



FIG. 5. A shotgun house at Fisher, Sabine Parish. This dwelling has been enlarged by the addition of a lean-to.

many farmers were more than willing to exchange the insecurity of a small farm for the cash wages paid by the companies. Administrative personnel were invariably whites, while the skilled labor force included both whites and Negroes. The unskilled laborers were largely Negroes, with some whites, augmented occasionally by groups of Mexicans.

The development of a large industrial system, coupled with high demand and easy logging conditions, could result only in the rapid destruction of the forests. Under the "cut out and get out" policy of the time the speed with which the industry had grown was matched by the rapidity of its removal.¹³ Along one

railroad line 23 sawmills, each cutting more than 100,000 board feet a day, went out of existence in five years.¹⁴ Sixteen large mills in Vernon and Beauregard parishes, employing at least 400 men each and with towns of 1,000 or more, had been abandoned by 1933.¹⁵ Maps best indicate the transitory nature of the company towns (Fig. 2).¹⁶ The virtual exhaustion of the virgin forests did not result in the extinc-

¹³ N. C. Brown and F. Moon, *Elements of Forestry* (3rd ed.; New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1937), p. 63.

¹⁴ J. W. Cruikshank, *Forest Resources of Southwest Louisiana* (New Orleans: Southern Forest Experiment Station, 1939), p. 25.

¹⁵ The short life span of the average sawmill town has been noted in other areas. Interesting articles which comment on the subject are: "The Cities and Towns of the High Plains of Michigan," by C. M. Brown in *Geographical Review*, Vol. 28 (1938), pp. 664-73, and "A Forest Tragedy," by S. T. Dana in *Munsey's Magazine*, Vol. 40 (1917), pp. 353-63.

¹⁶ The story of McNary, in Rapides Parish, is especially interesting. Operations ended there in 1924, and in less than two months the entire population of 3,000 was transferred by special trains to a new company town, McNary, Arizona, where work was immediately resumed.