



*Plant and yards of Oregon Lumber Co., Baker, Oregon*

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# Pioneer Eastern Oregon Lumber Firm

*David Eccles Cuts Ties for Oregon Short Line  
In 1887 and Founds Oregon Lumber Co. in 1889*

**I**N 1868 the late David Eccles made a trip by wagon into the Oregon Country, travelling as far west as Oregon City. During the two years he was in this territory he had a very excellent opportunity to look over many fine tracts of timber, both pine in the Inland Empire and Douglas fir in the coastal region. He returned to Utah determined to install a lumber manufacturing operation in Oregon whenever the railroad necessary for the marketing of his product was built through the country. After his return to Ogden he started a milling operation at Schofield, Utah.

In 1887 when the plans were definitely made to construct the Oregon Short Line railroad as a connecting link between the Union Pacific and the lines of the Oregon-Washington Railroad & Navigation Co., Mr. Eccles returned to Oregon and installed two small tie mills, one at North Powder, 20 miles west of Baker, the other at Pleasant Valley, 13 miles east of Baker, and manufactured the ties necessary for construction of the Oregon Short Line railroad.

Two years later, in 1889, he discontinued the small operations and constructed the first sawmill located at Baker, Oregon, at the same time incorporating the company under the name of The Oregon Lumber Co. This was among the few pine mills in this country.

Prior to the incorporation of Oregon Lumber Co. Mr. Eccles had secured the timber holdings which today are still supplying logs for the pine operations of the company. Available timber land was unlimited at the time and Mr. Eccles' sound judgment in securing the middle fork of the John Day River tract has been amply proven by more than 40 years of continuous operation.

In 1891 Mr. Eccles decided to expand his operation to include the manufacture of Douglas fir as well as ponderosa pine, or Oregon white pine as it was called at that time, and located a shipping point at Viento, Oregon. The lumber shipped from that point was milled at Chenowith, Washington, and flumed to the Columbia River, from where it was transported by barges to the Viento shipping point on the Oregon side of the river. This rather complicated system was

necessary because there was no railroad on the Washington side of the river at that time.

In 1903 Mr. Eccles purchased the Lost Lake Lumber Co. with operations at Hood River, Oregon, and in the same year purchased timber and started a mill operation at Ingles, Oregon, on the lower Columbia River, as part of the Lost Lake Lumber Co. In 1905 Lost Lake Lumber Co. was merged with Oregon Lumber Co., with operations at the several points mentioned above.

Oregon Lumber Co. had large holdings of Douglas fir timber located around the base of Mount Hood, and in 1906 built a mill at Dee, Oregon, discontinuing the operations at Hood River and Chenowith-Viento. This mill was originally constructed for the production of ties and timber, and it was with this type of business in mind that the timber was selected. In 1913 the mill at Dee was destroyed by fire and a modern mill for production of all types of lumber was built in its place.

At the present time Oregon Lumber Co. has an annual capacity of better than 150,000,000 feet of "Mt. Hood" Douglas fir and hemlock, and "John Day" ponderosa pine. The company has operated continuously since its inception, and has been through all those years controlled by the estate of the original founder.

At the present time Oregon Lumber Co. has approximately 3,000,000,000 feet of timber tributary to its operations, and is, according to the classification of the forestry department of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, a perpetual operation, meaning that the natural growth of the forest tributary to its operations is sufficient to replace the timber cut and manufactured into lumber.

The quality of the pine timber located along the middle fork of John Day River is known all over the country, and is the principal reason for the splendid quality and texture of "John Day" ponderosa pine. This timber grows at an altitude of from 4000 to 5000 feet, under ideal soil and climatic conditions.

Timber on the base of Mount Hood is a slow growth type of Douglas fir, developing an excellent quality of dimension and struc-

tural lumber having a greater number of annual rings to the inch than the general run of Douglas fir.

James N. Canse became associated with the company in 1890, one year after its incorporation, starting to work in the general office, located at that time at Ogden, Utah. From 1890 to the present Mr. Canse has been continuously employed by Oregon Lumber Co., and in the 43 years has capably and loyally represented the company. He has occupied positions of various capacities and responsibilities and at present is district sales manager, in charge of the Portland sales office. Mr. Canse is known and highly regarded by the trade throughout the United States.

