

Yesterday:

The Story of
Potlatch
and
Surroundings
Alec

PREFACE

This history is not, and is not intended to be taken for a complete history of this area. It is, rather, a project we undertook because of our interest in the past happenings of our area, to gather information we considered relevant to our interests, and to have a learning experience while doing something that would be beneficial to the community.

Fat Barker	Editor
Cathy Merrell	Assistant Editor
Rita Voss	Assistant Editor
Norris Biggerstaff	
Kent Chambers	
Dale Deerkop	
Rick Largent	
Barb Lisher	
Debby Nagle	
Laurie Normington	
Denise Palmer	
Debi Rose	
Don Scoles	
Jeff Strong	
Lin Sharp	Advisor

The students of the Sophomore 4th hour English class who gathered and compiled this partial history, appreciatively dedicate this work to Mrs. Lin Sharp, the able instructor and advisor to the class.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many individuals and organizations have made possible the publication of this history by sharing their time, past experiences, and memories with the authors. We would like to acknowledge their help with thanks and list their names here.

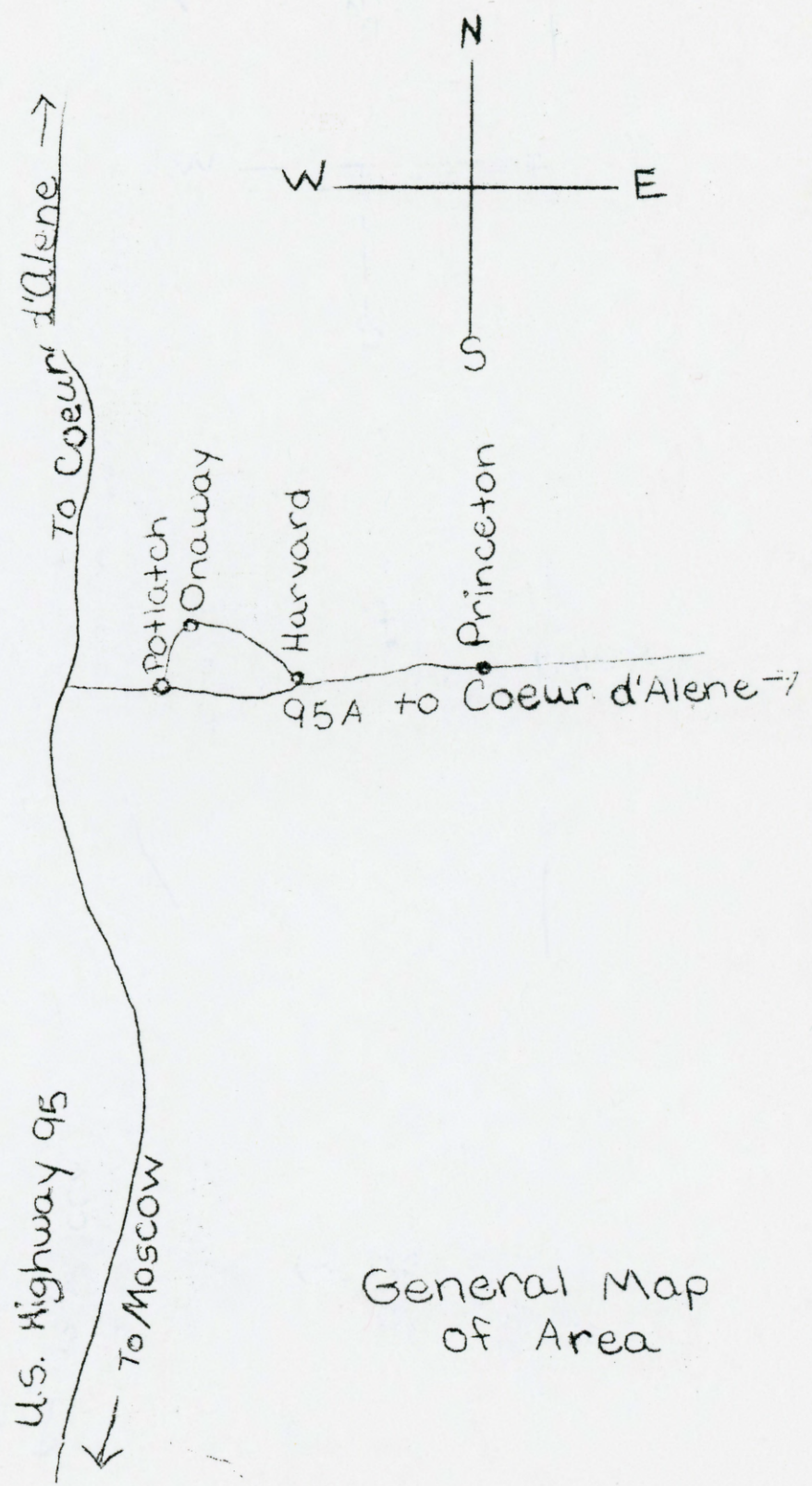
Mr. George Alexander	Mrs. Edith Nagle
Mr. Dick Bull	Mr. Jerry Nagle
Mr. Elmer (Dinger) Cada	Mrs. Francis Norbeck
Mrs. Betty Fosnot	Mr. Clayton Reynolds, Jr.
Mr. Craig Estes	Mr. Clayton Reynolds, Sr.
Mrs. Viola Guernsey	Mr. Fred Schnurr
Mrs. Flora Harris	Mr. Glenn Swinney
Miss Carla Hornbuckle	Mrs. Flora Tinnel
Mrs. Eunice Jones	Mrs. Eva Tobin
Mrs. Dorothy Kibbee	Mr. Paul Tobin
Mrs. Patsy Larson	Mrs. Katherine Walker
Mr. Marvin Merrell	
Mr. Glen Morrison	

Potlatch Forests, Inc.

