COOS AND COQUILLE RIVERS NAVIGABILITY STUDIES

By

James E. Farnell, Ph.D.
Research Analyst

Division of State Lands
Salem, Oregon

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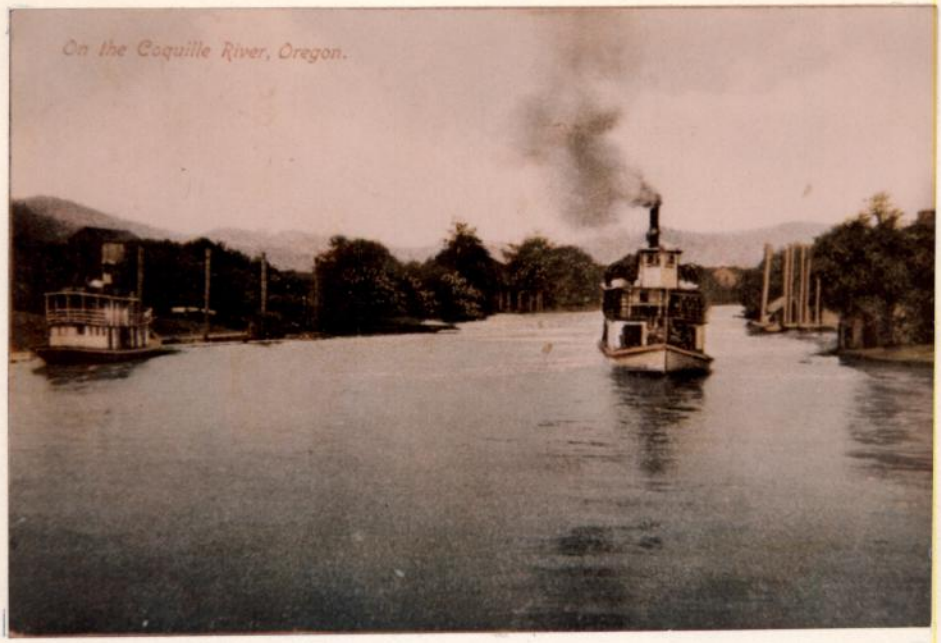
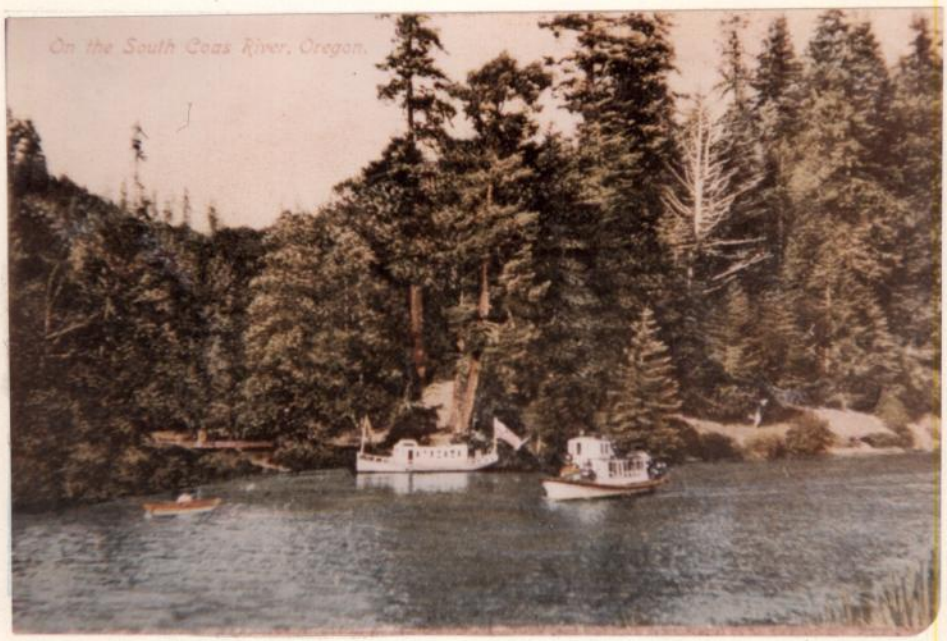




Frontispiece:

Scenes on South Coos and Coquille River at turn of century.

INTRODUCTION

Under the Equal Footing Clause of the Oregon Admissions Act, the United States Government transferred ownership of the beds of all navigable waterways to the State of Oregon in 1859. At the time of this report, the full extent of Oregon's ownership of the beds of these waterways remains unknown. The present development trends along our waterways make it apparent that the location of State/private boundaries is of extreme importance and should be defined. The 1973 Legislature recognized this need and passed ORS 274.029-034. This law directs the Division of State Lands to make a study of all Oregon waterways and publish their findings. This report is the Division's study of the Coos and Coquille Rivers.

The Coos is named, apparently in an abbreviated form, for the Indian tribe originally inhabiting the area. Coquille is the French spelling for an Indian word whose meaning has been lost. Millicoma was the Indian name for the North Fork of the Coos River, but any meaning beyond that is not known.[1]

No river system in Oregon, besides the Columbia and Willamette, has had a longer history of commercial use than the Coos and Coquille rivers. Fortunately the area has been well served with historians and museums: this has somewhat smoothed the difficult task of tracing the facts of navigable use. The researcher would like to thank the following institutions and agencies for their assistance in this project:

Bandon Historical Society
Coos-Curry Museum
Coos Bay Public Library
Coos County Courthouse
Douglas County Museum
Jack's Photos, Coos Bay
Bancroft Library, Berkeley, CA
Coos County Logging Museum
Oregon State Archives
Oregon State Library
Oregon Historical Society
Oregon Dept. of Water Resources
University of Oregon Library
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland
Port of Coquille River

Several individuals also extended themselves to give me information on the use of these rivers and provided me with pictures and documents, particularly Curt and Dow Beckham, Ernest Bryant, Kenneth Laird, Jesse Ott, Victor West, and Jim Howe.

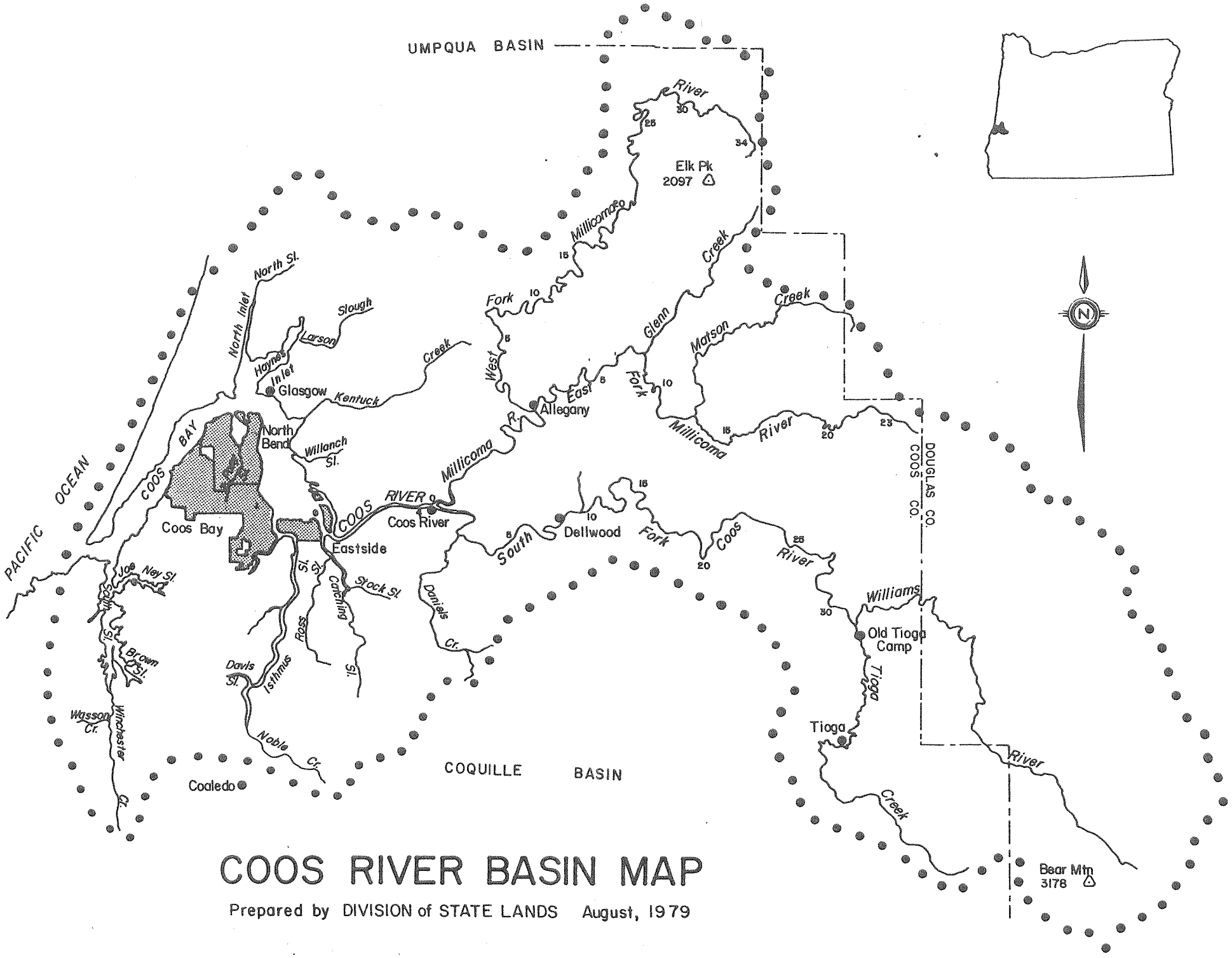
As navigation of one kind or another took place for over a century on various branches of the two rivers, it has not been possible exhaustively to explore all relevant sources, particularly newspapers and circuit court cases. Reliable information for each period of use, however, has hopefully identified the heads of boat and log navigation on each stream regularly used for these purposes in the Coos-Coquille basin.

Cover: The Coos, built 1874 at Empire City by W. H. Luse; it operated on Coos Bay and Coos River. Rebuilt in 1884 and taken to the Siuslaw in 1900 where the photo was taken from which this drawing is made.

BASIN OF THE COOS AND COQUILLE RIVERS

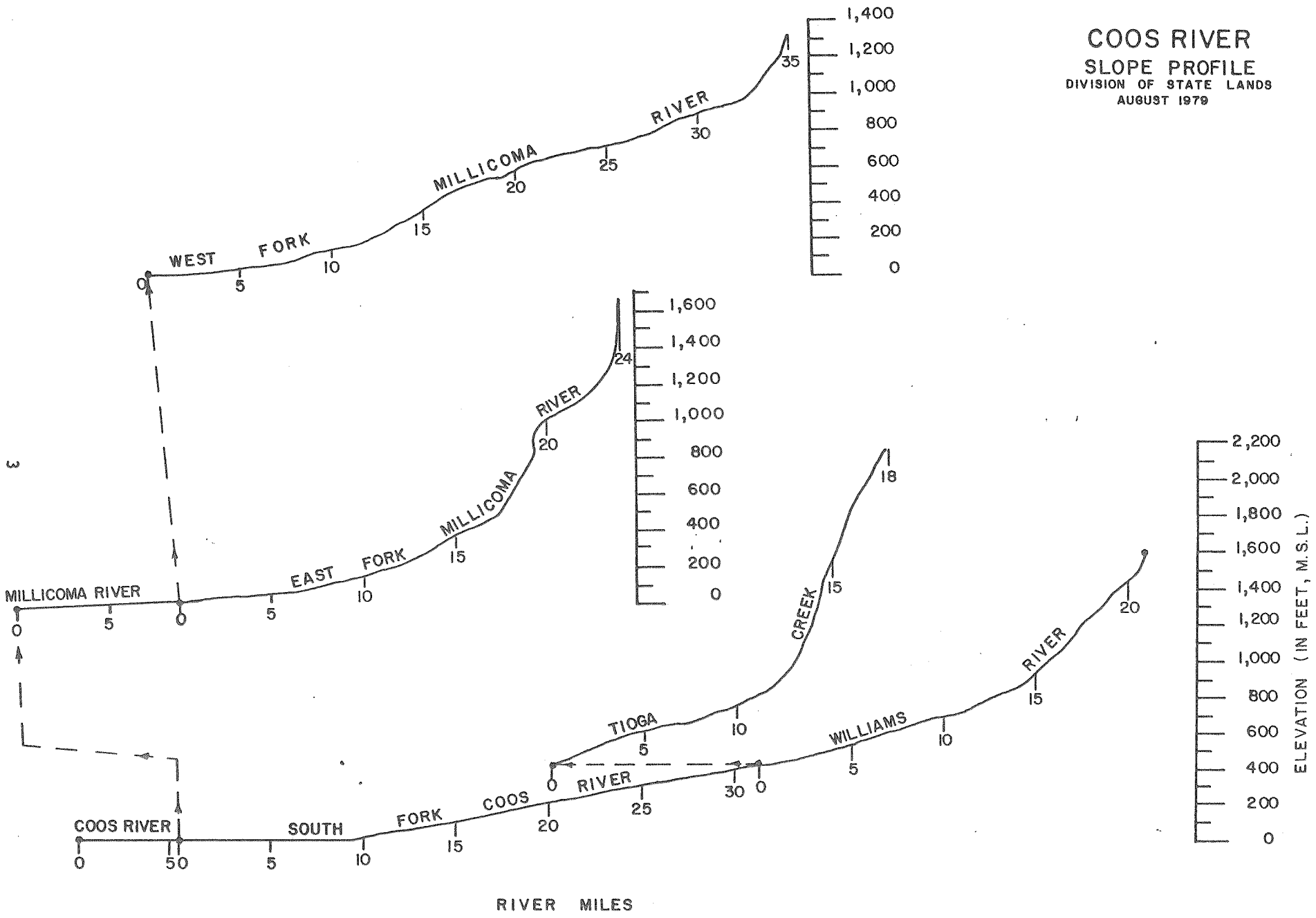
With the exception of Tenmile Lake and a few coastal rivulets, Coos County is identical with the watershed of the Coos and Coquille Rivers (though most of Williams River on the South Coos and seventeen miles of the headwaters of the Middle Fork of the Coquille through Camas Valley are part of Douglas County). The two rivers have separate mouths (Figs. 1 & 3). The wide entrance and capacious harbor of Coos Bay made it the favored port and accounted for the early and continued economic ascendancy of that river despite the greater length and superior agricultural resources of Coquille River. The narrower mouth of the Coquille was often choked by the encroaching northern sandbar, while on its southern flank the gauntlet of menacing rocks imperiled ships trying to negotiate the constricted river entrance. Even after construction of the jetty at the end of the nineteenth century, [2] the obstacles of rock and narrow channel left the Coquille less adapted to ocean commerce than Coos Bay.

The two river systems which drain a total area of 1,823 square miles are virtually joined between Isthmus Slough, which runs south from Coos Bay, and Beaver Slough, which runs north from the Coquille. Except for the opposition of Coquille River sawmill owners and the timely advent of railroad and automobile, these two river systems would probably long since have been joined by a canal which would have made them one continuous waterway.[3] Not only are the two main rivers of Coos County thus nearly joined, but the headwaters of the South Coss and North and East Forks of the Coquille interlace between the dividing ridges of the Coastal Mountain Range. Within the Coquille system itself, the North, East and Middle Forks and their tributaries also constitute a maze of watercourses which interpenetrate throughout the central portion of the county. Only the headwaters of the Middle and South Forks of the Coquille exist in some sort of discreet isolation from the other main streams of the basin.



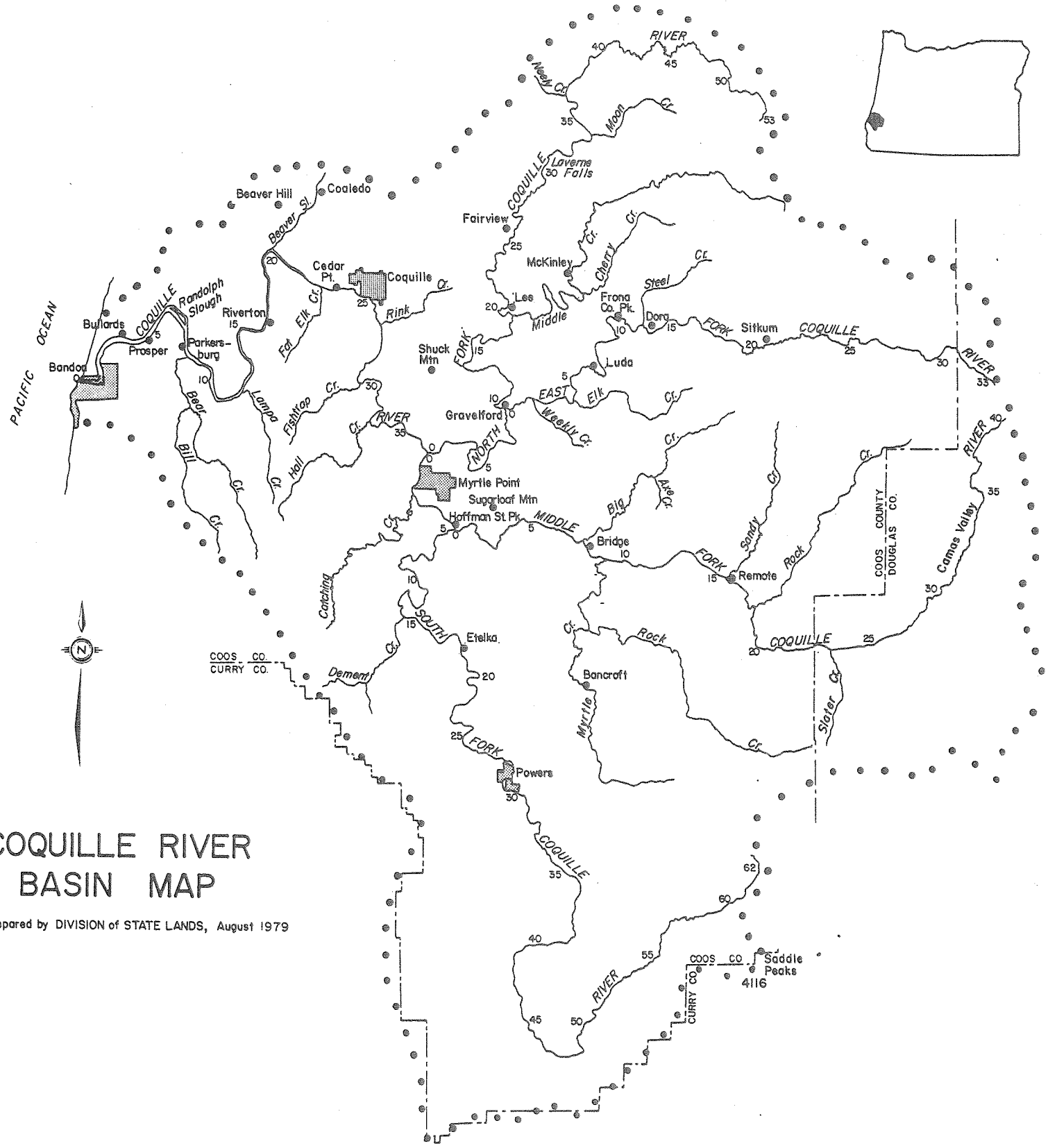
COOS RIVER BASIN MAP

Prepared by DIVISION of STATE LANDS August, 1979


COOS RIVER
SLOPE PROFILE
DIVISION OF STATE LANDS
AUGUST 1979
WEST FORK MILLICOMA RIVER
0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35
1,400 1,200 1,000 800 600 400 200 0
EAST FORK MILLICOMA RIVER
0 5 0 5 10 15 20 24
1,600 1,400 1,200 1,000 800 600 400 200 0
MILLICOMA RIVER
0 5
TIOGA CREEK
0 5 10 15 18
WILLIAMS RIVER
0 5 10 15 20
2,200 2,000 1,800 1,600 1,400 1,200 1,000 800 600 400 200 0
ELEVATION (IN FEET, M.S.L.)
COOS RIVER
0 50
SOUTH FORK COOS RIVER
0 5 10 15 20 25 30 0
RIVER MILES

Most of the mountains in the headwaters of the two rivers only rise to between one and two thousand feet of elevation; just one peak near the head of the South Fork of the Coquille exceeds 4,000 feet. It is characteristic of the two rivers that tidal influence extends very high. On the Millicoma this is one mile above Allegany on each fork or about ten miles from Coos Bay. On the South Coos, tidal effects extend to the site of the old State fish hatchery; this is 17 miles from the bay and 28 2/3 channel miles from the Pacific. The head of tide on the Coquille lies in the vicinity of Myrtle Point, or 39 1/4 miles from the Pacific on the South Fork: at the time of white settlement it even extended to the mouth of the Middle Fork at River Mile 41.[4] Above tidewater there is moderate gradient on the various branches of the Coos, but on the Coquille there is relatively low gradient for a number of miles. Then on the three southern Forks of the Coquille there is steep gradient before level mountain valleys are reached, making bench shaped profiles of their beds before the final steep slope of the upper headwaters is reached (Figs. 2 & 4).

The beds of the stream on the branches of the Coos and the two northern forks of the Coquille are traversed by bedrock reefs which are usually low and smoothed over. They are pocked with erosion craters of various diameters which give them a lunar or meteorite aspect (Figs. 5 & 6). Above the bed on the two northern branches of the Coquille, the banks form U or box shaped channels of various widths and heights. Along the North Fork of the Coquille at River Mile 30, for example, the bed is 50 feet across with little depression and from it the banks rise in perpendicular fashion to 25 feet. Besides the typical reefs and pools encountered on the beds of these branches of the rivers, gravel deposits occasionally smooth out the bed. Gravel deposits are thick and predominate on the lower reaches of the North Fork and also on the South Fork of



COQUILLE RIVER BASIN MAP

Prepared by DIVISION of STATE LANDS, August 1979

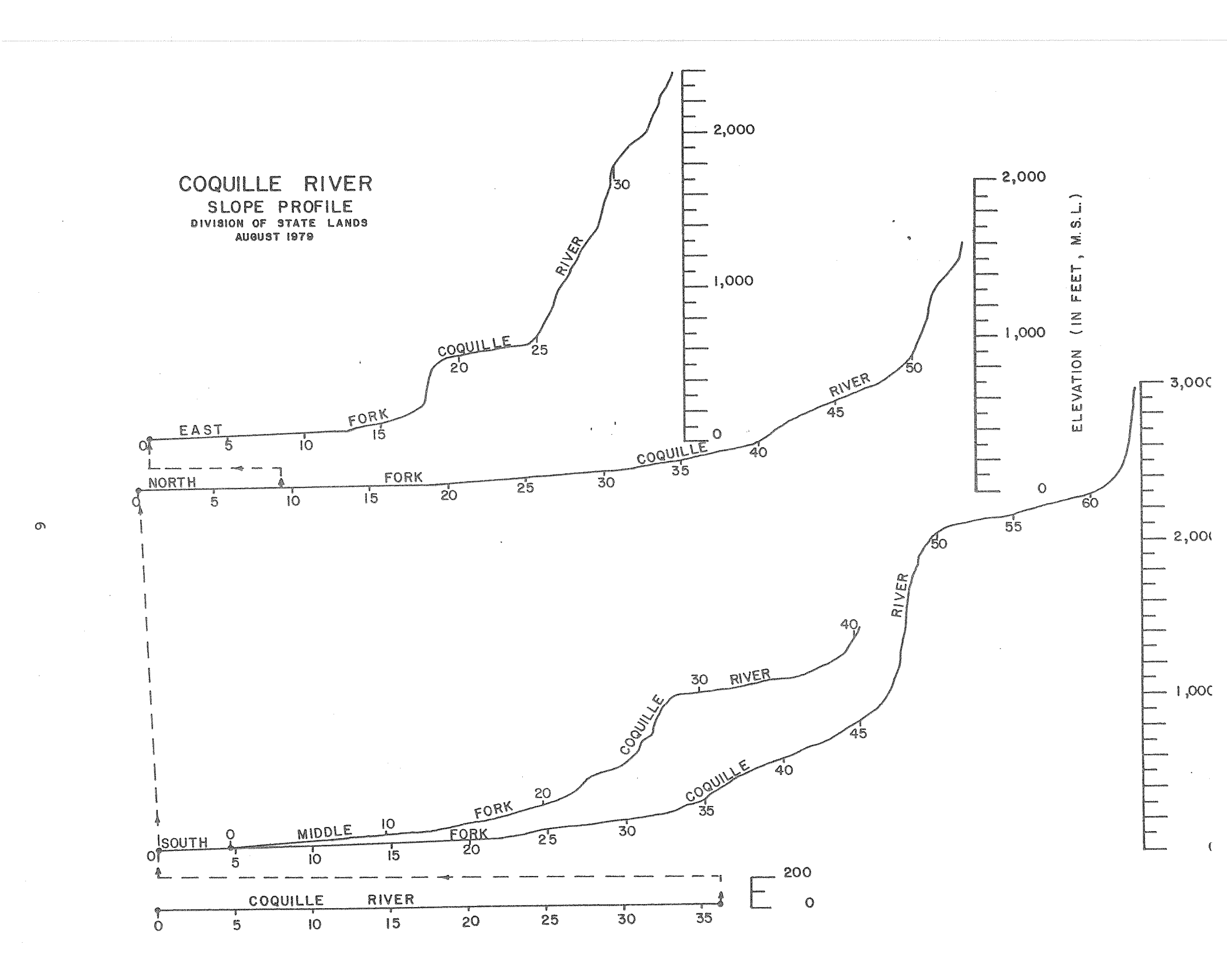

COQUILLE RIVER
SLOPE PROFILE
DIVISION OF STATE LANDS
AUGUST 1979
ELEVATION (IN FEET, M.S.L.)
2,000
1,000
0
3,000
EAST FORK COQUILLE RIVER
NORTH FORK COQUILLE RIVER
SOUTH FORK COQUILLE RIVER
MIDDLE FORK COQUILLE RIVER
COQUILLE RIVER
200
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45
50
55
60

Fig. 5a. Falls on West Fork Millicoma near RM 11. August 28, 1979

Fig. 5b. Bed of West Fork Millicoma, RM 4.5. August 28, 1979

Fig. 6a. Bed of East Fork Millicoma near RM 2.
August 28, 1979

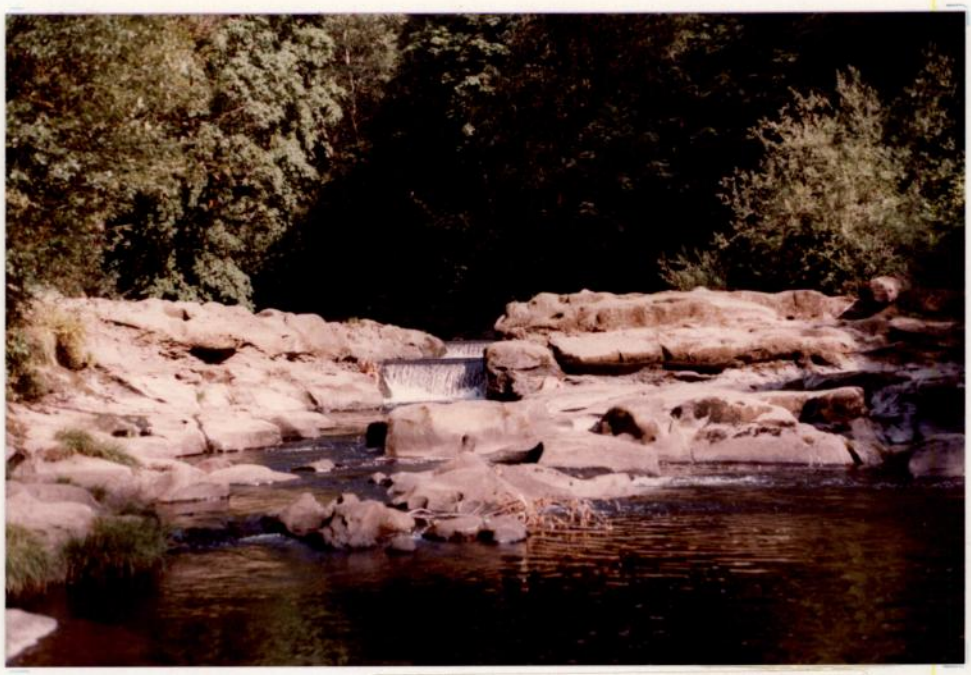


Fig. 6b. Lower Laverne Falls on North Fork Coquille, RM 31.3.
July 19, 1979

the Coquille, the longest and highest elevated stream in the basin (Figs. 4 & 7). As elevations increase, the several river beds are littered with boulders and they tend toward V shaped configurations.

Surrounding these channels are narrow agricultural strips in the lower reaches of the rivers and in some of the flatter elevated valleys. The most extensive alluvial plain is on the tidal portion of the Coquille, especially between Myrtle Point and Coquille City. Minerals have been found in various places in the basin, but the low hills and mountains of Coos County, from and through which the various branches of the waterways thread, have been and remain chiefly valuable for their thick growing forests. Lumbering is the county's number one industry.[5]

Very few points within the Coos-Coquille river system have had measurements of water discharge. The South Fork of the Coquille at Powers, RM 64.5, has had 786 cubic feet per second average discharge during a 59 year period (high 48,900 cubic feet, low 12). On the North Fork near Fairview, the average for 15 years ending 1977 has been 295 cubic feet per second (high 7,760 cubic feet, low 2). At this fork's mouth an interrupted 22 year record between 1928 and 1968 gave a mean flow of 945 cubic feet per second with a high of 38,400 cubic feet per second on December 23, 1964 and low of 1.2 cubic feet per second on August 12, 1968. Near the mouth of the Middle Fork, the mean flow for the sixteen years commencing in 1930 (while the Middle Fork Boom Company's dams were in operation, see below) was 743 cubic feet per second. The high was 23,600 cubic feet per second with an estimate for the earlier flood of October 31, 1924 of 31,800 cubic feet per second. The low flow was 1 cubic foot per second in mid-July 1931.[6]

On the Millicoma's West Fork near Allegany (RM 6.82), the average for 24 years has been 256 cubic feet per second (high 8,100 cubic feet per second,

Fig. 7a. South Fork Coquille at Warner, RM 15. July 20, 1979

Fig. 7b. South Fork Coquille at mouth of Robbins Creek (left) RM 11.5. September 12, 1979

low 1.8).[7] These figures speak to the fact that winter freshets can greatly swell the volume of water carried in the rivers while during the summer dry periods flows may nearly cease. This drying has been aggrevated in recent years by heavy irrigation diversion in all the streams that have agricultural land, so streamflows become very depleted in the lower reaches above tidewater during summer months.

