

LINDSEY SPRINGS
Interview 142a
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Marie Davis, Speaker
Retyped by Courtney Lawrence

ABSTRACT: In this speech to the Angelina County Historical Forum, Marie Davis talks about the Diboll Historical Society's research process for finding the old Southern Pine Lumber Company logging camp Lindsey Springs. They eventually found the campsite, and will erect an historical marker.

The search for Lindsey Springs: Southern Pine Lumber Company's first logging camp

(Talk given to the Angelina Historical Forum, September 13, 1993, by Marie Davis)

Marie Davis (hereafter MD): Two sets of my ancestors have been in Angelina County since the 1830's and others followed. I love local history. I have heard a lot of stories and now wish I had asked more questions.

I was raised a mile east of Diboll, left when I was married and returned in 1981 when my husband retired from the U. S. Department of Agriculture. It was not long after that that the Diboll Historical Society was formed. I have been active in it since it was organized.

In 1994 Diboll will be 100 years old and as one of our projects, we decided to try and get some more official Texas historical markers.

Since logging camps were so important to the survival of lumber companies in the early years, we decided to try and get a Texas historical marker for Lindsey Springs, the first logging camp which Southern Pine Lumber Co. established. Logging camps were established close to the timber source, miles from the mill, and the logs were transported to the mill over tram roads on which the train traveled. In the case of Southern Pine, families lived at the logging camp.

We wanted to be as accurate as possible about our facts – because we have found that once something is written down, it will be copied many times – wrong or right.

So we started our search for Lindsey Springs. We knew the approximate date and the approximate location.

How did it get its name? Where was it located?

We could not find the location on any map. T. J. Lindsey had a land patent near Homer and was County Treasurer in 1862.

Effie Boon, in her master's thesis on the history of Angelina County, stated that W. W. Manning had a steam sawmill south of Homer on Lindsey Lake in 1867. So probably Lindsey Springs was named for the Lindsey family in that area.

There have been so many people who have willingly helped us in our quest. Kenneth Nelson who worked in the land department of Southern Pine for so many years told us the old tram road ran from the mill in Diboll down present day Harris Street (by the golf course and new high school) up by C.B. Fairchild's land, on by Enoch Weaver's place (which is Lonnie Havard's place now) which is south of Fairview through the

Ferguson land and across the FM Road 58, which would make it in the Thomas Caro Survey. Kerry Lee, head surveyor with Temple Inland, furnished us with some maps.

We began asking questions of old settlers who used to live in the area. Mrs. Denver Scarborough, age 88, remembered when she was first married, they used to go to the springs and wash and get drinking water. (This was after the camp was moved.) Jess Scarborough went there when he was a boy with his father to get drinking water. Artemise Weeks said they used to stop by there on their way from Lufkin to Beulah to let the horses rest and get a drink. Pearl Havard said they used to go there and picnic.

The Henderson heirs own the area now, and Charles Young who has charge of their lands took us in the area on a hot July day. We found sections of the old tram road, but no springs. So we decided since the area had been cut over several times and run over with heavy equipment, the springs had probably dried up. Those making the trip were Doug Warner, Mark Martin, Jess Scarborough. Franklin Weeks, Steve Bailey, Becky Bailey, and myself.

We knew the location was south of the pump station and east of Farm Road 58.

So some months later 2 young men, John Richard, a native of Diboll, and Brian Adams, who had a hobby of searching for metal with metal detectors, said they would like to try and find the site. Mr. Young took them in the pasture and after several searches, they found the site. There was a spring, running into a creek. They found some railroad spikes, square nails, a broken plate, a thimble and other objects.

They found charcoal across the creek, which was believed to have been the site of the blacksmith shop. They later took a group of us there to see and make pictures. We had not gone far enough on our first journey. The site is about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile east of FM 58. We were all very happy and really appreciated John's and Brian's efforts. They were seemingly as elated as we were.

We had to find a date. In 1894 Diboll mill started production on 7,000 acres of timber on land that belonged to the Joseph Copes heirs – J.C. Diboll was a grandson of Mr. Copes and he did negotiating with Mr. Temple and Mr. Temple named the town Diboll. It was not until later, that they started buying land.