Kennedy Ford Grange

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Preface	i
Dedication	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
"Potlatch"	1
Early Inhabitants	2
Mining	3
Potlatch Town	8
Potlatch Forests, Inc.	19
WI and M Railway	22
Surrounding Area	24
Footnotes	28
Bibliography	29



General Map
of Area

POTLATCH

"The term Potlatch implies, specifically, to give land away. According to the Indians, a potlatch was a ceremonial gathering of one or more tribes. The main ceremonial was held in the early spring. If a chief had died or was unable to serve, another would take his place. The medicine men, as tribal wisemen, would claim rights and privileges. The young braves were called upon to prove their prowess.

"There were horse racing, trick racing, archery, spear throwing, display of arrows and arrowheads, clothing, beadwork and baskets. At the end of the council, gifts were exchanged among tribal delegates. Some tribes exchanged children.

"One of the potlatch sites was near a creek in Northern Idaho. Eventually, the creek and the general area were termed Potlatch, and when the lumber company was formed it was natural to call it after the area in which it began operation.

"Just as natural was the naming of the village where timbermen began to settle and rear their families."

The Daily Idahonian

September 29, 1961

EARLY INHABITANTS

"The forest areas had been a summer Indian range for centuries before Lewis and Clark arrived. They continued that way for another few decades after these explorers had passed." The Indians around this area prior to 1800 were mostly Nez Perce and Coeur d' Alene.

"The Indians come annually to the meadows and woods, seeking the camas root, berries, fish, and game. He ate what he needed, and carried the rest away as provision for the winter. There is no problem in drying, for storage, the camas root, huckleberry, and flesh of salmon. All three are nutritious relative to weight and bulk.

"Most of all, it is probably the huckleberry that brought him to the forest. This, and his naturally nomadic nature. Camas root and abundant game could be found in the prairies and streams near his home. But the huckleberry was natural to higher country and wooded hills.

"The huckleberry was a favorite food. It gave variety and flavor to his diet, and nothing the Indian had in his larder nourished him better.

"The traffic flowed around the area, not generally through it although there was a stage line. The few travelers used a route through Oregon, or along the Lolo Trail, or a military route through Coeur d' Alene Mts. The rest of the country remained as Indian hunting grounds."

MINING

In 1890 miners and settlers began to come in as a result of the discovery of gold in the Hoodoo Mountains by a Mr. Hoteling. However, this discovery was relatively small and caused little immediate reaction.

Gold Hill is about 5 miles north of Princeton. When the mining first started, the western part was called Gold Creek District and the eastern part, was considered a part of the Hoodoo district which was farther to the east, was called the Blackfoot District. Later, all the mines on Gold Hill were considered one district.

In 1863, about 100 men were mining on Gold Creek. There was a village called Pierce with a post office and a store. Supplies were packed in from The Dalles, Oregon.

There was a town called Jerome City on Jerome Creek by the 1870's. Before it burned down, it was a flourishing town with three saloons.

After 1870 most of the gold was found by skimming the shallow gravel. Lode mining was usually avoided. Later, more efficient hydraulic methods were substituted. Miles and miles of plank water ditches ran down the slopes to the mining sites, leading water from upper creek levels to large hoses, making high pressure jets which moved the gravel.

Gold occurred mostly as coarse dust and flakes and grains the size of rice. The largest known nugget was worth about \$210.00. It was probably about ten ounces in weight. Jim Cochrane had three nuggets, the largest worth \$60.00 and the other two together equaling it's value. Nuggets worth \$3.00 to \$20.00 were fairly common.

Copper, silver and quartz were later mined.

Chinese In The Mining Camps

The first Chinese in Northern Idaho came in about 1864. Some came from California where places were exhausted, and some were brought directly from China by contractors and recruited by companies to work in mines.

