

More Lumber Cutbacks Expected

But Industry News Not All Bad

What's Behind G-P Sawmill Closure?

By DON ROBINSON
Of the Register Guard

There are three ways — none entirely satisfactory — of trying to explain why a corporation like Georgia-Pacific decides to shut down an operation like its Springfield sawmill.

One is to pretend knowledge held in fact only by a board of directors that governs, at last count, something more than 60 manufacturing plants in this country.

Another is to construct an explanation from the fluffiest stuff that is Everyman's impression of a company's "personality."

The third, qualified on the basis of being least unsatisfactory, is to pick the brains of the people in or close to the lumber business — call them up and ask what trends or factors within their industry seem to apply in this instance.

These calls were made last week, after Georgia-Pacific announced Wednesday afternoon in a short letter to the 214 men employed there that it will permanently close its Springfield sawmill next Friday.

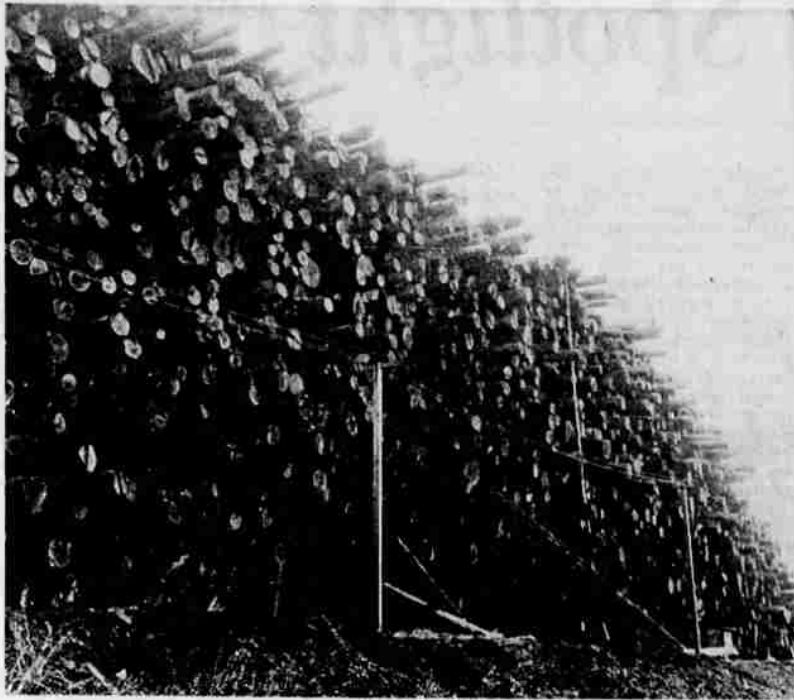
The conversations produced these kinds of results:

- That few people in the industry were surprised by the announcement, although none, of course, pretended to know exactly when it was going to come.

- That these people expect in the months and years to come that other sawmills will close, as other have closed in the recent past.

- But that this does not, necessarily, forebode ill for the total wood products industry of Lane County.

Those consulted all mentioned that the G-P mill appears to fit a category of huge-capacity plants (it has a production capacity of 200,000 board feet per eight-hour shift), built some time ago (the basic plant began operating in 1914), and "designed to operate in a market that existed 10 or 20 years ago but is not particularly efficient under market factors of today."



In recent years of slim lumber markets, the mills most vulnerable to closure seem to have been the very small and the very large. The G-P band sawmill in Toledo, closed in January, 1962, was another example of those in the big category.

"I just feel some of the larger mills are going to have to go by the board because of obsolescence and the cost of bringing them into line," said one man.

"You have got to make a lot of lumber just to make it economic (to operate a big sawmill) and our market today does not support the making of a quantity of lumber like that," said Bill Dean, editor of Random Lengths, Eugene publication focusing on the timber industry.

