

CAMP HOY
and
BEAUREGARD PARISH

LOGGING CAMP GHOST TOWNS

James G. Carnahan

CAMP HOY and BEAUREGARD PARISH:

Logging Camp Ghost Towns

James G. Carnahan

1994

To the guardian of the trees,

The Forester

Preface

This story of Camp Hoy is the result of a curiosity of old things and old places. I became interested in the history of Camp Hoy while I was doing research pertaining to my hobby of metal detecting for artifacts and old coins.

I was frustrated in my first attempts to locate the camp because I was receiving conflicting information about its location. The confusion was cleared when I established that there had been not one, but two, Camp Hoys.

I have used the information I obtained to write this in hope that some of the history of Camp Hoy would survive. I collected the most interesting portion of this story through interviews and correspondence with some of the people who lived in or near Camp Hoy during its time.

I regret that I was not able to contact everyone who had firsthand knowledge of the camps. I am sure their stories would have been as interesting and enlightening as the ones that I was privileged to enjoy. Those stories would have been different; perhaps not even in exact agreement with the ones I recorded, for the things seen through the eyes of children will not be recalled with perfect accuracy some seventy years later.

I wish to thank each of those who contributed to the story for their interest shown to me, and for allowing you and me to share their memories.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my appreciation to the following people for their time and letters which were used in the preparation of this book: Mrs. Zenobia C. Tyler Baggette, Mrs. Ins McFatter Harper, Mr. Lester D. Hulett, Mr. Cephas Reeves, and Mr. J.W. (Billy) Young.

Thanks to Ollie Tietje for her suggestions and help.

Thanks to Marc Willett for the cover's artwork.

I

GHOST TOWNS

The remains of the old ghost towns of the West are with us to this day. Some are in surprisingly good condition and are promoted as tourist attractions; many have been rebuilt and look as they probably once did; and all that remains of others are a few piles of rocks, partially filled excavations, and rusting pieces of metal.

Ghost towns, however, weren't restricted only to the West. As the East was settled, an outward expansion began. Sometimes the majority of a town's population moves, leaving behind their homes and business places. The reasons for the exodus could be the result of economic problems, natural disaster, plague, or just the belief that things would be better down the road.

After abandonment, the life of the structures was dependent on climatic conditions. The dry, arid weather of the western states is the reason so many ghost towns remain, and so it is for this reason people tend to associate ghost towns with the West.

Louisiana has its share of ghost towns, but with buildings constructed of logs or roughhewn lumber, little remains to show where they once stood. Rot, caused by the damp climate, along with warm winters and insects, made short shrift of wooden structures. Too, smaller buildings were lifted from their foundations and moved to other sites, so a few bricks and broken concrete may be the only evidence to show where a building once stood.

The majority of the ghost towns of Southwest Louisiana are directly connected to the lumber industry. Most of these are the result of the activities of Long-Bell Lumber Company; the giant timber company that had logging camps and sawmill towns strewn over every part of Beauregard Parish, and indeed, over most of the southwestern part of the state.

II

LONG-BELL LUMBER COMPANY

When the timber was cut out in the Great Lakes area, particularly in Michigan, the lumber companies had to find another area of untouched forests to meet their needs. The virgin forests of the South met their requirements; especially Southwest Louisiana.

Transportation, whether water or rail, was of prime importance. As the railroads penetrated farther south, so did the lumber companies. As the demand for lumber rose, the demand for extended rail service also rose, and the railroad met that demand by laying additional track when it was needed. The southern drive ended in the Longleaf yellow pine forest of Southwest Louisiana.

So it was in 1898, the Long-Bell Lumber Company set up along the Kansas City Southern's railroads. There had been a few earlier arrivals, but none would reach the size or have the impact that Long-Bell would have on Beauregard Parish (Imperial Calcasieu). It wasn't until 1912 that the State Legislature subdivided "Imperial Calcasieu" into Beauregard, Allen, and Jefferson Davis. Cameron was already a separate parish.

Long-Bell purchased two mills in Lake Charles; the Bradley Ramsey Mill and the Mount Hope Mill. With these mills, and with others under their control, they became the operators of the largest systems of sawmills in the South.

This vast operation was run by Mr. S.T. Woodring, who was the general manager, and was also director of the parent company.

Some of the mills long-Bell operated in Beauregard Parish were:

The Stevenson, Ludington & Van Shack had a capacity of 125,000 board feet a day. It was built in 1903, and sold to the Ludington Lumber Co. in 1911. It was cut-out in 1924.

The Hudson River Co. was built in DeRidder in 1903 and, it too, had a capacity of 125,000 board feet. Its cut-out date is listed as 1926.

King-Ryder Lumber Company mill was built in 1901, and was located in Bon Ami, just south of DeRidder. With a capacity of 150,000 board feet, it was cut-out in 1925.

The largest mill, the Longville Lumber Company, had a capacity of 200,000 board feet per day. It was built in 1907 and operated until it burned in 1921. The mill was not rebuilt because Long-Bell was preparing to move to the Pacific Northwest where they were building a large mill in Longview, Washington.

****Anniversary Medallion ****

A gold medallion about the size of a half-dollar was struck to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Long-Bell Lumber Company. (The author has one of these medallions in his possession, although time and handling has worn away the plating).

