

A CANADIAN MANUFACTURING EXECUTIVE DISCUSSES
THE WESTERN RED CEDAR SHINGLE INDUSTRY

An interview with Charles Plant
conducted by Elwood R. Maunder

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INTRODUCTION

Of the many thousands of different forest products in North America, shingles and shakes cut from western red cedar are probably the most remarkable. Red cedar has long been reputed to be the lightest commercial softwood, nonetheless superior in strength. Totally free of resin or pitch yet saturated with a natural oil preservative of its own, it has little tendency to shrink and resists decay even when subjected to wide extremes of moisture and temperature. British Columbia is blessed with what are probably the best remaining stands of western red cedar. It is also blessed with men who, through their industry in using that resource, have contributed very significantly to the amazing development of the province. Charles Plant stands out as one of the prime examples of leadership in the industry.

Plant was born on February 13, 1891 in Streatham, Surrey, England. At that time his father was a baker by trade who later became a bakery engineer for a company that produced ovens and some of the first machinery which automated breadmaking. With his family, young Charles Plant moved at an early age to Scotland, went to school in Edinburgh and left school at sixteen armed with what was called "A Leaving Certificate of the Scottish Educational System." After a succession of ill-fated attempts to establish his own businesses in England and Scotland, the elder Plant moved his family to Canada in 1910.

On his arrival in Montreal at only nineteen years of age, Charles Plant found employment at once with the Canadian Pacific Railway for thirty-five dollars a month which, to an immigrant lad, was a munificent sum. In the meantime, the Plant family had gone west to British Columbia and Charles decided to follow shortly thereafter. Following a brief period as a bank stenographer, he landed his first job in the forest products field with Arrow Lakes Lumber Company, an American-owned operation located at Arrowhead in the Kootenay district of British Columbia. There he began a long career in sales and mill management which in time carried him to the top of his field as described in the following interview. Plant quickly achieved a reputation as one of the most imaginative salesmen in his industry and became widely known for opening up new markets for lumber and other forest products of British Columbia.

In the mid-1920s Bloedel, Stewart and Welch, moved to make the Red Band Mill an all-Canadian operation, and in 1930 Charles Plant was brought in to promote Red Band's shingle products. He soon became known throughout the trade as "Red Band Charlie."

Plant's recollections within this volume quite unwittingly reveal the man, a gentle man, one equipped by temperament and intelligence to make a success of most anything he pursued. Vancouver residents will long affectionately remember the many years he led songfests in the city's parks and on its beaches. He was the first Canadian ever to be elected head of the Red Cedar Shingle & Handsplit Shake Bureau, a most effective trade association which has built its strength on an international membership.

Here is told much that relates to trade association affairs and the changing Canadian-American relationships between the two World Wars, the Great Depression, and in an unprecedented prosperity which has marked the shingle industry of the last quarter century. Differences between American and Canadian management techniques, characteristics of the labor force, grading and marketing, freight rates, government controls on logging, labor-management relations, and the long and bitter conflicts with manufacturers of substitute building materials--all come in for examination and insightful comment.

In the two sessions on May 1, 1974, Plant was interviewed at his home, 2380 Nelson Avenue, West Vancouver, British Columbia. The oral history project of which this interview is a part was made possible through funding provided by a grant from Paul R. Smith of Seattle, Washington and the Red Cedar Shingle & Handsplit Shake Bureau of the same city. Other volumes of oral history produced in the same series include: Paul R. Smith Views the Western Red Cedar Industry, 1910 to the Present, The Red Cedar Shingle & Handsplit Shake Bureau's Role in the Western Red Cedar Industry with Virgil G. Peterson, and Western Red Cedar, The Shingle Weaver's Story with Harold M. Stilson, Sr. Individual copies of these volumes may be purchased through the Forest History Society, P.O. Box 1581, Santa Cruz, California 95061.

Research for this series of interviews was conducted in the trade journals of the Forest History Society Library and in the Historical Manuscripts Collection of the Suzzallo Library at the University of Washington in Seattle. I am indebted to Dr. Richard C. Berner and Mrs. Karyl Winn for their assistance in probing the rich collection of lumbering and forest industry materials, which over the last two decades they have gathered and organized for scholarly use. The pertinent files of the M. R. Smith Shingle Company and of the Red Cedar Shingle & Handsplit Shake Bureau were also probed, and one of the ancillary benefits of the project has been the placement of these materials in the permanent custody of the Suzzallo Library.

The tapes from this interview were transcribed by my wife, Eleanor L. Maunder, and final editing of the manuscript was completed by Barbara D. Holman of the Society's oral history staff.

All uses of this work are covered by a legal agreement between the directors of the Forest History Society and the directors of the Red Cedar Shingle & Handsplit Shake Bureau. The work is thereby made available for research purposes. No part of the work may be quoted for publication without the written permission of the executive director of the Forest History Society.

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Elwood R. Maunder
Executive Director
Forest History Society

Santa Cruz, California
August 26, 1975

Elwood Rondeau Maunder was born April 11, 1917 in Bottineau, North Dakota. University of Minnesota, B.A. 1939; Washington University at St. Louis, M.A. (modern European history) 1947; London School of Economics and Political Science, 1948. He was a reporter and feature writer for Minneapolis newspapers, 1939-41, then served as a European Theater combat correspondent in the Coast Guard during World War II, and did public relations work for the Methodist Church, 1948-52. Since 1952 he has been secretary and executive director of the Forest History Society, Inc., headquartered in Santa Cruz, California, and since 1957 editor of the quarterly Journal of Forest History. From 1964 to 1969, he was curator of forest history at Yale University's Sterling Memorial Library. Under his leadership the Forest History Society has been internationally effective in stimulating scholarly research and writing in the annals of forestry and natural resource conservation generally; 46 repositories and archival centers have been established in the United States and Canada at universities and libraries for collecting and preserving documents relating to forest history. As a writer and editor he has made significant contributions to this hitherto neglected aspect of history. In recognition of his services the Society of American Foresters elected him an honorary member in 1968. He is a charter member of the international Oral History Association of which he was one of the founders. He is also a member of the Agricultural History Society, the American Academy of Political and Social Science, the American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, the Society of American Archivists, and the American Forestry Association.*

*Adapted from, Henry Clepper, ed., Leaders of American Conservation (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1971).

SESSION I, MAY 1, 1974

CHAPTER 1

Elwood R. Maunder: It is usually my practice in making interviews to begin by briefly tracing family origins. Where did your family come from originally? Where were you born and how did you spend your early years?

Charles Plant: I was born in England on February 13, 1891 at a place called Streatham which is in Surrey in the south of England. My father was originally a baker and then he became a bakery engineer for a company that produced ovens and machinery to make the original bakers' automatic bread-making devices, dough dividers, mixers, and those sort of things. He did a lot of traveling in northern England and Scotland, and he eventually decided to move to Scotland which was more convenient to the area that he covered. I was about ten years old at the time the family moved to southern Scotland and lived at a place called Eskbank. I went to school in Edinburgh.

ERM: Was that an elementary school?

CP: It was not elementary. It was what you call a secondary school for boys only--quite a famous one called George Heriot's, founded in 1628. It was the type of school that took you to about age seventeen. It gave the boys a very good education prior to going into fields of business or professions such as doctors or ministers. There were two points of view or goals in this particular school. I graduated from the commercial side of the school and when I left, I had what was called the Leaving Certificate of the Scottish educational system. I had a simple, basic business education--shorthand, typewriting, French, German, and an elementary foundation for a business career. I left school between ages sixteen and seventeen.

ERM: Had it been your intention to follow your father's field?

CP: No, not necessarily. I wanted to be in some kind of business but not necessarily one connected with my father. As I recall, I hadn't any particular objective.

ERM: Were there any brothers and sisters?

CP: Yes. I was the oldest. My next brother was two years younger, and my youngest brother was nine years younger than myself. Unfortunately, my mother died after the birth of the third boy. A couple of years later, Dad married again, so then I had a stepmother. This was the family that all moved to Scotland. When we were in Scotland, my stepmother had a daughter. While we were growing up, it was really a family of three boys and a girl, I being the oldest.

ERM: Are your brothers and sister still living?

CP: My brothers passed away but my sister is still alive. She is twelve or thirteen years younger than myself.

ERM: What is your sister's name?

CP: Her name is Lilian Hastie. She lives just over in Vancouver, not far from here. She comes to see me frequently.

My father eventually left this firm. He decided to go into business with his brother as a baker again in a part of London. They thought there was promise for them to make a good business. My father wouldn't have to do as much traveling. Prior to that, he actually had been away a lot. I think Mother had some influence, too, in wanting a new sort of setup at home. Unfortunately, this business he went into turned out to be a losing proposition. I think their judgment wasn't as good as it might have been in respect to the location of the business. In any event, they lost money and they kept losing money until the situation became pretty desperate for my father.

ERM: Had you also moved to London with the family?

CP: Yes, I had moved with them for about six or eight months. This was after I left school. When I left school, I got a job as a junior clerk in a little business in London and had some experience in stenography and ordering, simple office work. But when my father got into his own business, I joined him. I wasn't there too long because things became so disastrous for my father that he made up his mind he was going to retain what was left and move to Canada. I can remember him saying, "If I'm not a success in Canada, maybe my boys will be." The whole family moved to Canada in 1910.

- ERM: This document is an Inspection Card showing your arrival in the Port of Quebec on May 15, 1910. I see you arrived on the S. S. Sardinian. Was that a Canadian-Pacific ship?
- CP: No, it was a ship belonging to the Allan Line, as I remember. It was an old ship which took a long time to get here. It left London and then went to Le Havre, France and picked up a number of people from Europe who were coming to Canada. Eventually we steamed off. It was a very slow and tempestuous voyage. I recall there were three long weekends before we finally got to Quebec.
- ERM: Was that an immigrant ship? Were the passengers both English and continental Europeans?
- CP: Yes, but the English-speaking people were all together. There were two classes on this ship. There was cabin class for a limited number of people. My mother and father and the two younger children were in the cabin class. My middle brother, who was two years younger, and myself were fairly independent. We'd saved a little money and decided to do it all on our own. We traveled steerage. The steerage section was right down in the hold of the ship which had wooden bunks. The young fellows were all put together. I remember there were six in our cabin. We had blankets and boards, and outside the cabin we had a main room where they put the food on the tables. It was clean and comfortable, nothing very elaborate. We had a lot of fun. We were young and it didn't bother us at all. I recall when I finally arrived I still had about ten or twelve pounds left which I wanted to conserve for emergencies in Canada.
- ERM: What were your hopes in coming to Canada? Where did you plan to settle? Did you make any arrangements for these before you left the old country?
- CP: Personally, no, I had made no arrangements. But a friend had suggested I should try to get a job with the Canadian-Pacific Railroad--possibly get a job on a train so that I could see the country. When I got to Montreal, I went to see the person who engaged help for that purpose. He questioned my ability to be a waiter or a cook on a train. He found out that my background had more to do with business and office work than cooking. He suggested it would be better for me to try somewhere else in the CPR with better prospects for my future. He sent me to see a man by the name of W. J. Moule who was the assistant disbursement officer, I think. He interviewed me and asked me to take

some dictation. He dictated a couple of letters and then told me to go type them. I recall he used two words that I didn't understand correctly and I had to leave those blank. I apologized to him but he was a very decent fellow. What he'd said was "schedule" in this letter. Well, in England, we pronounced that word as "shedule." I think the other word was "disbursement." I had never heard that word in my life. He said that was all right and then told me to type it. The typewriter used by CPR then was called an Empire and it was not familiar to me. I managed some way or other to get those letters typed. He told me to come to work the next day at thirty-five dollars per month. I thought, "Thirty-five dollars a month. Now what does that mean in real money?" I had just come from a country of pounds, shillings, and pence. I think thirty-five dollars in those days was about seven or eight pounds. I said to myself, "My goodness, this is a land of milk and honey." I'd never seen so much money. I thought this was wonderful, so I went to work. The rest of the family went on to Vancouver.

ERM: Why did they go on to Vancouver? Did they have relatives there?

CP: My father had hopes of making some connections which might be useful in his business as a bakery engineer. He had previously made a trip to Canada in the interests of his original firm. He had some friends and he hoped to settle somewhere. He stopped at Toronto and at Winnipeg, and he eventually got as far as Vancouver with the family.

ERM: He had been over before on business and had seen the country? He knew what kind of country he was coming to?

CP: Exactly. But as I say, I wanted to do this on my own and I found being alone and young--I was nineteen--on thirty-five dollars a month, I could not only live but I could save a little money. After two to three months with the CPR, I decided to leave and come West, too.

ERM: Did you work for CPR when you got out here?

CP: No. I had an opportunity to, but I saw an advertisement in a bank that wanted a stenographer. I went there first and they engaged me right away at sixty dollars a month. I began to think, "Why go to the CPR? Sixty dollars is good enough for me." I thought I was making progress. There again, I found the bank proposition to be a strange situation. I found

while working in this bank I did very little stenography. They called me a stenographer but they were having me do elementary banking work with checks and simple stuff, like filing. This went on for about two or three months, I think. The accountant called me into the office one day, complimented me on the work I was doing, and told me he wanted me to join the staff. Well, I remember being quite perplexed. I said, "Am I not a member of the staff?" He said, "Well, you're a member of the stenographer staff, but we want you to join the banking staff." I said, "That sounds all right with me."

He took some pains explaining that it would temporarily involve some adjustment in my salary because of the rules and regulations at that time. The juniors on the bank staff had to start off with so many dollars per year, but the advancement was regular and progressive afterwards and it would be to my advantage to make the change because as long as I was a stenographer, I would remain a stenographer. I think the salary came to about forty-seven dollars a month, whereas I was already getting sixty. My reaction was this was sort of a donkey's raise for me. It didn't go over well but he said, "Think it over, Mr. Plant. You can stay there as long as you want. We'd like you to stay with us and go right along with our banking staff. If, on the other hand, after thinking it over you still wish to leave for another position, you can. You can work here as long as you want." I thought about it not too long and decided to look in the newspapers for another job right away. A day or two later, I happened to see an opening for a stenographer in a lumber company in the interior of British Columbia at a place called Arrowhead.

CHAPTER 2

ERM: What was the name of the lumber company at Arrowhead?

CP: It was called the Arrow Lakes Lumber Company. I wrote them a letter and gave them what background I had in application for this position. They replied by asking me to come and see them and they would give me a job. So I left the bank and got on a train going to a place called Arrowhead.

ERM: How far is that from Vancouver?

CP: It must be at least five or six hundred miles. It's right up in the eastern part of the province, in the east Kootenay district. It's near Revelstoke.

ERM: Who owned the company?

CP: It was owned by American capital from the Minneapolis area. The names of the people were Lamb, and the general manager was a man by the name of Lachmund.

ERM: Were these Minneapolis people in lumbering?

CP: I don't know where they came from. I'm not clear just who the owners were but that name is in my mind.

ERM: You were employed through correspondence?

CP: Yes.

ERM: Did they pay your fare?

