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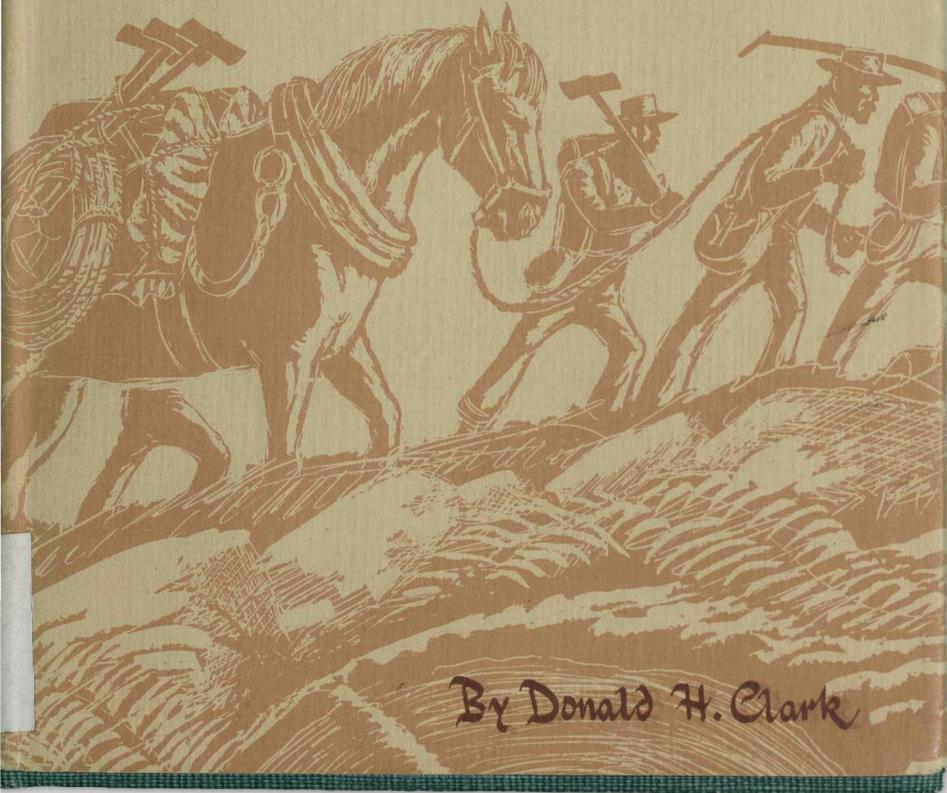
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MEN AND A HORSE



By Donald H. Clark

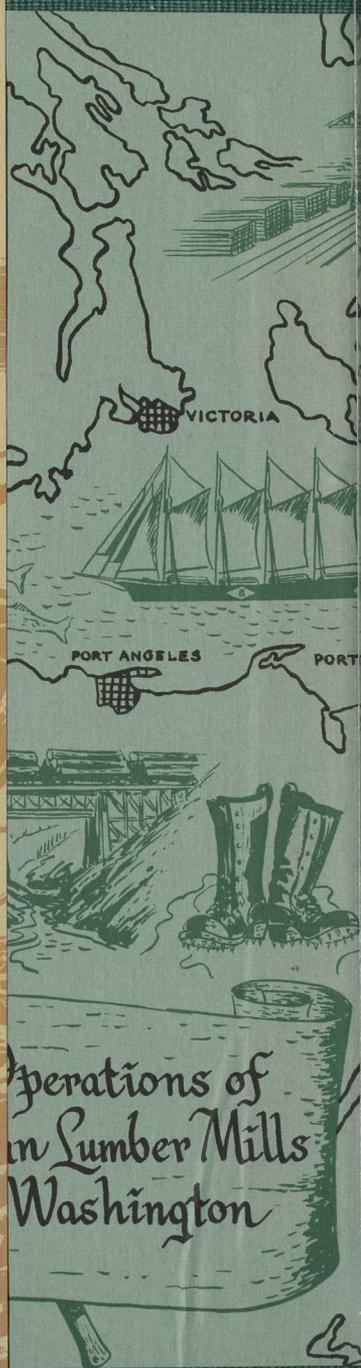
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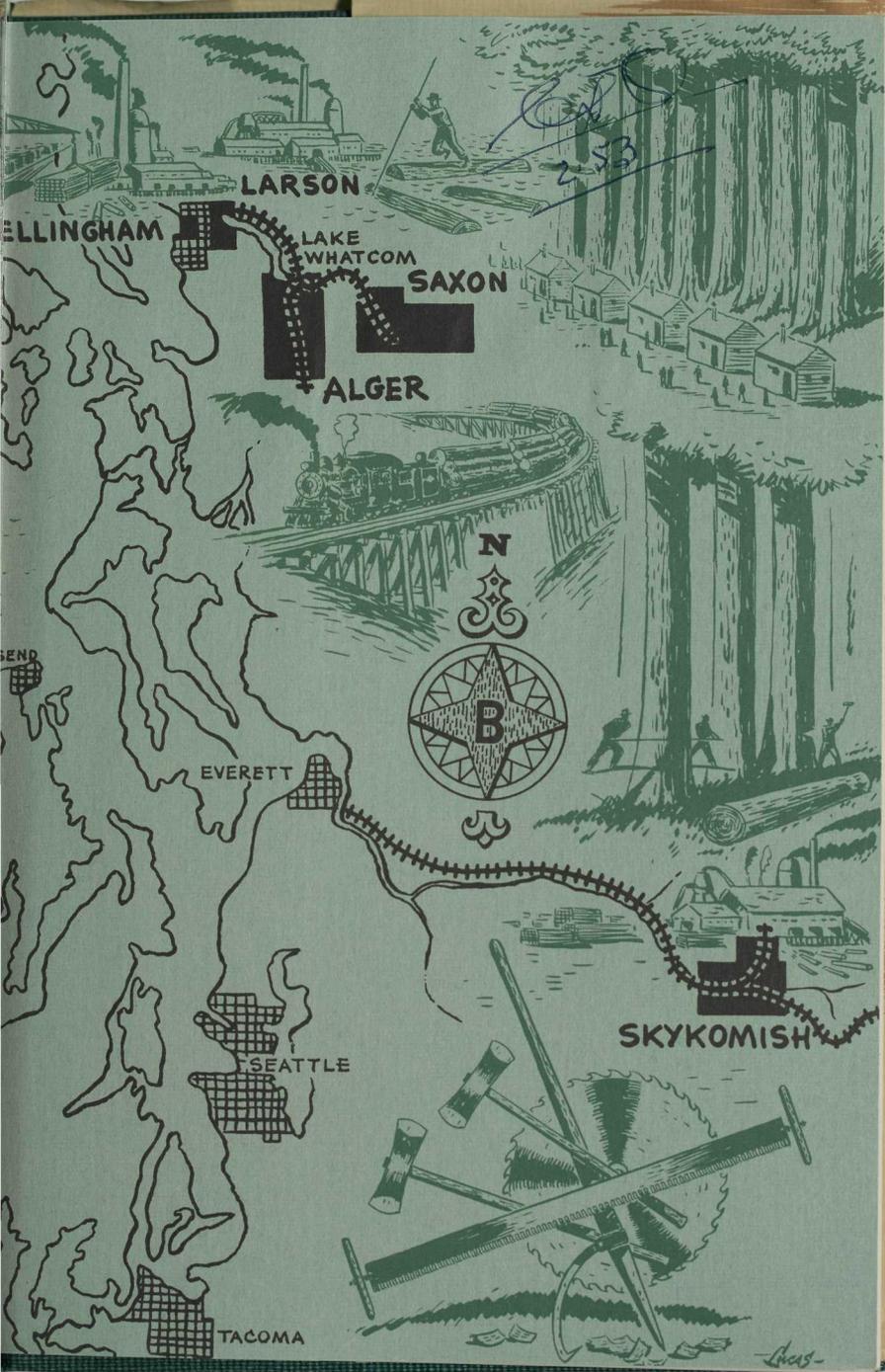
The author, Donald H. Clark, worked his way through the University of Washington via the logging and lumber camps of the northwest, and in the U. S. Forest Service in Oregon, Washington, Montana and Alaska between college terms. He graduated "cum laude" with B.S. and M.S.F. degrees.

He served in France during World War I as Captain of Field Artillery with the 91st Division, and after the armistice went into Germany with the 1st Division as a unit of the Army of Occupation.

In World War II he was a staff officer in Air Combat Intelligence with the 13th Air Force in the South Pacific.

Between wars—manager of the Red Cedar Shingle Association, and engaged in manufacture and sale of forest products. Now Research Associate and Instructor in Forestry at the University of Washington.





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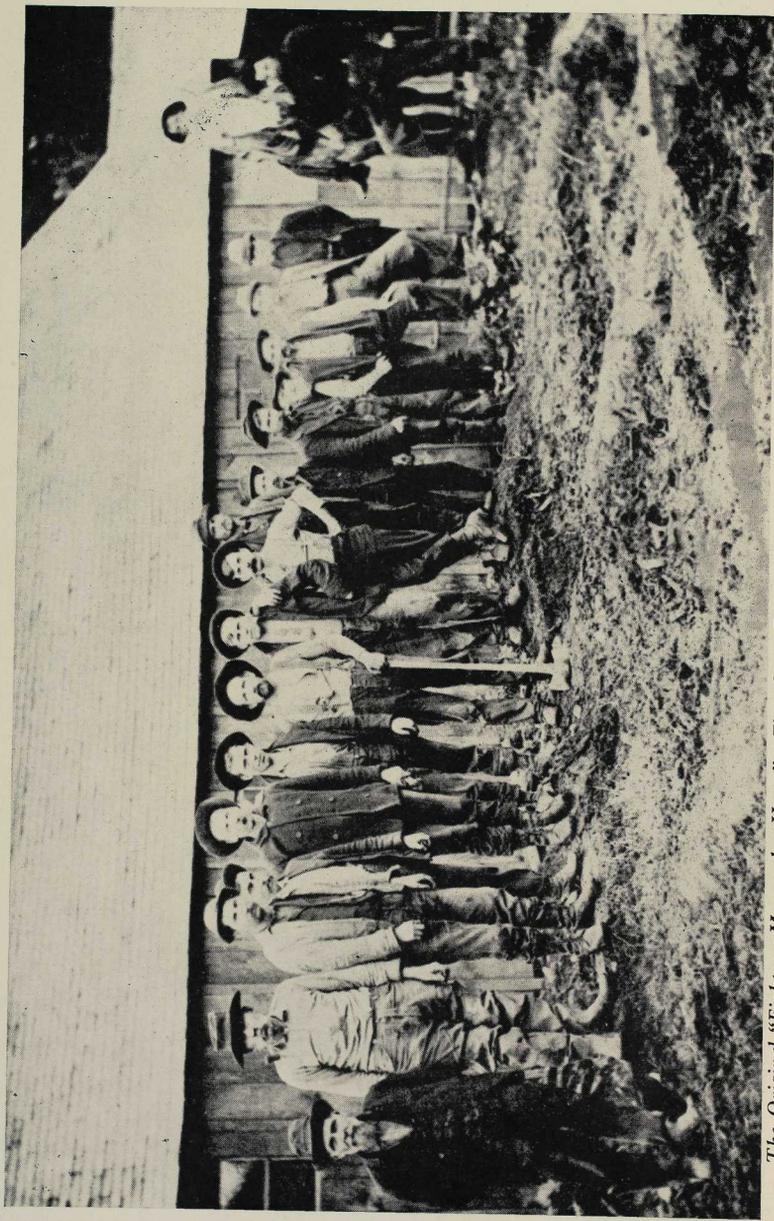
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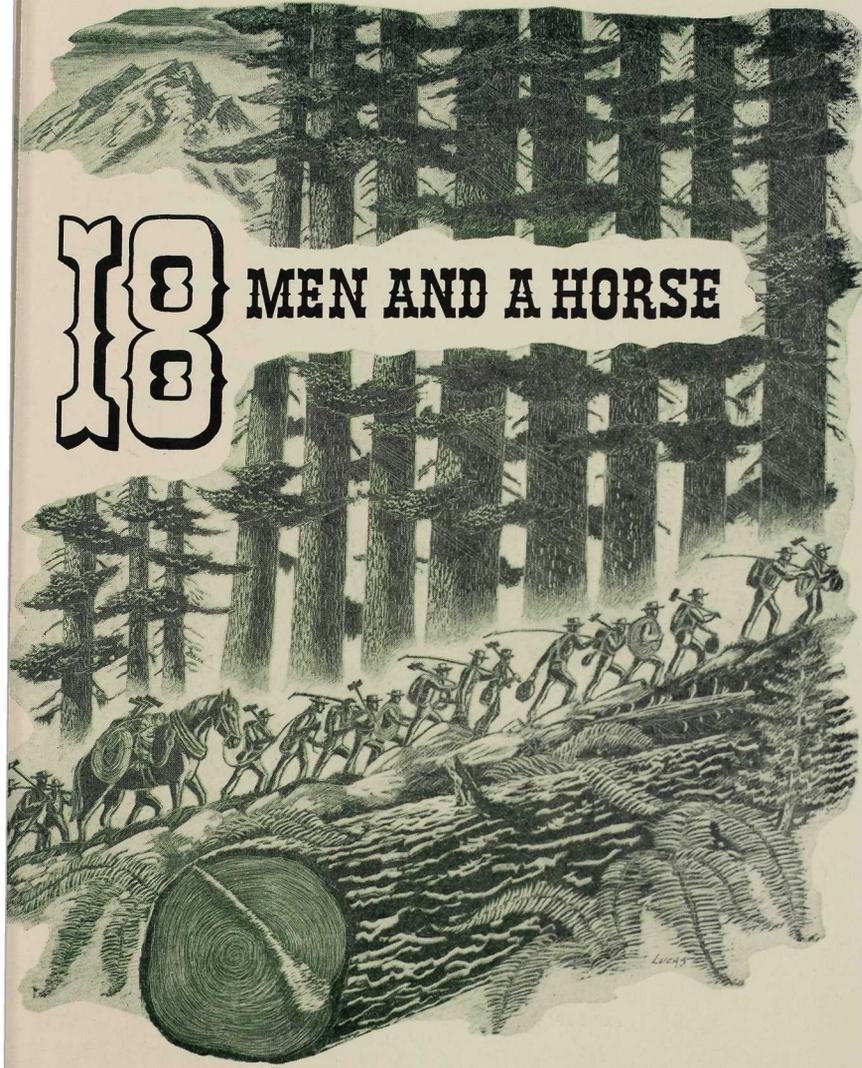
EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE



The Original "Eighteen Men and a Horse" - First Crew Employed by Lake Whatcom Logging Company subsequently merged into Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills - September, 1898.

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MEN AND A HORSE



By Donald H. Clark

The METROPOLITAN PRESS • Seattle, Washington

2 1948

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PRIVATELY PRINTED AND BOUND IN THE UNITED STATES
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PROLOGUE

THE "LONG-LOG" FORESTS

"The country now before us presented a most luxuriant landscape. The whole had the appearance of a continued forest extending as far as the eye could reach."

So, in 1792, wrote Captain George Vancouver in the log of his ship, the Sloop of War, *Discovery*. From the Strait of Juan de Fuca he had gazed for the first time on the vast virgin forests of the Puget Sound country, extending from the shoreline to the upper reaches of the Cascade and Olympic ranges.

The Douglas fir belt, described by one historian as the "long-log country," extends down the Pacific Coast from the upper reaches of Vancouver Island well into southern Oregon. Prevailing westerly winds bring vapor clouds from the warm Japanese current to drop their moisture against the cold slopes of the coastal mountains. This abundant precipitation, together with seasonal warmth and fertile soil, has created over the centuries one of the world's great timber stands.

The predominating Douglas fir, second in size only to the huge redwood among our native trees, towers to a height of almost three hundred feet on good soil. Western red cedar and Sitka spruce, nearly as tall as the fir and often attaining larger diameters, comprise a considerable part of the stand along the coastal plains and foothills up to 3,000 or 4,000 foot elevations. Scattered through the area, growing vigorously in the shade of the other species, is the western hemlock. Here and there are patches of white fir and white pine, and along the streams and lowlands, alder, maple and cottonwood thrive.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

Before the white man came, this enormous stand of timber had been unused through the ages, except that native Indians had cut a few of the cedars along the seashore for their canoes, lodges and implements. Year after year the older trees matured, died and fell, making room for seedlings to succeed them in the growth cycle measured by centuries.

Crews of the first sailing ships to venture along the coast cut a few of the towering firs for spars, ship planking and ship-knees. Some of this material they used for ship repair and some they carried to the China coast for trade. In 1827 the brig *Owyhee* took a deckload of a hundred spars from the Columbia River to China and the Sandwich Islands. There are records of many shiploads of hewed spars and piling taken from Puget Sound forests long before sawmills existed in the region.

Early settlers along the Columbia River and on salt water supplied ships with this hand-hewn material. Also, with froe and maul, they rived boards, shingles and fence rails from the huge old cedars to build homes and farm structures. Lacking further markets for forest products, they were forced to cut and burn a great deal of valuable timber to open patches of fertile land for agriculture. Often the settlers held "clearing bees" to assist each other, with ox-teams and manual labor, in falling and destroying the huge trees.

Today the value of those patches of timber would far exceed the value of the land, but the early pioneers had to raise their own food or starve. The hordes of salmon, halibut and other food fish were utilized to a very limited extent, there being no facilities for preserving or marketing. The mineral wealth of the country, covered by a blanket of forest,

PROLOGUE

remained undiscovered and undeveloped. This destruction of timber, which would now be considered an almost criminal waste of resources, was then an economic necessity.

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Dr. John McLaughlin, benevolent factor of Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Vancouver, built the first sawmill in the Pacific northwest in 1827. The machinery was shipped from England and installed five miles up the Columbia River from the trading post. Power was furnished by an overshot water wheel. Logs were brought to the mill by ten yoke of oxen. A crew of eight men, mostly "kanakas" from the Sandwich Islands, produced 2,500 to 3,500 feet of lumber daily.

By 1829 the mill had produced enough lumber to satisfy local demands, and regular shipments to the Sandwich Islands were handled by two Hudson's Bay Company ships. Honolulu paid sixty dollars a thousand for the rough lumber.

At Fort Nisqually on Puget Sound, a "saw-pit" mill was started in 1833. It was a "two-man-power" affair—one man at each end of the saw.

A water-powered sawmill was built in 1838 on the Willamette River; another in Salem, Oregon, during 1840; and in 1844 one at Oregon City and one near Astoria.

The California gold rush of 1849 stimulated Pacific northwest lumber production tremendously. Enormous quantities of lumber were needed for housing, docks and other developments. California had much standing timber but few sawmills. Several cargoes were shipped in from Australia, but most of the lumber demanded by the "forty-niners" came from Oregon and Washington.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

By 1850 thirty-seven sawmills were in operation in the Pacific Northwest. Most of them centered around the confluence of the Columbia and Willamette Rivers, and one mill at Portland was steam-powered. The annual production that year was slightly over twenty million board feet, with a market value of \$1,113,000. During the peak of the gold rush development lumber sold at the mills for as much as one hundred dollars a thousand, and re-sold in San Francisco harbor for \$350 to \$500.

Hazards of navigation over the bar at the mouth of the Columbia, together with costs of piloting and towing on the river, influenced new mills to establish northward along the Washington coast. Puget Sound, with almost two thousand miles of undeveloped shoreline, with deep quiet water, excellent harbors and timber to the water's edge, was destined to be the center of northwest lumber production for almost a century.

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The first power sawmill on Puget Sound was built in 1846 at the lower falls of the Deschutes River near the present site of Olympia by Michael T. Simmons, George W. Brush and a number of other settlers, operating as Puget Sound Milling Company. Used machinery was purchased from Hudson's Bay Company, and the product of the sawmill was sold largely through that company's Fort Nisqually trading post. Doctor William Fraser Tolmie, the Hudson's Bay Company factor at Fort Nisqually, shipped the lumber and shingles to Victoria and Honolulu markets.

By 1853 a number of other water-powered sawmills were operating or under construction on Puget Sound, together with seven steam-powered mills. Henry Yesler of Seattle built

PROLOGUE

the first of these steam-powered sawmills, producing almost entirely for the local market.

At Appletree Cove, J. J. Felt built a substantial and well-powered mill, but the location proved unfavorable. After shipping a few cargoes of lumber the mill was sold to George A. Meigs and moved to Port Madison on the north end of Bainbridge Island. A thriving sawmill town, considerably larger at that time than Seattle, grew around this mill and flourished for many years.

At Alki Point, Captain William Renton and C. C. Terry erected a sawmill, but constantly lost their logs to the wind and tide. Renton later moved the mill to Port Blakely where it operated quite successfully.

In the summer of 1853 the schooner *L. P. Foster*, 154 days out of Boston, put in at Port Gamble on Hood Canal loaded to capacity with building materials, food, and full equipment for two steam sawmills. The personnel of this expedition consisted of experienced sawmill operators and shipping men from East Machias, Maine, including Captain W. C. Talbot, A. J. Pope, Captain J. P. Keller and Charles Foster. Shortly after the mill was established, Cyrus Walker of Skowhegan, Maine, became associated with the firm. Operating as Pope & Talbot, Inc., and as Puget Mill Company, this organization continues its lumber manufacturing and shipping activities today—almost a hundred years later.

In the same year that Pope & Talbot founded Port Gamble, W. P. Sayward and J. R. Thorndike erected a mill and built a small town at Port Ludlow on the Olympic Peninsula across Hood Canal from the Port Gamble mill. After twenty-five years of lumber manufacturing they sold the property to Pope

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

& Talbot, and it was operated by them until recent years.

Another famous sawmill established in 1853 was placed at the falls of Whatcom Creek on Bellingham Bay by Captain Henry Roeder. The settlement built around this mill was the nucleus of present-day Bellingham.

Slackening of the San Francisco lumber demand, due partly to establishment of sawmills in California, caused a sharp price slump. Puget Sound mills were forced to sell for as little as ten to fifteen dollars on fir and twelve to sixteen on cedar lumber during the summer of 1855. Consequently, the thirty-one mills in Washington Territory, producing forty-five million feet of lumber annually, sought markets other than California.

Australia, New Zealand and other islands in the Pacific became steady users of Puget Sound lumber. Pope & Talbot sold heavily in the Sandwich Islands and carried Hawaiian goods in their company store. By 1857 the sawmills on Puget Sound had regained a measure of prosperity, and in that year sold almost \$400,000 worth of lumber, lath, shingles, masts and spars.

Transcontinental railroad building headed for the west at the conclusion of the War Between the States. Across the plains of the Dakotas, over the continental divide, and through the dense forests of the Pacific Northwest, the Northern Pacific headed for the coast. A branch line from Portland reached Tacoma in 1883, and a direct line over the Cascades in 1887. The Great Northern built through to the coast in 1893, offering cheap rates to middle-western and eastern markets—forty cents per hundredweight to Minneapolis, fifty cents to Chicago, and seventy cents to New York City. Under the impetus of these rates, rail shipments from western Wash-

PROLOGUE

ington leaped to eighty million feet annually, and within eight years to 322 million.

The 1893 panic plunged the Pacific northwest lumber industry into black despair which continued until the national election of 1896. With the inauguration of President McKinley in 1897 a period of prosperity ensued, aided materially by the Klondike gold rush and by government purchases incidental to the Spanish-American War. Within a few short years the State of Washington was to lead the nation in lumber production.

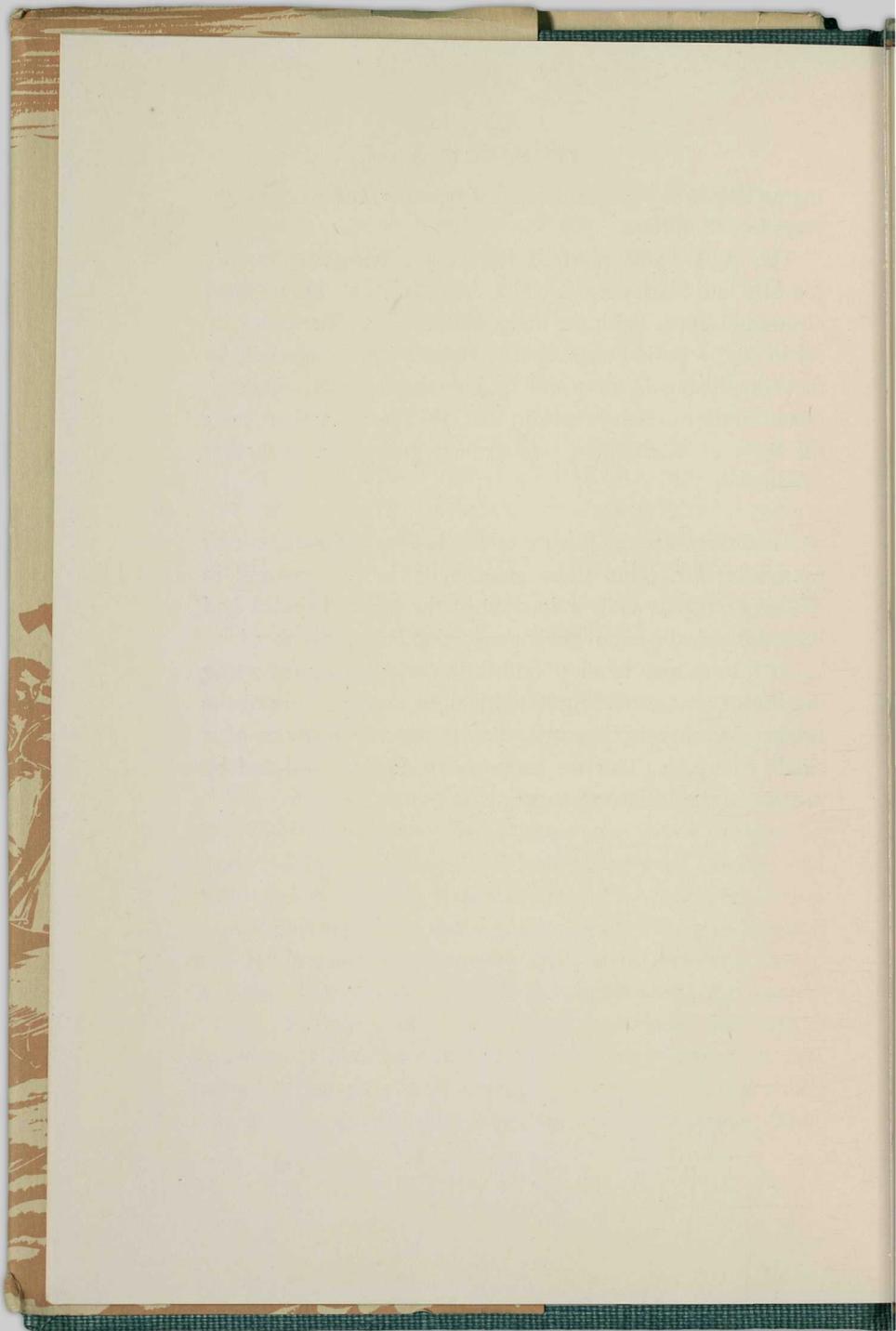
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This, then was the picture of the lumber industry seventy years after Dr. John McLaughlin built the first sawmill in Washington state. Only a fraction of the original timber had been utilized, the era of great production being still ahead.

1897

1827 P. 20

As history may be most faithfully portrayed by following the life of an outstanding individual, so may the story of the lumber industry be best told by tracing the fortunes of a single enterprise. This we endeavor to do, by word and by picture, in the following pages.



INTRODUCTION

More than a generation ago when I first visited a forest area that was all but impenetrable except to an experienced timber cruiser, I thought of the majestic trees as well nigh immutable—that they would never change nor should they be destroyed. When later I witnessed a great logging operation and noted how devastating the axe, the saw, and the donkey engine could be in a single day I thought of that visit as a great sorrow. I wished that some of the most strikingly beautiful trees could be preserved. Then, when I saw a great section of a nearby forest being swept by fire, and when still later I personally inspected the result of the great tornado that leveled millions of trees on the Olympic Peninsula, I realized that forests have greater enemies than man.

Individuals of the forest, like those of the race of man, also have life cycles. These trees are constantly imperiled by the elements, by disease and decay. If and when they reach the age of maturity they cease to grow and soon fall to earth. Their rotting forms help to nourish the soil and quicken the growth of a succeeding generation. Every forest is a huge graveyard. At least three generations of trees are observable even to any casual visitor to an evergreen forest. That our forest areas are very ancient has long been known. But trees existed long before man, a fact witnessed by coal deposits, forms preserved in sedimentary rocks, and in petrified woods. Of these remains we know not now how to classify the species. We can measure the age of living forests but not of remains of the ancients.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

A forest is of small value to man until it is harvested. It is a resource but it must be scientifically harvested to be a public asset. Until harvested it is the greatest potential casualty of all national resources. When our forests are matured they should be invaded and their product brought into wholesome use. Such of these tracts, where it is practicable, should be reforested and safeguarded. Those deforested areas that are suitable to cultivation should pass into the possession of those who will adapt them to agriculture, to homes or to other profitable purposes.

Thus, logging of our forests is the march of human progress. Our nation has been enriched by modern methods of timber harvesting as certainly as by the mining of coal, of iron and of gold.

This volume is an abridged history of the Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills, an organization that, from its inception as a little logging operation, steadily increased in vigor and became one of the largest and most widely known industrial institutions of the Great Northwest.

It is a story of the vision, the determination, and the skill of a small group of men whose names are indelibly written on the record of those who were in the front line of the builders of America.

For more than three decades Bloedel Donovan was recognized as one of the highly successful organizations operating in the world's greatest forest empire. Its logging operations had extended into four of the most heavily forested areas of the State of Washington. The text of the story also tells that

INTRODUCTION

one of these leaders for years has operated extensively in British Columbia.

Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills were among the truly modern and most skillfully operated, and their product, in large measure, the best marketed in the world. The productivity of these mills was enormous. They manufactured so great a variety of timber products, in such volume and dimensions, that every requirement of the building industry, large and small, could be supplied. An almost constant stream of ships and trains, barges and trucks, carried Bloedel Donovan products to domestic and foreign markets. These products built cities, warehouses, commercial establishments, highway and railway bridges, ships and docks, freight cars and airplanes. They aided in constructing great dams, irrigation structures, farm buildings, boxes for containers of products of orchards, fields and the sea. This company's mills also produced ties for hundreds of miles of transcontinental railways and local lines in the United States and Canada. For years the Hawaiian and other islands of the Pacific depended upon Bloedel Donovan mills for a large portion of their building needs. Japan was an important customer, often buying huge cargoes of squared timbers and cutting them to dimensions in its own mills.

This story of the Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills is not only a narrative of financing and operational events but it briefly sketches the activities of some of the men who contributed so much to the company's success. Obviously, but a few names could be recalled—literally thousands of men were employed and had a large part in the far-flung operations. Many of these names are of men who were notably active in

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

business, civic and political affairs of the west. But as the volume is not a biographical work and is purposely the record of a major industry, personal sketches are necessarily few and brief.

This story also tells how, from a modest beginning just fifty years ago, free enterprise in America permitted the building of an organization that touched and influenced the lives of thousands. In a short life span the Bloedel Donovan enterprises became well known in the lumber markets of the world. It is most fitting, therefore, that the history of this institution and the names of its founders and builders be preserved and made a part of the history of the Pacific Northwest.

—FRANK I. SEFRIT

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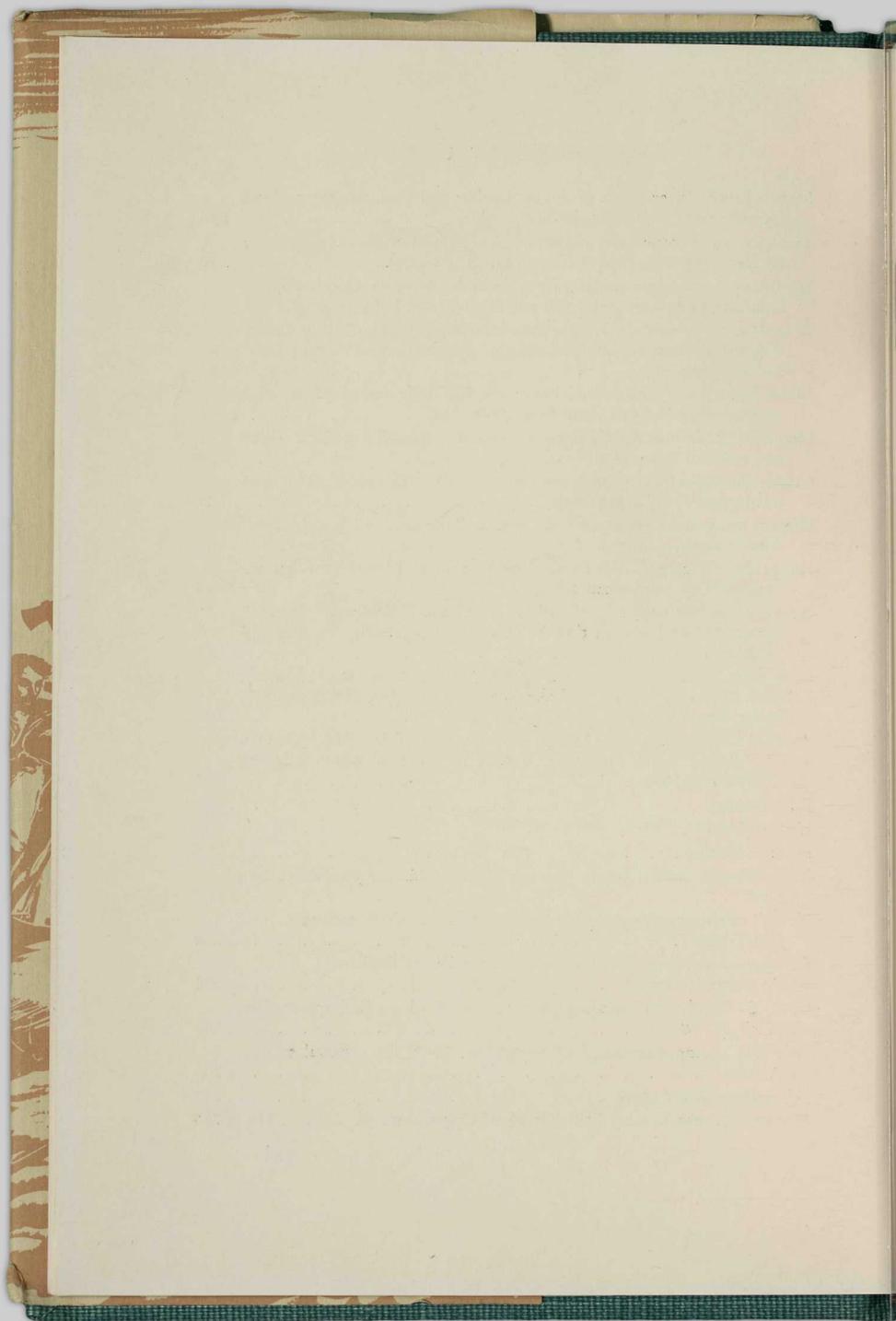
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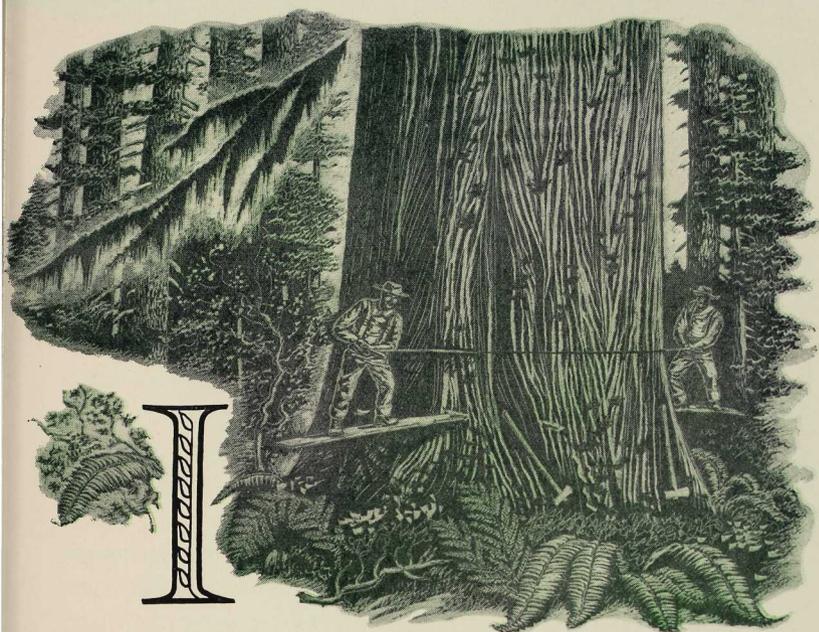
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THREE MEN MEET **A** HALF-CENTURY AGO,

on August 11, 1898, to be exact, three men met in the bustling young town of Fairhaven on Bellingham Bay. This was pioneer country, and the three were pioneers—a lumberman, a civil engineer, and a railroad builder.

“The Lake Whatcom Logging Company was organized this date,” J. H. Bloedel wrote in the company journal in his precise, angular hand, “and incorporated with a capital stock of \$6,000 in shares of \$100 each, subscribed as follows:

Peter Larson 20 shares.

J. J. Donovan 20 shares.

J. H. Bloedel 20 shares.”

Peter Larson knew men. The largest railroad contractor of his time, he hired many thousands, and he called railroad

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

presidents and bankers by their first names. With native shrewdness and ability to judge character, he trusted the two younger men implicitly: J. H. Bloedel, at thirty-four, manager of a logging company and a coal mine, and J. J. Donovan, an outstanding civil engineer at forty.

"Sure, draw on me for money, and let me know if you need any more. Buy the timber we talked about, and start logging right away." Peter Larson's speech retained the flavor of the Danish Island of Fyen, where he'd been born forty-eight years before. The next day they drew on Peter Larson for fifteen hundred dollars, and a few weeks later for the balance of the six thousand.

J. H. Bloedel was manager of the company, and he bought timber claims within easy logging distance of Lake Whatcom, a fresh-water lake twelve miles long, 313 feet above tide-water, and less than four miles from Bellingham Bay. From that day in 1898 until the present, that timber-fringed lake has played an important part in the activities of Lake Whatcom Logging Company and the organizations which succeeded it.

"We've had five years of depression," Bloedel reminded his partners, "but with McKinley in the White House, we're due for prosperity. We can't go wrong buying this timber now. It'll never go this low again."

Larson and Donovan had faith in Bloedel's judgment, as he'd spent four seasons surveying the pineries of northern Wisconsin, acquiring a clear sense of timber values and a strong interest in logging. That had been in the early 80's, during his vacations from the University of Michigan, and after leaving that school. More recently—since 1890—he'd added vastly to his timber and logging knowledge by manag-

Pake Whatcom Logging Co August 11th 1898

Aug 11	The Pake Whatcom Logging Co was organized this date, + incorporated with a capital stock of \$6000.00 in shares of \$100.00 each, subscribed as follows: Pete Barron no shares J. J. Dimmick " " J. H. Bloddel " "				
"	An assessment of 100% was levied due and payable at once. The following entry is therefore made:				
✓	✓ Funds Dr to Capital Stock			6000.00	
✓	✓ Pete Barron	2000.00	✓		
✓	✓ J. J. Dimmick	2000.00	✓		
✓	✓ J. H. Bloddel	2000.00	✓		
✓	✓ Bank of Whatcom Dr	1500.00			✓
✓	to Pete Barron			500	✓
✓	" J. J. Dimmick			500	✓
✓	" J. H. Bloddel			500	✓
	On this date a draft was made on Pete Barron for 1500.00, one-third of which applied to the credit of each of the above stock holders as per agreement among themselves.				

First journal entry—Lake Whatcom Logging Company.

ing Samish Lake Logging Co. which operated within a few miles of Lake Whatcom in the same belt of heavy old-growth fir and cedar.

He knew the value of a dollar, too, having been president

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

of Fairhaven National Bank during most of the terrible financial panic of 1893-96. He brought that bank through as a solvent corporation when all but two of the local banks had failed.

The value of the timber purchased by Lake Whatcom Logging Company did not go lower; it went up and up and up. If that timber were standing today, it would be almost priceless.

The three partners started their logging at South Bay on Lake Whatcom with eighteen men and a horse. Even today, scanning the old photograph of the crew, J. H. Bloedel can name each man—and the horse—and mention their specific jobs.

Two steam-driven donkey engines were bought from Washington Iron Works of Seattle, one to yard the logs from the woods to the landing, the other to road them from the landing to Lake Whatcom over "fore-and-aft" skid roads. "Queen," the line-horse, hauled the main-line back into the woods for the yarding crew, as there was no haul-back drum on the yarding donkeys then. She lost her job a couple of years later when manufacturers of logging machinery put a second drum on their donkeys for a haul-back line.

George Wood started working for Lake Whatcom Logging Company in 1899, the year after they incorporated, and completed twenty-nine years of service as rigging-slinger, head-loader, head-brakeman, and rigger. Now, at seventy-five, he clearly remembers detailed happenings of almost fifty years ago.

"We had a line-horse named Maud working at Camp One near South Bay. That was in 1899 when I went to work for



Fairhaven in September, 1890.



Fairhaven harbor and wharves, 1890.

