

### Lumber Expert Makes Plea For Greater Use Of Short Lengths In U. S. Building

(The following is reprinted from the article in the Timberman, written by Edward M. Davis of the U. S. Forest Products Laboratory of Madison, Wisc.)

In sawing the maximum amount of lumber from the log, short lengths are unavoidably produced—partly owing to the taper of the log and more largely on account of the practice of trimming out serious defects in the lumber in order to raise the grade. The manufacturer must, of course, secure a certain return from the product of the log or go bankrupt. There are two alternatives. The larger the proportion of the log sold, the longer will be the life of his investment in mill and timber. The smaller the proportion sold, the larger must be his return per thousand feet.

Broadly, then, it would seem that the interests of all parties demand the marketing and use of shorts. It is not uncommon to find shorts or material from which shorts could be made going to waste or being sold under circumstances that are little better than a dead loss. Industrial consumers buy 86.2 per cent of their lumber requirements in long lengths, whereas 69 per cent of it is actually used in lengths under eight feet.

The problem of short lengths is a complex one, but solution is of basic importance to the milling industry. It was for some time a subject of ineffectual discussions at meetings of the trade in connection with the standardization movement. Finally, in 1924, the interests concerned decided that the question could never be settled except through a technical investigation, and the Forest Products Laboratory was asked to make the necessary studies.

**Joint Project Undertaken**  
This project, however, seemed too large for the funds available at the Laboratory, and consequently the field was divided—the Department of Commerce taking up the study of construction uses, the Central Committee on Lumber Standards, represented by Arthur Upson, taking up the production phase, and the Forest Products Laboratory undertaking a survey of the uses of shorts in the wood-fabricating industries. In May 1925, reports of all three investigations were presented to the General Standardization Conference of the lumber industry at Washington, D. C.

The Central Committee has requested the various branches of the trade to cooperate in considering the reports, and recommendations for final action are scheduled for the next conference, about May, 1926. The present article is a brief review of the Forest Products Laboratory's study of the short-length problem from the one important angle of industrial uses.

The shorts (lengths under eight feet) which are most difficult to market are those in worked items,

such as ceiling and partitions, D & M, and siding, and for that reason special attention has been given to such items. Useful and suggestive data have been collected on products such as refrigerators, ready cut buildings, and auto export boxes, which use large proportions of worked lumber, and it is thought that no important outlet has been overlooked.

The survey of the industrial uses for short lengths which the Forest Products Laboratory has conducted involves a study of the amounts of softwoods used yearly, the distribution of the softwoods among the various items, the cutting sizes, species, and grades demanded, and the present and potential consumption of short lengths for 13 industries using \$55 million feet of softwoods yearly exclusive of box and crate lumber. In addition, less detailed data are offered on 13 other industries consuming several billion feet yearly, and on the use 219 million feet in non-wood industrial production.

The \$55-million feet used by the wood fabricating industries proper that are covered in this survey constitutes 4.5 per cent of the total annual production of softwood yard lumber, excluding box grades, and it constitutes 56 per cent of all softwood lumber used in the manufacture of wooden factory products, exclusive of boxes and crates, millwork, and railway cars. It is expected that a governmental bulletin covering the studies will be published in the near future. Meanwhile some of the salient features are presented here in summary and tabular form. Much of the information consists of figures which may very conveniently be condensed and tabulated. Table I shows details pertaining to the 19 wood-using industries principally considered. Table II deals with the 13 additional wooden products to which incidental attention was given in the studies.

**Controlling Production**  
Before considering the problem from the special point of view of industrial outlets, however, it is well to consider for a moment the primary importance of controlling the production of shorts. Specifically, the conditions of production could be measurably improved by the extension of milling practices such as the following:

1. Surfacing the piece and, when necessary, trimming out defects before machining to pattern, shorts as produced would be square edged and subsequent machining to any desired pattern, and would therefore possess a wider range of possible uses. This method requires one additional machining operation, but certain companies now following it are convinced that it pays.

2. End matching of softwood flooring and other large items. Although this is not a new idea, it is seldom carried into action even with flooring. A consistent extension of the practice of end matching, not only to flooring but to ceiling, partition, and concrete form lumber as well, would tend to make short lengths in these items more practical for the building trade, which is and will remain for a long time to come the biggest outlet for lumber of all sorts.

**Salesmanship Required**  
It cannot be expected that an immediate and complete solution even of the industrial aspect of the problem will result from the mere fact that a study has been made. While the evidence concerning use of shorts strongly indicates that rarely is the point of saturation closely approached, the present markets can be expanded only by diligent effort. It will generally be the manufacturer's or large distributor's responsibility to "sell" the consumer on the idea of purchasing his material in short lengths. With most wooden products short lengths have already been tried often enough to prove that within the necessary individual limitations their use is both practical and advantageous. It only remains to bring about a fuller development of these uses.