CP: Oh, no. I got there on my own. This is a letter which the Arrow Lakes Lumber Company gave me when I left them after two years. It mentions C. R. Lamb, president, Minneapolis; C. B. Mills, vice-president, Clinton, Iowa; and Otto Lachmund, managing director and secretary-treasurer of Arrowhead. The letter is signed by R. S. Jamieson who was the accountant at the time.

ERM: At what wage did you start work with this company?

CP: Seventy-five dollars per month.

ERM: What did you do for this company?

CP: I did various things. It was a relatively small company. My first work was to help the sales manager with his correspondence; write letters for him, type his letters, and also take the general manager's dictation and type his letters. My boss, Mr. Lachmund, told me that as soon as I was through with work in the office, I was to go out into the mill area, such as the planing mill and the shipping department, and familiarize myself with all the work there. I often helped the men who were loading cars or who were grading the lumber behind the planing mill. Of course, at times there would be a necessity to take stock in the mill and take inventory of all lumber. I became completely familiar with the items of lumber the company made and handled. I also helped invoice.

ERM: I notice on the letterhead of the Arrow Lakes Lumber Co. Limited, that they were manufacturers of pine, fir, hemlock, spruce and cedar lumber and box shooks. I gather they were producing a wide range of materials.

CP: Yes. This company had two mills. I worked at Arrowhead and the other mill was located at Kamloops. For instance, the box shooks were made at the Kamloops mills. The mill at Arrowhead specialized in fir and hemlock lumber. They made dimension lumber boards, shiplap, flooring, siding, and the material that goes into the construction of houses and barns, products primarily for shipment to our Canadian prairies. Our customers were nearly all in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. We made up the retail dealers' orders of a mixed-car nature and shipped directly by rail to these points on the prairies.

ERM: In other words, you didn't often go through wholesalers?

CP: Partly. We had one wholesale connection but basically we had our own salesman, a man by the name of Harold Manning. He traveled the prairies, made his calls, and sent in the orders which we filled.

It was there I first became acquainted with a product called shingles. This company didn't actually make shingles but we did need them for inclusion with our mixed-car orders. Just across the lake from Arrowhead was a small operation. I think there was only one machine that made shingles and it was run by a man

called Ralph Simpson. His machine was a horizontal type. They made the shingles and put them on a small barge and shipped them to our yard in Arrowhead. We would let them dry before we shipped them as inclusions in our mixed cars. This was my first acquaintance with shingles as a commodity. I had never heard of them before because the name shingles in England and Scotland refers to the pebbles on the beach. They use slate and tile on roofs there.

ERM: You were now about twenty-one years of age?

CP: I was twenty-one when I left that company. I joined the company at age nineteen.

ERM: Had you yet been married?

CP: Oh, no.

ERM: This letter would indicate that you found a better job somewhere else. Where was this?

CP: In Vancouver.

ERM: How did you find the better job?

CP: When the company decided to close down operation because of the economic situation of the day, we all had to find jobs.

ERM: I take it the economic situation in 1912 was poor. Why?

CP: Very poor. My recollection is the market for this mill's product in the prairies was low. It was also made increasingly competitive by some of the inroads of American lumber into the area. I'm a bit hazy about those particular details but it was a worrisome thing for the operators at the time. There may have been other factors, like the high cost of operating, I suppose, and the seasonal nature. They could operate only in the summertime because of very heavy, deep snow in the wintertime.

ERM: What did you do during the winter months?

CP: The situation in the office continued. During the last winter, when the mill was closed down, I was left practically in charge of keeping all the records and making the statements and doing what other things were possible. In fact, I was the last person employed at this particular plant. They wanted me to stay there

as an individual until things were really wound up. In due course, I naturally sought other jobs and I wrote I forget how many people. One of them was the Vancouver Lumber Company.

I wrote the Vancouver Lumber Company because it was a prominent company at that time. My parents lived in Vancouver and it would give me a chance to live at home again. Vancouver Lumber also engaged me by letter.

ERM: What position did you have with them?

CP: I was assistant to the sales manager. The sales manager had his own secretary but he wanted an assistant also. He must have figured I had sufficient basic lumber knowledge gained in the interior operations to be helpful to him with this coast operation. I sat opposite the sales manager and saw how he did all his work. I learned the great differences between a coast logging operation and a mountain logging operation.

ERM: What were the fundamental differences between the two?

CP: The larger scope of markets, for instance, and the different character of the timber we cut.

ERM: Bigger timber?

CP: Bigger timber. The timber was such that we could make heavy lumber and export it. Part of our output went abroad on ships, part went on cars, and some of it went locally. It was a much wider scope operation. The species of wood were different, although it was coast fir, hemlock, and cedar. The customers we dealt with were different. It was an all-year operation.

ERM: Did this afford you opportunity to travel?

CP: Yes, that came quite soon. I went to work for the Vancouver Lumber Company in 1912 at age twenty-one. In those days, on the prairies the Vancouver Lumber Company sold most of its lumber through wholesalers. In about two years, the company got a new general manager by the name of Ed Sanders. He had the idea that this company should build up its own sales force and not rely on wholesalers. He decided to take me out of the sales department and send me on the road to see if I could start our own sales organization. I remember it was very cold in January 1914 when I went on the road as their first salesman.

- ERM: Was that endeavor successful?
- CP: Yes. That endeavor worked out and it eventually became the method the company adopted for its sales, particularly in Canada. We had salesmen in the prairies and we eventually had salesmen in eastern Canada. In August 1914, you remember, war was declared. Canada was immediately involved and business quite collapsed. Orders on the books and many orders I had booked personally had to be cancelled. The customers saw no way of taking delivery of the lumber.
- ERM: A national emergency had created a national need for it, is that right? The government was taking it all up?
- CP: No. Men were going to war and people weren't building houses. Business was in a chaotic condition. Business retailers couldn't sell the product that was in their yard so they weren't buying any lumber. And if they weren't buying any lumber, the mill couldn't continue operating in Vancouver.
- ERM: Was it because your own labor force was lost to recruiting by the army?
- CP: No, just the lack of business. The problem for the Vancouver Lumber Company was to still stay in business. Since I was out on the road, they said, "Well, Plant, you go over to the United States and sell some lumber there." We had some friends in the states who had retail yards in places like North and South Dakota, as well as in Alberta and Saskatchewan. They did their buying principally in Minneapolis and, of course, they bought a great deal of their supplies from American mills.
- ERM: When you went across the line, what luck did you have?
- CP: It was pretty grim at first. I recall going about September or October and concentrating in the Minneapolis area where the major buying took place and trying to make calls on business firms. Pickings were very, very slim for month after month. I must have been gone about three months, not averaging more than a car or two a week which, of course, was very inadequate. The middle of January became more of a season for those buyers to begin to think of stocking up for their spring supplies. Requisitions were coming in more liberally then. During 1915 I did very well. I obtained good business from various companies, principally those with headquarters in Minneapolis. I didn't do much

traveling out of Minneapolis because there was such a volume of business available among what they called line yard headquarters such as Lampert Lumber Company and Rogers Lumber Company. One had to make calls on the purchasing agent, check any incoming requisitions for sales, and if the price was right, one might get the order or some other salesman would.

- ERM: How was the war beginning to affect the need for your product? Usually in a war situation, there is a tremendous demand for materials of all kinds.
- CP: Yes, as the war progressed, the Vancouver Lumber Company began to provide shipbuilding timber that was being used in the manufacture of ships in Vancouver. This was very helpful but we still needed normal commercial homebuilding items like lumber. We still needed the customers for that product and we still kept seeking them principally in the United States.
- ERM: Did you ever get any large orders from the Canadian military for barracks and bridges and ammunition box materials?
- CP: I recall one large order we got for the construction of a drydock at Prince Rupert. We were selling lumber for bridges and snowsheds to big companies like the CPR. I don't recall actual transactions with the government itself.
- ERM: What I was getting at is whether the war itself generated a large amount of business for you.
- CP: Yes, I think it did. At that particular moment, I wasn't personally involved in it. I was out building a sales organization in the prairies of Canada or anywhere. Actually, when initial relief came and some success had been made, the Vancouver Lumber Company decided I should begin working in eastern Canada. I'd apparently been successful in the prairies and in the United States. They now said, "Plant, you go into eastern Canada and start there." That was a brand new field for British Columbia lumber. We did a lot of missionary work there because it was a long haul in those days and it was a different type of situation.
- Nevertheless, it had to be explored. I was actually the second direct salesman sent there. The first one was an older man by the name of Rose. He was sent by the Canadian Western Lumber Company and that might have stimulated my bosses to send me there to do follow-up work in the interests of the Vancouver Lumber Company.

ERM: What did you discover when you went to eastern Canada. Was there a market for your products?

CP: Oh, yes.

ERM: A big market?

CP: A different type of market. A market more for the upper grades of lumber than the lower grades. The lower grades were heavy and the freight was costly. They grew their own material for ordinary construction, but the coast had the clear fir, for instance. We also had cedar which was a lighter construction wood. We wanted to promote it because the Vancouver Lumber Company was then developing that species to a greater extent. One of my missions was to find more markets for common cedar lumber.

ERM: Not shingles or shakes?

CP: Lumber, primarily.

CHAPTER 3

ERM: Were you involved in shingle making too?

CP: We did become involved in shingle making at that time. We eventually built what was called a combination mill where we cut cedar lumber and cedar shingles. It was at a site called Roche Point on Burrard Inlet in Vancouver.

ERM: What did you find was the market for cedar products in eastern Canada?

CP: One of the chief markets for cedar was boards which were used in the building of tobacco barns. They raised a lot of tobacco there. Cedar was found to be useful and competitive with other woods which formerly had been used for that purpose. I sold many carloads of cedar in areas around southern Ontario. At times, we also sold big construction timber, 12 x 12 and 16 x 16; sizes of timber that no longer grow in Ontario.

ERM: I think eastern Canada made use of eastern cedar products called New Brunswick shingles. Did you encounter that product when you were there and find a shortage of it?

CP: I didn't encounter much of it because we were shipping our own western shingles into Ontario at that time. The New Brunswick shingles were sold more in the far easterly Canadian area. They didn't move far from their place of origin.

ERM: That's true because there weren't many of them.

CP: That was it.

ERM: Was there a big demand for red cedar shingles then?

CP: Not a big demand, but there was a demand.

ERM: For what were shingles used in eastern Canada?

CP: For roofing, in those days.

- ERM: Not much for siding or for other purposes?
- CP: No. It was quite limited. The kind of shingles sold, as I recall, in Ontario, were of a little better quality--I should say a little larger size--than what was considered standard on the prairies. The question of shingle grades is quite a subject in itself. With shingle grades in Canada in those days, the sizes and specifications were different than the grades that were used in the United States.
- ERM: You used the X grade didn't you?
- CP: That's right. Our principal shingle was 3X. We also had another shingle, the 5X, which was our premium grade shingle.
- ERM: How did the X title come to be assigned to cedar shingle grades in Canada?
- CP: I really can't answer. It was just a name which must have been invented by some original advertising man.
- ERM: I wondered about that. One surmise I've made is that it had 3X or 5X or 7X according to its quality or its proof.
- CP: That seems like a very reasonable assumption.
- ERM: I think the shingle people took the pattern from the whiskey people.
- CP: That's probably true.
- ERM: You cannot actually confirm that?
- CP: No. My first introduction to shingles was when they were already called 3X or 5X.
- ERM: How did the difference between grading by Canadian and United States manufacturers affect trade in shingle products in those early days of your involvement? Was there a war of grades?
- CP: Not exactly. There was a very clear difference of opinion as to what constituted a Number 1 the best shingle. The Canadian manufacturers maintained a policy which was different than

what had become the custom and adopted in the grade system among the Washington manufacturers. The differences in practice were quite fundamental. In the United States the log was cut into blocks. In the process of cutting a shingle, the objective was to make a clear article as free of knots as possible. The grading rule wasn't specific as to the angle of grain in their principal grade which was called Extra Clear.

There are two sizes of shingles. The Extra Clear measured sixteen inches long, and five butts were equivalent to two inches. As I recall, a shingle had to be clear of knots except for a minimum amount in the very tip perhaps, which would be covered up, and not be a defect to the roof. It was a very serviceable shingle and used in huge quantities. Its parallel shingle, a little thinner, was called Star-A-Star. This was a similar grade of shingle except six butts measured two inches and it was still sixteen inches long. Those were the predominant grades in the United States.

Now you asked me the difference in the Canadian grades at the time. Our policy makers in those days firmly believed a Number 1 shingle had to be strictly edge-grain. This meant that in the process of cutting the shingle on the block, the block had to be turned frequently so that when the saw came through the block and made its cut, the grain would be edgeways, edge-grain and not flat grain. The basic difference is that an Edge Grain Shingle doesn't or isn't so inclined to warp and curl on the roof. It lies flat and to that extent is more durable. The basic conception was to make a grade of shingle Number 1. In fact, they called it a 300 percent shingle. The object was to make it 100 percent clear, 100 percent edge-grain, and 100 percent no sap. While there may have been some limited amount of shingles made of that grade in the United States, it wasn't their basic original grade in those days whereas it always was in Canada.*

ERM: Ultimately that led to the raising of standards in the U. S. and to the establishment of Rite-Grade shingles.

CP: That's right. I recall that very clearly.

*See Appendix A, pp. 64-7 for literature used by British Columbia manufacturers which emphasizes the superiority of Edge Grain, and a diagram showing how they are produced.

- ERM: This occurred about the end of World War I.
- CP: I recall my boss, Ed Sanders, was involved in those discussions at the time.
- ERM: Through the cedar shingle bureau?
- CP: The original conference was when the Shingle Branch of the West Coast Lumbermen's Association adopted a plan to make shingles that were trademarked Rite-Grade.
- ERM: They were getting kickbacks from customers due to inferior quality products, so there had evidently been some money spent by the association on a study to find out what the market wanted in the way of a product and how they might promote its sale more effectively. I think out of that study came recognition that the grading of the product was of rather great importance. This led to improved standards and creation of the Rite-Grade shingle.
- CP: Exactly. There had been a considerable diversity of grades then, too many grades. It was too complicated. There was a great necessity for standardization of some kind. Consequently, the level-headed men of the day figured they had to do something about reconciling those differences.
- ERM: How were you British Columbia people influencing that? Were you part of the same trade association, or did you have separate trade associations?
- CP: We had separate trade associations but I recall we became involved with the West Coast activities that concerned us. For instance, the Rite-Grade movement, while it was being developed, required membership of mills which paid dues on the basis of so much per square, or per thousand shingles, as it was in those days. That's another matter to discuss with you.
- ERM: The square pack?
- CP: Yes. There was lack of uniformity in packing, so we joined them in that as members of the Rite-Grade group and had discussions with them.
- ERM: In other words, there were Rite-Grade labels that went on the product on both sides of the boundary line, and the Rite-Grade group was not really a trade association so much as it was a

membership of manufacturers who had the right to use that label.

CP: Correct.

ERM: They met certain standards and submitted to regular inspection of their product by inspectors hired by whom?