The company bought a narrow gauge line from Mr. W. M. Atwood in 1897. Mr. Atwood did contract logging for the company. Evidently the track ran east of Diboll because some early settlers have said they remembered seeing, in later years, his water tank, which was his source of water. It was located near Harris Street. So the date had to be after 1897.

So we went to the courthouse to search to see if the company had bought any land in the Thomas Caro Survey. They had a timber deed dated in December of 1898 from J. J. Bonner for over 3000 acres of timber. He had gotten the timber from Angelina County Lumber Company who owned the property and then Mr. Bonner sold the timber to Southern Pine Lumber Company. In this same deed was a bill of sale for:

2 locomotives, 17 logging cars, spikes, bridge timbers, ties log chains, 70 oxen, 4 horses, 11 wagons, blacksmith outfit, 3 tents, road wagons, and other items.

All of these things would have been used in a logging camp. So we set the date as 1899. After this date Southern Pine Lumber Company started buying more timber and land in the adjoining surveys. They had enough for the camp to last until 1906.

I was up at the Ora McMullen room one day and I thought: Would that logging camp be listed in the 1900 census? So I found the 1900 census that Mrs. Underwood had

typed and John Wilkins had bound in book form. Sure enough, I found Lindsey Springs logging camp. In June, 1900, there were 110 people living at Lindsey Springs camp in 25 households. Their birthplaces were: South Carolina, Texas, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Georgia, Florida, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Germany and Norway. Their occupations were laborer, teamster, saw filer, general merchandise salesman (they had a commissary there) carpenter, tie maker, section foreman, log contractor, foreman, and a potter.

Since children in the census were listed as being in school, we knew there was a school there. Mr. Howard Walker had given us a list of schools in Angelina County from 1902 until 1911 and Lindsey Springs was listed. Franklin Weeks found information stating that the teachers were Mr. I. G. Albritton who taught there in 1903 received \$35, \$50 and for three months he received \$120. Johnnie Bonner taught there in 1905 and 1906. The trustees had a Diboll address.

Next we went to the old records of the quarterly conference of the Methodist Church. In the Burke circuit for 1904 and 1905 "Diboll Front" was listed as giving \$93.30. The "Front" was what the logging camps were called. Since Lindsey Springs was the only camp at this time, this is the amount they paid for the support of the ministry. So this logging camp was a little community with a commissary, church and school. I have a picture of what a typical logging camp was like.

So we found enough facts and wrote our narrative to send to the Texas Historical Commission for a marker, which has been approved. The Pineywoods Foundation paid for the marker. The Historical Commission has written the inscription and it is now at the foundry being cast. Next year, 1994, we will dedicate the marker. It will be located 2.3 miles south of the intersection of Fairview Road FM 2108 and FM Road 58 on the east side of the road, about a mile south of the pump station.

I would like to add that Bishop William C Martin, a Methodist Bishop, lived at the camp when he was a young boy. He came to Diboll in 1968 to hold a revival and he had such fond memories of the camp that he wanted to go back there. So Clyde Thompson, Doug Warner, Rev. Stanley Vodika and Paul Durham took him there. Paul Durham was editor of the Free Press, and made pictures of the event.

Dr. H. C. Cook who later practiced medicine in Diboll was the camp doctor.

My mother, Frankie Warner Glass, who is 92 has some memories of the camp when her family live there. She remembers a little about the commissary, the houses and also of riding the log train caboose to her grand parents farm near Diboll.

In an article in the Buzz Saw in 1950, Mr. Paul Durham, Sr. stated that he started working for Southern Pine at old Lindsey Springs at the age of 15, driving a bull team with a rawhide whip and worked for logging contractors Taylor Powell and Tom Treadwell. This was in 1903.

We are still looking for more information and if you know of anyone whose parents or grandparents lived there or have any information about the camp, we would like to talk to them.

The days of the logging camps are gone, but memories linger on. This camp was moved in 1906-07 to Trinity County and renamed Camp No. 1.

END OF SPEECH