

LOG RAFT CARRIES FORTUNE

Poor Man Twenty Years Ago, Simon Benson Now Stands to Make Millions Because He Ventured Where Others Feared



How Simon Benson Invests His Millions.

Simon Benson, a native of the Scandinavian peninsula, who came a poor man to Portland 20 years ago, is believed to have solved the problem of marketing lumber at a minimum cost in southern California, by transporting sawlogs by ocean raft and sailing them at San Diego. Benson is worth over \$2,000,000 and has staked his fortune on the ocean raft undertaking. The profit on a single raft reduced to lumber at San Diego will be about \$2,500,000.

On a trip to San Diego, California, some months ago Mr. Benson mapped out his project and before leaving that port he had completed all preliminary arrangements and secured a franchise from the city council to operate docks and a sawmill plant. He immediately returned to Portland, established a great logging camp on the Clatskanie, and began the building of the first ocean raft of sawlogs ever floated. The raft was launched successfully and after a 16-day voyage it has arrived at San Diego, where it is being dismantled. The landing of the raft was attended by a great public demonstration by the citizens of San Diego. Mr. Benson, who was the principal figure, is still there, directing the work of dismantling the raft, but is expected home early next week.

Raft Also Bore Cargo.

The raft, besides carrying its own 1,000,000 feet of logs, bore a cargo consisting of a complete set of timbers for the sawmill that Mr. Benson is now erecting at San Diego. The mill will have a capacity of 100,000 feet daily, or at least 25,000,000 feet annually.

Five rafts, each containing 5,000,000 feet, will be taken from the mouth of the Columbia river each season, to keep the San Diego mill running. It is estimated that the cost of transportation of the lumber in the form of rafts from the Columbia to San Diego will be \$2.50 per thousand. By rail it costs \$3 per thousand to carry lumber from this city to southern California. Allowing \$6 cents a thousand for additional expense and loss by rafting, it is figured that Mr. Benson will save \$5 per thousand in transportation alone. This will give him a profit of \$2,500,000 on each raft safely landed and reduced to lumber at San Diego. If he disposes of five rafts a year, the minimum capacity of his mill, he will clear the enormous sum of \$12,500,000 a year on transportation alone, in addition to the manufacturer's profit.

Others Are Tempted.

The immensity of the stake that Benson is playing for is expected to tempt others into the hitherto untrodden field of ocean rafting of sawlogs. Others have in a measure succeeded in rafting piling by ocean from the Columbia river to the south coast, but never before has the sawing project been attempted. Mr. Benson has had the courage to invest a large sum of money at San Diego in a sawmill plant that will be practically worthless should the ocean rafting industry prove unsuccessful. The large element of chance in the undertaking will, it is believed, deter others for a few years, at least.

The successful voyage of his first

raft is taken as an augury of good luck for the future. It was attended by various expenses that are not expected to be necessary in succeeding voyages. Two towing vessels were used to make doubly sure the success of the initial venture. In addition, a vessel was sent out from San Francisco, at about the time the raft was expected to pass that port, to locate it and ascertain its condition for the information of the anxious owners. In future, only one towing vessel will be used, and with gradual systematizing of the business the expense will be reduced to a minimum that will not, it is said, exceed \$3 per 1,000 feet of logs.

Heavy Elements of Peril.

Many elements of peril attend the undertaking, and it is by no means certain that Benson will eventually win out. Some of the sawlogs are 5 feet thick and 100 feet long. Chains of enormous strength and weight are necessary to hold the raft together, and even then it is possible to tow a raft only in the most favorable weather. A set of chains weighs 22 tons, and costs \$10,000. To carry on the business successfully three complete sets of chains and other gear are required. Owing to the uncertain weather, it is necessary to dispatch the entire five rafts from the mouth of the Columbia within the months of July and August, to make reasonably certain that they will secure safe passage on the long ocean voyage. Consequently, the work of building the raft must be rushed, and there is no time to wait for transportation of chains by rail from San Diego to Portland. A week is required to dismantle a raft at San Diego, and not more than one set of chains can be kept in transit.

