

# Vernonia Eagle

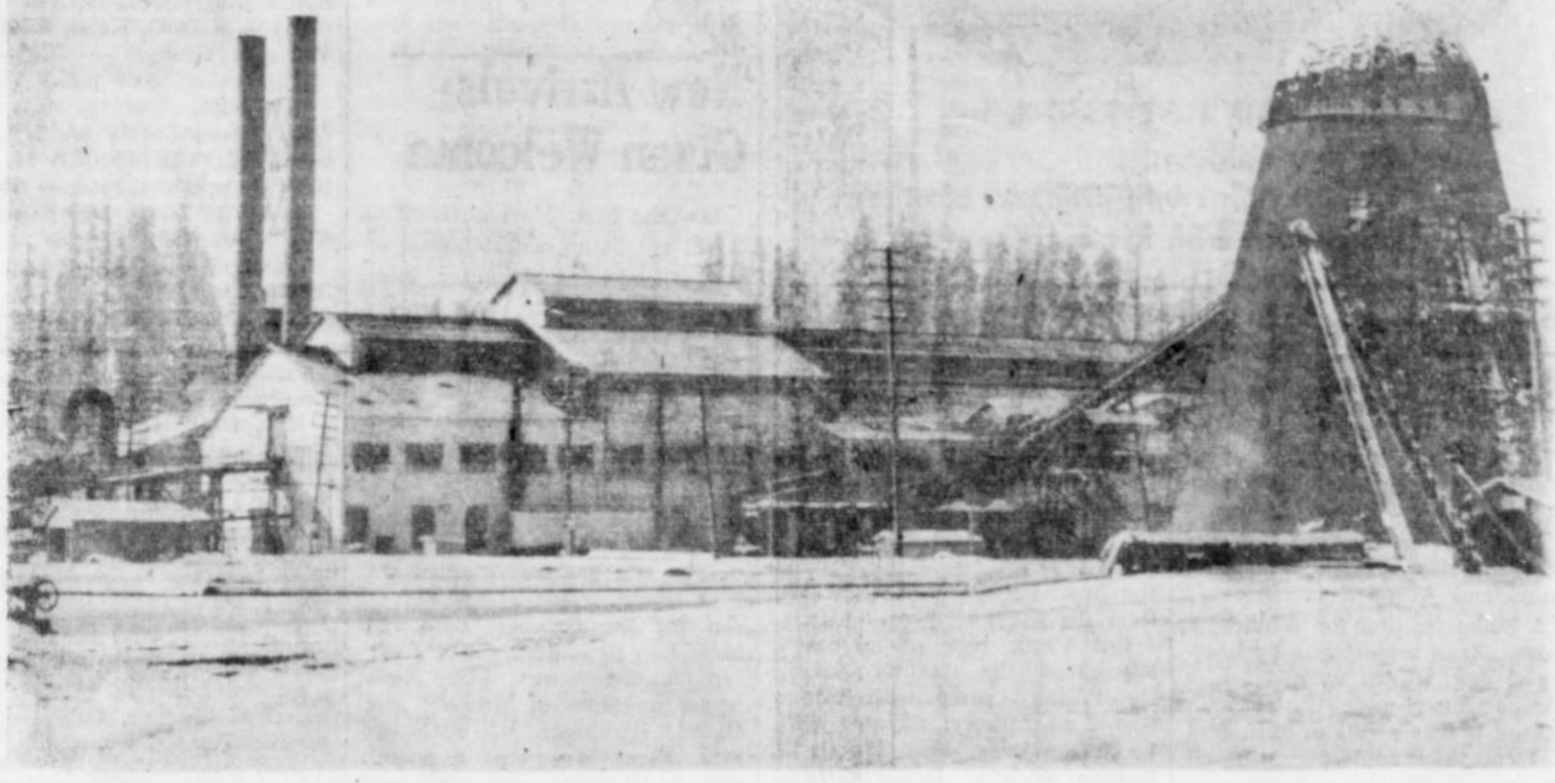
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VERNONIA, COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

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THURSDAY, SEPT. 12, 1957



THE INTERNATIONAL PAPER company mill, pictured here as it stood idled by a snow storm, was idled permanently this week

when the last log was cut, ending an era in the Vernonia area which started 33 years ago.