CP: The Rite-Grade Association which was an activity of the Shingle Branch of the West Coast Lumbermen's Association.

ERM: The Rite-Grade Association then did have members on both sides of the line.

CP: Yes. I'm not quite positive about the inspection factor with the Rite-Grade group, however, I know that eventually did come when the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau was formed.

ERM: That didn't occur until about 1926.

CP: Yes. I'm not quite sure about the inspection aspect of the Rite-Grade group now that you mention it. It might have been just an undertaking by the members. That's the way we made shingles; they relied on the individual mills to make them that way.

ERM: Do you remember that during World War I mills in British Columbia lost a considerable number of skilled laborers to military service and consequently people in the United States were recruited to take over their jobs?*

CP: No, I don't remember that. I didn't encounter that.

ERM: Were you not close to the manufacturing?

CP: Not at that stage. I became more active in the manufacturing end a little later on in my life.

ERM: You have no recollection of this competition for skilled labor?

CP: No. We had a considerable amount of Chinese labor in our

*"Shingle Makers Strike in the Northwest," Lumber World Review 30, no. 11 (June 10, 1916): 47.

shingle mills. Chinese people living here were very skilled in manufacturing shingles.

ERM: Why did they make superior workers in shingle manufacturing?

CP: They were particularly superior in packing. They were available and willing to do that kind of work. Many of the mills had a portion of their help living at the plant. These Chinese people were mostly single. If they were married, they didn't have their wives in Canada. They lived in their own way in their own little community. Most of the mills provided living and eating quarters for them. They lived near the plant and became very skilled at the machines that sawed, especially at the packing frames where they became very dexterous in the swift handling of individual pieces which is necessary for economy. The shingle sawyers and packers were paid on a piecework basis. It just happened we had a force of workmen who were Chinese. The Chinese people were quite prominent there.

ERM: In other words, the fact they were Chinese did not necessarily mean they were cheap labor. Were they paid at the same piece rate?

CP: No. There was a slight differential, as I recall, basically due to the fact that the operators were providing quite a lot of facilities for them, such as the erection of bunkhouses and the maintenance of facilities to look after them. It was the practice to pay slightly less but it was very marginal, as I recall.

ERM: But this was a differential because of other benefits the Chinese received from the company?

CP: Exactly, that's my recollection.

ERM: It was not based upon any status of racial inferiority?

CP: No. As I recall, there was no objection on the part of the white element that was also working for us. It was just an established differential.

ERM: The people on the other side of the line used to make use of the fact that Canadians made shingles with Chinese labor. How did they use this fact to their advantage and to your detriment?

CP: As I recall, there were certain groups of Washington manufacturers who were disturbed about the Canadian competition because we sold a big portion of our production in the United States. A great many of the producers there were a little annoyed, I imagine, that we were invading their markets especially when times were difficult. We were aware that some of them made efforts to do something about it. They conceived all kinds of reasons why we should have difficulties imposed on us such as tariffs and quotas. For quite awhile it was a constant worry to our operators. The manufacturers' contention in British Columbia was that the British Columbia product wasn't the real competition of the product in the States. The real competition was from the producers of asphalt shingles who were making great strides and who were trying to regulate and influence legislative bodies to put all wood shingles off the roofs in the United States. Our attitude was that we made a good shingle and that there were a great many dealers who appreciated British Columbia shingles. They liked a good product and wanted to continue to receive them. There was plenty of market for all of us if we approached it in a proper way.

ERM: That ultimately, of course, did help.

CP: It eventually did; that really did come about.

ERM: At what point did all those involved arrive at that kind of unanimity of view?

CP: It must have been in the early 1920s. It was in these very early days that discussions took place about the unification of grades and the unification of pack.

ERM: I have it here in my notes: Important grading rule changes were announced for red cedar by the Shingle Branch of the West Coast Lumbermen's Association in June 1918.* This was for Rite-Grade inspected red cedar shingles.

CP: That's it, June 1918.

ERM: There seems to have been an earlier revision of standards for the ordinary grades. The action by WCLA Shingle Branch was to coordinate their rules along lines of those adopted for the ordinary grades.

*"New Set of Grading Rules for Red Cedar Shingles,"
Lumber World Review 34, no. 12 (June 25, 1918): 41.

ERM: Did you remember Professor Bror L. Grondal?

CP: Yes.

ERM: He came into the picture about this time as a professor at the University of Washington School of Forestry. He had published comparative tests as to fire resistant qualities of red cedar shingles and other roofing materials.* His study purported to show the wooden shingle was superior to all other materials, that fires spread less rapidly, and wood shingles outlasted their substitutes. He showed that red cedar poles were cheaper and longer lasting than steel. What do you remember about Grondal and his work?

CP: My recollection of Grondal was that when the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau was ultimately formed a few years later, Professor Grondal was used in a consulting capacity and an advisory capacity, so the Bureau could promote its product on behalf of its members to best advantage. He was considered to be an expert, knowledgeable, and he eventually became the principal author of a book that had widespread publicity.**

As I recall, he never worked full time directly for the Bureau. He was on a retainer or consulting basis and helped the management in the production of that type of literature.

ERM: When did you become a member of the trade associations? Can you track your own relationship to them?

CP: Yes. Going back to the Vancouver Lumber Company days we were talking about, I told you I was sent out on the road. After starting on the prairies and a short period in the United States, I developed as much business as I could in eastern Canada.

In 1918, I was appointed sales manager of the company. Apparently, the former sales manager wasn't entirely satisfactory. My boss, Ed Sanders, who first started me off, wanted to bring me back as sales manager. This occurred in 1918 and coincides

*Bror L. Grondal, "Tests of Roofing Materials to Determine Their Comparative Fire Resistance," Lumber World Review 33, no. 11 (December 10, 1917): 25-33.

**Idem, Certigrade Handbook of Red Cedar Shingles (13th ed.; Seattle, Wa.: Red Cedar Shingle & Handsplit Shake Bureau, 1964).

with my exposure to the fact that the company was a member or about to become a member of the Rite-Grade group. The Vancouver Lumber Company had begun shingle manufacturing. We had our own plant and about ten or twelve machines. We had our own production with our own brand. For the promotion of our product, we were vitally interested in pursuing all the processes other larger manufacturers were adopting. There were many big producers in British Columbia in those days. Cedar was one of the important species being logged. As the fir and hemlock came out and went to the sawmills, cedar found most suitable conversion in shingle mills, some of which were devoted to the utilization of the log partly for cedar lumber and partly for shingles. Other mills produced shingles entirely. To a considerable extent, it became a matter of grading cedar logs as to best suitability for production of lumber or shingles, and directing the logs into the appropriate booms to go to the conversion plant.

ERM: Would you describe what part of the log goes to what kind of manufacturing?

CP: A cedar log is a very variable piece of timber. It varies according to the age of the tree and the part of the tree that it's cut from. I can illustrate only roughly. The older the cedar tree is, the greater is the amount of clear lumber because the clear lumber is in the butt cut. We had many very old cedar giants. The limbs are at the top of the tree and naturally that's where more knots are. The butt cut of an old cedar tree has more area which is free of knots. This type of log would be directed to the manufacture of high-class lumber such as beveled siding or bungalow siding and would be made into a clear lumber item.

Other parts of the tree would contain a log of good lumber as well as a lot of knots. This other part of the log would have knotty characteristics. However, in the manufacture of shingles, short pieces of wood are used measuring sixteen or eighteen inches. You can make a cut in a knotty piece of a cedar log and find lots of wood which is clear for sixteen or eighteen inches. That's all you need if you are making a shingle. So you have a situation where that is called a cedar log. Then you could get more, say from the very top of the tree where it's a smaller diameter. It has more knots. It would be so knotty it wouldn't make very good shingles or shakes but it would make good common lumber. There were three main types of cedar log sortings after the logs came out of the woods.

- ERM: I understand then that the finest cedar lumber was made out of the butt at the bottom of the tree.
- CP: Yes.
- ERM: The next cut of log went mainly into shingle bolts.
- CP: That's a rough idea. They are called blocks in a shingle mill.
- ERM: Then as you went on up the tree toward the upper limb area, you turned that into lower grade lumber products.
- CP: Yes. You also find another situation with a young tree such as you see in my garden. They are second growth and wouldn't make good shingles. They'd make good common lumber, that's all.
- ERM: Yes. That tree will have to go on for another several hundred years before it produces something that might be used for shingles.
- CP: Yes. I think that's one of the problems about the manufacture of shingles. Today the amount of very old growth doesn't exist anymore. I believe statistics will show that here on the West Coast after fifty years of total production of shingles, it has just dwindled and dwindled and dwindled because the old timber has been cut out.
- ERM: Is the end of the industry in sight as far as any real volume is concerned?
- CP: From what I read, today's advanced forestry methods are devoted to planting faster-growing trees. I think today you can get a marketable hemlock, for instance, or a marketable fir in perhaps eighty to a hundred years. You can't grow a cedar tree that will make clear cedar or even cedar shingles in that period of time. I don't know how long it would take. Some of these trees are hundreds of years old.
- ERM: We don't want to create the impression that cedar trees are going to be extinct because they're not. However, they are certainly not going to be available in quantity enough to continue to produce a lot of the products that are common today. Is that right?
- CP: That's my impression.

CHAPTER 4

ERM: After you had been back to the Lake States and to eastern Canada, where did you go next and what did you do?

CP: In 1918 my headquarters was in Vancouver as a sales manager for the Vancouver Lumber Company. I used to make trips to our principal branch offices. We had branches in Winnipeg, Toronto, Chicago, and one or two other cities.

ERM: Did you have one in California?

CP: No.

ERM: Or in Texas?

CP: Not at this stage. I'll come to Texas later. This is the twenties and they were Roaring Twenties. Business was good and quite active. The manufacturing operations in British Columbia then were largely supplied by logs that came from log producers.

I recall several of the log producers in British Columbia in those days had two names. There was a firm by the name of Merrell, Ring and Wilson. They had a lot of timber limits here and logged these limits, boomed up the different species, and sold the logs to various shingle or lumber-converting units. Another one was Bloedel, Stewart and Welch, a company that had come from the States. They were big operators from around Bellingham, Washington. Mr. J. H. Bloedel acquired timber very extensively in Canadian areas. The timber was sold to different companies, one of which was the Vancouver Lumber Company.

The Vancouver Lumber Company had a small logging operation at a place called Port Neville. When they decided to operate and log the timber, it was very heavy to hemlock and cedar. The management had the mill in Vancouver process the hemlock. They decided to build another mill at a place called Roche Point to process the cedar. This was in the early twenties. They built this mill which sawed logs that were suitable for lumber. The lumber was loaded on scows and the finished good lumber transported to the Vancouver plant for further drying and

processing. They had a shingle mill at Roche Point, however, that processed directly into shingles the portion of the log which was more suitable for shingles. Dry kilns were used to dry them and they were loaded onto boxcars which were shipped on scows and eventually on rail to all sorts of places. We had a good big production and we specialized in the best grade of shingles under a trade name Big Chief. All our competitors produced good shingles. They had their own particular brand names and did their own promotional featuring work, their own labeling and promotion through their own representatives for their own products. My job was to promote the Big Chief brand of shingles which originated at Roche Point.

Here is a letterhead of the Vancouver Lumber Company. It mentions the names of all the directors and gives our Big Chief insignia. It was a replica of that, together with our name and that it was such and such a grade of shingles. The Big Chief only went on our Number 1 grade. We had to make that synonymous with absolutely the best. The other manufacturers followed similar policies. They had good names and good products. The British Columbia group, as I recall, aimed at the same perfection we did. Our number one aim was to make the best possible shingle.

ERM: Before becoming a part of the Shingle Bureau, what association did you belong to in British Columbia?

CP: The very first association I can remember was called The Shingle Agency of British Columbia. I recall a man by the name of Nash was the secretary. Some of the senior operators in those days were Robert McNair, Albert Cotton, Thomas Kirkpatrick, and Joseph Chew. These men were primarily prominent shingle manufacturers, not lumber manufacturers.

They had their own problems in respect to shingles which, of course, is quite a different commodity than lumber. They resolved their problems such as grades, for instance, in their own group. It was originally the Shingle Agency of British Columbia and a little later we formed an association called the Consolidated Red Cedar Shingle Association of British Columbia. The association doesn't exist anymore but if any of those records are still available, they are in the offices of the Council of Forest Industries here.

Talking about the rivalry between British Columbia and Washington operators, there was a distinct rivalry between the manufacturers on opposite sides of the boundary line. As time went by, it seems to me, we found mutual ground on which we could unite and resolve our problems to our mutual good. In the process of looking back and working things out together, we became very friendly. Although competitors, we called each other by first name. I remember, however, that as the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau developed, its government was by trustees elected at annual meetings attended by appointees from the member companies. The board of trustees for a good many years, didn't want more than three or four men from British Columbia to be on the board. There were considerably more members from the United States; consequently, we were outvoted. It didn't seem to worry us, as I recall, because there was usually unanimity after discussion.

As the years went by, presidents of the Bureau were appointed every couple of years, and they were always presidents residing in the United States. By getting together and working things out, even this was overcome. I forget what year it was that they named me as the president. I was the first Canadian ever appointed president of that international association. This was not necessarily a compliment to me personally, but a compliment to British Columbia and an acceptance of the fact that we were not too bad to work with.

ERM: And that tradition has continued?

CP: Now, the practice is to alternate. It wasn't always so. As I said, it's in recognition of our mutual interests.

ERM: Economic competition between Canada and the United States has sometimes provoked revival of the old tariff subject. How have you faced the tariff problem over the years?

CP: The tariff was instituted by the United States. There was nothing we could do but hope for the best. Our attitude, as I recall, was to ask our own friends--we had many friends and customers who wanted our shingles in a consuming area and who wanted to continue to receive them--to please do their best to influence their congressmen or legislators to that end. That's all we could do. Naturally it was a worrisome period.

ERM: Was this particularly true during the Great Depression years?

CP: I think it was in the early twenties. There was the Smoot-Hawley

Tariff.* This was a threat and lumber was also involved. As a matter of fact, there was a duty on lumber which caused concern. I forget when the duty on shingles was taken off. There was a threat that the tariff would be put into effect again. It was a worry in those earlier times.

ERM: Always the threat was held over your head that the tariff would be reimposed?

CP: That's right. Later on, the entire industry, including all of us in British Columbia, was investigated by the United States Tariff Commission. It was, of course, a worry during that period to know what the outcome of their recommendations might be. We survived it all.

I can't recall exactly what period it was when we were not subject to duty but subject to a limited quota. The quota had been formulated on a percentage of consumption. There were periods when we could ship into the United States only so many shingles per quarter. It was a chaotic situation, because if a quarter began January 1, naturally everybody would rush to ship as many shingles as they could into the United States. Then the barrier would go up, and we couldn't ship any until the gates were opened again. It was a very unhappy time.

*Tariff Act of 1930, (Smoot-Hawley) Section 337, as amended; 19 U. S. C. 1337.

