



Timber: A Photographic History of Mississippi Forestry

James E. Fickle

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This collection of black-and-white images conveys the story of human impact on Mississippi's forests from the pioneer era to the present. Photographs gleaned from public and private archives tell a visual tale of the development of Mississippi's forest industries. Historic locomotives course through the woods, oxen drag big timber over rutted terrain, and lookouts perch atop Forest Service towers eyeing the horizon for telltale signs of fire. Photos of life in a portable logging camp reveal early hospitals, lumber company stores, mobile homes, and the advancing technology of logging machinery. The hatchet and torch give way to the cross-cut saw, the steam-driven loaders, the gas chain saws, and eventually the bulldozer and the Buschcombine. Portraits of the major players in the industry's investment and development provide a human face to the powerful history of Mississippi forestry.

The soft pulp lumber used to crate ammunition and to build many hastily constructed army barracks across the country during World War II finds documentation here. Mississippi pine housed the American war effort. After harvesting came inevitable difficulties in land management caused by over-cut terrain. This book documents how the forestry industry returned to renew its resources, replant its fields, and maintain an ecological balance for future generations.

Timber includes images by such noteworthy photographers as Clifford H. Poland of Memphis and John N. Teneussin of New Orleans. The Poland photographs alone, many previously misidentified and now on display as Poland's work for the first time, offer a level of artistic achievement that parallels the industrial might of their subjects.

James E. Fickle, a professor of history at the University of Memphis, is author of the companion book *Mississippi Forests and Forestry*.

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