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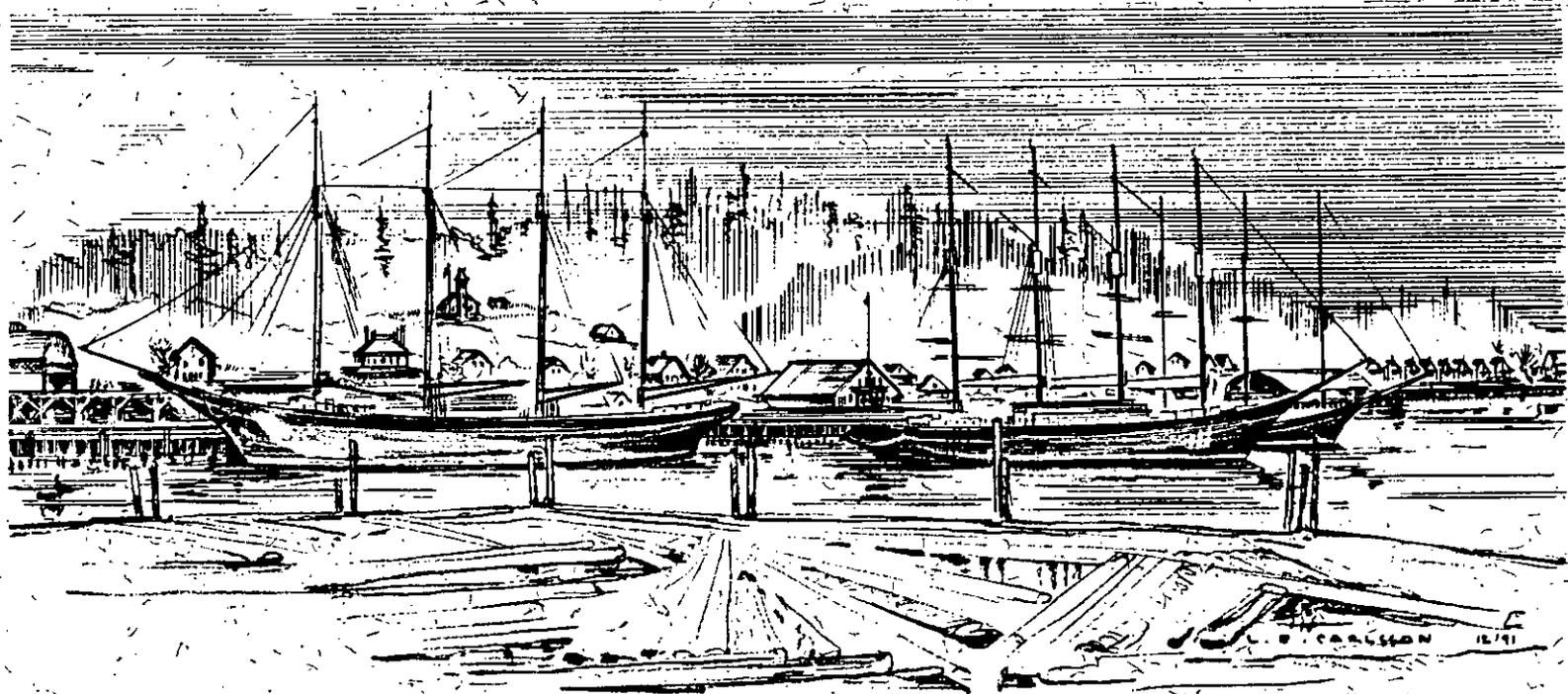
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PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILL TOWN



PORT BLAKELY HARBOR - WINTER - 1851

HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 for
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY

i.e. "Iars" Carlsson / architect aia emeritus

PORT BLAKELY MILLS AND MILLTOWN

Historic Buildings / Cultural Resources Survey

for

Port Blakely Mill Company

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April 1992

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INTRODUCTION

In 1863 Captain William Renton decided that Blakely Harbor was an ideal location for a sawmill. He had learned much from his previous sawmills, the first at Alki, the second at Port Orchard, both marginal operations.

Twenty-five years later a thriving company and company town had emerged, and "the largest sawmill on earth" was being built, capable of producing 1,000,000 board feet of lumber per day. (This would be equivalent to a ribbon of 1"x12" lumber stretching from Port Blakely to Moses Lake.) Forest lands and sailing ships were continuously purchased, railroads were built to assure an adequate supply of logs for the mill. The mills and town are gone now but the lands remain.

Thus the Company has large holdings. A decision was made to set aside about 1200 acres in the Port Blakely area as a quality planned unit development. A commitment was made to thoroughly investigate the cultural and natural resources, and to employ this material in decision making processes.

A team of experts, headed by Charles Wilson, Real Estate Manager, Port Blakely Mill Company, was assembled, accomplished planners/architects, hydrologists, natural scientists, geologists, archeologists. And it was determined that the cultural resources of this remarkable historic site should be recorded: the significant buildings, and the history summarized to codify the social, cultural, and economic influences.

A methodology (described later in this survey) embraced the concept of recording historic structures based on guidelines of a long-time national program administered by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, called the Historic American Buildings Survey / Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER).

The only structures remaining today are the Third Mill Power Plant, a concrete skeleton, and the Burnett House located on a privately owned lot, the only company town dwelling relatively unchanged from the early days. A small hose-cart storage building, c.1917, remains in good condition on the old Hotel site.

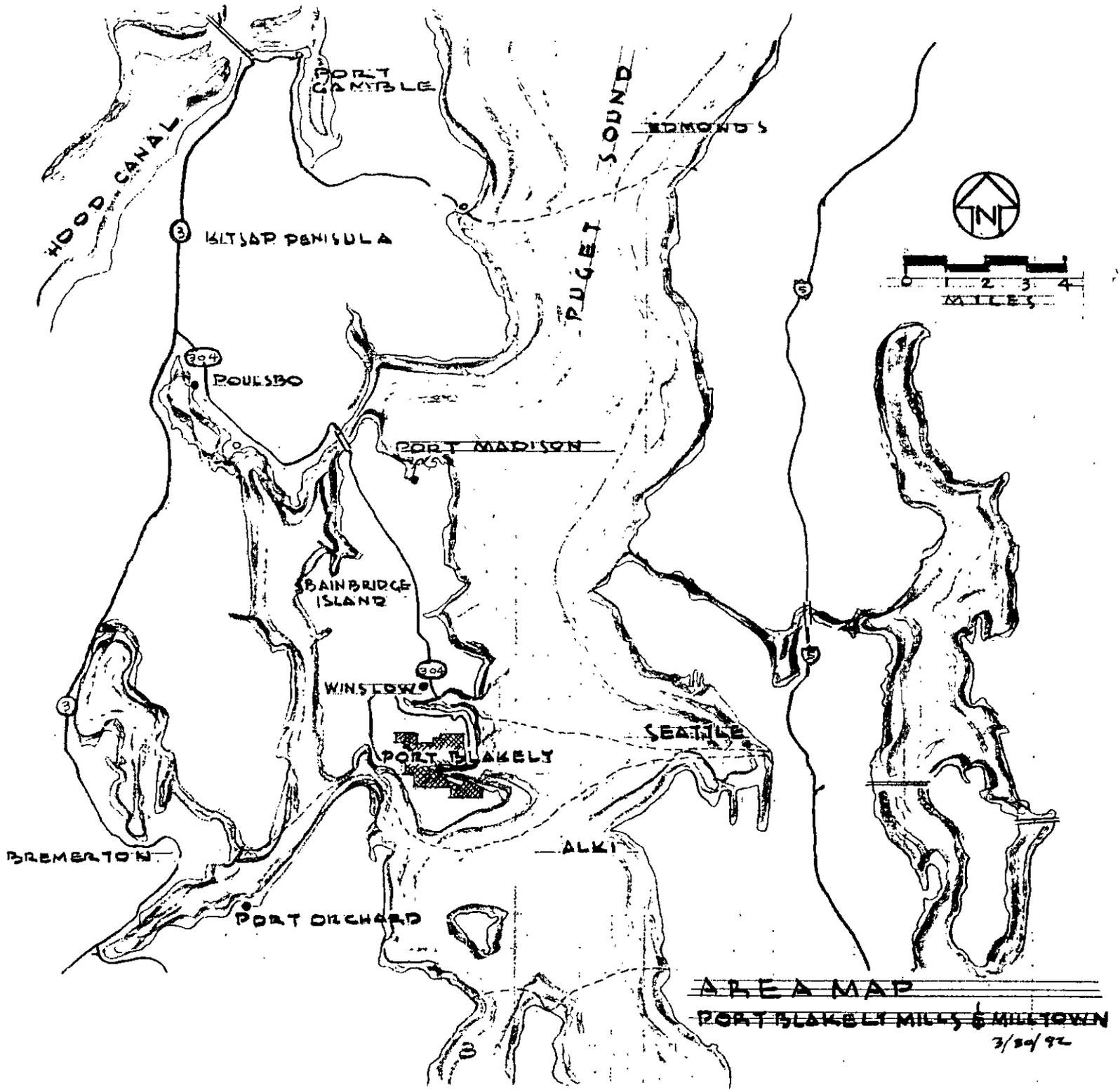
These buildings were measured and record drawings made. The drawings of other significant structures were created from old photographs (many of which were new prints from old plates

PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN

provided by Gerald Elfendahl, Curator, Bainbridge Island Historic Society), Sanborn maps and legal records.

Historic records came from the Port Blakely Mill Company archives, several museums and special collections, and writings such as Andrew Prices's excellent chronicle of Port Blakely and Captain Renton.

