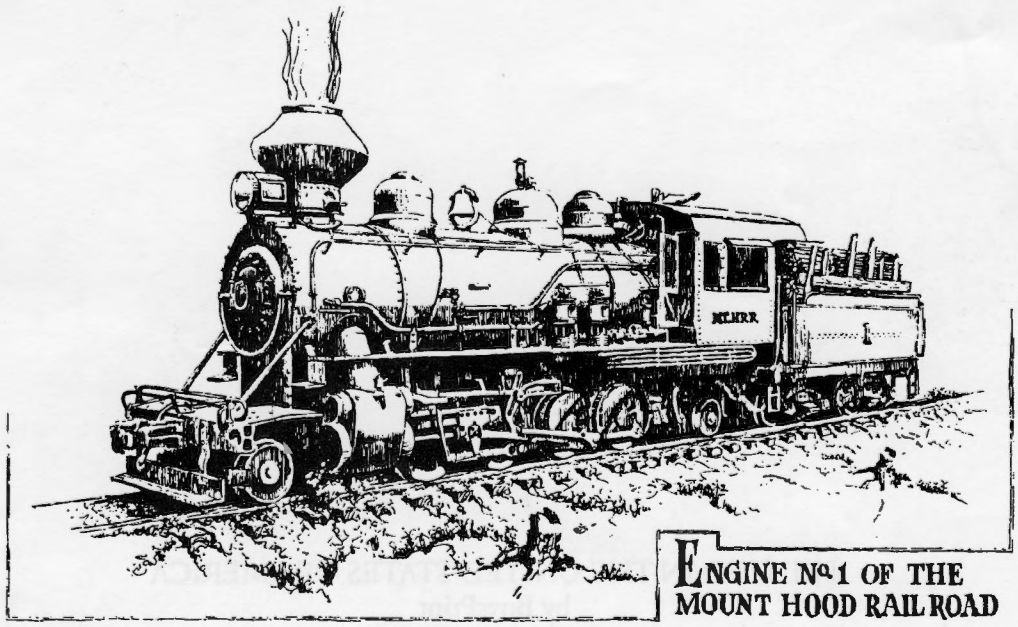
SWITCHBACK TO THE TIMBER

A History of the Mount Hood Railroad
and the
Oregon Lumber Company



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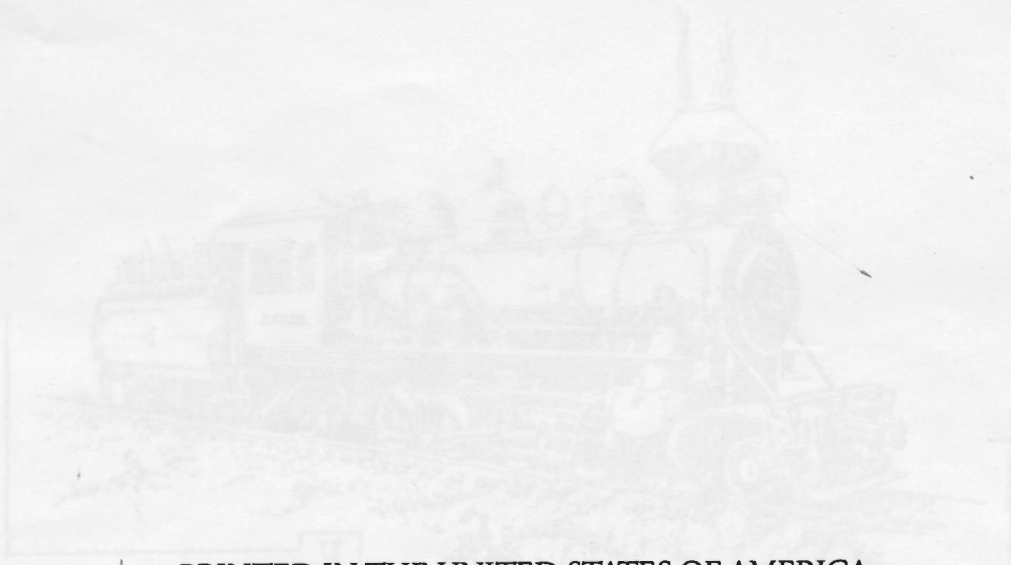

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Cover and frontpiece drawing of Mount Hood Number 1 (1922-1955) by Richard C. Pope — Retired Department Head, University of Alabama, Art Department, Huntsville, Alabama.

PREFACE

The narrative that follows started sometime in 1980 or 1981 when it was rumored the Union Pacific Railroad was going to file an application to abandon its branch line, the Mount Hood Railway. I had more than a passing acquaintance with the little railroad. As manager of the Neal Creek sawmill, I found it necessary at times of car shortages to beg, cajole or plead with the Mount Hood agent, Brice Nebeker, and eventually the U.P. powers in Portland for more flats on which to ship lumber. The railroad line runs from the town of Hood River, on the Columbia River, generally south to the little town of Parkdale, a distance of about 26 miles.

When abandonment rumors began circulating the road was seemingly on its last legs. Six miles of track from Dee to Parkdale had not been used since the closure of the Parkdale fruit packing plant several years earlier. Roadbed and track had deteriorated from neglect to a point where it was no longer safe for the slow moving freights. When the recession of the early 1980's hit the lumber industry, Champion International Corporation decided to close its sawmill at Neal Creek (Lentz) and the Dee hardboard plant. The only significant shipper left on the line was Hanel Lumber Company. Train service had dropped from daily service to twice or three times a week and the end seemed imminent. However, the local Port Authority prevailed on the Union Pacific to delay their plans while an attempt was made to purchase the line or to find a buyer. The Union Pacific acquiesced, set a price and the line eventually passed back into local ownership. It has now been in continual operation for more than 85 years, quite a record considering it was built for the sole purpose of serving one sawmill.

When research found the Mount Hood had been built by the Oregon Lumber Company it was almost like finding an old friend. In 1948, as a young forester, working for Edward Hines Lumber Company out of Hines, Oregon I came to know something about the pine operations of Oregon Lumber. The Seneca Division of Edward Hines was in the Malheur National Forest, on the south side of the upper John Day River valley and the Oregon Lumber Company was across the valley at Bates and Austin in the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. Just before leaving Hines for the Douglas-fir region of western Oregon I heard that Edward Hines was interested in acquiring Oregon Lumber. My superior, the chief forester, even spent time examining their timber holdings around Dee. Nothing transpired at that time and a sale was not consummated until five or six years later.

Because my interest centered around the Mount Hood this work is primarily about the company operations in the vicinity of Dee, Oregon and the Columbia River. A description of company activities in the eastern Oregon pine country out of Baker must wait for another time.

In attempting to follow the history of Oregon Lumber Company during the past years the trail has taken me, and a very understanding wife, to a number of locations in Oregon, Utah, Montana, Washington and Idaho in search of abandoned millsites. A most memorable incident took place one hot summer day in remote Elk Canyon west of Hailey, Idaho. While looking for evidence of old logging or sawmilling I wandered, unknowingly, into the center of a large band of sheep. Quite suddenly I was confronted by the herder on horseback. By signs he indicated he did not much care for my presence in the middle of his flock. I attempted to explain, but it took some doing; he was recently from Chile and spoke very little English and I spoke even less Spanish.

In the course of my quest I have received assistance from a number of helpful people that must be mentioned: Mrs. Aileen Eccles Gaddy, who patiently answered my questions about her family and her grandfather; John Murray, conductor on Mount Hoods' last Number 1; Kathleen Nichols, formerly on the Hood River museum board; Russ Curtis, a previous employee of Oregon Lumber and past resident of Dee; A.C. Lighthall Jr., for information about his father and the last days of Oregon Lumber; Mrs. Leland Flint, Fred Taylor, Bill Mays, D.S. Richter, W.C. (Dutch) Hendricks and all the librarians at the Hood River County Library that tracked down many of the books listed in the bibliography, and last, but not least my very

patient typist, Ann Pope Foster of Anchorage, Alaska.

Although I have attempted to be as accurate as possible I have not footnoted sources. I detest footnotes and refuse to chase *Op cits* and *Loc cits* that break up a chain of thought. In the bibliography a very brief description has been given as to what any particular text contributed to the story. I hope this will be suffice to anyone with an interest serious enough to pursue the subject further. Such a procedure is not possible with the local newspapers published at the time, as I have drawn on many issues. The *Hood River Glacier* was published from June, 1888 until November, 1933 and was a main source for the early period. Where possible, facts have been double checked against the *Hood River News,* which first saw life as the *News-Letter* in October, 1905 and is still published. Both papers were weeklies. A third paper was published for a time; the *Hood River Sun.* This paper started as a weekly in August or September of 1935, changed to a daily in 1949 and expired in August of 1952. One thing should be mentioned about early small town newspapers. To anyone reading old issues it soon becomes evident in earlier times reporters must have thought their readers knew everyone in town and they also knew the location of everything. So when Mr. Jones' mill burned there was no need to explain which Mr. Jones had suffered the loss or to give the location of the mill, or tell if it was a sawmill, a planing mill, grist mill or a flouring mill. Evidently it was assumed the subscribers knew, and most likely they did, but 100 years later the lack of detail is frustrating. The same is true of old photographs, all too often identification and dating is a guessing game. Many times only the relation of one known object or structure provides a clue to a time period or the identity of a place. In too many cases people and places must remain unknown.

While confident all facts are reasonably correct, their interpretation and what actions may have been taken because of such events are mine alone. I have attempted to look at the history of Oregon Lumber Company as one with forty years experience in the wood products industry, first as a forester then eventually as a sawmill and plywood plant manager, and to cast events in what seems a logical and reasonable manner.

Clem L. Pope
Hood River, Oregon
December, 1991

THE EARLY DAYS — SCOTLAND TO UTAH

The history of the Oregon Lumber Company and its feeder railroads, the Sumpter Valley Railroad and the Mount Hood Railroad is basically the story of one man . . . David Eccles. Born in Scotland May 12th, 1849 in the midst of abject poverty he became one of the first millionaires in the western United States. At the time of his death he was an officer or on the board of directors of numerous industrial, banking, and livestock organizations in Utah, Oregon, California, Wyoming and Idaho. His estate in 1912, was valued at approximately $4,500,000 by the family for Utah inheritance tax purposes. It is very possible that the actual valuation could have been much more. Some concept of the size of this tremendous fortune can be gained when compared to the fact that in 1912 a letter could be mailed anywhere in the United States for one cent.

The ability to amass such a fortune becomes more impressive when realized it was done in a period of less than thirty years by a man that had only about six months schooling. At the age of about 22 he had been demoted from a job of weighing and totaling the weights of loaded cars in a coal mine because he was unable to handle the mathematics involved. The story of David Eccles is truly one that would have inspired Horatio Alger.

Articles of Association for the Oregon Lumber Company were signed by David Eccles and his friends during the latter part of 1889, but the true beginning of the company may be said to have started on February 5th in 1842 when his father William and his grandmother Margaret Miller Eccles accepted the teachings of Joseph Smith and became members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

The Mormons in America began sending missionaries to Great Britain in about 1840. Their success had been limited, but in Scotland there were some converts and Margaret Eccles was one of the first to open her home to the missionaries. Scotland, and most particularly the industrialized cities, was suffering from the questionable benefits of the Industrial Revolution. Poverty was rampant and living conditions squalid, but people continued to migrate from the country into the teeming cities. There were dozens of workers available for every job. Needless to say factory owners made the most of the situation, wages were minimal and working conditions in factories abysmal. Into these wretched conditions came Mormon missionaries preaching not only of a Paradise after Death, but a Paradise on Earth, and such a place was to be found in Utah.

On May 5, 1843 William Eccles, at the age of 18, married Sarah Hutchinson, an Irish immigrant. Shortly thereafter his mother left for America and the promised land. She arrived in New Orleans in October of 1843, and traveled up the Mississippi to Nauvoo, Illinois. Passage from Liverpool was granted in return for her services as a mid-wife. It may have been that Margaret Eccles felt one woman was enough for her son to support and there was good reason for her concern. William was partially blind with cataracts, it was only much later in life that he was to regain partial vision as a result of a successful cataract removal from one eye. Evidently in his youth his sight was sufficient to learn the use of a wood-turning lathe, but as he grew older most of his sight had to be in his fingers.

By 1860 William and Sarah Eccles had seven children and the Promised Land seemed no closer than it had been eighteen years previously. There was one faint ray of hope. In 1849 the Church established the Perpetual Immigration Fund to bring worthy converts from the Old World. It was expected the expense be shared, and any help from the Church was to be repaid at some later date. It was not a free ticket. Where was a blind wood worker going to accumulate enough for even a small portion of the expense of nine passages?

In those early times it was expected, and demanded, all members of a family contribute to its well-being as soon as possible. As a matter of course then, John and David, the oldest of the five boys and two girls, were out on the Glasgow streets at an early age hawking, door-to-door, the products of their fathers' lathe. In addition, David worked as a porter and sold trinkets purchased from a wholesaler. Evidently the two boys did well enough as the family eventually received a grant from the

Immigrant Fund. That, along with their small savings, was enough to permit the entire family to purchase passage to America. There must not have been a lot to hinder their departure, two days after notification of the availability of funds the Eccles were in Liverpool ready to embark on the sailing ship *Cynosure.*

The transportation of Mormon converts from the Old World to their new home in Utah was done in a manner worthy of the best military organizations of today. The Fund would engage entire ships or entire decks if a full shipload was not available. Immigrants were advised as to the type and amounts of food required for the voyage, what kind of clothing would be needed and how much weight, if any, could be allowed for household items. The entire trip, by ship, train, steamboat, and wagon train, for several hundred people was planned down to the needs of the smallest child. There had never been anything like it before and there has been nothing to equal it since.

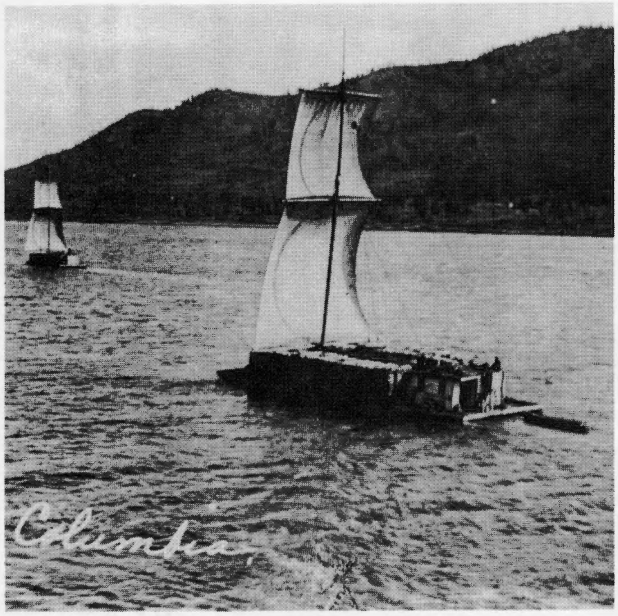
The *Cynosure* left Liverpool May 30, 1863 and arrived Castle Garden, New York on the first of July after a trip of 31 days, which was good time for the passage. At the time Castle Garden, a former fort, was the processing point for immigrants and it was here that arrangements were made for the train to Detroit via Canada. The Civil War was in progress and a more direct route was not feasible. Into Canada, crossing at Niagara Falls, thence to Detroit and on to Chicago. There a transfer to another train going south. It is at this point there are two stories about the next portion of the trip. One account has it that at Hannibal, Missouri, David, his brother John, and a friend, Thomas Cunningham, got off the train to stretch their legs and see the sights. As they stood on the platform the train pulled out, they were told not to be concerned it was merely switching. To their consternation the train continued on down the track and out of sight. The three boys were stranded with little or no money in a strange, half civilized country. Evidently this did not bother three streetwise Glasgow boys. In some manner they were able to cross the entire state of Missouri to St. Joseph, and thence up the Missouri River to rejoin the family at the jumping off point, Florance (Omaha), Nebraska. It is here the new Saints left the steamcars and began walking to their new homes in Utah. In this version of the story John Eccles decides to leave his brother at St. Joe and return to Scotland even though the family must have been short of funds.

In the second version the family is not separated but, John left them at St. Louis. He is 17 or 18 at this time, and hired out as a deck hand on a Mississippi river steamer supplying Union garrisons downstream. In both versions the method of transportation from Chicago is rather vague. But a clue is obtained in the account of Joseph Barton, a convert that preceded the Eccles. Joseph Barton came over in 1862, a year ahead of the Eccles, before the Civil War forced the detour into Canada. His route was by rail from Castle Garden to Albany then to Chicago, then south to Quincy, Illinois. From Quincy to Hannibal the trip was by steamboat, thence across Missouri to St. Joseph by rail and finally by steamboat to Florance, Nebraska. His group left Florance the first of August and arrived in Salt Lake City shortly after the fifth of October. The Eccles arrived in Salt Lake exactly one year later.

Thirty days from Castle Garden to Florance, a family of eight, with a father almost completely blind; it must have been a tremendous burden for fourteen year old David. The immigrants were met at Florance by a wagon train sent from Utah, but it was only to carry their belongings and added supplies. There was no room for riders, for the rest of the trip it was walking only. Once again it was attention to detail that made the trip bearable. These were no chaotic, raggle taggle wagon trains. The leaders were experienced men that knew where they were going and the best way to get there. Crossing the open plains of Nebraska and Wyoming should have prepared everyone for the Great Basin country, but it still must have been something of a surprise to the former inhabitants of the Glasgow slums; it was for the Eccles. Brought up in an urban environment and then placed in an agrarian society for which they had no skills, the first few years were exceedingly difficult. While they did not starve or freeze, the entire family was always on the brink of disaster.

Shortly after the family was settled in the vicinity of Logan, William secured a lathe from somewhere and began producing kitchen utensils from native timber. This meant David once again took to the road, but there was little hard cash in the Mormon society and much trade was in kind.

Hood River in 1882 by noted photographer Carlton E. Watkins. Obviously Watkins found the first bridge across the river more impressive than the few scattered houses on the slope above the Columbia. However, the location did warrant an OR&N station; it is the two story structure visible just over the top of the bridge. The railroad would eventually build two more bridges across Hood River, another wood one and a steel one that is still in use. Each succeeding bridge was built a little further downstream easing the track curvature out of town. In left center, just at the toe of a bluff, a spur track can be seen. Seventeen years later this would be the location of the Mount Hood Railroad mainline. (OHS Neg. 21636)



Long before wind-surfers or board sailors took over the Columbia River Gorge wood scows sailed unassisted upriver to The Dalles. Larger scows could carry as much as 200 cords of wood which was in great demand at The Dalles for fire wood in the homes and as fuel for the steamboats working the upper Columbia in barren eastern Oregon and Washington. (Courtesy of Winifred Flippen.)

Often the children labored in the fields for neighbors and it was grain David had received for his labor that saved them all from starvation one winter. They had been promised Paradise on Earth, but they had little more than they had in Glasgow. It was not just the Eccles; their cousins, the Moyses, who had joined them were no better off. They had come a year or so after the Eccles and were also continually on the edge of starvation; their lot had not improved and after several years they tried to persuade the Eccles to join them and return to Scotland. William would not consider such an undertaking. The Moyses then suggested moving to Oregon, they had heard fabulous stories of new woolen mills being built on the Willamette River at Oregon City. Being weavers by trade these rumors must have been a new dream come true. William remained hesitant, he took his new faith seriously and did not want to leave, but it was obvious his family was in jeopardy and something had to be done. He finally gave in to the Moyses and agreed to go for two years, but only to accumulate a stake. There is no record how church elders felt about such a decision and it seems unlikely William would undertake such action without permission to return. In view of the dire straits of both families it may be the elders welcomed the proposal. Certainly no one in the two families had skills of immediate value to the Mormons and it was just possible they might bring back some badly needed cash. Such a system of working out and then returning was to be of great importance to the Morman society a few years hence, but it was not yet a common practice. And the entire family would not go, only male members would leave, sending back their earnings to the womenfolk.

Once again there are two versions to the journey to Oregon. The first is that David went alone, labored mightily, supplying the mill at Oregon City with so much wood that he worked himself out of a job and returned home with four hundred dollars which he turned over to his mother for safekeeping.

The second version is somewhat more plausible. Both families, the Eccles with a cart and a yoke of oxen and the Moyses with a team and wagon, started for Oregon in April of 1867. David would have been about 18 and the trip was to greatly influence his later life. The journey was expected to take three months, but the travelers did not get to Oregon City until December, some eight months later. The lack of funds required they stop and work along the way, even so there must not have been any pressure to reach their destination.

For once Fortune smiled on the two families. The Eccles secured a contract to supply wood for the woolen mill and the Moyses, working as weavers, soon saved enough money to supplement the Perpetual Emigration Fund so three more of the Moyses family could come to America. The financial health of the Eccles improved so much that William, along with a hired man, journeyed to San Francisco, to try and raise money for an invention of his for making cloth with a mangle. Nothing came of the idea, but it does illustrate the improved circumstances of the Eccles. It is also suggested that during this period David went to Puget Sound and worked in the Pope and Talbot sawmill at Port Gamble for $75.00 a month. If true, he saw some of the most magnificent stands of timber the world has known and worked in one of the first large sawmills on the West Coast.

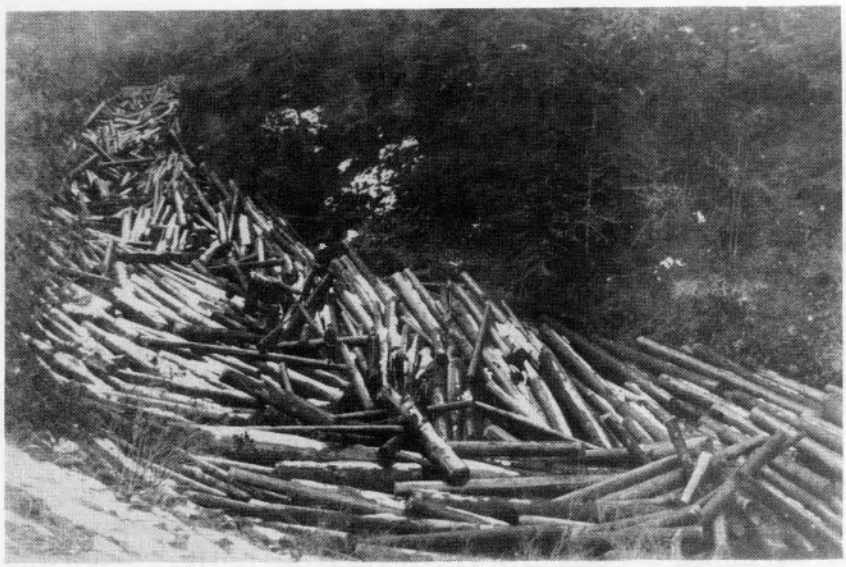
At the end of two years William was ready to return to Utah. There was some problem with the

Moyses, evidently they thought Oregon had more to offer than life in the great desert, but eventually they gave in to the exhortations of William and the entire group made a rather uneventful trip home through Central Oregon, returning sometime during the summer of 1869.

Conditions had changed considerably for the Mormons during the short period the Eccles had been in Oregon. Paradise was about to be overrun with Gentiles. The railroad had come, and like it or not, Ogden and Salt Lake were centers of activity.

The golden spike connecting the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads had been driven at Promontory Point May 10, 1869 and the first shovel full of sod for the Utah Central was turned by President Brigham Young on May 17th, hardly a week later. The Latter-Day Saints were not novices in the business of building railroads. With a constant need to replace cash that was continually flowing eastward for supplies they could not produce or grow themselves, the Church elders had taken sizable grading contracts with both the Central and Union Pacific. In September 1868 they had agreed with the Central Pacific to build the grade from the Utah-Nevada border to Weber Canyon. The contractors were Ezra Taft Benson, an apostle from Cache Valley; Lorin Farr, the mayor of Ogden and Chauncey W. West, bishop of the Ogden area. Earlier, in May of the same year, several agreements had been made with the Union Pacific to build a grade from the Utah-Wyoming line to the shores of the Great Salt Lake, undoubtedly the most difficult section of construction on the entire Union Pacific line. Contractors for the job were Bishop John Sharp, acting superintendent of public works for Utah; Joseph, Brigham Jr. and John W. Young, sons of Brigham Young and Joseph F. Nounan, a Gentile businessman of Salt Lake City. The contracts that had been signed with the Union Pacific totaled approximately $2,250,000, but the Saints never saw all of their money. Of the total amount only $750,000 was actually paid in cash, for the balance church leaders had to accept iron and rolling stock that had been used in building the transcontinental line. Evidently Brigham Young, in his disgust for the integrity of U.P. officials, felt this might, after all,

River drive on Hood River sometime around 1900. Note the length of the handles on the peaveys — at least six feet in length. A 'white water' man could get some leverage with those toothpicks. Peavey handles today are generally not more than 4 1/2 feet long. (Standow Traveling Studio, courtesy of Dr. Elwood Hutson.)



If you look closely loggers with their peaveys can be seen standing in the middle of this log jam. The only thing going to move this pile-up is a surge of water released from a splash dam upstream. Even then it seems doubtful these logs will ever get to a sawmill. (Courtesy of William Runckel.)

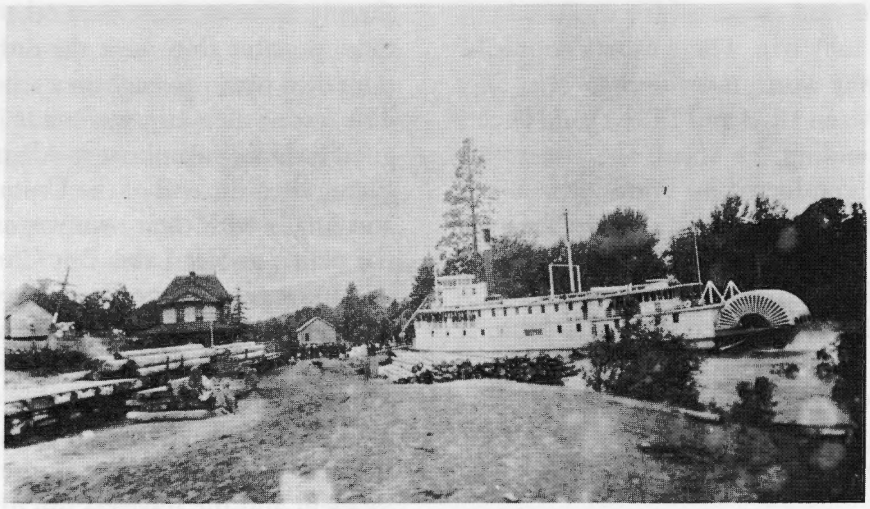
be the best and only way to get a railroad from Ogden to the capital city at Salt Lake.

In retrospect it seems strange David had not been caught up in all the excitement generated by the coming of the railroad, but on return to the family homestead he spent most of his time getting them settled and ready for the coming winter. He was close to 21 now and he had plans to strike out on his own hauling freight from Aspen, Wyoming, on the newly constructed Union Pacific, to mining settlements at South Pass. The route was across 170 miles of some of the most desolate, windswept terrain in the Rockies. David did not return to the homestead at Eden, Utah until the spring of 1871, and it is surprising that he continued with the freighting job as long as he did. The Wyoming summers are not a lot better than the winters, the wind never stops blowing, but the snow does disappear for a short period.

Not one to sit idle long, David soon obtained a contract to cut and deliver logs to a sawmill located on Wheeler Creek where it joined the Ogden River.

With the stake he had built from his earnings as a teammaster in Wyoming he purchased a yoke of oxen. He was in business for himself at last, but it did not last long. Skidding a turn of logs down a steep slope, the ground gave way, the oxen slid and in the accident both animals were killed. It may have been here that David developed his preference for horses when skidding or yarding logs; it was his contention they were faster, more agile, easier to control and most assuredly smarter than oxen. Out of business, David was again seeking work and in the fall of 1871 he was back in Wyoming, this time working in a coal mine owned by the Union Pacific. His pay was $2.50 per ten hour day turning a hand windless, hauling cars out of the mine. Anxious to rebuild his stake, he worked the windless as long and often as possible. His continual drive did not go unnoticed and he was advanced to the position of tallyman, but he was unable to handle the paper work and was returned to his previous job on the windless. It must have been a devastating blow to the young man to realize he was only worth what his brawn could earn, never his brain.

With his savings from a winter's work at the coal mine, David turned to logging once again. This time he contracted with David James to supply logs to his sawmill in Wasatch Mountains near the headwaters of the Ogden River. James had a retail yard in Ogden and his sawmill was managed by Henry E. Gibson and W.T. VanNoy. This time however, the job was such that David could not do it all and he had to hire four men to keep up with the demands of the little mill. The year 1872 was a good one. The mill never lacked for logs, David made a profit of $1,500 and Gibson and VanNoy were so impressed with his ability they invited him to join with them the following summer to buy their own sawmill. David was elated, but succumbing to his mother and perhaps to the blandishments of his brother John, who had suddenly



Record high water during the 1894 flood allowed the steamer *Regulator* to dock near the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company station at Hood River. The station was later replaced with the one presently used by the Mount Hood Railroad. By 1894 the OR&N had connected with the Northern Pacific in eastern Washington and transcontinental travel was available in the Northwest. The photograph is reputed to have been taken by the young purser, Fred Wilson. Wilson later became a well known jurist on the local Circuit Court. (Hood River Museum.)

appeared at the family homestead, he was persuaded to lend the $1,500 to John and underwrite his venture into a furniture business. Again David's capital disappeared, but he did not intend to miss out on a chance to share a partnership in a sawmill. Once more he turned to freighting. With a cousin, John Inglis, he took a contract to haul supplies to new mines opening up at Pioche, Nevada. On the first trip they were hit by a fierce winter storm and two of the oxen died, once again these ungainly beasts had let David down. However, he was able to rent two animals and fulfill his obligations. He did not make enough during the winter to pay his share of the sawmill, but was able to secure the rest in the form of a loan from Warren Childs, an Ogden merchant.

The partners erected the new mill in the Monte Cristo area close to the James mill they had run the previous summer. If David's winter had been bad, his summer could not have been better. Gibson and VanNoy ran the mill, sold the cut lumber to Barnard White, an Ogden lumber dealer, and David took care of the logging. Before the summer was over the partners decided they were doing so well they purchased a retail yard in Ogden. It was agreed David would be responsible for the logging and the sawmill while Gibson and VanNoy would go to Ogden to manage the new acquisition. This arrangement was to last until 1877 at which time W.T. VanNoy withdrew and took the sawmill as a portion of his share in the partnership, Gibson and Eccles kept the retail yard. The remaining partners then purchased another mill and moved it to Monte Cristo in the vicinity of the original mill now owned by VanNoy.

The dual partnership struggled along for several more years but it was doomed, Gibson and Eccles just did not get along and in 1881 the partnership was dissolved. Each of the partners retained $15,000; Gibson kept the retail yard and David the sawmill in the hills. He was convinced, however, of the logic and practicality of retailing his own product and his first action was to purchase or establish another retail yard under the name of David Eccles & Company. His belief in retailing lumber was never to diminish during his lifetime. As the David Eccles & Company grew and absorbed others it eventually became Eccles Lumber Company, the base of the Eccles fortune. This was his first sole ownership and it was here he maintained his office. He would have other offices as time went on and his empire grew, but if you wanted to see David Eccles you went to his office at the Eccles Lumber Company.

From logger to yard owner with a multitude of employees was a long trip. There were a couple of stops along the way worth mentioning.

Sometime between 1873 and 1881 David Eccles obtained his schooling, he spent one winter attending a school conducted by Professor Louis F. Moench. Generally this period is given as the winter of 1872-73, but this is also the same winter David was freighting to the Pioche mines to replace the $1,500 that had been loaned to John. It seems doubtful both activities could have taken place the same winter, but the exact time is really immaterial. It is known that David did attend the classes and it was here he met the girl that was to be his first wife.

If David Eccles can be said to have come from the very bottom of Glasgow society, Bertha Marie Jenson was from the other pole of Danish society. The difference between them could not have been greater. Bertha's father was a wealthy land owner and she was the only one of four children that survived childhood. Her mother died when Bertha was only two and she was reared by her stepmother Karen Peterson. It is said opposites attract and this was proof of the old axiom.

The Jensons came to Utah in 1867 in a style sharply different than most other immigrants. It is quite possible they were the only converts to pay their own ocean passage on a scheduled steamship. The rest of their trip was made in much the same good fashion; steamboat to Albany, train to North Platte, then the end of the Union Pacific Railroad, and finally with their own wagon and oxen across the plains to Salt Lake. But Christian Jensen was not unaware of the needs of others in his party and did much to assist those not so well off. From the North Platte River the caravan consisted of six or seven hundred people and this was the first time help had not been sent from Utah to assist and aid the newcomers. Fortunately the trip was without incident and the travelers did not suffer the hardships of previous crossings.

The advantages of Jensen's previous life was for naught once Salt Lake was reached. The family was assigned a small log cabin with a sod roof in the vicinity of Huntsville. The change in lifestyle was striking, but it did not last long. Jensen was as industrious as any of the others and he soon moved the family into a new brick home. The language barrier was of no consequence to young Bertha and she was soon included in all social gatherings of the small community. It was at one of the local

Photographs of David Eccles and Charles Nibley that appeared in the 1897 booklet issued by the Browning Photo Company of Portland. Underwritten by the Oregon Lumber Company it described milling and logging operations at Mill A in Washington and at Viento, Oregon. (Browning Photo Company from authors collection.)

dances that she encountered her previous classmate from Professor Moench's school. It is quite likely the two young people had encountered one another from time to time in such a small community, but it was from this point that David became seriously interested in Bertha. With his responsibilities at the mill he did not press his case and it was not until the summer of 1875 that he proposed. Bertha must have seen something in this logger from the hills and on December 27, 1875 they were married in the temple of the Latter-Day Saints in Salt Lake City. At the time of their marriage David was 26 and Bertha a month away from her eighteenth birthday. Things were looking up for David, the partnership with Gibson and VanNoy was profitable and it would be another two years before the three partners would decide to split. He had ample time to establish a home for his new wife in Ogden before assuming the entire responsibilities of a sole proprietorship.

In 1881, at the time of his split with Gibson, Eccles had retained the sawmill at Monte Cristo, but better opportunities were becoming available elsewhere. The sawmill was moved to Scofield, Utah, some 150 miles south and east of Salt Lake in the vicinity of coal fields being opened by the westward progress of the Rio Grande Western Railroad. Before long Eccles had several portable sawmills in the area under the supervision of his cousin John Inglis. His brother Stewart also joined him at Scofield with a shingle mill previously purchased from the Eccles-Gibson partnership. Before the venture was over the brothers added a general store and another lumber yard. Stewart did not remain active in the business very long, he was called by the church for a mission and was sent to Scotland for twenty-six months.

However, David did not devote all of his time to the Scofield or Ogden operations. Silver had been discovered in 1879 on the Wood River in Idaho and in 1881 Eccles made a trip to the region to look over the prospects. The possibilities looked even better when the Union Pacific Railroad announced it was building a line through Idaho to the West Coast and on July of 1881 actually began moving dirt at Granger, Wyoming. In a move that was to set a pattern for later expansions Eccles searched out a successful sawmill operator already established in the mining area and bought into the business. Almost without exception the early mills were small installations operating on a shoestring, moving from place to place, wherever the timber was better or easier to get to, or wherever the lumber might command a little better price. For the addition of extra capital most mill owners were willing to share their headaches. In this instance A.D. Quantrell, a Swiss immigrant, was quite willing to take on a partner, especially one that knew the business. The association was a success from the start. When the timber in Grays Gulch, in the vicinity of Hailey, Idaho, was exhausted the mill was moved to Elk Creek, three miles east of Bullion. The timber was not much, short limby Douglas fir, growing along the draws, but the demand was so great the new partners ordered a larger sawmill and added a planer. They were encouraged by the fact that the Oregon Short Line (subsidiary of the Union Pacific) interrupted its march westward during the winter of 1882 in order to build a spur to Hailey (and eventually Sun Valley). The line reached Ketchum in May of 1883. The boom died about the time the railroad got to town and Eccles already had his next move planned. The partnership split, each taking out about $50,000. Quantrell went into the cattle business around Idaho Falls and Eccles moved the mill equipment to Beaver Canyon, Idaho, on the Utah and Northern Railroad near the Idaho-Montana border.

David Eccles was not the first sawmill owner to set up in Beaver Canyon. William F. Rigby was probably the first, followed by the Stoddard brothers, VanNoy and finally Eccles. The timber supply was not abundant, but more than adequate for the small mills. Attracted by the construction of the Utah and Northern Railroad, Rigby probably cut ties and bridge stringers for the railroad. According to one of his first sawyers, Phineus Anderson, a LDS convert that came all the way from Kansas seeking work with his cousin, the sawmilling was seasonal only, lasting about seven months of the year. Rigby pulled out in 1884, moving his mill to Rexburg shortly after Eccles arrived. Local papers at Eagle Rock (Idaho Falls) reported that in 1884 the Beaver Canyon mills had cut 12,000,000 board feet of hard mountain pine and that they expected to cut 15,000,000 board feet in 1885. With this latest move Eccles did not need to buy into one of the existing mills, but he did need a manager, in time he would have three mills in the vicinity of Monida, Montana. He convinced H. H. Spencer,

an associate in Ogden, to oversee the job. With the completion of the Utah and Northern in 1881 (now the Utah Northern after a financial bail-out by the Union Pacific) the narrow gauge line stretched unbroken from Ogden to Garrison, Montana where it connected with the Northern Pacific. This was to be his carrier from the Idaho and Montana sawmills to the Ogden yards. A new lumber source was needed to supplement the dwindling supplies from the Scofield mills. Eccles was under pressure in Utah from government officials. The exact nature of the controversy is not clear, but it seems very likely there was growing objection to the widespread and indiscriminate cutting of government timber. There was little or no objection from the government when the settlers cut federal trees for their own use, but wholesale removal by a mill operator was not condoned. It was not entirely the loggers fault, as there was no legal way larger volumes of timber could be obtained. There was very little to purchase legally. The settlers homesteaded and proved up on a land claim that would grow crops, no one took up a timber claim. The only alternatives for the lumberman was to cut and move on. In an attempt to solve the conflict between millman and the government, Eccles organized a Lumberman's Convention in Logan in 1885, but to no avail. In 1886 the problem became so serious government officials attached the lumber inventory at Scofield; it was eventually released but it was a portent of what was to come.

Another of the federal restrictions that may have concerned Eccles, though there is no evidence that it hindered his activities to any degree, was the prohibition, in the 1878 Timber and Stone Act, against shipping finished lumber products between Territories. According to the statute it was illegal to ship timber from Beaver Canyon, Idaho to Ogden, Utah. However, the Act did allow shipment of finished products from a State, say Oregon to Utah. The handwriting was on the wall and David Eccles had already seen the moving finger.

Sometime in 1883 John Stoddard established a tie mill at North Powder, Oregon. It is not entirely clear if he was acting for Eccles or on his own, in any event, it was not long before Eccles became a major participant in the venture. It is necessary at this point to back track a bit to Utah. Marriner, David Eccles eldest son by his second wife, has written his father first met John Stoddard in Scofield, another report says their first meeting was in 1883 at Stoddard's home in Wellsville. It is also possible they met the winter of 1869-70 when David was freighting supplies from Aspen to South Pass. It was during this time Stoddard was managing a lumber camp in the vicinity of Aspen. Whenever and wherever they did meet, the two men became fast friends. They were practically two of a kind; both Scotsmen, both from the slums of Glasgow, both had an inordinate affinity for hard work and an unshakable belief in themselves and their abilities. Stoddard was the older of the two and one of the early immigrants to the Great Basin, arriving in 1850. By 1871 he had already taken four wives who eventually presented him with 32 offspring. David was attracted to Stoddard's daughter Ellen and the feeling was reciprocated. She evidently had no qualms about polygamy for the two were married secretly in Logan in January 1885; it was almost ten years exactly since Eccles first marriage to Bertha Jensen. Five more years would pass before the Mormon Church would prohibit plural marriages. David's second marriage was kept secret for fear of prosecution by Federal authorities for lewd cohabitation. It was not an idle threat, any number of Mormon men were sent to prison, others fled to isolated canyons in the southern part of the state, foregoing all worldly possessions to maintain their religious beliefs. John Stoddard eventually spent six or seven months in prison the winter of 1886-87 during which time Eccles supported his father-in-law's family.

From 1885 to 1889 it was particularly dangerous for Davis Eccles. He became involved in politics, served first as an Ogden alderman and was subsequently elected mayor. All when it was illegal for him to hold public office or to even vote. Ellen, as the second wife, was most circumspect in her relations with David and some members of her own family were unaware of their marriage. In order to further reduce the chance of exposure Eccles moved Ellen, her mother, a sister and several of her brothers to North Powder where her father operated the Oregon mill. From then on Ellen and her offspring would be known as the Logan or Oregon family and Bertha and her children would become the Ogden family. In time Bertha and David would have 12 siblings and

Ellen would add another nine.

David Eccles may not have cared for politics, but it was a critical time for the Mormons; their control of the local establishment was slipping away to the Gentiles. Strong candidates were needed and Eccles was one of the best. He was elected for two years as an alderman and did a creditable job. During the next election, while he was away from Ogden on business he was nominated for mayor and was elected. The race was close and he was the last Mormon mayor before effective control of local politics slipped from the grasp of church members. His accomplishments during his term of office were impressive, but he later admitted if he had been in town he would have refused the nomination.

After a few years the operations at Scofield were closed or sold, as were those at Beaver Canyon. Once again David Eccles was on to something bigger and better, his entire attention was turned to Oregon. The Oregon Short Line Railroad had been completed and transcontinental train service from Portland, Oregon to Chicago started on January 1, 1885.

The early development of the Eccles lumber empire in Oregon is not very clear but it is known that early on there were mills at North Powder, an old Scofield mill at Telocaset, several mills in Pleasant Valley managed by Frank Shurtliff and finally one at Baker City. H.H. Spencer came over from Beaver Canyon to manage part of the operation while John Stoddard went further west to start or purchase a mill at Hood River. There was also a flurry of incorporation; first Hall, Eccles & Company; then, Spencer, Ramsey & Hall, then finally in 1889, the Oregon Lumber Company. For this latter entity the principals were:

David Eccles	Ogden, Utah	570 shares
H.H. Spencer	Ogden, Utah	100 shares
C.W. Nibley	Logan, Utah	100 shares
John Stoddard	Hood River, Oregon	100 shares
William Eccles	North Powder, Oregon	50 shares
S. Williams	North Powder, Oregon	20 shares
Frank Shurtliff	Ogden, Utah	30 shares
Thomas D. Dee	Ogden, Utah	30 shares

Capitalization was for $250,000 divided into twenty-five hundred shares of $100.00 par value each. Eccles was president, Stoddard vice-president and Nibley secretary-treasurer. In 1904 capitalization was increased to one million dollars and the number of shares to ten thousand, par remained the same.

From the beginning at North Powder, Oregon Lumber Company was to become one of the largest corporations in the state. In the Blue Mountain yellow pine region of eastern Oregon there were to be mills at North Powder, Baker City, Pleasant Valley, Telocaset, Whitney, and Bates. The Mid-Columbia mills included several in the vicinity of Hood River, later, two near Chenowith, Washington and finally the big mill at Dee, Oregon. These latter mills were all on the eastern slope of the Cascades and cut predominately Douglas-fir. Further down the Columbia River, some 60 miles below Portland, was the Inglis mill, also in the Douglas-fir region. To serve the Baker mills the narrow gauge Sumpter Valley Railroad was built from Baker City over the Blues some 80 miles to Prairie City in the John Day River valley. For the mill at Dee the standard gauge Mount Hood Railroad was built 16½ miles from its junction with the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company at Hood River, thence extended a few years later another six miles south to reach the settlement of Parkdale. In addition to these common carriers the company had logging railroads at practically every location after the turn of the century.

As mentioned earlier, it was intended the scope of this effort be limited to the Mount Hood Railroad and to the company sawmill operations along the Columbia. The history of the Sumpter Valley narrow gauge is a story in itself as is the development of the eastern Oregon mills. It should be mentioned in passing, however, that once Eccles showed the way others from the Utah society were quick to follow. It is safe to say that for all practical purposes Mormon financiers controlled the lumber business of northeastern Oregon. They also moved into parts of California and acquired large tracts of redwood, some of which they held as investments and later sold, but a few they developed and liquidated themselves. The Mormons did much to aid in the settlement of eastern Oregon, but in the beginning the primary concern of the average worker was to earn hard cash to send home to families still in Utah and to accumulate enough to see them all through the winter. The weather around Baker City, and Hood River, for that matter, was too inclement to permit logging year round. The accepted practice was to close the

mills when it was no longer possible for the horses, and later the trains, to buck the snow.

When the mills closed the men practically fled back to their homes in Utah. Gradually, as the mills became more permanent in their locations, the mill workers brought their families and small communities became established at almost every mill location. When gold was discovered at Sumpter and the outsiders flooded in, the Mormons were already well established in the country.

What the Mormons helped establish was the inland lumber industry of Oregon. This was quite distinct from the tidewater mills already well established in the huge coastal stands of Douglas-fir, hemlock and cedar. The coast mills depended entirely on water to float logs down the rivers and then on coastwise ocean shipping to move their product to California ports. The inland mills could place little dependence on streams east of the Cascade Range and, from necessity, turned to the ox and the horse with which to log, and to the railroad to deliver their lumber to market. It was the railroad that unlocked inland timber and David Eccles recognized the Oregon possibilities just a little sooner than others. Perhaps it was because of his trip across Oregon to the woolen mills twenty years previous.

Eccles and Stoddard planing mill at Ruthton prior to 1895. Number 3 has been identified as Mr. Stoddard (John – David Eccles father-in-law?), 4 as George Stoddard and 5 also as George Stoddard (a son). Charles T. Early, a future Director of Oregon Lumber Company, is on the right end of the back row. The Columbia River can be seen at left center, behind the planer building. Box on the roof contains water for fire protection. (Hood River Museum.)

ALONG THE COLUMBIA — 1887 to 1904

The first solid evidence available concerning company activity in Hood River is in the Articles of Association of the Oregon Lumber Company. The address given for both John Stoddard and William Eccles is Oregon. This seems particularly significant since William Eccles, a younger brother, was the only one in the immediate family that ever became significantly involved in the Oregon lumber business. Sam, the youngest brother, was at Mill A for a short time, but William was the real power over the day-to-day operations in Oregon until his death.

Additional clues are to be found in several of the earliest issues of the local paper, the *Hood River Glacier.* It was reported on 8/21/89 that . . . "Mr. Stoddard proposes to extend his flume and put up a planing mill here if he can be assured of the right-of-way." The editorial went on to say he be given help as the flume would make timber from the west side accessible. A little later the paper noted that Robert Gray had been injured when struck in the back with lumber at 'Eccles & Company'. On 8/3/90 the *Glacier* added that the flume from Stoddards' mill to the railroad had caught fire and 1¼ miles had burned, and Stoddard had made arrangements to move the planer from the sawmill to the railroad. There is ample evidence the company had come to Hood River and that they intended to stay; its permanency is further indicated by the filing of Supplementary Articles of Incorporation on June 23, 1891 by John Stoddard, M.P. Potter and S.A. Hutton to amend the original incorporation of the Hood River Ditch and Water Company. A portion of the Article is especially enlightening . . . "owning, maintaining and operating a water ditch, commencing at a point on what is known as Ditch Creek in SE ¼ of Section 14, Township 2 north, Range 9 East, near the mill site heretofore known and until recently owned by John Parker and running thence a Northeasterly direction to what is known as Phelps Creek, formerly known as Fall Creek, thence down said creek to where the ditch of said Hood River Ditch and Water Company is now located from said Phelps Creek, thence along said ditch to the farm of Mrs. S. A. Hutton, and also to use and dispose of said water for irrigating, manufacturing and fluming purposes." The evidence clearly indicated the company had continued its policy of purchasing existing mills as a quick method of getting started. By assuring the water supply Stoddard had established the fact the company planned to stay awhile.

Although the company undoubtedly gave preference to those of their religious persuasion, they did employ local residents as needed and at Hood River they hired one individual that was to stay with them for over 30 years. His story chronicles the growth of Oregon Lumber Company in the Mid-Columbia.

Charles Tyler Early, always to be known as Charles 'T', arrived in Dog River, Oregon in 1888, one year before the Oregon Lumber Company filed Articles of Association in Ogden, Utah. He was 19. Little is known of his early life other than the fact he was born in Somerset, Kentucky, was the sixth child of Granson and Elisabeth Early and

Logging in the vicinity of Mill A. Note the size of the timber; it was ideal for horse logging. The smaller, younger trees also had less defect than the larger trees found west of the Cascades and in the Coast Range. When cut there was also considerably less breakage than experienced in the old growth stands. (Browning Photo Company, authors collection.)

As logging continued and distance to the sawmill increased it was no longer feasible to yard logs directly to the mill with horses. The company went to railroad logging. Logs were then skidded to a central point along the tracks and loaded onto cars. In this case the landing was above the level of the cars and logs were loaded by rolling them into place. As loads grew in height several small skids would be placed against, and at right angles to the load. Logs would then be 'arm-wrestled' to the top of the load with peaveys. The locomotive *Little Kate* is known as a steam dummy and was from the Ogden, Utah street railway system. It was the practice to disguise these little locomotives used on early street-car lines so as not to scare the horses. At least that was the theory. (Courtesy of Russ Curtis.)

was orphaned when quite young. Raised by foster-parents named Shungle, he received some public schooling in Kansas and Kentucky. In his later years the local newspapers would refer to the fact he was related to the famous Confederate General, Jubal A. Early.

