

# WESTERN



# WORLD

WHERE PRODUCTIVE SOIL AND TIDE WATER MEET

LUMBERING, MINING, DAIRYING, STOCK RAISING

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## \$300,000 Has Been Spent to Give Coquille River a Good Harbor

**S**OME thirty or forty years ago the Coquille river, a stream then navigable only a few miles, poured its waters into the Pacific ocean over a shallow and very dangerous bar which was close to the high point where the Coast Guard lookout now stands. Only small sailing schooners, of the type long since passed from the census of coast shipping, made port at Bandon and these only at rare intervals. Twenty to fifty days were consumed in the passage to San Francisco, from whence they came with supplies and returned with the product of the one small mill on the river. One hundred thousand feet of lumber made up a big load for the tiny ships and a round trip every two months was above the average.

### Traveling by Row Boat

Pioneer days? Yea, and in no way more so than in the matter of water travel. What a fuss we would make today had we to depend on a row boat to take us to any of the points on the upper river, from Bullards to Myrtle Point! Yet, there are many still living who remember the initial trip of the first steamboat on the river and who have pulled a skiff from the old Bandon Ferry slip to Beaver Slough or Coquille City, rather than walk or ride through the unbroken wilderness.

### It is Different Now

Even to those who came to the Coquille valley during the seventies and early eighties such experiences must flavor more of dreams than realities and to the most of us they are almost beyond realization. The mouth of the river has shifted a quarter of a mile northward and the tides flow in and out through a confined channel, giving a depth of water on the bar of from 12 to 16 feet at mean low tide. Steamers carrying upwards of 1,000,000 feet of lumber and making round trips to San Francisco every five days can cross in and out without the slightest danger, while vessels two to four times as large as the old sailing schooners can dock at Coquille City, 22 miles inland. Regular passenger steamers serve the valley as far up as Myrtle Point, nine miles above Coquille, and dozens of small craft ply back and forth over the river daily.

Again the pioneer spirit. The development of the Coquille river has barely commenced. It is that same influence that prompted the first residents to pull snags from the river with teams that is now moving us to further the improvement projects that are now under way and planned for the future.

### Private Capital Started It

Private enterprise furnished the funds for the first work done on the river, way back in 1880 when the river followed the bluff and had its outlet between Table rock and the point upon which the Lookout now stands. During the next four years approximately \$4,000 was raised by private subscriptions for harbor work and expended under the direction of Captain Judah Parker, founder of Parkersburg. Close onto \$1500 of this fund was the result of a grand barbecue and dance held in Bandon, attended by everyone up and down the river and throughout the country around. Large crates were built, filled with rock and sunk on either side of the mouth of the river in hopes of confining the ever-shifting channel.

### That Elusive Channel

Figuratively speaking, the mouth of the river at that time was about as elusive as the proverbial needle in the haystack. Col. R. H. Rosa gives an interesting story of its shiftings. Before he came here the river emptied into the ocean where it does now and the present sand flats on each side were covered with grass and scrub pine. Year by year it shifted southward and finally stopped at the Lookout rocks. Here Captain Parker and his assistants worked to hold it, but without success for the bar moved northward again to its original location.

### First Government Work

It was here that the first substantial efforts were made to confine the channel, when in 1884 congress appropriated \$10,000 for the work and the government engineers started construction of a jetty on the south side of the river. The first jetty, a

low shambing affair, had its inland end at the foot of the bluff, near what is now Second street and Edison avenue. Fragments of the work are still to be seen extending as far out as the inland end of the present south jetty, built in 1898. Congress made small appropriations from time to time and eight years ago the north jetty was completed and from that time on everything stood at a standstill until 1913, when \$26,000 was appropriated for maintenance. During the winter and spring of 1913 the high tides and heavy storms aided by the ever-present tendency of the channel to shift northward, cut a gap between the river and the ocean inside of the north jetty and behind the light house, causing the ship channel to shoal to such an extent as to make it dangerous. The \$26,000 available was not sufficient to warrant beginning the work of repairing this break and nothing was done until the following year when congress made a further appropriation of \$76,000, to be used on permanent improvements. This gave \$102,000 for the work that has just closed.