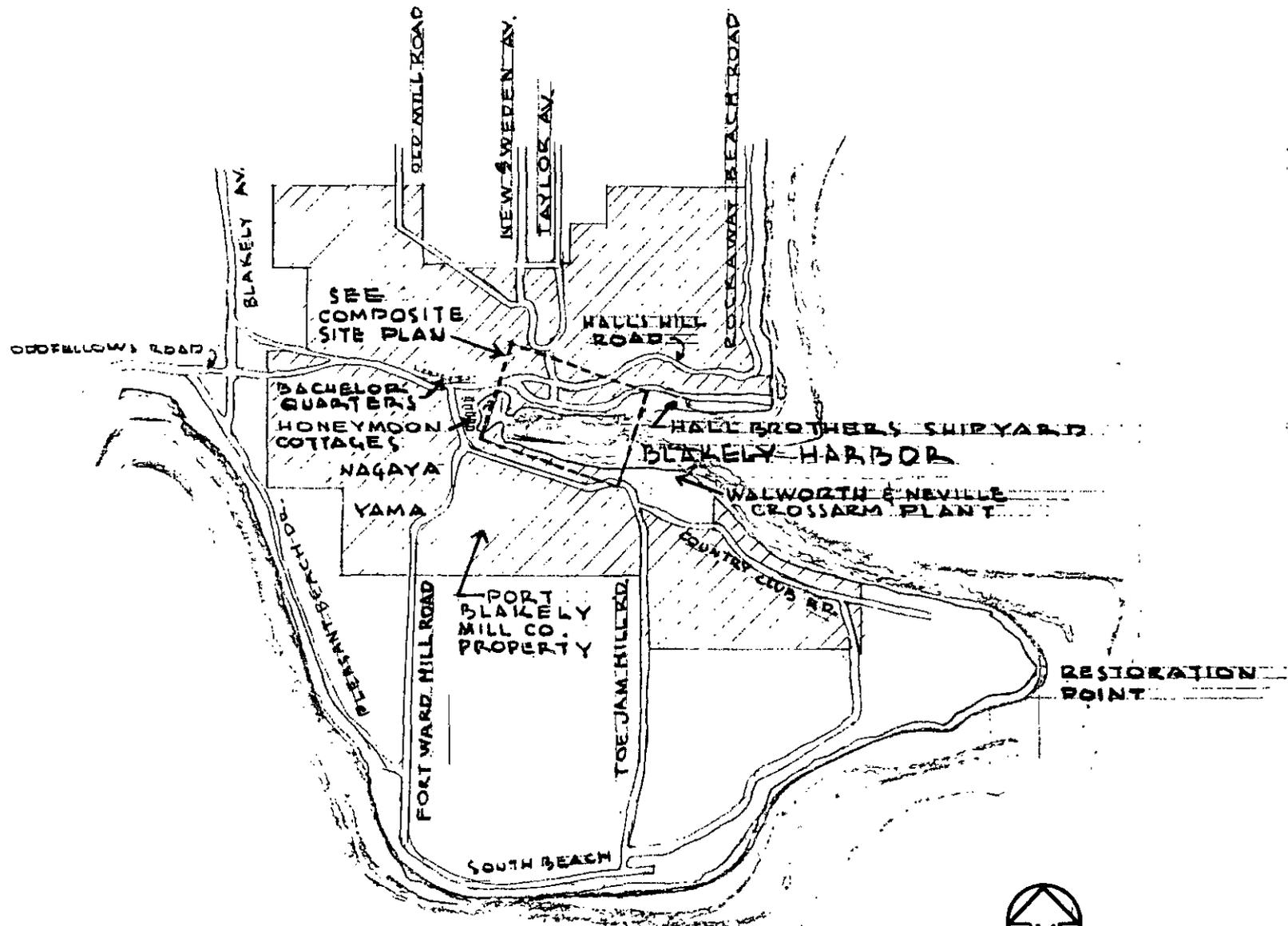
The intent of this Historic Buildings/Cultural Resources Survey is to create a vision of visiting an authentic historic community. It is hoped that the drawings, descriptions, and history will assist planners, architects and the citizens of the area in comprehending the vitality and uniqueness of Port Blakely, and with this background, plan their future with an historical consciousness.



AREA MAP

PORT BLAKELY MILLS, MILLTOWN

3/20/92



VICINITY MAP
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN
 4/2/92

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The decision by Port Blakely Mill Company to authorize this survey was the responsibility of Charles Wilson, Real Estate Manager. His, and the team's appreciation of the drawings as they evolved was indeed gratifying.

The research phase was a continuing process. From the beginning Jerry Elfendahl, curator, Bainbridge Island Historical Society, was very helpful, thoroughly informed and dedicated.

Karyl Winn and staff at the University of Washington Manuscripts and Archives were very helpful in retrieving Port Blakely Mill Company archives. Richard Engeman, Photographic Librarian and staff, University of Washington Special Collections, made available Hester and Watkins photographs and other Port Blakely information.

The Museum of History and Industry's Rich Caldwell, Librarian, and staff assisted us in locating valuable photos.

Suzanne Anest, Curator-Director, Kitsap Museum, Silverdale, helped to locate and get copies of important photos.

Tacoma Public Library's Judith Kipp located an important photo of the second mill.

Washington State Historical Museum's Elaine Miller located three photos and other information.

And we extend our thanks to Andrew Price whose book must be the cornerstone of research related to Port Blakely.

The Port Blakely Mill Company's Winslow office provides an overview of the team's efforts including two models of a conceptual development scheme. Archeological artifacts are a part of the display. Thanks to Ellin Spencer, Winslow Office Manager, for her appreciation for the drawings.

We are grateful to the Washington State Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation's Greg Griffith and Leonard Garfield in this survey and in the preservation aspects at Port Blakely.

PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN

The staff of the Washington State Library's Washington Room provided access to periodicals and general sawmill information.

Shanna Stevenson, staff for the Thurston County Historic Commission, provided background on the milltown, Bordeaux.

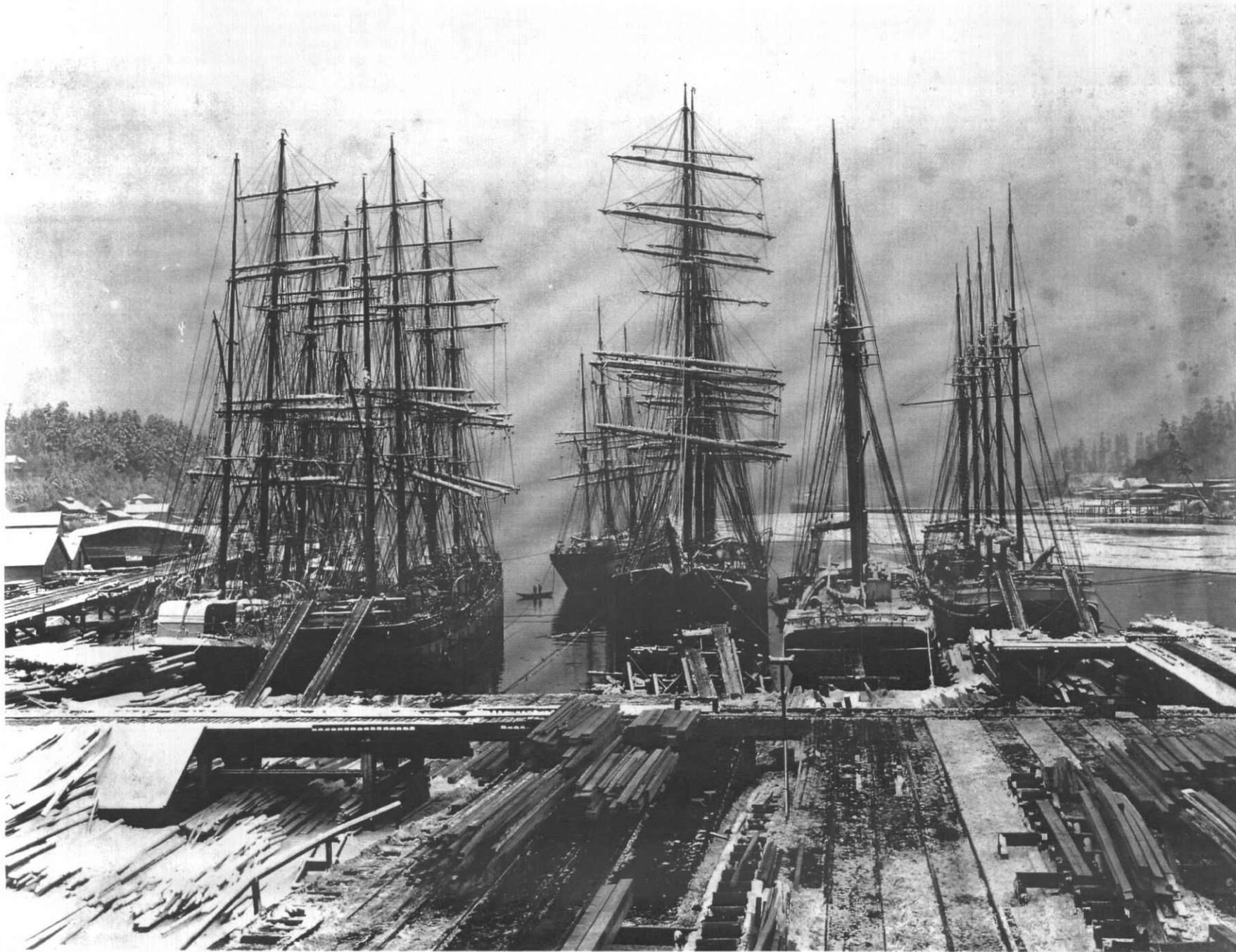
Donnie Cresco, Archives Manager, Weyerhweuser, provided access to historic documentation, the Snoqualmie Falls Lumber Company Mill Number 1.

We are grateful to Nancy Glazer, who resides in the Burnett House, for talking with us and permitting us to measure the house.

Also thanks to Gordon Durell for chatting with us and permitting us to take exterior measurements of his house, another company dwelling just to the east of the Burnett House.

Thanks to Ruth Carlsson for reading, researching, and critiquing the written material, and to Jae Carlsson for research, writing the history portion of the survey, assisting in the descriptions of buildings, and generally planning its format based of HABS/HAER guidelines.

And to Jeanne Welch, President, Western Heritage Inc., our deep gratitude for her faith in our capacity to do this work, and for her initial assistance in introducing us to the project and guiding us to the sources of information.



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METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH - the first step in this phase was to determine the scope of the survey. This involved (1) approximately ascertaining the amount of data available, (2) reading as much as possible about Port Blakely, the lumber industry, the shipping business.

Once the scope was established, a systematic search lead to information about Port Blakely Mill Company and the milltown, and photographs were ordered that might assist in the recreation of significant buildings.

The Port Blakely Mill Company collection at University of Washington's Manuscripts and Archives revealed a first floor plan of the second mill (at 1/8" = 1'-0") and other drawings that had been presented in a legal action regarding the destruction of that mill in 1907 by fire. We later transcribed this huge blueprint to 1/16" = 1'-0". This was the only dimensional drawing we found.

Early on, small scale Sanborn insurance maps of Port Blakely mills and milltown for 1888, 1893, 1904, 1917, and 1923 were available. These were at varying scales. We prepared a rather rough composite map at the 1888 scale. This process, for instance, showed that the Renton house and the Campbell house were on the same site. Later a new composite map was drawn indicating the changes in the company town and mills.

The first mill built in 1863 was not included in any maps. Two photographs were available however. Through perspective techniques these photos revealed its approximate size and location.

These same techniques were used to determine or verify sizes and locations of the significant and other buildings described in this survey, since sizes scaled off the Sanborn maps were inconsistent. The accuracy of techniques used on this survey could be expected to be within 2%.

The drawings of the significant buildings were presented in a preliminary form, then later refined when additional information surfaced. These 36"x24" sheets and the reductions to 8½"x11" are a part of the cultural resources survey, along with the Introduction, Acknowledgements, Methodology, Building Descriptions, History, Analysis, and Bibliography.

HISTORY OF THE PORT BLAKELY MILLS AND MILLTOWN - an analysis of their regional and cultural significance - is based on guidelines for formal HABS/HAER reports (Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record). The intent of such reports is to provide pertinent background information, written for a general reading audience.

The basic questions such a report seeks to answer are:

- What was there? Why? How did it work? Why it took the shape it did? Who worked there? How did it change?

