

A considerable turpentine and barrel-stave industry had also developed in East Texas. At the end of the [Civil War \(/handbook/online/articles/qdc02\)](/handbook/online/articles/qdc02) a number of operators built larger mills featuring circular saws that could cut more than 25,000 board feet of lumber a day. Yet in comparison to that of leading lumber states, Texas production was small; the state reported less than 100 million board feet in 1869 and only 300 million a decade later. Until this time most of the pine forest of East Texas remained untouched. Travelers remarked on the magnificent pine stands, the parklike, clean forest floor, and the individual trees often growing to 150 feet in height and measuring more than five feet in diameter.

The next fifty years, from about 1880 to the [Great Depression \(/handbook/online/articles/npg01\)](/handbook/online/articles/npg01), has been called the "bonanza era" in Texas lumbering. The railroad network developed rapidly and provided transportation to every section of East Texas. Entrepreneurs followed closely behind, establishing complete lumber-manufacturing plants and often tram roads to carry the logs to the mills and transport the finished lumber to mainline railroads. To provide for the employees, often numbering several hundred, the owners also built company towns such as Camden, Fostoria, Kirbyville, and Diboll. In the isolated areas of East Texas, the mill owner was like a feudal baron dominating the lives of his workers and their families. In many operations the company paid the workers not in cash but in merchandise checks, scrip, or tokens that were worth face value only at the commissary or company offices. Thus the dependence of the worker upon the company was nearly absolute. These conditions began to change after [World War I \(/handbook/online/articles/qdw01\)](/handbook/online/articles/qdw01), as the automobile and improved communications provided mill workers with more links to the outside world.

Lumbermen [Henry J. Lutchter \(/handbook/online/articles/flu13\)](/handbook/online/articles/flu13) and [G. Bedell Moore \(/handbook/online/articles/fmo27\)](/handbook/online/articles/fmo27) moved from Pennsylvania to Orange, Texas, in 1877 and built the first "big mill," with a daily capacity of 80,000 to 100,000 board feet. For the next half century, Lutchter and Moore set a high standard for quality lumber, advanced