



The Age of Paper

From the day of the reign of King Menes to the present time, the art of making paper and its use have kept pace with the growth and development of civilization itself. Humanity has passed successively through the ages of stone and of metal to the modern day, the age of paper.

George W. Mead





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The Age of Paper



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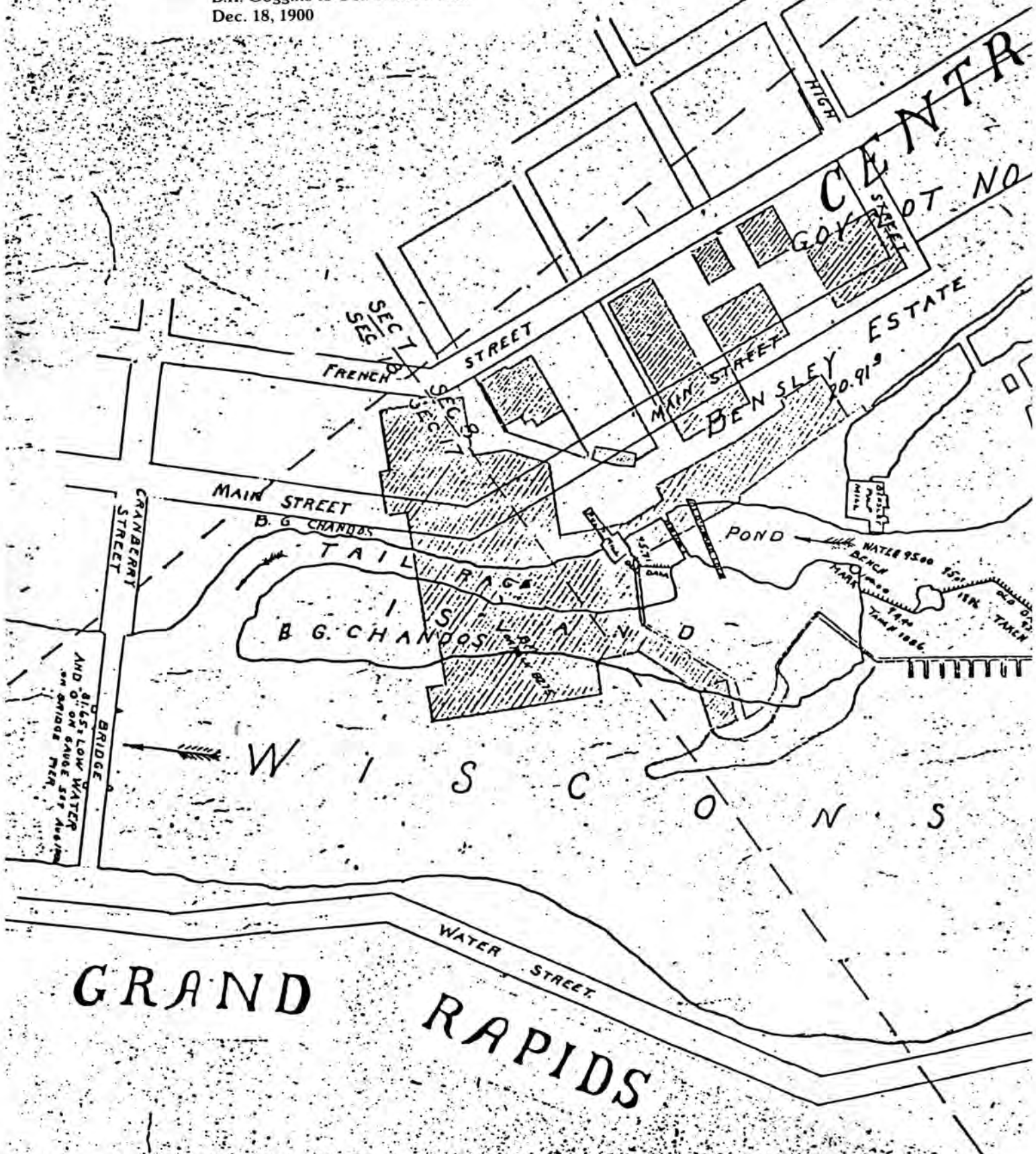
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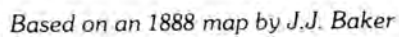
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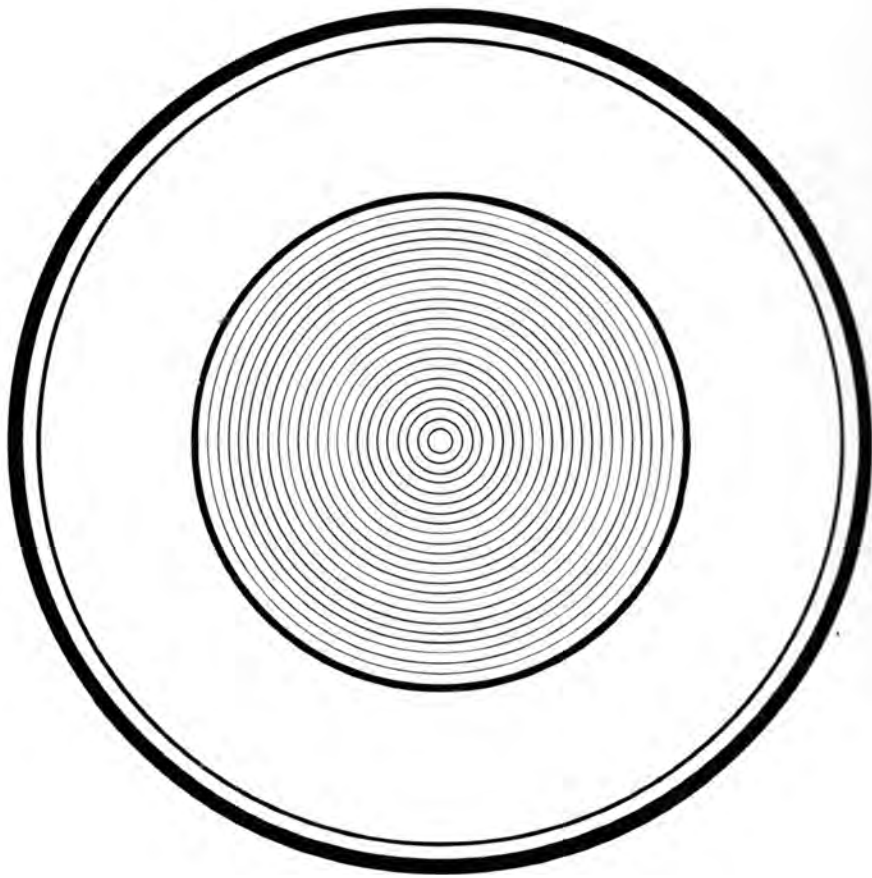


The Baker Map was not sent up to the Supreme Court with the rest of the record. It is a very large affair as you will remember and upon a long heavy roller, and both Williams and ourselves will want to use it and we will have it there at the argument.

B.R. Goggins to Col. Wm. F. Vilas
Dec. 18, 1900







The Embalming of Ta Zerta

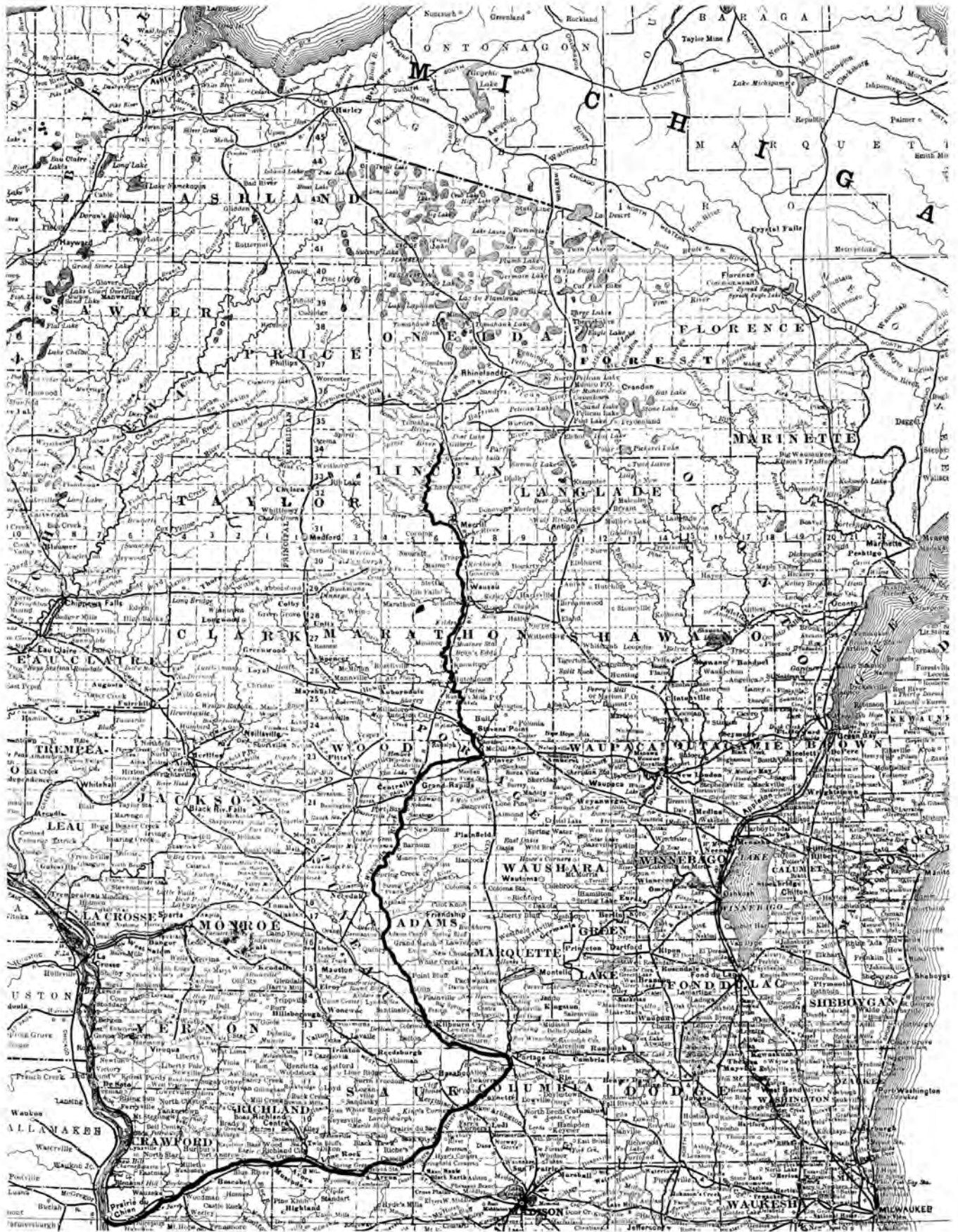
In a 1929 *Consolidated News*, George Mead, writing as president of Consolidated Water Power and Paper Co., passed on the following account of bitter-sweet events surrounding the invention of paper. It seems, said Mead, that King Menes of Egypt wanted a writing surface more convenient and portable than that which he had been using, namely, the walls of caves. To find such a medium, Menes sent his faithful servant, Ta Zerta, into the Nile valley in search of something thin, flat, lightweight and able to take an impression.

Somewhere between Khartoum and Cairo, Ta Zerta became inspired to break up several twigs of the papyrus plant and pound them to a pulp. The

natural gum of the papyrus was released as a glue. Ta Zerta, impressed by the breakthrough, fell asleep in the noon-day sun. When he awoke, he found something thin, flat, lightweight and able to take an impression. Ta Zerta had made paper.

When he reported back to his master, King Menes, the faithful servant learned a special award had been conferred upon him. The inventor, Ta Zerta, would be allowed to live just as long as old and infirm King Menes should live. More rewarding ultimately, when the master died, the servant would be run through with a sword, and, as a final encomium, be embalmed and entombed among the kings.

Wisconsin, 1885



True Paper

True paper may not have been invented until 105 A.D. when mulberry bark, fish nets, hemp and rags were fashioned into a product very roughly resembling that beneath this ink. Rags continued as the primary raw material through 1690 when William Rittenhouse established the first paper mill in America. His paper, and that of other manufacturers then, was made by hand.

Although raw material remained scarce and production per mill miniscule by modern standards, the United States paper industry grew rapidly with the expanding civilization. By 1800, paper was made at 185 mills. Experiments began, using wood and straw as raw materials. Cylinder and Fourdrinier paper machines were developed and makers continued to try pulping wood, corn stalks and straw. The first enameled paper was patented in England, coated with a mixture of animal sizing, isinglass, gum and white lead.

Continued shortages of rag stock led to successful production of ground-wood paper, made for the first time in the western hem-

isphere in 1841. The first wood pulp mill was built in Canada in 1865.

