

racially segregated in housing and other areas, but the lumber towns still provided . These accommodations were for mill workers and spur tracks were laid to the timber and remote camps were set up for the lumbermen that were housed and fed in tents. The conditions in the woods were dangerous and less than desirable, with long hours and starting pay from \$.75 to \$1.25 a day.<sup>[6]</sup>

From the 1870s states began passing laws to help labor. Secretary of Labor William B. Wilson (1913 to 1921), under President President Woodrow Wilson, was friendly to labor and Congress passed many labor-friendly laws during this time. Most were either struck down or limited by the Supreme Court, especially during the Lochner era.

## Unions

These uprisings centered around the Lake Charles and Alexandria in 1906–1907 and helped create the forces that would fight the timber war of 1911–1912. The Brotherhood of Timber Workers met in May 1912 in Alexandria, Louisiana, where they voted to affiliate with the powerful and militant Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). This alarmed the Southern Timber Association, which represented the mill owners. The Brotherhood of Timber Workers declared their intention to fight battles in DeRidder and within a 30-mile radius of it. DeRidder was then considered the center of labor unrest—it was the last area to return to work during the 1906–1907 strikes. It was seen by owners as the center of militant union activity. Both sides defined the area of conflict to be around northern Beauregard Parish (at the time still a part of Imperial Calcasieu Parish). The riot at Grabow and the ensuing court trials became the crucial events in the struggle to unionize the workers, bringing the conflict to a legal head with high national visibility. A strike and lockout on November 11, 1912, at the American Lumber Company mill at Merryville, Louisiana, about 20 miles west of DeRidder was instigated deliberately by the owners, led by association president John Henry Kirby of the Kirby Lumber Company of east Texas. The timber workers' union had been infiltrated by agents of the Burns Detective Agency who were on the payroll of the owners' association. As a result, Kirby knew that the union was in serious financial trouble because of the lengthy court proceedings following the Grabow Riot. Although the local union had affiliated with the IWW, the IWW gave no financial help, choosing to focus its efforts and priorities on the Northwest Pacific Coast timber war.

To cause a strike that would cripple the union financially, the Association blacklisted all union members associated with the Grabow riot. This gave the American Lumber Company at Merryville a pretext to dismiss 18 workers who had testified for the defense at the Grabow riot trial. The union then had no choice but to go out on strike again. This strike ruined the union financially and organizationally when in November 1912 the strikers' headquarters and soup kitchen in Merryville was attacked and destroyed by agents and friends of the mill owners. The strikers and union leaders were routed and they retreated to DeRidder. The strike was broken and the mills reopened in May 1913 using non-union labor.

These three events, occurring within six months of the Grabow riot, marked the end of the 1911–1912 Louisiana–Texas timber war. The union continued to exist as a shell until 1914, but the mills were never organized by the labor unions. This set the stage for further anti-unionism in the oil fields of Louisiana and east Texas.

By the end of 1921, the Piney Woods of Louisiana and Texas had been completely cut down, ending a 30-year boom for west Louisiana and east Texas. No effort was made by the timber companies to conserve or restore the Piney Woods, which many had thought could never be logged out. The ensuing recession left many sawmill towns deserted, including Grabow. Most of them, like Carson, Bon Ami, Neame, Ludington, and Hall, are largely forgotten; Grabow itself is remembered mainly for the riot.