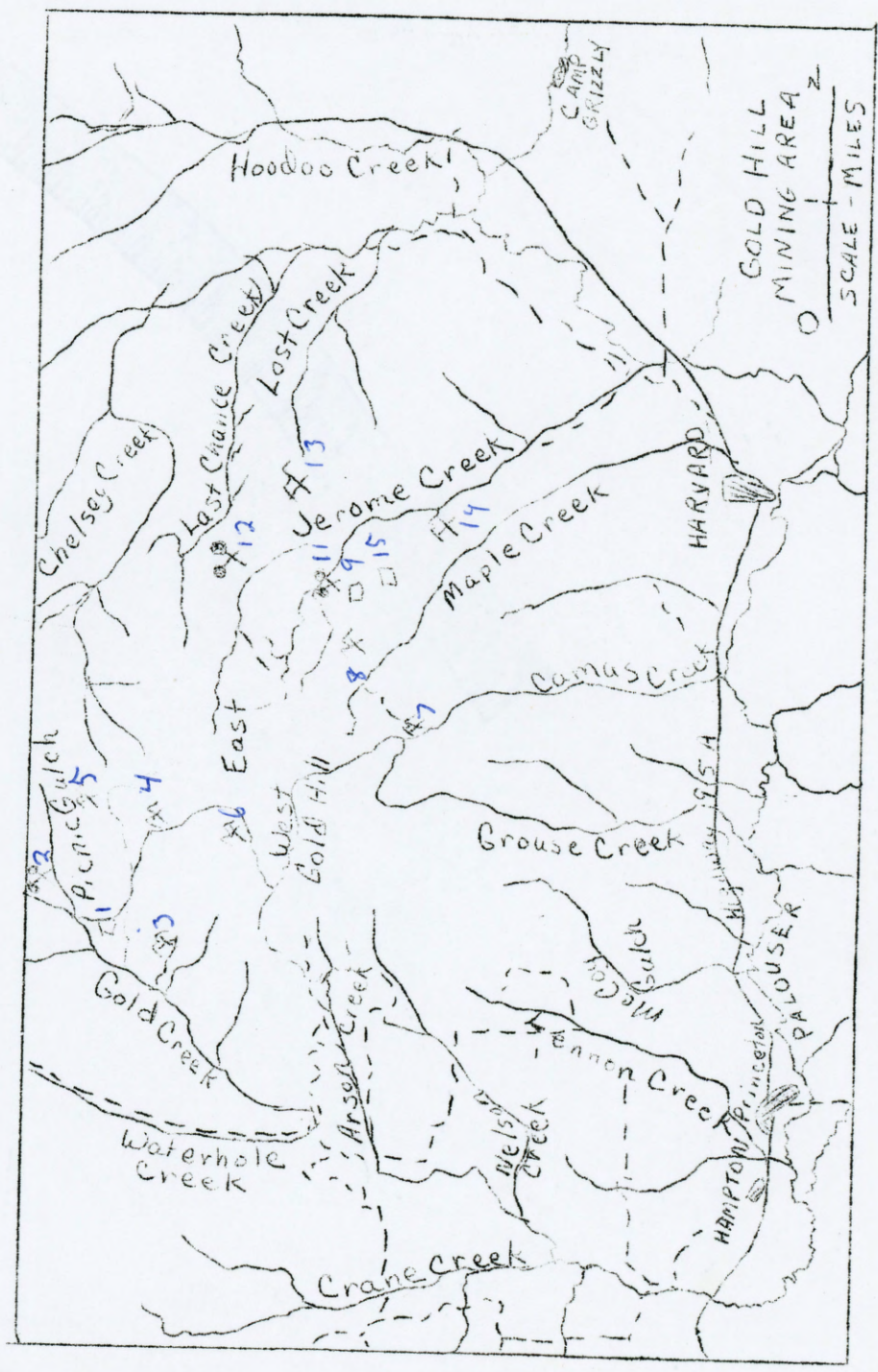
They came alone or in small groups, always clinging together because they were alien to the area and way of life. The white men continued working the more profitable mines while the Chinese stripped abandoned mines of their low grade ores.

The Chinese meeting place was Lewiston, and since there was no money for horses, they walked. They covered ten to fifteen miles a day, trotting. Each carried a pole on his shoulders with two baskets containing equipment and supplies of two fifty pound sacks of rice. They worked long hard hours and made it profitable because they lived on little.

In 1880 the Indians wiped out the complete Chinese settlement on Camas Creek near Harvard.