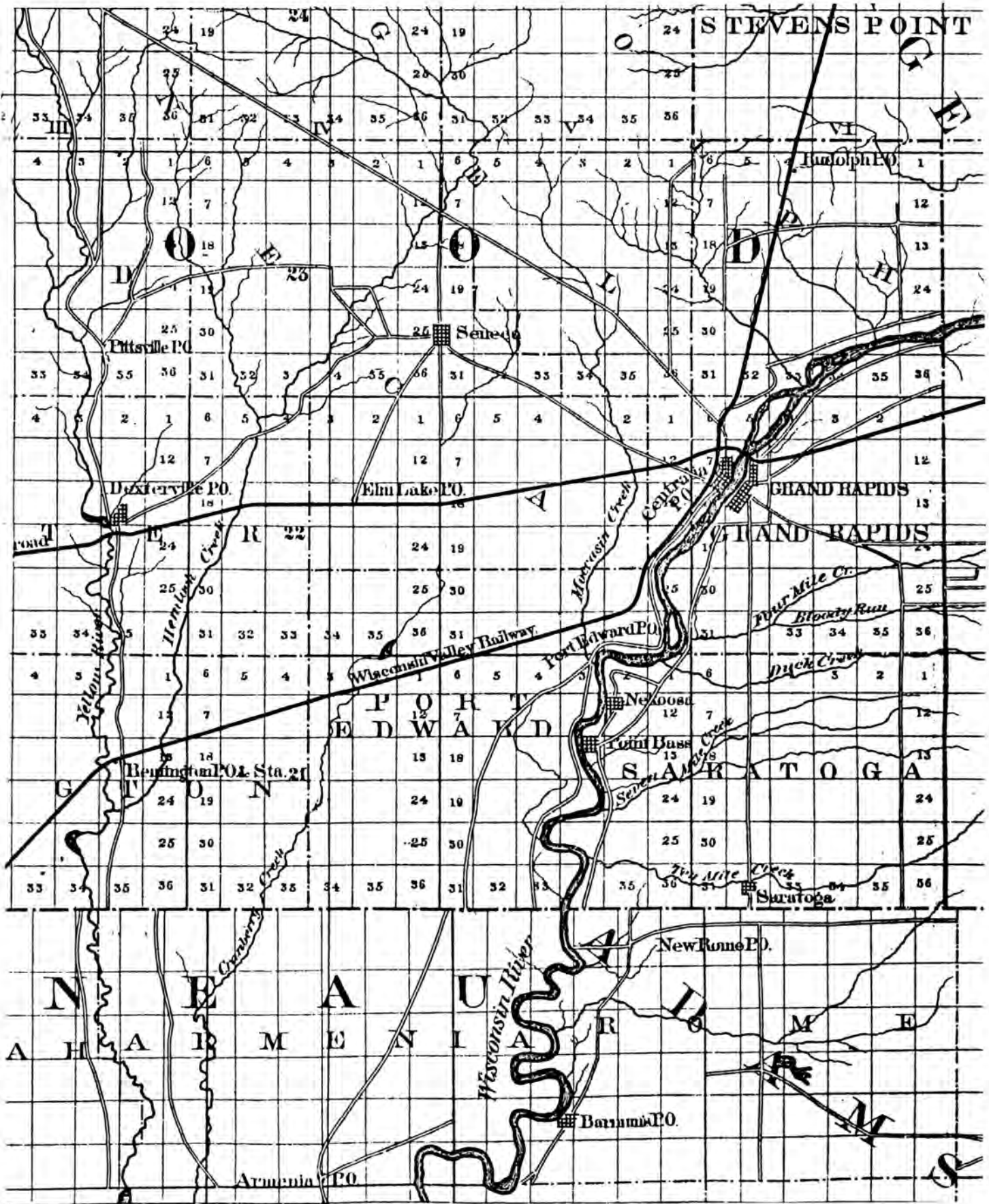
At the same time, chemical pulping of wood became a possibility and the coating of paper continued to be the subject of mid-19th century experimentation.

As the frontier moved westward, so did papermaking. In 1848, a 10-man cylinder mill was built at Milwaukee. The production amounted to 110 reams per week, said to be enough to supply the entire press of the state.

The Wisconsin Paper industry soon converged on the Fox River valley. Here could be had a large quantity of water, sufficient water power, level banks, raw material (rags and straw) and access to the new papermaking machinery manufacturers of Beloit.

The first mill on the Fox, built in 1855 at what was to be the Interlake operation, manufactured wrapping paper from straw. In 1872, the partnership formed that would be the driving force of the valley, Kimberly, Clark & Co., which by 1909 owned nine mills housing 17 paper machines.

1876 Atlas



Wood Pulp

Before 1871, nearly all paper in Wisconsin was made from cotton rags, white paper waste, or straw. At various times, other materials were tried, including algae, asparagus, bananas, frog spittle, hay, hop vines, moss, nettles, peat, seaweed, thistles and water lilies. A proposal had been put forward to try cow dung. Egyptian mummies such as Ta Zerta may have become were imported, the wrappings and other fibers to be used in making butcher paper.

The innovation of wood as a raw material for making paper vitalized the Wisconsin industry. Pulp grinders were introduced at Appleton in 1871. Kimberly, Clark & Co. built a big ground-wood mill in 1886.

An alternate to ground-wood pulping was the sulphite process, using sulphuric acid to dissolve intercellular matter in wood.

Sulphite processing had begun in America in 1882 and was used by Kimberly, Clark & Co. along with wood grinding.

Besides Kimberly-Clark, other

important Fox River ventures began. In 1874, Asa W. Patten, a Massachusetts native who had been involved in chairmaking, flour-milling, lumbering and mining, built his paper mill at Neenah. Claiming ill health and a desire to rusticate, Patten, in 1879, deeded his property to his son Thomas and to his son-in-law, John McNaughton, a former bank teller who became president of the Patten Paper Co.

Also in 1874, a partnership headed by John R. Davis was formed at Neenah. A year later, Col. George Whiting joined the enterprise. Along with Patten and McNaughton, he began to look beyond the Fox valley for opportunities.

At the same time wood pulp had become practical as a raw material, technical developments opened new markets that the Fox valley could not fill. Patten, Whiting and McNaughton turned their attention to the west.



Frank Garrison

Founders

Two men with similar backgrounds have been credited with founding the paper industry on the Wisconsin River. The first was Frank Garrison of the twin river cities of Grand Rapids-Centralia. The second was George A. Whiting of the twin river cities of Neenah-Menasha.

Whiting, born November 18, 1852, moved to Ripon, Wis. with his parents in 1854. After attending public schools and Ripon College, he went to Poughkeepsie, N.Y., where he took a full course at Eastman's Business College. He returned to Wisconsin in 1865 as an employee of Pettibone and Jones dry-goods merchants of Neenah.

After attending Centralia schools, Garrison went to Ripon College. He began industrial life working for his father, Orestes, in the woods and for a short time operated the family sawmill.

Whiting sold dry goods for four years then went to work for the Harris Manufacturing Co. of Janesville. In 1871, he returned to Neenah and originated the enterprise that later developed into the Kimberly & Clark Co.

Garrison entered the general-merchandise business in Centralia in 1875.

Whiting ended his connection with the Kimberly & Clark operation after a couple of months and again was employed as a traveling salesman. In 1875, he became connected with the Winnebago Paper Mills as secretary and active manager, continuing in that capacity for six years "and becoming thoroughly conversant with all the details of the paper manufacturing business," according to his biography in Publius Lawson's 1908 "History of Winnebago County."

Garrison was married in 1876 to Celia Rossier, daughter of E.B. Rossier, editor of the Centralia Enterprise. Rossier, formerly of Switzerland, had come to Centralia in 1858.

He established a mercantile store, won considerable prominence in the law firm of Hayden, Rossier and Baker, supervised construction of the Wisconsin Valley Railroad and served from 1870-73 as cashier of the Grand Rapids Bank. Rossier was also city treasurer, city clerk, chairman of the board of supervisors for Wood County and postmaster.

Garrison's father, Orestes, also provided Frank with an example in industrial life, becoming the owner of hundreds of acres of timberlands, operator of a large sawmill, rafter of many fleets of lumber down the river and probably financial backer of his son.

Whiting, said to be hard to get along with, severed his connection with the Winnebago mills in 1881 and associated with William Gilbert of Chicago as Gilbert & Whiting. Together they operated a paper mill in Menasha until Whiting bought out Gilbert in 1886.

Garrison sold out his mercantile business in 1887, to J.D. Witter. He had a more important project in mind. It was the one that would bring him soon into partnership with George Whiting. Beginning in 1886, Garrison would be involved in bringing the wood pulp industry to the Wisconsin and making that industry successful.

Meanwhile, Whiting's paper mill at Menasha continued to operate successfully until a disastrous fire and fatal explosion destroyed the plant. Fifteen residents of Menasha were killed and 70 more were injured by the explosion of rotary bleach. For a time, Whiting was in severe financial difficulty because he was unable to collect his insurance until after a protracted court battle. Nevertheless, he rebuilt an improved factory and, having succeeded again, turned his attention to the Centralia Pulp & Water Power Co. Frank Garrison, his father-in-law Rossier and others were trying to establish.



Ray Nash

Centralia Pulp & Water Power Co.

Home Capital

To exploit the development of wood as a raw material for paper, a combination of local and Fox River Valley energy and expertise initiated the paper industry on the Wisconsin River.

Five years before any paper was made, the enterprise began as a chartered corporation in 1886 called the Centralia Pulp and Water Power Co. Its stated object was to erect a pulp and paper mill at "Hurleyville," a sawmill site in south Centralia. Some of the best businessmen of Grand Rapids and Centralia combined, according to E.B. Rossier, editor of the Centralia Enterprise and an investor in the Centralia project, "with the view of investing home capital at home, which up to this time, has too rarely been the case." Officers of the new company were Frank Garrison, president; J.D. Witter, treasurer; E.B. Rossier, secretary. The board of directors included John Farrish, Nels Johnson and Frank Pomainville.

Operations were supposed to commence as soon as plans for a dam and structure could be adopted. "Work will be pushed forward with all possible energy," wrote Rossier.

All possible energy did not result then in a pulp mill. Not until March 21, 1887, did the subject see print again. "We have heretofore said but little about the prospects of that corpora-

tion because up to this time the parties interested were not yet prepared to go to work," said the Enterprise.

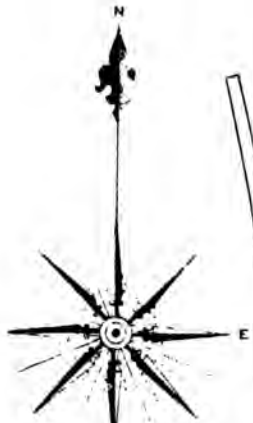
Strangers came to town, however, to save the day. "Messrs. Whiting and Steele, of Appleton, both practical men in the business, have agreed to take a large part of the capital stock of the company." The intention was to have the pulp mill completed and running by the following August, at a cost of \$50,000.

G. Frank Steele, appointed superintendent and secretary of the Centralia Pulp and Water Power Co., arrived from Appleton to make his home at Centralia. "This inaugurates the preliminary movements for the building of the dam and mill. The work will now be pushed to completion as fast as men and money can do it."

In May, Rossier again was discouraged. "If, to secure the whole right to the necessary water power and to prevent possible lawsuits, new purchases of sand banks have to be submitted to, we for one, are in favor of not spending another cent on the venture."

George Whiting came over from Neenah in June to consult with the directors of the company "in regard to the question whether the work of building the mills should commence or be abandoned."

Centralia
1891



NO EXPOSURES

Harper

5
144

Spruce & Poplar Logs
Platform

ROAD

Wisconsin
River

Dam

1

Crib Entry
Plank Bridge

Pulp Mill

2nd 30'
Saw & Cut 20'
1st Mach 15'
30'
Stuff Chest
East 30'

Grinding Machs
Turnings 30'

Wheel Ho.
100 Crib Work

Eng 30'
Eng 30'
Dinner Stuff
East 30'

2
7
0
Dry Run Single
Stone Pump
40'
10' x 10' on 10' base
Cyclone Shaver
Collector
Under Roof

CENTRALIA PULP AND WATER POWER CO.
2 Miles S. of Centralia P.O.

RUN DAY & NIGHT WATER POWER
NIGHT & SUNDAY WATCHMAN, BUREAU CLOCK
LAPAC, 10 TONS OF PRINTING PAPER PER DAY
5" MAIN IN PIPE FROM DAYTON PUMP RUNS
THROUGH PAPER & PULP MILLS TO HYDROS &
HOUSE ATTD IN ALL RMS. 100' 2" RUBBER &
OUTSIDE HOUSE DISTRIBUTED PAIRS OF
LIGHTS FROM MOTHER DYNAMO. STEAM
HEAT FROM STURTEVANT SUMMER
FUEL, EDGINGS & SHAVOS HIR BLUNT
SHAVOS CONVEYOR, ASBESTOS FELT UNDER
ALL IRON CLAD.

STONE BRIDGE TO BRIDGE 8' UP 20' FLOOR
Sture 10m 10' Paper Mach 104'

Finishing 20'
Shipping 20'

NO EXPOSURE

No Expos

Transforming Hurleyville

Whiting decided to commence. The newspaper was able to report in July the transformation of Hurleyville. Tenant houses and a large boarding house had been repaired. Ruins of an old sawmill and an old paint shop used by a pail and tub factory on the site were removed.

Cars could not be obtained to transport timber, and work was again delayed in August. Yet, a large force of workmen was expected to be employed and in a month the dam across the river would be completed.

Misfortune struck in November. The boarding house burned down. Among the contents destroyed were the clothes of that large force of workmen. Without rooms and a change of clothing for the workers, another minor delay resulted.

In January, 1888, Whiting and Steele, both present, watched nervously as the new mill ground its maiden bundle of pulp. "However cool and determined a man is," wrote Rossier, perhaps thinking of himself, "there is always an instant when the tensions of his nerves become visible, in an experiment of this kind, and more especially so, when some fifty or sixty thousand dollars have been invested."