Model Logging Camp.

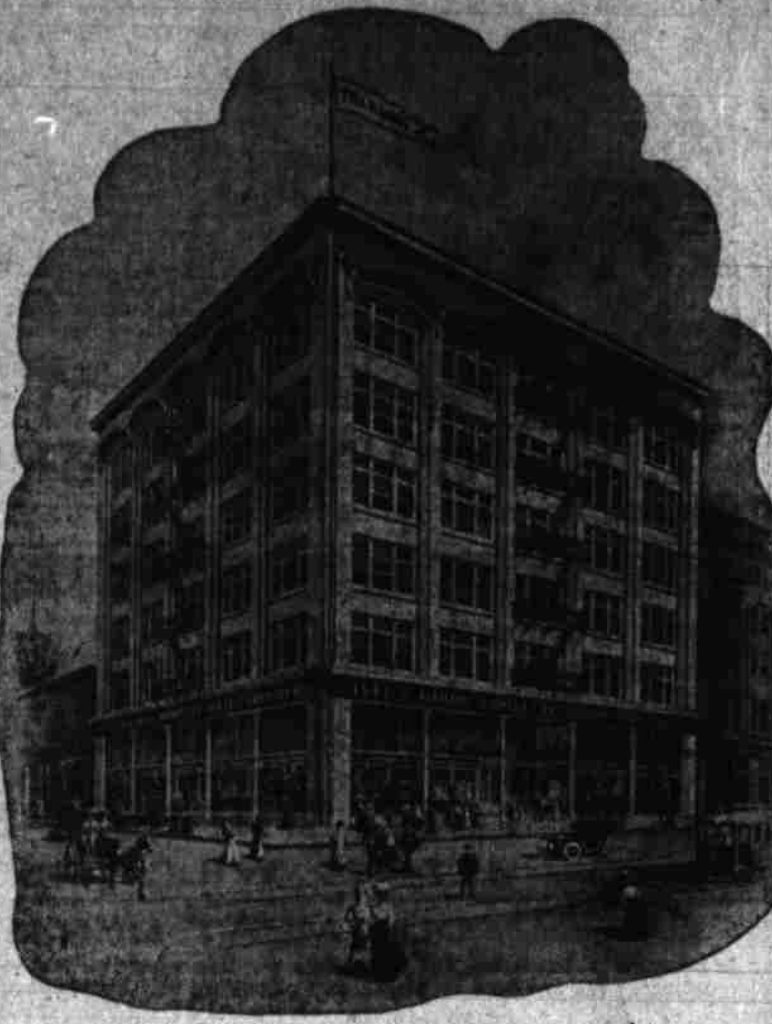
The Benson logging camp that has been established on the Clatskanie is a model of its kind. Mr. Benson has disposed of his logging interests in Washington, and concentrated all his equipment and energies in the Clatskanie camp, where the most modern machinery has been installed and a railroad is in operation to carry the logs from the woods to the river. They are floated down the Clatskanie to deep water in Wallace slough, an arm of the Columbia, where the gigantic, cigar-shaped ocean rafts are constructed and launched.

The Clatskanie camp will be the center of the ocean log rafting industry for the next 10 years. Mr. Benson has in this vicinity 40,000 acres of fir, aggregating 1,500,000,000 feet. He is an expert, practical logger, and has gone into an ocean rafting business after coolly calculating the chances and risks. From the dangers of the open ocean, a more insidious danger is found in the form of a small bug in the waters of south coast harbors. This bug has a long Latin name, but in its life is only one-sixteenth of an inch, and its work in a sawlog is short and sharp. Within nine months it renders a log almost useless. E. E. Covert, a Portland attorney who recently visited San Diego and observed the action of the bug, said:

"It is the most deadly thing known in destruction of wooden timbers. I saw a copper cylinder, through which rivets and nails had been driven into the piling the copper surrounded. This bug had eaten every aneurysm of wood, leaving the cylinder empty excepting for the metal nails and rivets."

