1, 3, 5, and 8, October 23, 1911, with attached membership lists of Brotherhood of Timber Workers in East Texas by town and alphabetically, Box 196, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

Jones
Wharton
Wiggins
Lindsey
White, S. W.
Droddy
Hamilton, W. B.
Smalley
Singletary, W. M., Sec'y Oakdale
Poimbouf
New, Geo.
Whaitehead
Roshto, T.
Sales, F.
Scroggins, P. H.

Strahan or Stratton
Cherry, Jno.
Tate, Campbellite Preacher
Lemley
Parker, Geo.
Dias, Ed.
Davis, Will.
Purcwell

Dismute [Dismukes?]
Ellis
Springfield, J. H.
Strahan, H. V.
Cox, J. R.
Wright, Ed. [scratched out]

CALL FRONT

Goyer, Joe
Brown
O'Brien

Hamlet, Jno.
Burch, Claude
Crews, S.

Thompson, Frank
Sepeda, M.

BESSMAY, TEXAS

Spaires, J. K.
Moore

Stevens, J. A.
Scroggins, P. H.

Smith, H. A.

BON WEIR, TEXAS

Craig, Dock
Stark, A. L.
Stark, Tom
Craig, Joe

McCane
Ennis, Joe
Green, Will
Stark, Geo.

Davis, Will
Davis, Lee
Stark, Thomas

ORANGE, TEXAS

Gidrey, V. [Guidry]
McDaniel, Alec
Pummer, H.
Abernett, Jno.
Love, Jno.
McKinley, Jno.
Douglas, Jno. Pres.
London, S. H.

Taylor, Jno.
Willis, A. W.
McDaniel, A. M.
Stinnet, Jno.
Wilkes, F. L.
Davis, Will.
Sterling, Vice Pres.
Turl, S.

Gidrey, A. V.
Wright, J. S.
Plant, W. M.
Love, Will.
Wright, E. W.
Hobden, Sid Sec'y
Mentz, Treas.
Wilkes

Goodman	Wiley, Lee	Williams, J. W.
Martin, N.	Harrell, J. B.	Hadnot
Hinton	Franks, J.	Agon
Myers	Jones, O.	Plummer, Sam
Moore, Sam	Wyatt	Starks
Katz & Ford, Merchants, Sympathizers		
Snoddy, J. A.	"	
Flaviel, Bob	"	
Wilson, C.	"	
Pulvell	"	
Anderson, J.	"	
Baumgarten	"	

OAKDALE, LA.

Singletary, W. M. Secy	Mayhill, C. H.	Ray, J. M.
Oliver, J. E.	Barker, J. W.	Clark, J.
Salsby, J. D.	Martin, W. E.	Hackett, J. W.
Miller, L. H.	McCann, W. B.	Bond, M.
McFarland, T. P.	Seiler, J. W.	McBride, Will
Cole	Rasbury, E. H.	Johnson, L. L.
Bailey, Isaac	Perkins, A.	Welch, Andy
Connally, Jno.	Johnston, Rufus	Shather, Wm.
Johnson, Joe	Edrian, B. D.	Skinner, A. G.
Fortinett, G. F.	Meyers, B. C.	Berry, C.
Willis, W. B.	Polk, F. W.	Mayett, B. C.
Sealy, Jno. J.	Bond, R.	Odom, J. H.
Willis, Jas. W.		

ALDRIDGE, TEXAS

Fox, J. C.

SARATOGA, TEXAS

Smith, Harry

#2

DE RIDDER, LA.

Brown

Steidley, Jas. F.

LEES MILL, TEXAS

Hall Brothers

Smith, from De Ridder, La.

KIRBYVILLE, TEXAS

Bryant, W. M.	Huffman, Acy	Fawil
Herrin, O. E.	Brown	Shoats
Releford [Rutherford?]	LaFollette, W. S.	Lawhorne, A. R.
Sherreth	Bush, Geo.	Strathan or Stratton
Turner, Ira	Houwer, Hill	Welch, Mike
Titus	Coates, S. T.	

CALL, TEXAS

Rayburn, Shorty	Simmons	Baucum, W. A.
Dorman, Jess.	Waley, W. A.	Waley, A.

GRATIS, TEXAS

Baucum, W. SS.	Fredericks, W. B.
----------------	-------------------

BUNA, TEXAS

Wright, Dick	Farshee [Foshee?]
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SILSBEE, TEXAS

Oliver, B. B.	Pool, G. B.	McDonald, W. S.
Maddox, W.	Carroll, W. J.	Lee, E. F.
Morgan, J. N.	Burk, E. H.	Moye, Geo.
Miller, Sam	Dismute [Dismukes?]	

ROGANVILLE, TEXAS

Alford, E. C.	Adams, Add.	Davis, Jno.
Glenn, Jno.	Hamlet, J. A.	Harris, R. L.
Horn, Jeff.	Hadnot, Chas.	Herrington, J. M.
Ikner, F. K.	King, J. W.	Smith, W. H.
Kinnebrew, Wm.	McKinnon, Jno.	Morgan, A. M.
Priest, Sam	Priest, S. C.	Reidinger, B.
Redd, Geo.	Rymes, Arthur	Sparks, M. D.
Sheffield, Carl	Smith, Sampson	Sellers, Ben
Spikes, Hardy	Truett, R. E.	Whitton, Ed.
Westbrook, A. L.		

SARATOGA AND DEARBORN, TEXAS

Starling, J. W.
 Hunt, H. H.
 Cherry, Geo.
 Schatgivano, Tony
 Davis, Will

Starling, T. N.
 Cherry, Jno.
 Waldrip, Job
 Schatgivano, S.
 Holland, W. M.

Hunt, E. D.
 Cherry, M.
 Martin, Lonnie
 Waldrip, Mat.
 Green, J. W.

WARREN, TEXAS

Coggins, W. C.
 Williams of Kountze
 Williams, Frank "
 Williams, Bruce

Simmons, M.
 Cox, J. R.
 Ham, O.

Strahan, H. V.
 Williams, A. A.
 Ham

#3

LOGTOWN, TEXAS

Springfield, J. H.

Love, J. E.

Ennis, Thos.

NEWTON, TEXAS

Taylor, Jno.
 Walker, Albert
 Woods, Z. H.
 Ellis, T. J.
 Davis, J. W.
 Davis, J. W. [?]
 Heard
 Wright, Ed. A.

Smith, Frank
 Verd, Thos.
 Sterling, L.
 Woods, J.
 Jones, Ed.
 Holt, A. L.
 Woody, Lee
 Holt, S. T.

Jones, Jim
 Woody, M. L.
 Hall Bros.
 Spikes, Dan.
 Parker, A. L.
 Sells, A.
 Smith, Negro
 Adams, Geo.

EVADALE, TEXAS

Plake, J.H.

Blake

BEAUMONT, TEXAS

Ellis (Organizer)

Smith, Will.

KOUNTZE, TEXAS

Bolin, Ed.

BON WEIR, TEXAS

Hughes, Preston
 Busby, Sam

Starks, A. D.
 Busby, Sol.

Campbell
 Rash, Will.

Davis, H. A.
 Starks, Tom
 Hughes, Sam
 Davis, Lee
 Baty, Chas.
 Spikes, Dan. Negro
 Jones, Ed.
 Love, W. S.

Davis, Geo.
 Taylor, E.
 Mace, W.
 Truett, S.
 Britton
 Davias, Val Negro
 Love, A.
 Starks, Pode

Starks, Sam
 Davis, Sam
 Gilchrist, Jno.
 Jones, Will, Negro
 Parker, S. H.
 McCane, S.
 Parker, A. L.
 Fennin

ROMAYOR, TEXAS

Taylor, Ed.
 Eckels, J. S.

Smith, Willie

Rhodes, E. B.

DIBOLL, TEXAS

Dogess

BELGRADE, TEXAS

Singleton, A. Negro, Stephens, S.W. Negro, Brooks, Tillman Negro
 Singleton, H. E. " Bryant, Will " Brooks, Tom "
 Watkins, Henry " Price, Will " Samuels, Syner "
 Dr. Snyder Preacher Stephens Heron, A. J.
 Hall, Jno. Parker, Geo. Whitaker, Will

COW CREEK, TEXAS

Bean, Ed. Samuels, Phil Levias, Dutz.
 Snyder, Jarrett Snyder, Tom Cochran, Ed., Negro
 Davis, Will, Negro Samuels, Sam Negro Davis, Jno. "
 Samuels, Jas. Wingate, W. W. Pres. Farr, Richard Vice P
 Jenkins, O. J. Sec'y Samuel, Vance Batey, Tom.
 Jenkins, Steve Treas Leviour, Pain Leviour, Chas.
 Simpson, Sol. Leviour, Nelson Clarence, Tom
 Bean, W. R. Jenkikns, Cleve. Young, Green
 Jenkins, Banks Sanuels, Huffy Samuels, Early
 Hubbard, William Thompson, Clarence Samuels, Cebe

#4

PINELAND, TEXAS

Whitehead, Organizer

HUFF CITY, TEXAS

Jeter, James, Negro
 Jeter, Tom "
 Whitton, W. E. "
 Brown, Jno. "
 Bowie, J. M. "
 Fowler, S. E. "

Heron, Ira, Negro
 Jones, Tom "
 Jones, T. E. "
 Johnson, Thos "
 Smith, A. C. "
 Britton

White, Jack, Negro
 Swingler, W. S. "
 Brown, Ben "
 Simmons, Frank "
 Smith, W. "

REMLIG, TEXAS

Royer, N. A.
 Fagon, C.

Royer, R.
 Payne, Sam

Perry, W.
 Fox, E.

JASPER, TEXAS

Fagon, C.
 Chatman, C. W.
 Day, Lee
 Ham, S.
 Jolks (or Jocks) Nick

Payne, Sam
 Day, G. W.
 Smith, Alf.
 Wheat, A. G.
 Chandler

Fox, E.
 Day, L. E.
 Marks, R.
 Parsley, Frank.

APPLEMAN'S MILL (Silsbee), TEXAS

Oliver, B. B.
 Maddox, W.
 Morgan, J. N.

Poole, J. B.
 Carroll, W. J.
 Burt, E. H.

McDonald, W. F.
 Lee, E. S.
 Totty, L. P.

SILSBEE FRONT, TEXAS

Cunningham, Cut.
 Moss, Henry
 Louis, Lige
 Gore, Andrew
 Gore, May

Cunningham, W. W.
 Moss, Jack
 Gore, Ike
 Gore, Cook

Moss, Jesse
 Spurlock, V.
 Gore, Bill
 Sapp, M.

SILSBEE, TEXAS (Tie Dept. Strikers)

Ramsey, Pete
 Griffin, I.
 Reed, Jno.
 Brown, Jake
 Wesson, Sam

Blair, Frank
 Mays, Will
 Wilburn, L. D.
 Bailey, S. C.
 Robinson, Jim

Lewis, Luke
 Deary, Mon.
 Washington, Dan.
 Phillips, Davis

VOTAW, TEXAS

Collins, Clint
 Collins, Tom Bailey
 Haney, Jno.
 McMellan, Robt.

Collins, M. E.
 Collins, Bruce
 Lott
 Spears, R.

Edwards, M. E.
 Edwards, M. E.
 McMellan, Jno.

At the same time, the Louisiana Board of Governors had made a list of known members of the BTW and had passed it out to members of the SLOA as a quick reference. The list was admittedly incomplete and was not designed to take the place of the black list that M. L. Alexander was compiling in the "clearing house." Willard Warren got a copy of the list for the 4 L Company and apparently used it extensively to check on names of men applying to him for jobs in his mills; it was dog-eared and had been briefly annotated:

No. 1

BLUET, LA.

M. V. Perkins
 Jas. Ashworth
 H. C. Craig
 C. Mathon
 John Gibson
 Elza Sweet
 Shelby Ashworth
 T. L. Smith
 Henry Ashworth

E. H. Hatchman
 H. P. Jones
 G. Y. Neal
 Ed Perkins
 O. N. Ashworth
 R. H. Simmons
 Casey Perkins
 M. V. Perkins
 R. D. Hudson

GRACE, LA.

D. P. Jones
 Gus L Neal
 M. A. Nelson

W. L. Johnson
 C. D. Crowell
 C. B. Coswell

H. B. Killen
 Jack Smith
 A. C. Cupples
 W. H. Robert
 S. P. Cole
 J. Harville
 T. M. Cupples
 S. J. Leubert
 Ed Robert
 J. F. Riley
 B. F. Crocker
 I. J. Cupples
 R. D. Moore
 W. L. Lockett
 H. Daniles
 W. A. Sanders
 A. Davis
 J. W. Robertson
 M. Neel
 N. McDale
 W. T. Justen
 H. Zimmerman

E. Peterson
 W. Show, or Shaw
 J. L. Campbell
 W. S. Warren
 W. L. Merrick
 J. L. Cain
 C. W. Wallace
 O. L. Ollar, Secretary
 M. L. Rusing, Secretary
 E. L. Johnson

 E. M. Hamilton
 H. Y. Thompson
 T. L. Evans
 G. Estes
 J. Johnson
 W. M. Cooper
 Tucker
 D. Peterson
 T. Baker
 C. West
 G. W. Hockworth

NO ADDRESS GIVEN

W. T. McKinney white
 J. J. Ferrell "
 J. Martin "
 Oscar Henton black
 L. E. Davis "
 B. Stephens "
 Will Kellner "
 Chas. Kendrix "
 Sim Thornton "
 J. A. Duckworth "
 Oliver Lynch "
 Frank Wills "

Frank Wessell
 J. J. Stoike
 C. Grantham
 C. D. Vomer
 Levi Thornton
 J. Moore

WHITFORD, LA.

T. B. Williams
 T. B. Olds
 A. Hoffeniester or Hoffmeister
 Grady Hall

G. R. Moore
 Tod Moore
 Jim Hall
 E. E. Briggs

M. D. Hammong
Tome Moore
C. A. Guthrie
T. H. Adams

Frank Foreman
F. O. Evert
W. T. Foster
F. R. Howell

No. 2

SELMA, LA.

D. E. Wheatley, Secretary
C. A. Seville
L. P. McGrems
J. M. Lofton
C. Anderson
W. B. Basley
F. M. Delano
John Roden
T. Galvin
T. J. Sherwound (maybe Sherwood)

Rufus Harris
W. W. Kennedy
Fred Noshey
J. L. West
W. C. Adams
Will Richardson
J. T. Bucklin
Rufe Moore
L. James
R. Johnson

CALVIN, LA.

E. C. Moffitt
Paul Harvey
C. W. McLamore

Grover Young
J. H. Clark
A. J. Harvey
C. E. Holt
Sidney Holden
Henry Lawson
Marion Stock
S. S. Dowlin
B. Williamson
B. S. Wilson
Sid Higons
J. Dran
T. E. Boyier
S. O. Barn
J. S. Key
F. Modict
H. L. McBale

W. G. Moffitt
O. T. Harvey
A. P. Hottman
(maybe Hoffman)
Wm. Anderson
A. J. Foley
Buck Hanna
O. M. Simms
M. C. Grouthern
J. H. Perkins
J. V. Stoval
Jim Hall
A. W. Grafen
G. R. Stewart
C. Gifson
I. R. Cupit
O. A. Morgan
W. F. McLovon
Tim Baker
H. Daniels
C. W. West

M. T. Holliday
W. J. Nelson, or Melton
Will Shell

E. S. Tucket
W. E. Robert
Clyde Nelson

ROCHELLE, LA.