All went well. The gates opened, wheels rolled and the machinery worked "as smoothly as a Davis sewing machine. The mill is perfect in all its parts."

February brought a regular meeting

of the stockholders and officers. Directors were F. Garrison, J.D. Witter, F. Steele, E.B. Rossier and John Farrish. Garrison was president; Steele, secretary; and Witter, treasurer.

About that time, Whiting, who with his brother had owned more than a quarter of the stock, sold out to Steele at 50 cents on the dollar above face value. The stock was then apportioned between the other stockholders, "so that the whole plant is now in the hands of home parties."

That month, the South Centralia mill manufactured 57,400 pounds or 574 bundles of pulp in 24 hours and over 500 bundles every day during the week. Poplar was coming in freely but spruce proved difficult to obtain because of the deep snow.

Whiting, who had got in quick and out quicker, never saw paper manufactured in his Centralia mill. He may have agreed with other "Appleton" men that the water in the Wisconsin contained too much "vegetable matter."

Not until 1891, was paper first made. On Friday, April 24, the new paper mill of Garrison's company was set in motion and the first roll of paper ever made in the Wisconsin River Valley was turned out.

"Projected and built by our own people and now owned by them," wrote the Enterprise, "the completion of this plant marks another epoch in our history which is of more than passing importance."



Welcome Hyde

Welcome Hyde & Co.

The men of vision who opened the Wisconsin River to new industries often emanated from more civilized parts of the world. In many cases, they remained in cities like Neenah and Appleton while conducting their affairs here. Such an investor was Capt. Welcome Hyde, lumberman and landowner of Appleton. Born in Vermont in 1824, Hyde was the son of a lumberman who had previously lost his considerable fortune at the hands of French raiders who "despoiled" his vessels in the West Indies.

Hyde received an education at the hand of his father and to some extent in Ohio and Illinois schools, supporting himself for a year at Rock River Seminary. After graduation, he "became associated with a gentleman of some means," John Matkin, who supplied Hyde with the funds to purchase cattle in southern Illinois, which he drove to the developing state of Wisconsin to sell. This became the foundation for his fortune. Hyde, familiar with the pineries, was the first to fully explore the Embarrass River, in 1850. He moved to Outagamie County, bought 640 acres, and cultivated farming and lumbering.

Hyde's most influential friend and business partner was Philetus Sawyer, for whom Hyde surveyed and cruised timber throughout the north.

While in the Outagamie-Waupaca county area in the decade before the War Between the States, Hyde influenced greatly the settlement of New London, Bear Creek, Clintonville and Embarrass, finding farm land for newcomers and locating pine lands for investors. When war intervened, Hyde rounded up a company of volunteers and joined the 17th Wisconsin Infantry. He was made captain but abandoned the military

because of ill health in 1862. His business successes, however, continued in the pink.

Hyde moved to Appleton in 1866. Continuing to expand his investments, he looked to Upper Michigan, Minnesota, Georgia, Florida and, slightly less hyperopically, Grand Rapids.

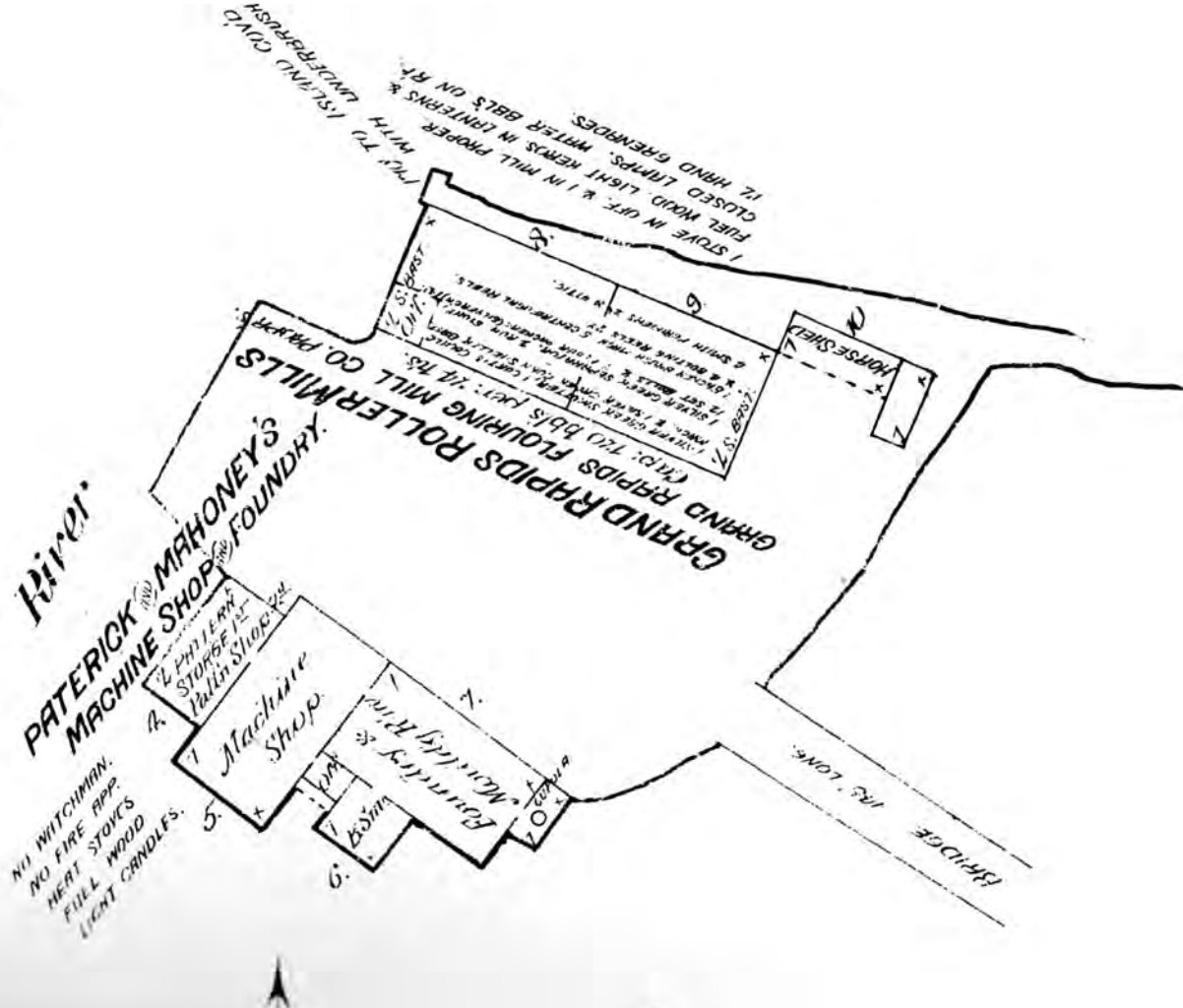
It became apparent in December, 1881, that Hyde and his lieutenant, Major Cole, who had been investigating the property for some time, had decided to purchase the old Rablin water power and mill in Grand Rapids, on the condition that citizens of Grand Rapids donate \$3,000 to build dams. Stevens Point had already made Hyde a bid to locate in that town.

On January 26, local newspapers were able to report that Hyde had bought the Rablin property for an amount George Hiles quoted as \$18,500. Hiles had been contracted to put in a dam. The pulp mill machinery would be moved from Appleton.

The new enterprise was welcomed enthusiastically. For 40 years a center for an immense lumber trade, the twin cities of Centralia and Grand Rapids had experienced a depression of sorts when the pine ran out.

"Alone, untenanted and unkempt the old mills stood, beaten by storms and racked by the winds, wrecks of what once were the busy workshops of a city's bone and sinew," wrote the Reporter of July 27, 1882. "The whispered words went forth 'Grand Rapids has seen its best day' 'Grand Rapids is dead.' "

Now "new men, new capital, new enterprise all of which we are sadly in need of" had come to save the day. "To Welcome Hyde & Co. we mainly owe our deliverance."



Impressions of Major Cole

In March, Cole came from Appleton with machinery and 20 men. They tore down the old saw mill, erected piers, repaired flumes and set about putting in the pulp mill. The mill was completed in July and at the end of that month began making pulp from pine slabs. The product was shipped to Appleton. Expectation was that the following winter a paper mill would be installed to utilize the pulp.

A reporter visited the mill soon after its start-up. He found Major Cole busy at work with his coat off, as usual, obliging and courteous. The major guided the reporter through the plant and explained the making of pulp. Rough pine slabs brought into the mill were sawed into pieces two feet in length, then placed in a steam chest and steamed until the bark could be easily removed. Barkless, the slabs were thrown into the grinders. The resulting pulp descended through pipes into a basement vat to be pumped back up, washed and cleaned.

The operation seemed to work but owner Hyde, in the manner of a speculator, was ready to sell out at year's end. The water power, real estate and pulp mill could be purchased for \$42,000.

A group of local investors responded to a call from James Walsh of Chicago to buy shares at \$100 each. Walsh himself would take 150. Other notables involved were J.D. Witter, Nels Johnson, F. Pomainville, Coleman-Jackson

& Co., G.R. Gardner and F.J. Wood. The deal, however, was not consummated.

Capt. Welcome Hyde had, in his brief encounter, changed the nature of Grand Rapids industry. He had brought the first pulp mill to what was to become a paper city. Major Cole also made a lasting impression. The Centralia Enterprise offered a retrospective on that individual on February 2, 1884.

"There is a man roving around this world of ours whose name is Major Cole. He pretends to hail from Appleton, and in days gone by he was general manager of the Welcome Hyde Pulp Mills at Grand Rapids. Last week he put in an appearance at this place and boarded at the Commercial Hotel in this city. Pretending to be general agent of said Hyde, with instruction to sell said pulp mill on commission, he tarried here six or seven days, ate, drank and told Granger stories, but finally disappeared without paying for his board and also forgot to settle with the printer.

"Major Cole is a man about five feet five inches high, has a sort of military look about him, wears No. 1 burnside whiskers and never carries any pocket book. As before stated, he talks the landlord out of his board bill and sponges his way through. He is minus one finger on his right hand . . . This limb was dropped off suddenly—when he was once presenting it at the bar for drinks."



Mrs. Bensley

Pioneers

A somewhat misleading prediction was stated by the Grand Rapids Tribune of February 12, 1887: "Soon will the sounds like unto low and distant thunder greet the ear as they resound from the six grinder pulp mill of M.L. Bensley. Then will be a time of great rejoicing." The big noise was about to happen in a slightly altered manner as Mrs. Marion Louise Jercett McDonald Bensley clashed with her cross-river rival, the Pioneer Wood Pulp Co.