### Pine Operations Start Under Code

**D**ETERMINATION of pine producers of the Pacific Greater West to support the lumber code and the NRA administration in the spirit of give and take for the general good of the country, was an outstanding feature of the mass meeting of pine producers held in Klamath Falls, Oregon, August 29-31, under the auspices of the Western Pine Association. R. R. Macartney, president of the association, presided. B. W. Lakin, former president, opened the meeting by outlining the work of those who prepared the lumber code and presented it for the signature of President Roosevelt. Mr. Macartney also related some of his experiences. Following this the code, paragraph by paragraph, was discussed under the guidance of David T. Mason, manager. The lumber code authority has assigned to the Western Pine Division a production quota of 750,000,000 feet for the three-month period beginning September 1. "This arrangement is equivalent to approximately 40 hours per week for 13 weeks," said Mr. Mason. "However, in this allotment of total hours there is no limitation upon any concern as to the distribution of its plant operation during the three-month period, so long as 525 hours of operation is not exceeded; but it should be fully understood that this allotment of sawmill hours in no way affects the rules relating to maximum hours for employes. Notification will be given if a change is made by the code authority, or if it becomes evident later that the total hours may safely be increased, or that a decrease is necessary." The Western Pine Association in order to administer the code and serve all pine producers in the territory assigned to it, whether members of the association or not, proposes to revise and liberalize its articles of association. Approximately 200 manufacturers were present at the general meeting. The semi-annual meeting of the association will be held in Portland, Oregon, September 22, when the revised articles of association will be presented for approval. It is also proposed that the association be incorporated.

Furthermore, it is proposed to set up branch offices of the association in Albuquerque, New Mexico; Klamath Falls, Oregon; San Francisco, California, and Yakima, Washington, and to employ a sufficient force to carefully and fully administer the code. It is proposed that 12 cents per thousand feet of production shall be paid for code administration and that in addition, members of the association pay for dues three cents per thousand feet on production.

A series of district meetings are to be held at which the code and its application will be discussed. Also it is planned, prior to the semi-annual meeting, to set up on a provisional basis, the organization of each district by the election of five to nine directors, the election of a chairman and secretary of the board of directors, and of district representatives of the association board of directors, so far as necessary to fill vacancies resulting from the enlargement of the association board by the revision of the articles of association. The organization into districts is to permit prompt handling of code matters

and the application of self-government by those most fully conversant with the situation in each district.

It was explained at the hearing that plants may operate under two codes; that is, an organization with a box factory should operate the box factory under the box code, but the sawmill and the planing mill will come under the sawmill code. It was pointed out that a pole and piling code is being drawn up separately and firms which log cedar poles and piling will have that part of their activities come under the code.

### An Historical Trail

**I**T IS interesting to note by an examination of the records of Wahkiakum County that the Cathlamet operation of Crown-Willamette Paper Co.'s camp is in the general location of a wagon road projected in 1854 by the territorial government of Washington. An act was passed relating to the building of a road from Cathlamet to the home of Sidney S. Ford, in Thurston County, and a survey was made. The detailed report of the surveying party indicates that the estimated cost of building 19 miles of road in Wahkiakum County was \$150 per mile. The 13 miles in Lewis County was calculated on an equal basis. The Thurston County section of the proposed line was already constructed. The report stated the cost of road building did not include bridge construction. One can scarcely realize the changes in the cost of road construction which have taken place in Wahkiakum County, the second smallest political subdivision in the state of Washington, while traversing the beautiful Ocean Beach Highway, where for a distance of about 12 miles the road skirts the towering bluffs of the Columbia River and the construction costs were approximately \$100,000 per mile. But this is in the New Deal era of 1933—not in the misty past of 1854. But hats off to these sturdy old pioneer trail blazers!

The writer remembers when he published the *Cathlamet Gazette* in 1889, the year Washington was admitted to statehood, he advocated the bonding of Wahkiakum County for \$30,000 to build roads. The plan contemplated the installation of two portable sawmills to cut four-inch plank

to be spiked to hewn logs to get out of the mud. But the idea never got beyond the germinating stage. The urge for highways permitting communication by land and to obviate the exclusive use of the Columbia and its tributaries which threaded the fertile valleys of the Elokoman, Skamokawa, Crooked Creek, Grays River and Deep River, never ceased until the Ocean Beach Highway was constructed.

George T. Allan, an old Hudson Bay official, who had the distinction of writing the manifest for the first cargo of lumber ever shipped from Fort Vancouver by the Hudsons Bay Company in 1834, sat in his armchair at Cathlamet, smoking his pipe and dreaming of the building of two highways traversing the banks of the Mighty River of the West, where the equipages of the nobility would travel. Mr. Allan dreamed dreams which came true, as on both the north and south banks of the Columbia River highways lead to the Pacific Ocean.

Pacific Logging Congress will make an excursion to the Cathlamet camps of Crown-Willamette Paper Co. on October 26, traversing the old routes blazed by the pioneers of the Evergreen state and absorbing the atmosphere of these early days. The records show that Mr. Allan was elected county commissioner at a special election in 1868, when the population numbered less than 20 people.—GEO. M. CORNWALL.



JAMES N. CANSE  
District Sales Manager Oregon Lumber Co.

GOLD BEACH, Ore., Sept. 15.—W. C. Tremley has erected his second sawmill about 14 miles from Gold Beach. He expects to cut 500,000 feet of Port Orford cedar during next three months. The lumber will be barged to Gold Beach and trucked to Coos Bay.