E. P. Curry
J. M. Howell
W. Couch
R. E. Thenlas [Thorla?]
G. L. White
J. Blount
J. E. Shepperd
J. S. Atkins
C. Parish

W. E. Roberts
W. H. Winn
A. J. Couch
B. Cook
L. C. Couch
W. M. Fitzgerald
G. O. Blevins
S. Curry

DE RIDDER, LA.

L. Mecollo
A. Mersey
Edwards Drecale
G. R. Heard
W. B. Hamilton
G. Hines
S. Ross
W. T. Johnson
L. Johnson
J. S. Phillips
J. S. Bailey
Cal Murphy
A. H. Davis
R. Lester

R. E. Dickerson
W. L. Morelo
C. M. Taylor

A. D. Norris, or Morris
L. Muroine
R. Jefferson
L. Yoran
S. M. Louis
R. A. Preston
J. W. McDonald
J. H. Harris
J. W. Holton
I. S. Howard
T. B. Bailey
J. E. McLoud
T. McMahon
D. Roberts

No. 3

GOOD PINE, LA.

G. M. Pollood (maybe Pollock)
W. E. Pollood " "
E. C. Pollood " "
W. M. Sharp
W. E. Ward

W. E. Keen

J. Worthey
G. W. Brister
J. W. Stowell
W. A. Bell
S. E. Wirdhouse
(maybe Woodhouse)
T. J. Powell

P. M. Keen
 O. M. Howell
 T. J. Pentcost
 J. Brown
 J. Allen
 J. J. McChuslen
 J. Keen
 F. W. Simpson, President
 J. Foley
 Dave Lockett
 H. M. Taylor
 C. W. Pentcost
 T. Powell
 J. R. McLouder
 L. Powell
 W. A. Stricklin
 J. S. Mittmer (maybe Wittmer)
 L. L. Paul
 H. A. Taylor
 J. Walker
 E. G. Pentcost
 J. W. Smith
 W. H. Powell
 C. D. Jones
 Burkleone
 F. Sanders
 W. S. Camp
 W. E. Johnson
 W. Knapp
 L. Stephens
 J. Odem
 G. Smith
 J. Wheatley
 W. C. Knapp
 R. Watson
 C. P. Hones
 E. W. Beams
 P. M. Strickland
 E. D. Bell
 S. C. Crus [Cruz]
 T. A. Barnett
 W. T. Walsh
 R. L. London
 D. Brown

W. F. Afrian
 R. C. Orp
 D. R. Bright
 J. K. McChuslen
 J. Foley
 W. Keen
 N. D. Taylor
 W. W. Brister, Secretary
 J. O. Ponchard
 E. C. Densine
 A. T. Sanchers [Sanchez?]
 L. T. Tarvis [Tarver?]
 C. W. Barton
 W. Tarver
 W. Tarver (?)
 H. Meke
 E. A. Price
 R. R. Dicks
 H. C. Johnson
 R. F. Wade
 D. W. Strickland
 C. D. Colman
 R. Pitts
 H. Oil
 J. Harrison
 J. L. Paul
 E. H. Tiller
 F. M. Thompson
 W. C. Tarver
 G. Cox
 F. King
 L. A. Trape (Trope)
 H. W. Whitley
 E. Green
 J. Cantham
 W. C. Banan
 J. McDowell
 W. F. Colton
 P. A. Flowers
 A. M. Carson
 C. E. York
 J. Friedman
 R. Watson
 J. Wisham

S. Casten
H. D. Stalls
A. Williams

J. Case
T. E. Maxey
J. N. Yule
W. W. Hall
W. A. Whitten

C. P. Thomas
M. Knapp
J. McLoney
R. A. Henley
J. N. Sanders
W. W. Cokerham
J. B. Case
J. Wilson
S. S. Hatfield

No. 4

FIELDS, LA.

T. Warren

J. D. Grouthern
W. H. Wood
J. C. Kelley
O. G. Milner
Chas. Davis
Sam Smith
Clarence Cooper
James Thompson
M. Boss
C. Gillin
Steve Mithcel
A. Pinder
D. Stanley
C. Holman
F. G. Curfy
R. Simmons
W. H. Thomas
Henderson Ashworth
T. A. Artidge
R. G. Norris
V. Crisdry
J. Thompson
H. C. Chancler
L. N. Thomley
W. B. Janclar
L. W. Swaley
J. W. Jacobs
J. Hosier

J. H. Hollingsworth
L. Perkins, Sect'y
Jas. Foster
T. L. Carter
Homer Thomas
Jas. Thomas
John Thomas
W. H. Dreggs
Lensey McHerd
O. B. Gillion
Iscol Perkin
C. Boss
Lege Perkins
Bill Perkins
R. Perkins
M. Mariette
J. A. Mathews
S. W. McLier
G. W. Smith
B. W. Perkins
T. J. Artidge
E. P. McNichols
J. H. Bingham
S. I. Willis
J. T. Tucker
A. Hoedin
Jessie Lovit
S. T. Willis
B. E. Weatherford
W. A. Perkins

Will Kimball
 W. A. Chatham
 Tom Hall
 Jeff Dickerson
 Walton Hancock
 Lee Lovejoy
 James Collier
 Joe Bryant
 W. R. McBride
 Jeff Wood
 Charles Crawford
 Louis Wallmar
 Mike Lovett
 W. Born
 G. Welsh
 Ely Pool
 Fred Childears
 Geo. Hosier
 W. J. Bauley
 Harvey Clark
 Harry Smith
 H. W. Rasins
 Joe Smith
 F. J. Broady (Brody)
 R. C. Carter
 Louis Spellers
 Dr. Martin
 Dave Brody
 J. T. Miller
 C. F. Henegen
 B. C. B. Delban
 Dick Scarfro
 J. Burine
 L. Clark

C. H. McCoulton
 A. S. Tadley
 W. E. West
 Bur Barney
 Hugh Askins
 D. Walker
 R. Williams

J. C. Loding (Lodin)
 Kirby Kimball
 Robert Collet
 Pete Smith
 Valvin Spikes
 W. M. Wright
 W. R. Stephens
 J. W. Spurgin
 A. B. Rusking
 Tom Collins
 E. Ashworth
 Cleve Caple
 Perry Glenn
 Bud Perkins
 Walter Murphy
 A. E. Miller
 O. Beckworth
 Frank Wilson
 H. W. McMeiley
 John Perkins
 Nepolian Smith
 L. McLownley
 Paul Saul
 H. Pruett
 Click Mauty
 E. L. Hancock
 Ellis Hunter
 Tom Franklin
 James Turner
 Henry Williams
 J. W. Gill
 J. R. Perkins
 D. A. Howard
 Clovis Bandvian

No. 5

F. B. Franks
 Lee Ward
 Henry Best
 Alt Dabbing
 C. C. Coster
 M. McElroy
 R. Glen

W. Winter
 J. K. Ames
 E. Bates
 E. R. Brouch
 L. McMahon
 Lee Ward
 F. B. Frank
 A. C. Bingham
 Tom Gillman
 E. Browning
 C. Cooper
 W. R. Hautz or Nautz
 C. H. Bucam
 Albert Hood

G. Byerly
 E. G. Hyolt
 C. W. Boothian
 L. E. Histon
 J. T. Walker
 West Franklin
 G. J. Waldrep
 B. H. Autey
 J. Harvey
 L. Parrish
 H. Chanler
 Lige Childers
 Joseph Bushnell

CARSON, LA.

Ed Lehman
 J. W. Hamilton
 J. O. Porter
 Ed. Ezell
 E. M. Jackson
 Chas. Doeld or Dodd
 W. C. Hinderson
 L. G. Brown
 W. L. Hard (Heard)
 W. B. Sears
 J. M. Moore
 A. R. Locaze [Lecaze?]
 Sam Gauthorn
 A. Dosinger
 J. S. Burgis
 Jessie Heard
 Joe Williams
 J. D. Wood
 J. T. Lensey
 Jim Miner
 J. T. Parks
 W. H. Watson
 J. B. Cook
 Wil Cohman or Colman
 H. E. Parks
 Morris Moon
 E. Bennett

C. O. Hall
 Tom Westoveus
 Charles Dickerson
 H. Gilbert
 Frank V. Lorch
 James Cathey
 Mack Brown
 Gus Hinton
 Frank Kardis
 J. C. Slaughter
 Martin
 M. A. Locaze
 W. B. Cooley
 I. P. Daniels
 J. L. Heard
 H. G. Jones
 S. H. Lauchon
 C. C. Loughley
 L. B. Holton
 A. H. Gray
 D. R. Hinderson
 J. E. Davis
 Joe Watson
 J. M. Kee
 Tom Cohman or Coleman
 E. J. Dircot
 C. S. Storkes

Gro Willis
 J. B. Patterson
 C. E. Patten
 Robt. Turner
 J. P. Freehand
 Joe Lefine
 E. J. Andrews
 E. T. Horwell
 Amos Thorle [Thorla]

W. H. Heard
 D. C. Colman
 A. F. Bosed
 Chas. Kelley
 S. M. Denright
 B. G. Groser
 L. R. Groser
 James Mies
 R. L. Melton

No. 6

OAKDALE, LA.

L. H. Miller
 R. Johnson
 - Thigpen
 - Jordan

A. E. Derry
 W. M. Singleterry
 J. E. Johnson
 M. Hamilton
 W. O'Connor
 W. S. Tratie
 Thos. Johnson
 R. Boss
 G. R. Hauk
 M. Johnson
 J. Mountville
 D. Ortig
 W. F. Ferguson
 A. Tauternet
 G. W. Webber
 A. Johnson
 F. Boss

J. J. Seiley
 Isaac Bailey
 W. S. Thigpen
 E. E. Jordan
 W. S. Leggett
 P. A. Pace
 J. J. Johnson
 J. Flimington
 W. F. Henry
 T. Andring
 J. E. Skinner
 E. Foutnot [Fontenot?]
 R. Mitchell
 M. R. Boss
 I. A. Dickens
 A. Founternot [Fontenot?]
 R. Vodrine [Vidrine?]
 H. T. Morgan
 J. F. Stalsby
 O. J. Thigpen
 A. M. Morgan
 E. W. Young
 A. Welsh
 D. Johnson
 J. D. Morgan
 J. A. Henry
 E. Draddy
 J. M. Thigpen
 J. Williams
 S. W. White

W. J. Pace
 J. Collier
 C. A. Banker
 W. Randall
 C. H. Weighill
 S. D. Carroll
 W. L. Green
 M. V. Baker
 W. M. Callahan
 J. M. Ray
 J. W. Jones
 J. B. Statsby
 J. W. Basker
 M. C. Thigpen
 R. I. Welch
 I. Perkins

J. E. Migell [Miguel?]
 A. B. Furgeson
 J. E. Richarne
 E. D. Wiggins
 H. C. Irion
 T. J. Polk
 G. W. Tarver
 A. E. Johnson
 J. E. Oliver
 C. H. Weighill
 V. Cole
 W. E. Wasten
 J. Clark
 W. H. Walters
 J. Strosver
 J. W. Hackett

GUY, LA.

U. Stufe
 S. T. Young
 W. H. Teuluck
 S. Smith
 A. Willis
 B. Davis
 M. Essex

I Bow
 P. Milvin
 P. Smith
 H. Cooler
 J. S. Gibson
 J. Edward
 E. Bell

PINELAND, TEXAS

D. J. Downs
 B. Parkham
 H. F. Mitchell
 O. A. Turner

B. A. Turner
 A. Hicks
 J. A. Bennett
 S. H. Curry

FLORA, LA.

D. Barnes
 G. Phemes (maybe Phares)
 M. C. Fredway or Tredway
 - - Parker J. D. Gentry

J. W. Hall
 W. A. Barr
 M. Curlee
 E. Parker

No. 7

LORING, LA.

T. M. Fromme (Fromn)
 M. E. Patrick
 J. Meshell
 J. N. Errington
 T. F. Meshell

B. F. Deer
 H. Johnson
 W. Jones
 W. S. Phillips

MARIONVILLE, LA.

A. Ricker
 H. A. Boling
 J. E. Hamilton
 N. Robert
 B. Loden
 W. Bishop

J. J. McPherson
 E. Creleman
 A. W. Hoyt
 H. Killum
 W. Griom
 J. T. O'Brien

DIDO, LA.

W. A. Border
 J. Strothers
 J. P. Strothers
 M. Gilcrist
 F. S. Powell
 J. E. McFarland
 J. S. Strothers
 M. West (?)
 G. H. Vick
 A. Strothers
 E. E. Jordan
 A. L. Drewett

P. McFarland
 C. Dyer
 J. D. Stockman
 W. C. Ben
 O Strothers
 J. S. Bennett
 M. West
 Jim Johnson
 E. P. McEleven
 L. T. Gilligan
 P. Wilcox

GOODPINE, LA.

C. Calwill
 J. D. Whatley (Whattey)
 H. K. Lemons
 P. Roshto
 F. Johnson
 W. Tiscon
 S Watson
 L. Luther
 J. F. Young

S. E. Baldridge
 D. C. Odam
 A. Maxey
 G. C. Carson
 P. J. Foley
 H. S. Dill
 C. S. Kelley
 J. M. Taylor

CRAVENS, LA.

James Morrison
 Apalmarie Barrera
 G. M. Cullar
 Arthur Parrish
 J. M. Cothan
 Byard Tour
 Elliott Askiser
 J. B. Jones
 Henderson Calhoon
 Wm. Chambers
 J. Cade
 Joe Thompson
 D. A. Hay
 M. Endicott
 Man Box
 Geo. Cunningham
 H. Lockhart
 B. S. Grones
 Howard Hopper
 W. Rucker

J. B. Slaughter
 E. H. Toban
 G. L. Smith
 Thomas Carter
 J. Donovan
 J. R. Strother
 Mack Johnson
 M. B. Boss
 Werrey James
 J. Wright
 H. McGown
 E. L. Reese
 T. Cleveland
 J. Walls
 C. Sanders
 James Simpson
 A. M. Rice
 H. Anderson
 Pat McMullen
 Martin Black
 J. H. Crominster
 C. A. Gill
 J. W. Peters
 J. E. Croford

No. 8

CRAVENS, LA., Continued

M. Paons
 T. Penberton
 F. Monor
 J. King

J. Wright
 H. McGown
 E. L. Reese
 T. Cleveland

TIOGA, LA.

P. O. Brown
 G. Holliday
 F. F. Frank
 P. Craig
 A. Krouse
 C. C. Hampton
 John Harvey
 J. Price

T. C. Dean
 R. Fourt
 S. K. Balk
 R. Cook
 A. Nugent
 C. M. Harvey
 Joyn [John?] Lovell
 J. Carr

F. Price
 P. McGuin
 B. Slocum
 R. Craig
 J. McGuire
 S. J. Vanderwater
 G. C. Ross
 W. Frankenhause
 R. P. Hooper
 J. Dyers
 Jay Craig
 D. Barnett
 C. C. Smith

S. C. Craig
 J. J. Mafon
 W. Berry
 C. E. Gautier
 A. B. Day
 J. B. Smith
 N. Green
 A. D. Hooper
 E. C. Gibson
 Jess Craig
 W. J. Sasser
 W. J. Crawford
 G. Willisford

JENA, LA.