The medallion has a portrait of Robert A. Long embossed on the obverse side. To the left of the portrait are the words: "Robert A. Long", and directly beneath his name is the word, "Founder." Around the upper portion of the medal in the inscription, "Long-Bell Lumber Company," and the bottom are the words, "Fiftieth Anniversary."

The reverse side depicts a narrow logging road winding through tall pine trees. At the bottom in imprinted the dates, "1875-1925."

III

THE ACTIVE TIMES

Prior to 1895, the longleaf pine forests of Louisiana had seen very little activity by the logging industry, but the next twenty or so years would tell a different story.

In those few decades, the longleaf forests were devastated, and the lumber industry in Louisiana almost ceased to exist. The big mills were able to harvest the virgin timber at the rate of a section every two weeks, and Southwest Louisiana was left with the largest clear-cut tract of land west of the Mississippi – over a million acres lay bare.

In those days before power saws and motorized skidders, the giant trees were felled by men called “flat heads” wielding crosscut saws. Once a tree was felled, it was trimmed and then skidded to a central point by oxen, mules, horses and later by steam powered drums and cables mounted on railcars.

The central point was near a railroad spur where the logs were loaded on flatcars and transported to a sawmill. The area was covered with hundreds of miles of tracks weaving through the thick pine forest between the logging camps and the sawmill towns. Nearly all of the tracks, including spurs, were of standard gauge, so they were able to connect directly to the railroad main line. Research shows that only one narrow gauge line was known to exist.

In some cases, timber was near enough to the mill towns that workers rode out to the “front” and back on the same train that brought in the day’s harvest of logs.

But, not of necessity, when the immediate area was stripped of trees, logging camps and towns were established at a distance to supply the voracious appetite of the saw mills.

These company-owned camps provided houses for the employees and their families. The camps usually had a commissary, bakery, boarding house, and a doctor’s office. All of the necessities for everyday living could be bought at the

commissaries, which were the small shopping centers of their day. Dry goods, canned meat, tools, footwear, tobacco, staples, hardware, some medicines, and fresh vegetables, and meat that were purchased from local farmers were just some of the items available.

Employees were usually paid in cash, but some companies also issued tokens of their own as partial payment in lieu of cash. The tokens were good only in the issuing company's store, thereby making certain the money the token represented was spent with that particular company.

Sawmill towns were more permanent in location because once the equipment was set up, wood yards in place, and rails tied in, it became more expedient and efficient to make use of camps set up near standing timber.

Logging camps were smaller and more mobile. The shotgun type houses could be loaded on flatcars and transported to a new location in a matter of hours. There were no indoor bathrooms and kitchen with running water, and in some cases electricity, so piping and wiring was of no concern when moving. Moving preparation didn't amount to much more than putting out the fire in the wood-burning stoves, doing a little packing, and securing the heavier objects. However, if the camps had bungalows or pyramidal houses, moving was just a little more time consuming, but move they did.

IV

BEAUREGARD'S GHOST TOWNS

Although the timber industry flourishes in Southwest Louisiana today, none of the hundreds of turpentine and logging camps of yesteryear remain. Much has been written on a number of the camps and towns, but nothing at all on others. Information on some of these camps can only be found in the memories of the survivors of those times.

Camp Hoy is one of those, or should I say two? There were two Camp Hoys in Beauregard Parish, and I have walked the sites of these camps, talked with, and received letters from several of those who lived in or near the camps. This story is an attempt to share some of that information I received with those who might have an interest in that logging era of Beauregard Parish, a story that may preserve some of the history and memories of those old logging days before they slide into oblivion.

****OLD CAMP HOY****

Highway 26 connects the town of DeRidder to Oberlin, 35 miles to the east. About the midway point, Highway 26 is crossed by Highway 113, a north-south road running between Dry Creek to the south and Sugartown to the north. This crossing, which has a few scattered houses and a convenience store, is called Wye. About 3 miles west of Wye, Highway 26 slices through where Old Hoy once thrived. Near this point, the road that ran south to Shiloh Church is still in use.

In the next chapters, letters from some of those who were there recall the life and times around Old Hoy at the turn of the century.

Some very minor editing had been done to the letters and interviews in order to prevent possible confusion caused by conflicting or redundant information.

V

THE INA McFATTER HARPER LETTER

This letter, written by Mrs. Ina McFatter Harper, is a review of her life and some of the incidents that took place around Hoy when she was a young girl:

I, Ina McFatter Harper, was the fifth child of my parents, Jody and Sarah McFatter. In 1907, my parents moved on a farm a mile east of Old Camp Hoy. Old Camp Hoy was already settled then, so I am not sure about the date it was settled.

I was born December 4, 1909. In 1915, I started school at Old Camp Hoy in a small one room schoolhouse with about 20 children enrolled. We had Sunday School and worship services in this building every Sunday. Mr. L.M. Covey would do the preaching.

Brother French would come to our house many Sundays for lunch with our family. My mother was one of the best cooks in the area! My mother was widowed with six children at a young age. My father was killed by a falling tree when I was five years old. We lived one mile from Old Hoy.

