

made by damming creeks, but some were entirely artificial.

Lumber at the mill was usually moved on "dollies," heavy two-wheeled carts drawn by mules. "Dollyrun" mules were sheltered in barns near the mill, the area around each barn being enclosed by a fence and called a "corral." In some instances mules were eventually replaced by electric or gasoline tractors.

The business district. A section in each company town was devoted to providing the more essential goods and services. A single building—the commissary—was the commercial heart of the community. This was a department store owned and operated by the company, and there the mill employees bought the bulk of the everyday items they consumed. Such stores were superior to anything ordinarily seen in the older towns of the area, and almost everything sold in them was brought in by rail. The commissary building often housed other facilities, and it was not uncommon for the barber, the doctor, the deputy sheriff, and others to occupy offices under the same roof. Occasionally some conveniences and necessities were furnished by neighboring settlements, but this was not the rule.

The company offices were usually situated in a large frame building near the commissary. They often served as banks, and at some sites the large brick and steel vaults alone remain to mark their former positions. A few of the larger towns had branch banks from nearby communities. Boarding houses two or three stories high were prominent features of the commercial district. Many towns had halls where motion pictures were shown several times a week, and almost all had post offices and barber shops. The company doctor maintained a downtown office which served as a drug dispensary. A depot and ice storage house complete the picture of a business district which appears rather attractive in comparison with that of the average small town of the time. Certainly the mill town residents felt that the facilities available to them were superior to those of many older communities.

The quarters. Residential districts usually followed rather similar patterns of orientation and placement. Negro quarters were situated near the mill, as were the less common small sections set aside for Mexican workers. Areas occupied by whites were closer to the business

district and were separated from the mill and Negro quarters by some feature—a strip of woods, a railroad, or open fields.

The companies frequently tried to make white residential sections attractive.²⁰ Trees were planted, streets were graded and graveled, and street lights were installed. The churches and schools for whites were usually located in this part of town. As a rule only one church was built in each section, a "Union" or "Federated" church in which joint services were held. Few cemeteries were opened, since there seems to have been a general understanding that the towns were impermanent. The schools were one or two-story buildings where classes were taught at least as far as the seventh grade. Older children often commuted to high schools in neighboring towns.²¹

The company houses. The dwellings built by the lumber companies were remarkable for the uniformity of their construction, and sometimes entire quarters were made up of houses identical in nearly every respect. This is understandable in view of the fact that almost all the buildings were erected before the majority of the population arrived, and limiting the number of house plans simplified construction. Less obvious are the reasons why certain house types were chosen. In some cases advantages are apparent, but in others selection seems to have been dictated by custom or style alone. The choice varied from time to time, and the growth of a residential area can sometimes be traced in the accretion of groups of houses of different types. Whatever the bases of adoption might have been, four plans were popular: the pyramidal, the bungalow, the shotgun, and the log-pen derivative.

Pyramidal houses (Fig. 3), with roofs sloping upward at the same angle from all four sides toward a central point or short ridge, are almost universal in Louisiana.²² The saw-mill variety is distinguished by its rather small dimensions, generally square floor plan, and single story. Its adoption seems to have been

²⁰ This practice is well described by F. V. Emerson in "The Southern Long-Leaf Pine Belt," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 7 (1919), pp. 81-90.

²¹ The general pattern of company town construction outlined above was by no means restricted to western Louisiana. This is shown by G. M. Hudson in "A Study of a Permanent Alabama Lumber Town," *Journal of Geography*, Vol. 36 (1937), p. 310.

²² Kniffen, *op. cit.*, p. 182.