Why Charles T. Early decided to seek his fortune in Dog River is a mystery. It certainly was not much of a place. It could hardly even be called a settlement in 1888. Located on the south bank of the Columbia River, halfway between The Dalles and Cascades (later Cascade Locks), without decent roads to either, it was dependant on river steamers for access to the outside world. Even the coming of the railroad in 1883 did not improve things much. There were a few homes and several business establishments on a small flat above the Columbia, next to the west bank of the Dog River. This tributary of the Columbia provided one of the few breaks in the rocky ramparts on the south side of the gorge that gave access to the broad and gentle valley above the rivers.

Generally, the area had been bypassed by the influx of early pioneers in their headlong rush to reach the fertile Willamette Valley. The Oregon Trail had ended at The Dalles, 22 miles upstream. From there to Cascades, another 20 miles downstream, the river was the most feasible route, first by rafts, later by river steamer. Either way there was little reason to stop at Dog River.

It was the settlers of the Willamette Valley that rediscovered the broad valley that extended north from the base of Mt. Hood to the Columbia. As the west side of the Cascade range filled, many of the farmers and ranchers began moving eastward to find more open space.

The first railroad connection through Dog River was when the Oregon Railroad and Navigation

Company connected with the Northern Pacific Railroad in Washington near Pasco. One year later, in 1884, the Union Pacific developed the Oregon Short Line from Granger, Wyoming and hooked up with the O.R.& N. at Huntington, Oregon. Located on the south side of the Columbia, more on trestles than solid ground, the railroad finally provided the settlement at Dog River with reliable access to Portland and all the East. It was not long thereafter "Dog River" was found too demeaning for such a fine place and the name of the stream and the town was changed to Hood River.

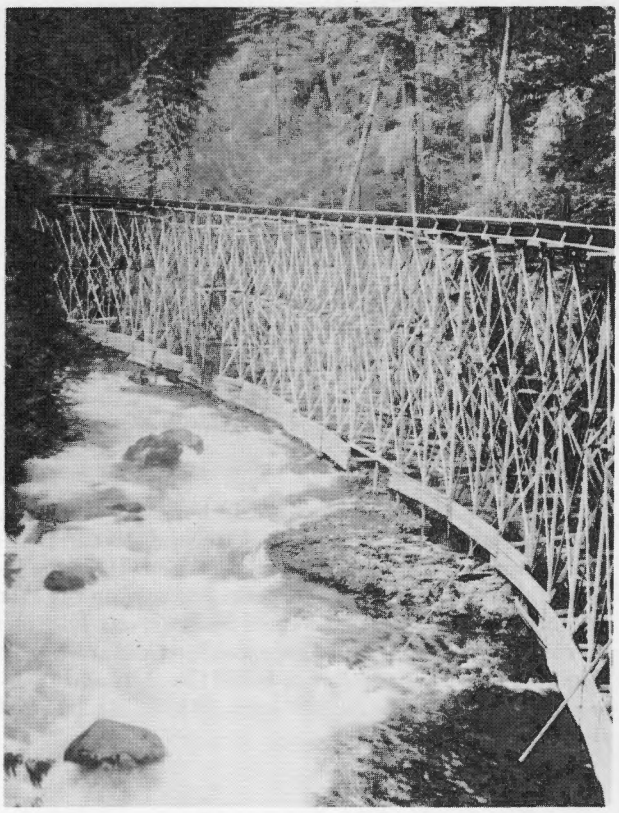
It is hard to fathom just why young Early would stop at Hood River when Portland, the hub of Oregon, was only 60 miles away. However, some inkling to his reasoning has been supplied almost 100 years later by his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Reymund B. Early, of Portland. In his later years Early confessed that he had come West to find the "big timber" he had read about while still a boy.

When traveling west on the railroad, the edges of the Douglas-fir forests of the Cascades are first visible when entering the Columbia River Gorge. To anyone who had come thousands of miles to find the real timber country of Oregon, this was the first chance to examine it first hand. Whatever the reason, Charles T. Early got off the train in Hood River and stayed the next 33 years. During that time he made his mark on the valley, and then proceeded on to Portland.

If the first years of Early's life are shrouded in fog this certainly is not the case after his arrival in 1888. He immediately found work with one of the local sawmills as an hourly laborer, and the local newspapers, first the *Hood River Glacier*, then later the *Hood River News*, chronicled his rise from flume walker to the board of directors of the Oregon Lumber Company. During this time he married, raised a family, was elected to the city council and held about every responsible job that his employer could offer.

When Early arrived in Oregon, David Eccles had already started one, and possibly two, small sawmills in the valley south of Hood River a year before. It is very likely he selected the area for much the same reason as Early.

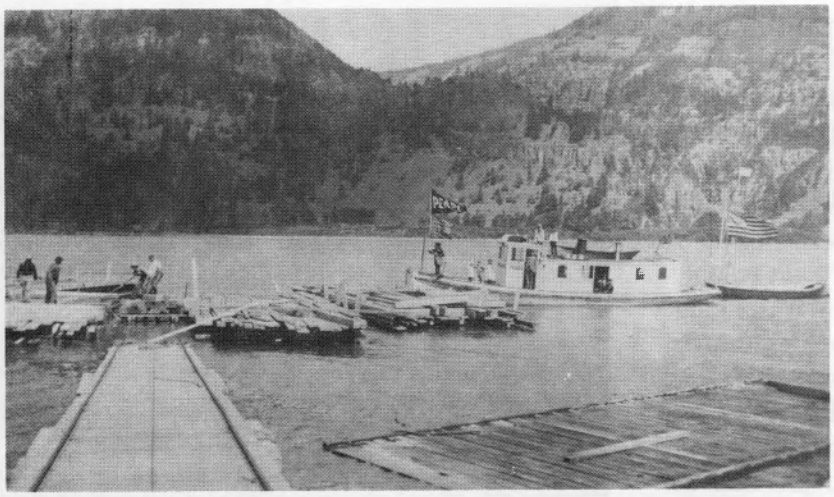
David Eccles undoubtedly came looking for Douglas-fir—and he knew where to find it. He had been down the Columbia as a young man, when his family had to seek work in the Oregon



Mill A was almost 1000 feet above the Columbia River and it was necessary to get rough lumber from the sawmill, down to the river and across to the planing mill and loading docks at Viento, Oregon. The most practical way down was by means of a flume. The canyon of the Little White Salmon River is exceptionally steep and narrow and many of the flume footings had to be placed in the stream. To protect the structure during periods of high water timbers were placed along the bottom of the flume legs to sheer off floating debris. (Browning Photo Company from authors collection.)

City woolen mills. He had already claimed more than adequate quantities of Ponderosa pine in the Blues, but the railroads were becoming more particular in their timber requirements. Pine was no longer acceptable where structural strengths were important. As the lines were first built wood was wood and the specifications for timbers and bridge stringers were quite lenient. But as the roads were being upgraded and structures replaced to accommodate the newer, heavier equipment, Douglas-fir was specified because of its great strength. David Eccles was not one to be caught without what the customer needed — he had to have mills cutting Douglas-fir.

The region had other features that would have appealed to early lumbermen. First, the timber was



To handle the task of towing lumber rafts across the Columbia River, Oregon Lumber Company had several steam launches, however, the *PEARL* was the only vessel purchased new. Here the incline from the river up to the planing mill can be seen. For towing the rafts were built up in a number of layers, each layer of lumber was laid at right angles to the previous layer. This would give stability and strength, but it also required immense amounts of labor to build the rafts and then tear them down for loading on the little incline cars. (Browning Photo Company from the authors collection.)

not overly large. Compared to the Coast Range stands, where the average tree might be four to five feet or more on the stump, the trees south and east of Hood River were small. Stump average was between two and three feet, and the wood was sound and tough. Trees of this size could easily be handled with horse teams, and Eccles favored horses over oxen. They were faster and more maneuverable. Second, there was water. Plenty of water for flumes to move logs and lumber and for log storage; water that would eliminate a lot of hard work hauling and feeding logs into the mills. It was even considered possible to drive sawlogs down Hood River, but that had not yet been tried. And third, the ground. Once the bluffs along the Columbia were surmounted, the slope was relatively gentle for a considerable distance to the south and west. There were a few sharp canyons, but nothing that could not be bridged or avoided.

There were some drawbacks however. The most serious was the cold winter weather. Water was fine for moving logs and lumber, but in the winter it froze, and some years it froze hard. Even the free flowing Columbia froze occasionally in those early years. It was not uncommon to walk teams of horses across the icy river. Snow was also a problem. There was no easy way to remove the accumulations when working at the higher elevations. It was a back-breaking, bone-weary, hand job. The obvious solution was to close down in the winter and go home. Not a very efficient solution by present standards, but then, there was little choice. Until there was equipment available that could effectively cold deck logs for winter operations and snow removal equipment that could keep the roads and mill yards open, at a reasonable cost, there was no alternative. So until a few years before World War II it was common practice in the Mid-Columbia to shut down the logging camps, saw up the logs in the pond, ship out the lumber inventory and button up the operation until spring. Everyone went home for the winter months, both the loggers and the mill hands. But somehow, when the weather began to break they would all drift back. There was no system to it, everyone just seemed to know when another season was ready to start. It is little wonder the locals considered the largest and most important payrolls in the region to be composed of transients.

Records of the first years (prior to 1890), when Eccles operated in Hood River, are scarce. There is some question as to the company name or even who was the company. Later developments indicate quite plainly that David Eccles was in control at all times, but that he was spending most of his time in the Baker area and that the Stoddards were looking after things in the Mid-Columbia. An early photograph has been captioned " . . . Stoddard and Eccles Planing Mill . . . ", but the *Hood River Glacier* prior to 1890 variously referred to the operation as "Eccles and Company" or "Stoddard's Mill."

By 1890 logging and mill operations were definitely known as the Oregon Lumber Company. There were at least two sawmills and one, possibly two, planers located in the valley, southwest of town. Logs were being skidded from the woods with horse teams to rollways along the flumes built from the timber to the mill site. After manu-

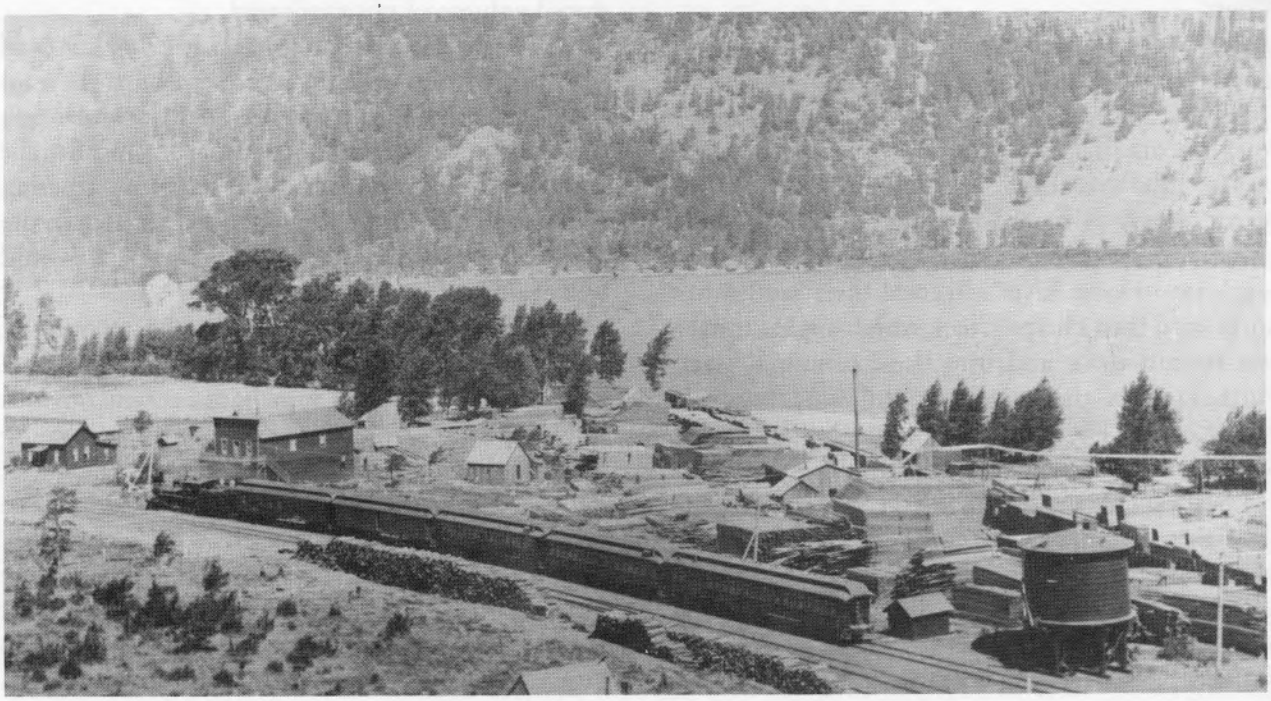
facture, the finished lumber, rough timbers and railroad ties were dumped into flumes that continued on to the planer or the loading docks along the O.R.& N. tracks.

Except for the Parker mill it is not possible to pinpoint the locations of the early mills. They were small affairs, easily moved from one location to another, using steam engines to power circular saws and other mill equipment. Slabs and sawdust were burned for fuel in the boilers. As logging crews cut their way into the woods much of the mill output went into the construction of flume extensions so horse logging would not exceed one-half mile. Anything beyond that distance was not considered economical and slowed production.

It was previously noted that in August of 1890 the flume from one of the mills caught fire and 1¼ miles of flume burned before it could be brought under control. This would tend to indicate the flume extended some distance if that much wet wood would burn before the flume walker could summon help from the mill. After this mishap, John Stoddard decided to move his planer from the mill to the loading dock near the railroad.

By 1891 the company had four sawmills in the field, a planer in the vicinity of Ruthton Point and a loading dock on the Oregon Navigation and Railroad at Haynes Spur. All the sawmills were known by name: the Butterfly mill, the Hayner mill, Mill A, and the Parker mill. The Butterfly mill may also have been called the upper mill and the Hayner mill known as the lower mill.

With so much activity it is not surprising the company sent William Steward Geddes, a bookkeeper from its North Powder operation, to keep books at Hood River. Ten weeks after he arrived Geddes died of brain fever or heart disease, the exact cause is not known. He had been with the company about five years, was a Mormon and left two widows. Evidently David Eccles helped support the two women until his death in Salt Lake, Utah in 1912. At that time, one of the women, Margaret Geddes, undertook court action to prove her son was also an heir to the Eccles estate. A prolonged court battle took place with Mrs. Geddes claiming she and David Eccles had been married in



Loading docks and planer at Viento, Oregon in 1897. At one time there was a small city here with its own post office. All of the structures have long since disappeared, but if one looks closely in the brush and the new young timber many of the old foundations and some of the flower beds can still be found. Construction of Bonneville dam required the railroad be moved, but the former grade and water tank foundations are still visible. From the cord wood stacked along the track the Oregon Railway & Navigation Company locomotives had not yet been changed to coal. (Browning Photo Company from authors collection.)

Second Class Pilot license issued to Charles T. Early for the steamer *PEARL* in 1903. About this time he was also the storekeeper at Viento. (Author's collection.)

1898 in Richmond, Utah. She eventually prevailed and an award of $250,000 was made to her son, Albert.

For Oregon Lumber, water was the lifeblood of its milling and logging operations in the Mid-Columbia and in 1891 the company became involved in its first suit over water rights. As noted earlier, John Stoddard, in order to have an adequate supply of water for the wide-ranging flume system, built a dam on Ditch Creek, which flowed south into Hood River, diverted the stored water northward into Phelps Creek which angled northeast toward town and into the Columbia River. Further down the mountain the water was diverted out of Phelps Creek and eventually to the planing mill and also into irrigation flumes.

Local ranchers and orchardists, owners of riparian rights to Phelps Creek, thought the company was taking more water out of the creek than it was putting in and filed suit against the company to limit the amount of water that could go into the lumber flumes. Early in 1892 the case was heard in The Dalles by a court appointed referee and in July, Judge Bradshaw ruled against Oregon Lumber.

Obviously there was some merit to the farmers complaint, since the company proceeded to line the flume to reduce water loss and continued to use the flume without trouble, even with the reduced volume of water allowed.

Years later the company would become involved in another suit over water, this time with the East Fork Irrigation Company. The case would reach the Oregon Supreme Court twice. Ironically, the company arguments would be based on riparian rights, much the same the ranchers had used in the Phelps Creek situation, but the company would lose again.

When the 1892 hearings over the amount of water the company could draw from Phelps Creek were held in January it may have become obvious to David Eccles and Charles Early they were going to lose some, and quite possibly all, of their water rights and something had to be done to protect the operations.

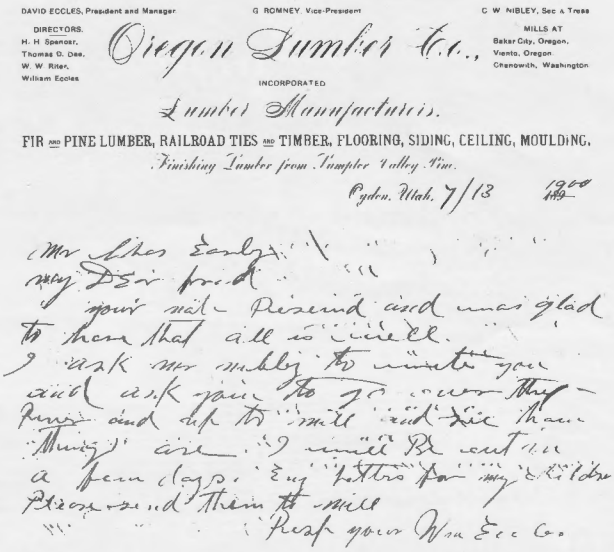
In early March, before the verdict had been rendered, J.W. West and David Eccles were in Hood River and it was reported they were surveying a railroad route from Mill A, up the canyon, to the timber. Deprived of adequate water to transport logs and lumber, the transition from flume to railroad, however expensive, could have been a possible solution to their dilemma. Later that same month the *Hood River Glacier* reported the possibil-

ity of a railroad quite favorably. "Oregon Lumber Company has decided to build a broad gauge railroad from Mill A into the timber and work will be commenced at once. This will furnish employment for 100 men and probably more than that number will find steady employment all summer. The company has a large order and will run every saw they own to its fullest capacity as long as the weather permits. We are glad indeed to chronicle this, as whatever sins of omission or commission the Oregon Lumber Company may be charged with, they possess the virtue of distributing lots of hard coin here."

When Judge Bradshaw rendered his decision in July allocating water it was probably more lenient than the company expected and by repairing the flume it was possible to continue their operations. However, after the decision was made public several unexpected things happened. Mill A was moved up the mountain to the vicinity of the Parker mill and as soon as Mill A was back in production the Parker mill was dismantled and the boiler and steam engine were sent across the Columbia River to the flats around Chenowith, Washington. New sawmill equipment was purchased to augment the salvaged boiler and engine.

The Hayner mill had previously been sold in late 1891 to a firm setting up business at Bridal Veil Falls, about 35 miles down the Columbia, toward Portland. This latest relocation left only two company mills, Mill A and the Butterfly, operating in the vicinity of Hood River. Ninety years after the fact it is hard to analyze the company action or intentions, but it would seem all of the talk about a railroad may have been a ploy to divert attention from company activity elsewhere. It could also be suggested since adequate water was still available after repairing the flumes it was not necessary to consider building an expensive railroad. If so, why suggest a railroad from Mill A and then three months later move the mill? It would have been much more plausible had the railroad been suggested for the Parker mill area where operations were to be continued.

It was not more than two or three weeks after the decision in the water case was announced and the sheriff had supervised the destruction of all the feeder lines into the company flume when the local paper reported that David Eccles was in Hood River. He was looking at an existing flume on the Little White Salmon River, which entered the Columbia from the Washington side, downstream


DAVID ECCLES, President and Manager
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C. W. NIBLEY, Sec. & Treas.
DIRECTORS.
H. H. Spencer,
Thomas D. Dee,
W. W. Riter,
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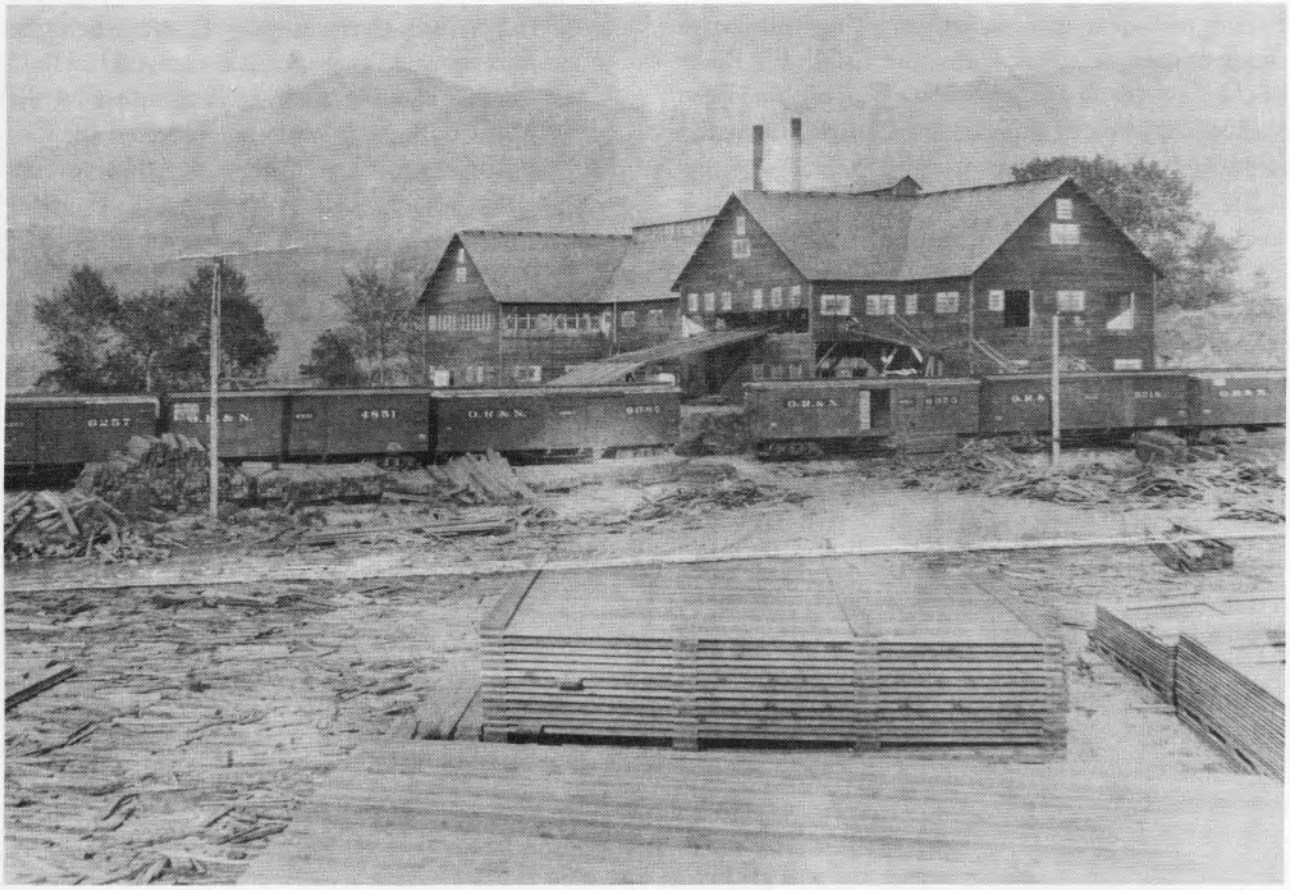
Oregon Lumber Co.,
INCORPORATED
MILLS AT
Baker City, Oregon.
Vento, Oregon.
Chenowith, Washington.
Lumber Manufacturers.
FIR AND PINE LUMBER, RAILROAD TIES AND TIMBER, FLOORING, SIDING, CEILING, MOULDING,
Finishing Lumber from Timpter Valley Wm.
Ogden, Utah, 7/13 1900
Mr Chas Early
My Dear Friend
your note Received and was glad
to hear that all is well.
I ask Mr Nibley to write you
and ask you to go over the
River and up to the mill and see how things
are. I will be out
a few days. Any letters for my children
Please send them to mill
Respt your Wm Ecc Co

Company letterhead of the late 1890's. Letter was from Wm. Eccles to Charles T. Early. "Your note received and was glad to hear that all is well. I ask Mr. Nibley to write you and ask you to go over the River and up to the mill and see how things are. I will be out in a few days. Any letters from my children please send them to mill." Evidently the letter was folded before the ink dried causing the smudges. (Authors collection.)

from Hood River some seven or eight miles. The flume in question had been used to transport cordwood from the flats above the Columbia to steamers and wood barges on the river below.

The editor of the *Glacier* jokingly wrote David Eccles had not reported whether or not he had purchased the flume, but he was closer to the truth than he realized. Evidently Eccles had made arrangements to use the flume or most likely purchased it outright and as soon as negotiations were finalized Mill A had been relocated to replace the less efficient Parker mill and the Parker mill was rebuilt with new sawing equipment and became known as the Chenowith mill.

The orchardists of Hood River may have won the dispute over water, but they may have also precipitated the movement of Oregon Lumber Company out of Oregon. In searching for alternatives, should the reduction of water become critical, Eccles, or more likely Charles T. Early, discovered and recognized the possibilities at the Little White Salmon. The topography and timber was very similar to that around Hood River and ownership of the flume, with prior water rights, would forestall any future controversies. The flume had originally been constructed to float cordwood which had become the first cash crop for local settlers. Being on the eastern fringe of the Cascade Range a thriving wood business had been built up supplying cordwood to The Dalles for heating fuel and for the up-river steamers. After cordwood reached the river it was loaded on huge barges equipped with a single tall square sail and transported up-river 30 miles to The Dalles. Being able to sail against the current gives some indication of the wind velocity in the gorge. To facilitate the return trip the large sail was dropped in the river ahead of the barge and the current was used to overcome



Davidson's Lost Lake Lumber Company sawmill on the banks of the Columbia River. It was just across Hood River, east of town. Today the south ramp of the Oregon-Washington bridge across the Columbia would be in the mill yard. David Eccles ran the sawmill for a short time after it was purchased from Davidson then removed the machinery for use in his new sawmill at Dee. It had been expected Eccles would bring logs to this mill on the Mount Hood Railroad. (Author's collection.)

the gorge winds and speed the barge downstream. Without a doubt Eccles and Early could see a wood market for the logs too small to saw and for mill slabs.

The decision to move across the Columbia River was not without logistical problems. The timbered flats at Chenowith where the mill was to be located were about 1000 feet above the river and roads were terrible. There were two possible routes over which the mill machinery could be moved. One was from Cooks landing on the Washington side of the Columbia, thence north, up the west side of the Little White Salmon River five or six miles until a suitable crossing of the river canyon could be found; then south, across the broad timbered bench to the mill site that was actually less that two and one-half miles from the starting point on the Columbia. The first two miles of this route were steep, the grade climbing and twisting over the shoulder of Cook Hill, a spur of Augspurgar Mountain. Hardly more than a narrow pack trail had been gouged out of the side of the mountain which fell away sharply to the Little White Salmon River.

The other route skirted the north end of the river bluffs across from Hood River; beginning at Underwood landing just west of where the main White Salmon emptied into the Columbia. The road here was not quite so steep and the drop-offs less precipitous. But the total distance equipment had to be hauled was farther, since the road went half-way around Underwood Mountain. Most likely this latter route was used. A few years later, a boiler equivalent to the one used in the Parker mill was hauled from Hood River to a mill located on the east slope of Mt. Defiance, the road grade was very similar to the one on Underwood; 24 horses were required. Regardless of the route used, the effort required to move a mill to the upper flats was tremendous.

After the mill had been rebuilt at Chenowith in the late fall of 1892, the next most pressing problem was to get the sawn lumber to the railhead, the nearest being the O.R.& N. back on the Oregon side of the Columbia. Using the existing flume that David Eccles had purchased, the lumber dropped approximately 800 feet in less than three miles. Here it was gathered up, loaded on barges and towed across the river.

It should be remembered that in 1892 the Columbia was a free running river with seasonal fluctuations of up to fifty feet between high and low water. Just getting the lumber out of the river was a sizable headache. Being located at the east end of the gorge was also a distinct disadvantage. Acting as a natural funnel, the cliffs and bluffs concentrate the winds which often create swells from four to six feet high.

To overcome the problem of getting the lumber out of the river the company decided to build an incline from the railroad loading docks down to the river. Small cars, running on railroad rails, were dropped by gravity where they were rolled onto barges towed across the river and loaded with lumber on the Washington side. On the return trip a cable was attached to the loaded car and it was winched off the barge and up to the loading dock. Later the practice of taking cars across the river was abandoned and the lumber was towed across in rafts and loaded on cars at the foot of the incline. With rough water and the continually blowing sand, making up the rafts and loading the lumber cars was a miserable job.

For the first year the company may have contracted the towing service; there were plenty of boats for hire on the river at the time. A company tug, the *Wauna*, was not purchased until October of 1894. Tom Pierce, a survivor of Pickett's charge at Gettysburg, was made captain of the steam launch. While Pierce's valor could not be questioned his navigational abilities are not disclosed. Originally the lumber incline was to have been located at, or in the vicinity of Mitchell Point, about four miles west of Hood River. However, the final location selected was at Viento, some seven or eight miles west of town. There were several good reasons for locating at Viento rather than Mitchell Point. There was more land available and the slope to the river was more gradual. The site was also downstream from where the Little White Salmon emptied into the Columbia. The loaded lumber barges would be going with the current rather than against it as would have been the case had the Mitchell Point site been selected. During periods of high water in late spring and early summer this would have been no small consideration.

The Viento property had originally been State land, open to entry, and had been filed on by Theodore Wygant. In 1893 C.W. Nibley purchased,

from Wygant for $100.00, a portion of his "Swamp Land Certificate" from the State; it covered Lots One and Two in Section 35, Township Three North, Range Nine East. In developing the Viento property, the company and Nibley, made several mistakes that were to be a source of trouble until the location was abandoned in 1903.

Theodore Wygant had filed on the Viento properties around 1875 and paid the State twenty cents per acre, but had never completed his purchase agreement. All he had sold Nibley were his prior rights to purchase the land; unfortunately Nibley did not take any action to consummate the land purchase. In the past the company had dealt fast and loose with public domain, cutting timber and using land as the need arose and there seemed no need to change at this date. Having a right to purchase without spending hard cash to buy land seemed more than enough protection for development. This was the first mistake. The second was building the incline and the planing mill on the wrong piece of land. Whether there was a lack of communication between Nibley and William Eccles, the general manager of the Oregon operations, or whether Nibley made an honest mistake in locating the land cannot be determined, but later events were to prove that most of the company improvements were located on adjoining Lots Three and Four, not on Lots One and Two.

Late in 1895 an employee of the company, Levi Jones, discovered the company did not own the Viento property, filed on Lots Three and Four and for $46.75 received title from the State. For the next six years Jones and the company were involved in court actions involving the disputed property.

According to testimony given at the first trial held in The Dalles in 1896, Charles T. Early, as storekeeper, was the first company official to learn Jones had secured title to the Viento property. Burns Jones, Levi's brother, came to the Drano store, located on the Washington side of the Columbia where the lumber flume dumped into the river, and asked for $50. Burns later said the money was due him from accrued wages. Early contended Burns offered to sell the company his half interest in the Viento land as he wanted to "do the right thing" and was afraid the brothers might lose their company jobs otherwise. Early telephoned William Eccles at the mill, explained the situation and told him that he did not have $50 at the store. Eccles, the only official authorized to sign company checks, did not want to come down from the mill and instructed Early to take Burns across the river, go to Hood River and get money from Blowers, a prominent storekeeper in town. Early locked up the company store, took Burns across the river on the company tow boat where they picked up Levi Jones working at the Viento incline. Together they caught the local train to Hood River.

At the store, Early testified, he obtained $40 from Blowers, added $10 to it from his own pocket and gave it all to Burns Jones. He then requested that Burns make out a deed to the company for his half interest in the Viento land. Burns suggested that since the original deed had not yet been recorded it would look strange to transfer title to his half of the property so quickly but he would do so as soon as the first deed was returned.

The payment of this $50 to Burns Jones was the basis of the company suit to secure half interest of the property; Early maintaining that Burns promised to sell and Burns contending the money was back wages owed him. During the first trial, despite conflicting testimony, several things emerged. One, Levi Jones had a valid deed to the Viento lands; two, Burns Jones did receive $50 from the company and that the company owed him over $100 in back wages; three, there had been an acrimonious discussion between the Jones brothers, William Eccles, Nibley and Early at the company store during which the brothers contended they were roundly cursed and vilified; and four, the brothers constantly maintained that they did not know that the company improvements were on the land on which they had filed. The improvements included stables, a boarding house, bunkhouse, hoisting engine house, planing mill, blacksmith building and several other small structures. In all, a rather sizable installation.

For the most part, in reading the old transcript of the trial, one gets the impression that the company officials had been pretty high-handed and arrogant in their dealings with the brothers. Nibley had offered to pay another $12.50 for their deed. When that was declined he countered with an offer to quit-claim his rights to all land except the mill site if the brothers would deed him their rights to the property occupied by the company. Prior to the meeting with William Eccles and Nib-

ley at the Drano store the brothers had specifically requested that Charles Early be excluded, but he was present either behind the stairway leading to the upper level or hiding behind the counter. Also, the door into the store had been locked after the brothers entered. As the meeting broke up and the brothers were leaving, Early jumped over the counter, grabbed up a scale weight and followed them out shouting threats. Burn's wife who lived nearby witnessed and heard some of the threats and curses. Shortly thereafter both men lost their jobs.

The turning point in the trial came with the testimony of J.M. Chitty, a farmer living in the Viento area. It was his testimony that did the brothers in. According to Chitty, he had been approached by Levi who wanted to sell a cow. When Chitty asked why Levi wanted to sell the cow, Levi responded he wanted to file on some land but did not have any money. In the conversation that transpired Levi told Chitty about the company land and figured he would need about $40. Chitty had only $20 but was able to borrow an additional $20 from a neighbor. For the $40 Levi agreed to give Chitty one-half interest in the property when the title was received. It was then they decided they should be able to get at least $1,000 from the company or Chitty would turn off the water supplying the company boilers which flowed across his property. Early was responsible for getting Chitty to testify on the company behalf. While Chitty had no great liking for the company he evidently had even less for the Jones brothers. At sometime the brothers decided to leave Chitty out of the deal. When Burns received the $50 from the company, $45 was used to pay off Chitty. He was furious, but there was little he could do at the time. Early learned of the falling out between Chitty and the brothers and had no difficulty persuading Chitty to testify.

Judge Bradshaw ruled in favor of the company but the brothers were not finished, they appealed to the Oregon Supreme Court. Late in 1899 the Supreme Court upheld Judge Bradshaw. The Supreme Court decision concludes, after stating the difficulty in deciding the case, owing to the different statements, as follows: "The testimony of the plaintiffs (Oregon Lumber Company) witnesses, in our judgement answers every requirement of the law, as announced in the decision, and hence the decree is affirmed." The triumph of justice seems questionable.

Burns Jones signed over his half interest in the property to the company and became a respected citizen of Hood River for many years. However, Levi still had 50 percent ownership and he was not one to give up easily. In conjunction with A.S. Bennett and John Cradlebaugh he filed suit in 1901 in Wasco County Circuit Court to have the Viento property sold and the proceeds divided. The gist of the argument was that with the company in possession of the land it was not possible for each owner to have half the property.

In the suit both Bennett and Cradlebaugh were listed as owners of an eighth interest in Lots Three and Four and Levi as having an undivided one-fourth interest. Cradlebaugh and Bennett had been Levi's attorney in the previous actions and this, evidently, was Levi's way of securing representation in the new suit. In an amended answer to the plaintiffs complaint the company listed the value of their improvements as $8,000, so if Levi had prevailed each one-eighth would have been worth $1,000. It is most likely the company valuation would have been conservative and $1,000 would have been a minimum.

The company answer to the court was based on several points. First, it was impossible to divide equitably; second, all but $1,200 of the improvements were on the railroad right-of-way; and third, in actuality the land was theirs all along; Nibley had purchased Theodore Wygants right to purchase Lots One and Two from the State of Oregon in 1893 and that at the time he did not realize the property the company wanted to develop was in Lots Three and Four. The fact he had never exercised the purchase right was glossed over. One of the exhibits offered in the original trial was an application by Levi Jones to the Oregon Land Commissioner with a $5 fee to file on Lot Two. The Commissioner wrote back that a prior application by Theodore Wygant was on record, but only 20¢ per acre had been paid. In the meantime Levi had learned the company owned Wygants' prior rights. He wrote back to the Commissioner that since the Oregon Lumber Company was involved he wanted no part of it and to please return his $5. The Commissioner replied the company would not have been able to 'beat his claim', but the money was returned and Levi dropped the

application.

Unfortunately the outcome of this suit cannot be found. The old records at The Dalles are incomplete and the decision is missing from the files. Any decision would probably have been moot from the company standpoint since it was to move operations from Viento to Hood River very shortly. In April, 1903 David Eccles purchased the new Lost Lake Lumber Company and the following May a boiler explosion at the Viento planer injured eight employees. Charles Early reported the $5,000 planing mill had suffered damage estimated at $2,000 and the company did not have insurance. Operations were moved to Hood River and by January, 1904 Viento was practically deserted.

Today, Viento is an Oregon State Park along busy Interstate 84 and little remains of the early industrial community. However, a diligent search will reveal some old foundations, the original location of the Oregon Railroad & Navigation Company right-of-way and a line of stately maples that had been planted around one of the two boarding houses that housed company workers. Backwaters of the Bonneville Dam have obliterated all trace of the old lumber incline.

Although it is gone and for the most part forgotten, the incline was the site of a tragedy that by present day standards would be almost incomprehensible. On a Saturday in mid-August of 1900, seven years after the incline had been established, Arnold Eccles, the 12-year-old son of W.H. Eccles (the younger brother of David Eccles) was operating the incline winch, pulling lumber cars from the river. Somehow he became entangled in the cable and was fatally injured. According to the newspaper account at the time, the boy was running an engine at the mill in the absence of the regular workman, whose place he was accustomed to take, when he got caught in the wire rope of the hoisting engine.

The local Hood River doctor, Dr. F.C. Brosius, made the trip from Hood River to Viento in 51 minutes using a horse team and rail handcar. He also accompanied the boy to Portland by train, but to no avail.

Some understanding as to why a 12-year-old youth was operating machinery in a mill can be gained from Marriner S. Eccles in his book *Beckoning Frontiers.* Mr. Eccles is writing about his father, David: ". . . he felt the age of eight was a suitable one for his children to go to work . . . in that summer when I was eight, I was sent to the box factory that was part of the Oregon Lumber Company and was told to carry my weight in boxes. The rate of pay was five cents an hour for ten hours work . . . "

While the accident was indeed unfortunate, it was not unusual for the period. Large families were commonplace and the children were expected to contribute some share to the well-being of the family. This was especially true in the rural areas.

The Viento loading docks were a necessary adjunct to the sawmill established at Chenowith. Before the mill, Chenowith was little more than an overnight stop on the primitive road winding through the forests of Underwood Mountain; it went as far as the Oklahoma district, seven miles beyond Chenowith, and faded out in the wilderness between Mt. Adams and Mt. St. Helens.

In the fall of 1892 Chenowith became a beehive of activity. The Parker mill equipment was moved from Hood River to the richly timbered benches above the Columbia and the process of rebuilding the mill and establishing a logging camp had to be completed before the winter weather closed in. This meant bringing in horse teams and laying in adequate supplies and equipment to maintain the entire operation; the company was expected to provide food and shelter for both man and beast.

One of the most important jobs was to get a log pond built. Before this could be done, logs had to be cut and the mill put into production. Since earth moving to any extent was out of the question, the dams were constructed of logs and sawn lumber. Selecting a suitable low spot in the terrain, a framework of logs faced with heavy planks was placed across the depression. If the draw had running water, fine, if not, water was provided by means of a flume.

When the Chenowith mill began cutting in 1893, Charles T. Early was transferred there from the Ruthton planer; it became his home for several years. In April, 1891 Early married the daughter of one of the most prominent businessmen in Hood River. Edith Blowers (rhymes with flowers) was one of four daughters of Captain A.S. Blowers, owner of the oldest and most prosperous hardware store in the city. In 1895 Captain Blowers deeded each of his daughters two acres out of his 40 acre land claim. The newspaper reported that Mr.

Building a log pond at Mill A or Chenowith, Washington. Constructing a retaining wall on a framework of logs with lumber was easier than trying to move dirt. Judging from the size of the workmen, the timber in the center of the picture may be 40 feet in length. In 1985 an abandoned dam of identical construction was found just south of the Dee millsite. Flume in the background will supply water to the pond and may be used to transport logs since it is rectangular in shape. Lumber flumes of the period were triangular; log flumes square or rectangular. (Courtesy of Clyde Norby.)

Charles T. Early expected to build soon, but never followed through to let the readers know if Early actually did build a home next to his father-in-law.

Edith Blowers must have found the new, rough and ready logging town that sprouted up around the Chenowith mill vastly different than her childhood home in Hood River. But, evidently she took it in stride and was a summer resident in 1893 when the first Oregon Lumber Company mill in Washington began to cut in earnest. At Viento, the incline was completed and by early summer of 1893, 75,000 railroad ties were stacked and ready for loading when disaster struck. The planer at Ruthton burned and two-thirds of the lumber inventory went up in smoke. John Stoddard came down from Baker City, surveyed the damage and decided to rebuild. In less than one month after the fire a new Fay planer arrived that was faster and larger than the equipment lost in the fire. It could surface timbers up to six inches thick and 14 inches wide. Sawmill production at the two Oregon mills had not been curtailed because of the planer fire and they continued to run night and day.

The year of 1894 was one of change for the company and there were several changes in management. John Stoddard, for many years the manager for Oregon Lumber in the Mid-Columbia, died in Salt Lake City on August 18th. Frank Davenport, later to become a prominent lumberman in his own right, was placed in charge of the rebuilt planer at Ruthton.

Ironically, it was at Ruthton that the company had its first brush with the local law. In September the road supervisor swore out warrants for the arrest of W.H. Eccles, then vice-president of the company, and Frank Davenport for obstructing the Ruthton Hill road. Evidently the flume from the sawmill to the planer crossed over the road and had sprung a leak, washing out part of the road. Both men were fined $40. Judge Soesbe of Hood River agreed with the road supervisor the company had been too slow in making repairs to the flume. Then, less than one month later, the company was back in court. This time Soesbe fined Oregon Lumber $100 for allegedly dumping sawdust and shavings into the Columbia River. The Judge was lenient in this case and fined the company only the minimum provided by the current statues. He could have gone for the $200 maximum. In 1894, when the average working man earned only $1 a day, this was a tough law.

A corral was built to contain the sawdust and shavings and the charge for obstructing the road was appealed to Judge Bradshaw's court in The Dalles. The demurrer was sustained and no trial was necessary.

If 1894 was one of change, 1895 was one of consolidation. Early in the year the Butterfly mill was sold to Frank Davenport who moved it to another location. The planer at Chenowith was taken to Viento. For the first part of the year the company operated Mill A in Oregon and the old Parker mill in Washington; then in September or October Mill A was closed, dismantled and moved into a new location in Washington above the Little White Salmon on the west side of the canyon.

The Ruthton planer and loading docks on Haynes spur were sold to Frank Davenport. The two remaining company mills were now in Washington, less that one mile apart as the crow flies, on about the same level above the Columbia and probably in sight of each other. However, it was an eight to ten mile trip from one to the other because the Little White Salmon River canyon separated the two camps. Once again a whole new operation had to be set up in the late fall months to be ready to run the following year. It was 1892 all over again.

With both sawmills in Washington, logging activities is Oregon ceased; the only operation left south of the Columbia was the Viento planer and loading docks on the railroad. Lumber from the mills was still sent down to the river by means of flumes, but because the canyon of the Little White Salmon was between the two locations, the company had to build flumes on both sides of the river. A log flume was still used at Chenowith but not at Mill A. For a short period logs were skidded directly to the Mill A pond. Horse teams were being used and evidently good horses were not readily available locally. In June of 1896, Charles T. Early had to journey to Sherman County in eastern Oregon to obtain four replacement animals. When skidding distances became excessive a decision had to be made concerning the method of log transportation — the company opted for a railroad over the traditional flume. Just how the company managed to get even a small locomotive from the Columbia to the upper level was not recorded, but they did. Early day photographs attest to their

success.

In August 1896, the bane of early lumbermen struck again. The Chenowith mill was destroyed by fire and the ensuing blaze burned considerable timber on Underwood Mountain. The mill was once again replaced but was moved further north, nearer uncut timber. This new mill is thought to have been known as Mill B. Eighty years later, local Forest Service and U.S. Geological maps still show Mill A and Mill B flats. The locations of the Chenowith mill and Mill B can no longer be identified but Mill A made a more lasting impression on the terrain and can still be located.

For the next few years the company operations were stable and the mills were not moved. Mill B concentrated on the timber east of the canyon, all the time pushing northward, while Mill A loggers worked north and west up Rock Creek. Development directly north was blocked by the Northwest Lumbering Company which had established a mill 12 miles up the Little White Salmon.

In July, 1897 Oregon Lumber brought a new river steamer, the *Pearl* up from Portland to replace the old tug, *Wauna.* The vessel was licensed to carry passengers and Captain McNulty, Chief Engineer Day, Jas. Taylor, William Eccles and Charles T. Early made the upriver trip.

It is unfortunate that the reporter for the *Hood River Glacier* did not provide his readers with more information about the captain of the *Pearl.* Could this have been Captain John McNulty that took the steamer *R.R. Thompson* down river through the Cascades in 1882? If so, he missed a chance to recall one of the most daring exploits that ever took place on the river. The *R.R. Thompson* was built at The Dalles in 1878 for the middle river run between the Cascades portage and the Celio portage. It was a large steamer for its time: 215 feet in length with a 38 foot beam. With the railroad taking over more and more of the freight business it was decided to bring the *Thompson* through the Cascade rapids for use on the lower river run. On June 3, 1882 during the spring run-off, Captain John McNulty brought the *Thompson* down from The Dalles to Cascades in 123 minutes. Average speed was 23 miles an hour. Under full power the steamer went through the six mile length of Cascade rapids in six minutes and forty seconds.

One additional reason to believe the captain of the *Pearl* and the *R.R. Thompson* was one and the same, other than the similarity of names was an event that took place in July of 1892. At that time Henry McNulty of Mosier was arrested and charged with criminal assault on Mrs. Annie Granlund, wife of a section hand. Bond of $1,000 was posted by McNulty's father, Captain McNulty. Since Mosier is only five or six miles east of Hood River, it suggests the captain may have been a resident of Mosier or The Dalles.

Six years after the *Pearl* had been purchased, Charles T. Early was to receive a Second Class Pilot license to operate the *Pearl* between Cascades and The Dalles; not the worst stretch of water on the Columbia, but then, neither was it the easiest. There is no good reason for Early to have obtained a river pilots license, there were plenty of good pilots available, but it tends to underline his desire to try anything new or different and his ability to succeed.

In 1898 the *Stevenson Pioneer* reported, " . . . Oregon Lumber Company is rushing the lumber trade right now. Mills run day and night. Mormontown is thronged with working men and Viento is crowded until there is no vacant house in town. The logging railroad will soon reach the northern extremity of the (Little) White Salmon valley. Homesteaders are realizing $700 to $1,200 per quarter section for their timber and prosperity beams throughout . . . " The month following this glowing report the company shipped 150 cars of lumber out of Viento.

Viento never rivaled Hood River in size but it was a booming community for a short while. It was identified on the O.R.& N. time tables, had its own post office, and Charles T. Early was named postmaster around 1895 after moving down from Chenowith. In addition, he continued his regular duties as bookkeeper for the company and was possibly the storekeeper as well. Ed Miller, formerly in charge of the Ruthton planer, became the office manager. The company established a store and owned one of the two boarding houses in town. It was run by a Mrs. Cameron, the other hostelry was owned and operated by S.W. Curran.

When the *Stevenson Pioneer* labeled Chenowith 'Mormontown' it was not being facetious. The Eccles mills in Baker and the Mid-Columbia had attracted literally hundreds of workers from Utah. A few men brought their families, but most had retained their residences in the Beehive State and

came to Oregon during the summer and returned home when the mills closed, a fact not lost on local residents. But these people were not forgotten by their church. In December, 1898 one of the first recorded meetings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints held in Hood River, took place at the A.O.U.W. hall. Undoubtedly there were other meetings, but this is the only one announced publicly. Present at this gathering were Elders James S. Geddes, Benj. D. Jansen, W.J. Barnes, George C. Peck and Erza T. Campbell. Geddes was president of the Oregon Conference at the time.

By 1899 the company had established a smooth pattern of operation and shipped a record 20,000,000 board feet of lumber during the season. Oregon Lumber gave each employee a turkey for Christmas and announced it would build another incline at Viento to double its capacity.