Camp Hoy was a small turpentine and logging camp with a commissary, as it was called then, and a post office. The post office was in the front corner of the store. There was also a small doctor's office.

The black people lived at the north end of Camp Hoy. They had a church and a cemetery there. The black children used their church as their school building too. The black people saved their money and built their own church. There was also a boarding house here for the blacks.

There were times when my mother had to go to the store for a little while, and a black woman would watch after us children. If mother would run a little late getting back, the black woman would prepare lunch for us, have us white children eat, then her black children would come into the house and eat. I can remember this happening a number of times.

The black woman asked my mother to go to the next black funeral in the area. My mother told her she would go – not knowing the next funeral would be her friend's, and my mother went to the funeral.

The Spanish and white children all went to the same school. The Spanish lived across the railroad track by the store.

Of course, there was no indoor plumbing in our school. I remember the teacher would send the older boys with the water cooler to the nearest house to get our drinking water for the school. All the children had little cups to drink from.

Miss Vines was one of the teachers at that time. I well remember she was trying to teach the older children how to plant seed and raise a garden. It was so much fun for us to watch them. I remember one little Spanish girl that kept getting close to my older brother where he was hoeing. Teasing the little girl, my brother said he would cut her toes off if she didn't move. Of course, she went and told the teacher he was going to cut off her toes. The teacher then called my brother in and gave him a good spanking.

I believe it was in 1918 a new two room school was built. We thought we were really big stuff then! While it was being built, the teacher would walk with the children during the afternoons to see the new school building under construction. This was a very exciting time for all of us.

I remember one family had a milk cow. This family would turn the cow out in the open land every day, but before school turned out in the afternoon, they would put the cow back in the pen because this cow would fight the children. One little girl fell down and broke her leg running from the cow.

In the fall of 1918 we moved into our new two room school building. There were from 25 to 30 children attending school then. There were two teachers for students through the seventh grade. The boys were still carrying our water in a cooler. Ice was brought from the ice house and put in the cooler.

I remember five of the teachers while I attended school at old Hoy. They were Mrs. Vines, Miss Havens, Miss McNamara, Mrs. Davis, and Miss Fitzgerald.

Miss Fitzgerald had a hard time finding a place to live, so she boarded at our house for a while. She would walk the mile to and from school with me, my brothers and sisters.

I remember quite a few of the residents at Old Hoy while I was in school there. Mr. Davis took care of the post office, and Mrs. Davis taught school. Mr. Jim Stracener ran the boarding house, Mr. McNutt operated the store, and Dr. A.E. Douglas was the local doctor. Also, there was Mr. Frank Campbell, Mr. C.V. Harper, Mr. Charlie Campbell, and Mr. Elf Stacener. Many other families lived there such as the McFatters, Jones's, Baileys, Polks, Hannas, Brannans, and the Coles.

Mr. Cole would take care of the horses and mules, keeping them watered and fed, and in the corrals when the animals were not in use. These horses and mules were used to pull logs out to load.

Around 1922, Old Camp Hoy was closed and moved to New Camp hoy. At this time I was transferred to Sugartown School.

As remembered by:

Mrs. Ina McFatter Harper DeRidder, Louisiana

VI

THE ZENOBIA T. BAGGETTE LETTER

The following is taken from a letter written to me by Mrs. Z. Tyler Baggette:

Old Camp Hoy was about one and half miles from our home. We lived in a house built of large logs. A kitchen, bedrooms, and porches were added on with lumber.

We went often to Old Hoy when I was 4 or 5 years of age. Probably before then, but I do remember very clearly going there at that age in a buggy.

We went often to Old Camp Hoy when I was 4 or 5 years of age. Probably before then, but I do remember very clearly going there at that age in a buggy.

I believe Old Camp Hoy was

there around 1910 until 1920 or 1922. Then it was moved to a place just east of where Inez Cole now lives on Highway 113. The road turns off of the highway just north of Mollie Young's house and leads maybe a mile to Inez Cole's place. It was called New Camp Hoy.

The owner of Camp Hoy was a man we called "old man Hoy". I don't know his first name. Frank Campbell was in management, or had something to do with it.

Also, there was a Frank Hulett and a Lester Hulett.

There must have been hundreds of Mexicans and blacks working in Old Camp Hoy and living in small houses built side by side.

There also was a commissary where they bought their groceries and other items. We bought our groceries there, and also, other farmers for miles around did, too.

There was a post office there and a doctor's office. Dr. Douglas was the doctor. He later moved to DeQuincy, Louisiana where he had a clinic for years.

Across the highway that is there now, north of it, is a cemetery for blacks. I've never seen it, but was told a black who died in DeRidder was brought out there and buried just about 2 or 3 years ago. So, it must still be kept up.

I remember the trains going in and out of Old Hoy. Also, there was skidders in the woods; something that helped loading logs. Yes, there was very much activity going on in that small town, which seemed large to me at age four.

The pine trees were huge; as large through as the Redwood trees in California, but maybe not as tall. And so thick you could not see anything but tree trunks – about 5 or 6 feet through.

The Mexicans and blacks sang as they went through the forest tapping the pine trees for the turpentine. A small, long gap was chopped in the tree, and a small metal vat, we called it, was put under the cut to catch the dripping turpentine.