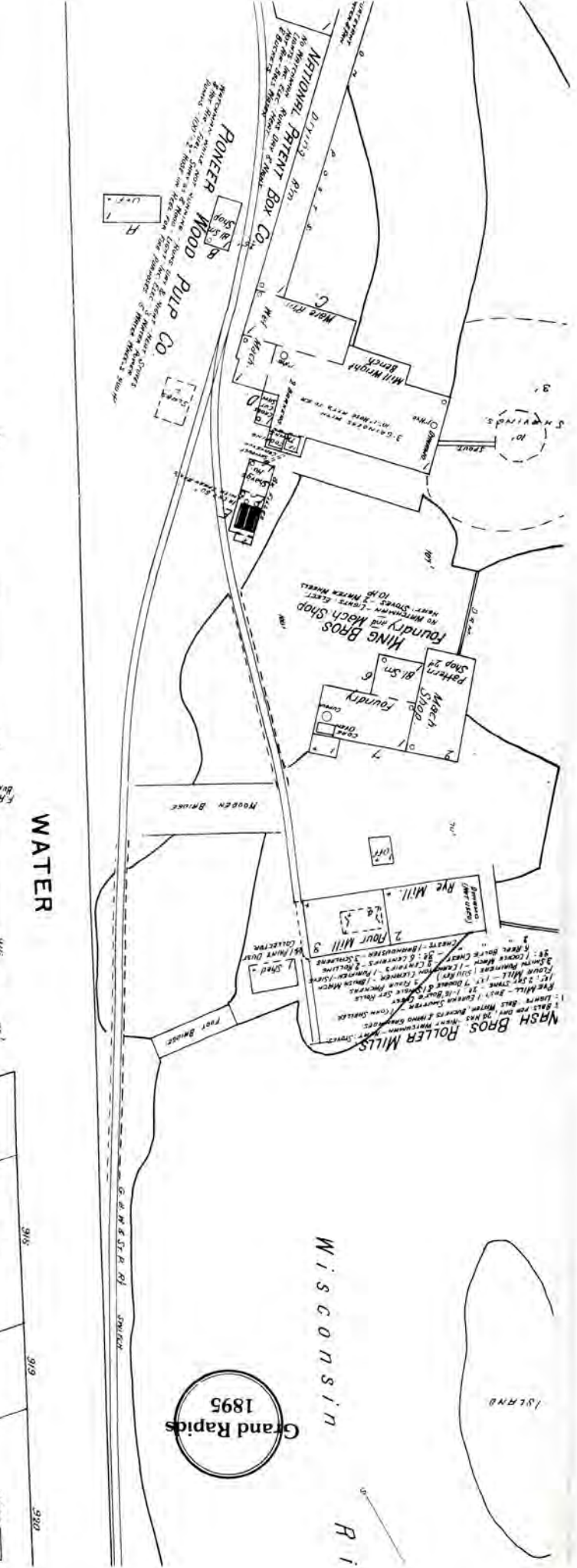
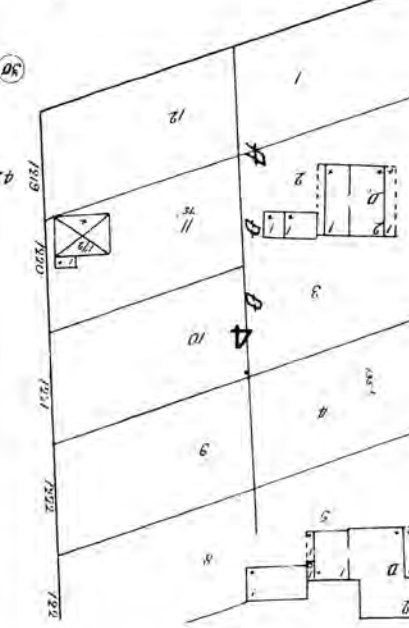
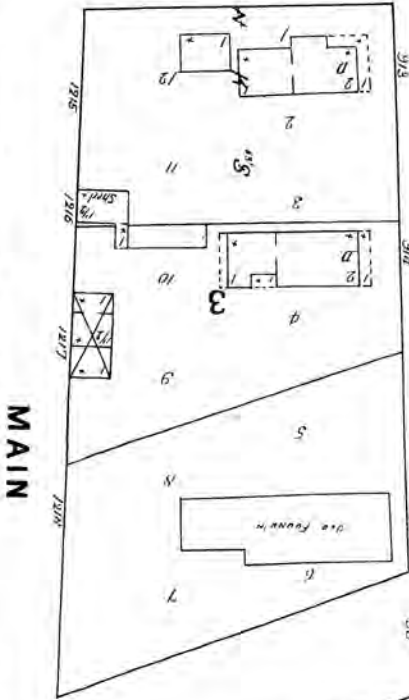
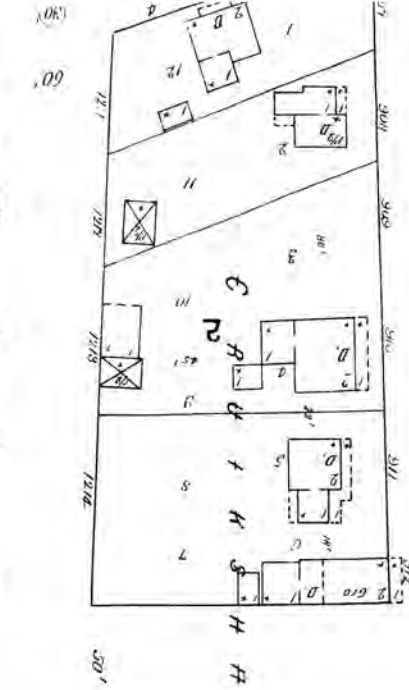
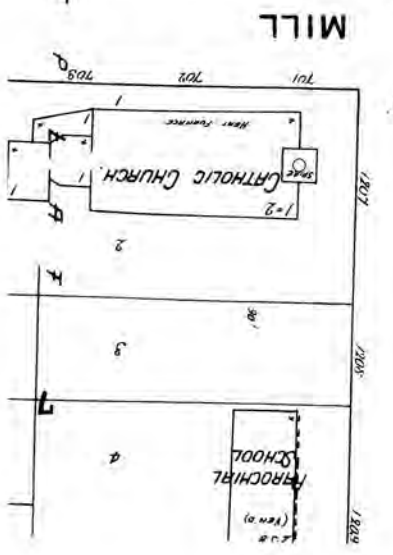
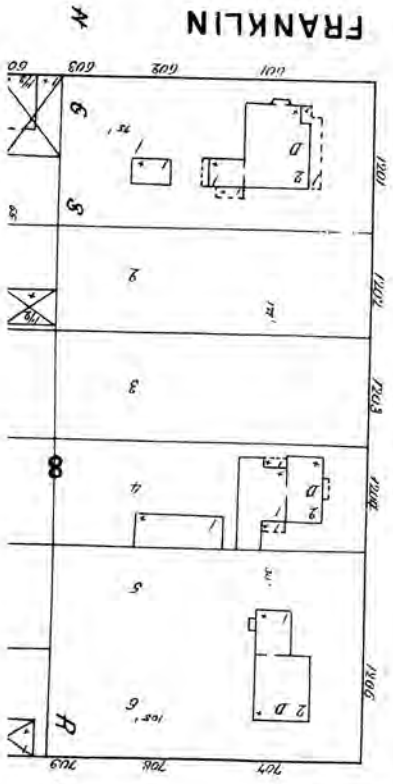
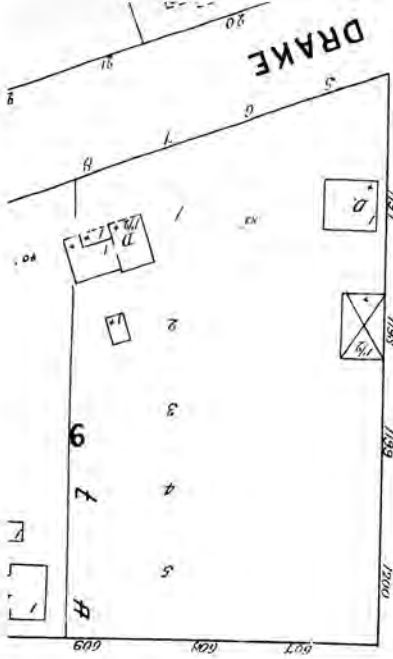
Welcome Hyde had built the first pulp mill here in 1882. He unloaded it as quickly as he could, first by leasing it to Robert and A.M. Pride of Appleton. The Prides installed better grinders and overhauled the machinery. They ran a profitable operation until Hyde sold the mill and water power on November 9 to a stock company known as the Pioneer Wood Pulp Co. of Grand Rapids. Of the new company's 400 shares, 309 were owned by Caroline Hoskinson of Green Bay. George Hoskinson, president of the firm, owned one share. W.E. Mack of Centralia took 80 shares and Falkland MacKinnon 10. In January 1887, Pioneer added two grinders to the two extant and purchased a

large stock of poplar, hemlock and spruce. Hoskinson, who had lived in Green Bay and Jamaica, moved to Grand Rapids.

"There are two other pulp mills," wrote the Green Bay Advocate, "but great difficulty has been experienced by them in insufficient power."

One such concern was the property of John and Marion Bensley. John Bensley, a California investor said to be worth \$10 million at his prime, had come into possession of the Centralia sawmill by loaning his "nephew, Mr. Garrison," a large amount of money and taking security upon that property.

Bensley, native to New York, made a fortune in California, partly by selling mules to the U.S. government during the Mexican war. He established a business office in Sacramento and became a prime mover in many enterprises, including the San Joaquin and Kings River Canal and Irrigation Co., Clear Lake Water Works, Pacific Rolling Mills, Pacific Oil and Lead Works, Pacific Dredging Co., Tuolumne County Water Co. and Black Diamond Coal Mining Co.



Grand Rapids
1895

WISCONSIN

R I

ISLAND

Mrs. Bensley's Revenge

Mrs. Bensley, widow first of George Greville, an Englishman, had accompanied her second husband, John Bensley, through most of his later ventures. The two were married in 1869 at Grand Rapids, where she had been inspecting land purchased through an agent.

By the time Bensley moved to Centralia, he was in ill health, suffering from Bright's disease. Mrs. Bensley conducted the business.

Under the Bensleys' control, the old abandoned Garrison sawmill was improved in 1883 at enormous expense, "transformed into one of the best manufacturing establishments on the Wisconsin River," said the Centralia Enterprise.

The race was repaired and the capacity of the pond increased. A new rotary saw, edger, trimmer, lath mill and shingle mill were added. Speculation included a possible pulp and paper mill.

The improvements amounted to money thrown into the river. The Bensleys owned no pine timber and had no ready way to get any. By this time, most lumber was manufactured farther north, near the raw material.

After going to such expense improving the sawmill, the machinery was, after several seasons of indecision, removed and the facility converted to a pulp mill.

By December 1886, the pulp mill was rolling. In fact, the barker exploded and shot three pieces through the roof. It sounded like thunder, or dynamite.

In March 1887, the Wood County Reporter described how pulp was made at Bensley's. Wood sawed into 2-foot lengths in the basement was barked and split before

being inserted into the grinders, two of which operated during the day and three at night when the Neeves' grist mill on the same water power shut down.

Now, after going to enormous expense improving and dredging the slough to accrue sufficient power to run the grist and pulp mill, Mrs. Bensley found that, in low water, there was not sufficient head to run both mills at full capacity. She approached the state Legislature for a charter to erect an 18-inch dam at Big Island below Biron's Mill. Through the opposition of Hoskinson and the Pioneer, the bill was defeated.

Mrs. Bensley got mad.

It seems the west end of the Pioneer dam rested on land owned by Marion Bensley. Remove the dam, she said, on March 28.

The dam was not removed.

Mrs. Bensley got a little madder.

On the night of April 4, 1887, a thundering racket burst many riverside slumbers from their repose as several charges of dynamite blew holes in the Pioneer dam.

As a result, a large portion of the Wisconsin River rushed through the gaps made by the explosions. The mill pond of the Pioneer Wood Pulp Co. and that of the Grand Rapids Flouring Co. dropped eight inches. Also placed at great inconvenience was the log-rafting industry.

"The most obnoxious feature of the act is that it does not benefit Mrs. M.L. Bensley in any manner," said the Centralia Enterprise, "While it does not bring a single drop more water to her mill, it is quite an injury to other parties not interested in this quarrel."

Mrs. Bensley had her revenge.

Mack & Spencer



When young Mr. Mack and young Mr. Spencer started up their pulp mill in Grand Rapids, they had to deal with Mrs. Marion Bensley.

Initially, it was necessary to file an injunction (in 1884) to determine the right of the parties to the water power in the Garrison slough on the west bank of the Wisconsin. When in 1886, Mack and Spencer installed an electric light company, Mrs. Bensley had their poles on the

island near the mill cut down, claiming they were on her land. "It might possibly be wiser policy for both contending parties to settle such difficulties amicably instead of pouring more inflammable material on the red hot ashes," opined the *Centralia Enterprise* of September 9, 1886.

"Continued litigation and disagreement have ostracised these firms from any feeling akin to charity," said the *Grand Rapids Tribune*."



Wisconsin Wood Pulp Co.

In April of 1887, Mrs. Bensley served notice on W.E. Mack and C.A. Spencer that they were to remove from her land their dam. Mack and Spencer asked the protection of the city authorities. They were afraid Mrs. Bensley would do to them what she had done to the Pioneer mill: settle the dispute with dynamite.

Later that year, Mrs. Bensley sued Mack and Spencer to prevent them from allowing their pulpwood shavings to

accumulate on her land or anywhere near it. She also demanded \$1,000 for past offenses.

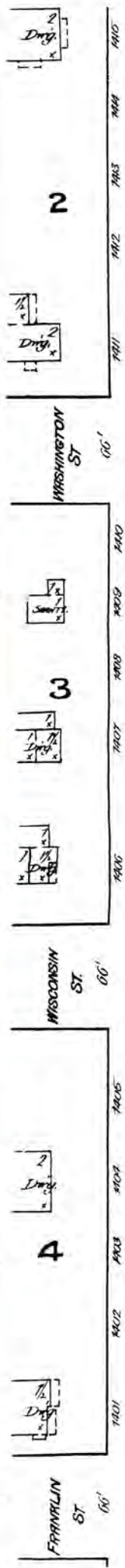
How did the latest Castor and Pollux of the pulp industry get in such a spot?

Soon after Welcome Hyde had purchased the Rablin property and converted an old saw mill into the first pulp mill in the twin cities, Spencer and Mack, "two energetic young men, appeared on the scene from Chicago." The two decided to buy a water power sufficient to run a pulp mill. After two months, Mack and Spencer arranged to buy the shingle mill of R.C. Lyons of Centralia. They immediately began clearing the head race of old slabs and built new dams, guard locks, flumes and structures housing three large grinders and other machinery including a Brightmann refiner and "72 wet machine."