On reflection, the announcement seems strange. Just how would adding another incline increase the lumber cut. By next March the answer became obvious. According to the *Hood River Glacier*, ". . . the company has 250 men in their employ in the woods and mills and shipped 2,300,000 board feet in March. Their two mills in Washington have a cut of 105M per 11 hour day. Company expects to run the mills night and day. Men working for the company have steady work and can get extra time working Sundays and after 6 p.m. Sometimes it is possible to get in 32 working days a month . . . " It would seem at this rate another incline at Viento would be sorely needed and maybe Charles T. Early had to run the steamer *Pearl* at night!

Late in 1897, Oregon Lumber Company published a small, hard-covered booklet by L.J. Hicks of the Browning Photo Company of Portland, Oregon. The booklet was entitled *Souvenir — Oregon Lumber Company's Chenowith and Viento Mills.* There were ten pages of descriptive literature and 18 photographs of the employees and various stages of logging and sawmilling. It is hard to decide if the company message was intended for the workers, stockholders or customers. Perhaps it was intended for all, but if so, why was the much larger operation in Eastern Oregon not included?

The booklet had historical significance in that it documents, quite well, early logging methods and sawmill equipment. It is also an excellent illustration of turn-of-the-century advertising that completely ignores the true facts of the hard, dirty, dangerous professions involved.

Unfortunately, views of the operations were not captioned. It is not known if the intrepid writer ventured further than Mill A and crossed the Little White Salmon River canyon to Mill B and the settlement of Chenowith, but it is not likely. Except for the horse logging, most of the photographs seem to be associated with Mill A, Viento, and the Mill A flume.

Herewith, then, is the 1897 story:

> "On the Columbia River, 58 miles from Portland, on the Washington side, in the midst of the most beautiful of the famous Columbia River scenery, a few miles above Cascade Locks, is the mouth of the Little White Salmon, a stream of water flowing now in gentle decent and now in wild dashes, forming cascades of splendor and beauty and quiet pools of crystal clearness, fresh from the mountains far above, making an ideal trout stream where a lover of fishing or of art and beauty can find the most enjoyable place, where Nature in her fullest abundance has provided all that could be asked for.
>
> Near the mouth of the Little White Salmon is "Cook's Landing," a landing place for the Columbia River boats, and as one is landed at this place he will find a freighting team in waiting for the regular boats, both up and down, and after the freighter has his load of merchandise, baled hay, etc., all on his wagon and securely fastened, an invitation is cordially extended to the passenger to "climb on", and off they start for one of the roughest and in places the most uphill climb the writer has ever indulged in; but with the ever pleasant and talkative driver; who is a great pleasure to find, is perfectly satisfied with his vocation, has no fault to find with the country, and absolutely enjoys driving over these mountain roads, the passenger will almost forget that he is jolting over rocks and through ruts, and occasionally going up pitches so steep as to make him hang on for dear life from sliding off backward, and nothing to hang to but a bale of hay. The road winds around and the climb is steadily up, following the canyon of the Little White Salmon, and soon a view of surpassing grandeur is presented which fully repays one for the discomforts of the ride. Away below, hundreds and hundreds of feet, can be seen the foam flecked stream of water winding like a snake over the rocks and down the canyon between two walls towering

almost perpendicular on either side, far above the wagon road, and finally can be seen to empty itself and intermingle with the mighty Columbia, which at this point is almost a mile wide; but the mountains standing out clear and clean cut against the sky and reaching to a height of from 2,000 to 3,000 feet, and rising directly from the opposite side of the river, cause one to almost doubt that it is more than one third that distance.

After the ride on the mountain road has continued about an hour and a half, and an elevation of nearly 800 feet has been attained, the view will suddenly change; from the works of nature in her wildest beauty to a scene of activity and bustle which is contagious to a sawmill and the little village of houses which is now brought to the eye. When the information is volunteered by the driver that the distance which has been traveled from the boat landing to the mill is three and one-fourth miles, it is doubtful if it will be "swallowed"; the passenger will undoubtedly have an opinion of his own, which he may not disclose, but it will probably be that the distance is fully twice that. The mill which is now seen is one of the larger lumber manufactories of the Pacific Coast, and one of the Oregon Lumber Company's mills, and the subject of this sketch. The officers of the company are: — D. Eccles, president; C.W. Nibley, secretary; Jas. Sharp, vice president.

The Oregon Lumber Company having a mill at Baker City, where a large supply of pine timber is available, and one at this place in the Cascade Range of Mountains, where an almost unlimited quantity of red and yellow fir and cedar is found, is thus enabled to supply the demand for any quantity and quality of lumber, and though this mill is some distance from the railroad which furnishes the shipping facilities they employ, yet by the method they have instituted for transferring the products of the mill to the railroad they are enabled to deliver it on the cars of the O.R.& N. Co. at the minimum expense which will be described later.

And now, as it may be of interest to follow the process of the evolution of a tree standing on the mountain side, its being felled to the ground, taken away to the mill and there converted into lumber of various sizes, and finally conveyed to the railroad, where it is loaded onto the cars and from there shipped, perhaps to aid in the building of some railroad or used in a mine, or to take its place as a part of some residence, a trip through the timber where the loggers are sawing down the trees, cutting them to proper lengths, barking them and conveying them to the mill, will be taken. A large section of very level land is seen, where the trees are very tall and straight, and grow extremely close together, and though not as large as that in some parts of the country, it is exceptionally good timber. In most timbered districts only a small part of the trees standing are of such a nature as to be profitably cut for lumber, a great amount which to an inexperienced eye looks to be first-class, yet it is found after the timber fellers have gone through, laying low the selected trees, they have left standing a considerable part of it, and upon investigation it will be discovered that all that is left is of inferior quality, some not being sound, and some having branches too low, which, in either case, if cut into lumber, would be of low grade.

While in this district it is found that scarcely a tree which is large enough to make into railroad ties is left standing, so that where the loggers have been nothing is left only a few very small trees and brush, etc. As the mill has been located at this point only a short time, the timber which is being cut is quite close; so the hauling of logs is not more than three-fourths of a mile or a mile, but the distance is steadily increasing, and the quality and kind of timber found is steadily changing, so that the manager of the logging department must constantly be devising ways and means for transferring the logs to the mill, which, with the ever changing conditions frequently renders a change of the system of logging necessary. As the distance will gradually increase to three or four miles, when it will become impossible to haul logs so long a distance over skid roads with horses as motive power, the Company has in contemplation the construction of a railroad, which it is expected will soon be built.

As the logging continues back farther into the mountains there is found to be much larger timber, more yellow fir, quantities of excellent cedar, and considerable pine and larch, a body of several thousand acres can be reached by the aid of a railroad, which can easily be built, with a very moderate grade.

The timber fellers are necessarily men of extreme skill and caution. They must understand from the looks of a tree standing if it is sound, and can profitably be cut, or if it is burly or full of seams, or of a decaying nature, in which case it must be left standing, not being of sufficient value to pay to transport to the mill. They are also required to fell trees in any direction desired, even though it may be opposite to their natural inclination. Their position is one of considerable danger, as, if on account of a high wind blowing or a

slight miscalculation in the direction in which it is desired to fell the tree, it is carried a trifle out of the course designed it may strike another, causing the two to go down together and being of such extreme lengths and the uncertainty as to the locality where they may fall, renders the position of any who may be within reach of the falling trees extremely dangerous. Many large limbs are falling in all directions, which if any should strike a man would be almost certain to end his life, but these men work on, apparently unconscious of their danger, only they are very cautious regarding the safety of those working in their immediate vicinity, by notifying them when a tree is about to fall.

Following the timber fellers are the crosscut sawyers, sometimes called "buckers", who cut the trees into required lengths; then come the barkers, whose business it is to find on which side the log will "ride" (the side that will lay on the ground while being dragged along the road). There is a natural "ride" for most logs, and it oftentimes requires a great amount of judgement and skill to determine exactly where the "ride" is. The barker must chop or peel the bark off this side and remove all knots, so it will slip along with the least amount of friction, and "snipe" the end (chop it off rounding so it will not strike any of the "skids" in the road). The "hook tender", then has the difficult task of extracting the logs from their various localities, and get them onto the road and "dogged" together end to end, (two or three, according to size, make a load for two horses) in readiness for the teamster to hook onto and take to the mill. Horses are used entirely here in preference to oxen, being so much quicker in motion; it is claimed that six span of horses will haul out nearly twice as many logs in a given time as the same number of oxen. About 18 teams are used here, and it is certainly quite a sight to see them coming down the "skid" road, one after the other, each with a load of logs stringing along behind.

The "skid" road is well graded, and built like a railroad grade, great care being taken to avoid any uphill pulls and to avoid curves as much as possible. At a distance of every seven feet a section of a small tree about 12 inches in diameter and eight feet in length is laid about one-half in the ground and rounding notch is cut in the center which is kept well greased the whole length of the road. The logs then slide along through the notches and by the logs being peeled full length along their "ride", the advantage in the greater load which can be hauled can easily be appreciated.

A new road which has many advantages over the old "skid" road has just recently been instituted here and proven to be a success. It is built in the first place like the ordinary "skid" road, then a pair of notches 31 inches apart are sawed into each skid four inches deep, enough to allow a 2 x 6 scantling to go into and stand two inches above. Planking is then put in between the skids and between the scantling and water is run into the trough thus made, and is continually kept running, so that when the logs are hauled through they are kept wet on the bottom, and are thus easily hauled, and at a great saving of "skid grease", which is a large item when it is considered that several barrels are used every week and the cost is about $9 per barrel. The teamsters are as a rule a jovial set of men, ever ready to tell or listen to a funny story, and though their life is one of toil and their hours of work are many, yet they can usually be found sitting around their "bunk" houses, after their work is over, laughing, singing and giving themselves over to solid enjoyment, and while it is notorious that owing to the nature of their liability at any time to get into a tight place where all the force the horses are capable of exerting is required, they usually get into the habit of using language of a very forcible character; but here it is entirely different; none of the teamsters use language of a sulphurous nature, that is to say, if the teamsters themselves are to be believed, and there is no reason to doubt this, (unless in company with them a short time). A pond is formed adjacent to the mill by damming a stream of water which flows from the mountains and through the woods directly past the mill at a point where it starts to drop into the canyon below to join the waters of the Little White Salmon, and this pond is drawn from the water to supply the mill and to float the logs in. This is the objective point of all the "skid" roads, which branch out from here like the branches of a tree. The logs as brought from the woods, are rolled off into the water and the log driver who has become expert in riding logs, is here and there over the pond driving logs like a band of sheep toward the end of the mill which is "like" the mouth of a huge monster whose appetite is insatiable. The logs are drawn in by having a "dog" driven into them, and three are hauled up at once, and they are one at a time rolled onto the carriage, where in less time then it takes to tell it the large saw has taken a slice off of it, and if a small log, it is then usually passed on to the pony saw, while the larger sized logs are most generally cut into the desired lumber with the large saw,

Mill A sawmill in Washington sometime before 1900. Log pond and the wooden dam can be seen in lower left. Rough lumber dropped out of the rear of the mill into a flume that floated the boards and railroad ties to the Columbia River. Mill A Flats are still shown on modern maps. The burned forest around the mill is typical of the period. Most of the timber in the Columbia River Gorge was destroyed by fires caused by settlers, railroads and loggers. No attempt was made to control the frequent blazes. (Courtesy of Clyde Norby.)

the slabs being dropped onto "live" rollers and carried through the mill and run down a chute into the canyon below where they are consumed by fire. The boards which likewise drop onto the live rollers, are carried to the edgerman, who runs them through the edger, which has three saws, and all of the rough edges are thus cut off, and at the same time the board, if desired, is ripped into two or three pieces. Or sometimes the larger sized logs are cut into "cants", the log being trimmed on three sides then sawed to make two or three "cants" with the large saw. These cants, also are small logs with one side trimmed, are put onto the pony saw carriage and sawed into lumber of whatever size desired, all boards requiring trimming being given to the edgerman, while slabs go to the place of everlasting fire. A cut-off saw is situated conveniently on either side of the mill, one at the rear of the large saw and the other behind the pony, so that all lumber can be trimmed to any length and all bad ends cut off. More lumber is probably cut with this mill in proportion to its size and the number of men employed than any other mill on the Coast. Eighteen men are usually employed in the mill, and with two engines, with a combined capacity of 110 horse power, saw from 275 to 300 logs per day, which makes about 100,000 feet of lumber.

A flume which is also supplied with water from the pond is built from the mill to the Columbia River, following the canyon of the Little White Salmon. It is built V-shaped, of two inch lumber, each side being 38 inches in height, with a three cornered piece of timber in the bottom.

Great credit is due Mr. Wm. Eccles for the successful management and to Mr. Nels Moen for the building of this flume through the almost impenetrable canyon where mountains of rock tower hundreds of feet on either side, and rising abruptly from the river bed; and where to survey the proposed route of the flume it was necessary that men of intrepid daring and great skill be employed. Trails were cut in the solid rock, where only foothold could be had, and on one side perhaps a hundred feet straight below flowed the wild waters of the river, where instant death was assured the man who made a misstep, or by any accident fell, as no man could possibly fall into these turbulent and treacherous rapids and get out alive, as he would immediately be beaten to death on some of the rocks of which the stream is lined; while on the other side is the precipitous rock rising above as high as can be seen.

In other places little notches were cut for foot and hand holds up the steep sides of the cliff, where a cat would find difficulty in climbing, and it was over this trail these men doing the preliminary work would be seen daily with packs on their backs laboriously wending their way.

The first part of the flume from the mill is built along the side of a sheer bluff at an angle of 53 degrees till it reaches the canyon bottom 700 feet lower than where it starts, and timbers shoot down this long steep place with such rapidity as to throw the water in a spray from the flume, so that although a large supply is turned into the flume at the mill it is nearly all thrown out before the bottom is reached, and another flume for carrying water is built from further up the canyon which furnishes the water from the flume from this point.

The grade from here is nearly the same, the full length, is gradual and only one sharp decent. It winds around first on one side of the river then on the other, crossings being frequent, and the bridges are necessarily of suspension build, one being of 160-foot span and 45 feet high. A great amount of lumber was consumed in the construction of this flume, as it is nearly all high trestle, one place being 90 feet in height, while for a distance of 900 feet in another it is on an average 55 feet high. It has been necessary in one place to cut a tunnel through the side of the mountain and in another, one side of the flume rests in notches cut in the side of a perpendicular cliff, while the supports for the other side rest upon the ground 50 feet below.

The length of the flume is three miles, and is certainly was a great work of engineering skill to superintend its construction.

The end of the flume is in a little lake or slough at the mouth of the Little White Salmon, and all the lumber arrives here within about 15 or 20 minutes from the time it is sawed, dropping from the flume into the lake, where it is confined by booms, which extend in a circle around, forming a barrier which keeps it from floating away. Here it is the flume men find their daily employment, loading the lumber onto rafts in readiness to be taken across the river. From 30 to 40 thousand feet is loaded onto a flat raft, which is made of two inch plank nailed onto 2 x 4 scantlings. The raft is loaded down till it is five or six feet in the water and about the same above. From here the rafts are towed across the river to Viento, where the lumber yard and planing mill is situated, about a mile across and a mile below by the little steamer *Pearl*, which has recently been built by the company especially for this purpose, and is a model of beauty and power, oftentimes taking

two rafts of 40,000 feet each across where the current is very strong and a heavy wind usually blowing, and at this point the waves roll very high on a windy day, being one of the roughest places on the river, but the captain, whose several years experience as master of steamer in this locality has enabled him to handle her in almost any kind of weather, while "Old Tom", the engineer, will usually impress one with his smiling countenance if all is well, but if anything goes wrong it will be with his vociferous expressions, which sometimes pours forth in torrents like a swollen mountain stream.

The rafts on arrival at their destination are tied to an incline which extends from the lumber yard down into the water low enough to be accessible at the lowest stage of the river, cars are run down the incline to the water's edge, where the lumber is loaded onto them, and they are hauled up by means of a cable and a donkey engine which is situated at the head of the incline. After the cars have been loaded and hauled to the top, horses are hitched to them and by the use of a system of iron tracks are taken to any part of the yard, where each different size and length of lumber is left at its particular pile, and is stacked up to remain and dry till some future time when it will be called for to fill a bill; while a side track from the main O.R.& N. line has been extended through the yard and men are kept busy loading railroad ties and lumber of various descriptions onto cars for distribution throughout the country.

A planning mill is situated conveniently in the center of the yard, so that orders for dressed lumber of all descriptions can be promptly filled. It is equipped with all necessary first-class machinery for making various kinds of dressed lumber, and with sufficient motive power in the way of a steam engine and boiler to run all the machinery. And under the skillful management of the foreman the mill and yard is conducted in the best interests of the Company.

A large general merchandise store belonging to the Company is conveniently located near the railroad at Viento and a large stock of goods of such a description as almost anyone would require is constantly kept on hand, and with the ever obliging book-keeper (who also has charge of the store) in attendance, one trading there will have no trouble in being pleased.

The little town of Viento, which is justly celebrated for its beauty of location and the grandeur of the scenery which is adjacent, lies snugly at the foot of the mountains whose towering forms rise in palisade after palisade to a height which will cause one not accustomed to the sight, to stand and gaze in wonderment and admiration at these mighty works of nature, whose greatness can not be excelled anywhere in the world.

Thousands of people every year cross the ocean to see the Alps, and its snow clad peaks, and to take a trip up the Rhine, with the ruins of old castles to be seen on its banks of world renowned scenery, while the beautiful scenery of the Columbia River, though perhaps of less celebrity, is also less remote, and those who have traveled the world over and not failed to see its mountain peaks and water falls and canyons, where streams of water of beautiful clearness continually flow, have no hesitancy in pronouncing it unsurpassed.

These mountain streams, such as the Little White Salmon, and many others, abound with trout, and by a good sportsman hundreds can be placed in his basket in a few hours fishing.

All these points of interest can easily be reached from Portland by a few hours ride on the cars of the O.R.& N. Co., whose lines reach through this entire district."

When Oregon Lumber Company moved to Washington, Hood River lost an important payroll. Although company mill workers and loggers had never been accepted by local residents as part of the community, there had never been any hesitancy about trading with them or accepting their money. Always considered outsiders, and even foreigners, the Mormons were almost ignored in spite of the fact they supplied a predominant portion of the hard cash in circulation.

Such was not the case when Captain P.S. Davidson came to town in 1898 looking for a suitable place to build a sawmill. The good Captain was a Gentile, seemed to have some money and promised to hire a lot of local men in his new mill. Community business leaders rolled out the red carpet and promised full cooperation for such a worthy endeavor. The *Hood River Glacier* described Davidson in glowing terms; as an upright individual, an experienced mill man from Wisconsin having several sawmills, and as a real riverboat man with 30 steamboats plying the Missouri River, he also had five stalwart sons.

Captain Davidson toured over the country, inspected the timber available and declared it acceptable. A mill site at the juncture of the Hood River

and Columbia was selected and Davidson announced he would build a big mill comparable to any on the West Coast, provided he could drive logs down Hood River to his new mill.

On this latter point the Captain struck a raw nerve and the business community was dismayed. The river had been locked up since 1896 by the Hood River Lumbering Company. Formed in 1895 by three old-time residents of the upper valley, A. Winans, William Buskirk and E.T. Winans; Hood River Lumbering had designs on the vast timber resources of all the upper reaches of Hood River. Short on capital, but long on ingenuity, the Winans found a way to protect their interests and minimize competition. To this end, in January of 1896, they managed to convince the Wasco County Court to declare Hood River and most of its major tributaries a public highway for the transportation of wood products and to give Hood River Lumbering an exclusive franchise to its use for 50 years. In exchange for this franchise the Court stipulated the company had to make actual and substantial improvements in the river and to secure the necessary rights-of-way from the adjoining land owners within five years. A bond for $2,500 was to be posted with the Court and no charges could be made above the point where improvements had been made, or before a boom was built across the mouth of the river. After these conditions had been fulfilled the company could then charge the following rates:

For sawlogs, for the first 12 miles upstream from the mouth of the river (which happens to be the approximate juncture of the East and West Forks) — $1 per M (thousand board feet), plus 25¢ per M for each added mile. For booming sawlogs — $1 per M. For cordwood, for the first 12 miles upstream from the mouth of the river — 35¢ per cord, plus 10¢ per cord for each added mile. For booming cordwood — 40¢ per cord. Other rates were established for poles and fence posts.

With lumber selling at $7 per M and cordwood at $2 per cord, delivered to the railroad, rates allowed by the Court were prohibitive. When word got back to Hood River about what had happened in Wasco County Court at The Dalles, the townspeople were incensed. They were not too concerned about sawlogs, but they felt their winter supply of cordwood might be in jeopardy. There were letters of outrage to the editor of the *Hood River Glacier* and even a mass meeting was held, but there the matter seemed to have ended. The river had not been used to any great extent for other than a few minor drives involving fence posts and cordwood and had never figured importantly in the logging business. Now however, with the possibility of a big mill in town at the mouth of the river, the exclusive franchise held by Hood River Lumbering had the potential of killing the goose that was going to lay the golden egg.

Other complications soon arose. Several months before Captain Davidson appeared on the scene, a wealthy wheat farmer from Eastern Oregon, G.D. Woodworth, had purchased a defaulted mortgage on 18 acres of land owned by the Winans brothers. Woodworth had just harvested the largest wheat crop ever produced in Eastern Oregon up to that time, had sold his holdings and was searching for other investment opportunities. The 18 acres just happened to be the best site for a dam close to the mouth of Hood River. About the same time he took an option on another property at the mouth of the river, owned by Mrs. Mattie Oiler who was related to the Winans. A portion of this tract extended into the Columbia and helped secure control of the most likely dam and mill sites on lower Hood River. Mr. Woodworth then told the local paper he planned to spend $5,000 to build a dam to generate power with the intention of attracting several large mills to the area.

Immediate action was necessary to keep Captain Davidson from looking elsewhere for a mill location. A petition was drafted and circulated to annul the Hood River Lumbering franchise on the basis of non-compliance with terms of the agreement with the Court. In one week, enough signatures had been secured to place the matter before the Wasco County Court. The following week a citizens committee was formed to buy the dam site from Woodworth and give it to Davidson, or anyone else that would build a mill in Hood River. Why Davidson and Woodworth did not get together is not known. The business community was united in its efforts but was running scared.

The petition filed in Wasco County alleged the terms of the river franchise had never been fulfilled. At the opening of the hearing, B.S. Huntington, attorney for Hood River Lumbering, strenuously protested the action and claimed the

Most generally it is assumed a lumber flume is built on a gentle gradient, much the same as an irrigation ditch or canal. Such need not be the case, many old flumes had steep drops. The only limiting criteria was to make the vertical curve of the flume gradual enough to avoid digging the leading end of the floating timbers into the bottom of flume. Due to the steepness of the Little White Salmon canyon it was necessary to tunnel through a section of the hillside to secure a suitable vertical or horizontal alignment. This particular section of the structure seems a hodgepodge of braces. The flume walker using the walkway on the far side of the flume must have been in dire need of a job. (Browning Photo Company from the authors collection.)

court had no jurisdiction in the case, but if it would grant a ten day delay he would then be prepared to prove that his client was in compliance with all terms of the franchise. The court disagreed with Mr. Huntington, insisted it did have every right to act in the matter at hand, as it had been the body that had issued the franchise in the first place, and there would be no delay. On this note Aud Winans and his attorney stalked out of court. It was found the required bond for $2,500 had never been posted with the county; the franchise was declared void and the Wasco County Court redeemed itself in the eyes of Hood River, especially the businessmen.

Somehow the Winans regained the defaulted mortgage on the 18 acres during the six months grace period allowed and Woodworth saw no reason to exercise the option of Mrs. Oilers property without the dam site. Even after losing the river franchise the Winans still held a winning hand. They (and Mrs. Oiler) still owned the best locations for the dam and the sawmill. To deal with the new situation, the citizens committee organized the Hood River Transportation & Boom Company for the sole purpose of buying out the Winans brothers and Mrs. Oiler. Incorporated by nine of the most prominent men in the area, the Boom Company was authorized to issue 1,000 shares of stock at $10 per share. The per share price was set low enough so individuals, as well as businessmen, could participate and enough shares were issued to adequately cover the expected cost of buying out the Winans.

With such active support from the entire community, Captain Davidson incorporated the Lost Lake Lumber Company with F.H. and Ethel Button for $75,000 on December 13, 1898. Two things seem odd about this incorporation; one is the small amount of capitalization, and the second is the need to have a local resident as a partner. The immediate impression is that, perhaps, the Captain was not as wealthy a mill man, or had as many steamboats, as originally thought when he first came to Hood River. Or, it could be because the Button's had considerable timber holdings on the West Fork of Hood River?

While Lost Lake Lumber Company was being formed, the process of reaching an agreement with the Winans and Mrs. Oiler was grinding on. An appraiser had been appointed to assess damages for the 36 acres that had been condemned for the dam and booming ground, deemed necessary for the operation of the Boom Company. He found Hood River Lumbering entitled to $2,000 for the river bottom and the Columbia River sandbar and $40 for a small tract at Sandy Flat, further upriver. Aud Winans refused a cash offer from the Boom Company representatives and declared the rights to be worth $20,000. He had 20 days to appeal the ruling to circuit court. After his last court experience Aud was probably just a little reluctant to try again and the final outcome of the contest between the Winans and the citizens of Hood River is somewhat hazy. The *Hood River Glacier* pointedly reported that Mrs. Oiler owned 83.63 acres at the mouth of the river and that just two years previous 49.79 acres had been purchased for $500; the balance had been homesteaded. It is suspected that the Winans sensed the tide of public opinion was not in their favor. They were shrewd businessmen and had always been well regarded. Rather than hold out for top dollar and jeopardize their reputations, they made a profitable accommodation with the Boom Company and faded back upriver, at least temporarily, to their resort hotel and homesteads.

After problems with the Winans were resolved, work on the mill went forward swiftly. By February 1899, 138 pilings had been driven adjacent to Hood River to support the mill structure. The main building, the largest ever seen in Hood River, was 50 feet wide and 356 feet long. The carpentry work was finished by May, machinery installed in June and July and sawing started in August with purchased logs. The *Hood River Glacier* reported the cost of construction was over $100,000, the cut would be 20,000 board feet per hour and the company would average 400,000 board feet every 22 hour day. Total employment was expected to be close to 400 men. The business people of the town had every right to be proud.

Captain Davidson had kept his promise to build a big mill equal to any on the West Coast. With two headrigs, using 24 foot bandsaws, backed with dual edgers, a re-saw, necessary trimmers and slasher saws, it was impressive. So much so that when a reporter for the *Hood River Glacier* watched a few five and six foot logs cut on the headrig, he declared the mill was " . . . slicing the big logs up at the rate of a million feet a day . . . " Quite an

overstatement, but it did require two planers to keep up with the mill cut. The whole installation, including a shingle mill and a complete machine shop, was driven by one large Corlis steam engine powered by the output of five boilers reported to have come from Mississippi river steamboats. Sawdust and other mill waste was utilized for fuel. A separate, smaller engine powered the electric light plant.

In December of 1899, Lost Lake Lumber sent a crew upriver to bring down logs that had been cut the previous summer, but the Winans beat them to the punch by bringing down 300,000 feet of logs from the forks, 12 miles upstream — just to show that it could be done. Evidently any breach between the Winans and Davidson had been healed, as Davidson was the only purchaser available and Winans were not ones to drive logs downriver just for the experience. The drive may have demonstrated that it was possible to bring sawlogs down, but 300M would have been less than a one day cut when the mill was operating at capacity.

The first river drives, made in the winters of 1899 and 1900, had to be made during flood stage and were extremely dangerous. Most of the year there was not enough water in the river to float sawlogs. The first drive of any consequence had been in the summer of 1889 when Merriman, Loy, Morris and Neligh brought down 60,000 fence posts. It was extremely slow and exceedingly difficult even for fence posts because of the summer water levels. The next drive recorded was a cordwood drive made by a Mr. Rodenheiser in the summer of 1892. Approximately 800 cords were brought down from the East Fork. Adequate water to drive sawlogs was available only during the runoff period when the normally placid river turned into a raging, wild current. These early winter drives were not actually drives, it was more a case of dumping the logs in the river and hoping they would ride the flood downstream, where they could be caught before escaping into the Columbia.

In 1901, Hood River Lumbering decided to build a splash dam on the West Fork, about 13 miles upstream, to flush the logs down. The company spent $3,500 to build a dam in the West Fork canyon 97 feet wide which formed a 800 foot backwater. Winans boasted it would be capable of sending 25,000,000 board feet down river. Lost Lake Lumber concurred with the need for a better system and proceeded to build their own splash dam three and one half miles up the East Fork. Their dam was 16 feet high, but created a backwater of only 280 feet.

The idea of a splash dam is to create a surge of water large enough to float logs down a shallow stream on a crest. Logs are dumped into the dry or low water river below the dam and when a sufficient volume of water has accumulated, the gates of the dam are opened and water released. With a large dam like Hood River Lumbering's, water and logs could be released in increments without having to wait for water behind the dam to build up. Each surge of water would pick up logs that had dropped out of the previous surge. The closer together, or more often the surges could be made, the fewer logs would be lost hanging up on obstacles. Lost Lake Lumber, with a much smaller dam, would have to wait several days between releases so that adequate water was available. Naturally there were always logs in the river that would not get flushed all of the way down, but would come down during high water in the winter — the trick was to catch them.

The splash system gave the loggers some latitude on when drives could be made, but it did not mean the river became operable all year around. There had to be an adequate flow of water in the river to float logs. Otherwise the surge that pushed the logs downstream over obstacles and helped minimize the hangups and log jams was dissipated and lost just filling the streambed.

Catching the logs at the other end of the drive, at the mill, required massive booms and considerable space. Logs could not be allowed to build up against the booms or eventually the sheer force of the water pressure and the weight of the logs would take out any boom, regardless of its strength. As logs came down, they had to be shunted out of the current into slackwater. Here was the biggest operational problem of a mill located on the upper Columbia River out of tide water. During high water there was some slack water for log storage but during summer months, when water was low, logs would be stranded on sandbars and near the shoreline. Some years the Columbia could fluctuate as much as 50 feet vertically; a 30 to 40 foot change in water level was common. This was an impossible situation for a mill that required logs be floated to the bullchain, especially if the only

tributary river could be driven but once a year. The entire cut had to be delivered at once and then stored until the next drive could be made.

For a mill cutting 400M a day, 300 days of the year, some 120,000,000 board feet of logs (lumber scale) had to be stored in booms along the river. It is estimated it would have taken over one-half a square mile of booming ground to store enough logs for the annual cut, not to mention the capital required to put that much volume in the river and to hold it until the logs were utilized. Lost Lake Lumber Company never achieved this level of production, and for that matter, never hired the number of mill workers contemplated because of this log supply problem. Even though it was never hampered by snow, it was forced to close because of high water and log shortages during the winter months just like the high country mills.

In April of 1901, less than two years after the Davidsons had put their mill into production, they were having financial problems. Davidson approached Eccles for help and borrowed $35,000. In return, Davidson gave a mortgage on all the Lost Lake holdings and a one year option during which David Eccles could purchase one-half interest in the company for $60,000. The Davidsons had retained the right to buy back the option for $5,000 anytime during the year, but did not or could not do so. In some manner not evident in the public records, the option was extended for a period of time. But two years after the initial agreement had been made Davidson, either willingly or reluctantly, agreed to sell out entirely. Early in 1903, David Eccles purchased Lost Lake Lumber Company. Strangely, the deed was made out to the trusted bookkeeper of Oregon Lumber Company, Charles T. Early.

This purchase must have dismayed the Hood River business community. After all their efforts to secure the mill site and to open the river, the frugal, hardworking Mormons were in control and there was little or nothing that could be done about it.

The following is a list of equipment pledged by Lost Lake Lumber in 1901. It provides an interesting insight to the type of logging equipment required and typical valuations of the period. (The land and timber that were also pledged have been omitted.)

Mill site consisting of approximately 50 acres of land in Section 25 in Township Three North of Range 11 East, valued at				$ 15,000.00
Sawmill including buildings and machinery on mill site				$ 75,000.00
Rolling stock, consisting of one Lidgerwood 9 x 10 Special logging engine valued at $2,000.00. 4,000 feet of wire cable, electric light outfit for boat, towing booms and cross chains, tents, skiffs, river tools, 5,000 feet of boom, boom chain, etc. Eleven wagons, five sets of heavy harness, neck yokes, eveners, whiffle-trees, etc. Camp equipment, etc., valued at $3,090.00, besides the engine first mentioned, making the value of the entire tolling stock as above				$ 5,090.00
Live stock consisting of ten horses and two cows, valued at				$ 1,175.00
1,500,000 feet of lumber in yard at mill, valued at				$ 9,750.00
100,000 lath in yard at mill, valued at				$ 150.00
Sawlogs in White Salmon:	164,571	feet		
Sawlogs in Hood River:	2,400,000	feet		
	2,564,571	feet	$ 7,673.71	
Sawlogs at mill	464,000	feet	$ 1,856.00	
Total sawlogs	3,028,571	feet valued at		$ 9,549.71
Accounts and bills receivable				$ 4,262.00
Mill supplies (saws, oils, etc.), valued at				$ 600.00
Office building on mill site, valued at				$ 300.00
Boarding house on mill site, valued at				$ 300.00
Barn building on mill site, valued at				$ 550.00

Why did David Eccles buy Lost Lake Lumber Company? It presents something of a mystery. Surely he was aware of its problems. His people at Viento were close enough to know what was happening at the Hood River mill and Eccles himself was in town every two or three months. If he was concerned about the security of his $35,000 loan he could have protected it by taking up the option for half interest in the sawmill. Or, did he feel that his hard-working, ingenious employees could solve the log supply problem that had eluded Davidson? Not likely. His people were not river men from the Northeast or the Lake States. For the most part they were immigrants from the old country, with no expertise with river drives. And it could not have been for the want of timber adjacent to the Washington operations. These lands had just been opened up; there would be mills in the region long after Oregon Lumber Company disappeared from the scene. Perhaps David Eccles thought that he was getting a bargain for his $130,000, but he was experienced enough to know that a mill with a log supply problem is no bargain at any price.

The only possible answer is Eccles simply wanted a new big mill. Neither Mill A nor Mill B were new and the photographs indicate Mill A was certainly not very imposing. Possibly he expected some savings could be made by having the sawmill and planer in one location and eliminating the expensive lumber flume and river towing. That seems to be the only possible explanation that can be offered for Eccles' acquisition of the "white elephant" at the mouth of Hood River.

Shortly after acquiring Lost Lake Lumber, Eccles formed the Mt. Hood Lumber Company and Charles T. Early deeded the new organization the Lost Lake sawmill. David Eccles became president; W.H. Eccles, vice president; H.H. Rolapp, secretary and Thomas D. Dee, treasurer. Capitalization was $400,000. Also included in the new company was an operation located on the lower Columbia that had been purchased in 1902 from the Beaver Valley Flume Company. This included a mill located at Runyons Station, at or near Inglis, Oregon on the Astoria & Columbia Railroad, some 60 miles northwest of Portland.

It is unfortunate the company did not see fit to have Mr. Hicks of the Browning Photo Company visit the Inglis operations on the lower Columbia River. Of all the Company mills this one is the least known. Purchased in 1902, it was abandoned by the company sometime around 1915. According to industry reports of the time this mill was to be Eccles entry into the lucrative coastal trade. It was to be especially advantageous since the inland mills would be able to ship both East and West, depending on market conditions. In 1907 the Inglis mill was rafting material to Wallace Island in the Columbia for re-shipment to California, but for some reason offshore traffic never developed.

It is not difficult to see why the company was attracted to the Inglis location; in many ways it was similar to Hood River. The sawmill was located some six or seven miles south of the Columbia River; lumber from the mill was transported to the planer on the Astoria & Columbia River Railroad by flume and the timber was relatively small and could be handled with horse teams quite easily.

Located approximately 60 miles below Portland, the area had just opened up with the building of the railroad, earlier access had been limited to steamboat transportation. Just who discovered Inglis is not known, but it was William Eccles who purchased the mill from Thomas, Lilli, and H.E. Meserve for $9,000. The deed does not mention the planer on the railroad, but judging from the price it seems safe to assume that more than just a sawmill was included for $9,000. The flume was also purchased by William Eccles from the Beaver Flume & Lumber Company owned by Charles and Florence Runyon for $2,500. The Runyons were paid an additional $2,500 for some timber cutting rights and $42,500 for 1800 acres of timber. Comparative production figures are available only for the year 1904, but serve to show the contribution of the Inglis mill compared to the Hood River and Baker sawmills.

The only picture that could be located shows the Inglis mill to be much smaller than Mill A and it is quite possible Inglis achieved its production level by being able to operate more days of the year than the Baker or Hood River mills. Closure due to freezing or snow was almost unheard of on the lower Columbia.

Inglis	10,150,000 board feet
Hood River	10,286,000 board feet
Baker	18,000,000 board feet

In the succeeding years the Inglis cut averaged around 8 MM board feet of lumber and 5MM shingles annually.

After the initial purchase, Frank Davenport who had been in charge of the Ruthton planer, was sent down river to install a steam engine and boiler and to add new lumber chutes at the planer on Runyons Spur and in 1905 a new 24' x 100' planer shed was built. In 1906 a pony re-saw was added and the company made the transition from horse to railroad logging. Judging from old photographs, it seems likely that Eccles once again raided some Utah street railway system for motive power. In 1907 a new 10 x 13 Willamette road yarder was purchased to improve log production.

It is not known if the Utah Mormons followed Eccles to the Inglis mill, there is little evidence that they did. There was a large Finnish and Scandinavian population in the area and they were skilled loggers and lumbermen. It is most likely the company relied on locals for employees.

Like Viento, the sawmill and planer have long since disappeared and it is impossible to even find the location of Inglis. However, Beaver Falls, the last mill site is still visible from old Highway 30, east of Clatskanie, Oregon.

Later in 1903, after the sale of the Lost Lake mill had been consummated, timberlands owned or controlled by the company were purchased in a separate agreement. In all, about 2,700 acres which had probably been owned by Button, on the headwaters of the West and Middle Forks, were obtained in the transaction.

Somewhat earlier, Charles T. Early, Henry W. Nibley and Joseph F. Nibley had each filed for 160 acre tracts under the provisions of the Timber and Stone Act. All three properties happened to be located in the West Fork drainage. Oddly enough, the filings and the Lost Lake lands were very close to 4,600 acres David Eccles had obtained from M.B. Bradley of Bay City, Michigan in January of 1902. Stranger yet is the fact that Mr. M.B. Bradley had purchased these same 4,600 acres only two months previous, from the Winans.

Obviously David Eccles had designs on the timber at the head of Hood River and had hoodwinked the Winans to get the largest tract available. The Winans were among the first settlers in the valley and had, over time, put together a sizeable holding. The rest of the ownerships were scattered homesteads; there had never been any other large scale land consolidations.

In other parts of the West, mill men moving out of the Lake States and the South were able to secure large tracts of timber from railroad land grants or had sent land agents ahead to block up the more promising lands for future development. Nothing like this had taken place around Hood River so it was a case of buying out the small homesteader and trying to block out around the Lost Lake and Winans purchases. Old deed records indicate Charles T. Early, the bookkeeper, also acted as a land agent for Oregon Lumber Company, and for himself, on occasion.

While the Chenowith mills were much smaller than the newly purchased mill in Hood River, they probably produced about as much lumber as the larger mill because of the more reliable log supply. In 1900 there were 40 men at work at Mill A, a like number at Mill B at Chenowith and 35 in the yard at Viento. William Robertson, head sawyer for Oregon Lumber at the time, in Hood River for the fourth of July celebration in 1900, reported that Mill A had cut a record 81,836 feet of lumber in 11 hours on the previous Saturday. This, of course, was an exceptional run, but the owners were making every effort to keep production up and to extend working hours. In late June a 120 candle power electric light plant was installed at Mill A. It was a case of "every little bit" helping.

Once again fire struck Chenowith. The residence of one J. Moody was destroyed, along with the Maccabee hall, but the mill hands saved the boarding house.

By 1902, the company began to dispose of its cut over lands in Washington. The total area sold was between 1,000 and 2,000 acres, most of which was considered desirable orchard land. Eventually most of it reverted to forest land. Sawmilling would continue on the Washington side for several more years, but sale of the land signaled the beginning of the end to this phase of company's operations.

When Mt. Hood Lumber took over the Lost Lake Mill in April of 1903, only about 50 men were employed. Charles T. Early, who had been promoted to superintendent of Oregon Lumber Company, predicted very shortly there would be between 300 and 400 men at work and the monthly payroll would be $30,000. Further, the Viento planer would be closed in two or three months and

lumber finishing would be moved to Hood River. Actually it was closed much sooner. As mentioned earlier, there was a disastrous boiler explosion at Viento in May, killing one man and injuring eight others. The planer, valued at $5,000 had sustained $2,000 in damages. The installation was not rebuilt. It took another six months to ship out accumulated inventory and by the beginning of 1904 Viento was abandoned. The inventory of the company store was packed up and shipped downriver to Inglis. Mill B was dismantled that summer and the boilers moved to Hood River. Mill A continued to operate for another year but was closed down at the end of the 1905 season.

With more company employees now in Hood River, the company established its own store at First and Oak Streets, an action not likely to endear the company with local shopkeepers. The Lost Lake Lumber Company logging camp on the East Fork was re-opened and work began to make the river easier to drive. Before the summer was over, $15,000 had been spent on river improvements. Evidently the company fully realized the importance of the river and problems involved. In spite of the sizeable expenditures on river improvement, serious difficulties were experienced during the winter of 1903-1904 in getting logs to the mill. The Mormons were no more successful with their drive than were the Davidsons.

In June of 1904, the Oregon Lumber Company was reorganized. Capitalization was increased to $1,000,000 and the Mt. Hood Lumber Company and its assets were absorbed. The company now had mills in Baker City, Sumpter, Hood River, Chenowith and Inglis. The *Oregon Timberman,* a Portland trade journal, estimated that company timber holdings exceeded one billion feet and that only Booth-Kelly, in Springfield, was larger.

The problem of driving the river had to be resolved and in late August, during the low water period, David Eccles, Thomas Dee and H. H. Rolapp came over from Ogden. With W. H. Eccles and N. C. Evans, a local landowner, they inspected a possible dam site about one mile upstream from the mouth of the river. It was decided with a dam for log storage, logs could be floated or flumed directly to the mill and use of the Columbia as a booming ground could be discontinued. Work began at the mouth of the river to build a log crib 300 feet long, 12 feet wide and six feet high, to sheer logs coming downstream toward the mill. The width of the crib gives some idea of the force the builders figured they were trying to control.

David Eccles and his party had no sooner left town than the *Hood River Glacier* reported three local businessmen, Leslie Butler, H. F. Davidson and John Leland, had secured a 99 year lease from Dr. T. L. Eliot to build a 35 foot dam (with provisions to build up to 50 feet) across Hood River and arrangements had been made with Oregon Lumber Company to store 8MM and 10MM board feet of logs and although they had offers to sell power, they intended to save it for local use.

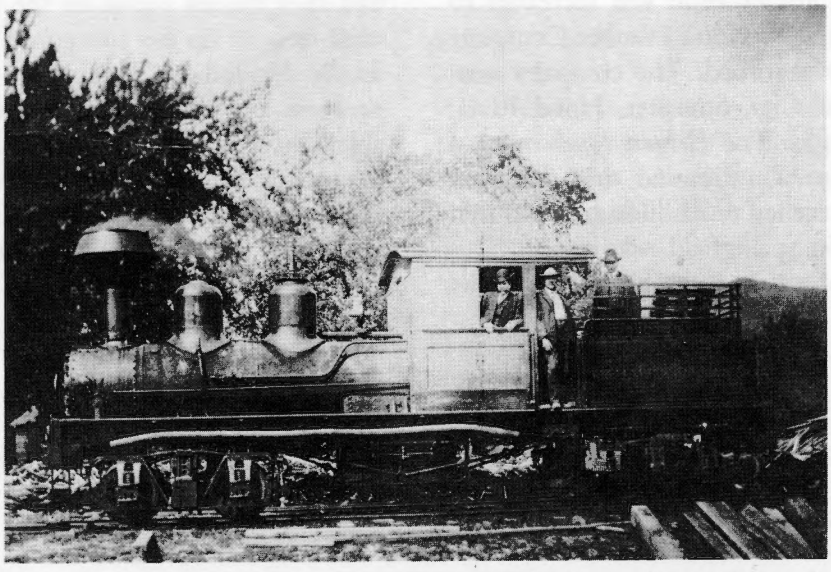
Five weeks later the unexplained happened once again. W. H. Eccles announced the company would build a steam railroad to supply logs to the mill. What had happened? Why all the talk about a dam? Had Butler, Davidson and Leland been acting in good faith, in concert with the company, or had they gotten rights to the dam site first and tried to hold up the company? Had David Eccles finally decided use of the river would always be a problem and that a railroad would be more reliable? There is no answer, but Eccles was serious in his intent. Before the end of the year a nine man survey crew, under direction of the redoubtable J.W. West, was in the field exploring possible routes up both sides of the river.

Once the decision had been made to construct a standard gauge steam railroad from the former Lost Lake Lumber Company sawmill at Hood River to the woods, work moved with speed and precision, typical of most projects undertaken by David Eccles. By 1904 he had already been involved with at least three other railroad projects. The Sumpter Valley Railroad, the Astoria and Columbia River Railroad and the Utah and Pacific.

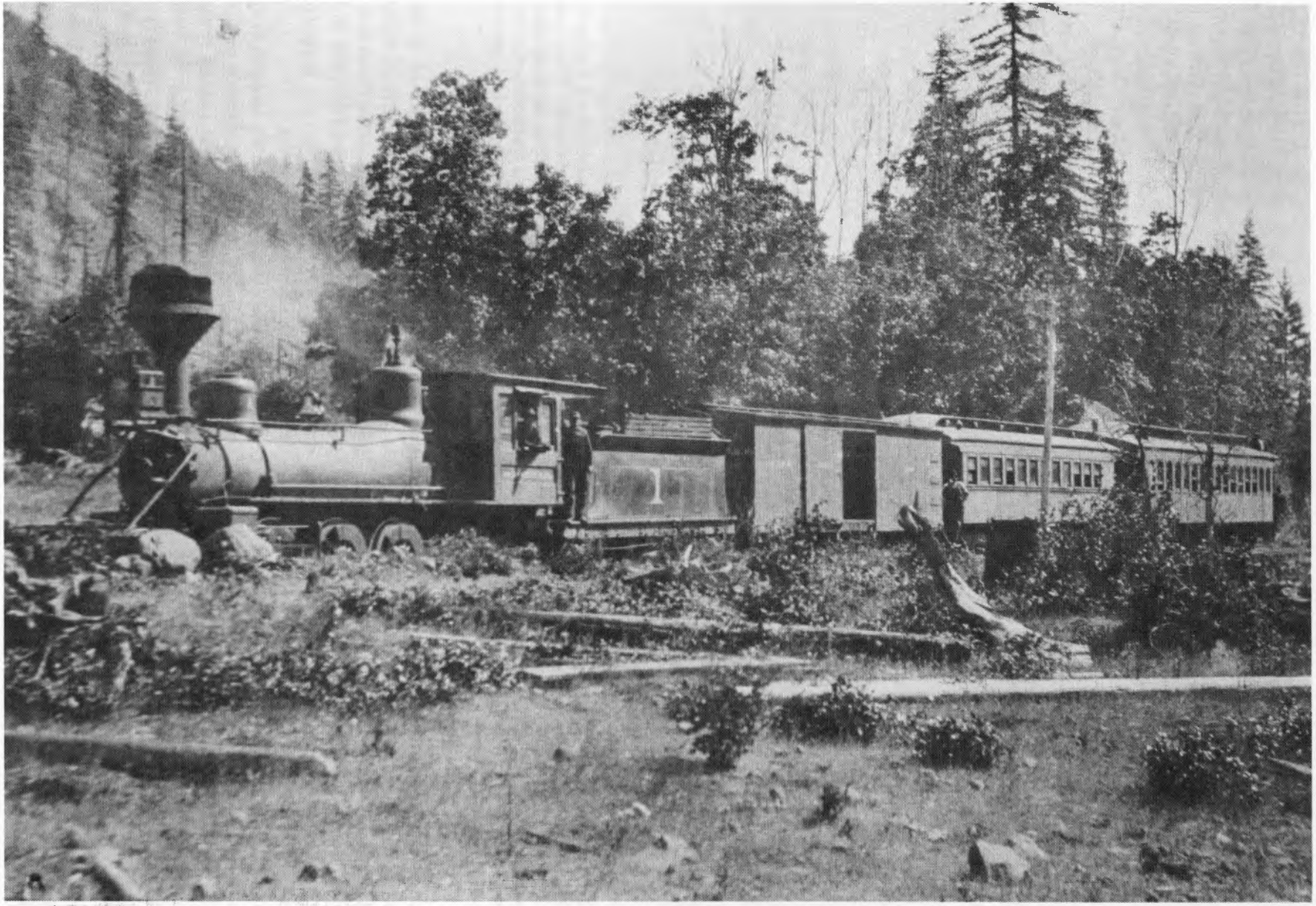
The Sumpter Valley, a narrow gauge line built primarily to haul logs to Oregon Lumber Company mills in Baker City, was started in 1891. It reached its final destination at Prairie City some 80 miles from the mills in 1909.