### The Project Just Finished

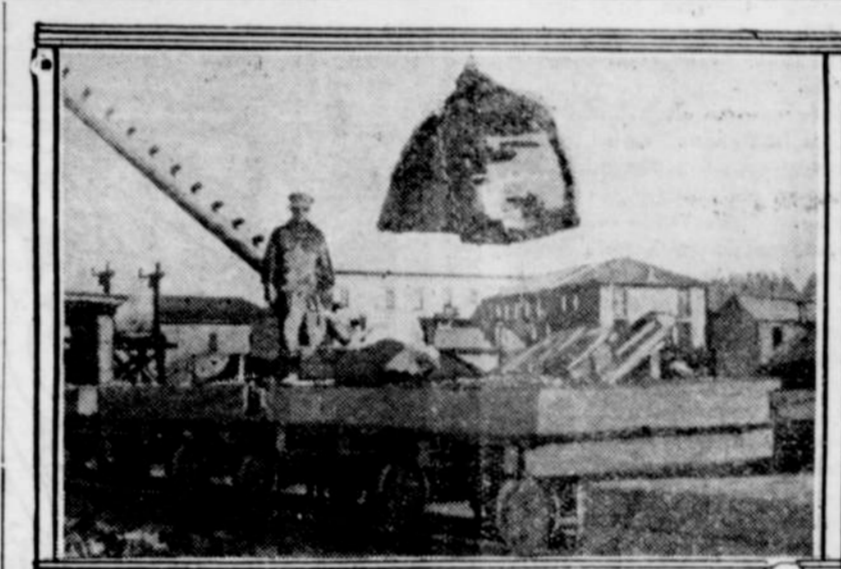
At the beginning of the present year the river was moving northward in its search for a new outlet and the same tactics as in 1884 were used to confine it—construction of a jetty inland rather than seaward. Under the Portland office, United States Corps of Engineers, Claude R. Wright arrived in Bandon early in January to take charge of the work. The first month was devoted to surveys, estimates and concentration of supplies and equipment, and opening of the Tupper rock quarry, which had been closed and the equipment dismantled following the completion of the north jetty. Between the quarry and the receiving wharf 3000 feet of trestle had to be built and the wharf reconstructed, while that part of the project on the north side of the river called for an entirely new dock and 2500 feet of trestle. The construction of trestle and wharves necessitated that a pile driver be added to the equipment, and to handle the rock two derricks, one on each wharf and each one capable of handling a 10 ton load had to be erected.

### Opening Quarry Big Job

Reopening the quarry presented some difficulties in itself and in order to understand the problem one must know that the quarry is nearly a hole in the side of a bluff or hill, into which the cars enter and are loaded from above by derricks. The arrangement was simple enough in itself, but presented this difficulty: During the previous work all the rock within a safe reach of the derrick boom had been cleared away, so that either the derrick must be placed deeper in the pit and a less secure foundation used, or a monster derrick built. By compromising, a solution of the problem was worked out and two 90 foot line boom derricks rose into place, one on each side of the quarry. Each of these hoists were able to, and did later, swing boulders weighing up to 15 tons from the pit to the cars, sometimes a distance of 180 feet. Two poles 50 feet long, with not over 4 inches difference in the butt and the tip measurements and direct from the woods back of Bandon were used for the derrick booms. Removing thousands of tons of rock from the pit was the first work of these derricks.

### First Rock Dumped June 1

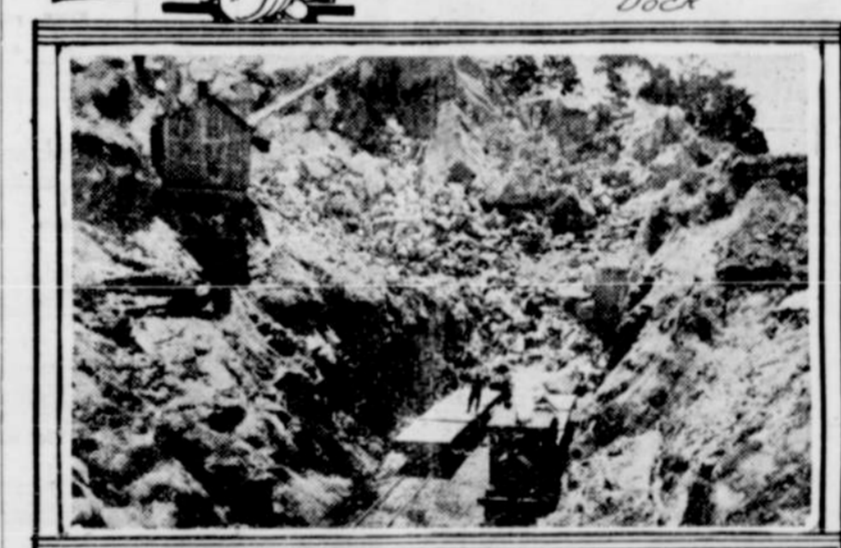
With the completion of the preliminary work came a lull, the two locomotives and steel for the tracks having been delayed in transit from the Siuslaw project and the two large barges for transferring the rock