When it was full, it was removed and the turpentine was poured into a big wooden barrel. The container was placed on the tree again to catch more

After getting the turpentine from the pine trees, they were sawed down, and loaded on trains by skidders, it seems they were called. Maybe mules were used, too. I'm not sure, believe horses were used.

The pine trees were hauled to a place called Ludington, Northwest of DeRidder. That was a sawmill town where the trees were made into lumber. Also, I think some were hauled to Longville, La. for sawing into lumber.

There were trams and railroads there. My father, W. Mid. Tyler, worked on the trains. They asked him to move with them when they left and continue working on the trains, but he told them he would rather stay and farm.

Highway 26 wasn't there then, but it could have been an old dirt road, and there was the road south toward Shiloh or Kipling community, which the buggies traveled. It is still there and is still a dirt and gravel road.

The most humorous thing that I can remember now was the doctor getting a car around 1918, I believe. There was only that one car ever in the country then, and when the local people would be driving to Old Camp Hoy in their buggies and see

dust up the road, and that car coming along, they knew to leap out, set the horse by the reins, and lead it out into the woods, tie it to a tree and try to hold that

horse down until the doctor passed in his car. Otherwise, the horses were so afraid of that car, they would rear up, paw the air, and almost tear the harness off of them. I thought that was so very funny.

Those pine forests were so beautiful, and I can remember through them for miles going to my Grandmother Hamilton's. I wish I could have some way of describing them to others. It was so dark under those tall pine trees, and so green overhead.

The ground was covered with thick, brown pine straw, and the water was clean and clear. There were no scrubby, ugly bushes or briars or other trees. Just those huge pine trees, maybe 5 or 6 feet through.

I remember something about New Camp Hoy. My father worked on the trains at Old Hoy, but he worked again one summer; this time sawing logs, and I am sure this was at New Hoy. He had laid by his cotton crop and got the job about the middle of summer. (We had moved to Bundick then).

Well, he had bad luck. A tree fell on him while sawing, and two men lifted it off of him, leaving him badly injured with several broken ribs.

That fall he couldn't pick cotton, but I was old enough to pick cotton at the age of 11. My father tho, with his ribs bound up, would pick handfuls along my row and put it in my cotton bag, which was over my shoulder and dragged along the ground. There were a lot of cotton pickers in the field picking too. I was paid, so I remember making extra money that first year. That was about 1914.

Something else comes to mind. I am sure Monte Cooper was a log scaler out there at New Hoy when my father was sawing the logs. I remember his wife, Bertie Baggette Cooper, who was my sister-in-law, telling me about them living around there some place when they first got married. Her husband Monte Cooper, was working there and I do believe it was at New Hoy. They reason I'm

was honest and gave a fair and correct sale.

My father didn't ever saw logs like that again, so I know it was when I was age 11.
When he got hurt, it was 1914. I time things by evens that happened at some
time, like my father getting hurt and it being cotton picking time.

New Camp Hoy was never as large as Old Camp Hoy, and was not there very long.

Thank you for letting me write this for you, as I do enjoy remembering those
beautiful, unstressful days. No one seemed to be in a rush; we had time to live!

From the memory of:

Zenobia C. Tyler Baggette

Dry Creek, Louisiana

VII

THE END OF OLD HOY

My sources believe that somewhere around the early 1920s, operations at Hoy ceased, and the camp, like a traveling circus, loaded up and left for another destination.

Nothing much remained where it had once stood, and what had been Hoy, now became Old Hoy. Just a short distance to the east, a new, but more brief life would begin for the camp. New Hoy was born, and from then on the camps were referred to as Old Hoy and New Hoy.

****OLD HOY NOTES****

Louisiana Post Offices by John G. Germann, 1990, show the Hoy Post Office was established September 11 1913 and discontinued June 30, 1925. James D. Primm was the postmaster, and after the post office was closed at Hoy, the mail was routed through Sugartown.

There was not a listing for Hoy in Dunn & Bradstreet prior to 1923, but it does list a W.E. Stracener grocery store in 1923 and 1924. In 1926, it lists a W.E. Stracener general store, and in 1927, there was a J.L. Stewart grocery store. There are no listings shown after 1927. Those years show a population of 25, down considerably from the once bustling town.

The 1916 Rand-

McNally indexed Map and Shipper's Guide of Louisiana lists a Hoy in Beauregard, and a Hoy Station in Allen Parish.

VIII

NEW CAMP HOY

New Hoy was located a little south of Highway 26 about 2 miles east of the crossroads at Wye. This places the camp southeast of the East Beauregard School, which is a short distance south of Wye on Highway 113.

There had been some prior activity on the east edge of New Hoy's location. A smaller camp had been established, and for about 3 years before New Hoy was moved in to do the logging, the tall pines had been tapped for their resinous sap.

The following chapters contain information from the interviews I had with three gentlemen who lived near or worked at New Hoy.

IX

THE CEPHAS REEVES STORY

Mr. Reeves, who is 83 years old, lives on the east side of New Hoy and the old turpentine camp. The turpentine camp appears to have covered about eighty acres. A road and an old tram leads west from the Reeves property and divides the old turpentine acreage into almost equal parts. The houses of the employees, who were black, were scattered randomly about the woods.