Involvement with the Astoria and Columbia River Railroad happened in 1893 rather indirectly. The Utah Construction Company had taken a contract with the railroad and when the Panic of 1893 hit the railroad could not meet its financial obligations. Utah Construction was overextended and appealed to Eccles for help. Through the First National Bank of Ogden, Eccles was able to assist the construction company, but it was not long before it was reorganized. When the new company emerged David Eccles owned one-third of the stock and his friends the remaining two-thirds. The four Corey brothers and their step-brother, J. E. Spaulding, who had built the firm when they won the Union Pacific bid to build the Oregon Short Line from Granger, Wyoming to Huntington, Oregon, were left out in the cold.

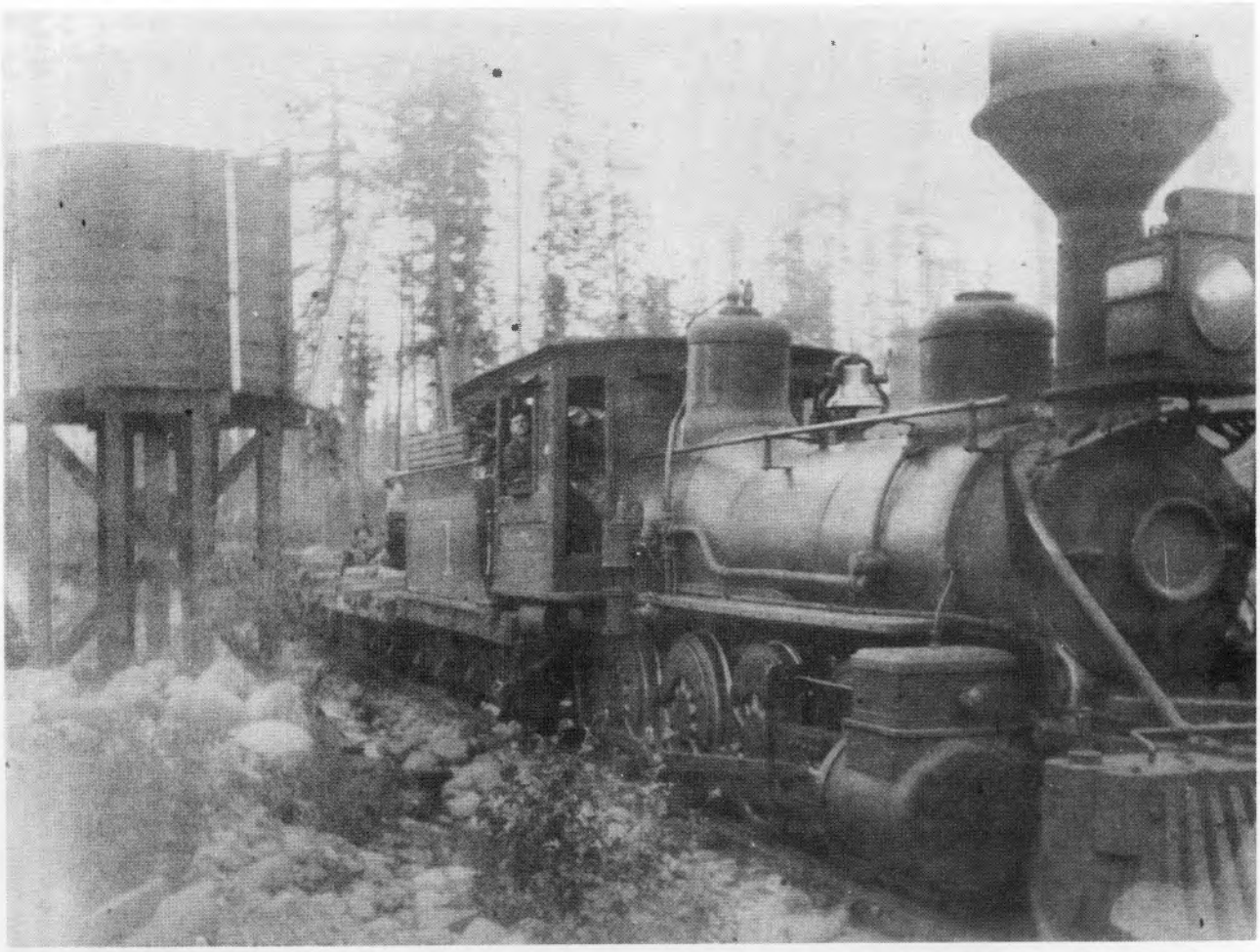
The third railroad, the Utah and Pacific, was organized in 1897 by a group of Mormons headed by A. W. McCune, owner of a very profitable mine in British Columbia, and George Q. Cannon, an apostle of the Church. The goal was to build a railroad from Salt Lake City toward Los Angeles. Earlier, the Utah Central had built as far south as Milford, Utah. From Milford the Oregon Short Line had done some work, but had stopped because of financial difficulties. McCune entered into an agreement with the Union Pacific Railroad to pick up the work and build to the Utah-Nevada border. He would build the grade and the U.P. would supply ties and rails in return for bonds. The Union Pacific also had the right, for a five year period, to buy the Utah and Pacific. Before the project had really gotten started Cannon died and



Shay locomotive used during construction of the Mount Hood Railroad, but destined for use on the Oregon Lumber Company logging railroad. Some consider this to be the first Number 1. Gentleman in the derby may have been W. H. Eccles. (Courtesy of John T. Labbe.)



Number 1 has paused to have its picture taken. All of the train crew and a few of the passengers can be seen. One of the very few photos of the Mount Hood passenger cars. Train is probably in the vicinity of Dee. (Hood River Museum.)



This 2-8-0 Baldwin purchased used from the Union Pacific was also a Number 1 on the Mount Hood Railroad; built in 1868 and was almost 40 years old when acquired. It was used for another 10 years then sold. There was also a Number 2 that was identical; same builder, same erection date, purchased from the UPRR at the same time and sold about 1916. There is no known picture of this particular locomotive. While Number 1 was not used in the woods operations it did deliver logs to the Dee mill as construction and logging activities progressed toward Parkdale. (Author's collection.)

David Eccles was invited to take his place. He became vice-president, Utah Construction got the construction contract and on completion the line was sold to the Union Pacific for $1,500,000. Half of the sale price went to the Eccles faction and half to the McCune people.

The *Hood River Glacier* reported the Eccles decision to build a railroad on November 10, 1904. A little later it added the company engineer, Joseph A. West, who had temporarily put aside his duties with the Sumpter Valley Railroad and was looking over the grade up Hood River Canyon. His decision was that it was 'not impossible'. At the end of December a nine man survey crew was in the area and several tentative routes were being examined. Possible routes were located up both sides of the river, but it was determined to be several miles shorter up the west side and $75,000 less expensive. Total cost of the project was estimated to be between $250,000 and $300,000 and distance to the forks of the river, the eventual destination, approximately 16 miles.

A route up the east side was finally selected even though C. W. Nibley, who was a director of the railroad as well as an official of the lumber company, was on record of favoring the shorter west side location. The deciding factor may have been interest in the line shown by the east side orchardists. The Sumpter Valley Railroad had started as a private carrier, but had been showing substantial earnings since becoming a common carrier. Not one to overlook additional income Eccles may have

opted for the longer route with expectations of recouping the extra costs, and a little more, from future fruit shipments. The first east side route followed Hood River south about four miles and turned up Odell Creek to the little settlement of Odell, then headed west skirting the northern end of Gilhooley Mountain. This location would have by-passed most of the fine orchards at the north end of the lower valley so it was decided to climb out of the river canyon sooner by using a switchback. After following the river for two and one-half miles and climbing from an elevation of 101 feet to 307 feet, the line switched back on itself, heading almost north. At an elevation of about 600 feet and near milepost 5, the grade reached the valley floor.

For some reason the grading contract was not given to Utah Construction. One of the Corey's was in Hood River with W.H. Eccles, but the contract was awarded to Mason, Giebisch, and Joplin of Portland about the middle of March, 1905. Grading was expected to begin immediately and be ready for steel by July 1. Survey reports indicated a 200 foot tunnel would be required at Johnson Point (the approximate location previously selected by Eccles for a dam).

By the middle of April contractors had six camps with 150 men strung out along the grade. Boring was underway on both sides of Johnson Point and Mason was reported to be bringing another 50 teams from the Great Southern Railroad which was building south out of The Dalles. The work schedule was helped considerably when it was determined the tunnel would not be needed and the gradient could be maintained with a sixty foot cut.

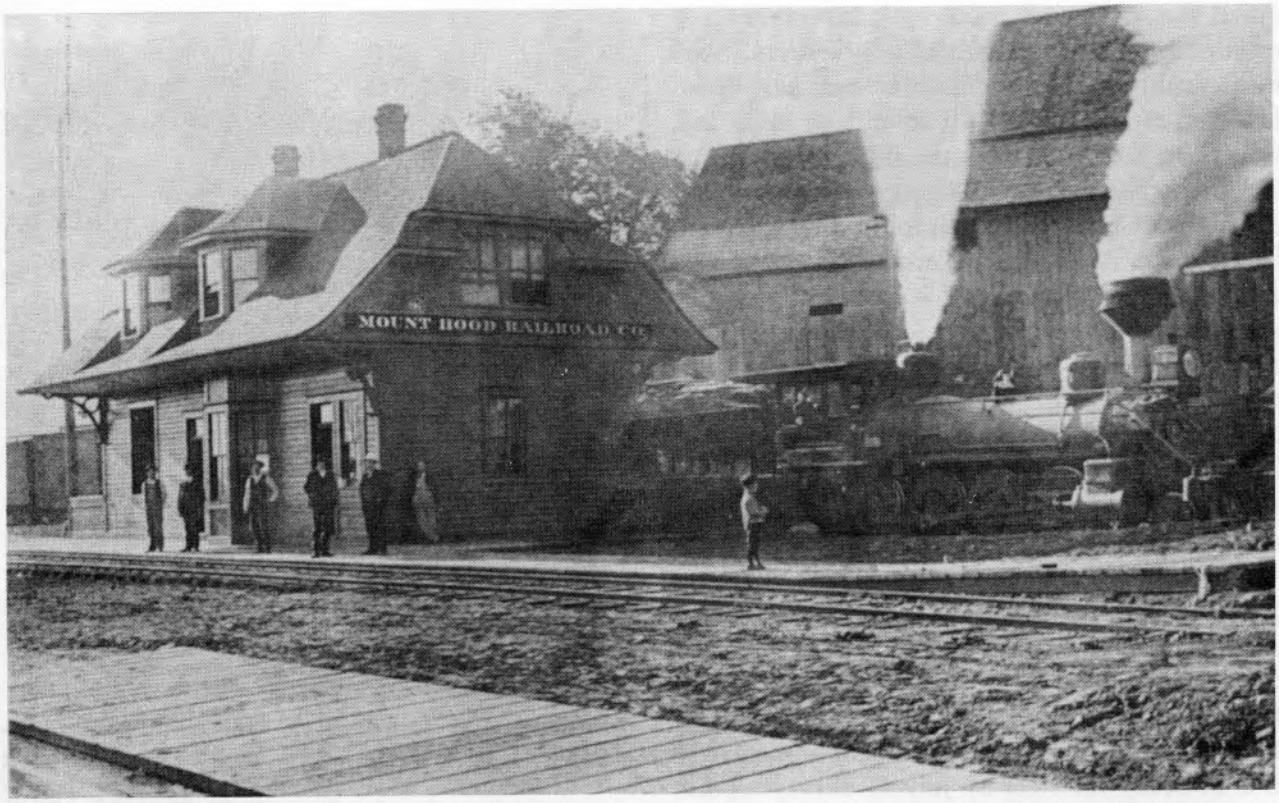
Terms of the agreement with the contractors are not known, but they must not have included the steel work. By the first of August they had completed 11 miles of earthwork and in early November the *Hood River News-Letter* reported Giebisch and Joplin only had two more weeks work for the Mount Hood Railroad and they had accepted a contract with the Hood River Irrigation District to build seven miles of irrigation ditch. During the first week of 1906, Giebisch and Joplin closed their camps for the winter and sent the remaining 33 horses and two wagon loads of equipment by boat to Portland.

The last few months of 1905 saw considerable construction activity at the Hood River terminus.

Evidently slabwood from the Dee sawmill left something to be desired as fuel for the wood burning locomotives and oak cordwood was used to supplement the faster burning Douglas-fir. (Courtesy of Lyle Gholston.)

Work had been held up with right-of-way problems. A number of local residents resisted negotiation with the railroad, but the most serious problem was with the Winans and Mrs. Mattie Oiler. The Winans owned a critical tract east of town and Mrs. Oiler owned the spot where the station was to be built. Eventually a settlement was worked out with the Winans and piling was driven around the foot of the bluff, from town, toward where the track crossed Hood River. The 130 foot truss bridge was in the yard, but could not be installed until the right-of-way across Winans was secured and half a mile of piling driven. By November 2nd, an agreement was reached and 40 men were driving piling. The bridge falsework was completed by November 16th and the bridge was in place shortly thereafter. Before the month was over W. H. Eccles fired up Mount Hood engine Number 1 (a Shay destined for logging) and pulled the first train a short distance out of town, but did not cross the bridge.

The problem with Mrs. Oiler could not be resolved and went to court. Mrs. Oiler wanted $5,000 for her seven tenths of an acre, the company had offered $500. After a two day trial the



The Hood River depot of the Mount Hood was designed by the local architectural firm of P. M. Hall-Lewis and Company and the construction contract was awarded to Fredricks and Arnold. Bid for the job was $2000.00. Judging from the relaxed posed the local is not scheduled to depart any time soon. (Author's collection.)

jury deliberated two hours and awarded the good widow $3500, the company got to pay court costs as well.

L. G. Taylor from the Sumpter Valley Railroad and a 15 year veteran of the O.R.& N. Co., was made foreman of the steel gang and he had his work cut out. His workers were Japanese from beet fields around La Grande and did not know a spike from a tie plate. He had confidence in their abilities and told reporters he expected to lay 2,000 feet of track a day once the bridge was crossed.

Starting from the bridge about the first of December, Taylor and his crew had only four miles of line completed five weeks later. The line in the canyon and at the switchback was troubled by slides and due to the soft roadbed the Shay (Number 1, also known as Little Bud, after the son of W.H. Eccles killed at Viento) was the only engine able to operate. The trip was also getting too long for one locomotive so a night shift was added to get material to the end of the track. Once past the switchback the terrain improved and so did the skill of the track gang. The first train pulled into Odell, 8½ miles from Hood River, about the beginning of February and by the middle of March there was service to Dee. An informal census conducted by the *Glacier* found the company had 66 Japanese on its payroll at the end of the year.

It is hard to determine just what the railroad company assembled in the way of motive power for construction and eventual freight service. There is no question about Shay Number 1 and there might well have been a steam dummy initially. George B. Abdill, in his book *Pacific Slope Railroads*, quotes retired engineer Arthur Sayre as having fired a small 2-4-2 steam dummy during the winter of 1905-6 while working on the Mount Hood construction. He specifically mentions the engine had no water glass and the firemen had to try the gauge cocks frequently to avoid blowing her to Kingdom Come. There is photographic evidence that Oregon Lumber had a steam dummy logging on the other side of the Columbia, but it's not likely it was used during construction. In March, just about the time work was getting underway on the Mount Hood, it was reported in the

Glacier that Oregon Lumber Company was extending their logging road on the Little White Salmon River in Washington. With interests in transit lines in and around Ogden and Logan it is quite possible for Eccles to have some used equipment sent to Hood River. After the line was completed the locomotive could have been shipped down river to the Inglis operation; it is known there was a steam dummy there after the turn of the century.

Near the first of November, 1905, both local papers reported the arrival of two Baldwin locomotives. The only specifics given were that each weighed 132,000 pounds and they had 54 inch drivers. One paper called them "new ten wheel Baldwin locos of the Mogul type." Available photos show the engines had a 2-4-0 wheel arrangement and were Consolidations, not Moguls. Unfortunately there are no other details and it is not known if the engines were purchased new, or, if obtained from another line, how old they were. Evidence discovered much later indicate they may have been purchased from the Union Pacific Railroad and could have been built as early as 1868. If true, these engines were almost 40 years old when they went to work on the Mount Hood.

As soon as winter weather broke work began on clearing the Hood River station site. Plans for the structure were prepared by a local architectural firm, P.M. Hall-Lewis and Company. Another Hood River company, Fredricks and Arnold, was awarded the construction job. The building was a first class, two story affair, some 19 feet in width by 45 feet in length. The lower floor was divided into two rooms, one for passengers and the other for freight. The second floor also had two rooms, one was an office, the other intended for the agents living quarters. Plans called for a platform completely around the building, ten feet in width on the north and west, but only eight feet on the south and east. The Mount Hood depot at Hood River was built for the princely sum of $2,000.

As the line developed, way stations were located and small shelters or stations were built. Hall-Lewis drew the plans and Fredricks and Arnold generally did the construction. The structure at Van Horn was 12' x 30' and cost $500, the one at Odell was 24' x 24' and cost $800, another at Winans was 14' x 24' and also cost $800. In Hood River an engine house was constructed, but there is no record as to the size or cost. About the time these improvements were completed the rail received some rolling stock. First in was a day coach followed by two observation cars.

Effective May 22, 1906 Superintendent J.A. West published the first timetable.

South				North
AM				PM
8:00	Lv	Hood River	Arr	5:30
8:03		Powerdale		5:27
8:20		Sears		5:10
8:25		Van Horn		5:05
8:40		Lentz		4:50
8:45		Odell		4:45
8:50		Dukes Valley		4:40
9:05		Bloucher		4:25
9:25		Winans		4:05
9:30	Arr	Dee	Lv	4:00

The 16½ mile ride to Dee, elevation 933 feet above sea level, took an hour and one half. Uphill or down the average speed was around ten miles an hour.

The first year of operation was not without problems. Before the road had been built out of town the first fatality occurred. One F. McGovern

Parkdale Oregon at the foot of majestic Mt. Hood. End of the line for the Mount Hood Railroad in 1911. The combination station and hotel is on the right. The two story square structure that looks like a block house is the railroad water tank. McIsaac's store with the false front is behind the tank. After 80 years there is still a McIsaac's in Parkdale. (OHS Neg. 71239)

Parkdale station soon after completion. The board platform kept passengers out of the mud while boarding the cars. Rooms were 50¢ to $1.00 and meals were 35¢. Log cars can be seen spotted on a track at the rear of the depot. (Courtesy of Russ Curtis.)

who had just been hired, was struck on the head while unloading piling in the Hood River yard. Long piling had been loaded on the top of a carload of short piling and when the load was dumped a longer stick hit and killed him almost immediately.

Early on it was found it would be necessary to raise one end of the wagon bridge over Hood River, east of town, in order to have adequate clearance for the locomotives passing underneath. This simple project seemed to raise the ire of Eastside residents as the slope of the bridge had to be increased. The editor of the *Glacier* complimented the railroad, however, and said they should be thanked for having a team standing by while the job was underway to help travelers across. It was also pointed out the railroad had paid all of the expenses and it had not cost the city one penny.

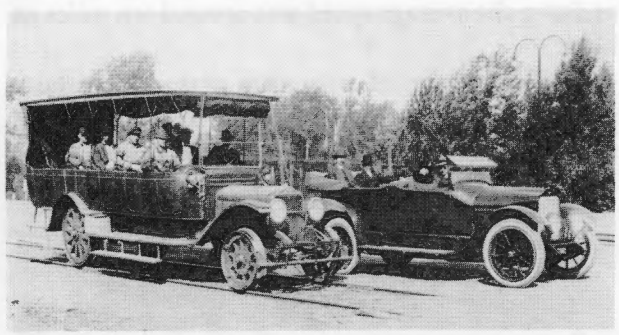
There was a problem keeping section hands. Many had drifted away and it was necessary to bring in additional Japanese workers from Portland. The new arrivals did not stay long either; they preferred better paying jobs in Baker City mills or the La Grande beet fields. Finally a large number of Greeks were brought in to replace the Japanese. They may have been hired away from the North Bank Road that Jim Hill was building down the other side of the Columbia; later to be known as the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway. Evidently the Greeks stayed longer than the first Japanese. In 1910 when the line was being built to Parkdale it was reported the Greeks staged a lively free-for-all at Trout Creek.

The most disturbing incident took place in late November, 1906 when an employee was walking to work on a chill winter Sunday morning and found 8 to 10 sticks of #1 powder on the tracks near the Paasch place near Van Horn (Pine Grove). It was reported that although the train had run over two of the sticks they had not detonated because they were frozen. The railroad posted a $500 reward, but the incident was never resolved. Another token of regard by local residents?

With the completion of the railroad to Dee and the inauguration of daily service it was time to get on with the finer points of railroad finance. At the December 24, 1906 Board of Directors meeting it was decided the line had been completed from Hood River to the center of Section 7, Township 1 North, Range 10 East, a distance of 16 miles and that company indebtedness was $320,000.

It was now time to float a bond issue. The directors approved a $500,000 First Mortgage at six percent, payable in gold, maturing in 20 years, but with the provision it could be paid off in 10 years for $525,000. Funds from the sale were to be dispensed at the rate of $20,000 per mile and the total length of construction was estimated at less than 30 miles. The mortgage pledged all property, both real and personal, and was purchased by Matthew S. Browning of Utah on May 4, 1907.

There were 1,000 bonds at $500 each. At the same time 2,500 shares of stock with a par value of



First rail-auto or jitney used on the Mount Hood. Purchased from a sight-seeing organization in Portland it was modified for rail use in the Mount Hood or Oregon Lumber Company shops. Vehicle was a 20 passenger White automobile. Open air accommodations may have been satisfactory in the summer, but side curtains and an engine heater were added for comfort of wintertime passengers. (Ted Wurm collection.)

$100 was also issued; of which 2,000 shares were given as a bonus to bondholders. The remaining 500 shares were sold for $10 per share. Furthermore, the entire bond issue was sold for only $380,000. The purchase of the mortgage by Matthew Browning is rather curious, but not too surprising. David Eccles was associated with Browning about this time in several banking ventures in Utah and Idaho and it had all the earmarks of David Eccles habit of sharing the largess with business associates.

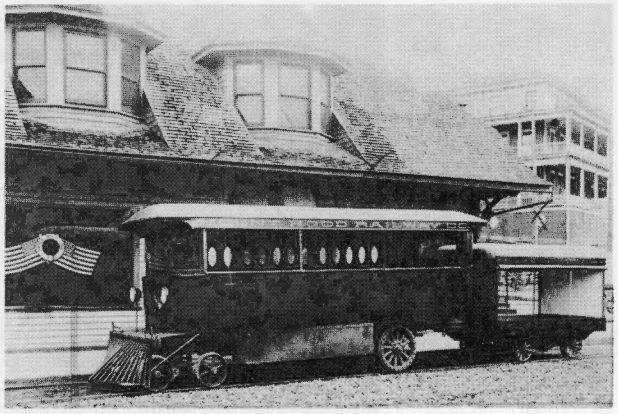
A recapitulation of actual construction costs are given in the Mount Hood Railroad ledger as of October, 1906, as follows:

Engineering	$ 11,981.40
Right-of-Way	15,934.20
Construction	101,981.89
Track Laying	10,682.56
Material	56,612.37
Equipment	16,779.23
Freight	20,712.80
Telephone Line	1,115.87
Hood River Depot	354.02
Total Cost to Date	$236,154.34

Two months later, for reasons not evident in the company ledger, the directors increased the indebtedness $84,000. Another interesting sidelight is noted in the annual statement filed with the Oregon Public Utility Commission in 1915. A listing of the twenty largest stockholders, with the control of 2,286 of the 2,500 shares, shows all to be members of the Eccles family, officials of the railroad, Oregon Lumber Company or former business associates. Further, in 1932 when it became necessary for the Mount Hood to issue refunding bonds for the mortgage bonds in default, most of the bondholders were descendants of David Eccles. In other words, Matthew S. Browning may have purchased the bond issue for $380,000 but it did not stay in his hands long. If Eccles, did in fact, give up ownership and control of the railroad it was not for very long.

Ironically Mount Hood Railroad bonds were not fully paid until the little road passed into the hands of the Union Pacific Railroad in October, 1968. The annual interest of $30,000 was paid sporadically, but the load was just too great when earnings began to decline in the 1930's.

After the death of David Eccles, the eldest son



The second White rail-auto purchased by the Mount Hood. Passenger traffic must have been heavy enough to require use of a trailer for parcels and baggage. During peak years the line operated two jitneys and a steam train daily. Legend on front of the depot in Hood River proclaims the railroad to be the 'Apple Belt Line.' Living quarters for the agent were provided on the second floor of the station. (Hood River Museum.)

of his second family, Marriner Eccles and Marriner Browning, son of Matthew S. Browning, joined forces in the banking business. Their combined enterprise eventually grew to form the largest bank holding company in the Intermountain region. Through astute management they were able to weather the 'bank holidays' of the Great Depression. Marriner Eccles was later appointed chairman of the Federal Reserve during the Roosevelt administrations. Beside being good bankers, the Brownings had another claim to fame. They were the inventors, developers and producers of the Browning automatic rifle. Better known as the BAR to thousands of WWII infantrymen.

The year 1907 started out with a bang. Heavy rainfall caused a large landslide at the big cut just outside of town and when the first southbound passed over the rough grade caused by the repair work, three or four cars detached from the rear of the train and rolled back toward town. They derailed at a stub switch at the foot of the grade with one car clear off the right-of-way, the others piling up more conveniently. Fortunately there were no injuries and traffic was not delayed. This mess was no sooner cleaned up when a major snow storm hit and all railroads were down, even the trans-continentals.

Operations were just getting under way again when B.B. Jordan, a brakeman for the Mount Hood, discovered some tight clearances at the Dee

The third and last rail-auto used on the Mount Hood, probably the best and most used of the three machines. The body was constructed especially for the railroad and was mounted on a Mack truck frame. When it burned at Summit in 1935 it had traveled over 400,000 miles on a railroad less than 22 miles in length. Date of this picture is not known, but judging from the piles of cordwood in the background it was probably during the depression when Mount Hood locomotives were converted from oil to wood. (Courtesy of Donald C. Dietrich.)

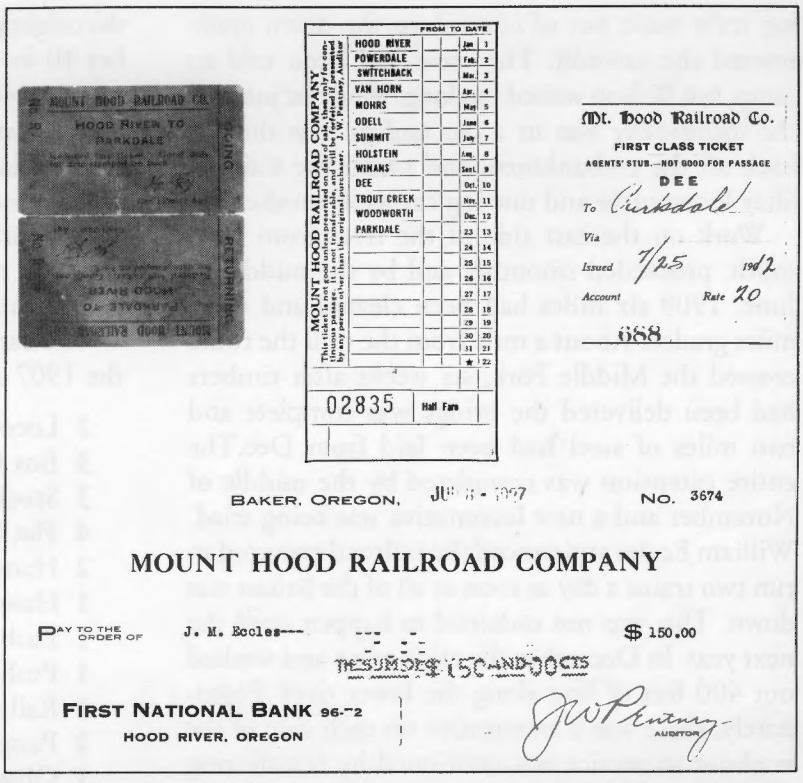
mill. While switching a car he did not keep a lookout when trying to give a signal to the fireman. He was caught when the train moved ahead and 'rolled' between the train and a car on the siding. The incident put him in the hospital, but he was able to return to work.

The most exciting event of the year occurred in May when the Mount Hood Railroad slabwood pile under the wagon bridge that crossed Hood River caught fire. Three of the spans were burned and a fourth damaged, about 75 cords of wood were lost. The fire reached Tokio, upriver from the bridge, and some of the canvas covered homes of the Japanese section crew burned. The fire most likely started from cinders from a locomotive and bridge repairs delayed traffic only 36 hours. The railroad sent city fire fighters $25.00 for their efforts and the following comment appeared in the *Glacier.* "It is just possible that corporations have no soul, but they have a good healthy gizzard sometime and appreciate a good turn just the same as other men. It shows we have the right kind of people at the head of affairs of this company." A well meaning attempt by the editor to overcome some of the ill feeling toward the Mormons.

To increase efficiency the railroad contracted with Fredrick and Arnold to build a boarding car so the section crew would have quarters when working away from town. The car was needed, the spring of 1908 was a repeat of the previous year. Heavy rains caused Hood River to raise 12 feet in just a few hours. The city wagon bridge washed out and considerable track washed out or was covered by slides. Once again the line was cleaned up and in April, as a public service, Charles T. Early announced the railroad would run a special train to Pine Grove for the U'Ren-Livingstone political debates. Some 75 people from Hood River attended the affair. To further curry business the railroad advertised special Sunday trips as outings for the family or fisherman. In the beginning the trips were successful, but in time attendance dropped off.

All during the time the Mount Hood was being built there were numerous rumors the line was going to be electrified. This was the current trend and electric rapid transit systems were being built nationwide. Neither David Eccles or his brother W.H. Eccles did much to discount the stories, and it is even possible that W.H. may have even encouraged them. The wildest rumor was that David Eccles was going to build an electric railroad out of Condon, Oregon. A power plant was to be located on the John Day River capable of generating 20,000

horsepower. A second plant on the Deschutes would generate 60,000 horsepower. The rail system would develop Central Oregon and Eccles was in the process of floating a $15,000,000 bond issue in Portland. In addition to this whopper there was always conjecture that the logging line being pushed west from Dee would cross the Cascades at Lolo Pass and hook up with some Portland line. Later, as the Mount Hood built south from Dee, the story was that is would eventually turn east and hook up with the Sumpter Valley Railroad. Wishful thinking all, but this was a time when anything was possible. The country was flexing its muscle and had confidence in its abilities. No rumor, no project, no matter how outlandish it seemed, was without supporters.



The Mount Hood Railroad used a variety of tickets before passenger service was terminated. The two part round-trip ticket from Hood River to Parkdale is the oldest having been issued when Charles T. Early was the General Passenger Agent. It was bright red and printed on medium cardboard stock. The 1912 ticket from Dee to Parkdale was printed on a light, but high grade paper lavender in color. Ticket 02835 is probably the most recent and much the same as transfer tickets now used on city transit lines. The check for $150.00 made out to J. M. Eccles, according to a typed notation, is for "Services as President of the Mount Hood Railroad Company during the month of May, 1927." Seems very reasonable for a railroad president. (Author's collection.)

Extending the railroad to Central Oregon was mild compared to the scheme that surfaced a few years later in 1914. It was reported a $6,000,000 plant was to be built at the mouth of the Deschutes River (some 50 miles east on the Columbia) to extract chemicals from the waters of Abert and Summer Lakes in southeastern Oregon. A 250 mile pipeline was to be built and a New York firm was to pay the state $10,000 and royalties. Hard to top a development like that. Actually, in 1909, articles of incorporation were filed for the Portland, Baker City and Butte Railroad. It was to be an electric line with power generated from a dam on the Deschutes River. Main offices were to be in Condon.

In the spring of 1909 the extension south began in earnest. A construction contract for the next six miles from Dee was awarded to the Portland firm of Johnson and Anderson. The lumber company was to do the clearing, but offered to give local settlers clearing jobs if they wanted some of the action. Early in April several car loads of dump cars, machinery, rails and other equipment were sent to the end of steel. Camps were set up, horses purchased and men hired. The job was to be completed by the 12th of August. The lumber company had already shipped a scow load of rails from Cooks Landing signaling the end of logging in Washington. These rails were not to be used on the southern extension of the Mount Hood Railroad, but on the logging road being built westward into company timber holdings. This line had crossed the East Fork by means of a bridge over the mill dam in late June of 1906. It had been punched south on the west side of the river for almost a mile, then using a switchback, turned northerly until it reached the flats above the mill. There it headed west as loggers cleared Dee Flats and cut their way toward the mountains. This switchback was the scene of the first serious accident on the Oregon Lumber Company logging railroad. Robert Wilson, the fireman, was killed when a loaded

log train went out of control on the down grade toward the sawmill. The crew had been told to jump, but Wilson waited too long. When he jumped the locomotive was in a cut and he was thrown back off the embankment and under the train. A Shay locomotive and one log car were wrecked.

Work on the east side of the river from Dee, south, proceeded smoothly and by the middle of June, 1909 six miles had been cleared and three miles graded. About a mile from the mill the route crossed the Middle Fork, six weeks after timbers had been delivered the bridge was complete and two miles of steel had been laid from Dee.The entire extension was completed by the middle of November and a new locomotive was being tried. William Eccles announced the railroad expected to run two trains a day as soon as all of the ballast was down. This was not ordained to happen until the next year. In December the rains came and washed out 400 feet of line along the lower river. Fortunately, there was a locomotive on each side of the washout so service was continued by transferring the mail and passengers around. There was no freight service.

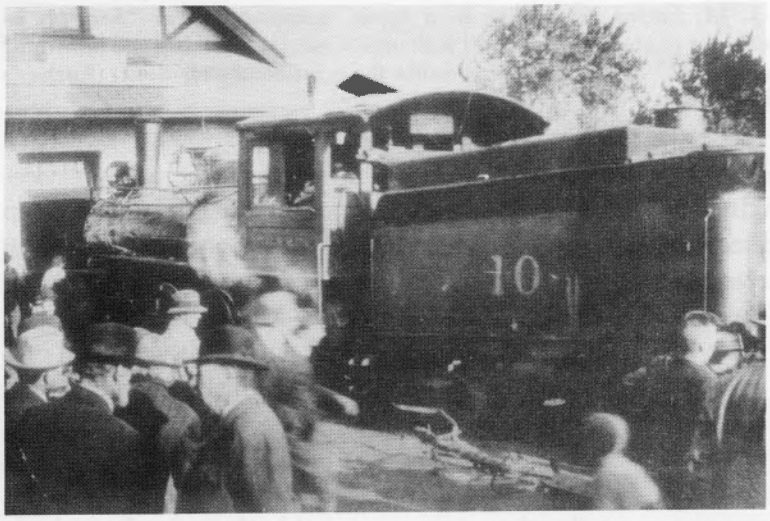
According to annual reports published by the railroad company the first engine acquired after the original two Baldwins were delivered, was Number 10 in 1910. It cost $4,804.80 and the freight was $1,040.04. The only thing that can be added is that it must have been purchased used and not from a local line. Other equipment needed to make good the promise of two trains a day was added during the year: two boxcars numbered 130 and 140; two flat cars numbered 123 and 135; and a coach numbered 50.

The earliest equipment list available is given in the 1907 annual statement:

2 Locomotives, Nos. 1 and 2
3 Box Cars, Nos. 10 - 100 - 120
3 Stock Cars, Nos. 11520 - 11698 - 11781
4 Flat Cars, Nos. 101 - 102 - 105 - 107
2 Hand Cars, Fair condition
1 Hand Car, Not serviceable
1 Push Car, Not serviceable
1 Push Car, Good condition
1 Rail Car, Good condition
2 Passenger Coaches, Nos. 20 - 30
1 Observation Car, Serviceable
1 Observation Car, No trucks

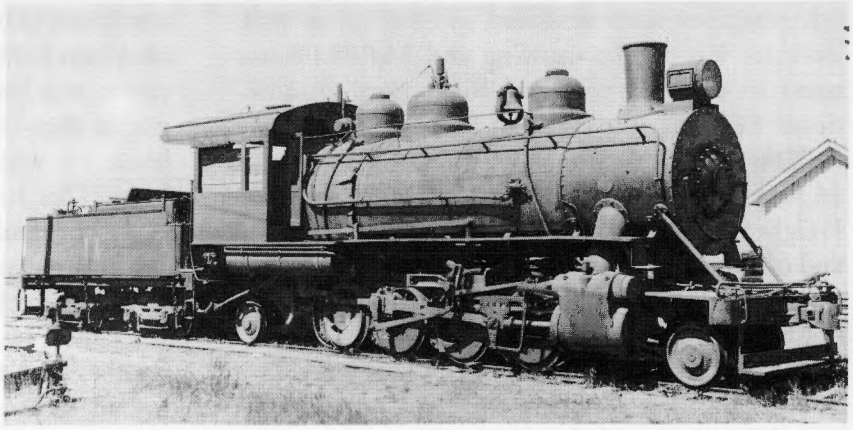
The 1908 statement is not as enlightening, it merely lists $6,749.51 as the expenditure for new equipment. Of that amount, $2,575.03 was spent for a steam shovel and $2,432.85 for a coach, cars and trucks. The balance cannot be identified. In 1909, flat car Number 119 may have been added. In spite of the relatively sizable roster, very few photographs are available of the early equipment. A picture of Mount Hood locomotive Number 2 has not yet been located.

In 1910 railroading was a dangerous business and working on a logging railroad doubly so. While the Mount Hood was being pushed toward Parkdale the lumber company was clearing its lands in the upper valley along the right-of-way and had established a camp and loading spur near Woodworth station. It was here two brakemen were killed in separate accidents while loading log cars. In May, Cecil Earl Farr was knocked under a train while making a coupling. He was a cousin of Mrs. Joseph W. West and only 21 years old.



Left unattended at the Mount Hood station at Hood River, Number 10 began to move and steamed into the Oregon-Washington Railroad and Navigation Company depot several hundred feet down the track. Fortunately there were no injuries, but several automobiles and a Mount Hood rail-auto were damaged. The locomotive crew had left the cab to inspect a load of captured WWI German war equipment displayed on a OWR&N train on an adjacent track. (Courtesy of Brice Nebeker.)

The body was shipped back to Salt Lake for burial. Three months later Dan Smith was seated on the track under a car being loaded. A log rolled off the load and crushed him. He was 33 and had come to Hood River from Kansas six years previous. An inquest was held, but the company was found not to be at fault. Such accidents were unfortunate and happened more often than they should have, but life was cheap, work continued unabated.



Number 11 ready for the cutting torch. This was the first Mount Hood locomotive purchased new. A little 2-8-2 from Baldwin, it went into service in 1920 and served both the Mount Hood and the Oregon Lumber Company for 31 years. Depending on traffic requirements Number 11 would work the mainline haul on the logging road or during the fruit harvest be assigned to the Mount Hood. (Courtesy Donald C. Dietrich.)

Charles T. Early was now superintendent of the railroad, having been promoted from general agent, and was actively promoting the line with various excursions. In early spring necessary ballast had finally been placed on the extension and by May, 1910 service to Parkdale was available. In June a special was run for about 100 members of the Pacific Coast Local Freight Agents that required two cars. Later in the fall of 1911, after acquisition of a fourth locomotive, Number 58, another special was run. The trip was made in about one hour and all were impressed with the smooth ride and accommodations. This time William Eccles, president of the line, and Charles T. Early hosted 125 local businessmen to show off the latest improvements. Architect R.R. Bartlett had been employed to design the combination Parkdale depot and hotel and way stations at Woodworth and Trout Creek. The buildings were under construction, but not quite complete at the time of the Eccles tour. The Parkdale Hotel opened to the public in May the following year; it had 12 rooms costing from 50¢ to $1.00 and meals were available for 35¢.

Not all local residents were impressed with the new rail service. Some banded together to form the Upper Hood River Valley Progressive Association to file a complaint with the State Railroad Commission that service was inadequate. This was the second compliant filed against the railroad. The first had been a year or so previous when Bridal Veil Lumber complained about rates. The new complaint was more disturbing. The railroad had just arrived and already was being accused of poor service, but there may have been some justification. On the last excursion the new locomotive had made the trip from Hood River in about one hour, but when Schedule #9 had been published on October 9, 1910, a month previous, it showed the service from town to Parkdale as three hours and fifteen minutes. Going back (downhill) it was a little worse, three and one half hours. In December the State Railroad Commission held a public hearing at the Commercial Club in Hood River, the depot was too small to accommodate the crowd. For its defense the railroad said the Association was attempting to regulate railroad traffic, to promote another line into the area and that the line had lost money on the Parkdale extension as 75% of its revenues came from Oregon Lumber Company at Dee. Two months later the Railroad Commission duly rendered its decision. It refused to order the Mount Hood Railroad to shorten its schedule, but suggested when weather permitted, a better schedule for business purposes be instituted. If this was not done the Commission might require a change; matter to be kept on the books as pending. Schedule #10 issued in May cut time from Hood River to two hours and fifty minutes, return time, two hours and ten minutes.

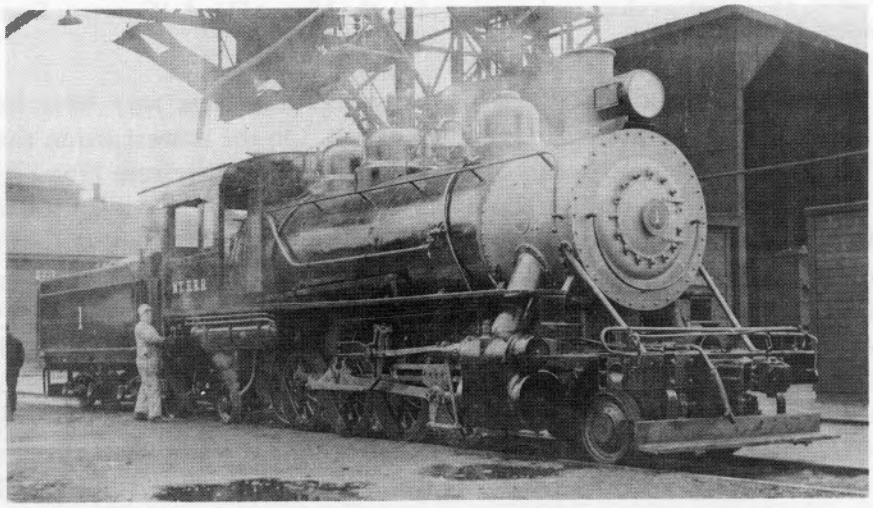
In 1912 the *Hood River Glacier* reported the railroad was considering converting the locomotives from wood to oil. Initially only one locomotive was changed, Number 10, and the cost was $650.00. After a successful two month test the

other engines were modified to burn oil as well. Business was on the upswing and $4,000.00 was spent to enlarge the Hood River yard, an additional $832.47 was spent to build an oil storage tank on the hillside just above the yard tracks and a 56 foot turn-table was installed near the new tank. Freight facilities at the main station were improved and offices were leased to American Express. Additional funds were spent to upgrade the engine house.

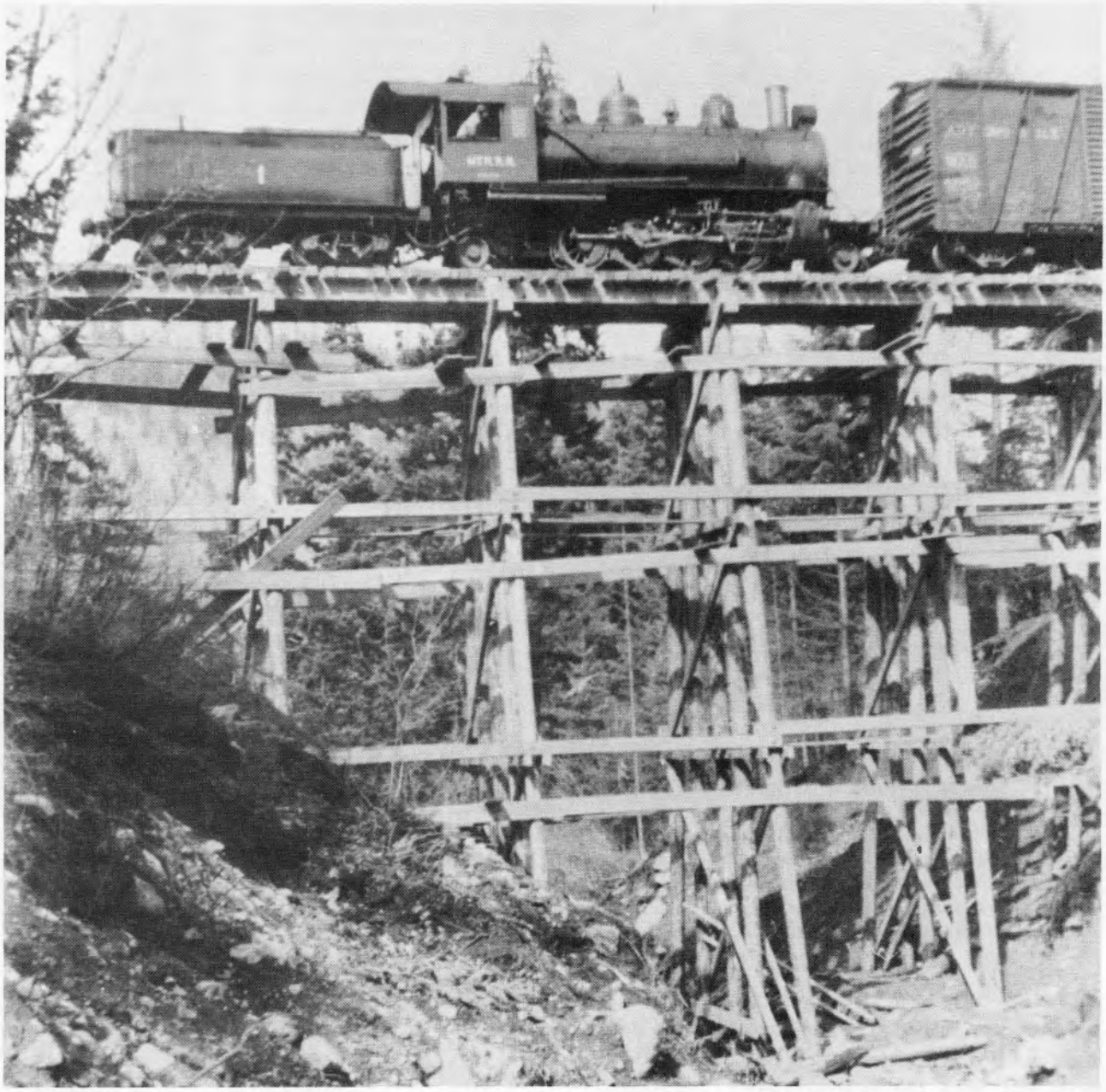
In 1911, while William Eccles was making a celebrated tour of England and the Continent (he had shipped over his big White Steamer in order for travel in style), David C. Eccles, the eldest son of David Eccles was placed in charge of the Dee mill. He was the proud owner of one of the few automobiles in Hood River (71 as of June, 1910). It was a big Thompson Flyer and he had it equipped with steel flanged wheels in order to run on the Mount Hood Railroad track. The first trial encountered no problems and the trip to Dee was made in minutes. After the young man was promoted and was transferred out of Dee, the Flyer was handed over to Charles T. Early.

In an attempt to placate local shippers along the line (about this time strawberries had become an important crop in the valley) Charles T. Early announced a reduction in freight rates and an adjustment in schedules to help shippers. Business continued to increase and a second train was scheduled into Parkdale. The old rumor about electrification was heard once more and it was spread as gospel that the logging line was headed west to hook up with the Multnomah Central at Lost Lake. This latter line had already reached Sandy from Portland. Mr. Early would neither deny or confirm the stories.

David Eccles died suddenly in Salt Lake City December 10, 1912. His death was a shock to his families and the legal disputes that followed are legend. In time it was decided the Oregon Lumber Company, the Sumpter Valley Railroad, and the Mount Hood Railroad belonged to members of the first family, more specifically, the David Eccles Corporation headed by the eldest son, David C. Eccles. There was little change in the Hood River operations. Charles T. Early became a member of the board of directors of the lumber company and in charge of all Douglas-fir operations. He also became vice president of the Mount Hood Railroad. Soon after Early assumed his new positions Parkdale residents filed another complaint with the State Railroad Commissioner. O.M. Bailey, one of the instigators of the first Parkdale complaint, contended rates were too high and that an agent was needed at Parkdale. The company said it had lost money on the Parkdale extension during the past three years and business did not warrant



Number 1 after undergoing a complete overhaul at the Albina yards in Portland. Photo is not dated so it is not possible to know if it was taken before or after the conversion to wood fuel. (Don H. Roberts photo courtesy of D. S. Richter.)



During a severe February storm in 1949 the track over Collins Creek, just below Dee, went out and a 'shoo-fly' was built just below the washed out section. The trestle was later replaced with a fill on the original alignment. Sixty foot Douglas-fir trees now obscure the view, but the temporary bents pictured here are still standing in the trees forty years later. (Courtesy of Bill May.)

an agent. The editor of the *Glacier* offered the opinion that 97% of the residents of the upper valley were satisfied with the railroad. O.M. Bailey fired off a letter to the *Glacier* saying 97% were not satisfied and he intended to pursue the matter.