Unloading A Six Ton Boulder



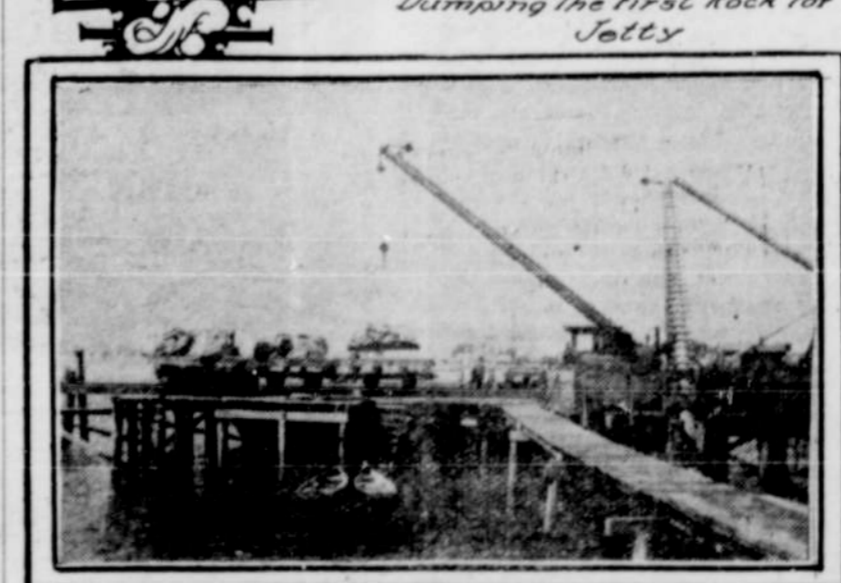
Loading Cars On North Dock



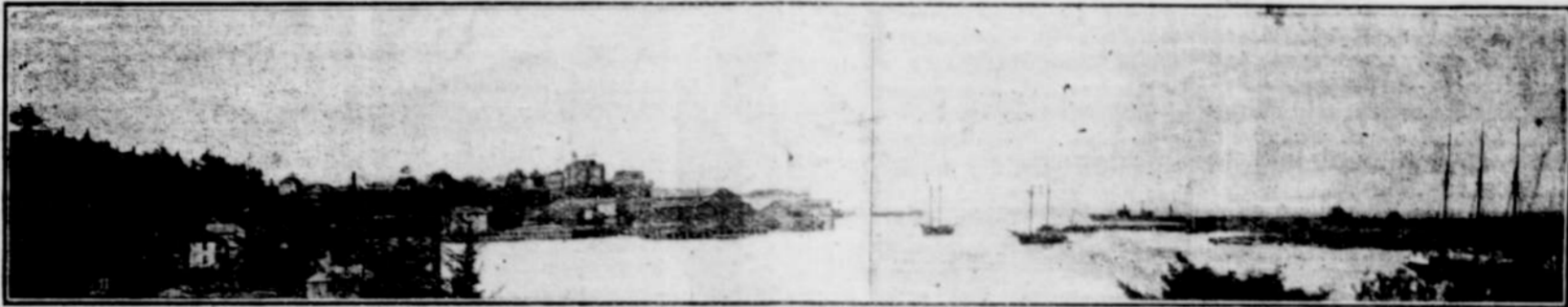
Rock Quarry



Dumping The First Rock For Jetty



Wharf On South Side of River



Panoramic view of Bandon Harbor, taken before the old sailing schooners were displaced by the modern steam ships.

gap behind the light house, but further construction is necessary in order that the full force of the current may be concentrated to wash out the shoals already formed. To do this it is proposed that a jetty be built from the government dock on the south side of the river to the inland end of the south jetty. This gap has been partly closed by an old piling structure, built years ago, but the storms and high tides have worked havoc with it. A permanent rock construction is now proposed and the cost is to be met by the Port of Bandon and the government.

In order to prevent the sand, washed out of the river, from being deposited just outside the bar, as is now the case, the north jetty must be extended and it is proposed that this be built along with the south inland jetty extension. Prevailing currents along the coast are from the north and with the north jetty shorter than the south, sediment is deposited between them. By extending the north jetty 3000 feet seaward the scourings of the river will be washed southward onto the beach.

Left over from the work just completed is \$30,000 available for new projects and, provided its expenditure is authorized, the Port Commission will issue \$25,000 in bonds, that the work may proceed immediately. Further appropriations by congress are also being solicited.

In order to determine the formation of the strata underlying the bar and make an estimate as to the funds necessary to give a depth of water on the bar of approximately 25 or more feet at low water, the government has authorized a boring survey to be made as soon as weather conditions will permit. Holes will be drilled at numerous places and the depth of water and underlying formation determined. This survey will probably commence about June or July of next year.