Trees Grew Tall
Page 24-25

□ Larger Mine
 ⊗ Placer Mine
 ✕ Smaller mine or Prospect
 --- Highway
 - - - Road
 ~~~ Creek



MINES AND PROSPECTS OF THE GOLD HILL AREA:

1. Carrico Mine- Working include two shafts about 50 feet deep and surface cuts.  
A small mill was in construction in the 1930's
2. Carrico placer deposits
3. Reservoir Creek prospect
4. Gilliam prospect-Vertical shaft about 200 feet deep
5. Lost Wheel Barrow Mine
6. Carrico Iron prospect-Opened by 200 feet of tunnels
7. Cassidy Mine-Incorporated in 1899; includes a 250 foot tunnel and several surface cuts.
8. Black Horse prospect, explored by a short tunnel.
9. Gold Bug Mine-at head of Heath Gulch. Vein reached by a 300 foot verticle shaft, and also a tunnel driven from the gulch.
10. Copper Ridge prospect-Numerous prospect holes.
11. Bishop claim and also placer deposits of Heath Gulch and Boulder Creek
12. Jerome Creek placer deposts
13. Daisy Mine-Early workings included an inclined shaft. Ore was extracted from slopes. Vein also opened in several cuts and a 100 foot tunnel.
14. Last Chance prospect-Originally located by the Walton brothers as the Early Bird but later renamed and developed by George O'Brien.
15. Gold Hill Mine-at head of Jack Gulch. Vein explored by tunnels, drifts, and surface cuts for a distance of 2000 feet. Tunnels enter from Jack Gulch at 2 levels.

"The Potlatch Lumber Company is developing in the northern part of Latah County. Due to the need of land and the increasing number of people, the farmers are being benefited by increased land value and a ready market for their produce.

The Potlatch Lumber Company is alone responsible and entitled to the credit for this commission of affairs. Operations are being carried forward on a gigantic scale. The number of men employed at the Potlatch Lumber Co. is estimated at two-thousand, not including the hundreds of men employed in the lumber camps. This large army of men are building the W.I.&M. railway, the stations, depots, side tracks, the monster dam at Potlatch, saw mill and yards, houses, business places and other structures in their new town of Potlatch. This means the outlay of large sums of money daily, and one reflects that this outlay will go on for years increasing in value.

The railroad is now in operation to Princeton but will be pushed on through the county to the Lolo Pass Region. This means the building of more towns, the opening of more places of business, and more farms."

The Palouse Republic  
Friday, December 22, 1905

The preceding article helped introduce the Potlatch Lumber Co. and the new town of Potlatch to Idaho and the Northwest. The Potlatch Lumber Co. was incorporated in 1903 under the laws of Maine. The company acquired 30,000 acres of timberland and the mills and timber of the Cold Lumber Company of Colfax, Washington, and the Palouse River Lumber Company of Palouse, Washington. The Colfax mill was run very little and the Palouse mill was only used for cutting lumber to build the town of Potlatch.

The town and mill were built on a flat near the Palouse River in Idaho through the years of 1904, 1905, and 1906. The site was chosen when the people of Palouse voted not to have the new mill in Palouse. In September 1905, erection of what was said to be the largest and best equipped milling plant in the country began.

Potlatch was strictly a company town, to live in town one had to be employed by the mill, and visa versa. The town was laid out with 60 foot wide streets on the logged off hills near the mill site. When the mill opened in 1906, 128 dwellings were occupied, 35 more were nearly finished and plans for another 40 had been accepted. A few houses, the church, the store and some other buildings were heated by steam from the mill. By September 1907, complete water, electric lights, and sewage systems had been installed. Two hundred and seventy-five houses of varying designs had been built and the population numbered 1500.

Houses on the south hill were occupied by mill management and other important people in the community. For example, Kolar's house was built for a Mr. Humiston who was the Assistant Manager and Vice President for the Potlatch Lumber Co. The cost was \$5,830.73. It was one of the first of the larger homes of that time. The house had a full basement with a trunk room. The first floor had a kitchen, living area, dining area, butler's pantry and two other rooms. The second floor has three bedrooms and a bath. The third floor has two bedrooms and a bath.

Only the people who lived on the South Hill could use the 4-hole golf course, which was on the hill, and the tennis court near the company gym, which was later made the Town and Country Store.

Many of the houses in Potlatch were exactly alike. Once a young man went into town to visit his girl friend, a maid in one of the homes. It was evening so he sat on the porch to wait until she was ready. He waited and waited. Finally, someone came out to ask what he wanted. He said he was waiting for his girl and was promptly sent next door to pick her up. He had mixed up the identical houses.

There were no indoor bathrooms in early Potlatch. Outhouses had seats with boxes under them. When the boxes were full, they were hauled off or dumped in the alley. Sewage ran out of the alleys into the streets.

In 1909 the Post Office was near the old bank. Stamps for regular letters cost 1¢ domestic and 2¢ foreign.

Potlatch had a fine volunteer fire department in 1910 for the town of 2,000. There was a chief and two companies of 16 men each. They used a hose cart and 500 feet of 2½ inch cotton hose. The department was paid \$55 per month by the Potlatch Lumber Company whose fire apparatus was always available.

The Confectionery was originally between the old bank and the Mercantile. Later, it was moved to its present location. At one time, it even had an elevator.

A vacant lot across from the present C. and J. Lounge was used to park wagons and tie horses while people were shopping in town.