These basic questions are highlighted against pertinent underlying context:

- Geology, topography, climate? What existed prior? Who instigated the development and what was their prior history? What was the larger regional or national economic and social picture that effected this enterprise? Who did they transact business with? How did they survive as a business? Who were the competitors? Disruptions like fire or labor problems? Nature of the workforce and people involved at all levels of the operation? Nature of community life, recreation, public affairs? Etc.

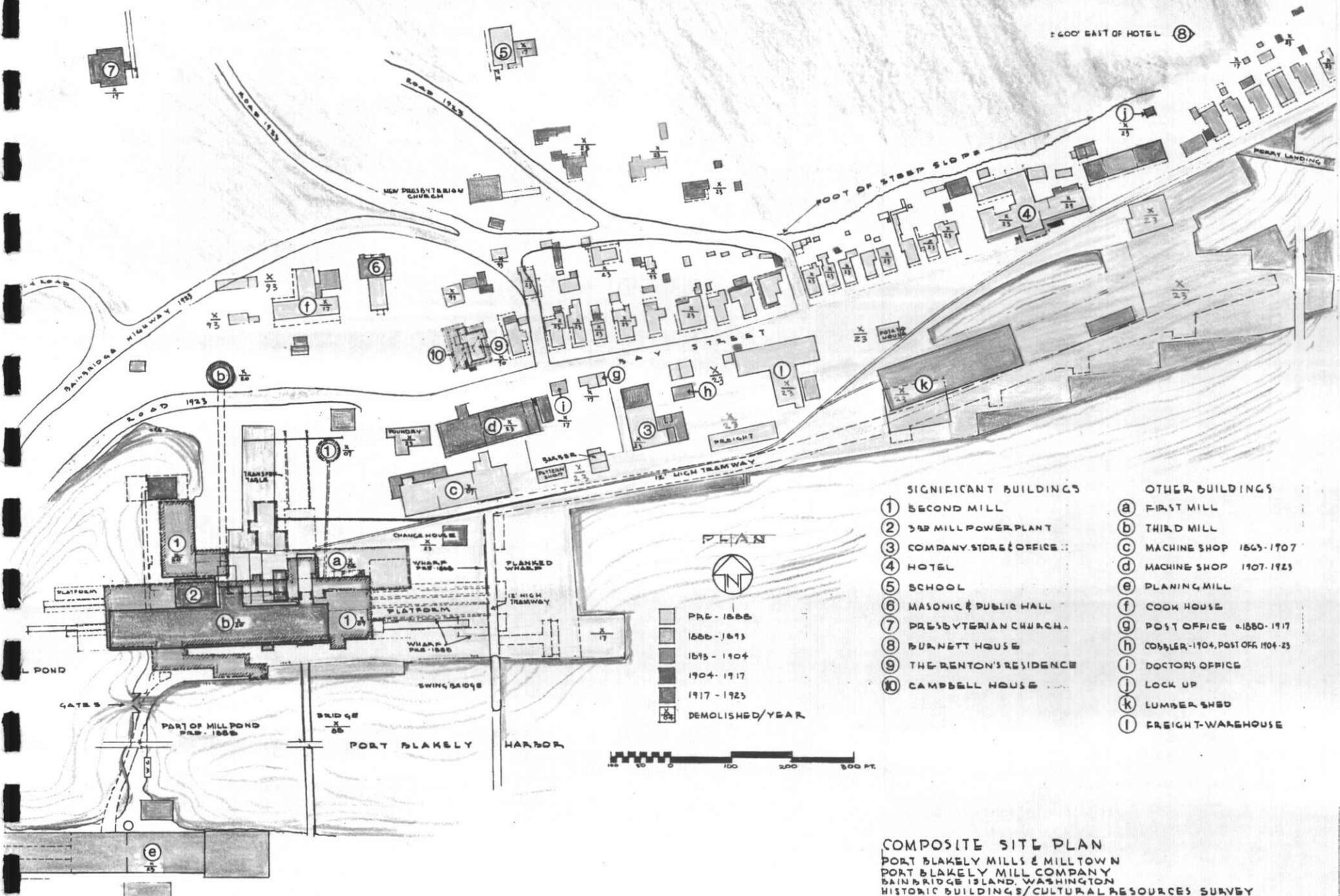
The specific questions we set out to answer regarding the Port Blakely site include:

- How the site came to be chosen for a lumber mill? What was the layout of the mill and the milltown? How successful was the operation? What brought about its eventual demise? Who lived and worked there? And how did Captain Renton make the success of it that he did?

Though this report takes the form of a history, it is more an analysis of historical data than a history per se. What does our research tell us about the life of the site--the economic life of the company and the quality of life of the people who lived there?

This part of the survey contains six parts:

1. How William Renton Came To Port Blakely
2. The Changing Portrait of the Milltown
3. The Lumber End of the Business
4. Economic Survival in a Frontier Economy
5. The Labor Picture at the Mill
6. The Character and Leadership of William Renton



- | SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS | OTHER BUILDINGS |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ① SECOND MILL | Ⓐ FIRST MILL |
| ② 3RD MILL POWER PLANT | Ⓑ THIRD MILL |
| ③ COMPANY STORE & OFFICE | Ⓒ MACHINE SHOP 1863-1907 |
| ④ HOTEL | Ⓓ MACHINE SHOP 1907-1923 |
| ⑤ SCHOOL | Ⓔ PLANING MILL |
| ⑥ MASONIC & PUBLIC HALL | Ⓕ COOK HOUSE |
| ⑦ PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH | Ⓖ POST OFFICE c.1880-1917 |
| ⑧ BURNETT HOUSE | Ⓗ COBBLER-1904, POST OFF. 1904-23 |
| ⑨ THE BENTON'S RESIDENCE | Ⓘ DOCTOR'S OFFICE |
| ⑩ CAMPBELL HOUSE | ⓷ LOCK UP |
| | Ⓚ LUMBER SHED |
| | Ⓛ FREIGHT-WAREHOUSE |

COMPOSITE SITE PLAN
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS/CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 L. B. "LARS" CARLSSON ARCHITECT AIA EMERITUS 21 FEB. 1998



PORT BLAKELY MILLTOWN

4636-12 PUGET SOUND MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HISTORY: PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN

HOW WILLIAM RENTON CAME TO PORT BLAKELY (Part 1)

The history of the Port Blakely Mill Company, as with the town of Port Blakely, is largely the history of one man, William Renton (1818-1891), though both peaked in prosperity in the decade after Renton's death. Born in Pictou, Nova Scotia, a sea-going town with a deep, protected harbor, a sawmill and a shipyard (not unlike the Blakely he would found), Renton went to sea at age eleven and by age 23 he was a sea captain with part-interest in the commercial ships he sailed and was a proud new U.S. citizen living in Philadelphia, married to a widow with a \$2,000 inheritance. In 1849, news of the California gold rush ringing in his ears, he left behind the North Atlantic, Mediterranean and Caribbean ports familiar to him. With wife Sarah and her three children on board, Renton sailed for the Cape Verde Islands off Africa, on to the River Plate in Argentina, thru the Straits of Magellan to Valparaiso in Chile, off-loading and on-loading new cargo at each stop, and finally on to San Francisco where he settled, selling his ship and purchasing a larger one. With the city in the throes of a building boom, he saw the possibilities in the lumber trade. That is what brought him to Puget Sound for the first time in the autumn of 1852.

An arm of the Pacific Ocean, Puget Sound is a network of inlets and islands stretching north and south between the Olympic Mountains to the west and the Cascades to the east. Stiff winds frequently blow out of the north or south and storms blow in from the west. The climate is damp and gray three-quarters of the year. In the 1850s, thick stands of tall trees covered virtually all the land, right down to the water. The huts of various Native American clans intermittently dotted the shoreline. The native peoples lived on shellfish, salmon, various forest game animals, wild fruits and vegetables but, increasingly, on goods obtained from trading with the whites. The Hudson Bay Company, establishing Fort Nisqually in 1833 to monopolize the local pelt trade, developed the site into a considerable cattle, farming, and timber plantation, making profit supplying Alaska's Russian outposts amongst others. This \$100,000 British Canadian operation was visited regularly by sailing ships and, as early as 1836, by coastal steamships. The first American settlement on Puget Sound (though impermanent) was a Methodist Episcopal mission half a mile away. The United States Exploring Expedition visited Puget Sound in 1841 to strengthen

American claims to the region, Lt. Charles Wilkes naming both Bainbridge Island and Blakely Harbor at this time. The region was ceded to the U.S. in the Treaty of 1846 just a year after Tumwater became the first permanent American settlement on Puget Sound. By 1849 when the U.S. Army built a post at Steilacoom, Americans fresh from the Oregon trail were steadily dribbling into the territory, some overland, some by steamer from Portland.

Captain Renton took on a cargo of piling at Steilacoom during that first trip of his to Puget Sound, but his primary purpose appears to be to talk with residents of the Sound and scout out the possibilities of the place. Future sawmill owners like W.B. Sayward, W.C. Talbot, J.J. Felt and George Meigs were doing likewise. Renton was convinced by Charles Terry to start a sawmill at the year old settlement at Alki Point. He returned the following spring with financial backing and the equipment for a small mill. Already the more perspicacious members of the Denny Party had moved from Alki to the protected east side of Elliott Bay to found Seattle proper where Henry Yesler was building his mill. Alki's harbor was deep enough for ships but its exposure to stiff north and south winds constantly threatened to scatter raw logs and beach loading vessels. When his backers balked the following year, Renton talked Daniel Howard into partnering the enterprise, moving the mill machinery to Port Orchard, on the straits opposite Bainbridge Island. The small mill, operated by six white men and five Indians, was better protected, and so prospered with all the virgin forests readily at hand.

Initially, all the lumbermen in the region made money, as fast as "sticks" could be cut and shipped to San Francisco. Considered a superior wood for shipbuilding, flooring, and various construction purposes, it was the tall stands of Douglas fir that the Puget Sound lumbermen particularly prized. But as these stands became more distant from the mills, mixed with increased competition and a fluid marketplace, a premium was increasingly put upon good management of the business, efficiency and marketing ability. Renton sold his mill in 1862. He needed a spot where he could build a large mill which was easier for ships to get at, with a deep harbor wide enough to accommodate several heavily laden ocean-going vessels at once and protected from blustery winds by high hills to the north, south and west. Plumbing harbors with a clothesline the following year, he found everything he required right under his nose at Port Blakely, halfway between his first two sites. Partnered again with Dan Howard, Renton put in a land claim under the Donation Land Act on June 30, 1863, for 164.5 acres around the perimeter of the harbor, paying \$205.63. Five more parcels (240 acres) on higher ground were picked up before a year was out. By then, cut timber from the first Blakely mill was being sold in San Francisco.