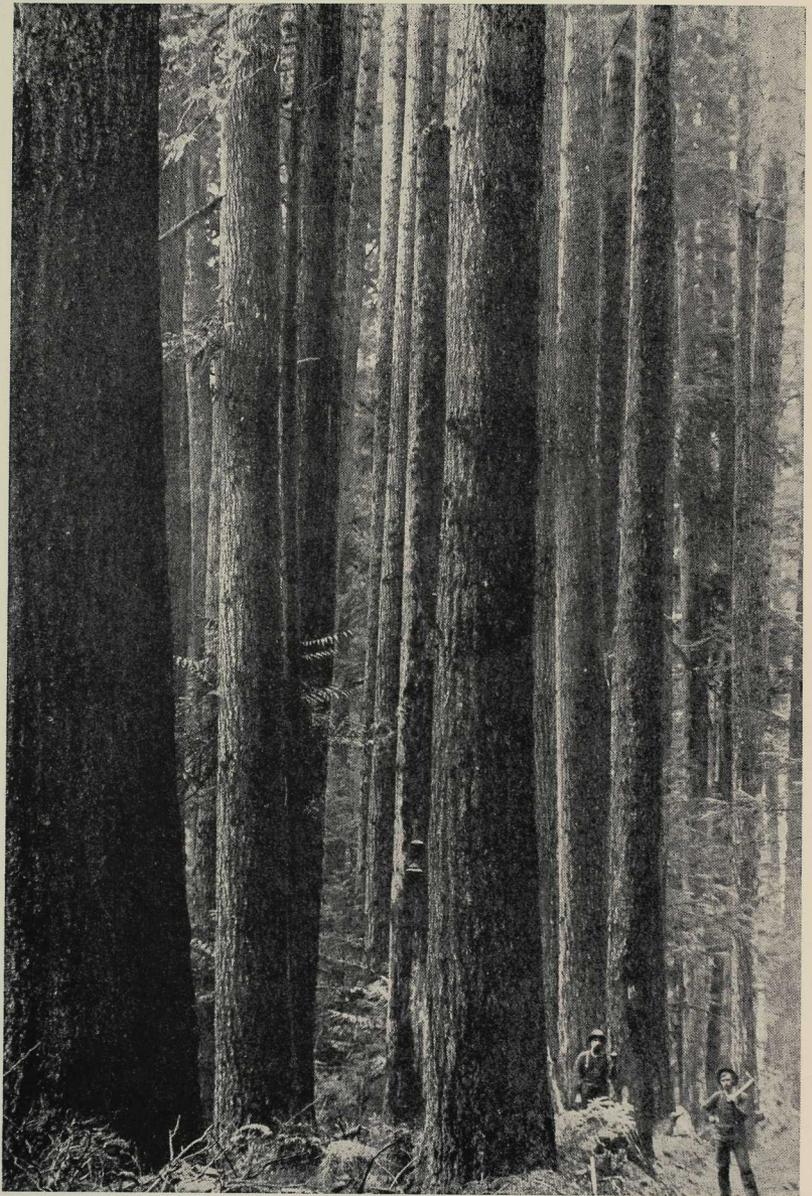
9

Lake Whatcom Logging Co.

1898

March 5	Wages Logging Dr and Camp Equipment	✓	8000	✓	8000	✓
	1 Mile here was killed by tree falling and some land to be replaced					

They were expensable in 1898 (Journal entry in J. H. Bloedel's handwriting).



Lake Whatcom timber, 1898. Hawley-Alger Claim.

THREE MEN MEET

'J. H.' and 'J. J.' She certainly was a smart animal. She didn't have to be driven; she'd take the line out into the woods all by herself. Once when we got caught by fire in the woods near Alger, she walked logs just like the rest of us to get out! When we quit using line-horses, the company pensioned her off for life."

George took us into his home at Alger, bought from the company in 1920, and showed us old photographs of logging crews and locomotives, then guided us on a three-hour jaunt through the old logging show south of Lake Whatcom. He pointed through the heavy second-growth timber to a length of rusty cable.

"There's an old choker we left when we logged here out of Camp Three. That was more'n forty-five years ago, when I was about thirty. I got smashed up by a load of logs in 1909 and I haven't been so spry since then." He slowed up his climb on the steep, rocky truck road, to let us catch up.

The Lake Whatcom Logging Company, using single-drum yarders and line-horses in 1898, was progressive compared with the many loggers who still used oxen. The New Whatcom Blade, a dynamic twenty-four-column newspaper then publishing on Bellingham Bay, remarks, ". . . The steady pull of the old-style ox team still lands many a log in the water."

Some of the timber on claims purchased by the company around Lake Whatcom was of tremendous size, and the stand per acre was so heavy that cruisers' figures were often questioned. In order to cut one tree near Alger, two nine-foot falling saws were brazed together. The tree measured over fifteen feet in diameter on the stump. Another tree, twelve feet in diameter and two hundred seventy-five feet high, actually



Logging with oxen near Samish Lake—1890. Mickey Gates on near side with ox-goad.



Yarding logs with single-drum donkey and line-horse.

THREE MEN MEET

cut out 105,000 board feet. The ring count showed it to be over seven hundred years old!

Four or five miles south of Lake Whatcom, extending from the vicinity of Alger almost to Samish Bay, some ten thousand acres of this heavy timber was owned by the Hawley-Alger interests. Hawley was a Michigan lumberman, and Russell A. Alger, also a Michigander, was Secretary of War under President McKinley from 1897 until 1899. Bloedel wanted this timber for the company, and he took Peter Larson out to look at it.

"We've got to get hold of this timber," said Bloedel.

"Buy it," said Larson.

"With what?" Bloedel countered.

Again Peter Larson used his famous three-word speech, "Draw on me."

Bloedel asked H. C. Henry of Seattle, Alger's brother-in-law, what the timber was worth.

"I think Alger'll take \$150,000 for it," Henry told him.

Bloedel hurried to Alger's headquarters in Detroit.

"Henry was too low, Mr. Bloedel. I want \$160,000, and I'm going to sell it right away."

Bloedel wanted the timber badly, and he knew it was probably worth \$160,000, but he didn't want to be rushed. He got Alger to give him the refusal of the timber until ten o'clock the following morning, and then went to a show to keep from worrying about the deal. The show was "Arizona," and it was probably a good show, but it didn't register with Bloedel. All he thought about was the timber deal, and he left the theatre resolved to offer Alger \$155,000. Alger accepted the offer the next morning.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE



Falling cedar near Cain's Lake in 1898.

Years later, a friend took Bloedel to see a show. It was "Arizona."

Bloedel grinned at his friend. "I think I've seen this show before."

"You have? How'd you like it?"

"I don't remember much of it, but it saved us \$5,000!"

The Hawley-Alger timber cut out an average of 94,500 feet per acre, and the best of it went as high as 150,000 feet.

THREE MEN MEET

"It's so damn thick you have to elbow your way through it," said Lafe Heath, an old-time timber cruiser.

About four thousand acres of Hawley's claims had been logged in the 80's, before Lake Whatcom Logging Company purchased, and the fallers had left exceptionally high stumps to get away from the butt-swell on the cedar and above the pitch pockets on the fir. Also, it was easier to cut spring-board notches than to cut brush away from the bases of the trees. This cut-over land was included in the sale, although Bloedel and his partners didn't particularly want it. Cedar stumpage took a rise in value later, and the company cut enough shingle bolts from the high-stumped cedar to make the purchase of the logged-off land a fairly good investment.



Woods crew and 20-foot cedar near Camp Five.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

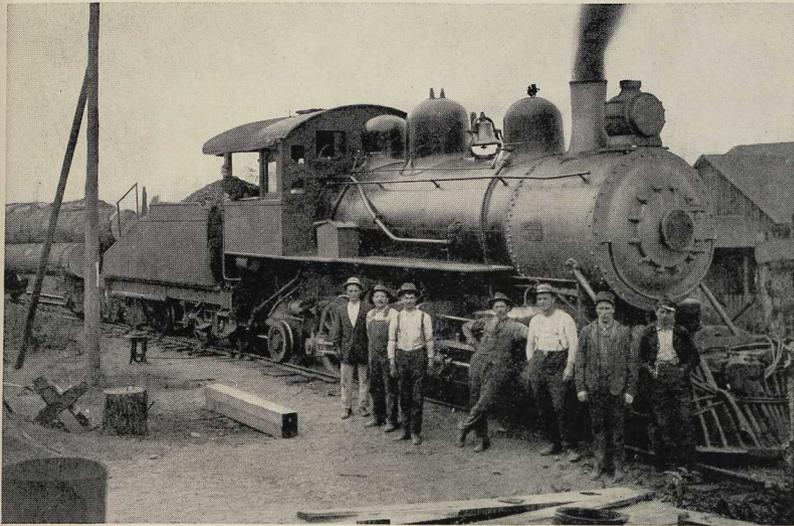
As a matter of fact the company didn't want to buy any land at all; they wanted only timber. Alger wouldn't sell the timber without the land, so the company removed the timber and sold all the land that was level and fertile enough for farming. Some of it brought as high as \$75 an acre uncleared, but most of it went to company employees at \$10 to \$27 an acre, on long term payments.

Those eighteen men and the horse, falling and bucking timber and dragging it to Lake Whatcom in 1898, didn't leave many records of their accomplishments. The few glimpses we find in the memories of old time employees and a few entries in old journals give us colorful flash-backs to the woods and the skid-roads and the bunk-houses.

George Wood remembers when he drew \$80 a month as head brakeman, during the same period that Bloedel was carried on the payroll at \$75. The camp cook drew \$35, and the highest paid man on the books seems to have been Lafe Heath, the timber cruiser, who drew \$104.46 for twenty-four days' work.

On November 5, 1898, the old journal carries a sad entry in Bloedel's hand-writing: "1 Blk. horse was killed by tree falling, cost \$80, had to be replaced." On September 30 of that year, a boat and a pair of oars cost the Lake Whatcom Logging Company a round sum of five dollars. Two cows to supply fresh milk to the cook-house cost twenty-five and thirty-five dollars, respectively; the thirty-five dollar cow probably being more "contented."

In December of 1898, number one fir logs were sold to Geneva Lumber Company on Lake Whatcom at four dollars per thousand delivered to the mill. On the last day of that



The "One-Spot" and crew. George Wood standing second from left.

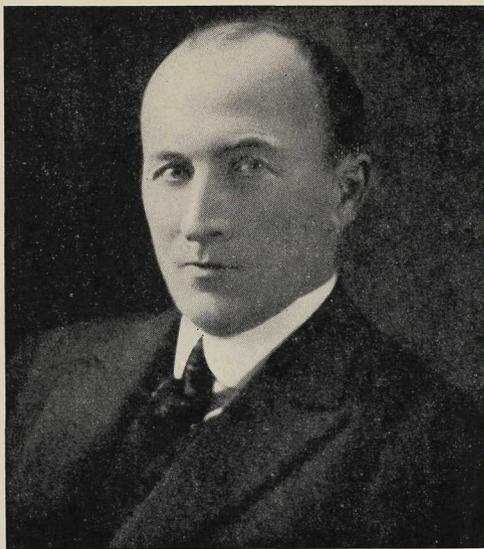
year, the company inventoried number one logs in its boom at \$3.75 per thousand, and number two logs at \$2. Forty boomsticks with chains were given a value of four dollars each. Clear cedar logs were carried on the books at \$3.50 per thousand.

This was the beginning—eighteen men and a horse—backed by six thousand dollars of Peter Larson's money and the ability and vision of two young men, J. J. Donovan and J. H. Bloedel. Thirty years later the horse was a memory in the minds of older woodsmen, but the eighteen men in the timber had been transformed into fourteen hundred loggers working from six big logging camps with one hundred and forty miles of their own rails to haul the logs to mills and tidewater. Sixteen hundred other men labored in four modern sawmills and in three planing mills, in three shingle mills, in a sash and door

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

factory and in a huge box manufacturing plant, shaping the logs into forest products for world markets.

Year in and year out, for a half-century, the mills and logging camps worked, not as destructive or wasteful agencies, but converting all of the raw materials of the forests into useful products, payrolls, and growing communities. Some thirty thousand farm acres and fifteen thousand acres of grazing land were created from the one hundred thousand acres logged. The remainder, better fitted for timber crops, is in process of conversion to "tree farms."



Fenwick Riley



III

FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE THE THREE MEN

who met in 1898 to create Lake Whatcom Logging Company laid the cornerstone of a project that endured for a half-century. They laid it on solid rock, so that through the years it survived shocks and disasters that wrecked weaker structures.

The corner stone was selection of large areas of excellent old-growth timber located on or adjacent to Lake Whatcom, of proven value but purchased when stumpage prices were at rock-bottom. Careful investigation of all available tracts was made, and the first sums paid by Lake Whatcom Logging Company, as shown in the old journal, were for cruising timber claims adjacent to the lake.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

The first timber purchased was the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 28, Township 37 North, Range 4 East, located directly inland from South Bay on Lake Whatcom. The owners, General R. A. Alger and his partner Revaux K. Hawley, were paid one dollar per thousand stumpage as the timber was cut. The southwest and northeast quarters of the same section, known respectively as the Clark and Turner claims, were bought for a flat price of \$1,800 each.

The stone under the second corner of the structure was the successful and economical operation of the early logging ventures, with the right men and skilled management. The first camp, established at South Bay, started with a yarding engine, a roading engine, the eighteen men that you've already met, and the line-horse, "Queen."

Wages for common labor were two dollars a day for ten hours, but that ten hours lasted from "can to can't," or from "can see" in the morning until "can't see" at night.

"Roll out, yous!" camp foreman Jess Knight yelled before daylight, and not until it was too dark to work would Jess lead the crew back to camp.

By the way, don't feel too badly about that two bucks a day for common labor. The *New Whatcom Blade* at that time carried the advertisement of "H. George, Grocer; 1355 Holly Street," where one dollar got you eight pounds of Arbuckle's coffee or eighteen pounds of "Best Granulated Sugar." Chris Semon's Wine House sold California Claret at four bits a gallon, and either Burgundy or Zinfandel at six bits. If you could afford a gallon of the very best California Port, Sherry or Tokay, Chris nicked you a whole dollar! For \$2.50 you

THE BLADE.

Vol. 1.

NEW WHATCOM, WASH., TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1894.

No. 8.

BOYS' SUITS! PUGET SOUND
 Apr 4 to 14,
\$1.50! HOW IT C

AT THE
THE RED FRONT
 Holy Block.
Cow Butter Store
 Butter street

SELS

Business Directory...
 The B. K. National Bank
 J. W. BROWN, W. W. GARDNER
 President, Cashier

NOLTE BROS.

Wholesale and Retail

If you have been told
 that you are getting
 something for nothing
 well you are indeed
 getting it.

**10th Annual
 Sale**

- Here are Prices that Cut Short
 All Arguments:
- Choice Black or Blue
 Men's Suits \$5.00
 - Pine Straps Kersey
 Overcoats \$5.00
 - Fancy Mixed Cassi-
 mer suits \$6.50
 - French or Faced
 Melton Overcoats \$6.50
 - Very soft Black
 Worsted Suits \$7.50
 - Pine Top Covert Over-
 coat \$7.50

And like bargains in our Hat and
 Cap Departments.
 Doing all we promise in price has
 done for us in the people's confi-

SOME GENERAL LOCAL NEWS

Prices Lower Than Ever.
 Men's Tan Shoes \$1.50 Former Price 2.00
 Men's Black Shoes 1.75 Former Price 2.00
 Ladies' Black Gait Shoes 2.00 Former Price 2.50
 Ladies' Black & Dongola Kid 1.75 Former Price 2.00
 Ladies' Black Dongola Kid 1.50 Former Price 2.00
 Ladies' Black Dongola Kid 1.00 Former Price 1.50

Misses' and Children's Shoes
 at Same Reduction.

**FAMOUS
 SHOE HOUSE**

JUST RECEIVED
 A New Line of
 THE LATEST in

- BLOUSE SET, GOLD-TINSEL BELTS.
- HAT PINS, LADIES' CHAINS.
- STUCK PINS, SILVER NOVELTIES

SPECIAL INDUCEMENTS
 A Beautiful Stick Pin, 25c.
 Look At This Good Eye-glass, 25c.
 Good Gold Frame Spect. 50c.
 Solid Gold Spectacles \$3.75
 Watch Alarm Clock, 75c.
 Watch Cleaning, 75c.
 Watch Main Springs, 75c.

W. C. C. STULL,
 1040 HOLLY STREET, THE BELLAIR JEWELER

NOLTE BROS.,
 Wholesale and Retail Dealers in
FRESH AND SALT MEATS.



Kettle Fried
 Lard, 10c lb.
 Home Cured
 Hams, 10c lb.
 Bacon, 10c

Thirteenth St., near D.
 New Whatcom, Wash.

H. GEORGE, Grocer....
 No. 1255 Holly St. Whatcom.
 Prices are What Talk...

- SEPTEMBER 27, 1907
 Olympic Flour, \$1.25 per sack, per 100 \$1.00
 10 lb. Best Granulated Sugar 1.00
 8 lb. Arrowhead Coffee 1.00

At the Old Stand Formerly Occupied by George & Morgan.

**Morgan & Matthes
 GROCERS.**

- 1-2 lb can salmon, 5c can
- Flour, good, 25c per sack
- Bran, 45c per sk.

We get two ship-
 ments of fruit
 from Yakima ev-
 ery week. Come
 and see our va-
 riety.

**Wanted--Horse, gray, 1100
 pounds weight.
 Must be sound.**

Morgan & Matthes

**CHRIS SEMON'S
 WINE HOUSE**
 Cor. D and 13th Sts.

PRICE LIST

- Kentucky Whiskeys
 3 years old per gallon \$2.65 per
 3 years old per quart 1.00 per
 5 years old per gallon 4.00 per
 5 years old per quart 1.25 per
 Brandy
 California per gallon \$3.00 per
 J. & H. Hennessy & Co. per gal. 4.50
 Ale and Pilsner
 Blue Pale Ale, 10c
 Guinness's extra stout per 25c
 Frederickburg Export Beer 25c per
 California Wines
 Port per gal \$1.00 per quart
 Sherry " " 1.00 per quart
 Tokay " " 1.00 per quart
 Catawba " " 1.00 per quart
 Mountain " " 1.00 per quart
 Sour wine " " 1.00 per quart
 Zinfandel per gal. 60c per 100
 Claret per gal 40c per 100
 Redding 60c per 100
 Basted goods for the Holiday

Living costs in the 1890's.



Horse-logging on skidroads. The "grease-monkey" always led the procession.

FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

carried home a gallon of brandy or old Kentucky rye, and for \$3, a gallon of Old Crow bourbon.

Men's suits—"All the New and Nobby Designs in Worsteds and Tweeds"—sold at \$7.50, with no sales tax. The best lunch in town cost two bits; and for fifty cents, according to the *Blade*, you got an "Elegant Dinner." Even away out near the Mount Baker Mines in 1898, meals were not really exorbitant, as J. H. Bloedel remembers a sign over a cross-road inn that announced,

DINNER 50c, SQUARE MEAL 75c, GRAND GORGE \$1.00.

In 1898 the under-cutters were considered skilled craftsmen, working ahead of the timber fallers and drawing higher pay. Unless strictly supervised, under-cutters and fallers wasted large amounts of good timber in high stumps, going yards above the ground level with their spring-boards—two, three, or four notches—to get away from brush, butt-swelling, and pitch. You won't find many of these high stumps on old Lake Whatcom Logging Company shows.

There was no high-speed logging equipment then, no skidders, no high-lead system. The yarding donkey, a single-drum affair, pulled the logs to the landing on the skid-road where they were made up into "turns" for the roading donkey. Each turn consisted of four or five logs (only three if they were large) "dogged" together in tandem with hooks and short cables. The larger logs were placed ahead and a sled, called the "pig," was attached to the rear of the turn to bring back the hooks and cables. One of the colorful and unprintable logging terms of that era was the designation of the man who rode this sled.

The cross-logs of the skid road were called "rides," and

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

the middle of each ride was hewed down to form a trough in which the logs were skidded. This trough was usually faced with "gluts" of vine maple to make it tough and wear-resisting. A "grease-monkey" worked the skid-road ahead of the turns, swabbing the troughs of the road with grease to reduce the friction of heavy logs. Skid-road grease was used by the barrel.

One side of each log was barked with axes at the landing before going into the turn, which minimized friction and reduced wear and tear on the skid-road. Loggers called this "chopping a ride" on the log. Also the butt of each log was "sniped," or beveled off around its circumference before it left the woods, so it wouldn't hang up while being yarded out to the landing.

The road engine hauled the turn of logs along the skid-road to the head of a pole chute leading down a steep incline to the lake. Here the cables were cast loose and the logs shoved into the chute for the last lap of their trip to the booming ground.

If this equipment and method sounds crude, remember that many loggers in the Puget Sound country were still yarding and roading with horses or oxen in 1898.

When the three partners decided to mill their own timber, they placed a sturdy and enduring stone at the third corner of their structure by selecting the Lake Whatcom site for their sawmills. The deep navigable lake, with huge stands of fine timber stretching from its shores in all directions, has continued to prove its advantageous location for the past fifty years. In early operations, the timber was logged directly into the lake by skid-roads and pole chutes, and later by short rail



Big log and small donkey. Larson Lumber Company operations—1904.

lines which were built and operated at a minimum cost. The mill still operates on the original site, having been purchased by Columbia Valley Lumber Company in the liquidation of Bloedel Donovan assets.

To complete the foundation of their building for the future, Lake Whatcom Logging Company anticipated their timber requirements for many years to come, and purchased numerous timber holdings south of the lake. When purchases were completed and logging operations consolidated, the company controlled practically all of the desirable timber in two solid townships south of Lake Whatcom. The fourth and last stone!

In 1900, the operations at South Bay were completed, and Camp Two was established near the head of the lake, with a



They had to braze two saws together to fall many trees in 1900.

FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

log dump at Anderson's Landing. Two and one-half miles of logging railroad was built into timber purchased from J. S. Emerson, and through an intermediate tract acquired from W. E. Rogers. These purchases included logging equipment in the hands of these two timber owners. The change of location also led to the purchase of two thousand acres from Port Hadlock Mill Company, a San Francisco outfit that owned this very desirable timber and needed to cash in on it. The ten thousand acre Hawley-Alger claims also became more accessible to Lake Whatcom Logging Company after they established Camp Two, and these were purchased in 1901. No finer timber ever grew than that on these claims.

A small but aggressive logger, E. L. Gaudette from Michigan, caused the company a certain amount of annoyance by purchasing timber just ahead of their logging operations. To eliminate this obstacle, they bought Gaudette out in 1903. The purchase price included Gaudette's logging outfit, sixteen hundred acres of timber, a shingle mill and general store at the present site of Alger.

During the period from 1903 until 1907, logging operations continued south and southwest of Lake Whatcom with Camp Three on Cain's Lake, Camp Four located four miles east of Alger, and Camp Five at Palmer Lake. An orchard planted by the company at Camp Four in the early 1900's still flourishes, and the old office building has been remodeled into a neat modern house. At Cain's Lake, near the site of old Camp Three, timber of considerable size and good quality is being logged today; timber that has grown from seed since the original logging operations by Lake Whatcom Logging Company!

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

In September, 1906, Lake Whatcom Logging Company bought the holdings of the Belfast Manufacturing Company. These consisted of the timber, logging equipment and a camp located at a point close to the present crossing of the Samish River by State Highway 99. This was known as "Moody's Camp," and is still shown as Moody on some maps. The purchase included a twenty-acre mill site with a double-block shingle mill, a general store building, boarding house, cottages, four logging engines and other logging equipment, and 1280 acres of timber.

The original Fairhaven & Southern Railroad, purchased by the Great Northern, and used by them as part of their Seattle-Montana division, ran from Bellingham Bay ten miles to Samish Lake, thence ten miles to Belfast, and from there south to connect with the Great Northern at Burlington. By 1907 the Great Northern had completed its new road along tidewater and abandoned the Fairhaven & Southern route as a main line. Lake Whatcom Logging Company leased this



Captain Lee M. Pittman's Steamer "Marguerite" on Lake Whatcom in 1900.

FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

line from the Great Northern, the only consideration being that the required service would be given to those industries still existing on the line. It was a valuable transportation link for Lake Whatcom Logging Company for nearly ten years, connecting with their own logging road about five miles north of Belfast, which road in turn connected with the Bellingham Bay & Eastern at Park. The company maintained their camp at Belfast until the timber was logged out in 1912.

Selection of high grade, sound and reasonably accessible timber by Lake Whatcom Logging Company was largely based on the judgment of their timber cruisers. These were practical woodsmen, short on formal education but long on common sense and knowledge of timber and logging. The company relied heavily on the accuracy of these cruisers' reports, and a faulty estimate on a large tract might easily have resulted in severe loss.

Not only did these cruisers estimate timber values, but also the best location for skidroads and the approximate cost of logging the area.

They could size up a tree and tell quite accurately what it would cut out in the mill. Over-ripe trees, riddled with conk or wind-shake, might show little exterior evidence of their worthlessness, but good cruisers could spot them nearly every time.

George Bowman was one of the first cruisers employed by Lake Whatcom Logging Company. He submitted no written reports, but his verbal reports were colorful. When George said, "There's nigh onto enough timber on that there claim t'keep a bull-team goin' fer two years," the management could make a pretty close estimate of the stand.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

Chief timber cruiser Lafe Heath located many of the good claims purchased by the company. Another very dependable cruiser was Fenwick Riley, whose first job with Lake Whatcom Logging Company was driving the line-horse "Queen" and who later became one of the key men in Bloedel, Stewart & Welch's operations. Fen trained under Lafe Heath and developed excellent judgment on standing timber.

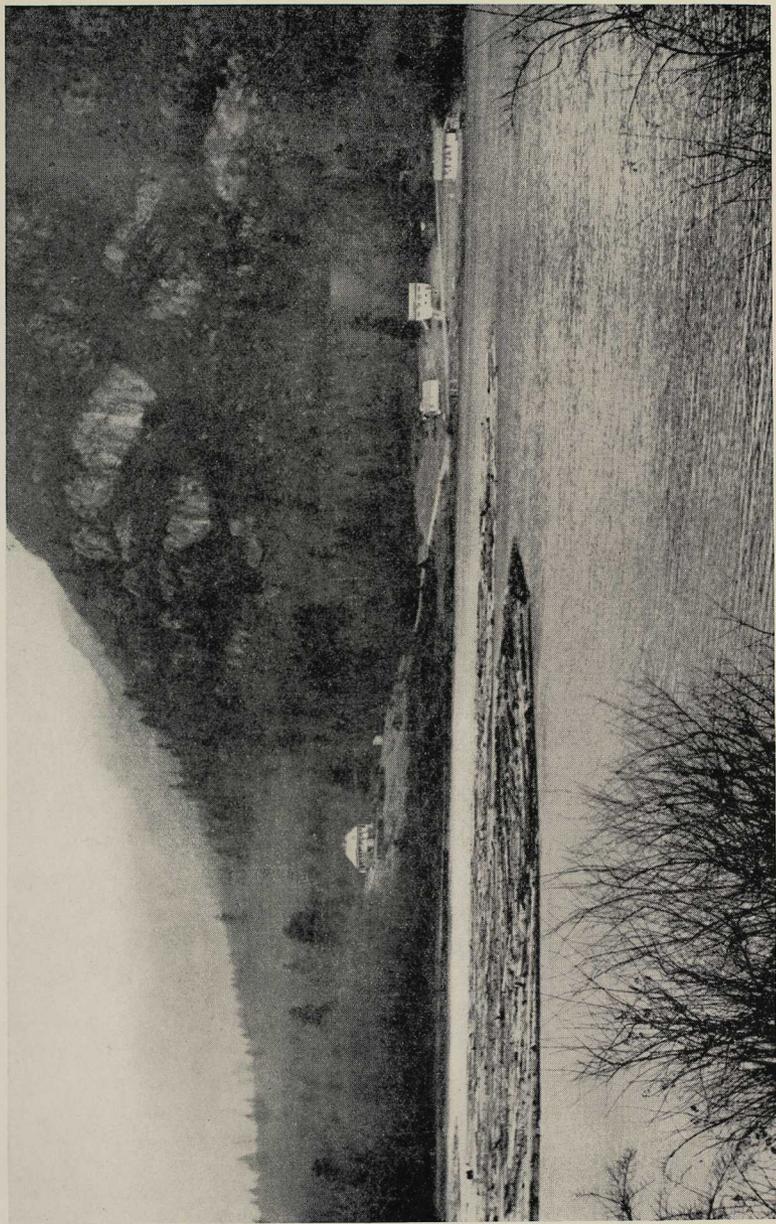
Before Camp Six at Belfast cut out in 1912, Camp Seven was started on the hill west of Cain's Lake, and the Alger camp had become an important unit. Over two hundred loggers worked out of Alger, and were hauled to the job on log trains. No part of the timber was more than six miles from camp. The cook-house fed 150 men at a single sitting, and the new three-story bunk-house had electric lights, metal beds, excellent showers, toilet facilities and individual clothes lockers. The third floor of the bunk-house was largely a club room for the men.

At the peak of operations there were fifteen donkey engines working in the timber surrounding Alger. In 1913 the logging railroad had a direct-connected American locomotive for main-line hauls, and two geared locomotives, a Shay and a Heisler, for work on the spurs. Sixty logging cars were in use on this operation. A repair shop was maintained to keep all of this equipment in operating condition.

When donkey engines were first put to use in the woods, and before logging camps developed machine shops for their repair, there arose a breed of men known as "donkey doctors." They took care of their patients with hammer, screw-driver, and monkey wrench, and usually kept them in a healthy condition.



Old-growth cedar—17 feet in diameter or “ten hugs” around.



South Bay on Lake Whatcom—where "Eighteen Men and a Horse" started logging in 1898.
(Photo taken in March, 1948—fifty years later.)

FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

One of the best of these "donkey doctors" employed by the company was Sam Wilson, known to one and all around Bellingham Bay during the early years of the present century. It was Sam's fixed habit to get drunk on pay-day and remain in that condition for the several following days. After the fourth drink he would slide under the table, be rolled for his wages, and go back to camp under the impression that he had enjoyed a delightful vacation.

In 1909, that dynamic prohibition evangelist, Billy Sunday, came to Bellingham Bay and erected a large tent as a tabernacle. The loggers, skeptical but curious, attended his services in droves. When Billy got warmed up to his sermon, he would start to disrobe; first his coat, then his vest and collar. By the time he got down to his shirt the loggers were interested, and, moved by mass hysteria, many of them signed a pledge to abstain from the use of intoxicating beverages.

Sam Wilson was one of those who signed, on a day near the end of June, just before the logging camps closed for the usual three-day Fourth of July celebration. On the second day of the celebration J. H. Bloedel was walking down the main street of Bellingham to see if any of his men needed help. He could scarcely credit his eyesight when he saw Sam Wilson approaching, completely sober and walking straight and unassisted.

"Hello, Sam! They told me you'd signed the pledge, but I didn't think it would last over the Fourth," Bloedel said. "I'm certainly glad to see you sober."

Sam grinned.

"You know, I'm just having a wonderful time. The sun's shining, the girls and the flowers are beautiful, and I never

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

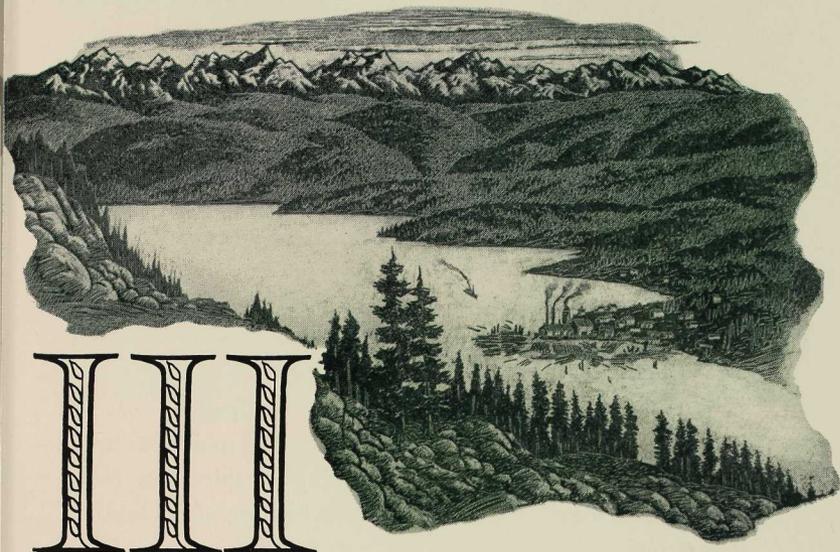
felt better in my life. You know, Mr. Bloedel, this is the first Fourth of July I've seen in fifteen years!"

Early-day loggers were usually unmarried and itinerant. They worked vigorously from sun-up until sun-down, fought hard, ate enormously, and drank up a high proportion of their wages. They weren't fussy about shower baths or landscaping around the bunkhouses, but they demanded good food and plenty of it. If the grub went down hill, so did the loggers—with their blanket rolls on their backs. Joe ("The Bull") Morisson normally included sixteen eggs with his light morning repast of mush, hot-cakes, fried pork, potatoes, toast, and coffee. While these men were generally considered to be crude and rough, they had most generous instincts. Sisters of Charity, who often came to the camp to solicit funds, were treated with the greatest respect, and it was not unusual for loggers to pledge an entire month's wages to a worthy cause. When Sam Wilson, the "donkey doctor," got too feeble for woods work, the entire camp, from whistle-punk to foreman, chipped in to send him back to his old home in Pennsylvania.

Captain L. M. Pitman owned the steamer *Marguerite* on Lake Whatcom, and had a regular daily run around the lake. He was upset but not too worried when loggers returning to South Bay from a lurid week-end in town almost wrecked his boat and smashed all the windows.

On his trip to South Bay the next day, the logging camp foreman met him at the dock with a handful of money.

"Here, Cap'n, have yer boat fixed up like she was. If it costs any more'n this, let me know, an' the boys'll kick in!"



SAWMILL ON THE LAKE **A**T THE TURN

of the century some of the finest timber in Whatcom and Skagit counties, much of it tributary to Lake Whatcom, was available at fifty cents a thousand on the stump. Loggers were paid, after deducting for meals, an average of thirty to thirty-five dollars for a month's hard labor in the woods. The manager, timekeeper and bookkeeper of Lake Whatcom Logging Company, namely J. H. Bloedel, drew \$100 per month. He also acted as purchasing agent, buying lots of candled eggs for the camps at nine cents a dozen, and quarters of prime beef for 4½ cents a pound.

Nevertheless there was little profit in selling fir logs to mills on Lake Whatcom at four dollars a thousand, or in hauling them to tidewater over the Bellingham Bay & Eastern Railroad on a \$1.75 rate, to sell in Bellingham Bay mills at \$5.75.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

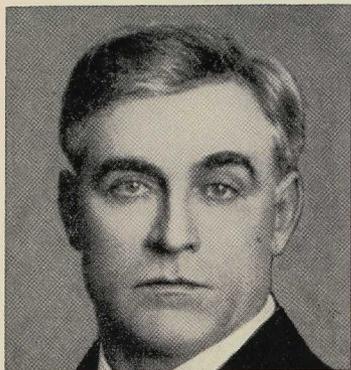
There was one logical move, which was to build their own mill, saw their own logs, and thus sell their timber in the form of lumber and shingles. The partners decided to build their mill here on Lake Whatcom, surrounded by heavy stands of fine old-growth timber—enough to supply the mill for decades. Most of this could be brought to the lake on a short rail haul, and much of it roaded in directly by donkey engines on skid-roads and “fore-and-aft” pole chutes.

Lumber could be shipped over the Bellingham Bay & Eastern from Lake Whatcom to eastern and middle-western markets at the terminal rates applying to shipments from Bellingham Bay. Why waste money hauling their logs to tidewater?

On the fifth day of July in 1901 a sawmill company was organized by the three original partners, with thirty thousand dollars capital, and incorporated as the Larson Lumber Company. Thirty thousand dollars wouldn't much more than build a fine home today, but it built a sawmill on Lake Whatcom in 1901.

Peter Larson, president of the corporation, came to Bellingham to attend stockholders' meetings or when needed for consultation, but usually he was in Helena or Spokane or Seattle, busy with railroad construction or investment matters.

J. J. Donovan was vice-president, but assumed no active duties with Larson Lumber Company until 1906. He was general superintendent of Bellingham Bay & British Columbia Railway and Blue Canyon Coal Mining Company. He also acted as engineer for Bellingham Bay Improvement Company, Bellingham Bay Land Company and the Fairhaven City Council. Somewhere in between he found time to develop water



C. L. Flynn



F. E. Frost



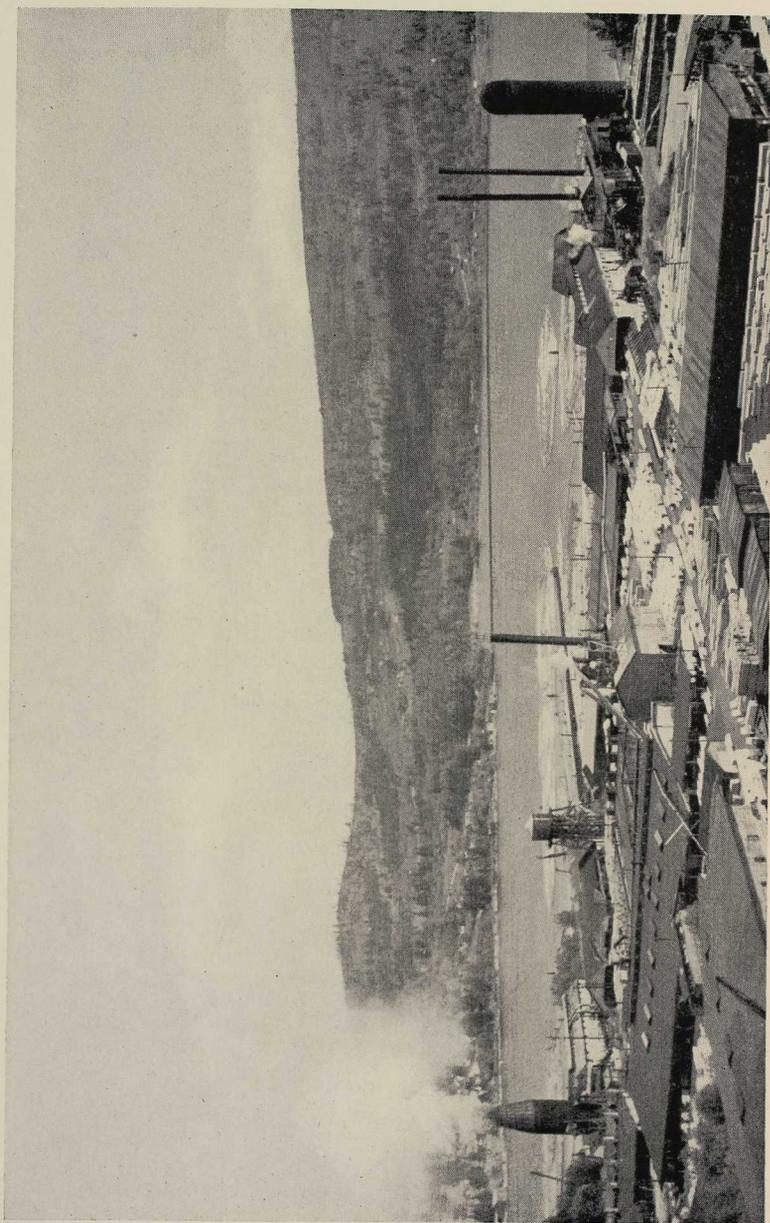
James H. Prentice



John McMahon



Ralph A. Clark



Larson Mill on Lake Whatcom.

SAWMILL ON THE LAKE

power on the Nooksack River and to prospect for coal and other minerals.

As manager and secretary of the company, J. H. Bloedel bought eighty acres on the northwest shore of Lake Whatcom from Harry McCue, built a double circular sawmill, and cleared ground for a lumber yard and railroad spur adjoining the east boundary of the city of New Whatcom.

New Whatcom? Why that's part of Bellingham now, together with what used to be Whatcom and Fairhaven and Sehome. And how those towns used to fight each other! Real rough-and-tumble, frontier-style combats with no holds barred.

The mill started in August of 1901, cutting fifty to sixty-five thousand feet of lumber in a ten-hour day. The office, containing the manager, a bookkeeper and a stenographer, was a small shack on the south edge of the lumber yard.

Sawmilling was in Bloedel's blood. He used to inspect the mill at noon, then rush home for a quick lunch without taking time to clean up. His wife would meet him at the door with a whisk broom.

"Just look at your clothes, Harry! You'll have to use this broom before you sit down at my table."

Bloedel looked himself over. "No, don't brush that off, Mina; that's sawdust from our mill."

The Larson mill ran steadily and turned out good products, but equipment to make more and better lumber was added from time to time. One outstanding purchase was a sheet-iron refuse burner, shipped from Stillwater, Minnesota, where it had served for forty years. Repaired and enlarged it served the Larson mill for another forty years.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

To handle cedar logs economically and to provide for shipment of mixed cars of lumber and shingles, a small shingle mill just north of the Larson mill was purchased from the Hastings Shingle Company of Vancouver, British Columbia. Later the Larson Lumber Company built another shingle mill with ten upright machines, so arranged that cedar cants from the sawmill were sent directly to the shingle mill by conveyor.

The first stockholders' meeting was held at Larson a few weeks after operations started. Proud of a new office building which had been carefully planned and constructed, Bloedel hoped for a word of praise from Peter Larson.

"What was the matter with the old office?" Larson demanded, "I made all *my* money in an old box car!"

At the start of the meeting, Bloedel, a competent accountant, submitted a carefully prepared financial statement. Minutes later, and somewhat flustered, he hurried out to consult the company bookkeeper. "Mr. Larson wants to know how much money we've got in the bank!"

Peter Larson liked to see cash in the bank or in his big black wallet. However, when he was shown how the substantial profits had been put back into the purchase of more timber, saw mills, logging equipment and other physical assets, he approved. Then and there the future policy of the company was formed—that, rather than pay out the profits in larger dividends, they should be reinvested in additional timber and the expansion of the mills.

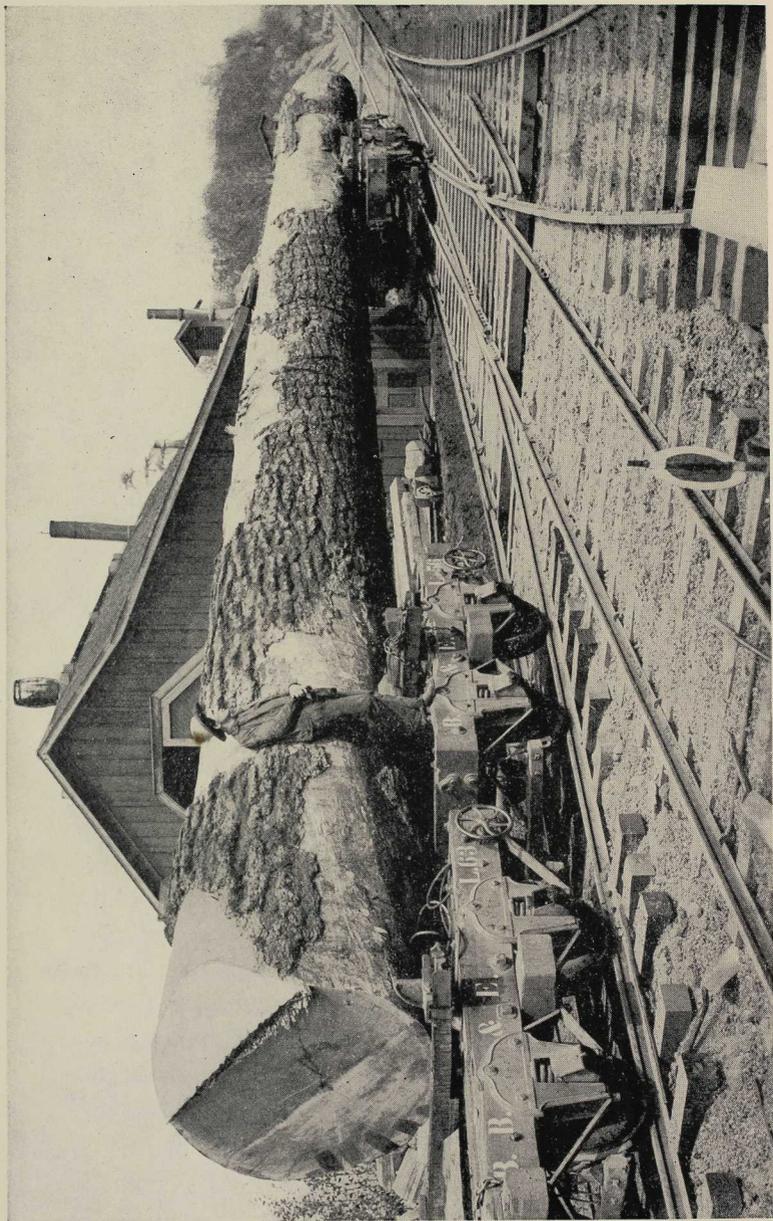
Two years after the Larson mill started, a young man with a successful record of sawmilling and mill construction in the Lake States came to the Pacific northwest from Rhinelander, Wisconsin, with six other young lumbermen. A mechanical



Larson Lumber Company's first "Locy."

genius, he re-built the Day Lumber Company mill at Big Lake, built several sawmills in British Columbia, and came to Larson in 1903 as general superintendent. From that time until his retirement in 1923, C. L. Flynn was a potent factor in the company's success.