No saloons were allowed in Potlatch so Princeton had several to serve the area.

The Flannigan Creek bridge was built in 1911 under the direction of Elmer Travis. The crew worked over July 4<sup>th</sup> to finish the bridge by harvest time, so their families brought a picnic to the bridge to celebrate Independence Day.

No fireworks were allowed in Potlatch because of the fire danger in a logging area.

Through the efforts of Reverend N.M. Fiske, pastor of the Union Church, the Potlatch Public library was organized in October 1915.

The North South Highway was officially opened about 1920. A. W. Laird, General Manager of Potlatch Lumber Co., gave a welcoming speech. Afterwards, to celebrate the event, an automobile parade was held with prizes in the following events:

First event--most attractively decorated car

Second event--car holding the largest family

Third event-- most decorated car

Fourth event--oldest car in parade

Fifth event--best clown or stunt car

Sixth event--car holding the largest number of girls

The programs, compliments of Potlatch Lumber Co., were printed on genuine white pine.

During the 1930's depression, there were two brothers, who owned one Sunday suit between the two of them. They wanted to go to church, so one would go one week and the other would go the next week.

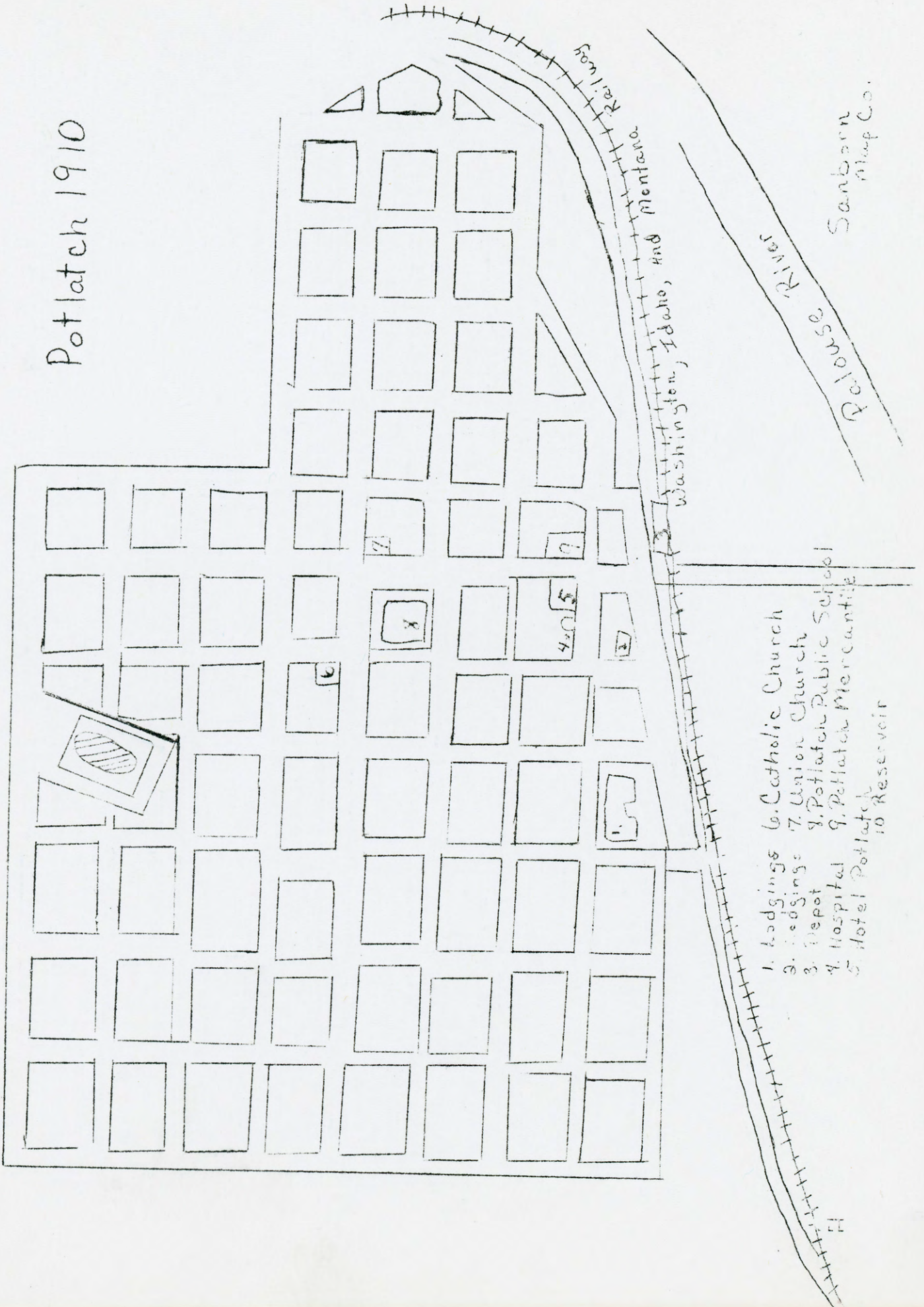
There was also a girl who wanted to go to a party but it cost a dime. Her parents couldn't afford it, so she didn't go.

The Potlatch Lumber Company hired Charles Ogan on January 1929 as the Potlatch policeman. He held that position for 30 years, in 1929-1959.

He died in his 80's several years ago.



# Potlatch 1910



1. Lodgings
2. Lodgings
3. Depot
4. Hospital
5. Hotel Potlatch
6. Catholic Church
7. Union Church
8. Potlatch Public School
9. Potlatch Mercantile
10. Reservoir

Washington, Idaho, and Montana Railway

Palouse River  
Sanborn Map Co.

Potlatch

1928

Sanborn Map Co.

Falouse River



POTLATCH

- 1. Hospital
- 2. Boarding House
- 3. Confectionery
- 4. Gym
- 5. Potlatch Lumber Co. Office
- 6. Mercantile
- 7. Garage
- 8. Hotel
- 9. Theater
- 10. Post Office
- 11. Public School
- 12. Catholic Church
- 13. Union Church
- 14. High School
- 15. Classrooms
- 16. Lutheran Church
- 17. Teachers' Home

The following is an excerpt from a speech by J.J. O'Connell in 1939.

"The town is unique for a town of its size, in that it is not incorporated, has no mayor, council or other town officers. It is commonly referred to as "A COMPANY TOWN", because it is almost entirely supported by the payroll of the Potlatch unit of Potlatch Forests, Inc., producers of Idaho White Pine lumber. Another business of importance is the Washington, Idaho & Montana Railway Company which operates between Palouse, Washington, and Bovill, Idaho and maintains its shops and general offices in Potlatch.

"There are over 300 residences and every one of them is supplied with electricity and pure, deep well water at high pressure.

"Rents, for the type of house occupied, are the lowest in the Inland Empire.

"The town has the usual stores, a bank, movie, and three churches.

"Schools are under the superintendency of Mr. J.C. Eddy. We have a High School enrollment of 256, and a Grade School enrollment of 251. Twenty teachers are employed. Our schools rank with the highest in the state in achievement tests. Our class of thirty-three graduated last year, sixteen have continued on in higher education."

Potlatch continued as a Company town until 1940. The town was incorporated in 1952 and the houses were sold to those who wanted them. The City Hall was the main office for the mill and was one of the last buildings to be sold. In 1948 new street signs were added in the formation of a tree at the suggestion of a mill employee.

### School

The Potlatch Public School (Hiawatha) was built in 1908. All the small towns in the area had their own grade schools. Only residents of Potlatch attended school in Potlatch. Later, when children from other communities came to Potlatch to attend school, they often had to stay in town at boarding houses because there were no buses. Tuition for out-of-town students was three dollars.

For the first few years, the graduating classes held their ceremonies in the Union Church. The first 12-year class to graduate in the Potlatch Public School was in 1920. The principal was Suma Hall. superintendent R.S. Chambers, and the President A.W. Laird.

A boarding house was maintained for the single women teachers (Where Jerry Andres' home is now.) The school didn't hire married teachers because their husbands could earn a living.

By 1945 about 210 lunches a day were served to students in the gym by the American Legion and the Legion Auxiliary. In 1948, 28 country schools consolidated to make the Potlatch School District.

School discipline was very strict. After a first warning, the offender was sent to the superintendent's office to get a whipping with a rubber hose. The girls were not allowed to wear anklets because it was immodest. They had to wear full stockings. The grade school and high school students could not go downtown without an excuse. For freshmen and sophomores, the curfew was 9:00 P.M. Juniors and seniors had to off the streets by 10:00 P. M.

Certainly all was not dull at the Potlatch School. Sports teams competed much as they do today. Whenever they went to another town, however, they had to provide their own transportation because there were no buses. They sometimes competed in the Whitepine

Tournament and the St. Maries Tournament.

During World War I, the students collected scrap iron. Whoever collected the largest pile, got a party.

About 1920 some students got mad at the superintendent so they hung him on the top floor of the school by his heels. A little while after that, the 7th and 8th graders took down the grade school coach and paddled him just for the fun of it.