YAMA

4636-064

PUGET SOUND MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY

19

WILLIAMSON COLLECTION

THE CHANGING PORTRAIT OF THE MILLTOWN (Part 2)

The mill and the milltown built by the former sea captain had a shipshape character: tidy, cheerful and industrious. To a tourist's eye at the turn of the century the site was considered "pretty" in a Victorian sort of way, what today we would call "quaint". But when the mostly completed first mill began operating in the spring of 1864, Port Blakely was a rather dreary and wild place.

As architecture, the sawmill was little more than a huge elongated shed with an iron corrugated roof, open to the north, east and west, with diamond windows cut in the south wall and the two gables as its sole decorative flourish. Additional lighting was provided by fish oil lamps (in 1882 it is converted to electric lighting for fire safety, electricity produced by the mill's own generator). This lighting was necessary not merely because the interiors would still be fairly dark otherwise but moreover because lumber demand often necessitated running the mill day and night to meet orders.

The mill was a two story affair set on pilings well out from the north shore of the harbor, the boilers and engines at pier level (about eight feet above high tide) with the actual cutting floor being one story above that. Independent logging contractors in the region cut growths of Douglas fir (often specified in preference to other trees) and dragged them into the water of Puget Sound where the mill company tug towed chained logbooms full of them to holding areas on the south edge of Blakely Harbor. From there the raw logs were taken as needed through floodgates into the millpond behind the west end of the mill, where the green-chain would haul them up onto the cutting floor. The lumber was cut to specification and removed from the east end of the mill, where it descended on rollers down to pier level to await loading on one of six or more San Francisco bound sailing ships which the company tug had maneuvered up to the dock.

Smaller loads might zig shoreward then zag east again up the long pier, past the machine shop (where foundry-work and woodworking was done), past the pattern-making and sail-cloth shed, past the company store and company office and the various warehouses situated on the pier, carted to where steamers and smaller Puget Sound sailing ships were berthed, onloading these miniature batches of sized timber for local consumption (or depositing them in a lumber shed near the end of the pier).

On the pier and inside the mill, signs were posted prohibiting smoking. A series of water barrels, buckets and hydrants (fed by the reservoir) were placed at strategic intervals around the inner periphery of the mill. Sawdust was continually being swept and refuse was shuted onto shore where a slab pile burned day and night.

On shore, the building closest to the mill was the large T-shaped cookhouse (a dining

hall with the kitchen behind) where millworkers received three meals a day (*gratis*, at least in the early years). To the west along the millpond were the workers dormitory and a series of two-man bachelor apartments to afford more privacy for skilled workers. Further around the pond, on the south shore of the harbor, the huts of a few Native American families were allowed to squat on mill property throughout much of the tenure of the first mill.

Heading east from the cookhouse and the mill was Bay Street, a boardwalk set partly on the pier, partly on dry land. On the land side of Port Blakely's main street was a row of eleven uniformly built 22½ by 30 foot homes with a shed and outhouse in back. Renton's dwelling was the first of these. A row of eight more extending up Bay Street were built within the first few years as well as a small hotel.

In the 1860s, Port Blakely was a damp and smoky frontier town. The mill machinery hummed and the saws buzzed sometimes day and night, adding noise to the intermittent banging dockside of wood being piled, the creak and groan of the ships in the harbor plus the shouts and clatter of their loading. The small and enclosed character of the harbor and its town would ensure that this does not change much with the passing of years. But during the town's second decade, its initially plain and characterless architecture will change and provide the village a few civilized amenities.

Blakely had been connected by telegraph to the world since 1871, and by twice-daily steamship service to Seattle by at least 1872. But a marked jump in the quality of life began to happen around 1875. Past the second cluster of houses a new hotel was built, the Bainbridge Hotel, a gleaming white two-story edifice 200 feet long with 75 beds (with enlargements to the rear in about 1880), its porch and balcony facing out over the bay. A saloon and a taylor shop inside would draw mill families, not just tourists and new immigrants, up Bay Street and into the classy building. Across the street the hotel ran a livery, and that year it established a stage service, albeit bumpy, up the eight feet wide road to Port Madison in north Bainbridge Island. A steady stream of businessmen, tourists and immigrants were becoming a pleasant fact of life for the town. Six-day passenger service to San Francisco by steamer began in 1876.

More lines of houses were constructed, extending Bay Street eastward. Most of the existing box houses had been enlarged once or twice, adding covered porches, shrubbery and decorative fences to their facades. A stroll along the boardwalk now had a charming aspect to the eye. At the head of the log pond Renton built four attractive cottages exclusively for ship captains (and the captain's family who, more often than not, was traveling with him), to induce their frequenting of the Blakely mill. The town was making a self-conscious effort to present itself well.

Port Blakely's town center was on the wharf. Remodeled and expanded, the Company Store faced out over the water: its broad, gently pitched two-story facade, like an open and friendly gesture, greeted ships as they nudge up to the pier. Generous with windows and doors and visually held together by horizontal siding and a pronounced lintel extending over

the central four portals, the store was perhaps the handsomest building in town. The door and window farthest right opened into the Mill Company office. A small building to the store's left held two businesses, one a barber and bath (a niche that may have housed the post office prior to 1881), the other a fruit, candy & tobacco shop. Its entrances faced the breadth of the pier out front of the store as if this strip of planking were a public courtyard. Indeed, this section of wharf may have been used this way. Behind the Company Store nearer Bay Street, businesses inhabited portions of other small structures. One to the east held a cobbler's shop and, to the west, was one of several locales for the post office (the next building up would house a doctor's office after 1889).

Down Bay Street, the Renton house had been enlarged by 1878 and three-quarter surrounded by a handsome covered porch with its stair-railing angled toward the mill. It added charm to the beginning of Bay Street (where the blunt grandeur of the Campbell House replacing it, built on the same lot after Renton's 1891 death, would have a pompous and unapproachable character, foreign to both William Renton's personality and to that of the town he built). In 1876, between the Renton residence and the cookhouse to the west, the mill authorized the Masonic Order to build a tall and narrow public hall, for its own and the entire community's use. The mill lent a small building in that vicinity to Lizzie Ordway to start a public school. In about 1881, the oft-remodeled schoolhouse was built well up the hill with a commanding view of the harbor. The town had no church building till the Presbyterian Church is built in 1905 (also high up on the hill), but the schoolhouse and the Masonic hall served that function, as had private homes prior to them.

The big building boom of this period began in 1879 at the extreme other end of the Bay Street boardwalk. A modest degree of shipbuilding had been taking place in Blakely Harbor by Ole Engblom since at least 1868, which was taken over by W.H. Bryant about five years later, but with output nothing like the Hall Brothers. Having recently lost their yard at another harbor in the Sound, Captain Renton built a machine shop, five houses above the shipyard (Hall's Hill) and a timber-carrying rail link up the shore from the sawmill, in order to induce the Halls to move their already successful and prestigious operation to Port Blakely. They took the bait, and the building boom began anew: dormitories and houses for 70 (later 140) laborers, three long ship-launching "ways", a woodworking and a loft (engineers) building, plus sheds for tools, hardware, paint, sails and caulking oakum. During its 23 years at Blakely Harbor, the Halls would build 78 schooners and steamships from Douglas fir cut in Captain Renton's mill.

Washington Territory surrendered its frontier status and declared itself a civilized state within the Union in 1889. Fire destroyed the first mill the previous year and, back in operation after a mere five months, the new double mill ("the largest sawmill in the world") began to set all sorts of production records. (In 1890, the year before Renton died, 125 vessels carrying 55,916,896 board feet of lumber departed from Blakely Harbor, one quarter of all the lumber shipped from Puget Sound that year.) Port Blakely now sported a population

of a thousand people. At least half of these were immigrants, preponderantly Scandinavian. Migrations of whatever nationality would often start with relatively shiftless single males looking for temporary work, followed in the second wave by families staking everything on the possibility of building a better life for themselves. The farmers on Swedish Hill to the north of Blakely often grubstaked themselves by either first working in the mill or working seasonally there, while tending their rough-shorn homesteads.

During the 1890s, along a creek 400 yards to the southwest of the millpond, Port Blakely developed its second ethnic suburb. Secluded in second-growth firs, two small villages of Japanese immigrants emerged. On the flats was a noisy bachelors camp (Nagaya) and creeping up the hillside beyond it (Yama) was a picturesque ramshackle of tidy, unpainted, low-slung family dwellings. In the next decade, 200 people would be living in 50 houses there. Its businesses included a labor broker and tailor, hotel with western style restaurant favored by caucasian millworkers, grocery store and ice cream parlor, photography studio and watch repair, as well as a tea garden (with wisteria hanging from trellises), a Buddhist temple (where children were schooled in Japanese language and culture), and a Baptist church.

The sketchy texture of the Scandinavian farms in their strained tug-of-war against nature and the hill-slope of Japanese buildings that seem piled against one another as natural as driftwood on a beach, were in stark contrast, stylistically, to the self-important look and inflated scale of two late Victorian structures built during this period at the height of the town's prosperity, the Campbell House and the Presbyterian Church. The newly-built second mill, with its two cutting lines, should also have overwhelmed the town with its size. But there was nothing visually overbearing or disproportionate about it. Its shipbuilders' style of bowstring trusswork produced a design that was virtually unique for comparable structures. Punctuated by a thin clearstory, the gracefully curved roof was both majestic and at the same time harmonious with its surroundings.

During the 1890s labor saving devices were introduced by the mill's new management (John and James Campbell). Rail lines stretched everywhere. A 12-foot high elevated tramway now carried lumber straight from the cutting floor (second story) of the mill eastward along the ever-extending wharf, or swung to the right across a swinging bridge over the water to the south shore of the bay. Once only dotted with a smattering of wood-frame houses, the south shore of Blakely now had become a liquid asset for the mill. Here, stack after stack of processed timber was backlogged for eventual shipping. Alongside lay a long, low, flat-roofed planing mill, constructed to meet the emerging demand for precisely finished lumber products. Flat roofs suddenly appear to be stylish, as the pitched roofs of the Bainbridge Hotel, the school and the Masonic Hall have each been removed (as fire prevention?), to their esthetic detriment.

East of the planing mill, the main building and powerhouse for the Wallworth &

Neville telegraph crossarm factory added to the congestion after the turn of the century. Both south shore mills would load their product on railcars and ship it by barge to the railhead in Seattle as a way of keeping up with emerging competition in the rail transport of timber. Since companies on the mainland had easier access to rail lines, the company felt compelled to build a narrow barge-loading pier jutting out from the south shore. The harsher demands of 20th century industry had become a challenge to the town and its company, a challenge they would fail to meet.

The big mill burned in 1907. The new owners (David Skinner and John W. Eddy) replaced it with a smaller mill, later half-abandoning it (leasing it or closing it down for periods). Halls shipyard had already moved to Eagle Harbor, and the economy of the town deteriorated quickly. The stop and start third mill closed down finally in 1922, and was torn down two years later. This was also the fate of most of the buildings and a large number of the homes that fire had not yet claimed. A new church and ferry terminal were built but it was too little too late to save a once lovely frontier town.