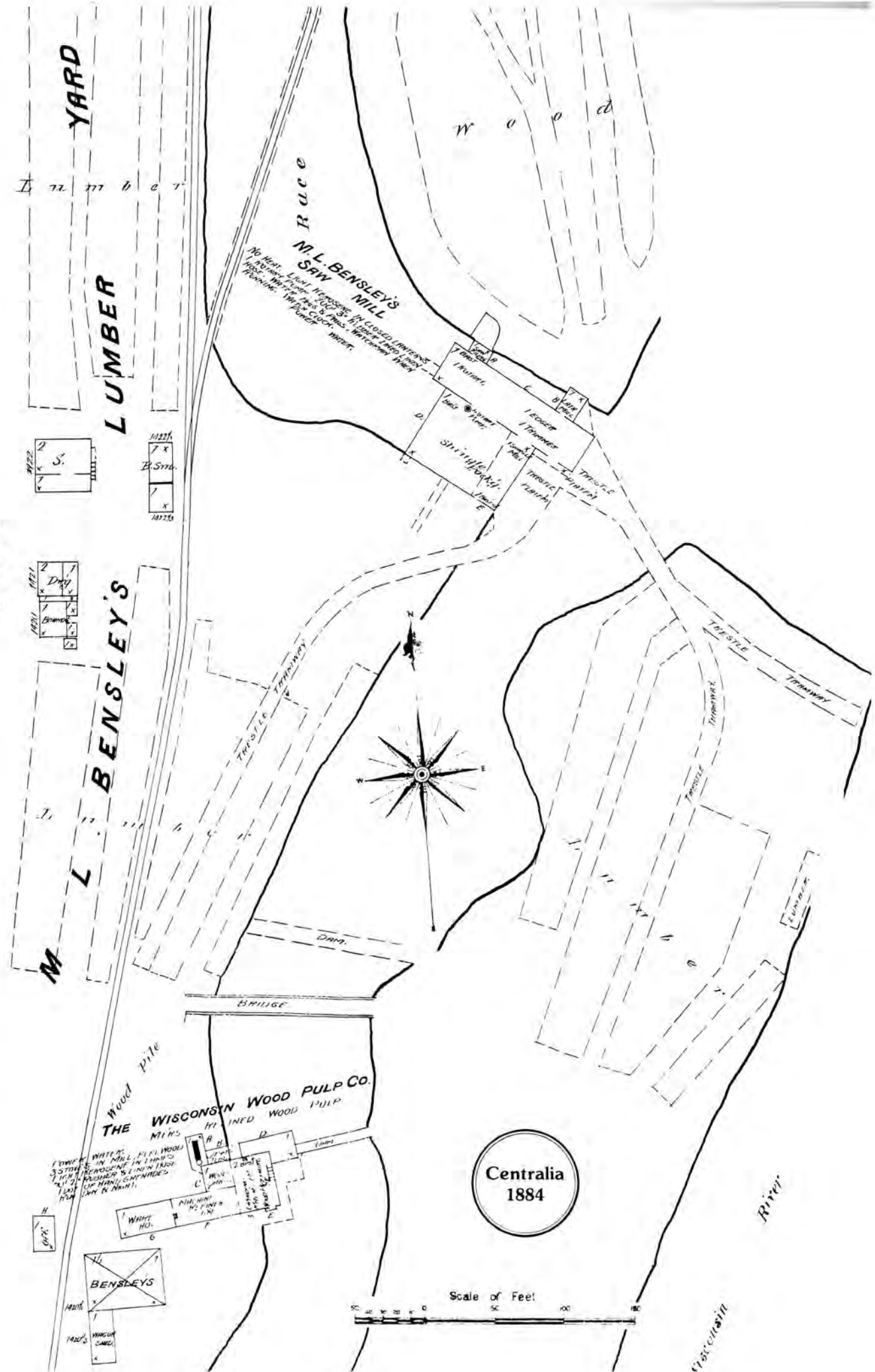
The mill started October 16, 1882, and could produce 5 tons of pulp per day.

The firm of "Spencer and Mack" organized into a stock company in February 1883, known as "The Wisconsin Wood Pulp Company." Officers were C.A. Spencer, president; W.E. Mack, secretary; C.A. Spencer, W.E. Mack and Geo. L. Williams, a local attorney, directors.

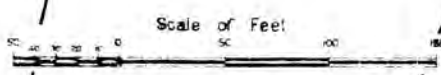
A poplar barker went haywire in September, 1883, causing damage to the buildings and to the company, causing the Centralia Enterprise to comment: "Messrs. Spencer & Mack seem to have to sustain more than their just share of mishaps, of late, but such is fate, and the only true way to do under such circumstances is to grin and stand it."



MAIN



Centralia
1884



Incandescent Light

By November, Mack was married. Wrote the Grand Rapids Tribune, "Mr. W.E. Mack and his fair bride arrived in this city this week."

Mack and Spencer made pulp from poplar. They also used basswood, according to an April, 1885, Wood County Reporter, to be marketed in Chicago.

"Slush-ice" caused the mill to shut down in December, 1885. "It is feared that the supply of water will fail so that the shares of the electric light company may go down three-fourths of a cent on the dollar. We hope not."

The electric company—another name for Mack and Spencer. The electric light machine was set in operation for the first time in mid-December, 1885.

The Centralia flouring mills were supplied with five lights, the pulp mill with 15, Frank Garrison's store with 15, W.E. Mack's residence with five. Other merchants had contracted for a specified number of lights, which would soon be installed. "The experiment is a complete success," wrote the Tribune. "Everybody speaks in the highest terms of the volume as well as the steadiness of the light."

At that time, Mack and Spencer proposed to light the bridge with electric light for \$56 per year, one half to be paid by Centralia, the other half by Grand Rapids.

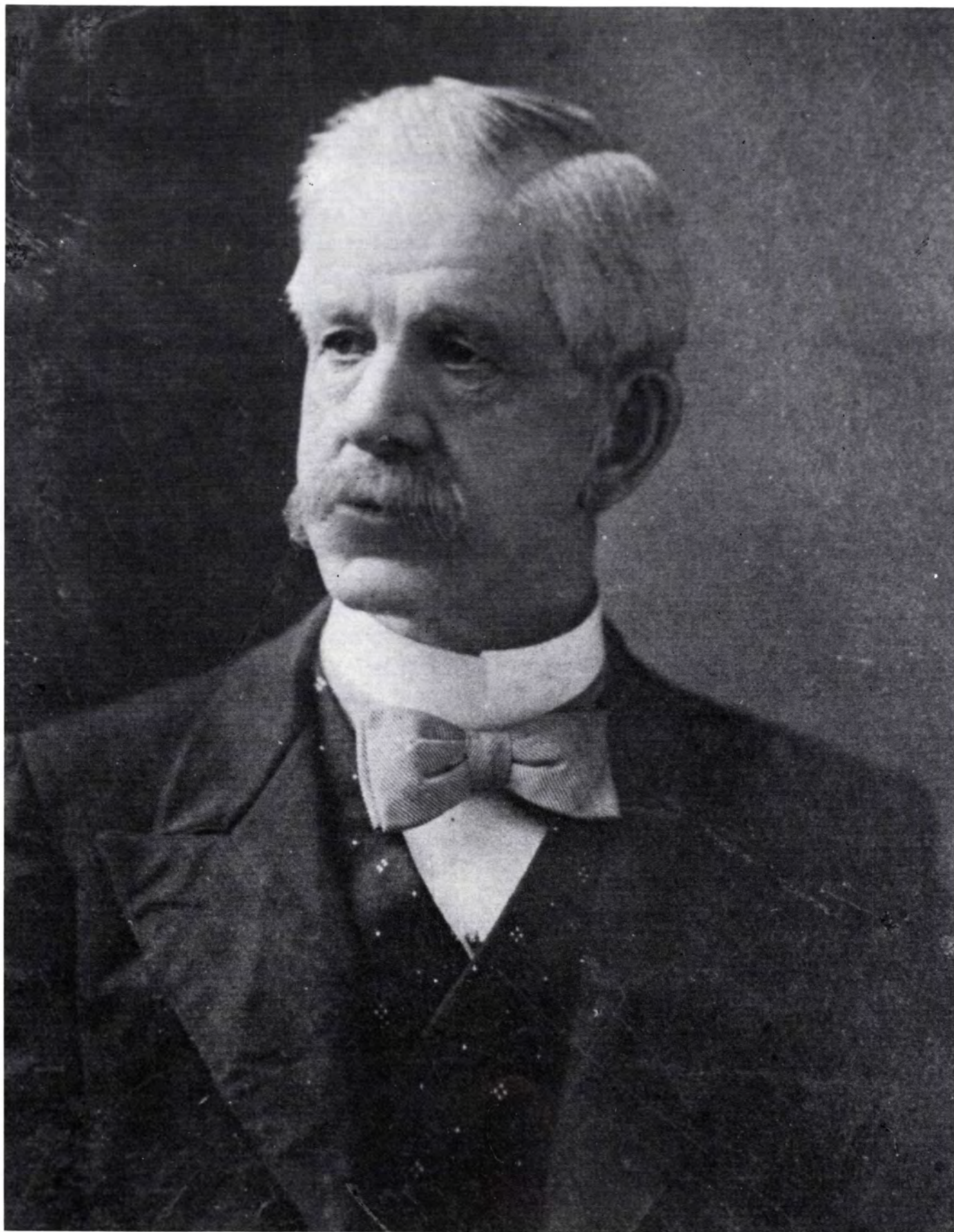
An August, 1886, Tribune touted some of the advantages of the incandescent light being introduced "everywhere." "We shall soon cease to hear of the many suffocations from the use of gas, disastrous fires and explosions."

"In these two cities, the company is meeting with phenomenal success in the demand for these lights and it is calculated that at least three hundred lamps will be in operation within thirty days. The lights will be so arranged that each one may be turned off and are entirely independent of every other."

In November, 1886, Mack & Spencer received at their pulp mill four large turbine water wheels, three of which were to be used to operate their mill, the fourth to propel the electric light plant. The price of lights was reduced to \$6 apiece. "We understand almost every store in town will have a number of the lights put in as soon as possible."

On April 4, 1887, the Tribune illuminated a less-shining prospect.

"On last Thursday evening, the following named attorneys and litigants departed for Sparta, to take part in the trial of issues pending between Mack & Spencer and M.L. Bensley:—Geo. R. Gardner and Geo. L. Williams, of this city; M.A. Hurley, W.C. Silverthorne and G.D. Jones, of Wausau; Moses Hooper, of Oshkosh, and Messrs. B.G. Chandos, W.E. Mack and C.A. Spencer."



J.D. Witter

J.D. Witter

Pedestrians crossing the Garrison switch on Cranberry Street in 1898 wondered what caused the unusually virulent odor in the immediate vicinity. Upon investigation, it was learned that J.D. Witter, the Grand Rapids farmer, was loading a train car with onions all of his own raising.

To call Jere Delos Witter a farmer proves to be at once accurate and misleading. Although the Witter farm occupied much of the east side of the city, Witter's most important function was as a banker and a civic leader.

Witter was born in Brookfield, N.Y., September 18, 1835, son of Josiah and Calista Langworthy Witter. Although they had apparently attained no particular wealth, the hard-working farm families of his Seventh Day Baptist parents had been in the United States for generations.

As with other boys of that time, Witter's early education consisted mainly of "close application to the work laid before him on the farm."

In 1850, the Witters undertook the covered wagon trek to Waushara County. Jere continued to help out on the farm. At age 18, he spent a brief semester at Milton Academy but returned home the same year.

The Waushara farm proved to be less than bountiful, so Jere soon decided his activities needed a broader and more expansive field. At 20, he began to read law in the Wautoma office of his brother-in-law, W.C. Webb. Soon, Witter became deputy clerk of the county board, a post he held for two years while continuing his legal studies.

In May of 1859, Witter was admitted to the state Bar of Wisconsin at Grand Rapids but returned to Wautoma.

About that time, Witter fell in love—with a photograph.

Witter's physician cousin, George Witter of Grand Rapids, had a photograph on his wall of his wife's niece, Emily Phelps of Friendship, N.Y. Witter fell in love with the picture and wrote to Miss Phelps. She returned the favor and a correspondence was begun that resulted in a mail-order bride and an 1860 frontier wedding.

Shortly after his marriage, Witter moved to

Grand Rapids to practice law. For eight years, he worked with Judge C.M. Webb. Witter also served for six years as district attorney and, in 1869, was elected to a four-year term as county judge.

After becoming known in the area, Witter turned his attention from law to what he saw as greater opportunities in banking, real estate and insurance.

In 1872, Witter organized the First National Bank of Grand Rapids. He also kept a controlling interest and remained as manager. Witter was elected president of the First National Bank of Golden, Colo., in 1874, a bank he closed at the end of the first year.

In 1888, Witter organized the Bank of Centralia.

Throughout, Witter's land and lumber interests were extensive. He also became a stockholder in most of the important business ventures of the Wisconsin River Valley, such as the Centralia and Biron paper mills, Johnson & Hill general merchandise, Oberbeck furniture company and the Grand Rapids Milling Co.

Witter also maintained investments in three Appleton paper mills and the Commercial Bank of Appleton. In Texas, he owned cattle, in Louisiana, rice and in Dakota, banks.

When the county government lapsed into corruption, Witter was one of the few, said his Reporter biography, who dared protest. He was elected to the county board and wrested control from the gang that had for years misruled it and looted its treasury.

Witter also served on the city council and the board of education. He was mayor for a term.

One of the causes to which Witter was most committed was the T.B. Scott Free Public Library. He paid for magazine subscriptions and a traveling library as well as maintaining and improving the library itself.

He identified with the Congregational and Methodist churches, but Witter aided all congregations. When the poor of the city were in distress, he gave through the churches 1,200 barrels of flour.

Grand Rapids Pulp & Paper



Born June 17, 1847, in Denmark, Nels Johnson became the quintessential self-made man of the frontier.

In 1867, he immigrated through New York to Chicago, where he worked as a laborer before coming up to Grand Rapids in search of some employment suitable to a "green country boy." Johnson started, like so many others had, as a laborer in the employ of Francis Biron. He worked in the woods during the winter and in the saw mill at Biron during the summer. "He advanced himself up until he held the position of head sawyer," wrote the Wood County Reporter, "when he quit to enter the general mercantile business with Henry Langord in 1876."

Apparently, Johnson sent \$500 to Marshall Field in Chicago and asked him to do the buying for the Grand Rapids concern. The two continued to correspond.