NAVIGATION

The original point of settlement in the basin was Empire City on the east bank of the mouth of Coos Bay which is now the western portion of Coos Bay City. The bay, hailed as the largest natural harbor on the Pacific Coast between San Francisco and the mouth of the Columbia, was the focus of pioneer arrivals which began in earnest during 1853. This followed the successful entry into Coos Bay and departure of the schooner Nassau in May 1852. The impetus for settlement was direct exploitation of gold and other minerals - the transiently rich black sand gold deposits at Whiskey Run were discovered in 1853 - and supplying of goods to mining centers in the Rogue Valley, Northern California and tributary to San Francisco Bay. Very shortly the Coos Bay economy became almost exclusively centered on the supply of lumber, coal, apples, dairy and other agricultural products to the Golden Gate. Indeed throughout the late nineteenth century, Coos Bay and the Coquille valley were economic colonies of San Francisco.[8]

Because San Francisco was the lodestar of the Coos Bay economy into the twentieth century, water transport was crucial not only between Coos County and the California port, but also within the waterways of the county itself. It was not until the second and third decades of the twentieth century that railroads and good highways joined the Coos country to the rest of the Oregon market.[9] So important was water transport in early Coos county that The Coos Bay

Monthly, a periodical devoted to boasting the advantages of the region and elevating its cultural life, referred to it as "A Western Venice" in 1907. It justified this appelation as follows:

> Probably nowhere else in America can a place be found where a community like that of Coos Bay depends so entirely upon water transportation as do the people of this section.... The whole configuration of the country is such that the settlers outside of the towns nearly all live within a stone's throw of navigable streams. Coos River is traversed by steamers for a distance of about 17 miles from the bay on each fork, the north and south, and both sides of the river are lined with dairy farms to the head of navigation. [On Catching Isthmus, North, Haynes, Willanch and Kentuck inlets] are steamers or launches making a business of carrying freight and passengers and making daily trips to the Bay towns.... The first settlers followed the custom of "the first families" and traveled in dug-outs until skiffs and boats could be constructed. So, in the old days every farmer had a large boat in which he brought his lighter produce to market at absolutely no expense beyond his own time and muscle. A day, with the tide right, sufficed for a trip to town and back home again. For hay or heavy loads a scow was brought into requisition, and in this case a somewhat longer time, but no more expense, was involved.... The Alert makes daily trips to Marshfield from Allegany at the head of navigation on the north fork of Coos River.... The dairy farms along the route furnish daily freight, and the boat does a large business.... The Coos River....runs to Marshfield from the head of navigation on the south fork of Coos River. She has been on the route for many years.[10]

Elsewhere the same journal, variously referring to the county as a modern or an agricultural Venice, noted that there were nearly two hundred gasoline powered launches on the bay:

> They vary from the size and style of an ordinary rowboat to that of a good seagoing craft. Some regularly cross the bar, bringing deep sea fish into market, and lighter craft often run around to the Coquille river, crossing both bars without trouble. The introduction of gasoline a few years ago worked a great revolution in navigation of the bay and its tributaries.

A 1909 publication state that 300 gasoline powered vessels were registered on Coos Bay.[11]

Thus dependent upon boats both for extra and intramural communication, a thriving ship and boat building industry developed on both Coos Bay and the Coquille (Figs. 8 & 9). The latter river witnessed the construction of the

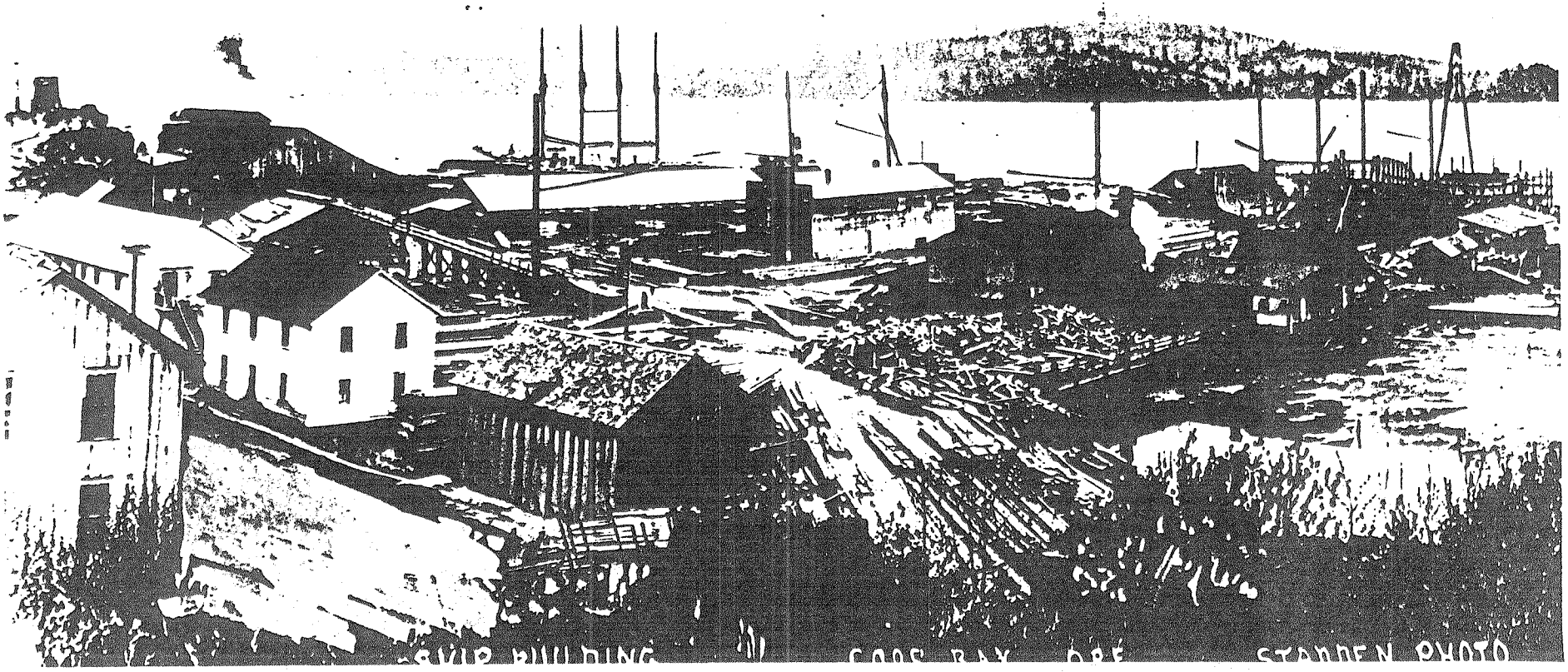


Fig. 8. Ship building at
Coos Bay.
Oregon Historical Society
Collection

Fig. 9. J. H. Price Shipyard on the Coquille, 1908. Bandon Historical Society Collection

first ship, a 30 foot sailing vessel of unknown name, in 1857. Coos Bay was the major center of shipbuilding, however, which began with the Blanco constructed in 1859 at North Bend. This was the first of a fleet of 59 vessels built on the Bay by Capt. A. M. Simpson for his farflung lumber empire. Simpson's yard, under the master shipbuilder John Kruse, built the finest sailing vessels on the Pacific Coast, Western Shore, fastest of the clipper ships, and the Louis, first five masted schooner built in the United States. Other major ships built on Coos Bay have been listed by Victor West, Jr.[12]

The Coquille again became the scene of shipbuilding with the arrival of Capt. Rackleff and his son William. On August 25, 1859 they successfully crossed the Coquille bar in Twin Sisters built on the Umpqua. William E. Rackleff returned to the valley in 1870 and the following year constructed the Mary which he operated on the river between the mouth and the forks for a year. His more successful riverboat Little Annie was built in 1876. Meanwhile the Grube sawmill had constructed an ocean going schooner, the Eliza Johanson in 1869. From these beginnings until 1945, fifty-five other ships and riverboats were built on the Coquille plus at least 40 smaller tugs and river craft.[13]

FERRIES

All references to ferries discovered show that they were on the tidal portion of the Coos or Coquille rivers. While the rivers were still under the jurisdiction of Jackson County, its commissioners granted a license to W. H. Harris on January 13, 1854 to operate a ferry across Coos Bay at Empire City. The earliest reference to a ferry in the Coos County Court Journal is for July 13, 1859 when J. B. Duffy was licensed to operate a ferry across the Coquille River; P. D. Davis received a similar license February 5, 1861. On

July 8, 1862, S. Crawford was granted a license by the County Court for a ferry across Coos Bay at Empire City. The vessel used was a rowboat. John Lewis was granted a five year ferry license at the mouth of the Coquille River in 1878, and in 1892 W. S. Ransford was authorized to operate a ferry across South Slough at Rozell's Boat House.[14]

Perhaps because of the ubiquity of boats on the rivers, the County Court did not begin to operate free ferries until the present century. On July 10, 1905 the first of these was established at Coquille City. The next year a free ferry began operation across South Slough. Two years later the Marshfield-East Marshfield free ferry was inaugurated, and Bullards obtained a similar county service in 1909 (Figs. 10 & 11). A free ferry operated at Riverton between 1911 and 1916, but when Glasgow requested such service to North Bend in 1917, the petition was denied.[15]

The slow extension of highways in Coos County led to the establishment of two ferries on Coos River during the early 1920's to accommodate autos. The Engren ferry was a barge which crossed the Coos six miles above its mouth. On the South Coos near Dellwood, the Jes Smith ferry operated from 1930 to 1936.[16] There were probably other ferries on the Coos-Coquille waterways which have not been identified.

UPPER HEAD OF VESSEL NAVIGATION

The importance of water transport to and from and upon the tidal portions of Coos Bay, Coos River, the Millicoma and the Coquille is so well known and fully documented that it is only necessary in this report to locate the upper head of boat navigation on the main streams in the basin.

Coos River

On the Coos, the first regular steamboat to operate was the Bertha which

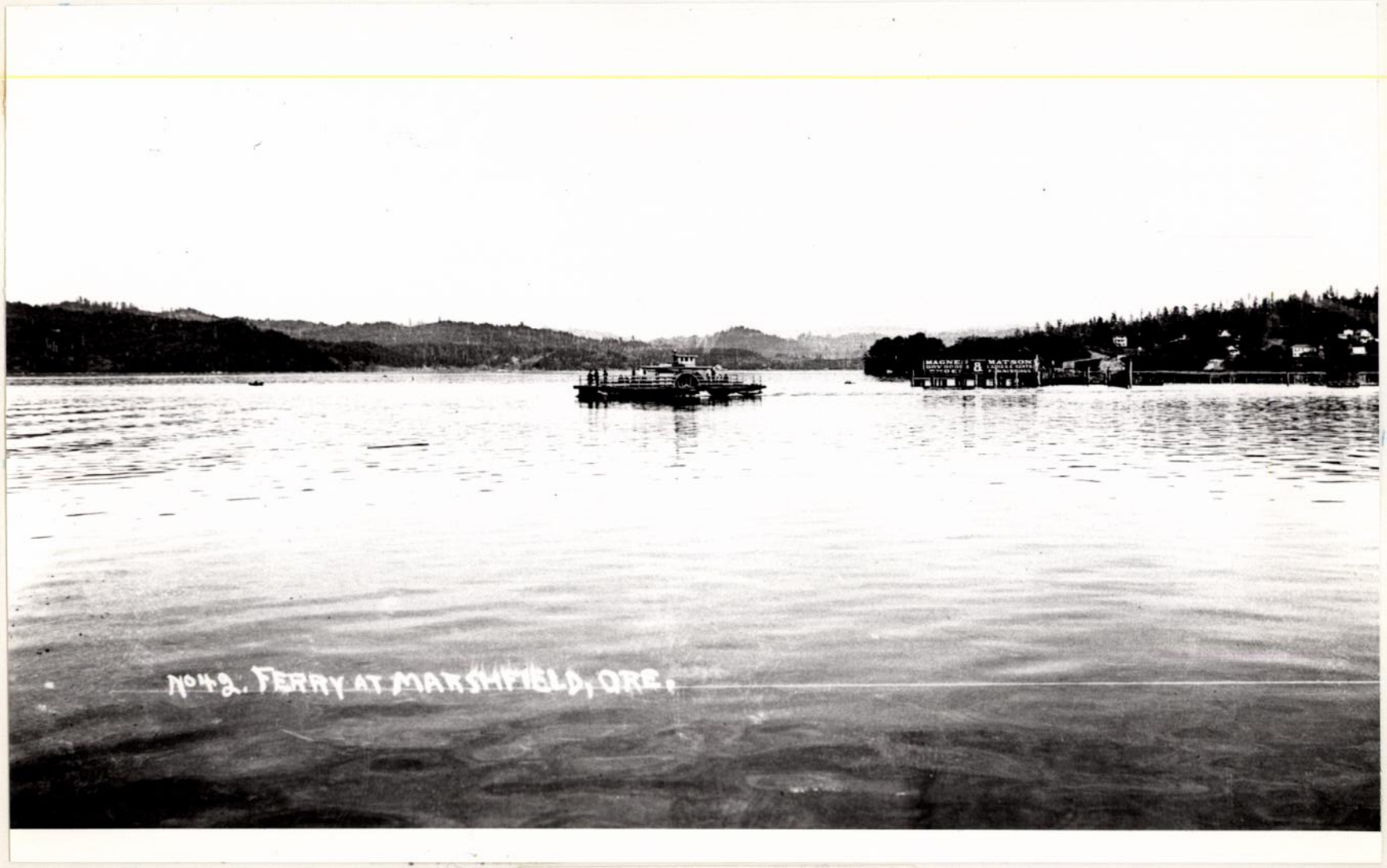


Fig. 10. Marshfield Ferry.
Oregon Historical Society
Collection

Fig. 11. Bullards Ferry.
Bandon Historical Society
Collection

commenced service in 1879 and ran on alternate days up the South and North branches of the river.[17] The upper head of boat navigation was virtually identical with the head of tide on both branches of this river. Jesse Ott, aged 93 of Allegany, began his steamboating carreer on the Millicoma in 1906 and ended it Christmas Day 1948; he states that Allegany was the head of vessel navigation (Figs. 12-14). Rowboats might have gone to the head of tide above that town but never above tidehead. Even the regular steamboats had occasionally to transfer passengers to smaller vessels, the Transfer and Florence, in order to make the last few miles to Allegany.[18]

On the South Fork, boats would go to Dellwood or McKnight's Landing (Figs. 15 & 16). In 1910 Albert E. Seaman blasted a half mile channel from McKnight's Landing to the Fish Hatchery in order to be able to take his launch to the hatchery's boat landing when there were small tides. When the Ray Brothers took barges to the landing in connection with their logging operation in 1935-36, they had to winch them in the last few hundred feet. There may have been boat use at least as high as River Mile 14 during the mid-1930's because Hugh Barclay who owned a ranch between RM 12.5 and 14.5,[19] which he used as a summer home and proposed to develop for other summer homes, stated in a court case decided in 1938 that "South Coos river has stretches of navigable water at all seasons, and these stretches consist of the long, deep pools over which many people navigate small pleasure craft." (159 OR 272).

Beaver Slough

Though tidal, this waterway experienced the most difficult boat navigation in the basin, but because most external trade passed through Coos Bay, this link between the waters of Coquille River and Isthmus Slough was of necessity

Fig. 12. 1895 Corps of Engineers Map showing head of navigation on the two Forks of Coos River. House Ex. Doc. No. 237, 53rd Congress, 3rd Session.

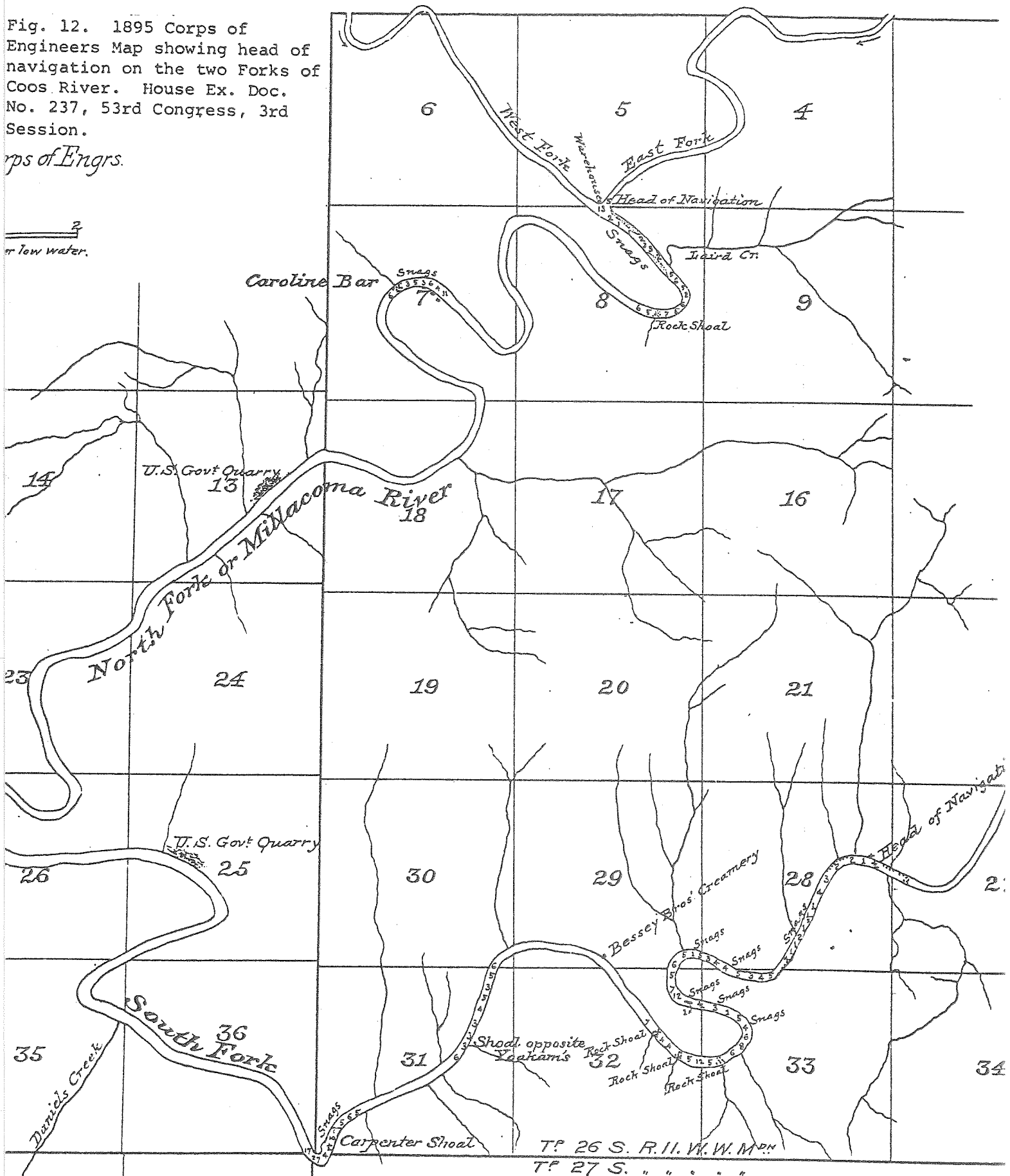


Fig. 13. Alert, Rainbow and unidentified gasoline launch at Allegany, 1912.
Jack's Photos, Coos Bay

Fig. 14. Mecca (left) and Millicoma frozen in at Allegany, 1924.
Jack's Photos, Coos Bay

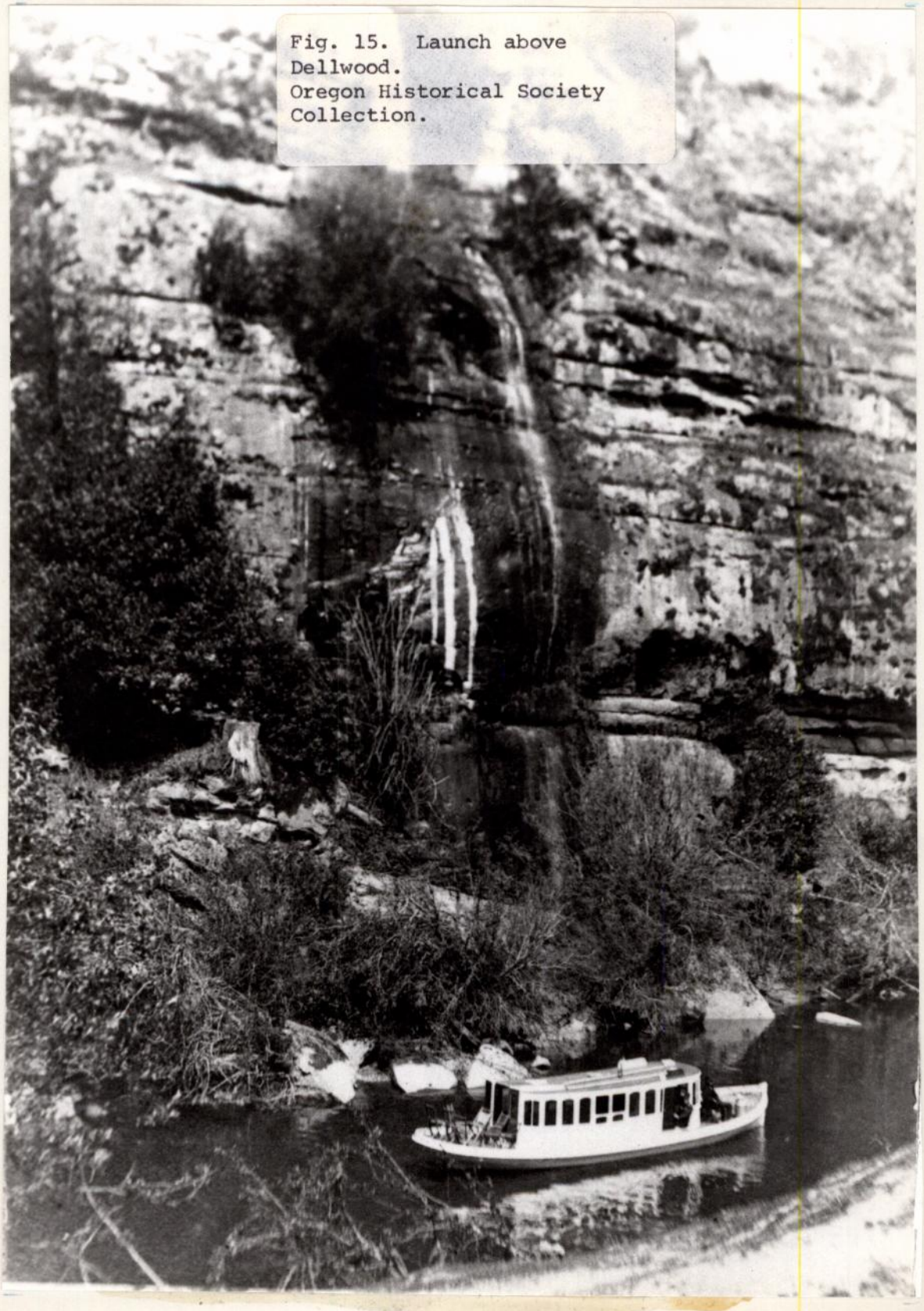


Fig. 15. Launch above Dellwood.
Oregon Historical Society Collection.

Fig. 16a. Rainbow, Hope and Tioga at Smith Ranch, South Coos River, 1915.
Jack's Photos, Coos Bay

Fig. 16b. South Coos at Fish Hatchery site, Head of Tide, RM 12.
July 1979

exploited by the early settlers. R. C. Dement, whose family gave its name to Dement Creek on the South Fork of the Coquille (RM 14.5), recalled the family's journey through the slough from Coos Bay to their new home, a narrative which also throws light on canoe navigation of the South Fork of the Coquille:

> Some time about the middle of '55 we packed our worldly goods into two Indian canoes. Among other things father had gotten hold of a sow and six or eight pigs. Well, he crated them up some way and took them along with a few blacksmith tools and our household goods. We had our canoes well loaded.... We made the head of Isthmus slough the first day. There were some Indians there who helped us move across the isthmus 1 1/4 miles to the head of Beaver slough.... One squaw carried the anvil weighing 125 pounds on her back with a strap around her forehead. Next we had Beaver slough to navigate. About five miles with trees and brush hanging over our heads and beaver dams every little ways.... We were all day getting down to the Coquille river.... Father had to make several trips through the slough before he had all of our plunder safely on the banks of the Coquille.... Then we moved on up with our canoes as far as the junction of the south and middle forks. Our home was to be six miles further up river. On account of many rapids on the south fork, it was not advisable to go further in our canoes, though father did hire some Indians to take his blacksmith tools on up the river in a canoe.[20]

Esther Lockhart had descended the slough the previous year, she believed it to have been the first journey upon it by a woman:

> It really seemed a perilous undertaking then, even to a pioneer woman, to ride through this remarkably unusual and picturesque inlet. In many places the stream was very deep. Every few rods it turned and twisted abruptly. Trees of spruce, alder, fir, cedar, tasselwood, wild cherry, crabapple, willow and various other kinds, with many large shrubs, lined the banks. Many of these were intertwined with wild blackberry and other vines that formed an almost impenetrable tangle. In many places the brush and branches reached far over the stream, sometimes threatening to push us out of the boat if we relaxed our vigilance. At that time neither my husband nor I could swim, and with three young children and some household goods in our little craft, we had need of caution. But what made this short voyage interesting and most unusual was the fact that it was the home of countless busy beavers, from whose presence the stream had been named.... My husband was obliged to paddle up to the bank every few hundred feet, sometimes oftener, disembark and destroy the ingenious dams the animals had constructed across the narrow stream. We knew,

> however, that only a short time would elapse before the obstructions would be rebuilt, and that a traveler coming through the slough the next day would probably find as many dams there as we had found.[21]

Even when Capt. Dunham regularly ran the 23 foot steamer Mud Hen on the slough during the 1880's, the beaver dams continued to impede traffic. By 1886 he had 6 barges on the slough and planned to add another steamer. A bill was introduced in the 1887 legislature to have locks built on the slough.[22] In the autumn of 1889, however, conditions had deteriorated to the point where the Coos County Court found it necessary to take action:

> It appearing that Beaver Slough from its mouth to Coaledo is and has been for over 20 years one of the principal thoroughfares in the county, and that the same has been continually used and traveled with boats by the public during the time, and that it is necessary for the traveling public that said slough be kept open, and that for a few years past said Slough has been filling up with brush and logs so that the same is now almost impassible. It is therefore ordered that J. F. Dunham be allowed the sum of $100.00 to be by him expended in assisting in opening said Slough.[23]

Three years later the jungle had again advanced:

> It being necessary in the winter months to have said Slough open for travel, it being about the only route of travel between the Bay and the Coquille River in the winter, and whereas said Slough has grown up with grass and brush and filled with logs so the same cannot be traveled. It is therefore ordered that the sum of $75.00 be appropriated to improve said Beaver Slough, and that same be placed in the hands of J. F. Dunham.[24]

The waterway long remained the subject of tall tales and even hyperbolic verse.[25]

Coquille River

The construction of jettys at the mouth of the Coquille was first undertaken by local interests and then adopted as a project by the U. S. Army Engineers in 1878 and work begun by them in 1881.

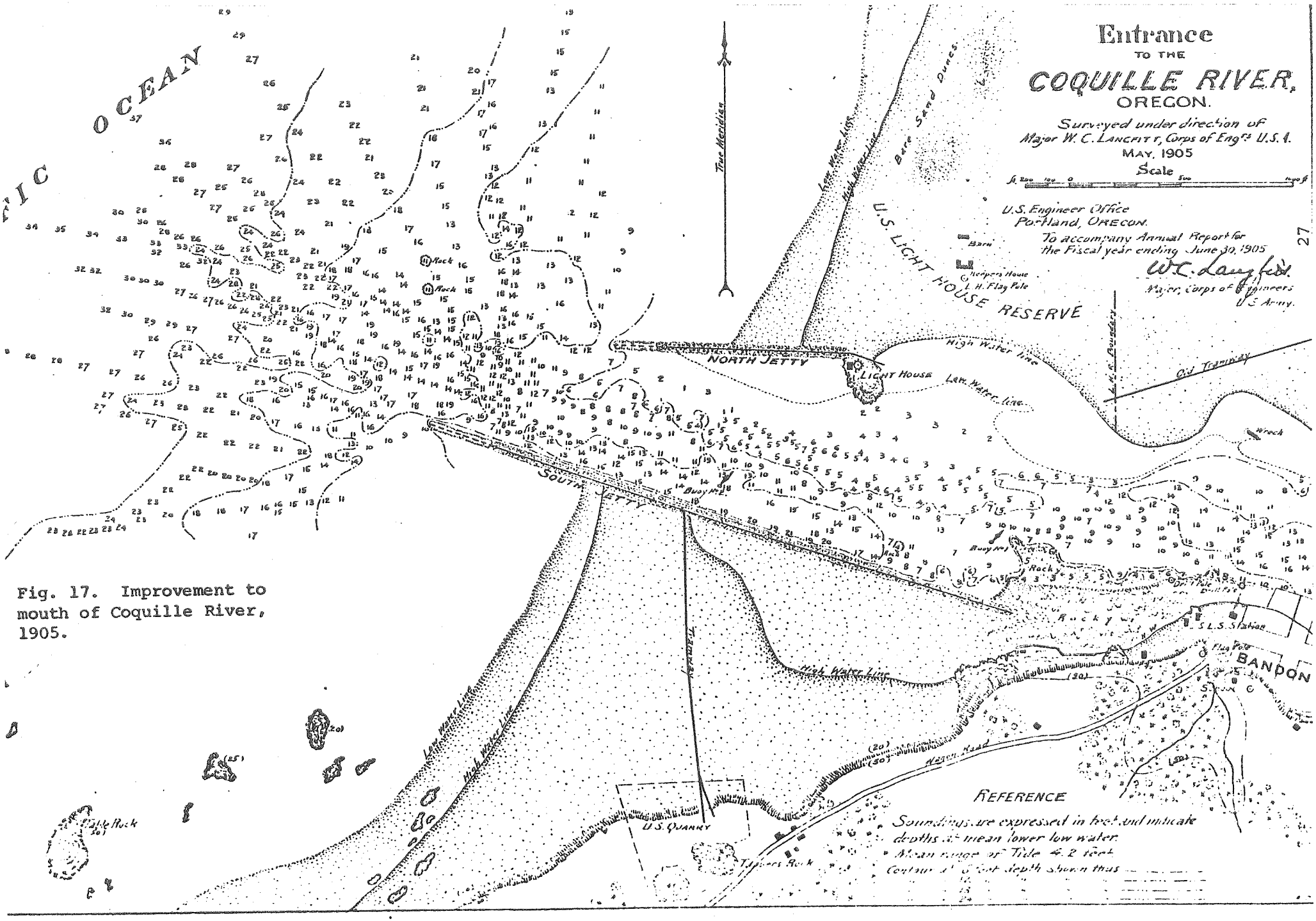


Fig. 17. Improvement to mouth of Coquille River, 1905.