### \$300,000 Has Been Spent

It is estimated that to date \$300,000 has been spent in improving the Coquille river and expenditures aggregating twice that sum are probable during the next few years. Not only does this mean that ours is to be one of the finest harbors on the coast, but that the construction work will greatly stimulate the industries of the section. In the work on the new jetty 200,000 feet of lumber from the local mills, 15,000 running feet of poles from home yards and 500 tons of coal from mines in the valley were used.

### Bandon Shipping Large

Urgent need, rather than the mere desire to "make a showing", is behind the effort to make this a first class port. Under normal conditions Bandon ships annually: 87,000,000 feet of lumber, 5,500,000 feet of ties, 3500 pieces of piling, 5000 poles, 5,500,000 shingles, 600 cords of matchwood, 13,000 bundles splints, 250,000 box shooks, 1000 tons of coal and thousands of cases of salmon and dairy products. Imports amount to 1200 tons a month.

### FISHING INDUSTRY

Nineteen hundred and fifteen was a bad year for the fishing industry along the entire Pacific coast and the salmon pack fell from 40 to 50 per cent short of the average. In the Coquille river the run of both silver-sides and chinooks was light, due to the absence of rains until late in the season.

In place of the average pack of 10,000 cases tall and flat tins the Co-operative cannery, at Prosper, packed only 5241 cases this year and the Nass plant canned about the same per cent of its normal run. However, the record for the largest pack of silver-sides south of the Columbia river goes to the Co-operative cannery. Although the pack was short this year the financial returns did not show a proportionate slump, as the prices are well up and the market exceptionally strong.

Under normal conditions the salmon fishing and canning industry gives employment to about 200 men during the season. Close to 50 are kept busy in the canneries and upwards of 150 are employed operating the seines and gill nets along the river.

drills sunk hole after hole in the rock to be filled with powder for the blasts that brought down as much as 1500 tons of rock to the shot, broke windows and occasionally sent stray rocks through houses within a radius of a quarter of a mile. Swung from the pit to the cars, the rock started its journey, an average of 25 tons to the car load. Arriving at the dock it was swung onto the waiting barge and ferried across the river, where it was reloaded on cars, hauled out over the trestle and dumped into place. As much as 400 tons in a single day and nearly 7,000 tons for the banner month, were the record runs on the job. Up to December first, 35,000 tons of rock were placed in constructing the 2,000 feet of jetty.

Now and then little incidents marred the regularity and precision of the work of the 50 men on the job, but no interruption lasted over two days. Once a 10 ton rock broke from the derrick on the receiving dock and crashed through the only barge available at that time for ferrying the rock across the river, but that did not stop the quarry. However, when one of the derricks at the quarry slid off into the pit it stopped operations all along the line. There was but one serious accident, although narrow escapes were experienced by most every man on the job. One man suffered injuries twice, first when hit by a glancing stone and later crushed badly under a rolling rock. The most miraculous escape occurred when the big derrick collapsed. Seventeen men were in the pit when the huge timbers and rigging plunged down around them and not a man was scratched.

The first estimates were for 30,000 tons of rock, but lack of a solid base caused repeated settlements and 5000 additional tons had to be placed in order to bring the jetty well above the high water line.

From the above figures it will be seen that the cost per yard of rock placed in the latest jetty works was under one dollar. Previous projects showed a cost per yard ranging from \$1.45 in one to \$1.65 in another.

The record established in the latest project is due largely to the efficient work of three men in particular—Engineer C. R. Wright, chief in charge of the project; and Messrs. Roy Rozelle and "Speck" Patterson. Mr. Wright's first formulated his plans, determined the equipment and crew necessary, so that when Foreman Patterson arrived from the Siuslaw, no time or money was squandered in starting and continuing the works. He has made many friends here who wish him luck wherever the government may send him on other improvement projects. It is hoped that in future government projects locally Mr. Wright may again be with us.

Mr. Patterson has been a foreman on government jetty works for a number of years and knows the work from a to z. To him and Mr. Rozelle, who was in special charge at the quarry is given the credit for much of the efficiency with which the rock was moved. They were conscientious and careful in their work and in every instance tried to give local men an opportunity to work—in fact it could easily be said that the government works, for the size of the crew, employed more local men than would have been worked under a private contractor.

Mr. Patterson will be transferred by the government to another project. Mr. Rozelle will continue the government office in Bandon, keeping tab on the government's property here and at Coos Bay, and collecting data on shipping, etc.

### New Projects Proposed

No more sand washes through the

across the river could not arrive until July. With the arrival of the locomotives and track however, a temporary barge was secured and the first rock for the new jetty dumped June 1. The work, once started, continued uninterruptedly. A battery of steam