"These larger sawmills many times are older, they don't have modern machinery (but) they have a great deal of machinery that takes a lot

of maintenance. They have lower output per man hour resulting in high cost of production," said Eugene Mayor Edwin Cone, operator of a Goshen mill.

These and other men mentioned that very large mills do have a variety of problems including obsolescence of equipment (this was a factor mentioned by the Giustina Bros. company when it closed its own, smaller sawmill earlier this month), the need to produce great volumes to make a profit, the cost of maintenance, the fact that logs formerly channeled through these mills are now more profitably diverted to plywood plants, and the fact that versatility of product rather than sheer volume is now a requirement for survival.

There are only a handful of lumber mills left in Lane County as large as the G-P plant in terms of production

capacity. None are identical, each represents a different level of modernization and versatility.

Asked about improvements to the G-P mill, a spokesman checked and found that the last major alteration there was installation of a ring barker, for better log utilization, some six or seven years ago before Georgia-Pacific bought the Booth-Kelly Co. holdings.

A couple of persons wondered whether the company's timber supply has any bearing on the decision to close the sawmill.

While conclusions and judgments are lacking here, it is known that the mature timber G-P purchased from Booth-Kelly has been harvested at a fairly rapid rate and that much of this has been sold to other manufacturers.

Records in the Lane County assessor's office show that in 1959 the G-P inventory of

Two Factors

Supply of timber for lumber purposes and market conditions that cause finished lumber to pile up unsold are apparently only two of the factors behind the closure of G-P's Springfield sawmill. Some 200 jobs will end next Friday when the huge plant, with a capacity of 200,000 board feet per eight-hour shift, closes its doors permanently.



timber was 2.5 billion board feet. About a third of that was sold or harvested in the first year, the accepted explanation being that it was part of an effort to liquidate the corporation's debt.

Records show that by January of this year the G-P mature timber inventory stood at 1.5 billion board feet, a total depletion of about a billion feet in the four years of G-P ownership. Last year's depletion was 218,297,000 board feet.

What does the Georgia-Pacific sawmill closure portend for the rest of the sawmills in Lane County?

"I would guess that within the next year or so another couple of pretty well-known

mills will close," said editor Dean.

Others answered the question in the same way. They all anticipate other sawmill closures for reasons relating to the types of plants in existence, the nature of the lumber market, and the supply of timber.

The latter factor was pointed out by L. L. Stewart, owner of the Bohemia Lumber Co. in Culp Creek. "I do expect other sawmills to be closing," he remarked. "There is not enough available timber resource to support present production capacity."

At the same time, these people are not predicting an over-all loss in the total Lane County industry that manu-

factures products from trees.

They expect, for one thing, that the core of medium-sized sawmills that are versatile, that have been kept up to date with automated, modern equipment and that have the ability to keep themselves in timber will continue to produce lumber at a profit.

For another, they expect that production of plywood and other kinds of wood products will increase.

These expectations seem to fit the trend of recent years revealed by employment statistics provided by the Eugene office of the State Employment Service. Taking 1959, the year G-P bought Booth-Kelly, compared with last year, 1962, figures of annual average employment are:

LANE COUNTY			
	1959	1962	Change
Sawmills	5,380	4,850	down 530
Logging	2,150	2,650	up 500
Plywood and other wood products	5,380	6,860	up 1,480
Total Industry	12,910	14,320	up 1,410

Questions remain about the fate of the men and equipment no longer needed in the Springfield operation. Georgia-Pacific says it will employ as many as possible of the 214 sawmill workers in other parts of its operations, including the two plywood plants and a specialty board plant in Springfield and a stud mill on Mosby Creek east of Cottage Grove.

Frank Worley, business agent of the International Woodworkers of America Local 3-246, whose members these men are, said he has no idea how many G-P might find jobs for. Nor did the company itself have more information on this by the end of the week, although a spokesman expressed hope that when the adjustments are made the story "will have a happy ending."

"I am just guessing," Worley commented, "but I can visualize that a majority have worked there for 10 years or longer."