Such a development will inevitably require greater refinement of manufacture at the sawmill—in fact the greater production of ready cut stock. The strong preference of the wood-using industries for such stock is indicated by the fact that 85.5 per cent of all shorts purchased are bought cut to the size desired and frequently to special sizes. An increased sale of shorts, therefore, involves specialization of sales forces and greater attention to individual

### Vigilantes



These three youthful vigilantes—Vincent Calvert, 18 (above), John Ryland, 18 (center), and Ben Williams, 22 (above)—are being held on first degree murder charges at Birmingham, Ala. They didn't kill a young man who was courting Ryland's sister so they fired a shot at an auto in which they believed the couple was riding. It proved to be another car and the shot killed Agnes Lorraine Creel, a six-month-old baby. Calvert, a minister's son, admits firing the shot.

cases. Without greater care in these particulars, production of increased volumes of random-lengths shorts is no more likely to bring lucrative returns than at present, and the industry cannot reasonably expect to increase the sale of such shorts in any great measure.

This study has revealed many instances that offer encouraging evidence of what may be done in the utilization of shorts. It will be understood that conditions vary greatly between consuming plants, even in the same industry, that the feasibility of using short lengths will be determined by balancing the pros and cons of each individual case, and that price and availability will be the final determining factors.

Some general considerations militating for or against the sale and use of shorts are presented in the following paragraphs. It is hoped that they will serve more or less as a guide to lumber producers in forming their selling policies with respect to short lengths. By proper effort the present unsatisfactory situation can be greatly relieved.

#### Consuming Conditions

In plants where shorts are used to the best advantage, the following conditions are usually found to prevail:

1. Production is on a quantity basis, or the products remain standard from year to year.
2. A few cutting sizes are used in relatively large volume.
3. Shorts are purchased in carload lots.
4. Shorts are purchased in specified lengths and banded to facilitate handling.

Some conditions militating against the purchase of short lengths by the wood-using industries are:

1. Frequent lack of a reliable source of supply. Consumers would often be more favorable inclined toward use of shorts if it were not for the frequent difficulty of securing reasonably prompt shipments of uniform quality. Producers on their part are hampered in selling shorts by an unreliable market.
2. Failure of some manufacturers to offer shorts in the most acceptable forms. Shorts in exact lengths (corresponding to cutting sizes used) or multiples, and usually banded, are strong favorites with consumers. Such material is preferred to loose random lengths, since waste is practically eliminated and handling costs reduced.

### LUMBER RATES TO BE FOUGHT

SAN FRANCISCO.—Lumber interests of Southern California came to grips yesterday with the Pacific Northwest lumbermen on the question of freight rates. The battle was precipitated by the application of the Los Angeles Lumber Products company for a rehearing by the state railroad commission of its application several months ago for freight rate adjustments on lumber shipped from San Pedro to points in southern California. The commission on June 15 last ordered certain rate adjustments on petition of the Los Angeles Lumber Products company, but the reductions did not satisfy the Los Angeles company, and a rehearing was asked. Argument on the application for a rehearing will be continued.

Lumber companies with mills at Madera, Pinedale and Merced Falls are joining with the Los Angeles Lumber products company in an effort to bring about further reductions in freight rates on lumber shipped out of San Pedro and from Central and Southern California mills. The move is strenuously opposed by lumber interests of the Pacific Northwest.

Oregon and Washington lumbermen argued that there is little competition between the pine and fir lumber of the Northwest and the spruce and hemlock lumber of California, as the different kinds of lumber are used for different purposes. The only item that would be appreciably affected by further rate cuts in California, they said, would be box shooks, which are manufactured from various lumbers.

#### Logs Cut Out

SEATTLE, Wash.—The Everett Logging company, operating on the Fulsip Indian reservation near Maripelle, Washington, will cut out in December of this year or January next at the latest, it is reported. This will mean the end of the Indian timber in that section and will round out over six years operations of this company. The concern was originally started by George (Cyclops) Miller and the Hartleys, Miller selling out a few years back, since which time the management has been in the hands of T. J. Hartley of Everett. Louis Plerson is the present superintendent.

### "GROW TIMBER" IS THE ADVICE OF LUMBER CHIEF

#### Growth of New Timber Vital to Continuance of Industry

#### CONDITIONS ARE TOLD

#### Situation in Washington is Held Serious Unless Action is Taken

For a quarter of a century we have talked about reforestation purely from a sentimental or conservative standpoint. We have stressed the vanishing forest and the effect of a lumber shortage on the nation. We have called attention to the tremendous waste of logging. While this publicity and propaganda has not been without its value, yet the problem, like every other, is largely an economic one. Unnecessary waste there may be in some operations, but the exploitation of a resource is often necessarily wasteful simply because only a part of the material can be profitably utilized. A plentiful supply of cheap lumber has been of untold benefit in the development of a new country, but with the advent of permanent construction our former heavy lumber consumption is not essential as is evidenced by the much smaller per capita consumption of the older countries. Cheap lumber has been one of the factors permitting the rapid development of the country, but cheap lumber and growing timber as a business are economically incompatible.