## Last Log Cut Wednesday Morning at IP Sawmill

Wednesday morning, about 11:30 a.m., the last log was cut at the International Paper company, Long-Bell division, mill here, just a little more than 33 years after the first log was cut in July of 1924. In that time, approximately 2½ billion feet of lumber has been cut and shipped from here to many and diverse places to become part of homes, businesses, and structures of every type.

In 1922, the little town of Vernonia knew that big things were ahead for it. Surveyors were busy, land was bought, and talk of a "big mill" was the principle topic of conversation on the streets in the homes and wherever people gathered. Also, that year, the railroad was being built into Vernonia at last fulfilling the hopes of half a century for such a link with the outside world.

### CONSTRUCTION STARTED

Actual construction of the Oregon-American Lumber company mill began in 1923 and with that, came the first influx of people to the community. At the same time that the mill itself was being built, the hill, formerly a part of the Israel Spencer homestead, was being cleared and houses built on it for the employees of the mill.

In 1924, when the mill began operation, Ed Hayes, who came here from Louisiana, was superintendent. In 1925, he was succeeded by Judd Greenman who came here from Washington. At that time, the mill was operating two shifts and employed about 750 men. In 1928, the mill cut 165 million feet of lumber, the greatest quantity ever made in any one year of its history.

### DEPRESSION AFFECTS MILL

In 1930, when the depression was making the going rough for most industries, the mill closed, but was reopened on a curtailed basis and ran until 1932. In 1933, the company was reorganized and became the Oregon-Am-

erican Lumber corporation and Fred Olin came here from Mill City as president and Mr. Greenman was made vice-president and general manager. The mill began operation again in 1936.

In 1947 when Mr. Olin retired, Mr. Greenman became president of the corporation and C. L. Anderson was made vice-president and general manager of logging and sawmill.

### MILL CHANGES HANDS

In 1953, Oregon-American sold out to the Long-Bell Lumber company, which was absorbed last year by the International Paper company.

When Mr. Greenman retired in 1955, Mr. Anderson succeeded him as general manager of the Vernonia division of the Long-Bell company.

Mr. Anderson came to Vernonia in 1924 from Kansas City and began work as timber dock foreman. He came up through the departments of the mill and laughingly ascertained that his employment with the company had been continuous except for two or three times he got fired.

### RUHL HOLDS TIME RECORD

In point of years on the job, Merle Ruhl, chief clerk in the office, holds seniority. He was sent here in 1923 by the parent company in Kansas City, was here during the construction of the mill as payroll clerk and has been here continuously since it began operation. He remained here, also during the depression shut down.

R. A. Simmons was another employee who came here with the beginning of the mill and his death this spring terminated his service. Hamp Roberson, mill foreman, also has been here for most of the operation.

Since the mill reopened in 1935, Ernest East and Forest Blount have sawed continuously and Blount had prior service here before the shut-down.

### LONG SERVICE NOTED

Other men who have been here continuously since 1936, with some of them here before that also, who are now being laid off with the closure of the sawmill include George Laird, Claude Gibson, C. S. Welty, W. V. Lindley, Henry Price, Louis Taylor, W. H. Bailey, F. A. Roediger, W. A. Brimmer, Jack Tomlin, M. J. Lamping, Ernie Hermann, H. E. Eckland, A. D. Bonislaw, A. H. Erb, W. B. Ortnier, F. W. Lange, V. L. Snook, Henry Ade Sr., Mike Willard and C. A. Hallam.