On Halloween 1944, dozens of kids started tipping outhouses over. They tipped over Dave Windsper's outhouse and ran off. A couple of hours later when they were walking by, the outhouse was sitting up again. Unfortunately, the leader yelled "charge" and they ran at it. Dave had moved it back a few feet, and the charging kids fell in the half-full hole. The first kid was pushed waist deep by the eleven others. When they finally climbed out, they all went down to the river in T-shirts and shorts to wash their clothes and shoes.

#### Churches

Early Potlatch had three churches. The Catholic and Lutheran Churches were at their present locations. In 1907, the Union Church was a frame building directly across 6th street from the present day Hiawatha. By 1910, it had been rebuilt one block west. Fourteen different denominations were represented. Many townspeople felt the beautiful brick building was flawless. The steeple alone was 54 feet above the eaves. People came from all over the area to go to church there, and the average Sunday School attendance in 1907 was 225. The first pastor was Reverend Scafe. The first baptism took place in 1909 at Kennedy Ford Park. The Union Church burned July 30, 1951.

Potlatch Mercantile

In 1907, the Merc was started. The stock was moved from a frame shack on the flats to the same location where the hopping center is now. In 1909 the Merc was finished. The dimensions were 135 feet across the front and 120 feet deep. It was two stories high and had a full basement. The bricks used for the Merc were purchased from a brickyard where the high school football field is now.

A.A. McDonald, who managed the Merc from 1909 to 1921, had great ambitions for the store. There was a grand opening sale with free lunch and a dance in the Opera House, which was over the Bank in the old store building. Each year there were five or six two-day sales, attracting crowds of up to 5,000. The sales held in February, April, June, October, and December were prominent in establishing the town of Potlatch as a trade center for a 30 mile radius.

During the depression, the Merc gave credit coupons, the value of which was later taken out of the worker's paychecks when the Mill started running again.

Mill paychecks were in the form of tokens which could only be used for goods at the Company-owned store. Before money was paid out, debts were automatically deducted. When the mill sold the town in 1952, the Merc was one of the last buildings sold. Merle Fisher was the last manager, until the building burnt down on January 13, 1963.

### Boarding Houses

Originally Potlatch provided four boarding houses for the single working men. White men stayed at a boarding house beside the confectionery. The Japanese boarding house at 9th and Fir was torn down in 1938, and the lumber was used to build the Rock Creek Grange. The Italian boarding house is now the Moose Hall. One boarding house later became the hospital and another the theater.

### Theater

The theater, just north of the Oddfellows Hall, was converted from a boarding house in 1912. Movies, public plays, and operas were favorite fare. Admission was usually 5 to 10 cents. The owner, Mr. Allen Nygaard, had the building torn down in 1960 because competition with television had reduced attendance.

### Hospital

Before the hospital was built in Potlatch, the nearest hospital was located in Colfax; and the closest doctors were in Palouse. The original hospital in 1910 was a small building where the library is today. Later it was moved into a converted boarding house at the corner of Pine and 9th. The first doctors were Gibbson, Thompson and Hein. The dentist had his office where the present laudromat is.

By 1939 the hospital had 32 beds. In 1943, it was closed down and made into a doctor's office. It is now being converted into apartments.

Riverside

Riverside, in the 1930's-50's was a popular meeting place for various forms of entertainment. Many popular singers, especially country-western, such as Ferlin Husky, Johnny Cash, Buck Owens and Hank Snow, came to perform. Some stopped here between showings in Lewiston and Spokane, while others came especially to play at Riverside. They usually played during the week because they charged more on weekends, but still often charged up to \$2,000. People came from as far as Steptoe and Spokane; sometimes the gross income for a night was over \$4,000.

Big name bands from Chicago and California also played. Once an orchestra was contracted, the turnout was small. There were annual Rodeos for the Fourth of July, occasional circuses, and frequent dances and stock-car races. Roller skating and dancing were also popular. For about 20 years, there were no stockcar races. Then a new track was built and they began a regular Sunday afternoon pastime.



POTLATCH FORESTS, INC.

The Potlatch Lumber Company began operation in 1906. After operations were well under way, William Helmer, a timber cruiser, laid out the logging spurs and located the camp sites.

The following advertisement was printed in the Palouse Republic, December 22, 1905.

## THE NEED FOR GOOD SHEDS

It is an accepted fact that good sheds are a necessity, so there is no room for argument on this point. The main question has been where and how to get the right kind of material to build good sheds. Right here we come to your aid. How? By quoting you rock bottom prices on high grade lumber. That's all you need to fix you out all ok. Good lumber at right prices. Call and you ask for these. We have got the goods and make the prices right. Remember that we are headquarters for all kinds of building material including lime, cement, hard-wall plaster, ready roofing, etc.

Potlatch Lumber Company

In the early days of Potlatch, the company ranch was where Gary Morris' ranch is now. Hans Peterson was the manager. The company raised timothy hay, chickens, turkeys, and beef for the mercantile store. They kept the horses used for logging at the mill. On Flannigan Creek there was a "slop ranch" where the garbage from the town was fed to the pigs.