The time has come when, if we are to accomplish anything in replacing our virgin forests, we must look upon timber growing purely as a business. The nation can afford to support great areas of forests for stream control, for recreational purposes, or as a regulator of a sustained lumber production. The state with its lands donated by the government can handle them regardless of immediate financial questions, but if the private owner is to devote lands to timber growing the common essentials of good business must be met and the event returns must justify the investment and carrying costs.

**The Lumber Industry**  
The first thing to be done in any business proposal is to take an inventory of the capital assets. Limiting our figures to the state of Washington, let us take up first the lumber industry.

For many years Washington has stood first among all the states of the Union in lumber production. Its annual cut of more than seven billion feet would build a plank road three inches thick and 18 feet wide extending around the earth at the equator. It would load a solid freight train of more than 250,000 cars, extending from Puget Sound to east of Chicago. Each year's cut would build a city of average size residences numbering more than half a million and housing two and one half million people. Over 800 plants are employing directly more than 125,000 men and the value of the annual product is more than 200 million dollars. Our lumber payroll is more than 65 per cent of the entire industrial payroll of the state, and if you took away the lumber industry, most of the other industries would be without a market for their products.

The next factor in this inventory would be the timber situation. From the best evidence obtainable, there still remains virgin standing timber to the amount of 350 billion feet board measure. Through lumbering and fire we are depleting more than 200,000 acres annually, or 1.6 per cent of our acreage. However, we are cutting the better lands first and are yearly harvesting practically 2.5 per cent of our standing timber supplies. Maintaining the present cut to the end, which of course, is an impossible condition, we have a present life of the industry of something like 40 years. Regardless of whether the above figures are accurate, the fact certainly remains that if our lumber industry is to be extended beyond the supplies of present standing timber, measures must be taken towards timber growing without any loss of time.—Frank H. Lamb in The Timberman.

#### New Humbird Camp

SANDPOINT, Ida.—Camp No. 16, of the Humbird Lumber Co. is being moved from Naples, where the cut has been completed, to a place three miles from Olagstone. The camp will be operated all winter, it is reported, and will begin in the new location as soon as the old camp and trucks have been torn up. About 120 men will be employed. John Palmer is camp foreman.

### Herrick Lumber Co. to Open Pine Mill at Burns in 1926

BEND, Ore.—Definite plans have been made for the start of milling operations at Burns October 1, 1926, it was announced this morning by James W. Girard, vice president and general manager of the Fred Herrick Lumber company, in charge of operations at Burns. Girard was in Bend today on his way to Burns from Portland, where he was for the past week.

The Herrick mill, for which a pond is now being excavated, will be a practical duplication of the original Brooks-Seanton mill B in Bend, announces Girard. It will be a steel mill with three band saws. A large crew of workers is excavating for the mill pond and relocating the highway. Water for the mill pond will be impounded from a group of springs known as the warm springs. All work preparatory to the construction of the mill is progressing very favorably, says Girard.

#### Contract Is Let

BELLINGHAM, Wash.—The Pacific Coast Paper mills has let a contract for the foundation of the \$75,000 factory it will build here and on October 12 will open bids for the factory building, 75½ x 135 feet, two stories high. The company's plant will have a daily output of six tons and will be operating about January 1, 1926, the company plans. Bellingham lumbermen interested in the company are J. J. Donovan, Geo. Christie and William McCash.

#### To Sell Timber

CENTRALIA, Wash.—Timber on three tracts of state land in Lewis county will be sold at auction on November 3 at the court house in Chehalis under the direction of the state land commissioner's office. One tract is appraised at \$65,698.30, another at \$11,229, and the third at \$2,116.

#### Buys Timber Tract

PORTLAND.—The Mount Emily Lumber Co., La Grande, Ore., has bought 22,000,000 feet of yellow pine, 250,000 feet of lodge pole pine and an unestimated amount of other timber in the Umatilla National forest. The timber is located on Five Point creek. The price paid was \$2.75 a thousand for yellow and lodge pole pine and 50 cents for other species.

### Lumbermen Sue King County for Flood Damages

SEATTLE.—The North Bent Lumber company, twice defeated in its claims for \$335,000 damages from the city of Seattle for property losses suffered in the 1918 Boxley canyon flood, has filed a motion in superior court asking that the third contest be held outside King county.

The flood in 1918 practically destroyed the company's plant and village. The company contended that the flood was caused by the city's lack of precautions in building the Cedar river dam. The city denied this, attributing the flood to swollen springs and streams on Washington mountain.

#### Shevlin Gets Tract

PORTLAND.—The Shevlin-Hixon Lumber Co., Bend, Ore., was successful bidder on 42,650,000 board feet of pine and other species of timber in the Deschutes National forest bids which were opened recently at the Portland forest office. The winning bids were \$3.50 per thousand for pine, and \$1 for other species.

#### Head Bucker Killed

BELLINGHAM, Wa.—Lars A. Haugen, 33, head bucker for the Hoedel-Douglass Lumber mills at its Saxton camp, was fatally struck October 5, when he was crushed by a tree. He died en route to a Bellingham hospital. The accident occurred when a falling tree struck a hollow cedar, throwing it where Haugen believed himself to be in a safe place. Haugen came from Norway last April.



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