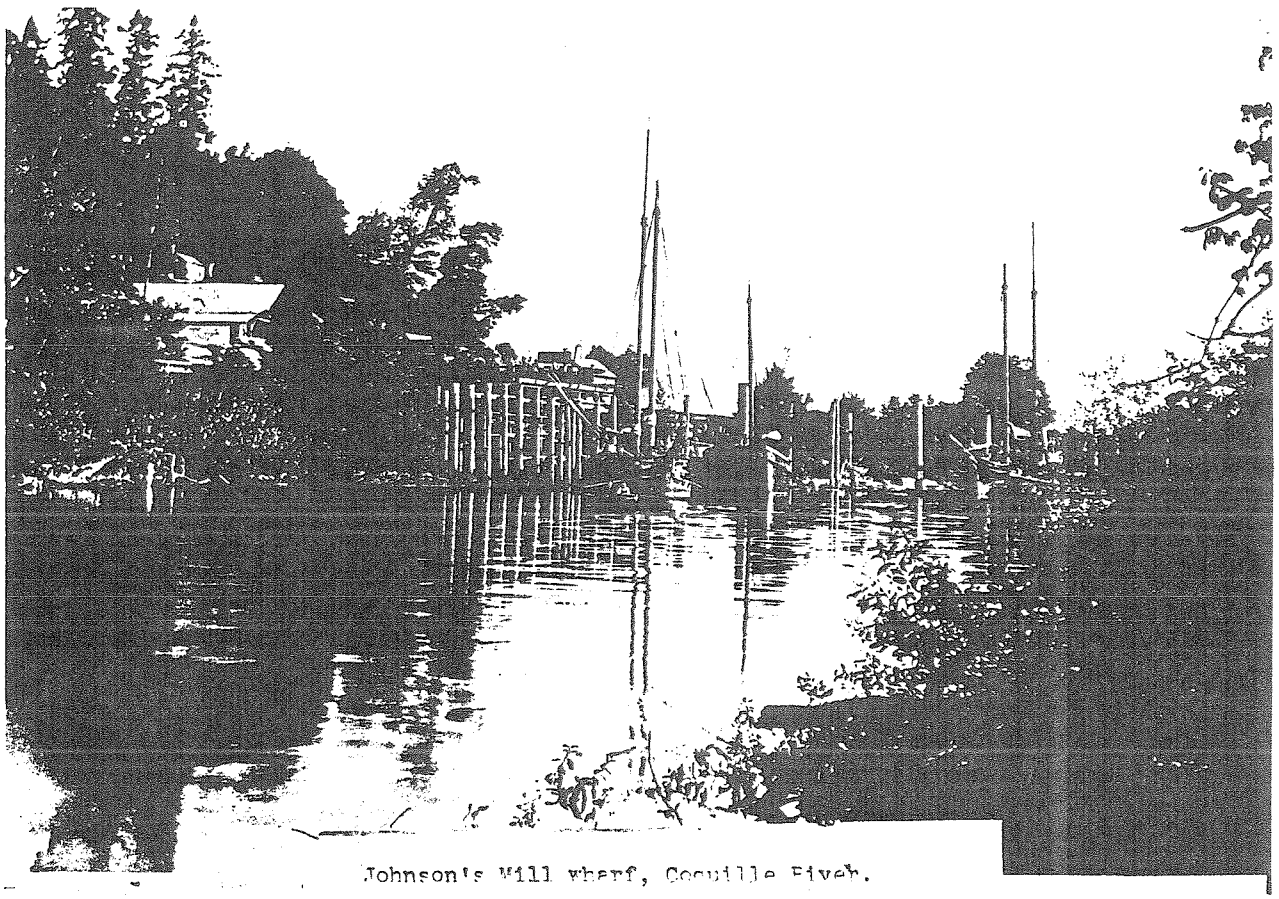


Fig. 18. Johnson's Sawmill wharf, 1894 (River Mile 28). Coos-Curry Museum Collection.

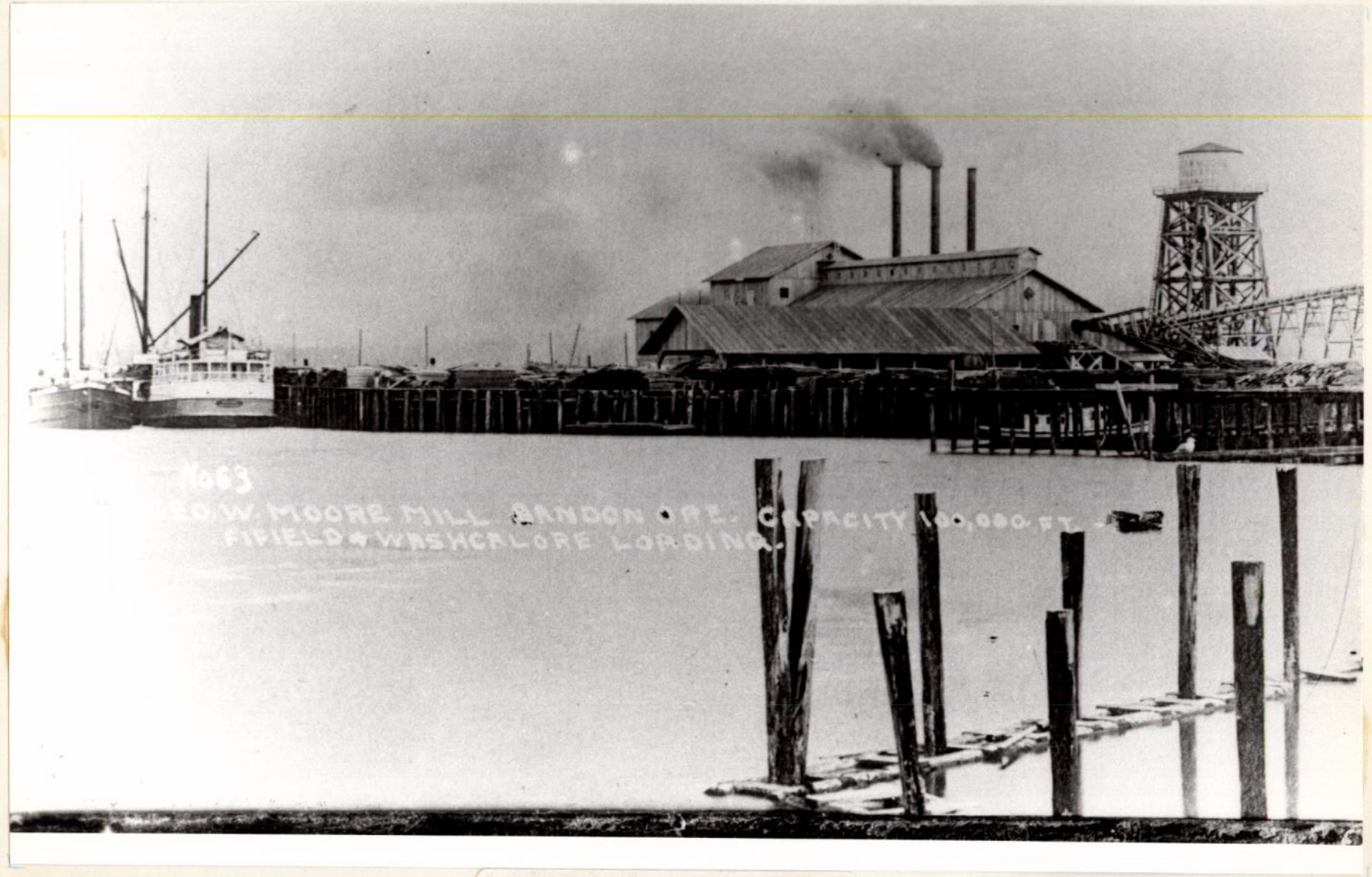
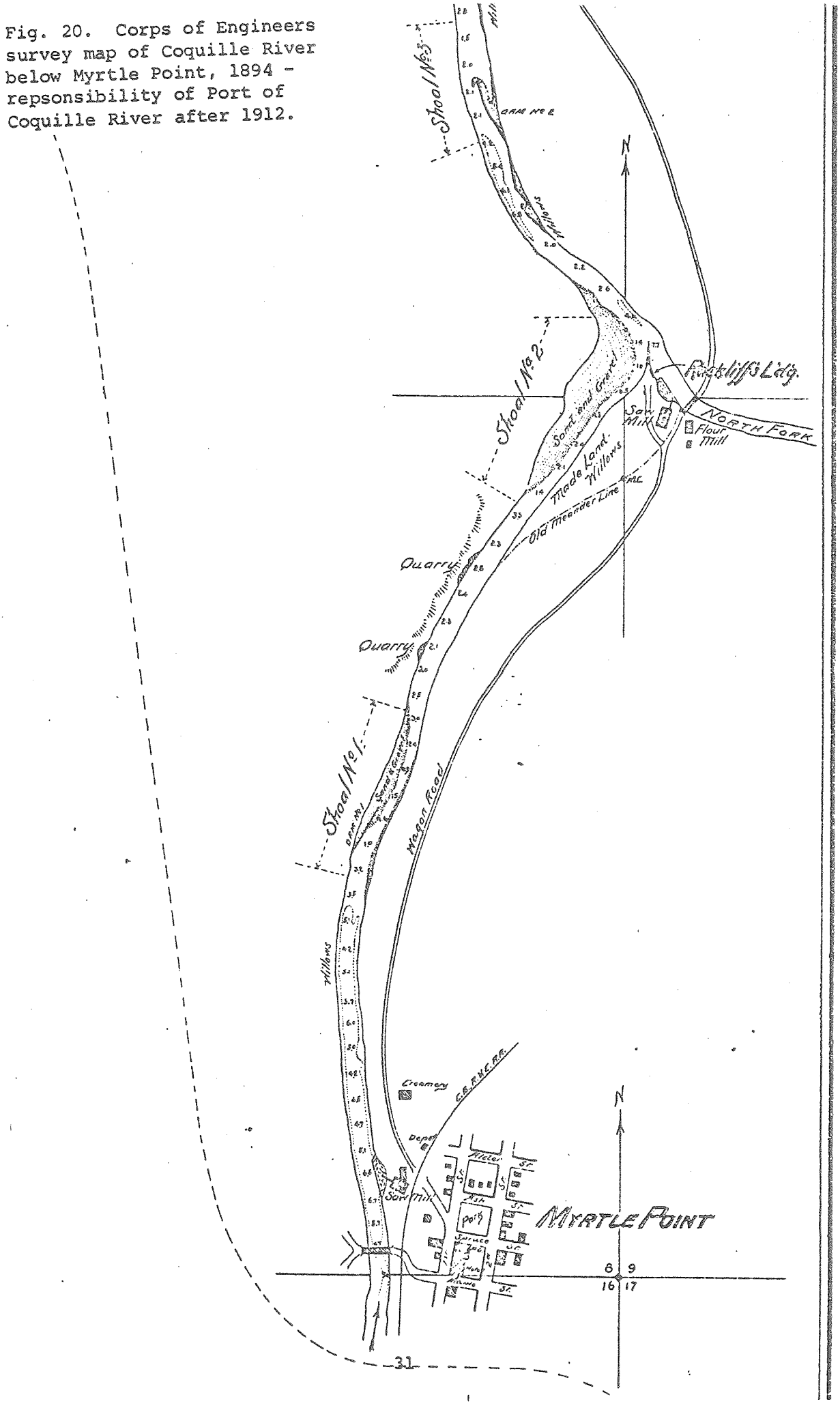


Fig. 19. Fifield and Washcalore trading at George W. Moore Mill, Bandon.
Oregon Historical Society Collection.

By the end of the nineteenth century the works had proceeded to the point that ocean navigation from the river became much more feasible (Figs. 17-19).[26] One of the effects of this improvement was to stimulate commerce on the upper Coquille. The Engineers were called upon to improve the river channel throughout its tidal portion up to Myrtle Point in 1888 and snagging began in 1889. A survey of a larger project of channel improvement was made in 1891 and that project approved the following year. Annual improvements were made after 1893 and in 1894 significant dredging and bank strengthening with pilings was undertaken on the South Fork of the Coquille immediately below Myrtle Point (Figs. 20, 21).[27]

Improved commercial possibilities at Myrtle Point, which linked that port to ocean-going shipping which went as high as Coquille City (Figs. 22, 23), in turn stimulated greater use of water transport above the head of tide on the several forks of the Coquille. In 1901 James M. Bright of Gravelford on the North Fork (RM 9.2) began construction of a steamboat to be used between that settlement and Myrtle Point; in January or February 1902 it made its maiden voyage as the J. Warren. By 1904 navigation on the North Fork was so well established that the Corps of Engineers regulated log driving as far up the Coquille as Gravelford in order to aid passage of vessels.[28] In 1907 the steam engine of the 22 foot J. Warren was replaced by a gasoline one.[29] J. M. and William Albert Bright continued to operate on this route during winter months - anywhere between November and April - until about 1912.[30] In January 1910 the people of Gravelford were inconvenienced because boat trips from that point were temporarily prevented by unusually heavy log runs on the North Fork.[31] The following December, however, the newly built sternwheeler Myrtle (Fig. 24), which normally operated between Myrtle Point and Coquille City made a trip to Gravelford. This feat of the Myrtle, which had a length of 57.4 feet and depth

Fig. 20. Corps of Engineers survey map of Coquille River below Myrtle Point, 1894 - repsonsibility of Port of Coquille River after 1912.



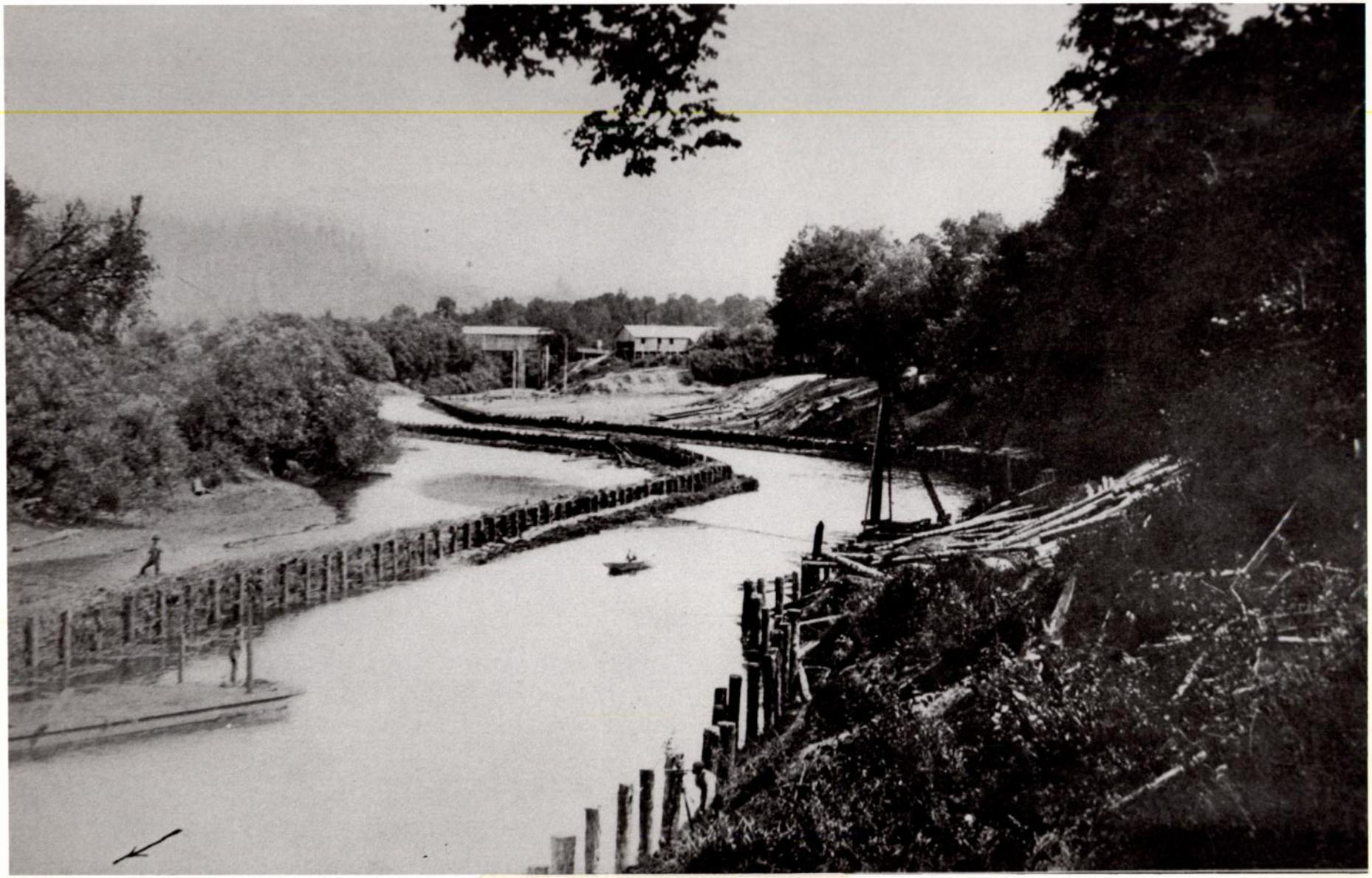


Fig. 21. Improvements of Coquille by Corps of Engineers at Shoal No. 3; looking upriver to Rackleff Landing, 1895.

Fig. 22. Sternwheeler Dispatch between Coquille City and Bandon. Oregon Historical Society Collection.

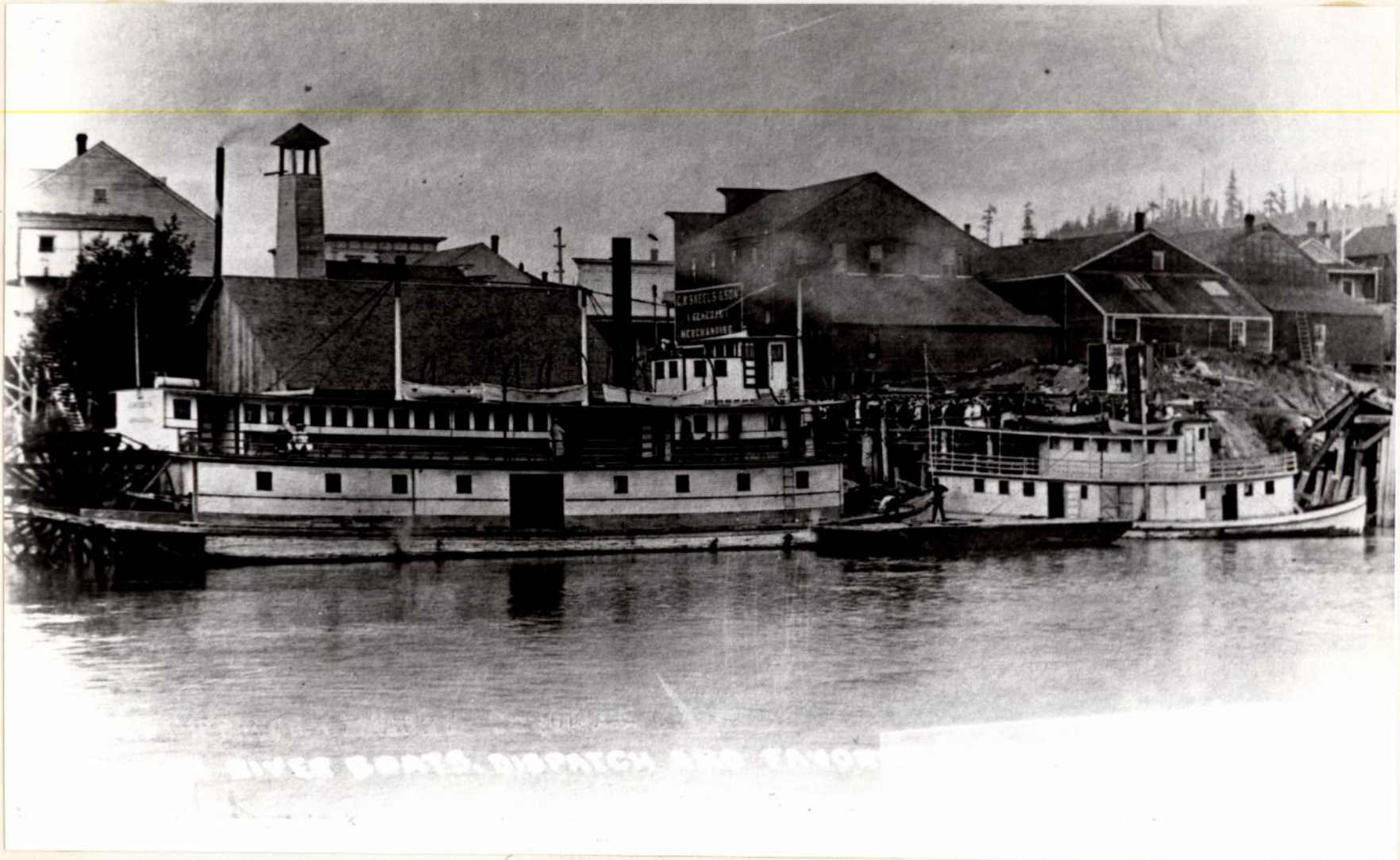


Fig. 23. Dispatch and Favorite at Coquille City Landing.
Oregon Historical Society Collection.

of 2.9 feet, was repeated several times when high water occurred during the next decade.[32]

These beginnings encouraged the area's population to take advantage of the 1909 legislation which permitted the establishment of Port authorities "in counties bordering upon bays or rivers navigable from the sea or containing bays or rivers navigable from the sea"[33] to establish a Port of Coquille River. Because they believed that a port centered at Bandon would concentrate most of its funds on the river entrance and tidal portions of the river to the neglect of their transportation needs, the upriver interests desired a separate authority. It would be devoted to improvement of the river near Myrtle Point and branches of the Coquille above tidewater. Proponents of the new port argued that the North and South Forks were navigable for small boats a distance of 15 miles above Myrtle Point. Their election campaign proved successful in 1911, and during January 1912 the Port of Coquille River commenced operations.[34]

One of their first efforts was to request the Corps of Engineers to have the East Fork improved for eight miles (to Pleasand Hill) and the North Fork above Gravelford to River Mile 17 (the lower Lee Valley). In 1914 the Corps turned down this request.[35] By that date it had also stopped dredging above Coquille City to the detriment of navigation to Myrtle Point. This left the Port of Coquille River to clear these river lengths with its own resources. It succeeded in during the task during the first years of its existence.

In 1913, the Port adopted an ordinance and a resolution which defined the scope of their activities on the river. Ordinance No. 2 adopted on June 18, stated:

Sect #1 - It shall not be lawful to place, discharge, or deposit

> by any process or in any manner, ballast, refuse, dirt, ashes, cinders, mud, sand, dredgings, sludge, sawdust, slabs, strips [?], stucups [?], or any other refuse, matter of any kind or description whatever, other than that flowing from streets and sewers and passing therefrom in a liquid state, or to abandon lodged sawlogs in any navigable water of the Port of Coquille River, or in any tributary of any navigable water of said Port, where the same shall be liable to be washed into such navigable water, either by ordinary or high tide or by storm or floods, or otherwise, whereby navigation shall or may be impeded or obstructed.

The resolution of 16 July declared:

> The Port of Coquille River Commission intends making a continual seasonal improvement, during low water of the South, North, and East Fork of the North Fork of the Coquille River, in the following manner, to wit: - By cutting overhanging trees and bush, piling and burning the same when the nature of the banks will permit otherwise by cutting the brush or trees into short lengths. By falling or girdling such trees on top of the river bank, which by their weights are liable to cause the banks to cave in. This will comprise principally myrtles and maples. By cutting off below extreme low water or pulling and placing on the banks for burning where the nature of the banks will permit, all snags from the main channel of these streams. By blasting or bulldozing such boulders as may be necessary.[36]

In the new Port's annual statement for the year 1914 published in their official paper, the Myrtle Point Enterprise, they further promised to improve the North, East, Middle and South Forks of the Coquille for log driving and boating. The following year they proposed to clear the North Fork of snags to Fox Bridge (RM 14.3), the East Fork to the Leatherman Place (approximate RM 8), and the South Fork to the upper end of McNair's place. They stated that light draft boats could at that time use these sections in the rainy season when roads were bad, and that farmers could use them for seven or eight months of the year to get to the creamery and town. For loggers the snagging operations had meant an easier time getting out their logs.[37]

The new Port was so successful on the North and East Forks that the Myrtle was able to get as far as Fox Bridge during February 1918, while on the East

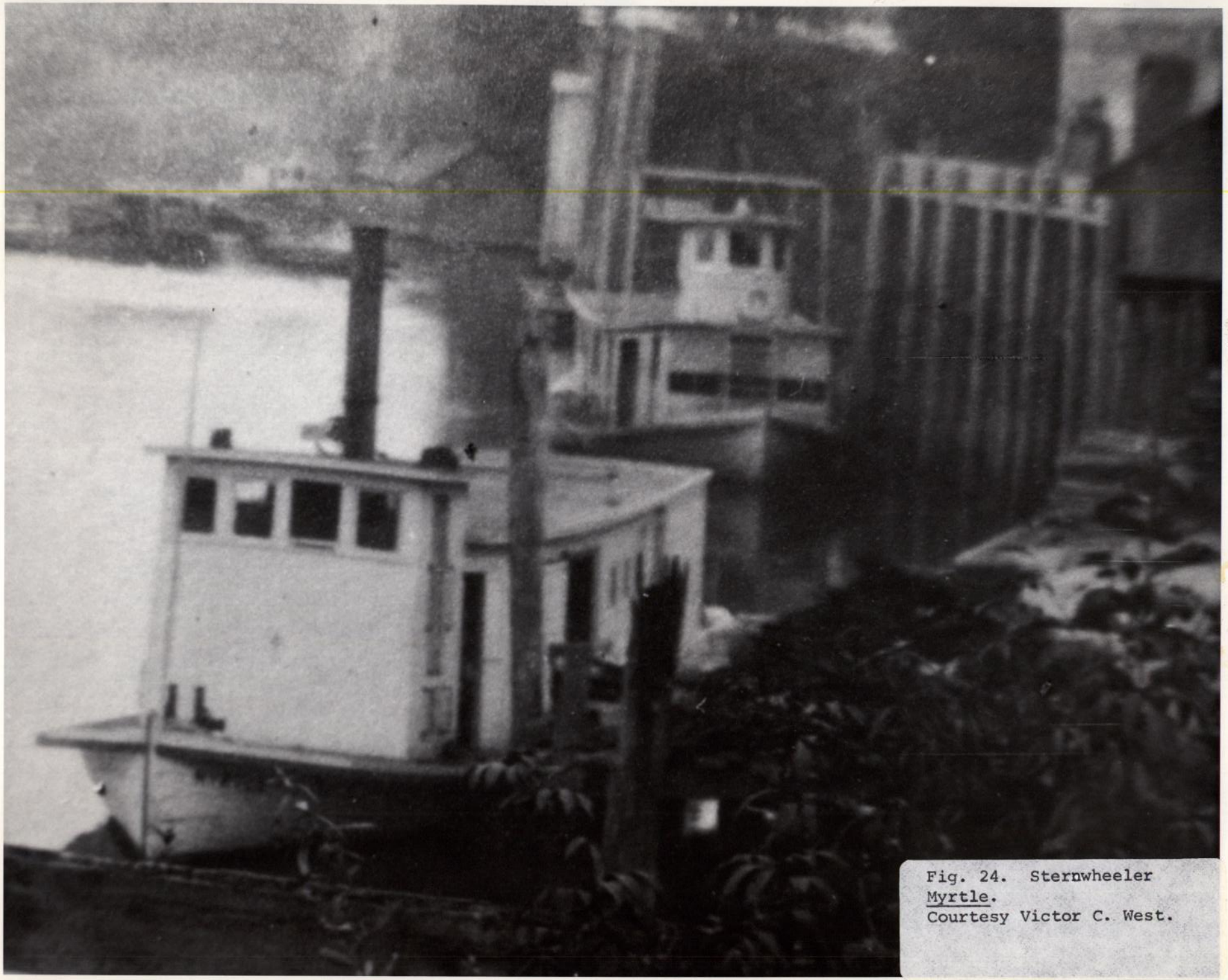


Fig. 24. Sternwheeler Myrtle.
Courtesy Victor C. West.

Fig. 25a. East Fork Coquille at Dora Bridge. July 19, 1979.