In 1910 the mill had a wet log capacity of 350,000 feet in 10 hours. The sawmill ran day and night with two-ten hour shifts. Sawdust was burned to produce steam power. The mill was electrified in 1953.

By 1914 the Potlatch Lumber Company was the largest white pine sawmill in the world.

Logging operations included sleigh hauls. Railroad spur lines were laid

into timbered areas that were to be harvested. Horses, and later small tractors, were used to skid logs from the woods to the loading ramp where they were stacked onto rail cars.

Early day logging was aided by steam-powered machines called "donkeys". The first two donkeys arrived at Helmer, Idaho, in 1907. It took an engineer, a fireman, a wood buckler, a hook tender, and two choker setters to run them.

There were many log drives down the Palouse River. Trees as large as 7 feet in diameter were harvested. In 1935, the mill accepted only pine. Loggers often left tops three feet in diameter lying in the forest. The slogan was: "Select the best; discard the rest."

During the winter of 1942-43 there was so much snow that the loggers couldn't keep up with the mill and the trucks and trains couldn't move. There was also a terrible rat problem that winter.

In February 1941, the largest production record in 30 years was reached under the supervision of Claire Nogle when camp 35 produced 6,841,980 feet of logs. By 1946 Potlatch Forests Inc. log pile reached Flannigan Creek.

The following was part of a radio speech by J.J. O'Connell in 1939.

"The mill was built in 1906 and has operated every year since. For years, it was the largest White Pine mill in the world, and is still considered one of the larger ones. The sawmill produces 300,000 feet of lumber per day which is shipped to many States of the Union. The plant of the Potlatch Forests, Inc. employs an average of 400 men and the railroad employs an average of seventy. The annual payroll is over a million dollars.

"In addition to the Potlatch plant payroll, an average of 550 men work in the woods during the summer, supplying the mill with saw logs. This payroll has been so constant from year to year that Potlatch has never had any serious problems and has not participated in any of the many alphabetical

aids furnished by our government.

"In addition to the manufacture of lumber, Pres-to-logs are made as a by-product from lumber shavings and sawdust, at the rate of 40 tons per day.

"I believe it would be of interest to our listeners-in to hear something about the workmen in the mill. Some have been continuously employed since 1906. Thirty are over sixty years old. Twenty-one percent are past fifty-one years of age. Sixty percent have been employed ten years and longer; twenty percent, twenty years and longer."

W. I. and M. RAILWAY

The W.I.&M. Railroad was started along with the mill in 1905 and completed 3 years later. The tracks ran from Lairds, Washington, through Princeton, Harvard, Vassar and numerous other whistle stops to Bovill, Idaho. Many of these whistle stops were named by the men who surveyed for the railroad. Original plans called for continuation into Montana accounting for the M in the Name; but it never reached the border.

The original purpose for the railroad was to supply logs for the Potlatch mill. The largest log train carried 104 loads of logs to the Potlatch Mill in 1907. The first passenger car moved on the tracks Sept. 30, 1905. Passenger service continued until July, 1955.

The Potlatch depot was nearly destroyed by fire on July 6, 1923, at 4:00 a.m. The depot building at Harvard was moved to Princeton, later to become the Co-op. The present day locker plant was originally the Princeton depot.

In 1933, "The Bug," a converted Studebaker automobile, was put into use. It covered 120 miles daily, carrying mail and passengers. In 1936, there were 17 bridges, 5 locomotives, 300 flat cars, 15 boxcars, 2 passenger coaches, a locomotive crane, a weed burner, and miscellaneous work equipment.

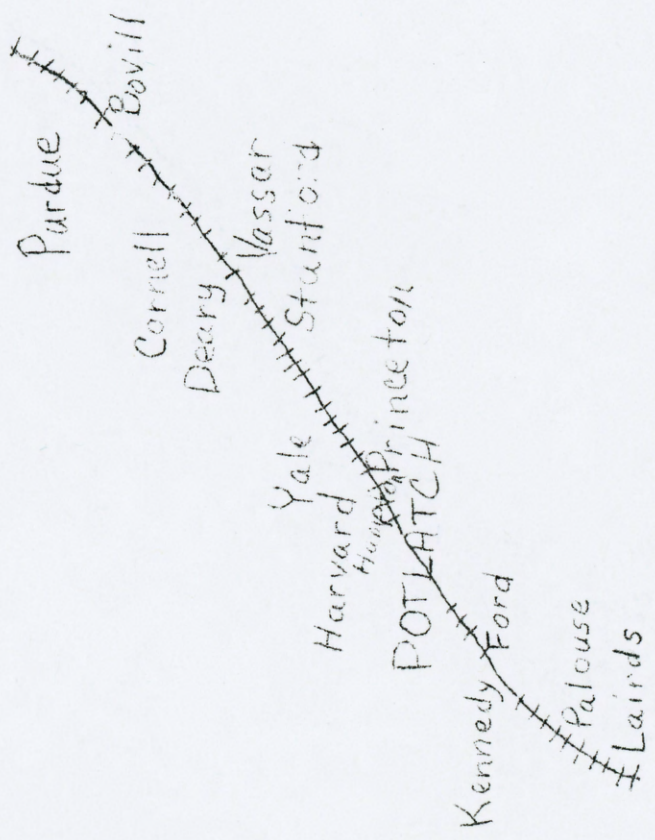
The railroad stimulated logging, mining, farming and travel. It was sold in 1961.

Washington, Idaho &  
Montana Railway Co.

The Potlatch Story

Vol. II, No. III

Sept. 1960



### SURROUNDING AREA

The history of Latah county actually began in 1888 when action first was taken to separate from Nez Perce county. The small towns in the surrounding area were established before Potlatch. The first to be settled was Princeton, second, Harvard, third Onaway. Small stage stops were later established between these towns.

#### Hampton

The little hilltop village of Hampton, near Princeton, was built about 1904 by Judge J. Starner, a Washington territorial judge, and was originally called Starner in his honor. It had a store and post office, Main Street, First and Second Streets, and Jones Street. There was also a hall where there were regular practices for girls interested in basketball. Before Potlatch was built, a stage coach went from Palouse to St. Maries with Hampton as the stopover.

#### Princeton

Princeton was named after a town in Minnesota. This action started a fad to name small settlements after big eastern colleges. By 1906 Princeton had become a full-fledged community. It had a school as early as 1890. The first school building was later used for the woodshed of the second school. In 1904, there were five saloons, all with false fronts and signs reading, "Beer-5¢". The backyards all had high wooden fences.

At least as late as 1904, the land between Princeton and Potlatch was still forested.

On August 9, 1912, the Post Office was mysteriously broken into. Nothing was taken, but about ten dollars in pennies was thrown on the desk.

The general merchandise store, "The Marquette", was built in Princeton by George D. Guernsey, who came to Hampton in 1904. He later served as Post Master at Princeton for 35 years.

On May 22, 1921, a Nazarene Church was built. There were fifteen members. The property in use now was purchased in 1923.