Mr. Reeves and I drove to the New Hoy Camp so he located and showed me the things he remembered. As we passed through the old turpentine camp, he pointed out where the houses had been; most of which stood on the North side of the road. There had been a commissary for the turpentine workers on the south side of the road about where Mr. Harold Carter now lives.

A little farther west is the actual site of New Hoy. There are some large concrete blocks on the north side of the road which I thought had been foundations for equipment, but Mr. Reeves said the foundations had supported a water tank. New Hoy's commissary had stood just west of these foundations, and a boarding house was across the road from it. He estimated there had been about 60 houses farther to the south.

When I asked about medical services, he said he didn't remember a doctor at the camp but, when he was thirteen years old, he had gone to a dentist who was there at the time.

Mr. Reeves mentioned that there had been some other small logging camps operating nearby. There was Camp Vizzard, between Oberlin and the Carpenter place; Camp Allen, near the head of Flat Creek and the old Andrus place; and Blue Goose, near Zenobia Baggette and the Hobbs place.

From a visit with: Cephas Reeves Dry Creek, Louisiana.

X

THE BILLY YOUNG INTERVIEW

The following is from an interview with Mr. J.W. (Billy) Young who often visited the camp with his father to deliver their farm produce:

Mr. Young, who is 76 years old, resides on the west side of New Hoy. He was born on the north side of the camp, and as a boy worked with his father on the farm. They sold and delivered some of their produce to the camp which was owned by Long-Bell Lumber Company.

He recalls the turpentine camp just east of Hoy, but couldn't add any information to that which I had acquired from Cephas Reeves.

He doesn't remember the boarding house at New Hoy, but he believes there must have been one to serve the needs of the single employees, and the many visitors who frequently came to the camp.

Unlike Mr. Reeves, he doesn't remember a dentist at the camp, but one may have been there temporarily. He does remember that a doctor by the name of Henchie had an office in the camp.

Mr. Young doesn't know of any schools or churches at the camp. He thinks the blacks may have had a church, since on Indian Branch, a small creek that runs through the property, there was a deep spot called the Baptizing Hole where black converts were baptized. They also used to fish in that hole, but it is now filled with silt and trash. The whites probably went to church at Shiloh or Sugartown since they could ride the company train to those places.

The commissary, next to the water tank on the north side of the road was quite large, and close to it was another small building that housed the Delco unit that supplied some of the electricity for the camp.

A description of the camp's arrangement begins with an east-west road on the north side. It was along this road the commissary, boarding house, and the doctor's office was located. Another east-west road marked the south boundary of the camp.

There were four parallel streets on the west side connecting the north and south roads. Each of these streets had about ten resident houses for whites. A well and bakery was also located on one of these streets.

To the east, there was a vacant area about 300 feet wide, and then four more parallel streets connected the north and south roads. The blacks lived in about forty houses in the eastern section.

Altogether there were about eighty houses in the camp. The white's houses faced the east, and across the way, the black's houses faced the west. All houses had front porches, and I suspect that what leisure time the occupants had was spent visiting on those porches.

Some distance northwest of the commissary was a huge corral where they kept the skidder horses. These animals were used to move the logs to a collection point to be transported by train to the sawmills.

Mr. Billy's brothers-in-law, Irvin and Tyson McCutcheon, worked on the trains that moved the logs to the mills. One mill he mentioned was Gaytine, near Ragley. Some probably went to DeRidder and to Bon Ami or Carson.

There were about five men on a train crew, but Mr. Young doesn't remember what jobs Irvin and Tyson performed on the train, but he is almost certain neither held down the firemen's job, for they were clean when they came back from a run. A fireman was always filthy from feeding the engine boiler's fire with pine knots.

Mr. Young recalls a tragic event that took place at the camp. There had been trouble between Marshal Sam Ihles, who was considered to be a good lawyer, and a black man. The man had been banned from the camp, but one day when

Sam came out of the commissary, the black man shot at him, missed, and went to running. Immediately, an armed posse gave chase and, in an exchange of gunfire, the ambusher was killed.

From the memory of:

Mr. J.W. (Billy) Young

Sugartown, Louisiana

XI

Lester Hulett's Account

Mr. Lester Hulett was born in 1903, is now 91 years old, and lives in DeRidder, Louisiana. Mr. Hulett worked at New Hoy when he was a young man, and was there until the camp shut down operations.

Mr. Hulett's father was James Fanklin Hulett, and was known by the name of Frank. Frank was the woods foreman at New Hoy for the Long-Bell Company. It was his job to take care of the tree felling crews, organize the work, and see that the saw mill's order for that day was filled. The order was usually given for a number of logs cut to a specific length, or a multiple of that length. A log that was twice the ordered length was accepted as two logs.

Lester had worked for Long-Bell in Longville, Louisiana when was out of school during summer vacations. His job had been to ride the skidder horse that dragged the tongs to the logs.

A steam skidder had a drum and cable arrangement, which was able to handle four cables that came in through pulleys over the drums. At one end of the cable was a set of tongs which was attached to the singletree on the harness, and pulled to a log by the skidder horse. When the horse and tongs arrived at the log, a worker called a tong setter, released the tongs and attached them to the log, while the horse and rider raced back to the skidder and picked up another set of tongs.