Langord sold out in 1877 to William H.H. Edwards, who sold in 1879 to J.D. Witter, who sold in 1887 to George Hill. Johnson & Co. became Johnson & Hill.

In 1892, Johnson built a new store and a new house, fulfilling the prophecy of the May 30, 1891, Enterprise and Tribune, which reported his purchase of 12 acres for \$1,050. "With a frontage on the beautiful Wisconsin River, a fine stock range in the rear, and the whole only four or five blocks from the business center of the city, Mr. Johnson's new pur-



SWCHC

Grand Rapids Pulp & Paper Company, 1896

chase certainly has every commendable feature for a first-class residence site."

In 1895, Johnson presided over the building of a dam at Biron for Grand Rapids Pulp & Paper Co.

Incorporation papers of that company were recorded in 1892 by J.D. Witter, George Severe Biron, J.W. Cameron, "Daly & Sampson" and E.T. Harmon. They purchased and razed the old Biron saw mill.

Due to a business "depression," the firm deferred further action until 1895, when operations began on a new dam and mill. Initially, the mill was planned to contain seven grinders and a single paper machine. That would make it the size of the plant at South Centralia and about half the size of that at Nekoosa.

So reported the Centralia Enterprise and Tribune of June 15, 1895.

By August, work had commenced.

"What a change! What transformation! What stir and hustle and activity! But for the old family residence and one or two other remaining landmarks of the old place, the Biron of today could not be recognized as the same place where for over a generation the old mill turned out yearly its product of lumber. Year by year its products rose in long rows of towering lumber piles along the banks of the river that furnished the sinews of power that made the buzzing saws gnaw their way greedily through the heart of thousands of pine logs that were spring floated into the mill pond. But year by year the rows of lumber piles grew shorter and shorter, as the supply of timber became exhausted more and more, until for a number of seasons the annual output was very slight. The lumber industry on the Wisconsin in this vicinity was a thing of the past."

At Biron, brick walls of the new boiler room, the beater room and the machine room were going up, built on a foundation of solid rock. Two steam drills worked at excavating a wheel pit for the seven turbine wheels. General Superintendent Nels Johnson told the Enterprise editor that more than 2 million feet of lumber would be used in the dam and plant, practically all furnished by the John Arpin Lumber Co. About 800,000 bricks would be used and 3,000 cords of rock.

Pulp making started on January 20, 1896.

"The Enterprise was furnished a sample of the product, taken from the first sheet by Mr. Flavel Beadle, one of the millwrights. We were indeed surprised that the first run of pulp should be of such high quality. There was not a defect in composition or color, and the whole presented an excellent fiber."

"The mill has been running almost continuously ever since it was started up," reported the Enterprise. "The Company now has four grinders running and will have two more ready in a day or two. From the four grinders they made 312 bundles of pulp during Tuesday night. They made their first shipment on Wednesday, which consisted of two carloads of pulp consigned to the Centralia Pulp and Water Power Co. of this city."

In April, 85 workers turned out four carloads of pulp per day, to be stored for the purpose of having a surplus on hand when the mill started making paper, an event predicted for the following week.



SWCHC

“Nash Gate” (1900)

T.E. Nash

Tom Nash knew what to do with the junk timber left after his predecessors had taken the pine out of the pinery. The application of his idea resulted in at least one railroad, two towns, a paper mill, a pulp-buying concern, a bank and a grand mansion along the Wisconsin River. In addition, Nash was involved in one of the largest cranberry marshes of the 19th century, four grist mills and a street-car line. He also helped create several landmarks in the capital city.

Nash rose to this accomplishment from a peasant heritage. His father, Lawrence, was a salmon fisherman from the Irish village of Shanagolden near the river Shannon who immigrated to Boston in 1850 to escape the potato famine.

Thomas, the third child, was born April 4, 1852, at Zanesville, Ohio. The following year, the family moved to Wisconsin, landing eventually in Granville township, Milwaukee County, as Lawrence's employers moved their railroads even farther into the north. Until the age of 14, Tom attended Milwaukee schools. He spent a year working on a farm before, like his father, going to work on the railroad, laboring at construction while studying telegraphy, then a "high tech" field.

From 1866 to 1869, Nash operated telegraph in Iowa and Minnesota for the Green Bay and Western Railroad. In 1869, he went to Fond du Lac. During the early 1870s, Nash worked at Saukville, Amherst and Shiocton. In 1875, he came to Centralia as station agent for the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul road.

Nash was transferred to Port Edwards and to Remington where, with his brother, Lawrence M., he bought a parcel of land and hired local Winnebagoes to pick cranberries, which were shipped to Chicago.

In 1882 or 1883, Nash was appointed traveling freight agent for the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, but resigned when elected in 1884 to the state Assembly. His service in the Legislature brought Nash into contact with William Vilas,

his seatmate and one of the state's most influential citizens.

Vilas immediately engaged Nash to assist him in one of his pet projects, the development of the University of Wisconsin. When Vilas was named Postmaster General by President Cleveland in early 1885, the task of shepherding the university appropriation bill through the Assembly was left to Nash. After a substantial reduction, the bill's passage resulted in Science Hall, the "old red gym" and a heating plant.

Vilas soon summoned Nash to Washington as chief clerk of the post office department, appointing him next to the position of general superintendent of the railway mail service in which he continued until 1888 when Nash resigned to return to Wisconsin. That year, he bought from George and Frank Wood the land at Whitney Rapids that would lead to the biggest project of his life.

But first, Nash joined his brother, John L., in purchasing and operating the Neeves flour mill in Grand Rapids. In 1890, he organized, as president and general manager, the Port Edwards, Centralia and Northern Railway with tracks from Port Edwards to Marshfield. Under his leadership, the Wood County National Bank was founded in 1891.

The cranberry marsh T.E. had bought with brother L.M. in 1875 became one of the most successful in the area until drainage of bogs caused drought and fires in 1892 and 1893, and he disposed of it. The last crop of berries brought in just enough cash to capitalize on the land purchase of 1888.

In 1892, with local partners L.M. Alexander, F.J. Wood and Frank Garrison, and out-of-town investors Vilas, A.W. Patten and John McNaughton, Nash brought together the Nekoosa Paper Co. The following year, he built a paper mill using as a central element the paper machine from the Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

The Nekoosa Syndicate



"We shall decline to join you in the development of the waterpower," wrote Frederic Joy in 1889 from Detroit. Tom Nash had failed.

"We shall not attempt to build any more pulp mills at present anywhere," said J.A. Kimberly, president of Kimberly Clark Co., Neenah, in 1891, "trusting that you may strike some good fellow to go in and make a fortune with you."

Tom Nash had failed again.

But he was soon to succeed—by finding "some good fellows" to invest in his Nekoosa paper mill project. The benefactors were L.M. Alexander, Port Edwards, A.W. Patten and Patten's son-in-

law, John McNaughten, of Appleton, and Nash's old friend, William F. Vilas, in 1892 a U.S. senator.

On December 15, 1892, Nash was able to write to Vilas: "The Nekoosa enterprise goes along smoothly and everything seems to be settled except to have the title examined and get an estimate of the cost . . . At the request of Mr. Patten, Moses Hooper of Oshkosh is to investigate the ownership, and has promised to give his opinion by the 22nd and Mr. Tower will give an approximate estimate on the cost of the dam, pulp mill, boiler house and a two-machine paper mill not later than the 28th."



Nekoosa Paper Company, 1896

L.M. Alexander, president of the John Edwards Manufacturing Co., Port Edwards, wrote to Vilas on December 16, 1892. "We had a meeting with Mr. Tower, paper mill architect and hydraulic engineer, of whom you no doubt have heard Mr. Nash speak of as having once made a survey of his water power some time ago. The meeting was held in Appleton with Mr. Patten and Mr. McNaughton present."

"There is no doubt," concluded Alexander, "that our powers will all be utilized shortly for such purposes and paper mill men say that 'Nekoosa' is bound to be a valuable power for its size and

possibility of extensive development."

Tower drew up his plans for inspection by G.F. Steele, general manager of the Combined Locks mill at the time of its completion. The cost would be \$400,000. Nash wrote to Vilas on Jan. 14, 1893, that Steele, Garrison, Patten and McNaughton "dissected" Tower's plan and decided that a dam, pulp mill, boiler house and two-machine paper mill could be built for \$300,000, plus \$50,000 for the Nash-owned property.

Toward the new company Vilas and Alexander committed \$50,000 each, Patten and McNaughton together \$125,000 and Frank Garrison of the Centralia paper mill split \$50,000 with Steele. Nash's assets were valued at \$75,000. Patten was offered the presidency but declined as did McNaughton, in favor of Nash. Garrison became vice president and Alexander secretary-treasurer. Patten and McNaughton joined the board of directors.

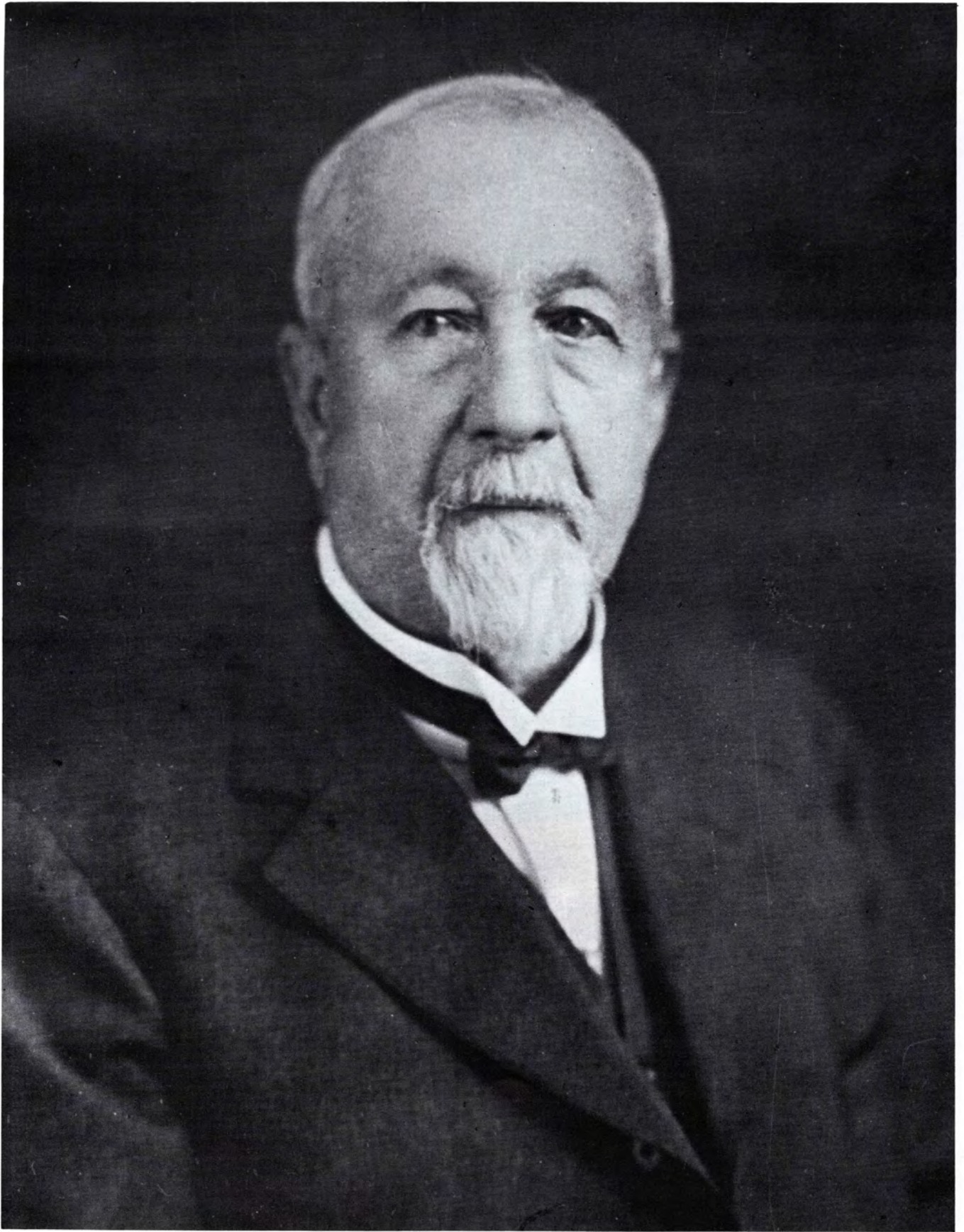
On January 19, 1893, Vilas told Nash that he was willing to abide by the judgment of the others more experienced in paper industry but that, "I should discount you a little now, because I think you ought to be naturally zealous for this enterprise."

The Enterprise examined the members of the "syndicate of capitalists" who had brought their resources to Nekoosa. Messrs. A.W. Patten and John McNaughton of Appleton were pulp and paper manufacturers in the Fox River Valley. Their company owned two paper mills at Appleton and two at Kaukauna plus numerous pulp mills along the valley. Frank Garrison and G.F. Steele were both "extensively interested" in the Centralia Pulp and Water Power Co. "and as stockholders therein are the pioneers in paper making on the Wisconsin River."

L.M. Alexander deserved a large degree of credit. "Although he has been a resident here only about four years, he attests the faith that is in him concerning our future welfare by investing his money here at home unsparingly, as well as exerting his influence toward others to do likewise."