At the hearing in March, Bailey contended rail rates were too high, especially on boxed apples, cider apples, cordwood, hay and potatoes. He also felt an agent was necessary at Parkdale so shipments could be prepaid. Charles T. Early responded to these charges for the company by presenting a sworn statement the Mount Hood had lost $4,917.64 on the Parkdale extension in 1912 and business at the station was less than at Odell or Van Horn, neither of which had an agent. The second train had increased earnings only $3.06 per day, loss on fuel alone amounted to $9.50 per day. The berry train had operated for six weeks and

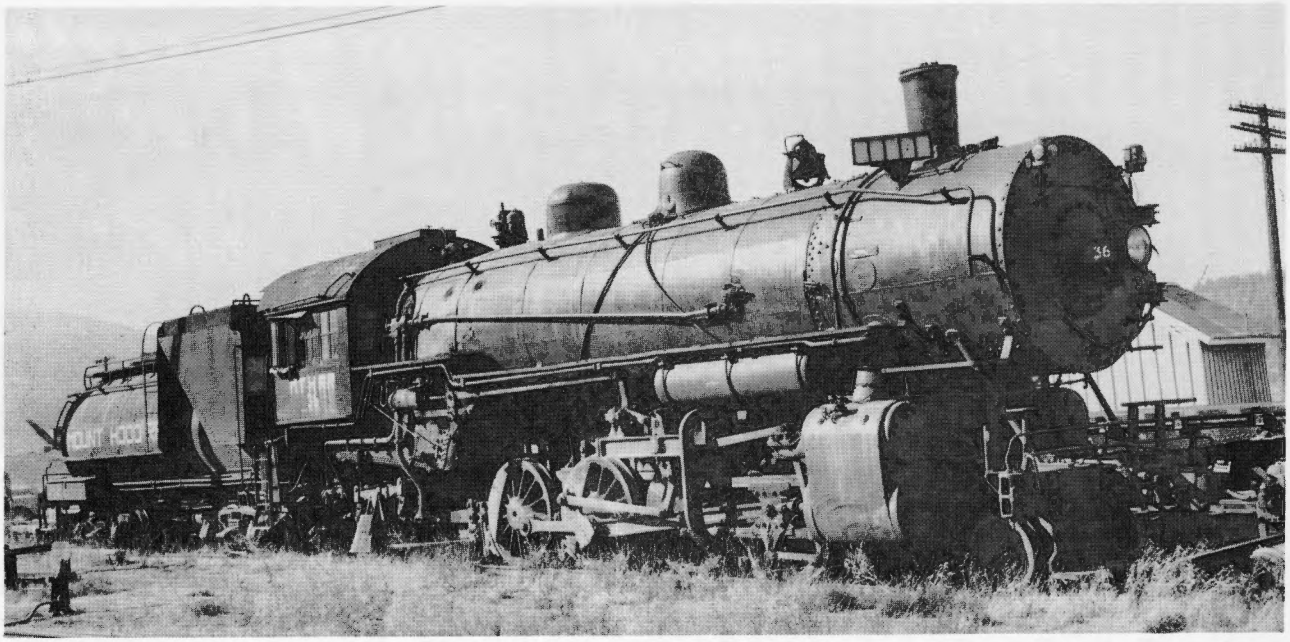
A sister to the ill-fated Mount Hood Number 36. Number 2261 was one of two former Union Pacific 2-8-2's purchased by the Edward Hines Lumber Company for its Oregon and Northwestern Railroad. Although the O&NE was a common carrier its main purpose was to haul logs from the company logging operations at Seneca, Oregon some 60 miles north of Hines. These locomotives were well suited for this purpose and at the rumored price of $10,000 each, a real bargain. (Photo by author.)

handled only 58 tons which amounted to only 3% of the business. Early felt residents had not been fair with the railroad. He thought it would have been better if upper valley folks had told him about their problems first, he was sure the railroad would have been pleased to meet them half way. It seems the Parkdale people just did not agree with Mr. Early.

It is difficult to determine how profitable the railroad had been up to that time, but for some reason the 1912 annual statement recaps receipts and disbursements for the previous years as follows:

YEAR	RECEIPTS	DISBURSEMENTS
1906	$23,833.56	$20,236.02
1907	65,201.42	66,982.67
1908	63,893.00	58,739.54
1909	85,908.50	52,238.58
1910	86,866.18	60.285.25
1911	77,787.82	74,196.00
1912	73,491.99	67,152.55
By balance	47,409.79	
Equipment depreciation		7,593.19
Ways and structures depreciation		15,343.46
Extinguishment of Discount		101,625.00
	$524,392.26	$524,392.26

Interest payments to the bondholders had been $19,200 for the first four years then increased to $30,000 thereafter. In later years when it was necessary to issue refunding bonds or to have the bondholders subordinate their rights to the Oregon-Washington



Number 36 . . . the locomotive that never got out of Hood River. This monster 2-8-2 was first used on Union Pacific mainline freight hauls. It was so heavy it laid the rails over and was on the ground before it reached yard limits. It weighed 267,850 pounds, Number 1 (the last new Baldwin) weighed only 139,000 pounds. It may have been fortunate Number 36 never made it to the bridge across Hood River. (Photography by Stan Kistler.)

Railroad & Navigation Company to secure used rails for the Mount Hood, all of the bonds were held by members of the Eccles family or the Lighthall family. A. C. Lighthall having been brought in to manage the Oregon Lumber Company, but more of him later.

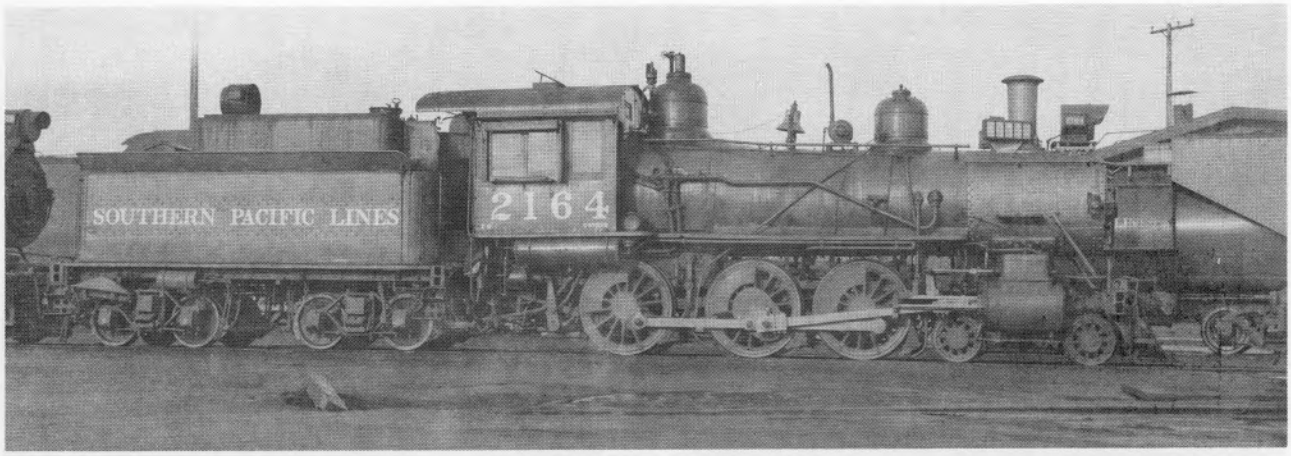
Fire, the bane of every sawmill struck Oregon Lumber Company with a vengeance in July, 1913. The big mill at Dee was completely destroyed along with a million feet of stacked lumber. A special train load of fire fighters was rushed from Hood River and over 100 men fought the blaze. All the homes, the hotel and four million feet of lumber were saved, but the railroad bridge over the dam and part of the dam was damaged. Loss was estimated to be over $100,000. David C. Eccles and William Eccles came from Ogden to survey the damage; it was announced only the lumber had been covered by insurance, but the company would rebuild. All lumber orders on hand would be honored at the Inglis mill which was to go on two shifts immediately.

A move toward the west now became more important as most of the company timber in the vicinity of Parkdale had been logged and large portions of cut over land sold to orchardists. The two mile grading contract recently awarded to Casciato and Ragione specified completion by the end of the season and was being pushed hard to meet the deadline. This extended the logging line about three miles from the mill and began getting into rough terrain. One of the trestles was 600 feet long crossing a canyon. Several shorter trestles were nearly 90 feet in height.

The new sawmill, equipped with sprinklers, was completed by the first of December. The boiler was relocated away from the main mill and equipped with pumps that could discharge 1000 gallons of water per minute. After a month of sporadic operation due to low water in the East Fork the mill was forced to close because of snow.

At the other end of the line in Hood River, the Twohy Brothers Company was given a contract from the O.W.R.& N. and the Mount Hood to fill the joint trestles east of town. The piling was rotting and becoming unsafe, value of the contract was estimated to be $10,000.

Ordinarily it would be expected with all the improvement work the Mount Hood had done previously, its valuation would increase, Such was not the case between 1912 and 1913. In 1912 the state assessed value of the line as $333,222. The following year the figure was dropped to $246,668. As a comparison the O.W.R.& N. railroad was



A classy little locomotive leased by the Mount Hood from the SPRR. Used in late 1926 or early 1927 it may have been required to help move the apple crop. (From the Guy L. Dunscomb collection.)

valued at $1,596,307.

Charles T. Early continued his efforts to build tourist traffic by offering Sunday excursions from time to time. The biggest effort came during the summer of 1915 when the railroad sponsored an outing to climb Mt. Hood. The cost was to be $5.50 per person and 50 people had to sign up. For this fee the railroad would provide a special train, wagon transportation to the forest boundary, guide service up the mountain, transportation of bedding to Cloud Cap Inn and dinner at the Inn. After several delayed starts due to poor weather the climb was made in early August. There were 93 people on the trip and of 73 that attempted the climb, 66 made it to the top. Ashley Wilson, the Mount Hood Railroad superintendent, headed the climb.

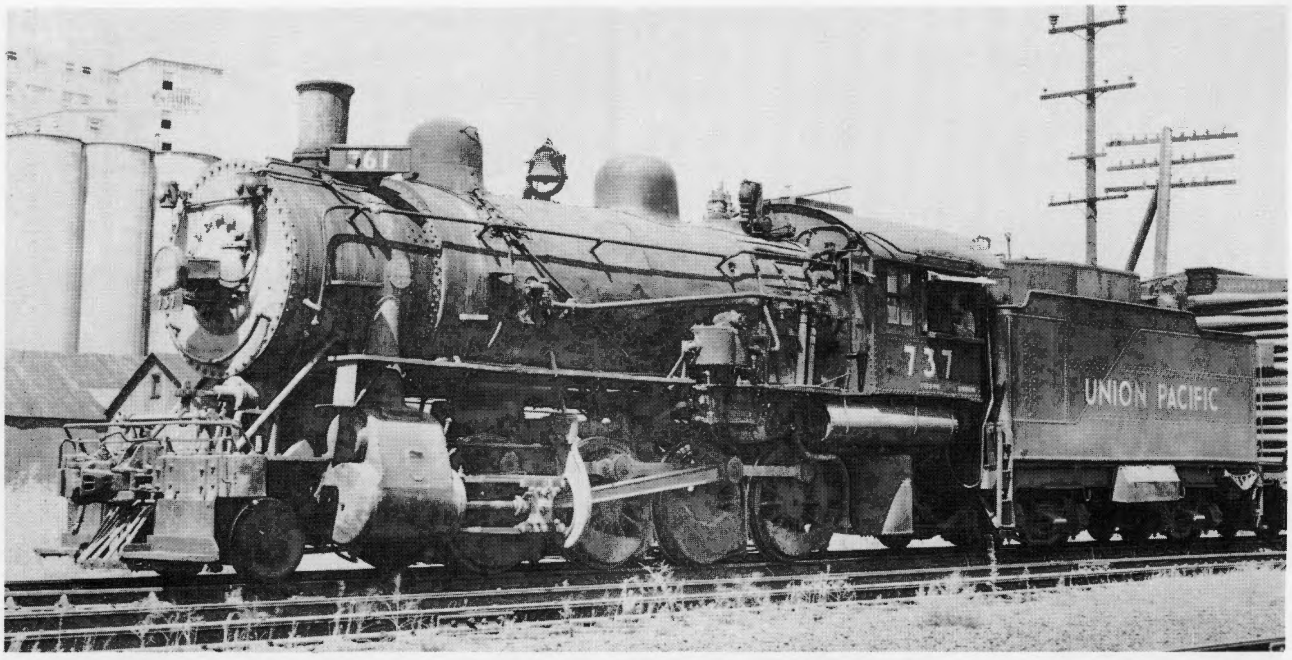
Wilson had no sooner gotten off the mountain when he was involved in a derailment and a forest fire. The derailment occurred at Parkdale when the hand brake failed on a carload of cement and it rolled off toward Dee pulling a passenger car. Fortunately it ran through a derail and was stopped, but engine Number 1 had to be sent up from Dee to assist Number 10 in getting the observation car back on the track.

Less than a week after the derailment a fire started at the Holstein station and spread north to the Bloucher station and up Gilhooley mountain covering two square miles before it was controlled. The southbound train was stopped and the crew and passengers tried to check the blaze without success; they eventually had to send to Dee for the mill crew. Because of the fire, D. T. Rowntree sued the railroad and Charles T. Early for $3,500 damage to his property. He claimed the fire was started by sparks from a locomotive. Company defense was that an oil fired locomotive did not emit sparks. Attorneys for Rowntree attempted to have the case moved to Portland and tried in Federal Court claiming the Mount Hood Railroad was a foreign corporation, but were denied. (This had been tried against the Mormons before and had not been successful.) Four months after the suit was instigated a local jury deliberated for 12 hours before awarding the Rowntrees $800.

The winters of 1915 and 1916 took their toll on the little line. High water just about took out the Hood River bridge and the rails at the switchback either slid out or were covered over. Snow was a problem everywhere. In February of 1916 a passenger train on the O.W.R.& N. was stalled at Bonneville for 96 hours. Drifts of 12 to 15 feet were reported on the main line.

Part of the Mount Hood track along the lower river was washed out so badly it had to be replaced with a trestle. Above Dee, where the grade cut through a loose detritus slope, boulders covering the tracks were so large they had to be broken with dynamite before they could be cleared. Rail service to Dee was out for three weeks and Parkdale was isolated for 42 days.

In an attempt to improve passenger service and reduce costs, the Mount Hood purchased its first 'rail-auto' in April, 1916. It had previously been a 'rubber-neck wagon' in Portland and was converted to rail use by the installation of flanged wheels. There is no record of who decided to try this mode of transportation, but it seems typical of Early to



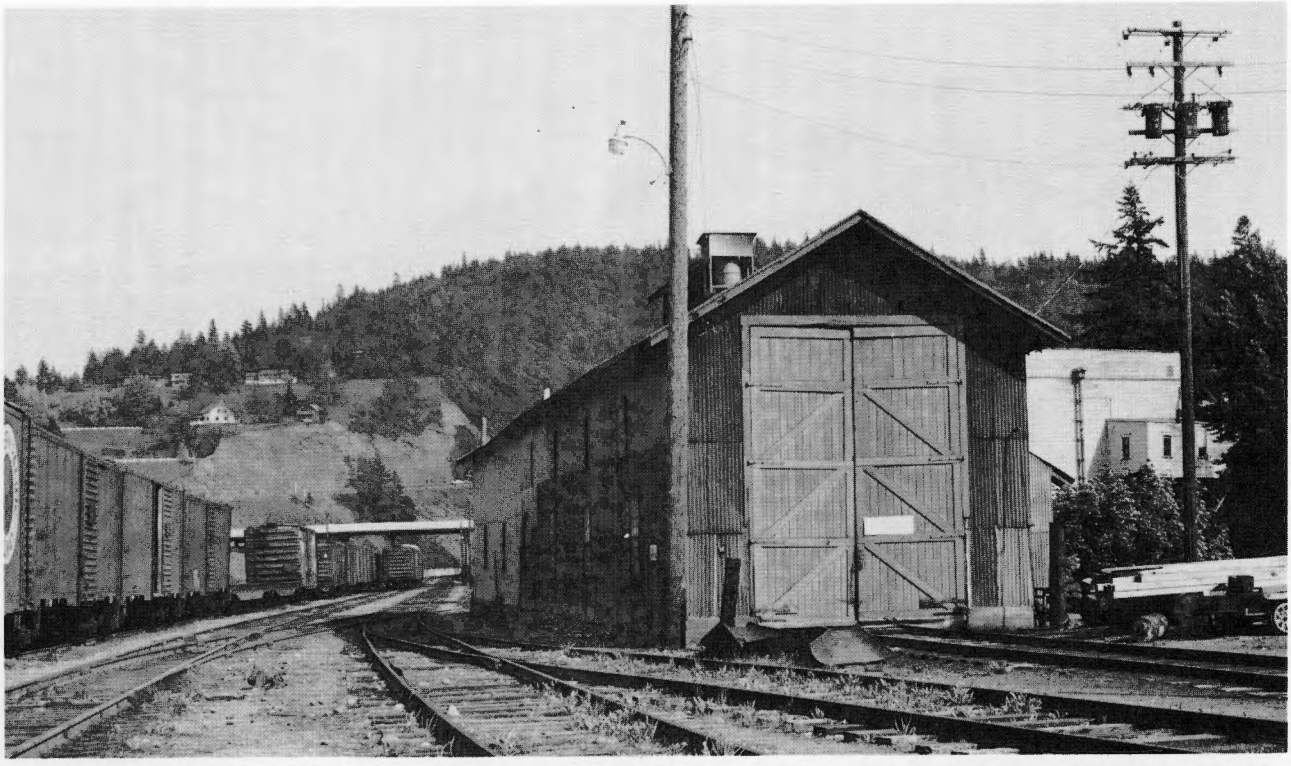
Records indicate UP 737 was leased to the Mount Hood at one time, but just how extensively it was used is not known. With a weight of 213,350 pounds it is very close in size to Number 36. It too may have been more than the Mount Hood structures and rail could handle. (From the Stan Kistler collection.)

try such equipment and not to spend too much. The mechanical conversion was done in the company shops to reduce expenses. Early had inherited the Thompson Flyer David C. Eccles had adapted to rail use and may have figured with a larger machine he could haul passengers. This particular machine on its first run to Parkdale took only an hour and fifteen minutes. It was immediately added to the schedule to make two round trips a day and given the right-of-way over steam trains. Fare to Parkdale was 90¢ each way, same as the passenger coach.

One problem with the new machine became apparent immediately. Due to the switchback it was necessary to run backward part of the time. It was not safe and possibly not too agreeable to the customers. To overcome the problem a turntable was installed at the switchback where the crew turned the vehicle on each trip. The automobile had originally cost $3,000.00; the steel tires, freight and other accessories $471.73; the turntable was installed for $287.62; and a garage for the rail-auto was built at Parkdale for $395.60. It was not a Pullman Palace Car, but it did the job for many years.

It was not long before the new equipment was making three round trips a day. But in late August, only four months after the railroad began using the rail-auto it was involved in a close call. On the way from Parkdale the front axle broke, fortunately no one was injured. The axle had been installed when the steering mechanism was removed and was of mild steel. The replacement axle was of drop forged steel. At the time of the accident it was estimated the rail-auto had logged 15,000 miles since it had been put in service. To make it suitable for winter use side curtains were added and an engine heater installed.

Near the end of the year it was announced the line would be purchasing another rail-auto and true to its word a new White machine was delivered in February of 1917. It may well be the first new equipment ever purchased. The White was driven under its own power from Portland over the O.W.R.& N. tracks in two hours and fifteen minutes. It was quite an event, W.A. Van Scoy of Pathe *News* was one of the passengers and recorded the trip for theater newsreels. The local newspapers described the machine as having 45 horsepower, being fully enclosed, seating 26 people, having a central aisle and arranged to be pay-as-you-enter. The body was built in Seattle and assembled by White Motor Company on a truck frame in Portland. Just before the new unit was delivered the



Hood River engine house in the late 1950's or early 1960's. View is east toward Hood River, white overpass is the Highway 35 bridge over the yard tracks and the river. (Courtesy of Donald C. Dietrich.)

railroad published a revised time table and the round trip fare between Hood River and Parkdale was listed at $1.50.

By 1917 the Mount Hood was eleven years old and beginning to settle down to a routine. Charles T. Early was still trying to build business and in May he announced the lumber company would sell 2000 acres of cut over land in the upper valley. The land was in two tracts, one with 1600 acres was adjacent to the Mount Hood Railroad, the other 400 acres was located on Dee Flats west of the mill. The land was to be sold in 40 acre parcels, or larger, at about $55.00 per acre. Payments could be spread over ten years with interest at six percent. Early indicated he had many inquires from the mid-west and the east and also expected colonists from northern Europe. He emphasized the company would sell only to bona fide settlers and not to speculators.

By the middle of the year there were four round trips a day between Parkdale and Hood River, but the hard to please upper valley residents filed another complaint against the Mount Hood with the State Railroad Commission. This time they complained rail-autos were running without a full crew. The author of the Parkdale column in the *Hood River News* ridiculed the complaint and that was the last heard about the problem, if it was one.

During the life of the rail-autos they caused the railroad their share of problems, but none was quite as embarrassing as that related by one Jas. V.N. Suydam to the *News.* It seems that the southbound rail-auto stalled or broke down near Summit one evening around 5 p.m. After working on it for three or four hours the driver called Hood River for assistance. After another hour or so the situation had not improved, and no effort was made to get an engine down from Dee. About midnight a train did come down, but instead of taking the stranded passengers to their destination, the rail-auto was backed down to a siding in Odell. There the passengers remained until rescued by an auto summoned from Hood River. The passengers did not reach Parkdale until after two in the morning. Mr. Suydam felt put upon and his letter to the editor let the people know just what kind of service the Mount Hood Railroad provided, or did not provide, as the case may be.

In September, Ashley Wilson, the superintendent of mountain climbing fame, resigned to accept a

Easing around the horseshoe curve and on to the Highway 35 overpass, Number 51 heads downgrade to the switchback just above the river. (Courtesy of Donald C. Dietrich.)

position with the White Motor Car Company in San Francisco. He was to be in charge of the motor bus division.

The Mount Hood Railroad has had a number of accidents during its years of operation, but the incident in late September, 1918 could have had disastrous repercussions if it had not been for the quick thinking of one of its employees.

World War I had not been over very long and the government was sending a train load of captured war booty around the country with stops scheduled at various communities. The so called "War Train" arrived in Hood River via the O.W.R.& N. and was on display on tracks fronting both the Mount Hood depot and the O.W.R.& N. station. A crowd estimated to be around 700 people had come down to see the display. Mount Hood locomotive Number 10 was in front of the Mount Hood station and had steam up; it may have just come into town. In any event, both engineer and fireman of Number 10 left the locomotive to view the captured war paraphernalia. The engine began to creep ahead, picking up speed and headed directly into the crowd. Leroy Flint, a Mount Hood employee, saw the moving locomotive and had presence of mind to throw a switch that directed the engine into a rail-auto, several parked cars and away from sightseers. The engine plowed through the cars and in the O.W.R.& N. station before it stopped. Speed when it hit the building was estimated to be between 10 and 20 miles an hour.

J. W. West, superintendent of the Mount Hood at the time, told the local papers the engine could not have started by itself. There was steam in the boiler, but it was shut off and the engine blocked, a perfectly normal and safe procedure. Several rumors started the rounds; one was that several men were seen jumping from the cab when the locomotive started, the other was that the throttle was defective. The wheel blocks Superintendent West mentioned were found and it was evident they had been run over. By good fortune the ICC inspector had just examined Number 10 the previous day and had found no defects. He was called back from The Dalles to check again and was not able to find anything wrong with the locomotive.

Three automobiles were totally destroyed by the engine, four were badly damaged and several slightly damaged. The destroyed autos were immediately replaced by the Mount Hood and all others repaired at company expense. This prompt action undoubtedly forestalled any possible litigation. Total

Number 50 ambling across the East Fork Bridge bringing a light load down from Parkdale. (Courtesy of W. C. Hendrick.)

damage was around $6,000 and although West continued to maintain someone had started Number 10 the mystery was never solved.

From the very beginning railroads have had some sort of magical aura that has created special groups of adherents and supporters. There have also been detractors, some of which, for unknown reasons hold a desire to damage railroad property and even injure the passengers. Such an individual seemed to harbor a grudge against the Mount Hood in 1919. Employees of the line had noticed several broken switchlocks and open switches in the main Hood River yard. In one case a rail-auto with 30 people was nearly derailed and in another incident a steam train was put on the ground. Sheriff Johnson was notified and he arranged to have the yard kept under observation. While watching the rail yard with binoculars the sheriff noticed a young boy open the turntable. When the Sheriff apprehended the juvenile still another switchlock was found to be broken. John Van Horn was found to be 13 years of age and admitted to breaking no less than 20 switchlocks and to placing steel rails across the tracks. The boy was from a Seattle family and may have been related to the Van Horns in the Pine Grove district, but this latter possibility was never mentioned. On questioning, in an attempt to determine a motive, the only thing the boy would admit was he had associated with hobos in the vicinity. Transients had always been a problem in the past, they had been found sleeping in the unused coaches and had even stripped copper out of several of the cars on one occasion. The company made an effort to keep all of the brush cut around the yard to discourage them from staying around the yards. Van Horn was placed on probation by Judge Blowers and ordered to report to Sheriff Johnson every week.

The winter of 1919-20 was one to be remembered. Hood River had a string of days in the very low -20's. There was a record snow and Odell had three feet on the tracks. There was a shortage of fuel in Hood River so the train crews tried to make it through to the mill. The first attempt was

a failure, but on the second day the train reached Odell. To make matters worse it was reported the locomotive at Parkdale was on its side in the ditch and its tender in the ditch on the other side. Winter never was very good to the Mount Hood.

In its February 20, 1920 issue the *Hood River News* reported the railroad had acquired a new engine, Number 1115, and it made the trip to Parkdale as scheduled. The *Glacier* had reported in January a locomotive had arrived from the S.P.& S. to replace the engine damaged in the derailment at Parkdale and that had later blown a cylinder head. The reports, if correct, would indicate the Mount Hood had found it necessary to acquire or lease two locomotives near the beginning of the year. Engine Number 1115 was from the O.W.R.& N. and Number 53 was from the S.P.&. S. The condition of the Mount Hood motive power must have become very marginal because next September the road took possession of a new oil-fired Baldwin 2-4-2. The new locomotive was of the Mikado type and was reputed to be able to start ten cars on a 3½% grade. The railroad had never had anything like it, train crews must have thought they had died and gone to heaven.

The joy was short lived however, the rail-auto was involved in a head-on collision with a work train just above Dee. Lee Slutz, the driver, sustained severe head injuries and a fractured skull. Five of the seven passengers were slightly injured; the south-bound jitney had been loaded but most had gotten off at Dee. The rail-auto had not been going too fast as it had just stopped 400-500 feet earlier. Investigation by the Public Service Commission found that Lee Slutz was not at fault. The railroad had contracted with Portland Bridge Company to replace the bridge across the East Fork and the bridge company had been using a Mount Hood train in the work. The construction company sued the railroad for $4,700 and the Mount Hood counter sued. The court eventually ruled the builders responsible for the accident.

With the cab ahead former Mount Hood 50, now sporting Union Pacific colors and Number 1250, heads for the packing houses at Odell or Parkdale. (Author's collection.)

About the middle of 1921 a significant management change took place within the David Eccles Company, owner of both the Oregon Lumber Company and the Mount Hood Railroad. David C. Eccles was deposed as head of the holding company by dissatisfied family members. Charles T. Early resigned and left Hood River. He was replaced by William Geddes who had been sales manager in Ogden, Utah.

Winter struck again, only earlier than usual. December, 1921 a blizzard hit the Mid-Columbia country and drifts 30 to 50 feet high were reported at Viento. Hood River had 30 inches of snow in 48 hours followed by rain. Dee had four feet and when the snow soaked up the rain the covered bridge over the West Fork collapsed as did the roof over the planer building. At Parkdale the roof of the rail-auto garage failed and the water tank sprung a leak. The tank had just been repaired after the train crews tried to burn it down thawing frozen pipes. The early season storm caught loggers by surprise and Oregon Lumber Company camps were isolated. When snow began to melt the mill dam and the logging railroad bridge went downstream with the flood. But all of the news was not bad. After checking figures it was found the Mount Hood Railroad moved 2,002 carloads of the 2,769 loads of apples shipped during the 1921 season. David Eccles may have been right when he insisted the railroad be located near the east side orchards.

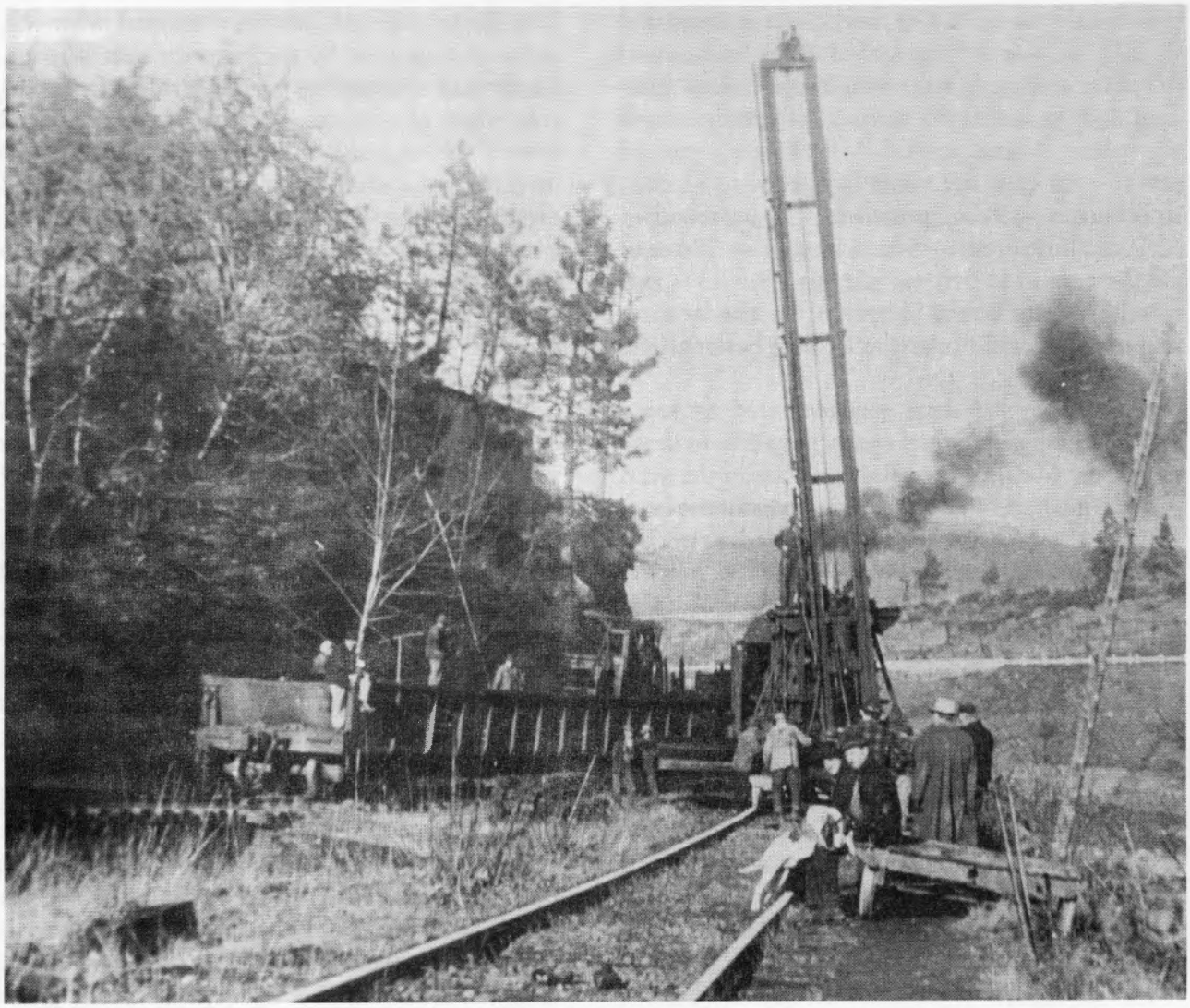
During 1922 the Mount Hood Railroad took delivery of its second new Baldwin locomotive. It

Rampaging waters of Hood River have caused problems for the little railroad on numerous occasions. This particular shift in alignment occurred while the old wooden span was still in use and happened during the same storm that took out track at Collins Creek. (Leland Flint photo.)

was almost an exact duplicate of its predecessor which had become Number 11. The new engine became the second or third Number 1. About the same time, a new rail-auto arrived. According to the *Glacier* the new conveyance could accommodate 30 people. The body had been built in Paris, Illinois and mounted on a Mack truck body. The crowning accolade was . . . "the interior finish and upholstery was like a Pullman."

In the summer of 1922, one of those things happened that had no relevance to the Mount Hood Railroad, but may have affected a far greater number of others in later years. For some time various projects had been undertaken to develop power in the lower canyon on Hood River. A sizable development had been started several years previous but had been stopped for the lack of funds. Pacific Power and Light picked up the project to dam the river above the switchback and run a pipeline down the canyon to a generating plant located just west of the railroad bridge across Hood River. The site became known as Powerdale, and for a time it even appeared on the time cards. According to the *Hood River Glacier,* the Phoenix Utility Company that held the construction contract, purchased a locomotive from the Mount Hood and leased the railroad from town to the switchback to facilitate the movement of men and supplies. Phoenix also built a narrow gauge line (36 inches) across the river and up the opposite side. It was here the tragedy took place. A young man had been employed as a tallyman on the project and was riding on the front of the narrow gauge locomotive holding a small dog. The dog got loose and jumped off ahead of the little engine while it was still moving. The boy leaned over and attempted to catch the animal. In the process he lost his grip, fell between the rails and was crushed by the little engine. The young man was the 18 year old son of Owen P. Young, vice president of General Electric Company. He had come 'West' as so many others had done, to work between school years, to get a little experience and savor a little freedom. The coincidence of the event would be that in later years Owen Young would be a director of the New York Federal Reserve and become a good friend of Marriner Eccles, chairman of the Federal Reserve under Roosevelt. Working together they had significant influence on American fiscal policy.

Weather and damage during the winter of 1922-23 was a repetition of other years, maybe a little worse. This time high water took out the power project and the railroad lost 2,000 feet of line. In a vain attempt to save the tracks an older dam was dynamited. Upstream log jams threatened to take out the mill dam at Dee again, they were blown on five different occasions. After it was all over Man-



The Mount Hood had no heavy equipment and when major bridge repair was necessary a pile-driver had to be borrowed or leased from the UPRR. The gondola has been spotted on a turn-table that no longer exists, but original cement oil tanks are visible on the hillside above the gondola. There was another turn-table at the switchback used to turn the rail-autos so passengers would not have to ride backwards; it was never used to turn locomotives. (Author's collection.)

ager Hewitt came down from the main office in Baker and made an inspection of the line with Superintendent Shurtliff and Agent Brazeau. They estimated the damage to be nearly $12,000 and it would take crews working from both Hood River and Dee at least 10 days to open the line. They were wrong. It took over 100 men 20 days to put the railroad back in business. The delay was critical as there were still several hundred cars of apples scheduled to be shipped.

The apples were shipped on time, but it might have been a close thing. That fall the growers filed a complaint with the Public Service Commission stating the warehouses along the railroad were overfull and the Mount Hood should be forced to buy another locomotive to insure timely movement of their crop. They cited the fact the railroad had given one of their engines to Oregon Lumber Company and were afraid a winter storm could delay shipment. In defense of the Mount Hood, Shurtliff replied the locomotive in question had always belonged to the lumber company and they had rented it for $25.00 per day. Further, if the growers would give the railroad steady business they could afford new equipment. He cited the fact that most of the box shook was being hauled into the valley on trucks even though the railroad had reduced its rates. He also pointed out the line

had already moved 1,130 cars of apples compared to 669 last year. At the end of 1923 Superintendent Shurtliff could report the Mount Hood Railroad had hauled 2,475 carloads of produce from the valley. Packed apples — 1,381 cars; packed pears — 86 cars; lug boxes of apples — 81 cars; strawberries — 9 cars; potatoes — 9 cars; wood — 320 cars; box shook — 5 cars; lumber — 584 cars. Of the total, lumber was slightly over 23% and wood 13%, for a total of only 37%. The location selected by David Eccles was looking better all the time.

Shurtliff's good news was tempered by some bad. Working in marginal weather conditions death struck the Mount Hood Railroad late in the year. It was winter and the conditions were not the best. J.B. Goss, a brakeman, had been standing on the top of a boxcar being pushed by the locomotive, watching for slides when he spotted one. When he realized the car was going to hit he jumped, but he landed on the side of a steep cut and fell back under the locomotive.

By the fall of 1924 train crews really had things organized. For a while they were operating five trains daily to move the apple crop; once 72 cars were moved in 24 hours. The little line must have strained every muscle during the year. For the entire period over 3600 cars were moved out of the valley. Of the total, lumber accounted for only 21% and wood 9%.

As the number of automobiles increased in the valley, so did grade crossing incidents. One of the first happened July, 1923 when an automobile occupied by seven members of the Herbert Struck and Hugo Paash families were hit by the rail-auto at the Pine Grove crossing. There were no injuries, but the car was dragged 40 feet and demolished. Six months later there were two accidents at Odell involving the rail-auto. Again there were no injuries. In June, 1924 the jitney struck a car driven by inveterate fisherman Luhr Jensen near the Dee mill. Again, the car was demolished, but Jensen was not hurt. It is most likely, however, the collision ruined a good fishing trip. Jensen said he had been unable to see the jitney because of brush and lumber and he did not hear the siren as it approached the crossing. Fortunately speeds were low and for many years there were no fatalities, but there was a growing number of close calls.

The first fatality was recorded June, 1927, when Ben Kinzer died of injuries sustained when his automobile was hit by the rail-auto near Winans. Kinzer had appeared to be improving, but apparently died of a stroke. The inevitable happened toward the end of 1932 when the rail-auto was involved in a crash with a speeder near Odell carrying five or six of the Japanese section hands. Everyone joined the birds except Charlie Fuji who was fatally injured.

With the increase in traffic the Mount Hood yard was expanded and in 1927 a second transfer track capable of holding 26 cars was added. Business was beginning to settle into a routine and even the winters did not seem as fierce. At times it was not possible to run the rail-autos because of the snow, but passenger and mail service was maintained with a reasonable degree of efficiency. In early 1928 the newspapers noted the Mount Hood had been able to continue operations when weather tied up the Union Pacific and the Columbia Gorge Highway. Including the highway in that claim did nothing to help the comparison. Even now it does not take much to close the gorge freeway in the winter.

After 20 plus years the Mount Hood Railroad was starting to show its age. It was necessary for the bridge crew to rebuild the wooden span across Hood River and a steel bridge replaced the wooden structure across the East Fork. In 1923 approximately four miles of track from the switchback, around Horseshoe Hill and up Van Horn grade was replaced with 75 pound steel purchased from the O.W.R.& N. At the same time a rock jetty was built south of the city to divert the river from the tracks. In all, the two projects cost around $75,000. In early 1929, taking advantage of the winter lull, locomotive Number 1 was sent in to the Union Pacific yards for an overhaul; when returned it looked like a new engine. Management did attempt to keep property in good condition.

In 1929 the Mount Hood suffered from two fires. The first involved the section crew and was rather inconsequential, the other was considerably more serious. The first incident involved three boxcars, on a spur at the switchback, that had been converted to living quarters for the Japanese section crew. T. Nagami, a laborer for the Mount Hood, returned unexpectedly one afternoon and drove off Mrs. K. Ozasa, the only resident at the time, and set fire to the cars. It is suspected that he

plundered the camp before setting the fire. Mrs. Ozasa had observed him disconnecting the camp water supply before she was forced to flee, but justice was swift. Three weeks after the paper described the incident, it reported Nagami had been apprehended and sent to the 'Salem pen' for two years.

The second fire involved a large portion of downtown Hood River with damage to the business district estimated at $250,000. The railroad came off lucky. It lost an old rail-auto and the roundhouse, but one of the locomotives that might have been lost was saved by A. C. Lofts. The engine was cold but Lofts pulled it to safety with one of his large trucks. Shortly after the conflagration the Mount Hood Railroad entertained the Hood River fire department with a big dinner at the Dee Hotel.

Life along the railroad was becoming rather boring, but from time to time there were little incidents to liven things up. One such took place at Dee in early 1931 when a speeder carrying the Japanese section crew back-fired and the gas tank caught fire. There were some anxious minutes when it became known the speeder was loaded with dynamite. Calm was restored when one of the crew lifted the boxes off through the flames.

In 1932 it became common knowledge the Mount Hood Railroad was in trouble. The papers reported the ICC had allowed the line to issue $500,000 in 6%, 20 year refunding bonds. The bond trade had been allowed because 99% of the bondholders had approved and it would avoid costly foreclosure and receivership proceedings. It was also agreed the bondholders would forgo two years interest that had lapsed since the original bonds had matured. One month after the papers had announced the refunding the little town of Hood River was hit with a body blow. The Butler Bank closed. The home town bank, owned and operated for over 25 years by two of its finest citizens, closed its doors. The Great Depression had begun.

Within the next two years tax delinquency in Hood River County reached close to sixty percent. Funds for relief became inadequate to meet needs. The *Hood River Glacier* ceased publishing after 45 years. The congressional appropriation of $31,000,000 for a dam at Bonneville was hailed as saving the entire Mid-Columbia region from economic desolation. Both the Oregon Lumber Company and the Mount Hood Railroad were struggling to stay alive. To shake up management, institute economies, staunch the flow of red ink and hopefully restore interest payments to the bondholders the David Eccles Company sent a new manager to Oregon. A.C. Lighthall became CEO for the Oregon Lumber Company and its supporting railroads. His presence in Dee was first noticed by the Hood River News in January, 1934; it was not a moment too soon.

During the previous month, from December 1 through December 25, Hood River recorded 22.37 inches of rain, over half its annual total. The river went on a rampage. The railroad lost two bridges and an unspecified amount of fill. Mail was sent by automobile. At Dee the foot bridge over the new concrete dam was blown to release accumulated debris. The new boiler room that had just been completed to replace the old one damaged the previous year, was flooded and suffered $10,000 damage.

The storm was a disaster for the railroad. Freight traffic was delayed, but it did not much bother passengers, hardly anyone used the railroad anymore. When the jitney burned at Summit in May, 1935 the only occupants were the driver, Pearl Perkins, and the Union Pacific agent, James Blake. The two men got the mail out of the burning machine, but were unable to save the vehicle. In 30 minutes it was destroyed. The machine was 13 years old and had been driven 400,000 miles. Perkins had been the original driver, he had only been replacing Norm Shrum, the regular driver. According to John Murray, a former conductor on the Mount Hood, the remains were taken back to Hood River and the jitney rebuilt at a local garage. The first job he had when he went to work for the railroad was to assist loading the rebuilt jitney on a flat car for shipment to Condon, Oregon. It had been purchased by the Kinzua Lumber Company and was given a new lease on life on the company railroad, the Condon, Kinzua and Southern.

Burning of the jitney signaled the end of passenger traffic on the Mount Hood for all practical purposes. Some passengers were accommodated in the caboose on the local, but such occasions became rare and finally ceased altogether.

One economy initiated by the Mount Hood was a real hardship on the train crews. In order to reduce the outflow of hard cash management made

the decision to convert the locomotives from oil to wood. Data submitted to the ICC in 1934 disclosed the little Baldwin tenders could carry five cords of slabwood. Progress had been set back 20 years and it was quite some time before the little engines were reconverted to burn oil.

The middle and late 30's were a period of labor unrest for the West Coast lumber industry. It was no different with the Oregon Lumber Company. Labor problems started at the Dee sawmill in May, 1935 and while there was little violence, tempers flared and the State Police were called in after management appealed to Governor Charles H. Martin for help. The mill did get back into operation but the order file was low and production sporadic. Shipments declined and while railroad crews did not become involved in strike activity reduced traffic required deferral of all nonessential maintenance projects.

On September 27, 1935 a notice appeared in the *News* that the Oregon Lumber Company had filed, in U.S. District Court, for the appointment of a permanent trustee while the company was reorganized under Section 77B of the National Bankruptcy Act. The railroad was not included in the filing, but anything effecting its primary source of income automatically caused a knee jerk reaction. A reorganization plan was formalized and accepted by Judge James Alger Fee, February 28, 1938. Through the efforts of A.C. Lighthall and W.J. 'Jack' Eccles, the lumber company was able to continue working on a reduced scale during the reorganization and by 1942 all of the terms stipulated by the court had been fulfilled. It was no small accomplishment, many lumber firms of equal size had failed and passed into the hands of receivers.

Things were not a bed of roses for the railroad during this time and by 1939 it became absolutely necessary to replace rails, most of which had been in service over 30 years. Arrangements were made to lease 16 track miles of 100 pound rail and continuous joints from the Oregon-Washington Railroad and Navigation Company and the Union Pacific Railroad. To do so bondholders agreed to subordinate their claims to those of the lessors. This replaced track from Hood River to Dee. In 1944 the same arrangement was made to secure another 6 miles of steel in order to replace track from Dee to Parkdale. When these two agreements were filed it was noted that of the $482,000 of bonds known to exist, or that were located, the Eccles family descendants owned $268,000 and the Lighthall family $214,000.

In 1936 the Mount Hood Railroad purchased 12 standard gauge skeleton, wooden underframe log flat cars from the O.W.R.& N. Company. They were O.W.R.& N. numbers 51010, -11, -19, -21, -37, -38, -41, -47, -53, -77, -78, and 51082. Price for the cars was $2,100 and the Mount Hood was to pay $175 per month. The agreement was signed by W.M. Jeffers, Executive Vice President of the O.W.R.& N. Company and J.W. Eccles, President of the Mount Hood Railroad. It was evident the cars were for the logging railroad operated by Oregon Lumber Company.

The last significant work on track grade came in 1937 and was caused by the rising Bonneville dam backwater. The Corps of Engineers awarded Kern and Kibbee a $48,142.50 contract to build a 750 foot concrete revetment to protect the embankment where the Mount Hood entered Hood River Canyon. Not to be denied, the river went on another rampage in November and took out much of the unfinished protection work. A year later the Corp awarded Morrison and Knudsen a $2,000,000 contract to raise and relocate the Union Pacific tracks upstream from Bonneville dam.

The demise of the passenger rail-auto eliminated most of the grade crossing accidents, but not all. In April, 1940 an automobile driven by Mrs. J. T. McClain was struck by a northbound train and a ten month old child was killed, five others in the car were injured and taken to the Hood River hospital. According to A.E. Wilson, fireman on the train, the engineer, W. J. 'Ed' Peck had sounded the whistle, but because of brush around the little used private crossing the automobile was not seen until too late.

In 1947 the little 2-8-2 Baldwin that had moved most of the traffic over the Mount Hood was 25 years old and management purchased a replacement. The Union Pacific was disposing of its much larger 2-8-2's at such reasonable prices the bargains were too good to turn down. A number of short lines purchased the surplus U.P. power, and the Mount Hood acquired Number 2136. It was a mighty engine, but it weighed almost twice as much as the little engine it was to replace and therein was the problem. The first time Number

36 was used it spread the rails and was on the ground before it got out of town. Early derailment was really fortunate, if it had happened on the upper leg of the switchback the locomotive might be sitting there yet. The huge engine was rerailed and started once more and was on the ground a second time, still in sight of town. The purchase was a fiasco. The monster sat in the Hood River yard for seven years until it was sold for scrap.

The age of steam ended on the Mount Hood in 1950 with the purchase of a 1000 horsepower Alco HH-1000 from the Newburgh and South Shore. It was a better buy than the big Baldwin from the Union Pacific, but not much. Even with a 1000 hp rating the locomotive seemed underpowered for the job and was disliked by the crews. Either the shortcoming of the used Alco was recognized by management or the engine was not suffice; a second diesel arrived a short time later. It was a new Model S-3 Alco with only 660 hp, but it did the job effortlessly and the bigger machine was relegated to the engine house.

A. C. Lighthall, Jr. had taken over management of Oregon Lumber Company after the unexpected death of his father in 1950. Over the years the Lighthall family acquired controlling interest in the company and in 1955, after several years of negotiation, Oregon Lumber was sold to the Edward Hines Lumber Company of Chicago. The railroad was also offered to Hines as part of the package for an additional $750,000, but the offer was refused. Hines had a railroad of its own, the Oregon and Northwestern, that hauled logs from the woods around Seneca, Oregon to the sawmill at Burns, and had become disillusioned with the ownership of railroads. Lighthall continued to run the little railroad to service the hardboard plant at Dee, two sawmills in the vicinity of Odell and the fruit growers. But, traffic out of the valley was on a definite decline, trucks had taken over almost half of the lumber, wood chips and hardboard shipments. The growers still shipped by rail but trucks were being used more and more to get the pears and apples to the growing fresh fruit market. When the Union Pacific offered to purchase the railroad in 1968 for $1,800,000 Lighthall accepted the offer with alacrity.