### Harvard

Before 1905, when the railroad went through the Palouse wilderness, Harvard was called Woodfell. In 1906, the name Harvard was permanently put on the records. The Post Office was built in 1898. About 1930 the store, now Minden's Market, was started by Milton Becker and Jim Gutton. Homer Canfield, State senator, was one of the original homesteaders in the Harvard area before Potlatch was started.

### Onaway

Onaway was called "Bull Town" in honor of Mr. John "Henry" Bull, who started the town. The original homestead of Henry Bull was approximately where Baldriges live now. He owned 40 acres on the south side of town.

A surveyor for Weyerhauser was unhappy at Potlatch and quit. He then asked Henry Bull if he could survey his 40 acres for a town. Henry Bull said he didn't have enough money to have it surveyed, but the surveyor said he would lay out the town free if he could have a lot to build on. Henry Bull agreed, and the job was undertaken.

A while later, the surveyor learned that a representative for Weyerhauser was going to Moscow to register Potlatch as a town. As there was then a law that prohibited two registered towns from being within a mile or two of each other, Henry Bull went to Moscow by horseback over Moscow Mountain to register Onaway. The Potlatch representative went by train to Palouse and then into Moscow; Thus he was too late to register Potlatch. L

The location of the Post Office caused rivalry between Onaway and Potlatch. Potlatch was closer to the railroad, and therefore got the Post Office. At a later date, Potlatch almost lost the Post Office because it was not yet a registered town. Onaway, in turn, got all the taverns because the Potlatch Mill would not allow taverns in its town. This, too, caused rivalry to flare up.

There were two additions to Onaway. Lemuel Bull, Henry Bull's father, owned 40 acres on the north side of town. This addition was directly across the main road from Henry Bull's 40 acres. The Newman addition was also on the North side of town, starting from the first house on the north side going east and leading up to Lemuel Bull's addition.

The first general store was built about 1910 and owned by Roy Guernsey and Lester Sinnett, who was Henry Bull's brother-in-law. The original store building, with a few additions, is now the Faithful Gospel Church.

Onaway had pool halls, a livery stable, the general store, a hotel, second-hand store, barber shop, a dance hall, blacksmith shop and a large school.

In December of 1928, the population of Onaway was 300.

In the 1940's, Onaway was a really rough place, especially on Saturday nights. Some of the older buildings burned, or were burned, as may be the case, in 1947 or 1948. One bar-restaurant was a hangout for the high school kids; and Clayton Reynolds, Jr. witnessed a fight which he related to us:

A bald man started it by hitting another man in the face and knocking his head through the glass in the door. The other promptly drew a knife; but didn't have a chance to go after his opponent because the owner, who had a broken leg, conked the bald man over the head with his crutch, thus ending this exciting episode.

Onaway was also a stage stop on the way to the mines; and, about 1923, Onaway was the main road. The road to Potlatch turned off where Hatley's is now, and the road to Princeton went through Onaway.



Kennedy Ford Grange

Kennedy Ford Grangers are pioneers in Idaho, and were the first to organize and erect a Grange Hall. Early in 1904 a couple of meetings were held in a hall near Palouse, Washington. Most of the people were from the Kennedy Ford neighborhood. Later they met in the Berry school-house about four miles from where the Kennedy Ford Grange now stands.

Later in March 1904 the Grange, still a part of the Washington Grange, was formed by Carly Bell Kegley.

The hall was finished before the railroad, which was built in 1905-1906.

They used the name Kennedy Ford because there was a ford or crossing over the river behind the hall.

The hall was built a year before the grange received its charter. In February 1, 1906, the time the charter was issued, the Grange had 98 charter members.

Permission was given to Matthew and Mary E. Miller to build the grange hall on the present site. On March 10, 1906, they signed the deed giving the present 100 square feet of land to the Grange.

The Grange donated a Jersey cow to the first couple in the hall to get married. They were Leila Layton and Walt Thaffer.

In July 29, 1930, a petition for release from Washington Grange was granted; and they became Kennedy Ford Grange #177 of Idaho.

The grange organized a drill team that became one of the best in the state. In 1936, they had a baseball team with uniforms.

Kennedy Ford Juvenile Grange #74 was organized June 24, 1949, by district deputy Ralph White with 29 charter members.

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>John B. Miller, The Trees Grew Tall, (Moscow, Idaho: the News Review Publishing Company, 1972), p. 10.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Beal and Wells. History of Idaho. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1959.

French, Hiram T. History of Idaho, Vol. II & II, Chicago and New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1914.

The Family Tree, 1936 - 1958 (Potlatch Forests, Inc. published)

Jones, Dorothy D. & Gates, Charles M. Empire of Columbia. New York: Harper Row, 1957.

O'Connell, J.J. Speech, K. F. P. Y. Radio Station, 1939.

Moscow Post, September 2, 1923.

Moscow Post, July 6, 1923.

The Palouse Republic, Vol. 9, No. 38, December 22, 1905.

The Potlatch Story, December 1959.

The Potlatch Story, September 1960.

Sanborn Map Company, 11 Broadway, New York

Wells, Merle W. Students' Guide to Localized History. New York: Columbia University, 1965.

Hidy, Ralph W. and Mill, Frank Ernest, and Nevins, Alan. Timber and Men. New York: Macmillan Company, 1963.

Miller, John B. The Trees Grew Tall. Moscow, Idaho: The News Review Publishing Company, 1972.