Wednesday terminated the service of the men in the sawmill proper and the jobs of the men in the stackers, dry kiln and assorter will be ended over the next ten days or two weeks. This will lay off approximately 200 men, half the total crew at present.

## Teachers, Parents Get Acquainted At Reception, Inspect Building

The teachers reception held Monday evening at the Washington school under sponsorship of the PTA drew a very good attendance, although many parents failed to avail themselves of this opportunity to become acquainted with the teachers and inspect the school building.

Mrs. Earl King, PTA president opened the meeting by extending a welcome to new teachers and also to parents new in the community. The summer band, directed by William Johnson, played several selections, after which Don Bayley, mayor of Vernonia, gave an address of welcome to new teachers and to those returning and voiced the desire that they might feel at home in the community and become a part of it.

Further musical numbers provided by the band included two solos, the first a clarinet solo by Suzi Alexander, who was accompanied by Miss Carol Anne Smith, vocal music director, and the second, a trombone solo by Sam Hearing III who was accompanied by his mother.

Introduction of members of the high school board of directors was made by Sam Hearing Jr., chairman of the board, and elementary school directors were introduced by Ralph Sturdevant, chairman of that board.

Mrs. King called on Eugene Dove, high school superintendent, to introduce his teachers after which Darold Proehl, elementary superintendent, introduced the teachers from the Lincoln and Washington elementary schools. As each was introduced, a corsage or boutonniere was presented by Mrs. L. L. Wells and Mrs. Frank Serafin. Corsages had been made by Mrs. Guy Thomas.

High school teachers who were introduced included Harold McEntire, principal, mathematics; Mrs. Ora Bolmeier, dean of girls, English and family living; Miss

Janis Archibald, English, home making; Miss Margaret Cotter, commercial subjects; Miss Marilyn Knox, English and library; Ivan Bodine, social science; Carlton Moran, speech, biology and athletics; Joseph Roemer, science; Welcome Rumbaugh, wood shop and agriculture; Myron Vleck, driver training, physical education; Mrs. Jessie Wallace, girls physical education.

### FUTURE NOT KNOWN

No statement has been made as yet as to the possible disposal of the mill machinery or property, including the 65 houses on the hill and the 15 on the flats. However, information has been released that the 20,000 acres of logged off land will be tree farmed.

The town is strangely quiet without the sawmill sounds that have become so much a part of the way of life here. An era has ended and eyes now turn to the future with hopes for something new to fill the void.

## FIRE DANGER CLOSES AREA

According to information received Wednesday morning from Buford Hayes, assistant district fire warden at St. Helens, all of zones 1 and 2 have been closed until further notice. Zone 1 is the coastal region and zone 2 takes in all of Columbia county and parts of Washington and Multnomah counties.

Also, there will be no renewal of burning permits and no new ones will be issued until there is a change of weather conditions.

## Credit Union to Extend Boundary

The Vernonia federal credit union board of directors at a meeting Tuesday evening transacted two items of business that change the set-up of the union, an official announced Wednesday morning.

Tod Bowerman was elected as vice-president to fill the position vacated when Louis Towne, former vice-president, became president following the resignation of Leland Pugsley who left this community recently.

The board also voted to extend the boundaries of the union to include Top Hill, Timber, Mist and Birkenfeld pending approval by the bureau of credit unions administration director.

Reason for extending is to offset the loss of members by making the credit union available to all living in the Nehalem valley portion of Columbia and Washington counties.

Publicity plans were discussed and it was pointed out that this is the only community credit union in the state. Loans for 1957 are down from 1956 but total assets are up.

## Clerk, Carrier Exams Offered

Federal civil service announces an examination for substitute clerk—substitute carrier in the post office service at Vernonia. Applicants must actually reside within the delivery of the Vernonia post office or be bona fide patrons of that office. Persons employed in the Vernonia post office will be considered bona fide patrons of the office.

Applications may be made at any post office for forms or information as to where such forms may be obtained, or to the Director, Eleventh U. S. Civil Service Region, 302 Federal Office Building, Seattle 4, Washington.