One of the difficulties of Benson's undertaking will be the storing of sufficient logs in two months to run his San Diego mill the entire year. A large part of the logs will have to be placed on piling racks at high tide, and moved away from reach of the water. Once every nine months the boom sticks will have to be sawed up to save them from the ravages of the bug.

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SCANDAL IN HIGH LIFE IS AIDED IN VIRGINIA

Mrs. Bessie C. Paxson Sues Mrs. Gordon Searles for Stealing Husband's Love.

(Special Service.)
Richmond, Va., Oct. 4.—Judge Clifton, in the Henry county circuit court, will try one of the most interesting scandals in high life that has ever been aired in a Virginia court. The litigation comes upon the declaration of Mrs. Bessie C. Paxson of New York and Washington, who asks damages in the sum of \$25,000 from Mrs. Myrtle R. Gordon Searles of Cleveland, Ohio, and Virginia, for the alienation of the affections of her husband, A. C. Paxson.

The alleged alienation took place at Atlantic City after the death of Gordon

and before the marriage of Mrs. Gordon to John R. Searles, with whom she is now living in Los Angeles. Gordon lived less than a year after his marriage to the present Mrs. Searles, and the marriage of the young and pretty widow to Searles occurred six months thereafter. Gordon had been previously divorced from his first wife at Fort Worth, Texas. She received \$50,000 as a settlement.

Gordon was the brother of Elizabeth Gordon Hanna, wife of Daniel Hanna, son of the late Mark Hanna.

All the interested parties move in the highest society circles. Mrs. Gordon Searles inherited a vast estate in Virginia upon the death of her first husband, all of which has been attached pending a settlement of the present suit.

LOW RATES EAST

O. R. & N. Announces Low Round-Trip Rate.
The O. R. & N. Co. has made a low rate of \$4.50 for round trip, Portland to Buffalo, New York, account the international convention of Christian churches, to be held at that place October 12 to 17. Tickets will be on sale October 5 and 6. A choice of several different routes is given, and stopovers allowed in both directions. For further particulars in regard to routes, through sleeping-car service, etc., call on or address C. W. Stinger, city ticket agent, O. R. & N. Co., Third and Washington streets, Portland.

PENLETON SCOURING MILL CLOSED DOWN

(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)
Pendleton, Or., Oct. 4.—After a successful five months' run the scouring mills at this place shut down yesterday on account of the lack of wool purchasable at prices which the company is willing to pay. There seems to be plenty of wool in this section, but the owners are independent and do not care to sell

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The Very Latest Styles for Autumn Are On Display

Every important style center has contributed liberally to this magnificent display of Autumn Wear for Women and Children. The several sections devoted to Outer Garments seem to vie with each other as to which shall present the most attractive appearance—and they have all won! If you saw this display on opening day, you gained some idea of its scope. Almost every day since then newer things have been added as the season advances. Everything seems to have caught this spirit of progress that is so rapidly forging this store forward. The sales force has been lifted to the most intelligent level, and almost doubled. Ideally complete store fixtures, and clear, mellow sunshine streaming in from all corners, contribute to the comforts and pleasures of shopping here. Explore this store tomorrow or tomorrow evening and let us explain to you how we sell for a small sum at time of purchase and then a little each week or month as may suit your convenience.

In Our "Men's Shop"

If you are a man who appreciates distinction in dress and do not care to pay the price custom tailors ask, come here and see the readymade garments we offer. The better judge of styles and materials you are the better pleased you will be with what we show in Suits, Topcoats and Raincoats. We also have a complete line of Furnishings and Shoes. A dollar a week will clothe you completely—if you come here.

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