

Home / Items

/ Potlatch the Company Town

The town is a company town, all the real estate, houses, stores, hotels, church and school buildings being owned by the Potlatch Lumber Company.

Complete water, electric light and sewerage systems have been installed. Two hundred and seventy-five houses of varying designs have been built and the population numbers fifteen hundred at this writing, September, 1907. Two church buildings have been erected, one for the Catholics and one for the Protestants. The Union Church of Potlatch (Protestant) has fourteen different denominations represented in its membership. No saloons have been allowed. The school facilities are only equalled by those of larger cities.

The Potlatch Lumber Company also owns and operates two other mill plants, one at Palouse and one at Cullfax, Washington, each with a capacity of 50,000 feet in ten hours.

All three plants are located on the Palouse River, which at all seasons of the year furnishes ample water for log storage.

The climate is such in the Palouse country that the mills can be operated the year through.

The timber resources owned by the Company are extensive enough to keep the mills running many years.

The Company also operates a Yards Department, with twenty-five yards located at various towns of Idaho, Washington and Oregon.

The Washington, Idaho & Montana Railway Company, a separate and distinct corporation, also makes Potlatch its headquarters. It runs from Palouse, Washington, to Borvill, Idaho, a distance of forty-seven miles and furnishes to the Lumber Company an easy means of transportation for its logs and lumber. Connection is made at Palouse with the Northern Pacific, Great Northern, Burlington, Canadian Pacific, Soo, Spokane & Inland, Oregon Railroad & Navigation Co. and Union Pacific.

A projected line of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Ry. will, in a short time, extend to Borvill, giving a direct connection at the eastern terminus with that road.

The Railway Company has at Potlatch its machine shop, car repair shop and round house.

Words do not always sufficiently impress the reader with distinct ideas and we therefore accompany this sketch with some cuts showing the plant, town and timber resources.

SAW MILL.—(Designed by W. A. Wilkinson, Minneapolis, Minnesota.)

Dimensions 104x275 feet with wing 32x164 feet.

Power House 40x150 feet. Engine Room 38x60 feet.

Twelve boilers, 200 H. P. each, divided into four batteries of three each.

Twin City Corliss Engine, 1200 H. P. Maximum 1800 H. P.

Fly Wheel, weight 80,000 pounds; 24 feet in diameter; 66-inch face; carrying 66-inch three-ply leather belt.

Sills and Posts of mill set on concrete pillars sunk to hard pan.

First Floor of mill given to shafting and pulleys transmitting power.

Second Floor—the sawing floor—equipped with four band saws, two single and two double cuts, and one 24-inch gang with 46 saws; four double edgers, eight saws; two trimmer tables.

Third Floor, sling room and observation gallery.

Sorting Shed 544 feet long and double timber dock 170 feet in length.

Daily capacity 350,000 feet in 10 hours.

BURNER.—Dimensions, 45 feet diameter, 140 feet high.

Steel casing lined with over 500,000 brick, 200,000 of which are fire brick.

DRY KILN.—Five-Strail Brick Kilns. Dimensions 142x

120 feet. Capacity 120,000 feet.

PLANING MILL.—Steel frame, iron roof with skylights.

Dimensions, 130x112 feet; containing 32 machines, matchers, surfacers, moulding machines and band resaws.

Daily capacity 100,000 feet in 10 hours.

Power Plant of its own: Six boilers, 200 H. P. each, two batteries; Twin City Corliss Engine, 700 H. P., Maximum 1200 H. P.

Mill equipped with extensive blower system carrying shavings to boilers, shavings vault or burner.

DRESSED LUMBER SHED.—Dimensions 90x512 feet.

Storage capacity 5,000,000 feet.

LOADING TRACK.—Three-fourths of a mile.

LUMBER YARD.—Covers 60 acres. Main alleys 20 feet.

Back alleys 16 feet.

Yard supplied with 45 miles of track over which the lumber is transported by electric storage battery locomotives dragging lumber from the mill to yard, or taking it from yard or kilns to the planing mill.

WATER-WORKS PUMPING STATION.—Fireproof, iron, brick and concrete.

Two Underwriter's Fire Pumps, 1000 and 1500 gallon capacity.

Water received from two artesian wells 400 feet deep, from which water is pumped into concrete reservoir holding 1,000,000 gallons, set on a hill back of the townsite, with an elevation of 200 feet, furnishing a steady pressure of 95 pounds.