CHAPTER 5

ERM: You were married in Duluth, Minnesota, on January 1, 1917, to Myrtle Louise Pierce, the daughter of Mrs. Charles Shephard Pierce of Duluth. Would you tell me a little bit about how you became acquainted and married?

CP: Oh yes, I have a vivid recollection of that, but it isn't particularly concerned with the shingle business.

ERM: No, it isn't, but it has to do with your own history.

CP: I see. I was in Minneapolis in 1915 and 1916 during the early days of the war. I made that my headquarters to sell lumber. I was very fond of music in those days. I met a friend and we decided to go into the same digs together in a little residential hotel near town. His name was Howard Pantel. We had a lot in common because he sang and I played the piano. We belonged to a musical group and had many mutual friends. In our little apartment, a picture of his girlfriend in Duluth was on the wall. It was a very beautiful picture. He used to tell me about his girl. He apparently wasn't too successful with girls but he was hopeful of eventually winning her favor. She was a teacher and came to a teachers' convention in Minneapolis. My friend Howard Pantel and she met. Of course, as a good friend, I was introduced to her. As things progressed, I found I wasn't only interested in the picture, I became interested in the girl. We dated and became fond of one another. I got the girl and my pal didn't.

ERM: How did he react to all that? Was he put out with you?

CP: No. We always remained friends. She and I clicked and they didn't. We pursued our friendship by letter. I'd make weekend trips to Duluth to court my girl and eventually proposed. She was American. I was born in England, came to Canada, and married an American girl. My daughter went to school in Canada. However, she went to the University of Washington in the United States and married an American naval officer. We're pretty much mixed up. My wife's father was Charles Pierce. He was born in Ontario, Canada. Her mother was Minna Oppel.

- ERM: Do you know what kind of work her father was in?
- CP: Yes. He was a hardware merchant in North Dakota. However, previously, for about twenty years, his business had been in Duluth. He died about 1916. When I met them, their home was in Duluth.
- ERM: Apparently music and singing have been a very important part of your life, more than just a casual thing.
- CP: It's been a pleasure for me to have music all my life, in a strictly amateur way.
- ERM: You have participated in the Kiwanis performances here and sings in the city of Vancouver. I gather this sometimes involved thousands of people.
- CP: That's correct. We did a lot of work in the Kiwanis Club in those days. My activities were twofold. Every wintertime, the club put on a musical comedy in our theatre. They were amateur productions staged very efficiently, I think, by a professional producer. We sold tickets to the public. We sold out for a whole week's performance and raised considerable money for the benefit of the good work of the Kiwanis Club. I had a bit of aptitude for both singing and amateur acting and very frequently had principal parts in such shows as The Chocolate Soldier, The Red Mill, and that sort of thing.

Perhaps something a little more unique was my bit of an aptitude for song leading. We had singing during luncheons at our club meetings in those days. I once was called to lead a sing and apparently had a little more success than some of the others in making the boys sing. We all had a good time. In those days the idea of community singing for the public in general became popular, so the club decided to sponsor community singing as an activity and entertainment during the summertime. I was given the responsibility. We at first, had outdoor singsongs on the beaches here and we'd attract big crowds. Later, we improved our facilities and method for good community singing by obtaining a good screen and projector. We operated in Stanley Park in what they called the Malkin Bowl. During that period, huge crowds would come on Wednesday evenings and spend an hour and a half singing. Other entertainment was also provided. I was the leader or master of ceremonies and received publicity on that account. The Malkin Bowl is still there, by the way.

- ERM: What happened to the institution of community singing?
- CP: It died out with the changing fashions, I think, of younger people today strumming their guitars. I don't think it could be revived but it was quite popular then.
- ERM: You've been a member of the Masonic Order and I understand a very active one.
- CP: I have always been a member of the Masonic Order. When I joined the Kiwanis Club, I found my activities with Kiwanis were such that I couldn't devote my spare time to more than one organization. I had a primary responsibility to my job and my boss. The Kiwanis Club was sort of an agreeable sideline to me and that was sufficient. While I retained my membership in the Masonic Order, I was never what you might call an active Mason going through the various chairs.
- ERM: Were you ever active in Hoo-Hoo?
- CP: To a moderate extent, yes. When we had a Hoo-Hoo club here I was a member. It lasted only a short time. During the period when we had meetings my ability for songleading was used to help them. Beyond that, I wasn't particularly active.
- ERM: Do you think Hoo-Hoo is a declining factor in the lumber industry? Was it more important at one time than it is now?
- CP: My recollection is the Hoo-Hoo organization of which I became a member very, very early in my life, passed out of existence due to some type of irregularity, and people entirely dropped support of it. In later years, it was revived.
- ERM: It's active now.
- CP: I know it's active again in Vancouver. I have a membership and a plaque to show that I'm an old-time member in the organization.
- ERM: On March 22, 1916, you made application for enlistment in the Canadian military forces but were rejected on account of acute asthma. Have you suffered from this all your life?
- CP: Not so much now but I used to suffer in my youth. It was the reason I wasn't wanted for military purposes in World War I. I have a bronchial condition; it's not asthma. When I was young, it was quite severe and frequently gave me a rough time.

- ERM: You also belonged to the Screwball Club. What was that?
- CP: That's a bit of a joke by a friend of mine. Every weekend I liked to go for walks when I could get away from the office. I'd go for a good walk around Stanley Park on a Sunday morning. I walked all the way around with a walking stick. I'd perhaps stop and look at the ships go by and birds or something like that which interested me. I was simply getting some relaxation. I loved to walk on weekends. There were others who also enjoyed walking. The superintendent of the park was a fellow by the name of Phil Stroyen. He'd often be around on a Sunday. We were good friends. Actually in his supervision of the park, he'd see the individuals who were taking walks all the way around. One day I met him near the Lumbermens' Arch. We stopped and he said, "What are you doing?" I said, "I'm just taking my walk around the park." He said, "Oh, now you belong to the Screwball Club too." It was only a silly name he gave to people like myself who walked around the park.
- ERM: Stanley Park is quite a big park. How many miles around is it?
- CP: Just under seven miles. There are lovely walks and trails throughout. You didn't always have to walk all the way around; you could take different ways. You could spend your whole morning getting relaxation.
- ERM: I know it is a beautiful park. I understand you are also air-minded and a keen amateur photographer. Does that indicate you are air-minded in the sense of fresh air or were you interested in flying?
- CP: I don't know who wrote that. I presume it must refer to the fact that I didn't mind the airplane trips I took in those days.
- ERM: It's written for Canada Lumberman's Who's Who in Lumberdom by Stewart Lovick Limited and Marian Angus.
- CP: Oh, yes. I presume she interviewed me and found out I traveled by airplane.
- ERM: What about amateur photography?
- CP: I like to take pictures and make good snapshots of good subjects in a purely amateur way. Photography was my hobby in later years, particularly when I went on vacation. I kept records in

slide form of my trips by taking shots of interesting subjects. I kept fairly well-edited thirty-five millimeter collections of good pictures and used to show them to private groups. That's the extent of my photography.

CHAPTER 6

ERM: You have been a member of the Consolidated Red Cedar Shingle Association of British Columbia. You retired from your directorship in that organization when you retired from Bloedel, Stewart and Welch in 1956. Was your work with the B. C. Association contemporary with that of the Shingle Bureau?

CP: Yes. Before the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau began its main activities, the Consolidated Red Cedar Shingle Association was the body which went on a promotional program with its own British Columbia members advocating their shingles under the registered trade name of Edgwood. It was quite successful for a period of two years. The members contributed so much per square of shingles produced to promote shingles in individual areas in the United States under this trademark. Texas was one of the places concentrated upon. The dues of the Association supported the advertising program at twenty-five cents a square-- a lot of money in those days. It was quite successful. As harder times came along, some of the members felt twenty-five cents pressed too hard a burden on their total costs, and the activity gradually decreased. Edgwood activities ceased about 1929.

I remember the date because I joined the Bloedel, Stewart and Welch company in 1930 which was the tag end of the Edgwood campaign. The Bloedel company was making shingles under a brand called Red Band Shingles. My first year with the company began with promoting Red Band Shingles and moving away from the joining group effort under the name of Edgwood.

ERM: Edgwood had been the competitor to some extent, I suppose, of Rite-Grade?

CP: No. I would say Edgwood succeeded Rite-Grade. The Rite-Grade effort ceased, and we discontinued using Rite-Grade labels. There is no Rite-Grade today, nor has there been for many years. The Rite-Grade certainly ceased at the beginning of what came to be known as the Certigrade movement.

When the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau commenced, the very first head of the organization was Arthur Bevan, its secretary-manager. Shortly after he left the organization, we needed a new manager. I recall being on the board that year. Leo Black was president of the Bureau and he found a man he thought would be suitable. William Woodbridge was that man. He had been associated with trade papers. I believe Woodbridge offered his services as secretary-manager on a trial basis because things at that time were very upset. As I recall, he began on a very modest salary. Shortly after Bill Woodbridge became secretary-manager of the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau, he developed the name Certigrade to use on our labels.

The key to success was the label. It became imperative that the new members of the organization have their shingles inspected. If the shingles were not in compliance with the rules and okayed regularly by their inspectors, they couldn't obtain and use the label. The program was to use the promotional pull of the name Certigrade in our advertising which would make any ambitious manufacturer want to produce his shingles up to grade.

ERM: How far back in time and with what associations do you relate inspections?

CP: I can't relate inspections earlier than the days of the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau, although there may have been inspections earlier. My particular activities in those days were more in the sales field in the East, so I can't vouch for the accuracy of the statement. Official inspectors, as they were called by the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau, were always a factor from the Bureau's earliest days.

We had our own inspector who looked after the many British Columbia mills, a man by the name of Guy Fessenden. There were other inspectors who covered all areas under a chief inspector named Fred Monte. He supervised all inspectors and saw to it there was uniformity in the inspecting process. Each inspection was very thorough, and a report copy was left with the management to show where the inspector had found a blemish or off-grade errors in particular bundles of shingles. We knew from which machine a particular bundle was made. If a bundle of shingles was found to be off-grade, the management could follow up and correct the individual who was responsible. Inspectors often found the odd shingle here and there that was improperly

THE CERTIGRADE LABEL AND WHAT IT MEANS

From time immemorial in the history of the North American Continent wooden shingles in some form or other have, in most cases, formed the roof covering and in many cases the wall covering for the houses on this portion of the Globe.

Nowadays the bulk of the shingles used are manufactured on the Pacific Coast from Western Red Cedar. Not all Red Cedar Shingles however are of No. 1 Edge Grain Grade; lower grade shingles are manufactured, but these lower grade shingles, while they have their uses, cannot be used with satisfaction for the same purposes as the No. 1 Edge Grain Grade.

To date the greatest market for Red Cedar Shingles has been on the North American Continent, particularly in the United States of America. In fact it is only comparatively recently that the merits of this material as a roof and wall covering have been recognized and transportation facilities permitted them to find markets elsewhere.

Unfortunately for the Manufacturers of Edge Grain Shingles the public and others were not educated to the difference between the No. 1 Edge Grain Grades and shingles of inferior quality and, either due to ignorance or a false sense of economy, low grade shingles were used where they should not have been used, such as on roofs of city residences. For this and other similar purposes these low grade shingles did not, of course, prove satisfactory, and for such purposes were considered unsuitable under fire conditions. The net result was that as all shingles were classed alike, and no discrimination made between Edge Grain Shingles and Flat or Slash Grain Shingles, in some districts, particularly in the United States, the use of all shingles was legislated against.

In order to combat the difficulty that arose through this indiscriminate legislation, the Edge Grain Shingle Manufacturers of Washington, Oregon and British Columbia combined to form the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau, and as a result of the work done by this Bureau the public and others are now being educated to the merits of No. 1 Grade Edge Grain Shingles and the difference between these and lower grade shingles.

To afford protection to the public and also to themselves the Edge Grain Shingle



(On shingles used in the United States)



(On shingles used in Canada)

Manufacturers adopted certain standards of manufacture and placed themselves under a rigid inspection service to ensure that such standards were strictly adhered to. These standards of manufacture were approved and promulgated by the Bureau Standards, U. S. Department of Commerce, under Commercial Standard 31 - 33, and by the National Research Council of Canada, under N. R. C. Standard 5 - 1934. To identify shingles manufactured to these standards the "Certigrade" labels, facsimiles as shown were approved and adopted. Mills, licensed by the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau, whose product is up to grade are permitted to use CERTIGRADE labels on all bundles of No. 1 Grade Shingles.

placed. The grading rules did provide a small tolerance for human error, but the aim was always for one hundred percent perfection. They were pretty strict about that. Of course, the grading also had to be applied to the lower grades. The Number 2 shingles had their rules and were also inspected. In the marketplace, the Number 2 shingles were used for less important areas than the roof. The key to that inspection system was the issuance of a label. The labels were only granted to members in good standing. With trademarking and inspection, there was standardization and a great improvement in the whole shingle picture.

ERM: Have there always been certain producers outside the realm of the Association who have been less than concerned about standards and who have merely put their product out as best they can?

CP: Yes. We had a few in British Columbia who chose not to belong. That's not to say they wanted to make their shingles of a poorer grade. They simply weren't inclined to join, and as a result were not issued labels. It was, of course, the aim of all the supporters to have everybody in the industry join. However, we had to tolerate a few nonjoiners.

ERM: How would you characterize the trade promotion of your industry over the years?

CP: I was proud of it.

ERM: You felt the industry did a very good job?

CP: No question about it. We also held ourselves together during very difficult times. Those depression years were tough for everybody, and pennies were important to us. We did a moderate amount of promotion even when our funds were very meager. We kept together and, as things improved, increased our dues, so we were able to increase the amount of promotional work. This was a combination of advertising in trade papers, for instance, but to a great extent it was the personal work of fieldmen. The trustees believed in the importance of the men out on the road contacting people and telling them of the advantages of shingles and helping them combat local problems such as antishingle legislation. We found that fieldmen were the most important activity to maintain.

ERM: Do you mean that the fieldman would pick up threats before you?

CP: Yes, and we could then attempt to stop it. There were also building exhibits where we cooperated with local interests to show methods of application and the use of shingles and explained their advantages.

Bill Woodbridge was the first extremely competent, able manager to put these things across. He developed ideas. I'll give you one which comes to memory. I forget the name of the building program your government was putting on, a national homes proposition of some kind, that involved the building of a home in Washington, D.C., as a sample type of building for which loans would be approved. Bill Woodbridge conceived the idea and authorities agreed to call it the Certigrade home because it had Certigrade shingles on it. The Certigrade home received a terrific amount of publicity which we didn't have to pay for.

ERM: Was that the Homeowners Loan Corporation under the New Deal?