After sixty years of operation the Mount Hood Railroad had settled into a bucolic lifestyle. Traffic averaged eight to ten cars a day and there was only one speed — slow. Even the winter storms did not seem to be cause for concern. The slides had almost stabilized and most of the undersized drainage structures had been washed out and replaced with culverts or small bridges that could take the worst runoff. The only cloud on the horizon was declining shipments. The first serious blow came when the fruit growers closed the Parkdale packing house. Little sawmills, that used to ship from that end of the line had long since disappeared so the Union Pacific petitioned for abandonment of the line above Dee. The local Port Authority persuaded U.P. not to press the abandonment, but, the death knell was sounded when the recession of 1979 hit the building and lumber industries. Champion International Corporation, the latest owner of the Dee operation and of a sawmill on Neal Creek near Odell, closed the two plants and put them up for sale. The railroad now served one sawmill and a seasonal fruit shipper. Service was reduced to three runs a week, or as needed.

In the mid-80's the Union Pacific Railroad made a decision to concentrate its efforts on transcontinental shipments and offered its branch lines for sale. If buyers were not found the branches were to be phased out. Once more the Hood River Port Authority intervened and persuaded the Union Pacific to defer action on the Mount Hood branch until the Port had time to examine the possibility of making the railroad a tourist attraction. The study must have been favorable because it was not long before a group of local investors, headed by Jack Mills, a county commissioner and former vice president of the U.S. National Bank began extended negotiations with the Union Pacific. After two years of meetings the Union Pacific agreed to accept $650,000 for the Mount Hood properties and the former U.P. station at Hood River. The new owners plan to continue the freight service and to develop the tourist potential; they expect to spend an additional $500,000 during the next few years to refurbish the line and to purchase suitable equipment for passenger service, some of which is already in service.

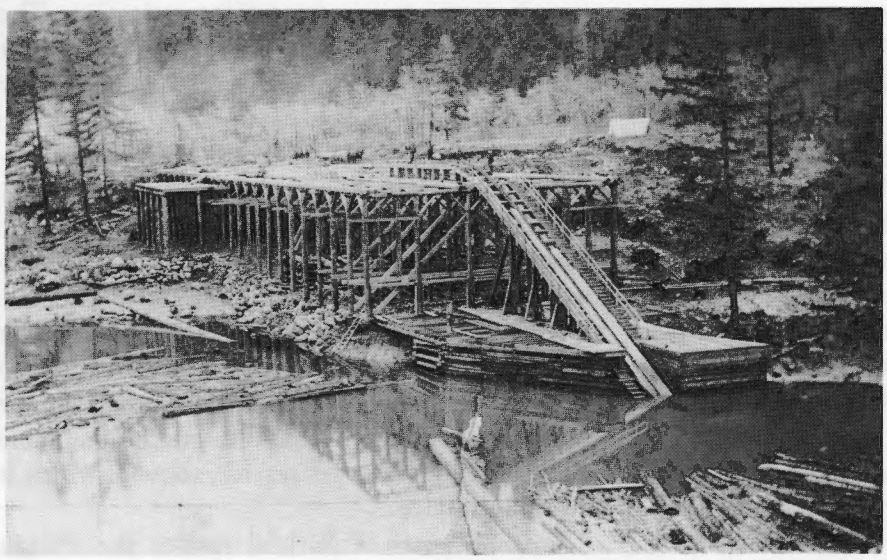
After 85 years of faithful service the Mount Hood still survives and serves. Measured in years, the Mount Hood is an old lady, but new management hopes to prove there is still a lot of life left in the old girl.

THE MOVE TO DEE

When David Eccles announced construction of a railroad up Hood River he did not fully divulge his intentions to move the Columbia River sawmill to a new location. It was first thought the railroad would deliver logs to the mill at its present location, but when it became apparent, some six months later, that was not the case the townspeople began to realize the extent of their loss. A new mill location had been selected upstream on the East Fork of the river where the stream ran through a rocky narrow gorge; a spot ideal for power generation. Not the best location for a large development, level land was at a premium, but the site was made usable with careful planning and some judicious earth movement. In later years, when the mill was no longer dependent on the river for power or log storage, mill managers must have regretted being squeezed between the slopes of Gilhooley Mountain and the river when so much flat land was available in either the upper or lower valleys. Company officials and Hood River town fathers would, on several occasions, discuss the possibility of moving all or part of the Dee operations back to Hood River.

It was not until teamsters began hauling large timbers from the mill in town, past the end of track construction to some vague location on the East Fork, that local residents began to comprehend what was happening. David Eccles was building another mill had been the gossip, then word got out that the Columbia River mill was to be dismantled and the machinery to be moved upstream. The best machinery from the Davidson mill was used for one-half of the new mill, but new, more modern equipment was purchased for the other half.

The original East Fork mill was an imposing structure; it was 60 feet in width and 276 feet in length. Logs used for mudsills supporting the building were 60 feet long and three feet in diameter. The first story was 28 feet in height with a 30 x 60 foot filing room over the mill floor. Over 500,000 board feet of lumber and logs were supposed to have been used in construction. A separate boiler building measured 50 x 50 feet. The mill dam was 32 feet high with the logging railroad crossing over the dam 16 feet above its crest. Nelson Moen, a Norwegian master mechanic, first hired by Eccles in 1894 and who has been credited with the construction of the Little White Salmon lumber flumes, was in charge of mill construction. Initially it was estimated the operation would produce 300,000 board feet of lumber per 10 hour shift and require 500 men to produce the necessary logs and run the sawmill. As was so often the case, both the production levels and the manpower requirements were over-estimated by



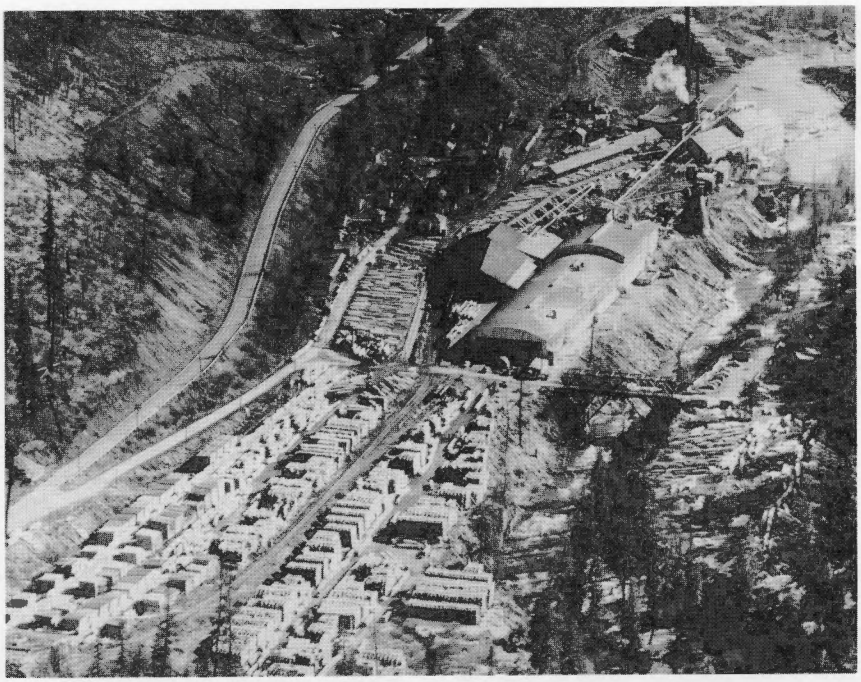
The Dee sawmill under construction in 1905 or 1906. Piling supporting the mill floor were probably logged in the vicinity, but the sawn timbers were hauled by horse and wagon from the recently acquired Davidson mill at Hood River. It was a little while before town residents realized the sawmill on the Columbia was to be closed. The steam donkey at the rear of the building was used to erect the many floor supports. (Courtesy of Russ Curtis.)

The Dee sawmill about 1950. The logging railroad has been abandoned and the new truck dump is in the lower left. Logs have been decked for the coming winter and the mill was now sawing every month of the year. Using a cable system it was possible to deck logs over 50 feet if desired. In 1941 a similar deck of logs went up in smoke. While making more room for another deck a blasting fuse smouldered, later ignited the dry duff and the blaze reduced 4½ million board feet of logs to cinders. Fortunately the fire was contained and did not spread to the buildings or the extensive lumber inventory. Note the open burn pile. (OHS Neg. 64984.)

about 100 percent.

According to reports made in the local newspaper and *The Columbia River Timberman* magazine, the mill had two sources of power, steam and electricity. Steam for the carriage cable drive, two Hill niggers (log turners), lifts for the edgers, the telescopic bandsaw lifts and steam pumps was supplied by two Kewanee boilers furnished by Zimmer-Wells-Brown. Five hundred and twenty-five amps of 60 cycle, three phase electricity was supplied by a Bullock alternating current generator driven by a water turbine rated at 1,000 horsepower. A Sturgess automatic waterwheel governor was used to keep the current constant. There were about a dozen induction type motors, the largest was rated at 150 horsepower and used to drive the large double cut bandsaw. There were two 115 horsepower motors, one for each of the two edgers, two 50's on the slasher saws, a 30 on the log haul and several smaller drives in other parts of the mill. All electrical equipment had been supplied by Allis-Chalmers and the electrical engineering done by Robert H. McKibben.

There is no reliable builders information as to the specific size of the water powered turbine. After the 1913 fire it was noted the turbine in use was a 39 inch diameter double wheel model with inward flow, designed for open flume operation



Dee, Oregon from the air. Sawmill is in the upper right and the new hardboard plant is the building with the rounded roof, adjacent to the hardboard plant is the planer. Mainline of the Mount Hood Railroad cuts through the mill yard just east of the planer and loops out of the picture above the log deck. Truss bridge across the river is the road to Dee Flats and Lost Lake. Highway 35 is located on the side of Gilhooley Mountain above the company houses. Open burning of wood waste has been eliminated with the addition of a wigwam burner. As of 1990 the only structure in the picture left standing was the hardboard plant, everything else had been removed to make room to store sawdust, wood chips and hog fuel used in the manufacture of a high grade, high density board. Lumber manufacture at Dee was terminated in 1966 shortly after Champion-International Corporation acquired the operation from Edward Hines Lumber Company. All of the wood by-products used in the hardboard manufacture now have to be hauled in to Dee from other locations. (Courtesy of Champion-International Corporation.)

and manufactured by S. Morgan Smith Company of York, Pennsylvania. This may have been a replacement for an original A-C turbine. Location of the powerhouse is also questionable. One report gives the location 100 feet north of the mill, another 300 feet north. The most that can be determined is the generator was connected to the turbine with a very heavy leather belt three or three and one-half feet in width, eighty feet in length and costing $800.00. It is surmised both power units were in a building north of the mill a short distance, along a flume built on the east side of the river.

The mill contained two complete sides; the one on the west had the old Davidson equipment, the band mill was an eight foot Allis double cut. Saws for the double cut measured 14 inches in width. A single cut eight foot band mill headed the new machinery on the east side of the mill. No information could be found as to the size of motor used to drive the single cut.

Information concerning the type of carriage drive was not given in the initial mill description, but became available in a report of the first death that took place at the mill during an early shake down run. J. L. Koonz was fatally injured when a cable evidently pulled out of a defective eye hook on the log carriage struck Koonz in the head as he was cutting a brace out of the way of the cable. The accident took place about the middle of July, 1906 and an inquest was held shortly thereafter. The coroners jury found no blame on the part of the company. Koonz had only been on the job for a few days, but had worked for the company off and

on during the past fifteen years.

During the first winter of operation, problems were encountered when the rains came. It became impossible to run the sawmill because of high water, when runoff reached a certain level the power plant flooded and equipment had to be shut down. It had probably been expected the mill would have to curtail when water was low, but it just might have come as a surprise that high water could be just too much of a good thing.

The Dee Hotel was a fixture of the community for many years. It served as a boarding house for company employees and as a guest house for visiting officers of the company. The mainline track of the Mount Hood was located so close to the east side of the hotel guests could almost step off the cars onto the open porch. (Courtesy of Russ Curtis.)

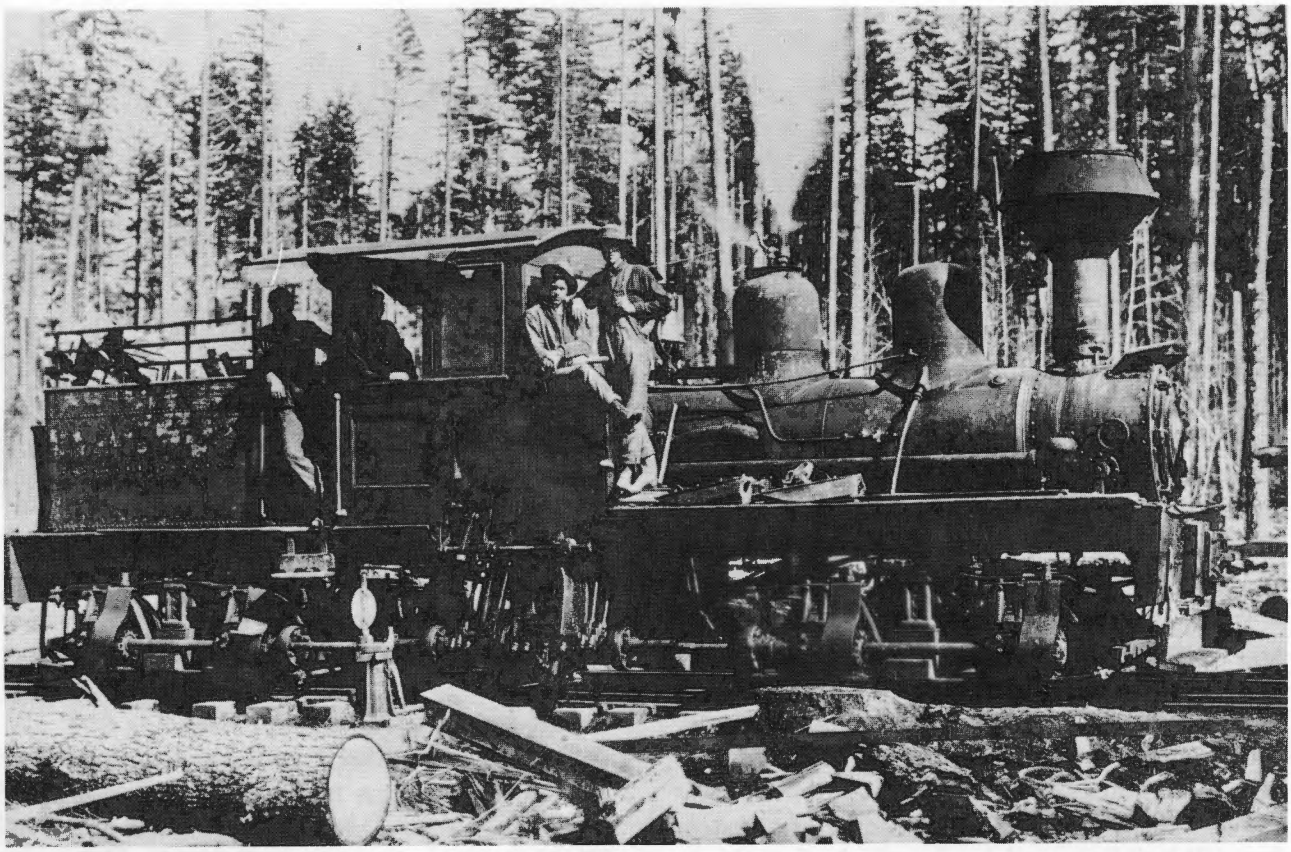
During the next year and one-half the company built several dozen homes for employees, a fine two story hotel, a combination store, office and post office and other miscellaneous structures all clustered around the sawmill buildings. Lighting for the little town was provided from the mill which had its own system for mill buildings and lumber yards. Steam heat piped from the boilers was somewhat of a mixed blessing. When the boilers had to be shut down because of high water the town was without heat.

In September, 1908 a new planer was installed, along with a new electric hoist designed by William Eccles to aid in loading heavy timbers. An example of the high quality timbers the mill could produce was exemplified by two cants delivered to one Captain Dukes of Hood River for use in his house moving business. They were ten inches square and 60 feet long. According to Dukes "They were straight as a line." His cost for the two sticks — $32.00.

Aside from damage done by high water in the winter of 1906, which required new head gates at the power house, there were few mechanical or operational problems. The good fortune ended October, 1908 when the governing machinery on the dynamo malfunctioned and according to the *Hood River Glacier* a ten ton flywheel was thrown two hundred feet across the river. Fortunately the flywheel did not go the other direction, into the sawmill or the nearby homes and no one was injured. The mill was forced to close down for several weeks while the defective equipment was replaced or repaired.

As Oregon Lumber consolidated operations at Dee other locations were closed, abandoned or sold. It had been a continuing practice to sell off Washington lands as soon as they had been cut over. Mill A was abandoned after all usable machinery was removed. The structure caught fire and burned the summer of 1911. Viento was also abandoned as soon as the lumber inventory was shipped out following the disastrous boiler explosion. Old records do not tell if Levi Burns finally took possession of the Viento property that had been so hotly contested. The Viento planer building burned in 1907 and the Davidson mill suffered the same fate later in the year. The Davidson mill fire was blamed on transients or on some Chinese that had gardens in the vicinity. The little steamer *Pearl* was sold to Captain J.W. Taylor, who made a living bringing fresh meat from Portland to the upriver communities. The company store in Hood River was sold and a new one opened at Dee.

These early years set an operating pattern that was to continue until the beginning of WWII. The mill would continue sawing until snow in the woods curtailed the log supply. The loggers would be laid off first, then the sawmill hands after all the logs were sawn. Finally the planer and shipping crews would be let go when all orders on hand were finished and shipped. In the spring it was generally the planer crew that started work first,



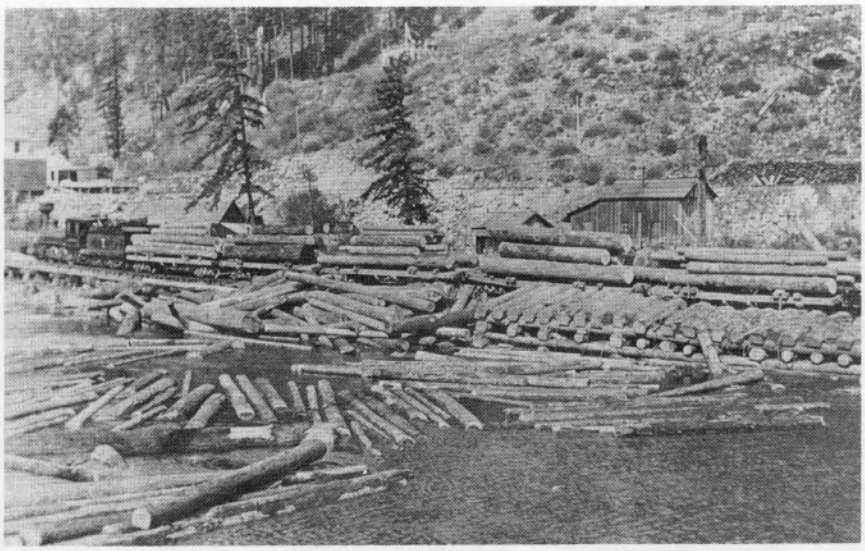
While identity is not 100% certain, this is very likely the same Shay used during the construction of the Mount Hood Railroad. According to Mont West, grandson of J. W. West, chief engineer during the construction period, this relaxed shot was taken on the Oregon Lumber logging company operations. (Courtesy of Mont West.)

working up some of the lumber that had been drying and was ready for surfacing. By starting early an inventory of the most commonly requested items could be developed. Next would come the fallers and buckers, the elite of the wood crew. Provided, of course, train crews had been able to buck the snow drifts and open the rail line to the isolated camps. After the camps opened the rest of the woods crew would be sent out. Mill workers were not put back to work until the log inventory at the mill was large enough to sustain continuous operation the rest of the summer. Almost always the mill would start with a single shift and not add the second for a month or more. Most generally, snow would shut the mill down about the middle of December and sawing would start about mid-March. In some years, however, when snow was heavy, operations were curtailed as early as the middle of October and not resumed until late the following May. At other times, when weather conditions were more favorable the mill would be closed for as little as six or eight weeks. During the shut down it was customary to do the annual maintenance work. Weather conditions were not the best for this type of activity, temperatures were often well below freezing, but it eliminated the need to shut down during the summer months. There were some years, however, when it was high water that precipitated mill closure. Being located so close to the river it became common to have the boiler room flooded and the whole town without heat or lights. Such occurrences were reduced in later years when the boiler room was relocated and a steam turbine replaced the water powered turbine. Being subject to the vagaries of nature the Dee sawmill was never able to live up to its potential. Average annual production remained approximately 20 million board feet for a number of years; it was not until the 1940's that the mill began to reach capacity. Shortly after, production was reduced voluntarily when the Forest Service adopted a sustained yield policy and determined the allowable cut was being exceeded and the amount of timber sold in the area had to be reduced.

Why sawmill workers and loggers never grow old. The two pondmen standing on logs in the middle of the pond with their trusty peaveys are supposed to break down the logs 'jack-strawed' on the hillside and feed them over to the slipman. The slipman in turn guides the logs to the bull chain and up into the sawmill. The log dump is a horrendous mess and if the train crew unloads the four cars that have just come in the problem will just get worse. But, if the train does not get back to the woods with the empties the train crew will have serious problems with the bull-of-the-woods. (Courtesy of Russ Curtis.)

David Eccles died December 6, 1912; he left no will and the settlement of his estate took several years. At the time of his death he was an officer or director of some 47 corporations and owned stock in 76 industrial firms and banks, having majority ownership in many. Because of laws in effect at the time, Ellen Stoddard Eccles, his second wife, was not considered legally married and could not share the estate. Therefore, the first family, or the Ogden family as they were also known, received 5/7ths of the estate and the second family, known also as the Logan or Baker family, received only a 2/7ths share. Unfortunately there was no specific or explicit division of the many companies held in the estate, each heir was awarded a portion of the total holdings and each family considered their shares collectively. In spite of the advice of many friends and business associates, Marriner Eccles, the eldest of the second family, decided it would be best if the families did not try and continue the various businesses as a joint effort, but to proceed separately. As a result each family formed a company to manage their interests. The first family formed the David Eccles Company to manage their 5/7ths of the estate and the second family organized the Eccles Investment Company to handle their 2/7ths. In the years that followed the fortunes of the David Eccles Company began to wane while those of the much smaller Eccles Investment Company began to grow significantly through astute management. It was not until sometime in 1920 that ownership of the Oregon Lumber Company was held by a single family.

According to Marriner Eccles, in his book *Beckoning Frontiers*, the David Eccles Company began to have problems in 1919 when Leroy Eccles was asked to resign as vice-president and general manager of Amalgamated Sugar Company, one of the firms in the first family portfolio. From that time forward, Leroy and his older brother David C.,



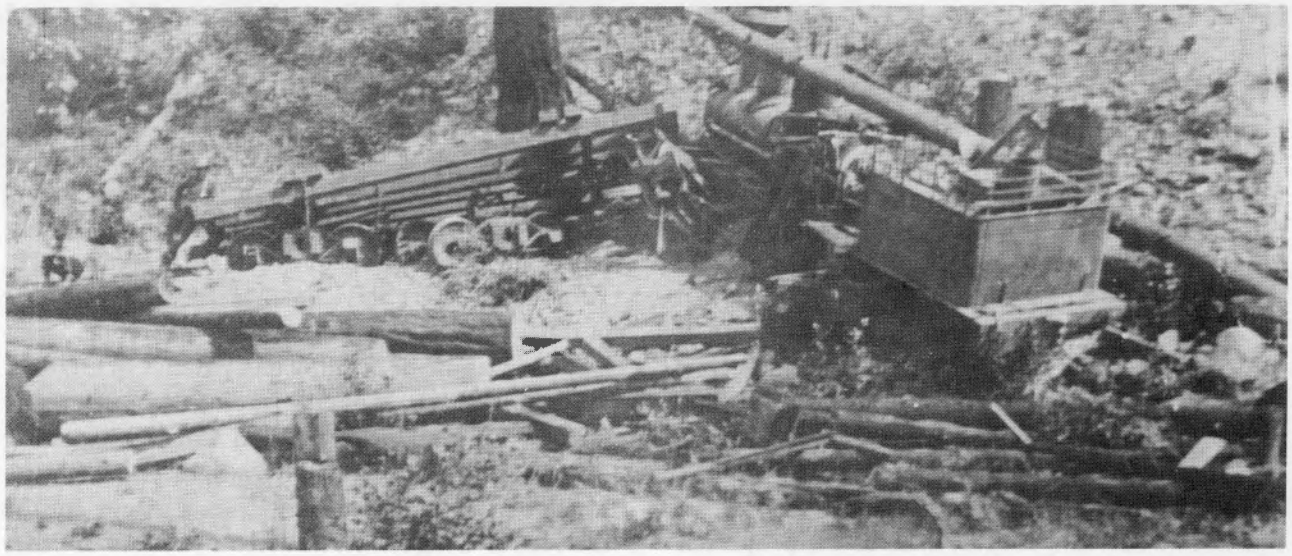
Mount Hood Number 1 with a string of loaded log cars at the Dee log dump on the east side of the pond. Mainline is behind the train and passes just in front of the pile of slabwood on the right side of the photograph. (Author's collection.)

began to experience a variety of management problems and in 1921 both men were forced out of the holding company by other members of the family. By 1920 Oregon Lumber was starting to suffer from mismanagement and even though he owned only 28 percent of the company compared to the 44 percent held by the David Eccles Company, Marriner was brash enough to propose to his older half-brother, David C., a buy or sell offer. He proposed to state a price giving David C. the option to buy his 28 percent or he would purchase the 44 percent held by the David Eccles Company. Needless to say Marriner was shown the door, told in no uncertain terms to mind his own business and to stop interfering. Matters for both the David Eccles Company and Oregon Lumber continued to go from bad to worse. When David Eccles died in 1912 the Oregon Lumber Company had no debts and held cash and bonds worth $750,000; it had never failed to pay a dividend and had grown from an original $100,000 to $1,000,000 in capital with another million in surplus. In spite of the improved business climate brought on in part by WWI and continuing demand for lumber, Oregon Lumber was no longer able to pay dividends. Marriner Eccles became convinced that something needed to be done. He approached other members of the David Eccles Company and several agreed to support a possible take-over bid. Not only was it necessary to secure 51 percent of the lumber company stock, but control of the Mount Hood Railroad and the Sumpter Valley Railroad was needed as well. The railroads were absolutely essential for successful operation of the Baker City and Dee mills.

Once again Marriner paid a call on David C., but this time it was somewhat different. This time David C. was offered the choice of resigning, along with his managers, or he could buy out Marriner and the other interests he represented. David C. was given one week to make a decision. He decided to buy, but could not come up with the cash. There was an exchange of stocks in other holdings for part of the purchase price and a two year period granted in which to pay off the balance. The David Eccles Company became sole owner of the Oregon Lumber Company, but it was about the only significant operating company left. In 1921 David C. and Leroy were ousted from the David Eccles Company while some other members of the family left the group by trading their stock for other assets.

Division of the estate was not the only problem created by the unexpected death of David Eccles. He, and other officials of Oregon Lumber Company, had just been indicted for a second time on charges of land fraud. On July 5, 1912 the company had reached a compromise agreement with the government on a fraud suit started by U.S. District Attorney John McCourt two years previously. Only four months had elapsed and on October 23, 1912 the government had filed a second suit with an entirely new set of charges. With the death of David Eccles the indictment was revised and enlarged to include all descendants and both wives. Just to make sure that no one was left out, Albert Geddes Eccles, the son by the unacknowledged third wife, was also included.

In the suit just settled the government charged the company had conspired with 49 individuals to secure land patents for the purpose of logging the timber thereon. Such activity was alleged to have taken place between July 1, 1902 and October 1,



Wreck of one of the Shays at the switchback above the Dee sawmill. Robert Wilson, the fireman, was killed in the mishap. The crew had been told to jump, but Wilson hesitated and the locomotive was in a cut when he jumped. He was thrown back under the train. One log car was destroyed and the cab of the Shay pretty well demolished, but the locomotive was patched up and back at work with a minimum of lost time. (Courtesy of Russ Curtis.)

1907 and during that time the company had cut and removed 30,000,000 board feet of timber from the lands in question. The timber removed was valued at $1.50 per thousand on the stump and $15.00 per thousand when manufactured into lumber. The U.S. Attorney had very strongly recommended the court void all the patents and assess damages of $450,000 against the defendant company.

The court had decided nine of the patents were valid, but voided the other forty. It had also decided it would not be justified in fining the company for 30,000,000 feet of timber on the basis of its value after conversion to lumber, but it was justifiable to assess the stumpage value of $1.50 per thousand on a lesser volume of 15,000,000 feet of timber. Court fixed total damages at $26,250. The company had not gotten off free, in actuality it was hardly more than a slap on the wrists. Little wonder that John McCourt was back with a second indictment so quickly.

The second trial began October 23, 1912, little more than one month prior to the death of David Eccles. This time the government claimed he was party to 43 cases of land fraud wherein employees and wives of employees filed land claims in October, 1899 under the terms of the Timber and Stone Act, for the purpose of selling their patents to David Eccles. To quote from the decision rendered by Judge R. S. Bean, U. S. District Court, District of Oregon, January 31, 1916:

> The case was tried on the pleadings and testimony and submitted for decision on the merits
>
> Two questions are therefore present: (1) Whether the evidence is sufficient to show that the entries were of such character as would entitle the complainant to a degree to set aside the patents if the suit had been brought within the statutory time. And (2) if, so, whether or not it is barred by the statute of limitations.
>
> Now, as far as the first question is concerned but little need be said. The testimony shows and there is no dispute about it, that the entrymen were practically all of them employees or wives of employees of the defendant company; the land was selected by an agent of the company and shown to the entrymen; the representatives of the company looked after the matter of filing, making final proof, publication of proof notice, and furnished the money with which to pay the government price of the land, and when the patents were issued they were delivered not to the patentees but to an agent of the company, and soon thereafter the entrymen were notified to appear at the company's office and convey the property, or sign deeds for the property, which they did do, receiving $100 therefor. Under these circumstances, it would seem quite clear that if the suit were brought within the time the transaction was such as could not be upheld in law.

The rest of the decision went on to point out the statute of limitations had expired and the case was dismissed.

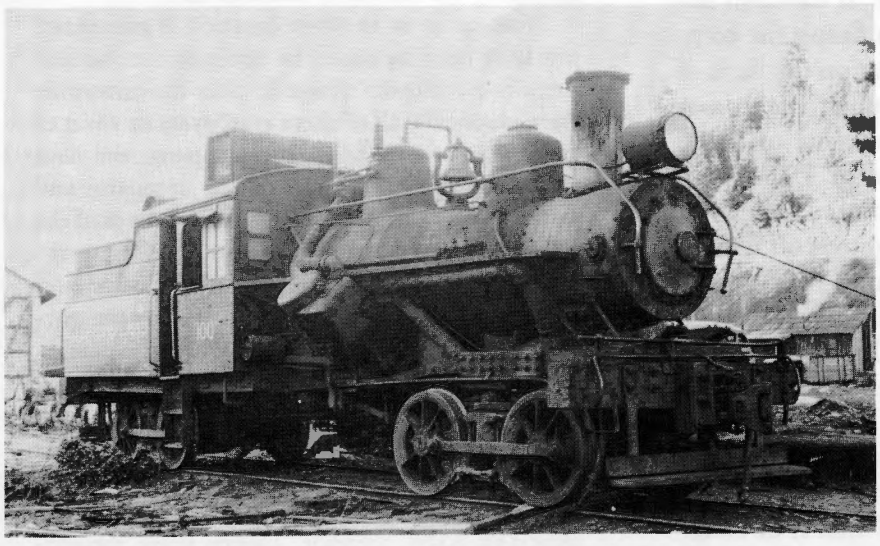
The most interesting question concerns the twelve year delay before the government decided to prosecute. At the trial it was shown that after the entrymen received their patents October 12, 1900, they were assigned to David Eccles. He held them for just over six years before recording them October 24, 1906, twelve days after the statute of limitations for this type of land fraud expired. The timing seems more than just coincidental. Stranger yet is why the government waited still another six years before going to court.

Eccles had waited six years to record the deeds, but did not actually convey title to the properties to the lumber company for another year, sometime in 1907, and the company did not record the transfer deeds until 1911. The federal suit initiated October 23, 1912 was one day short of six years since Eccles first recorded the deeds at the Baker County courthouse. The U. S. Attorney argued that Eccles had held the deeds to conceal the fraud, and the six year period for determining the limitation period should actually begin when the Department of Justice first learned of the attempt to defraud the government. This argument was rejected by Judge Bean and in his decision cited numerous instances wherein the Secretary of the Interior and the Commissioner of the General Land Office had been notified of questionable land transactions in the Baker City area.

On December 28, 1899, Mr. W. E. Fricke, a resident of Baker County wrote the Secretary of Interior about . . . "a great land steal that is being perpetrated here by the Sumpter Valley Lumber Company, a Mormon outfit." On September 10, 1900, Mr. Robert Service wrote the Commissioner of the General Land Office about the lumber company and its use of dummy entrymen. On October 9, 1900, Frank L. Moore, a leading lawyer in Baker City, wrote the General Land Office suggesting special agents be sent to investigate land filings. He signed his letter as U. S. Commissioner for the District of Oregon. There were a number of other letters, even one from Forest Supervisor Sheller, who wrote the Commissioner of the General Land Office. Evidently the Interior Department did finally send investigators to Baker City. In its February 8, 1904 issue, the *Baker Herald* featured a front page article about the probable arrest of prominent city residents by government secret service men investigating illegal land and timber transactions. In his decision, ruling against the U. S. District Attorney, the judge also quoted from a letter written on March 25, 1905 by an inspector for the Land Office, that the lumber company was paying taxes on lands, the deeds to which had not yet been recorded.

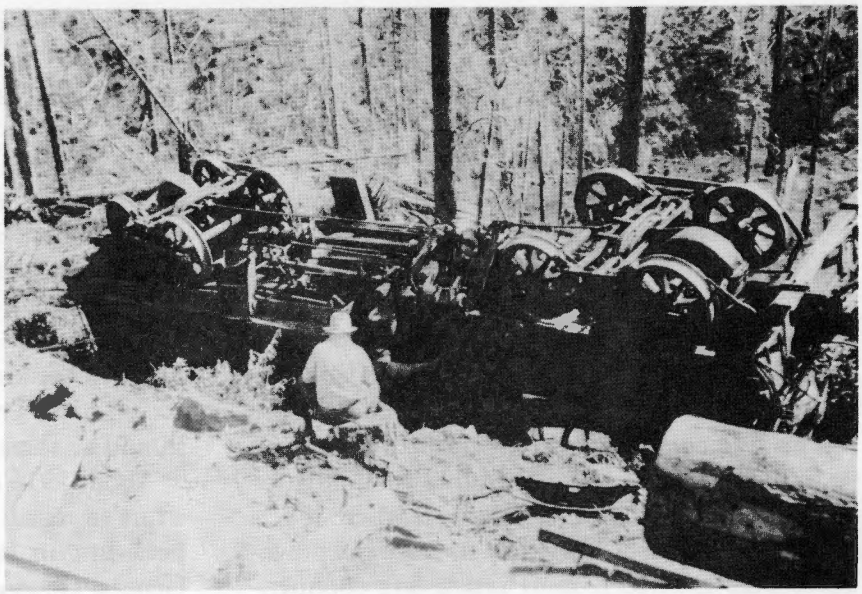
In both trials lumber company attorneys maintained there had never been a conspiracy to defraud. True, company agents had assisted friends and employees locate land and had helped in the filing procedures, and had, if offered, purchased land and timber after a deed had been granted, but there had never been any collusion. Still the question remains: Why had the government waited so long before deciding to prosecute David Eccles and the other company officials?

This was not the first time David Eccles had gotten into hot water with the govern-



This gear driven Heisler replaced the Shays and was the last logging locomotive used on the Dee operations. Note the box for fire fighting tools on top of the cab. Acquired new in 1920, displaced by trucks during WWII and probably sold for scrap. (Robert M. Hanft photo courtesy of D. S. Richter.)

ment, it went clear back to Scofield, Utah. The Baker City situation, however, was undoubtedly the largest unauthorized acquisition of the federal assets to date. Assuming that each of the 43 entrymen had filed for the 160 acre maximum, the company would have secured title to almost 8000 acres of prime Ponderosa pine timber and land for a minimal expense. And if rumors were correct, the 92 cases named in the two trials may have been just the tip of the iceberg. Until he died, David Eccles had always made money from Oregon Lumber, and well he should, the firm paid little or nothing for most of the timber cut.



Bill Canny, the camp 'Push', seen here seated at trackside, had to bring a steam donkey down from the woods to help Number 11 get the Heisler back on the track after this escapade. Incident took place near Jones Creek in 1932, but like a cat with nine lives 100 was back in business in short order. Steam locomotives, especially those used in logging, were practically indestructible. (Courtesy of Russ Curtis.)

Even though the U. S. Attorney did not get to first base with the second lawsuit it was not the end. A new indictment was made against the company in February, 1918 citing the same 1899 land patents. This time it was claimed the government had been defrauded on 6560 acres of land that had been worth $65,600 at the time patents had been issued. Validity of the patents was no longer the issue. The defendants countered the land was worth no more that $22,960 ($3.50 per acre). This particular case drug through the courts and was finally decided in 1923 in favor of the company by Chief Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court, William Howard Taft, in the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit in San Francisco, California.

One more attempt was made in 1921. In a complaint involving only one questionable patent, where it was alleged the company had, in 1903 removed $53,181.66 worth of timber unlawfully, the company was fined $10,000. It was the last attempt to convict the company and its officers of fraudulent land and timber dealings. The government threw in the towel.

While David Eccles may be censured for his actions, he is not to be condemned. He did nothing more than many others in the lumber business, he, however, made no attempt to hide his actions. All dealings were open and above board and the company and its officials never denied helping applicants file for government land. As Judge Bean indicated in his decision after the second trial, the proper authorities had been notified many of the filings may have been questionable, but no timely effort was made to investigate or prosecute.

It has never been a secret that for a number of years land fraud in Oregon was almost a way of doing business and many prime tracts of timber were acquired by lumbermen using questionable tactics. The wheeling and dealing reached the very highest levels of government and at one time Oregon had only one effective representative in Congress. Three out of the four Oregon members were either on trial or under investigation on charges of fraudulent land dealings. The removal of Senator John H. Mitchell from office was most likely a case of being at the wrong place at the wrong time, but he was convicted. Senator Mitchell had been chairman of the Interoceanic Canal Committee and in the course of his duties crossed President Theodore Roosevelt in his zeal to build the Panama canal. When it was intimated that Mitchell might be involved with one of his constituents in questionable land dealings he was almost trampled to death

in the pretrial shuffling of U. S. Attorneys and federal judges acceptable to the administration. Mitchell died shortly after being convicted and removed from office, but was later exonerated and given a pardon by President Taft.

Actually, land frauds were possible on two levels, the most common was use of dummy entrymen under provisions of the Timber and Stone Act. This was on the federal level and an individual could claim up to 160 acres by paying the price, usually $1.25 per acre, and swearing the land was most valuable for its timber or its minerals. There was no residency or improvement provision similar to the Homestead Act. The other possibility for illegal dealing was on the state level where it was much easier to secure larger tracts once the procedures were known. A most interesting commentary on land fraud in Oregon was written by S. A. D. Puter, *Looting the Public Domain,* while he was serving a jail sentence in Portland. Puter had been convicted, been given two years and fined $7,500 for his part in a number of land swindles. At the same time Henry Meldrum, formerly the U. S. Surveyor General for Oregon, was sentenced to three years and fined $5,250. Puter's book is unusual as it names people and places and outlines some of the methods used to acquire title to state land.

State problems came with the use of "Certificates of Sale" issued by the state that could be secured for the payment of one-third the purchase price, except in the case of timber land, which required a payment of one-half the land value. The value was generally $1.25 per acre. Lands most available were sections 16 and 36 in every township. These lands had been granted by the federal government to the states under the terms of the Organic Act of August 14, 1848. Money derived from the sale of these lands was to go into a General School Fund, hence, the name, school lands. In the event any portion of the school sections had been pre-empted by a previous claim or patent, the state had the right to select an equal acreage from a list of alternate lands. Claiming selection rights from the alternate list allowed large blocks or tracts to be secured. The "Certificates of Sale" were transferable and there was no limit to the number of acres for which an individual could apply. As long as an applicant could pay the balance due and would swear the land was not being purchased for speculative purposes the state would issue a deed. Such a system was a wide open invitation to land fraud, but it might not have been abused to such an extent if there had not been a need. The demand for lumber had grown at a phenomenal rate and the larger, more efficient sawmill required a large volume of logs, but there was no legal method to obtain the raw material needed except by questionable means. Lumbermen may have been the culprits, but the public supplied the motive and the government, through lax enforcement, the means to defraud. Blame should be shared equally.

About 1916 the State of Oregon began a serious effort to regain some of the land thought to have been lost to land speculators. Oregon Attorney General George M. Brown examined the dealings of F. A. Hyde of Oakland, California and some of his associates, with the state land office. In the course of several years the Attorney General tried seven land fraud cases, in as many Oregon counties, involving F. A. Hyde and received favorable verdicts in six of the seven. According to the newspaper report of January 16, 1918, the seventh case had been held in Klamath county and was under appeal, but another favorable verdict was expected. The other verdicts had been appealed to the State Supreme Court, but the Attorney General had been upheld and commended. The court stated the conspiracy to defraud had been clearly defined. In the cases that had been resolved 9,130 acres had been returned to state ownership and an additional 24,000 acres had reverted to the federal government. The restored state lands were located in: Crook county, 3,890 acres; Linn county, 600 acres; Jackson county, 2,360 acres; Lane county, 160 acres; Clackamas county, 1,360 acres; Hood River county 760 acres.

In Hood River county over 2,000 acres were involved and the co-defendants, California Door Company, Palo Alto Land and Livestock Company and Western Lumber Company all contended they had purchased script from Hyde in good faith. However, it was proved the script had been obtained for speculative purposes by Hyde and as such was not valid.

There were other ways to circumvent the government and evidence seems to indicate David Eccles may have engaged in some deception with authorities. About 1910 there were more, or con-

tinuing problems with the bureaucracy, but this time the consequences were more direct and immediate. The Forest Service had come of age and had begun selling timber at auction to qualified bidders. However, if an individual or a firm had unresolved problems with the government the offender could be disqualified from bidding of Forest Service sales. Evidently, David Eccles and the Oregon Lumber had been disqualified or knew there was a very good chance of not being allowed to bid on sales offered by the Whitman National Forest. Therefore it is no real surprise when William H. Eccles, David's right hand man in Oregon, formed the W. H. Eccles Lumber Company in 1911. The new firm immediately purchased the Baker sawmill of the Wisconsin-Oregon Lumber Company (also eliminating a little competition) and moved it out to Austin, south and west of Baker, on the Sumpter Valley Railroad. Shortly thereafter, August 16, 1911, W. H. Eccles was the successful purchaser of one of the first sales on the Whitman; it was estimated at 80,000,000 board feet of timber.

After the death of his father in 1912, David C. Eccles had become president of Oregon Lumber and it was not long before he was put to the test. In July, 1913 the Dee sawmill burned to the ground along with 1,000,000 board feet of lumber. There were no fatalities, but the loss was estimated at $100,000. Only lumber was covered by insurance, not the mill. The fire had been discovered about four in the morning, but because of strong winds it could not be controlled. Over 100 men fought the blaze, some having been sent from Hood River by special train. They were able to save about 4,000,000 feet of stacked lumber, the company houses and the hotel, but the railroad bridge over the dam was consumed in the flames and the dam was damaged. The telephone operator finally reached Charles T. Early at 5 a.m.; he had just gotten back from a trip to Inglis. It was probably Early that organized the special train.

David C. Eccles came in from Utah three days after the fire and announced the sawmill would be rebuilt, but it might not be as large as it had been. He also told the *Hood River Glacier* company logging operations would most likely be concentrated on the west side of the Middle Fork as practically all of the company timber on the east side had been cut.

The new president soon received another test when the trainmen on the Sumpter Valley Railroad went on strike. He eventually settled the strike; the trainmen lost their grievances, there was no pay increase and five of the crew members were not reinstated, but the company did agree to recognize the union. David C. Eccles may have played tough and won the battle, but in the long run he lost the war. It was indicative of his tenure as president of the company.

When operations started at Dee, logging development went in two directions. The first, probably the most active logging side, began working toward the south between the East and Middle Forks of Hood River. This was the general direction of the extension of the Mount Hood Railroad and log hauling was most likely done with Mount Hood equipment between scheduled runs from Dee to Hood River and return. The general terrain on this route was flat and well suited to agriculture, after the timber was removed it was company practice to sell logged land as soon as possible. It helped develop the country and provided traffic as well.

The main body of company timber was, however, west of Dee, between the Middle Fork and the West Fork. Except for some flat ground immediately west of the mill the terrain was first broken and rough and then mountainous. Building a railroad here was altogether different than the extension to Parkdale. At the time the mill burned the logging railroad was accessible to the Mount Hood Railroad by means of the bridge over the dam. When the dam was repaired after the fire the bridge was not rebuilt. A new crossing was constructed utilizing a truss bridge over the East Fork near the south end of the log pond. The new track hooked into the logging line that had been built southerly along the west side of the East Fork almost to Tony Creek. Then, with a switchback, the railroad headed northerly as it climbed out of the river bottom; it then curved left and went almost due west across Dee Flats. By the middle of 1913 this line extended only three miles from the sawmill and most of the distance had just recently been built by Casciato and Ragione. By May, 1915 the mainline logging track had been pushed as far as Deer Creek and a spur had been built on a lower elevation to log timber along the West Fork at a location known locally as "Camp Overall".

Work on the logging line progressed slowly, but

by the end of 1916 the track had probably crossed Camp Creek and reached the flat where a logging camp was established.

In May, 1916 the Forest Service announced it was considering the sale of 350,000,000 board feet of timber on the West Fork. The proposed sale area was directly in the path of the railroad being built by Oregon Lumber Company. Forest Service officials said the sale had been requested by John W. Palmer. WHO?

It took a little digging for the locals to find out John Palmer had at one time been president of Westport Lumber Company, a well known firm located on the lower Columbia River. (Westport Lumber may have originally been known as Palmer and Stoddard Lumber Company when it started in 1905.) Strangely enough it was also learned Mr. Palmer was a sometime resident of Hood River owning a fine 60 acre apple orchard. Palmer had recently sold his interest in Westport Lumber to Alex White of the Beaver Valley Logging Company of Quincy, Oregon. Perhaps he was looking for a new location?

Forest Service Employees, W. T. Andrews, a logging engineer and F. E. Ames, chief of the department for Oregon, met with local residents and businessmen to dispel fears that a sale covering 7,000 acres would effect the supply of irrigation water and pollute streams with accelerated runoff. They pointed out it would take at least 10 to 12 years to harvest all the timber, but the entire area was to be replanted and seed trees would also be left. The new reproduction would be able to retain precipitation. The big hit with businessmen came when they heard that 25 percent of the sales receipts would be made available to the county for schools and another 10 percent would go to the county road fund. Comments were made the extra 10 percent would help pay for the Mount Hood Loop Road that was being pushed. Businessmen at the meeting approved of the sale and the editor of the *Glacier* came to the same conclusion.

A sale of such magnitude had to go to Washington, D. C. for approval, but it was forthcoming and the sale was advertised by the middle of July. The appraised prices were: $1.20 per M for Douglas fir, Western red cedar and Noble fir; $2.50 for White pine and 50¢ per M for Western hemlock and other species. The sale was estimated to contain over 70 percent Douglas-fir, with approximately 330,000,000 board feet on 7,020 acres. Bidders were required to deposit $10,000 and the successful bidder would be given 12 years to log the sale. It was also required a sawmill capable of cutting 200,000 board feet per day be built. Bid closed September 27, 1916. John W. Palmer was awarded the sale at the appraised price, no one had a bid against him. Strange indeed!

Stranger yet was the fact that on September 23, 1916, John W. Palmer, J. F. Palmer and Henry Carstens of the law firm of Carstens and Earle of Seattle incorporated the West Fork Mill and Timber Company, whose principal office was in Carson City, Nevada. The authorized capital stock was $100,000, but only $50,000 was subscribed; $49,800 by John W. Palmer and $100 each by J. F. Palmer and Henry Carstens. In later years, when Oregon Lumber was building a railroad into Vernonia, one of the way stations was named Carstens.

An item in the *Hood River News* 6/27/1917 issue noted J. W. Palmer had sold his sixty acre apple orchard to Dr. Joseph McChesney of Portland and Palmer was in poor health. There was no further mention of Palmer or the timber sale in either of the Hood River papers until August of 1919 when the *Glacier* reported Palmer had assigned the Forest Service timber sale rights to Oregon Lumber Company. Palmer cited poor health required taking such action and red tape had delayed the deal for more than a year. Figures cited by the paper were somewhat different than the original. Total sale volume had increased to 365,000,000 board feet and the acreage to 7,340. The paper added the comment Oregon Lumber Company had already pushed their logging railroad into the sale area.