Jim Bagan, manager of the Eugene office of the State Employment Service, said his office had already given G-P a list of some local jobs that are open. He said his office will make every effort to help find new jobs for the men.

"I would suppose that a good share of the semi-skilled and skilled men will find jobs," he said. And on the other end, some of the younger workers should be able to find jobs and adapt to new situations.

"One of the problems will be the unskilled person who has worked there for a long time. I don't know exactly what the community can do for them," Bagan stated. His rough estimate was that these characteristics might fit 50 of the 200-plus men in the mill.

The company could furnish no further information on the value of the equipment being shut down or its disposition.

Over Independence

Violence Expected In S. Rhodesia

By STANLEY MEISLER
Of the Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. officials believe violence will erupt soon in the British colony of Southern Rhodesia, but they don't expect another Algeria.

All signs, officials say, point to trouble for the colony now controlled by 220,000 white settlers living among 3.6 million Africans.

The white settlers, self-governing since 1923, have demanded independence from Britain. Africans oppose independence unless control of the government is put in their hands.

"If Britain gives Southern Rhodesia independence or if the white settlers declare themselves independent," African nationalist leader Ndadabangi Sithole said in a Washington speech last week, "then we have no alternative than to declare ourselves independent. This would mean a full-scale war."

Officials here expect African nationalists, particularly the younger nationalists, to use a limited number of guns, Molotov cocktails, and plastic bombs in their fight for control of Southern Rhodesia. The State Department also has received unconfirmed reports of nationalists studying techniques of guerrilla warfare in Tanganyika, Ghana, and Czechoslovakia.

But, for three reasons, officials say, they don't expect the full-scale war that Sithole predicted:

1. The African nationalists, more moderate than nationalists elsewhere on the continent, have no stomach for an Algerian-type civil war.

2. Power lies with the white settlers, who could use 35,000 police and reserves, and a 14,000-man army to quell an uprising.

3. African nationalists could not count on a flow of arms across Southern Rhodesia's borders: The colony is bounded by South Africa, Portuguese Mo-

zambique, British Bechuanaland — all sure to oppose any African nationalist uprising — and Northern Rhodesia.

Kenneth Kaunda, an advocate of non-violent resistance, is the probable first prime minister of independence-bound Northern Rhodesia. Even if he changed his views about violence, he probably would not risk antagonizing Britain during negotiations for independence.

Nevertheless, officials call the situation a dangerous one. G. Mennen Williams, assistant secretary of state for African affairs, reportedly now spends more time on this problem than any other one.

The problem reached a head recently when Britain, in effect, approved the breakup of the federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. This federation comprises Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland, and African nationalists long have opposed it, seeing it as no more than a device to put all three British territories under the control of Southern Rhodesia's white settlers.

Africans now control the politics of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia and have won the promise of independence. Once independent, they have pledged, they will secede from the federation.

The whites in Southern Rhodesia have countered by demanding independence themselves if Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland leave the federation. The whites picture themselves as no different from the American colonists who declared their independence from Britain in 1776.

Officials here say the United States is trying to convince Britain to use all its resources — moral influence, financial pressure, nominal control over defense — to make sure that Southern Rhodesia does not gain independence without ironclad guarantees that there will be eventual African control of the government.

In addition, officials say, the United States is encouraging both Britain and the Southern Rhodesian white settlers to use the good offices of U.N. Secretary-General U Thant in ironing out the problem.

New Footage May Freeze Tower's Lean

PISA, Italy — The leaning tower of Pisa will get a \$3.2 million foot lifting during the next four years — to keep the lean right where it is.

Engineers and geologists fear that otherwise the leaning tower, increasing its tilt by a quarter-inch every 10 years, may become the toppling tower by the year 2100.

Prof. Letterio Donato of the University of Pisa civil engineering faculty outlined an elaborate stabilization project at the end of a recent national hydraulic and geodetic convention here.