CP: It was the Federal Housing Administration--FHA. I have a bit of information here:

Although the number of homes financed with FHA-underwritten mortgages has declined to less than 10% of the total, the Federal Housing Administration, which passed its 40th birthday recently, has had a profound influence on house construction during its existence. When started in 1934 during the depression, FHA's amortized mortgage program suddenly made home ownership available to the masses. It has insured 11 million homes, 24,000 multi-family structures and 31 million home improvement projects. It is interesting to recall that the very first FHA-insured home was a highly promoted all-shingled house, called The Certigrade Home, built by your Bureau in Arlington, Virginia. A small-scale model of the house was displayed on the floor of the U.S. Senate and alluded to in remarks by then-Senator Homer T. Bone of Washington State. It happened 40 years ago, back in 1934.*

Woodbridge was very clever at this type of activity. He had a way of getting around with government people in Washington, D.C.

* "Activities," newsletter sent to its members by the Red Cedar Shingle & Handsplit Shake Bureau, early 1975.

I recall an instance during the time of wartime controls. We were being properly price-regulated. I was on a trip at the time, I think I was in Boston. Woodbridge had to go to Washington on business in connection with these government projects. He wanted several of the trustees to meet him there to assist him. He particularly wanted me to be there as a Canadian to demonstrate that he was representing an international association with members on both sides of the border.

Henry Olwell from Everett was there representing the Jamieson Shingle Company. He was another trustee. As I recall, we had an interview with the attorney general. Henry was a real good friend of mine, a great man.

Woodbridge wanted me there, not to do anything, but simply to be there to show I was a representative of a Canadian company. We met a man by the name of Thurmond Arnold. I recall going into his office and having a talk with him about a particular problem.

ERM: Your presidency of the Bureau was in 1947 and 1948. Until that time, there had been five presidents--you were the sixth. Thereafter, every presidency alternated between Canada and the U.S. Is that now established tradition?

CP: That has become pretty well-established tradition now. It took awhile to arrive at that point, but we Canadians were finally accepted on a par.

ERM: You knew Norman A. English from Vancouver who died in 1960. What can you recall about him?

CP: Norman English and his partner, George O'Brien, owned and operated a shingle mill. The company was called the Northwest Shingle Company, as I remember, and he was elected to the board of trustees. Besides partnership in this shingle mill, he also worked for the Powell River Company. He had a very prominent position in their logging division. He was one of British Columbia's well-known logging fraternity. Shingles were, to some extent, a sideline for him. He was a very fine and personable man. I understand when he became president after I retired, he was most successful and agreeable. He did a good job, a very helpful job for the Shingle Bureau.

ERM: P. H. Olwell of Everett, Washington, was the first president.

- CP: Yes. I think he was the sales manager of the Jamieson Shingle Company in Everett. As such, he was responsible for disposing of a large production of shingles from that plant. He was delegated the function of attending to the work in connection with the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau. I first met him there.
- ERM: Were most of the men you were associated with in the Bureau sales managers of their companies, or were many of them principals of their companies? Paul Smith was the principal of his company.*
- CP: In that case, yes. Paul R. Smith is a wonderful man. I've always admired him. He was a very able man and a solid thinker when it came to board meetings. He knew how to use his head, a good balance wheel in that organization. It's so easy, you know, for people to go off at random, but not Paul. If he said something, there was a solid reason for it. His judgment was very sound. I always admired him. His advice and judgment very frequently were adopted because they were pretty solid. He kept the hotheads from being too hot. He was a good man.
- ERM: What about R. M. Ingram of Aberdeen, Washington?
- CP: He was a sales manager in those days, but he eventually became a principal.
- ERM: R. H. Wayland of Seattle?
- CP: He was a principal. I didn't know him well, except when I met him at the meetings. He's a very fine man.
- ERM: Did you know R. A. Wilde of Everett?
- CP: Yes, he was a sales manager.
- ERM: Of these other people pictured here, who would you think of as being the real leaders of the industry?
- CP: I am looking at W. H. McLallen now. He was a Canadian connected with the Capilano Lumber Company originally.

*For more information on Mr. Smith, see Paul R. Smith Views the Western Red Cedar Industry, 1910 to the Present, typed transcript of tape-recorded interview conducted by Elwood R. Maunder (Santa Cruz, California: Forest History Society, 1975).

He and his brother eventually formed the Capilano Shingle Company. Bill McLallen was a very keen merchandiser; had a good driving force and was always very prominent in the advocacy of promotional activities. He had more force perhaps than anybody else on the board, as I recall. He was selected to be chairman of the advertising committee. He would advocate the spending of more money and the collection of more dues for the purpose of the promotion of shingles. He had been very successful in his own business and, as long as I can remember, he was an exceptionally good promoter when it came to association work like the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau. I would give him full marks.

The others did less, however, they were not necessarily inactive. Victor Whittall was another Canadian who was a great advocate and a very fine man who believed healthy promotion was good and should be sustained. He was very active. When he was the president, he was a well-liked man. Perhaps I mention these Canadians because they were nearer to me than those in the States. I wouldn't want to infer that others lacked in importance. I simply didn't know them as well.

SESSION II, MAY 1, 1974

CHAPTER 7

ERM: How would you compare different industrial associations with which you have been familiar, like the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau, with other associations that you know, in respect to progressiveness and imagination and cohesiveness among the members?

CP: The association which I knew in the lumber field that was most cohesive was the Pacific Lumber Inspection Bureau. I've got to think in terms of two periods, before 1930 and after 1930. Prior to 1930, I was with the Vancouver Lumber Company where I worked with lumber as well as shingles. After 1930, my personal activity was in shingles. I can think more comprehensively about the lumber associations prior to 1930 than I can since.*

ERM: Let's consider the period prior to 1930.

CP: I recall that prior to 1930 in British Columbia we had a lumber association called the British Columbia Manufacturers' Association. They promoted their products by sending delegations to such countries as England and Australia. While in these countries, they met timber people and discussed and promoted the product. There was nothing to hold them together, nor did they spend any money in major trade promotional work in those days. They did have to spend money in the Pacific Lumber Inspection Bureau to make sure the lumber shipped abroad was properly inspected because a PLIB certificate became part of an overseas transaction. A foreign buyer wanted to make sure the mill producing the order qualified according to grades which were certified.

They were as successful as any other organization, but promotional work by other groups varied. I recall considerable effort made by the West Coast group during a period when a lot of money was spent for advertising. I don't recall whether the British Columbia mills participated in that at all.

*See Appendix B, pp. 68-70 for supplementary material on trade associations.

- ERM: Back in 1916, 1917, and 1918, the Shingle Branch of the West Coast Lumbermen's Association spent \$100,000 on advertising over the three-year period.*
- CP: Recently in British Columbia greater strides have been made in promotion than in former years. We have now amalgamated all associations under the Council of Forest Industries. Formerly, we had the loggers association, the lumbermens association, the shingle association, and comparatively recently there has been a merging of all those into a council. There is also a plywood association. The plywood people have produced excellent advertising copy and plans for the promotion of plywood. I would say there is no comparison between the amount of money used in the olden days and that used today by lumber people in British Columbia for promotion of wood products all over the world. But I'm not up-to-date in information. I've been out of the picture for eighteen years.
- ERM: You can speak about the attitude of your superiors and the companies for which you worked. Was it difficult to obtain money from them for promoting sales? You were a pioneer from the Vancouver Lumber Company in exploring the potential markets.
- CP: It was hard, very hard, to pry dollars out of management for associated efforts. They wanted to go at it in their own way. In shingles, they would rather spend money promoting their own brand by going into the field, obtaining a good representative, and helping him with a certain area. That's what I used to do. I would try to find the right sort of people in a place like Texas where one could count on customers to stay with you and work with you. You would agree to supply them with merchandise, if they would agree to provide you with the business and promote the product locally. In those days, we emphasized individual effort rather than collective effort. The money left for a collective effort such as Certigrade was very small.
- ERM: I suppose it was, in part, the fact that the old nineteenth-century concept of individual free enterprise was still dominant in the minds of the people running the business.

*"Shingle Branch of West Coast Lumbermen's Association," Lumber World Review 36, no. 2 (January 25, 1919): 38.

CP: We were great individualists in my youth and when I was growing up in the business there was tremendous competition.

ERM: It took time for the industry to grow sophisticated enough to recognize its greatest competition was not from within, but from without.

CP: Exactly, that was so true. It's absolutely the fact in connection with shingles because there was such a huge market for our product. Our competition was not each other; it was the asphalt, the substitute people. Those people were our enemies. We should have been putting shoulder to shoulder and unifying our efforts to tell the world of our good product. We eventually succeeded in accomplishing that.

We standardized our products and standardized our pack. The pack was a great stumbling block at first. It took a couple of years to straighten out that matter. We finally resolved those questions. The acceptance of a grade in commercial standards was a preliminary to the subsequent associated efforts for promotion.

ERM: I presume you credit people like Professor Grondal for greatly advancing these ideas in the course of counseling with people in the industry?

CP: Yes, he was a great help. I credit the wisdom of the operators and their own good common sense primarily because, after all, they had the money and the plants. They saw the logs in the water which had to be converted to the best advantage. It took a decision on their part more than anyone else.

ERM: Who do you give credit for that kind of statesmanlike thinking back in those early days? Who were the principals whom you remember most vividly as being the wiser men of their industry?

CP: The men I knew mostly were on the Canadian side. Henry Mackin with the Canadian Western Lumber Company was one. My boss, Ed Sanders, of the Vancouver Lumber Company was another. Mr. Huntting and his partner, Mr. Merritt, were leaders. They operated a large mill. In the shingle field, a good leader was a man by the name of Carl Culter. He was the principal of the Hammond Cedar Company of Hammond, B. C. He was a man of fine leadership, and there are others.

ERM: What about freight rates? You've lived through a period when they've had considerable influence and impact on the industry.

- CP: Rates were usually increasing as the years went by. I recall the association had their committees which met with the railways to discuss details of minimum weights. Mr. Henry Olwell used to head that particular committee for the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau. I can't recall the details except it was an aspect that entered into the activities of the association.
- ERM: Was it always a matter of concern to the members?
- CP: Oh, yes. It was a matter of concern.
- ERM: When the West was opened up by the transcontinental railways, there opened up for the western lumber and shingle industries a vast new market in the prairie states and provinces which had not existed prior to that time. Isn't that true?
- CP: Yes.
- ERM: For a time, there was a battle of freight rates which gradually went down to encourage the return freight from the West. There was always freight from the manufacturing centers of the East but they needed return freight, which proved to be wood products in the main. In order to encourage this, some of the railroads lowered their rates. As time went on, I presume from what you have said, the tendency was for rates to keep going higher.
- CP: For example, the first freight rate I can recall in the early days of my association with the Vancouver Lumber Company was the lumber rate from Vancouver to Winnipeg. It was forty cents per hundred pounds and that was the commodity rate for lumber to that part of the country. There was a considerably higher rate to an area like Toronto, which I don't remember. The bulk of our lumber in those days went to the prairies on a commodity rate which was forty cents. I don't know what it is now, but it advanced progressively over the years. I think the rate to Minneapolis in those days was about forty-five cents. The cars had to be loaded to full visible capacity and the railroads imposed a higher rate for shingles because a carload of shingles weighed less than a carload of lumber. Those differentials were the factors which occupied the attention of the Consolidated Red Cedar Shingle Association. We were always advocating the most economical rate obtainable. The railroads, on the other hand, wanted a certain amount for a car; that's why we had to pay a higher rate.

- ERM: I found something in the Lumber World Review, which was Boling Arthur Johnson's trade journal. In 1914, Henry J. Mackin, sales manager of the Canadian Western lumber company, stated that importation of Canadian shingles into the U. S. was much lower than U. S. alarmists said. For one thing, oriental labor was slower. There were fewer shingle machines in B. C., therefore production was slower. Besides, B. C. shingles were going to the eastern Canadian market, since New Brunswick shingles which formerly supplied the eastern market were supplying New England.*
- CP: If Henry J. Mackin said that, he must have known what he was talking about because he was one of the leaders in British Columbia. I don't quite follow that particular comment.
- ERM: There evidently was a lot of criticism or competition between Canadian and U. S. Producers. He stated oriental labor was slower than American labor. I got the impression earlier from you that it was faster in some respects. There were fewer shingle machines in British Columbia at that time.
- CP: That's perfectly true.
- ERM: Therefore, was production slower?
- CP: The volume of shingles made in the United States at that time was much greater than the volume of shingles made in B. C. That's true. The production of shingles in the United States by individual sawyers and packers was probably greater. I'm pretty sure this is what Henry Mackin meant by reason of the grading rules which existed at the time whereby you could make wide shingles by permitting flat grain and edge-grain. A workman putting them into bundles could make a great many more American shingles per day than a Canadian or any other nationality could because of our Edge Grain grading rules requirement.
- ERM: Back in those early days, wasn't there great competition among shingle weavers to produce at a record pace per day? Do you remember the competition which existed at that time?

*"Allaying Fears of Shingle Men," Lumber World Review 27, no. 1 (July 10, 1914): 28

CP: Yes, I hazily remember that factor. The volume produced by some of the shingle weavers in the United States was really remarkable. Their efficiency and speed and the nature of the timber was such in those days that they could and actually did make exceptionally good records for themselves. They did it because of the basic objective of making more money. This was a piecework operation. The individual's incentive was to develop a skill. They did very well. We had that to some extent in Canada too.

The sawyer is the man who operates a machine. He initiates the speed of the machine. His skill of producing a maximum volume in a given number of hours is dependent on his own quickness in observing defects and cutting them out properly, continuing to work, and at the same time making a good shingle. He sets the tempo. The man at the next stage is the packer. He must be able to keep up with the sawyer because he's got to keep his bins clear. If the sawyer cuts at too fast a rate for the packer, the bins would overflow, and the operation would be interfered with. The packer and the sawyer worked in pairs. For instance, you'd find on a number one machine, the sawyer at the number one position is probably the most skillful operator, and the number one packer would be his partner. They all vary just as human efficiency varies. It varied from day to day because of the varied production and the varied quality of the timber itself.

Frequently, sawyers who were very quick and efficient would complain to the management because the timber wasn't good enough for them. We couldn't help the timber. We had to take the logs from the boom as they came along. They were cut into the proper length of blocks and had to be disposed of. The volume of production by individual was affected by the quality of the timber with which he had to work.

ERM: What would you say is the difference between B. C. and the U. S. in respect to national policies on land acquisition or resource acquisition?

CP: That's too broad a question for me to answer, I'm afraid. I couldn't answer a comparative question like that because I don't know. Over the years in British Columbia, the acquisition of timber licenses and timber rights have changed and I am not familiar enough with what the situation was at that particular time in the United States to be able to answer.