The red tape Palmer referred to must have been caused by the Forest Service. Officials of Oregon Lumber had already taken over the corporate shell of West Fork Mill and Timber Company. Records in Carson City show on November 13, 1918 Charles Early had been elected president and David C. Eccles vice-president of West Fork. Neither Palmer nor Carstens were listed among the new directors. Furthermore, the corporation was kept intact until 1927; at that time W. J. Eccles was president and Homer Eccles the vice-president.

Circumstances tend to indicate an understanding between Palmer and officials of Oregon Lumber

Company. Palmer had been in business with a Stoddard, the Westport mill had not been far from the company sawmill at Inglis, he had been living in Hood River when the timber sale was offered, the West Fork Mill and Timber Company was taken over lock, stock and barrel before the Forest Service had allowed the sale to be transferred and Palmer had been a prominent figure in the lumber industry in his own right. It is almost too much to believe the Eccles family or Charles T. Early was not acquainted with Palmer and that he had not been persuaded to buy and hold the sale until the fraud suits were settled. It must be admitted, however, there is absolutely no proof to indicate a prior agreement.

Timing of the Forest Service sale may have been bad for the company. Shortly after the sale had been awarded to Palmer the company became involved in a private timber sale of tremendous proportions. Had it been carried to a successful conclusion it might have surpassed both the Dee and eastern Oregon operations in size. In January, 1917 the *Hood River News* announced that Charles T. Early, acting for the Oregon Lumber Company, had purchased 27,000 acres of land and timber in Columbia, Washington, Tillamook and Clatsop counties. Initially the purchase was known as the Dubois tract, after the Pennsylvania company from which it had been purchased. Later it became the Oregon-American tract after a new organization formed to manage the acquisition. Early newspaper reports stated $4,000,000 had been paid for two and one-half billion feet of timber and 27,000 acres of land. County records indicate the purchase price only half the amount reported, but even so, it was a transaction of some magnitude. In April of 1958 the sawmill that had been built, one of the world's largest at the time, to cut the logs from the tract, finally shut down. During the nearly 35 years the mill had been in production it had cut slightly more than the two and one-half billion feet of lumber.

The Oregon-America Lumber Company was incorporated in Ogden, Utah for $3,500,000 with David C. Eccles as president and general manager, Charles T. Early the vice-president, Matthew S. Browning as treasurer and Royal Eccles as secretary. The officers, along with Leroy R. Eccles and John Snowcroft, composed the board of directors. It was anticipated it would take one to two years to build a railroad into the property and it would cost between one and two million dollars to get both a railroad and a new sawmill into operation. The new corporation began by contracting with Utah Construction Company to build a standard gauge railroad line from the United Railway tracks at Wilkesboro, Oregon, north and west of Hillsboro, into Vernonia. From there the survey went on to Keasey for a total distance of close to 32 miles. The railroad was incorporated in 1919 as the Portland, Astoria and Pacific. The construction project became a continual drain on the resources of the Oregon Lumber Company, the David Eccles Company and the Eccles family. In 1922, the year steel reached Vernonia, Oregon-American was sold to Charles S. Keith and his associates in Central Coal and Coke Company of Kansas City, Kansas. Purchase price was reputed to be $4,000,000. Central Coal and Coke had been founded in 1871 and entered the southern pine lumber business in 1893. With its southern mills and the sawmill at Vernonia the company produced 325,000,000 board feet of lumber annually. Central Coal and Coke could not exactly be classed as a newcomer to the business. It is truly unfortunate the David Eccles Company was not able to capitalize on such a fortunate and judicious purchase. Evidently it was beyond the capabilities of its executives and its declining resources to hold on until production could be achieved. It was about this time that David C. and Charles T. Early were ousted. It would be most interesting to know if they were let out because they opposed the sale of Oregon-American properties, or because their management had made the sale necessary. There was no question that something was drastically amiss. In 1920 lumber production at Dee dropped to 16,000,000 board feet, in 1921 it was down to 12,500,000, in 1922 only 15,000,000 was cut and the drop could not all be blamed on the weather or the market.

In early 1919 Oregon Lumber and the Continental and Commercial Trust and Savings of Chicago (with Calvin Fentress of Hubbard Woods, Cook County, Illinois as trustee) agreed to a $600,000 First Mortgage 7% Serial Gold Bond issue to be secured by all real and personal property owned by the company in Baker, Grant and Hood River counties in Oregon. A timber cruise of company lands was attached and the company given the right to cut up to 50,000,000 board feet

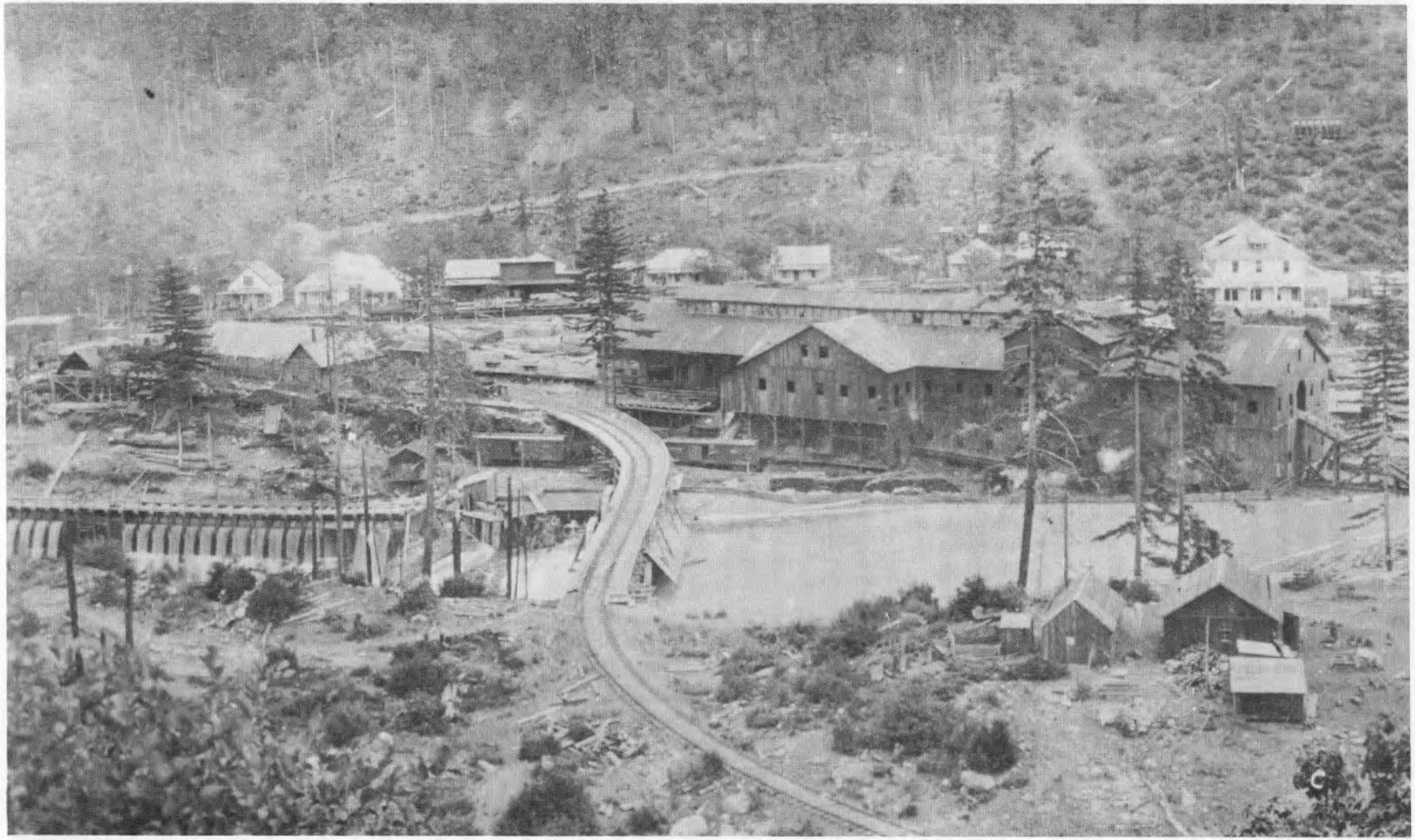
of standing timber before being in default. Of the total amount only $450,000 was to be issued immediately with the remaining $150,000 available, if necessary, at a later date. The initial offering was to be redeemed at the rate of $90,000 a year, for five years beginning in 1919. The mortgage agreement listed David C. Eccles as president and Charles T. Early as secretary.

The bonds were redeemed ahead of time and in June, 1922 Continental and Commercial Bank of Chicago (with William P. Kopf of Chicago, the trustee) agreed to a new bond issue, this time for $1,000,000. It was to be a First Mortgage 6% Sinking Fund Gold Bond issue to mature June 1, 1937. The company pledged $285,000 in First Mortgage 6% Bonds of the Sumpter Valley Railroad, all lands and real property in Grant, Baker and Hood River counties, and all timber on the real property. A cruise supplied by the Portland firm of Thomas and Meservay was attached to and became part of the agreement and a new cruise was to be supplied annually. Further, the company agreed to pay $4.50 per M, Spaulding scale, to the trustee, for all timber cut monthly. This time the document was signed by Jas. E. Pickett, president of Oregon Lumber Company and W. J. Eccles as the secretary.

For some unknown reason these bonds were also paid off early, or perhaps never even issued. A new agreement was entered into April 1, 1925 with an entirely different financial institution, the Fidelity National Bank and Trust of Kansas City (Fredrick T. Boles of Kansas City, Missouri, Trustee) for a $1,000,000 First Mortgage 6% Sinking Fund Gold Bond issue to mature April 1, 1935. For this offering the company agreed to pledge 6,053 shares of capital stock of the Sumpter Valley Railroad, par $100, lands in Grant and Baker counties, the timber thereon and the millsites in Hood River County. The company agreed to pay in the sinking fund $2.50 per M, Spaulding scale, on all pine cut and $1.00 per M, Spaulding scale, on the other species. This time Royal Eccles signed as president of Oregon Lumber and M. A. Rommey as the secretary. The only conclusion drawn here is Royal Eccles may have thought he could negotiate a better deal than Jasper Picket. One thing does tend to stand out. Why was it necessary to negotiate any of the million dollar bond issues? Oregon-American had just been sold to Central Coal and Coke for several millions in 1922. What had happened to the money? Had Oregon Lumber and the David Eccles Company been so deeply in debt all the funds were soaked up paying off creditors? It is very possible, but it hardly seems likely it would all disappear in this manner. Perhaps there may have been some truth in the rumors of raids on the lumber company treasury to finance a Broadway musical with Sophie Tucker and an ill-advised venture in a Baker gold mine.

In addition to having problems on the management level the company was experiencing difficulties on the operational level. When the mill was rebuilt after the disastrous fire of 1913 it continued to rely on water power for electric generation. There had been and there continued to be problems due to fluctuation in the river level. During high water the boiler or the generator rooms frequently flooded and during low water in summer the mill often had to adjust working hours to coincide with the accumulation of water behind the mill dam that could be released to drive the water powered turbine. Periods of low water were probably the most frustrating, especially when there was a plentiful supply of logs, good logging weather and an abundance of lumber orders, but little water to generate essential electricity.

The situation became more critical in early 1914 when the East Fork Irrigation District planned to divert additional water from the East Fork, near the little community of Mt. Hood, some five or six miles upstream of the mill. The district claimed it had sufficient water rights to irrigate 13,000 acres. The Oregon Lumber Company immediately filed an injunction to restrain the district from taking any additional water from the East Fork. Attorney Earnest C. Smith of Hood River and the firm of Huntington and Wilson of Portland were hired by the company to represent its interests before Judge Bradshaw of The Dalles. The company claimed it had rights to 340 second-feet of water to run the sawmill and it if was necessary to curtail operations the property would be depreciated and the company would suffer a $500,000 loss. A temporary injunction was requested until the controversy could come to trial. All of this was not an especially good time for the irrigation district as a $150,000 bond issue had just been offered to finance expected construction costs of a new ditch. The issue had to be reoffered at a later date and



The classic picture of the first sawmill at Dee. The mill is right center, the hotel is the large white building at far right and the log train in front of the row of small white homes is on the tracks of the Mount Hood Railroad. Track that crosses the bridge on top of the dam leads to the logging operations on Dee Flats. (Courtesy of Leland Flint.)

there was only one bidder.

Ten months after requesting the first injunction against the irrigation district, the company requested another. This time to prevent the district from awarding a $19,160 contract to Andrus and Bode to improve the East Fork ditch so more water could be taken from the river. Shortly after the second injunction was filed Judge Bradshaw ruled on the first application made by the company and refused to issue an injunction. The case came to court shortly thereafter with testimony being heard by a court appointed referee. Transcripts of the testimony taken were forwarded to the judge for his decision. The water district engaged George Wilbur and A. J. Derby to present their side of the controversy to the referee. The case was expanded when the Hydro Electric Company which had a dam on Hood River further downstream, that could be adversely effected by the removal of water from the river by the East Fork Irrigation, also brought suit against the district in order to determine its particular water rights. In July, 1915 Judge Bradshaw issued his decision; he found against the company and decided irrigation had prior rights.

Officials of Oregon Lumber decided to appeal the decision of Judge Bradshaw, but also decided immediate action was necessary to solve the problem of power generation at the Dee mill. To this end a new 750 kilowatt steam turbine and condenser was purchased from Colby Engineering of Portland for approximately $30,000. The new turbine, along with a new boiler, was installed before the 1916 season got underway.

Judge Bradshaw's decision was appealed to the State Supreme Court. The first hearing was held in March, but not all the court was present so a rehearing was necessary in April. The court remanded the suit to the State Water Board. This decision tended to confuse the issue and opened the door to a repeat of the entire legal process. It was conjectured, when the Supreme Court announced its decision, all water rights in the entire valley could be affected and that is exactly what happened. It took the State Water Board over four years to examine all Hood River water allocations and to render a decision. In April, 1923 the board decided East Fork Irrigation was entitled to 142 second-feet from the East Fork and was given five years to utilize all of the water granted. The lumber company was found to be entitled to only 223 second-feet from the Middle and East Forks. Portland Power and Light [Hydro Electric Company] was denied all riparian rights, but was awarded 140 second-feet at Powerdale on the lower river and an amount not to exceed that used at the Tucker Bridge plant. The decision was automatically sent to the Circuit Court where it was upheld by Judge Fred Wilson, who had replaced Judge Bradshaw on the bench. The decision was immediately appealed by the company to the State Supreme Court. In July, 1924 the highest court in the state confirmed the finding of the Water Board and upheld the decision of the lower court; the water district did have prior water rights.

After winning about everything in sight the East Fork Irrigation District had the audacity to instruct its attorney, George R. Wilbur, to petition for a rehearing. It was claimed the court had allowed the district only 120 second-feet instead of the 142 second-feet awarded by the Water Board. For some reason the district was also dissatisfied that PP&L was awarded an additionsl 110 second-feet over the 640 second-feet claimed. Not long after, PP&L served notice to the irrigation district that it intended to take the water dispute to the U. S. Supreme Court if necessary.

The suit did go to the U. S. Supreme Court, but the PP&L appeal was dismissed on the basis the court did not have jurisdiction as PP&L still had appeal rights to the Circuit Court from the State Supreme Court. In 1928 Oregon Lumber decided it wanted no more of the interminable fight over water. Rights awarded to the company by the State Water Board were purchased in 1928 by A. J. Derby, now Judge Derby, who had fourteen years previously represented the irrigation district when the trouble first started.

Early in 1932 the PP&L appeal came before Judge Wilson in Hood River Circuit Court. This time PP&L tried to show they were the successors to Logan and Crowell who first used the river to power a mill in 1883. The mill had burned in 1901, but had been rebuilt and operated intermittently until 1911 when Dr. J. F. Watt and N. C. Evans established the Hydro Electric Company which had been acquired by the power company. Judge Wilson once more found for the irrigation district. Pacific Power and Light threw in the towel, after 18 years of litigation the case was finished.

From the time the rebuilt mill got in to produc-

tion in 1914 until the purchase of the Forest Service timber sale from Palmer in 1919, Oregon Lumber continued to push the logging generally westward along the slope above the West Fork of Hood River. Construction was exceedingly difficult and a number of trestles, several over 90 feet in height, were required. Above the junction of the West Fork and Lake Branch yarders had to reach 2,200 feet across the canyon, when the logs came out they were flying 400 feet in the air. What eventually became known as the lower logging camp was established on a flat just before the railroad made its second switchback. The camp was a little over ten miles from Dee.

During the first few years there had been no serious fires in the timber, but one dry day in August, 1917 a fire started in the vicinity of Sandy Flat along the West Fork bottom, six or seven miles from Dee; it roared up the hill through old slashing and trapped the logging train. The engineer, Dan LaRocque, was burned to death, the engine and five log cars were destroyed. Other members of the crew, L. Miller, the fireman; Frank J. Andregg, trainman and B. B. Smith, the conductor, barely escaped the same fate. Before the fire was controlled by 200 men from the woods crews and the sawmill, three-quarters of a square mile of timber was consumed in the blaze, one-half mile of track was destroyed, two bridges reduced to charred ruins and two steam donkeys severely damaged.

When the fire was discovered, the conductor Smith, had gone to a nearby railroad telephone to notify authorities, but when he returned he was cut off from the train. Andregg had laid face down between the rails to escape the blaze, but when the flames reached the train it burned all the wood parts and the brakes. The train was then released and started to roll down the grade, plunging through one of the burned out trestles. Andregg heard the train coming and rolled from between the rails before it passed over him. Evidently the engineer had attempted to save the Shay locomotive, his charred body was found 30 feet from the engine. Some time later it was discovered the engineer, LaRocque, was really George Owens. He had changed his name on leaving Sheridan, Oregon recently to avoid members of the radical International Workers of the World with whom he had been associated.

Another freak railroad accident took place no more than four months after the fire. D. A. Bosich of Hillsboro had just been hired and was riding out to camp on the last empty log car as the train pulled away from Dee and headed for the woods. After passing the first switchback the train reversed direction and started backing up the grade; this placed Bosich at the very front of the train. As the train came around a curve and crossed a trestle several loaded log cars were seen coming down the track at high speed. Engineer W. W. Brown reversed his engine, but it was futile. All the train crew jumped except Bosich who was killed instantly. The loaded log cars had broken away from the landing above and there had been no way to notify the oncoming train. The locomotive and cars were thrown 75 feet down the embankment, three cars were demolished and the others all damaged to some extent. This mess had hardly been cleaned up when a hand car with the section crew got out of control and crashed into a Shay locomotive standing on a side track. All of the crew "joined the birds" except one who was seriously injured. Railroad logging, or rather, logging railroads were just plain dangerous.

Nineteen eighteen was a good year for the mill, the cut was close to 24,000,000 board feet, up 2,000,000 feet from the previous year. But, it was too good to last, 1919 would turn out to be the worst fire year the company ever experienced at Dee. The summer turned off dry and by July there was trouble in the woods. Fire started on Dead Point Creek in the vicinity of a sawmill being run by the Davidsons under their old name, Lost Lake Lumber Company. It was most likely the old Frank Davenport sawmill built back of Winans shortly after the railroad reached Dee. The facility had been purchased by Oregon Lumber and had been leased to the Davidsons. Soon after the fire started it was out of control, crews from Dee were rushed over to help fight the conflagration, but it was no use, the mill was destroyed in minutes. The combined mill crews were able however, to prevent the fire from spreading into the nearby timber. Damage was estimated at $20,000, the insurance was only $4,000.

The Dead Point fire had no sooner been contained when another flared up in the vicinity of the Oregon Lumber Company woods camp. This fire was also controlled through the efforts of the

combined crews, but it broke out again several days later. This time it took well over a week to get a line around the blaze, but even then it continued to burn inside the fire lines. Timber three and four feet in diameter was consumed in the raging flames along with some company logging equipment. But the worst was yet to come, the mill fire on Dead Point flared up and swept the hills just west of Winans. Residents became very apprehensive and attempted to prevent the fire from crossing from Dead Point ridge to Green Point. Should the flames travel any further south the entire community that had grown up on Dee Flats would be threatened and quite possibly the Dee sawmill. The spectacular flume Davenport had built over the river to float his lumber from the mill in the woods to the railroad reload was destroyed and ashes from the fire began to fall on Willow Flat some ten miles away. Conditions became critical when the blaze crossed Green Point Creek and began to race up the hill toward the flats. The fire reached and consumed the residence of S. Tomori before the winds that had been driving the blaze south for weeks suddenly changed and drove the fire back to the forest it had blackened. Residents of Dee had never experienced anything to equal the three months spent fighting fire, and fortunately never would again. Fires, in those early days, were an accepted fact of life, Dee and the company would see others, but nothing to equal the summer of 1919.

The fires were out, but a year later the Forest Service sued Oregon Lumber Company for the damages caused to federally owned timber. It was claimed on July 21, 1919, and at other times during June and July, the company operated a wood fueled steam locomotive without adequate spark arresters; a spark from the locomotive caused a fire to start in debris accumulated near Marco Creek and the fire destroyed 10,840,000 board feet of government timber. The Forest Service was asking $10,840, plus 6% interest from July 21, 1919, plus court costs. An amended complaint was filed shortly thereafter, sort of an after-thought, asking for double damages. A jury trial was held and the company argued the Forest Service officer in charge of the sale had required the locomotive be equipped with a South Bend (Indiana) spark arrester, and they had complied with his instructions. The jury exonerated the company.

By 1920 the railroad had punched well into the heart of the big timber sale and a new camp was established in the vicinity of Ladd Creek; it became the "Upper Camp". With the new camp came a new gear driven logging locomotive, a two truck Heisler. Considering the fires and wrecks, the two old Shays had taken a beating, unfortunately there is no record of just what happened to the two veterans or exactly when they were retired.

Although the Forest Service might have not thought much of the fire prevention equipment used by the company they did approve of its logging methods. T. T. Munger, an assistant forester with the Service, complimented the company for cutting all the trees down to an 8 inch diameter. For that particular time it was unusually good utilization, most loggers considered it uneconomical to bother with such small timber and did not harvest trees under 12 or 14 inches. Thorton T. Munger, the young forester, went on to have an imminent career with the Forest Service and was Director of the Northwest Forest Experiment Station for many years.

As mentioned earlier, production in 1920, 1921 and 1922 was the lowest ever recorded, 16MM, 12½MM and 15MM, respectively. The reason for such a dismal showing is hard to find, the weather most likely was part of the cause and the succession of top officers certainly did not help, but on the actual production level there was little change in personnel. The mill superintendent, E. H. "Dad" Green had been at Dee since the beginning and had probably taken over from Nels Moen shortly after the mill began production. The assistant mill superintendent, Nels Nelson, trained by Green, had spent time in Baker to gain additional experience and eventually became responsible for both the sawmill and the woods operations at Dee after Green retired. The lumber market had slumped some after the war and it must have been a combination of all the unfavorable conditions culminating at one time.

The winter of 1921-22 came early, came unexpectedly and with unusual ferocity. In Hood River there was 30 inches of snow in 48 hours, at Dee the snowfall measured four feet, drifts at Viento were estimated at 30 to 50 feet; blizzard conditions prevailed for several days. During one of the lulls, early in the storm, a group of loggers decided to leave the woods camp and walk 16 miles down the

railroad grade to Dee. At the time snow was only two feet at camp and they expected no problems. Seven men left sometime Sunday and before they had gone a mile one man turned back. Two of the remaining six were well clothed, but the other four were poorly shod. They were forced to camp out Sunday night in the howling gale, but resumed walking early Monday in over three feet of snow. According to newspaper reports at the time, one man became delirious and attempted to commit suicide with a knife and had to be disarmed. Walking in the dry snow was like wading in cold sand and when two men attempted to cross a slide where a trestle had been taken out by a snowslide or avalanche, they lost their footing and rolled 500 feet down the slope before coming to a stop on the bluff overlooking the West Fork several hundred feet below. Monday a rescue party started from Dee looking for the men, but the rescuers did not get the loggers back to Dee until Tuesday. When they were found they were in terrible condition, two of the men, H. E. Brady and Theodore Mulkey were almost dead. The logger that had become delirious was missing and presumed lost when he attempted to cross a slide. Several of the men were rushed to the Hood River hospital with frozen feet, Brady seemed to be in the worst condition and in spite of the best efforts he lost his right leg and a portion of his left foot. The logging train was unable to open the railroad to the camps and the last of the loggers did not walk in until a week after the ill-fated hike of the first seven.

The storm caused problems all over the valley. After the record snow it rained and the accumulated weight collapsed a number of roofs. Part of the planer building went down, the Dee wagon bridge fell into the river, ice and logs accumulated behind the mill dam and it went out; damage to the company alone amounted to between $5,000 and $10,000. It was not a year to remember.

Harry Elmer Brady sued the company the following August for $42,000. He also named Joseph W. West, the camp superintendent, Clem West, his son, the timekeeper and Charles Blanding, the camp foreman. Brady's legal actions became rather involved. The suit for $42,000 was heard before Judge Tucker in Portland who ruled that another action, instituted previously against Oregon Lumber, for $29,600 was a non-suit. In defense the company maintained a locomotive had been rushed to camp, but the snow became too deep too fast. The storm had been totally unexpected. It was Brady's contention the loggers had been marooned 16 miles from Dee and feared death by exposure. Brady hired John Kaste and Irving Rand as his representatives and the company employed the services of John F. Reilley and E. L. McDongal to present the defense. The case bounced back and forth between the state and federal courts for some time. When trial finally took place in Circuit Court in Hood River before Judge Fred Wilson the amount of damages had been reduced to $25,000. In March, 1925, four years after the terrible trek, the court ruled against Brady declaring the action a non-suit. The judge decided the course of action Brady had taken was his own as other loggers had stayed in camp safely and the blizzard and snowslide had been major causes of his injuries, not the lumber company.

In 1922 the company, in an attempt to increase storage for its winter supply of sawlogs, built an additional pond above the mill on the west side of the East Fork. A small draw was blocked with a timber dam several hundred feet in length constructed across the mouth of the little valley. Portions of the structure were still standing in 1989 and it was interesting to discover the construction techniques were identical to log pond dams built at Mills A and B in Washington 90 years ago.

With the growing demand for wooden fruit boxes, Oregon Lumber decided in 1924, to get into the box business at Dee and cut hemlock for box shook. Until that time pine had been the preferred species for shook, but with rising prices orchardists were beginning to accept other types of shook for their boxes. For an estimated $20,000 necessary equipment was purchased from Portland Machinery Company. Included were two cut-off saws, a rip-saw, a resaw, a stapler and a cleat machine. It was hoped it would be possible to produce 3,000,000 feet of shook annually with the new machinery. At the first of the year it had been announced the old wooden dam would be replaced with a new concrete structure and it would be built under the supervision of the Game Commission with an improved fish ladder. Evidently it was considered more important to get the box factory in operation before the 1924 operating season got underway than replace the old dam. It was not until mid-September, when water was its lowest,

that work on the new dam got under way. Company officials announced the mill would be down for at least six weeks while the concrete was poured and given a chance to cure. With a two month log supply on hand, the logging camps were also closed. Cost of the new structure was reported to be $50,000 and when completed the local fishermen were jubilant. Traditionally it had been company practice to open the dam gates on Sunday and flush debris downstream. Since this was the only day many could spare for angling it had always been a bone of contention between Oregon Lumber, fishing enthusiasts and the Game Commission. With the new dam the company agreed it would not be necessary to flush out debris more than two or three times a year. With the good news though, came some bad. The veteran trimmerman, Y. Ogita, fell into the log pond while raising the gates on the dam and drowned. The river had been in flood at the time and his body was carried ten miles downstream before it was recovered. Ogita had been well liked and respected by all mill workers. Over the years the number of seasonal employees from Utah had decreased and practically all of the mill jobs were held by local residents, many of which were Japanese. These relative newcomers were considered hard working and valuable employees.

Fire again, this time at the sawmill in 1925 burned the machine shop, blacksmith shop and car repair shop. In the shop at the time was a locomotive machinists had spent two years overhauling and converting to oil. Unfortunately it was not reported if the engine was a Shay owned by the lumber company or one of the old rod locomotives of the Mount Hood Railroad.

Over the years production at the Dee sawmill had gradually increased and to insure an adequate log supply was available at all times the woods crews had become larger. In 1924 the company had 150 men working in the timber and was using nine donkeys for yarding logs. Most of the machines had originally been steam powered, but in keeping with the time, the yarders as well as locomotives had been converted to oil. In 1922 the Mount Hood Railroad purchased a second Baldwin Consolidation type locomotive that was practically a twin to the Baldwin purchased in 1920. The older Baldwin was transferred to Oregon Lumber when the latest and newest addition to the Mount Hood roster arrived. From then on it was operating practice on the logging road to use the Heisler in the woods to take loaded log cars to a siding located at Peterson's Cut about half way between the two camps, pick up empties and return to the woods. The rod locomotive acquired from the Mount Hood was used to bring empties up the hill and take loaded cars back down.

In 1926 there was almost a repeat of the 1917 fire that burned locomotive engineer George Owens (Dan LaRocque) to death. A spring slash fire started by a company logger jumped the fire line and trapped the logging train. Engineer Bill Estes was badly burned about the face and hands when he brought the train out. Over 100 acres went up in flames before being contained with a fire line.

Another accident involving the same locomotive took place less than three months later when the engine ran into a low hanging cable at the landing. Two men riding on the front of the engine were slightly injured but the donkey fireman was fatally injured when the line came in contact with the stack of a donkey engine. The stack was knocked off and fell on Dan McLoud. He was rushed to Dee on the logging train and then to the Hood River hospital on a special Mount Hood train, but he died as the train reached Odell.

In the same summer, 1926, it was reported in the *Hood River Glacier* that J. G. Heimrich, chief owner of the Great Southern Railroad, was dickering for the recently closed sawmill at Cascade Locks. Two years earlier Heimrich had purchased a Forest Service timber sale for 253,000,000 board feet of Ponderosa pine in the name of Wasco Pine Box and Lumber Company. The cutting area was in the Tygh Valley drainage about 25 miles south of The Dalles, Oregon. At the time of the purchase the Great Southern ran from The Dalles, south to Dufur and on to Friend, a distance of about 15 miles. It was expected the rail line would have to be extended another eight miles to reach the sale and the full contract time of eleven years would be required to complete the timber harvest. Wasco Box paid $2.00 per M for both the Ponderosa pine and Lodgepole pine and 50¢ per M for the other species. Originally it had been expected a sawmill would be built to process the timber, but instead Heimrich proposed to transport the logs by rail to the Columbia River at The Dalles, then raft them down river to Cascade Locks.

What the *Glacier* did not mention in the article about Heimrich was that the mill at Cascade Locks, now in the hands of receivers, had most recently been operated by the ousted president of Oregon Lumber Company, David C. Eccles. Almost from the time he left Oregon Lumber, Eccles had struggled to revive the old Wind River Lumber Company sawmill at the Locks. After three or four years, during which much of his fortune disappeared, he was forced to give up this last attempt to make a go of it as a mill owner and operator.

Wind River Lumber Company had been a well known and reputable firm before it had fallen on hard times and been purchased by the more successful Bridal Veil Lumber Company. It had not been activated and had been neglected for two years. Rumors as early as the summer of 1922 appeared in the *Hood River News* that the old mill might be started, but it was not until the following year there was firm evidence of interest in the plant. A mortgage for $328,574.02 was filed and shortly thereafter it was reported Eccles had leased the mill for one year and when it got under way would probably employ more than 100 men. The mill was renovated and in operation for the beginning of the 1923 season. Eccles incorporated the sawmill operations as the Wind River Timber Company and the owners retained the name, Wind River Lumber Company. The "lumber" company had agreed to supply logs to the "timber" company sawmill; needless to say the contradiction in names and activities caused any number of garbled reports. For the first year a lumber cut of 30,000,000 board feet was projected and the lessor activated three logging camps on Wind River, on the Washington side of the Columbia River to supply the necessary volume of logs.

The first stunning blow came when the loggers were unable to drive logs down Wind River. Owners of St. Martin's Springs, a hot springs resort at the mouth of the river, sought and obtained an injunction preventing use of the river during low water. Litigation, almost forgotten, had been pushed by the resort ten years previously, and the owners had secured a favorable decision from the courts preventing log driving on Wind River when water was below a certain level. In addition, it had been the custom of the mill to close down in summer long enough to permit federal authorities to take salmon eggs. Ignorance of past customs and the forgotten court ruling jeopardized the winter log supply and the mill had to cease sawing. Loggers had 19,000,000 feet of logs ready to drive down Wind River, but winter rains were late in coming. In spite of all the problems, Frank Davenport Jr., in charge of the office for Wind River Timber, predicted the mill would operate another season. When Wind River Lumber purchased a 27,000,000 board foot Forest Service sale scheduled to go to Cascade Locks the situation did seem brighter. The mill did run during most of 1924, average employment was 132 men and production was approximately 25,000,000 feet of lumber.

Apparently the relationship between the timber company and the lumber company began to fray shortly after Wind River Lumber Company suffered some severe financial losses in a disastrous forest fire north of Carson in the Columbia National Forest. Over 300 acres of prime timberland, along with a logging camp and a large quantity of logging equipment were destroyed before the blaze was corralled by 140 men. Losses easily exceeded $100,000.

Hard hit with such a large loss the lumber company filed suit to dispossess Eccles of the Cascade Locks mill for non-payment. It was alleged Eccles had not been paying for use of the sawmill or for logs utilized. Wind River Lumber refused to honor the agreement further. The suit also charged the timber company had agreed to pay $1.00 per M for all lumber cut for mill rental, plus $15.00 per M for all logs delivered to, and rafted at the mouth of Wind River, and that no payments had been made from July, 1924, to June, 1925. The formal lease had expired the previous December, but had been continued on the basis of an unwritten understanding. It was also pointed out the original lease had contained a clause terminating the agreement 10 days after any month payments were not made in a timely manner. The case came before Judge Fred Wilson on September 14, 1925. Attorneys for the plaintiffs were Platt, Platt, Fales and Smith; Eccles was represented by reliable "Judge" Derby.

Judge Wilson ruled in favor of Eccles and his Wind River Timber Company. Judge Derby had shown the agreement had been renewed verbally and all of the money paid had been applied to the purchase of logs when actually a portion of the money should have been considered rental of the

mill. Eccles won, but his troubles were not over. Two weeks later the Ladd and Tilton Bank in Portland sued for payment of two mortgages held on the timber company. One was for $106,000 and the other for $29,000; the bank also wanted $12,000 for attorney fees. According to both the *Glacier* and the *News*, Eccles managed to settle all complaints and was to have purchased the Cascade Locks sawmill for an undisclosed sum, in cash. Preparations were made to begin the 1926 season, but the mill never really got started. Something happened and a receiver took possession; about the same time all Wind River Lumber Company timber holdings were sold to satisfy creditors.

Everything had come tumbling down and in 1927 Alaska Junk, out of Portland, began dismantling the mill. One year later gutted buildings that had once housed one of the better Columbia River mills were leveled by a fire started in a sawdust pile along the railroad track. Ironically, it was these tracks that caused the mill owners such grief earlier. The mill operations had been divided in two parts by the railroad and an overhead cable system had been devised to carry lumber over the tracks to the finishing department. The system had been featured in *The Timberman* magazine but quite obviously was a production bottleneck even before it was activated.

By 1926 the lumber industry was in the start of another slump, prices were down and so were a number of producers. Oregon Lumber kept operating, but began negotiations with the Forest Service to turn what was left of the big timber sale back to the government. The company could not pay $1.20 for Douglas-fir stumpage, margins were just too tight. The Forest Service had been extremely lenient with the company in its enforcement of contract terms. Prices were to have been adjusted every three years, but during the life of the contract they never changed. It had also been stipulated a specific volume be cut by the end of each three year period, this requirement was waived each time for as long as the company held the contract. During the entire life of the contract the company only cut between one-third and one-half of the entire contract volume.

In 1927 N. E. Nelson was in sole charge of all activities at Dee and he made the first steps to cultivate the Hood River business community and drag the company out of its self-imposed isolation. Nelson offered to run a special train from town to Dee and the woods to show community leaders what was going on at the sawmill and in the timber. Acceptance to his offer may have startled Nelson, fifty-five members of the Chamber of Commerce joined the tour to see the sights and enjoy a real loggers meal at camp. Before lunch J. D. Thomison, of the Hood River Guides, told guests the mill had cut 13,000,000 board feet of lumber in 1926, of which 2,500,000 had been sold locally. In addition to lumber, railroads had purchased 700,000 ties and 4,000,000 feet of box shook had been shipped out in the eight months the mill had operated. Nelson continued after the meal, explaining that in the past year all rail equipment had been equipped with Westinghouse air brakes and all locomotives and donkeys had been converted to oil. They were further informed the monthly payroll was $21,000 and for 1926 it had exceeded $250,000. Nelson went on to say that with the Forest Service contract the company had purchased in 1916 and company owned timber, there was enough raw material to keep the mill running for another 30 years. (He neglected to tell the visitors the company no longer had the Forest Service contract or how it had been obtained.) Nelson did add, however, the company had lost money since 1918.

The Chamber members expressed appreciation for the trip and the fine lunch, but they quite candidly told officials present they had always viewed the firm as a Utah corporation not interested in the development of Hood River County, and there had been little evidence to dispel such a feeling. Nelson replied the company would buy supplies locally if prices were right or equal to others. This seemed to generate a slight thaw and the good feeling was enlarged later when the *News* reported on an interview with W. J. Eccles concerning the possibility of relocating the sawmill to Hood River. Eccles told the reporter the mill was worth $1,500,000 and such a move would cost $300,000, but milling would be able to continue year around. That was as far as he was willing to commit himself.

The Chamber of Commerce excursion had been so successful it was repeated in 1928. A high climber gave an exhibition of topping a spar tree and the Reverend Billy Sunday came along as featured speaker, but got off on politics. David I. Stoddard,

the general manager and W. J. Eccles also took part in the trip. Later in the year Royal Eccles, the new president of Oregon Lumber, was invited to speak at a luncheon meeting of the Chamber of Commerce. He cited a number of interesting statistics concerning the company; $16,000 was paid annually in taxes, $30,000 was spent each year in the valley for fresh farm and garden produce, during the summer 60 to 65 families lived at Dee, but only 40 to 45 remained during the winter, the company had enough timber to operate another 30 years and the company had plans to double the mill cut to 40,000,000 board feet yearly. He also told his audience 200 men were employed with a daily payroll of $1,100. (This works out to about 55¢ an hour for a ten hour day, not an exceptional wage for 1923.) Royal Eccles continued by explaining the increase in lumber production in the face of a decline in prices which was due to southern producers building new plants in the northwest while their southern mills were still producing. He expressed regret the sawmill had not been rebuilt in Hood River after the disastrous fire of 1913. Then he made a very curious comment, "Because of circumstances, the Oregon Lumber Company Dee plant was not what the company desired nor what the Hood River folk desired." It can only be concluded that he meant the mill was what his father had desired, not what the present management would have preferred. It is obvious what the Hood River folk would have desired.

In 1930, David Stoddard, who had become the Oregon Lumber Company president, was also invited to speak to the Hood River Chamber. The recitation of facts and figures was about as expected, only updated. It was now calculated there was about 1½ billion board feet of timber tributary to the Dee mill and with the present cut at about 30,000,000 annually it would last 50 years. In that length of time regrowth would be ready to harvest so the company was looking at sustained yield and business indefinitely. Taxes had not increased the past year and one-half, neither had the number of workers on the payroll, but the cost of labor was up to $300,000 yearly, an increase of almost 30 percent over what it had been. After the cost of labor was deducted from an annual gross of around $500,000 and an additional $125,000 spent on equipment replacement, Stoddard told listeners, there was not a lot left for overhead and profit.

Nels Nelson opened the 1931 season with a prediction wages were going to have to be cut because of poor conditions. As an example he said in Portland the wages of a choker setter were now $2.75 per hour, down from almost $4.80 last season. The cost of living was supposed to have dropped 25 percent and he expected there would be at least a 17 percent cut in wages at Dee. After touring the region where Oregon Lumber sold most of its product Nelson reported conditions were bad. Little money had been available, but Hood River had not been hit as hard as many other localities. Sometime during the year Oregon Lumber Company had gotten another president, this time it was Joseph Eccles who replaced David Stoddard.

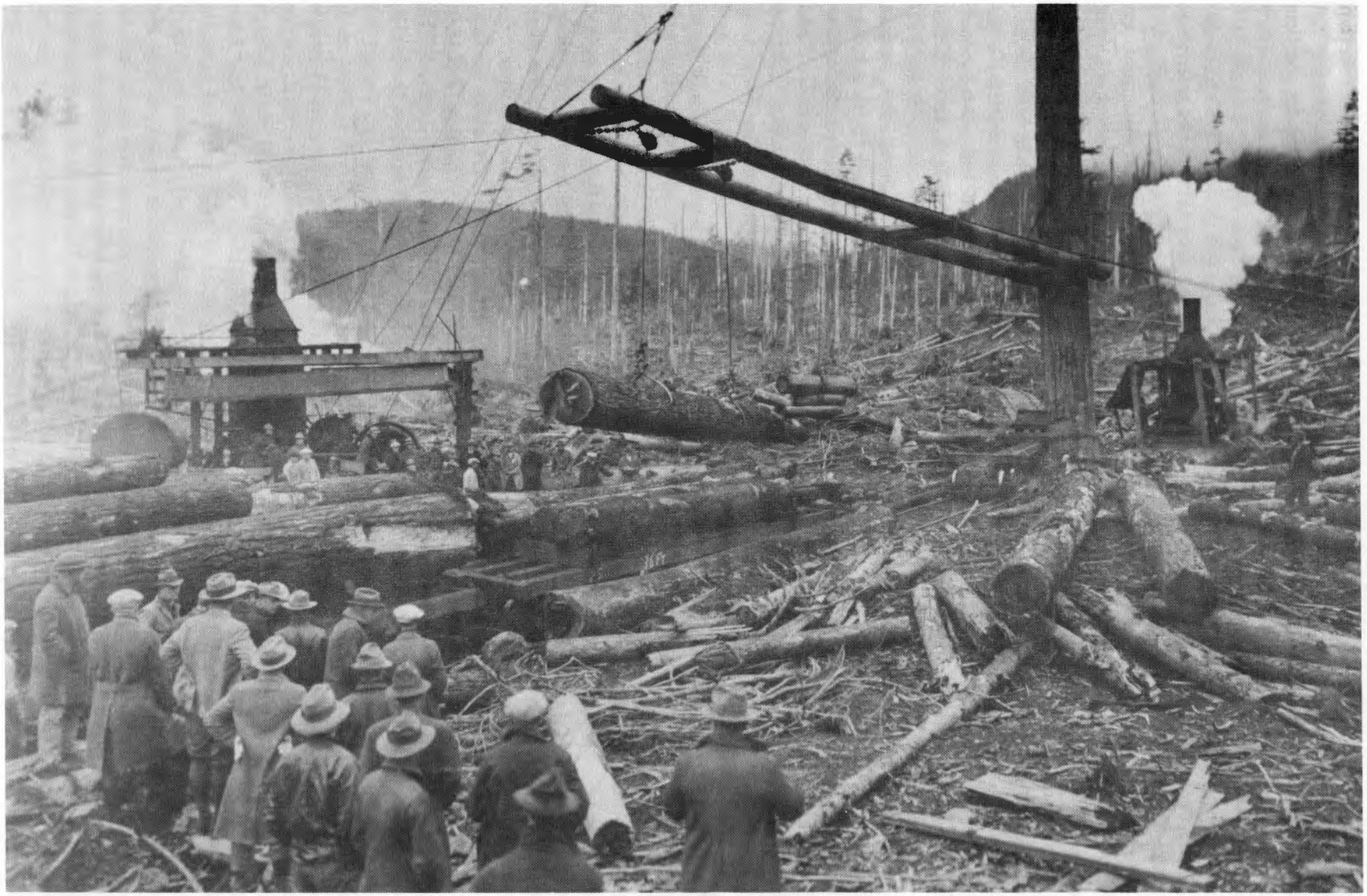
The summer of 1931 the Forest Service announced that because of a presidential order all timber sales were being curtailed. Only sales of less than $500 and sales to mills dependent on government timber were to be allowed. In some manner this was supposed to help the serious depression facing the lumber industry. By the beginning of September the sawmill had run out of orders and closed. One hundred and twenty five men were laid off. Nels Nelson and Homer Eccles, who was in charge of lumber sales, headed to Denver to try and secure a tie order from the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. Apparently they were able to quote the railroad an attractive price as they got the order and when the mill restarted in October it was predicted cutting could continue as long as weather allowed.

Effects of the general depression reached Hood River in 1932 when it became known the Mount Hood Railroad had defaulted on its bonds and had been forced to issue refunding bonds and when the Butler Bank had to shut its doors. The mill continued, but on a curtailed basis; there were only about 60 men in the sawmill and a like number in the woods. The box factory became the most important production unit as demand for box shook remained strong. A minor accident in the woods about this time did little to improve conditions. The Heisler locomotive left the tracks and rolled 20 or 30 feet down the embankment before coming to rest against a tree stopping an unexpected journey down the mountain. A rail evidently laid over when the train rounded a particularly sharp curve as it was headed toward the mill with twelve

loaded log cars. The engineer, fireman, brakeman and two loggers were able to jump to safety before the locomotive went over. Fortunately air brakes set on the log cars and they remained on the rails and upright. To get the Heisler back up it was necessary to bring a donkey down from the logging; it then had to be towed the rest of the way down by the Baldwin, Number 11. Damage was minimal, less than $1,000, and the engine was back in service in less than a week. The train was off the track twice more before the summer was over, but fortunately no one seemed to get injured when these fiascos took place.

The sawmill opened in March, 1933 and only about 100 men were hired, most being former employees. Over twice that many applicants had to be turned away. The logging train started clearing snow from the tracks later in the month, but the snow accumulation was the deepest ever seen by old-timers. Even using blasting powder on the packed snow it took over a week before the crew was able to get the track cleared. Loggers were in camp by the middle of April, but the snow still hampered logging until late May. As it happened, however, there was no demand for logs, the mill had caught fire in mid-April and the center section of the sawmill and the filing room on the second floor had been damaged. The Hood River fire department responded to the call and arrived in only 20 minutes. Nels Nelson and Homer Eccles had been in Portland for the funeral of Charles T. Early and returned as soon as notified. The mill was completely covered by insurance and rebuilding and repair began immediately. As it turned out damage was not as bad as expected, only $18,000 and the mill was back in production in less than a month. In June, Nelson hosted another tour group to the mill and woods, this time it was newspapermen from Hood River and The Dalles and their wives. Discussion was somewhat different than other years. The company was operating two shifts according to Nelson, and if there was an upward trend in the market, the company anticipated giving a 10 percent increase in wages July 1. However, now that all wages were under governmental control it would not be possible. One wonders just how much of this was for public consumption and how much was truth. The company was in fact forced to terminate the second shift because of NRA regulations. A number of mills had protested the elimination of the second shift. It was pointed out to authorities a short working year was mandatory because of weather considerations and that it was necessary to run a second shift in the summer months. Under NRA rules Dee was supposed to cut only one shift and work not more than 120 hours each month; it also promulgated the minimum wage for a 40 hour week to be 42½¢ per hour. A little later it was decided the seasonal mills could operate 48 hours a week. Dee went to the longer week as soon as possible, but the second shift could not be rehired. Actually it became necessary to trim the woods crew by 45 to 50 men. Because of artificial limitations on working hours it was often necessary to have a lay-off of a day or more at the end of any month the allowable quota of hours was reached before the month actually ended.

The Great Depression began to grip Hood River County and by the summer of 1933 relief funds were too meager to meet demand, tax delinquency in the county had reached close to 60 percent and the government established several CCC camps in the area to provide jobs for unemployed young men. Just when things seemed blackest it was announced Congress had appropriated $31,000,000 for construction of the Bonneville Dam. Each county adjoining the construction site was to receive a manpower allocation. The Corp of Engineers calculated the pool formed behind the dam would raise the level of the Columbia River between 20 and 27 feet over extreme low water. For some reason, the fact that Columbia would be held to minimum fluctuations caused Nelson and the city to open discussions about the possibility of relocating the planer and rebuilding the box factory in Hood River. Nelson assured the city council the cost of the move would be financed by the company, but he wanted support of the council and city. Just what the river had to do with moving the planing mill or the box factory cannot be fathomed. The logs would still be cut at Dee, lumber to be processed would arrive by rail and would more than likely leave by rail. Company markets were in the mid-West and East, practically nothing went to the West Coast market, so use of the river for shipping could not have been much of a consideration. It would seem quite possible that Nelson had undertaken these talks without the knowledge or approval of company management.



To foster better relations with the business community of Hood River, Nels Nelson, manager of Oregon Lumber, provided several tours of the sawmill and logging operations for the local Chamber of Commerce. The loading operation being observed here is typical of the steam era. The log is being loaded with a double set of tongs under a hayrack type boom suspended from the spar tree. Movement of the boom and tongs are controlled by the 'loading pot' at the rear of the spar. As the cars are loaded, logs are also being yarded into the landing by the larger donkey on the right. (Hood River Museum.)

December closed 1933 with a flood; between the 1st and the 25th of the month 22.37 inches of precipitation was measured. The river went on a rampage, the railroad went out, the footbridge over the mill dam was blasted to release accumulated debris and the new boiler was damaged to the tune of $10,000. The new installation had just been completed the day before the flood and had been built to replace the one inundated by high water in 1930.