Ten miles of water mains with 100 hydrants.

Click to view full screen

The town is a company town, all the real estate, houses, stores, hotels, church and school buildings being owned by the Potlatch Lumber Company.

Complete water, electric light and sewerage systems have been installed. Two hundred and seventy-five houses of varying designs have been built and the population numbers fifteen hundred at this writing, September, 1907. Two church buildings have been erected, one for the Catholics and one for the Protestants. The Union Church of Potlatch (Protestant) has fourteen different denominations represented in its membership. No saloons have been allowed. The school facilities are only equalled by those of larger cities.

The Potlatch Lumber Company also owns and operates two other mill plants, one at Palouse and one at Colfax, Washington, each with a capacity of 50,000 feet in ten hours.

All three plants are located on the Palouse River, which at all seasons of the year furnishes ample water for log storage.

The climate is such in the Palouse country that the mills can be operated the year through.

The timber resources owned by the Company are extensive enough to keep the mills running many years.

The Company also operates a Yards Department, with twenty-five yards located at various towns of Idaho, Washington and Oregon.

The Washington, Idaho & Montana Railway Company, a separate and distinct corporation, also makes Potlatch its headquarters. It runs from Palouse, Washington, to Bovill, Idaho, a distance of forty-seven miles and furnishes to the Lumber Company an easy means of transportation for its logs and lumber. Connection is made at Palouse with the Northern Pacific, Great Northern, Burlington, Canadian Pacific, Soo, Spokane & Inland, Oregon Railroad & Navigation Co. and Union Pacific.

A projected line of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Ry. will, in a short time, extend to Bovill, giving a direct connection at the eastern terminus with that road.

The Railway Company has at Potlatch its machine shop, car repair shop and round house.

Words do not always sufficiently impress the reader with distinct ideas and we therefore accompany this sketch with some cuts showing the plant, town and timber resources.

SAW MILL—(Designed by W. A. Wilkinson, Minneapolis, Minnesota.)

Dimensions 104x276 feet with wing 32x164 feet.

Power House 40x150 feet. Engine Room 38x60 feet.

Twelve boilers, 200 H. P. each, divided into four batteries of three each.

Twin City Corliss Engine, 1200 H. P. Maximum 1800 H. P.

Fly Wheel, weight 80,000 pounds; 24 feet in diameter; 68-inch face; carrying 66-inch three-ply leather belt.

Sills and Posts of mill set on concrete pillars sunk to hard pan.

First Floor of mill given to shafting and pulleys transmitting power.

Second Floor—the sawing floor—equipped with four band saws, two single and two double cuts, and one 54-inch gang with 46 saws; four double edgers, eight saws; two trimmer tables.

Third Floor, filing room and observation gallery.

Sorting Shed 544 feet long and double timber dock 170 feet in length.

Daily capacity 350,000 feet in 10 hours.

BURNER—Dimensions, 45 feet diameter, 140 feet high.

Steel casing lined with over 500,000 brick, 200,000 of which are fire brick.

DRY KILN—Five-Stall Brick Kiln. Dimensions 142x120 feet. Capacity 120,000 feet.

PLANING MILL—Steel frame, iron roof with skylights.

Dimensions, 130x312 feet; containing 32 machines, matchers, surfacers, moulding machines and band resaws.

Daily capacity 500,000 feet in 10 hours.

Power Plant of its own: Six boilers, 200 H. P. each, two batteries; Twin City Corliss Engine, 700 H. P., Maximum 1200 H. P.

Mill equipped with extensive blower system carrying shavings to boilers, shavings vault or burner.

DRESSED LUMBER SHED—Dimensions 90x512 feet.

Storage capacity 5,000,000 feet.

LOADING TRACK—Three-fourths of a mile.

LUMBER YARD—Covers 60 acres. Main alleys 20 feet.

Back alleys 16 feet.

Yard supplied with 45 miles of track over which the lumber is transported by electric storage battery locomotives bringing lumber from the mill to yard, or taking it from yard or kilns to the planing mill.

WATER-WORKS PUMPING STATION—Fireproof, iron, brick and concrete.

Two Underwriter's Fire Pumps, 1000 and 1500 gallons capacity.

Water received from two artesian wells 500 feet deep, from which water is pumped into concrete reservoir holding 1,000,000 gallons, set on a hill back of the townsite, with an elevation of 200 feet, furnishing a steady pressure of 75 pounds.

Ten miles of water mains with 100 hydrants.