- ERM: What were the problems in that regard here in the British Columbia mills you were connected with?
- CP: The mill I was first connected with was the Vancouver Lumber Company. We didn't own sufficient timber limits to do much logging. We were primarily log buyers. People like Bloedel, Stewart and Welch, and Merrill and Wilson were primarily loggers. They obtained their licenses from the provincial government and paid the annual fees for retaining them. When the area on which they had a certain license was logged, all timber had to be scaled by government scalers. The quantity and quality of the logs in a specific boom became what they called a government scale. That was the basis for a transaction upon which the government imposed a royalty. The royalty had to be paid as a first obligation of the producer. It was a royalty which varied according to the grade of log and the species and the time. As time moved on, the governments increased their royalties. That was the system in those days, as I recall.
- ERM: Has it changed much?
- CP: Oh, yes. It's somewhat different now but the government still collects royalties. It's too involved a subject for me to even touch on. The new systems now have timber farms and timber licenses and pulpwood licenses, and the whole business is infinitely better controlled for the benefit of people who really own the timber and for reforestation for future generations.
- ERM: Wasn't the Honorable J. V. Clyne very much involved?
- CP: I don't think so, but H. R. MacMillan was. There was an important judge by the name of Sloan who's dead now. He conducted a big inquiry into the status of the industry. He made recommendations to the government after very exhaustive inquiries as to what should be done. From his recommendations in the "Sloan Report" there came an entirely new setup for handling timber in British Columbia. To some extent there have been changes and it's under constant surveillance, I think.
- ERM: Would you say there is much tighter government control of the situation here?
- CP: Yes, as far as I know, but I can't compare it with the United States.
- ERM: The technology of the industry is another area that I wish you

would comment on. Over the years, the technology of the lumber industry has had a very interesting development from primitive logging methods to increasing mechanization. There is growing sophistication in lumber mills and pulp and paper mills. What about the shingle industry? How much has it changed over the years?

CP: My quick and short answer is, surprisingly little. The upright saw that was used to manufacture shingles is still used to make shingles.

ERM: That goes back more than fifty years?

CP: It goes back a long, long way. There may have been some minor refinements and improvements of the machine itself, but that basic principle has not changed. I think the reason is because in every shingle that is made, and in every single slice or two of that saw through the block, the human eye has to be used to decide what to do and what not to do. They haven't any technology that can beat that yet.

ERM: Has there been less automation in the shingle manufacturing business than in the lumber business as a whole?

CP: I think so. You see, the objective of making a perfect shingle, a good edge-grain shingle, consists in taking the slice of wood first and then cutting out any defects and leaving a part there as a good shingle. The sawyer's eye has to be used to decide whether to cut various parts off. The objective is to cut off no more than the defect. If he cuts off too much, he wastes timber. The human eye is still the basic factor which governs that particular man's operation and, if technology can cut out a piece of rot here, a knot here, or a split there, it's something that hasn't been invented yet.

ERM: Of course, that same factor obtains in making lumber also, where the eye of the sawyer is the key to the whole thing.

CP: That's perfectly true.

CHAPTER 8

- ERM: Over the years a variety of cooperative plans have been introduced in certain mills in the Pacific Northwest whereby the worker has shared the responsibility of running the mill and the earnings. One of the earliest of these was the Turgeon Mill in Seattle which announced such a plan in 1914.* Paul Smith and his M. R. Smith Lumber Company instituted such a plan years ago.** Have there been similar plans here in Canada?
- CP: Not that I know of. I can't recall a single one. I do recall an instance in 1936 when the mill I was responsible for was faced with a situation of quotas whereby we could ship only so many shingles to the United States. Price regulations were in effect at that particular time. We could sell only so many shingles at such and such a price. Then we had to close it down. I recall we made a proposition to our own employees that we would try to operate an additional period during the time we couldn't ship to the United States, and sell the additional part in Canada at a lower price because of a lower price regulation in Canada. We discussed this with the men but they didn't wish to cooperate. We didn't succeed in that little venture of cooperation, but that's not quite the same. I don't know of any profit sharing.
- ERM: What would you have to say in general about labor/management relations in the B. C. shingle industry over the years of your involvement?
- CP: In the early days, management ran the plant. We employed the men and we didn't have any unions.

*"Latest News of the Lumber World," Lumber World Review 27, no. 2 (July 25, 1914): 38.

**Paul R. Smith interview with Elwood R. Maunder, pp. 27-8, 78, 80-2.

ERM: When did organized labor begin?

CP: Organized labor came when the IWA [International Woodworkers of America] became established in British Columbia sometime in the forties.

ERM: Prior to that there was no union in Canada?

CP: We didn't have unions in the thirties, that's for sure.

ERM: Did you ever have strikes in the early days?

CP: We had a strike in 1936. We had four or five years of serious depression in the early thirties. In 1936 we had a strike in the mill in which I was in charge. It wasn't a strike of our own employees so much as an influence of outsiders who were trying to get our men to strike. They were what we called Communists. They didn't like the big company. I remember they tried to pick on Bloedel, Stewart and Welch because we were promoting the lower wage during the additional period operation. They heard about that and thought we were cutting wages. They all struck and made it very unpleasant. They didn't so much strike as surround the mill with pickets so that our own men couldn't go to work. We called it a strike. It stopped the operations for quite awhile. There were no labor unions until the forties, I'm sure.

ERM: The old shingle weavers were very independent, weren't they? With or without unions they sometimes kicked up their heels and stopped working. In the summer of 1916 there was a strike among shingle workers.

CP: Are you talking about the United States mills?

ERM: Yes. Perhaps it was only there.

CP: It didn't necessarily follow here. I don't think we had any then.

ERM: Generally speaking, what percentage of your employees were Orientals?

CP: In the Red Band Mill I was in charge of, I estimate about twenty percent.

ERM: What procedure is followed in negotiating contracts with labor today or in the later days of your time in the business? Was it done on a company basis or on an industry-wide basis?

CP: We did it on an industry-wide basis. We had a company that is now called the Forest Industry Relations. All the mills joined together and appointed negotiators to handle arrangements with the unions with a view to getting an industry-wide agreement which was uniform for everybody. We didn't have our own individual mill unions.

It was an industry agreement that had to be negotiated through the organization which represented all of us and the unions which represented labor. As a result of their negotiations, an industry-wide basic agreement was adopted. Basic things such as the hours of work, wages, and holidays were all settled on an industry-wide basis. This system has maintained as long as I can remember and still exists.

ERM: There have been annual Red Cedar Shingle Congresses going back to the early years you were in the business. Have you attended many?

CP: I attended all of those from the time I became an executive, such as a sales manager or manager.

ERM: In your view, what have those annual conferences accomplished?

CP: In the case of the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau, which is the one I'm most familiar with, the annual meeting was more or less an annual event which presented an opportunity for all members to attend and hear reports of the men they had voted in as trustees. The trustees met every month, and handled committee work and industry association work as a whole. Once a year, an annual meeting was held where everybody was invited to find out what it was all about. I thought it was very constructive. It gave everybody a chance to meet one another, and often an important speaker would be engaged to create interest during luncheon. There were social gatherings afterwards. I think it was very worthwhile in helping to keep us together.

ERM: There has always been a rather good exchange of information. A sharing of problems and solutions to problems.

CP: Excellent, yes. Like getting new ideas and getting off beefs if you've got any.

ERM: To what extent, if any, is there secrecy within the industry in your experience? Are there any secrets of the trade?

- CP: I don't recall any. If anybody had them, they must have kept them very secret, because if somebody got an idea, I think it soon got out.
- ERM: It wasn't the kind of industry that lent itself to secrecy very well.
- CP: I don't think so. I was never exposed to that kind of situation.
- ERM: Were the workers in the industry a rather mobile lot who moved around from one company to another or was your labor force stable?
- CP: The labor force in the shingle field was very stable in my day. On the contrary, the labor force in the logging camps was not necessarily stable. There would be much more moving around by a logger in the woods than there would be by a man who worked in town and went to work at the mill. He had a home to go to and he was a steady employee who stayed with us.
- ERM: It was April 1920 when it was announced that in the future

... the new packing and marketing rules recently adopted by the Shingle Branch of the West Coast Lumbermen's Association will go into effect. The manufacturers of Rite-Grade red cedar shingles are going over to the new packing rules without exception. Many other mills also promise to make the change. The old system of manufacturing and selling shingles by the thousand is obsolete and must go into the scrap heap of institutions that thrived in ages past, along with ox-team logging, one-lung flivvers and jitney cigars.*

Would you comment about how that transition was worked out, who favored, and who opposed the change?

- CP: What was that year again?
- ERM: In 1920 it was announced that the West Coast Lumbermen's Association and its members would adopt this rule.

*"West Coast Shingles to be Sold by the Square after April 1, 1920," Lumber World Review 38, no. 3 (February 10, 1920): 45.

CP: That's about right. That's very interesting. It recalls to mind my own experience at that time with the Vancouver Lumber Company. Prior to that time, we were making and selling shingles by the thousand like everyone else. We were advocating along with others the change to selling them by the square. A difference of opinion arose on the proper quantities in the new pack. To a great extent it involved the question of exposure to the weather that was considered to be standard. What I mean by exposure to the weather is when a shingle is laid on a roof, part of it is underneath the other shingle so that part of it is open to the weather and part of it is covered.

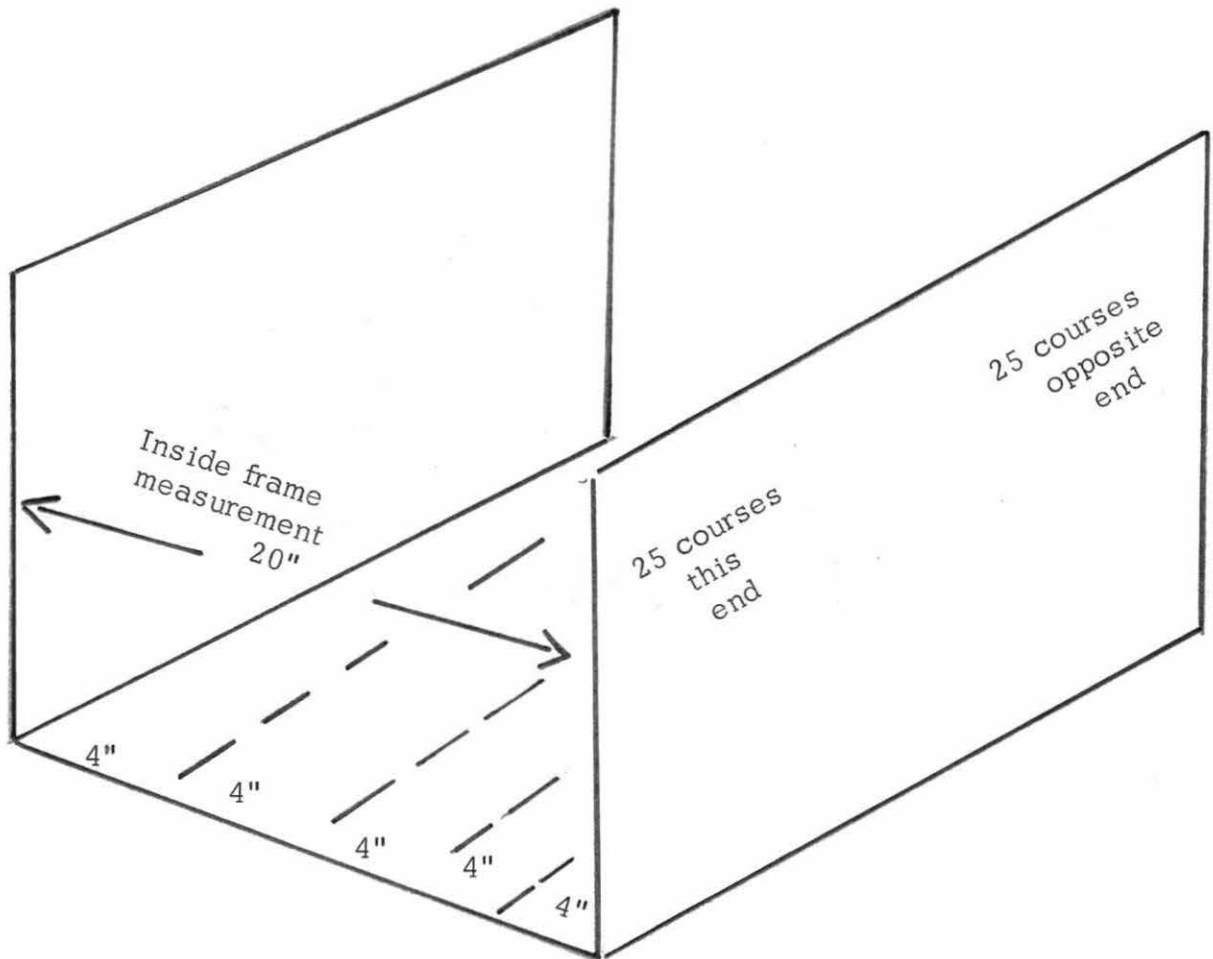
As I recall, originally the exposure to the weather for the standard sixteen-inch shingle was four and a half inches. The first accepted change was to make a square of shingles to consist of twenty-two courses in each bundle.

ERM: There were on an average about four hundred and sixty actual shingle pieces in one square of sixteen-inch shingles.

CP: You are getting involved when it comes to talking about the number of pieces. Do you know what a thousand is? That's not a thousand pieces. The original M meant the number of shingles that could be put in a twenty-inch frame allowing little spaces in between, two or three pieces in both ends of every course. Twenty-five courses high at each end. The frame is twenty inches wide; that was one bundle. Four of those bundles were supposed to be equivalent to one M or one thousand, but that doesn't necessarily mean one thousand individual pieces because the individual pieces varied considerably in width. The reason they called it a thousand must have been because they decided that one shingle was four inches wide for measurement purposes, and one thousand four-inch pieces, or the equivalent, constituted one M. If you put those shingles on a roof with four and a half inches exposure, they will cover an area that is greater than ten feet by ten feet which is one square. One of the reasons the industry wanted to change to a square was because our competitors sold covering capacities rather than a bundle of a commodity which had varying covering capacity because it was an M, it was a thousand, and the measurement of exposure to the weather was a great determining factor on its covering capacity.

My recollection is the first agreement to make a square had twenty-two courses in a bundle. The tradespeople were offered this new pack. However, it didn't go over or sufficient effort wasn't made

Explanation of 1M shingles



1 course = 5 4" pieces
 25 courses = 125 4" pieces
Add opposite end
 25 courses = 125 6" pieces
Complete bundle
 25 double = 250 4" pieces
 courses

Therefore 4 bundles
 =
 250 x 4
 = 1000 or 1M

by the producers to promote it. No sooner had it been adopted when it was dropped. I think this situation went on until the next annual meeting when some further resolution could be made of the problem. This is when I recall that Henry Mackin and my boss, Ed Sanders, were prominent in the discussions. They undoubtedly were part of those who contributed to an eventual solution. They sought to find a legitimate square which was a convenient square and acceptable to the trade. The solution was to make a twenty-twenty pack and to make five bundles, twenty-twenty pack. If you wanted to sell by the thousand, you could sell five bundles. If you wanted to sell by the square, you could sell four bundles. The weather exposure had to be changed to five inches and the study and the agreement by everybody was that five inches exposure was perfectly safe and acceptable. It turned out to be the solution. Thus began the twenty-twenty pack.

Four bundles was a square and five bundles was a thousand. That was the key. This was acceptable to the trade but the square very quickly became the measure that was used rather than the thousand. When you quoted shingles in those days, you were still selling four bundles and that was a square. You sold your shingles by the square instead of as formerly, by the thousand.