In January, 1934 a new company representative was first noticed in Hood River — his name was A. C. Lighthall. Because of the precarious condition of David Eccles Company and its few remaining holdings the financial lending institutions, which undoubtedly included the Fidelity National Bank and Trust Company of Kansas City, Missouri, had insisted a qualified business manager be hired. After a time A. C. Lighthall had been selected by the company with the approval of the banks. How eminently he filled the bill is demonstrated by the fact that not many years passed before he became president of Oregon Lumber Company and had secured controlling interest in the organization. Lighthall was not a run of the mill business manager looking for a position. He had already made a fortune, reputed to be over a million, in oil and the stock market while working in the Denver region. There had to have been some incentive to attract him to Oregon Lumber, perhaps the opportunity to revive a failing company and to eventually take control from weak and inefficient owners. And just maybe the owners did not care if someone would take over the headaches of running the company as long as dividends started coming again. Lighthall did not play to the crowds, preferring to remain in the background. For a time Nelson continued in charge of the Dee operations, with W. J. "Jack" Eccles as the general manager and Homer Eccles as sales manager. But changes were coming, Nelson's days were numbered and soon Jack Eccles would be the only family member active in the business, Lighthall would eventually have his own managers.

In 1934 Jack and Homer Eccles, along with Nelson and Norris Guerny decided to take a flyer on their own. They purchased 12,000,000 feet of timber in the Husum area, on the Washington side of the Columbia, bought a small mill that would cut 40,000 board feet of lumber a day and incorporated as the Mid-Columbia Lumber Company. Other details of the enterprise are lacking.

Early in August Dee was robbed for the first time; the post office was broken into and the safe smashed. The break-in was discovered by the mill night watchman and the thieves were scared off, but as they departed they fired at the watchman several times with a hand gun. Later, during the investigation a sawed off shot gun was found that had been left behind. Word was received at Dee in October, only three months later, that Ed "Perchmouth" Stanton, one of the three men that had robbed the Dee post office had been electrocuted in a Texas prison for killing a sheriff. He had been wanted for murder and had a long record. The other two men had been caught, also in Texas.

Just before the end of 1934 the company purchased a large new tractor, a Cletrac 75. It was put to work skidding logs in the Tony Creek drainage where the snow was not too deep, getting out wood for a sizable tie order. Four smaller diesel tractors were sent down from Upper Camp to assist. This was to become the nucleus of the "Cat" side.

The year 1935 saw the beginning of widespread labor unrest in the entire wood products industry. It started at the coastal mills and spread inland. At first it was hoped Dee would not become involved in the resurgence of organized labor as there seemed to be little sympathy for the movement. During WWI there had been a minor strike at Baker when lumber handlers employed by the company went out demanding an increase of 25¢ a day over the existing daily wage of $3.25. The men had been only partially successful as workers at the W. H. Eccles and Stoddard mills did not join the strike. During WWI all Dee employees had joined the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen, a semi-official type of labor organization formed by the U. S. Army to counteract the divisive tactics of the International Workers of the World, better known as the IWW or Wobblies. The IWW had been around for a number of years and had gained a significant following, but in addition to its goals of labor reform the organization turned political and had not hesitated to use violence to further its demands. When the government could not obtain the quantity of spruce lumber needed for the war effort the army intervened. Soldiers were sent to the woods and the 4L instituted to give woods and

millworkers an alternative to the IWW. It worked for a time, but faded after the war ended. The Dee local of the 4L lasted until sometime after 1919. At the last recorded meeting in April, 1919 Charles Soley was elected president; H. Tatum, vice-president; John Inglis, secretary and W. S. Horbelt the treasurer.

The only problem Oregon Lumber Company had with the militant IWW at Dee occurred near the end of the logging season in 1922. At that time loggers demanded the company pay wages equal to the maximum paid on the other side of the Cascades in western Oregon. The demand was rejected out of hand, the company contended they could not afford to equal west side wages. The entire logging crew was sent down the road. Both local newspapers blamed the demand for higher wages on IWW activity. It had always been company policy to keep wages below Portland levels in both the woods and mill, but management had been exceedingly vociferous when Portland mills suggested their rail rates for lumber shipments east be equalized with Hood River.

The 1935 trouble began in a rather unusual manner, orchardists seemed to be the most concerned, they felt the supply of fruit boxes was in jeopardy. Millworkers at Dee had continued on the job and had not shown interest in the movement until some union delegates from Portland appeared at the gates and demanded to speak to the workers. Both W. J. Eccles and Nels Nelson had gone to Portland to see what could be done to head off potential trouble as the company had a full order file for the first time in years. Only Jim Wirrick, the mill superintendent, was available and he denied the union representatives access. Wirrick was next presented with a list of demands said to have been presented to other mill owners and operators, they were as follows: First, the right to organize; second, a minimum wage of 60¢ per hour; three, compulsory arbitration.

With the appearance of Portland union delegates workers began to walk off the job. To entice workers back Jack Eccles offered the 200 employees one-half the profits, if there were any, and he agreed to open the books every two weeks for inspection. The men expressed their desire for a union shop, which Eccles rejected; the mill remained closed. Sheriff William H. Edick, and members of the State Police under Sgt. Frank N. Grimm were sent to Dee to maintain order. Strikers appeared in Hood River at the railroad yard, but were ordered out of town and told there was no strike there. Portland union reps advised striking workers to obey the law and leave town. With orchardists pressing for their orders the company met with the union to try and work out a solution to run just the box factory. The union was agreeable as long as the workers used were union members and they were paid 60¢ an hour. The company refused to go along, stating 60¢ was 20 percent over the going rate and was just too much; the box factory remained closed.

During the week the plant was down company officials probably came to the conclusion to try and run without union employees. With police present, the planing mill was started first. The box plant was questionable as many orders had been canceled. Since there had been no serious trouble when the planer restarted the mill began next. Several car windows were broken as some workers crossed the union line and a former employee was arrested for threatening others with a loaded rifle. The lumber company had requested assistance from Governor Charles H. Martin and a large force of State Police maintained order. During the time the mill had been closed strikers applied to government agencies for relief; it had been denied. Refusal of relief assistance must have shaken the strikers confidence. The strike was only about three weeks old when local union members issued a public statement to the effect that in early April all mill owners in Oregon and Washington had been presented with an agreement calling for a wage of 75¢ per hour, a thirty hour week and union recognition. The companies had been given until May 6th to accept. The agreement had not been accepted and workers had gone on strike. Employees at Oregon Lumber Company (Dee) had not been organized and had continued to work for the old NRA scale of 42½¢ an hour and a 48 hour week, until approached by union representatives from Portland. (A visitation requested by some Dee employees.) The statement went on to say local unionists felt the demands too high and now asked only for union recognition, not a closed shop, and a wage increase of 5¢ an hour based on the Weyerhauser wage scale. The Weyerhauser system recognized common labor, semi-skilled and skilled classifications. At Weyerhauser only 20 percent of

the labor force fell into the common labor group. At Oregon Lumber 50 percent were classed as common labor receiving the lowest NRA rate. The union publicly stated it was willing to accept 50¢ an hour and a 40 hour week; a settlement that had been reached at several mills.

Evidently the company saw no need to accept the union offer, full production had been reached and 500 men were on the payroll. The pickets became a little more restive and some wives appeared on the lines. Governor Martin declared no pickets would be allowed at the mill. Following the governors declaration several workers were badly beaten at the little community of Mt. Hood and at Parkdale. Four men were arrested. After a meeting with Governor Martin, Sheriff Edick and District Attorney John Baker the strikers were allowed two pickets at the mill entrance. In the case of the assaults at Mt. Hood and Parkdale two men were fined $66.00 each. The fines were paid by a union attorney sent from Portland.

In October it happened. Four fires were discovered in rapid succession, the first was on Tony Creek. Nelson sent for help from the Forest Service and on his way back noticed smoke coming from the planer and box factory. A third blaze quickly flared up on Gilhooley Mountain above the mill and a fourth blaze was discovered in a pile of oily rags and rubber boots at the sawmill. Only the cooperation of workers, strikers and Forest Service employees saved the plant. The planer and box factory were lost and damage was estimated between $70,000 and $80,000. The loss was covered by insurance and planer building was quickly rebuilt and new equipment ordered. The sawmill itself, was back in production in a week. At the time there was little doubt the fires had been incendiary and most likely set by some extremists involved in the labor dispute, but such a conjecture was never proved. Prior to the fire the entire installation had been forced to close for about ten days because of financial problems. The company had filed for reorganization under the terms of Section 77B of the National Bankruptcy Act.

Because of the ailing financial health of Oregon Lumber Company there is a feeling strike efforts were not pushed as vigorously as they might have been. As a matter of fact, about the only time the strike was mentioned in 1936 by the *Hood River News* was in the December 4th issue when it was reported that mill picket W. I. Harris was killed in a car accident at Tucker Bridge. W. M. Adams, also a picket and owner of the car, was injured. The article added the mill was in full production and there had been no trouble in recent months. The next union news appears in the new *Hood River Sun* on May 12, 1937. The paper reported Stanley Brown and Hugh McCurdy, representing the Dee local of the Lumber and Sawmill Workers, attended the Columbia River council meeting at Newport, Oregon. It would seem sometime between December, 1936 and May, 1937 Oregon Lumber and the union had reconciled their differences. Just when an agreement might have been signed is not known, nor what the terms may have been. However, some inkling can be surmised from another item in the *Sun* dated June 2, 1937. According to Stanley Brown and Moyne Rogers, of the Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union, Local 2778, workers at the J. Neils sawmill in Klickitat, Washington had been organized. In some instances workers had been receiving only 45¢ an hour, which was 17½¢ below the Portland scale and 10¢ under the Dee scale. In addition, Klickitat mill workers had been expected to put in 10 hour shifts. From the foregoing newspaper article it seems safe to assume the Dee union had won recognition, a raise to 55¢ per hour and quite possibly an eight hour day. On the other hand, the company must have been able to maintain the wage differential between Dee and Portland.

Members of the new local elected Jake Herron as president, Clyde Kelly became recording secretary and the familiar Stanley Brown was named financial secretary and business agent. Stanley Brown had not been in office long when, in 1938, another member of the union requested the sheriff issue a warrant for Brown's arrest. He was accused of forging Jake Herron's signature to a number of union checks. The union had been bilked out of $480 and several Hood River merchants lost $300. Brown had played a prominent role in the organization of the Dee mill and had been a leader of the faction that had swung the workers from the AF of L to the CIO. He had been a CIO organizer of a number of Mid-Columbia mills and had been one of a group washed out of a mill at Bingen, Washington with fire hoses. At first it was thought Brown was a Canadian, but on further investigation it was ascertained he was from England. Brown

could not be found locally and the sheriff circulated his description up and down the coast. Within three weeks he was arrested in Seattle and returned to Hood River. It was determined the fugitive had fled to Canada, but since he was wanted and also a British subject the Canadians refused him entry. He was forced to return to Seattle where he was apprehended. Six weeks after Stanley Brown was returned he was tried before Judge Wilson and convicted of eleven counts of forgery. His sentence was for not more than five years. In November, 1939 the sentence was commuted and Brown deported to England.

In 1940 the union flexed its muscle and pulled a three day strike when the company refused to fire Walt Leonard and Oscar Johnson because they were behind with their union dues. Union officials said it was not a strike just a "job action". Whatever it was, 120 men walked off the job over a dispute involving less that $25.00. The issue could not be settled locally and was sent to the NLRB for resolution. The union must have recognized the strike had not been a well thought out idea. Frank Wishart, as recording secretary for Local 5-18 of the IWA, as it had now become, wrote a letter to the *Hood River News* explaining the need for the members of any organization to cooperate, and besides the local merchants should be pulling for the union as all its members spent their money in Hood River.

The mill workers had never been happy with the 7½¢ differential between their wages and those in Portland and the rest of western Oregon. As 1941 was drawing to a close 160 mill workers walked off the job at Dee to protest the wage differential. The planer crew had started at 5:45 AM as usual and the sawmill at 7:30 AM; at 8:00 the employees shut down the machinery and walked out. It was not clear if the 140 loggers that joined them did so of their volition or whether they were laid off by the company after the mill was forced to close. R. W. Goin, president of the local, indicated the men were ready to arbitrate, but since the company would not, a strike had been called. F. E. Gorden, secretary-treasurer of the Columbia River Council added that Oregon Lumber enjoyed a 7½ cent differential in the minimum wage, but it was an 18 cent differential on the average rate paid. The union was demanding a 7½ cent per hour increase for all employees. Jack Eccles replied to the demand for the company. He explained the differential had been granted in 1935 because of the lower return from lumber when compared to Portland. He offered to let the Department of Labor inspect company books to verify the claim. The claim was valid in one respect and not in another. It is true the quality of Douglas-fir timber on the east side of the Cascades is of a lower quality than that on the west side and in the Coast Range. Being the most easterly fir mill in Oregon, Dee was on the fringe of the Douglas-fir region, almost into the Ponderosa pine region. But there was another reason the lumber return was always lower. The mill had always cut heavily to timbers and railroad ties. For many years there was no attempt to cut for high grade lumber even if the quality of the log was suited for better than large beams or cants. The mill was not organized to handle the additional sorts high grade cutting would require, as a consequence clears were not recovered.

In any event, the union accepted the company offer to let the Department of Labor verify the claim of lower lumber return, but continued to demand the increase even after the examination supported the company position. WWII had just started and as the *Hood River Sun* so succinctly put it: "Gentlemen, this is a hellava time to call a strike."

The company refused point blank to arbitrate and a committee of local leaders from Hood River was formed to help resolve the impasse. Reverend Louis E. White, pastor of the Riverside Community Church; R. E. Steele, secretary of the Chamber of Commerce; Hugh Ball, editor of the *Hood River News* and Tom Scott, a prominent businessman, met with company officials, members of the union and the U. S. Conciliation Service. There was little progress until Hugh Ball, acting on a request of a Dee union member suggested the disagreement be submitted to an arbitration board composed of one member from the company, one from the union and one from the office of the U. S. Conciliation Service. The suggestion was adopted and A. C. Lighthall appointed himself to represent Oregon Lumber Company and the union selected A. F. Hartung of the Columbia River Council as their representative. The two men accepted George Cheney from the Conciliation Service as the third member of the board. A compromise was finally reached and the Dee workers were given a 3 cent

per hour pay increase retroactive to May 1, 1941. Hartung voted against the decision. The following June, 175 men in the mill got another surprise. They received another raise of 7½¢ retroactive to April 1 that had been granted to all Columbia Basin sawmills. In December, 1942 still another wage increase was negotiated between the AF of L, the CIO and the government. This time the increase was for another 7½¢ an hour, retroactive back to September for most, but as far back as May for a few. The base rate had now reached 90¢ an hour; the AF of L had asked for $1.05 and the CIO for 95¢. Since the last increase negotiated was industry wide and included over 65,000 men there was some fear cash payment of back wages would be inflationary. It was decided, therefore, the windfall be paid in the form of savings bonds.

Wages remained fairly stable during the rest of WWII, but in 1944 the employees of Oregon Lumber, Neal Creek Lumber and Jaymar Lumber, all mills located in Hood River Valley, decided to go on a fishing trip. Sixteen months previous the CIO had asked for a wage increase and improved working conditions. The WLB had turned down the request and since there was no other appeal available during the war years, the men decided to show dissatisfaction by staging a "fish-in" or a "fish-out", whichever the case might be. Without any prior notice workers at the three mills just did not show up for work; it did not get them a raise, and it is also doubtful if they got many fish.

By 1951 the base rate for sawmill employees reached $1.60½ per hour and conditions were upbeat throughout the industry. Employees began to demand increased wages and better fringe benefits at every contract renewal. There was no serious effort by management to resist the continuing wage and price spiral until the 1979 recession. By that time the base rate in a unionized mill exceeded $10.00 an hour. In addition to higher wages unions had won their members lucrative health and welfare packages.

The first indication residents of Hood River had all was not well with Oregon Lumber Company came when a notice appeared in the *Hood River News* September 27, 1935 the company was filing for reorganization under the provision of the federal bankruptcy laws. Vice-president A. C. Lighthall submitted a "Plan of Reorganization for the Oregon Lumber Company, A Utah Corporation", to the District Court of the United States, District of Oregon, July 15, 1936. In the plan it was admitted that as early as 1932 the company had been unable to fulfill terms of the $1,000,000 bond issue of 1925. At that time an agreement had been reached with a majority of the bond holders to extend the maturities of outstanding bonds to April 1, 1940. The extension was conditioned, however, upon no default occurring in payment of interest on the bonds prior to the extended maturity. Interest was paid up to, and including, April 1, 1933, after which time no interest had been paid. As a consequence, the extension was no longer valid and the company was in default. The situation was further compounded when the company was unable to meet its obligations on a $376,000 loan that had been obtained from the First National Bank of Portland. The bank had loaned the lumber company $126,000 in September, 1933 so an undivided 73 1/3 interest in some Grant County timberlands could be purchased. This was the so-called Knapp Tract containing over 19,000 acres of prime Ponderosa pine; it was a bargain that just could not be passed. At the same time the company borrowed an additional $250,000 from the bank to purchase its own First Mortgage 6% sinking Gold Bonds of 1925. Market conditions being what they were at that time, the company anticipated there would be no problem purchasing the bonds at 50¢ on the dollar and the bank must have agreed. The buy back would have been an excellent means of reducing the bonded indebtedness and the semi-annual interest payments. Unfortunately only $360,000 of the First Mortgage Bonds could be purchased at the expected price, but the bank agreed to let the company purchase $140,000 First Mortgage Bonds of the Sumpter Valley Railway Company with the remaining funds, provided, of course, the purchase price did not exceed 50¢ on the dollar.

Quite naturally the bank did not make the loan without some conditions and they were considerable. First, the bank was to hold any bonds purchased, they were not to be retired and continued to be a company obligation; second, the lumber company was required to issue warehouse receipts for not less than 10,000,000 board feet of finished lumber; third, the company had to give a mortgage on its new mill at Whitney, Oregon; fourth, 51 percent of company stock had to be deposited with

the bank. It was quite a bundle.

The first repayment to the bank was to be $75,000 due in two years. In September, 1935 the company was not able to make the required installment and was rebuffed by First National when attempts were made to negotiate new terms. In addition to difficulties with the bondholders and the bank the plan stated approximately $150,000 was due for delinquent property taxes and another $30,000 was owing on 1936 taxes which had not yet become delinquent. Further, an agreement had been entered into with the Corcoran Estate to purchase the other 26 2/3 percent of the Knapp Tract held by the estate. To secure total ownership the company had agreed to pay $44,000 over the next eight years. The reorganization plan also anticipated any other unsecured creditors would be paid, plus 5 percent interest. At the time of the filing, assets of Oregon Lumber exceeded liabilities by 2¼ times, the firm could be considered solvent, but had a serious cash flow problem.

To solve its financial dilemma the company proposed to the court the bonds held by the First National be canceled, the term of the bonds that would remain outstanding be extended to April 1, 1943 and that script, payable by the company, be issued to cover all unpaid interest. The total value of these two items amounted to $409,381. The First National loan would be paid back on the following schedule: $40,000 annually, beginning June 1, 1937, thence 1938, 1939 and 1940; $90,000 on June 1941 and $126,000 on June 1, 1942. Interest was to be set at 3½ percent, payable quarterly, on any outstanding balance. To get the parties to agree to the proposal the company offered the First National a first mortgage on approximately 36,387.31 acres of land and timber. In addition the bank would continue to hold 51 percent of the outstanding company common stock which had been given as security earlier. Cutting on lands offered as security would not take place until an agreed price was paid the bank for each forty acre tract. It was also stipulated the bank release the 10,000,000 board feet of lumber held under warehouse agreement.

To entice bondholders it was proposed the First Mortgage Deed of Trust be amended to include an additional 480,000,000 board feet of timber, exclusive of the land and timber offered to the First National, plus a payment of 25¢ per thousand into the sinking fund for any timber cut not originally included in the 1925 mortgage. On February 28, 1938, Judge James Alger Fee of the District Court approved the reorganization practically as proposed by the company.

Four years later, on January 1, 1942, the auditor for Oregon Lumber Company had reason to issue a notarized list of liabilities. One item was a note payable to the First National Bank of Portland for $126,000; it was the last payment, as scheduled. Another listing showed the First Mortgage 6% Bonds and Script outstanding to be $297,124; down $112,257 in about four years. The plan seemed on schedule and by the time WWII was over Oregon Lumber emerged in a strong financial condition. On December 31, 1950 current liabilities were $1,861,630.60 and current assets (excluding land, timber and plant) were $4,210,083.13. In 1951 profits were close to $600,000 and a $6.00 dividend was paid on 9966 shares of stock outstanding. The comeback had been a struggle and an accomplishment. During the lean years a great number of prominent lumber manufacturers had been unable to weather the storm and had disappeared.

With the advent of crawler tractors in the woods a new era began. Logging equipment began to be smaller, more mobile and slightly less expensive. Tractors began to be used for yarding logs on the lesser slopes and trucks began to supplant railroads. Even on the steeper ground, where cable yarding was necessary some ingenious logger figured out how to put a set of winches or drums on the back of an old bulldozer and developed a triple-drum yarder that was relatively inexpensive and could be taken under its own power almost anywhere in the timber with a minimum of effort. Earth moving, at a reasonable cost, became possible and it was not long before truck roads were being punched into the most remote and inaccessible locations. Railroads were soon relegated to main hauls and trucks were used to deliver their loads to a central point to be reloaded onto railcars. At first logs were handled individually, but soon methods and equipment were devised to pick an entire load off a truck and place it on the cars as a unit. With the ability to move dirt came the ability to handle snow. The Dee sawmill began to make changes in order to operate the entire year.

The first time logs were decked at Dee to sus-

tain winter operation at the mill happened in 1924, the year the concrete dam was built. A steam yarder had been brought from the woods and spar poles 120 feet in height erected on each side of the East Fork to support a cable system that would pick the logs out of the pond after they had been dumped, lift them out of the water and pile them neatly in decks on the east bank, just upstream of the mill. When the logs were needed they were picked out of the decks bodily and dropped back into the pond; a simple but time consuming procedure. During the first summer over 8,000,000 board feet of logs were decked for the early spring cut. Evidently the experiment was not too successful as it was not repeated to any great extent until 1931 when a power shovel was used to make a level ledge on the east side of the river on which logs could be more easily piled. Beginning about 1940 the practice of decking logs at Dee became a standard procedure, along with rocking truck roads at lower elevations, so a winter log supply could be insured. Sometime in the early 40's, during the war years, the logging railroad was discontinued and the steel absorbed in the war effort. The abandonment attracted so little attention it was not even mentioned in the local papers.

Logging methods were changing rapidly, but development of newer and better ways of getting logs out had not diminished the danger of fire in the woods. Regulations prohibiting the use of some types of machinery when it was extremely dry and humidity levels low, or forcing a complete closure of logging by zones or even statewide, began to reduce fire incidence, but the menace was always present. In 1936 a 2,000 gallon fuel tank located in the woods ruptured. Somehow the fuel ignited and a cold deck with 1½ million board feet of logs and a 175 horsepower yarder went up in flames. The fire was intense and two locomotives and two speeders were kept busy shuttling men and equipment to the inferno. Fortunately only ten acres were burned before a fire line was established.

In 1938 a fire on the Middle Fork threatened several homes on Trout Creek Ridge before 150 fire fighters from the Forest Service, the Civilian Conservation Corps and Oregon Lumber contained the blaze. On this occasion 60 acres of cutover land and second growth went up in smoke. A short time later a small portable sawmill owned by Jaymar Lumber was destroyed near Dee by a fire started from slash burning. Some mill machinery was saved, but the building was leveled. Early in 1939 the Newall sawmill at Parkdale, another small mill, went up in smoke. Origin of the fire was not determined. Then, in the summer of 1939 over 10,000 acres in Washington were blackened. The fire was just across the Columbia from Hood River and flames threatened Husum, BZ Corners and a number of homes on the upper White Salmon. At times the blanket of smoke was so dense the sun was obscured and drivers in the Columbia Gorge had to turn on their automobile headlights.

Not all fires occurred in the woods. The Dee mill was hit again in February, 1940 with an electrical fire that destroyed the main panelboard and spread to the grinding room which was completely gutted. The entire operation was down a week until electrical service was restored. That same year, on the Fourth of July, an unattended or forgotten campfire on Lake Branch erupted and it began to seem like the summer of 1919 all over again at Dee. The fire roared out of the West Fork canyon and headed for homes on Dee Flats and Trout Creek Ridge. Hundreds of campers at Lost Lake were forced to evacuate when the West Fork bridge was threatened. The blaze spread through slashings, second growth and then virgin timber. Over 1,000 men were put on fire lines, but the blaze covered 2,500 acres before it was controlled and considered safe. In addition to standing timber, some felled and bucked logs were lost as well as a variety of logging machinery. Miraculously no one was injured in the fast moving flames. Like most large fires there were flare-ups. One on Blue Ridge covered 70 acres before being corralled and another on Deer Creek spread over 300 acres before being circled with a fire line.

In 1941 it happened at Dee again. On this occasion four cold decks containing 4½ - 5 million board feet of logs just south of the mill went up in smoke. July temperatures were in the 100's and there was concern when the blaze jumped the road and raced up Gilhooley Mountain that the sawmill and lumber piles might go next. The Hood River Fire Department responded and a unit from The Dalles was "on the way." After it was over it was agreed having a plentiful water supply was the primary factor in saving the big mill and limiting damage to $50,000. This fire probably started from a smoldering fuse used in blasting out room for a

fifth log deck. At the end of the fire season Oregon Lumber had a dinner, hosted by Jack Eccles and Jim Wirrick, the sawmill superintendent, for fire departments from the Forest Service, The Dalles, Hood River and White Salmon.

Late in 1940 Representative Walter M. Pierce introduced a bill in Congress requiring the Forest Service to manage national forests on a sustained yield basis, cutting would not be allowed to exceed growth. There was not much concern or interest in sustained yield during the war years, but by 1945 it was being considered very seriously by the entire industry. Oregon Lumber Company took out an ad in the *Hood River Sun* to the effect that a Forest Service study had shown production in the valley had to be reduced if a sustained cut was to be maintained and the company intended to cooperate. The mill would be revamped to operate efficiently on a lesser volume. In 1946 the mill went from two headrigs to one and the cut was reduced from 160-170,000 board feet per shift to 100,000 a shift. In 1951 there was a push in some quarters to divide up the national forests and allocate the sustained yield units to specific sawmills. The Hood River Chamber of Commerce backed the formation of such a unit for Hood River mills. The Vancouver, Washington Chamber appeared at a local public hearing and objected such action would be detrimental to Vancouver mills that purchased upriver timber sales and used the Columbia River to raft logs downstream. Arguments for and against the allocation of sustained yield units continued for a number of years, but the Simpson unit on the Olympic peninsula in Washington was the only cooperative agreement ever approved.

One of the so-called advantages of a cooperative sustained yield unit was that both the federal and intermingled private forest land would be managed by the Forest Service as a single ownership, although land title did not actually change hands. Such a concept could have been particularly advantageous on the edges or fringes of the national forests where private holdings made access difficult and often impossible. Without access there was little chance of effective management.

There was another means by which such obstacles could be circumvented; it was the land exchange. In this case land titles actually did change hands. In order to block out boundaries the Forest Service and adjoining land owners would agree to trade bare land or land and timber of like values. Occasionally the swap would be for as little as ten or twenty acres, other exchanges would involve thousands of acres. One of the first trades Oregon Lumber and the Forest Service made was in 1921 and it gave the government ownership of 192 acres of land and timber around the north and east sides of Lost Lake. In all, over three-quarters of a mile of shore line was included in the property acquired by the Service. In return the lumber company was granted cutting rights on 160 acres of timberland on the West Fork, about four miles southeast of the lake. Most of the trades were time consuming and not closed with any sense of urgency, in this particular case the details were not finalized until 1927. The delay could have been caused by another, larger, exchange that was in the works about the same time. In 1928 the Forest Service announced it had secured ownership to 5875.19 acres of land formerly owned by the Stanley-Smith Lumber Company of Hood River, for timber located on 144 acres of land in Crater National Forest. This had to have been one of the better swaps made by the Forest Service, but it could not have been much help to the tax base of Hood River County.

Actually the Lost Lake trade was not the first deal Oregon Lumber made with a public agency. Earlier it had given Oregon a site for a state fish hatchery on Dead Point Creek near the Punch Bowl. This happened to be an outright donation and not a trade.

In 1932 the Forest Service offered a resort site at Lost Lake on a five year lease. The lessee was required to construct a lodge, a number of cabins, bathing facilities, a boathouse and have twelve rowboats. Cost for the first year was to be $50.00, then $100.00 annually for the remaining four years. The second five years were subject to adjustment. Eventually a small resort was built at the north end of the lake with a vista toward Mt. Hood. The location selected for the lodge was on land once owned by Oregon Lumber Company.

To maintain the scenic beauty of a road into Lost Lake the Forest Service entered into another trade with the lumber company. This time the company traded 920 acres of timberland through which the lake access road had been built, for cutting rights on land closer to active logging operations.

The company and the Forest Service made a number of other trades during the years. The earlier ones were almost always timber and land or just cutover land for cutting rights on the national forests. This latter type of exchange began to fall into disfavor in later years when timber values were bid up on the public sales by competing lumber companies. Trades were based on appraised values and when the Service saw timber being bid to three and four times appraised value, a trade of timber appraised at $5.00 per thousand board feet did not seem as attractive as a sale of the same timber for $15.00 or $20.00. It was not long before a trade for like values was about all the Forest Service would consider. However, this type of trade did have merit and in the case of scattered ownerships it could be of considerable value.

According to A. C. Lighthall Jr., one of the most cost effective arrangements his father made, when placed in charge of Oregon Lumber Company, was to effect a trade of tremendous proportions with the Forest Service. At his instigation Oregon Lumber traded 663,000,000 board feet of timber and land to the Forest Service for the cutting rights to 623,000,000 board feet of federal timber. The advantage to the government was that it acquired scattered land and timber tracts within the national forest boundaries and blocked up the ownership pattern. The advantage to the company was logging and transportation efficiency. The Forest Service provided a much more orderly logging development and tracts were not scattered over several counties. There was one disadvantage for the company — when it had removed the agreed volume of timber, it would most likely be out of business, and that is just about the way it happened.

By the mid-50's plywood and veneer production seemed to be more profitable than just sawing logs into lumber and the feeling began to pervade the West Coast industry that a producer had to have more than a sawmill. There was a scramble to install chippers to secure lucrative contracts with paper producers, then sawdust assumed a new importance, finally there was a new demand for bark as fuel. The development of by-products was fine as far as it went, but plywood was still the shining star. Many mills slid into this phase of the business by borrowing three-quarters of million or million dollars and starting with a veneer plant, but there were some real problems. Sawmills cutting high grade logs were managing to survive, but if a veneer plant was added the better logs soon began to find their way into the veneer lathe and the bandmill was soon struggling with lower grade logs. Dry-end or plywood operators purchasing veneer on the open market wanted high grade veneer and put the squeeze on the new veneer mills. Lumber return would drop because the better logs were being peeled and veneer prices were being set by plywood producers. The next step, for those that could afford it, was to spend another 2½ - 3 million dollars on a plywood lay-up plant. A shake-out condition existed in the industry for a number of years.

A. C. Lighthall died unexpectedly in Denver in 1950, but by then he had completed the company reorganization, secured control of Oregon Lumber and had charted its course into the future. Before 1950, Lighthall had evidently realized, a little earlier than many others in the industry, a sawmill alone would be marginal and only diversification could mean survival. In 1948 he hired Dr. A. B. Anderson and W. J. Runkel. These two men, while working for the now non-existent Western Pine Association, had developed a process of making a hardboard from bark. This was the route Lighthall intended to take Oregon Lumber Company. After his death his son took over as president of the company and proceeded to follow the blueprint that had been laid out. An experimental laboratory had been established in Portland. The process was proved successful and a prototype plant was engineered and fabricated by the chemical division of Blaw-Knox Construction Company. The new plant was capable of turning out 180,000 square feet of hardboard daily. The product was called "ALLWOOD" and was marketed through Simpson Timber Company of Seattle. Over the years the "furnish" or raw material used to fabricate the board has been changed to meet new strength requirements, end users and appearance. The use of bark, one of the main goals of the process, has been eliminated and only sawdust and chips are utilized.

In 1955 the entire operation, including the Baker sawmills and the remaining eastern Oregon timberlands, were sold to the Edward Hines Lumber Company of Chicago, Illinois. After 66 years, Oregon Lumber Company ceased to exist.

LOCOMOTIVE ROSTER

In most instances the locomotive roster for a railroad is a straight forward tabular listing of locomotive number, Whyte classification by wheel arrangement, date built, builder and pertinent characteristics of the engine. For the Mount Hood such a compilation is not possible. Some records no longer exist and many of those still available are conflicting and lack necessary specifics.

The best and most complete roster of Mount Hood equipment appeared in an article written by Jack M. Holst for the January, 1971 (Volume 11, Number 1) issue of *Pacific News*, a magazine devoted to railroading. Mr. Holst was a knowledgeable railroad historian, now deceased; it is truly unfortunate the source of his data cannot be identified. Additional information has been gleaned from pages of the *Hood River Glacier* and the *Hood River News*, early copies of annual reports, pictures and other individuals acquainted with the history of the Mount Hood. Willis "Dutch" Hendricks and D. S. "Doug" Richter were particularly helpful.

MOUNT HOOD LOCOMOTIVES

First, did the railroad ever have a steam dummy or a tank type locomotive? On page 169 of *Pacific Slope Railroads*, George B. Abdill quotes Art Sayre as having fired a small 2-4-2 steam dummy, during early construction of the Mount Hood, that had formerly been used on street railways in Ogden, Utah. Such a statement seems reasonable since David Eccles had formed the Ogden Rapid Transit Company in 1900 and purchased the Ogden Railway Company, a firm that had been in public transit since 1884. There is also photographic evidence Oregon Lumber had steam dummies at work in its logging operations in Washington (Mill A) and a little later at Inglis, Oregon. On the side of "Little Kate", the locomotive used at Mill A, the word Ogden can faintly be seen. Finally, the May 11, 1905 issue of the *Hood River Glacier* notes an engine for the railroad had arrived. Arrival of the Shay and the two Baldwins was not noted in the paper until November 2nd, some six months later.

Evidence would tend to indicate a small locomotive had been available during construction, but there is no supporting record. It is most unlikely "Little Kate" was shipped across the Columbia River to assist, as Mill A did not close down until the Dee sawmill was in production. The only likely clue is from Jack Holst, in his 1971 roster there is the following:

#10 0-4-2T Baldwin 11/1889 #10442 10x14/35"
Originally Ogden City Railway #10
Union Railway #10; acquired Oct. 1892
Union St. & Suburban Ry. #10; Dec. 1894
Central Railway of Oregon #10; June, 1905
Central Railroad of Oregon #10; May, 1909
Mount Hood Railroad #10; acquired Oct. 1910
Out of service Aug. 1919, sold Aug. 1920.

It is possible the first four lines of the above might apply to a steam dummy used for a very short time then shipped down the Columbia to Inglis. Such a conclusion is based on an item in the January 13, 1906 issue of the *Hood River News* wherein it was noted the railroad was having trouble with slides and "Little Bud" was the only engine available due to the soft roadbed. The trip was also getting too long for one engine (the first train reached Odell 2/8) and a night shift was to be added to get material to the track layers. If a steam dummy had been available it seems obvious its usefulness was at an end.

The next locomotive used was the Shay, "Little Bud." Although numbered 1 and clearly lettered Mount Hood RR Co. it was never intended for use on the line for other than initial construction. Very unlikely it was ever carried on the Mount Hood books; was intended primarily for logging and should be considered property of Oregon Lumber Company.

The next two locomotives to arrive and actually purchased to serve on the Mount Hood were the Baldwins which all sources list as having been purchased from the Union Pacific Railroad. The Holst descriptions are as follows:

#1 2-8-0 Baldwin 12/1868 #1802 20x24/50"/140#/21240t.e./93300 lbs. wt.
Ex-Union Pacific #1252, #115.
Mount Hood 2nd #1; acquired 1906, sold Dec. 31, 1916.
(Note Holst considered the Shay as the first #1.)

#2 2-8-0 Baldwin 12/1868 #1804 20x24/50"/140#/21240t.e./93300 lbs. wt.
Ex-Union Pacific #1251, #114.
Mount Hood #2; acquired 1906, sold Dec. 31, 1916.

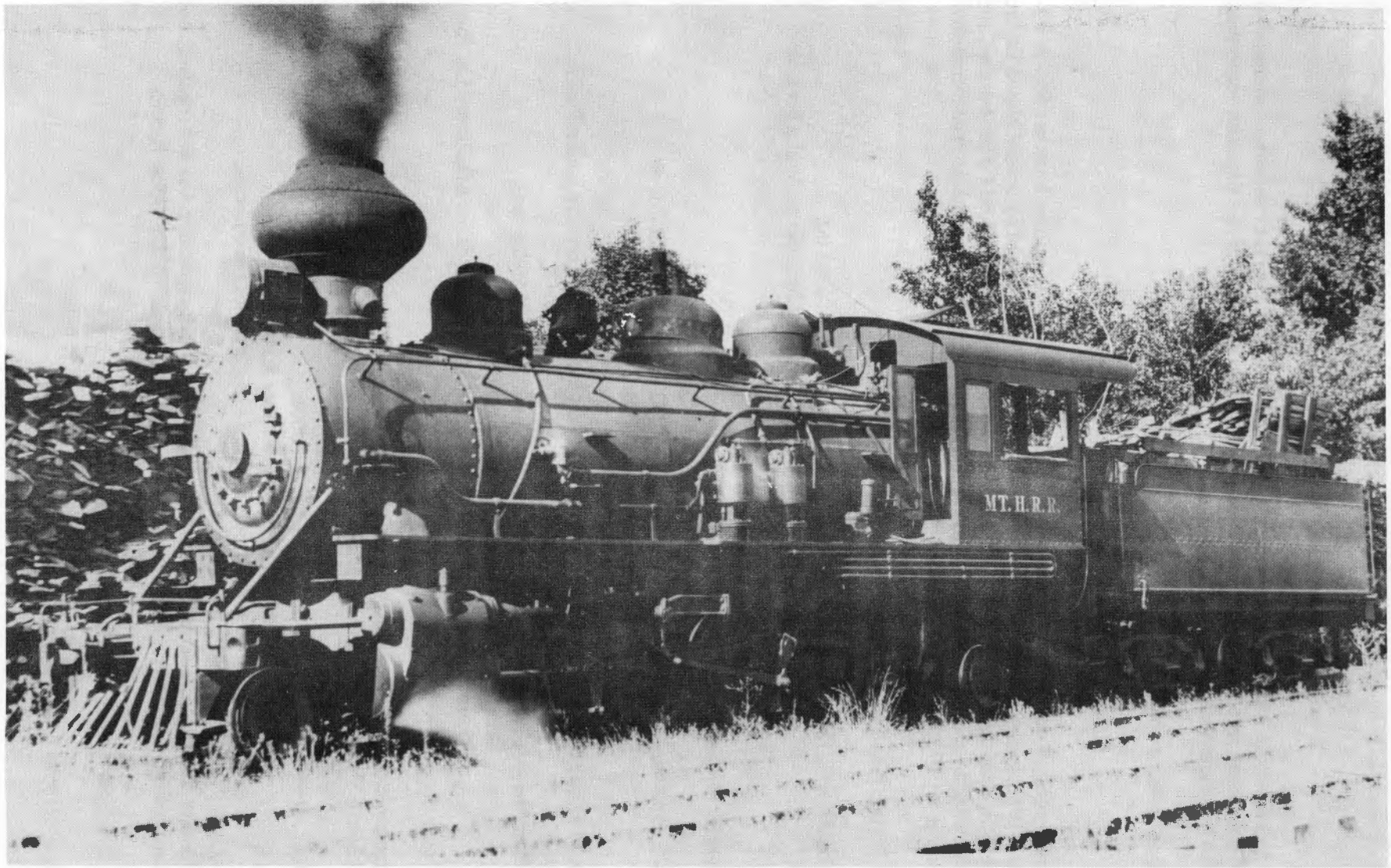
Inquiry has established these two locomotives did exist. They cost approximately $15,000 when purchased new by the Union Pacific, could carry 2244 gallons of water and eight tons of coal. They worked out of Cheyenne, Wyoming and according to U.P records were scrapped in 1902 and 1904. It is generally accepted these 37 year old antiques were rebuilt and converted to wood fuel before being sold to the Mount Hood, but when and where the conversions were accomplished is not known.

The 1907, 1908 and 1909 annual reports of the Mount Hood Railroad lists various amounts spent for repairs on Number 1 and Number 2. The 1910 report shows expenditures on only Number 2, but $4,804.80 was spent to purchase Number 10 and $1,040.04 to have it shipped from some unknown location to Hood River. It can be assumed from the minimal cost this locomotive was not purchased new, and further, since the railroad was now firmly established in business, the purchase would not likely be the 0-4-2T listed by Holst, but the 4-6-0 that rammed into the OR&N station in 1918. Unfortunately no information can be found concerning the previous owner of the locomotive, its builder, date built other than the last four lines given for the 0-4-2T.

Annual reports of 1911 and 1912 show the little railroad had assembled a wealth of motive power. Repair expenditures are shown for four locomotives, Numbers 1, 2, 10 and 58, but once again there is little specific data on the latest addition. Cost of Number 58 is given at $2,603.31 — another used engine. Holst describes Number 58 as follows:

#58 4-4-0 Manchester 10/1882 #1088 16x24/57"
Tacoma Eastern Ry. #1; Dec. 1, 1901.
Oregon Railway & Navigation Co. #58
Mount Hood #58; acq. 1911, ret. July, 1922.
Phoenix Utility Co.; Powerdale, Oregon.

But there is a hitch concerning the disposition of Number 58. In his book, *Railroads Down the Valley*, Randall V. Mills says when actor Buster Keaton filmed "The General" (Disney called his version "The Great Locomotive Chase") on the Oregon, Pacific and Eastern Railway (formerly the Oregon and Southeastern Railroad) out of Cottage Grove, Oregon, a locomotive was purchased from the Mount Hood to be used as the "Texas". Duplicating the chase that took place in Georgia during the Civil War, it was the Texas that ended up a wreck at the bottom of Row River. In the OP&E roster Mills credits to G. N. Best, one of the better known scholars of railroad history, is the following:



Another Number 1 . . . the second or third, depending on whether the Shay is included, was ordered from Baldwin in 1922. It was identical to Number 11 in almost all respects. When purchased both locomotives were oil fired. During the depression the railroad converted all motive power to wood fuel and added the cabbage stacks to reduce the chance of right-of-way fires from wood sparks. (Courtesy of W. C. Hendricks.)

#5 4-4-0 Baldwin 1881 Ex-Mount Hood Railroad #1
OR&N #58; UP #529; OR&N #44
Wrecked for motion picture in 1926.

Classing the locomotive as Mount Hood Number 1 and as a Baldwin adds to the confusion. Information supplied by the Railroad and Locomotive Historical Society does help clarify the situation somewhat. Their records for the Mount Hood show:

#1 Manchester 1882 #1088 57"/17x24/120#/81150/50850/12412.
Ex-UP #1109, Ex-OWRR&N #44, OR&N #44
UP #529, OR&N #58, Acq. 1915, sold 1922.

Actually there is enough similarity in all descriptions that it may be safe to assume Number 58 was a 4-4-0 Manchester, #1088, built in 1881 or 1882; that it had previously been owned by several Union Pacific affiliates, and before coming to the Mount Hood it had most recently been OR&N #58. Further, the engine had been owned by the Mount Hood between 1911 and 1922 and it was most likely the locomotive Keaton wrecked for his 1926 movie epic.

In 1920 the Mount Hood acquired its first new locomotive:

#11 2-8-2 Baldwin 7/1920 #53486 18x24/44"/180#/27,000t.e./144000 lbs. wt.
Purchased new, sold or transferred to Oregon Lbr., sold to Alaska Junk on June 28, 1951.

Two years later a twin to Number 11 was added to the roster:

2nd #1 2-8-2 Baldwin 5/1922 #55397 18x24/44"/180#/27000t.e./139000 lbs. wt
Purchased new, sold for scrap in April, 1955.

Sometime in 1947 the Mount Hood purchased another used locomotive from the Union Pacific:

#36 2-8-2 Baldwin 4/1911 #36333 24x30/57"/200#/50468t.e./267850 lbs. wt.
Union Pacific (OWRR&N) #2136, #536.
Mount Hood Railroad #36, acquired 1947, sold to Zidell Machinery Co. for scrap in July, 1954.

The steam age came to an end on the Mt. Hood in 1950 when the first diesel was purchased from the Newburgh and South Shore Railroad. Holst provided the following data:

#51 B-B Alco 7/1940 #69148 1000hp Model HH-1000.
Originally Newburgh and South Shore # 1002.
Mount Hood #51; Union Pacific #1251, but not renumbered.

Evidently Number 51 was not a satisfactory unit and when the block cracked it was not repaired, but shunted to the rear of the Hood River engine house until the line was sold to the Union Pacific.

The second diesel purchased, according to Holst was:

#50 B-B Alco 9/1950 #78317 660hp Model S-3
Purchased new; Union Pacific #1250.

There is a possibility that Number 50 was actually owned by the Sumpter Valley Railroad, but supporting evidence is lacking. By this date the SVRR was no longer an operating railroad; it had been converted to a holding company and its main asset was a truck line used to haul lumber from outlying mills to Baker, Oregon.

LEASED LOCOMOTIVES

For various reasons the Mount Hood found it necessary from time to time to rent or lease locomotives from other lines. The earliest it was found necessary to add temporary motive power was between March and July of 1918. All that is known is Twohy Brothers Company supplied locomotive #125 for the period in question.

The next time help was needed was the winter of 1919/1920 when it was so cold. Temperatures along the Columbia River dipped to -27 degrees, and remained below -20 for some time. In Hood River wood for fuel was in short supply. Undoubtedly the Mount Hood had its problems during this time. A train derailed at Parkdale and the locomotive and tender went over into a ditch, the jitney jumped the track at Van Horn and shook up a load of passengers and shortly after the locomotive that derailed was repaired it blew a cylinder head. On January 8th the *Glacier* reported a locomotive from the Spokane, Portland and Seattle had arrived to help out, and on February 20th the *News* reported another engine, #1115, had arrived.

The Train Register shows that SP&S #53 made two round trips, but no more. Quite possibly it may not have been adequate for the job. Union Pacific #1723 (a 4-6-0 ?) shows on the Register for several days in early February, but was soon replaced by U.P.#1115 which remained in use until the end of September. Most of the information that follows has been taken from the Holst roster.

#53 4-4-0 Rogers 11/1883 #3410 17x24/56"/130#/13690 t.e./76000 lbs. wt.
Originally Oregon Pacific #3.
Willamette Valley and Coast #3.
Astoria and Columbia River #6 in 1896.
SP&S #53; acquired March, 1911.
Leased to Mount Hood 1920; returned April, 1
To Burke Machinery Co. for scrap upon return to SP&S.

#1115 4-4-0 Rhode Island 9/1890 #2442 18x26/64"/150#/16782t.e./109900 lbs. wt.
Union Pacific #601.
OWRR&N #1115 in May, 1920.
Leased to Mount Hood February through September, 1920.

#2164 4-6-0 Schenectady 3/1888 #2517 18x24/57"/160#/18550t.e./101500 lbs. wt.
Southern Pacific #246, #1695, #2164; scrapped in 1935.
Leased to Mount Hood as #2164 by S.P. in late 1926 or early 1927.

#737 2-8-0 Baldwin 1/1906 #27206 22x30/57"/200#/43305t.e./213350 lbs. wt.
Originally Snake River Valley #357.
Oregon Railway & Navigation Co. #357.
Union Pacific Railroad #737.
Leased to Mount Hood by U.P. (date not known).

RAIL-AUTOS

White 5/1916 Model 6-60 Bought new, retired Oct., 1924.

White 4/1917 Model 4-40 Bought new, retired Nov., 1929.

Mack 4/1922 #70014 Model AB Purchased new. Burned 1935,rebuilt locally (?)
Sold to Condon, Kinzua and Southern about 1941.
Formerly on display in Fossil, Oregon.
Reported in Heppner, Oregon undergoing renovation.
Now in storage in Hood River.

The *Hood River Glacier* reported the first rail-auto was purchased from a sight-seeing firm in Portland. It was converted for rail use by the railroad; the 1916 annual report lists the cost for steel tires and other accessories at $471.72. This tends to discount Holsts' claim the first White was purchased new. All retirement dates are also suspect.

OREGON LUMBER COMPANY LOCOMOTIVES

#1 2-tk Shay Lima 4/1905 #951 2/8x12/26½"
Acq. new 1906 (used during construction of Mount Hood)
J. W. Brothers; Battleground, Washington.
W. J. Miller; Bellfountain, Oregon.

#2 2-tk Shay Lima 5/1907 #1892 3)8x10/26½"/48000 lbs.
Acquired new 1907.

#11 2-8-2 Baldwin See description under Mt. Hood locomotives. Transferred to Oregon Lumber Co.

#100 2-tk Heisler 7/1920 #1440 15x12/36"/74000 lbs. wt.
Purchased new, probably sold for scrap during the war effort.

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