J. V. Eastwood
 F. M. Renfre
 W. R. Ford, Secretary
 J. E. Lewis
 I. D. Otwill
 R. M. Phillips
 J. T. Young
 I. Drewin
 A. Mertins
 J. T. Cunningham
 A. M. Smith
 N. Curtis
 E. L. Robertson
 B. M. Garrett

G. Eastwood
 A. Phillips
 J. M. Francis
 A. McRight
 C. R. Blackman
 J. W. Townsend
 K. S. Price
 E. Hardman
 J. D. Asther
 L. M. Welsh
 M. Jackson
 E. W. McCullom
 R. M. Tarver

VIDOR, TEXAS

T. Dragton
 Price
 J. W. Folks
 I. I. Mason
 M. Burrell
 R. D. Kisher
 L. Kisher
 T. C. Corbett
 J. Southwell
 M. Stephenson
 W. E. Hudson

F. M. Smith
 C. R. Folks
 R. Harris
 I. D. Coke
 S. Whitman
 P. R. Williams
 J. H. Reeves (Ruves)
 H. John
 Jackson
 R. V. Richardson
 Tom Hall

BALL, LA.

E. C. Pollard, Secretary
 L. H. Wilbanks
 B. W. LaCroix
 W. A. [or E. L.] Coleman

W. S. Ferrell
 J. Williamson
 W. C. Coleman
 W. T. Coleman

No. 9

BALL, LA., Continued

W. A. McGraw
 O. L. Harper
 E. H. Chandler
 E. A. Grant
 L. E. Tullas [Tullos?]

A. R. Welch
 C. L. LaCroix
 R. L. Banks
 L. L. Murrell
 W. H. Hammond

POLLOCK, LA.

C. D. Dikes
 S. B. Ford

 W. M. Hays
 W. G. Florney
 B. Friday
 L. L. Tedler
 W. L. Hathaway
 P. Paul
 S. C. Tedler
 O. H. Gauch
 J. B. Tingle
 T. J. Simmons

J. Johnson
 T. L. Chandler
 A. C. Buxton
 H. L. Tedlar
 R. C. Bryant
 M. McGinty
 T. H. Hammond
 W. H. White
 R. A. Allen
 M. W. Allen
 J. T. Legget
 M. C. Rayburn
 W. T. Edwards

HARTBURG, TEXAS

G. P. Birdwell
 E. G. Warden
 J. A. Morgan
 W. L. Pinkston
 D. J. Hogan
 H. Furgeson
 W. A. Calaway
 A. C. Delman
 R. W. Dunkley

J. Furgeson
 J. E. Jones
 W. G. Baggett
 C. Williams
 J. Rayner
 R. L. Wilmer
 R. E. Nothen
 J. D. Robinson

GRACE, LA.

B. F. Crocker
 I. J. Cupples
 R. D. Moore
 W. L. Lockett
 H. Daniels
 W. A. Sanders
 A. Davis
 J. W. Robertson
 M. Neal
 N. McDale
 W. T. Juston
 H. Zimmerman

E. M. Hamilton
 H. Y. Thompson
 G. Estes
 J. Johnson
 W. M. Cooper
 Tucker

D. Peterson
 T. Baker
 C. West
 G. W. Hockworth

WARD, LA.

J. Willis
 J. J. Devore
 S. D. Beasley
 J. C. Phillips
 W. S. Storey
 D. A. Devore
 J. M. Hallmore
 T. Shumuck
 W. Johnson
 I. Hatfield
 J. Ashmore
 Ben Strother
 J. Mizell
 Jeaves

H. C. Deramore
 W. E. Nichols
 W. Samuel
 R. F. Harper
 D. Storey
 C. W. Wiggins
 D. Phillips
 L. H. Hatfield
 J. B. Johnson
 B. Doyle
 W. R. Harper
 E. A. Smith
 F. F. Ballard
 J. Wesley

No. 10

MONTPELIER, LA.

J. H. Smith
 C. Dixon
 J. D. Tiner
 E. L. Crowney

W. M. Dixon
 A. Smith
 L. W. George
 W. D. Kirkland

ISABEL, LA.

C. G. Osley [Oxley?]

W. R. Moore

T. McLaughter
 H. Dennis
 J. D. Fanwell (Farwell)
 B. Sager
 E. F. Williams
 B. Richardson
 E. Mizell
 D. Murry
 J. W. Brown
 O. L. Green
 L. Ereund [Freund?]
 J. D. Ethridge
 B. F. Perkins
 H. Maddock
 J. S. Richardson
 W. Thomas
 T. H. Strain
 E. Hucely (Huckely or Huckaby)

O. F. McGhee
 B. F. Hogan
 L. A. Morgan
 J. M. Elreth
 T. J. Hamilton
 A. E. Williams
 Galoway
 M. C. Stephens
 R. H. Gillis
 L. F. Johnson
 J. O. Bell
 T. Fulks
 J. D. James
 L. O'Connor
 W. W. Tolly
 D. A. Hyatt
 E. McGee

PINE GROVE, LA.

Chaner
 W. S. Alfritten [Albritten?]
 T. J. Linder
 S. Burnett
 E. D. Bell
 J. Chander
 Grosbeak
 J. S. Higginbotham
 P. L. East
 I. Keith
 J. Newtin
 G. L. Rogers
 W. Lee
 W. H. Bush
 H. C. Keller
 J. D. McCaskill
 A. R. [?]

J. E. Crawford
 F. L. Dunn
 H. Phillips
 M. Ward
 E. C. James

R. T. Hayden
 R. W. May
 W. J. Cawley
 J. L. Keller

C. T. Avris
 C. T. Avris
 W. Bukston
 J. L. Ward
 J. G. Martin

E. E. [F. F.?] Brown
 E. P. Jenkins
 A. L. Slesey [Slosey?]
 J. W. Walker
 W. S. Benton
 J. O. McLenoust
 M. P. Tillman
 G. E. Stone
 G. W. Robins
 W. M. Rogers
 E. Fennell
 F. D. Smith

J. D. Donley
 S. Tyes
 M. U. Slessey
 W. E. Gale
 D. P. Cookley
 T. Dixson
 W. E. Newson
 D. Smith
 T. Lofton
 F. Mensgrove

R. D. Bonnett
 R. J. Closey
 J. W. Kirckland
 J. G. Gibson
 W. E. Burch
 H. Collins
 P. D. Yoelger
 H. J. Freeman
 R. R. Rhed
 J. H. Chandler
 W. J. Arnold
 D. P. Grover

No. 11

BLUET, LA.

J. B. Wright
 R. F. Bennett
 W. C. Lowley
 Isrel Cole
 M. Craig
 Tom Glon
 R. L. Irly
 J. L. Teny
 J. W. Bennett
 G. J. Owens
 J. L. Hardford
 E. L. West

W. W. Overstreet
 A. McGee
 J. K. Ship
 Dank Weatherford
 J. W. Wagner
 C. A. Buston
 Pete Peavy
 J. B. Lee
 J. R. Hardford
 E. E. Hammock
 L. A. Folsam
 Bill Davis

WASEY, LA.

R. E. Peirson
 Sam Siurs
 C. H. Ford
 W. H. Williams
 Sam Mitchell
 Will Alston
 J. E. Shelby
 G. W. Rell
 F. W. Ships
 C. Clark
 Jesse Perry
 A. Blankenship

E. C. Dennett
 Ed Smith
 O. T. Davis
 M. R. Crawford
 M. A. Beyer
 Will Appleton
 Elmore Freen [Green?]
 J. Ferren
 J. L. Goidoir
 Sam Sellers
 John Mathius
 Britter Smith

C. L. Peel
 F. Loonax
 Jesse White
 Henry Taylor
 J. Leon
 F. D. Courtney

Robt. Robenson
 A. Hartman
 Louis Powel
 M. Lockins
 W. M. Proctons

FULLERTON, LA.

Cloud Drasher
 John Lopovitz
 Goe Troke
 B. Pelt
 Joe Troke
 Will Shelton
 W. W. Brown
 Manuel Yajos
 Joe Yajos
 J. N. Hall
 J. N. Robert
 G. H. Humphrey
 Chas. Preston
 T. W. Rollins
 - -

Mock Wheat
 J. H. Howell
 Nox Yojos
 Felix Yojos
 Pat Whitehead
 J. Wiggins
 J. J. Shaw
 - -

James Chapple
 James Parrish
 Chertie Carpenter

Jor Leopvitz
 Touil Paze
 Frank Paze
 Tomie Selfay
 J. P. Jones
 James Pelt
 J. Cassell
 Alex Yajos
 Dave Hall
 Frank Smith
 G. C. Coleman
 E. S. Slaughter
 W. J. Potter
 T. J. Peckfeck (Pechfeck)
 J. M. Suport
 G. W. Swope
 B. W. Bronson
 Joe Kocue
 F. Vieller
 J. H. Yoeller
 J. A. Eastwood
 E. D. Whitten
 W. Hughes
 C. B. Parrish
 L. S. Carter, Secretary
 J. J. Beloit

FULLERTON, LA., Continued

W. J. Cockran
 Chas. Langston
 W. M. Harrish (V. M. Harris)
 Nick Anderson
 Goverin Bowin
 Willis Jones

H. F. Hall
 Jeshus Crefus
 G. B. Kelley
 Jim Rammill
 H. Harward
 Jesse Cassel

W. H. Moore
R. R. Thompson

W. H. Harrison
J. A. Dickers

KINDER, LA.

H. Smith
H. Wise
L. T. Burman
W. F. Goodwin
J. Begget
F. Holloway
A. R. Stikes

A. Weekly
W. A. Thomatan (Thornton)
C. D. Montgomery
W. E. Johnson
W. Roan
H. T. Johnson
T. J. Humble

COLDWATER, LA.

J. Bushup (Bushop)
V. Dunn
C. C. Thurmond
J. T. Hall
G. Cooper
R. E. Thornton
E. E. Linsey or Lonsey
E. Stress
G. E. Andrews
J. Morgan
G. Palmer
O. T. Reyburn
R. M. Johnson
R. L. Davis
J. W. Shepard
L. Etress

C. Mitchell
S. Martin
D. Gilcrist
M. Neely
J. W. Littleton
W. A. Marton (Martin)
J. C. Odan
S. Dillon
L. E. Etress
T. F. Hensen
J. M. Robertson
E. Clifton
R. E. Dugen
T. Chestnut
M. Stoves

WOODWORTH, LA.

W. C. Tompkins
W. H. Alberteam
T. H. McRight
Ed Dyer
Luther Chester
Lee Chester
R. S. Albritten
John Marshall
P. J. Hosington
J. F. Cypias

O. R. Caples
M. C. Hans
O. C. Griffith
Carl Cunningham
E. J. Melders
Wm. Grously
M. J. Hays
G. A. Tucker
Martin Colliger
J. Kemp

C. L. Cudd, Secretary
 A. D. Melder
 J. L. White
 C. A. Miles
 J. E. Welch
 J. R. Trowley
 J. H. Treekel
 Sam Squires

Bud Seders
 E. W. Wellington
 J. C. Smith
 W. H. Wellington
 C. M. Treekel
 J. J. Trowley
 Joe Kemp

DIDO, LA.

G. Gibson
 E. F. Rost [Rest?]
 H. Hayham (Bayham)
 M. Boxten
 J. N. Laird
 D. R. Samlin
 B. D. Rime
 C. C. Seiff [Self?]

Tarvis Powell
 R. Bayter, Secretary
 V. Powell
 L. M. Hawkins
 H. W. Remes
 W. M. Preswitt
 J. C. Cox
 E. A. Ashworth

FISHER, LA.

Richard Thibodeaux
 C. C. Aultman
 John Dile
 L. Dile
 Albert M. Miller
 W. J. Airhart
 C. W. Graham
 W. W. Ogletree

APPENDIX 15: Christmas in a Sawmill Town, 1902

The day after Christmas 1902, W. W. Warren hastened to write to O. W. Fisher, assuring him that affairs remained in order:

We got over with our Christmas in very good shape, and so far have not heard of any one getting shot or cut or any serious trouble of any kind, and there were but very few that got drunk. We had the best Christmas that we have ever had, and this morning we got the planing mill started, the trains and the circular side of the saw mill. We intended

to start the band side this morning and not start the circular, but [Frank] Jones got drunk yesterday morning and is now in Shreveport. I do not know that he would come back at all, as this is one of his old tricks, and I have wired to some of the other mills that have an extra sawyer, to see if I cannot borrow a man, and I think I will also send a party to Shreveport to-day to see if he cannot find Jones and bring him back, because I do not want to have his family left on our hands, and probably I can get him back here and straighten him up and let him work for a while. But I think I have got pretty nearly enough of Jones and it ought to be enough for some of the rest of the people here. I appreciate Jones' ability as a sawyer, but I also think that to have a man leave as Jones has done, and will do again, costs just about as much as it would to put up with a little poorer sawyer.

I did not intend to try to run any this week when we first figured on shutting down, but we did not get to run Wednesday, and I decided that the quicker we started the mills the sooner we could get our crew together, and I believe that by to-morrow morning we will have everything in good shape, except the band mill, and by Monday Christmas will be a thing of the past. I may be able to get a sawyer to-day or to-morrow, and as I said above, I am going to try to get Jones back here, as he is probably still in Shreveport.

I think hereafter it will be just as well for Mr. Hardwick to spend his Christmas at Fisher and look after his men, instead of going away when there is repair work to do and the crew to keep together. Mr. Hardwick had some repair work layed [sic] out for the men to do in the mill, principally on the carriage, but with no one to really take charge of it I told the men not to do it, because to do what he had left to be done would really not leave us any better off than we are right now. The carriage needs rebuilding, but to do it right we should build the frame and bore the holes and have it ready, and the iron work could be changed between Saturday night and Monday morning. But to put in new axles under the old carriage and attempt to babbit [sic] it up so that it would be level, with new wheels on one end of the trucks and old wheels on the other end, would make just such a job as we had when we did this before, and we will probably break two or three axles after we get started up. I believe the only way to babbit a carriage and get it level is to turn the carriage upside down, and the timbers in this carriage will not stand that kind of handling, for one of them is nearly broken in two now. But if the carriage frame is built we can change the iron work over, and when it is done we will have a job that will be worth something.

I do not like to change Mr. Hardwick's plans on this or any other repairs, but when I saw that his crew was disorganized, and Jones, one of

the men left to assist at the work, was so unreliable, I thought the best thing to do was to start the mill and hold the crew together.³¹

APPENDIX 16: Bank Panic, 1907

Kansas City, Mo., 11/7/07

TO THE EMPLOYEES

OF THE MISSOURI LUMBER & MINING COMPANY:

We regret to announce that the financial conditions all over the country are such that we cannot make payment of our payroll in currency as heretofore. The banks are not paying our currency in sufficient quantity [sic].

The best that we can do is to give you either our own checks or chashiers' checks for what is due you; and we have to announce at this time that, if our mills continue to run four days in the week, we cannot promise cash payment for labor at regular stated periods.

If our employees wish to stay in our employ and wait on us until we can get the currency, we will try and run our mills four days in the week and furnish them provisions and will pay money as soon as we can get it, but it may be several months before the banks of the country are in a position to furnish enough currency to meet a payroll.

Kindly let your wishes be known to your foreman as soon as possible.

MISSOURI LUMBER & MINING COMPANY.

³¹ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Springfield, Missouri, December 26, 1902, 4 L Letterbook pp. 148-150, Author's Collection. Babbitt metal, an alloy containing tin, copper, and antimony, invented by Isaac Babbitt in 1862, served as a lining for bearings in wheels and steam engines. Soft and malleable, it readily melted under heat and pressure, forming a liquid metallic lubricant that resisted friction. In sawmills, babbitted wheels, when worn and misshapen, often left carriages out of plumb, which caused the mill to produce boards of substandard sizes. Carriages carried logs through the saw at high speeds and suffered heavy wear and tear. As many as three workmen -- blocksetters and doggers -- rode the carriages in large mills, subject to extreme danger from the machinery. Setters and doggers nearly always spurned such devices as safety belts and harnesses.