Fig. 25b. East Fork Coquille near Elk Creek, RM 3. July 19, 1979

Fork regular boat service was extended to Dora in 1914 - with boats leaving for that settlement from Myrtle Point at 1 PM during winter months![38] (Fig. 25). Leatherman used the Althea on a regular run to Pleasant Hill from January 1913 to late 1914 when it was operated by A. Jack Hayter from Myrtle Point to Dora.[39] Guy Weekly took cream to Norway Landing on the Recall, and the Nakomis was another boat regularly operating on the East Fork. The Myrtle even reached the I. P. Weekly farm (RM 1.5, East Fork) with a load of hay in February 1918.[40]

Besides regular boat service for freight and passengers on the North and East Forks during the second decade of the twentieth century, there was also increase in the number of privately owned boats operating on these sections of the Coquille. M. M. Minard used a gasoline powered boat in connection with his logging operations on the East Fork.[41]

Most of the funds of the Port of Coquille River were spent in dredging the South Fork to Myrtle Point and its Spruce Street Landing.[42] But boat use on higher portions of the South Fork was noted in the Myrtle Point Enterprise. Elton Robbins, who owned a ranch above River Mile 11 was operating a gasoline boat on the South Fork to Myrtle Point in February 1912 (Fig. 7b), and Broadbent was using a gasoline boat for his Sunrise Creamery in the town named after him (RM 10) during January of the same year. The ever resourceful Myrtle was able to take off a load of cheeses from the Broadbend factory during high water of December 1912.[43]

During the 1920's the Port extended its river clearing operations to Middle Creek, upper portions of the North Fork and the Middle Fork. Thus during the first decades of its existence, the Port of Coquille River regularly snagged and cleared the banks of the several main branches of the Coquille

above tidehead, so farmers could enjoy better means of personal and commercial transport during winter months when the poor roads of the valley were at their worst.[44] The benefits of its activities for loggers will be discussed below.

After an hiatus begun with the Second World War, the Port of Coquille River has for the past fifteen years maintained a regular program of stream clearance of the four main branches of the Coquille above head of tide "to bring the system up to navigation standards."[45] Ernest Bryant, who began his service to the Port on a contractual basis in 1966 and was appointed a Commissioner in 1968, was directed at that time to boat the entire system to determine needs for stream clearance for boating. He noted problems on the North Fork from Hollis Mast Ranch (upper end of Lee Valley, RM 22, Fig. 26b), to Laverne Falls (Fig. 6b), especially at the mouth of Hudson Creek (RM 29.5); on Middle Creek at the mouth of Cherry Creek (RM 7.4); on the East Fork at Weekly Creek (RM 1.5) and up to Minard's Riffle (RM 8).[46] Bryant now conducts winter clearance operations of the river system in a 20 foot aluminum boat drawing six inches of water whose propeller is powered by a 50 horsepower engine. In the highest water, his channel maintenance boat goes up to Fairview on the North Fork (Fig. 26a), McKinley on Middle Creek, Dora on the East Fork, Remote on the Middle Fork (Fig. 27a), and Rowland Creek (RM 24) on the South Fork (Fig. 27b). Although his efforts are now partly directed in these upper reaches to prevention of floods and bank erosion by jammed drift logs and debris, the Port's maintenance program permits two-way boat navigation up to the head of Lee Valley on the North Fork (Fig. 26b), Dora on the East (Fig. 25a), Sugarloaf Canyon on the Middle Fork, Rowland Prairie on the South Fork (Fig. 27b), and McKinley on Middle Creek (Fig. 49).[47]

Fig. 26a. North Fork Coquille from Fairview Bridge, RM 25.5.
September 12, 1979

Fig. 26b. North Fork above Hollis Mast Ranch, Lee Valley, RM 21.5.
September 12, 1979.

Fig. 27a. Middle Fork Coquille below Remote, RM 15. July 20, 1979

Fig. 27b. South Fork Coquille through Rowland Prairie, RM 22. September 12, 1979

Drift boaters also used the North Fork below Laverne Falls (RM 31.3, Fig. 6b), the Middle Fork below Bridge (RM 8), and the South Fork below Powers (RM30).[48]

LOG DRIVING

At the turn of the century, Coos County was eighth ranked in the amount of its timber reserves among the counties in Oregon, and the Coquille City Commercial Club claimed that it had ten percent of the state's timber reserves.[49] Agricultural lands were very constricted along the lower portions of most of the main streams with the exception of the lower Coquille. In mining, the black sand gold deposits had been quickly exhausted; coal mining had a longer history, but it also worked out in this century. First to last, the major output of Coos County has been timber; and with the late coming of railroads and good highways, lumbermen were as dependent as other inhabitants of the county on water trasport to get their logs to the mill and lumber to market.

In 1883 the Coquille City Herald was very optimistic about the capability of the various branches of the Coquille to support log drives. It believed the North Fork was suitable as a logging stream for 40 miles, the Middle Fork for 35 miles, the East for 25 and the South Fork 60 miles, besides their innumerable tributaries.[50] Twenty years later a Coos Bay spokesman, perhaps L. J. Simpson, remained almost as enthusiastic:

> I consider Coos an ideal county. The number of water courses susceptible to being driven, form a cheap and practical method of transporting logs to tide water. At the present time winter freshets are depended on for furnishing water to drive logs. By the employment of dams and the judicious use of dynamite, quite a number of the streams could be advantageously used for driving logs at low stages. The North fork of Coos river, including the west and east forks of the North fork, have generally speaking high banks. The South fork of Coos river is an ideal driving stream. Logs could be driven with slight expense for improvement, for thirty miles above tide water.

> The North, South and Middle forks of the Coquille river all carry a good flow of water at nearly all seasons of the year, and traverse a heavily timbered country of virgin timber. The banks are fairly good. Some improvement of course, would have to be made before logs could be driven in the summer season. There are numerous creeks which might be made available for driving, but the use of logging roads would be preferable.[51]

The county's dependence on water transport persisted much longer than in other parts of the state; log flotation remained a predominant mode of transport in the 1920's, 1930's, World War II, and even down to the 1950's, long after it had disappeared from other logging regions of Oregon. This section of the report will trace the upper head of log navigation on the heavily utilized logging streams in Coos County from the time of the first sawmill of 1853-54 to the final drives over a century later.

Early Drives on the Coos and Millicoma

The largest sawmills, serving the San Francisco market, were built on Coos Bay in the mid 1850's. They at first exploited the readily available timber stands on the many tidal sloughs and inlets of the bay, but their large scale production soon led to driving on Coos River and its branches above tidewater. The following are references found to specific early operations on the river; they are not exclusive nor do their dates necessarily indicate the earliest time drives occurred on these rivers. D. D. Campbell and George S. Mortimer logged on the river during the winter of 1874-75 and contracted with John Noah to boom their logs. The Noahs had logging camps on both forks of the Coos during the next decade.[52] John Bazzill who lived a mile up the East Fork of the Millicoma sent logs out in December 1879.[53] The Coos Bay News reported 2400 logs had been put in the East and West branches of the North Coos in 1881.[54] The December 1883 freshet brought 7,000 logs out of the East branch of the Millicoma.[55] In August 1885 Henry Blake placed

a lien on 860 fir sawlogs which he had cut for Alex Raine; 610 of them were still lying in the East Fork of the Millicoma at William Vancamp's place.[56]

It is not surprising that with this volume of log flotation, a splash dam was built on the East branch of the Millicoma in 1884. With it Charles Granholm brought 500 logs out during midsummer. Granholm later built splash dams on Marlowe Creek and higher up on the East Fork of the Millicoma, but he and other loggers also continued to bring logs down without aid of splash dams during winter freshets.[57] Harper Workman logged for Thomas O. Mortimer on the East Fork during 1891, and Charles Hendrickson had a camp during 1893 and 1894 from which large numbers of logs were floated out. Frank Farrin, after shom Farrins Camp at River Mile 25 is named, participated in the 1891 log drive. On May 15, 1897 Palmer Bros. who resided 18 miles up the Coos from Marshfield registered their mark for logs floating in the waters of Coos River.[58]

Local newspapers and lumber trade journals during the decades astride the turn of the century noted log drives on the Coos which were either held up for lack of rains or came out successfully on the freshets. But these announcements are rarely specific as to which branch of the Coos was meant, let alone the upper head of log navigation on the river's three main branches.[59] The location of a log jam between the forks and John Bazzill's place was identified in December 1899, but this was nearly at the mouth of the East Fork (Fig. 28). That fork again experienced a large jam in April 1905 (Fig. 29).

The nonegerarian Jesse Ott was able to identify the upper head of log navigation on the Millicoma's East Fork during these years, because in 1897 he packed supplies into the logging camp of his uncle Jord Shappers which was located two miles above the mouth of Matson Creek (RM 14.6). Shappers had a dam there which was used to store logs during the summer cutting season,

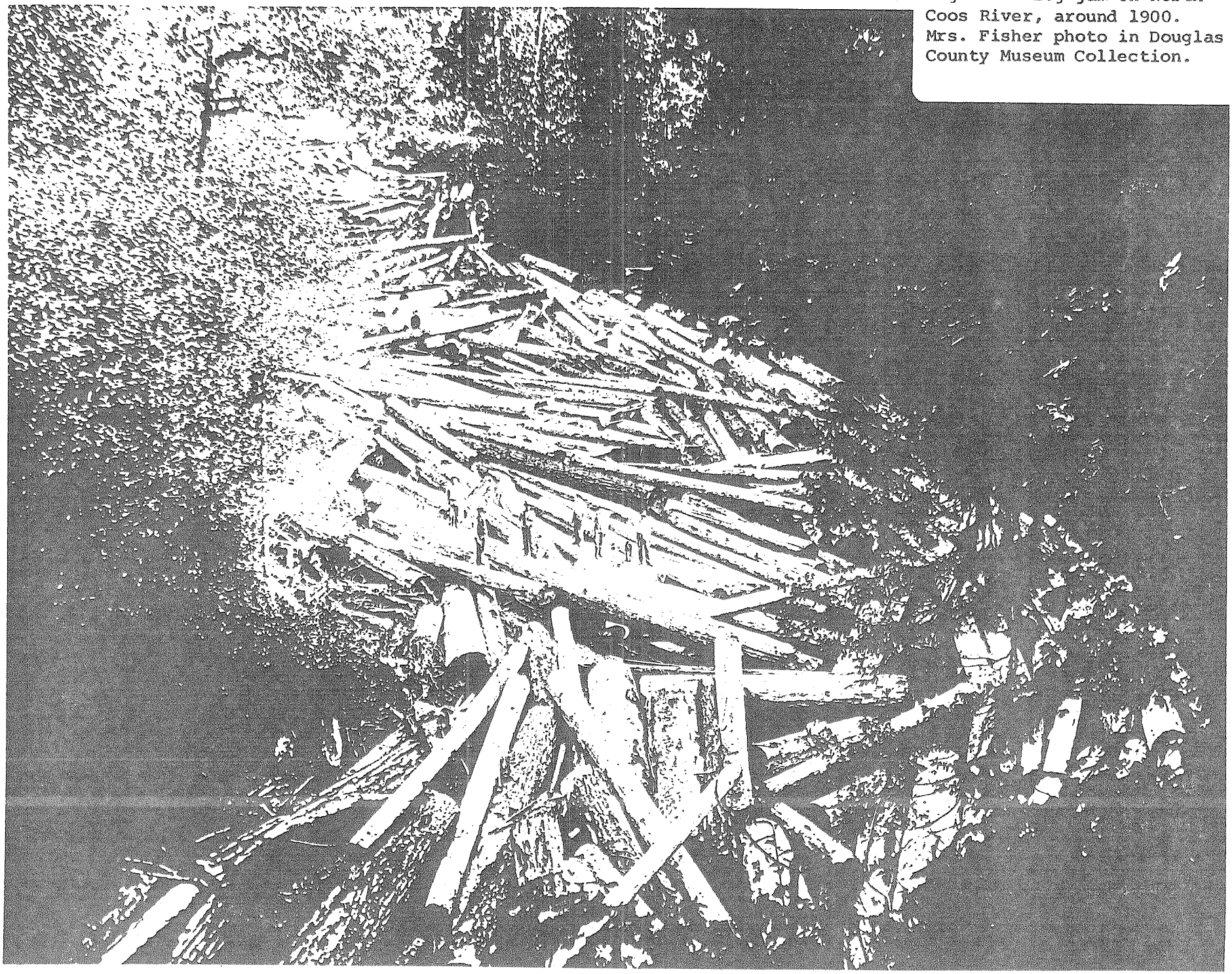


Fig. 28. Log jam on North Coos River, around 1900. Mrs. Fisher photo in Douglas County Museum Collection.

Fig. 29. Logs in River at Allegany, around 1903. Nelson Grubbe photo in Douglas County Museum Collection.

scatter the logs downstream in order to minimize the risk of jams, and begin the drive when the late autumn freshets came (Fig. 30a). Shappers had another dam one-half mile above the main one at his house which had a similar function. After the logs reached the mouth of Matson Creek, there was sufficient flow during the freshets to carry the logs down to tidewater without further splashing. Even such obstructions as the low falls below Millicoma State Park (Fig. 30b) were readily passed in high water, but the crew had to go along the banks and push logs back into the current because, as Mr. Ott recalled, "they hung up like anything." One Gustafson also had a camp at the mouth of Matson Creek from which he logged and drove the East Fork in 1901-02.[61]

Other records verify the river miles from which other drives on the East Fork of the Millicoma took place during the early years of this century. Smith-Powers Logging Company had their "Camp 3" at Hodges Creek (RM 4.5) from before 1911 to 1916 from which they drove logs to Allegany.[62] In 1907 Jorden Schapers and others placed a lien against Walter Devoe, John Mickelbrink, Dean Lumber Company, C. A. Smith, etc. for 225 fir sawlogs cut at the Devoe and Mickelbrink camp on the East Fork of the Millicoma branded P which were cut and floated to Coos Bay by them beginning October 1, 1906. Schapers drove 1400 fir sawlogs from the Fred Noah and Harburt Lockhart Logging Camp between River Miles 6 and 7 of the East Fork between 13 June and 20 December 1907.[63] Other major drives took place from below Matson Creek during the years 1909-1910 using unaided streamflow, and a like drive of 3 million board feet of logs occurred again in either 1921 or 1922.[64]

Generally, however, splash dams were put in to aid later drives on the East Fork of the Millicoma. In the years 1910-12 the Grove's dam existed on the King place at River Mile 10.6; in 1919 a dam near this location was still in operation. During 1924 Mark De Freese put in the Lockhart Dam at

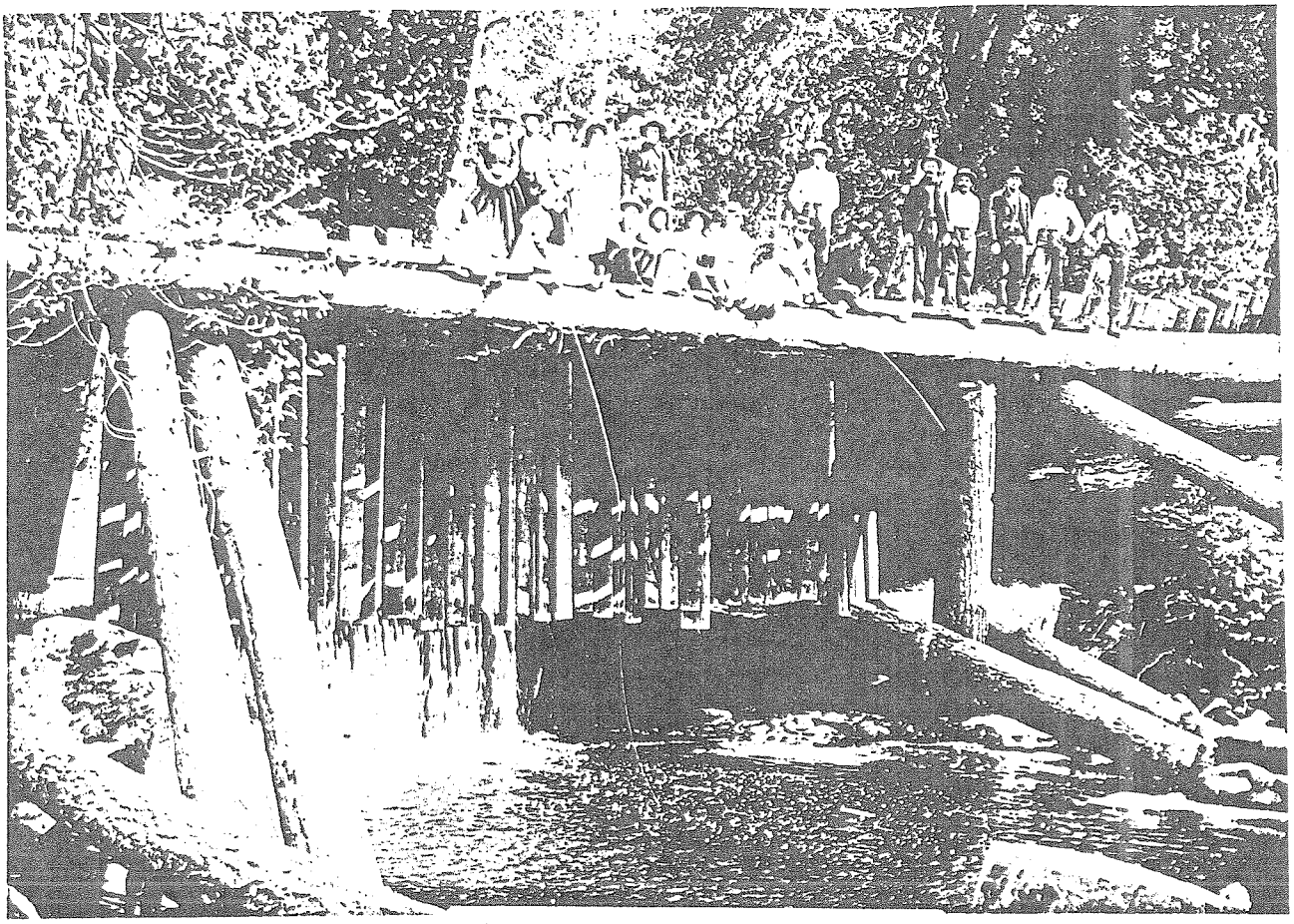


Fig. 30a. Jordan Shaper's Splash Dam, RM 14.6 East Fork Millicoma around 1900. Jack's Photos.

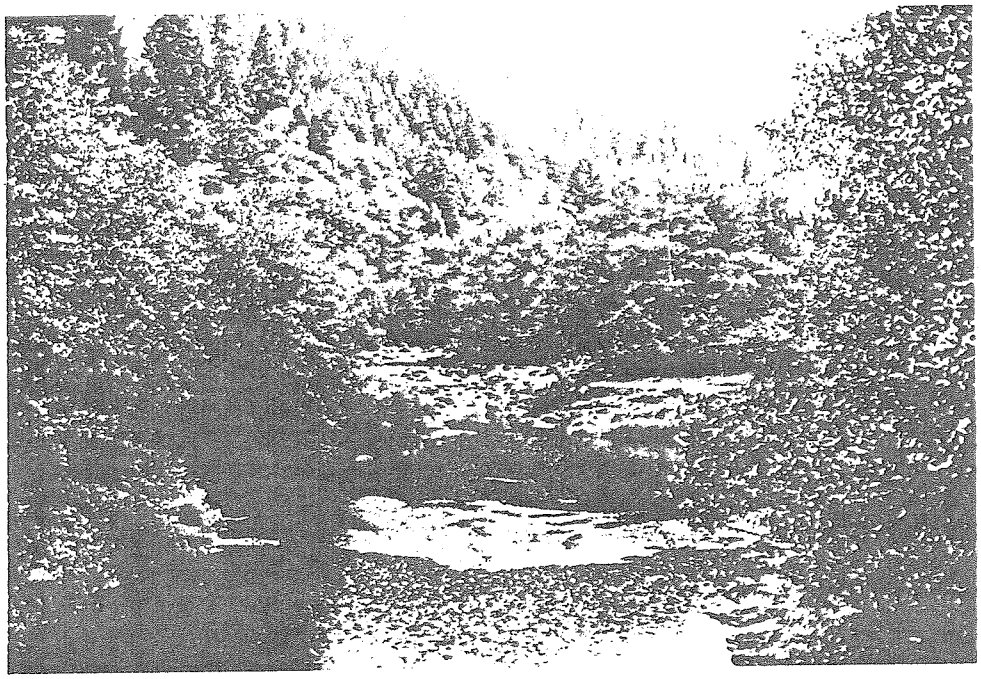


Fig. 30b. Whitewater on East Fork Millicoma, RM 3. August 28, 1979.

River Mile 6.4. Other dams existed a mile above Allegany, at River Mile 5.3 (operated by Coos Bay Lumber Company), and two dams near River Mile 11.1. All of these were constructed and had fallen into disuse before the year 1935 (Fig. 33).[65]

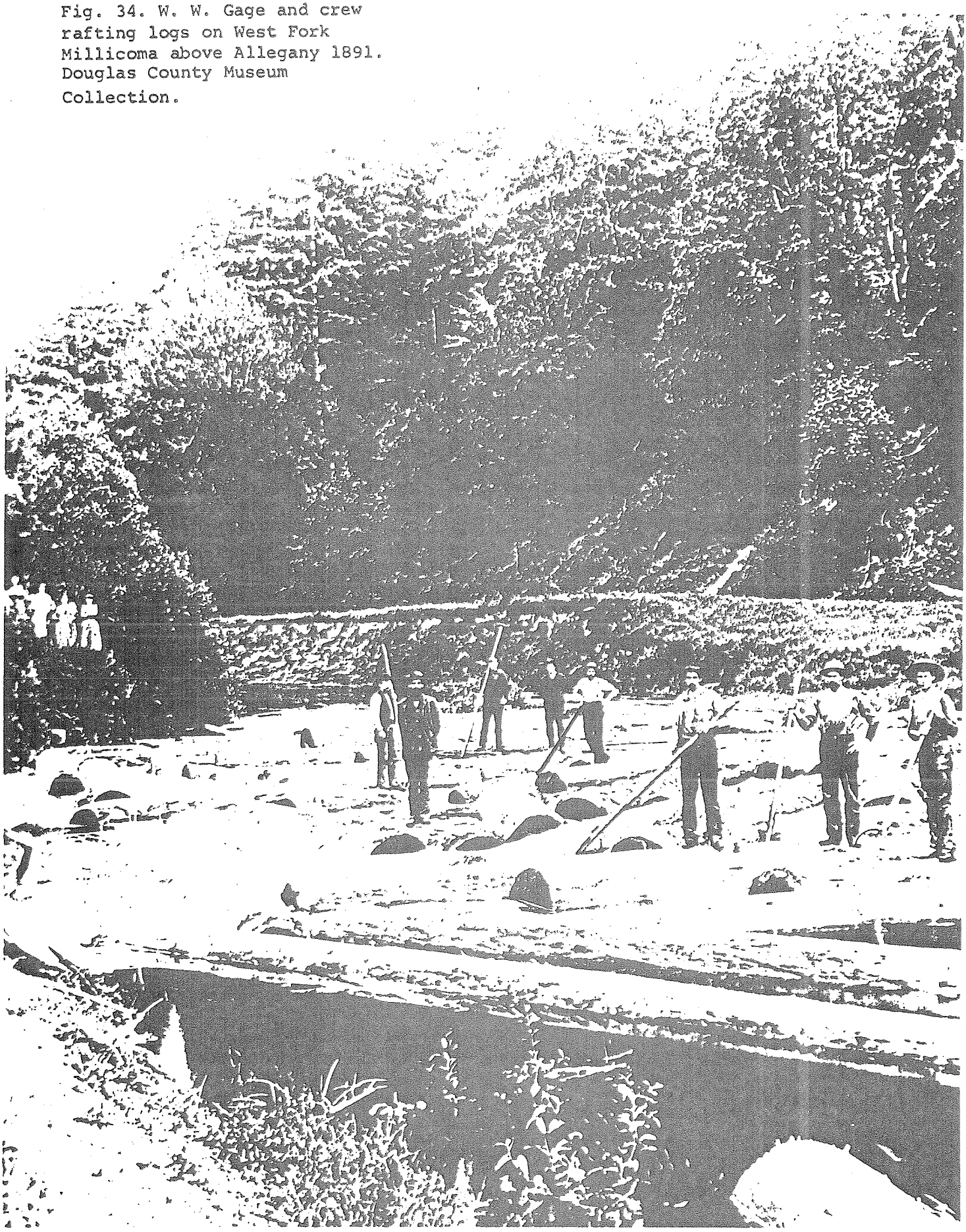
As for the tributaries of the East Fork of the Millicoma, John Hendrickson operated a logging camp on Glenn Creek during the 1890's from which he floated out logs to the North Bend Mills.[66] Forty years later the Millicoma Boom Company splashed logs out of the creek before they were granted a boom franchise on the East Fork. A splash dam existed near the mouth of Matson Creek sometime before the 1930's,[67] and the early splash dam of Charles Granholm on Marlowe Creek has already been noted.

On the West Fork of the Millicoma, a large logging operation was conducted by W. W. Gage a mile or two above Allegany during the 1890's with the ordinary flow of the stream (Fig. 34).[68] Andrew and Matt Mattson had a logging camp on the West Fork during the season 1894-95, and J. A. Stemmerman had a camp on the river during 1907.[69] Clarence Gould later logged upstream and floated logs out 1913-1916. This was approximately ten miles up that fork, one-half mile above Florida Falls where a splash dam was built in order to help the logs over the falls. Jesse Ott recalls that besides Gould's operation, "there was a little hand logging done, that is jack screwing. Walter Devoe put in a few there one summer jack screwing. And then later on he got a donkey.... I worked for him when he was jack screwing one summer..."[70] (For a logging jack, see Fig. 48.)

Actually J. Walter Devoe had the largest drives on the West Fork and from the highest reaches on the river. 1000 fir sawlogs cut between River Miles 12 and 13 during the 1920-21 season hung up at Estelle Falls (Fig. 35a) at the end

Fig. 33. Splash Dam above Allegany, no date. Douglas County Museum Collection.

Fig. 34. W. W. Gage and crew rafting logs on West Fork Millicoma above Allegany 1891. Douglas County Museum Collection.



of April, 1921. Devoe continued cutting in the same area during the autumn of 1922.[71] By the spring of 1923 he had progressed upstream to River Mile 15 and there is notice of a dam in connection with his operations. Ludwig Ness's lien against 2500 logs describes something of the operation during that year and the next. The logs had been cut near River Mile 13.5 in Township 24 South, Range 11 West and were "scattered along the north fork of the Millicoma branch of Coos River from said property down said stream for a distance of approximately ten miles and which logs are branded DVO."[72] (Figs. 5a, 35b.) During 1924 Peter Michelbrink hauled and dumped logs into the river at the cutting site with a team and freighted feed, groceries, and logging equipment from Allegany 9 miles by road. Devoe was still cutting and putting logs in along the same stretch of river at least as late as December 1924.[73]

On the South Coos there was a notice of logs coming out on a freshet from above McKnight's landing in 1882 and again in December 1884. Ren Smith logged in Smith Basin a few miles above tidehead on this branch of the Coos in the 1880's.[74] Henry Hoëck logged in Smith Basin and Big Creek (RM 14.5) from 1906 to 1916 and floated his logs out on the winter freshets (Fig. 36a).[75] J. E. Cowan and Barney Doyle took over 1,200,000 board feet of fir sawlogs and pilings from River Mile 12, some from the lands of Henry Sengstacken on the river, during the 1909-10 logging season.[76] In 1924-25 the George W. Kruse brothers floated logs out from River Mile 15.5. Had it not been for the problem they had getting logs over the fish hatchery rack (Fig. 37) and the prohibition of their use of the lower Coos by the Corps of Engineers, the Kruse brothers would probably have continued to drive the river.[77] The South Coos was later to be the scene of prodigious drives with the said of two well-coordinated splash dams, but before the year 1924 it had been, from River Mile 15.5, "navigable in its natural state at certain seasons of the year for the

Fig. 35a. Estelle Falls on West Fork Millicoma, RM 8.1. August 28, 1979

Fig. 35b. West Fork Millicoma, RM 6.6. August 28, 1979

Fig. 36a. South Coos at Big Bend, RM 13. July 1979.

Fig. 36b. Weyerhaeuser log yard and boom at Dellwood on South Coos, RM 8.5. July 1979.

Fig. 37. Fish Hatchery rack on South Coos River. PUC Files, State Archives.

floating of logs to market."[78]

The main tributary of the lower South Coos River, Daniels Creek, was logged with the aid of a railroad and does not seem to have had any significant log driving above the head of tide.[79]

Log Driving Under the Public Service Commission

As the 1902 statement about the excellent qualities of Coos County rivers for log driving indicated, some improvements were desireable to facilitate drives and to make them possible during summer months. One answer was for a company to build splash dams and make river improvements to bring down their own logs as was early done on the Millicoma's East Fork. Another was to make the same type of improvements but charge logging operators tolls for their use as a boom company. Beginning with legislation in 1889,[80] several companys had tried to obtain rights to improve rivers, establish booms, and charge tolls for logs driven on the improved streams and stored in their facilities. Such grants had been nullified in court decisions because they created monopolies on waterways which were public highways for commerce.[81]

The interests of those who wished to improve rivers, but be remunerated for the expense by other users, on the one hand, and those who feared the monopoly rates would shut them out from use of the rivers, on the other, were balanced out in the year 1917 when the state legislature empowered the Public Service Commission (now the Public Utilities Commission) to permit boom companys to improve and charge tolls on navigable rivers. The tolls were determined in separate public hearings using supply costs as the basis of charges, similar to railroad rate determinations, the Commission's original regulatory charge.[82] Until this power was removed in 1957, the Commission developed files on over thirty applications for boom company permits. Twenty percent of these records of the Commission, by volume, deal with the Coos River Boom Company

which operated on the South Coos River, and over 40% of the records by volume deal with rivers in Coos County,[83] again emphasizing the strong importance of water transport for the commerce of that county even to the middle of this century.

Because the Public Service Commission could not grant a franchise to a boom company unless the river was navigable during regular recurring periods of the year, the test of navigability which the Division of State Lands must meet in order to establish title to the bed of a river or stream, the grant of a boom franchise by the Public Service Commission already creates a claim by the state to a river's navigable status. The hearing procedures provide a rich mine of data concerning the use of subject rivers for log drives during the years before franchise applications.

