



Minden Perserverance and Pride (Making of America)

John A. Agan

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The beautiful historic town of Minden is tucked up in the pine-filled hills of northern Louisiana. Established by Charles Hanse Veeder in 1835, a third-generation German-American originally from upstate New York, Minden rapidly earned a reputation as a town of unique character, aided by the Minden Academy and the early introduction of the Methodist, Baptist, and Episcopalian religions. After Veeder left the town, the hearty settlers remained to foster Minden's growth and development. Although the seat of Webster Parish today, Minden has faced expansion fluctuations, caused by natural disaster and economic hardship, but followed by ambitious industrial endeavors and renewed hope.

Minden thrived commercially, with economic gain centralized in Bayou Dorcheat, which was composed of separate landings acting as shipping points for goods coming from much of northern Louisiana. Industries like cotton farming and the Minden Lumber Mill, formed in 1901 as one of the largest mills in the United States at the time, caused the town's population to nearly double in just ten years. Under the leadership of great men like E.S. Richardson, Minden also became a model for other towns of similar size in the field of education. At the same time, disastrous fires, a catastrophic tornado, and the devastation of the steamboat trade on Bayou Dorcheat by the coming of the railroad challenged the community in the ever-changing twentieth century.

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