Another young Lake States lumberman, Sid G. Smith of Saginaw, Michigan, came to Larson Lumber Company in 1905. His father was a lumberman, and Sid had an inherent aptitude for the business. He worked in the mill at first, then in the logging camps as timekeeper and purchasing agent. After five years of clerical work he decided to change to the operational phase of logging, and headed for British Columbia and the recently organized firm of Bloedel, Stewart & Welch, Ltd.



A big log on the old B. B. & E. Railroad.

SAWMILL ON THE LAKE

There he worked with Fenwick Riley, and in 1912 became foreman of the one side the company operated. He went into the first World War, serving as an army captain from 1917 until 1919, then returned to the Pacific Coast to work for Pacific Mills, Ltd., at Ocean Falls, British Columbia. Following Fen Riley's death in 1921, Sid rejoined Bloedel, Stewart & Welch to take charge of their operations, and is now senior vice-president in charge of all the company's timber and logging.

In 1906 C. L. Flynn sent to Rhinelander for John McMahan, a man who was destined to play an important part in the company operations. First, last and foremost, McMahan was a sawmill operator, and one of the best in this line in the entire lumber industry. Today, after running Bloedel Donovan sawmills for forty-two years, he's still one of the best—and still running the Larson mill for Columbia Valley Lumber Company.

Rapid expansion of the Larson Lumber Company called J. J. Donovan to active participation in its affairs in the summer of 1906. Relinquishing his other business interests he took charge of logging operations and logging railroads, and promptly became a recognized leader and authority in Pacific Northwest logging. For thirty years no logging congress was complete without "J. J." presiding or taking a leading part in the sessions; scarcely a lumber or timber journal was published that lacked a technical article from his pen; conservation meetings and forestry groups vied for his attendance.

Five years after the saws started humming at Larson, growing demand for the company's products swamped the mill with orders. "J. H." and "J. J." called in Flynn.



Under-cutting—a professional job.

“Let John McMahan run this mill, Flynn. You’re going to build another one, and it’s going to be bigger and better.”

McMahan ran “Mill A” smoothly and efficiently while Flynn built “Mill B” on the lake shore south of the original mill site. The new mill was sixty by three hundred twenty-

SAWMILL ON THE LAKE

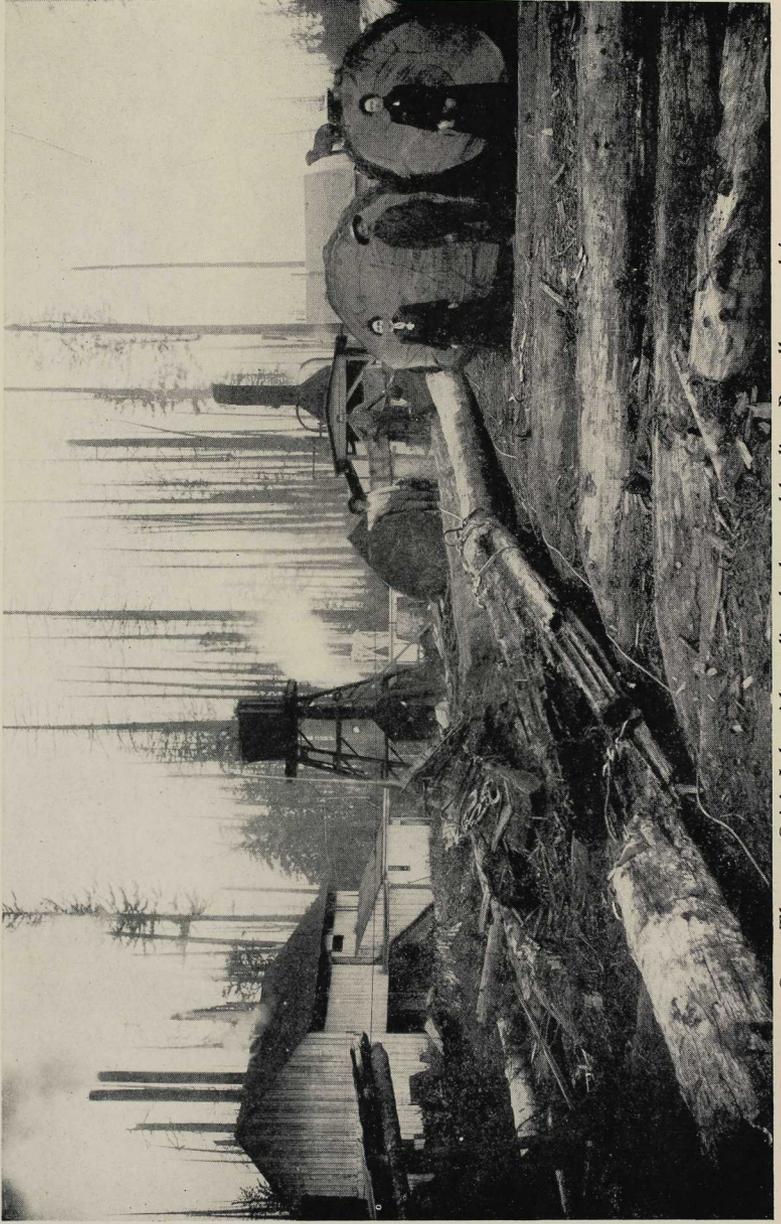
four feet and equipped with an eleven-foot band saw, two gang saws, and a twenty-two saw automatic trimmer. The seventy-two inch carriage, equipped with enough track to saw eighty-foot sticks, took its first log on July 25, 1907, exactly six years after the first lumber was cut at Larson.

The mill was designed largely for cutting timbers, and it cut plenty of them. On one order alone, eighteen hundred carloads of bridge timbers were shipped to Edmonton, Alberta. Each car carried fifty-five pieces of 9" by 18"—30 feet long. If you can't visualize eighteen hundred carloads you can call it a little over forty million feet of lumber on that order! Railroad contractors Foley, Welch & Stewart built most of the bridges along the western half of the Grand Trunk Pacific with this lumber.

Meanwhile the company's logging operations reached further and further back into the timber around Lake Whatcom. First there was Camp One at South Bay, then Camp Two located about two miles back in the timber from Park, then Camp Three near Cain's Lake, and later Camp Four some four miles east of Alger.

Eventually many miles of logging railroad were built from Lake Whatcom into the surrounding timber belt, but the most famous of these lines was a two-mile stretch which had been built by Blue Canyon Coal Mining Company in 1896 from Woodlawn to tap a timber claim owned by William McCush and which road later was owned by Lake Whatcom Logging Company.

George Wood worked on the train crew that operated that line and he remembers every inch of it. "They used five different kinds of rails on that stretch," he reminisces. "Part of it



Camp Three at Cain's Lake with roading donkey and landing. Roundhouse at left.

SAWMILL ON THE LAKE

was six by six timbers with flat steel strips bolted on top. That wasn't so bad in the winter, but when she started to dry out in the summer and the damn rails end-shrunk, the steel strips would come loose and stick up through our loads. After five or six derailments on one trip the language we used shrivelled the needles off every tree for miles around."



How many shingles in this cedar?



Early High-lead Logging—Alger Camp.

SAWMILL ON THE LAKE

The Lake Whatcom Logging Company line from Park to Camp Two wasn't as bad as the McCush line. At least it had all-steel rails, even if they were too light and almost worn out. George Wood ran the logging train over this line—"off and on," as he puts it.

Bloedel phoned George up at camp one day, just after George and his crew had put the train back on the rails for the third time. "They've been out of empties for five hours at Camp Two, George. What're you doing up there?"

"Well, we're not exactly playing, 'J. H.,' and you'd better send up somebody else to run this damn roller-coaster!"

The rest of the conversation is lost to history, but George stayed on the job and managed to keep the train more or less on the tracks until the company, two years later, bought thirty-five pound rails from General Alger's old operations near Blanchard.

In those days there were no air-brakes on logging trucks, and the combination of hand-brakes, steep grades and heavy loads resulted in flat wheels. The train crews deeply resented the flat-wheeled trucks and the fact that their demands for new wheels didn't meet with immediate action from the company management. So when "J. H." and "J. J." decided to bring their families—two wives, three children and a nurse—to see the logging operation, the equipment for their transportation was carefully selected.

The visitors came up Lake Whatcom on the steamer *Ella* and were met by the logging train at the south end of the lake. The logging truck directly behind the locomotive had been equipped with wooden seats, but after the first hundred yards nobody sat. The train crew rode the locomotive while the

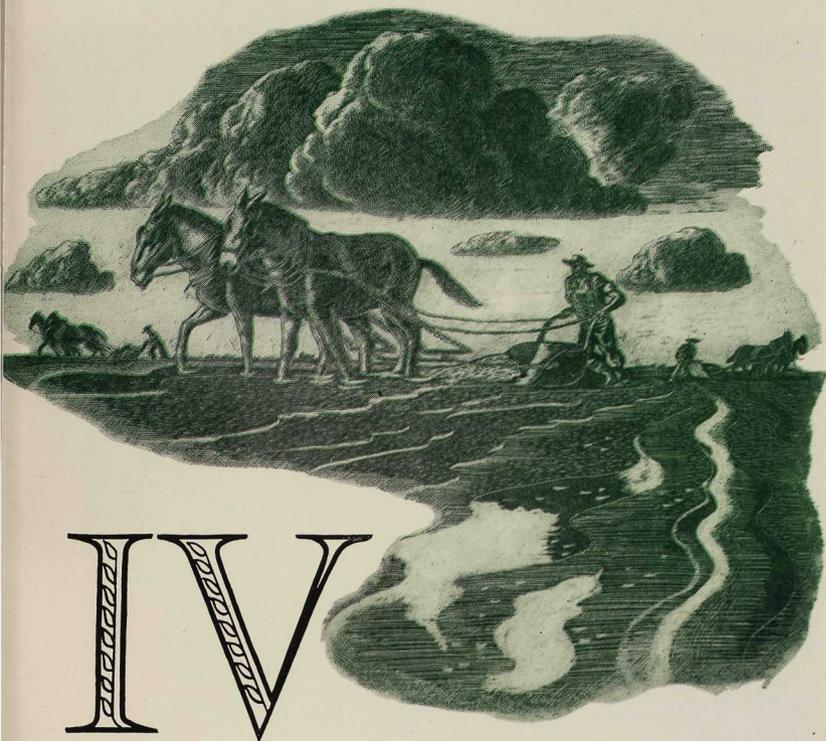


Shingle bolts at Blanchard enroute to Belfast Mill.

guests stood up on the swaying logging truck all the way to camp.

"Couldn't you find a truck with flatter wheels?" Bloedel asked the brakeman.

The brakeman shook his head and grinned. The next day a repair crew came up to replace the flat wheels.



IV

A TALL FIR FALLS

IN THE SUMMER

of 1907, when the big new mill at Larson was sawing its first logs, Peter Larson, railroad builder, industrialist, miner, lumberman and financier, completed his last earthly contract.

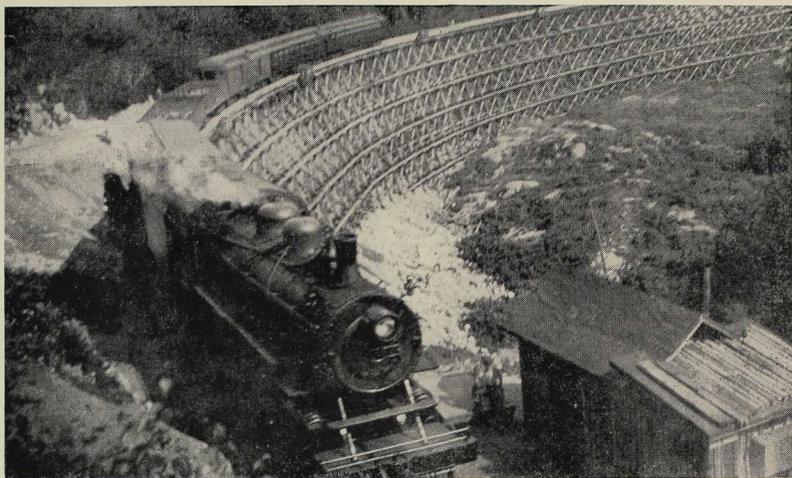
Deeply buried in obscure corners of history and almost forgotten is his record of building and achievement. Pages of historical matter have been written about the lives of men of much smaller stature and accomplishment, but Peter Larson was modest to an almost painful degree and would give information concerning himself to no publisher or news gatherer.

A TALL FIR FALLS

He left his home on the Danish island of Fyen (Fyn) in 1868 and landed in New Orleans almost penniless, with no friends in the United States and no knowledge of the language. Not quite eighteen years old, he was strong and ambitious, and in spite of his handicaps was soon handling sub-contracts on the Mississippi levees. He worked for a while in Arkansas, then traveled north through Illinois to Minnesota and North Dakota. In 1876 he had acquired a six-mule team and freighted for Sims & Armington between Bismarck and the Black Hills.

The Northern Pacific railroad was building westward across the Dakota plains, and drawn like a needle to a magnet by this larger project, Peter Larson joined a railroad construction gang. With his six-mule team and a scraper he handled sub-contracts, following the construction westward with remarkable success. By the time he reached Montana, according to one of his friends, "he owned a whole county full of mules."

In Bismarck, Peter Larson met an attractive, ambitious Irish girl, Margaret Moran, and when he left Bismarck to establish his headquarters in Billings, she went with him as his wife. Margaret's parents had come from Ireland to settle on an Iowa homestead, where, in addition to the usual crops, they had raised seven girls. One of Margaret's sisters had married a railroad contractor named Lamey, and it was during a visit to this sister in Bismarck that Margaret met Peter. Then three more Moran girls went to Bismarck to visit the Lameys. These three also married successful railroad contractors; Patrick Welch, John W. Stewart and Richard Porter! Stewart and Welch later became partners of J. H. Bloedel in the firm



1200-foot trestle, 110 feet high on Algoma Central & Hudson's Bay Railway, 105 miles north of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, built by Foley Brothers, Larson & Company in 1905. At time of completion was rated as largest frame structure railroad bridge in the world; containing 3½ million board feet of timber.

of Bloedel, Stewart & Welch, Ltd. of British Columbia. Each one of the men who married a Moran girl was later associated with Peter Larson in contracting.

Peter Larson was well equipped for the rugged work of building railroads. He stood six feet two inches in his stocking feet; muscular, broad-shouldered and well-proportioned. "He had the most magnificent physique I ever saw," declared his physician, Dr. William Treacy of Helena.

He was a quiet man, a deep thinker, rugged and self-confident but never a braggart. Wherever he went he won lasting friendships with men in all walks of life, from day laborers to railroad presidents. He never entirely lost his Scandinavian accent. During his association with J. H. Bloedel and J. J. Donovan he always called them by their last names in public, but in more intimate meetings they were "Yay H." and "Yay Yay." His few letters, usually written in his own

A TALL FIR FALLS

sprawling long-hand in the early part of his career, were direct, forceful, and without a single superfluous word.

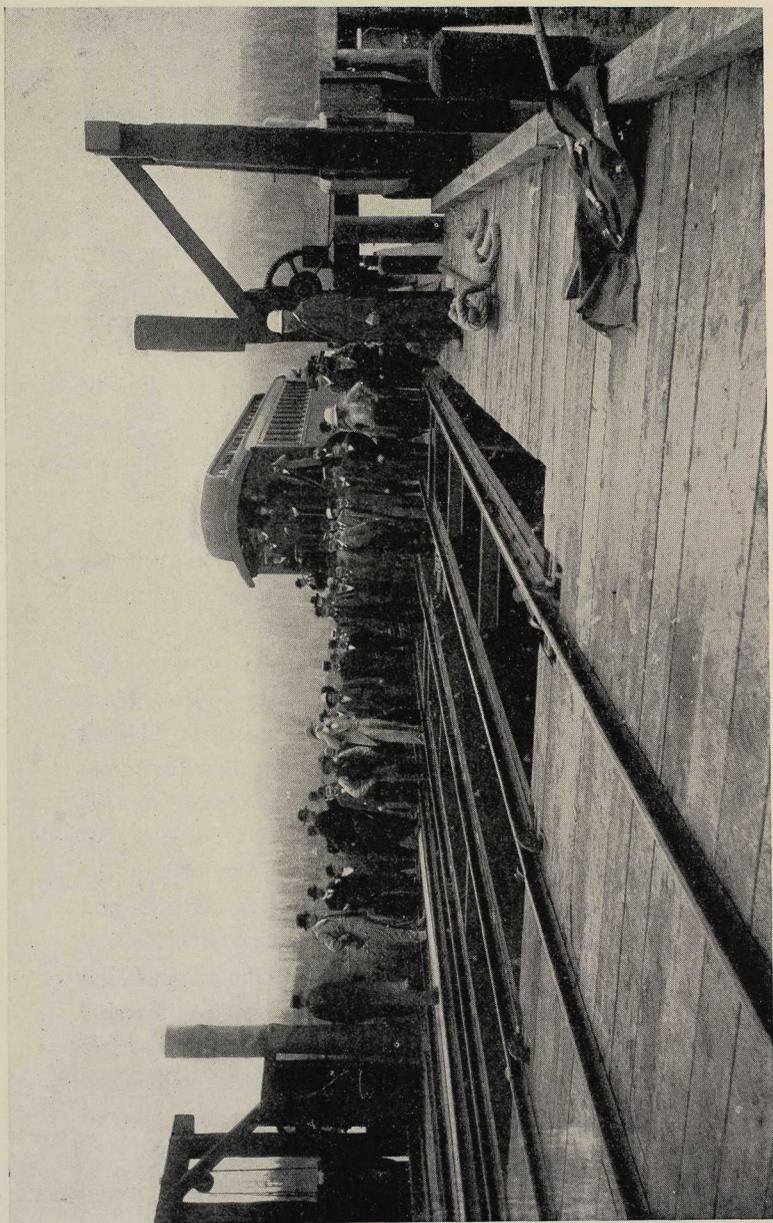
In the course of his work through Montana, Larson took prime contracts and became the most important railroad contractor in the country. At the time of his death, according to the *Helena Independent*, he was the largest individual owner of flouring mills west of the Mississippi, and one of the most successful operators of mines. One morning in the Larson Lumber Company office he ripped open an envelope and grinned at James Prentice.

"Want to see something, Yimmy?"

Larson and his partner, Thomas Greenough of Missoula, joint owners of the Morning group of mines near Wardner, Idaho, had sold the property for three million dollars. He showed Jimmy a check for part of his share; one million dollars!

Building of the Northern Pacific progressed westward, and Peter Larson moved his headquarters to Helena, Montana. Here he became associated with other successful men who had wide interests in mining, banking, real estate promotion and merchandising. Several of these men—John T. Murphy, A. M. Holter, T. C. Power, M. E. Downs, H. M. Parchen, and ex-governor S. T. Hauser—operated as the "Helena Syndicate" in ventures requiring large capital, and Peter Larson joined them in many of their activities.

Larson's construction on the Northern Pacific line included a large part of the Missouri Division, and later considerable portions of the Yellowstone and Montana Divisions. After completion of the main line of the N. P. in 1883, the "Helena Syndicate," through Governor Hauser's influence, secured



Dedication of barge slip at Larson, Washington. Peter Larson, center, in mackintosh and flat hat.

A TALL FIR FALLS

contracts to build branch lines from Helena to Marysville, Rimini and Butte. The firm of Larson & Keefe handled a great deal of this work.

Larson also figured heavily in the construction of the Montana Central, a line connecting Havre and Butte, built by Colonel Broadwater and associates, through the influence of James J. Hill. With Hugh Kirkendall, Larson graded the Neihart branch of that railroad.

In 1889, he and his associates graded the Coeur d'Alene branch of the Northern Pacific.

In the State of Washington he built the Washington Central, and the Spokane Northern, running from Spokane to Northport, Rossland and Trail, to connect with the C. P. R.

In 1898, as a partner in Mann, Foley & Larson, he contracted with the Canadian Pacific to build a line from Arrow Lake to Goldfield and Midway near the U. S. boundary.

Later, as Foley, Locke and Larson, he helped build a large part of the Canadian Pacific main line.

At the time of his death Peter Larson was the "company" in Welch and Company, Stewart and Company, and Porter and Company, with railroad contracts in Alaska, and on both the Canadian Pacific and Grand Trunk Pacific railroads. The three firms employed over 30,000 men!

In 1882, Peter Larson struck up a friendship with a young civil engineer recently graduated from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, who was supervising construction of tracks, bridges and tunnels for the Northern Pacific in Montana. This friendship with J. J. Donovan developed into later business connections between the two on Bellingham Bay: Blue Canyon Coal Mining Company, Bellingham Bay & Eastern Railroad, Lake

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

Whatcom Logging Company and Larson Lumber Company.

During the first years of the century, while the Grand Trunk Pacific built westward through Canada, Larson became convinced that Prince Rupert was to be the terminus. He joined forces with a Seattle man, Ed J. Matthews, and they secured options on most of the valuable land in and around that small seaport. In 1908 the Canadian government prevailed upon them to relinquish their options. The fact that they later secured a contract to build the Grand Trunk from Edmonton to Prince Rupert may possibly be attributed to their forfeiture of these options without too much remonstrance.

When the Klondike gold rush started in 1897, Larson heard that Mann & McKenzie, rival railroad builders who constructed much of the Canadian National, were figuring on a contract to build a railroad from Telegraph Creek on the Stikene River to Dawson. Larson sent J. H. Bloedel to Wrangell, Alaska, to investigate the feasibility of the road and to advise Larson whether such a project might be profitable. After several months of careful investigation, Bloedel submitted a negative report which saved Larson from a losing venture, and Larson was appreciative.

"If you find a good investment any time, Bloedel, let me know and I'll put up the money."

Later, when "J.H." and "J.J." needed a partner with capital to finance timber purchases, Larson's offer was remembered. They notified Larson, and he came to Fairhaven for the meeting of August 11, 1898, which launched the Lake Whatcom Logging Company.

Larson's loans to Lake Whatcom Logging Company were large, but they were entirely on a business basis, rather than

A TALL FIR FALLS

speculative. He knew that his money was well invested. When one of his friends commented on the size of the loans, Peter Larson smiled.

"Well, I get seven percent interest on my money, and a third of the profits."

On Larson's occasional visits to Bellingham Bay he stopped at the old Fairhaven Hotel and spent much of his time at the Larson mill, sitting on a lumber pile and whittling, evidently oblivious of his surroundings.

"That bay horse shouldn't be working, he's lame," Larson chided the yard foreman.

The foreman stared in the direction of the distant loading platform where the horse was working. "I never noticed he was lame, Mr. Larson. I'll take him off the job right away."

"While you're at it you'd better fire those two lumber pilers down at the end of the dock. They're loafing!"

Peter Larson knew horses, he knew men, and he had an uncanny ability to size up situations quickly and accurately. He was a strong man with vigorous masculine tastes and diversions. He liked a sociable drink on proper occasions, and he had a keen and appreciative eye for the ladies.

He used to frequent the old-time wrestling matches when "Farmer" Burns, Gotch, and "One-eye" Jenkins tossed each other about the ring. In Helena he kept a stable of good driving horses, and when he went out to look them over every horse in the stable would whinny in recognition. Even during his last illness Peter Larson would go to the stable and lean down, grimacing with pain, to stroke his favorite's legs and hocks.

Listing of Peter Larson's many business interests would

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

serve no purpose, but their diversity is interesting. He was a large share-holder in the Cameron Lumber Company on Lake Coeur d'Alene, a heavy owner of timber land in Canada, and owner of 50,000 acres of hardwood timber near Jackson, Mississippi. He held a majority interest in the Spokane Brewing & Malting Company, a consolidation of the breweries of that city. He owned a large share of the Centennial Mills of Spokane and Seattle, and was interested in other flour mills. In banking circles he was a director in the Old National Bank of Spokane, the National Bank of Helena, The Cascade National of Great Falls, and the First National of Billings.

Business associates of Peter Larson profited heavily by his sagacity. The contracting firm of Shepard, Henry & Larson included H. C. Henry of Seattle, who added considerably to his fortune by profits from the construction of the Great Northern over the Cascade summit and on to tidewater at Everett. The rebuilding of the Canadian Pacific east of Winnipeg by Foley, Locke & Larson was an extremely profitable deal for Larson's partners.

In 1890, John W. Stewart was located at Marysville, Washington, as Division Engineer in charge of operating the Seattle & Montana branch of the Great Northern, a line which linked Seattle with New Westminster, B. C., via Bellingham Bay. In this capacity he picked up considerable information about railroad construction, and became a partner of Peter Larson. In the subsequent construction of the Grand Trunk Railroad from Prince Rupert to Edmonton and on to Saskatoon, Stewart was a member of the highly successful contracting firm of Foley, Welch & Stewart.

At the start of World War I Stewart joined the Canadian

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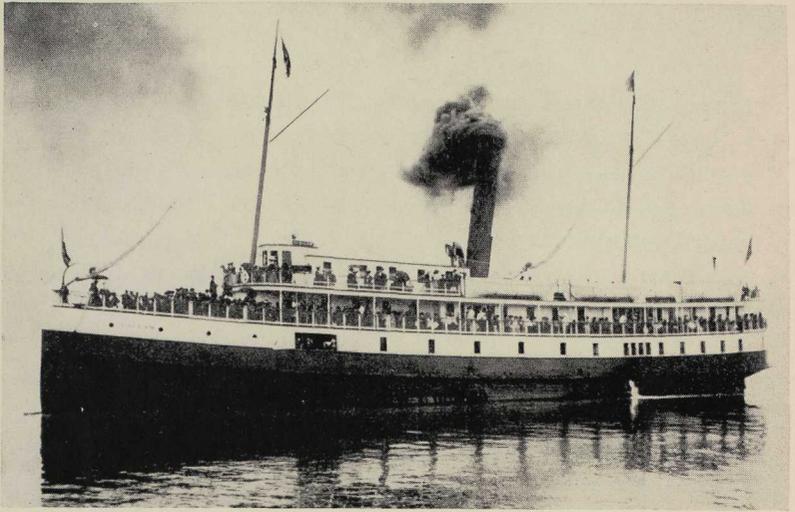
forces and returned from overseas a Major General.

In 1897 Peter Larson joined forces with the Foley Brothers, a concern that became one of the greatest contracting firms in the world. In their history, "SEVENTY YEARS: THE FOLEY SAGA," published in 1945, the Foleys state, "Joining forces with Peter Larson, Patrick Welch and John W. Stewart, the Foley Brothers entered upon the most spectacular phase of their long career. This powerful combination quickly achieved and for almost twenty years held a dominant place in the wave of railroad building that in quickening tempo was surging through the Northwest and Canada."

Most men with even a fraction of Larson's interests and investments would have operated from a suite of offices with frosted glass doors, a staff of secretaries and accountants, and a general atmosphere of dignity and importance. Peter Larson kept most of his accounts in a huge leather wallet in his coat pocket. His letterheads, printed on cheap ruled paper, read simply, "PETER LARSON, *Railroad Contractor*." The simplicity and effectiveness of his business system was astounding.

On the morning of January 8, 1904, Peter Larson left Seattle for Victoria, British Columbia, on a business trip. He took the *Clallam*, a well-built seaworthy ship constructed at Heath's Yard in Tacoma the previous year, and licensed to carry 350 passengers. On this trip she carried fifty-nine passengers and a crew of thirty-one.

The sea was calm until late in the afternoon, when the *Clallam* was within sight of Victoria. Then a gale blew up from the southwest, and at the same time the ship's engines were shut down to clear a clogged water exhaust pipe. In a manner never fully determined, the ship took water rapidly,



S.S. "Clallam" which foundered in Strait of Juan de Fuca, January 8, 1904
with Peter Larson aboard.

flooding the engine room and making repairs impossible.

After drifting for a quarter-hour Captain George Roberts ordered sail hoisted, and the *Clallam* ran eastward before the gale in the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The wind became more violent, with alternate flurries of rain and snow.

When the ship started listing to port, two lifeboats were launched containing the women and children, nineteen in all, and with two sailors to handle the oars. The first capsized alongside the *Clallam*; the second got away from the ship but swamped later. All occupants of both boats were lost!

A third lifeboat filled with male passengers, including Peter Larson, met with disaster in launching when the bow line broke loose. All the men in the boat except Larson were dumped into the sea and drowned. Larson hung to the block and line at the stern of the boat and dangled over the water, deluged by the icy spray and buffeted by the sixty-mile gale.

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A friend of Larson's, Lester W. David of Seattle, threw a line around Larson and with the help of others dragged him aboard the ship and covered him with blankets.

There was no light nor heat on the ship, and it took water rapidly. The surviving passengers bailed water from the hold with a bucket-line extending to the rail. David kept an eye on Larson and when the ship appeared to be sinking he aroused him.

In the meantime the tugs *Sea Lion* and *Holyoke* from Port Townsend and the *Iriquois* from Sidney were dispatched to help the *Clallam*. The *Holyoke* took her in tow, but when the *Clallam* started to disintegrate and her condition was hopeless, the towline was cut and the tug came back to rescue the remaining passengers and crew.

The *Clallam* now listed so heavily to port that the three starboard lifeboats could not be launched. Larson and David, with life belts buckled around them, crawled aft on the starboard side along a wire netting extending from the rail to the deck. David, who was ahead, fell through an opening in the netting and went overboard. To avoid being sucked under the ship he swam away with all his strength. Peter Larson lost sight of David, but saw his derby hat floating on the water. "There goes David," he groaned.

Larson continued aft and crawled onto a loosened life-raft just as the *Clallam*, after an eleven-hour struggle against the elements, went down midway between Smith Island and Dungeness Spit.

After three hours in the water, David was picked up by a lifeboat and taken aboard the tug *Sea Lion*. A few minutes later the life-saving crew brought Peter Larson to the *Sea*

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

Lion, unconscious and more dead than alive. They had little hope of saving him, but after liberal applications of hot coffee and whiskey he revived.

"Where am I?" he whispered.

"On the *Sea Lion*," David told him.

"Who are you?"

"I'm Lester David. Don't you remember me?"

"*Sea Lion!* David! Then we're both drowned!"

Thoroughly convinced in his semi-conscious state that he was in the hereafter, Peter Larson grinned feebly. "Well, they speak English down here, anyway!"

Peter Larson and David were lucky. Of the ninety persons aboard the *Clallam* only thirty-six were saved. The fifty-four who lost their lives included fifteen women and four children.

The *S. S. Dirigo* hurried the survivors from Port Townsend to Seattle where Larson and David took a room together at the old Butler Hotel. Scores of friends who read their names in the list of survivors rushed to congratulate them on their escape. Among the visitors was Bloedel, who spotted Larson's big leather wallet on the mantel above the radiator, mixed with an assortment of wet clothing. He spread the contents out to dry, noting among them a dividend check from the Morning Mine of Wardner, Idaho, for \$50,000, a note from Moritz Thompson of Seattle's Centennial Mills for approximately \$100,000, and another from the railway supply firm of W. D. Hofius & Company for \$50,000.

Larson's protracted immersion in the icy water shortened his life considerably. Mayo's Clinic diagnosed his case as sclerosis of the liver and warned him that he had a limited time to live. Rather than retire, however, Larson remained in



Peter Larson, second from right, with his adopted daughter, Mabel and her brother, Gordon Lamey. Center, Mrs. Peter Larson. Left, Peter Larson's mining partner, R. A. Bell with his wife and daughter.

active control of his many affairs. He advised the men in charge of his railroad contracts and kept closely in touch with the jobs. When Foley, Locke & Larson were reconstructing the Canadian Pacific east of Winnipeg in 1906, a huge quantity of bridge stringers and ties was required. At Larson's suggestion Bloedel went to Winnipeg to solicit orders for this lumber. The result was a thriving business for Larson Lumber Company which lasted for several years. Canadian business methods impressed Bloedel favorably, and led to his subsequent establishment of lumber interests in that Dominion.

On July 12, 1907, Peter Larson's weakened body could no longer bear the strain, and he passed away at his Helena home in his fifty-seventh year.

Peter and Margaret Larson, having no natural children, adopted their niece, Mabel Lamey. Mabel married Charles B.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

Power of Helena, and two of the three children born to this couple survive. These grandchildren of Peter Larson are Jane Elizabeth Tobin of Helena, and Lady Margaret Carrick who lives in England with her husband, the Earl of Carrick.

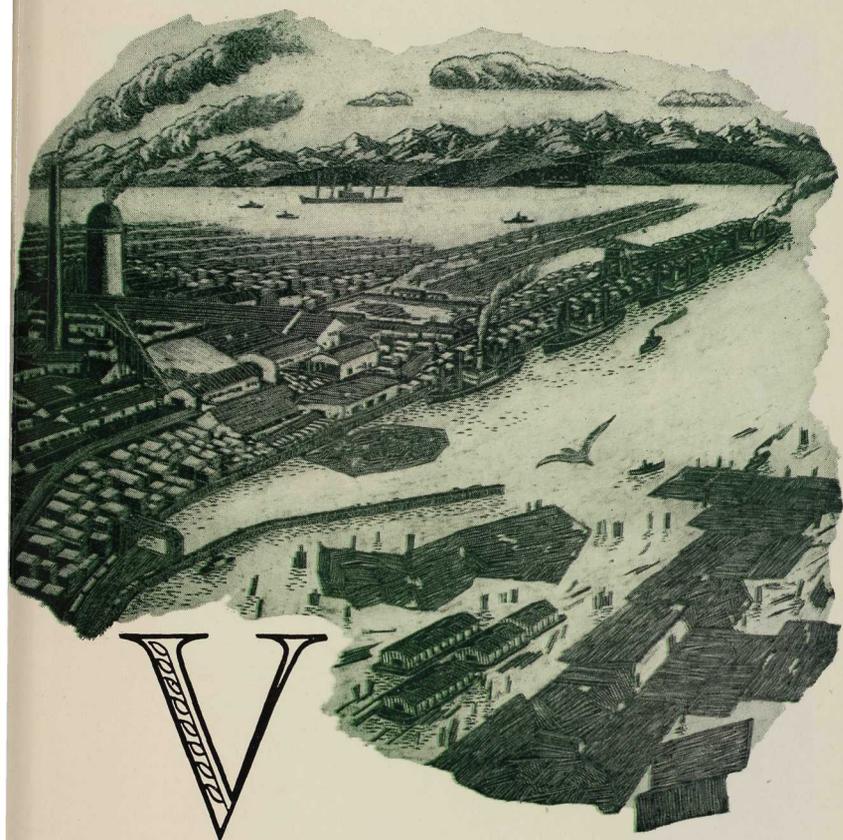
Peter Larson's will, dated a month before his death, included generous gifts to a variety of charities and public institutions of almost every description and creed. Included in his will were three orphans' homes, three hospitals, seventeen churches of all denominations, the associated charities of Helena, and two scholarships. He left large sums to his granddaughter, his grandson and his three brothers. A third of the residual amount was willed to his adopted daughter and two-thirds to his wife.

United States Senator T. H. Carter, in the *Helena Independent* of July 13, 1907, pays his respects to Peter Larson:

"It was as natural for him to be charitable as it was for him to breath. He was scrupulously just, and for a friend he would go to the end of the road. Thousands will miss his benefactions, and his intimate friends will never know his like again."

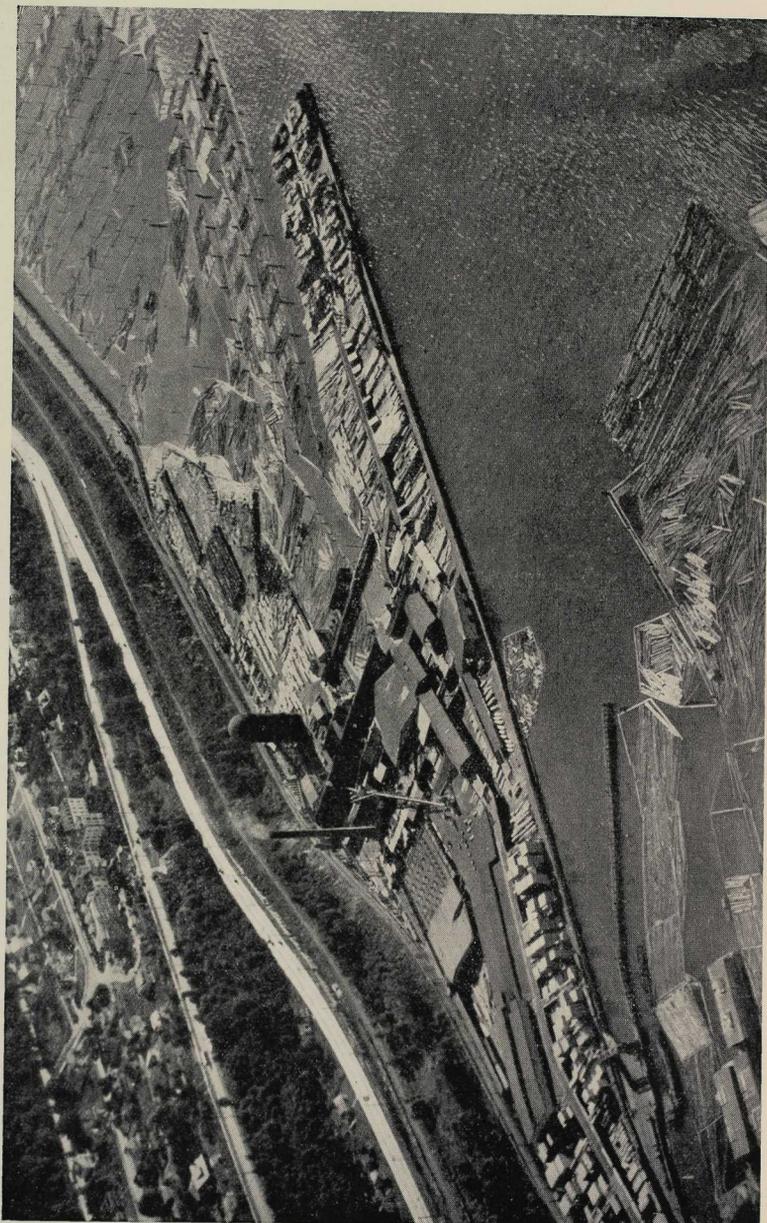
"It was his human side which won friends for him," declared A. L. Smith, Vice-President of the National Bank of Montana. "He prided himself upon his word and it was never broken."

Many of the "rags-to-riches" and success stories of today and yesterday fade into colorless anecdotes in comparison with the history of Peter Larson, self-educated, ambitious and dynamic builder of railroads and industries. Thousands of miles of gleaming rails stretching westward to the Pacific across the United States and Canada are enduring monuments to his memory!



ONE HUNDRED FIFTY MILLION
FEET A YEAR

TEN YEARS AFTER
their first sawmill was completed on Lake Whatcom, Larson
Lumber Company had become one of the largest all-rail
shippers of Pacific coast lumber products, with an annual
production of seventy-five million feet of lumber and one
hundred fifty million shingles!



The Cargo Mill, Bellingham.

ONE HUNDRED FIFTY MILLION FEET A YEAR

Marketing this huge volume of lumber required a nationwide sales force and a considerable financial structure. To properly handle their output the company established sales headquarters in Seattle, and shortly thereafter J. H. Bloedel moved to that city from Bellingham.

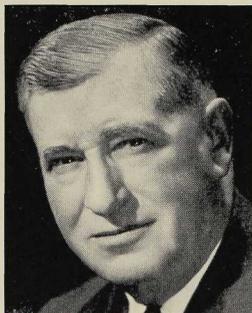
In that same year, 1911, the company organized a retail lumber corporation with a nominal capital, to market its products in eastern Washington. J. H. Bloedel was president of the company, J. J. Donovan was vice-president, and Ralph A. Clark was secretary. It was appropriately named Columbia Valley Lumber Company. Yards were located in Dryden, Monitor, Omak, Okanogan and Tonasket. In 1915 yards were purchased in Douglas, Mansfield, Waterville and Winthrop from Stevens Lumber Company. With the purchase of Skykomish Lumber Company in 1917 yards at Wenatchee and Cashmere were acquired.

"Bill" Miller became manager of Columbia Valley Lumber Company in 1917, operating the eleven yards in eastern Washington and also one located in West Seattle. Whatcom County yards at Lynden, Ferndale and Everson were operated directly by Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills as branches of their Bellingham retail yard.

Formation of Columbia Valley Lumber Company was for the purpose of creating an additional outlet for products of Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills, but the yards were unable to compete with other local yards if they paid the price Bloedel Donovan could get elsewhere for their product. That meant they had to buy on the outside, which rendered them of little value to the parent company. The result was that the yards were sold to Columbia Valley Lumber Company stock-



J. N. Donovan



Sid. G. Smith



Earl E. LeValley

holders who were friends and employees of "Bill" Miller. Bloedel Donovan retained the Whatcom County yards.

The Bellingham yard carried an average of a million feet of lumber for local sale and was managed by D. F. Trunkey, nicknamed "David Harum" because of his sagacity as a trader and his ability to sell almost anything that reached his hands. When a "Chick Sale" model toilet became "surplus" as a result of sewer installations, Trunkey sold the edifice to Archie McMurchie, a hard-headed Scotsman, for two dollars cash!

Every now and then Trunkey found himself saddled with a bunch of lumber that wouldn't quite make the grade for first-class city construction. He'd check over the off-grade stuff and corner one of the company's older employees.

"Bill, I always figgered you'd make a bang-up farmer. Why don't y'git a piece o' land an' be independent in yer old age?"