The Millicoma

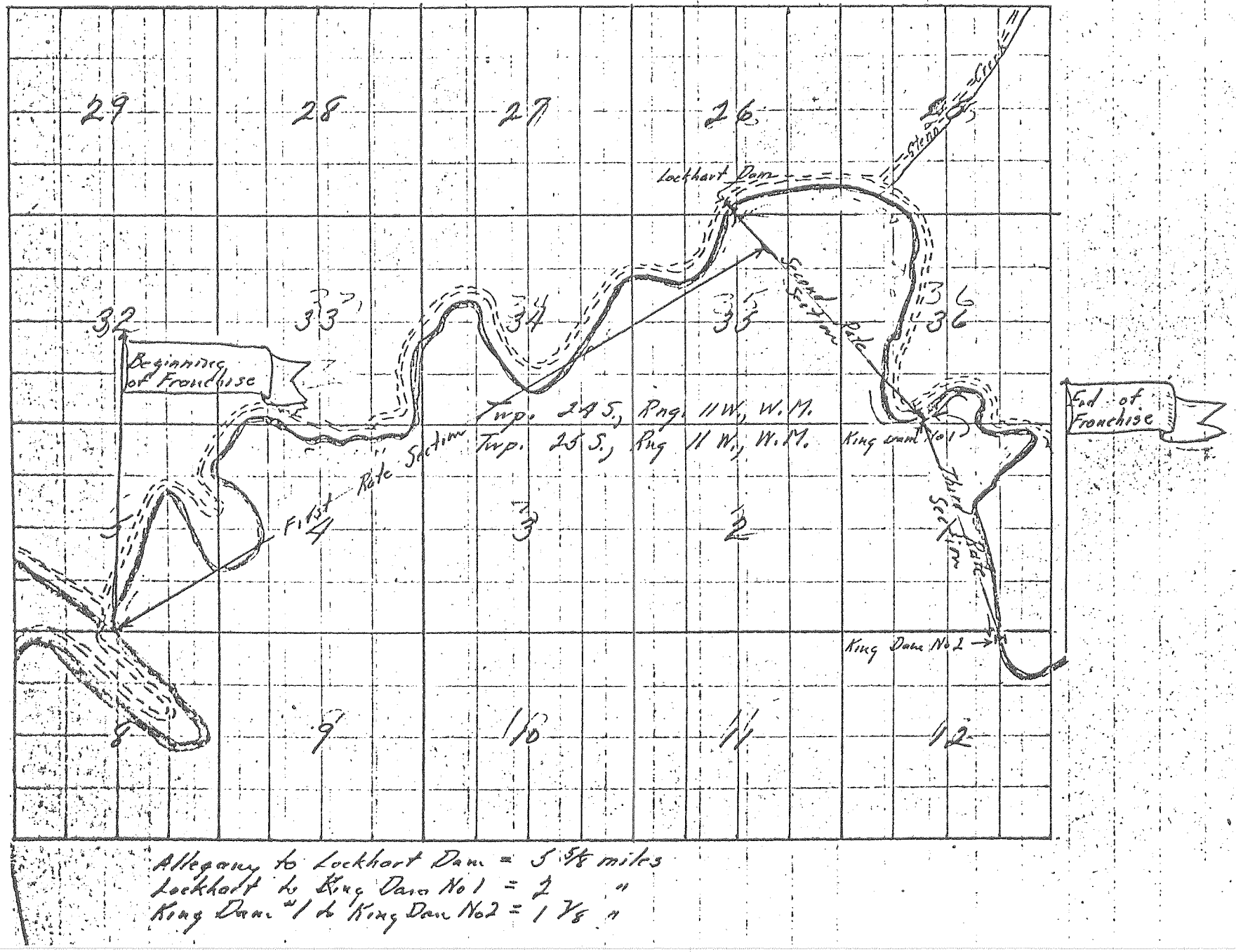
The first branch of Coos River on which a boom company received a franchise was the East Fork of the Millicoma. The formal application was received on October 23, 1934. In it the Millicoma Boom Company proposed to make improvements on most of the lengths of Glenn and Matson Creek and to River Mile 17.5 on the East Fork. Seven splash dams were to be built on these streams and the company even envisioned lowering logs over Golden Falls! In their opening statement before the Commission, they stated that they wished to improve the river because it was impossible to get logs out of the area during winter months without use of the river and that lack of logs during the previous winter had shut down the Coos Bay mills for two months throwing 2-300 men out of work - during the country's greatest depression. In the course of the hearings on the application, the company withdrew the Golden Falls project from it proposal and also stated that their immediate plans only

envisioned improvements to Matson Creek.[84]

In the face of opposition from riparian owners, small scale loggers and the large owners of timber in the river's watershed, including Weyerhaeuser, the Millicoma Boom Company revised their application in September 1935. Whereas in the first application they had contended that the streams could only be used with splash dams (in order to justify their improvements and the resultant tolls), their opponents had countered that as the river was not floatable in its natural condition, the PSC did not have any jurisdiction over the river. By restricting the area of the river over which they requested a franchise to the section from the mouth to River Mile 11.5 of the East Fork (Fig. 38) the boom company obtained the portion they wished to exploit immediately and were able to present sworn statements that that portion of the river was navigable for logs in its natural condition. Exhibit A contained the following statement:

> I, Charles O. Kampfer, being first duly sworn, upon oath say that I am of the age of 41 years, and a resident of Marshfield, Coos County, Oregon. That during the years of 1909 and 1910 I was employed in logging operations on the East Fork of the Millicoma River, Coos County, Oregon, and observed the conduction of at least four major operations upon said stream, and observed the floatation of at least 20,000,000 feet of saw logs out of said stream. That according to my observations, there has been no time, except during a slight rise of the water, that logs could be floated out of said stream merely by use of splash dams, but that natural waters were always required to float the same out. That splash dams were used mainly to scatter logs and to make back water within which to dump logs, but that the logs were actually floated out by natural waters and without the use of splash dams.
>
> That at the present time the river is in the same condition, and that from my past experience and observation I would state that there are anywhere from five to fifteen freshets during the year on which waters the said logs may be profitably and practicably floated out. That this has been true in the past and has actually been consummated.....it is admitted by me that the use of dams would be of some advantage.

Fig. 38. Map accompanying revised application of Millicoma Boom Company for franchise, 1935.



> That the duration of the freshets on the said river is from three to five or six days, which is ample time to float out the logs stored previous to such freshets, and, as herein before stated, in the average year there are sufficient freshets of such duration as to make the use of the stream feasible and practical without the use of dams.
>
> That I have actually observed the floating of large quantities of logs over the entire length of the stream referred to in the motion for amended application.

As Mark De Freese, aged 48 and the Millicoma Boom Company's river crew boss, stated in Exhibit B of their revised application:

> In the year 1921 or 1922 I drove logs from a point above the furthest point up the stream that the said amended application sought would cover, and also drove logs from other points along said stream. I drove said logs without the aid of any dams, and drove out 3,000,000 feet at one time. These logs I drove out without the assistance of men along the banks, and in fact, without the use of peavies, and after the drive I found only 27 logs which were hung up in the bed of the stream and, of necessity, were left until the next freshet.
>
> I have found that in logging this stream that I could depend upon three or more driving waters each winter, and which driving waters would average three days time each in duration.
>
> During the time I have been connected with operations on this river, there have been large quantities of logs amounting to millions of feet driven out of the East Fork of the Millicoma River. The bulk of these logs came out on natural waters.
>
> It is true that by installation of three or more dams at well-chosen points, it will be possible to extend the time during which logs can be moved by means of splashing to approximately nine months each year.[85]

But note 1924 driving debacle from lien book IV, 443-68.[86]

The revised application was approved on October 24, 1935 at which time the Public Utilities Commissioner found as a matter of fact:

> 18. That no portion of said stream within the limits of the proposed franchise is navigable for commercial purposes and that said stream within said limits in its natural condition is navigable for floating logs or other timber products at high freshets and that all of said portion of said stream covered by this application may be made navigable for floating logs or other timber products during most of the year by the improvements contemplated by the applicant herein.

The Millicoma Boom Company operated on this portion of the river for a number of years and surrendered its franchise in July 1953 (Figs. 39, 40).[87]

The South Coos

The Coos Bay Lumber Company received a booming franchise from the Public Service Commission for the lower Coos River. In 1920 it contemplated developing the South Coos with splash dams but decided against it and ultimately built a private logging road to tap their forest resources above tidewater.[88]

In 1936 the Coos River Boom Company applied to the Public Utilities Commissioner for a booming franchise on the South Coos from tidewater to the Douglas County line. Coos Bay Logging Company who operated the private logging road, the Weyerhaeuser interests, some of the riparian owners, and the river boat operators opposed the grant of the franchise. Because the Corps of Engineers had prevented any new logging operators from putting logs into the congested tidal portion of the South Coos, the PUC denied the Coos River Boom Company's petition but did give them the right to develop River Miles 15.5 to the river's headwaters with a holding boom and splash dams.[89] This limitation effectively prevented the boom company from operating, but in 1941 with the increased demand for lumber caused by World War II, they built their first splash dam and began to improve the river for driving. Their court appeal from the Commissioner's ruling resulted in the Circuit Court decision of March 11, 1942 which made the following points:

> It will be beneficial to the public for logs and timber products of South Coos Basin to be transported to the markets by water over the franchise here in question in conjunction with the existing franchise, thus permitting a continuous water movement of timber products from the basin of South Coos River to the mills on Coos Bay over the inconvenient and costlier method of public way plus transportation over private roads.... Water transportation has been a significant factor in the development of the lumber industry in the Douglas Fir regions and especially in Coos County....

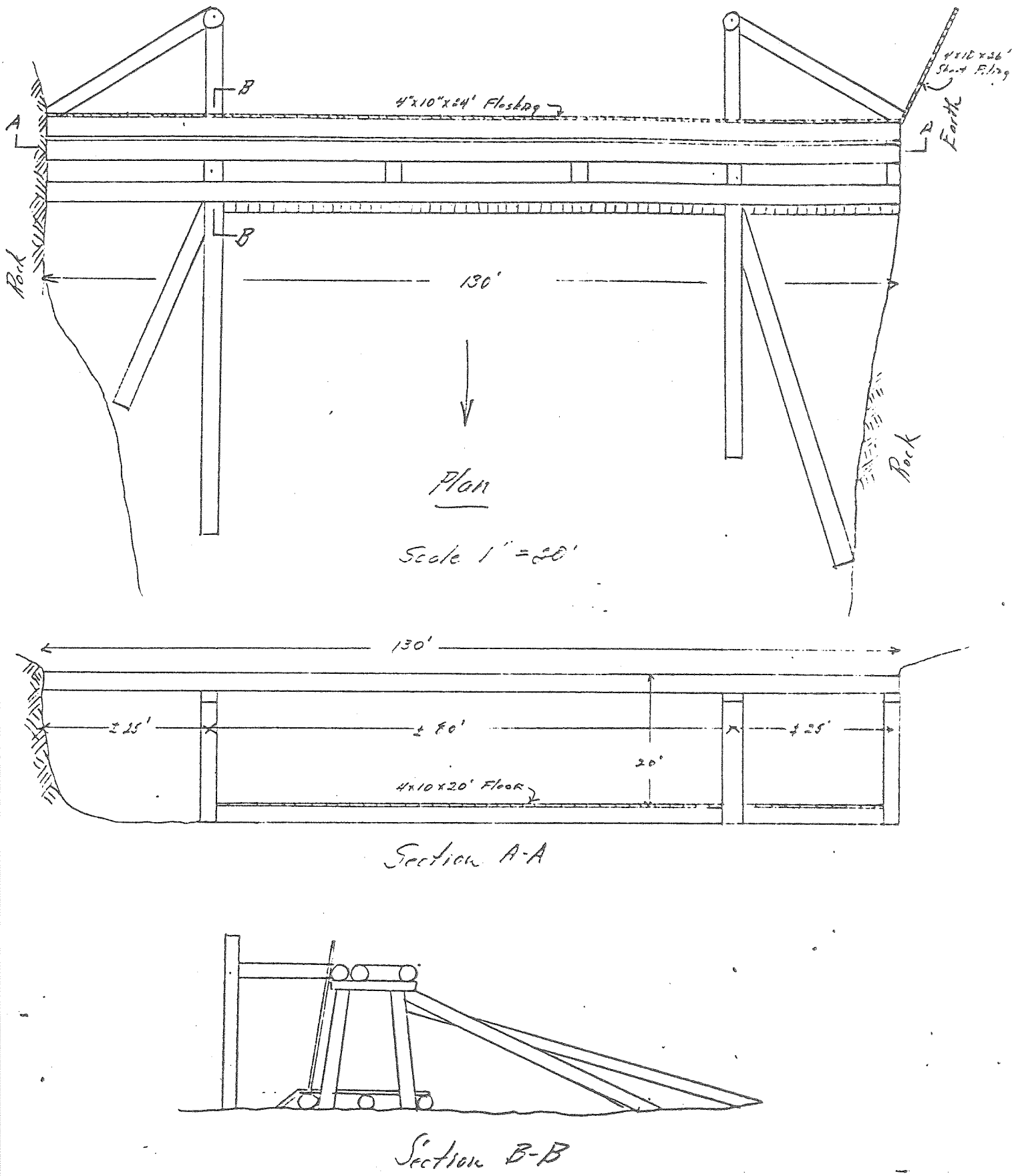


Fig. 39. Plans for rebuilding Lockhart Dam, RM 6.4, East Fork Millicoma, 1936.

JHB 7-29-36

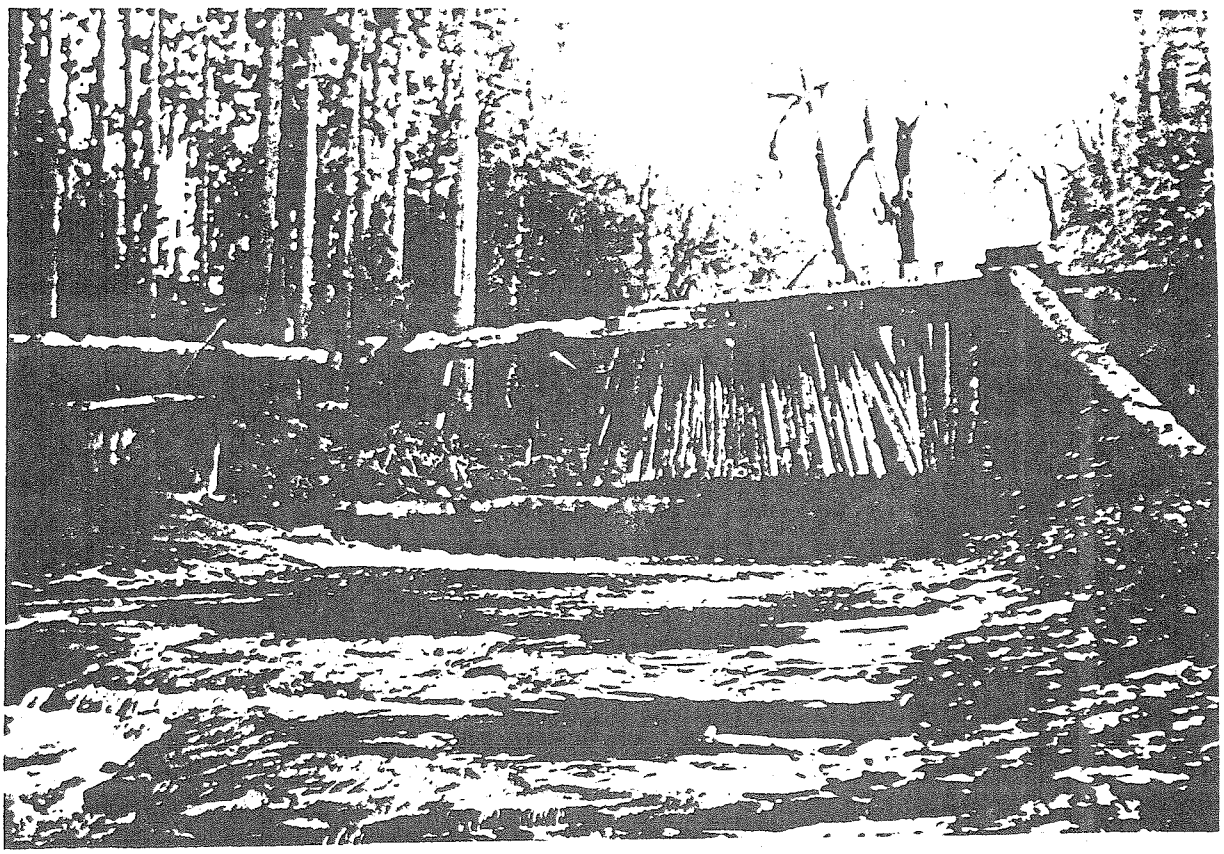
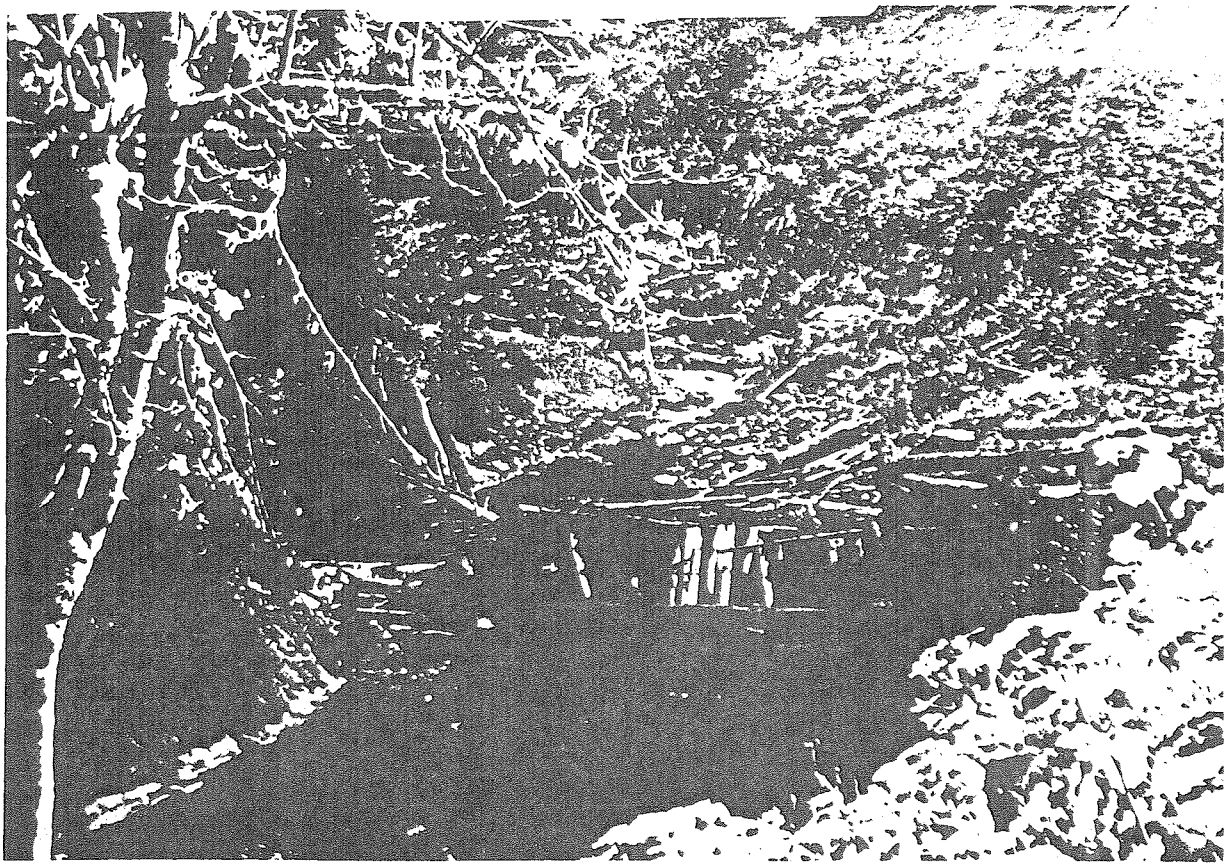


Fig. 40. Ruins of Millicoma Boom Company's Lockhart and King dams, 1957.
PUC File, State Archives



> Use has been made of the South Coos River in its natural state for many years past for the transportation of logs to market in and of itself, on that part here under consideration, and in further considering the character of the stream, its widths and various depths, volume of water including the rise and fall, and its capacity, the South Coos River is navigable and capable of being used in its natural state for the transportation of logs and other forest products to market.... The necessity for the use of South Coos River for transportation of logs to market has now been increased due to the national emergency demanding conservation of trucks and tires and to this end there is now in effect ration regulations promulgating office of Price Administration effective December 30, 1941.[90]

The boom company's 1941 dam was located at River Mile 21.5 and backed water for a mile and a half upstream creating a twenty foot head (Fig. 41). A second dam of similar size was built in 1943 below the confluence of the Williams and Tioga Creek. Dow Beckham of Coos Bay became splash dam superintendent for the Coos River Boom Company in the latter year. He stated that much of the improvement which was done on the river was in blasting large rocks which obstructed its bed: at the franchise hearings in 1936 some were described as being of 15 to 30 feet in height. After these boulders had been blasted and other stream improvements made, four million board feet of logs could be taken down the South Coos from the Tioga dam on one splashing when the autumn freshets came. Indeed freshets alone could sometimes take the logs out in the winter time from above Tioga Camp without using either of the two dams. Mr. Beckham recalls that his well trained crew could take down 200,000 feet of logs per hour during such freshets. Logs up to 120 feet in length were floated down the river during the 1940's (Fig. 42). Yet smooth as the operations were, it was not without its perils as this newpaper report from 1945 shows:

> Glenn Thorton, stepson of Oscar Lundberg, was killed during a log drive. The incident occurred just below the bridge that crossed South Coos River about seven miles upstream from the

Fig. 41. Site of Coos River Boom Company's 1941 splash dam, RM 21.5.
PUC File, State Archives

Fig. 42. Coos River Boom Company drive on South Coos, 1940's.
Curt Beckham Collection.

> head of tide water. Glenn and Dow Beckham had blasted five or six bid boulders that had caused a large jam. They were waiting for the water from both dams to catch the jam, and then with a cable and a log truck they were going to pull the key log with would cause the jam to float free and continue to tide water where the logs could be rafted. While the men were attaching the cable to a log in the jam, the logs suddenly gove way and the entire log jam moved rapidly down with the splash. Men on the road saw Glenn disappear under the logs, while Dow made it to shore some 1000 feet downstream. Glenn's body was found June 17, 1945 -- ten days after he was killed.[91]

Despite this tragic mishap which had been the inevitable accompaniement of all log driving, Beckham remained with the boom company until it sold its interests to the Menasha Wood Products Company in 1956. By that time there was a rising tide of opposition to the splashing operations by the Fisheries Commission and the sport fishing fraternity of the state. In 1957 the dams were burned out (Fig. 43) and with them went the authority of the Public Utilities Commission over the state's logging streams.[92]

Fig. 43. Burning of Coos River Boom Company Dam No. 1, 1957.
PUC Files, State Archives.

THE COQUILLE

By the early 1900's the Coquille replaced the Coos as the major log driving river in the county. This was largely accounted for by the advance of jetty construction at the river's mouth. With the Coquille's far more extensive system of waterways and relatively untapped forest resources, this basic navigational improvement brought a boom in logging operations (Fig. 44a). From November 1899 to July 1903, forty log brands were registered for the Coquille River and its tributaries (only one for the Coos). Of the 148 brands taken out between the latter date and 1920 for the waters of Coos county, most were for logging outfits on the Coquille (Fig. 44b).[93]

Because they came at a later date, the log drives on the various branches of the Coquille have fuller documentation than those on the Coos. The North Fork of the Coquille was extensively used for log driving in the early period. John W. Clinton had a two and one-half day drive on the North Fork to the bridge at Shuck's place (Fox Bridge, RM 14.3) in June 1898. B. B. Teters, who registered his log brand in 1900, had a log drive from Fairview in the autumn of 1902.[94] Late in the year 1903, 1200 fir logs were cut on the Mast property on the North Fork between River Mile 15 and 17 to be floated to the mills on the lower Coquille (Fig. 45).[95]

During the previous year, log driving had been undertaken much further up the North Fork of the Coquille. Herbert Johnson and his brothers, Fred and Sam, took one thousand logs out from River Mile 35 during the two winters of 1902 and 1903. Their landing had logs stacked 40 feet high and it took two years for them to reach the lower Coquille. Emmett Pierce took 4300 logs from River Mile 42 in 1903, but only 1500 came out during the first year and 1000 the second.[96] In the same 1903 logging season, Ed Moon put in 900 fir

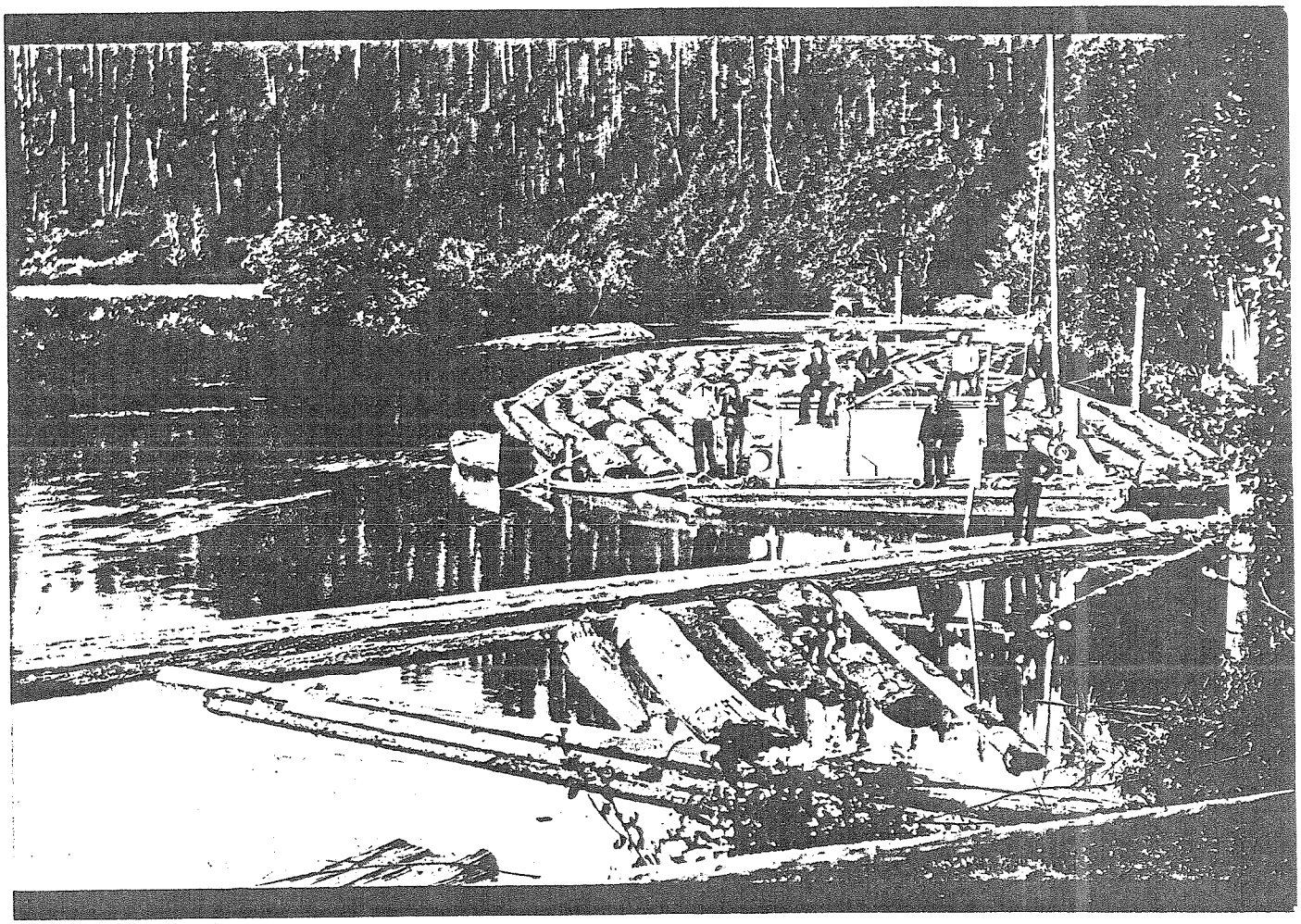


Fig. 44a. Log rafting scene on Lower Coquille River 1902.
Jack's Photos

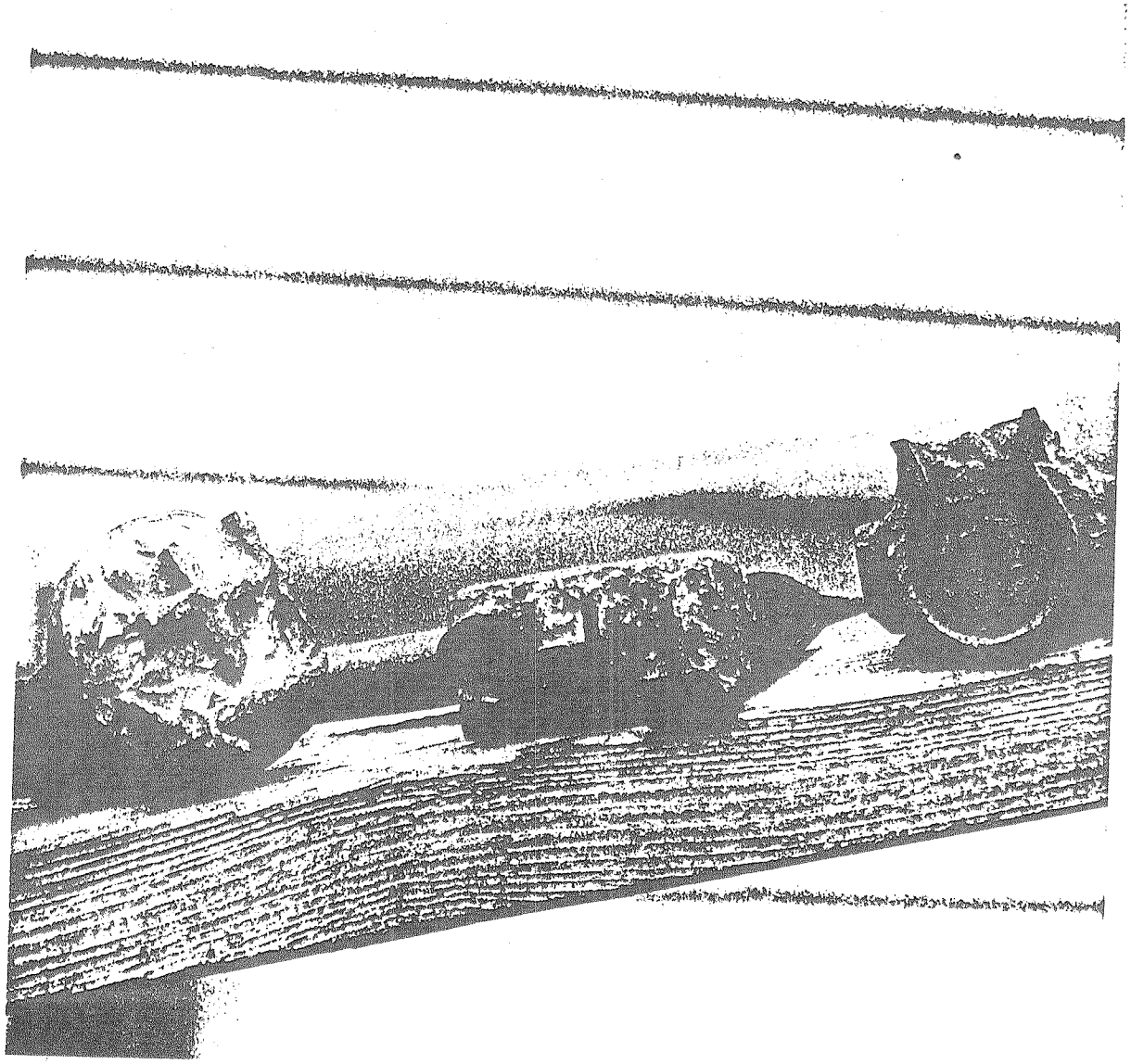


Fig. 44b. Coquille log
branding hammers.
Coos County Logging Museum.