Per J. B. White, President.

J. B. White to W. W. Warren:

I have your letter enclosing blank check which I have filled out for \$10,000.00. One-half of it will be currency, but \$5,000.00 of it will be in \$1.00, \$2.00 & \$5.00 denomination Cashier's checks made payable to bearer.

I would suggest that you post notice to your men that on account of the financial condition, the Company will not be able to get currency to pay their men; that while the Company would prefer to close down its mills, yet, if the men wish to stay and to wait for their pay until currency can be obtained, which may be several months, we will try to furnish them provisions.

Now, the fact is, Mr. Warren, I think this is about the last money we are going to get out of the banks for some time. I have not taken any money yet for our payroll at Grandin nor at Clarks & Standard, La. We shall pay in Cashier's checks.

In order to protect the banks, we are sending each mill a rubber stamp with which to stamp every check that we sign, which reads "Payable only through Clearing House." It is well enough for us to know ourselves that the worst panic that the United States has ever had is upon us, but it is our duty to look cheerful and cheer others; keep our courage up and thus keep others courage up by telling them the rosy side of things. Every bank in the United States, from Maine to California, is refusing to pay out currency. I know where banks are buying currency to-day and paying 1% for it when they can get it shipped in by express, but they can get very little of it. The fact that all banks have quit paying out currency is of itself evidence that people will not soon deposit currency when they cannot get it out when they want it, and it will only take another payroll or so to exhaust the banks, and then it is going to take a long time to restore confidence.

I am sending our notices to-day to our salesmen to try and get orders while no grain is moving, because we will get more cars just now than we will later when enough currency is secured to move grain. We need not be surprised if there are some very heavy failures. All of the large mills are giving notice to their men that they cannot promise them any money for labor.

I am sending you, under another cover, the stamp to use on all checks. Should you not be able to use these cashier's checks they can be returned to the New England National Bank for the credit of the Louisiana Long Leaf Lumber Co.

J. B. White to W. W. Warren:

I write to suggest that you prepare for a long siege of hard times. I do not believe that we are going to have a good year next year, and it will take some time to recover from the panic which has now found its way to every bank in the country. Conditions in New York are no better; I think they are worse than they were a week ago. I do not think you will be able to start your Oak Mill; nor will we be able to start the one at Clarks. Oak Mills are shutting down. Mr. Reuth and Mr. Garretson have shut down their Oak Mills in Butler County [Missouri].

I do not think you will be able to get any currency for your next pay day. We got along without any currency this pay day at Grandin; we never asked for a dollar. We paid our men in checks, and expect to have to pay them their next pay day in orders on our grocery. We are not running now but four days a week, and expect to run only three days a week after next week.

I am sending a copy of this letter to our Mr. Slagle at Clarks, because the same conditions apply there as at Grandin and Fisher.

All manufacturers are going to feel this holding up of orders. Lumber is going to feel it worse, because the first thing in economy that a man will do when he is hard up is to stop building. The building of homes, and the use of building material in general comes from an accumulated surplus; it is not one of the necessities of life. Next year is presidential year, which is of itself sometimes sufficient to cause fear among financiers, but this year it will have the added strength of the depressing influence of the worst panic that the country has seen since 1873.

J. B. White to W. W. Warren:

I have your letter of November 13th, and expect that the best we can do will be to run half time, beginning the first of next week. This is what we are going to do at Grandin.

I do not know whether we can reduce wages, and only run three days a week; I should think it might be doubtful whether the men could make both ends meet.

I think the feeling is, as far as Grandin, Fisher and Victoria are concerned, that these mills do not need orders at present low prices, while there is some excuse for the mill at Clarks to take orders at the present low prices, because of indebtedness and interest and taxes which have to be met very soon.

I think the general condition of the country is likely to improve after the first of the year, but there will likely not be much lumber wanted for a year or so. Lumber is the first commodity that feels a depression in times like these, and it is I think usually the last to respond to improved conditions.

J. B. White to Clarence Slagle:

Now this is the way I feel about it, and I have since ascertained the feelings of the Hannibal parties [Pettibone and Dulany]. We will not cut wages while only running three days per week, but it is a good time to average up salaries. We are doing this now at Grandin. We find we have been a little out of line, and have been paying more for some labor than our neighbors at Winona. This we are now correcting.

Later, when we make an attempt to run five or six days in a week, we will give notice to our men that they can go to work at a certain reduced salary, if we find that reduction is necessary, as we probably will, for quite likely prices are going to be lower next year, and labor will have to be lower in order to enable us to compete; and that we will take up again whenever it seems that we can do better than run three days in the week, but while we are charging rent and not reducing our prices for goods to our men from the commissary we ought not to ask them to work for any lower wages.

I note that you say some mills on the [William] Edenborn road [Louisiana Navigation & Transportation Company, later part of the L&A Railroad] propose to run full time, and pay their men on a 15% reduction. You can inquire around and see what other mills are doing, and, of course, we will have to pay about the same wages throughout that section of the country.

Regarding the coal shipments; if you only run three days in the week you won't need much coal, and I have been wondering if it will be possible to save our money at home by burning wood [in the locomotive engines]; if we can burn pine knots or wood in our engines, or whether they will have to have a different smokestack. I know that Warren burns wood, in fact, has always done so, and they appear to have no trouble.

J. B. White to W. W. Warren:

With regard to your salary, I think that President Fisher should give up part of his salary to you, as he is now located so far away that he cannot give the business his attention, and if you would like to have me call his attention to it, or rather, if you know of no better plan I will call his attention to it. I am in favor of paying you \$5,000 per year, and of not paying the President of the Company to exceed \$1,000 per year from the first of January on.

J. B. White to W. B. Pettibone, La Crosse, Wisconsin:

Now, it has occurred to us that it was not good policy for us to go to the extreme bottom of what we might imagine the market might be

forced down to. It wasn't good policy for us to help force prices down to the lowest point at a time when the yards are not buying and when they are not selling lumber, and when the financial condition is such that people are alarmed because of the banks even in the smallest towns refusing to pay out money; everything is checked as regards building in city and country; people are waiting to see if normal conditions as to currency and credits will resume after the first of the year, as has been promised by those who are most optimistic, as well as by many who are very conservative in their judgment. It has seemed better to us to try to steady the market even if we have been getting but eight or ten cars a day in orders for all of our mills. We believe we will get more for our lumber having adopted this policy at this time in the dead of winter than we would if we had plunged along with some others in a mad race as to who would strike bottom first. When buying begins, whatever buying there may be - how much or how little the volume of business may be - we will get our share of what there is and we believe prices will be some better and that we will be some better off than we would if we had plunged madly after orders at any price that we could get them for.³²

APPENDIX 17: Millwright strike, 1908

In September 1908, the millwrights at the 4 L Company plant at Fisher, Louisiana, struck, demanding time and a half for working Sundays. Captain White was outraged. He wrote to Warren:

³² J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to William S. McKinney, Kansas City, Missouri, March 26, 1907; White to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, October 31, 1907; White to Warren, two letters on November 7, 1907; same to same, November 9, 16, 19, 22, 1907; White to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, two letters on November 25, 1907; White to Warren, November 26, and December 5 and 7, 1907; White to W. B. Pettibone, Hannibal, Missouri, December 23, 1907; White to Warren, two letters on December 26, 1907; White to Pettibone, La Crosse, Wisconsin, December 30, 1907, Box 11626, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; B. F. Bonner, Houston, Texas, to S. A. McNeely, Houston, Texas, November 3, 1907; C. P. Myer, Houston, Texas, to All Kay Ell Managers, November 9, 1907; Bonner to Heads of Kay Ell Departments, November 23, 1907; Myer to All Kay Ell Mill Managers, November 29, 1907; Myer to J. A. Herndon, Kirbyville, Texas, December 3, 1907, Box 115, No. 07-09, Kirby Lumber Company Collection, SFA.

I am sorry to hear this but it seems likely you will have to get some other millwrights. I never heard of a millwright getting time and one-half in a saw mill. A millwright has always understood that it is always expected of him to work Sunday on account of the wages that he gets, that he is to keep the mill up so that it will run six days in the week, so that their men can have the privilege of working six days in the week, and on that account a millwright has always to work on Sunday in order that other men can work six days in the week. There is a belt to fix, there is always some little repair work to be done that has to be done on Sunday and you would rather have a millwright work on Sunday and lose some other day in the week.

It is not a moral question involved because he is willing to work on Sundays if we will only pay him for time and one-half. If it was a moral question, I would suggest that he be a Seventh Day Adventist and take his Sunday on Saturday.

There are men that we have paid time and one-half to for working on Sundays but it has been that class of men who work every day in the week and because we have had urgent work to be done on Sunday we allowed them extra time as a premium because they took their day of rest to do this important work, but a millwright can rest on other days and he ought certainly to work on Sunday when required to in order that the other men can work six days in the week.³³

APPENDIX 18: SLOA Assessments, 1911

PAYMENTS MADE ON SEPTEMBER PRODUCTION TO THE SOUTHERN LUMBER OPERATORS' ASSOCIATION

Athens Lumber Co.	Athens, La.	252.34
J. A. Bel Lumber Co.	Lake Charles La.	844.96
J. A. Bentley Lumber Co.	Zimmerman, La.	751.25
Big Pine Lumber Co.	Colfax, La.	585.28
S. H. Bolinger & Co.	Bolinger, La.	213.08
Davis Bros. Lumber Co.	Ansley, La.	225.60

³³ J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 28, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; the carbon copy of this letter, sent to C. E. Slagle at Clarks, Louisiana, is in No. 3660, Box 22, File 461, Louisiana Central Lumber Company Records, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, UM.

Enterprise Lumber Co.	Alexandria, La.	914.05
Frost-Johnson Lumber Co.	Alden Bridge, La.	350.89
Frost-Johnson Lumber Co.	Campti, La.	423.42
Frost-Johnson Lumber Co.	Montrose, La.	408.71
Krause & Managan Lumber Co.	West Lake, La.	385.87
Lock Moore & Co.	West Lake, La.	1161.37
Tremont Lumber Co.	Winnfield, La.	1481.35
Feeman-Smith Lumber Co.	Millville, Ark.	879.41
Graysonia-Nashville Lbr. Co.	Nashville, Ark.	147.45
Griffin Mill Co.	Griffin, Ark.	433.72
Oak Leaf Mill Co.	Stroud, Ark.	341.52
Southern Lumber Co.	Warren, Ark.	718.67
Union Saw Mill Co.	Huttig, Ark.	1634.78
Caddo River Lumber Co.	Rosboro, Ark.	493.75
W. T. Smith Lumber Co.	Chapman, Ala.	1188.43
Frost-Johnson Lumber Co.	Nacogdoches, Texas	937.31
Waterman Lbr. & Supply Co.	Waterman, Texas	705.00
Dierks Lbr. & Coal Co.	Bismark, Okla.	1195.00 ³⁴

APPENDIX 19: Sawmill Managers' Correspondence, 1911

L. F. Haslam to R. M. Hollawell

Personally I believe that the January elections in this state will bring about a change of sentiment among the farmer element that has gone into the union and also I believe that after it has been demonstrated that we can operate our mills with strictly non-union labor, that element of sawmill labor that has gone into the union will rapidly come to the conclusion that it is to their best interest to leave it, since only by doing so can they hope to obtain employment about the mill plants, but until this time comes, I believe that we should have the assistance of the Alexandria Office in helping to keep our plants clean of union members.

³⁴ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, October 25, 1911; "Payments Made on September Production to the Southern Lumber Operators' Association," October 25, 1911; White to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, October 25, 1911; White to Smith, October 26, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 32, Files 702 and 703, WHMC, UM.

I simply take the liberty of making this suggestion for what it may be worth, as it is merely my personal opinion in the matter.³⁵

R. M. Hallowell, general manager of the Industrial Lumber Company plants at Elizabeth and Oakdale, Louisiana, agreed with Haslam.

Judging by our own conditions, I believe that the Mills who have attempted to start so far, will find that their old non-union employees will gradually come back to them; and that within the next three or four weeks, we will have fairly a complete non-union crew, - provided they use ever precaution to keep the Union men out.

The Union people at Oakdale are about worn out, and are rapidly approaching the point where they would like to give up their books and literature as a signal of total disorganization.

The Manufacturers have made a hard fight against this Union, and have spent a large amount of money, and I consider that it would be penny wise and pound foolish, at this time, to make any effort to close up our organization, as it would simply mean we would leave a lot of live coals around at various points and it would be a very easy matter for the organizers to fan them and start into life a new Union.

I believe the Alexandria Office should be continued indefinitely either at that point or some where in this vicinity, certainly not so far away as St. Louis.

I believe that each of the Mills should arrange to continue secret service work by using two or more of their confidential employees for the purpose of locating the Union men if they get in. This would enable the Association to cut out the biggest part of its expense, which is the high priced and frequently unreliable secret service men. In our own case, I have dispensed with the service of our White secret service man on account of too much whiskey drinking and inaccurate statements in his findings. Our Colored Operative is giving good service, and I believe has covered the field thoroughly and accurately, so that we will dispense with him on Friday,--our crew now being practically complete.

I offer these suggestions for what they are worth, which I judge will not have much weight with the balance of the Committee, as my views were so entirely opposed to the views of the balance of the Board of Governors and the Executive Committee, since you will recall that I took the position in September on two occasions that the time was ripe to start certain Mills October 1st. I was entirely alone in this position, but

³⁵ L. F. Haslam, Pickering, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, November 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC, UM.

still believe that had this been done at the time - four or five mills could have started, and after some two weeks, a few more started, and in this way get all in operation gradually and without a scramble for men, and the result would have been certainly much more satisfactory.³⁶

M. L. Alexander to Members, SLOA:

the operatives that we have in our service are men who are trained to the work, they are backed by agencies of repute and responsibility and if the men that they give us are not satisfactory we can get rid of them immediately without question or trouble. The men that it has been suggested that I employ are backed, it is true, by the responsibility of the recommendors but they are not trained in this service and will be in the nature of an indiscriminate force, as far as this office is concerned, backed by the responsibility of fifteen or twenty different recommendors and who have, no doubt, been loyal to the interest that employed them but whose loyalty or discretion might be questioned as far as this office is concerned.

We have made a good fight so far, the operatives, as a whole, have given us good service and whereas there has been some little criticism as to the methods of a few of the men and which have been promptly recognized and the men relieved, the general results of our investigations have been most valuable. The time is a critical one, when we are just on the eve of success; I do not care to assume the responsibility for the Association or for myself of the taking on of untried men, I would feel personally, that I had hung a millstone around my neck and I am therefore going to respectfully decline to adopt for the Association or for myself the grave responsibility that would be entailed by adopting the suggestion.³⁷

APPENDIX 20: Back-To-Work Order, 1911

BROTHERHOOD OF TIMBER WORKERS.

ALEXANDRIA, La., Nov. 16th, 1911

Dear Co-workers:

³⁶ R. M. Hallowell, Elizabeth, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, November 23, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC, UM.

³⁷ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, November 22, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC, UM.

This is to notify you that a vote was taken by the members of the B. of T.W. at DeRidder, Fullerton and Oakdale. The vote was almost unanimous to go back to work. Same was approved by the Grand Lodge.

Now the conditions are, that the union boys get back on the job and go to work in order to hold the position. By so doing it will enable the boys to keep up the organization by paying dues and getting all th[at] comes in the union and at the same time keep the scabs out.