"That ain't a bad idea, Dave, but I ain't got much money t'put into buildings."

"Don't worry none about that, Bill. I got some lumber here I'll sell ye real cheap, an' I'll let ye pay fer it when it's convenient."

Trunkey not only kept his yard cleaned up by this device,

ONE HUNDRED FIFTY MILLION FEET A YEAR

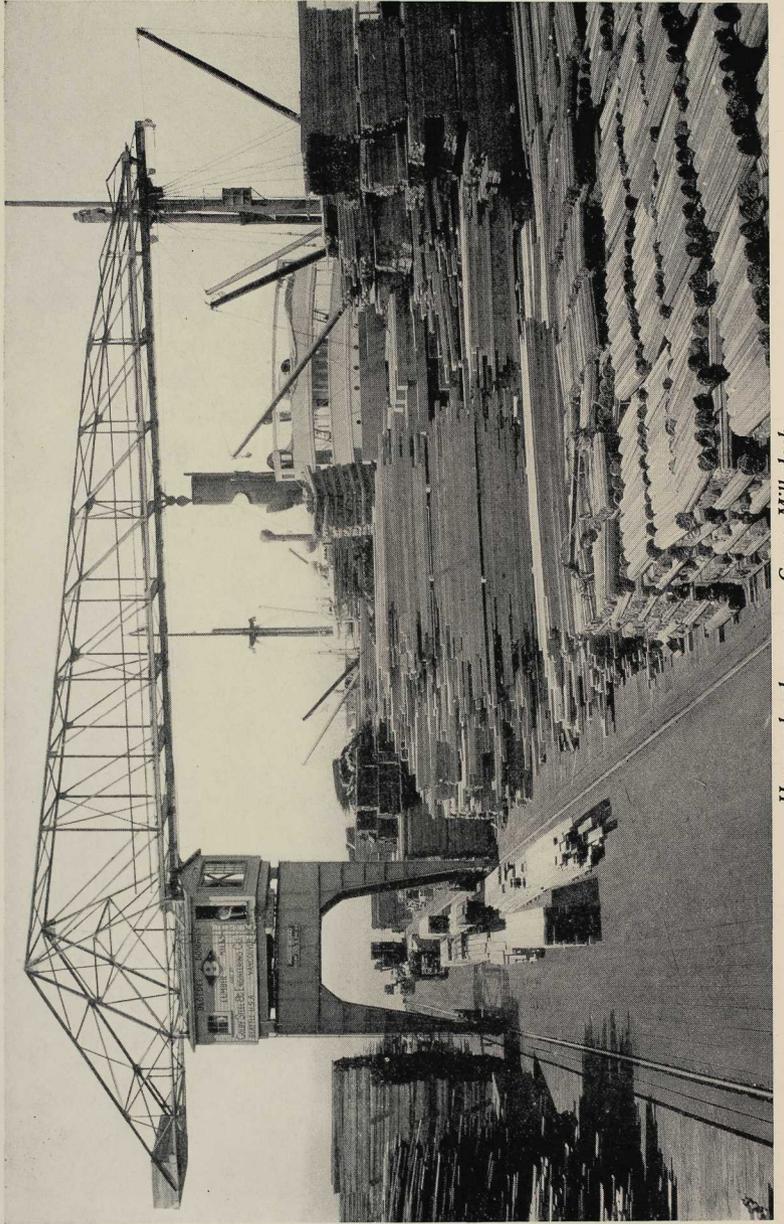
but also started scores of prosperous poultry farms in Whatcom County. His ingenious methods for selling odds and ends of lumber for chicken coops gave Trunkey the credit for fathering Whatcom County's large poultry industry.

In this same vital year of 1911 it became apparent to Bloedel that scarcity of good timber in Washington State was on the horizon, while in the coastal timber belt of British Columbia, both on the mainland and on Vancouver Island, were enormous stands of high-quality timber, virtually untouched and awaiting the capital and operating skill essential for their harvesting. With an eye to the future he organized a Canadian corporation with \$500,000 capital stock.

"You'll come in with me, won't you, 'J.J.?' " Bloedel asked his partner, Donovan.



Cargo mill dock; all loading berths occupied.



Hammerhead crane on Cargo Mill dock.

ONE HUNDRED FIFTY MILLION FEET A YEAR

"No thanks, 'J.H.,'" Donovan declared, "I'd rather keep my interests here at home."

Bloedel allied himself with railroad contractors Patrick Welch and General Stewart, the former associates of Peter Larson, and called the corporation Bloedel, Stewart & Welch, Ltd. Fenwick Riley, who drove the line-horse "Queen" on the original crew of eighteen men and a horse, and then became an expert timber cruiser for Lake Whatcom Logging Company, contributed largely to the early success of the operations. On his advice, following many months of careful timber reconnaissance, Bloedel bought about ten thousand acres of the best timber in British Columbia, near Myrtle Point on Malaspina Strait, one hundred miles north of Vancouver. The cruise indicated slightly over three hundred million feet, most of it old-growth fir and cedar.

Further timber purchases were made as logging progressed, and by the time the company completed the operations at Myrtle Point in 1928, over two billion feet had been logged.

"Fen Riley and Sid Smith had a lot to do with the success of that operation," Bloedel reminisces. "I've always figured that the proper selection of men means success or failure in any business, and that when a man is ready to graduate from a lesser job, it's to the company's advantage to have a better job ready for him. I doubt whether we would have taken over the Cargo mill if we hadn't had John McMahon to run it. We had Chet Miller available to run the Skykomish mill when we bought that property. When we purchased the Clallam timber we felt pretty safe with Jack Donovan and Charley Donovan to run the show. A business concern can buy machinery, but it can't buy good men; it has to train them."

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

Not only did Bloedel Donovan train most of their key men, but after they were trained the men remained for remarkably long periods of employment. "Curly" Jones, now head sawyer at Larson, has sawed for the company thirty-five full and consecutive years. John McMahon has supervised Bloedel Donovan sawmill operations for forty-two years. Employees with less than twenty year service records are considered almost as transients.

Jim Prentice, formerly Secretary and Assistant Sales Manager of Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills, and now Secretary and Sales Manager of Columbia Valley Lumber Company, started work at Larson in 1902. Forty-six years with one concern isn't exactly temporary employment.

F. E. (Jack) Frost was hired by Larson Lumber Company on July 13, 1908, as stenographer and office clerk. His pay was seventy-five dollars a month, and he was supposed to work only sixty hours a week, but he usually came back at



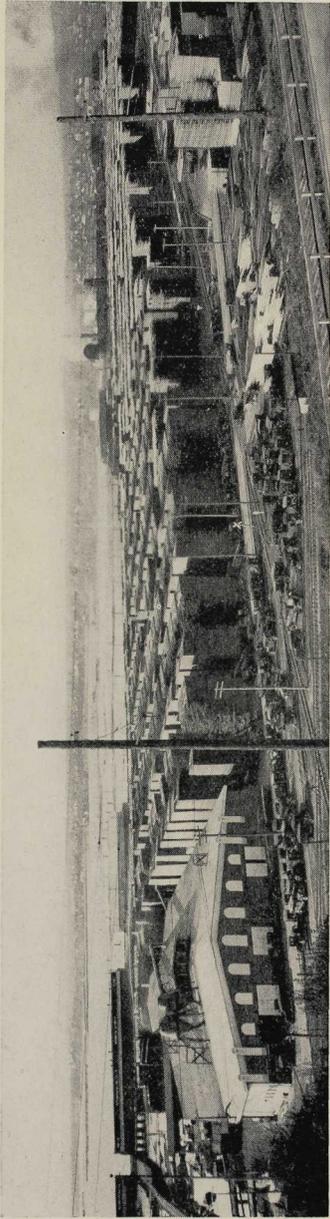
Headquarters office at Bellingham.

ONE HUNDRED FIFTY MILLION FEET A YEAR

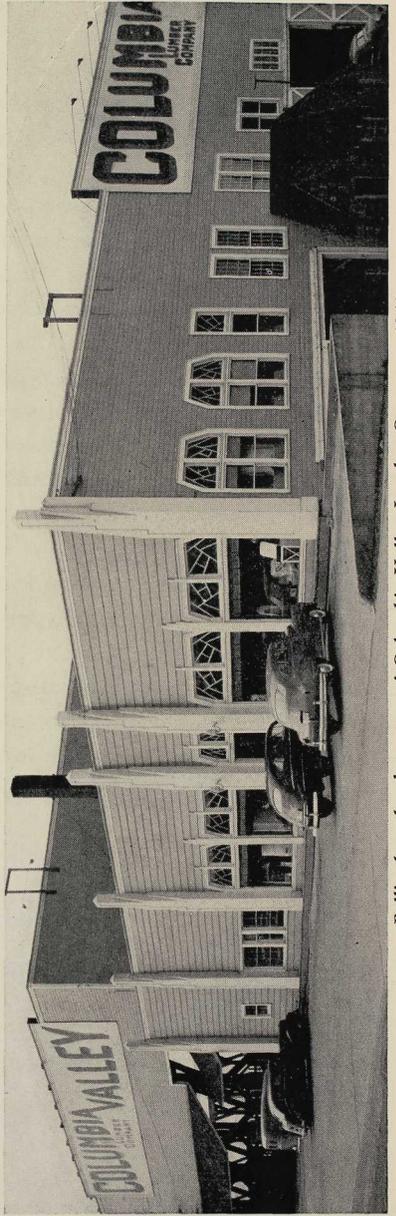
night to help the bookkeeper and thereby learn the company's accounting system. Successively he graduated to bookkeeper for both Lake Whatcom Logging Company and Larson Lumber Company, then to treasurer of Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills when it was organized, and in 1936 to Secretary-Treasurer and Assistant Manager. He later became Vice-President, and acted as Secretary-Treasurer of several subsidiary corporations. His title might well have been "Watch-dog of the Treasury," from his fidelity to company interests in financial matters. Still very active, he has served since 1945 as Liquidating Trustee of Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills. "Jack" Frost typifies the company's long-time and loyal executives and employees, and justifies their policy of training and advancement.

During the rapid expansion period of 1911-1913, Bloedel Donovan acquired a sash and door plant at Bellingham. Originally built and operated by J. F. Keplinger, the outfit became financially involved and failed. However, it proved a valuable addition to the company's rapidly growing establishments, as it utilized parts of the company's lumber to the best advantage, and helped greatly in the matter of mixed-car shipments. One of the famous accomplishments of this plant during its operations over a third of a century, was production of all the sash, doors, frames and mouldings for building the then largest hotel in the world, the Stevens at Chicago.

Few lumbermen on the west coast grasped the tremendous significance of the Panama Canal as related to the marketing of lumber. From the inception of this project in 1904, Bloedel foresaw its potentialities and planned to use them. To that end he needed large production of lumber on tidewater.



Bloedel Donovan box factory and 40 million feet of box lumber.



Bellingham headquarters of Columbia Valley Lumber Company, 1948.

ONE HUNDRED FIFTY MILLION FEET A YEAR

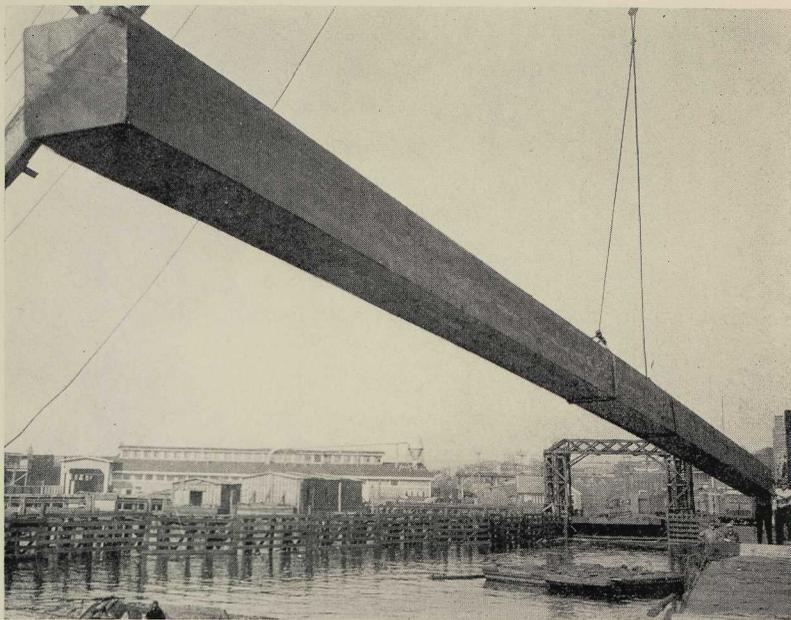
An excellent mill site at the foot of Dock Street on the Bellingham Bay waterfront was occupied by a large sawmill built in 1891 by Bellingham Bay Mill Company, a San Francisco syndicate. It had burned just before the turn of the century, and had been rebuilt as one of the most modern mills on the Pacific coast, with a capacity exceeding that of any other in the Pacific Northwest. Shipments were almost entirely by water.

In spite of its favorable location and large capacity, the mill had operated without any marked degree of success. The plant's design and equipment were sound, and the fault was probably due to absentee ownership. Late in 1912 "J.H." and "J.J." called in John McMahon, then foreman of Mill "B" at Larson.

"John, we want you to look over Cornwall's mill from the piling to the top of the stack. Give us a complete report on it as soon as you can."

McMahon's report was favorable and Bloedel Donovan bought the property. Immediate work was started to change the mill to electric power and put it into operation.

On March first of 1913 a complete reorganization of the company's corporate set-up took place, merging Lake Whatcom Logging Company, Larson Lumber Company, and the recently acquired Cargo mill, under the name of Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills. Assets were listed at \$3,889,875, with a million and one-half each in common and six percent preferred stock, and the balance in capital surplus. Thus the sixty original shares of Lake Whatcom Logging Company, valued at \$100 each in 1898, had increased within fifteen years to the amazing amount of \$50,000 per share!



Loading a big dredge spud at Cargo Mill.

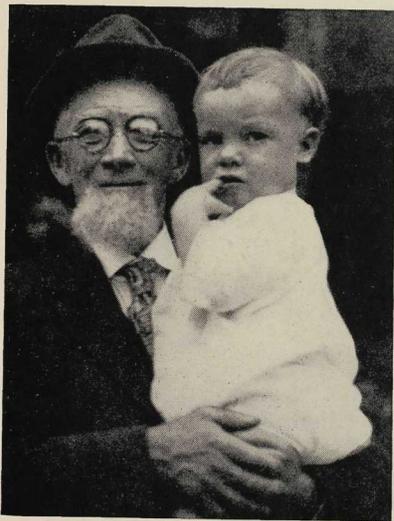
Both Bloedel and Donovan firmly believed that company executives should be stockholders. Following that policy considerable stock was set aside for key men in the organization, to be paid for by stock earnings and bonuses. Substantial income from this source was realized by employees, and those who remained with the company until its liquidation in 1944 realized considerable amounts in liquidating dividends.

In the new corporation, J. H. Bloedel was president; J. J. Donovan was vice-president, J. H. Prentice secretary, and F. E. Frost treasurer. Sales were managed by E. I. Garland from the company's Seattle office. Branch sales offices were located at strategic points in the middle-west and in New York state. The company later established offices in Chicago.

ONE HUNDRED FIFTY MILLION FEET A YEAR

Bloedel remained firmly convinced of the value of the Panama Canal in the increased distribution of west coast lumber, although many outstanding lumbermen and other businessmen were skeptical. The argument of the skeptics was that southern pine and eastern Canadian pine products were so firmly entrenched in the eastern market that Douglas fir would never be accepted.

E. G. Ames of Puget Mill Company stated that he'd tried to invade the eastern seaboard market with fir lumber and had failed. J. Hamilton Lewis, a prominent Seattle attorney and later senior United States senator from Illinois, thought that the Canal might hurt Seattle and the west coast by allowing shipments of yellow pine from the south to invade lumber markets on the Pacific.



D. F. (David Harum) Trunkey

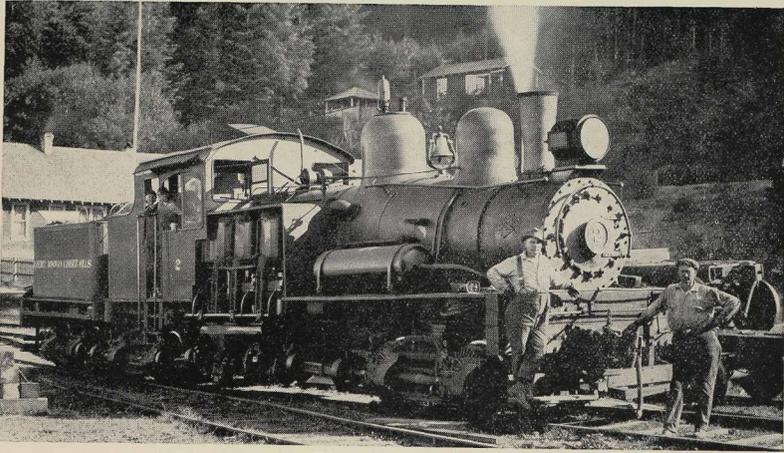
EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

In spite of all opinion to the contrary, Bloedel Donovan established a sales office in the Whitehall Building on the Battery in New York City in 1913, anticipating the sale of their products to the east coast by water. John F. Drescher was put in charge, and through his sales efforts Bloedel Donovan shipped one of the first cargoes of west coast lumber to move through the Canal. The vigorous methods used by agents of southern pine mills to block the sale of Douglas fir on the eastern seaboard were ineffective, and the use of west coast lumber in the east grew by leaps and bounds.

One hundred fifty million feet a year! Yes, that's a tremendous output of lumber—enough to fill six thousand ordinary boxcars. That many cars would reach from Bellingham to Everett, Washington, on the Great Northern tracks without using the six hundred carloads of shingles that were produced by the company each year.

On a single shift basis the Cargo mill cut seventy-five million feet of lumber annually during 1913 and the following years. The combined output of the two rail-shipping mills at Larson, operating one shift only, was equal to that of the Cargo mill. That made the total annual lumber production of the three mills add up to one hundred fifty million feet. In addition, the three shingle mills operated by Bloedel Donovan—two at Larson and one at Belfast—cut one hundred fifty million shingles each year, or enough to roof ten thousand homes.

Twenty-five miles of standard gauge railroad was owned and operated by the company in 1913. From Park, the Northern Pacific junction at the head of Lake Whatcom, the rails extended eight miles to Alger, and from that camp they



The "Two-Spot."

traversed the company's timber holdings. The main-line road beds were well constructed, with a 1.9% maximum grade, although branch lines had up to 5% or 6% grades. Logs were dumped into Lake Whatcom, rafted, and towed twelve miles to Larson by the company's steam tug "Prentice."

When the Panama Canal was opened to shipping on the fifteenth of August, 1914, the Bloedel-Donovan organization was ready to ship lumber by this new route to the east coast of the United States and to the world's markets. Since that time over half of their output has moved by water. This was neither luck nor coincidence, but the result of long careful planning. By 1917 Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills had become one of the largest shippers of lumber in the Pacific Northwest, with markets in nearly every part of the globe.

When ten million feet of lumber was needed to develop our defenses at Pearl Harbor, Bloedel Donovan got the order. When the Great Northern Railway Company placed a single order for nine million feet of lumber for snow-sheds in the

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

mountains, their purchasing agent, Otto Wood, gave the business to Bloedel Donovan. One timber cut in the Cargo mill for Puget Sound Bridge & Dredging Company was eighty-two feet long, and three feet square! It contained 8,856 board feet, and was cut from a log with a diameter of seven feet six inches at the butt, five feet two inches at the top, and scaling thirteen thousand board feet! Five other identical timbers were cut, all for dredge spuds, three of them shipping to Honolulu and the others to Boston. At the same time seven dredge spuds were cut for shipment to Quebec, five of them measuring eighty-five feet long and the other two measuring ninety feet!

Regional acknowledgment of the company's predominant position in the lumber industry was indicated by J. H. Bloedel's election in 1915 to presidency of the West Coast Lumbermen's Association, and national acknowledgment by his selection as vice-president of National Lumber Manufacturers' Association.

Only fifteen years had passed since eighteen men and a horse pulled their first logs from the woods on the shores of Lake Whatcom, but those years of struggle and careful planning had borne abundant fruit.



VI

MOBILIZED FOR WAR

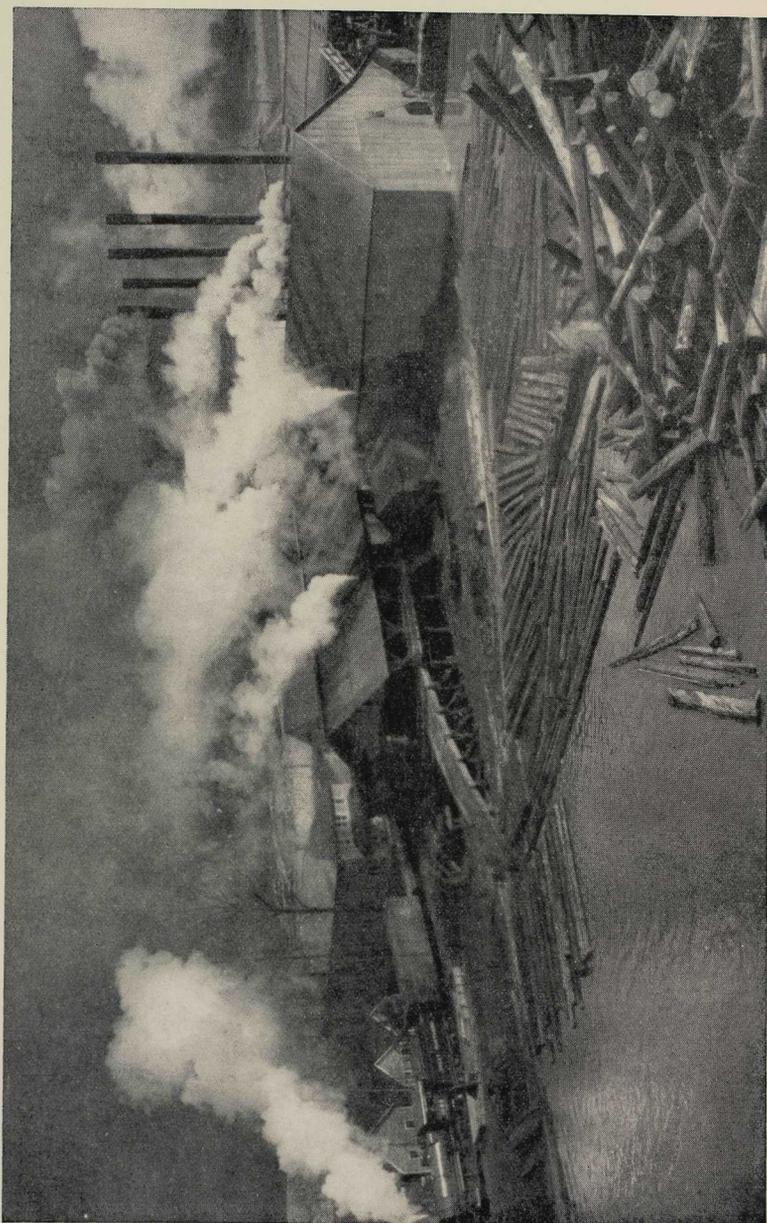
ON THE TWELFTH DAY

of March, in the year of Our Lord nineteen hundred and seventeen, the Senate of the United States declared that a state of war existed with the German Empire!

"Give us lumber—thousands of trainloads of lumber—mountains of lumber!" the War Department demanded.

The Army started cantonments by the score all over the country. More lumber for these! At once! A million soldiers to be housed—two million—three million! Hurry! Hurry!

The Navy demanded lumber for building bigger yards; for barges, lighters, docks. Shipyards all over the country screamed for forest products!



Skykomish Sawmill.

MOBILIZED FOR WAR

Increased sinking of our merchant ships by German submarines threatened our life-line, and the Shipping Board rushed construction of five hundred wooden ships. Huge keel timbers and framing lumber for these could be supplied only from the Pacific Northwest.

Airplanes were needed—thousands of them—with struts and propellers of light, strong, long-fibered spruce. "Give us spruce—it will win the war!" became a popular slogan. Lumbermen built mile after mile of roads into isolated stands of age-old Sitka spruce.

Loggers tore into the task of doubling their production, working long hours at top speed. Mills ran day and night to produce lumber—all that was demanded of them. There was plenty of timber available—timber large enough to make enormous ships' keels and other big sticks that could be produced nowhere else in the world. There were loggers to bring out the timber and mills to cut it, but transportation and distribution had become one vast confusion!

Purchases by the Army, the Navy, the Shipping Board and the Spruce Production Board were unorganized and uncoordinated. Shipyards received lumber shipments from various mills so that the decking arrived first, the keels last, and the framing and sheathing lumber somewhere in between.

Shipyards on the Atlantic seaboard and the Gulf coast used a great deal of southern pine, but the big timbers—keels two feet square and one hundred twenty-five feet long; framing timbers and ribs twenty to thirty feet in length, two feet wide and eighteen inches thick—had to come from the Pacific coast. Mills in the northwest also supplied enormous quantities of ship planking six inches thick, eighteen inches wide,

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

and up to sixty feet in length. Another urgent demand was for clear ship decking, 2½" by 5¼", vertical grain on the edges.

In the summer of 1917 the War Industries Board was organized with Bernard Baruch as chairman, and with a number of hard-working committees. One of these committees, headed by Alexander Legge, president of International Harvester Company, handled raw materials, including lumber, and it combined purchases of the Army, Navy, Shipping Board and Spruce Production Board under one official agency. John H. Kirby of Houston, Texas, was put in charge of the Southern Pine Division, and J. H. Bloedel was made chairman of the Fir Production Board—at a dollar a year—with authority over production of fir lumber for all government agencies. H. B. VanDuzer of Portland, Oregon, and Colonel Brice P. Disque served with him on the board, together with C. W. Stimson, who had been industry adviser to the Shipping Board. William G. McAdoo, representing the federal government, was put in charge of all railroads.

The Fir Production Board found hundreds of orders placed with mills not adapted to handling the items; they discovered lumber shipped in single carload lots that reached destinations forty to sixty days later and with no regard to production schedules in shipyards; they located many vital cars of lumber side-tracked indefinitely at intermediate points because of bad-order rail equipment.

Their first step was to allocate orders to mills best prepared to ship them. The few mills that refused orders were reported to McAdoo with a recommendation that rail equipment be denied them. This procedure proved to be immediately effective. The next move was a strong recommendation to the rail-

MOBILIZED FOR WAR

roads that lumber shipments be combined into trainloads, each consisting of thirty-five to forty cars, and containing practically all of the lumber needed for a complete ship, usually from one million to a million and a half feet. As far as possible each car in the train was to be loaded with a single type of lumber. These trainloads were to be moved intact through diversion points such as Minnesota Transfer, instead of being broken up for further movement as was customary. If the trainload were all for one yard it moved directly to that yard. If material for several yards was included, the train was expedited through to eastern division points such as Binghamton, New York, and was broken up there for rerouting.

Three shipping points were designated for this trainload assembly: Auburn, Washington, for the Northern Pacific and Milwaukee lines, Everett for Great Northern shipments, and Portland for the Union Pacific.

"That'll upset our regular schedules," warned the railroad traffic managers.

"That's too bad, gentlemen," Bloedel replied, "but you've got to help us meet a national emergency."

"What happens when we get a bad-order car in one of your trainloads? We can't hold up the train for one defective car!"

"Drop it out for repair, just as you do on other train movements. We'll put a soldier with railroad experience on every train to attend to that and to pick up any cars that have been repaired and are ready to move."

The railroads accepted the Fir Production Board's recommendation and order began to appear from chaos. Colonel



Skykomish bridge, built by Jack Donovan.

MOBILIZED FOR WAR

Disque of the Spruce Production Board lent soldiers with railroad experience to assist in train movements. Instead of cluttering up the rails for forty to sixty days, the trainloads reached break-up points in eight to ten days. Shipyard production soared, and the Shipping Board was so gratified that when Bloedel made one of his frequent eastern trips, A. D. Lasker, chairman of the Board, sought him out to extend his personal thanks. John Henry Kirby, grand old man of the southern pine industry, met Bloedel in Washington and congratulated him. "I don't see how you did it, Bloedel. There's actually more lumber in the shipyards now than they can use!"

J. H. Bloedel cherishes a voucher check for one dollar from the Treasurer of the United States on which appears in Lasker's handwriting; "For Services Rendered The United States Shipping Board, Emergency Fleet Corporation, During The Time Of National Emergency." He also possesses a letter from Lasker in which the check was enclosed, which reads in part:

"... covering your patriotic service for the Emergency Fleet Corporation during the war. This is a belated acknowledgment of the real service which you performed."

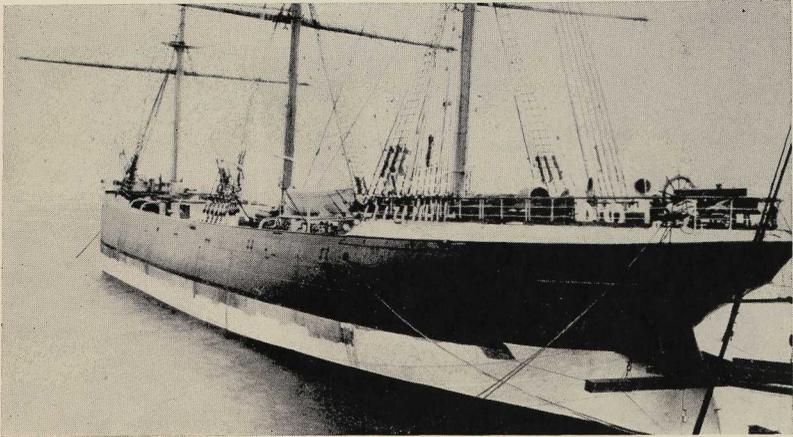
During the war period Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills strove valiantly to meet government demands and managed to maintain high production in spite of depleted man-power and shortage of materials. They added a fourth mill to their holdings, the Skykomish Lumber Company at Skykomish, Washington, which they acquired from the estate of Peter Larson in the early winter of 1917. Included in the purchase was 133,690,000 feet of standing timber which belonged to Skykomish Lumber Company.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

It is interesting to note that Peter Larson's associates in organizing the Skykomish Lumber Company in 1898 were John F. Stevens, chief engineer of the Great Northern Railway Company, and George Farr, division engineer of the same company. Stevens was principal engineer in charge of constructing the Panama Canal from 1905 until 1907 when General Goethals and the U. S. Army Engineers took over. Stevens did a good job, but he was strong-minded and clashed with another strong mind—that of Theodore Roosevelt. Prior to that, Stevens built the Great Northern across the western part of the United States to the Pacific Coast. His name is perpetuated in Stevens Pass which cuts through the Cascades from Wenatchee Valley to the vicinity of Skykomish. Also an heroic statue of this man stands in Marias Pass in Montana, a pass which he discovered and through which he built the Great Northern Railway.

J. J. Donovan, in addition to supervising the company's far-reaching logging operations during the war period, also served as president of the Pacific Logging Congress, as vice-president of the First National Bank of Bellingham, and as chairman of numerous patriotic organizations engaged in war activities. As a director of the war-created United States Spruce Corporation he won special commendation from the federal government. His son, J. N. Donovan, who graduated from Worcester Tech in 1913, worked briefly for the Northern Pacific, then for Bloedel Donovan in their Alger operations, was put in charge of logging at Skykomish. He later handled the company's operations on the Nooksack River and in Clallam County as general logging superintendent.

A high percentage of Bloedel Donovan's employees served



German Bark "Steinbeck" in Bellingham Harbor, 1914.

in the Armed forces during the war period, many of them skilled men that were badly needed in the mills and logging camps. In spite of this and of numerous other heavy handicaps, the company's four sawmills produced 276 million feet of lumber and 265 million cedar shingles during the period of national emergency in 1917 and 1918. During that period the company's logging camps supplied most of the logs used by the Bloedel Donovan mills, and also produced an additional 188 million feet which was sold on the open log market.

Another item urgently needed by the government during the entire war period was wooden containers for food and munitions. Bloedel Donovan had no facilities for producing box shoo, but they planned and built a large box factory adjacent to the Cargo mill, and were in production within a remarkably short time. The plant installation included planers, cut-off saws, and all other essential equipment for manufacturing and packaging the material specified by the Quartermaster General. With the possible exception of ship-

VOUCHER No. WN2-3396

WASHINGTON, D. C., JULY 24, 1922

No. 34681

Treasurer of the United States

PAY TO THE ORDER OF J. H. BLOEDEL

\$ 1.00

ONE

DOLLARS


 UNITED STATES SHIPPING BOARD EMERGENCY FLEET CORPORATION
 DIVISION OF OPERATIONS
 T. L. CLEAR, TREASURER

*For services rendered
 the United States Shipping
 Board Emergency Fleet Corporation
 during the time of national
 emergency, C. D. Koster, chairman*

T. L. Clear
 T. L. CLEAR, TREASURER

93500

yard materials, the boxes supplied to the government were the most essential that could be manufactured during the war emergency.

A colorful incident of the first world war centers around the German bark *Steinbeck* and her crew. This ship lay at Bloedel Donovan's dock, two-thirds loaded with lumber, when war was declared between Germany and England on July 28, 1914. She was chartered to W. L. Comyn Company for Liverpool, so naturally the mill stopped delivery of lumber for completion of her cargo. Her master, Captain Wohlers, was a very arrogant young German, and demanded one hundred dollars demurrage from Bloedel Donovan for every day the ship lay idle. He finally became so obnoxious that officers of the company ordered him to move the *Steinbeck* from the Bloedel Donovan docks. Captain Wohlers ignored the order.

The *Steinbeck* had a large supply of excellent Munich beer, and as the papers published news of German military successes, Captain Wohlers would treat everybody that came aboard. One hot August day John McMahon headed for the *Steinbeck* in pleasant anticipation of a cold bottle of beer with Wohlers. John noted that a *Bellingham Herald* "extra" had just hit the news stands with headlines announcing that

MOBILIZED FOR WAR

British troops had stopped the mighty German advance, but he sped aboard the ship and told Captain Wohlers that the Germans were still advancing.

"Haf zum beer," glowed the Captain.

McMahon gulped the beverage and headed for the gang-plank just as newsboys came to the dock with the "extra."

* * *

Bloedel Donovan had an eleven-foot diameter log on the tide flats. It was too big to get into the mill, and they hired a workman to blast the log into halves, telling him to do it about midnight when there wouldn't be anybody around to get injured. The workman evidently knew less than he claimed about blasting logs, as he drilled four holes of four inch diameter, and used dynamite instead of stumping powder.

When the charge went off just before midnight, the blast shook the entire neighborhood, damaged roofs and broke the edger in the mill.

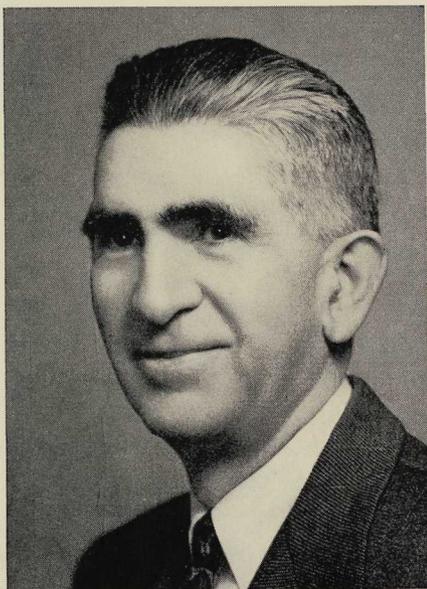
Nearby was the *Steinbeck*, moored at the dock stern-to-stern with a British Strath Line freighter. Seconds after the log disintegrated into fragments the crews of both ships were at battle stations fully armed, each believing the other to have started hostilities. It took some persuasion to convince them that neither ship was endangered.

As days passed the crew of the *Steinbeck*, all young German lads and badly abused by Captain Wohlers, drifted away from the ship and disappeared. Two of them worked for a while at Alger camp as flunkeys, one advancing to second cook. They were quite athletic and used to box with Jack

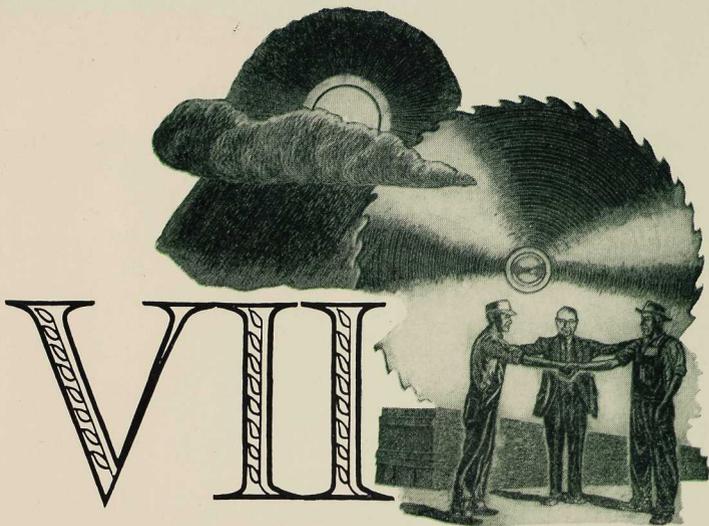
EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

Donovan during spare hours. By the time they left Alger they spoke good English, and one of them, Ed Brinkman, reached Germany and many years later stood high in Nazi circles, handling propaganda and publications.

When the United States entered the war the *Steinbeck's* skipper was put behind bars, and the *Steinbeck* interned at Eagle Harbor. During the war period she was blown up and sunk, together with other interned ships, by secret enemy plans.



C. W. (Chet) Miller



"J. H." AND "J. J." MEET **G**ERMANY CAPITULATES!
THEIR MEN

ARMISTICE SIGNED," shrieked the newspaper headlines on November 11, 1918.

The war's end brought new problems to the lumber industry of the Pacific coast and to many other industries; labor problems attended by strikes, disorders and threats of a general labor uprising.

Throughout the Pacific northwest the situation looked black and threatening. Seattle was Pacific coast headquarters for the Industrial Workers Of The World, nicknamed the "Wobblies." This radical labor organization planned something new—a general strike to include all workers of every description in a major city. They chose Seattle for their experiment because of its high percentage of organized laborers and its liberal attitude toward workers. At the suggestion of the I.W.Ws., through messages sent all over the country, many hundreds of radicals flocked to Seattle prior to the date of the strike.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

On February 6, 1919, 65,000 members of 110 labor unions struck, paralyzing the city's life. The strike committee announced that it was a "sympathy strike" to bolster the cause of 35,000 shipyard workers who had been on strike for higher wages since January 21 of that year.

Seattle's mayor, Ole Hanson, had 1,500 regular and special police on duty, and 1,500 regular troops from Fort Lewis camped in the city's outskirts to prevent rioting.

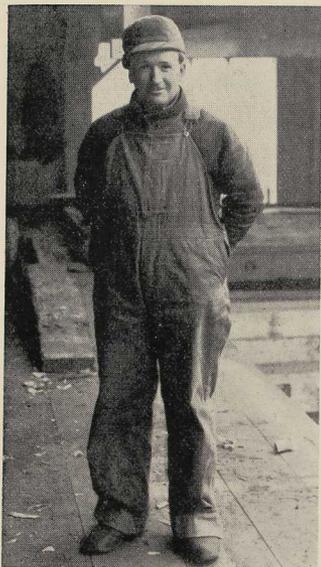
After five days the strike was called off, having apparently accomplished nothing except nation-wide notoriety for Seattle.

A high percentage of the timber workers on the Pacific Coast at that time carried the red card of the Industrial Workers of the World. These men were mostly itinerants; drifters who worked from camp to camp, with no families, no loyalty to any community—or to their country.

Many smaller logging camps in those days offered poor and quite unsanitary living accommodations, with no comforts or recreational facilities. The itinerant worker carried his blankets on his back from job to job, with what little else he owned rolled up inside, and was often referred to as a "bundle-stiff." He worked at a camp or a mill for a few days or a few months, then drew his pay and headed for the nearest town to blow in his money on booze and women. It was a sordid existence and bred bitter, unreasoning men.

Compared to these "hay-wire" outfits were such expensive and well-equipped camps as J. J. Donovan built at Alger with a commodious three-story bunk-house, electric lights, metal beds, clean bedding, individual clothes lockers, and a club room containing reading and recreational material.

"J.H." AND "J.J." MEET THEIR MEN



"Curly" Jones, head sawyer.



Tom Harris, power plant engineer.

However, the I.W.W. hated all bosses with little discrimination between the good, the bad and the indifferent. By word of mouth, by soap-box oratory in city "skid-road" districts, and through "*Solidarity*," "*Appeal to Reason*" and other radical papers, they urged class warfare. All workers against all employers! One big union!

Endeavoring to minimize friction between labor and management, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker sent a brilliant labor conciliator, Carleton H. Parker, to the Pacific Northwest. Parker had a background of economics, had taught at the University of California, and had served as a federal labor

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

investigator in California's I.W.W. troubles. He was sincere and endeavored to understand the problems of both factions in labor disputes, although many employers felt that he leaned in the direction of labor. His terrific zeal and exhausting hours of work caused his premature death before industrial harmony was restored. "*American Idyll*," published in 1919 by his wife, Cornelia Stratton Parker of Williamstown, Massachusetts, tells vividly the story of his endeavors.

Parker's handicap in dealing with lumber industry labor problems was the difficulty of bringing employers into negotiation sessions with labor leaders, some of whom had criminal records and were habitual troublemakers. Nevertheless as a result of Parker's influence, strongly backed by the labor unions, the Pacific Coast lumber industry changed from the customary ten-hour day to an eight-hour basis on March 1, 1918. Many operators were strongly opposed to the change, although others, including J. J. Donovan, conceded that it was inevitable.



"J. H." in good voice at company picnic.

"J.H." AND "J.J." MEET THEIR MEN

On July 23, 1919, C. L. Flynn, Bloedel Donovan's general superintendent, discharged two men from the Larson mill for organizing some of the mill crew on company time.