THE LUMBER END OF THE BUSINESS (Part 3)

Port Blakely was a company town. Its fate was tied to the huge success, though ultimate failure, of the Port Blakely Mill Company's sawmilling operation. Together they began and prospered as an important cog in Puget Sound's volatile frontier economy, based on west coast and Pacific seagoing cargo trade--mostly in rough-cut construction-grade lumber and in good flooring. In the 1890s and 1900s, they were successfully making the transition to the modern, national, railroad-based economy--which put a premium on finished wood products--until the second mill burned. The business never brought itself back up to speed after that. When the mill died in 1922, so eventually did the town.

Initially, located on an island in the very center of Puget Sound (in an adequately large, deep, protected harbor), the Blakely mill provided the easiest and/or most efficient access to logging operations going on all around the Sound. It was also highly convenient to ocean-going shipping. The destination of most Blakely lumber during the first decade or so was northern California, in the throes of a head-over-heels building boom. As Renton built the mill in 1863, his partner Daniel Howard set up the San Francisco end of the business: establishing a lumberyard at Pier 3, opening a business office to market it on Stewart Street nearby, and hiring as his clerk a young arrival from New England, Charles S. Holmes. (Holmes would take over the San Francisco office by 1872 after Howard and his replacement, Samuel E. Smith, each died in fluke accidents.) The Bay Area provided a steady and stable market for Blakely lumber. But when the market was up, the lumberyard would sell lumber as fast as the square-riggers could bring it in. In the 1870s and 80s the company would develop other steady markets for their lumber in Hawaii, southern California, and (what would remain the most profitable over the years) the mining regions of Peru and Chile--and for periods in places like Australia, China, Siberia, and even around the Horn in Europe. Most of the Blakely lumber was exported; only a small percentage of output was used for consumption around Puget Sound.

The output of the Blakely mill was phenomenal. In 1866, 35,000 board feet of lumber were processed each 12 hour workday, or about 11 million feet per year. In 1882 it jumped to about 140,000 board feet per day, 40 million per year, and in 1899 up to 275,000 for each (now 10-hour) workday, 97 million per year. One thousand board feet would build a modest size house, which adds up to the equivalent of eleven thousand houses in 1866 and 97 thousand in 1899 just from this one mill. With earnings (in 1899 dollars) at just under a penny per foot of sawed lumber, gross mill receipts for the year 1882 would have been just under \$400,000 (In the early years with heavy demand and few suppliers, it might have run as high as a nickel per board foot.)

Prices, of course, fluctuated greatly from year to year. 1865 to 1867, for instance, were rather flat years, with prices low and demand moderate. Renton seriously contemplated getting out of the business. But later in 1867, through 1868, the demand picked up, and the mill needed to run two shifts, literally day and night, to keep abreast of mounting orders to be filled. The market was similarly strong in 1871 and 1873, with the Blakely sawmill making money hand over fist.

So the company growth-curve, in this feast or famine marketplace, has to be plotted with a very jagged line. The 26 million board feet in 1881, say, leaped to 40 million in 1882 and 49 in 1883, then plummeted to 39 in 1884, and rocketed to 52 million by 1885. It would edge down to 48 and bounced back to 56 in the next two years, and go on like that. Growth was greatly spurred when the increasingly inefficient 24 year old mill burned in 1888 and was replaced with a new larger mill with two cutting lines (with an eventual top capacity of one million board feet per day). Growth boomed. And even during the nationwide depression, from 1892 through 1894, when production stagnated at about 75 million feet each of those years, it did not decline. This was due to an unremittingly strong market in southern California, now in the midst of its own housing boom. As the recession ended, production leaped to over 100 million board feet for each of the next two years (and then, for another two, plummeted precipitously to 89 then 68 million). With the turn of the century, production would plateau out at around 100 million board feet.

In the frontier days, local competitors actually weren't much of a business problem--except during severe economic slowdowns. Because of the voracious demand from California, when the economy was good, everyone produced to capacity. When not good, reduced demand would create an oversupply down south. The price might drop below the ability to make a profit for all Puget Sound lumber producers. To survive these periods, the major exporting mills formed producers combines (Pine Lumber Association in 1877, Pine Manufacturers Association in 1880, Pacific Pine Lumber Company in 1886), voluntarily limiting production. (But as soon as economic winds began to change or new markets presented themselves, these restrictions tended to be ignored.)

Competition of a new sort, in the emerging rail-based economy, was what undid Port Blakely after the turn of the century. The new British Columbia sawmills were elbowing into the world market, providing less-expensive rough-cut lumber for the ocean-going cargo trade. At the same time, the new rail-trade in finished wood-products necessitated both a new kind of equipment and a new brand of thinking which placed a premium on a highly efficient operation in the Henry Ford mode. (These are the qualities that would make Weyerhaeuser such a huge success in the new century--forcing others like Simpson Timber and Pope & Talbot to convert their practices in order to survive.)

With William Renton's death in 1891, John and James Campbell took over the operation at Blakely. They seemed to recognize the challenges ahead of them, instituting labor saving devices and purchasing a band saw which cut larger and wasted less wood than the circular

saws. They built an elevated tramway to make ship-loading and movement of materials more efficient. On the south shore they erected a large planing mill to produce finished wood products plus a pier where this could easily be loaded onto rail-barges which were towed across the Sound to the Seattle railhead. There was now an extensive lumberyard for air drying and a kiln for kiln drying the fresh-cut forest product.

In 1903 the Campbells (along with Holmes and silent partner Richard K. Ham) sold the Port Blakely Mill Company to Michigan lumbermen David Skinner and John W. Eddy. They sold in an up market, so they had reasons to get out--probably because they were aware of the difficulties of the changing business climate that would otherwise lie ahead of them. Initially, being island-based in mid-Puget Sound was one of the Blakely mill's biggest assets. At the start of the new century, being on an island was the very thing that made Blakely ill-positioned to be a vigorous player in the burgeoning rail trade.

When the big mill burned in 1907 and the new owners rebuilt (in a weak market), they erected a smaller mill in the old non-streamlined fashion. They could have chosen to rebuild on the mainland near a railhead, but they did not. The mill ran at a loss--when it ran at all--over its last twelve years. In 1923, one year after the mill closed, the owners divided up or sold the still very lucrative assets of the Port Blakely Mill Company (rails, the Company Store, prime Seattle and San Francisco properties, etc.) that were independent of the sawmilling operation. Separating their financial interests, Skinner took over the fleet of company ships, Eddy the company's vast timber lands and the company name. The Port Blakely Mill Company to this day runs considerable tree-farming operations throughout western Washington.



HONEYMOON COTTAGES

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28

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ECONOMIC SURVIVAL IN A FRONTIER ECONOMY (Part 4)

Money was scarce in the boom/bust frontier economy of Puget Sound. Except for the cash that pioneers and immigrants brought with them, all available capital arrived in the form of payment for export products. Sawmill profits may have been big but so were losses. When the California market in lumber was slack, where did the cash come from to pay mill wages and to purchase food, to buy raw timber and to compensate logging crews for harvesting it and shippers for transporting the sawn product? The mill cost \$60,000 a year to run in the 1870s. Worth the \$50,000 it cost to build, the mill had very little collateral to warrant a California banker's extending the business much credit. One or two economically down years could have killed the mill company.

What saved it was diversity. When the business formally incorporated as the Port Blakely Mill Company in 1876, it listed as its assets not just the \$80,000 mill and associated properties. Also listed amongst company assets were several ships, a store, timberlands, and other properties. Each played a vital role in the health and survival of the company--during the early days as well as throughout its existence.

The three lumber ships the company had purchased ten years previous, now numbered five, and would number nine in 1899. (It also owned a tugboat.) In a strong economy, independent commercial ships might choose to take on more profitable cargos or call at other ports (during a goldrush or boom of another sort). Owning a few vessels was a safeguard to insure timely delivery of orders. Also in a slack lumber market, they could take on coal or other freight to generate positive income. Later the close contact with the Hall's Brothers Shipbuilding encouraged the production of barks, barkentines, and eventually the swift and large capacity schooners for lumber hauling as against the more traditional square-riggers. The mill company and Halls would often share interest in these ships, and Winslow Hall would arrange return cargo from lumber destinations to maximize their economic returns.

The company received a modest income from its rental housing, and collected a portion of the proceeds from the hotel and its saloon. But the big money maker on the townsite was the company store. In 1876, its inventory was worth \$40,000 (\$48,000 by 1883 and \$90,000 by 1899). It served not only the needs of Blakely townfolk, but became a kind of regional bank. The store would provision local and ocean going ships, local farmers and merchants, as well as rail and lumber camps. This would cancel part of the mill company's debts to these enterprises, minimizing the exchange of hard currency. Mill wages were similarly credited to the store's account. The mill often paid off contracts, purchased goods, or laborers bearer notes in "scrip", a common replacement for cash in the early Puget Sound economy (often worth only 80¢ on the dollar for merchandise), or in 60-day drafts (which couldn't be cashed at full value for two months).

In 1887, the year before the fire destroyed the first mill, the sawmill took a financial loss despite its high output that year (low prices? the inefficiency of the old mill's operation?). On the eve of the fire, this could have boded ill for the company, except that the company store recorded an amazing \$200,000 profit. This wiped out company debt and left a \$75,000 cash surplus. This sum was almost exactly the amount of company assets lost in the fire the next year. Since it had been too costly to insure the old mill, this surplus essentially paid for the construction of the new double mill, which would be far more efficient and have nearly twice the capacity.

The most significant of the company store's provisioning tasks was for the logging camps. These camps were small independent operations (the company did not itself run any logging operations until 1885). Each ran their own financial risks. In 1882, 32 such camps were serving the mill, harvesting maybe three thousand acres annually. Because they were so crucial to the mill's operation, the company would often front the logging boss his capital and supplies and then allow him to pass on wages and operating expenses back to the mill. This benefited both concerns and minimized the exchange of hard cash.

The company put all spare cash, and often borrowed moneys, toward purchasing good timberland. By 1884, when valuable timber stands fronting Puget Sound had been largely used up, the company owned one to two million dollars worth of timberlands inland, containing three billion board feet of lumber. At the current rate of output, this would have lasted the mill 75 years. Land would always be valuable, so it was instant collateral. The mill borrowed more to pay a rail contractor (who would later become its top logging contractor) to build a logging railroad (started in 1883) from Kamilche on Puget Sound into the heart of Mason County timberlands and through (eventually) to Montesano. The man who accomplished this was Sol Simpson, later founder of Simpson Timber Company (with the investment aid of Port Blakely Mill Company stockholders). Without this railroad, the cost to haul out the timber would have proved exorbitant, and purchasing timber rights from other landholders might eventually have become too costly were there no other alternatives. So this capital investment provided long term benefits for the company.

Renton would often invest his own private money and that of his wife, as well as company reserves, in various local businesses. This bonding would similarly strengthen both his and their financial status (which also created networks of gentleman's agreements: bills would not be pressed until one knew they could be paid). Renton helped underwrite the local telegraph company. Once operation began in 1871, it saved two to four weeks in the sending of messages to the San Francisco office and receiving reply. Mrs. Renton's growing fortune was often loaned to Seattle bankers who had but small capital reserves, or to the mill company when strapped and needing (as in 1878) significant improvements and expansion to remain competitive.