Once the tongs were in place, a flagger gave the signal, and the skidder operator applied steam. The drum began to turn, the cable tightened, and the tongs gripped the log which was dragged to the skidder. Tong setting was a dangerous job that resulted in a number of men being killed by overzealous skidder operators.

When Lester was about 16 or 17 years old, he went to work at New Hoy in the post office which was attached to the commissary. He stayed on this job until operations ceased at the camp.

Information obtained from:

Lester Hulett

DeRidder, Louisiana

XII

THE END OF NEW HOY

The timber was now gone and the need for New Hoy was over. The residual operation was moved to Bon Ami where milling had been greatly curtailed because the supply of logs had dwindled to a point that full scale operation was no longer economical.

The buildings and houses at New Hoy were offered for sale. Mr. Ralph Newcomer, now deceased, told me that when he was a young boy, he had gone with his father to the camp to buy some of the houses for \$25, and the larger ones for \$35. The sale included the privies and the wooden walks. They tore the houses down, loaded them on wagons, and brought them to Iowa, Louisiana. The house that Mr. Newcomer lived in until his death still stands, and has some of the New Hoy camp lumber in its structure.

The land lay bald, stripped of trees. The Long-Bell Lumber company had purchased the land for the timber that grew on it. Once the timber had been harvested, the land was of no use to them at that time, so it went for sale. Mr. Hulett told me that was sold for three dollars an acre, and the buyer was given ten years to pay it off.

I wandered around where New Hoy once stood, and nothing much is visible. The concrete foundations for the water tank have been destroyed in the past few years, and only the faint outlines of the streets where the whites lived on the west side are perceptible. Soon even these signs will be gone, for the timber that had replaced a virgin forest has once again been harvested, and the land will soon be replanted.

As the years pass, these young pine seedlings will grow, and eventually the trees will be large enough to harvest. Sadly perhaps, they will never grow to the size and majesty of the trees that once stood in their place.

XII

CONCLUSION

Gone are the old logging camps, such as Hoy, that were so numerous around the turn of the century, and gone are the old methods of harvesting trees. No longer do land owners and timber companies “cut-and-run”, leaving behind a savaged land. Trees, being a renewable resource, are now treated like any other crop.

Flying over the area south of DeRidder in the 1940s and ‘50s, one looked down on a vast area of bald hills, scarred by deep gullies that were the result of erosion created by the absence of trees. Today, some of that land has been reforested, and some is under cultivation producing rice and soybeans. Some of the hills are now pastures to herds of cattle and sheep. The “plow did follow the ax,” but it was a long time coming.

More than a hundred years ago, the forest seemed endless, and not many thought they could be used, but even toward the of the 1800s, there were a few far-sighted companies that began experimenting with industrial forest management. Some gave up the practice of “chasing the trees,” settled on their own land, and began scientific forest management.

In the late 1800s, the first forest reserves were created, and in 1907 those reserves became national forests, and were put under the care of government foresters. The U.S. Forest Service, a part of the Department of Agriculture, was established in 1905.

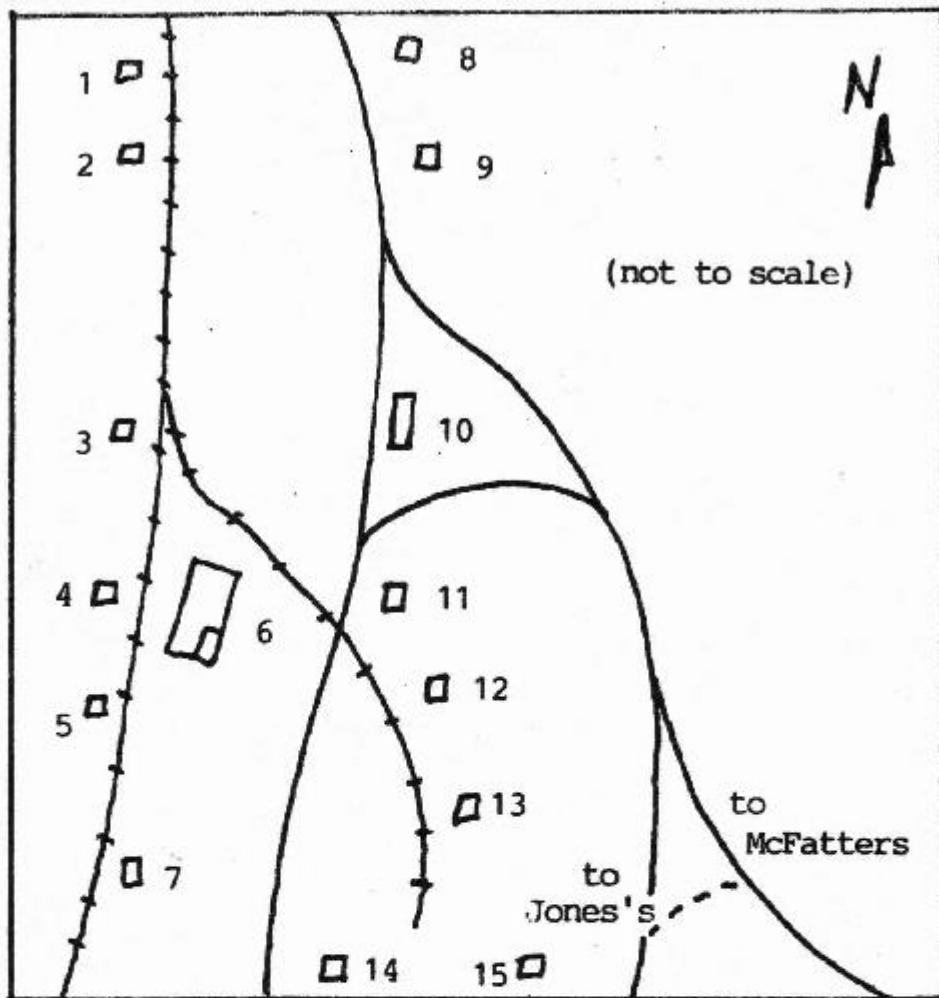
The demand for forest products is enormous, so it is essential that proper management be practiced in order to meet the demand. The government and timber companies hire foresters, who hold degrees from one of the accredited schools of forestry, to keep a close eye on the forests.