"Don't worry, there'll be no strike," Flynn phoned the company's Seattle office, "Most of our men here are old-timers that won't be influenced by 'wobblies.' "

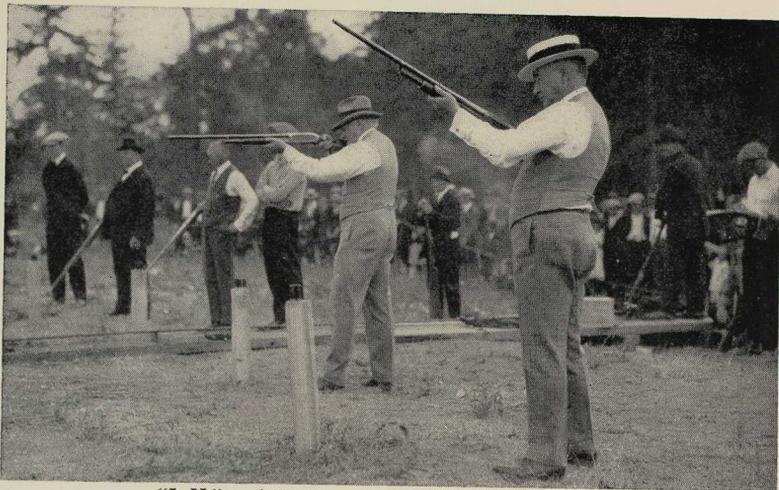


*First Bloedel Donovan picnic—enroute to Lummi Island
on Steamer "Kitsap II."*

For once in his career Flynn underestimated the situation; the next day not even the mill watchman showed up for work. The fight was on, with the I.W.W.s. determined to control the plant through a closed-shop agreement.

The Cargo mill crew did not strike, although some of them quit work the next day when a persuasive Bellingham labor leader named Dyke harangued them from an automobile at the mill gate. Enough loyal employees remained at work to keep the mill operating.

By October the strikers had lost interest in the only issue at stake, the closed shop, and returned to work. The strike was dead, but Bloedel and Donovan, rather than being elated by victory, felt concerned over the reasons for the trouble.



"J. H." and "J. J." trap-shooting at company picnic.

"I believe some of their grievances are justified, 'J. J.," Bloedel concluded, "When we had a small organization we knew every one of our men and called them by their first names. They called us 'J. H.' and 'J. J.' and told us all their troubles. Now instead of 'eighteen men and a horse' we've got nearly eighteen hundred men on the payroll in all the mills and camps, and our only contact with them is through the foremen and superintendents."

"We've got to have closer relationships," Donovan agreed.

Speaking to their employees in a body, the partners suggested that they organize a union under the shop committee system which was being successfully used in England.

"Boys, we're sorry this has happened," they continued, "If we'd been able to talk things over among ourselves as we used to do when we were a smaller outfit, there would have been no trouble. We're always ready to meet you in fair and open discussion, and we have no objection to a company union.

"J.H." AND "J.J." MEET THEIR MEN

What we object to—just as you do—is to have union leaders living in San Francisco or New York tell us how we should run our business and our jobs."

The men accepted the idea and organized at once, assisted by J. C. Lindsey, a consulting industrial engineer. Separate shop committees for each unit of the Bloedel Donovan organization were elected by secret ballot of all the employees—union and non-union men alike—and started functioning on October 1, 1919. The shop committeemen represented the workers in collective bargaining with the management on wages, hours, efficiency, working conditions, grievances, and working rules. The "hire-and-fire" system was eliminated. Men were discharged only for breach of the rules that they themselves formulated through the shop committeemen.

The entire system was voluntary, self-contained, and removed from influence by the management. Certain men who spent a considerable amount of their time on shop committee work were paid by the company for this extra time.

Joint council meetings were held every Tuesday in the shop committee room at the Cargo mill, attended by committees from the two Larson mills, Skykomish, the sash and door plant, the box factory, the retail fuel department, and the Cargo mill. A benefit fund was instituted, with contributions by the company and by the men. The shop committee wrote up a sickness contract with local physicians and hospitals under which they agreed to bear the expenses of their members for all medicine, medical and surgical services and hospital accommodations, regardless of whether the illness occurred during working hours. Hospital services were provided in either St. Luke's or St. Joseph's hospitals in Belling-

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ham. Ambulance service was provided. Employees paid 25 cents per week for this service, with a limit of one dollar per month. The amounts so collected were deposited in a trust fund. The company underwrote the contracts, but the employees paid the bills.

The shop committee also established a mutual funeral fund for members and direct dependents which distributed funeral costs among all subscribers and eliminated financial hardship to survivors or the estate of the deceased.

A set of "Standard Practice Rules and Working Conditions" was formulated and agreed upon by the joint committee, and by appointed representatives of the management. An analysis of these rules will show that 70% of them were formulated for the safety and protection of the workers, and that 30% of them dealt with discipline and prohibitions.

Typical of these standard practice rules are the following:

"CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS"

"Constructive suggestions or criticisms as to betterment in methods, rules or practices in the operating of these plants . . . are earnestly invited. It will be the duty of all committeemen or councilmen to receive and encourage such suggestions and criticisms, and to see that they are given careful consideration and suitable recognition and reward through the council."

"GRIEVANCES"

"Whenever the fairness of a rule or custom or practice in the relations of employer and employee is questioned—the employee is instructed to take the matter up immediately with his shop committeeman who will go with the employee at once . . . to the foreman, who will . . . discuss it with them and settle the matter at once if possible."



Cargo Mill shop committee.

The shop committee at the Cargo mill set up a commissary with steam-heated lunch room, and free coffee furnished by the company.

Bloedel Donovan announced a system of substantial discounts on building materials to employees for their own homes, payment to be made on installments from their company earnings. Retail yard manager D. F. Trunkey was notified in April, 1920, that credit to employees for building material purchases was left in his hands, and that the company wanted to encourage by every possible means the building of homes by workmen.

The "*Industrial Harmonizer*," a monthly official magazine of Bloedel Donovan's employees, was launched in November, 1919. The name of the publication was selected in a prize contest sponsored by the company. It was a newsy, intimate



Larson Mill shop committee.

publication replete with cartoons and personalities, photographs and humor. The management assisted the magazine in every possible manner, but from start to finish it belonged to the employees, and they often used its pages to rib the "bosses" and executives. Nobody was exempt from good-natured criticism, and lapses in social conduct were gleefully exposed.

Excellent poetry was written for the "*Harmonizer*" by "Charles Olsen, Tree Faller" and others. Assistant editors were appointed in all offices, mills and at each of the retail yards of Bloedel Donovan and Columbia Valley Lumber Company.

Tom Harris, who started to work for Bloedel Donovan on

"J.H." AND "J.J." MEET THEIR MEN

October 13, 1901, and who was still active in their power plant eighteen years later, tells in the "*Industrial Harmonizer*" of November, 1919, how he and "J. H." talked over their personal affairs from time to time.

"He'd sit there on that box by the oil can," Tom said, "and we'd come to many conclusions. His babies and mine happened along about the same time, and we had many a wrangle about teeth and colic. 'J. H.' didn't know much about this twin Corliss engine, and he had to admit it. I didn't know how he'd been able to handle his financial problems and keep the payroll going through all these years, but he's done it."

In the October, 1920, issue of the "*Harmonizer*" is an announcement that the company will insure the lives of all employees who have worked a full year, and that premiums will be paid by the company. The amount of the policy depended on length of service, with each employee who had worked twenty years or over for Bloedel-Donovan receiving a \$2000 policy gratis. Policies provided for sickness and accident disability payments, and any person leaving company employment was allowed to retain the policy by taking over payment of premiums.

One marked effect of the shop committee plan, showing the development of a common interest between employer and employee, was the program of social gatherings that ensued. All who worked for the company, from whistle-punk to president, met together in celebration of Labor Day, Christmas, Independence Day and other holidays. The annual Christmas parties had to be held in the Bellingham Armory, that being the only building large enough to accommodate the four thousand or more who gathered—employees and their families—



Salmon barbecue at annual company picnic.

"J.H." AND "J.J." MEET THEIR MEN

to receive presents, dance and be generally merry. Every kid in the vast audience was given something useful or entertaining, after which the floor was cleared for dancing.

At one of these Christmas parties Bloedel spotted an employee talking to a charming young woman whom Bloedel assumed to be the man's wife. Bloedel's ability to spot charming young women at a great distance was equalled only by his ability to estimate the value of a promising timber stand.

"Merry Christmas, Tom," Bloedel greeted his employee, "I wish you'd introduce me to your wife; I'd like to dance with her."

"Sure, Mr. Bloedel," said Tom, and excusing himself from the charming young woman he led Bloedel across the hall toward his 6'1" wife, a good six inches taller than "J. H."

They danced and danced and danced, Bloedel feeling remarkably conspicuous. Each time the orchestra showed signs of stopping for an intermission it would be suddenly revived into full swing.

"There's something peculiar going on here," Bloedel thought, and danced over close to the musicians. In the wings of the building close to the orchestra, he spotted his brother-in-law, Jim Prentice, Secretary of the company.

"Keep it up, boys," Jim was admonishing the musicians, "The boss is having a wonderful time!"

The mystery was solved, but Jim faded out of the picture for his own safety before the dance ended.

Under the shop committee system Bloedel Donovan's employees staged a huge annual picnic, sometimes on Labor Day but often in July or August. The first of these was held on Labor Day in 1919. The steamer *Kitsap II* took the gathering



Picnic crowd.

"J. H." AND "J. J." MEET THEIR MEN

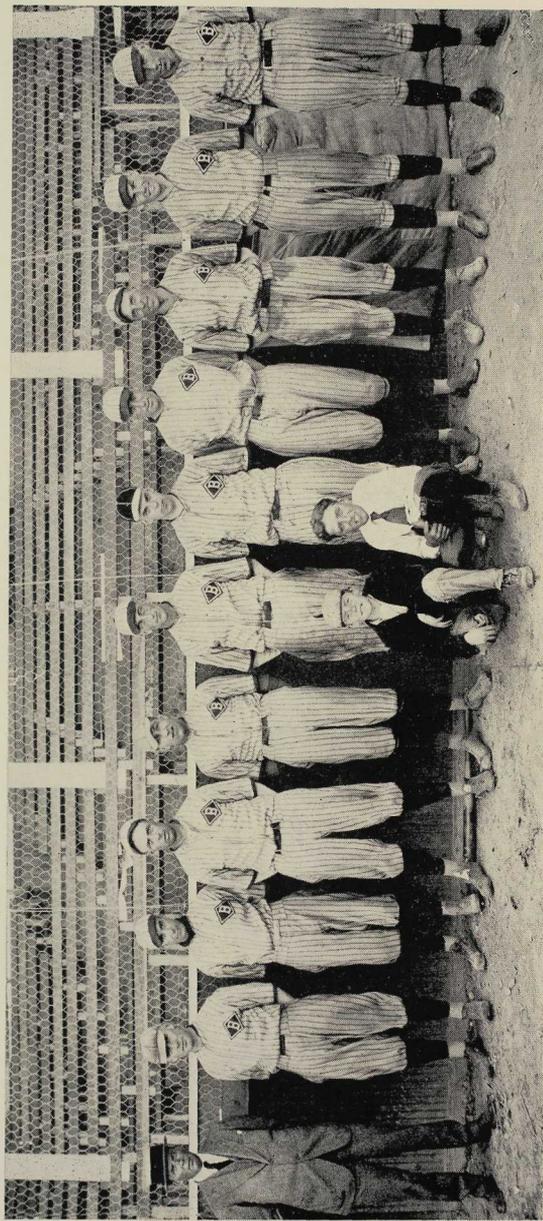
on a cruise to Lummi Island. On other occasions the picnic was held at Ferndale Park or Cottonwood Beach, with four thousand or more attending.

An outstanding feature of these picnics was a salmon barbecue, with scores of huge fresh salmon roasted Indian-style over a fire of dry alder wood by an old-timer named Mayhew. The salmon were split lengthwise, impaled on sticks close to the glowing coals, and turned frequently as they cooked.

Typical of these affairs was the twelfth annual picnic held at Cornwall Park, Bellingham, on August 25, 1934. Sports events were scheduled for men and women, boys and girls. There were tennis, soft-ball and horse-shoe contests, and throughout the day there was good band music. A dance from



25th anniversary picnic, Birch Bay, August 11, 1923. Larson Mill team wins tug-of-war.



"Diamond B" baseball team, manager and mascots.

"J.H." AND "J.J." MEET THEIR MEN

nine o'clock until midnight in the State Street Auditorium concluded the day.

In John McMahon's office at the Larson mill there stands a silver cup awarded annually at these company picnics to the winner of the tug-of-war contest. Inscriptions show that it was won equally by the Cargo mill and Larson teams over a period of years.

These social gatherings were attended by many who lived outside the city of Bellingham, mostly ex-employees who had retired to farms but continued their friendship with the company. These people were always assured of a hearty welcome.

For fifteen years—from 1919 until 1934—there was industrial harmony in all of Bloedel Donovan's operations under the shop committee plan. Then came the labor provisions of the National Recovery Act and subsequently the Wagner Act outlawing company unions.

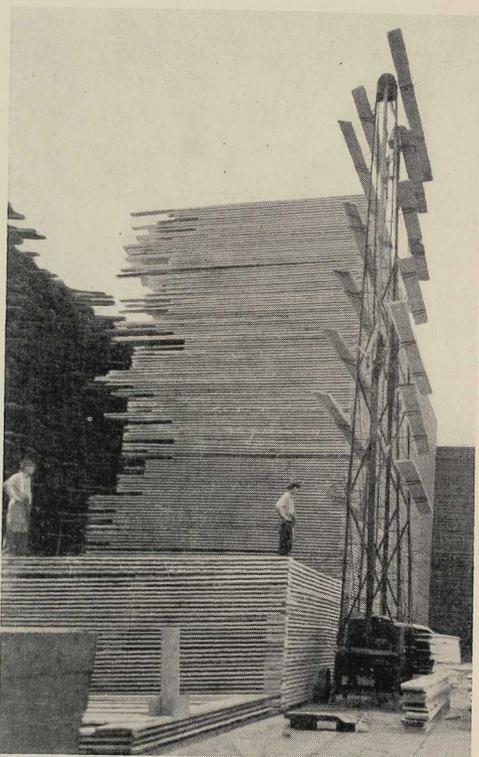
Turmoil started almost at once. The A. F. of L. took charge at first, but were challenged later by the C.I.O. The result was a jurisdictional fight that lasted for several years, with management the helpless bystander who received most of the flying brickbats. The dispute was finally settled by the mill crews being organized under the A. F. of L. and the logging crews under the C.I.O.

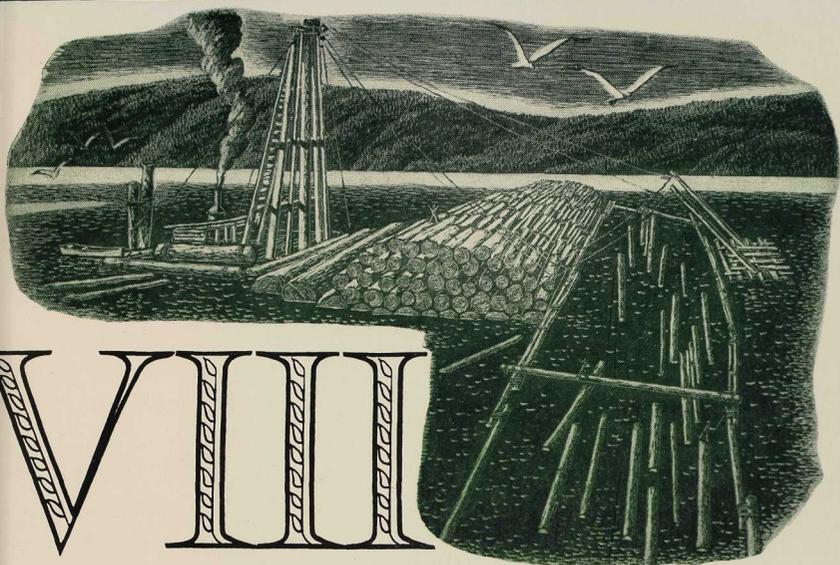
An incident typifying the attitude of most Bloedel Donovan employees occurred shortly after liquidation of the company was announced in 1944. Bloedel happened to meet Chief Engineer Louie Olden outside the mill.

"Well, Louie," said Bloedel, "it's fortunate for everybody that we're liquidating at a time when there's lots of other jobs to be had by our men."

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Louie looked at Bloedel with a sorrowful expression. "You don't quite understand, 'J. H.,'" he blurted. "I know I can get another job, but this place has been home to me for a long, long time, and I hate to leave it."





VIII

MARCHING WEST TO THE SEA **I**N 1898, WHEN

eighteen men went into the woods surrounding Lake Whatcom with one horse and the crude logging equipment of the day, the huge coastal belt of timber in the Pacific northwest was virtually untouched. From southern Oregon to the north end of Vancouver Island, and from the Pacific Ocean to the summit of the Cascade Mountains stretched this dense forest, growing rapidly in the humid coastal plains and foothills.

Some of this timber was in private ownership but much more of it was in public domain, subject to filing by citizens as timber claims. There were no established National Forests until 1900.

Many timber owners accumulated large holdings by purchase from individuals who had proved up on their claims, or who had secured lands under the Homestead Law or under the earlier Pre-emption Law. Others bought Military Bounty Land Warrants from veterans, these being assignable.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

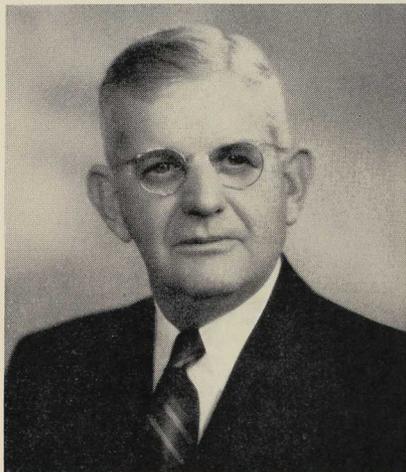
There was much abuse of the federal timber claim privilege, one extreme case involving a large block of adjacent timber claims filed upon by inmates of a house of ill fame in a major Puget Sound city. It's hardly necessary to mention that the girls were not personally interested in timber operations, taking a dim view of life in the wide open spaces. Titles to many claims acquired during this timber-grabbing era were not valid, and upon investigation they were later cancelled by the federal government.

None of the organizations operated by Bloedel, Donovan and Larson secured timber through the filing of timber claims. Their purchases were from private owners, with the exception of limited amounts bought from the State of Washington or on contracts with the U. S. Forest Service.

With the establishment of National Forests, National Parks, and State of Washington timber holdings, the picture altered materially. In July of 1946, over 97 billion feet of the remaining timber in the State of Washington was owned by federal, state and county agencies, or fifty-seven per cent of the 178 billion foot total.

Original timber purchases by Bloedel and Donovan had been well selected for quality and ease of logging, and were in the flat lands or rolling foothills of Whatcom and Skagit Counties. By the time of World War I, these older tracts around Lake Whatcom, Cain's Lake and Palmer Lake were about exhausted. Belfast had been logged out, and the Alger camp was to be closed up in 1928. Some of the earliest shows of Lake Whatcom Logging Company were already covered with heavy second-growth timber, and selective cutting of piling and Christmas trees were being made.

MARCHING WEST TO THE SEA



Charles C. Donovan

On the Skykomish and Beckler Rivers, 133 million feet of timber had been purchased, but that was to supply the Skykomish mill and didn't help the Cargo mill or the two mills at Larson.

Timber purchased on the Nooksack River from private owners, the Great Northern Railway, and the State of Washington, supplied the Bloedel Donovan mills from 1921 until 1937, but bordered on no reserves of timber that would allow continuous operation.

In the early twenties, Bloedel-Donovan took a verbal option on three hundred million feet of Pope and Talbot timber near Arlington, but Ed English, of English Logging Company, nosed them out and got the tract.

Because they had to have timber for the Cargo and Larson mills, Bloedel Donovan then turned toward Clallam County



Log train at Sekiu.

and made a careful investigation of several large untouched timber tracts belonging to private owners. A group of men in Grand Rapids, Michigan, operating as Clallam Lumber Company, owned forty thousand acres of desirable timber. Through timber factors James D. Lacey & Company, Bloedel Donovan arranged to purchase 12,200 acres of these holdings which cruised about eight hundred million feet, for two and one-half million dollars.

This timber lay largely in the drainage areas of the Calawah and Sol Duc Rivers, which ran west to the Pacific, and in the Beaver Creek, Hoko, and Clallam River basins, which drained into the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

Details of the purchase were agreed upon in early December of 1920, involving the payment of a half-million dollars in cash, and the balance payable over a ten-year period. In January of 1921, Lacey's Chicago office had a contract prepared by their attorneys and sent to Bloedel Donovan for signature. It reached Seattle on Monday, January 24. Bloedel Donovan's attorney, E. S. McCord, while agreeing with the

MARCHING WEST TO THE SEA

intent and gist of the contract, following the custom of all good lawyers, disagreed with the wording, and went to Bloedel's office to re-dictate the voluminous document to Bloedel's secretary, Mrs. Perry. After reading the typed revision McCord decided to make still further alterations, and again re-dictated the contract.

Bloedel was anxious to complete the typing of the contract, sign it, and mail it to James D. Lacey's Chicago office that Monday night, the twenty-fourth of January, but Mrs. Perry was obviously exhausted from long hours of work.

"You'd better go home," he advised her, "You can type the finished draft tomorrow."

The revised contract was mailed from Seattle on Tuesday, January 25. McCord wired Clallam Lumber Company that the contract had been executed by Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills after certain inconsequential legal changes, and had gone forward to Lacey's Chicago office. Clallam Lumber Company replied by wire that IF the changes were inconsequential they would sign the contract when received and return it to Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills. The IF was extremely important.

When Wood Beal, Secretary of Lacey's Chicago office, received the contract in the mail on Friday, January 28, he looked at his calendar.

"There's no point in my taking this to Grand Rapids tonight," he thought. "I'd get there too late to do any business, and that Clallam Lumber Company bunch always plays golf on Saturday, so I couldn't get their directors together for a meeting. I'll go up there Sunday night and have them sign it Monday."

While this was going on, the storm-brewing staff in old



Building a raft at Clallam Bay.

MARCHING WEST TO THE SEA

Mother Nature's laboratory was working on a super-hurricane, a model which would travel at the rate of one hundred fifty miles per hour. They planned to launch it that week end over the Olympic Peninsula!

At three-twenty the following afternoon, Saturday, January 29, U. S. Weather Observer Perry R. Hill noticed that a strong wind was coming up, and checked his anemometer at North Head weather station at the mouth of the Columbia River.

"Forty miles an hour, eh? Well, I've seen lots worse than that!"

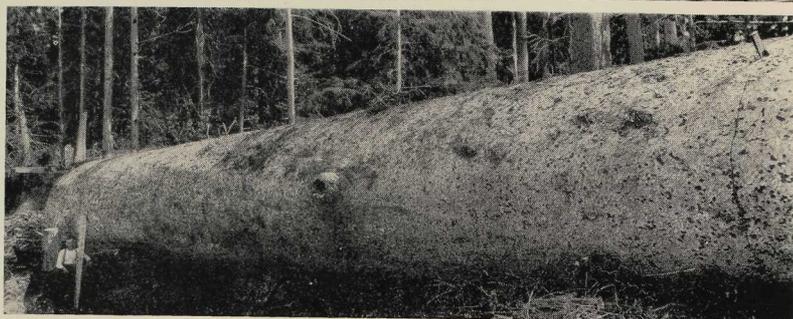
During the next twelve minutes the wind increased its intensity, breaking off treetops and whisking them away like feathers. Hill braced himself for another look at his instruments.

"One hundred twenty-six miles per hour! Holy hurricanes! I don't believe it!"

During the next five minutes the wind velocity stepped up to one hundred and thirty-two miles, then Hill's anemometer broke. He estimated that the wind reached a maximum velocity of one hundred fifty miles per hour!

It travelled north from the Columbia, flattening huge patches of timber in a strip seventy-five miles long and thirty miles wide in Jefferson and Clallam Counties. It piled full-grown trees in fantastic heaps twenty feet or more high. It knocked the timber on one forty flat as soup on a platter, and left the next forty intact! Today, nearly thirty years later, its path can still be traced.

The big wind crossed to Vancouver Island, blowing down as high as twenty-five per cent of the timber stand around



Spruce log, 56,650 board feet—Clallam operations.

Cowichan Lake and Qualicum, and reached across the Strait of Georgia to the British Columbia mainland before it blew itself out. It was felt at Bloedel, Stewart & Welch's Myrtle Point Camp, one hundred miles north of Vancouver.

A Clallam County rancher locked in his shivering cabin, looked out the window to see his chicken coop about to take off on the wings of the wind. When he opened the cabin door, intending to salvage the coop from the elements, the wind blew him and the door, together with the cabin's roof, a right smart distance from his homestead!

In an area of some 2,250 square miles, an estimated eight billion feet of good timber was felled, the greatest disaster of its kind in forestry and lumber records. Roads, trails, and telephone lines were obliterated, buildings were destroyed, and cattle killed. By some miracle, there was only one human

MARCHING WEST TO THE SEA

life lost; a man killed at Aberdeen by a falling smokestack. But the masses of tangled timber created the greatest fire hazard in forest history.

Because of the disrupted communication lines, news of the disaster spread slowly. Fragmentary reports reached Bloedel in Seattle on Sunday, January 30, but he thought them exaggerated. Monday's reports confirmed the disaster and Bloedel called McCord.

"Mac, we've got reports from Clallam County of severe timber damage by a blow-down, something much worse than we've ever had in this part of the country. I can't believe the figures they give me on the loss, but whatever has happened I suppose we're stuck as we signed the contract in good faith and mailed it on the 25th, before the blow-down."

"The timber isn't yours," McCord snapped, "until there's a meeting of minds, and by that I mean that they must also have signed the contract. I'll send them a telegram at once."

McCord wired Clallam Lumber Company about the reported heavy damage to the timber, and that pending investigation, his clients refused to conclude the deal. On the same day, Monday, January 31, Wood Beal presented the contract to Clallam Lumber Company officials in Grand Rapids. It was approved and signed, but not until after McCord's telegram had been received.

McCord filed suit to invalidate the contract on the grounds that Clallam Lumber Company was unable to deliver what it had agreed to sell. He claimed that this could be construed in law as "constructive fraud," and cited numerous court decisions supporting his opinion, some of them going back as far as the seventeenth century in the British courts.

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Willard Keeney, Clallam Lumber Company's astute lawyer, evidently recognized the validity of McCord's claims, as he suggested that Bloedel Donovan's officials come to Chicago for conference and possible compromise.

The case never went to trial. Bloedel and Donovan followed Keeney's suggestion and met McCarthy and other directors of Clallam Lumber Company in Chicago. McCarthy lost his temper and stalked out of the meeting, but the other Clallam Lumber Company directors agreed to settle with Bloedel Donovan on the basis of an estimated twenty percent loss, which figured a half-million dollars less than the original price.

Now comes a peculiar relation of coincidence and timing. Had McCord and Bloedel insisted that Mrs. Perry complete the typing of the final revision of the contract on Monday and had it mailed to Lacey's Chicago office that evening, January 24th, it would have reached Wood Beal Thursday, January 27th. Undoubtedly he would have gone to Grand Rapids that day. The contract would have been signed and in the mail headed back to Seattle the next day, January 28th. That was twenty-four hours before the hurricane struck the Olympic Peninsula, and Bloedel Donovan would have been out a half-million dollars.

Even with this allowance Bloedel Donovan would have been better off if the timber had not been damaged. Logging and building railroads in the tangle of uprooted trees was difficult and very expensive. The wind-thrown hemlock and spruce decayed before it could be reached. The fir was salvaged, and the heart-wood, averaging about 80% of the log content, was utilized.

MARCHING WEST TO THE SEA

Of Clallam Lumber Company's 40,000 acres of land on the Olympic peninsula, Bloedel Donovan subsequently bought under various forms of logging contracts all except the area that had been previously sold to Crescent Logging Company and its predecessors.

They bought other holdings also, among them the Ruddock-McCarthy timber near Forks. This was a partnership, with each partner owning undivided halves. Ruddock wanted to sell, and gave Bloedel Donovan an option on his half-interest. McCarthy refused to sell, and Bloedel, on a subsequent trip to Europe, met him in Paris to negotiate for his share of the timber. McCarthy was subject to defective hearing unless a high figure was mentioned, and none of Bloedel's offers were large enough to penetrate his ear-drums.

James D. Lacey & Company had a contingent interest in the Ruddock-McCarthy tracts, having located and bought them for the owners. Failing to make a deal with McCarthy, Ruddock sold his half interest to Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills and petitioned the court for a division of the property, which became effective shortly after the court hearing. James D. Lacey & Co. got their share of the profit from Ruddock, but failed to get it from McCarthy. They subsequently sued him and obtained judgment for \$80,000, plus costs. The stubborn McCarthy refused to settle, so his share of the property was sold on judgment and taken over by certain bankers in the name of Farwest Logging Company. Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills later logged the tract, along with other adjacent timber.

During World War I, the Federal Government's Spruce Division built a railroad in Clallam County to tap the large



Building railroad grade—Clallam.

coastal spruce belt and take the logs to a government-built mill at Port Angeles for cutting into airplane stock. This road started at Disque Junction, two miles west of Joyce, followed up the Lyre River and along the shore of Lake Crescent, thence over the summit and down the Sol Duc

MARCHING WEST TO THE SEA

River to Lake Pleasant, some 52 miles altogether. Also many spurs were graded into the Hoko and Calawah country. Neither the railroad nor the mill were completed when the war ended on November 11, 1918.

This "Spruce Railroad" was built through part of Bloedel Donovan's timber and offered access to tidewater. It seemed natural, therefore, that Bloedel Donovan should try to purchase the line, although the haul on their logs would average sixty miles to tidewater at Port Angeles, over a 1,200-foot summit. An alternate plan considered by Bloedel Donovan was to build their own road to Clallam Bay, less than half the distance to Port Angeles, and over a summit not to exceed 700 feet. That plan, however, would involve securing a suitable terminal on Clallam Bay with plenty of protected water for booming and rafting grounds.

Goodyear Lumber Company of San Francisco owned the only good site available on Clallam Bay, together with about 15,000 acres of partially logged-off lands connected with Clallam Bay by railroad.

Bloedel and Attorney McCord went to Washington and offered Secretary of War Weeks \$600,000 for the "Spruce Railroad," but the offer was refused. Bloedel told Weeks that he could build twenty-five miles of road into his timber from Clallam Bay for \$800,000 and haul logs over much less mileage than on the "Spruce Railroad." Weeks evidently thought Bloedel was bluffing, but when he met Bloedel in Jim Dole's home in Honolulu, after Bloedel Donovan *had* built their own road, he admitted that he'd underestimated Bloedel's intentions.

The "Spruce Railroad" was sold in January, 1923, to a



Sappho Camp.

Chicago man, one John Lyon, on a "shoe-string basis," for something like a million dollars. Lyon was purely a speculator, having no timber on the peninsula and no use for the road.

Before negotiating seriously with Goodyear for their Clallam property, Bloedel and Donovan went to Los Angeles to meet Lyon and an individual named Garrigues who acted as Lyon's advisor. They asked three million for the railroad and were quite cocky about the situation.

"Your timber is the 'lock,' gentlemen," Garrigues gloated, "but our railroad is the 'key'."

"We can build our own railroad to Clallam Bay for \$800,000," Bloedel retorted.

Garrigues laughed sarcastically, "We don't see any dirt flying, Bloedel!"

Bloedel and Donovan gave up their efforts to buy the "Spruce Railroad" and went to San Francisco to see Goodyear. As a result of their conference, they bought the Goodyear property in October of 1923. The purchase included

MARCHING WEST TO THE SEA

about 600 million feet of standing timber, a good booming and rafting grounds at Sekiu on Clallam Bay, and eight or ten miles of railroad from Clallam Bay into the timber, of which three miles could be utilized in their plan to build into Lake Pleasant.

When Bloedel Donovan started extension of the Goodyear Railroad into the timber they'd bought from Clallam Lumber Company, Garrigues heard of the activity and wired them to postpone all construction and negotiate for purchase of the "Spruce Railroad." Bloedel wired three words, "*Sorry, Too Late.*"

General Stewart and Pat Welch, who were also Bloedel's partners in his Canadian operations, contracted the building of Bloedel Donovan's railroad extension into the valley of the Sol Duc River. This extension of the Goodyear Railroad was called the "Clallam Bay & Southern," and was headed toward Lake Pleasant and southwesterly from there toward Forks. J. N. Donovan, vice-president and general logging superintendent, put the location of this extension in the hands of Charles C. Donovan. He was not related to J. J. Donovan, but was a member of the Crockett family who settled at Coupeville on Whidby Island in 1850.

"C.C." had worked on early surveys of the Bellingham Bay and Eastern and on logging railroads for Lake Whatcom Logging Co. Incidentally, J. J. Donovan once threatened to demote him, during his early apprenticeship, for making a one-foot error in running levels. In addition to his Whatcom County experience, C. C. Donovan helped build the White Pass and Yukon Railroad in Alaska, build part of the Milwaukee Road through the Cascades, constructed logging rail-

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

roads in the sugar pine belt of Northern California, surveyed the location of the Milwaukee line in Clallam County, and later acted as superintendent of the railroad at Port Angeles.

Stewart and Welch were railroad contractors of wide experience, but they'd never built logging railroads before. Charley Donovan knew that the cost of a logging road had to be charged to the exact amount of timber that comes out over the line, and that loggers can't afford to build on main-line construction standards. This combination of experience was of value to Bloedel Donovan, and "C.C." became the "main push" in their railroad building. The fact that he'd taken quite a hand in building the "Spruce Railroad" made him of even more value in this respect.

"Timber Genius of the Olympic Peninsula" was the term that local newspapers used to describe C. C. Donovan. His technical ability was only part of his value to the company, as he had the ability to handle men in all walks of life, and his faculty of making friends was phenomenal. He typified the kind of man whom both Bloedel and Donovan considered essential for the success of their operations. He became general superintendent for the Clallam operations under J. J. Donovan and later under J. N. Donovan. He supervised logging operations and built rafts at Sekiu; rafts of saw-logs for the Cargo mill at Bellingham and pulp logs for the paper mill at Port Angeles. Successful operation of Bloedel Donovan in Clallam County for almost a quarter-century was, in large part, due to "C.C.'s" leadership and ability, and his death in 1944 was a contributing factor in the decision to liquidate Bloedel Donovan's holdings.

Stewart and Welch brought with them to Clallam County a

MARCHING WEST TO THE SEA



Clallam County Roadside.

railroad construction worker of Czeck origin named Joe Meeley. Joe landed on the job in a cold, dismal rain, with all his earthly effects in a trunk and handbag. Joe gazed up at the weeping sky, down at the sea of mud underfoot, and then at his dripping baggage.

"I think I'll just unpack the leetle one," he grunted.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

He has probably unpacked the "beeg one" by now, as he stayed on to work for twenty-three years for Bloedel as track maintenance man, construction boss, camp foreman, and, finally, logging superintendent. You'll find him bossing the show today from his headquarters at Sappho; genial, rugged and dynamic, general superintendent of the operation which succeeded Bloedel Donovan.

From the original Goodyear Camp at Sekiu, Bloedel Donovan's operations spread south and west to new camps—Sappho, Beaver, Calawah, Hoko, Pysht—with over 800 men working steadily. In one day's work, nine sides in the "West End" of their operations loaded 320 carloads of logs scaling 2,537,940 board feet! One side alone yarded and loaded 86 carloads, scaling 902,360 feet on that day! The eighteen men working that side thereby made an all-time record for the State of Washington.

The Goodyear operations, working at full capacity, never put over 100,000 feet of logs daily into Clallam Bay. Bloedel Donovan, in a single day's operations, often dumped as high as a million feet!

Thus began one of the great timber-harvesting operations of the west; one that operated for nearly a quarter-century, building over one hundred miles of railroad and supplying more than four billion feet of timber for the lumber markets of the world.

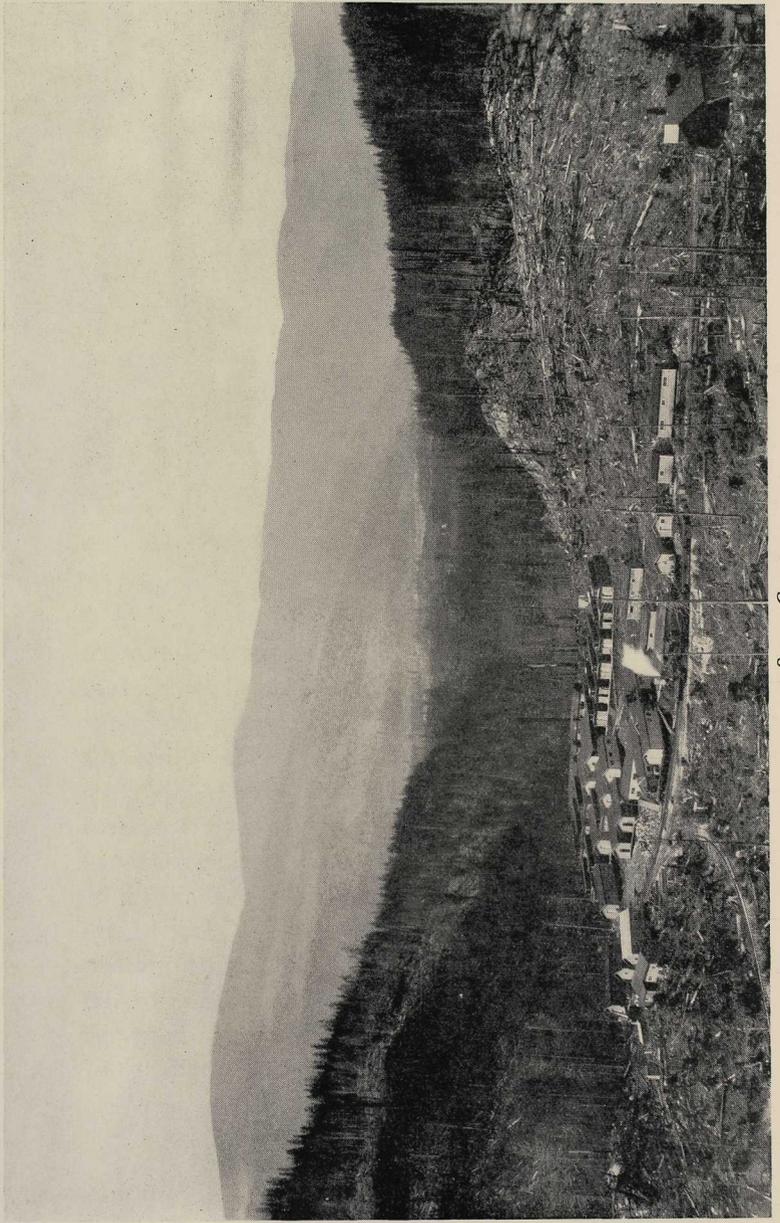


BATTLING FOR SURVIVAL

IN THE LATE FALL

of 1920, Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills added another log-producing unit to their camps. Headquarters of this show were located at Saxon on the South Fork of the Nooksack River, fifteen miles southeast of Bellingham.

The first timber purchase on the Nooksack was from Michigan Timber Company in 1919. Following this came purchases of limited amounts of timber from the State of Washington, Sound Timber Company, and E. K. Wood Lumber Company. The Great Northern Railway Company had very substantial adjacent timber holdings which Bloedel Donovan acquired somewhat later. The last purchase was from the E. N. Salling Estate, after which no holdings of any size were available.



Saxon Camp.

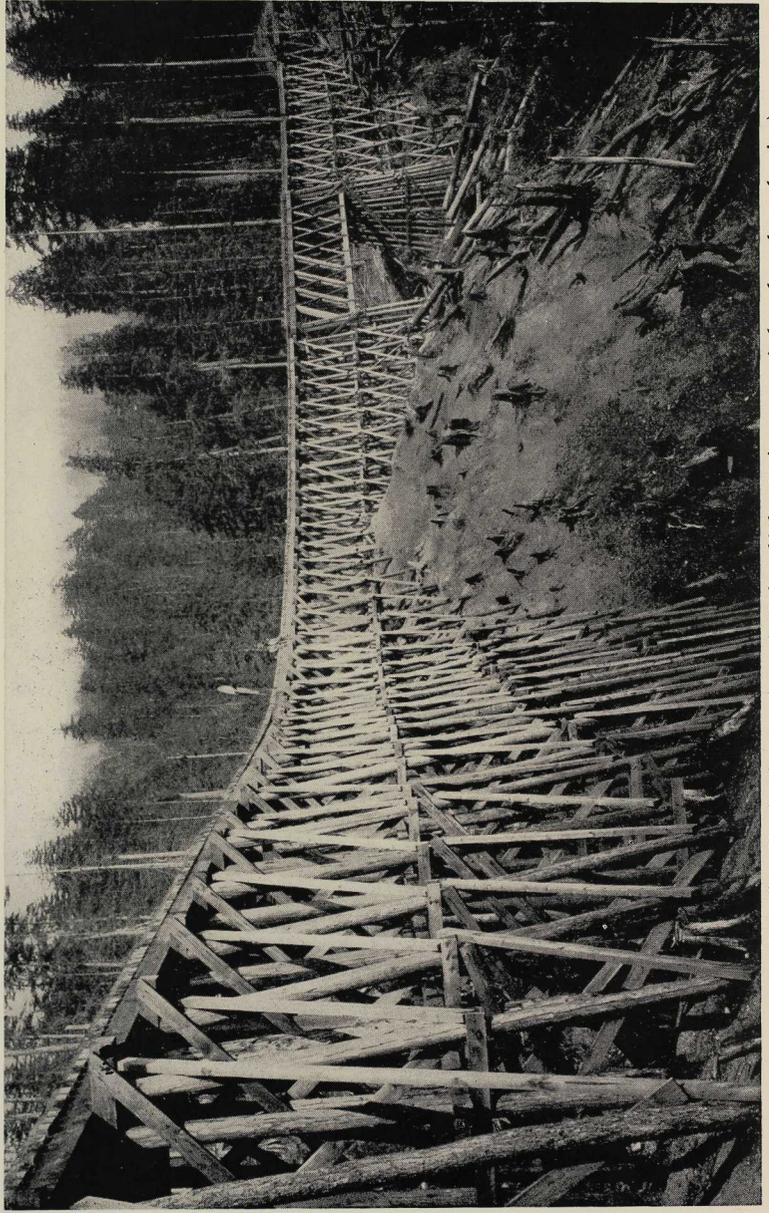
BATTLING FOR SURVIVAL

Lyman Timber Company and E. K. Wood Lumber Company had blocks of timber mixed in with Bloedel Donovan's on both sides of the Nooksack. A number of timber trades were effected with these owners, to the considerable advantage of all concerned.

J. J. Donovan planned the Saxon camp and operations, but turned the management over to Jack Donovan during the early stages of development. Jack handled the entire show until logging was completed in 1937. During the first eight years Alex Morrison assisted him as resident logging superintendent, then Charley Jeans from 1929 until the middle thirties, then "Bill" Wood until logging terminated.

Over fifty miles of railroad were built in the Nooksack Valley, the logs coming out on Bloedel Donovan equipment to connect with the Northern Pacific at Saxon, thence under an N.P. operating contract to Wickersham and Park, where they were dumped into Lake Whatcom for towing to Larson.