sawlogs branded H above River Mile 34 which then scattered along the river to tidewater.[97] Also in 1903 [J. E.] Paulson put in 300 logs. G. A. Signalness (or Signolious) 700 to 800 logs, Ed W. Wires 700 fir sawlogs, and [R. J.] Holverstott and Ed Wigan also put in sawlogs: over 8000 logs in all.[98]

1903 was a year of low water, it is therefore not surprising that with this number of drives, each one of which would only partly come out, that several large jams developed on the river. The problem of driving the river was compounded the next season when [C. W.] Westman put in 1200 logs and Kerr 1100, besides more logs from the other operators.[99] The river became so congested that the Corps of Engineers limited the hours of log driving on the North Fork in 1904 to allow steamboat navigation to Gravelford. In order to clear the stream, G. A. Signalness hired William Vaughan and J. A. McDonald to build a sizeable splash dam near River Mile 36 in June 1905, and the river was cleared by its release during the autumn of that year (Fig. 46a).[100] Vaughan and McDonald who had previously logged on Daniels Creek moved into the North Coquille basin during April 1905. The logging donkey they used in this operation is now on exhibit at the Coos-Curry Museum. In October they built their own splash dam at River Mile 40.[101]

Vaughan and McDonald explained that the purpose of their dams was to scatter the logs down river as far as Fox Bridge in advance of the winter freshets in order to prevent the type of jams which stacking the logs at the landing, in the manner of the Johnson boys, had caused in the past. Evidently jams still developed. The Timberman described the situation on the river in the Spring of 1906:

> The high water brought out 15,000 logs from the North Fork of the Coquille. There were estimated to be 40,000 logs all told in the stream. About 8,000 logs still remain in the smaller

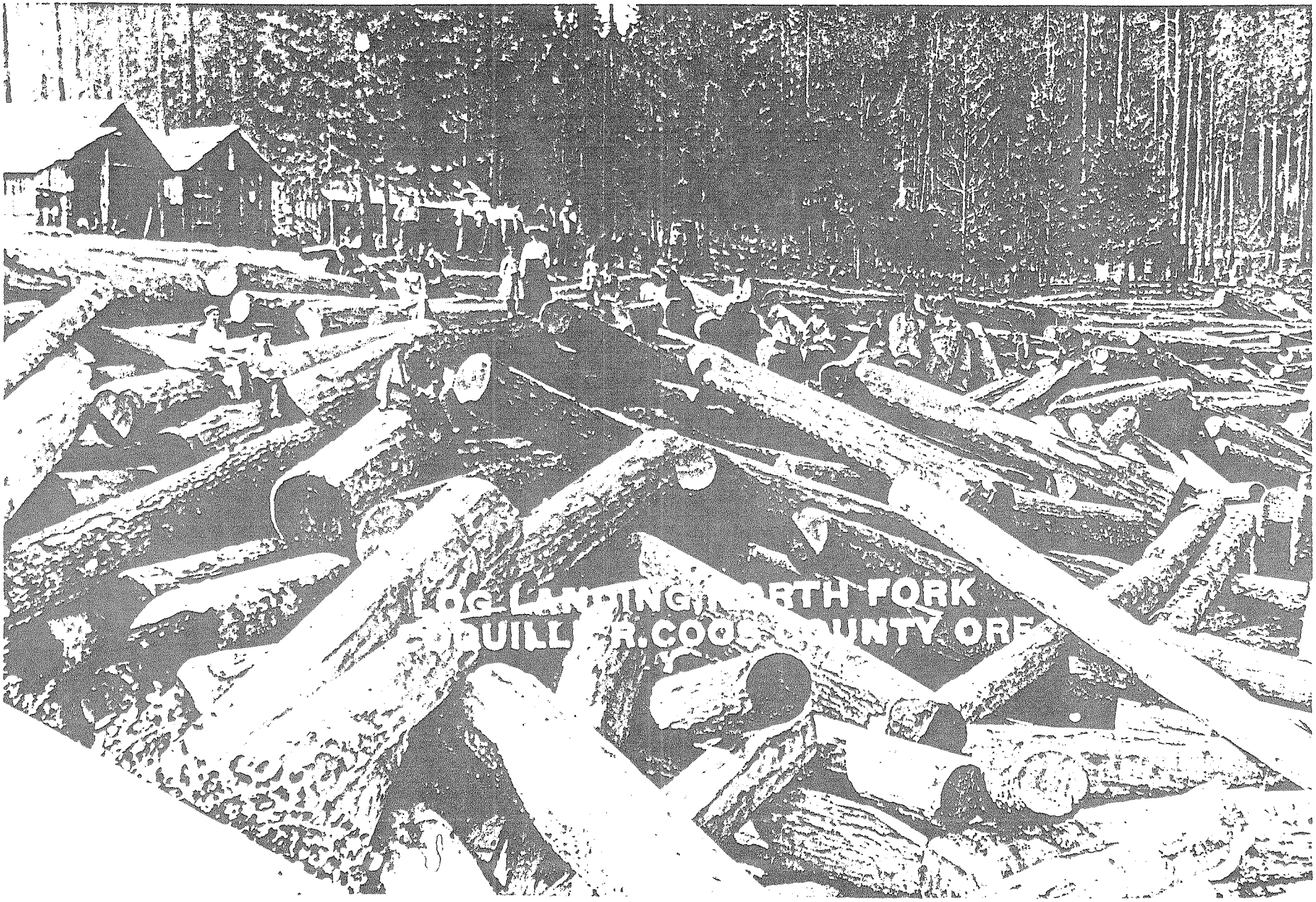


Fig. 45. Log Landing, North Fork Coquille River. Douglas County Museum Collection.

tributaries, a portion of which will be driven out during the year.[102]

In 1907 Vaughan and McDonald purchased the Signalness dam and released it twice in that month and once again in April, presumably to clear the river of logs. This caused two riparian owners just below the Signalness dam, D. F. Flinn and N. W. Moon, to file suit against them in Coos County Circuit Court for damages to their river banks (Fig. 46b). In the resulting Oregon Supreme Court case (55 OR 372), the navigability of the North Fork during a portion of the year was conceded by the court, but Vaughan and McDonald were enjoined from further release from their splash dams without prior consent of the downriver landowners.[103]

Between Laverne Falls and Fairview, Glenn Barker drove logs with only a deadhead to store his logs during the years before 1907.[104] Drives for Gary Swan and others originated near Gravelford in 1905, and 20,000 logs of J. M. McDonald jammed there in January 1908.[105] A year later the log jam at Gravelford prevented boats from reaching that town. A drive of 3000 logs took place on the North Fork in December 1909.[106] The Timberman reported on four camps operating along the North Fork of the Coquille during 1911: Mast Bros., Aaasen Bros., Barker Bros., and Conlogue Bros..[107] Barker, in partnership with Baxter, drove logs from Fairview during 1924-25,[108] and Dennis McCarthy drove from above Fairview, now with the aid of a splash dam, during the same decade (Fig. 47).[109]

Middle Creek, which enters the North Fork at River Mile 18.8, was also the scene of extensive log drives. As early as December 1902 [L. A.] Lawhorn brought logs down from near River Mile 13. Earnest Bryant's grandfather participated in the early drives from upper Middle Creek (Fig. 48).[110] The most extensive drives on the creek occurred after 1913. Aasen Bros. and Walter

Fig. 46a. Near site of Signalness dam on North Coquille, RM 35. July 19, 1979.

Fig. 46b. Flinn's property on North Coquille, RM 33.6. July 19, 1979.

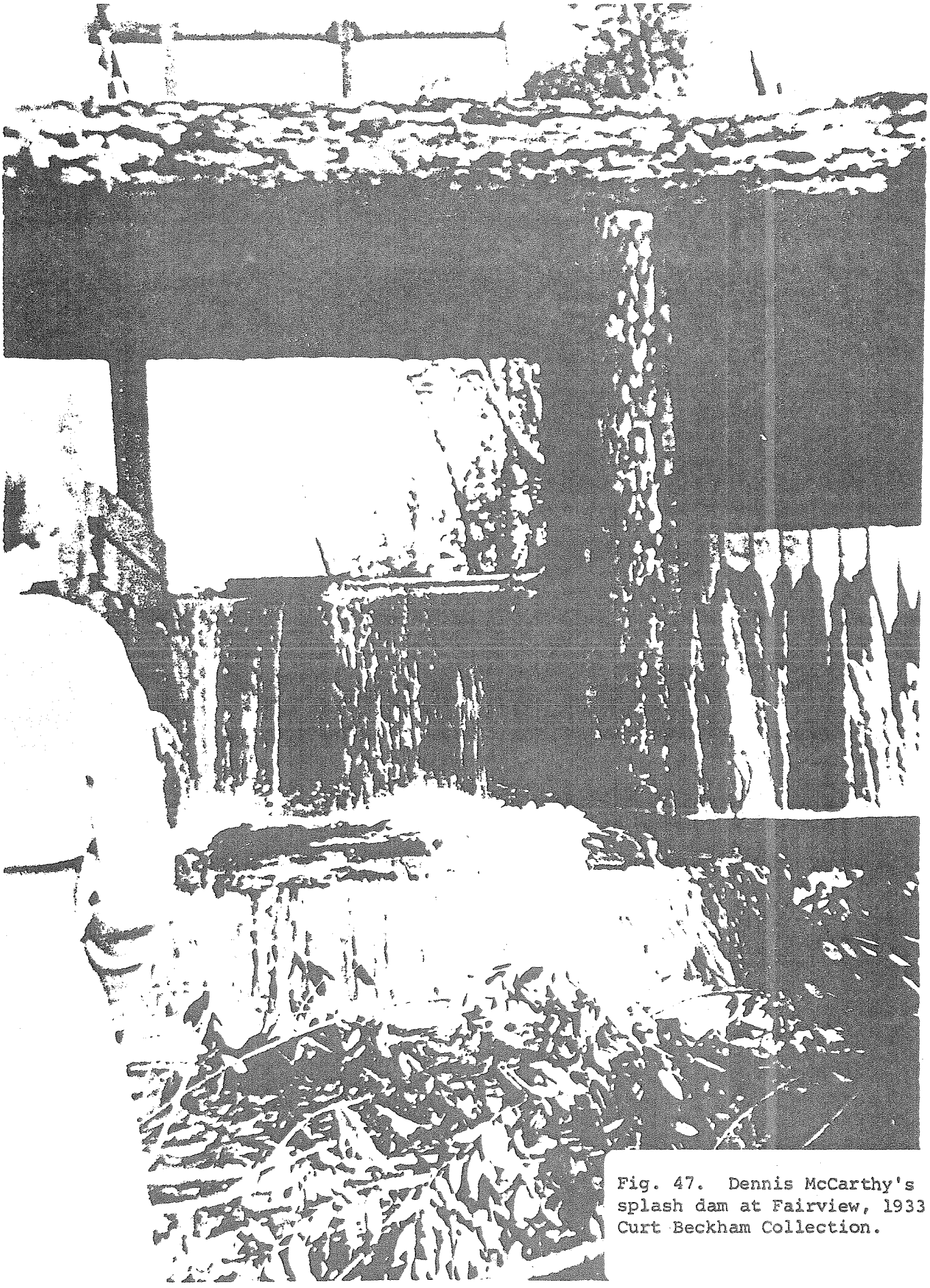


Fig. 47. Dennis McCarthy's splash dam at Fairview, 1933. Curt Beckham Collection.

Fig. 48. Scene from L. A. Lawhorn drive on Middle Creek, with logging jack foreground.
Coos County Logging Museum.

Lawhorn had a drive on Middle Creek in December 1914; their drive of November 1915 took 13,000 logs out of that waterway and by December they had secured 32,000 logs (Fig. 49).[111] Menasha Woodenware and the Bert Folsom Logging Company were also taking logs from above the mouth of Cherry Creek (RM 7.4) in the same year.[112] Aasen logged the creek near McKinley during the 1917-18 season and had a splash dam on the creek near River Mile 15 (Fig. 50). Dennis McCarthy also did some driving on Middle Creek from near McKinley during the 1920's.[113]

The East Fork of the Coquille sustained log drives even earlier than the North Fork. Dora was the head of log navigation as it had been of vessel use on the river. A notice occurred as early as 1884 that Krantz's boom at Dora had broken. J. H. Minard drove logs to the lower Coquille from Dora during the season 1885-86; and G. G. Swan of Dora registered a log mark in 1898.[114] By December 1901 the dominant logging partnership on the East Fork, Minard and Folsom, had been formed and drove logs from Dora.[115] Several notices of their drives on the East Fork occurred during the next quarter century (Figs. 51, 52). In February 1903 Bert Folsom lost 120,000 feet of logs. Liens were put on 350 sawlogs cut for them in October and November 1905 near Dora Post Office, branded M F, and floated down the East Fork, and on 420 second growth fir sawlogs cut in November and December at Pleasant Hill and held in the Weekly Boom on the East Fork. M. M. Minard had an eight day drive during February 1908. Between November 1911 and the end of February 1912 the firm drove at least 1,113 fir sawlogs branded M F from the East Fork to the mill of the Prosper Mill Company on the lower Coquille. He participated in the drive from Dora during 1916-17 and was still putting in logs from there during 1923 for flotation to the mills downstream.[116]

Fig. 49. Site of logging camp near McKinley on Middle Creek, near RM 6.8. July 19, 1979.

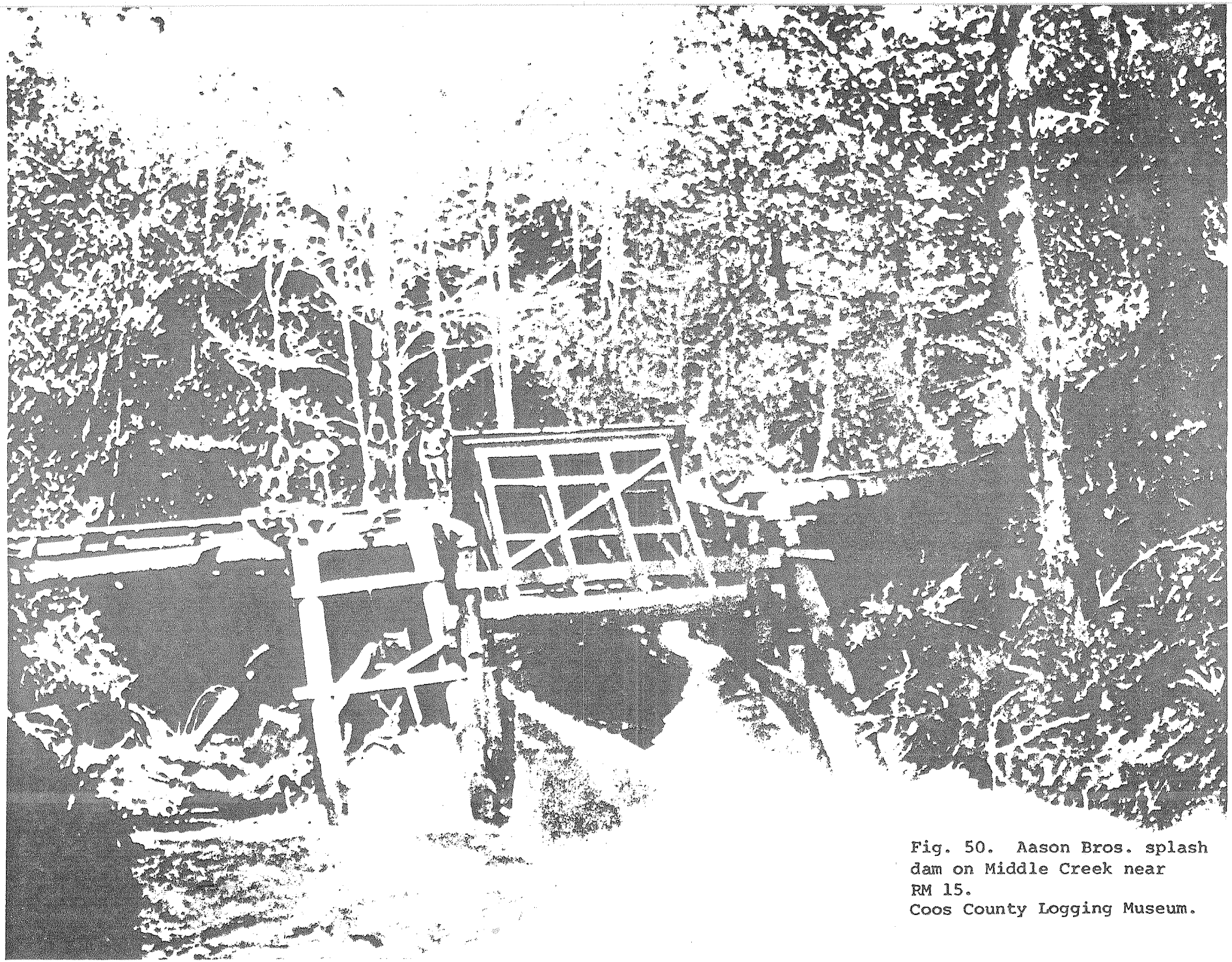


Fig. 50. Aason Bros. splash dam on Middle Creek near RM 15.
Coos County Logging Museum.

Among the other logging outfits driving the East Fork of the Coquille was Will Harmon who took out 4,000 logs in December 1903 and J. O. Stemmler who took logs down from Dora in January 1904. W. A. Bright, the builder of the J. Warren, drove logs from lower down on the East Fork during 1902 and 1903.[117] A. W. Hollenbeck took over 500 fir sawlogs marked AH from River Mile 2 of the East Fork in 1906-07.[118] George Hermann used a gasoline boat in connection with his drive on the East Fork during December 1907.[119] George S. Matthewson drove from the M. J. Krantz lands and Minards Ranch at Dora in December 1913; Catton and Sons rafted logs from the same locale in December 1915.[120] Rains allowed the Dora loggers to drive during December 1917, and Ezra Watson took his logs down from Dora during November 1919. Drives were still taking place in 1924.[121]

The only drive which took place above Dora was one undertaken by F. A. Baker and H. S. Charlton from lower Brewster Valley (RM 18). It came out successfully in February 1912, but does not seem to have been repeated.[122]

Elk Creek which enters the East Fork at River Mile 3.7 was also the scene of drives by various operators over a span of years. At least 300 fir and cedar logs were driven on the creek from the lands of Daniel Miller during the last half of 1907.[123] Ernest Bryant recalled that tie drives had occurred with the aid of splash dams on Elk Creek during World War I.[124] The whole creek was used for a drive by B. F. Folson during 1923-24. F. Glen Shores placed a lien on the logs for his assistance "in the manufacture and running of said logs," particularly for cutting brush on the creek during January 1924 and for work on the creek and furtherance of the log drive during March. William Olson, Albert Folsom and George H. Chaney took 3 million feet of fir sawlogs out of Elk Creek during 1925-26.[125] As late as 1946-47 logs were

Fig. 51. Log drive on East Fork of the Coquille. Douglas County Museum Collection.

Fig. 52a. East Fork at Dora, RM 13.5.
July 19, 1979.

Fig. 52b. East Fork at RM 3.
July 19, 1979.

placed in a deadhead in Elk Creek and floated down each autumn to the Coquille City mill.[126]

Kenneth Laird, whose large-scale splash dam operations on the East Fork of the Coquille will be discussed below, recalls that Steel Creek at Dora was also used to carry logs. Laird's first job was with A. Jeub and the Steel Creek Logging Company in about 1921. They logged on the stream (RM 13.2) for at least two years, splashing the creek each day at 5 p.m. Once the logs entered the East Fork they went to the mills on the lower river with the ordinary flow of the current.[127]

On the Middle Fork of the Coquille, driving probably came about the same time as driving on the North Fork. The Timberman noted that several camps were operating on Enchanted Prairie (River Miles 11-13) in 1900.[128] George A. Hansen and Hubert Fetter of Remote and T. J. McBee of Bridge registered log brands in 1901.[129] J. W. Clinton and James Rookard were operating at Bridge in 1902 when at least 4,000 logs were taken out. The drive of 1904 broke the boom on Middle Fork. 200 or more fir sawlogs were driven from the Pressly Place on the Middle Fork at the end of 1905.[130] In 1906 Thomas Rookard drowned in a log jam at Bridge.[131]

These drives from Enchanted Prairie in the first decade of this century also drew logs from Big Creek and Myrtle Creek, but the number of loggers' liens placed on the drives from these two tributaries would indicate that the logs often hung up from one season to the next. Thus as early as 1896 there was a lien placed on 300 fir and cedar sawlogs, 18-20 feet in length, cut and hauled to Big Creek four miles above its mouth.[132] A lien was placed on 700 sawlogs cut for C. E. Howser in the same locale and branded E in the autumn of 1902. Two years later a lien was placed on 185 fir and 865 cedar logs cut, branded S&W, and put in Big Creek for Stout and Weekly. In September 1905, 950 fir and 400 cedar sawlogs 4 1/2 miles up Big Creek from Bridge

Post Office were the subject of a lien against Luther Williams. Ten years later white cedar railroad ties were brought down Big Creek from Peter Axe's place.[133] No doubt the heavy proportion of white cedar in the forest around Big Creek, as in the whole Middle Fork basin, accounted for the heavy exploitation of this watershed.

Just as the heaviest logging on Big Creek began to subside, the even more difficult driving stream, Myrtle Creek, was the scene of logging activity which lasted over a decade. Most of the drives from this tributary of the Middle Fork were for J. G. and Frank Joseph Fish who had land one and a half miles south of Bancroft Post Office (RM 10.5), as well as other property on the creek. Between 1905 and 1916 they logged Myrtle Creek down from the Bancroft area and part of Rock Creek as well (Fig. 53).[134] Liens against two other parties who drove Myrtle Creek tell something of the improvements necessary to use the stream. C. F. Waterman's liens versus R. W. and H. G. Harrington and M. R. Lee stated that he claimed for labor performed upon and assistance rendered in the floating and running of 350 fir and cedar sawlogs out of Myrtle Creek in time of high water. He drove for 15 days, seven days with a team of horses, between December 29, 1905 and May 30, 1906. A decade later William Northup built roadways and cleared brush, logs and debris out of Myrtle Creek so that Edgar Hannan's ties could be taken down the creek to a shipping point from the tie camp at River Mile 8.[135] At some point in time Frank Fish built splash dams on Myrtle Creek in order to aid the drives, because he later claimed that they were the model for the successful dams put on the Middle Fork of the Coquille in 1923 by the Coos Bay Lumber Company. As late as 1924 the Myrtle Creek Logging Company was still putting logs in the creek.[136]

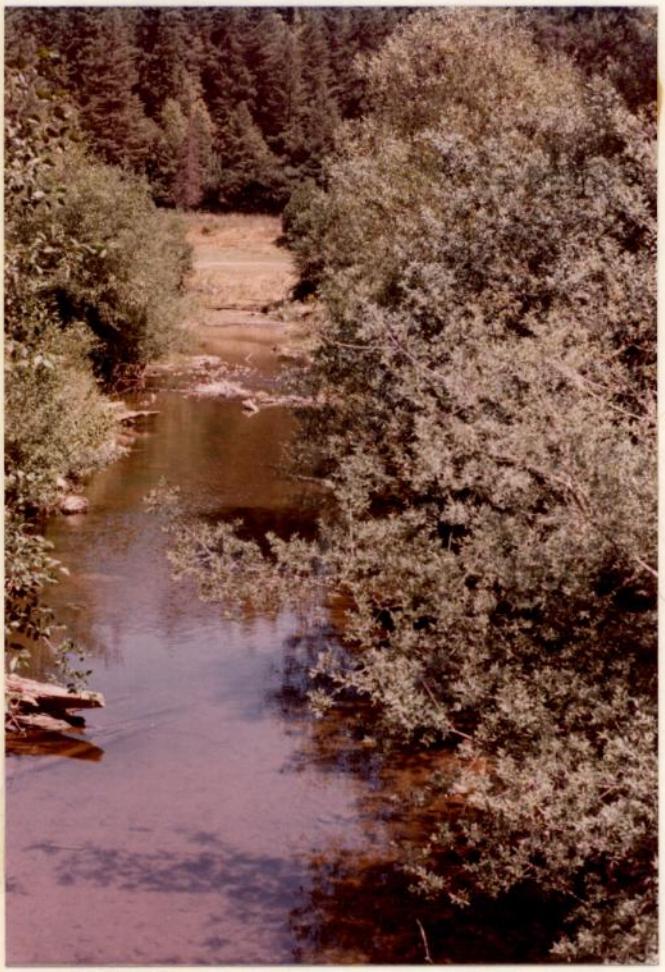


Fig. 53a. Myrtle Creek below Bancroft.
July 20, 1979.

Fig. 53b. Myrtle Creek below confluence with Rock Creek, RM 4.7.
July 20, 1979.

Before splash dams were put on the Middle Fork, two drives from above Bridge convinced lumbermen that either such methods or a railroad would be required to bring more logs out of the forests of the Middle Fork basin. The first was a drive of one million feet of fir and cedar sawlogs taken from Rock Creek (RM 18, Fig. 54a) a mile and a quarter above Remote by Edmund L. DeKeater and Albert Abraham (Abrams) in the season 1912 and 1913 which scattered logs along the river all the way to Bandon.[137] The second was a drive from the Smith Powers Logging Camp No. 3 a mile and a quarter above Rock Creek on the Middle Fork which similarly took over three years to clear to the mills on the lower Coquille.[138] The great logging chief Alfred H. Powers described these drives in the year 1924 when he was 62 years of age:

> There has been for a good many years logging operations [along the Middle Fork] on a small scale. I went up there eleven years ago and I put in eight million and we never got a log out that year. I had put in seven or eight million the next year and we got a big flood and fetched them out, and I lost about two million feet that went out in the ocean and out over the farms. We couldn't control the logs.....in order to get enough [streamflow] on the Middle Fork, it will overflow the banks on the South Fork and you are liable to lose a great many logs over the farms between the mouth of the Middle Fork and the ocean. (Fig. 55)
>
> I have known all the different owners that have tried to drive a little and most all of them have lost logs and some of them have had them hung up pretty near a year. The different men that logged along the river on a small scale, like the man that logged up at Remote, he lost one-third of his logs that went out into the ocean that came out from there (Decatur and Abrahams).[139]

Another driving section of the Middle Fork, not contiguous with these areas where the drivers' destination was always the mills on the lower Coquille, was in Camas Valley. James Stobie took logs to the Middle Fork with a horse team in 1917 and floated them about a quarter of a mile to his sawmill near Mill Creek (River Mile 31, Fig. 54b). Stobie's niece recalled that the mill had ceased operation but was still standing in 1929, so he probably floated logs on this section of Middle Creek for about ten years.[140]

Fig. 54a. Houghtaling's deadhead in Middle Fork Coquille above mouth of Rock Creek (left), RM 18. July 20, 1979.

Fig. 54b. Middle Fork Coquille, RM 31, Camas Valley. September 11, 1979.