The forester’s job is demanding and complex. From seedling to maturity, the trees are under constant threat from insects, diseases, animals, high winds, and

fire. The foresters have to recognize these dangers and take the necessary action to protect those trees, and then must make the decision of when and how the harvesting will be done once the trees are mature. From seed to log, the trees and someone's investment is dependent on the forester.

The pine forest in Beauregard remains a major contributor to the area's economy, and even though there will never be a virgin forest as there once was, it is safe to say that with today's technology and forest management, there will always be tall pines swaying over the gentle hills in Beauregard Parish.

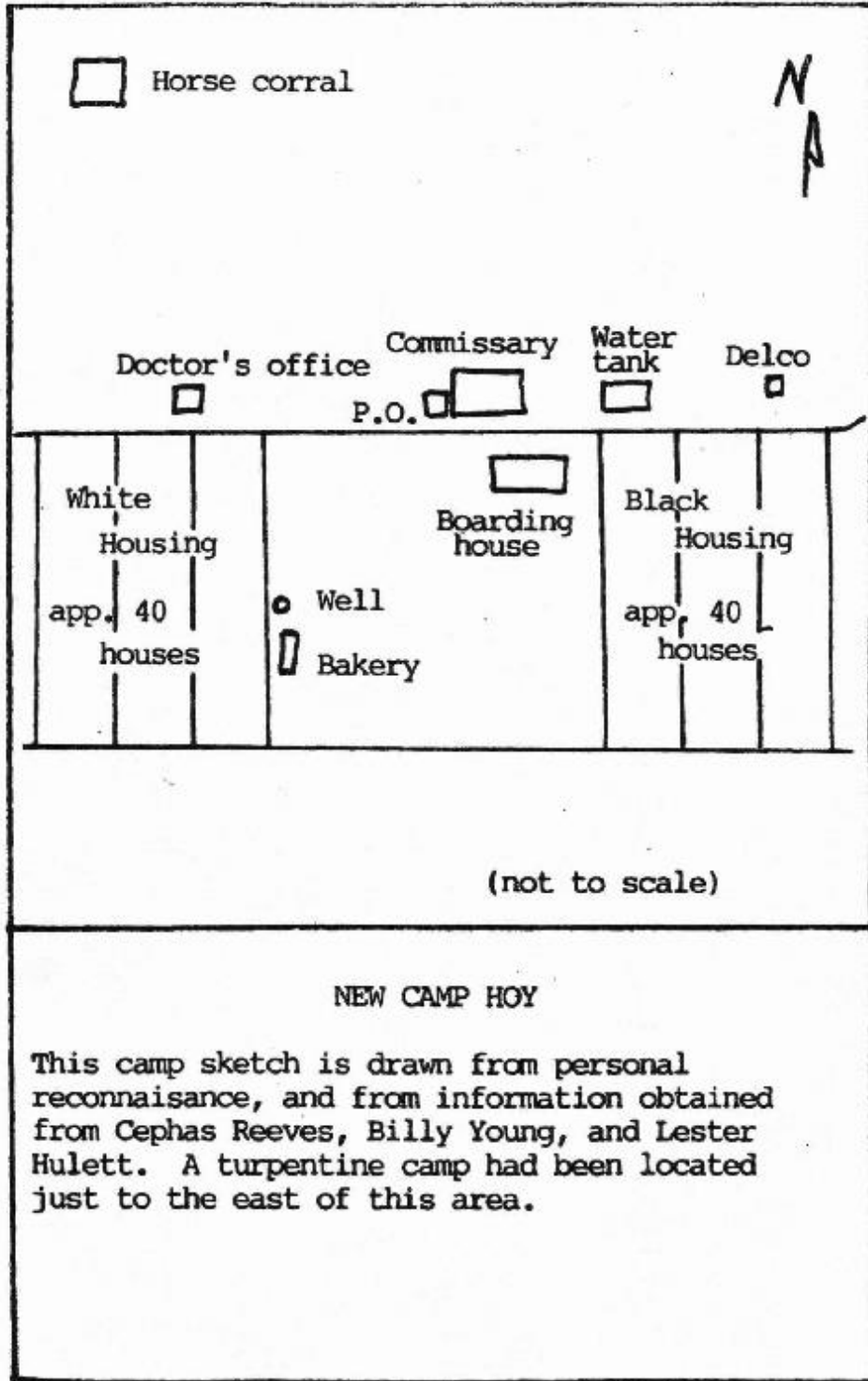
NOTES

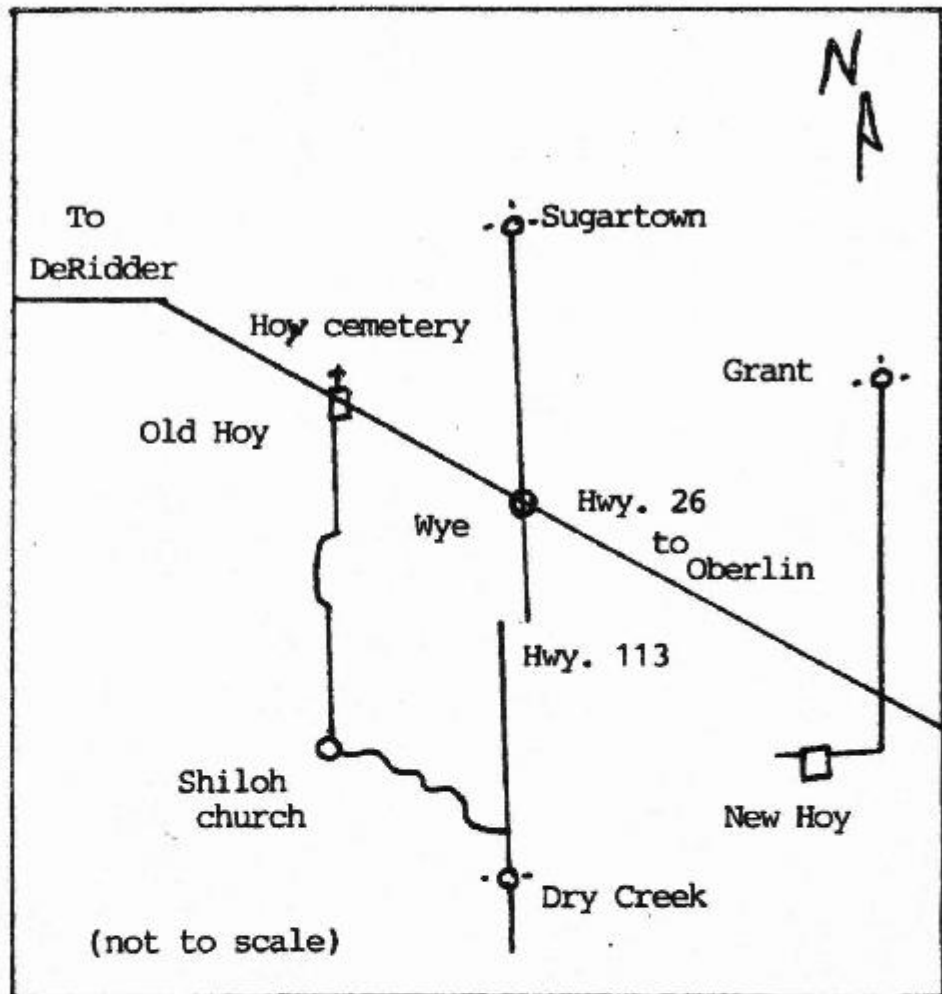


OLD CAMP HOY

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Dr. A.E. Douglas | 8 Black church & cemetery |
| 2 C.V. Harper | 9 Black boarding house |
| 3 Elf Stracener | 10 White boarding house |
| 4 Lopez | 11 Doctor's office |
| 5 Garcia | 12 Feed store |
| 6 Commissary & post office | 13 Mule corral |
| 7 Water pump | 14 Two room school |
| | 15 One room school |

Drawn from a sketch furnished by
Mrs. Ina McFatter Harper





CAMP LOCATIONS

Camps are shown where they are on today's maps. Wye is the crossing of Hwy. 113 and Hwy. 26. These old sites are on private property that is now leased to hunting clubs and is posted.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Kerr, Ed. History of Forestry in Louisiana.

Press Representative, Louisiana Forestry Commission, 1958.

Millett, Donald J. The Lumber Industry of "Imperial " Calcasieu : 1865-1908

Louisiana History, Vol. 7

Shuts, George Alvin. Lumbering in Southwest Louisiana: A Study of The Industry as a Couture-Geographic Factor. A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Facility of Louisiana State University. May, 1954.

CAMP HOY AND BEAUREGARD PARISH

This book tells a little of the story of timber harvesting in Beauregard Parish, how it came about in the early 1900s, and the tale of two logging camps as seen through the eyes of those who lived in or around those camps.

The letters of Ina McFatter Harper, Zenobia Tyler Baggette, are from their memories of Old Camp Hoy, and the information on New Camp Hoy are from interviews with Cephas Reeves, Billy Young, and Lester Hulett.

My thanks to those wonderful senior citizens for sharing their time and memories; for memories are all that are left of the two Camp Hoys.