The ships, company store, timberlands (and its railroad), and subsidiary properties played a major role in keeping the company solvent through the ups and downs of the frontier

economy. By the time of statehood, money was plentiful and the railroads were making the Port Blakely Mill Company part of the national economy. Blakely would now have to compete efficiently with sawmills from all over the country, not just the west coast. And it would have to meet the more exacting specifications of wood products users. To this end, the milling operation would have to succeed on its own terms. The company's other financial assets would no longer be able to play a buffering role.



BACHELOR'S QUARTERS 1311 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE LABOR PICTURE AT THE MILL (Part 5)

Sawdust was always in the air. Twenty or thirty saws and planers might be buzzing simultaneously. Fortunately the building was open and naturally ventilated and lighted from clearstory monitors and latticework walls. In winter the workfloor might have been damp and cool despite machinery heat and sawblade friction on wood. A moment's inattention could mean the loss of a finger, or worse. Strict adherence to procedure is probably all that kept the shop a reasonably safe place to work.

Most of the floor work was unskilled or semi-skilled labor. Logs would have to be sorted in the millpond, attached to green chains which hauled the long timbers of often massive diameter up to the milling floor. Bark had to be stripped and the logs squared by double circular saws (later, band saws), two runs, before timber could be sectioned into long boards. Conveyed by live rollers, it had to run the gamut of band resaws, gang mill, scantling machine, trimmers, etc., before being lowered onto the wharf and loaded on waiting ships, or placed on a tram for the lumberyard, or sent over a swing bridge (later, a telfer) to the planing mill for even more precise refinement. Workers had to man each of these stations, doing their job quickly and efficiently. Others constantly swept up sawdust, shuted debris on conveyors to the slab-heap (later, the burner) on shore for incineration, or performed other safety tasks.

Skilled labor went on next door in the machine shop, foundry, and woodworking plant. And engineers nursed as many as 21 boilers (in a concrete building adjacent the mill) and 16 different steam engines (and later some fossil fuel engines) throughout the plant. The tugboat crew was constantly busy jockeying booms of raw logs into and lumber carrying vessels in and out of the harbor. Incoming ships would be fumigated to prevent the spread of pestilence and disease, and longshoremen joined ships' crews in off-loading ballast and on-loading lumber. Cookhouse workers were preparing three meals a day for each shift. At the Company Store, clerks were busy selling wares and, outside, dock laborers were off-loading merchandise from Puget Sound steamboats or on-loading provisions destined for logging camps. Accountants were tallying their books while the company's property managers were seeing to their rentals.

Away from the mill, 60 persons were employed in Mason County to operate and maintain the Company's 80 miles of logging railroads with its four locomotives and 80 logging cars, plus a machine shop and roundhouse at Matlock. Some of the logging crews nearby were directly employed by the company (since 1885); others worked on contract. Agents for the company regularly traveled about the region: doing site inspections or repairs, collecting rents or fees. Contract lawyers and real estate managers worked to gain clear titles to land

claims. Aside from workers in the San Francisco office and lumberyard, the company owned or had interest in as many as nine ships with their sizable crews.

This is not only a remarkable number but also an incredible variety of direct employees and contract workers associated with this one business endeavor. And, while simpler, it wasn't that much different in the early days of the company. Then labor was in chronic short supply. Men working in the mill this month might desert next month to join a construction crew in Seattle, a railgang, or to do some homesteading. "Men are scarce, wages high," Renton wrote a couple years after the mill opened. (Blakely, it was said, paid its workers in gold, not the silver or script paid out by other Puget Sound mills.)

The labor shortage changed in 1873 with the completion of the western link of the Northern Pacific Railway. Former railworkers now sought work at whatever wage, particularly the Chinese immigrants. But anti-Chinese sentiment throughout the west drove Chinese from most of the Blakely mill jobs in 1877, to be replaced by "white" workers at a higher pay. Most of the "white" workers were immigrants as well, largely from the British Isles at first, later predominantly from Scandinavia. By 1889 a significant contingent of Japanese workers also began having jobs in and around the plant. Through the end of the century, the mill floor would run largely on the restless influx of immigrant labor. Pay was low, but adequate (aside from a wage and free workday meals it may have included membership in a health co-op plus a place to live, or materials and a lot upon which to build a dwelling).

When the mill began operating in April of 1864, regular wages (which Renton called "high") were \$30 to \$50 per month, plus three meals a day. By 1899, wages would not average much more: about \$62 per month. In the beginning it cost the mill only 35¢ per day to board a man in the cookhouse. The young workers roomed in a dormitory. Work was six days a week, 12 hours a day (possibly 11½ with a half hour for lunch). This lasted till 1886 when Knights of Labor pressure on the local timber industry and the industry's need to hold down production reduced the workday to ten hours (7 a.m. to 6 p.m with an hour for lunch). (Organized labor and union agitation played scant role in mill life at Blakely till its final dozen years.) The mill's 1864 opening saw twenty men on the payroll. Within a couple years thirty to forty men were employed about the place. By 1871 the workforce more than doubled. By 1890, the crew of the big mill was near 275 in number and nearer 400 by 1899. When the lumber market was strong, the mill ran two shifts to meet demand, as was the case in 1904 with 515 employees.

Skilled and managerial positions were more likely to be held by American-born workers. In the early days, skilled labor began at \$65 per month and ran as high \$250, though the usual for engineers was \$100 to \$125. The company had to advertise for skilled laborers in San Francisco newspapers, and the reliable managers were often relatives of trusted business acquaintances. Renton himself lured three of his Campbell nephews from Pictou, Nova Scotia, to come out and join him as engineers: John (age 25) and William (age 18) came in 1872, and James (age 26) followed in 1879. William would veer into steamship

engineering but John and James would become the principal managers of the mill company in the half-dozen years before and dozen years after Renton's death.

The role the town played in this was as a magnet to attract immigrant labor. For skilled and older unmarried workers, inexpensive two-person bachelor quarters were provided. The married could rent houses. Add to that the hotel, meeting hall, company store and other businesses--and Port Blakely began to look like a real town in the late 1870s, no longer the dreary frontier boomtown of its economically difficult first ten years. Renton had begun renovating the town and the image of Port Blakely that he wished to project was that of a modest homey beauty--a haven in the wilderness where immigrants could feel secure starting their life in "the New World". With manpower so fluid in Puget Sound's frontier economy, this attractive "look" helped to provide a steady influx of new workers. While pay was lower than what most American-born workers would take (Japanese immigrants in 1890 received but a dollar a day and meals), wages were good compared to Eastern factories. It was decidedly a place for the recent immigrant to write home about.

Despite the babel of immigrant languages, people got on well together at Port Blakely--finding ways to make their off-hours meaningful and fun. Religious services went on in homes, the Masonic hall or the school. Fraternal orders were begun by groups of men feeling the need for fellowship. For diversion, people could hike, fish, boat, or swim; clam-dig, collect seashells, or pick flowers. Baseball was both played and produced an avid spectator following (Port Blakely fielded a team to compete with nearby communities as well as with the U.S. Army team from Fort Ward at the south tip of the Island). The town sported a fruit, candy and tobacco store, and eventually (in the Japanese suburb) an ice cream parlor, a restaurant, and a tea garden. Tramp steamer traffic around Puget Sound provided cheap picturesque excursions. The saloon in the hotel was a lively place to go weekend evenings. (It was said the Tyee Room never closed. Port Blakely was an "open town", a company village where the mill owner tolerated alcohol beverages. Ship crews and the local workforce imbibed at several taverns around the bay, and the overflow of "loose women" from Seattle's sizeable red-light district would ply these establishments.) Dances and other social events went on at the community hall, the hotel, or the school. A large resort a mile away at Pleasant Beach offered an indoor swimming pool, bowling alley, hotel and grounds, plus an outdoor pavilion (where a world championship boxing match took place in 1906). The growing city of Seattle was but a short steamboat ride away if more glamorous excitements or "civilized" amenities were desired. For vacation, San Francisco was six days away by steamer.

As a pastime, newspapers were perused and politics argued. Music concerts and amateur theatricals were not unheard of. Nor were minstrel shows and variety acts by touring entertainers (later, silent movies). Like everywhere, kids were full of the dickens. But, despite sporadic excitements, the overriding impression is that emotions were temperate, in work and play. Like the well-run mill, things rarely got out of kilter. The populace of Port

Blakely was a dim reflection of the factory that supported them, overshadowed by the town's straight-laced patriarch. They worked hard, were industrious, productive, and relatively happy. With no deep complaints they, ultimately, were a quiet people. Quiet in a robust, healthy kind of way.

THE CHARACTER AND VISION OF WILLIAM RENTON (Part 6)

William Renton was less a "man of vision" than an intelligent and highly determined individual. He had a canny second-sense about how to make a business succeed in a frontier economy, and he was driven--come hell or high water--to make it do so. His operation was as neat and well organized as his mind must have been. But he took a firm, muscular grasp of his enterprise, exerting an influence over events and contingencies which seemed beyond his control.

He could direct blunt, hardnosed messages to his contractors: "Hereafter, when you settle with your men, give them drafts on us at 60 days sight. If they don't like it, let them go." This stemmed from a--get the job done, on budget, on time--type mentality. However, Renton was no cold industrialist. He appeared to be a quite approachable man, able to get along well with a rich variety of humanity--from yankee businessman to shiftless frontier tough and from Native Americans to migrants from the British Isles, China, Scandinavia or Japan. Considered by all to be generous and never exploitive, he placed no dampers on his wife Sarah's extensive philanthropic interests. Ever the sea captain, a leader that expected to be followed, he also felt responsible to watch vigilantly over the morale and well-being of his crew.

Captain William Renton saw the first square-rigger loaded with his lumber pull away from the Blakely wharf in late May of 1864, bound for San Francisco. The man was then 45 years old, 5 feet-10 inches tall, 250 pounds. Somewhat balding, he had white locks and sported a beard without a mustache. His eyes looked square forward (these eyes, that had personally conducted the land survey around Blakely Harbor, would be nearly blind in ten years). And there was determination in the set of his jaw (the scarring from prior head injuries was either not obvious enough for people to comment upon or it conveniently served to reinforce impressions of the man's grit). The huge profits that would come while the lumber market was strong were earned by toughing it through this boom/bust economy's down-cycles. Acquired business sense had told Renton that survival meant diversifying his company. It likewise meant building the kind of port that would induce ship captains to regularly dock there and new business to establish on the site, and also be an appealing enough town to lure in immigrant labor.

He tried managing the business from San Francisco during much of the 1860s. Blakely Harbor was then a wild, heavily forested, lonely-looking place and the town was pretty rickety. In his absence, service to customers lagged. So in 1870 he moved back to Blakely to personally manage the operation, and he essentially never again left. The first ten or twelve years of the business must have been stressful and hectic. If economic ups and downs

weren't enough, he had ill-luck with his partners at the San Francisco end: the first was thrown from his buggy into a gaslight post, the second fell down a ship's hold. Both died. Renton needed an honest, competent individual to handle the sales end of his operation and with Charles S. Holmes, who took over, he got shrewdness as well. As the business began to stabilize, Renton set his sights on building Port Blakely into an attractive town.