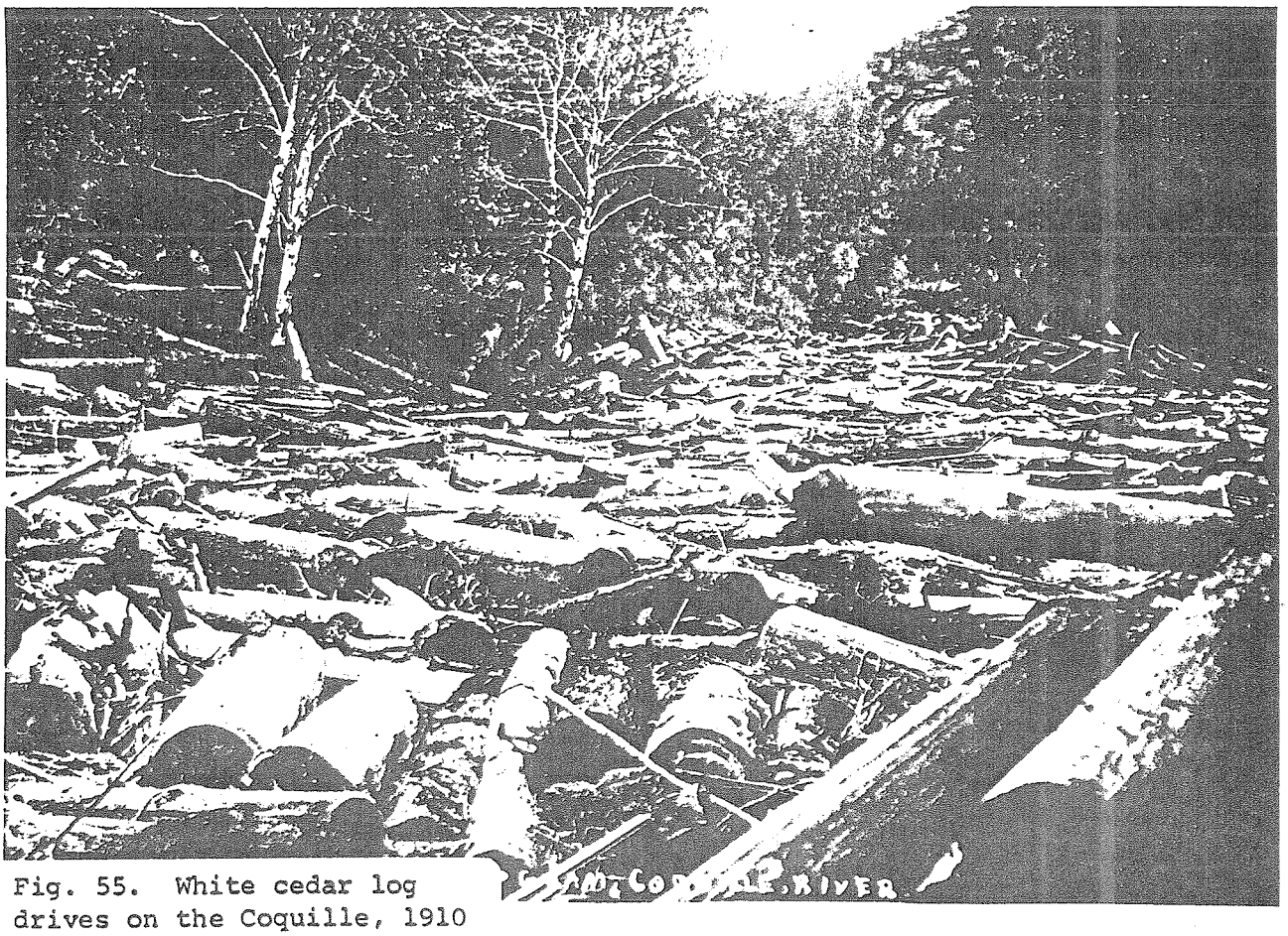


Fig. 55. White cedar log drives on the Coquille, 1910 and 1912.
Jack's Photos.

On the South Fork, C. E. Edwards and Harry Dalmar had a boom at Myrtle Point in 1891 which received logs from their camp upstream, its exact location not known.[141] William T. Wilson and J. P. Hayes of Rural (now Powers, RM 30) each registered a brand in 1901 for logs to be floated in the Coquille River.[142]

Ed Carter of Etelka brought 2200 logs down this fork in 1902 (Fig. 56a).[143] Robert P. Carman had a camp in 1903 which was probably near Etelka.[144] At least 15,000 logs came down the South Fork in November 1903. During the same logging season, David Carey and William Howell had a camp six miles above Myrtle Point and used the mark "1111".[145] That year W. H. Hayes of Etelka registered his brand. C. C. Carter and J. M. Wagner cut 1100 fir and cedar sawlogs at their camp on the South Fork during the summer of 1904.[146] C. C. Carter had a camp on Baines and Lockhart lands, Etelka, in 1905.[147]

Edmund Hall Chaney established a logging camp in the Carolina Settlement, like Rural an early name for the present-day Powers, in 1909 from which he also drove logs during the following year.[148] Most log driving on the upper South Fork of the Coquille seems, however, to have been done by Morris Bros. (Robert L. and Frank). In November 1911 they floated logs down from the Hayer Place in Rowland Prairie (Figs. 27b, 56b). By November 1912 their drives came from Rural.[149] Frank Morris broke his leg contending with a log jam on the upper South Fork in November 1913. The Corps of Engineers reported in 1914 that logging was carried on to River Mile 27 of the South Fork.[150]

Leonard Harley floated 50 cords of hardwood down the South Fork from Rowland Prairie and Edmund Hannon railroad ties from Broadbent during 1918.[151] Throughout the years 1912 to 1918, logs came down the South Fork from Dement Creek (RM 14.5), being first floated and then splashed out of that tributary

Fig. 56a. Etelka on South Fork Coquille, RM 18. July 20, 1979.

Fig. 56b. South Fork Coquille, RM 19.3. September 12, 1979.

(Fig. 57a).[152] The Coquille Lumber Company floated logs from River Miles 16-17 of the South Fork in 1921 even though the Power Logging Railroad was put in during 1914.[153] But the South Fork above the mouth of the Middle Fork was little used for driving after World War I.

Tributaries of Tidal Portions of the Coquille

Catching Creek,[154] Fishtrap Creek,[155] and Fat Elk Creek[156] were also used to float out sawlogs. This was apparently done by placing the logs in these streams and then waiting until the combination of winter freshet and high tide had sufficiently inundated the watershed to float out the accumulated logs. Hall Creek may have sustained drives from higher reaches of the stream. On December 4, 1901, E. A., L. M. and John L. Aasen Bros. registered their log brand and stated that they were engaged in logging business on Halls Creek. In 1905 a lien was placed on 50 Port Orford cedar logs at the mouth of the creek which had been cut in its headwaters.[157]

On the other side of the Coquille it was stated in 1887 that Cunningham Creek was not likely to be cleared out to allow floating down of the timber around it.[158] Later it was splashed, and logs yarded down its valley with donkeys, but successful logging ultimately depended on the construction of a logging railroad.[159] A railroad was likewise used to take logs from the Rink Creek watershed.[160]

The lower river tributary which supported a significant amount of log drives on the regular winter freshets was Bear Creek. On December 23, 1884, Sam Goheen placed a lien on 200 sawlogs which he had cut and placed "into the waters of Bear Creek...branded with the figures 1-2-3 on the end of each." On January 31, 1885 he placed a lien on 200 logs he had cut for Esua Prewett on Bear Creek.[161] J. Ed Taylor and others got their logs out of Bear Creek in the high waters of January 1887.[162] Albert Snead put 500 sawlogs in Bear

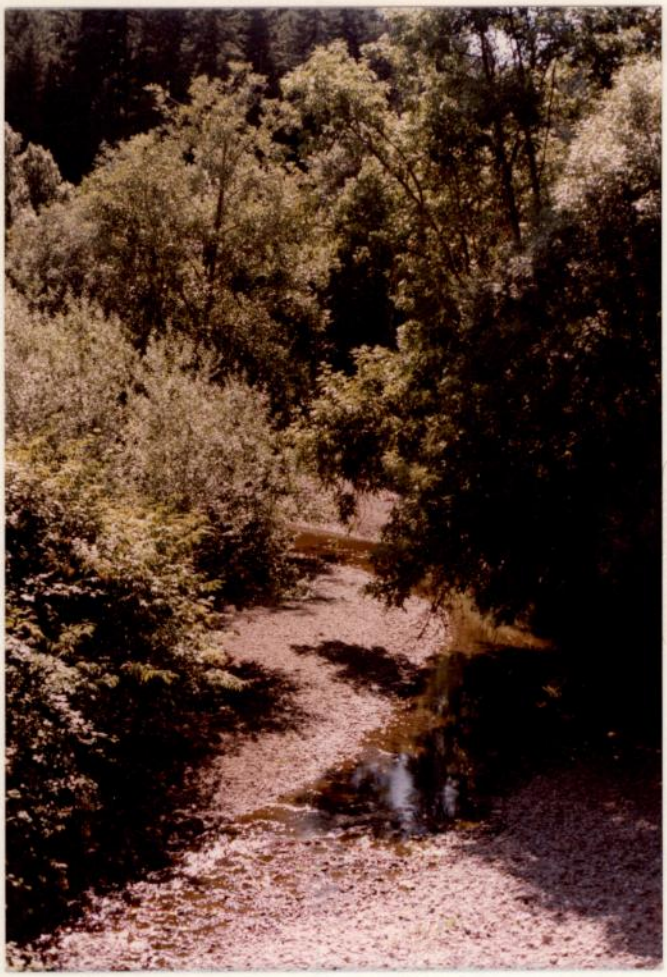


Fig. 57a. Bed of Dement Creek, RM 0.5. July 20, 1979.

Fig. 57b. Middle Fork Coquille above Slater Creek, RM 23.5. September 11, 1979.

Creek for J. F. Haga during the months of April through July 1893. In the autumn of 1901, Doak and Sons put 334 sawlogs branded J into Bills Creek and floated them to the Coquille via Bear Creek. E. L. Ohman took over 2,750 fir and white and red cedar sawlogs cut on Ralph Williams' land out of Bear Creek in December 1909 and January 1910.[163] The volume taken out was sufficient for a Bear Creek Logging Company to petition the Public Service Commission in 1925 for a franchise to drive, raft, boom and store logs in Bear Creek, but as it was the only company logging the stream at that time, the application was not proceeded with and was withdrawn in December of that year.[164]

Regulated Use of Splash Dams on the Coquille River

There was very little log driving in the State of Oregon after the year 1920. Such might have been the case in Coos County as well, because after 1907 C. A. Smith was consolidating his hold on a timber empire within its boundaries which was to be run on the latest capitalist lines, including a complete array of investment in plant, railroad, and machinery. The American Lumberman displayed the might of Smith's achievement in a prodigious hundred page spread in November 1911.[165]

The lumber baron's hubris was shortly doomed by the nemesis of overextended capital investment at a time of shrinking markets, a contraction which became catastrophic immediately after World War I.[166] In the retrenchment measures adopted by those who took on the responsibilities of receivership for the bankrupt giant, a new day for log driving on the Coquille presented itself. The managers believed that overinvestment in expensive logging railroads had been one cause of Smith's downfall and therefore carefully limited that form of operating expense. They found that the sanguine estimate of 1902 that the Middle Fork of the Coquille could be made a year round carrier of logs with a small capital investment was indeed true. As

they explained matters to their stockholders:

Middle Fork Development

> During the summer of 1923, we made the survey suggested in our last Annual Report, of the Middle Fork of the Coquille River, for the purpose of opening up the Company's supply of cedar and fir on its upper reaches. This survey was made with a view to preparing for sale a portion of that timber. Our anticipation had been that it would cost in excess of $200,000 to make the river carry logs from our own property to the loading works on the railroad at Coquille 37 miles away.
>
> We were agreeably surprised to find that the cost had been badly over estimated and that for a sum of around $30,000, this stream could be made to float logs for nine months, of a normal year, and at a very low operating cost. There had been a considerable quantity of Port Orford cedar fallen along the Middle Fork during the summer, and these operators and ourselves formed a Company which, at an expenditure of around $30,000 (our portion being $7500.) built two dams and are now successfully bringing the logs out to Coquille. There are estimated to be upwards of two billion feet of logs to come out from this source, of which nearly one half are from our own timber.
>
> There is a double advantage to us in this development of the River; first, it makes salable a fine body of timber containing around fifty million feet of Port Orford Cedar, and between 700,000,000 and 900,000,000' of fir and second, in increasing the territory in which high grade fir logs may be produced by small contractors.[167]

Water transport was the first limitation of expenditure, sale of timber and purchase back of logs from small operators rather than logging by paid company employees was the second. Therefore the pages of the third log brands register opened by the Coos County Clerk in 1920 were quickly filled. The Pacific States Lumber Company (the receiver company of the Smith interests) kept its own record of the brands (Table 1).[168]

The agency through which Pacific States (renamed the Coos Bay Lumber Company) and the Western White Cedar Company (which advanced $18,000 for improvement of the Middle Fork) developed the river was the Middle Fork Boom Company. During 1923 they built a splash dam below Slater Creek, just over the Coos line in Douglas County (RM 23.3; Fig. 57b) and another one-half mile below the mouth of Sandy Creek (RM 14.7, Fig. 58). The same year they

Table 1. Pacific Lumber Company's List of Coquille River Log Brands, 1922-25.

DATE	NAME	MARK
10/31/22	Axe, Peter	E
7/16/23	Baxter & Barker	
3/26/23	Carter, C. C.	A
2/27/24	Coos & Curry Cedar Co.	CC
1/3/24	Chaney, Geo. H.	C
	Crockett & Shaffer	
1/16/22	Devor, J. W.	DVO
2/12/24	Dement, Claire	
2/25/24	Dement, Claire	
12/15/23	Folsom, Bert	
1/18/24	Farmer, J. O.	J
12/14/23	Garrett, Roy	I
8/13/23	Hobson, Fred	FH
2/15/24	Heath, Frank	PL
1/18/24	Houghtaling, A.	R
7/23/23	Loney, E. J.	JE
1/15/24	Laird, P. W.	PL
2/19/24	Morrison, M. J.	JM
12/10/23	McMullen, Ben	Mc
3/3/24	Phillips & Forest	FF
11/14/23	Russell, W. J.	R
2/19/24	Somers, Cecil	CS
8/1/23	Smith & Doyle	SD
12/10/23	Steel Creek Logging Co.	C
2/13/24	Wainwright, L.	LW
7/5/23	Aasen & Kelley	AK
2/7/23	Aasen, John	
7/31/23	Quilhaugh, H. E.	HQ
2/13/23	Loney, E. J.	
2/1/24	Coffelt, Floyd	JR
11/1/23	LaBranche Bros.	
11/23/23	Sullivan, Tim	T
1/14/24	Pyburn, C. J.	T
11/26/23	Grant, J.	
	Rickert, Chas.	
5/31/23	Parry, Fred	
1/3/24	Hayes, E.	
	Johnson, E. E.	
	Watson, Ezra	
3/22/24	Biglow, A. M.	
	Martin, Wallace	
	McGill, V.	
7/24/23	Aasen, John	
3/16/24	Aasen, John	
8/2/23	Dodge & Baker	DB
7/23/25	Bert Folsom	

SUPPLEMENTARY LIST

Date	Name	Mark
2/12/24	Dement, Claire	CD
2/29/24	Garrett, Roy	
11/16/23	Aasen, John	
7/24/23	Aasen, John	
5/24/23	Grant, J.	
4/18/24	Hayes, Clayton	
4/8/24	Phillips, W. S.	
2/25/24	Wilson, Johnson	
1/2/24	Dashney, John	
12/15/23	McDonald, James H.	
11/26/23	Simmons, W. E.	
8/2/23	Dodge, Baker	
1/18/23	Myrtle Creek Logging Co.	
7/23/23	McMullen, Ben	
5/15/23	Phillips, W. S.	
2/13/23	Lawson Cypress Lbr. Co.	
7/14/23	Western White Cedar Co.	
11/1/23	Western White Cedar Co.	
10/1/25	Western White Cedar Co.	
11/15/24	E. E. Weekly & Wm. Weekly	
10/2/25	H. V. Holverstott	
2/9/25	A. B. Collier	
5/2/25	Summerlin, Anthony	
8/4/25	Moon Bros.	
3/2/25	E. J. Loney	
8/26/25	Albert Maiden	
7/17/25	Holverstott Bros.	

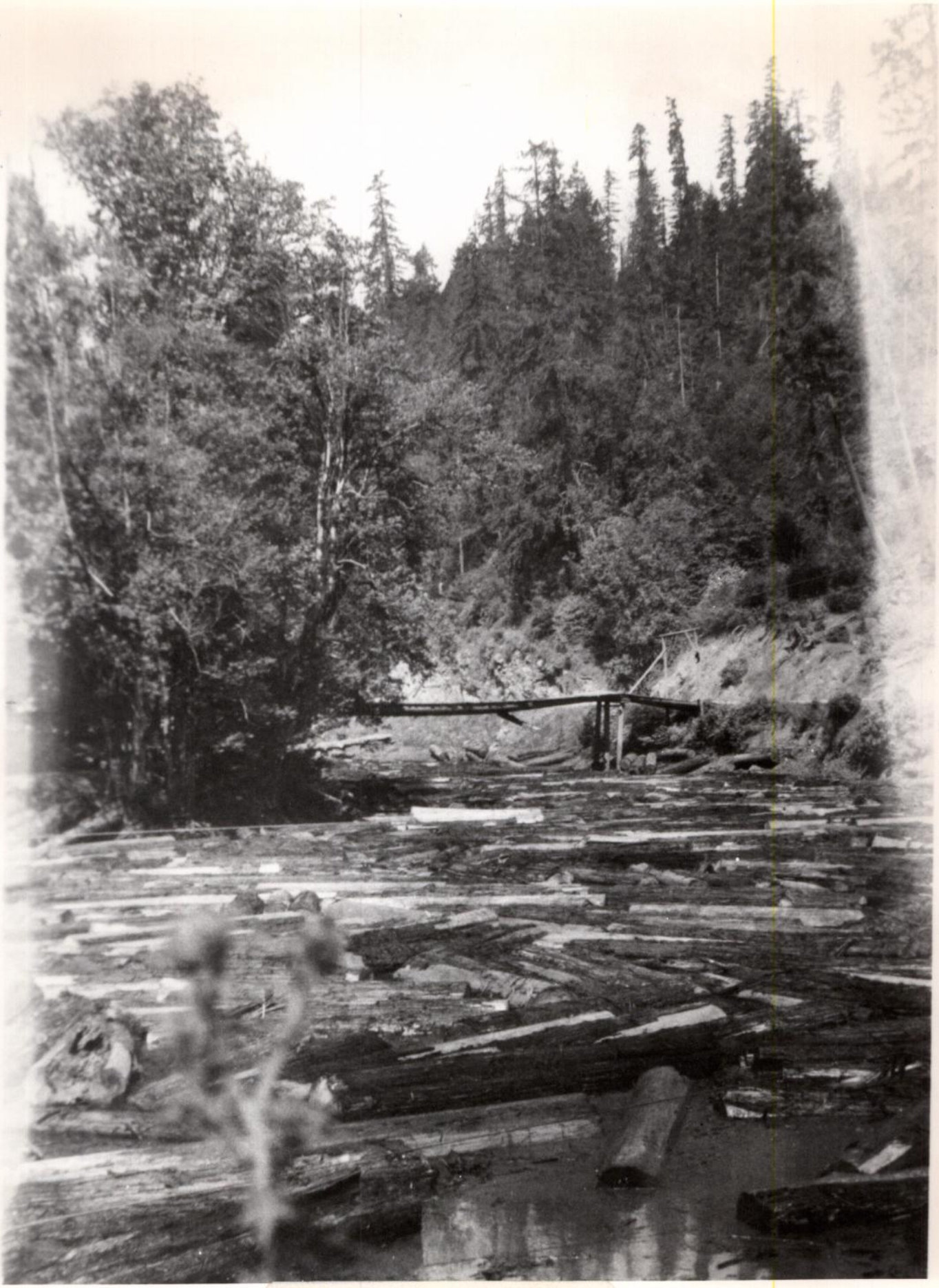


Fig. 58. Logs impounded behind Sandy Creek dam of Middle Fork Boom Company on Middle Fork, 1929.
Curt Beckham Collection. 98

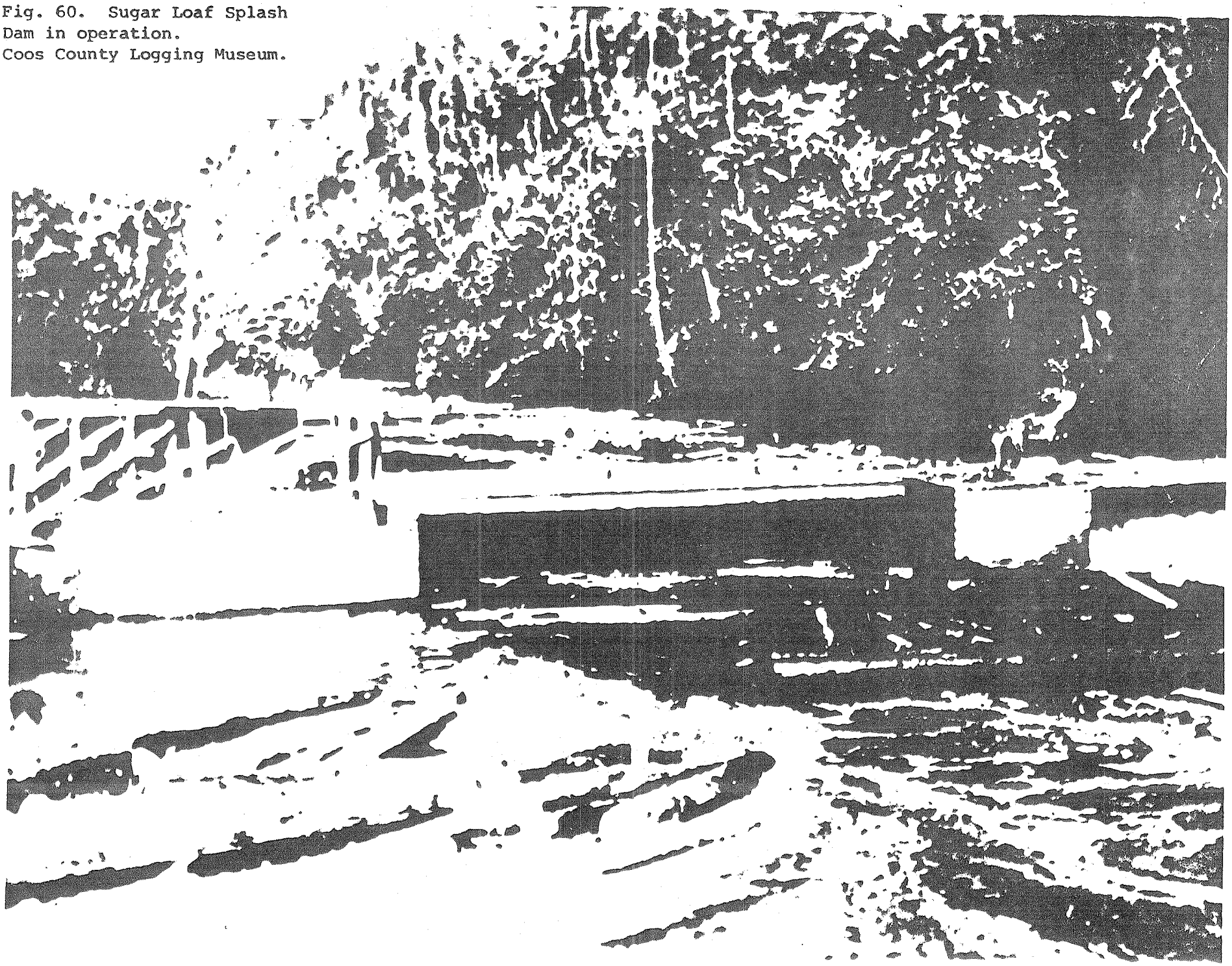
went before the Public Service Commission to obtain a booming franchise on the Middle Fork and proposed to build a third splash dam during 1924 at Sugar Loaf (RM 4.4, Figs. 59-61).[169] The franchise was granted March 11, 1924. In their first half year of operations, they handled 44,098,707 feet of driven logs and expected to handle 17,400,000 feet in the second half of the year. The company continued driving and booming until 1939, after which date no logs were sent down the river, and in 1941 they surrendered their franchise.[170]

In the years that the Middle Fork Boom Company operated, Sandy Creek was also driven with the aid of a splash dam (Fig. 62), and Big Creek, which had earlier been driven with natural freshets, also had a splash dam built on it in order to aid the transport of logs.[171]

The Public Service Commission was not the only body which gave permits for the erection of splash dams on the branches of the Coquille after 1920. The Port of Coquille River which had been organized in part to improve the driving potential of the several forks of the Coquille also granted permission to build splash dams on the river and regulated log booms, especially the one above the mouth of the North Fork. In May 1918 George Chaney approached the Port with suggestions for the improvement of the East Fork. In February 1920 Sumerlin and Lawhorn were allowed to maintain two log booms in the East Fork, and in June 1924 Chaney received permission to build a splash dam on the river; in fact he built one at River Mile 9 and another near Froma Park at River Mile 12.[172]

Meanwhile on the North Fork Dennis McCarthy was allowed to build a splash dam in June 1922 (Fig. 47). In order to help his operation the Port blasted the boulders in the canyon above Lee. The North Fork Dam Company and Baxter and Baker were both allowed to build dams on the North Fork in 1924. The latter partners built one dam above Fairview at River Mile 27.5 and a second

Fig. 60. Sugar Loaf Splash Dam in operation. Coos County Logging Museum.



To accompany application for a permit to build and maintain a splash Dam across the Middle Fork of the COQUILLE RIVER in the S.W. 1/4 of the N.W. 1/4 of Sec 25. Twp 29 S., R12 W. W.M. Coos Co. ORE. to assist in logging operations on upper portions of said river

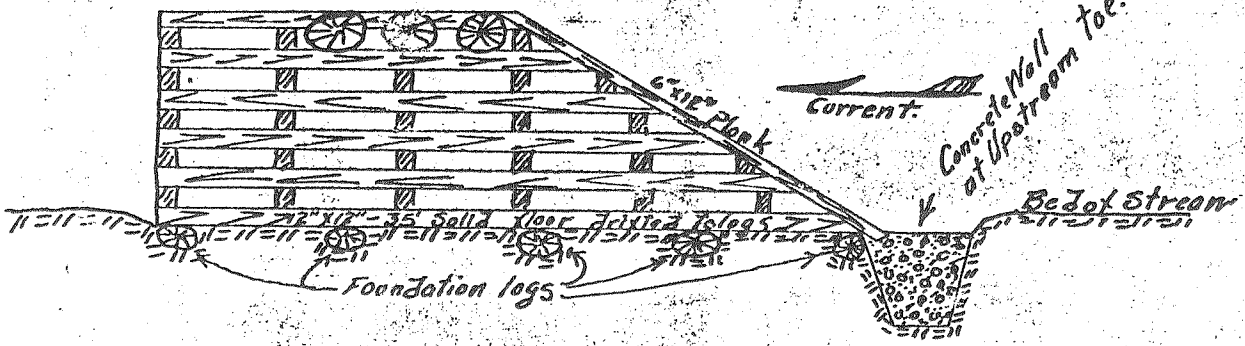
U.S. Engineer in charge
PORTLAND ORE. _ _ _ _ _ _

APPROVED by PORT of COQUILLE RIVER
by _ _ _ _ _ PRESIDENT
Attest _ _ _ _ _ Secretary
This _ _ Day of _ _ _ 1924.

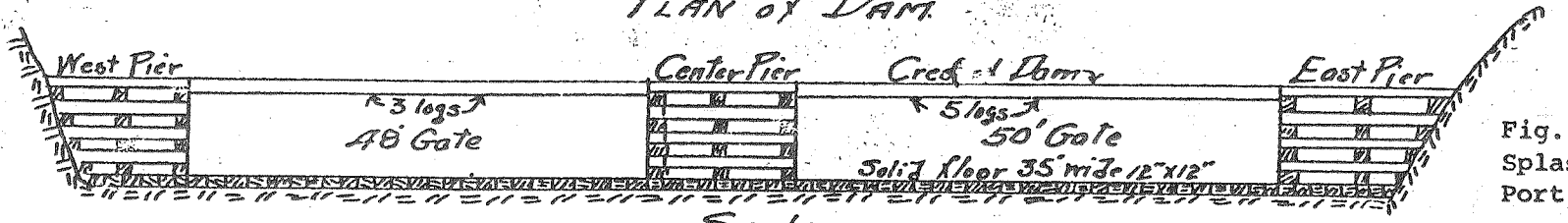
MIDDLE FORK Boom Co. - Applicant

SHEET #2 of TWO SHEETS.

Section of Dam
Thru Pier & Gate
Scale - one inch = 10 feet.



PLAN of DAM.



Scale
one inch = 20 feet

Fig. 59. Plans of Sugar Loa Splash Dam, 1924. Port of Coquille River.

File 178
Filed Nov. 15, 1924
J. M. [illegible] Sec

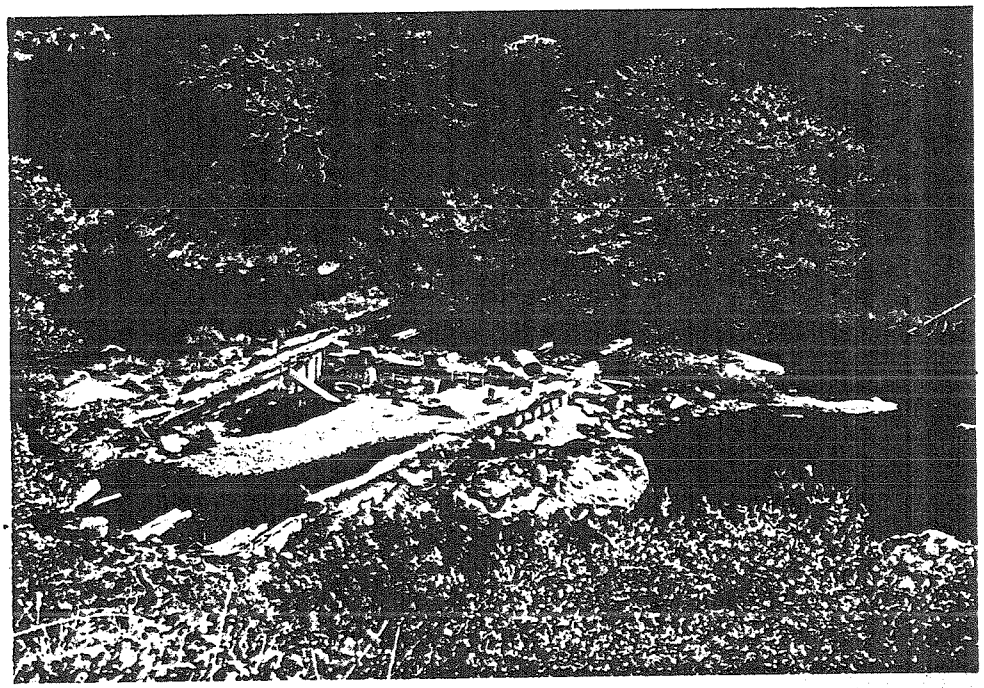


Fig. 61. Ruins of Sugar
Loaf Splash Dam.
August 29, 1979.