On July 12, 1922, the worst woods fire in the company's history started on land purchased from Michigan Timber Company, north of Cavanaugh Creek. It completely stopped logging operations, and Jack Donovan's men fought the fire all summer and until the fall rains started. Loss to the company was over \$300,000, and on top of that the Eddys, owners of Michigan Timber Company, sued Bloedel Donovan for \$108,000 damages to their timber. The case was settled out of court for a fraction of the amount claimed in the suit. During the course of the fire it ran through timber owned by Sound Timber Company and the Salling estate. The Eddys tried to get these owners to join them in the suit against Bloedel Donovan, but were refused.



Cavanaugh Creek bridge, Nooksack operations. (130 feet high. 108-foot truss timbers hewed on the site.)

BATTLING FOR SURVIVAL

In spite of the destructive fire on the Nooksack, the following year and the succeeding years until 1929 showed heavy production. Combined company output was highest in 1928 when 425 million feet of logs were cut by all Bloedel Donovan camps. In the same year the Menzies Bay and Myrtle Point camps of Bloedel, Stewart and Welch produced 300 million feet. The combined total of 725 million feet is probably an all-time record for logging camps under any single management.

Development of the paper pulp industry in the Pacific Northwest—especially that of sulphite pulp—was watched with deep interest by company officials. Bloedel Donovan sold hemlock slabs from their sawmill and ends from their box factory to the newly-erected plant of Puget Sound Pulp & Timber Company in Bellingham. Becoming increasingly interested, the company hired V. D. Simons of Chicago to plan a pulp mill. The project was not carried through, as careful investigation proved that the industry was yet too undeveloped to show a successful pattern of operation.

Later—in 1929—a well-known pulp engineer, Hardy Ferguson, was retained by Bloedel Donovan. The plans he offered were acceptable to the company, but the stock market collapse on October 29 of that year, following several years of prosperity and heavy speculation, plunged the country into a major depression.

General financial conditions forced the postponement of pulp-mill construction, but this idea of effecting complete utilization of all classes of timber was not abandoned, nor was the time and effort spent in this planning lost. Instead of locating in Bellingham, however, the pulp plant was built



High-lead yarding on the Nooksack.

later at Port Alberni by Bloedel, Stewart & Welch, Ltd., who hold substantial reserves of Vancouver Island timber, much of it suitable for pulping.

During the depression years that followed, Bloedel Donovan experienced their worst financial struggle. In February, 1929, they had financed timber purchases in Clallam County and elsewhere by issuance of ten-year serial notes bearing six percent interest, to the extent of two million dollars. By February, 1932, with the depression in full swing and heavy debts to meet, the company found itself, for the first time in its history, unable to retire a payment when due.

The amount in serial notes then remaining unpaid was \$1,550,000. The company offered holders of these notes further collateral in the form of a first mortgage on certain of the Bloedel Donovan properties if they would agree to a suitable extension in time of payment. They indicated confidence in the company's management by readily agreeing to the extension.

BATTLING FOR SURVIVAL

Bloedel Donovan's common stock total was raised from one and one-half million to three and one-half million dollars by a stock dividend of two million based on company earnings. Additional subscriptions to the preferred stock boosted that also from one and one-half to two million dollars.

In July of 1933 Bloedel Donovan made a loan of \$750,000 from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation on the Good-year and adjacent timber holdings. It was the first loan made by that agency under the National Recovery Act to any corporation. It allowed the company to retire obligations due under timber cutting contracts, and yielded additional working capital that was needed until the improvement of business conditions in 1937.

During the early years of the depression, average interest rates on business loans had shrunk from six percent to three percent. Without question Bloedel Donovan could have taken advantage of this general tendency to secure a lower rate on their own securities. They preferred, however, to take the harder route of paying in full. As a result both J. H. Bloedel and J. J. Donovan were highly complimented on the course they chose in meeting their obligations.

Throughout these long hard years Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills stood the gaff, maintained a steady payroll, and laid off no men in the mills nor in the woods. Meanwhile the price of lumber had gone down and down and down! From an average selling price of \$25.10 per thousand during the several years preceding the depression, it plummeted during 1932-1936 to an average of \$15.

Among other adjustments made by the company management to keep the organization solvent during depression years



On the Nooksack. Left to right: Charles Jeans, Saxon Superintendent; Lawrence Bloedel, Assistant Superintendent; J. H. Bloedel, President; J. J. Donovan, Vice-President.

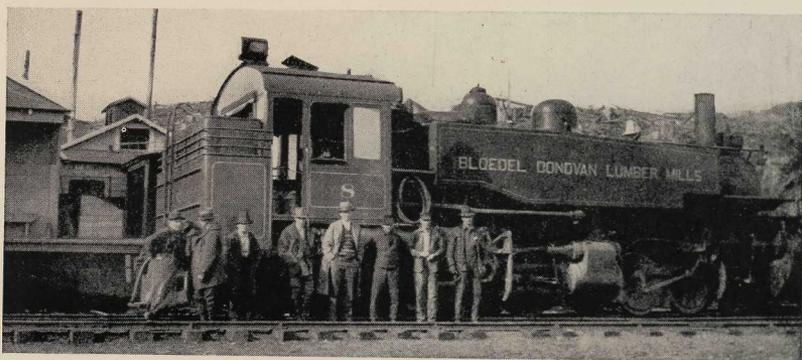
was the status of cutting contracts between Bloedel Donovan and Clallam Lumber Company. Such contracts were widely used in cases where corporations felt it inadvisable to purchase large timber tracts outright. Stumpage on an agreed basis was paid the owner periodically, based on actual log scale.

BATTLING FOR SURVIVAL

Drastically reduced lumber values made Bloedel Donovan's cutting contracts with Clallam Lumber Company untenable, and unless altered, the logging operations could not continue. Willard Keeney, the same attorney who represented Clallam Lumber Company in the blow-down negotiations, realized the validity of Bloedel Donovan's request for a change in the cutting contracts, and assented for his clients after considerable negotiation. The agreement was not easily accomplished, however, as it involved considerable hard work and an honest portrayal of conditions.

Only those who assisted in the long hard struggle to keep the company solvent and operating can appreciate the "blood and sweat and tears" shed by those in active management. Their compensation was the survival and ultimate success of the enterprise they had founded and built. Also few people other than those who have been heavily involved in logging and lumbering, realize the drastic ups and downs which the industry has experienced over the years.

During extensive periods both loggers and millmen have operated at an actual loss; the alternative being the larger



The "Eight-Spot" at Saxon Camp.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

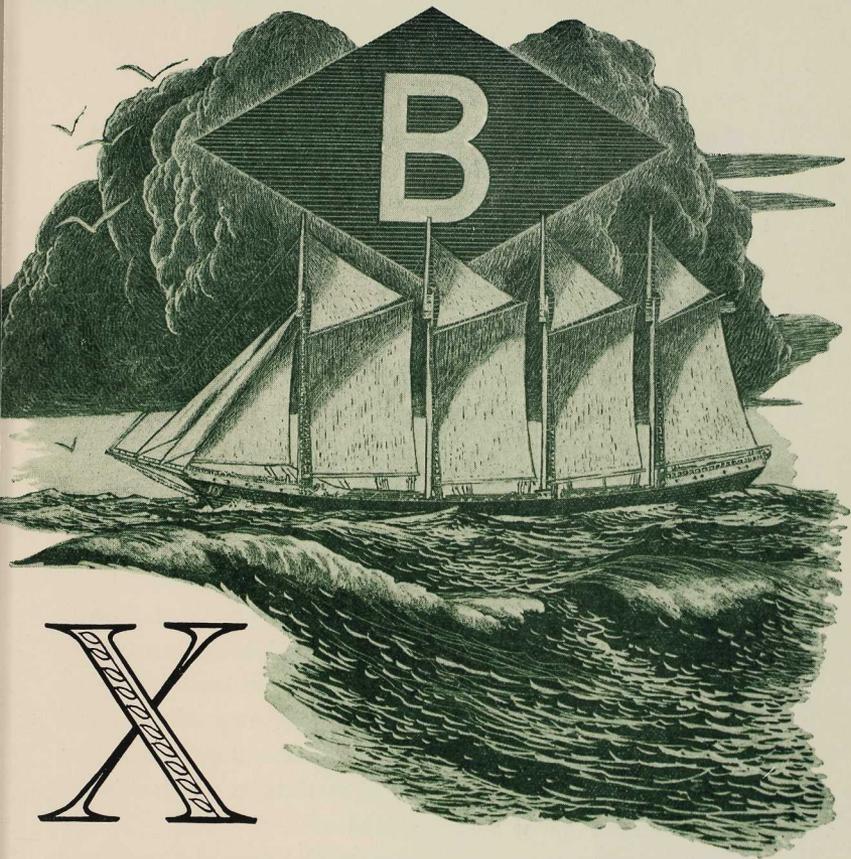
loss resulting from maintenance of idle equipment, unavoidable overhead expenses, and taxes on mills and timber.

There have been prosperous periods in the industry with resulting fortunes. There have also been many more periods of non-profit or loss, with resulting failures.

Even a casual glance at the graphic record of the company's affairs, shown on the last pages of this book, will indicate the wide and sometimes violent fluctuations in production and prices.

Many lumber firms have made a practice of shutting down completely during periods of severe price depressions, but Bloedel Donovan always managed somehow to maintain a reasonable amount of employment. Even during the gloomy year of 1932, with the company forced to sell its lumber at an average price of eleven dollars, three-quarters of a million dollars was expended in wages.

It's too bad the chart can't talk! Then it could explain its own peaks and hollows, describe the enormous effort involved in producing and selling those billions of feet of logs and lumber, and tell you how employees spent the eighty-four million dollars they received from the company payroll.



X

LUMBER TO THE WORLD'S
EAR CORNERS

MILLIONS

and millions of words have been written dealing with the romance of the forests and the men that go into the forests to harvest the mature trees—to haul them to streams or to tide-water—to cut the logs into lumber in huge throbbing sawmills! The forests do contain romance, and the men who harvest them are colorful and vital, but the story does not end there.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

Forests produce huge timbers, flooring, shingles, doors and thousands of other useful items. Forest products build homes and churches, ships and wharves, saloons and brothels, temples and shrines, warehouses and factories, and nearly every other type of structure that man has devised from the beginning of his earthly existence!

Of course, you must realize that when a lumber producer sells his product and ships it by rail or water or truck, he seldom knows just where or how it may be used, even though he may know its destination. What a story we could tell if we knew where every stick of the lumber produced by the company and marketed in the far corners of the world had been used! Very close to six billion feet of it was manufactured—5,839,370,000 feet if you must know the exact figures.

Records of shipments during the early years of Bloedel Donovan's operations have been discarded, so we can tell you only where their products were shipped and used during the last two decades of their activities. The map of the world which accompanies this chapter indicates, therefore, only a reasonable fraction of the world markets to which this tremendous volume of lumber moved.

While the amount of lumber sold by Bloedel Donovan in the United States led all foreign markets, during a twenty-year period company shipments to the Hawaiian Islands were over 280 million feet, to Japan almost 150 million feet, and to China close to 60 million.

There were smaller markets, too; Algeria, Korea and Samoa; Alaska, Mexico and Greece; Egypt, Spain and New Zealand; in fact, few parts of the world were overlooked.

In January, 1945, the *S. S. Stanley Matthews* took to

LUMBER TO THE WORLD'S FAR CORNERS



John A. McEvoy



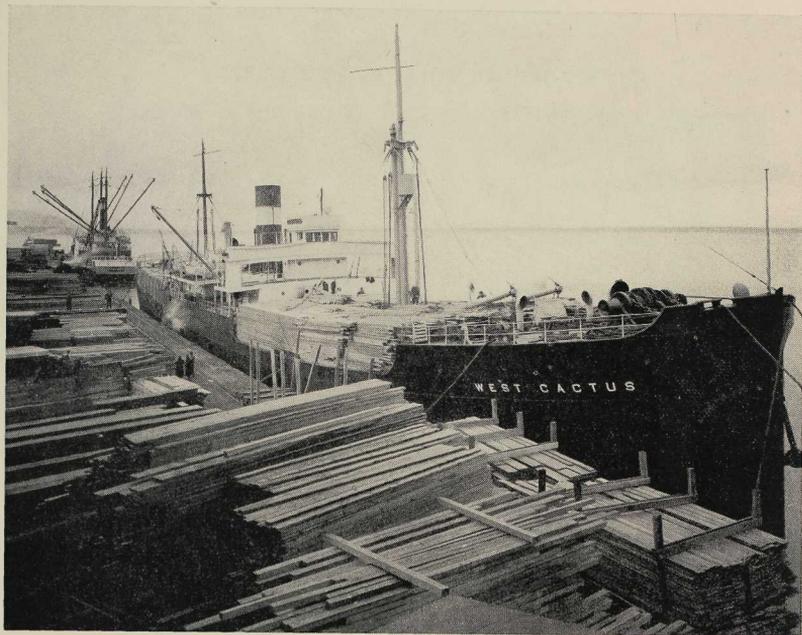
Charles R. Lockridge

Hawaii a cargo of six million, three hundred eighty-five thousand, four hundred and twenty-three feet of lumber! The purchase price of this shipment was well over a quarter of a million dollars.

An entire book could be written around the famous ships that docked at the company wharves and the famous cargoes they loaded for distant parts of the globe. Bloedel Donovan's docks, with a minimum of thirty feet of water at low tide, could accommodate six to eight deep-sea vessels, and they were often full to capacity while two or three more ships waited out in the stream.

The company records for one month show eight ships that loaded consecutively for such divergent destinations as Australia, Hawaii, England, California, the Orient, Puerto Rico, Boston and New Zealand.

Pages could be filled with the names of famous ships that loaded "Diamond B" lumber; *Notre Dame de Fourviere*,



Finishing a capacity load at Cargo Mill.

Mauana Ala, Lurline, Makiki, La Marseillaise, Asama Maru, Willbilo, Protesilaus, Arizonan, Star of Lapland, and hundreds of others.

The *Duchess D'Aosta*, an Italian ship nicknamed the "Dutchess de Oyster" by stevedores, loaded lumber at the company dock during national prohibition days. "She was as dirty as the devil," asserts John McMahon, "and I wondered why she attracted so many visitors. After she sailed I heard that she sold lots of liquor during the brief time she was here."

The *Jacob Luckenbach* docked at 8:15 on the morning of February 3, 1927, started loading at 8:45, and sailed at 3:15 p.m. the following day carrying 3,165,000 feet of lumber!

The *Pacific Hemlock* and her sister ships—*Pine, Spruce,*

LUMBER TO THE WORLD'S FAR CORNERS

Redwood, Cedar, Oak and Fir—loaded from 2½ to 3 million feet of Bloedel Donovan lumber on each Bellingham call.

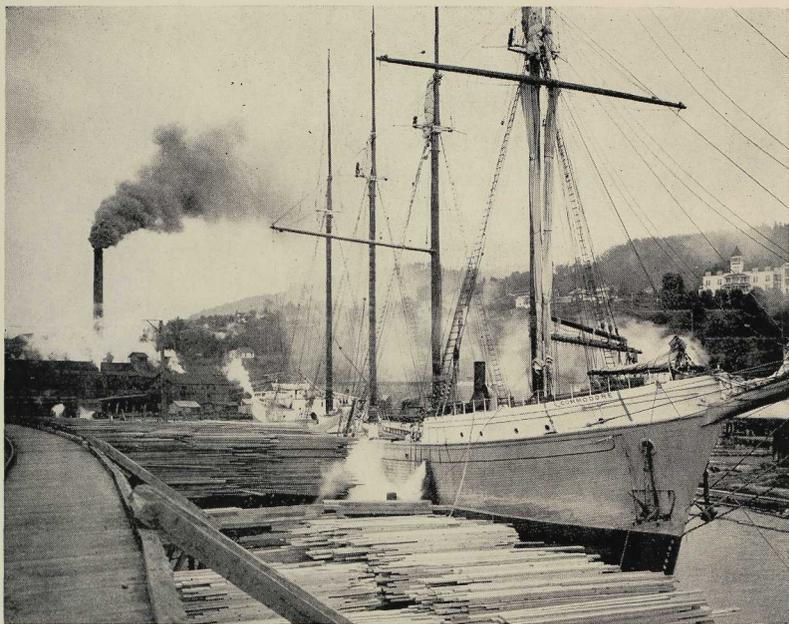
In September, 1921, eighteen ships loaded. Two of these had Japanese destinations, seven loaded for California ports, three each for Hawaii and the east coast of the United States, two for the Orient, and one for the west coast of South America.

The *Whitney Olson*, on regular charter between Los Angeles and Bellingham, hauled so much Bloedel Donovan lumber to California that she had a big "Diamond B" painted on her hull. Usually her trips were spaced at twenty-three day intervals.

The record also carries indications of sea tragedies. "April 12, 1923. *Robert Lewers* due today, on rocks Vancouver Island; later broke up—total loss!"

In February, 1923, the *Alta* was never heard from after she sailed from Bloedel Donovan's docks! In the same year the *Watson West*, loaded with "Diamond B" lumber, went on the rocks off the California coast. During the same period the *Mary Foster*, similarly laden, was rammed and sunk in Honolulu Bay.

Those famous schooners, the five-masted *Vigilant* and four-masted *Commodore*, made regular lumber trips between Hawaii and Bellingham Bay. The *Commodore* usually loaded slightly over a million and one-half feet, and the *Vigilant* two or three hundred thousand more. Their masters, Captain Matt Peasley of the *Vigilant* and Captain Burmeister of the *Commodore*, were colorful mariners. Captain Mellberg, a six-foot-four-inch giant, took over the *Vigilant* from Captain Peasley and continued the friendly rivalry in sailing time with the



Barkentine "Commodore," famous Hawaiian lumber schooner.

Commodore. The "races" between these ships are epics in Pacific Coast history.

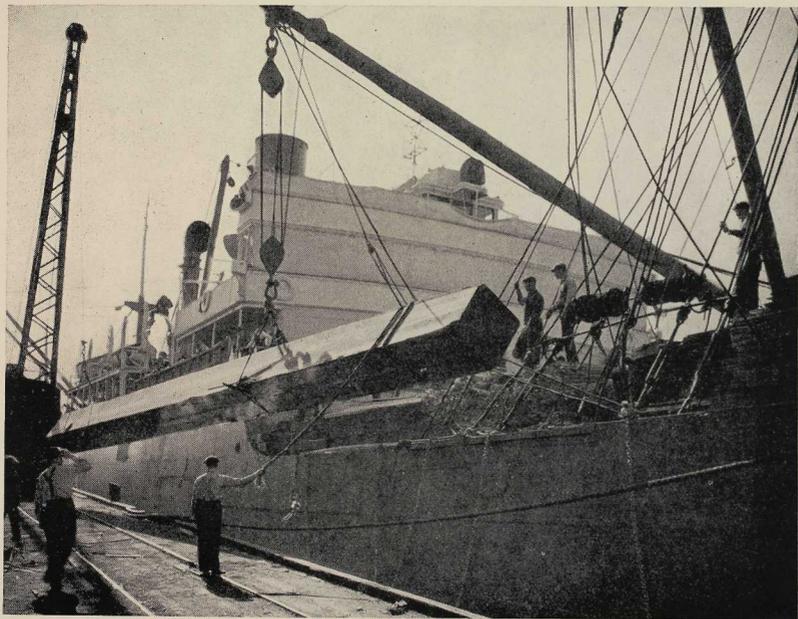
When the *Commodore* finished her last trip in the spring of 1935 and was towed to the "bone-yard" in Lake Union, shipping men and hosts of others shed a silent tear over the passing of the famous craft. The retirement of the *Vigilant* some months later wrote "finis" to the days of Hawaiian lumber schooners. Immortalized by Peter B. Kyne's famous sea stories, the legends of these ships will long endure in the memory of man.

In the summer of 1914, Bloedel Donovan lumber started to move through the Panama Canal to the east coast. The first two ships chartered were the *Windber* from Pacific-American

LUMBER TO THE WORLD'S FAR CORNERS

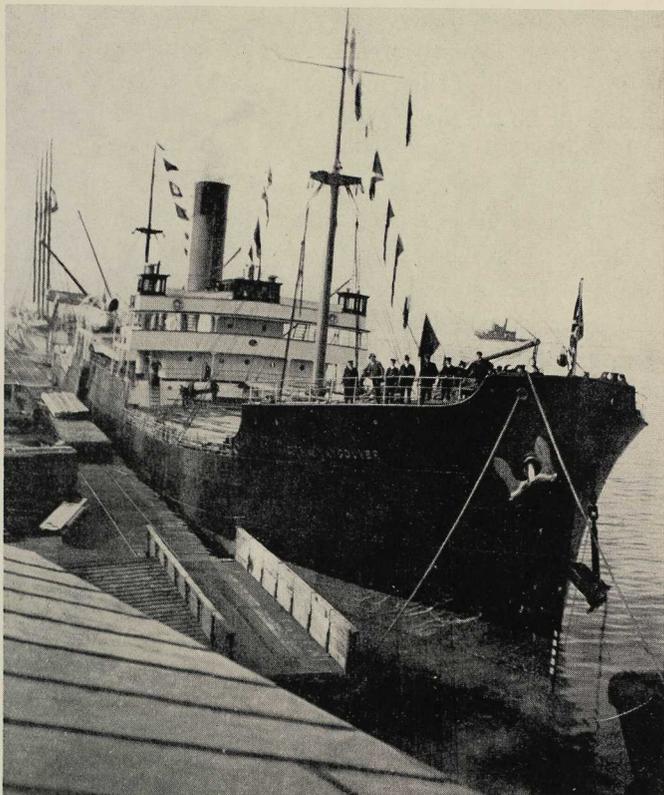
Fisheries, and the *Edison Light* from a Boston owner. Due to enter the Canal shortly after its opening, both were blocked by the Culebra Cut slide of October 14, 1914. The *Windber* started for Boston via Magellan Strait, but the *Edison Light* waited until the Canal reopened in early December. They entered Boston Harbor the same day, *Windber* having gone 13,852 nautical miles to *Edison Light's* 6,269!

Shipments to the east coast were handled with a certain amount of difficulty in those days. Drescher had a hard row to hoe! At one time he had a hand-picked crew to unload a large cargo at the dock of the Long Island Railroad in the New York Harbor area, as he wanted the lumber handled with extreme care. Local longshoremen decided that they were being overlooked, and made statements that "there would be some heads



Shingles, lath, timbers—loading for distant ports.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE



"City of Vancouver" loading Diamond-B lumber for "Down Under" on her maiden voyage—1916.

busted!" Drescher called the traffic manager of the Long Island Railroad, a subsidiary of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and stated that he would give him two hours to get the ship in the clear for unloading, or else he would move it to the docks of the Central of New Jersey, a competing road, and wire the presi-

LUMBER TO THE WORLD'S FAR CORNERS

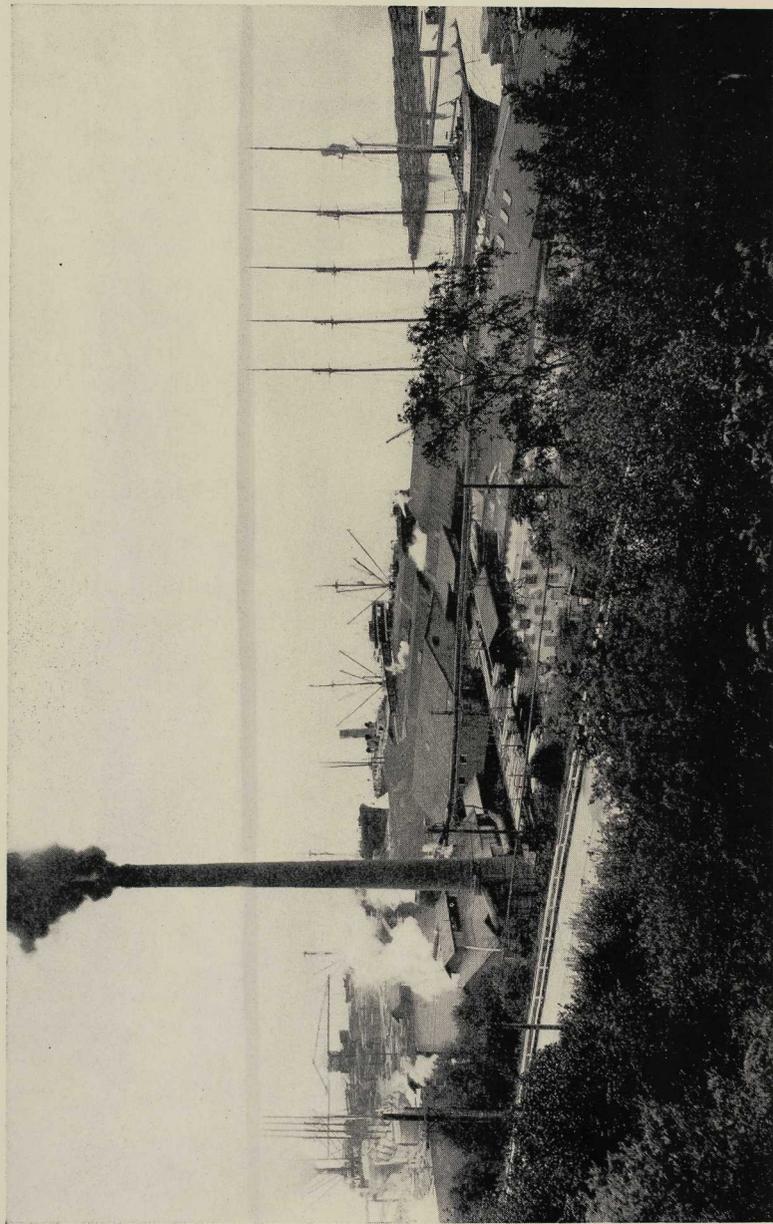
dent of Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills that he was forced to discontinue shipments via the *Pennsylvania*. Within the half-hour he got action from all concerned, and the ship was properly unloaded by Drescher's crew!

The first lumber cargo that was taken into Bridgeport, Connecticut, was a Bloedel Donovan shipment on the chartered steamer *Cricket*. The masonry bridge piers near the entrance of the harbor allowed only six inches clearance on each side of the ship. That was a tight squeeze, but when the ship got to her mooring, she found herself sitting on an oozy mud bottom at the first low tide! That was real pioneering.

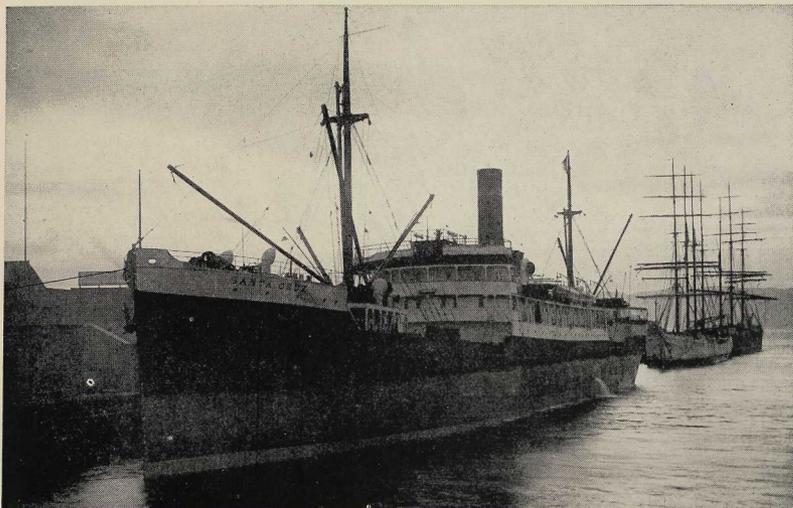
In order to handle water shipments to foreign markets more profitably, a number of the larger west coast lumber manufacturers organized the Douglas Fir Export & Exploitation Company under the recently-passed Webb-Pomerene Act



Star of Lapland at Cargo Mill, May, 1917



A busy day at the Cargo dock in 1925. Extreme left, a California ship and the four-masted "Commodore;" Extreme right, the "Vigilant;" center, steamers for Hawaii and China.



The transition period from sail to steam, 1915. A Grace Line Steamer at the Cargo dock with schooners for Australia and South America.

of April 10, 1918. Under this Act those engaged in export trade were allowed to combine for the purpose of consolidating shipments. Although the "D.F.E." met with strong opposition from shippers outside the organization, it was quite successful in operation and helped materially in expansion of foreign lumber markets.

During the latter part of the first world war, independent sea tonnage became scarce and finally unavailable. This forced Bloedel Donovan to curtail their New York office, leaving only a clerk in charge. By 1920 tonnage again became available and the New York office was reactivated. Space was secured in the Central Terminal Building, and Charles R. Lockridge was put in charge. He continued to manage the office until the company liquidated. Since starting with Bloedel Donovan in 1915, Lockridge sold lumber for them continuously for almost thirty years.

LUMBER TO THE WORLD'S FAR CORNERS

Complete figures are not available on the amount of lumber that the company sold in the United States market during its entire period of operation, but during the twenty years prior to liquidation, 3,164,815,000 feet was shipped to various parts of the forty-eight states. Most of this was sold through regional sales offices in Chicago, Minneapolis, Los Angeles and New York. Salesmen traveled the middle-west, finding good markets in the Dakotas, Iowa, Nebraska and Illinois. W. W. Vawter worked from Minneapolis, starting with the company in 1913 and continuing until his death in 1945. J. D. Rounds sold Bloedel Donovan lumber in the territory around Binghamton, N. Y.; B. M. Gibbs traveled Illinois from his home in Princeton; Jim Wallin headquartered at Beatrice, Nebraska, and Martin McDonald handled the Chicago office. For years the company secured a large part of California's lumber business from their sales offices in that state. Jim Prentice was the company's representative in Los Angeles for a considerable period.

One major production item not sold through the regular sales force was box shook. After the termination of World War number one, government orders ceased to be much of a factor, and the company sought other markets for this product. The man who took over this job, and who did remarkably well at it, was John A. McEvoy, a graduate of the company's Skykomish mill, and of Columbia Valley Lumber Company.

In the fall of 1919, McEvoy was assigned to the Seattle sales office in charge of marketing box shook, car material, and railroad lumber requirements. When the general sales office was moved to Bellingham in 1929, John remained in Seattle and continued his sales work until liquidation of the company.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

Markets for oil cases were developed in many corners of the world: Egypt, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Balikpapan, Curacao and Talara. Large shipments were made to African ports, including Durban, Lourenco Marques, Mombasa and Takaradi. Los Angeles bought large quantities for casing overseas oil shipments. In one year two and one-quarter million cases were sold to one company, the Hawaiian Pineapple Company.

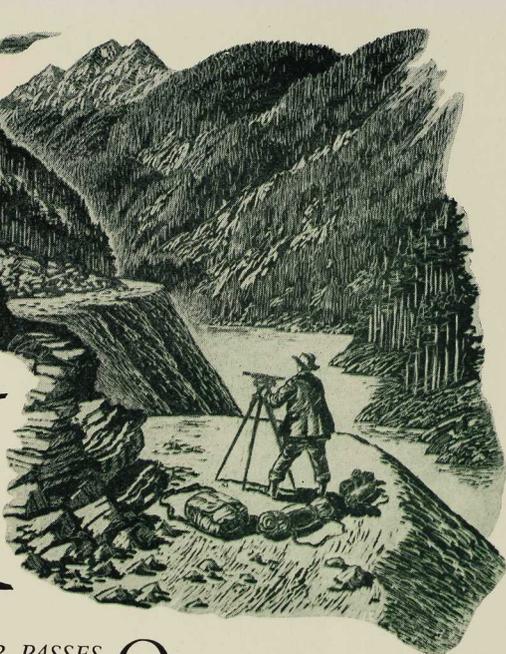
Egg cases, fruit boxes, dynamite containers, and other items were sold in quantity, each with special sizes and grades that helped utilize all of the company's box lumber.

In 1925 the box factory burned in a spectacular fire, but was quickly rebuilt and continued to operate as long as the company made lumber.

All over the world today stand homes built of "Diamond B" lumber and roofed with shingles bearing that famous mark of quality. Much of the lumber used for ties, bridges and snowsheds by our railroads and those of Canada came from Bloedel Donovan saws. A full shipload of timbers—12" by 12" and larger—was shipped to Pearl Harbor on December 15, 1941! Another interesting shipload—date boxes in this instance—went to Basra, Iraq, in 1942 to package the shipment of that fruit for the United Kingdom trade.

A book, and quite an interesting one, could be written on the varied uses of the company's lumber products all over the world during the half-century of operation. Such a volume would show a record of accomplishment hard to surpass among the world's great commercial organizations.

XII



A GREAT BUILDER PASSES

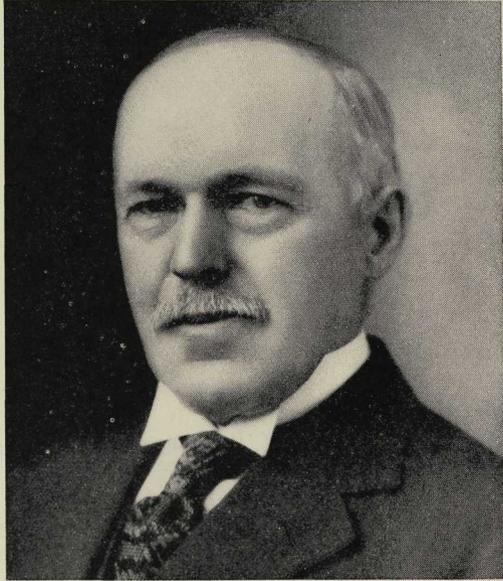
ON THE THIRTIETH DAY of June in 1927, a magnificent lodge was opened near snow-capped Mount Baker, sixty miles by highway east of Bellingham. The lodge had been built by popular subscription, all of it from Bellingham citizens. One of the project's trustees subscribed heavily and continued to make up deficits until his contributions totaled fifty thousand dollars. His friends scanned the list and smiled in approval.

"That's a generous contribution, but 'J.J.' always was generous."

Few of them knew that John Joseph Donovan pledged his personal credit to borrow a substantial part of that money!

This man's father and mother came to the United States in 1850, as Irish as an armful of shamrocks; Patrick Donovan from County Cork, and Julia O'Sullivan from County Kerry.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE



J. J. Donovan

In Rumney, New Hampshire, Patrick was a railroad foreman, and there John Joseph was born on September 8, 1858. Later there were six brothers and sisters, and life in the Donovan family afforded few luxuries. Nevertheless "J.J." graduated from New Hampshire's State Normal School when he was nineteen, taught for three years, and went on to complete his education as a civil engineer at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. He paid for his attic room in Boynton Hall by doing janitor work. He earned his meals by working in restaurants. Tactful, studious and a natural orator, he was chosen as president and valedictorian of the class of 1882.

"Oh yes, one of those 'bookworm' types," you're thinking!

A GREAT BUILDER PASSES

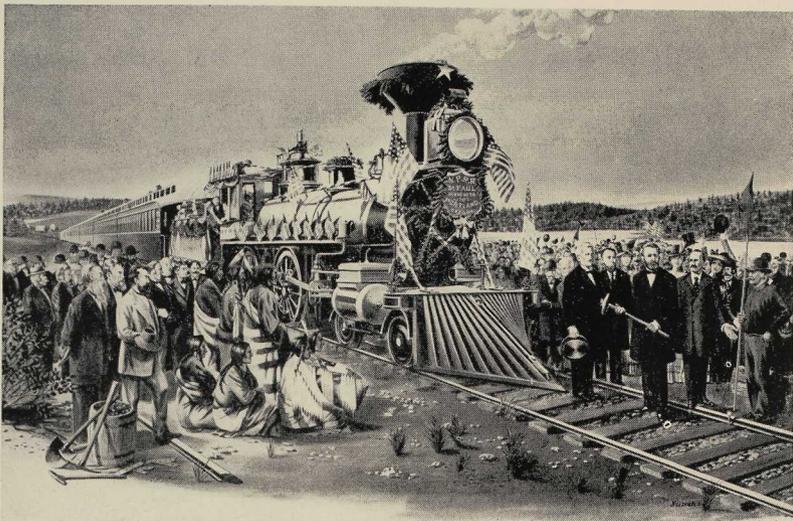
Well, out of the whole school he was one of seven selected for the tug-of-war team. Each of his team-mates out-weighed his modest 162 pounds, and most of them were much taller than Donovan's five feet eight inches.

In "The Tech Pilgrim's Progress" of 1884, "J.J." tells his classmates what's happened in the two years he's been out of school:

"Left Worcester immediately after Commencement for Boston, where . . . I received the munificent offer of \$50 per month from the Northern Pacific and started for the Northwest. Staged 500 miles from St. Paul, and on July 31 rode down Hell Gate Canyon, Montana, with the mercury standing 100 degrees. Six months later traveled the same road with the thermometer marking *minus* forty-six degrees. Between these extremes of temperature, and from one end of the canyon to the other, I oscillated as rodman, leveler, or assistant engineer until December, 1883, when I came to Ainsworth, 3,136 miles from Worcester, crossed the Columbia, and have since been assistant on location and construction amid the sand and sage-brush of the Cascade division."

"J. J." should have mentioned his all-night horseback ride over Montana mountains to celebrate his twenty-fifth birthday at the Northern Pacific's "Gold-Spike" ceremony. Henry Villard, president of the railroad, brought five solid Pullman trainloads of guests to witness the joining of his western extension with the Northern Pacific's main line from St. Paul. Titled British and German capitalists mingled with Crow Indians and with cavalrymen from adjacent army posts when the last spike was driven.

"Who him?" asked a feathered Crow chief, pointing to a heavy-set silent man chewing a black cigar.



*Northern Pacific "Last-spike" ceremony at Gold Creek, Montana
September 8, 1883.*

Villard grinned. "Him used to be Great White Father; callum now just Ulysses S. Grant."

In a letter read at his 1887 class reunion, Donovan describes three years of his life in less than two hundred words, concluding with his final work for the Northern Pacific:

"July, 1886, to June, 1887, in charge of Cascade Division, west. Graded and laid track, with snow from 10 to 50 feet deep to be shovelled out of the way, last winter.

"June, locating. Shot three bears.

"July, up to Alaska, then home."

"Then home," he concludes. Yes, to continue his romance with a vivacious New Hampshire girl, Clara Isabel, daughter of John S. Nichols of Haverhill, and granddaughter of the Granite State's Governor Page. "J. J." married Clara in the spring of 1888 and took her west to live at Fairhaven on Bellingham Bay.

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The Northern Pacific was completed to the west coast, but Nelson Bennett, prominent railroad contractor, remembered Donovan from their association in driving the Cascade Tunnel, and sought him out.

"Young man, I want you to engineer the Fairhaven & Southern from Bellingham Bay south, and the New Westminster & Southern up to the Canadian line."

Donovan handled that double job, and in his spare time was chief engineer for the Fairhaven Land Company and the Skagit Coal and Transportation Company. He built railroads and wharves, operated coal mines on the Skagit River, and platted the vigorous, boisterous young town of Fairhaven.

"Extend our rails north to Vancouver and east to Spokane," Bennett told "J. J." early in 1890. Donovan located the entire route, then built and put into operation 80 miles of the new line.

In the fall of 1890 James J. Hill, "The Empire Builder," came through the Puget Sound country.

"He's going to make Bellingham Bay the western terminus of the Great Northern," the land promoters whispered.

"Jim Hill's Road Edging Along—Closing The Last Gap!" screamed the *New Whatcom* "*Daily Reveille*."

"Your Skagit Valley's a 'Dark Continent,'" Hill told the Fairhaven Chamber of Commerce, "but I'm going to penetrate it."

Hill had his location surveyed from the Cascade summit down the Suiattle, Sauk and Skagit River Valleys to Bellingham Bay. He planned to make Fairhaven the Great Northern terminus, as evidenced by his acquiring considerable local property and a half-interest in the Fairhaven Land Company.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

The 1893 depression forced him to switch to the present route, which was cheaper and faster to build. Hill's northern route over the summit to the Suiattle would have required extensive tunneling, but Great Northern's engineer, John F. Stevens, located the cheaper route into the Skykomish valley, using a series of switch-backs.

This decision deflated the Fairhaven boom, causing heavy losses to investors. Hill let his Fairhaven property revert for taxes.

While Hill was on the west coast he bought the Fairhaven & Southern and New Westminster & Southern to add to his holdings.

"I'm going to finish the New Westminster road to the Canadian line for Hill," Donovan told his wife, "then we'll go back east for a long vacation." In "J. J.'s" absence, the "Helena Syndicate," Holter, Larson, Murphy, Downs and Houser, bought Jim Wardner's holdings in the Blue Canyon Coal Mining Company on Lake Whatcom. Bloedel retained his interest in the mine and became secretary. Donovan was general superintendent, and M. E. Downs was president.

In order to facilitate the transportation of coal from Blue Canyon Coal Mines, Donovan built a short railroad called the Bellingham Bay & Eastern, with a terminal at the foot of Lake Whatcom on the present site of the Larson Mill. This was in 1891. In 1901 the line was completed around Lake Whatcom to connect with the Northern Pacific at Wickersham, thus affording a connection between Bellingham and the N. P.

In the '90s and early in the 1900s, the State Harbor Line Commission was handling the tremendously important job of

A GREAT BUILDER PASSES

establishing harbor lines and waterways. Donovan acted as one of their chief engineers. Then in March of 1894 one of the State Board of Road Commissioners resigned and Donovan was drafted to fill the gap. A year later the governor appointed him as a regular member of the Board. Neither of these appointments interfered with his Blue Canyon Coal Mines duties.

State roads, railroads, tide-lands; coal mining, wharf-building and surveying! At thirty-six there wasn't much indication that Donovan would be an outstanding logger and lumberman, but for five years he'd been associated with J. H. Bloedel in the Blue Canyon Coal Mines, and in his railroad building he'd made a friend of Peter Larson, financier and promoter of industries. The three who later met in 1898 to



"J. J." at company picnic.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

form the Lake Whatcom Logging Company were drawing closer together!

In 1894 Secretary of the Navy Herbert formed the Bering Sea Fleet to follow the seal herds north to the Pribilof Islands and enforce the international treaty on sealing.

"Stop pelagic poaching while the seals are migrating, and hold the catch limit down to 7,500 skins," he ordered.

Eight units were in the fleet; the newly-built ships *Yorktown* and *Bennington*, the older ships *Mohican*, *Ranger*, *Adams* and *Alert*, and the revenue cutters *Grant* and *Corwin*.

All were coal-burners, and they had to fill their bunkers for a long cruise. Donovan and Bloedel got busy, very busy indeed! As a result the *Yorktown* made an official test on Blue Canyon coal.

"My ship gets more steam from Blue Canyon than it does from Comox or Fairhaven or Black Diamond coal," reported the *Yorktown's* commander, Captain Folger.

"OUR COAL IS THE BEST!" shouted the *Bellingham Bay Express*.