Now let it be understood, if all of you cannot get back on the job where you are, go to other places and get a position. If you are asked to sign up, do not hesitate, sign and promise the company anything, promise them, if necessary, that you will have nothing more to do with the union. But listen, you boys all call a meeting of your members and have a good understanding first, that you are doing this only to fool the BOSS. It makes no difference what you promise them, be sure and keep your dues paid up regularly and help us carry this organization on to other states.

We must do this in order to get all the states organized. Then the BOSS can not get scabs to take our places. Now you all know that now is the time to act. We must stay on the job if we whip the Boss. Now when a man comes to your town, see if he is a union man and if he is not be sure and make a union man out of him and tell him to sign up and go to work. We can do this and in a short time have more union men back at work than ever before.

If you remember, we have never made any demands on the companies yet. This fight was all made by them. Now is the time for us to get back on the job and keep our mouths shut, but at the same time, lead the company at all times to think the Union is dead but always let it be known among the members only that we are as solid as a rock. Nea[r]ly every one you see is a B. of T.W. and if not, you can make one out of him by using good tactics.

This move carried on secretly and smooth will be a success. If you get fired just go o[v]er to the next place and send a union man back to take your place. This will whip the BOSS in the end.³⁸

M. L. Alexander to Members, SLOA:

We find that the union organization is decidedly on the wane; their membership, from conservative estimates, at one time reached something like 12,000 members but we do not believe that at the present it will go over 3500 or 4000 paid-up members. It is true that they are getting in some new members daily but we also believe that the percentage of loss

³⁸ General Executive Board, BTW, Alexandria, Louisiana, to BTW members, November 16, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 711, WHMC, UM.

is far in excess of any gains that they are making. Their membership is a conglomeration of mill men, farmers, merchants, Mexicans, Dagoes and negroes but at no time have more than 40 or 50 per cent been actual mill workers, and we find that already dissention is becoming rife in their ranks; the question of social equality is being fostered and agitated; it is reported that many of their organizers have misappropriated funds collected for membership dues and a spirit of unrest and dissatisfaction is taking hold.

We find, on the other hand, however, that they have by no means given up their fight but that their methods of operation are now more secretive than ever before, that their members are instructed to get employment under any pretext, even advising that they foreswear the union and sign any obligation that might be required by the mill companies in order to secure work, but to still remain a member of the union and by all means pay their dues. It therefore creates a more subtle and dangerous condition and one that is harder to combat. We also find that they have by no means given up the idea of organizing other states: East Texas is the center of agitation at present, Mississippi and Arkansas will be the next points of attack, it will, therefore, take absolute co-operation and eternal vigilance to clear up the situation--this co-operation we must have if we are to be successful.³⁹

APPENDIX 21: Subscription List, c1912

SUBSCRIBERS TO THE LUMBERJACK

Alexandria, La.: Tom McCabe, Central Hotel; A. B. Hundley; L. L'Hereux, 10th & Jackson St.; Chas. Clement, 230 12th St.; Lemoine Bros., Central Hotel; P. N. Lockett, Care of S. Warshauer; J. W. Plunkett, 1214 Holly St.; Steve Irving, 13th near Levin St.; Mr. J. Cuney, 903 Madison St.; Frank F. Vann, 10th & Jackson St.; M. Heyman, Third St.; J. W. Hawthorn; J. D. Cleary, 1146 Monroe St.; W. L. Townsend, Palace Barber Shop; F. S. Lindle, 423 Fifteenth St.; W. H. Sawyer, 715 Monroe St.; Dr. J. V. Bonnette; J. E. Richardson, 518 Scott St.; J. J. Ellington; J. J. Thompson, 1332 Park Ave.; R. H. Talley; Mrs. M. Roth, 1342 Gould Ave.; Sam Domico; John Ross, Care of J. R. Whittington; C. L. Maloz, 430 Elliott St.; B. F. Toney, 419 13th St.; T.

³⁹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to All Members, SLOA, November 27, 1911, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

A. Carter; Judge E. C. Hunter; R. Davenport, 933 Jackson St.; P. C. Taylor 38 Wheelock & Madison St.

Anacoco, La.: R. Nelson 21; E. W. Miffin; John Cox; E. Kay; G. C. Fort; J. N. Connerly.

Bentley, La.: R. P. Stewart, D. F. Harper.

DeQuincy, La.: W. T. McFeran; W. F. McFeran; E. P. McMickle 73; Dean Rainwater; W. R. Wadkins; R. L. Durham; J. H. Thompson; G. H. Adams, Box 161; J. L. Herd.

DeRidder, La.: G. Y. James; Z. Martin; A. I. Shaw; F. Stanfields 34, Box 132; C. J. Ware; J. H. McMahon; C. E. Harris; C. H. Ellis; J. W. Bowers 60; W. A. Mathis; W. H. Meire; A. E. Wood; W. H. Smith; Mrs. Molly Hall; T. J. Pittman; Jas. Edwards; Chas. Huffman; J. G. Idom; W. E. Hollingsworth; Wm. W. Morrow; J. L. Miller; W. L. McAllister; Jas. A. Taylor; W. M. Green; Leon Zabau, Box 46; J. A. Lawlis; W. S. Farquhar; J. L. West; Dr. J. H. Cannon; George Myers 61; J. D. Ford; S. H. Gibson; E. F. Preasley; H. M. Davis; E. Clement; A. K. Simmons; Isac Wells; D. E. Baggett; C. M. Buel; W. H. Yerby.

Calvin, La.: J. G. Idom; I. E. Burnett; R. Garner; W. P. Alton; J. H. Summerville; W. J. Nelson; B. Standley; G. A. Dunn; W. T. Coleman.

Derry, La.: Ambroise Leconte 22; A. P. Rashall 22; E. M. Harrison; Paul Darbonne; Antone Melancon; E. C. Carter; Henry L. Beasley.

Eureka, Cal.: Eugene Woods 58, Box 1011; Frank Ellis, Box 1011; L[umber] U[nion] 431 I.W.W., Box 1011; W. B. Lane 61, Box 1011.

Fullerton, La.: J. H. Lacaze; J. J. Guess; E. H. Hutchinson; S. S. McCullough; H. L. Hall; W. A. Chacey; T. J. Pinchback; Chas. Cramer; M. H. Hall.

Galbraith, La.: A. B. Owens; J. H. Merrill; C. F. Smith; C. Beebe.

Grabow, La.: Wm. McBride; W. H. Watson.

Monroe, La.: E. M. Brack; R. W. Brack.

Flora, La.: I. L. Zachery; J. E. Gill; James Pharis; J. W. Hall.

Huntington, Tex.: O. R. Marshall; J. B. Durham.

Hineston, La.: A. E. Marler; J. L. Crawford.

Juanita, La.: J. L. Lowe; H. Nelson; Albert Goins; Thos. Galier; H. D. Nelson.

Jonesville, La.: A. Bass; W. Q. Bell; J. T. Shannon; W. L. Enee; W. F. Doshier.

Kirbyville, Tex.: E. E. Sapp; W. A. Dubose; H. M. Gilbert; Chas. A. Mixon; J. D. Bailey.

Kipling, La.: W. M. Taylor; C. A. Young.

Kinder, La.: C. T. Thompson; A. Nevil; Tom Ham; Kinney; J. D. Mercantel; W. Meyers; Paul Chasson; W. E. Thompson; Lee Popin; John T. Jordan.

Leesmill, Tex.: S. W. Collins; W. H. Starks; C. D. Guin.

Leesville, La.: C. A. Hunt; R. N. Ferguson; W. L. Smith; D. E. D. Ykes; Matt Jordan; J. L. Davis; J. A. Goodwin; M. Freeland; J. M. Alford; S. W. Smith; J. S. Trotti; C. O. Gill; D. W. Howard; J. N. McDonald; L. D. Bright; R. L. Smart; E. E. Morris; W. B. Baggett.

Lake Charles, La.: Alex P. Palmer; A. Jacob, 1430 St. John St.; M. Voge, RFD 1, Box 23; Emil Nelson, 316 Mix St.; J. W. Barnes, 622 Railroad Avenue; Ed Goodman 1631 Martha St.

Ludington, La.: W. A. Wilson, Box 150; Jas. M. Davis.

Le Blanche, La.: W. C. Baggett; J. B. Sledge; J. F. Kingrey; J. B. Baggett.

Menotne, Ala.: E. T. Brown; Hal Howe; C. F. Parker.

Milford, La.: W. L. Walding; Jim Terrell.

Mystic, La.: L. F. Middleton 66; Pate Peavy 66; Sam Mitchell; E. E. Shaw; C. Gillion; B. L. Whitman; C. B. Gilland; J. W. Crawford 63.

Merryville, La.: S. W. Rogers; Robert Allen; W. E. Briggs; R. B. Brown; C. A. Estes 25; J. E. Stevenson; E. L. Calcote; A. J. Landry; S. B. Slayden; W. J. Hennigan; Jasper Rogers; Henry Ridley; Alex rodgers; D. McCorquadale; R. E. Williamson; A. J. Dunn; W. C. Lemley; R. J. Franklin; Calvin Gill; L. Stricdkland; Cook Frazer; A. B. Babin; Tede Dunn; A. Y. Young; H. A. Arledge; T. O. Wright; J. W. Wincy; C. T. Herford; J. L. Perkins; W. F. McKinney; J. T. Schwase; E. L. Burge; J. E. Hennigen; W. R. Briggs; John Dodd.

Newlin, La.: J. H. Watson; M. J. Dears; J. E. Brown; H. Arrington; John Conley; D. E. Slaydon; P. L. O'Conner.

Oakdale, La.: R. B. Johnson; M. W. Strother; W. A. Fussell; J. M. Davis.

Otis, La.: Jerry Smith; W. F. Chester; J. B. Gilbert; Bud Cedars; J. M. Delaney.

Pollock, La.: I. J. Chester; A. H. Brown; I. S. Blair; D. M. Howard; T. J. Linzy; C. F. Howard; B. Harkins; E. L. Roberts; J. J. Jones; Joe Moss; L. Stinson; T. L. Rader.

Provencal, La.: R. D. Tarver; S. L. Stinson; Hy Russell 35.

Phillips Bluff, La.: R. S. Crawford; Ivery Bushnell.

Pitkin, La.: H. M. Kennedy; V. Howard; F. A. Bass; W. R. Martin; L. Martin.

Rosepine, La.: J. R. Calcote 21; Hy White 21; G. E. Bailey 21; L. A. Burrow; P. Eastman; Frank Reeves; Tom Cooper; J. R. Cryor; Tom Green.

Rena, La.: C. J. Cobly; C. S. Gill.

Sour Lake, Tex.: I. T. Watson; W. H. Childress; R. Redman.

Salt Lake City, Utah: Ed. Rowan, 117 W. S. Temple St.; Wm. Smith, 44 2nd St.; Mike Carroll, 201 1-2 E 4th South St.; Virginia Stephen, Hyland Heights; J. Van Wormer, 117 W S Tem.; L[umber] U[nion] 69 I.W.W., 117 W S Tem.

Starks, La.: Wade Pool 36; Ed. Howard; S. P. Dunlap; C. M. Stewart; W. Howard; S. Doyle; R. E. Zoder; Levi Alberton; S. A. Berwick; Robert Clark; Reese Ashworth; G. W. Pool; M. Doyle; Alex Doyle; Lilie Drakes.

Simms, La.: R. M. Benart; S. W. Sanders; R. W. Benoit; W. Z. Youngblood; Burt Cooley; John Cooper; W. L. Haren; Corbet Perkins; W. S. Reece; D. C. Ward; N. B. Ashworth; E. L. Ashworth 23.

Seattle, Wash.: L[umber] U[nion] 432 I.W.W., 211 Occidental Ave. Rear; S. E. Seherain; Hans Skogan; H. Sutter; John Day; Frank R. Schleis; John Labay; Geo. Icke; C. R. Goss 64; Alfred Bell; Geo. Ganzwohl; Chas. Bernat 59; C. O. Linden; Fred Karichg 64; James Holmes; Mark Mosheik; Geo. Gute; A. Tisdale; Otto Peters; Wm. Roberts; F. S. Fisher; Thos. Lee; Geo Colmorgan; James Nolen 61; O. Bouchardo 35; H. Hixson 35; Lousi Monsen 61; J. H. Reynold 671; H. E. Grantham [proper address may be in Todd, Arkansas].

Tacoma, Wash.: J. F. Biscay, Box 92 R4; J. J. Czar, 110 S 16th St.; J. Osterberger, 1059 Commerce St.; TRUTH, 617 S Eye St.; WHY, 1423 S. Washington St.

Zwolle, La.: Lee Freeman; Brinkley Pitts; A. Y. Thompson; J. H. Ezernack; W. I. Parker; J. N. Errington; Frank Coney; Will Cloquitt.

Fullerton, La.: Louis Malone 39; W. N. Brewer 39.

Hamons, La.: Dock Haymons 39; Miss Lula Hogan; Bill Watson 39; A. B. Haymons 39; J. B. Beeson; C. L. Golman 39; Bert Golman 39; J. B. Turner 39; J. R. Haymons 39; Mary Watson 39; Henry Booth 39; E. T. Hall 39; J. J. Mathis 39; J. T. Swain 39; W. E. Powell 39; Cullen Haymons 39; Chas. Haymons 39; W. D. Davis 39; J. E. Swain 39; Robert Poe; G. A. Golman 39.

Leesville, La.: Elizabeth Beeson 39; A. J. James 39; C. F. Clorsner 39; H. B. Spear 25; W. V. Brister 36.

Hicks, La.: A. J. Knight 39; H. J. James 39; R. R. McCleod 39.

Boyce, La.: B. F. Weeks 39.

Kemona, Mo.: A. P. Casand 39.

Tioga, La.: A. N. Wilson 39; E. P. Shaws 38; Wesley Roberts 21.

Lake Charles, La.: Chris Di Carlo 39, 113 Mix St.; Leroy Simons 62, 1412 Commercial St.; D. Borels 36, 808 Shatuck St.

Bridesburgh, Pa.: P. J. Young 26, 2658 Orthodox St.

New Orleans, La.: E. R. Norgress 65, 4206 Carrollton Ave.; W. G. Turpel, 521 Julia St.; L. Dujarris, 3632 Annunciation St.; R.

Sheckton, 1011 Tchoupitoulas St.; L. Duplasir, 2035 Josephine St.; J. O'Neil, 1103 Carondelet St.; J. L. Christ, 8034 St. Chas. Ave.; Miss May Weems, 1401 Terpsichore St.; Eraste Vidrine, 335 Carondelet St.; J. J. Fineran, 520 S. Front St.; Frank Albers, 2435 Royal St.; Geo. Ingahm 36, 3720 Baudin St.; John P. Shorth 62, 515 N. Gayoso St.

Teloga, Ga.: Oscar Roberts 26.

Louisville, Ky.: R. Fitzpatrick 38, 2409 Brown St.; J. H. Logadan 38, 835 L 22nd St.; Zalton Yunger 38, 1837 Edenside Ave.

Provencal, La.: H. D. Rodgers 25.

Call, Tex.: A. L. Welters 32.

Butte, Mont.: R. A. Hultman 30, Care I.W.W. Hall, E. Park.

DeRidder, La.: T. J. Powers 21, RFD No. 1, Box 86; G. W. Stamps 62, RFD No. 90; C. S. Deeny, Box 171; T. Q. Davis 35; T. H. Deason 35.

Jena, La.: Ellen Stormes 33.

Grace, La.: Sallie Norton 33; Jack Smith 64.

Dry Prong, La.: J. A. DeWitt 54.

Bonweir, Tex.: H. Kellum 38; M. H. Davis 38; Mose Donaldson 38; S. Cyrus, care S. D. Cain.

