



# **Big Thicket People: Larry Jene Fisher's Photographs of the Last Southern Frontier (Bridwell Texas History)**

*Thad Sitton, C.E. Hunt*

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Living off the land—hunting, fishing, and farming, along with a range of specialized crafts that provided barter or cash income—was a way of life that persisted well into the twentieth century in the Big Thicket of southeast Texas. Before this way of life ended with World War II, professional photographer Larry Jene Fisher spent a decade between the 1930s and 1940s photographing Big Thicket people living and working in the old ways. His photographs, the only known collection on this subject, constitute an irreplaceable record of lifeways that first took root in the southeastern woodlands of the colonial United States and eventually spread all across the Southern frontier.

*Big Thicket People* presents Fisher's photographs in suites that document a wide slice of Big Thicket life—people, dogs, camps, deer hunts, farming, syrup mills, rooter hogs and stock raising, railroad tie making, barrel stave making, chimney building, peckerwood sawmills, logging, turpentine, town life, church services and picnics, funerals and golden weddings, and dances and other amusements. Accompanying each suite of images is a cultural essay by Thad Sitton, who also introduces the book with a historical overview of life in the Big Thicket. C. E. Hunt provides an informative biography of Larry Jene Fisher.

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