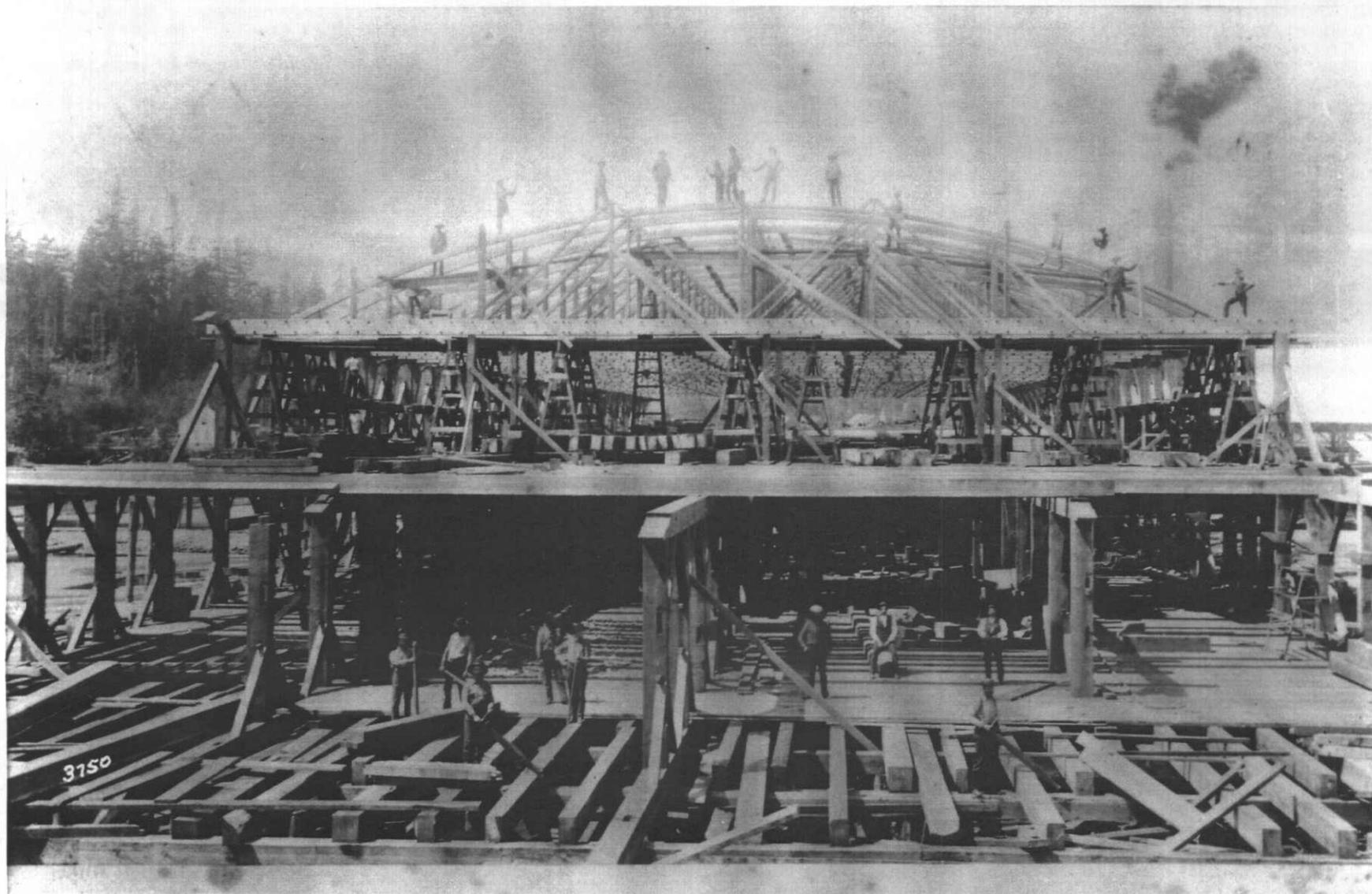
William Renton was a self-made man who lived modestly all his life. He ascribed to the social Darwinist ethic common to 19th century entrepreneurs which asserted that people should get on in the world by their own efforts. At Port Blakely he promoted fraternal organizations (like the Masons) as a vehicle by which people would look out for each other and develop a sense of community responsibility. He preferred this to labor unions or more passive public welfare or Salvation Army type aid. Blakely's first citizen does not appear to have been a particularly religious individual (the first church at Blakely was built well after his death). (Like the good Mason that he was, Renton likely ascribed to "Enlightened" secularism, prone to "seeing" and engaging in the world with dispassionate "Mind".) A robust and gregarious materialist, he understood people's basic needs: a good job, food, housing, and the ability to blow off steam on Saturday night. Renton personally disapproved of alcohol, but allowed saloons in and around Port Blakely (at a time when many milltowns like Port Madison preferred to remain dry).

Injuries from an 1857 boiler explosion (at his previous Port Orchard operation) caused him regular headaches and by 1874 had left him virtually blind, but he never complained. Nor did it crimp his abilities. Even into his 70s, this robust, monumental figure wearing a cardigan jacket and round slouch hat was still a familiar sight on the dock out front of the company store. Regardless of handicap, Renton knew every inch of his mill and could account for every dollar of company assets, and continued to oversee the operation till the very week he died.

This happened in 1891, following his wife by only a year. Business was booming, but the mill shut down for three days in tribute. A thousand people came to his funeral. Eulogized as an honest man who kept his word, he was also a savvy and prudent investor. He helped build his wife's \$3,000 dowry (inheritance from her first husband) into a million dollar estate (left to her daughters). He had put his own private funds into real estate, coal mines, railways, etc., leaving behind an estate worth three million. It went to his nephews the Campbells (Sarah and he had no children), possibly on the condition that they continue to run the mill ten more years after his death before selling it--knowing that John and James' management would do right by the business and the town. He had already made this arrangement with his partner Charles Holmes to prevent the company from splintering.

Thus Renton's diligent and successful style of doing business continued into the 20th century. Twelve years after his death, summer forest fires had ravaged Washington state, Halls shipyard had decided to move (to larger quarters on Eagle Harbor, three miles north, on Mill Company owned land), Sol Simpson's affiliated logging and sawmilling operation

informed Blakely of its intention to go independent, and Weyerhaeuser had just announced that it would be opening several large state-of-the-art mills in the Northwest. To Holmes and the Campbells, it looked like a good time to get out of the business. With new ownership running Blakely in 1903, the continuity of Renton's highly effective, hands-on brand of company leadership came to an end.



CONSTRUCTION OF THE SECOND MILL-1888
40

U of W NEG. NO. UW 4943

DESCRIPTIONS: SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS

1 The Second Mill

Five days after the first sawmill was destroyed by fire on February 3, 1888, Captain Renton wrote to his partner, Charles Holmes, in San Francisco. He outlined his plans for building a new mill, stressing the need for state-of-the-art equipment. There was no question in his mind what had to be done: combine the sawmills under one roof.

Five months later the new mill was an operating reality. The huge structure was supported on wood piles. The first floor contained the steam engines, conveyors, belts and wheels to drive the saws and log handling gear on the second floor. Platforms extended eastward and northward from the second floor which, in a few years, would connect to a 12 foot high tramway. The tramway ran 1400 feet east from the mill platform above the planked wharf at the north shore of the harbor.

The structure was unique. Built-in-place 8-panel bow-string trusses at 12 feet on centers spanned 102 feet. The bottom chords of these trusses were fabricated with laminated vertical beams held together with staggered large size bolts at 12 bolts per panel.

The top chord was built up with 2 inch thick horizontal laminations. The vertical and diagonal truss members were heavy timbers. The first floor columns and diagonal bracing were also heavy timber with floors on heavy planking. 3x14 roof joists spanned the 12 foot bays. A continuous monitor type skylight provided light for the center portion of the second floor. Latticework at the upper portion of the second floor walls and above the openings at the ends of the structure provided light and ventilation.

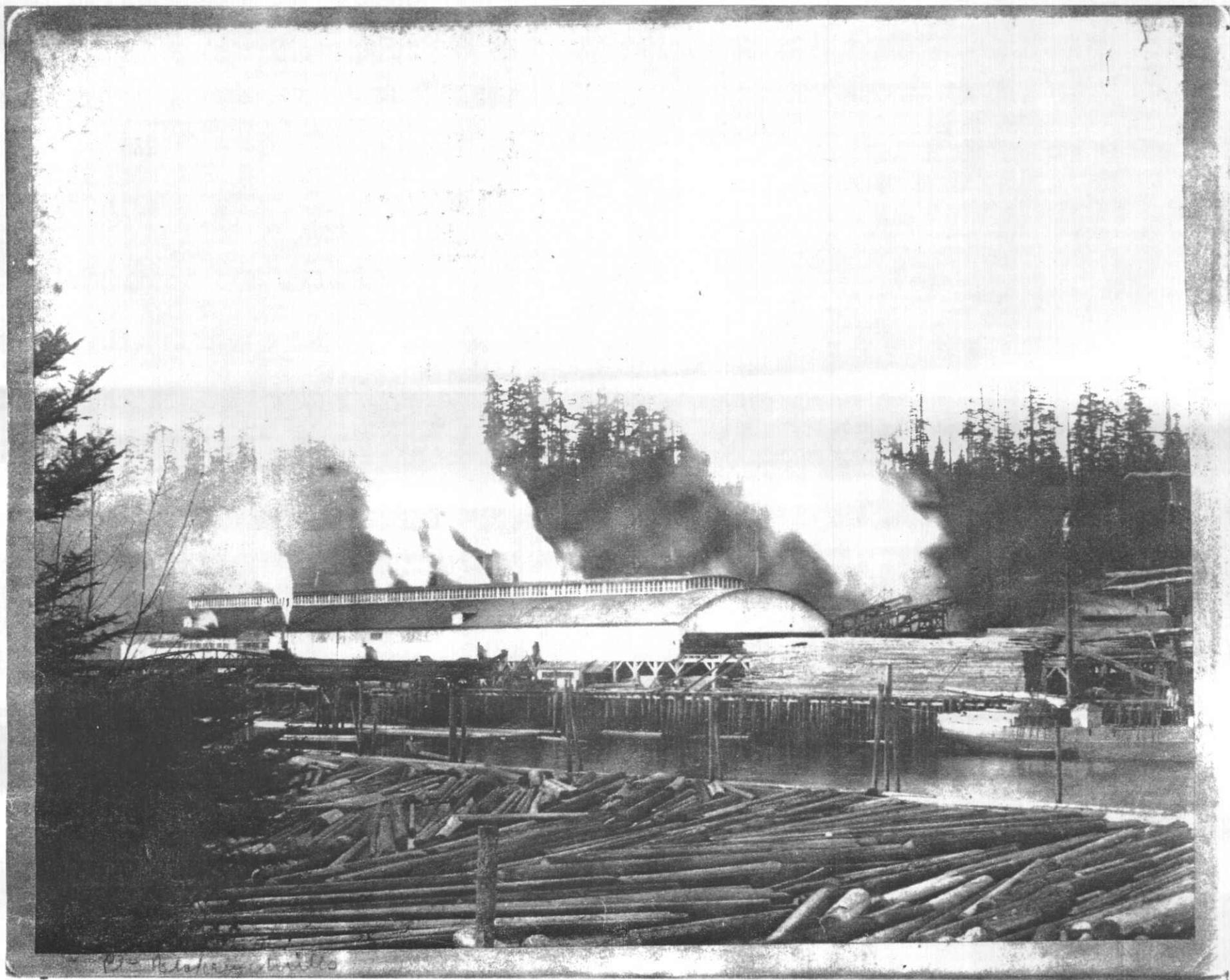
The quality of the building was exceptional, no doubt combining the techniques and skills of New England barn builders and those of Hall Brothers shipyard crews.