Seattle, Wash.: C. E. Shaw 64, Box 911.

Kinder, La.: M. M. Bester 38.

Oberlin, La.: A. B. Richardson 39; A. T. Sanders 38; Henry Winn 38; W. T. Smith 38.

St. Paul, Minn.: L. V. Rjorkland 64, 640 Olive St.

Chicago, Ill.: F. F. Schmitt 63, 441 King St.

Port Alberni, B.C., Canada: T. Jicklin 63.

Albert Lea, Minn.: Art Hill 63, 22W Main St.

Pollock, La.: W. H. Single 64; M. T. Austin 38; W. T. Friday 38; J. J. Austin 38; Guss Chandler 38; Chas. Phillips 38; H. V. Calk 36.

Antonia, La.: J. W. Wooley 38; W. C. Price 68.

Ratcliff, Tex.: L. Masier 28; O. E. Dreman 35.

Many, La.: W. H. Fearson 34, RFD No. 1.

San Francisco, Cal.: P. S. Haley 61, 1338 Noe St.

Phillips Bluff, La.: C. Buller 38.

Quadrante, La.: B. J. Funderburk 35.

Wilda, La.: W. H. Turner 35.

Elton, La.: Bob Sarton 21.

Walnut Hill, La.: A. H. Baggett 61; E. R. Perkins 35.

Flora, La.: W. T. Beasley 61; E. T. Smith 61; J. W. Hall 61.

Gorum, La.: J. R. Cooley 22.

Shepherd, Tex.: W. A. Watley 21.

Bon Ami, La.: Sam Peppers; Ed. Rodgers.

Marshfield, Ore.: G. P. Spann, Box 633; Fred Hogan 35, 487 Commercial Ave.

- Cravens, La.: M. H. Willis; R. E. Strother; J. R. Strother; T. M. Johnson; J. W. Morgan; M. Bass.
- Pickering, La.: L. J. Thompson; W. N. Thompson.
- Dubach, La.: Louis Morris.
- Hineston, La.: S. H. Wallace 39.
- Singer, La.: H. Hyson 65.
- Starks, La.: V. Howard.
- Ketchikan, Alaska: Modern Methods.
- Bonweir, Tex.: H. M. Davis 36.
- Pineville, La.: B. F. Crawford 23, Box 226; J. W. Crawford 23, Box 226.
- Arkinder, Ark.: J. W. McDonald, RFD No. 1.
- Calvin, La.: J. M. McBride 62.
- Georgetown, La.: J. R. Jones 36; W. H. Westberry 36.
- Little Creek, La.: S. H. Hawthorne 36.
- Alexandria, La.: H. L. McAdams 62, care Terminal Hotel.
- Girard, Kan.: Appeal to Reason.
- New York City: Volne Listy, 217 E. 66th St.; Il Proletario, 149 W. 4th St.; Williard Northrop 22, 44 W. 76th St.
- Center Point, La.: S. T. Dupuis 60.
- Lawson, Ark.: L. T. Hedges 60.
- Votaw, Tex.: S. J. Williams 41; E. McCormack 35.
- Pickayune, Miss.: Ervin Lirds 21.
- Carmenia, La.: W. H. McElveen 36.
- Rebecca, Tex.: Lee Ferguson 62.
- Saratoga, Tex.: L. F. Rigby 36.
- Bleakwood, Tex.: Lee Harris 56.
- Elyria, Ohio: J. L. Judy 35, Ely Block.
- Blewett, La.: W. H. Murrill 61.
- Simmons, La.: Tom Young 23.
- Jasper, Tex.: Sid Atkins 35.
- Saginaw, Mich.: Daniel Crane 62, 505 N. Fayette St.
- Goldonna, La.: Ed. Coux 60; J. A. Brantley 60.
- Lufkin, Tex.: J. L. Driver 22; P. L. Fuller, RFD No. 2.
- DeQuincy, La.: R. M. Malone 35.
- Leesmill, Tex.: J. A. Rutherford 36.
- Burkville, Tex.: M. Hall 61.
- Cora, La.: Ivy Kemp 35.
- Shively, Cal.: Chas Panelatti 61, Humboldt Co.
- Nacogdoches, Tex.: Joe Thompson 40, care Frost-Johnson Lbr. Co.
- New Edinburgh, Ark.: W. B. Ward 60.
- Walnut Ridge, Ark.: F. S. Pinchback 60.
- Puenta, Cal.: Milam Pease 60, Box 4-C.

34. McKenna, Wash.: R. D. Cruikshank 34, Box 134; Donald Black
Victorville, Cal.: A. R. Tucker 34, Box 163.⁴⁰

M. L. Alexander to Members, SLOA:

"Our files [on December 15, 1911] have approximately twenty-two thousand names and we are able, in eighty per cent of the cases, to give the records of the men inquired for." Alexander was pleased that more mills had been asking for confidential information on workers and giving the black list "regular daily reports of all men employed."⁴¹

APPENDIX 22: Circular to "Colored Wage Workers," December 1911

Officers of the Grand Lodge, BTW, to Members:

TO THE COLORED WAGE WORKERS OF LOUISIANA AND TEXAS

There is a move on foot among the Saw Mills that have been shut down to fool up all the negroes who would listen to them and pit them against the poor, unfortunate white men who have been kicked out of their jobs, because of their affiliation with the Brotherhood of Timber Workers. Now, we have this to say to you colored people: If you allow yourselves to be made tools of by these men who hold out flattering promises of good wages and good treatment, you are [d]oing the very thing that our organization proposed to prevent and forever put a stop to.

The Brotherhood of Timber Workers is the only order that has been organized in the South that takes the negroes and protects him and his family along with the white wage worker and his family on an

⁴⁰ "Subscribers to The Lumberjack," c1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA. No effort has been made to correct errors in the list. Numbers following personal names are not explained in the text, although it seems they represent some sort of mailing code devised by Covington Hall, the editor.

⁴¹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, December 15, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 33, File 718, WHMC, UM.

industrial basis. Thousands of your race have taken advantage of the opportunity afforded by our order and have loyally performed their part. Are you one of those members, or are you one of those fellows who had no thought of the future? If you go in and take the jobs that have been wrongfully taken away from the honest and hard working white and colored men, you will not only assist these mill men to keep up their system of low wages and abuses unmentionable, but you will also assist them in whipping the many thousands of white men and men of your own color and race. Of course, it is impossible for these mill men even with your assistance to ever completely whip these men who have stood up so nobly for their good and good of all wage workers, and there is absolutely no chance for them to ever down the order which we have organized, but as long as you suffer yourselves to be made tools of, the mill owners will continue their unfair and foolish fight [sic] against us. Let us plead with you to get in and help us in this great fight for you and yours. If you cannot do this in the name of all that is high [sic] and holy, do not be misled and be made tools of.⁴²

APPENDIX 23: SLOA Manager's Communications, May 1912

M. L. Alexander to C. D. Johnson:

We are not discouraged at the outlook, however, in fact, we believe that we are now in better position to cope with the situation than heretofore as we now know exactly where we stand and what we have to go up against. We are also inclined to believe that when the representatives of the lodges return to their homes and begin to think over the situation they will find that they were up against a "brace game" to a considerable extent. They are not strong, either numerically or financially; fifty per cent of their members are not connected with the operation of the mills and many of those who were induced to pay dues in the extra effort to make a showing at this convention will soon drop out. In addition to this, we believe that the leaders feel that they cannot afford to take the chance of ordering a strike at this time, there are too many idle people and the odds are too great against them. The time has come, however, when the operators

⁴² M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, December 26, 1911, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box j33, File 721, WHMC, UM.

should stand solidly together and if they will do so we feel safe in predicting a successful finale.⁴³

M. L. Alexander to Members, SLOA:

...it is quite possible that demands will be made by individual locals as some of them are extremely anxious to show themselves and their strength, we therefore caution our correspondents to be on the alert and to keep actively in touch with this office, assuring you that we are entirely at your service and are glad to give you any information desired, when called upon.⁴⁴

Clarence Slagle to M. L. Alexander:

[I] would have likely accepted your invitation to have gone to Alexandria and listened to what the socialistic agitator, Wm D. Haywood, had to say; but probably it would have done me no good in the end except to have probably made us a little more uneasy.⁴⁵

LIST OF LOCAL LODGES REPRESENTED

BY DELEGATES AT THE CONVENTION

Local No. 208 Anacoco	Delegate, J. M. Conerley.
Local No. 291 Antonia	" None.
Local No. 330 Alberta	" C. J. Boshop.
Local No. 250 Bentley	" W. H. Scott.
Local No. 328 Cooper	" S. C. Smith
Local No. 204 Blewitt	" E. L. Ashworth
Local No. 329 Crawford	" J. B. Gilbert
Local No. 223 DeRidder	" Ed Dyess, F. Fisher, L. Zeban.
Local No. 224 Dido	" G. Carroll.

⁴³ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, May 9, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 756, WHMC, UM.

⁴⁴ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to All Members, May 11, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; copy in LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 756, WHMC, UM.

⁴⁵ C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, May 13, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 756, WHMC, UM.

Local No. 235 Flora	" J. W. Hall.
Local No. 207 Fuller[ton]	" Jas. Lacase.
Local No. 214 Grace	" O. A. Morgan.
Local No. 255 Georgetown	" J. R. Jones.
Local No. 376 Galbraith	" J. W. Cotton.
Local No. 412 Indianvillage	" T. J. Bevil.
Local No. 225 Jena	" B. R. Bright.
Local No. 215 Kinder	" M. J. Perkins.
Local No. 235 Lotus	" John Beasley
Local No. 218 Merryville	" Ed Lehman, M. Blumberg.
Local No. 243 Newlin	" George Harper.
Local No. 219 Oakdale	" S. W. White.
Local No. 297 Oberlin	" G. Lanier.
Local No. 274 Osborn	" C. A. Johnson, C. C. Cloud.
Local No. 259 Provencal	" W. H. Voigt.
Local No. 272 Pitkin	" Lewis Lacaze.
Local No. 254 Pollock	" A. H. Brown.
Local No. 374 Paul	" C. N. East.
Local No. 302 Rose Pine	" P. Eastman.
Local No. 329 Starks	" J. H. Hollingsworth.
Local No. 340 Shady Grove	" O. N. Simmons.
Local No. 305 Sartori	" T. W. Hill.
Local No. 357 Thickett, Tex.	" W. R. Lodin.
Local No. 228 Tioga	" H. Roberts.
Local No. 365 West Lake	" Ezra Moss.
Local No. 330 Zwolle	" J. H. Ezernack.
Local No. 414 Zion	" Z. E. Armstead.
Local No. 208 Woodworth	" J. E. Tekell.
Local No. 411 Stay	" C. W. Burton.
Local No. 409 Sulphur	" E. W. Vargas.
Local No. 203 Field	" E. E. Shaw.

LIST OF COLORED LODGES REPRESENTED AT CONVENTION.

Local No. 291 1-2	Atlanta, La.	Delegate	Jas. Bonier.
Local No. 358 1-2	Stay, La.	"	A. Powell.
Local No. 391 1-2	Lake Charles	"	D. R. Gordan.
Local No. 218	Merryville	"	W. M. Henry.
Local No. 342	Lena Station	"	A. T. Burnes.
Local No. 306 1-2	Converse	"	H. W. Belton.

Apparently only one Texas lodge sent a delegate, and the six locals designated for Negroes ["1-2" indicated a local lodge for black workers] does not agree with later assertions that half the members of the BTW were Negroes. In fact, the union did not attract the larger part of its members to its convention, probably because of the expense involved but more important was the inherent danger for the worker who showed up at the union hall, because he would surely lose his job once his presence were known by his employer; Alexander would see to that.⁴⁶

APPENDIX 24: SLOA Membership, August 1912

LIST OF MEMBERS⁴⁷ OF THE Southern Lumber Operators' Association St. Louis, Mo., August 10, 1912

ARKANSAS

Arkansas Lumber Co.	Warren, Ark.
Arkansas Short Leaf Lumber Co.	Pine Bluff, Ark.
Bradley Lumber Co.	Warren, Ark.
Eagle Lumber Co.	Eagle Mills, Ark.
Fordyce Lumber Co.	Fordyce, Ark.
Freeman-Smith Lumber Co.	Millville, Ark.
Gates Lumber Co.	Wilmar, Ark.
Graysonia-Nashville Lumber Co.	Nashville, Ark.
Graysonia-Nashville Lumber Co.	Graysonia, Ark.
Logan Lumber Co.	Texarkana, Ark.
A. J. Neimeyer Lumber Co.	Little Rock, Ark.
Southern Lumber Co.	Warren, Ark.

⁴⁶ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, May 13, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 757, WHMC, UM.

⁴⁷ "List of Members of the Southern Lumber Operators' Association," St. Louis, Missouri, August 10, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Union Sawmill Co.	Huttig, Ark.
Louis Werner Sawmill Co.	Mills, Griffin & Stroud, Ark.
General Office	St. Louis, Mo.
Wisconsin & Arkansas Lumber Co.	Malvern, Ark.

TEXAS

Anglina County Lumber Co.	Keltys, Tex.
Carter-Kelley Lumber Co.	Manning, Tex.
Fidelity Lumber Co.	Doucette, Tex.
Foster Lumber Co., Mill	Fostoria, Tex.
General Office	Kansas City, Mo.
Frost-Johnson Lumber Co.	Nacogdoches, Tex.
Kirby Lumber Co. (13 Mills)	Houston, Tex.
Louisiana & Texas Lbr. Co., Mill	Ratcliffe, Tex.
General Office	Kansas City, Mo.
Lufkin Land & Lumber Co.	Lufkin, Tex.
Thompson & Ford Lumber Co.	Grayburg, Tex.
Thompson & Tucker Lumber Co.	New Willard, Tex.
West Lumber Co., Mills	Onalaska and Westville, Tex.
General Office	Houston, Tex.
Waterman Lumber & Supply Co.	Waterman, Tex.

LOUISIANA

Alexandria Lumber Co.	Alexandria, La.
J. F. Ball & Bro., Mill	Pollock, La.
General Office	Alexandria, La.
J. A. Bentley Lumber Co.	Zimmerman, La.
Big Pine Lumber Co.	Colfax, La.
S. H. Bolinger & Co., Mill	Bolinger, La.
General Office	Shreveport, La.
Bowie Lumber Co., Ltd. Mills at Des Allemands, Ludwine, St. James and Bowie, La.	
Brown Lumber Co.	Shamrock, La.
W. A. Brown Lumber Co.	Bannister, La.
Bucley Lumber Co.	Yelgar, La.
Calcasieu Long Leaf Lumber Co.	Lake Charles, La.
Central Coal & Coke Co., Mills	Neame and Carson, La.
General Office	Kansas City, Mo.
Cotten Bros. Cypress Co.	Morgan City, La.
Cumming-Moberly Cypress Co.	Moberly, La.
Crowell & Spencer Lumber Co.	Long Leaf, La.
Erastus Cole	Longville, La.
Davis Bros. Lumber Co.	Ansley, La.
Enterprise Lumber Co.	Alexandria, La.
Frost-Johnson Lumber Co.	Alden Bridge, La.

