

Morris Lumber Company in Slocomb - Heritage book

Early industry in the town included turpentine, cross ties and lumber. After the turpentine operators moved out, next came the sawmills. Morris Lumber Company was established to cut ties to be used on the modern railroad, thereby providing steady labor for the area. J. C. Ausley was secretary and treasurer of this incorporated company that sold "rough and dressed yellow pine" lumber. The lumber company was supervised by Mr. Sumpter Kelly and Mr. Dan Clark. Slocomb residents were always proud of their homes that were built with Lockhart lumber with absolutely no knots anywhere in the lumber in their homes.

Morris Lumber Co. soon became the backbone for a struggling rural town and Slocomb began to boom with the output of every grade of fine lumber known to the world. The company became incorporated in 1901. This same year the town of Slocomb was chartered by enthusiastic pioneers of the town. Some of the finest lumber in the world was produced here in Slocomb, Alabama.

In Slocomb was the giant sawmill where the huge logs were processed. Radiating out from the town were dummy lines, imitation of the railroad, over the almost level countryside to the forest. R. C. McCarty was the Superintendent of Yards until the company moved to Cairo, Ga. in 1912. "Doc" Anthony was the chief of the cross tie business, felled much of the timber, both of pine and cypress, and became a delightful citizen of the community. The Morris Lumber Company employing approximately a thousand men, finished up the timber and shipped their products to many parts of the world. Many other sawmills were built and the longleaf, virgin pine forest was cut. Kelly-Clark on Pate Creek was another important lumber company in this area.

The timber was cut by crosscut saws. It was then hauled by log carts, being pulled by oxen, usually four or six yokes of oxen to each cart, by the wood fed "dummy" which rolled on wooden tracks. Also by a larger locomotive, that now and then would let loose on the Central of Georgia main line, and was engineered by Otis Brownlow and fired by Cleve Ethridge. The log trains were loaded in the deep forest. This work required much labor to cut, saw, and haul the huge virgin logs. Another important industry from the forest was the cutting of cross ties for use on the railways and dummy lines by Doc Anthony. He employed many laborers.

After the turpentine and sawmill industries played their role, made their contributions to the community, folded up and moved from the area, cotton, cucumbers, watermelons, cord wood, and hogs were the main products. Modern trucks began to haul pea-

nuts and tomatoes. Each product had a time as a leading crop. *Submitted by: Committee*
Source: "My Home Town " by Era Jo Holmes.