"USE AMERICAN COAL!" shrieked the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*.

"BLUE CANYON COAL GOES!" the *New Whatcom Daily Reveille* gloated.

"COAL CONTRACT AWARDED! reported the *Seattle Telegraph*, "VESSELS WILL PROCEED TO BELLINGHAM BAY, WHERE THEY WILL LOAD AT BLUE CANYON COAL COMPANY'S BUNKERS."

When the fleet steamed north on May 17, 1894, the steam came from Blue Canyon coal.

A gas explosion in the Blue Canyon mine on April 8, 1895,

A GREAT BUILDER PASSES

formed a heavy cloud of choke damp which smothered twenty-three miners. Donovan happened to be absent at the time or there would have been twenty-four victims. Official investigation exonerated Donovan and other mine officials and owners of all blame, but it was a severe blow to the mine and to the entire community. On top of this misfortune, the coal formation became broken and quite difficult to mine. Operations continued for several years, but on a diminishing scale as profits vanished.

The year 1898 was momentous for J. J. Donovan. In addition to becoming an inactive partner with Bloedel and Larson in Lake Whatcom Logging Company, he became chief engineer and general superintendent of the third railroad to center on Bellingham Bay, the Bellingham Bay & British Columbia, and of a subsidiary landholding corporation called Bellingham Bay Improvement Company. San Francisco capitalists Taylor and Cornwall, backed by Ogden Mills, controlled the properties.

The B. B. & B. C. operated two daily trains from New Whatcom to the Canadian border at Sumas to connect with the Canadian Pacific. Van Wyck, Wahls, Goshen, Central, Millerton, Everson, Hampton and Clearbrook were the intermediate stations. Today only Everson remains—population two hundred ninety-two.

About this time the Great Northern cast covetous eyes at the B. B. & E.'s strategic twenty-three miles, but Donovan and Bloedel decided that they didn't want to live in a "one-railroad" town.

"The Northern Pacific ought to own that line," said Donovan.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

"Let's see what we can do about it," replied Bloedel. Resulting negotiations ended in 1902 by the Northern Pacific owning the B. B. & E. It remains part of their system today.

In 1903 Bernard Baruch, who had extensive mining interests in the west, selected J. J. Donovan to investigate some properties in the Cascades and sent him a substantial sum of money. On completing the survey Donovan returned the unused portion of the funds with his report.

"That's the first time I ever got any expense money back from a mine investigation," Baruch wrote "J. J.," and within a short time Mrs. Donovan received a fine Victor phonograph with one hundred selected Red Seal records.

J. J. Donovan was not only a friend of Baruch, but also of many other great men of that period: Cardinal Gibbons, Sam Hill, Farrell of U. S. Steel, and scores of statesmen and financiers. When he relinquished his duties with the B. B. & C. in 1906 to take charge of logging and railroads for Lake Whatcom Logging Company, he promptly became a leader in that field, and an authority on methods and equipment.

No "swivel-chair" logger, he spent a great deal of his time in the woods. "That's 'J. J.,'" said George Wood, pointing to one of the calk-booted loggers in a faded, forty-one-year-old photo taken in the woods near Alger, "and that old locomotive in the photograph, the 'one-spot,' was his pride and joy."

For almost thirty years Donovan took an active part in the Pacific Logging Congress, serving as its president from 1915 until 1917. His technical articles appeared regularly in lumber journals, and young men studying logging engineering in

A GREAT BUILDER PASSES



"J. J." with D. F. (David Harum) Trunkey.

forestry schools clipped the articles and stuck them in their notebooks.

Donovan studied his industry and discarded what he considered to be wasteful and obsolete. The present predominance of Diesel power in logging on the Pacific coast is largely due to his efforts and endorsements.

When John Nichols Donovan received his civil engineering degree at Worcester in 1913, "J. J." stood beside his son and received his own delayed "C. E." His thesis was entitled, "Proposed Railroad From Bellingham To Spokane."

In 1911 "J. J." traveled Europe, not overlooking "Old Ireland." On his return he built the Donovan Block, a substantial four-story masonry structure on Bellingham's main business street, housing the Grand Theatre and Wahl's mercantile establishment. The "DONOVAN" in block letters on



J. J. Donovan and friends at Sekiu.

the building's keystone isn't needed to identify the institution as his own; the stone shamrocks on the second-story corners and the painting of Blarney Castle on the theatre screen identify the builder.

Donovan was definitely no "stay-at-home." He traveled the entire United States, made several trips to Alaska and to the West Indies, one to Hawaii, and two to Europe. The European trips included Rome and a personal audience at the Vatican.

A strictly moral person, he never sought to impose his code on others or to proselyte. He would never touch liquor, but would attend gatherings of his friends at which all of the others imbibed. Try as they might, they could not get him to drink.

"Let's never discuss personal matters on which we differ," Bloedel suggested when he and Donovan first associated in business. "You're a loyal Catholic, I'm a Protestant; you're a 'teetotaler,' and I take a drink when it suits me. Let's not quarrel."

"That's a bargain," Donovan agreed. The pact was never broken and they never quarreled.

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In 1932 "J. J." was invited by his Alma Mater to deliver the principal address to the graduating class. He accepted, although his health was failing, and the long trip to Worcester quite an ordeal. His school gave him an honorary Doctor of Engineering degree!

Mrs. J. J. Donovan passed away on the twenty-seventh of June, 1936. "J. J." suffered poor health for months, and on the ninth of January in the following year he followed her to realms reserved for great and sincere men.

A complete listing of J. J. Donovan's activities and honors would prove monotonous and might strain the credulity of those who did not know him. Any issue of "Who's Who in America" published during the latter years of his life will give a fairly complete list of his attainments, but we believe that a selected few will better serve to illustrate his versatility and high citizenship.

His major contribution to the State and community was his part in creating and operating successful productive industries: three major lumber and logging concerns, three local railroads, two coal mining operations, a substantial power development at Nooksack Falls, and numerous others that served their day and became obsolete or were absorbed into larger developments.

In old newspapers and documents we find that he spent many months of valuable time and vital energy urging operators of flour mills, paper mills and cement plants to locate on Bellingham Bay. He worked diligently during 1904 to organize Puget Steamship Company, designed to operate cargo and passenger ships between Seattle and Bellingham via Everett.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

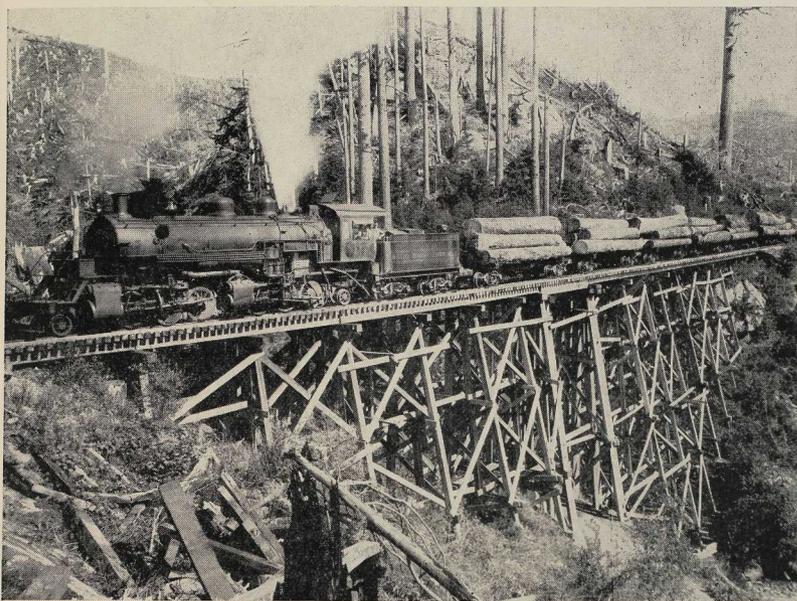
Donovan left no record of his struggles and hardships, but here and there we catch a flash of the difficulties he overcame, such as his winter work in the Cascades in 1887 when he "graded and laid track with snow 10 to 50 feet deep to be shovelled out of the way." Again, in the *Fairhaven Herald* of May 24, 1892, we find him with his Irish blood aroused in a brief and victorious struggle against odds.

Donovan, with his Bellingham Bay & Eastern construction crew, was building a trestle over the Great Northern tracks in New Whatcom to reach the Blue Canyon coal bunkers. The Great Northern was violently opposed to the crossing, and failing to secure a legal restraining order, sent a crew of men from Mount Vernon to stop Donovan's project. They spotted a twenty-car train at the crossing. Donovan had the city deputize a hundred men and remove the train.

"CORPORATIONS BATTLE," says the *Herald*, "Exciting Crossing War Between the Great Northern and the B. B. & E.—Clever Strategy of the Blue Canyon People to Thwart Obstruction Tactics."

"Fully 150 men engaged in the fight," the paper reports, "and the battle raged from seven in the morning until nearly twelve o'clock!" The first skirmish occurred when the Great Northern kept a locomotive at the crossing all night, and ran it to and fro over the crossing so that timbers could not be taken across the track. Donovan divided his men into two parties. One party would put a timber across the track, and when the locomotive ran past them, the other party would get a timber across before the locomotive returned."

The battle raged for hours, with the Great Northern sending for a construction train and fifty more men, who put



Mallet compound locomotive at Canyon Creek, Clallam County.

chains around completed bents of the bridge and tried to pull them down with the locomotive. The mayor appeared on the scene with twenty special policemen, and there was plenty of fighting and arrests, but Donovan completed the bridge crossing.

Less violently, but for larger stakes, Donovan fought for federal improvement of local waterways, including the Nooksack River and Swinomish Slough. Washington's Good Roads Associations and the Bellingham Chamber of Commerce each claimed his services as chairman for several terms. He belonged to the State Board of Charities and Correction, the National Municipal League for Civic Reform, and the State Commission on Forestry Legislation. For eight years he was a trustee of Bellingham's State Normal School. Among his

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

scores of memberships were the American Society of Civil Engineers, the Montana Society of Engineers, and the Knights of Columbus.

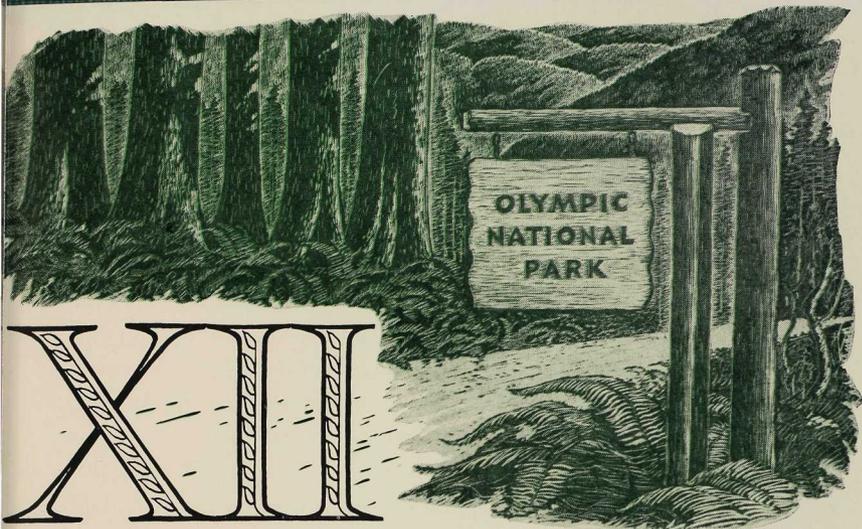
Around Bellingham the pioneers tell of an old employee of Donovan's who knocked on "J. J.'s" door one night during the panic of 1893 and handed him three thousand dollars in cash!

"Mr. Donovan, that's my life savings. I'm scared of the banks! Will you keep it for me?"

* * *

His sons, John Nichols and Philip Lawrence, live in Bellingham and are active in Pacific Northwest business life. His daughter, Mrs. Leslie Craven, nee Helen Elizabeth, lives in Bronxville, New York. Eight grandchildren inherit through him the virile blood of Patrick Donovan and Julia O'Sullivan.

He was "J.J." to his intimates and to many older employees. One of the oldest Bloedel Donovan men, George Wood of Alger, remembers one of "J.J.'s" frequent visits when George was badly burned and close to death. Donovan laid his hand on George's bandaged forehead and spoke softly, "Have faith in God!"



MEETING THE FUTURE
HALF WAY

XII

THE GREATEST man-power shortage in United States history developed during World War II. From slightly over a half-million men in 1940, the army mushroomed to almost ten million men in the latter part of 1944. Our two-ocean navy of 1940, with about 4,500 ships and 200,000 men, was transformed in four short years to a five-ocean navy of over 91,000 vessels and nearly three and one-half million men. Approximately one citizen out of ten throughout the United States became a part of the armed forces, all of them in the active age bracket.

In their mills and in the Clallam logging operations, Bloedel Donovan were hard hit, but the shortage of skilled loggers was the worst handicap. In an emergency, untrained men can fill many sawmill jobs; but it's difficult in the timber, where one false move gets a man a broken leg—or worse.

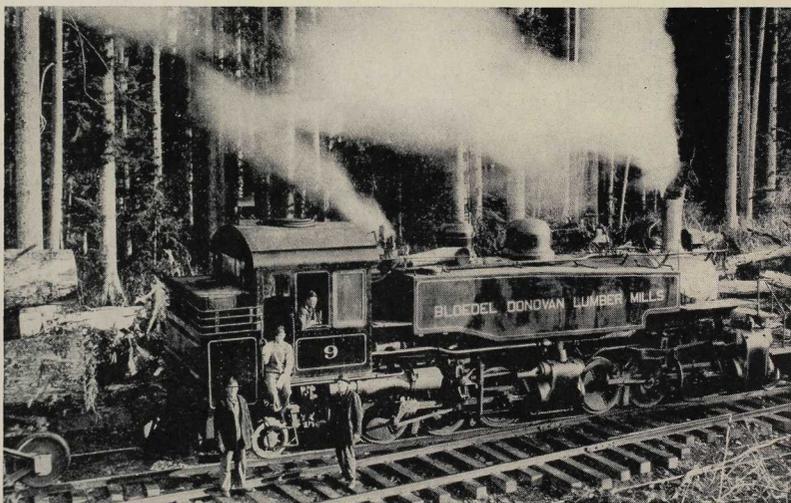
Government wage restrictions prohibited payment of additional bonuses to employees. Large operators were held to the

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

letter of the law on wage scales, but many "gyppo" loggers found ways to evade government edicts and took thousands of expert woodsmen from the larger companies.

In the summer of 1944, when the shortage of men was most acute, the company suffered a severe loss. On the eleventh day of July, Charley Donovan, "King of Clallam County," closed reluctant eyes on his beloved timber. Jack Donovan, president of Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills and thoroughly competent in logging engineering, gave the Clallam operations every minute he could spare from his many other duties. In spite of all Jack could do, the loss of Charley Donovan left a wide gap in the company's operations—a gap impossible for any person to fill.

"When Charles Donovan passed away," mourned the *Port Angeles Evening News*, "It wasn't just another death. He had sympathy and understanding for his fellow man, be he capitalist, whistle-punk, bootlegger, or politician . . . That was why



Small mallet main-line locomotive. The "Nine-Spot."



The President and "high-rigger" Fred Wilson.

he handled responsibilities so well, representing management on the one hand, and supervising large numbers of workmen on the other."

To accentuate the company's difficulties, their timber yielded fewer and fewer fir logs as operations headed westward into the Hoko River valley. Hemlock and spruce, valu-



Cargo Mill log boom with spruce from Clallam operations.

MEETING THE FUTURE HALF-WAY

able for pulp but of limited use for sawmill operators, became predominant in the stand. Bloedel Donovan had no pulp mill, and they certainly couldn't build one in a time of war-imposed scarcity of materials.

Harold Ickes, shortly after his appointment as Secretary of the Interior, conceived the idea of creating a large National Park on the Olympic peninsula. He planned to take about 530,000 timbered acres from the Olympic National Forest and add it to the 318,000 acres of the existing Olympic National Monument.

According to government estimates, seventeen and one-half billion feet of standing timber would be included in the boundaries of the proposed Olympic National Park. Timbermen who knew the area declared it would be closer to twenty-five billion.

Franklin D. Roosevelt decided to personally investigate the proposed park, and on September 30, 1937, he came to Lake Crescent after a good-will side trip to Victoria, B. C. The next morning, the President's caravan headed west on the Olympic peninsula loop highway, with a scheduled stop at Bloedel Donovan's Beaver Camp to witness the topping of a spar tree.

"We weren't asked to arrange that show. We did it voluntarily out of respect for the nation's chief executive," Bloedel explains. "Whatever our political beliefs may be, we honor the office of President of our country!"

Fred Wilson, twenty-year-old "high rigger," did a neat job of topping out the 195-foot tree, and was asked to come to the President's car.

"Did you get out of breath up there?" the President asked. "It looks bad when the tree sways."



Ocean raft construction at Sekiu.

MEETING THE FUTURE HALF-WAY

Fred grinned proudly as the President shook his hand before departing.

"I take off my hat to you," said the Nation's Chief.

Creation of the Olympic National Park in 1938, following the President's visit, left the Olympic National Forest with less than half as much timber as it had owned in 1921 when Bloedel Donovan came to Clallam County. Logging operators on the Olympic peninsula and in the Grays Harbor area were dealt a severe blow by the inclusion of this vast stand of timber in the Park. Many of them had definite plans to extend into the area. Bloedel Donovan had spent a considerable sum surveying a logging railroad location from Forks south across the Bogachiel and on to the Hoh River valley. All of this work, including right-of-way procurement, was lost when the Park was enlarged. The Northern Pacific, urged by Grays Harbor interests, also made a survey into the Hoh River area with the intention of building a logging railroad. This also was abandoned.

Lumber communities on the Olympic peninsula protested that much of the area included in the Park would never be used for any recreational purpose, although they favored the original Olympic National Monument Site.

When the new Park boundaries were established, Jack Donovan urged the company to sell its Clallam County holdings. "We've got only five years of logging here at our present rate of a hundred million feet a year," he reasoned, "and we can't get much new timber now. If we sell while we've got a fair amount of timber left, we can include our railroads and camps and booming grounds as live equipment instead of junk."

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

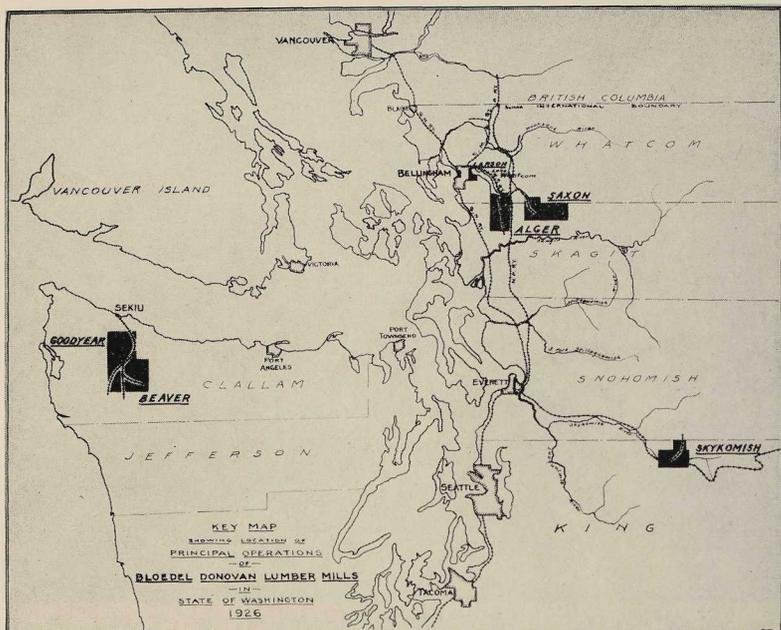
By reducing their log output to fifty million feet a year the company could have prolonged their operations, but that wouldn't have kept the Cargo mill in full operation. The final decision was to sell the timber and liquidate.

Among potential purchasers was Rayonier, Inc., with pulp plants at Port Angeles, Shelton and Hoquiam, and with established timber and logging operations on the Olympic peninsula. Their Shelton plant had been forced to close in August, 1943, through inability to secure adequate supply of pulp logs.

Jack Donovan and Martin Deggeler, Rayonier's northwest manager, had discussed the timber situation a number of times, Donovan greatly favoring selling the entire Bloedel Donovan holdings to Rayonier. Largely due to his suggestions, Bloedel Donovan started negotiations with that company. In January of 1945, Rayonier's president, Edward Bartsch of New York, came to the Pacific Northwest, and in February Rayonier took an option on the Clallam holdings of Bloedel Donovan, including timber, railroads, logging camps, booming grounds, machinery, and equipment, at a price well into seven figures.

Deggeler hired John P. VanOrsdel of Seattle, a competent and experienced forest engineer, to cruise Bloedel Donovan's timber. Van Orsdel's check cruise confirmed Bloedel Donovan's figures almost exactly; in fact, ran slightly over the amount claimed.

Upon exercise of the option, Rayonier became one of the largest timber operators in the west, and were able to meet requirements of their customers without importing dissolving pulps. Recently they have further bolstered their Olympic peninsula holdings by purchasing, in the eight-figure bracket, a majority of the stock in Polson Lumber Company of Grays

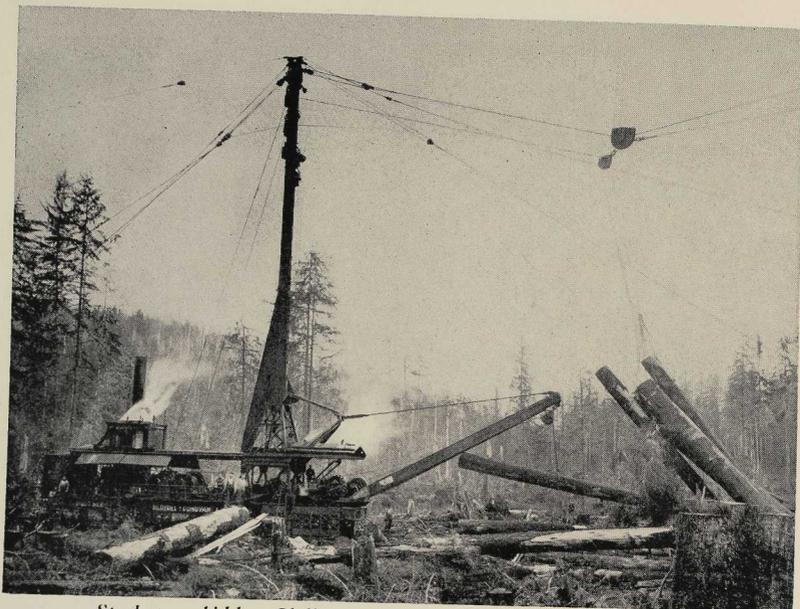


Key map showing location of principal operations of Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills in state of Washington, 1926.

Harbor. This gave them control of an additional two and one-half billion feet of standing timber.

Bloedel Donovan withdrew from Clallam County after almost a quarter-century of operations, during which time they had built over 100 miles of railroad and supplied four billion feet of timber to their own and other sawmills. During good years, an annual production of three hundred million feet of logs had not been uncommon!

"We're sorry to part with our Clallam operations," company officers told news reporters, "but as long as we had to do it, we're selling to a local company that's equipped to get the most value out of that timber. It's mostly pulp species now,



Steel-spar skidder, Clallam operations. This crew logged a record of 380,280 feet in eight hours.

not sawmill timber. Rayonier will hire most of our men, and they'll keep the camps running steadily. That means prosperity for Clallam County."

Sale of the Clallam holdings left Bloedel Donovan the sawmills at Larson and Bellingham, the timber and mill at Skykomish, and about sixty million remaining feet of timber six miles south of Lake Whatcom, known as the Tozer Tract, which Bloedel Donovan had purchased in March, 1943.

Because of urgent lumber demands imposed by World War II, and a critical log shortage, Bloedel Donovan was ordered by the Portland, Oregon, office of the War Industries Board to divide the Tozer timber with Eclipse Mill Company of Everett. This left Bloedel Donovan a fairly adequate log

MEETING THE FUTURE HALF-WAY

supply for the mills at Larson, but none for the Cargo mill. On May 10, 1945, the Cargo mill closed for good, after thirty-two years of continuous operation, during which time it had cut a large share of the 5,839,370,000 feet produced by Bloedel Donovan mills. Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills entered into liquidation on November 15 of the same year.

In June, 1946, the Skykomish mill and its timber was sold to Empire Millwork Corporation of New York City. The new owners hired Chet Miller, Bloedel Donovan's sales manager, to run the operation. He must have pleased them, as he's recently been elected a vice-president of their corporation.

Under liquidation proceedings Columbia Valley Lumber Company became a separate corporation. They purchased some of Bloedel Donovan's unused real estate, and on November 1, 1946, bought the Larson mill on Lake Whatcom. John McMahon continues as general superintendent of the mill, and Jim Prentice is the company's sales manager.

Earl LeValley, who started with Columbia Valley Lumber Company at Wenatchee in 1913, and who has served as Secretary and General Manager since 1929, is now also President of the concern. Under his management Columbia Valley has emerged from its earlier vicissitudes, and continues as the real successor of Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills.

Over one-third of the lumber that Columbia Valley puts through the Larson mill now is rough green stock purchased from small local mills for drying and milling. This exemplifies the trend toward production by small portable or semi-portable mills who rely on larger mills to purchase their stock for re-manufacture and sale.

The strategic site of the Cargo Mill on Bellingham Bay

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

with its deep water docking facilities made it a mighty valuable property for future development of manufacturing plants and shipping. Although Bloedel Donovan had received several good offers for the property, they chose rather to sell it to the Port of Bellingham in November, 1947, for \$75,000. Bellingham's Port Commission has leased all of the buildings to small industries who are making excellent use of the premises, and contributing greatly to the city's welfare. Those of us who knew Cargo Mill when two or three shifts of men kept the huge saws humming day and night, with the adjoining box factory alive and vibrating—those of us who have stood at the windows of the busy three-story office to watch a half-dozen ships load lumber for the ports of the world—feel a tightening in our throats and a tingling in our eyelids when we look down from the hill above on the deserted docks and the huge dismantled mill.

But we know that those waterfront acres are destined to be occupied by other enterprises; that the engines and equipment are being used in other sawmills, and that even "Big Ole," the huge steam whistle, is calling workers to their jobs on another waterfront.

"You supplied lumber for homes all over the world, Old Mill, and your payrolls built hundreds of them here on Bellingham Bay. You supported businesses, schools, churches and hospitals; you were Bellingham's life-blood for a third of a century! Well done, Old Mill!"



XIII

FARMS FROM FORESTS

WHATCOM

and Skagit counties in the State of Washington are remarkable for their fertility and the enormous yields of their rich bottom lands and foothills. A fact overlooked by many of the present generation is that the lands that produce such huge yields of oats, peas, strawberries, blackberries, potatoes, hay, and a score of other crops, were covered with fine old-growth timber a half-century or more ago.

These two counties in the northwest corner of the northwest state of the United States, boast the maximum yields from well-bred poultry to be found in the world. For this condition, we can tip our hats to the memory of D. F. Trunkey, former retail lumber yard manager of Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills at Bellingham. In his passionate desire to sell short-length and slightly off-grade lumber, this man started



Samish River Valley south of Alger. Poultry and seed ranches on land logged from Camp Six at Belcast.

FARMS FROM FORESTS

hundreds of poultry farmers on their way to success and independence. A very high percentage of these poultry farmers were people who had been employed by Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills and were looking forward to retirement and the less arduous labor of raising chickens and the various crops used for poultry feed.

A close second to poultry farming is the vast dairy industry which has been developed on these lands. Much of the butter, cheese, cream, condensed and powdered milk and ice cream marketed through cooperative dairies has originated in pastures that once grew immense stands of timber. Carnation Company and other large condenseries have received their milk supply largely from dairy farmers who cleared Bloedel Donovan's logged-off lands to avail themselves of the long pasture season and mild climate of Whatcom and Skagit counties.

The land on which these poultry and dairy farms are located is rich and most of it fertile to any crop that may be raised in the Pacific Northwest, but it did not lay idle, awaiting the farmer's plow, as did millions of acres in our middle-western states. For hundreds of years it supported a forest that supplied the nation with building materials, and will never be duplicated in the history of the world.

Thousands of acres of this magnificent virgin forest were harvested by the Bloedel-Donovan-Larson industries, and the fertile and accessible land was sold by them to people who desired homes and farms.

"TO BE SELF RELIANT IS THE AMERICAN WAY," announces an eight-page illustrated pamphlet printed by the Land Department of Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills years ago. This organization took the hard way of selling their logged-off

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

lands. They could have disposed of them to speculators or to real estate firms, but they chose to sell to small farmers and dairymen and poultry-raisers in tracts of five acres and over. It cost money and effort to place these lands in the hands of small ranchers, but Bloedel Donovan did it.

When large acreages of fertile land started to emerge from their blanket of timber, J. J. Donovan took the situation in hand and sold many tracts to Bloedel Donovan's older employees and to other people who hungered for places of their own. His popularity among the people to whom he sold these lands was legendary. They called him "Uncle John," and took his advice on land clearing and building and on a score of other problems. When the job of selling logged-off lands became too big for him to handle and was turned over to company land agents, they had a tough time living up to Donovan's popularity and reputation for fairness.



Farnham ranch house built around original log cabin. Near Cain's Lake on land logged by Lake Whatcom Logging Company.



Joe Brown's new home on dairy farm two miles south of Alger — original buildings in background. Land was logged from Belfast Camp in 1908.

Four thousand acres of farm land had been sold by the company when W. E. Little took over as land agent in the early nineteen-twenties. Soil surveys made by Washington State College at Pullman, Washington, at Bloedel Donovan's request, divided the land into seven different soil classifications. Each of these soil classes was proven suitable to a certain crop or group of crops, and was so listed and sold. Much of the land was found suitable to strawberry culture, and eastern strawberry growers who had been satisfied to get 125 crates per acre, were astonished to hear that yields from this land ran as high as 600 crates!

The company didn't just log the acres and sit down and wait for buyers to take the land away from them. They had the land carefully surveyed and platted, evaluated as to productivity and accessibility, and then put on the market through



A new home in rich alder bottom on land logged from Belfast Camp. Thomas I. Blair's "Sundown Ranch" at Junction of Samish Road and Highway 99.



Claire Smith farm with artificial lake, one-half mile east of Alger. This area was logged from Camp Four about 1903.

a well-planned campaign of conservative and honest advertising.

A. F. Ruser, an experienced land expert, who took over the logged-off land sales for Bloedel Donovan in February, 1936, states that J. H. Bloedel gave him only two rules to follow in selling the land. The first rule was to be fair in his pricing of the land—fair to the purchaser, and fair to Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills. The second rule was to deal reasonably with purchasers who got behind in their payments, but who tried their best to live up to the sales contract.

"I never foreclosed on any tract," Ruser declares, "although I had to take back a few on which purchasers voluntarily gave up their contracts."

Prices and terms of sale were left in Ruser's hands. Much of the land was listed at ten dollars down and no other pay-



Herndon Ranch near Cain's Lake on original site of Camp Four. Three and one-half miles east of Alger.



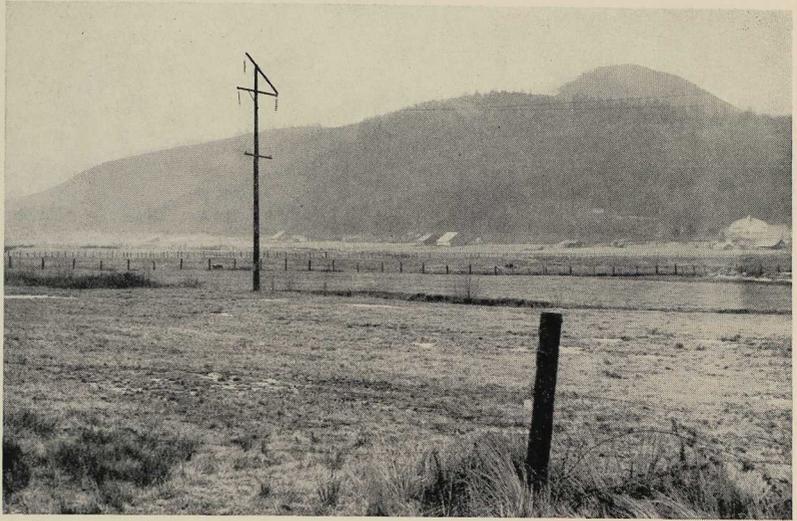
Claude Parker's chicken ranch between Alger and Blanchard. This area was logged from Alger Camp.

ments for a year if the buyer actually moved onto the land. When economic conditions and prices of farm produce warranted a slightly higher scale of payments, the contracts were altered to a scale of fifteen per cent down payment.

Around Bloedel Donovan's old headquarters camp at Alger, south of Bellingham, Ruser settled over a hundred families. He made quite a point of selecting people who were congenial and who were apt to get along with their neighbors, as that policy tended to build up good communities. To good farmers he sold for as little as \$7.50 per acre. Frequently he paid the settlers for building roads to connect the tracts. He allowed those who had little or no timber on their own tracts to get cordwood from unsold tracts that had an abundance. He found that the better class of buyers paid up faster than their contracts stipulated. As a rule, Ruser fought shy of selling to men over sixty years of age unless they were quite



Weaver farm near south end of Samish Lake on land logged from Alger camp.



Prosperous farms and Alger school on land logged by Lake Whatcom Logging Company about 1906.

rugged or had members of their immediate family who could assist in the hard work of clearing and cultivating the land.

One of the transcontinental railroads told Ruser that large numbers of "dust-bowl" farmers wanted a western location, following a series of bad farming years which occurred in the '30's. Ruser handled the deal, using part of Bloedel Donovan's lands and part of Pacific Realty Company's lands. These people, and most of the genuine farmers from the dust-bowl areas, proved to be valuable settlers.

Bloedel Donovan advised settlers from the mid-west to sell their equipment and furniture and re-purchase out here. Almost without exception that proved to be a better policy than to transport their belongings to the Pacific coast at high expense. Those who came with nothing to furnish their places were given accommodations in unused company logging camps. Ruser showed them how to cut cord-wood from

FARMS FROM FORESTS

logged-off lands, pick berries, hunt for native game, and support themselves by their own efforts during their first few months on the Pacific coast. Most of them built log cabins, following instructions issued by the company, and many of these are still being used for secondary buildings, the owners having built more modern houses since their original tenancy of the "Daniel Boone" buildings.

During depression years, the company's land agent started a wood yard where settlers could sell cord-wood for cash. Bloedel Donovan's fuel department bought this wood at a price which in those times gave them a reasonable return for their work. It was stipulated, however, that the cutting of the wood must be entirely without the use of power tools, so that they would use their own efforts and avoid accepting emergency employment from the government.

At Alger, Bloedel Donovan's old headquarters camp, the company donated a building for a community hall. This was used for many purposes by the settlers, one of which involved an unusual community fair. Settlers brought their prize live-



Area near Samish Lake logged from Alger Camp. Hillsides covered with vigorous second-growth timber; bottom lands in dairy ranches and poultry farms.



Logs from second-growth timber near Reed's Lake, Whatcom County. Area originally logged by Lake Whatcom Logging Company from South Bay about 1899. Re-logged 1947-1948.

stock, their largest vegetables, and their best canned fruit and vegetables for exhibit. The county agent acted as judge of these exhibits, and cash prizes were furnished by Bloedel Donovan.

In the Clallam County operations there was not so high a percentage of fertile lands as compared with Whatcom and Skagit counties. The logged-off land around Lake Pleasant sold as soon as it was placed on the market, but that was due to its value as recreational sites. The same situation applied to the sale of the lands around Clallam Bay, where the waterfront lots sold like hotcakes, but the interior areas went begging. Most of the Clallam logged-off area, however, is definitely ear-marked for future timber crops.

Down near Blanchard, where the Chuckanut Highway starts winding along the rocky coast toward Bellingham, a

FARMS FROM FORESTS

number of settlers bought logged-off lands from Bloedel Donovan for fifteen dollars an acre. At the time of the sale there was a certain amount of second-growth timber on the land. Probably there is no better site in the world for forest growth than that particular area, and the trees grew rapidly. Some of the owners are now getting \$42 per thousand board feet at their sawmills for rough green lumber cut from timber which has grown on these tracts. One owner was paid \$4,000 for the second-growth timber on a forty-acre area that he bought from Bloedel Donovan. The buyer in each of the



Average Douglas Fir log—33-inch diameter, logged in 1948 from area near Reed's Lake. Originally logged by Lake Whatcom Logging Company in 1899.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

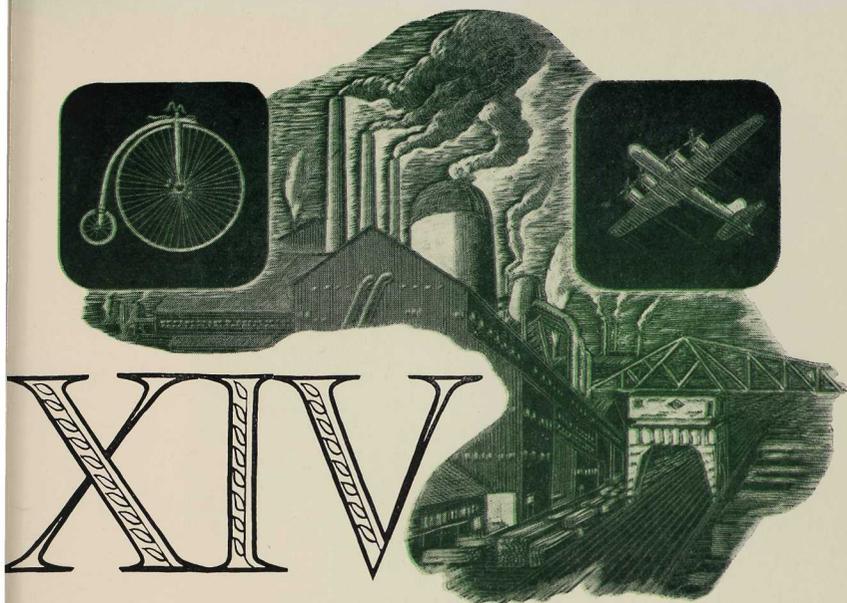
cases mentioned was Columbia Valley Lumber Company, successor to Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills.

Undeniably, and unfortunately, there are wide expanses of land in western Washington, covered with stumps, brush, and forest debris, which were cut over in the early days and allowed to revert to public ownership. Much of this was unprotected and, after repeated seasonal fires, became sterile.

A decidedly pleasant contrast is shown in the timber areas harvested by Bloedel Donovan and its antecedents, a total of almost one hundred thousand acres. Nearly thirty thousand acres around Lake Whatcom were flat, fertile lowlands. These were sold by qualified land experts to farmers and poultry men. Dairymen bought strips of land that included excellent pasture areas on higher benches.

Most of the areas logged on the Nooksack, as well as those in Clallam County, were rough and non-agricultural. These areas were recently sold to Prentice Bloedel for timber growing.

Those lands that for centuries raised timber crops—crops which sprouted from the dense forest floor, matured and died and disintegrated into forest soil for another timber stand—those lands are now supporting hundred-year timber crops, or annual yields of berries, poultry, vegetables, grain or cattle. But all of them are supporting a vigorous growth of homes and happy families.



AN EIGHTY AT EIGHTY

THE THREE YOUNG MEN

who met in the bustling young town of Fairhaven in 1898 founded an enterprise that endured and prospered for half a century. The railroad builder, Peter Larson, lived to see only the start of the company's success. The civil engineer, J. J. Donovan, spent three decades of his life in helping the operations toward prosperity and completion. The lumberman, J. H. Bloedel, has completed one business cycle and has founded a huge new enterprise in the forests of British Columbia.

It's a far cry from the Pacific Northwest to the ancient province of Artois in France, where Bloedel's family originated, and from where they were forced to emigrate with four hundred thousand other French Huguenots in 1685. Bloedel's family settled in the Rhine Palatinate, and from

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE



J. H. Bloedel

there came his grandfather, Heinrich Bloedel, to locate in Wisconsin in the early 1840's.

Heinrich's son, Henry, became a small manufacturer of agricultural machinery and is credited with the invention of the first disc harrow. He married Helena Maurer and to them Julius Harold Bloedel was born on March 4, 1864, in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

J. H. Bloedel's mother died while he was an infant, and he was raised on a farm by his maternal aunt. At sixteen, he had graduated from high school in Sheboygan, and had devel-

AN EIGHTY AT EIGHTY

oped a well-defined business instinct. He worked and saved to purchase a bicycle—the early type with a huge front wheel and a much smaller wheel bringing up the rear—terms of sale being ten dollars down and the balance on monthly payments. It was the first “bike” in Sheboygan, and every kid in town wanted to ride it, so Bloedel rented an old skating rink and taught them to ride—for a reasonable fee.

Within a few weeks the Sheboygan boys were enthusiastic “bike pilots,” longing to have machines of their own. Bloedel secured a sales agency for a well-known make of bicycle and satisfied the local demand, at a profit.

In the early 80's, bicycle racing was a great attraction at county fairs. Bloedel entered many of these races and gained a considerable local reputation. He treasures his photograph taken with his fifty-two-inch racing “wheel” just after winning one of those contests.

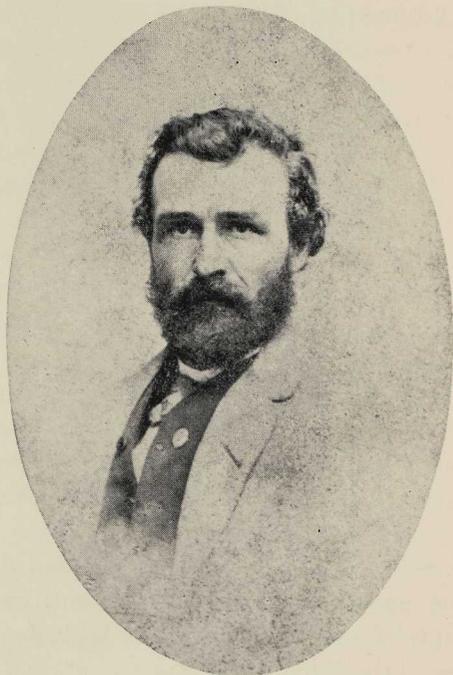
Winter snows were heavy in Sheboygan, and the fad of tobogganing, imported from Montreal, became widely popular. An unused city street ended at a steep bank, sloping down to the frozen Sheboygan River.

“What a place for a toboggan slide!” Bloedel enthused to his pal, Alfred Weygand. “We can ice this slope and mark a course across the river ice to that flat island!”

They fixed up the course, got hold of a number of toboggans, and rented them to all comers. The fad lasted only one season, but the profits from this venture and the “bike” sales financed Bloedel's last year in high school and his first year in college.