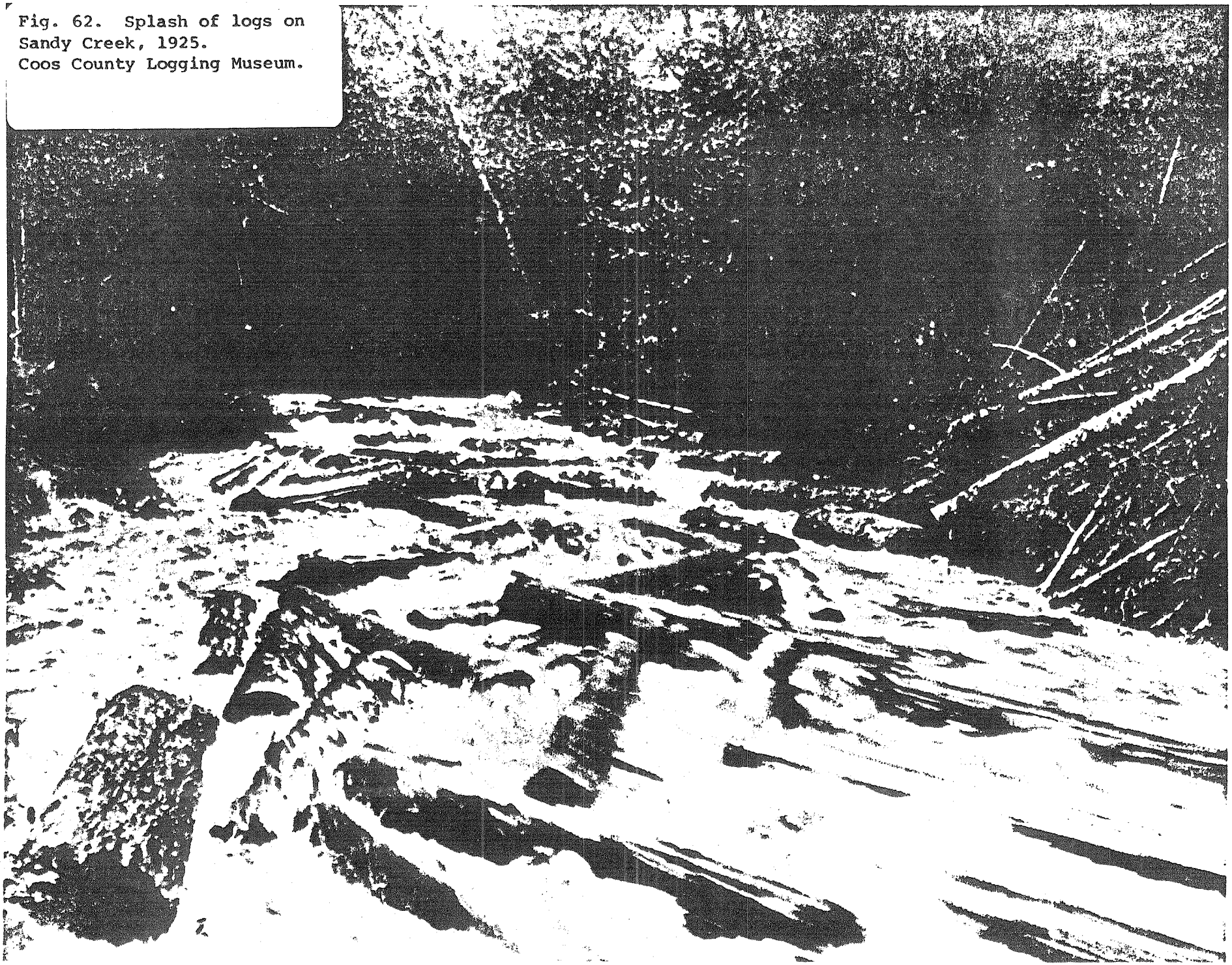


Fig. 62. Splash of logs on Sandy Creek, 1925. Coos County Logging Museum.

above Laverne Falls at River Mile 31.5 (Fig. 6b).[173] The Middle Fork Boom Company also cleared their splash dam projects with the Port.[174]

The riparian owners felt aggrieved at this alliance between the lumber operators and the Port of Coquille River and complained to the Port regularly after 1925. In 1928 they brought suit against the Port and won damages for losses to their lands on the East and North Forks caused by the splashed log drives.[175]

Probably the largest splash dam operation to be conducted, outside of that on the Middle Fork was the LB&L Logging Company's operation (Kenneth Laird, Julius Benham and Ivan Laird) on the East Fork of the Coquille. It was formed in 1935 and bought out George Chaney's splash dams. They were little used by the new company which instead had their own dam below Froma Park, which held 10 million feet of logs, and another just below Dora at the Abernathy place, which held 5 million feet. LB&L were logging in the Sitkum area where logs could not be driven on the East Fork because of the rocky canyon there. They trucked the cut logs ten to twelve miles from Sitkum and dumped them at Fora for flotation downstream to the Smith Wood Products Mill at Coquille. Kenneth Laird and his partners operated until 1945 when they sold out to Coos Bay Lumber. In their banner year of 1941-42 they had a crew of 136 men and took 33 million feet of logs down the East Fork, just under half of it being their logs, the rest those of other operators.[176]

FISHERIES

Extensive commercial fisheries existed on the Coquille River from 1883-1925 and also on the Coos River.[177] They were on the tidal portion of the rivers and therefore do not add to the state's claim on the basis of tidal reach and vessel navigation.

CONCLUSION

From this abundance of data on the navigable use of the Coos and Coquille Rivers, what portions of the beds of the main streams and their tributaries may be claimed by the State?

On the basis of vessel navigation, neither branch of the Coos River supported vessel navigation above the head of tide at Allegany and the State Fish Hatchery, except for a limited use of the South Coos between River Miles 12.5 and 14.5 by small recreational boats. On the Coquille River, steamboats and gasoline launches carrying freight, mail and passengers ascended to River Mile 14.3 on the North Fork, Dora at River Mile 13.5 on the East Fork and to Broadbent at River Mile 10 on the South Fork during the first two decades of this century. The sections of the river which have been opened to vessel navigation, primarily by recreational craft, have been extended by the Port of Coquille River acting under its legislative mandate to River Mile 21.5 on the North Fork, River Mile 4 one the Middle Fork, McKinley at River Mile 8.5 of Middle Creek, and Rowland Prairie or River Mile 24 on the South Fork. Drift boaters use the North Fork below Laverne Falls (RM 31.3), the Middle Fork below Bridge (RM 8), and the South Fork below Powers (RM 30) to the present time.

These reaches were exceeded on some forks of the Coquille by log drives undertaken with regularly recurring natural streamflow during winter months. This went as high as River Mile 42 on the North Fork. Splash dams were early used on that fork to spread logs downstream in advance of the winter freshets to minimize the risk of jams in the river. Navigability of the North Fork to River Mile 42 was recognized in 55 OR 372.

Logs came down Middle Creek from as high as River Mile 13 for two decades. Successful driving of the Middle Fork with natural flows occurred from River Mile 13 in Enchanted Prairie. This fork's tributaries, Big Creek and Myrtle Creek, were driven by unaided streamflow from River Miles 4 and 9 respectively. On the South Fork log driving was undertaken for several years by different logging operators from Rural at River Mile 30. Bear Creek was also driven with ordinary flow by several operators from at least the mouth of Bill Creek (River Mile 3).

The exercise of jurisdiction by the Public Service and Public Utilities Commission has further extended the claim of the State to River Mile 24.8 of the Middle Fork of the Coquille.

These navigable lengths on the Coquille may be compared to the meandered lengths on three of the forks: River Mile 22 on the North Fork, River Mile 7 on the East Fork, and River Mile 30.5 on the South Fork.[178]

On the Coos and Millicoma Rivers the main claim to the beds of these streams is on the basis of log drives and the exercise of jurisdiction by the Public Service and Public Utilities Commission. On the East Fork of the Millicoma the head of log driving with unaided streamflow was River Mile 14.6, the tributaries apparently being driven only with the aid of splash dams. This claim to the East Fork was strengthened by the grant of a booming franchise to the Millicoma Boom Company up to River Mile 11.5.

On the West Fork of the Millicoma the highest point at which driving occurred with unaided streamflow would seem to be River Mile 13. Reaches of the river above this point required splash dams in order to transport sawlogs. No booming franchise was issued for this stream.

The South Coos was driven from River Mile 15.5 with unaided streamflow. These drives had the obstacle of the fish hatchery racks to clear at River Mile 12. Although the court granted a franchise on this river on the basis of navigability for all of the river above tidehead except any portion east of Range 9 West of the Willamette Meridian, this was evidently done as a wartime emergency measure, and subsequent driving depended on massive river-bed improvement and the regular use of splash dam assistance.

SUMMARY

Waterway	Boat Miles	Log Drive Miles	Town Near Head
Coos River	All		Coos River
South Fork Coos	0-12	0-15.5	6.5 mi. above Dellwood
Millicoma	All		Allegany
East Fork Millicoma		0-14.6	Above Matson Creek
West Fork Millicoma		0-13	13 RM. above Allegany
Coquille River	All		Myrtle Point
South Fork Coquille	0-24	0-25.3	2 mi. below Powers
Middle Fork Coquille	0-8	0-13	5 mi. above Bridge
Big Creek		0-4	Near Bridge
Myrtle Creek		0-9	Near Bancroft
East Fork Coquille	0-13.5	0-13.5	Dora
North Fork Coquille	0-21.8	0-42	11 mi. above Laverne Falls
Middle Creek	0-7.9	0-13	McKinley
Bear Creek		0-3	Near Bandon

FOOTNOTES

1. Lewis L. McArthur, Oregon Geographic Names, 4th Ed. (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974), pp. 175, 177, 493.

2. The West Shore (April 1877), p. 150; U. S. Army, Chief of Engineers, Report, 1879, II, 1807-09; 1901, V, 246-66.

3. For an early proposal for such a canal, Ibid., 1874, II, 366-68.

4. Ibid., 365; Henry H. Gale, Resources of Coos County (Marshfield, 1875), p. 21.

5. State Water Resources Board, South Coast Basin (Salem, 1963), p. 16 and pp. 12-30; E. R. Peterson and Alfred Powers, A Century of Coos and Curry (Portland: Binfords & Mort, 1952), Chaps. 25, 26, 28, 30, 31.

6. Coquille Valley Sentinel, Progress Number, June 1937, n.p.; telephone communication from Ed Hubbard, U. S. Geological Survey, Portland, 17 Sep 1979; U. S. Geological Survey, Water Resources Data for Oregon, Water Year 1978, Water-Data Report OR-78-1 (Portland, 1979), pp. 498, 501.

7. Ibid., p. 502.

8. Stephen Dow Beckham, Coos Bay, the Pioneer Period 1851-1890 (Coos Bay: Arago Books, 1973), pp. v. 6-11, 31-33; Gale, Resources, p. 26.

9. Though Camas Valley had easy communication with Roseburg and became part of Douglas County.

10. Coos Bay Monthly, 2:2 (May-June 1907), pp. 3-4; and see C. L. Mahaffy, Coos River Echoes (Portland: Interstate Press, 1965), Introduction.

11. Coos Bay Monthly, 1:4 (Dec 1906), p. 4; Columbia River and Oregon Timberman 10:4 (Feb 1909), p. 32C.

12. Peterson & Powers, Century, pp. 405-418.

13. Ernest L. Osborne, Wooden Ships and Master Craftsmen (Bandon: Bandon Historical Society, 1978); E. W. Wright, ed., Lewis & Dryden's Marine History of the Pacific Northwest (Portland: Lewis & Dryden, 1895), pp. 240, 301.

14. Jackson County Commissioners Journal, 1853-56, pp. 26-27; Coos County Court Journal I, 4, 5, 47, 95, II, 273, V, 31, all cited in WPA Historical Records Survey MSS, Coos County, "Ferries", Oregon State Library, Salem.

15. Coos County Court Journal, Vol. 8, pp. 358, 421, 573-574; Vol. 9, pp. 116, 310; Vol. 11, pp. 21, 214.

16. Mahaffy, Coos River Echoes, pp. 107, 108.

17. Ibid., p. 105.

18. Ibid., pp. 211-12; and illustration facing pp. 102-03; interview with Jesse Ott, Allegany, 29 Aug 1979.

19. Mahaffy, Coos River Echoes, pp. 10, 226-27 and illustration facing pp. 4 & 5; Coos Bay Monthly, 3:3 (June 1908), pp. 1-10; U. S. Army Chief of Engineers, Report, 1895, V, 3504; Transcript of evidence before Public Utilities Commission 24 July-August 1936, pp. 582, 698, File L-F-34, PUC, State Archives, Salem.

20. Myrtle Point Herald, 27 Aug 1936, p. 1; 3 Sept 1936, p. 6; for Indian canoe use of the Coos, see Mahaffy, Coos River Echoes, p. 1.

21. Agnes R. Sengstacken, Destination West! (Portland: Binfords & Mort, 1972), pp. 178-79.

22. Peterson & Powers, Century, p. 412; the Coquille City Herald reported Dunham's steamer went into service December 1884, and see issues of 13 Jan 1885; 30 Nov 1886; 25 Jan, 5 and 12 Nov 1887.

23. Coos County Court Journal Vol. 4, p. 299 in WPA Historical Records Survey MSS, Coos County, VII A 1.

24. Coos County Court Journal Vol. 5, p. 109 in Ibid.

25. Ibid., XIV A; S. D. Beckham, Coos Bay, p. 48; and see U. S. Army Chief of Engineers, Report, 1874, II, 366 and Randall Mills, Stern Wheeler Up Columbia (Palo Alto: Pacific Books, 1947), p. 70.

26. U. S. Army Chief of Engineers, Report,1881, III, 2596-98; 1891, V, 3148-51; 1901, V, 346-66; 1904, I, 651; for early entry into the Coquille see Coos Bay Times, Centennial Ed. (1947), Sect. 5, p. [3].

27. U. S. Army Chief of Engineers, Report, 1890, IV, 2926-28; 1891, V, 3147; 1895, V, 3356; 1898, IV, 2961-62; 1900, VI, 4272.

28. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 8 Nov 1901; 7 Feb 1902; Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 5:9 (July 1904), p. 1.

29. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 29 Nov 1907.

30. Telephone conversation with Zeno Bright, Gravelford, 10 Aug 1979.

31. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 15 Jan 1909.

32. Ibid., 17 Dec 1909; 7 Jan 1910; 27 Jan 1911; 26 Jan, 19 Dec 1912, 12 Feb 1914; 21 Feb 1918; Victor C. West to author, 23 Nov 1979 and see Osborne, Wooden Ships, p. 19.

33. Laws of Oregon, 1909, Ch. 39. This provision was repealed in 1968.

34. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 24 Nov, Dec 1911; Port of Coquille River Minute Book I, p. 1.

35. U. S. Army Chief of Engineers, Report, 1913, I, 1341; 1914, I, 1352, III, 3180.

36. Port of Coquille River Minute Book I, pp. 34-36.

37. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 28 Jan 1915; 27 Jan 1916.

38. Ibid., 14 Feb 1918; 16 Dec 1914.

39. Ibid., 2 Jan, 13, 27 March, 17 Apr 1913; 16, 31 Dec 1914.

40. Ibid., 27 Mar 1913; 5, 12 Feb 1914; 16, 21 Dec 1915; 6 Dec 1916; 10 Jan 1917; 21 Feb 1918.

41. Ibid., 9 Dec 1914; 18 Nov, 7 Dec 1915; 10 Jan, 20 Dec 1917; 31 Jan 1918.

42. Port of Coquille River Minute Book I, p. 279.

43. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 19 Jan, 15 Feb, 19 Dec 1912.

44. Port of Coquille River Minute Book II, passim.

45. Ibid., Book III, pp. 136-37 and passim.

46. Ibid., pp. 131, 153-56.

47. Telephone conversation with Ernest Bryant, Myrtle Point, 7 Sept 1979; Port of Coquille River Commissioners' Meeting, 11 Sept 1979.

48. Ibid.; information from Bill Mullarkey, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, 17 Sept 1979.

49. Henry Gannett, Forests of Oregon (Washington, D. C.: GPO, 1902), pp. 15, 16, 19; Coquille Commercial Club, Coquille (1913).

50. Coquille City Herald, 11 Sept 1883.

51. The Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 3:10 (Aug 1902), p. 46 and see p. 43 for the immediately preceding communication from L. J. Simpson.

52. Ibid., 1:7 (May 1900), p. 16; Coos County Circuit Court Case #279; Coos Mechanics Liens, I, 131, Coos County Courthouse, Coquille; Mahaffy, Coos River Echoes, pp. 206.07.

53. Marshfield Coast Mail, 27 Dec 1879; the location of Bazzill's home from Division of State Lands Plat Book #402, T 25 S, R 11 W.

54. S. D. Beckham, Coos Bay, p. 37 and pp. 28-46; West Shore (Dec 1881), p. 285.

55. Marshfield Coast Mail, 3 Jan 1884.

56. Coos Mechanics Liens I, 129; Raine was operating during 1882 and 1883 as well, pp. 114-16.

57. S. D. Beckham, Coos Bay, pp. 37, 39; Coquille City Herald, 1 Mar 1887.

58. Coos County Laborers Liens, I, 150-55, 245-46, 298, 346, 363-65, and see pp. 370-71 for William Turpin and John Kruse's 1894 camp on the North Coos River; also see PUC file LF-34, Transcript of Evidence, 24 July-1 Aug 1936, p. 536; Coos County Log Brands and Stock Marks II, 78, 95, Coos County Courthouse, Coquille. Workman was the second logging operator to register his brand in Coos County.

59. Marshfield Coast Mail, 3 Jan 1884, 12 Feb, 31 Dec 1891; Pacific Coast Wood and Iron, XV, 167-68 (Apr 1891); Coos Bay News, 22 Nov 1898, 6, 13 Nov 1900; Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 1:12 (Oct 1900), p. 7; 2:3 (Jan 1901), p. 6; 2:5 (March 1901), p. 10; 6:3 (Jan 1905), p. 33; 9:2 (Dec 1907), p. 49; a good photo of a log jam on Coos River is in 2:3 (Jan 1901), p. 35.

60. Ibid., 6:6 (Apr 1905), p. 29; Marshfield Coos Bay News, 5 Dec 1899.

61. Interview with Jesse Ott, Allegany, 29 Aug 1979; Mahaffy, Coos River Echoes, illustration facing pp. 23 and 27.

62. Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 10:4 (Feb 1909), p. 32C; American Lumberman (11 Nov 1911), p. 68; MSS C-B 817, William Denman Papers, Carton 7, "Comparison of Cut and Full Estimate, 1907-18," p. 3, H. H. Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

63. Coos County Laborers Liens II, 194-98, 243.

64. PUC File LF-33, 3 Sept 1935, Exhibits A and B.

65. Ibid., Transcript of Evidence, pp. 10, 45, and application maps.

66. Mahaffy, Coos River Echoes, pp. 181, 186-87.

67. PUC File LF-33, Transcript of Evidence, I, 10, II, 199-200.

68. Jesse Ott interview; Mahaffy, Coos River Echoes, pp. 175-78 and illustration facing pp. 5, 26.

69. Coos Laborers Liens, I, 395-96, II 199-200.

70. Jesse Ott interview; Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 11:2 (Oct 1910), p. 40; William Denman Papers, "Comparison Cut and Full Estimates," p. 16.

71. Coos County Laborers Liens IV, 55, 57-58, 172-73, 344-45.

72. Ibid., pp. 352, 292-93.

73. Ibid., pp. 388-89.

74. S. D. Beckham, Coos Bay, pp. 37, 39; Marshfield Coast Mail, 3 Jan 1884; and see Coos Bay News, 24 Nov 1897; Mahaffy, Coos River Echoes, pp. 4, 8, 98, 230-31 and pictures of the 1887 drive facing pp. 22, 131.

75. PUC File LF-34, Transcript of Evidence, pp. 109-10, 184, 698; Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 7:7 (May 1906), p. 41; 10:11 (Sept 1909), p. 36; William Denman Papers, "Comparison of Cut and Full Estimates," p. 17; Coos County Laborers Liens III, 326, 392, 402-16.

76. Ibid., 44, 48, 52-60, 61, 64-66; Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 11:1 (Nov 1909), p. 33.

77. PUC File LF-34, Transcript of Evidence, pp. 137-38, 287-91, 384-85, 535-36.

78. 159 OR 279.

79. Peterson and Powers, Century, p. 433; Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 1:4 (Feb 1900), p. 10; 2:8 (June 1901), p. 7.

80. Laws of Oregon, 1889, pp. 105-07, Special Laws, pp. 337-38, 656-57.

81. 42 OR 394, though the decision was based on a technicality. For this case's inhibition of improvment of the upper Rogue, see "Rogue River Navigability Report," footnote 103.

82. Laws of Oregon, 1917, pp. 160-66.

83. PUC Records RGP-12, 69 A-12, Item 1, State Archives, Salem.

84. Ibid., File LF-33, Original Application, 22 Oct 1934 and map, Transcript of Evidence, pp. 42, 53.

85. Ibid., revised application with Exhibits A and B, and Protest Briefs.

86. Coos County Laborers Liens IV, 443-68.

87. PUC File LF-33.

88. PSC File LF-11, 12 and see testimony in LF-34.

89. Ibid., PUC Oregon Order No. 3941.

90. Ibid., PUC Oregon Order #10359, quoting the decision in Coos Bay Logging v Ormond R. Bean et al.

91. Mahaffy, Coos River Echoes, p. 112; telephone interview with Dow Beckham, 1 Aug 1979.

92. Oregon Laws, 1957, pp. 203-04, 682.

93. Coos County Log Brands II, 117-398.

94. Ibid., p. 128; Coos County Laborers Liens I, 457; Coquille City Herald, 23 Sept 1902.

95. Coos County Laborers Liens, II, 76, 92, 110.

96. Supreme Court G 8-3, case #676 (Flinn v Vaughn), Testimony, pp. 138, 139, 141, 155, 159, 184, 192, 197, 229-32, Oregon State Archives, Salem.

97. Ibid., 244, 254, 271; Coos County Laborers Liens II, 85, 88-90.

98. Ibid., pp. 65-66, 77, 86; Flinn v Vaughn Testimony, pp. 140-41, 159, 176, 247, 254, 271; initials from Coos County Log Brands II, 190, 228.

99. Flinn v Vaughn Testimony, pp. 138-41.

100. Ibid., pp. 131-33; Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 5:9 (July 1904), p. 1.

101. Peterson and Powers, Century, p. 433; Flinn v Vaughn Testimony, p. 131.

102. Ibid., pp. 135-37, 160-64; Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 7:5 (March 1906), p. 32G.

103. Ibid., 11:5 (March 1910), p. 37; Flinn v Vaughn Testimony, pp. 134-35.

104. Ibid., p. 191.

105. Coos County Laborers Liens II, 115-16; Myrtle Point Enterprise, 3 Jan 1908.

106. Ibid., 15 Jan, 17 Dec 1909.

107. Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 12:11 (Sept 1911), pp. 40-41.

108. Interview with Kenneth Laird, Sitkum, 2 Aug 1979.

109. Interview with Curt Beckham (McCarthy's son-in-law), 29 Aug 1979; and see below page 99.

110. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 12 Dec 1902; interview with Ernest Bryant, 11 Sept 1979; Coos County Log Brands II, 157.

111. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 16 Dec 1914, 25 Nov, 2 Dec 1915; William Denman Papers, "Comparison of Cut and Full Estimates," pp. 14, 15, 18.

112. Coos County Laborers Liens III, 367-69.

113. Curt Beckham interview, 29 Aug 1979.

114. Marshfield Coast Mail, 3 Jan 1884; Coquille City Herald, 22 Dec 1885, 23 Nov 1886; Coos County Log Brands II, p. 100.

115. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 20 Dec 1901, this may have been for the sawmill at Dora, see Ibid., 2 Jan, 30 Jan 1903.

116. Ibid., 21 Nov 1902, 6 Feb 1903, 21 Feb 1908; Coos County Laborers Liens II, 108, 110, III, 106-09, 113-14, 132, 348, 426.

117. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 10 Jan 1902, 13 Feb, 25 Dec 1903, 22 Jan 1904; Stemler registered his log brand 4 Nov 1898, Coos County Log Brands II, 98.

118. Ibid., p. 263; Coos County Laborers Liens II, 144, 147, 220.

119. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 29 Nov, 27 Dec 1907, 3 Jan 1908.

120. Ibid., 2 Jan, 27 Feb, 4 Dec 1913; 16 Dec 1915; Coos County Laborers Liens III, 208, 217 and see 430.

121. Ibid., IV,372; Myrtle Point Enterprise, 6 Dec 1917, 6 Nov 1919.

122. Ibid., 19 Jan, 15, 22, 29 Feb 1912; Coos County Log Brands II, 329.

123. Coos County Laborers Liens II, 242-43.

124. Ernest Bryant interview, 11 Sept 1979.

125. Coos County Laborers Liens IV, 392, 423, V, 121.

126. Curt Beckham, Gyppo Logging Days (Myrtle Point, 1978), p. 24.

127. Kenneth Laird interview, 2 Aug 1979; Jeub took out the brand for the company in 1923, Coos County Log Brands III, 31-32.

128. Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 1:12 (Oct 1900), p. 12.

129. Coos County Log Brands II, 142-43, 151.

130. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 7, 21 Nov, 12 Dec 1902, 12 Feb 1904; Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 2:3 (Jan 1901), p. 6; Coos County Laborers Liens II, 137-38, 140.

131. Marshfield Sun, 1 March 1906.

132. Coos County Laborers Liens I, 420-29.

133. Ibid., II, 27, 101, 126-30, III, 400.

134. Ibid., II, 111-12, 120-22, 131, 134, 138-40, III, 391-92.

135. Ibid., II, 148-49; III, 395-98.

136. Curt Beckham interview, 29 Aug 1979; Coos County Circuit Court Cases # 6480, 6544.

137. Coos County Laborers Liens III, 163-83; Coos County Log Brands II, 337; Columbia River and Oregon Timberman 14:2 (Dec 1912), p. 32H.

138. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 8, 29 Jan 1914.

139. PUC File LF-34, Testimony of A. H. Powers; and see William Denman Papers, "Comparison of Cut and Full Estimates," pp. 6, 20, and U. S. Chief of Engineers, Report, 1914, I, 1352.

140. Welcome Martindate Combs and Sharon Combs Ross, God Made a Valley (1962), p. 29; telephone conversation with Mrs. W. M. Combs, Camas Valley, 10 Sept. 1979.

141. Coos County Laborers Liens I, 160-76.

142. Coos County Log Brands II, 137, 139, 147.

143. Ibid., p. 169; Myrtle Point Enterprise, 14 Nov 1902.

144. Ibid., 20 March 1903; the Carmans remain property holders at Etelka.

145. Ibid., [14] Nov 1903; Coos County Laborers Liens II, p. 78-83.

146. Ibid., 106; Coos County Log Brands II, p. 186.

147. Coos County Laborers Liens II, p. 133.

148. Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 10:7 (May 1909), p. 24; 11:1 (Nov 1909), p. 33; Myrtle Point Enterprise, 9 Dec 1910; Coos County Log Brands II, 309.

149. Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 11:1 (Nov 1909), p. 33; 12:11 (Sept 1911), pp. 40-41; Coos County Log Brands II, 333; Myrtle Point Enterprise, 9 Dec 1910.

150. Ibid., 17 Nov 1911, 12, 26 Jan, 21 Nov, 26 Dec 1912, 13 Nov 1913; Coos County Laborers Liens III, 149-55; U. S. Army Chief of Engineers, Report, 1914, I, p. 1352.

151. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 3 Jan, 5 Dec 1918.

152. Ibid., 28 Nov 1912, 18 Dec 1918; Coos County Laborers Liens III, pp. 417-21.

153. Ibid., IV, p. 43.

154. Myrtle Point Enterprise, 22 Jan 1904, 22 Feb 1911.

155. Coos County Laborers Liens I, 196, 202, II, 6, 9, 11-12.

156. Ibid., II, 90; Columbia River and Oregon Timberman 2:7 (May 1901), p. 15; 3:8 (June 1902), p. 7.

157. Coos County Log Brands II, 149; Coos County Laborers Liens, II, 119.

158. Coquille City Herald, 19 Nov 1887.

159. Columbia River and Oregon Timberman, 1:9 (Sept 1900), p. 5, 3:8 (June 1902), p. 7; 7:5 (March 1905), p. 32F; 8:3 (Jan 1907).

160. Ibid., 8:5 (March 1907), p. 22; 11:1 (Nov 1909), p. 47.

161. Coos Mechanics Liens I, 126-27.

162. Coquille City Herald, 25 Jan 1887.

163. Coos County Laborers Liens I, 254, II, 21, III, 66-67.

164. PSC File LF-26.

165. American Lumberman (11 Nov 1911), pp. 43-142.

166. Peterson and Powers, Century, pp. 431-32; William Denman Papers, "Coos Bay Lumber Company File".

167. Ibid., Annual Reports folder, 1923 and see 1924, 1929.

168. Ibid., Coos Bay Lumber Company File; Coos County Log Brands, III.

169. PSC File LF-27, Application; Curt Beckham, Gyppo Logging, pp. 13, 21 has pictures of one of the upper splash dams and a high lead log dump on the Middle Fork, and see pp. 12-14.

170. PSC File LF-27, Application Exhibit B, Order Nos. 1062 and 8649 and passim.

171. Curt Beckham interview 29 Aug 1979.

172. Port of Coquille River Minute Book I, 42, 50, 53, 154, 212, 292, II, 31, 118, 151, 253.

173. Ibid., I, 274, II, 37, 38.

174. Ibid., II, 167 and maps of their project.

175. Port of Coquille River Minute Book II, 57, 79, 85, 128, 140, 151, 173, 192, 294, with map of J. M. Bright Ranch, 1928, and map of Shook and Weekly lands, 1929; Weekly v Port of Coquille River, Coos County Circuit Court, Coos County Courthouse, Coquille.

176. Interview with Kenneth Laird, Sitkum, 2 Aug 1979.

177. Peterson and Powers, Century, pp. 442-45; Coquille City Herald, 3 Nov 1885.

178. Advisory Committe to the State Land Board, Second Biennial Report, Oregon's Submerged and Submersible Lands (Salem, 1972), pp. 111-12.