Frost-Johnson Lumber Co.	Campti, La.
Frost-Johnson Lumber Co.	Mansfield, La.
Frost-Johnson Lumber Co.	Montrose, La.
Frost-Johnson Lumber Co.	Noble, La.
Galloway Lumber Co.	Grabow, La.
Germain & Boyd Lumber Co.	Atlanta, La.
Globe Lumber Co., Ltd.	Yellow Pine, La.
Gulf Lumber Co.	Fullerton, La.
Gulf Lumber Co.	Stables, La.
Hodge Fence & Lumber Co.	Lake Charles, La.
J. C. Hill Lumber Co., Mill	Tillman, La.
General Office	Houston, Tex.
Hudson River Lumber Co.	DeRidder, La.
Industrial Lumber Co.	Oakdale and Elizabeth, La.
Jeanerette Lumber & Shingle Co.	Jeanerette, La.
King Ryder Lumber Co.	Bonami, La.
Krause & Managan Lumber Co.	West Lake, La.
Little River Lumber Co.	Manistee, La.
Lock, Moore & Co.	West Lake, La.
Longville Lumber Co.	Longville, La.
Louisiana Central Lumber Co.	Standard and Clarks, La.
Louisiana Long Leaf Lumber Co.	Victoria and Fisher, La.
McCarroll Lumber Co., Ltd.	Holden, La.
National Lumber & Creosoting Co, Mill	Galbraith, La.
General Office	Texarkana, Tex.
Peavy-Byrnes Lumber Co., Mill	Kinder, La.
General Office	Shreveport, La.
W. R. Pickering Lumber Co.	Barham, Cravens and Pickering La.
General Office	Kansas City, Mo.
Rapides Lumber Co.	Woodworth, La.
Sabine Lumber Co.	Zwolle, La.
J. W. Sanders	DeRidder, La.
St. Louis Cypress Co.	Houma, La.
Tremont Lumber Co., Mills	Eros, Rochelle and Jonesboro, La.
General Office	Winnfield, La.
Urania Lumber Co.	Urania, La.
F. B. Williams Cypress Co.	Patterson, La.
Thos. C. Wingate	Leesville, La.
Wyatt Lumber Co.	Wyatt, La.

ALABAMA

E. W. Gates Lumber Co.	Yellow Pine, Ala.
Kaul Lumber Co.	Birmingham, Ala.

OKLAHOMA

Dierks Lumber & Coal Co., Mill Bismark, Okla.
 General Office Kansas City, Mo.

FLORIDA

Bay Point Mill Co. Pinewood, Fla.

ADDED SINCE AUGUST 10TH, 1912

Whitecastle Lumber and Shingle Co., Ltd. Whitecastle, La.
 St. Bernard Cypress Co. Arabi P.O., La.
 Wausau Southern Lumber Co. Laurel, Miss.

APPENDIX 25: IWW Wage Scale, September 1912

WAGE SCALE⁴⁸

Established by the National Industrial Union of Forest and Lumber
 Workers, I.W.W. in the Northwest.

Head Filer	-----	\$8.00	per day & up
Second Filer, doing bench work	-----	6.00	" " " "
Filer's Helpers	-----	4.00	" " " "
Blacksmith	-----	3.50	" " " "
Blacksmith Helper	-----	2.75	" " " "
Horse Shoer	-----	3.50	" " " "
Pipe Fitters	-----	3.00	" " " "
[Block] Setters	-----	3.50	" " " "
Carriage rider head man	-----	3.00	" " " "
Carriage men tail men	-----	2.75	" " " "
Edgermen	-----	4.25	" " " "
Trimmermen	-----	4.25	" " " "
Tremmer [sic] leader	-----	3.00	" " " "
Re-sawyers	-----	3.50	" " " "
Rip sawyers	-----	3.00	" " " "
Gang sawyers	-----	3.50	" " " "
Oilers	-----	3.00	" " " "

⁴⁸ "Wage Scale Established by the National Industrial Union of Forest and Lumber Workers, I.W.W. in the Northwest," August 15, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 36, File 787, WHMC, UM.

Scalers -----	3.00	"	"	"	"
Timber shuts men -----	3.00	"	"	"	"
Edger table men:					
4 men at -----	2.75	"	"	"	"
6 men at -----	2.50	"	"	"	"
1 Clean up man at -----	3.50	"	"	"	"
2 Clean up men at -----	2.50	"	"	"	"

The ONE BIG UNION did it there; the ONE BIG UNION will do it here.
Wise up! get busy; organize, use your brains as well as your hands on the job.

Moral:-

Join the Brotherhood of Timber Workers to-day.⁴⁹

M. L. Alexander to M. L. Fleishel and the Louisiana Board of Governors, SLOA:

I beg to advise that I was called to Baton Rouge yesterday by the Governor, who much to my surprise, tendered me the Presidency of the Conservation Commission of the State of Louisiana. This Commission formed under a recent act of the Legislature, consisting of three members, has entire control of all the natural resources of the state, both as to their fisheries, oyster beds, game preserves, minerals, forestry, etc. The position is one of honor and trust, in addition to which, it carries with it a very handsome salary. This honor was totally unsolicited on my part, and I first declined to consider it at all, however, upon the urgent request of the Governor, I finally accepted the position, provided I should have ample time to so adjust the affairs of this office as to not jeopardize its interest in any way, all of which I desire to discuss with the Board at their next meeting. I, therefore, trust that you will consider that the interest of the Association is entirely safe in my hands for sometime to come and that I will make my sacrifice rather than see them jeopardized.

In my discussion with the Governor, I took advantage of the opportunity to thoroughly discuss the labor situation, its causes, the character of the men who are the leaders in the agitation that is going on, and also the work of this Association and its object; and I feel confident in saying that the Governor is not antagonistic to the Saw Mill interest and that his only desire is to deal fairly and impartially in all questions of public policy that come under his jurisdiction.

⁴⁹ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, August 15, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 36, File 787, WHMC, UM; copy in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

I believe that my conference with him has done much to disabuse his mind of certain false impressions that he had, and convincing him that it was the desire of the Saw Mill interest of the State to do everything that they consistently could to better the condition of their employees.⁵⁰

APPENDIX 26: Covington Hall's Speaking Style

Covington Hall at a mass meeting in Lafayette Square in New Orleans on the evening of July 9, 1912. "Socialists and labor unionists," according to The Daily Picayune, condemned the lumbermen for killing members of the BTW at Grabeau and called on Governor Luther Hall to send the attorney general to investigate the causes of the conflict. About 200 men and "a sprinkling of women and the curious" in the audience were "largely unsympathetic." Enthusiastic responses to "the spellbinders" came from the audience close to the platform. John Breen, president of the Louisiana State Federation of Labor and secretary of Typographical Union No. 17 of New Orleans, presided. Breen complained that New Orleans newsmen had sneered at the BTW as "socialistic, thus trying to belittle it." The union, he declared, had 18,000 members in the South "'despite the ultimatum of the Southern Sawmill Operators' Association at a recent meeting that the [union] had been effectively crushed." He denied that the BTW wanted bloodshed or violence, "'but in view of such conditions as existed there we believe that almost anything should be resorted to if thereby an improvement might be brought about." Hall said conditions in the piney woods were "infamous." Based on his

⁵⁰ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to M. L. Fleishel, Fullerton, Louisiana, August 15, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 36, File 787, WHMC, UM; copy in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

recent tour of the district, he asserted that "there are posted signs which declare the premises private property ... and those signs say: 'Keep Off.' And murderous gun men make you keep off if your presence is not wanted or you are suspected of being a unionist or a Socialist." He called sawmill owners thieves, murderers and hypocrites, and asked, "Who can help being a criminal under such conditions as exist in those places." Hall, The Daily Picayune reporter explained, "couched" his talk:

in terms at a level with the understanding of his audience, and at times those nearest him would interrupt him with questions and exclamations. He was given an ovation at the conclusion of his address when he declared:

"Let us all stand together in this fight. You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have your liberty to gain."

Two other speakers - T. J. O'Hara, a member of the Typographical Union, and T. J. Brennan, described as a "Socialist" - addressed the crowd. The audience then raised "a small contribution" for the defense of A. L. Emerson and other unionists charged with murder in the incident. The mass meeting adopted a resolution, likely drafted by Hall, which gives in rather stilted terms the union side of the argument. Ironically, the resolution accepted the term, riot, to describe the Grabeau fight:

On the 7th day of July, 1912, a riot occurred at Grabow, La., while the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, exercising their rights under the laws of even Louisiana, were holding a public meeting in the interest of their cause.

The meeting was being held on the public road directly in front of the office of the Galloway Lumber Company, and hardly had President Emerson, of the brotherhood, begun his address when the union men were fired upon from the office of the company, and before the firing ceased three men had been killed outright, from three to five mortally wounded and fifteen to twenty more or less seriously wounded.

The deplorable affair is the direct outcome of the methods and practices used by the Southern Lumber Operators' Association to drive all union labor out of its mills by establishing a reign of terror throughout the

Southern forests, and could not have occurred had Governor Hall, of Louisiana, heeded the protest made to him against the brutal acts of the association and its gun men by the last convention of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers' held in Alexandria, La., May 6-10, 1912.

Immediately following the trouble at Grabow, President A. L. Emerson, of the brotherhood, was arrested, taken to Lake Charles, denied bail and placed in prison, where he is now being held practically 'incommunicado,' as he is being denied the right to 'talk for publication,' this while the Southern Lumber Operators' Association is filling the press with lies about him, the brotherhood, its friends and sympathizers, the cause of the present trouble, which is due entirely to the inhuman conditions existing in the association's camps and mills and to no other cause.

With President Emerson, ten or twelve other union men were arrested and jailed and the press reports state that other and wholesale arrests are expected at any hour.

Therefore, be it resolved, That against all this, the murder, the jailing, the silencing of union men under arrest and the barbarous system now prevailing throughout the timber belt of this state and the entire South, we, workers and friends of justice of the city of New Orleans, in mass meeting assembled this 9th day of July, 1912, do solemnly protest and call upon the authorities of the state and nation to at once begin a thorough investigation of conditions existing in the Southern lumber industry.

Be it further resolved, That copies of this protest be sent to the president of the United States, to the governor of Louisiana, to Congressman Victor L. Berger, and to the labor, Socialist and independent press throughout the country; and

Be it lastly resolved, That we assure the Brotherhood of Timber Workers and its imprisoned members and president of our sympathy and aid in their present hour of trial, and pledge to them our support and help in the splendid fight they are making against peonage, tyranny and injustice.

M. L. Alexander collected copies of press reports of the Grabeau incident and circulated them among mill managers in the area. From the headline of the news story, "Haywood's Mass Meeting Small," it seems that Hall expected Big Bill Haywood to

attend the mass meeting, but by July 9, 1912, Haywood had left Louisiana, never to return.⁵¹

APPENDIX 28: Industry Rhetoric, July 1912

William D. Haywood of the IWW left immediately for Chicago, it was charged, to avoid the trouble at Grabeau, Louisiana. Back in his office, he set to work on articles on Southern labor conditions for three of the nation's most prestigious general magazines, Collier's Weekly, Leslie's Weekly, and Pearson's Magazine, all published in New York. Willard C. Howe, editor of the American Lumberman, published in Chicago, had received a warning of the impending publication of Haywood's projects. He editorialized bitterly against Haywood, and suggested to lumbermen that they should protest the proposed articles to the editors of the New York magazines:

LABOR V. ANARCHY

Events of the last week have demonstrated that employers of mill and woods labor in the South are face to face with a dangerous problem. Rarely if ever in the industrial history of the country have labor disputes been signalized by a display of self restraint even in the logical endorsement of just demands. Nearly always some harum-scarum element is introduced into the controversy - often, it is true, without the knowledge or consent of those whose interests are at stake - with the result that any sort of labor disturbance - strike, lockout or whatever it be - is generally regarded as labor "trouble." But in the present instance, arising from the activity of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, the Industrial Workers of the World, Emerson, Smith, Haywood et al., the word "trouble" should be written in large capitals. For trouble is the basis - the keynote - of their operations. Haywood, in an interview that appears on page 28 of

⁵¹ "Haywood's Mass Meeting Small," The Daily Picayune, New Orleans, Louisiana, Wednesday, July 10, 1912, copy in LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 774, WHMC, UM, and in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

this issue, talks of "war measures." The "war" he describes is as honorable as the "war" between citizen and highwayman - where the citizen's watch and pocketbook are the issues. The Brotherhood of Timber Workers has been telling its recruits that they are the real owners of the timber and mills; that they, by their exertions, are producing the wealth of the lumber industry and are entitled to the proceeds. In one case it is a pocketbook and a watch; in the other a sawmill and some timber.

Organized labor - represented by the American Federation of Labor and affiliated bodies - looks on these metamorphic "organizations" with disfavor if not disgust. There is no danger of any affiliation that will enlist in their aid any fraction of real unionism. But men who play with dynamite, guns and blackjacks are dangerous and should be guarded against accordingly.

Fortunately the sawmill and timber workers of the South are, in the majority, men who can and will think for themselves. Every mill or camp has its quota of men who will reject the false leadership of such characters as Haywood and his associates. In many of these men loyalty is engrained so thoroughly that unless held in check they are apt to go to extremes, believing that they are acting in the interest of their employers. But their loyalty is a tremendous asset at a time like the present.

Every operator in affected or threatened territory should know the attitude of every man in his employ. Loyalty should bring appreciation and suitable reward. Disloyalty should serve as the signal for stern measures, that this festering sore in American labor may be healed or excised before fearful consequences ensue.

Wherever this troubles [sic] arise - whether in West or South - the principles involved are the same. The issue lies between legitimate, cleanly conducted industry on the one side, and cowardly greed, disregard or law and utter lack of principle on the other. Every decent citizen knows where he belongs.⁵²

APPENDIX 28: News Report of Indictment, July 1912

On Monday, July 22, 1912, the Calcasieu Parish Grand Jury accepted the evidence presented by Alexander's secret agents and brought in 65 indictments against

⁵² Willard C. Howe, Chicago, Illinois, to Subscribers, July 13, 1912; "Labor V. Anarchy," The American Lumberman, July 13, 1912, Reprint, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 775, WHMC, UM.

Emerson and his associates for murder and highway robbery; it found no true bill against either John or Paul Galloway.⁵³ The correspondent for The St. Louis Republic filed a dispatch when the Grand Jury returned the indictments in District Court in Lake Charles⁵⁴:

UNION TIMBER MEN INDICTED.

Lake Charles, La. July 23d - That members of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers were entirely at fault in the riot at Grabow July 7th, in which three men were killed and more than thirty wounded, and that the operators and employes of the Galloway Lumber Company acted in lawful defense of its rights, is the deduction [inference] to be drawn from the report of the Grand Jury which investigated the labor war.

Indictments for murder were returned against an unknown number of union men. Twenty-three union men now in jail were indicted.

Among those indicted on charge of murder is A. L. Emerson, President of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers.⁵⁵

APPENDIX 29: SLOA Executive Committee, 1912

The SLOA took the opportunity to make a particular effort to recruit members, dwelling especially on cypress lumber mills. It also announced its new slate of officers,⁵⁶ who actually changed very little:

⁵³ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, July 23, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁴ W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, to O. W. Fisher, Bozeman, Montana, and J. B. White, Kansas City, Missouri, July 24, 1912, Box 8976-84, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁵ SLOA, St. Louis, to Manufacturers of Lumber, July 25, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁵⁶ SLOA, St. Louis, Missouri, to Manufacturers of Lumber, July 25, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

OFFICERS:

President	C. D. Johnson	StLouis, Mo.
First Vice-Pres.	W. A. Pickering	Kansas Cityh, Mo.
Second Vice-Pres.	J. H. Kirby	Houston, Tex.
Treasurer	Geo. K. Smith	StLouis, Mo.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

C. D. Johnson	Chairman (Ex Officio)
John H > Kirby	
S. J. Carpenter	
C. B. Sweet	
C. S. Keith	

BOARD OF GOVERNORS:Arkansas

H. H. Foster, Chairman	Malvern, Ark.
C. J. Mansfield	Warren, Ark.
A. C. Ramsey	Nashville, Ark.
J. W. Martin	Pine Bluff, Ark.

