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(RECAP)

WESTERN TYPES

THE LUMBERMAN

MR. CHESTER F. WHITE is often spoken of as the "brains of the timber industry." To him are referred all the vital questions affecting timber products — their manufacture, transportation, sale. He was in complete charge of the recent fight of the lumbermen of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho against the advance in lumber rates promulgated by the transcontinental railways — a campaign that terminated most satisfactorily for the lumbermen, both in the Federal courts and before the Interstate Commerce Commission. A few years ago Mr. White was merely a hired man. In a sense he is to-day, but he has mastered the trick of making money for himself as well as for his employers.

About fifty years ago he went to California, worked his way north to Washington, and then back eastward again to Keokuk, Iowa, where he learned the lumber business in the big retail yards owned by an uncle. He became a manufacturer, with an interest in a lumber-mill. Then with knowledge he traveled back West. "I saw Henry Villard complete the Northern Pacific," said Mr. White, "more than twenty-five years ago, and the coming of this pioneer railway opened my eyes to the power of transportation when applied to the towering forests of fir and cedar and spruce."

With his former Iowa associates Mr. White began extensive logging operations at Shelton, a small town on Puget Sound. Then they built a sawmill at Tacoma, which was completed about the time the great depression of the early '90's was approaching. The company was wrecked, and Mr. White received the news in San Francisco, whither he had gone in an endeavor to sell the new mill's products.

"Things looked pretty blue for me, as the failure took every dollar that I possessed, but I thought the best thing I could do would be to buy a new suit of clothes, as a sort of a bracer, and find a job," is the way he tells of the experience.

When Mr. White was trying to find a place to land, it chanced that Pope & Talbot, a firm famous on the coast, needed a manager for a small lumber-mill the firm owned at Cos-

mopolis, on Gray's Harbor, southwestern Washington.

"I'll go," said White without hesitation, but being a good trader he insisted on good terms. The salary was not large, but the new manager was given a home and other perquisites, enabling him to bank almost all his cash income. The success of the Gray's Harbor Commercial Company, as the Cosmopolis enterprise was termed, dates from the arrival of the new manager eighteen years ago. The mill was a cargo shipper entirely. Mr. White bethought himself of the needs of his retail lumber friends in Iowa and through the Middle West, and made the sort of stock he knew would compete with the woods there in use. He began to ship lumber by rail inland, with such success that soon he had built up one of the biggest plants in the Northwest, and the trade became so profitable that the cargo business was entirely abandoned. Mr. White saw the value of spruce, and made his company the chief manufacturer of that wood on the Coast. He was the first to install wooden water-tanks at his mill as a protection against fire, and he now makes these tanks for all the Western states. In this way the knowledge he got on the Keokuk lumber-yards bore fruit.

"A man may stay in his own town so long that he doesn't know what is going on in it; I'm going to move," Mr. White announced to his family some four years ago. Several times he had resigned as manager of the Gray's Harbor Company, but it had not "taken" with Pope & Talbot. This time he was insistent. His own interests were growing extensive. But rather than lose his services, the San Francisco firm reorganized the company, and Mr. White became a heavy stockholder. The head offices were moved from Cosmopolis to Seattle.

His first savings were used to buy timber along the river banks. Quickly the timber was cut and sold, and Mr. White bought more. When an acre of timber land could be bought for a few dollars, compared with hundreds now, Mr. White became one of the heavy timber owners of his part of the state. When these lands advanced in value, he was carried

upward on the crest of the wave that made so many western Washington millionaires.

With this capital he bought Seattle real estate, which has had such a phenomenal advance. He is a born trader. They used to tell him that if he had stayed in Massachusetts he would have cornered all the butter and eggs in the state. He says he will sell anything he possesses, provided he can make something out of the deal.

BUYING LUMBER "FUTURES"

YOU should take up a donation claim; some time this timber will be worth a lot of money," remarked Capt. J. P. Keller, manager of a small mill in the Puget Sound district, to Cyrus Walker, a young man he had brought with him from Maine.

"How long would I be required to live on the land to perfect my title?" asked Walker.

"Five years."

"I wouldn't promise to live here five years if I could own this whole country," was the response of the young man. That was half a century ago. Cyrus Walker in the years that followed became one of the heaviest land-owners of the Northwest, and now is ranked as one of the extremely wealthy men of the Pacific Coast. His fortune is estimated at \$25,000,000, and the company in which he is largely interested — the Puget Mill Company, controlled by the Pope & Talbot interests — has holdings estimated to reach beyond the hundred million mark.

Young Walker was one of the hard workers of early days. Yet it was not his hard work that brought him his millions. He bought fundamental things — timber lands and city property — and his holdings increased in value by the effort of his neighbors and without any particular care on his part aside from the paying of taxes. His policy has been to buy wisely and hold — never to sell.

When he began, Mr. Walker was book-keeper, timekeeper, or anything else that enabled him to be useful about the mill, and he stepped in as manager upon the death of Capt. Keller in the early '60's. For seventeen years after his arrival he did not leave the plant, and then it was for only a brief trip to San Francisco and the East.

In those days the country was unsurveyed, and trees were cut down without thought of land ownership. It was plain to be seen that this condition must end, and that timber lands

would eventually be valuable. It chanced that some school land was sold by the Government for \$1.50 an acre. On his own initiative, Walker bought several hundred acres for his company, still being skeptical as far as he individually was concerned.

"That's a good idea; buy all the land you can get," was the word that came back from the Pope & Talbot offices in San Francisco to the young manager. This school land purchase was the beginning of the immense timber holdings of the Puget Mill Company, otherwise known as the Puget Sound end of the Pope & Talbot business.

Following the war, greenbacks were worth in purchasing power only about half the value of gold, but they were legal tender with the Government. By buying up greenbacks in the East and using them for the purchase of \$1.50-an-acre timber land on Puget Sound, the company acquired thousands of acres of the best forests in the Northwest. With the coming of the Northern Pacific, accompanied by its enormous land subsidy, the company traded in railroad bonds for still more land. Thus the cost per acre was reduced to cents. Through many years these purchases continued, until the holdings of the company became almost a quarter of a million acres. For the last score of years these vast tracts have been held intact, without additional purchases, and the mills of the Puget company have been fed from forests of other timber owners. The far-sighted Walker is holding the timber for the time when the Northwest will be the last storehouse of the continent's trees.

The young manager found great favor in the eyes of the parent company, became a partner, and in later years married a daughter of Captain Talbot. Through all the active years of his life, and until a recent accident affected his health, he has stuck to his post at the Port Gamble mill.

ONE WHO STRUCK GOLD

ALL the tales of rich gold discovery are not confined to the California of early days, nor yet to the Alaska of the last decade, as the story of Amidas Grenier will testify. Six years ago he was a street-car motorman in Worcester, Mass. To-day he is a millionaire, though only twenty-nine years old, and with memory still full of the discouraging days before he struck it rich in Idaho. But he