Thos. E. Nash engineered the project, keeping the "advantages" of the Wisconsin River water power constantly before the large manufacturing interests of the eastern part of the state. "He knows that the waters of the Wisconsin River are soft, are free from lime, and combine the best elements for the successful manufacture of paper."

SWCHC



Falkland MacKinnon

MacKinnon

One of the more improbable figures to affect the development of the pulp and paper industry on the Wisconsin was Falkland MacKinnon.

MacKinnon was born in 1849 near Richmond, county of Surrey, England, the son of an officer in the Royal Navy. He was the next youngest in a family of five boys.

When MacKinnon was a youngster, according to a reminiscence furnished by grandson F. Mack. Landsdowne, he made his first trip to the new world.

MacKinnon's father was "Captain MacKinnon," in charge of an English battleship.

"I remember," wrote MacKinnon in 1926, "when my father walked into our house and said, 'I have just returned from the Falkland Islands and the admiralty have given me leave of absence for 1 year.'

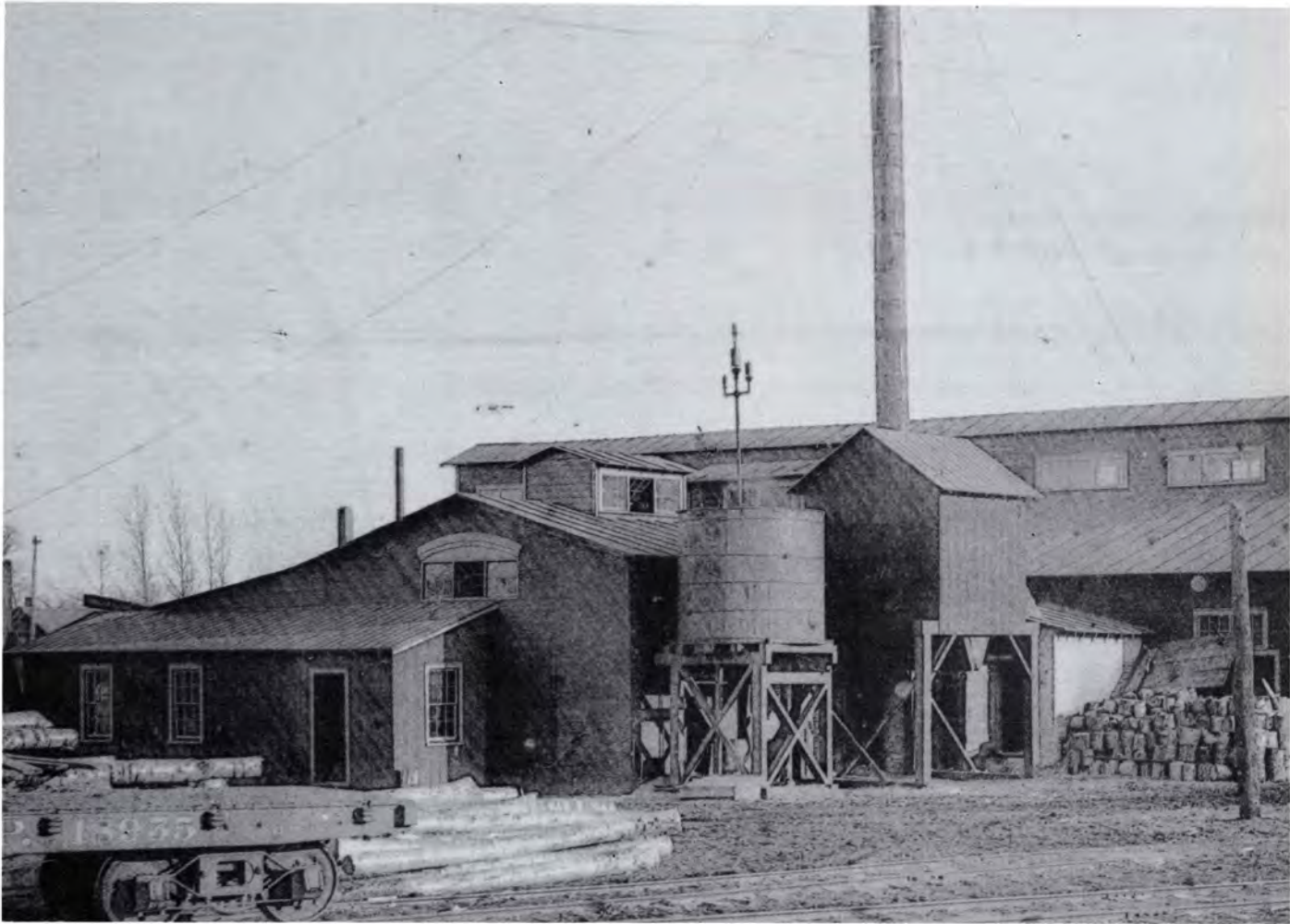
"My mother spoke up and said, 'a trip to the U.S. would please me.' Having discussed the trip, it was decided that we

take the next steamer that left England for the U.S. and that proved to be a paddle wheel steamer called the Ocean Queen."

While in the United States, the captain visited much of the time with President Fillmore (1850-53) at Washington, D.C. where he met soon-to-be-Gov. Doty of Wisconsin. Doty invited Capt. MacKinnon to Neenah and apparently secured a loan from him that MacKinnon was obliged to foreclose for which it seems Capt. MacKinnon received a grant of land bordering on Lake Winnebago.

The captain lived in Wisconsin for some time but had to return to England occasionally to look after his interests there. His son, Falkland, was placed in an English school first, then transferred to Stuttgart, Germany, where he studied chemistry, German and French. His first business was that of a broker of spices with offices at London.

Hub & Spoke



Falkland MacKinnon's next trip to the U.S. occurred in 1873 when he spent 13 months attending to his father's business. In August 1875, he came on a commission to report on certain iron mines and was recalled in 1877 to England by the death of his captain father.

Returning with his two brothers—William, who afterwards emigrated to New Zealand, and Duncan—MacKinnon settled in Menasha where he took a painting contract with Menasha Wooden Ware Co.

The work completed, MacKinnon formed a partnership with C.D. Griffith of Appleton

and purchased, through John Schnabel Sr., the equipment of a hub and spoke factory at Seymour, which had been damaged by fire. MacKinnon and Griffith came to Centralia in 1878 and the following year erected a hub and spoke factory.

The Centralia hub and spoke having proved successful, the firm built a second mill at Vesper in 1879. The original buildings at Centralia burned in 1879 and were immediately rebuilt.

In 1881, the Vesper mill was sold to James Hiles and the Centralia mill again enlarged.

On April 26, 1882, MacKinnon married



F. MacKinnon Manufacturing Company, 1896

Louie or Louise King Hoskinson of Green Bay, daughter of the then-U.S. consul to Jamaica and brought his bride to his residence facing the river at French Street where they were to remain throughout their wedding life.

Griffith sold his interest in the hub and spoke in 1882 to B. Ramsay who acted as MacKinnon's partner until 1890 when the Centralia mill burned again. A cooperative stock company was then formed under the name MacKinnon Manufacturing Co. of which J.D. Witter was the principal stockholder. Later, MacKinnon bought out Wit-

ter and many mill workers who held a share or two.

MacKinnon acquired other manufacturing interests. He was instrumental in the organization of the Pioneer Pulp Co. which was placed under the management of George E. Hoskinson, Mrs. MacKinnon's father, who moved to the twin cities after his return from Jamaica.

While this and other investments made MacKinnon rich and influential, he liked to recall the old days. He especially enjoyed a story about his father, the old captain.

While visiting around 1850 with Gov. Doty on Neenah's Doty Island one hot summer night, Capt. MacKinnon slept in a detached summer house.

Doty knocked on the door and warned, "Do not leave your window open and look out for bears, which are very numerous, especially at night."

The captain got out of bed, loaded his gun and placed it on a chair near the window. As a further precaution, he partially closed the window but placed a sheet iron tray against it. If any man or animal invaded his room, the tray would be knocked down.

The precaution was not in vain.

In the night, a bear poked his nose against the half-open window and knocked over the tray, which fell on the floor with a clatter. Capt. MacKinnon awakened but on account of the darkness did not fire.

The following day, Gov. Doty called Indians from miles around to take part in a great bear hunt that would rid the island of all wild animals. The quantity of game shot or captured is said to have measured in the hundreds.

Only half a century later, the captain's son, Falkland MacKinnon, had reached the age of 45, Neenah and Centralia were modern cities and through such machinations as MacKinnon's hub and spoke all of Wisconsin had come well past the industrial revolution.



CENTRALIA FLOURING MILLS
COLEMAN JACKSON & CO.

(CHICAGO BOYS FEB 20 HOURS.
ISSUE IN OFF. & IN TALL HUBBET
FUEL COIL. LIGHT ALONG NE IN
OPEN LAMPS.
1 NIGHT WATCHMAN
1 BARBER FINE EXTING
NUMBER OF HAND GRENADES.
WALL BOYS & PAIS ON EACH FLOOR.

Rec e

M. L. BENSLEY'S
SAW MILL

M. L. BENSLEY'S
SAW MILL
LIGHT HEAVY DUTY IN CLOSED LUMBER
200 S. 1st Street
Tulsa, Okla. - Phone 2-1234
Night Porter - 2-1234
No Heat - 2-1234
No Water - 2-1234
No Phone - 2-1234

YARD

LUMBER

BENSLEY'S

MAIN

HIGH ST.

2

3

ST. N/SWQ:

Mrs. Bensley's Will

In her lifetime, Mrs. Bensley had participated with panache in a feud of many years with the Pioneer Wood Pulp Co. and its owners, George Hoskinson, Falkland MacKinnon and W.E. Mack. Perhaps the rich widow's most dramatic act was the dynamiting of the Pioneer dam.

In another dispute, this time with the Mack and Spencer electric light company, Mrs. Bensley cut down recently erected poles she claimed were on her land. Because of similar actions and disputes involving water power and land rights, the several mill owners seemed to be constantly in court.

Mrs. Bensley had married her second husband, John Bensley, at Grand Rapids in 1869. The two rebuilt the old Garrison sawmill on the west side as a pulp mill and had proposed to further transform it to make paper of straw.

In June, 1889, John Bensley died. In October of the same year, the mill, well insured, burned. Mrs. Bensley shortly thereafter left the clammy climes of Wood County for Las Vegas, New Mexico, for reasons of health.

Not even her death on January 4, 1890, could terminate the devastating influence of Mrs. Bensley on the cooperative development of the rapids and on the mental state of those involved.

Nevertheless, the Centralia Enterprise and Tribune refrained from

speaking ill of the dead. Mrs. Bensley, said the newspaper, had always used her wealth in charitable deeds. She had educated orphan children and had never spoken one word in her own praise.

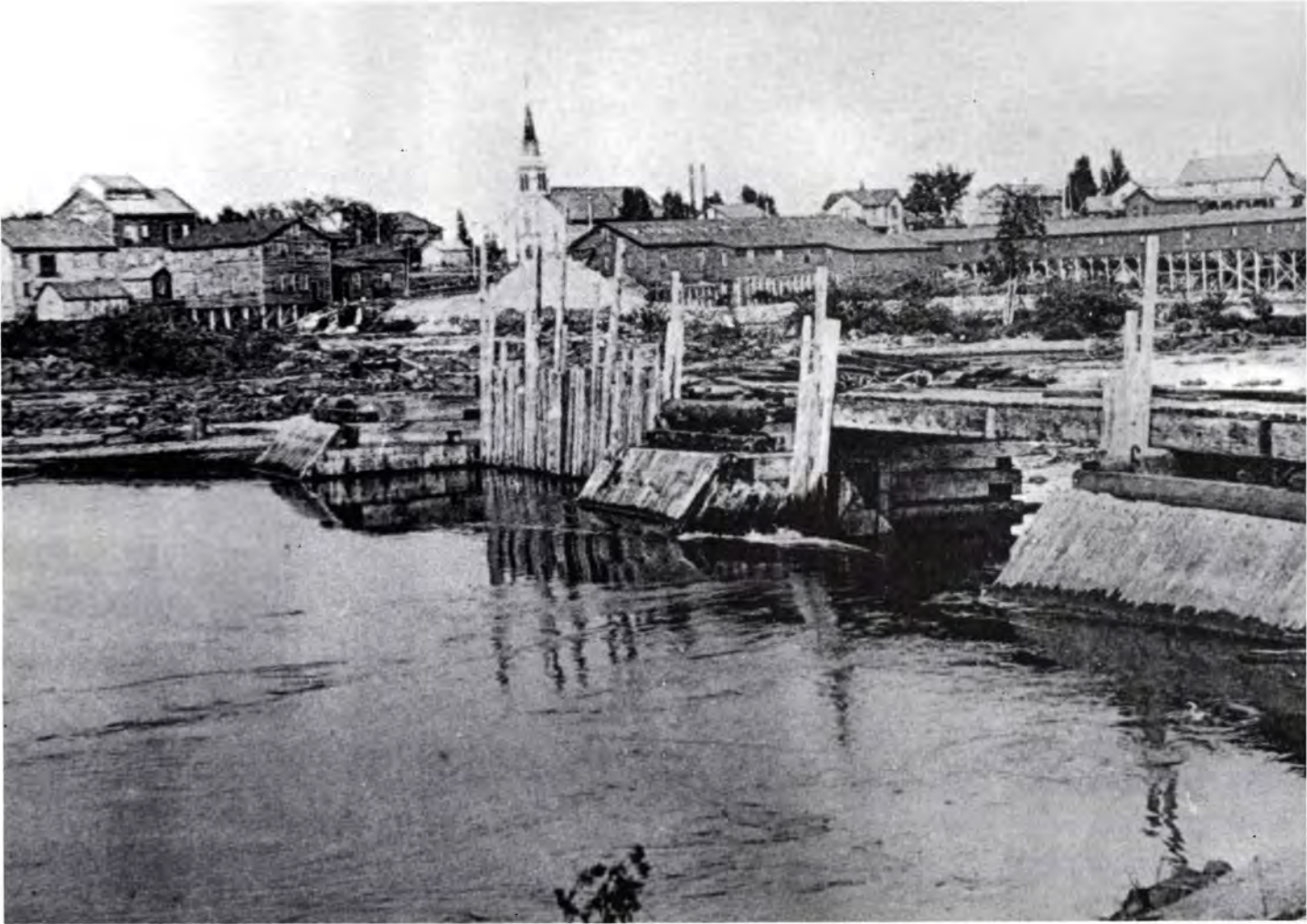
Mrs. Bensley's large holdings here fell to her brother, Bertrand G. Chandos, who emerged suddenly as a major and controversial figure. Chandos, whose father was Scottish and his mother English, had been born in West Virginia in 1849 and moved to Wisconsin in 1880.