Louisiana

M. L. Fleishel, Chairman	Fullerton, La.
J. H. Morrison	Carson, La.
L. F. Haslam	Pickering, La.
S. T. Woodring	Lake Charles, La.
C. E. Slagle	Clarks, La.
R. M. Hallowell	Elizabeth, La.

Texas

B. F. Bonner, Chairman	Houston, Tex.
Howard Davis	Kennard, Tex.
J. Lewis Thompson	Houston, Tex.
S. M. Morris	Lufkin, Tex.
C. P. Myer	Houston, Tex. ⁵⁷

APPENDIX 30: YPMA Standing Committees, 1912

The YPMA, meeting in Chicago for its mid-year convention, named its standing committees for 1912:

⁵⁷ M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

Standing Committees for 1912

ADVERTISING COMMITTEE

J. B. White, Chairman	Kansas City, Mo.
S. J. Carpenter	Winnfield, La.
H. H. Foster	Malvern, Ark.
C. D. Johnson	StLouis, Mo.
S. H. Fullerton	"
I. H. Fetty	Kansas City, Mo.
Hoxie Thompson	Trinity, Tex.
O. L. Benway	Hammond, La.
John L. Kaul	Birmingham, Ala.
M. B. Nelson	Kansas City, Mo.

COMMITTEE ON GRADES AND SIZES.

J. W. Martin, Chairman	Pine Bluff, Ark.
Eli Weiner	Keltys, Tex.
John L. Kaul	Brimingham, Ala.
F. R. Gilchrist	Laurel, Miss.
W. T. Murray	Fordyce, Ark.
A. W. Ranney	Century, Fla.
T. J. Warren	StLouis, Mo.
C. E. Slagle	Clarks, La.

The 286 mills reporting for April 1912 showed an excess of sales and shipments above the mill cut of 35.5 million bf.⁵⁸

APPENDIX 31: John Henry Kirby's Rhetoric

The staff correspondent of The New Orleans Times-Democrat began his tour of the piney woods on the first of August 1912. He heard John Henry Kirby, speaking to the employees of Kay Ell's Call, Texas, sawmill, justify the association's actions:

We never ask a man in our employ nor one who applies to us for work whether he is a Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian or Catholic, nor

⁵⁸ George K. Smith, St. Louis, Missouri, to All Members, YPMA, May 28, 1912, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 35, File 762, WHMC, UM.

whether he is an atheist, a Jew or a Christian, nor whether he is a Democrat or a Republican, nor whether he is a Mason, Odd Fellow, Knight of Pythias, Woodman, Elk or Hoo Hoo, nor whether he is or ever has been a member of a labor organization or in sympathy with organized labor, but we do ask whether he is a B.T.W. or an I.W.W. If he is, we have nothing he can do. We recognize his right to join this organization if that is his wish, but we claim for ourselves the equal right to protect those in our employ and guard the industry in which they are engaged.

The man who puts force above the Golden Rule, dynamite above the law and murder above the Christian religion, has nothing in common with us, has nothing in common with the Christian people we employ, has nothing in common with the lawabiding communities [sic] in which our business is conducted, and we do not propose to inflict upon these communities and these people, who have a right to expect us to conduct our affairs in an orderly, lawabiding and civilized way under the tents [sic] of the Golden Rule, any man or set of men who subscribe to the preachings and teachings of the I.W.W. We will close down our mills and retire from activity before we will destroy the peace, safety, order and tranquility of the communities in which we do business and before we will expose our loyal and lawabiding men to personal violence and death.

The Times-Democrat printed a sample of Hall's speaking style:

One of the broken sticks the capitalist class has been leaning on for years was called the "conservatism of the South." Time after time the world has been confidently assured that, if the worse came to the worst, the South could be depended upon to furnish soldiers enough to keep the ship of piracy afloat; that the "old American stock" was "purer in the South than in any other section of the country," and that that stock "would never stand for the subversive ideas of Socialism," but the mother of all progress, economic necessity, has not only shattered this stick to dust, but is rapidly tearing to pieces the great bugaboo of "nigger domination," as well.

They are a strange people, these Christians working in the forest of the South. They say "faith without works is no good," and their motto is the motto of Gen. Andrew Jackson: "Pray to God, but keep your powder dry."

The bosses are, as usual, charging the union with being responsible for everything that happens, and that many strange and weird things are happening throughout the timber belt none can gainsay. For instance, the log cutters made a demand for 60 cents per thousand feet and when it was refused all special bills [of lumber] in some mysterious manner ended up three inches short and the work had to be done all over again; trees began to show a tendency for absorbing spikes into their interior, against which

the saws protested by going up in the air; then in backing up the log carts, the nuts would run off the [axle] spindles and fall in the creeks and other places where they could never be found, so that everything on the job had to come to a standstill; the flanges on the [railroad] car wheels break off on the curves and all the logs go back into the woods instead of going to the mills as they should⁵⁹

APPENDIX 32: The Corvée, 1912

C. E. Slagle to B. L. Anders:

I have your letter of October 15th advising that our men can be released from road duty at \$2.00 per capita. Our pay roll man at our camp has been instructed to see the men and secure an order for this charge. I enclose herewith a copy of the order and the names of those who are willing to pay this road tax. There are two or three of the men who are not willing to pay this road tax; and I would, therefore, suggest that you see our man at the camp and secure the names of these parties, and if you are satisfied that they are subject to this road duty, they can either instruct our pay roll man to charge them with the \$2.00, or you can give them proper notice and force them to work the roads or pay you direct. Please advise if you will be willing to do this and we will send you check at any time for the \$40.00, which we have charged to those of our employees who are willing to pay this tax as showed [sic] by the enclosed order.

The 20 men who agreed to pay the tax apparently signed the "deduct" order in the same hand:

We the undersigned ask that we be charged \$2.00 each in the month of Oct. Same to be credited to the Public Road Funds of Ward 5 in payment of our Road Tax for the year 1912, as per Special arrangements with B. L. Anders Road Supervisor of Ward 5

Chas Hickman	2.00
C. C. Green	2.00
Dell Murphy	2.00

⁵⁹ "Blacklist is Alleged; Sawmill owners Deny the Charge of Union," The New Orleans Times-Democrat, Wednesday, August 7, 1912, clipping in Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

	921
W. S. Young	2.00
G. P. Horton	2.00
O. Chandler	2.00
F. M. Helton	2.00
Jno Sanford	2.00
Dock Rainwater	2.00
C. C. Bonnette	2.00
L. W. Granthan	2.00
J. A. Thomas	2.00
B. I. Womack	2.00
C. H. King	2.00
Al Ady	2.00
Geo Rogers	2.00
J. A. Givans	2.00
E. S. Johnson	2.00
D. H. Weaver	2.00
C. A. Meredith	2.00

\$40.00⁶⁰

⁶⁰ P. A. Bloomer, Fisher, Louisiana, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, September 16, 1912; C. E. Slagle, Clarks, Louisiana, to Warren, October 10 and 31, 1912; Slagle to Warren, November 1, 5, and 21, 1912; Warren to Slagle, November 13, 1912, Box 89; M. Newman, Shreveport, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, Fisher, Louisiana, November 15, 1912; J. P. Towery, Zwolle, Louisiana, to the 4 L Company, October 1, 1912, Box 11267-53; B. H. Smith, Longville, Louisiana, November 26, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA; Slagle to B. L. Anders, Chatham, Louisiana, October 16, 1912, File 809; Slagle to Union Saw Mill Company, Huttig, Arkansas, November 5, 1912, File 816; Slagle to H. P. Minard, Standard, Louisiana, File 818; L. F. Haslam, Pickering, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, November 30, 1912, File 824, LCLC Records, No. 3660, Box 37, WHMC, UM.

A detailed report showing amount of assessment rendered by each of the following locals up to September 1, 1912.

			Amount forward		462.95
Alberta, La	No. 330	\$18.75	Merryville, La.	No. 218	\$37.80
Alexandria	272	21.50	Many	232	1.00
Bonweir, Tx	312	16.00	Montrose	416	7.00
Bancroft, La	276	15.90	Newlin	243	4.00
Blewitt, La	204	18.80	Oakdale	219	27.00
Derring, Tx	369	1.00	Osborn	274	23.55
Crawford	413	5.00	Oberlin	297	14.00
Converse	306	1.75	Provencal	259	16.00
Cravens	206	7.75	Paul	374	13.00
DeRidder	223	92.75	Pollock	254	9.50
Dido	244	27.00	Powell Camp	430	2.00
Erin, Tex	322	10.50	Phillips	412	31.00
Fulton, La	325	8.25	Rose Pine	302	25.35
Feilds	203	36.00	Shady Grove	340	28.85
Flora	235	30.00	Six Mile	288	42.35
Grace	214	19.50	Starks	329	23.60
Gorum	366	16.35	Stay	358	15.00
Galbraith	376	5.00	Saratori	305	11.00
Hornbeck	233	27.50	South Side	419	1.00
Huntington	403	3.10	Thickett, Tex	257	24.00
Ike, La	417	26.50	Tioga, La	228	9.00
Jena	225	11.00	Woodworth	208	14.90
Kinder	215	19.05	Wilda	354	10.85
Leesmill, Tx	301	16.50	West Lake	365	4.60
Longville, La	271	1.50	Wesey	202	2.00
Leesville	210	6.00	Zwolle	230	11.00
		<u>\$462.95</u>			<u>\$872.30⁶²</u>

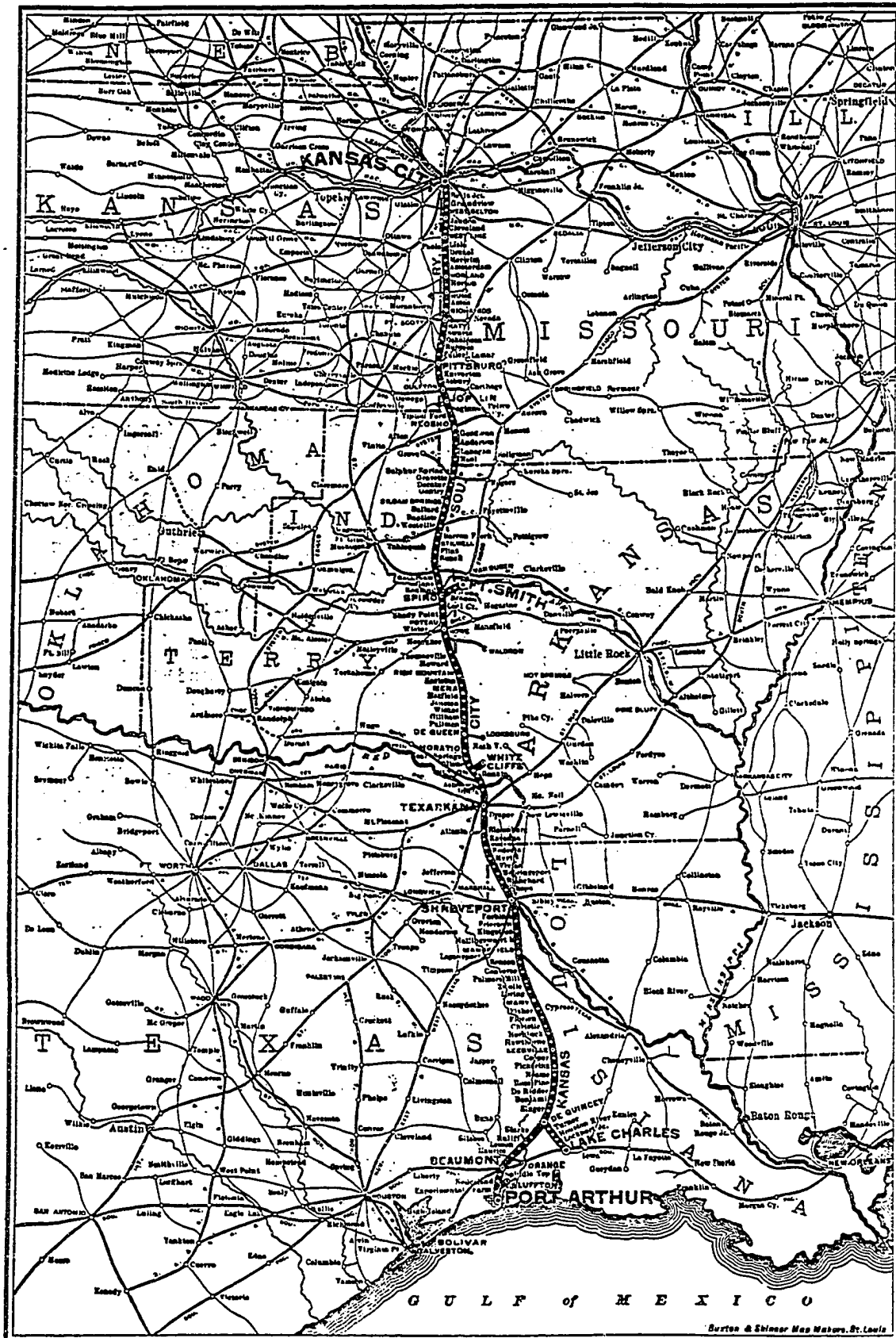
⁶¹ Brotherhood of Timber Workers, "Assessment Report," September 1, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

⁶² M. L. Alexander, Alexandria, Louisiana, to C. D. Johnson, St. Louis, Missouri, September 2, 1912, Box 122, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.

APPENDIX 34: Kansas City Southern Railway Company Route Map, 1908⁶³

Overleaf: The Trans-Mississippi South, 1908

⁶³ Reverse of letter from F. E. Roesler, Immigration Agent, The Kansas City Southern Railway Company, Kansas City, Missouri, to W. W. Warren, Fisher, Louisiana, January 23, 1908, Box 11635, Fisher Heritage Collection, LSA.



VITA

John Reed Tarver, was born on January 30, 1932, at Natchitoches, Louisiana, the third son of George Ferdinand Tarver and Lena Vivian Dowden. His father named him for the radical journalist, John Reed. A journalist himself for 35 years, John Tarver learned the printer's trade in a newspaper and job shop. After graduating journalism school, he edited and wrote for weekly and daily newspapers, and specialized in political accounts for advertising agencies. In the 1960s, he was consultant to Governor John J. McKeithen and to U.S. Representative Speedy O. Long. For the State of Louisiana he coordinated productions for major motion picture companies on location in Louisiana and directed the activities of the Louisiana Tourist Development Commission. During the Korean War, he was a guided missile guidance technician at Cape Canaveral, Florida, and later helped adapt this method of guidance to a surveying system used widely in the offshore drilling industry. Since 1980 he has edited technical publications for the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station. In 1959 he married Annis Dowden. They have two children. The family lives in Baton Rouge and at Old Gum Springs, Sabine Parish, Louisiana, on the rural route out of Hornbeck. He is a member of the Society of Professional Journalists, the Baton Rouge Press Club, The Louisiana Forestry Association, and the Agricultural History Society.

DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: John Reed Tarver

Major Field: History

Title of Dissertation: The Clan of Toil:
Piney Woods Labor Relations
In The Trans-Mississippi South, 1880-1920
Volume I-III

Approved:

Paul F. Parkoff
Major Professor and Chairman

Kathleen de la Peña McCord
Dean of the Graduate School

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Paul P. Lips

John L. ...

Paul Hogg

Date of Examination:

November 14, 1991