Applications must be filed with that office by October 9, 1957.

### Lions Club Is Monday

O. T. Bateman, president of the Lions club, has announced a resumption of meetings next Monday evening with the dinner served at the VFW hall by Mrs. Harold McEntire and Mrs. Thelma O'Brien. Plans will be made for fall activities and a full attendance of the membership is urged.

## First National Assembly Program To Be Offered Next Wednesday

The first National Assembly program for this school year will be presented next Wednesday afternoon in the high school auditorium at 2:45 p.m. and will feature Phil Betzold and his deep sea exhibit. Advance billing state that Phil Betzold is a true King Neptune's emissary. He was born and educated in Minnesota but joined his father, a well-known diver, in the West Indies in the summer. In these fabulous islands he learned diving from the natives and as he grew older, he learned the diving trade from his father.

Mr. Betzold has traveled throughout the world gaining first-hand knowledge of marine life on the scene and through

## Conference Participation Considered

Preparation for this community to participate in one of the conferences of the state department of planning and development were discussed Monday night at the first September meeting of the Vernonia chamber of commerce board of directors meeting.

Plans for presenting problems faced by this community will include the working out of a point-by-point program of the needs of the area the directors were told by Guy Thomas, chairman of the industry committee of the chamber. He has called a meeting of his committee for this afternoon, Thursday, when final plans will be drafted for the presentation. It is intended that the committee attend the conference scheduled next Tuesday at Tillamook.

Working with Thomas on the committee are: Pete Brunson, Lyman Hawken, Louis Towne, Wesley Bolmeier, Don Bayley, and Marvin Kamholz. Others who may wish to attend the Tillamook meeting are asked to contact the committee for transportation.

Several ideas for a new committee of the chamber were discussed by directors as possible items for development. The committee, for which a chairman has not yet been appointed, will work on recreation as it relates to this area. Ideas discussed were: a trout fishing pond, state park for camping, establishment of additional picnic areas, development of water resources, more public city on recreational facilities available, camps for large groups such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, fishing and trail riding.

Scheduled tonight at St. Helens is a county-wide meeting at which this chamber will be represented and about which another news item appears on this page. Discussion of this meeting was also a part of the evening's business.

## Fire Destroys Residents Home

Fire of undetermined origin completely destroyed the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Montgomery Wednesday morning about 8:30. The old house, of cedar construction, burned rapidly and all of the contents were lost. The loss was partially covered by insurance. The place is about 2½ miles out Rock Creek road and was formerly the John Eden place. The fire department responded to the call but were unable to save the house.

### Goodwill Truck Dated

The next trip to Vernonia by the Goodwill truck has been set for October 10, according to Mrs. Frank Lange, local representative. Persons who wish articles picked up at that time may call Mrs. Lange, HA 9-3161.

## Industrial Problems Topic Tonight Of Labor, Industry, Government Men

From the St. Helens Sentinel

A county wide meeting, including labor, industry and city and county government has been called by the St. Helens chamber of commerce to discuss the employment situation that may develop with the eventual closing of the Vernonia mill and other matters.

The meeting will be held under the auspices of the chamber industrial committee, headed by J. R. Austin, chairman, in the county court chambers at 8 p.m.

Austin said that invitations will be sent to representatives of the Central Labor council, the Columbia County Development commission, the city council, the port commission, chamber of commerce groups, and industries of the county.

According to the St. Helens chamber, the closing of parts of the mill this month will involve 200 men, some 300 have already been released and others will be released later this year, bringing the mill to a complete closing by about the first of the year.

Effort will be made to try and find work for the men involved the chamber reported.

Austin also said that the group will be asked to discuss the industrial situation in preparation for one of the meetings to be held by Governor Robert Holmes and Julius Jensen, head of the state planning and development department.

Meeting will be held in Portland, Astoria and Tillamook and local groups are slated to be represented.

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