It was Chandos who received word of Mrs. Bensley's final illness and he who saw to her funeral in San Francisco, where she had lived much of her life. Chandos also asked to be named administrator of the estate.

"Mrs. Bensley is very wealthy," wrote the newspaper, just prior to her death. "She will probably leave all her property to her children born from her first marriage: two daughters both married and one son all living in Scotland."

If Mrs. Bensley had two daughters and a son or any children at all, that was news to B.G. Chandos. The only heirs, he said, were Mrs. Bensley's sisters: Mrs. Jennie Goodrich, Mrs. Lucy Rountree of Clark Center, Ill. and Mrs. Nellie Hardesty of St. Louis—and himself, the only surviving brother and the only resident of Wisconsin.

Consolidation



Mrs. Bensley had died in the midst of a period of industrial development along the river. Where there had been run-down saw-mills, several pulp mills had been built. To some were added paper-making capabilities.

The first pulp mill on the Wisconsin was built at South Centralia in 1887 by the Centralia Pulp and Water Power Co. which also made the first paper on the river, in 1891. Local directors of this venture were Frank Garrison, E.B. Rossier, John Farrish and J.D. Witter.

Witter had been in the paper business since

1883 when he joined with W. and J. Horton in building the "Lincoln Mill" at Appleton.

On December 15, 1892, Tom Nash, of Centralia, wrote to William Vilas, of Madison. "I just heard that Witter and Cameron have formed a company to build a paper mill on what is known as the Biron power, three miles above here. There is about ten feet fall there and the site is a pretty good one. I mention it to show that Jere is satisfied with the paper business for the company he is interested in at Appleton having about completed another big mill being the third one they own there."



SWCHC

Across river from Lyon's Dam.

In 1893, Nash, in partnership with Vilas and Fox Valley investors, founded the Nekoosa Paper Co. and built a modern mill and town-site at Nekoosa.

By contrast, Grand Rapids and Centralia stagnated. Although the twin cities dominated the immediate region commercially and culturally and the river here showed a fall of 30 feet in less than three miles, the major potential of the water power remained undeveloped because it was in the hands of many owners and with differing ambitions. Much property was also tied up by litigation.

Mrs. Bensley had been dead four years when the owners of most water rights and lands met on July 16, 1894, and signed an agreement that "the water powers at said cities would be of more value if consolidated and improved on one general plan." The intention of the document was that each owner would deed his properties to the "consolidated" corporation formed in exchange for shares in \$300,000 of capital stock.

The signers and in this sense founders of the Consolidated Water Power Co. were W.E. Mack, C.A. Spencer, the Wisconsin Wood Pulp Co. (signed by C.A. Spencer, president), Falkland MacKinnon, the Grand Rapids Water Power Co. (signed by F. MacKinnon, president), the Pioneer Wood Pulp Co. (signed by George Hoskinson), T.E. Nash, John L. Nash, B.G. Chandos and B.G. Chandos as administrator for the M.L. Bensley estate. In order to apportion the shares in the new company fairly according to properties owned and submitted, the signers appointed a board of "arbitrators:" Peter R. Thom, T.W. Orbison and Frank T. Russell, experienced paper men of the Fox valley.

The Enterprise and Tribune waxed enthusiastic on August 4, 1894. "A new move has just been made by a number of the leading business men of the twin cities which cannot fail to be of the most beneficial and far-reaching consequences upon the growth of the twin cities. It is a move which has been hoped for and talked of for years and years."

The company, said the paper, controlled every foot of land on both sides of the river with the exception of the site of the Jackson Milling Co. on the west bank and the King brothers foundry on the east.

On February 13, the report of the arbitrators came in and was presented at the February 20 meeting of the signers of the July 16 agreement. Suddenly, the bliss of consolidation was disrupted when Tom and John Nash, originally enthusiastic backers of the plan, took one look at the figures and walked out.



Nash Brothers Flour Mill

Forging Ahead

Tom Nash and his brother, John, took one look at the figures presented by the arbitrators for the Consolidated Water Power Co. and walked out of the February 20, 1895, meeting and out of the organization. They immediately stated that they were dissatisfied with the numbers and would resist the further organization of the company and the issuing of any stock.

The owners of 1,755 shares as apportioned by the arbitrators were:

Grand Rapids

Water Power Co.....	171
B.G. Chandos	206
M.L. Bensley Estate	388
Spencer & Mack	86
Pioneer Wood Pulp Co.	403
Wisconsin Wood Pulp Co.	306
Nash Brothers	135
Electric companies	60

The electric companies, one on the east side owned by the Nashes and one on the west side owned by Mack & Spencer in partnership, were purchased by Mack, taking those shares out of the Consolidated total. A further 20 shares were deducted to pay for the arbitration and the Nashes removed their 135 shares. They deserved, they believed, for their flour mill and water rights, at least double the amount that had been awarded them.

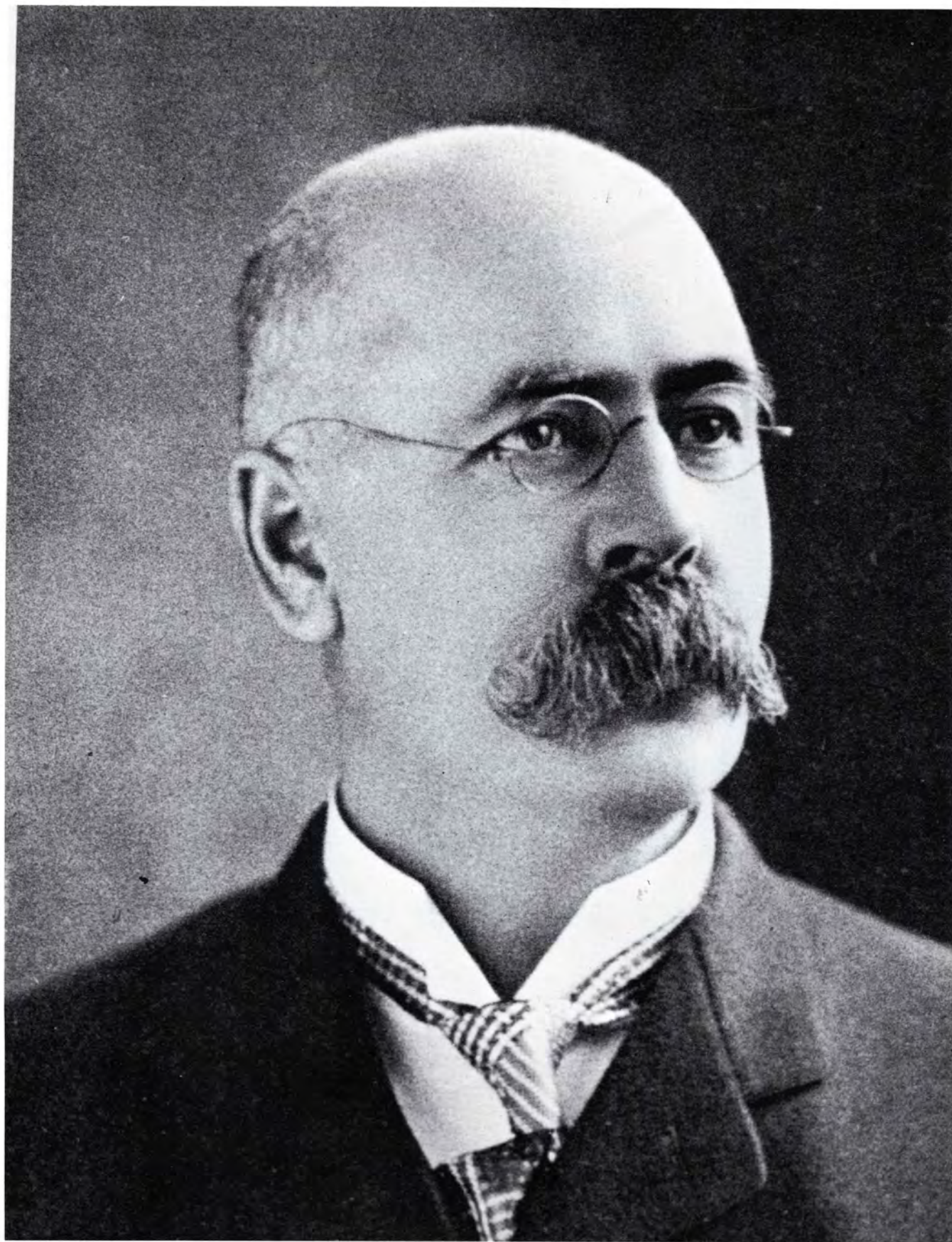
A crucial element of the organization had quit but the company forged ahead on course.

On March 2, a letter was drafted stating that steps would be taken to force the Nashes to take their stock. It also informed them that a meeting would be held on March 15 to elect directors and perfect the organization and that they should attend.

The Nashes did not attend the March 15 meeting. Nevertheless, the first directors of the Consolidated Water Power Co. were elected: W.E. Mack. G.E. Hoskinson, F. MacKinnon, B.G. Chandos and C.A. Spencer, with Hoskinson president, Mack vice president, Spencer secretary and treasurer, and MacKinnon general manager. Chandos was appointed a committee of one to serve notice of the proceedings on the Nashes.

Concrete steps in the formation of a new company continued to be taken. On March 20, the directors voted to purchase 200 stock certificates, and "The Secretary's Manual and Corporation Book." Building a dam was discussed.

On March 26, the extraction of an original signer occurred when Chandos sold his 206 shares to Nels Johnson, manager of the Biron paper mill. Johnson was elected to fill Chandos' place on the board on April 12. At that meeting, the board voted to deliver 135 shares of stock to the Nash brothers whether they wanted it or not and to demand in return their deeds.



Thomas E. Nash

Disconsolidation

In March, 1895, the Consolidated stockholders were Hoskinson, MacKinnon, Mack, Spencer, Johnson and the "Bensley Estate."

Chandos sold the Bensley lands and rights through Hooper & Hooper of Oshkosh to Jere Witter in April 1895. Witter, a prominent banker, had long been Johnson's partner, both in the Johnson & Hill store and in the Grand Rapids Paper Co. mill at Biron.

At a May 6 meeting, the new board agreed to get T.W. Orbison of Appleton to survey and plan a dam. Ben Hooper was elected director, a position he would hold only briefly. J.D. Witter's First National Bank was chosen to handle the Consolidated finances.

Witter replaced Hooper on May 20, MacKinnon was elected president, Spencer secretary, Johnson general manager. It was resolved to offer the Nashes further options. The Nash brothers did not respond. On June 1, the matter was referred to an attorney in order to commence a lawsuit.

The Nash brothers offered on June 10 a choice of five demands: 1. 270 shares of stock instead of 135; 2. \$18,000; 3. perpetual water power delivered to the Nash mill in exchange for the right of Consolidated to abut its dam on Nash property; 4. submission of the issue to George R. Gardner, Consolidated attorney and B.R. Goggin, Nash attorney for settlement; or 5. submission of the issue to Judge Webb

for arbitration.

All were rejected. It would be idle to "arbitrate upon an arbitration," said MacKinnon.

"I am further directed to say that at the date when your propositions were received, our attorneys were engaged in preparing the necessary papers for the commencement of an action against you to compel specific performance of your agreement of July 16, 1894, to convey your lands to this company and accept stock therefore. This company therefore proposes that you join issue in the action commenced and that trial be had before Judge Webb at once and judgment be obtained thereon as speedily as possible."

"All those interested in the new company, and the people in the Twin Cities generally, are pained to know that the Nash Bros. refuse to enter amicably and that litigation is necessary," wrote the Centralia Enterprise and Tribune.

A year after its conception, the object of the Consolidated plan had been frustrated.

In August of 1895, Hoskinson asked that his Pioneer pulp mill be returned to him until it was actually needed. Spencer and Mack asked that their Wisconsin Wood Pulp Co. be allowed to grind up their present supply of pulp. Each owner was allowed to resume his original venture.

For the moment, cooperation had failed. The next step was court.