The plan is aimed at keeping the eight-story white marble Tuscan tower permanently tipped 16 feet off center — as it is now.

Donato made a series of subterranean soundings with electronic equipment a few years ago. On the basis of those findings, and further study by experts, the new program calls for:

1. Sinking two huge steel screens into the unstable soil from opposite sides of the famous bell tower at a distance of 150 feet. The idea is to keep the ground perfectly still during successive stages.

2. Planting eight pneumatic caissons in an outer ring 185 feet from the tower at a depth of 36 feet below sea level. Each caisson will be 53 feet square.

3. Removing the old supporting soil under the tower as far out as the steel screens, taking out an accumulation of concrete and rubble shoved underneath during the centuries in an effort to stop the steadily increasing lean.

4. Replacing the earth and building a new foundation under the tower according to modern techniques of substructural engineering.

Before World War II 900 tons of concrete were pumped into holes dug under the low side of the tower in an effort to stop the increasing lean. The rate of lean slowed considerably until artillery shelling in 1944 caused shock waves that started the process all over again.

The bells in the tower are never rung, for fear of what their vibration might do. But more than 150,000 tourists annually climb about the tower.

Now the engineers hope that two billion lire worth of fancy foot work will stop the sag of centuries.

Evolutionist Now Sees Downward Direction

Human Race May Have Reached Its Peak

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — A

disquieting hint comes from a famous evolutionist — that the human race may already have reached its peak in development of brain size and intelligence and that the trend, now, may be in a downward direction.

He is Ernst Mayr, professor, author, and director of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University.

But he holds some hope for the human race if "the biological aspects of man's evolution are duly taken into consideration by those entrusted with the task of planning for the future of mankind."

He suggests that we start re-warding and stop punishing the superior. And that we take steps

to avert a "standing room only" population on the earth.

Prof. Mayr has been a key contributor to modern evolutionary theory during the last 30 years—a period during which biologists have learned more about how animal species evolve than in any other period since Darwin's time.

His views are embodied in a monumental report on new developments in evolutionary theory, "Animal Species and Evolution," which is acclaimed by such biologists as Sir Julian Huxley, George Gaylord Simpson, and Prof. Theodosius Dobzhansky of Columbia University.

Dobzhansky calls Mayr's report "A landmark in the biology of our age."

The Harvard scientist says the increase in human brain size—a characteristic that sets man apart from all other animals—stopped nearly 100,000 years ago.

Declaring "one cannot avoid feeling that man could still go a long way on the road toward improvement," he adds, "nevertheless, there is no evidence of any biological improvement in at least the last 30,000 years."

He voices agreement with Sir Julian Huxley that most likely "man's genetic nature has degenerated and is still doing so."

What put the brakes on brain growth? Prof. Mayr suggests that when men joined together in bigger groups, the average

and below-average individuals became more protected.

But now, Mayr says, "those who are intellectually best endowed contribute less to the gene (inheritance) pool of the next generation than do the average and, indeed, most of the less-than-average," although the high I.Q. group may be above average in physical health.

What is the answer? Mayr suggests that we encourage the superior.

"In our present society," he writes in his book just published by the Harvard University Press, "the superior person is punished by the government in numerous ways, by taxes and otherwise, which makes it more difficult for him to raise a

large family. Why, for instance, should tax exemption for children be a fixed sum rather than a percentage of earned income?"

"Why should tuition in school be based, in large part, on the ability of the father to pay rather than inversely on the achievement of the student? ... Innumerable administrative rules and laws . . . discriminate inadvertently against the most gifted members of the community."

"I firmly believe that such positive measures would do far more toward the increase of desirable genes in the human gene (inheritance) pool than all the negative measures proposed by eugenicists of former generations."

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DeMolay at OSU

CORVALLIS — The annual state DeMolay meeting will be held on the Oregon State University campus April 25-27. More than 650 young men are expected to attend.