ERM: Was this immediately and generally accepted by the industry or did it take some time to get it adopted on a broad scale?

CP: It was adopted within a year after that, as I remember.

ERM: And everybody fell into line?

CP: Yes, they fell into line. The difficult time was during that first period when they had the twenty-two pack. I recall very vividly from my own experience, my company had made a lot of shingles of twenty-two pack. We put them in transit and couldn't sell them. We had to unload them and put them in storage. They stayed in storage for many months. Eventually we had to repack them. As it turned out, we didn't lose too much money on it because the market had gone up materially.

ERM: I notice further in the Lumber World Review article of February 10, 1920 that

Every contractor or carpenter knows that irregularities of roof surface cause a certain amount of waste of roofing

material, and estimates the quality of roofing required accordingly; but a unit covering should be based on a regular surface. A dressmaker or tailor always figures a certain waste of material in cutting and estimates accordingly. The manufacturers feel certain that in changing to the square unit, they are making a progressive step, that will be approved by a big majority of the retail dealers, and that that small proportion of dealers who may not at first be inclined to favor this change, will favor the move strongly, after they have given the merits of the proposition full consideration.

What do you recall about the battle for the market with makers of substitute roofing materials? Efforts were made in such places as California and Texas to pass local ordinances to outlaw or limit the use of wooden shingles. How did you deal with that problem?

CP: The only way we dealt with it was through the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau's own activities and the alertness of the fieldmen. Many became specialists in following up the local situation and interviewing local interests to get their influence with local authorities. A local municipality or town which had some antishingle legislation pending would have a meeting of counselors, and our fieldmen would urge people to go to their own council and advocate the use of shingles. They would point out the wisdom of not doing thus and so and why shingles were not hazardous. This was the function of the fieldman.

One of the primary reasons we belonged to the Bureau was to help fight propaganda of that type. The Bureau and their fieldmen did similar work in connection with other adverse issues that worked against the interest of shingles, such as insurance differentials.

CHAPTER 9

ERM: In 1923 the Shingle Branch of the West Coast Lumbermen's Association and the Shingle Manufacturers' Association in British Columbia created as a joint enterprise the Red Cedar Shingle Market Extension and Information Bureau.

The board of management of the bureau consisting of E. R. Case, of Raymond, Washington; W. C. McMasster, Seattle, Washington; J. A. Edgcombe, Vancouver, B.C., and N. R. Whittall, Vancouver, B.C., representing the boards of trustees of these two shingle associations, have perfected plans which will immediately be put into effect. It is expected the bureau will be the means of bringing the shingle manufacturers of the coast in closer contact with the retail lumber merchants throughout the country and enable them better to administer to the needs and requirements of the trade. A staff of field men is being sent into the field at once prepared to assist the retailer in moving his stock of red cedar shingles from his yard to the roofs and side walls of North American homes. The bureau is equipped with comprehensive exhibits displaying red cedar shingles as applied to the home. These displays can be used by lumber merchants in their service rooms, own-your-home expositions, state and county fairs, and in other places, for the purpose of demonstrating the artistic manner in which shingles may be used to make a home homelike.*

CP: I don't think that lasted very long. I don't recall it.

*"Red Cedar Shingle Extension Bureau Announced," Lumber World Review 44, no. 12 (June 25, 1923): 32.

Even though this was perhaps a short-lived enterprise, it set the pattern in a way. It was an initial step, a model of what was eventually created.

CP: Yes.

ERM: Natural disasters, such as earthquakes or fires, have always played a very prominent role in your industry. Tornadoes in Texas and Oklahoma and other places have caused a need for your product, thus a big surge in the market. Do you recall any examples of that?

CP: Yes, there were a few occasions when, after tornadoes in a certain area, there would be a big rush of business and extra demand for shingles to replace many roofs which were damaged. Extra demand frequently had the effect of raising prices at times.

ERM: In 1923, the American Red Cross solicited wooden shingles from the Bureau to send to Japan after their catastrophic earthquake.* Prior to this time, Japan had evidently known nothing about cedar shingles.

CP: I don't recall that incident.

ERM: Do you remember anything about traffic in shingles to that area?

CP: Not to that area, no.

ERM: Has most of your market been within the United States and Canada?

CP: The market for shingles produced in the United States and Canada has been mostly on the North American continent.

ERM: Has there been no need to go abroad?

CP: Many times the Canadian producers felt the need to develop markets elsewhere, which we did, particularly because of the threat of the tariff and the concern we had regarding our natural market. We extended our marketing quite extensively in England. We developed a small demand and sowed seeds for a hopeful future there, however the volume was negligible.

*"Shingle Donations to Japan," Lumber World Review 45, no. 6 (September 25, 1923): 48.

ERM: What about Australia and New Zealand?

CP: Negligible there.

ERM: And the Hawaiian Islands?

CP: Little there. We did have some success in the British West Indies, but beyond those few places I have mentioned, industry statistics show it is North America where ninety-eight percent of the products found use.

ERM: The industry has been affected in other ways by foreign trade, particularly the log trade to Japan. Cedar logs have been sold to Japan for many years, have they not?

CP: You are talking about the United States now. We don't sell our logs to Japan.

ERM: No logs are sold to Japan from British Columbia?

CP: We might sell some sort of cedar logs of a certain character but our regulations are quite strict, as far as exporting from Canada is concerned. We were not allowed to export except by special permission. It had to be a grade or type of log that the log producers couldn't market in Canada. He had to have a permit. There was an export committee, as I recall, to whom an applicant had to submit his request. The applicant had to show he tried to sell his boom of logs to a certain number of people domestically, and if there was nobody in British Columbia who wanted them, the logger might get a permit to dispose of it elsewhere.

ERM: You don't have anything comparable to the log exporting that's going on in the States?

CP: No, I don't think so.

ERM: I wonder to what extent the continually rising trend to sell logs abroad has had an impact on the cedar shingle and shake business.

CP: I imagine its extensive, but I don't know. I'm out of touch with developments in the United States. I know it was a factor in the eventual closing down of the famous Seattle Cedar Lumber Manufacturing Company which my old friend, Leo Black, operated for a good many years.

ERM: There is a little news item here in the Lumber World Review for December 25, 1924. It says that "Victor Beckman thirty years ago was secretary of the first association of red cedar shingle manufacturers on the Pacific Coast." Apparently, then, in 1896 there was an association of red cedar shingle manufacturers on the Pacific Coast. That predates the Bureau by a good many years. This article states that in 1924 Beckman commented, "Shingles in those days sold for 74 to 90 cents a thousand, and those that kept their business alive did so by selling underweights." What were underweights?

CP: I'll have to get my pencil to show you what an underweight is. Take a 5X shingle, that is five to two, sixteen inches long. That particular size of shingle has what is called a guaranteed or established dry weight which is used in the computation of a delivered price. In other words, if I am at Vancouver at the fob mill point and you are at the delivery point in New England, you want to know what your shingles are going to cost you in New England. Say that I want five dollars mill base for my shingles. Now if the weight of the shingles for 5X is 180 pounds, dry weight, and the freight rate is \$1.00, the freight would be \$1.80. So I would add \$1.80 to my \$5.00 and I would say, "Your shingles will cost \$6.80 delivered."

In this illustration I used 180 pounds as the shipping weight for 5X shingles. This was the weight used for shingles sold by M or thousand measure. After adoption of the square pack, a shipping weight of 144 pounds was adopted for sales purposes. That is a ratio of 80 percent. In other words:

5 bundles 20/20 pack = 1M - 180 pounds weight
4 bundles 20/20 pack = 1 square - 144 pounds weight

When a carload of shingles is weighed on the scales together with the car itself, if it turns out that the dry weight is actually 170 pounds; that's the actual net weight, then there are ten pounds of underweights. Now that ten pounds of underweights are an increment to the mill because the mill has guaranteed your delivered price and you're obligated to pay that. If, in figuring that, I have gained something by underweights, it's something that has accrued as a profit factor, if you please, to the producer. The reason that usually the shipping weight--what it's called--which in this case is 180 pounds, was usually a little more than actual was because of the plain necessity of protecting the shipper against the possibility of it being the

reverse. In other words, a shipping weight was usually conservatively heavy in the interests of the manufacturer but not excessively so. But in the case of shingles, in times of a dull market it was often a factor which made the difference between making ends meet or not. The underweight is one thing, but the value of the underweights to the producer was another factor. We still have shipping weights in the industry. We still have established accepted weight, and that goes for lumber too. There's a shipping weight for a thousand feet of two by fours. If the mill happens to find its product a little bit less than that, that's underweights. On the other hand, if it's heavy and it's got a lot of moisture in it, that's an overweight which is a penalty for the producer against the mill price.

- ERM: I presume there is a much closer check on this today than there used to be.
- CP: I don't think they've changed the principle, have they? I think they still have to have an established weight of shingle.
- ERM: What I meant is that the buyer would be more likely to check at his receiving end that he got what he thought he was buying in terms of weight.
- CP: He's only concerned in his quotation. He wants to know if he's buying a car of two by fours or a car of shingles. He wants to know what number of dollars he's paying, delivered to his plant or to his siding or whatever it is, and he accepts that as final and pays on that basis. It's what they call the delivered price as opposed to the fob price.
- ERM: How has the role of the wholesaler in your business changed over the years? Were wholesalers more important in the early days than they are today? Your company apparently wanted to establish at one time a kind of independence of wholesalers. Has that situation reversed in recent times?
- CP: I think that the answer depends primarily on what is the size of the company. A big company will be more likely to have its own salesmen and, from my knowledge today, the wholesalers are still most important. In the big MacMillan Bloedel organization, we still use wholesalers in different parts of the country to sell our products. There are different types of wholesalers. I have a nephew in the wholesale business. He doesn't represent any specific mills, but he is a wholesaler primarily for the products

of lumber mills in the interior of British Columbia who don't ship by water. There are many, many small mills which haven't access to the various dealers throughout the United States. They have to make use of a wholesaler who promises to put them in touch with the market, put them into transit, and get them closer to the market. I think as far as my knowledge goes, they are just as important today as ever they were.

CHAPTER 10

ERM: We were discussing at lunch today your admiration for the Bloedels. Would you talk a bit about them?

CP: I first joined Bloedel, Stewart and Welch in 1930. At that time, logging was their principal business. They went into the shingle business in British Columbia about 1925. J. H. Bloedel was the senior man there and had acquired the Red Band Shingle Mill from a concern called Shull Brothers. I think he had been selling them logs from his logging operations and there may have been difficulties in the Shull people meeting their obligations. Bloedel may have had to take over the plant. That particular plant became the first active conversion unit of a portion of the product for the Bloedel enterprise in Canada. From a sales point of view, it was really being operated from the Bellingham headquarters.

This went along for a few years until 1930. The Vancouver Lumber Company which I was with had folded. The Great Depression came on and we all had to get new jobs. Sid Smith who was the general manager of the Bloedel organization got in touch with me immediately. I wasn't out of work a single day. Because of my background, he wanted me to run that mill, not only from a sales standpoint but as a manager. He wanted it to be handled from a British Columbia point of view as opposed to the Bellingham, Washington influence. They had their own problems with their shingle mill there. They had their Diamond B product then, and Sid Smith wanted to get into running our own operation right here.

That's where I came into the picture with the Bloedel organization, and when I first met the senior man, J. H. Bloedel. He was the chairman of the board and a very fine gentleman. Sid Smith was my general manager and I was the mill manager and responsible to him. That same year, young Prentice who was nine years younger than I joined the organization. He was the purchasing agent in those days for the Bloedel, Stewart and Welch organization. We spent much time as coworkers in the organization. Of course, as coworkers we shared all our problems. He, being the boss's son, of course, moved up the scale and eventually became president. We shared so many of our problems and worked them out together that we became very close.

ERM: You've had a very intimate relationship then with Prentice Bloedel?

CP: Excellent.

ERM: Tell me a little about Mr. Bloedel.

CP: One of the things I admired Prentice for was his foresight and wisdom in developing the idea of greater utilization of forest products in those early days. He was the man who sparked the idea of us getting into the manufacture of pulp. We almost started in pulp in Port Alberni, however, the war came along and interfered with that enterprise. Later we built a pulp mill there, primarily due to the sparking of Prentice. He sparked the idea of utilizing some of the waste from the manufacture of cedar. He said, "I wonder if we can make Presto logs out of it?" As a result, we worked on this idea and found ways and means. I made trips to plants in the United States where they made Presto logs and found out something about it. We eventually made arrangements to acquire the very first rights to make Presto logs in British Columbia.

ERM: Who did you have to get that from?

CP: We got those rights from the company which was connected with the Potlatch industry at Lewiston, Idaho.

ERM: Potlatch Corporation?

CP: Yes. The name of the company which controlled those rights was Wood Briquettes, Incorporated. They controlled the machines all up and down the West Coast and licensed their machines to producers who had a sufficient volume of waste product that would make a manufacturing plant viable. Studies were made by their engineers about this volume at the Red Band Mill. A decision had to be made as to the investment that would be necessary for starting a new product. Prentice and myself were greatly involved in that. We had so many start-up problems; we had to "guinea pig" in the sense that never before had Presto logs been made from cedar waste--and green (moisture filled) waste at that.

ERM: How much waste is there in cedar? What percentage of the total would you say is lost to manufacturing?

- CP: Volumewise, I would guess that half of the log is not shingles. Some of the log goes to the boiler house to make steam to drive the machines that make the shingles.
- ERM: There's a lot of knots, rot, bark, and sawdust.
- CP: It was very voluminous.
- ERM: So about fifty percent of the bulk weight of the log coming into the mill goes back out in waste form, to go into a by-product like Presto logs or to make power in your plant.
- CP: You could figure so much waste at every cut of the saw. It leaves a thin piece of wood which is a shingle, and every time a saw goes through it makes a kerf which is lost volume. It once was very voluminous and a great deal of it had to be burned up in our burners. Prentice's aim was to economically use some of this waste. He was willing to invest time and money in developing it. It was the first shingle mill that made a success to that extent with Presto logs. There was no secret about how he obtained the license in British Columbia. Before long we couldn't fill the demand for Presto logs. Of course, the present MacMillan Bloedel organization still has those rights. It was originated initially by Prentice. He is a man of high principles and a grand man to work with.
- ERM: He seems to me to be a well-read man whose interest in cultural things and the community is very high.
- CP: No doubt about it. Of course, he's very wealthy. In recent years, he has shown his liberality by making a great gift to the city of Vancouver, the Bloedel Conservatory, which is named after him. It's a very important item of interest for visitors in our Queen Elizabeth Park.
- ERM: What can you recall about others you were closely associated with in those years with MacMillan Bloedel, and where was the plant located?
- CP: This particular plant was located on the north arm of the Fraser River which is about a twelve-mile drive from here. Mr. J. H. Bloedel lived in Seattle, and he would often come to town. I had an office at the mill and in Vancouver too. Sid Smith, the general manager, would very often call and say, "Charlie, Mr. Bloedel is in town and he wants to go out and see the mill this afternoon. Will you pick him up after we've

had lunch at the club?" I would meet him at the club and we'd drive out to the mill. I'd walk around with him and he liked to see the operations and what was going on. This was the old man. He kept his interest in that way and it was a pleasure to talk to him. I always liked the old man. *

ERM: What about some of the other people you were associated with?