In 1881, J. H. Bloedel enrolled in civil engineering at the University of Michigan. He planned to work during the sum-

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE



Henry Bloedel

mer vacations to supplement the amounts his family could afford toward college expenses. The increasing difficulty of this routine, together with his urge toward a business career, induced him to leave the University somewhat later and accept a job as civil engineer for the Milwaukee, Lake Shore and Western Railroad, which was building through the pine forests of northern Wisconsin. Those magnificent pineries impressed young Bloedel deeply, and gave him an impelling desire to own and harvest timber.

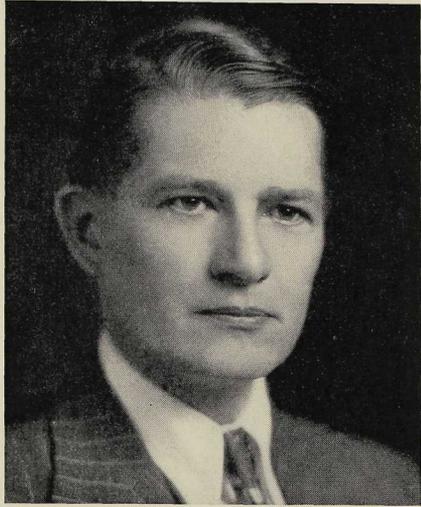
AN EIGHTY AT EIGHTY

When the survey was completed in 1885, Bloedel returned to Sheboygan, invested his savings in a ten-acre city tract, and plotted it into lots. He realized a substantial profit from the sale of this property, and followed it with the purchase and marketing of three more additions to the city of Sheboygan. All four of these still bear the name of "Bloedel and Pfister" on the city records, and one of them is in the leading residential section.

Sensing opportunities on the Pacific Coast, Bloedel collected the small capital from his real estate operations and headed west in the summer of 1889. He paused briefly in Tacoma, went on to Seattle a few days after the great fire, then north to Bellingham Bay. The booming town of Fairhaven was being platted into town lots by Fairhaven Land Company, and was building rapidly in anticipation of being the terminus of the Great Northern. He met and liked a young engineer, J. J. Donovan, in charge of constructing the Fairhaven and Southern Railway. Bloedel decided to make Fairhaven his home, and returned briefly to Sheboygan to close out his affairs.

Back in Fairhaven in March of 1890, Bloedel met J. F. Wardner, a dynamic promoter of mines and other enterprises. The two men bought timber around Samish Lake and organized Samish Lake Logging Company, with Bloedel in active management. Bull teams were used to yard the logs and to road them to the lake over skidroads. The "bull-puncher," who drove the oxen, was customarily the woods boss in those days. He kept the bulls moving with a pointed ox-goad, a powerful voice, and a lurid vocabulary. Bloedel hired Mickey Gates to drive the company's six yoke of oxen, paying him the fabulous sum—for those days—of \$150 a month and

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE



Prentice Bloedel

board. When Bloedel went into the timber to check up on the work, it was easy to locate Mickey and his crew; just stand anywhere around Samish Lake and listen!

In that same eventful year, 1890, the Fairhaven National Bank was organized, with A. S. Clark as a president and Bloedel a stockholder. In 1891 Bloedel became vice-president, and when Clark resigned in 1893, Bloedel succeeded him and continued as president until the bank liquidated in 1896. Only the Fairhaven National and one other bank out of thirteen in Bellingham Bay weathered the great panic of 1893 and the succeeding few years. In 1896 Bloedel made a deal with the Citizen's Bank of Fairhaven, the only other solvent local bank, to take over all assets of the Fairhaven National, including its safe, and to pay all obligations. Through shrink-

AN EIGHTY AT EIGHTY

age of values during the panic, stockholders, including Bloedel, lost their entire investments in the bank, but every depositor was paid in full. For many years Bloedel carried a five-dollar bill issued by the Fairhaven National Bank and bearing his signature as president. It was all he had to show for his investment! To make matters worse, Fairhaven's boom had collapsed with the selection of Seattle as the terminus of the Great Northern.

Shortly after Wardner and Bloedel started the Samish Lake Logging Company, Wardner took an option on Blue Canyon Coal Mines, located on the southeast shore of Lake Whatcom. Bloedel took an interest in the mines, bought a relinquishment on 160 acres of adjacent coal land, and started active operation. Needing more capital, Wardner interested a group of Helena, Montana, capitalists in the mine during the summer of 1891, finally selling them his controlling interest in the property for a considerable sum. Bloedel retained his interest with the new owners, and became secretary-treasurer of the Blue Canyon Coal Mining Company. The purchasers, known as the "Helena Syndicate," have been named in foregoing pages, and were associates of Peter Larson. M. E. Downs became president of the company, but was seldom around the mines and left the active operation to J. J. Donovan, who had been hired as general superintendent.

A barge carrying twenty-five dump cars was towed by a small steamer between the mine and a landing at the north end of Lake Whatcom, a distance of nine miles. From that point the Bellingham Bay & Eastern hauled the cars to Blue Canyon's coal bunkers at Whatcom on Bellingham Bay.

For additional revenue, the B.B.&E. hauled logs from Lake

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE



J. H. Bloedel with 52-inch "Racing Wheel" Sheboygan, Wisconsin, 1885.

Whatcom to tidewater for several small loggers who operated around the lake, also marketing the logs for the account of the owners.

A letter written by J. H. Bloedel on October 2, 1895, to J. Nesselroad of Silver Beach, accounts for the sale of 281,168

AN EIGHTY AT EIGHTY

feet of logs. Flooring logs sold at \$5.60 per M. and merchantable logs at \$4.40, delivered to the Tacoma Mill Company at Tacoma. After paying freight, towage to Tacoma and other expenses, Nesselroad received less than \$3 per M. on the lot.

Blue Canyon coal was high grade bituminous with low ash content, as proven by U. S. Navy steaming tests, and the subsequent use of Blue Canyon coal by the entire Bering Sea Fleet in 1894.

In 1895 the continued financial depression and operating losses at the mine forced the "Helena Syndicate" to curtail financial support. Bloedel and Donovan called the mine workers together.

"We'll try to keep the mine operating," they told the men, "and we'll keep you in living supplies, but you'll have to wait for most of your wages."

The men agreed, Donovan kept the mine running, and Bloedel traveled far and wide to sell coal; Seattle, Portland, Port Townsend, or any place where coal was used in quantity. In Everett, he called on the paper mill and on W. C. Butler, superintendent of the Everett smelter.

The Everett Nail Works wanted coal, but President Whitney told Bloedel that the company had no money to buy it.

"How are you fixed on nails?" Bloedel inquired.

"Our warehouses are full of wire," Whitney replied, "but we're not making it up into nails because we can't sell 'em."

Bloedel hustled down to Schwabacher in Seattle, who wholesaled hardware, groceries, and general supplies, in large volume. He arranged a three-way deal whereby Everett Nail Works got Blue Canyon Coal in exchange for nails, and



"J. H." celebrating his eightieth birthday with Bloedel Donovan Old-Timers.

AN EIGHTY AT EIGHTY

Bloedel traded the nails to Schwabacher for groceries and supplies to keep the coal miners eating and comfortable.

Bloedel paid Blue Canyon's debts to Morse Hardware Company of Bellingham with nails. He traded more nails to other local firms for groceries and clothing for the miners.

The explosion of April 8, 1895, and especially the loss of twenty-three lives, grieved Bloedel and Donovan deeply, but they reopened the mine and continued to operate, with Bloedel as president and Donovan as general superintendent. The "Helena Syndicate" hesitated to carry the entire financial burden, but Peter Larson gave them what support he could. The struggles of those hard years brought the three men together in a close personal friendship and gave them a sense of values not found during prosperous days.

By 1897, Blue Canyon operation became so tough that success seemed impossible, and Bloedel resigned from the company. He was not dismayed by the loss, figuring that it was worth while to take a risk on a promising business, and that the most valuable experience in the world is that resulting from a losing venture. Donovan believed the mine would eventually pay, and continued operations for several years.

Following his withdrawal from Blue Canyon, and the closely subsequent launching of Lake Whatcom Logging Company, Bloedel took another important step in his career. On October 20, 1898, he married Mina Louise Prentice in St. James Episcopal Church at Fairhaven. His bride was a daughter of John Atwater Prentice, a successful lumberman of Saginaw, Michigan. During the following thirteen years, until they moved to Seattle in 1911, the Bloedels made their home and reared their children in Bellingham.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

With the exception of duck shooting, which is his major hobby, J. H. Bloedel has been most enthusiastic about golf. He promised his friends that he would shoot an "eighty" on his eightieth birthday, and he made good his promise at the Seattle Golf and County Club on March 4, 1944. Somehow he detoured three long holes, but his card was certified at eighty strokes!

On the day before his birthday, Bloedel was decoyed to Bellingham on the pretext of urgent business matters. Instead of business, a score of his associates and older employees had conspired to give him a rousing birthday party, and presented him with a beautiful gold Swiss clock and with enlarged framed photographs of the three original partners of the company.

On September 26, 1946, Arthur H. Howard, then mayor of Bellingham, called local news reporters to his office.

"Mr. J. H. Bloedel has donated to the city a twelve and one-half acre tract on Lake Whatcom, part of the Larson sawmill site, for use as a park and bathing beach, and a substantial sum for the planned buildings and development of the area. It will be known as Bloedel Donovan Park."

The area given to the city was opened in 1891 as a lake terminal for Blue Canyon Coal Mines, and later used by Lake Whatcom Logging Company and by Larson Lumber Company. The site holds a sentimental value to Bloedel, and J. J. Donovan's name is linked with his own in the name of the park, to honor their long and intimate association.

When entirely completed the park will include playgrounds, tennis courts, wading pool, bath-house, picnic area, softball diamond, and a pier and boat haven for yachts and

AN EIGHTY AT EIGHTY

M. E. DOWNS, President.
J. H. BLOEDEL, Secretary.

GENERAL OFFICE.

BLUE CANYON COAL MINING Co.

CAPITAL \$500,000.00.

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO THE COMPANY.

NEW WHATCOM, WASHINGTON, Oct. 2, 1895. 189

Mr. J. Hesseiroad,

Silver Beach, Wash.

Dear Sir:-

In raft sent to Tacoma Mill Co. September 20th, there were the following logs:

N)	Flooring,	138,961	at 5.80,	778.29
)	278 Logs.			
N)	Mcht. and B/S,	148,396		
Less 10 B/S, marked H,	<u>8,209</u>	<u>142,187</u>	at 4.40,	<u>625.62</u>
		281,188		1403.91
	90 days draft, 2-1/4% discount,			<u>31.59</u>
				1372.82

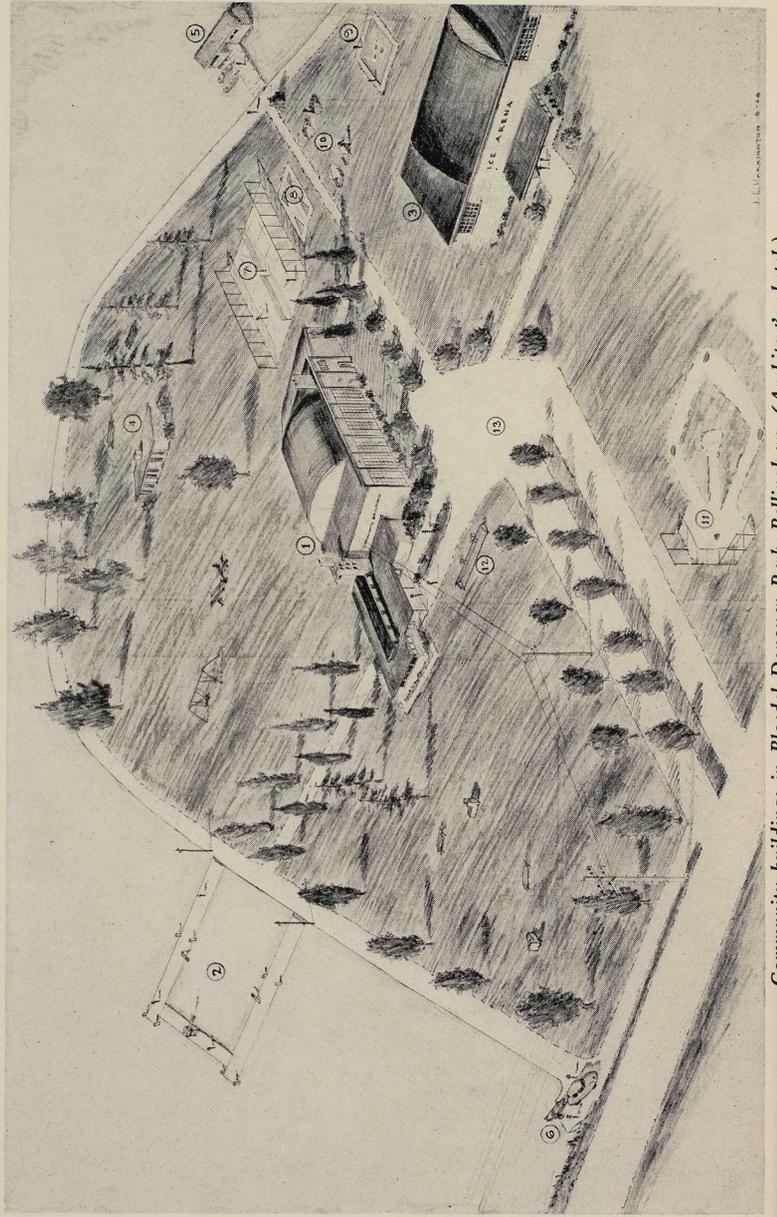
Our charges are:

Freight,	1.40		
Towage to Tacoma,	.35		
Rafting,	.10		
1/2 Scale,	.02-1/2		
Expenses,	<u>.04-1/2</u>		
	1.92 x	281,188	<u>539.84</u>
			832.48

Yours truly,

J. H. Bloedel

Secretary.



Community buildings in Bloedel Donovan Park, Bellingham. (Architect's sketch).

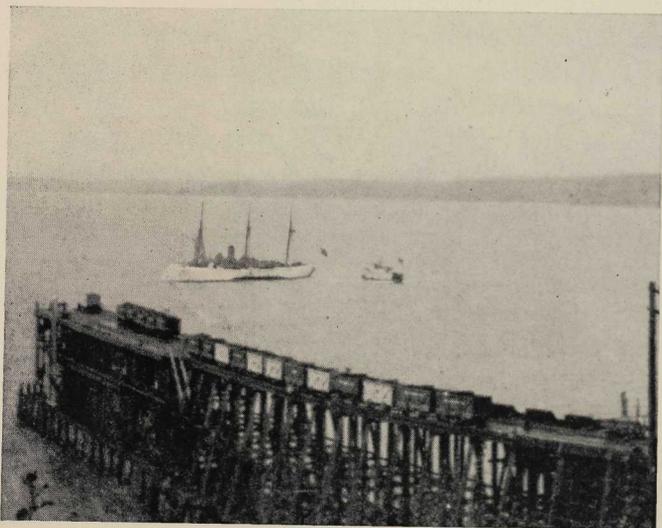
J. C. HARRINGTON, B. S. A.

AN EIGHTY AT EIGHTY

power craft. The point north of Larson, reaching out into the lake, has been converted into a beautiful bathing beach of white sand. There is a well-designed community building and a large bathhouse.

The grounds and buildings were dedicated to the city of Bellingham by J. H. Bloedel and Mina Prentice Bloedel on August 11, 1948, the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Lake Whatcom Logging Company, in the presence of more than a thousand people. Bellingham's city officials were present, as well as a large number of Bloedel Donovan's former employees.

Today J. H. Bloedel is a very active and alert Chairman of the Board of Bloedel, Stewart & Welch, Ltd. When he



*U.S.S. "Yorktown" loading Blue Canyon Coal on Bellingham Bay,
April 28, 1894.*

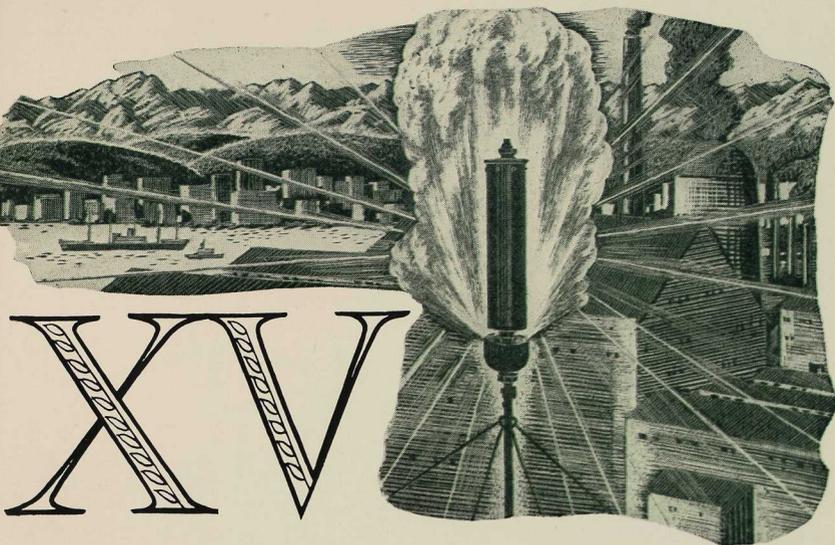
EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

assumed that position in the latter part of 1943, his son, Prentice, became president and assumed active management of the corporation which Sid Smith had ably built up and operated under the guidance of "J.H." Prentice gained sawmill experience at the Cargo Mill under John McMahon, starting in 1922, the year after his graduation from Yale. After this apprenticeship he entered the Vancouver headquarters of Bloedel, Stewart & Welch, taking with him to Canada his recent bride, Virginia Merrill.

Virginia is also distinctly of lumber parentage, the daughter of R. D. Merrill of Seattle, and the granddaughter and great-granddaughter of old State of Maine lumbermen. The merger of the Bloedels and Merrills follows the ancient and honorable custom, peculiar to Pacific Coast lumber families, of forming and maintaining their own regional hierarchies.

From February of 1943, when Jack Donovan succeeded him as president of Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills, J. H. Bloedel served as chairman of the board of that corporation. He also now holds the board chairmanship of Columbia Valley Lumber Company in addition to his duties with Bloedel, Stewart & Welch, Ltd. He has not retired and he says he never will.

"Retire?" he snorts, "Why should I? How could I possibly enjoy myself more than I do now? It's like raising grandchildren . . . all of the fun without any of the responsibility."



"BIG OLE"

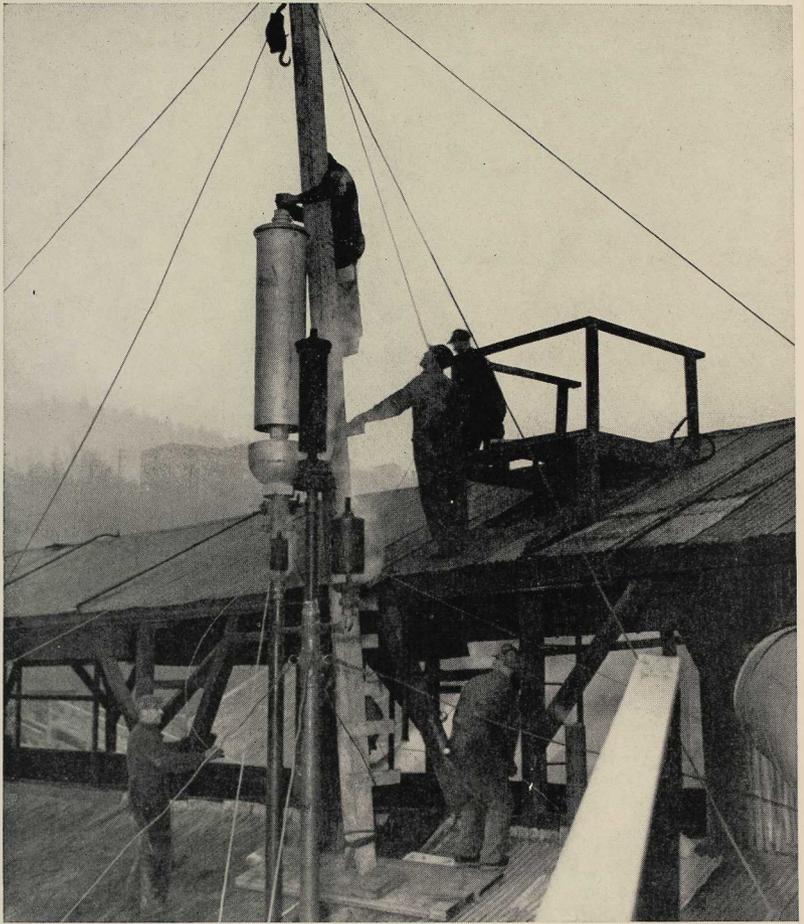
FOR ALMOST FIFTY YEARS

a huge whistle mounted on the roof of Bloedel Donovan's cargo mill called thousands of workmen to their daily stint, released them again at the day's end, and announced to Bellingham Bay tidings of war and peace, of triumph and disaster.

"Big Ole" was not removed and sold when the cargo mill was dismantled. With care—almost with reverence—the big whistle was taken from its place and sent to Canada.

Writing to Bruce Farris, vice-president of Bloedel, Stewart & Welch's Lumber Division at Port Alberni, B. C., Bloedel shows his sentiment for the old whistle.

"I am instructing John McMahon, superintendent at Bellingham," says Bloedel on September 1, 1942, "to carefully pack and ship the old mill whistle from the Bellingham mill



"Big Ole" being dismantled in September, 1942, for removal to Port Alberni, B. C.

addressed to the company at Port Alberni. I miss the old whistle because it is a landmark . . . It has blown continuously in Bellingham for nearly fifty years . . . It is more than a whistle . . . So the force at Bellingham have agreed to let me

"BIG OLE"

have the whistle to send to Port Alberni where it should blow for many years."

The belief that "Big Ole" is more than a whistle is widespread among those who have lived on Bellingham Bay. In 1919, when Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills started its lively house-organ, later known as the "*Industrial Harmonizer*," the company offered a cash prize for the best name submitted for the publication. "Gaff" McGlinn of South Bellingham suggested the name "Big Ole" and backed his choice with seven cogent reasons:

First, "Big Ole" typifies Bloedel Donovan and Bellingham to residents and non-residents alike.

Second, "Big Ole's" sonorous tones and deep notes are suggestive of the power and reserve strength of the home office.

Third, "Big Ole's" basso voice raised day or night is as significant of alarm or indicative of rejoicing to the people of this city and the countryside as ever was Philadelphia's Liberty Bell in the early days of this republic.

Fourth, "Big Ole" has endeared himself to the hearts of the citizens of this city so surely that some public acknowledgment should be rendered him.

Fifth, "Big Ole" in his majestic strength is certainly typical of the brawn and courage of the woodsman; of the nerve and resource of the founders.

Sixth, "Big Ole," whose resonant voice silences the puny efforts of rival noises, surely is well placed over the parent roof of the giant of the lumber industry of the Northwest.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

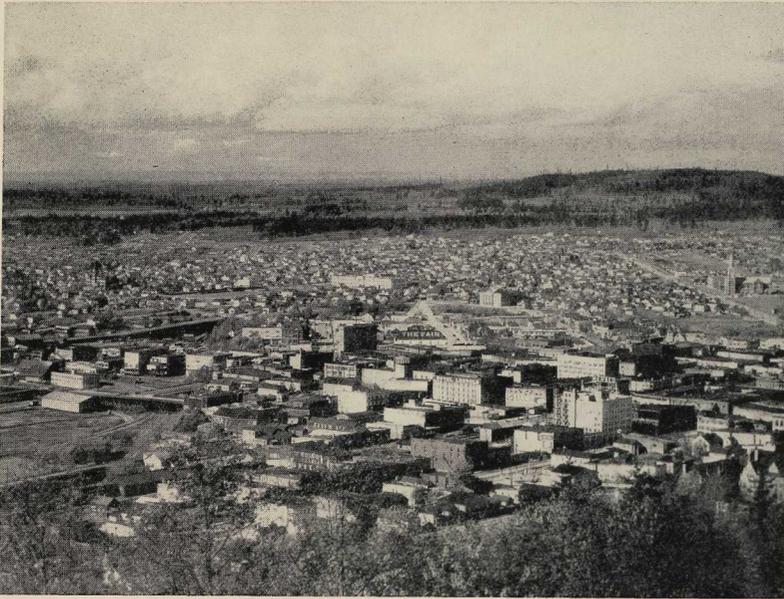
Seventh, "Big Ole," named in admiration and not in mockery is a deserved tribute to those valiant sons of Scandinavia who have done so much towards the development of this new country.

A Bellingham Bay boy, Robert T. Sand, wrote a homesick letter from Hollywood addressed to the *Bellingham Herald*. Discharged from the armed forces after the second world war, Bob has a studio for continuation of his artistic studies.

"A few days ago," Bob wrote, "I was riding along in the Hollywood Boulevard bus, worn out by the heat. I got to comparing this town, with its palms and dusty hills, to the fresh green 'hills of home'—Bellingham. I thought of another thing that this town doesn't have that Bellingham used to have—whistles. So, of course, I thought of the king of all whistles—Big Ole. Then I realized with a start that the Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mill is no more—and maybe 'Big Ole' is no more, too. 'Big Ole,' whose throaty voice echoed from Sehome Hill, reached out to Lummi Island, circled the great harbor and faded out over the farms in Nooksack Valley and Lake Whatcom's shimmering surface.

"'Big Ole' packed the authority of time, and every watch and every clock was given a critical look to see if they were toeing the mark to 'Big Ole's' toot. 'Big Ole' had personality, too, and no matter how far you travel, how many cities you visit, you can find no match for his sonorous tone."

"Big Ole" has followed the crop of mature timber to Canada. When the big whistle came to Bellingham Bay it came to a region of timber harvesting, a busy manufacturing center for the hundreds of square miles of ripe forest awaiting



Bellingham, Washington

the woodsman's axe. Now that crop has been largely harvested, and those hundreds of square miles are raising new crops of timber—fir and cedar and hemlock—born from the seeds of trees that Lake Whatcom Logging Company and many others removed from those lands a generation ago.

While those trees are growing to form a new timber crop for a coming harvest, "Big Ole" has gone to Vancouver Island to help men cut and mill the mature forests of another great timber belt.

Some future day when that great expanse of land has yielded its timber and is re-cropping for the future, "Big Ole" may come back—perhaps to Bellingham Bay—to help harvest the new crop on Puget Sound.

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

From the *Bellingham Herald*, September 13, 1942:

VALE OLE!

Thousands of us experienced a slight letdown feeling last week when it was revealed that the throaty, pulse-stirring voice of "Big Ole" never again would be wafted over Bellingham.

Big Ole's untimely passing, to a multitude of youngish and graying men, if not to an equal number of wives and mothers, is an event tinged with melancholy.

For Big Ole was no thing of iron and bronze, no inanimate gadget that served merely as a cog in a mighty waterfront aggregation of machinery. Big Ole was an institution, a personality. About him was the pungent and friendly odor of fir pitch, the music of whirring saws, the roar of megatherine machines in motion. About him was the tang of salt spray and the whiff of snooze as wind and rain lashed Bellingham Bay to fury. About him was the sweat of lumberjacks converting the products of Paul Bunyan's mighty efforts into sticks of usable sizes and shapes for domestic and foreign markets.

Indeed, for close to four decades Big Ole was a public monitor, his "big manly voice," to the accompaniment of a white plume of steam mounting skyward, going into thousands of homes, warning at 7 a.m. that the wheels must turn an hour later, reminding housewives at 5 p.m. it was time to light the fire for dinner—a dominant, authoritative voice by which clocks were set, the kids were readied for school, the activities of a city were timed.

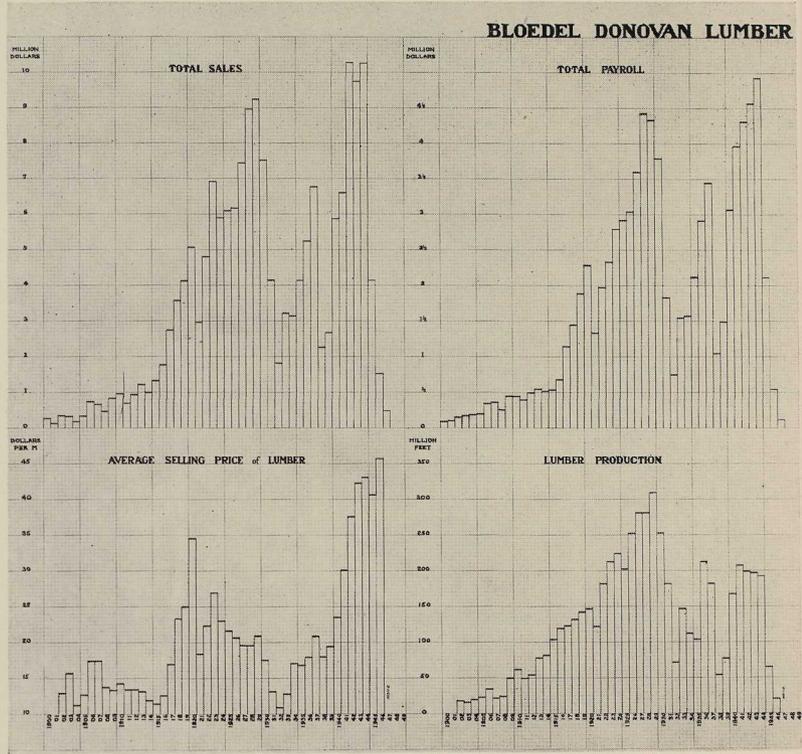
If Big Ole is a victim of World War II, retired here to make way for a voice of a different key, it should not be forgotten that he is an honored veteran of World War I, to which this newspaper confesses unblushingly an affectionate attachment. During that great conflict,

"BIG OLE"

Big Ole was The Herald's "bulletin board," breaking out in throaty triumph upon receipt of bulletins of American and Allied victories and sending the excited populace to the telephone for details, and it was Big Ole that announced the closing act in the drama. In The Herald of November 11, 1918, Mary B. Haight wrote: "When Big Ole proclaimed to Bellingham that the Armistice was signed at 1:10 this morning, it took not longer than twenty minutes to assemble an excited, anxious little crowd at the newspaper office, intent on learning just what the exact news was. At 1:30 there were four automobiles on darkened Holly street, tooting the glad tidings to each other as they raced for the first 'extras' . . .

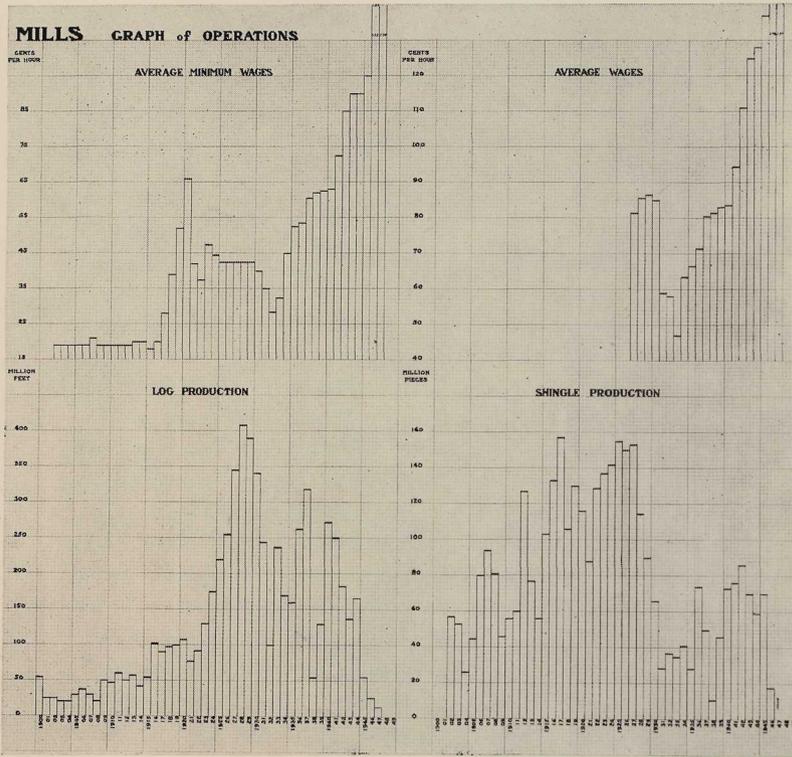
Just a sawmill whistle, perhaps, yet thousands think otherwise. Big Ole was "the watchdog's voice that bay'd the whispering wind," and in silence today he is still an "articulate, audible voice of the past." Vale, Ole!

EIGHTEEN MEN AND A HORSE

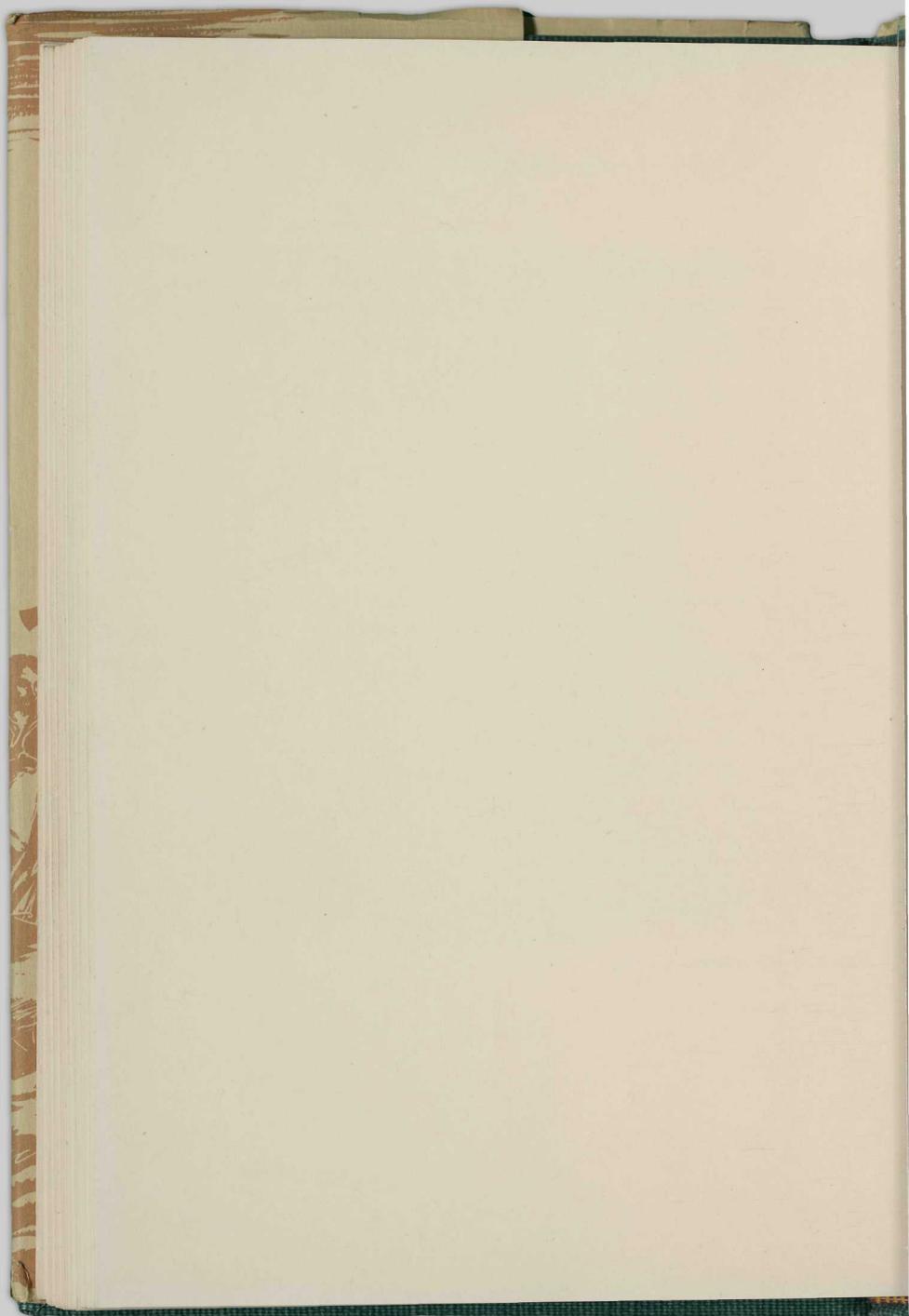


Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills

"BIG OLE"



Graph of Operations.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author is deeply grateful to the many persons who have furnished information and assistance in compiling the material for this book. Among those who have contributed notably are Jack Donovan, Frank E. Frost and James Prentice of the Bloedel Donovan organization. George Wood of Alger has furnished much information from his memory and his collection of old photographs.

Frank I. Sefrit has spent many hours sketching the background of Bellingham Bay and Whatcom County, and has granted full use of the old files of the *Bellingham Herald* and its predecessor the *Fairhaven Herald*. He has also been most helpful as an editorial advisor.

Miller Freeman of Seattle, through his interest in the preservation of Pacific northwest industrial history, is in large part responsible for the inception of this volume.

A. F. Ruser has given generously of his time and experience in tracing the sales of logged-off lands by Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills. The lands he handled included those logged by Lake Whatcom Logging Company and Larson Lumber Co.

Juanita Gray, long identified with the Seattle office of J. H. Bloedel, has been both a help and an inspiration.

Dr. Bror L. Grondal of the College of Forestry, University of Washington, has given invaluable advice on technical matters.

Especial thanks are due Townsend Coale of Seattle, whose deep interest and unflagging efforts have been essential in all matters concerned with writing and publication.

● The overall style and design of this book were formulated by Max Wells of Metropolitan Press, Seattle. Original sketches and titles by Carter Lucas, art director at the Metropolitan Press. Page format and typography by Charles A. Schlosser.

Credit is due the Artcraft Engraving & Electrotype Company, under supervision of Albert P. Salisbury, for the fine rendition of aged photos.

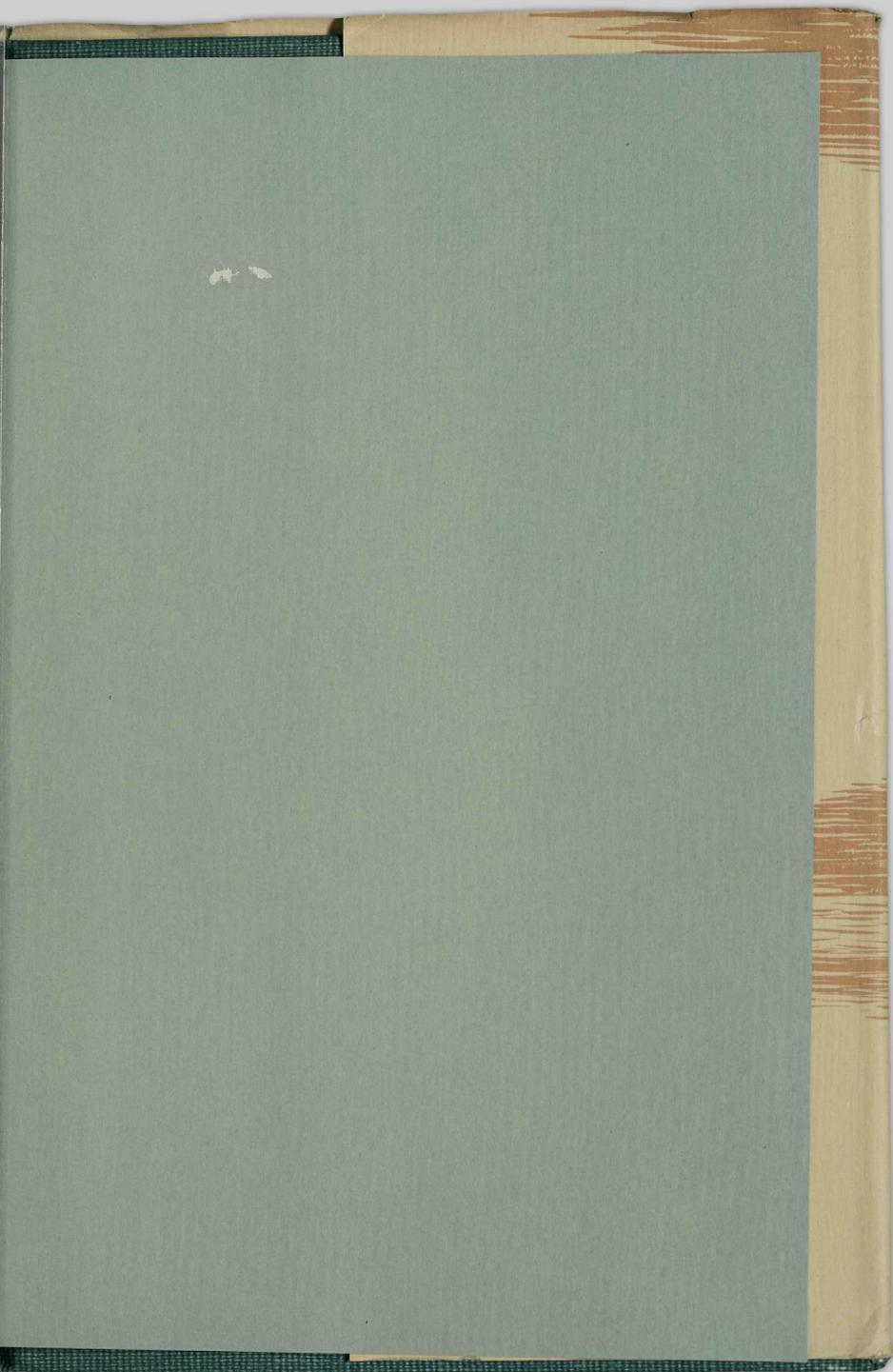
Acknowledgment is made to the following contributors and sources of photographs and sketches used in the book:

Jukes Studio, Hegg Photo Co., Andrew Helander, Frank M. Reasoner, Bellingham Herald, Capt. Lee M. Pittman, D. W. Hindman and Sandison Studio of Bellingham. Also William Arild Johnson, A.I.A., and Associates of Bellingham, who prepared the sketch of Bloedel Donovan Park.

Other photographic sources are: John D. Cress, Darius Kinsey, Marine Salon Photo Shop, Grady Studio, Grossart Studio, Timber Views Company and Bob and Ira Spring of Seattle.

Additional photographs were furnished by Tony Archer, Vancouver, and Western Photo Art Co. of Port Alberni, B. C., by Northern Pacific Railway Company, Buckbee-Mears Company, American Lumberman, Foley Bros., Inc., Arlington Photo Studio and Fabian Bachrach, New York City.

Mrs. Charles Donovan of Port Angeles contributed two photographs to the book; and the ancient "gold-tone" of J. H. Bloedel and his high-wheeled "bike" was done by F. W. Manville, Sheboygan, Wisconsin.





Principal Operations of
Bloedel Donovan Lumber Mills
in State of Washington