CP: The principal man I was associated with and who I conferred with more than anyone was Sid Smith. Sid Smith was a real leader and a fine dominant individual in our logging industry. He surrounded himself with men who were just like him and worked well with him. He was a key factor in the success of the Bloedel organization in my opinion. He was my direct boss and I have the greatest admiration for him. He always treated me fine, backed me up in every conceivable way, and made me want to carry on. We worked as a team.

ERM: I have absorbed a great deal of your time today. We have covered very much useful information. I've enjoyed it and I hope you have also.

*See Appendix C, p. 72, J. H. Bloedel, "My Creed."

APPENDIX A

Kameo Brand Edge Grain Shingles



The life of a shingle depends not only upon its thickness and the wood from which it is made, but far more upon the way it is manufactured and whether or not it has been preserved by proper kiln drying.

Edge Grain Shingles are shingles that are quarter sawn or sawn across the grain of the wood at an angle not exceeding 45 degrees.

Western Red Cedar from British Columbia is recognized as having greater weather-resisting properties than any other wood from which shingles are made.

All our Number One shingles are manufactured from selected Red Cedar logs and are sawn edge grain or quarter sawn. Many do not realize how tremendously important it is to saw shingles in this manner, but a glance at Diagram 2 shown on this page will explain why this is so.

This diagram illustrates an end view of a block of

wood, frequently split. Shingles sawn this way are known as *Flat Grain Shingles*, while shingles sawn in the direction indicated by the line *ab* are known as *Edge Grain Shingles* and will not check and split. The two types of shingles are illustrated in Diagrams One and Three.

The relative expansion and contraction of Flat Grain and Edge Grain Shingles is 104 per cent more for Flat Grain than Edge Grain. (U. S. Forest Service figures.)

The result of these unequal stresses in the Flat Grain Shingle causes warping, cupping, curling and splitting. You then have the typical Flat Grain Shingle roof curled at the edges, loose and fallen shingles, a leaky roof and cheap appearance.

Kameo Brand *Edge Grain Shingles*, being strictly Edge Grain and containing no knots or defects of any kind, cost slightly more per bundle than ordinary

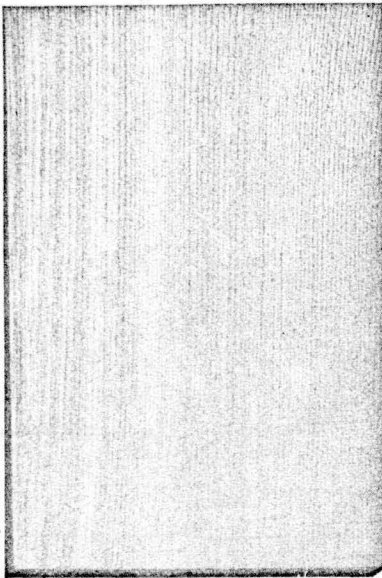


DIAGRAM 1

An edge grain Red Cedar Shingle.

The parallel and vertical grain of the wood prevents warping, cupping, curling and splitting.

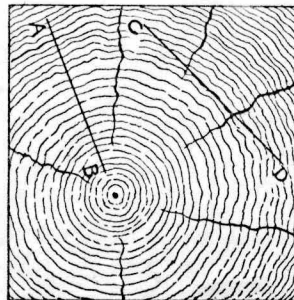


DIAGRAM 2



DIAGRAM 3

A slash grain shingle.

Unequal stresses and strains under usual weather conditions causes the shingle to warp, cup, curl and split.

wood showing the "check" lines. It will be noted that the lines of these checks are always in a certain direction to the grain of the wood, i.e., across the grain or radiating towards what was the heart or centre of the tree.

It will clearly be seen that if shingles are sawn from the block in the direction as indicated by the line *cd*, such shingles will have a tendency to check and subse-

shingles, as better logs are required and more wood is wasted in so turning the block that the saw will always be cutting across the grain. Labor costs are higher, and more care is required in their manufacture and grading.

A roof constructed of these shingles will, however, cost less than a roof constructed of cheap shingles. (See Page 39 for a comparison of costs.)

RED CEDAR SHINGLES

Red Cedar Shingles are manufactured from Western Red Cedar, the botanical name for which is *Thuja plicata*. It is sometimes called ARBOR VITÆ, (The Tree of Life) and it is found mainly on the West coast of the North American Continent, in the States of Washington and Oregon, and in the Province of British Columbia, Canada.

The best stands of this timber today represent a very mature growth. Some of the trees are of immense size and logs brought into a shingle mill are sometimes as much as 7 feet and more in diameter.

Contrary to general belief Red Cedar is not red in color but varies from a light buff to a dark reddish brown. This variation in color is not necessarily a defect; it is to be found in the same individual living tree and is consequently found in the same individual shingle. Research indicates that there is no difference in the strength of wood of varying color.

The heartwood of Western Red Cedar is highly resistant to decay due to a natural preservative oil which it contains, but the predominant characteristic of this wood is its low coefficient of expansion and contraction and its ability if properly manufactured and applied to roof or wall, of withstanding exposure to the weather without warping, checking or splitting. It is this characteristic which makes it desirable above all other woods for the manufacture of shingles and shakes.

Shingles are sawn from blocks cut from Western Red Cedar logs in such a manner as to produce a thin "tip" and a thicker "butt". In a shingle sawing machine the blocks are held in a carriage which moves to and fro past a high speed circular saw. The blocks are tilted after each backward motion of the carriage so as to give a tip at the top of the block and a butt at the bottom of the block, and then vice versa, or successively two tips at the top of the block and two butts at the bottom, and then vice versa. Machines cutting tip and butt alternately are called single butting machines and those cutting two tips and two butts alternately are called double butting machines. See Fig. 5 and Fig. 6.

The blocks may be sawn at right angles to, or tangential to the annual rings of the wood. Shingles sawn at right angles, or approximately so, to the annual rings are called "Edge Grain" Shingles, while those sawn tangential to the annual rings are called "Flat" or "Slash Grain" shingles. See Fig. 4.

Edge Grain shingles are more expensive than Slash Grain shingles as more care, more wood and more labor is required in their manufacture. They will, however, last considerably longer (the life of an Edge Grain Shingle is commonly estimated as being three times that of a Slash Grain shingle) and the difference in cost is not a matter for any serious argument.

After the shingles have been cut from the blocks they are then "jointed" or trimmed on each side so as to make them parallel sided. This operation completed, the shingles are packed in "packing frames" into bundles for conveyance to the drying kilns.

Whether or not the shingles are to be stained immediately after they leave the kilns, the packing of the shingles in bundles is necessary as a convenience for conveyance to the kilns, for piling on the kiln trucks so that air can circulate through the shingles, and for handling after they leave the kilns whether they go to the staining plant or are shipped as natural shingles.

The kiln drying process, although not realized as such by some, is a very necessary and important part of shingle manufacture. In the first place it is necessary to dry the shingles down to reasonable shipping weight and thus make for economical shipment, but more important still is the fact that kiln drying sterilizes the wood and kills any wood destroying fungi, the presence of which might cause premature failure of the shingles after they have been applied. In addition, kiln drying performs the important function of developing and disclosing any inherent defects, such as splits, checks, incipient decay, etc., not visible before drying.

THE MANUFACTURE OF EDGE GRAIN SHINGLES.

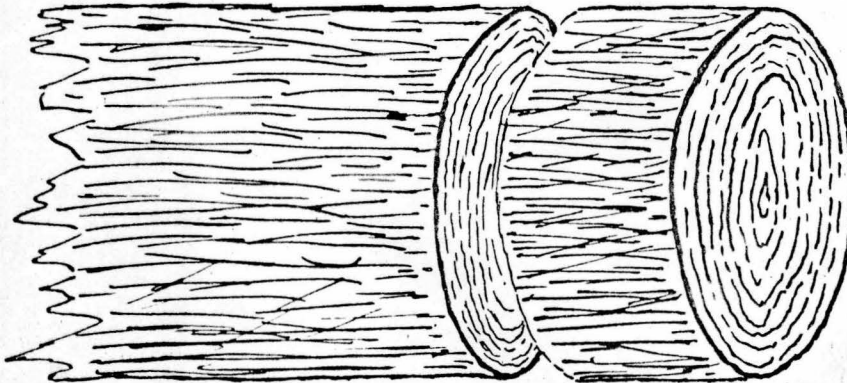


Fig. 1.
The Cedar Log.

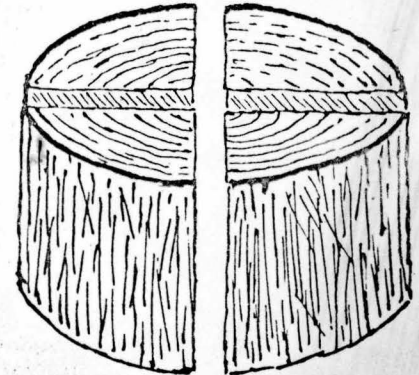


Fig. 2.
A Block cut off.

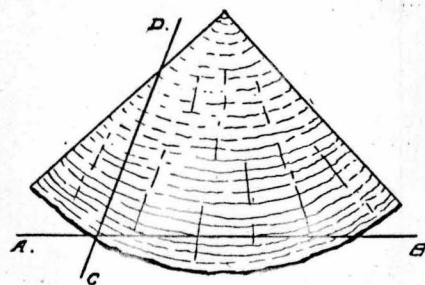


Fig. 3.
The Block quartered.

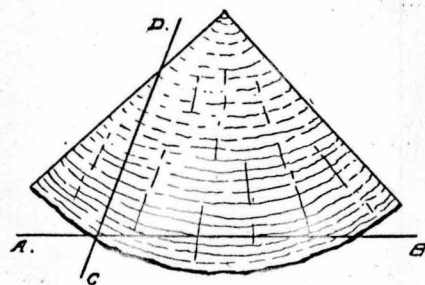


Fig. 4.
A Quartered Block

Edge Grain Shingles are cut in the direction C - D., always at right angles to the annual rings of the wood.

Slash Grain Shingles would be cut in the direction A - B., tangential to the annual rings of the wood. It is not necessary, however, to quarter the blocks for making slash grain shingles as they are generally made from small logs and the whole round block is put into the machine.

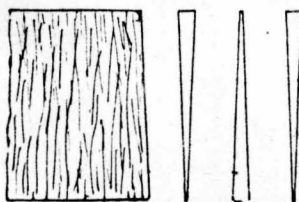


Fig. 5.
The shingles as they come from the block
on a single-butting machine.

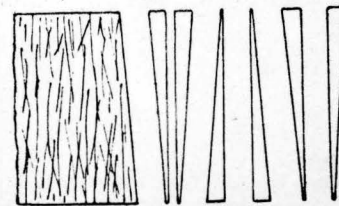


Fig. 6.
The shingles as they come from the block
on a double-butting machine.

APPENDIX B

Excerpts from letter dated September 7, 1974, Charles Plant to Elwood Maunder.

The following are my notes after checking my memory with the six pieces of literature which have been loaned by my friends at the Canadian Forest Products Co.

In the United States:

1. The West Coast Lumbermen's Association, Shingle Branch was functioning around 1915.
2. The Rite Grade Association may have been a separate group or organization, but my memory suggests it was just an "activity" of the Shingle Branch which started around 1919 or 1920.
3. Red Cedar Shingle Bureau: Virgil Peterson has probably already given you data about its beginning. I am not sure, but obviously it was functioning in 1925. (See "Historic Homes of America" copyright 1925 by Red Cedar Shingle Bureau and printed in U.S.A.

Note: Have just received this year's announcement of the Fifty Ninth Annual Meeting of the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau for September 20, 1974. This means that shingle manufacturers must have started their annual meetings in 1915. I don't think it was the "Bureau" then--more likely the "Shingle Branch."

In Canada:

1. The British Columbia Lumber & Shingle Manufacturers Association was operating when I started with the Vancouver Lumber Company in 1912.
2. The Shingle Agency of B. C. also functioned for shingle manufacturers during the 1st decade, but so far I have not found any relics of this group.
3. The promotion of British Columbia "Edg-Grain" Inspected shingles started in the early 1920s, under the name of Shingle Manufacturers Association of British Columbia.
4. The Consolidated Shingle Mills of British Columbia Ltd. This became the new name about 1928 when a more intensive and expensive promotional program was initiated under the new trademark EDGWOOD.
5. About 1930 and the beginning of the depression the EDGWOOD effort discontinued, and mills in both countries co-operated as the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau in promotion of inspected shingles under the industry label "Certigrade."

Note: Prior to the adoption of Certigrade the Bureau used the word Certified for a limited period.

6. The Consolidated Red Cedar Manufacturers Association of B. C. was a separate organization to handle essentially Canadian matters such as negotiating with Provincial and Federal Government authorities, the Timber Controller and during wartime prices and other regulations. It also worked with the B. C. members of the Bureau in promotion work strictly in Canada and/or some overseas markets where the Red Cedar Shingle Bureau was not already covering with fieldwork, advertising, etc.

7. In recent years, the Consolidated R.C.M. B.C. has become amalgamated with other forest industry associations for Logging Lumber and Plywood in a single grouping now called The Council of Forest Industries.

APPENDIX C

for Chas. Plant

MY CREED

11-5-53

To be Active, to be Proud, to be Tolerant, to have Faith, to have Integrity, and to be Grateful.

To be Active: To be happily active in a way of general worth carries rewards in satisfaction of accomplishment and peace of mind far beyond material gains; besides, an idle machine rusts out much faster than a busy one. Therefore I would remain at work to the end of the final chapter.

To be Proud: The workman proud of his work affords the most favorable service. Therefore I would be proud of whatever I do. Only by earnest application to duties can one measure up to his opportunities.

To be Tolerant: To be tolerant of my friends as I would have them be tolerant of me. To recognize that good fortune may shape one's destiny, but to realize also that adversity may well be an incentive to increased effort and more intensive development of mind to reach greater goals.

To have Faith: It is natural to have faith in an everlasting God as well as faith in country; but also I have faith in my friends and, by faith in myself, I have sought earnestly to merit their confidence in me.

To have Integrity: Personal integrity is the mainspring of successful living - and just as honesty is always the best policy, so integrity encompasses all in social as well as business relationships.

To be Grateful: I am grateful that I have a beloved mate who has been an inspiration in whatever I have done and, with the blessed understanding of a good mother, has taken responsibility in molding the lives of a happy and useful family.

And Lastly: I am grateful for the vision and high purpose of the founders of our republic in establishing a system of competitive and free enterprise. Under this system and during my lifetime I have seen our country grow from 35 million to 150 million people, enjoying freedom, comforts and opportunities utterly unknown to less fortunate peoples. I am therefore grateful that I have had a small part in developing and preserving that system. MAY GOD BLESS AMERICA.

J. H. Bloedel

*J. H. Bloedel**J. H. Bloedel*

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