The devastating fires that destroyed the first mill (in 1888) and the second mill (in 1907) each began when a journal box in a room adjacent to the mill overheated. In both instances, flames spread so rapidly that fighting it became futile. Millworkers barely escaped with their lives. This was despite strict safety regulations at the mill and an impressive system of waterbarrels and buckets, hydrants fed by reservoirs on the hill, plus a saltwater pump to fill the reservoirs. The best the fire crews could manage was to prevent the fire from

spreading to other company and town buildings, and from destroying the entire length of the wharf. Because of prohibitive cost, the first mill was not insured. The second mill was covered, and had in place a state-of-the-art sprinkler system. But even this was not sufficient to halt, or much slow, the conflagration.

The market was strong in 1888, so when the mill burned, Renton had cash in his pockets. He rebuilt immediately: this time a large and efficient double-mill on the pier, a bit further from shore. (Having lasted 24 years, the antiquated first mill was one of the least efficient and most costly to run on Puget Sound. A change was long overdue.) The new mill was operational in five months. It had nearly double the production capacity.

The 1906 earthquakes and fires that destroyed San Francisco and Valparaiso, Chile, produced a boom lumber market. But this market was glutted with timber by 1907, driving down price and profits, in 1907 when the second mill burned. This was unfortunate timing. There was no ready cash this time, due to the down market, and the insurance company balked on payment, necessitating legal action. The new owners, Skinner and Eddy, did not complete rebuilding for 2½ years. They also decided, for whatever reasons, on erecting a smaller mill. This third mill had three-fifths the production capacity of its predecessor.

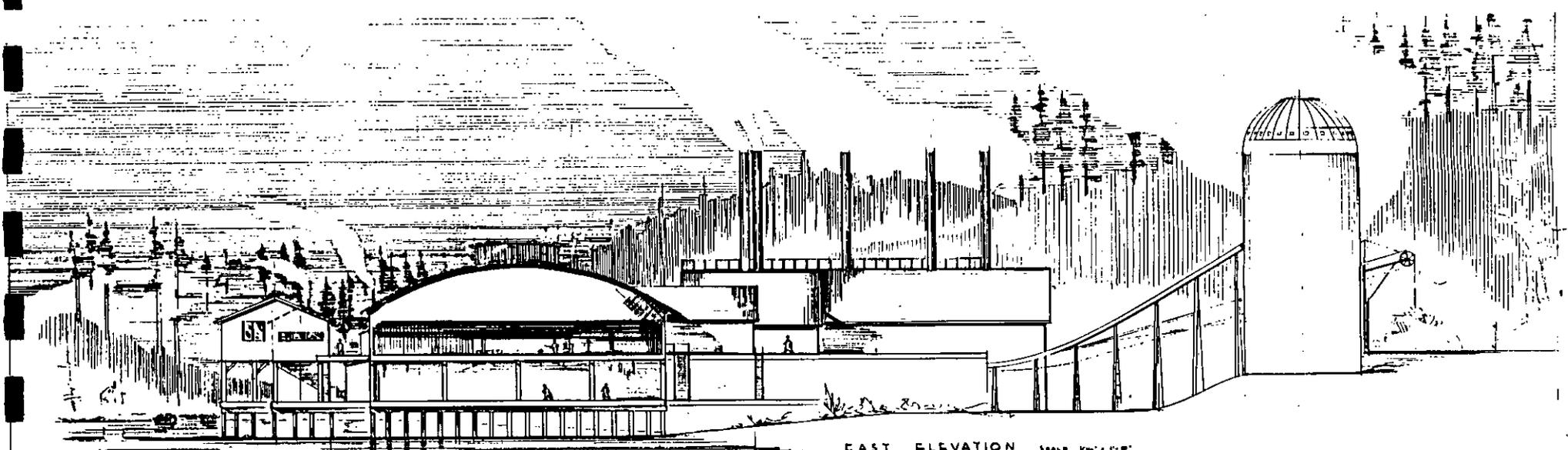


13 - Palakawa Mills

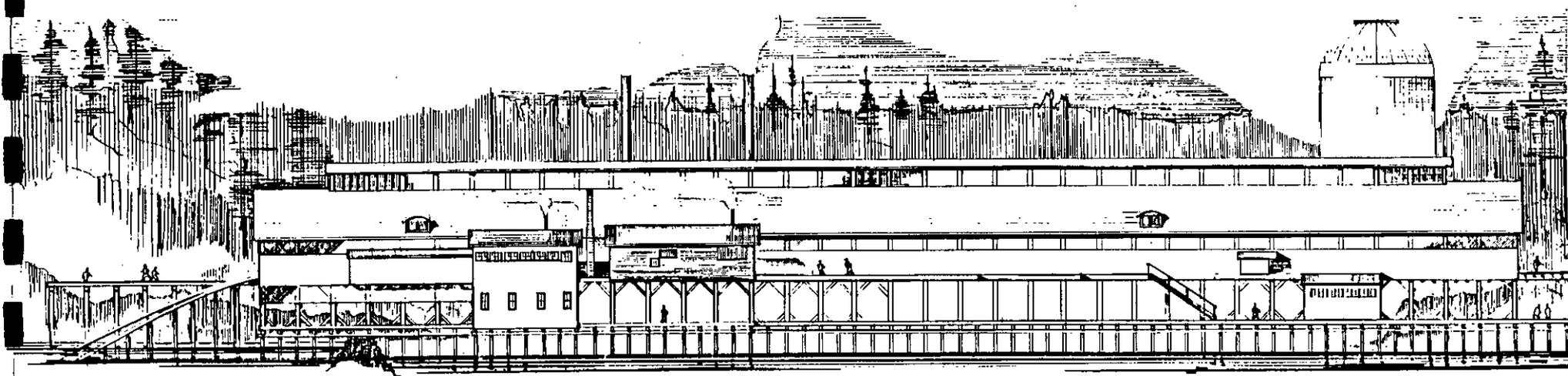
SECOND MILL c 1890

43

U of W NEG. NO. UW 4947



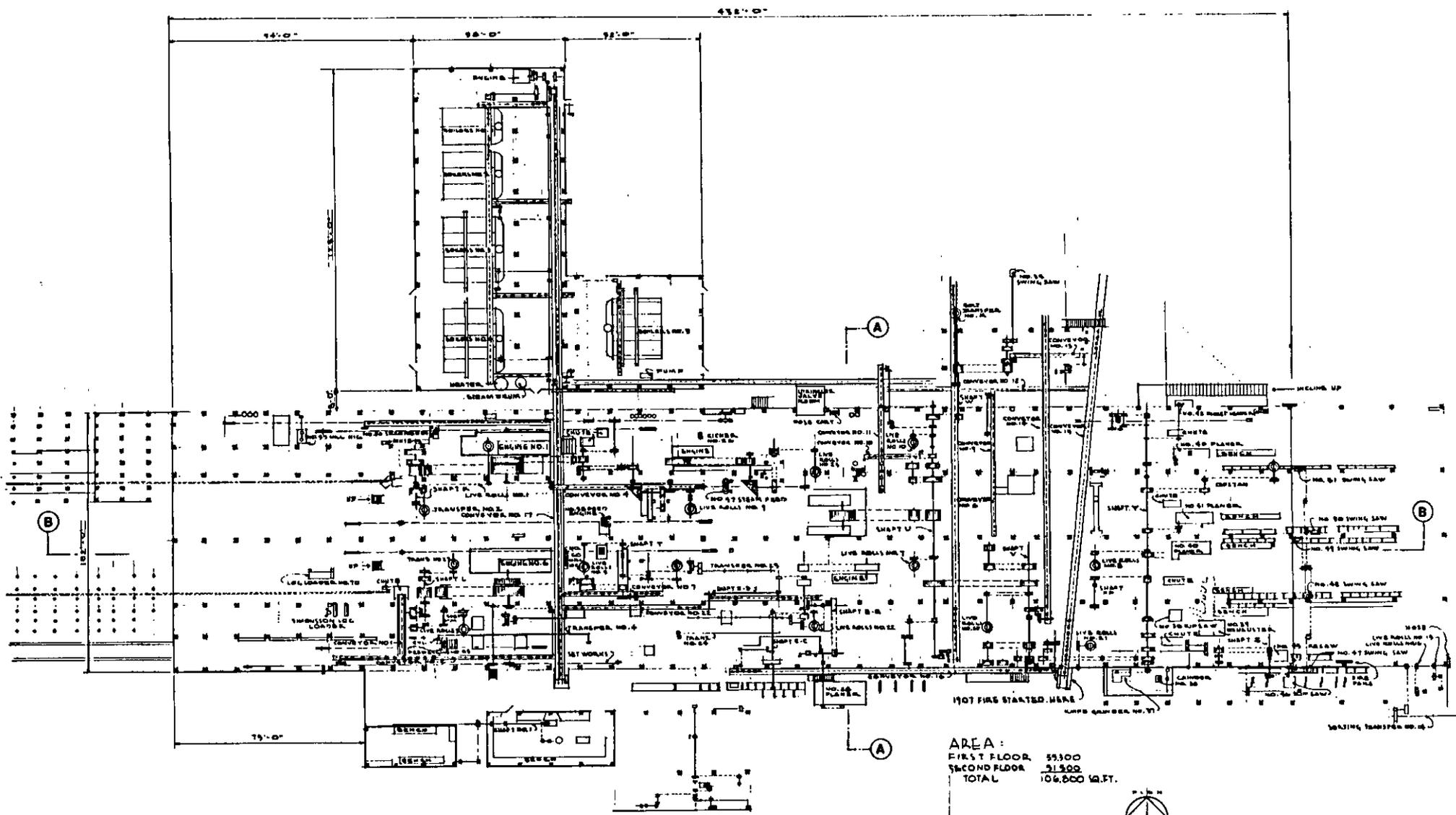
EAST ELEVATION SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"



SOUTH ELEVATION SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

THE SECOND MILL - ELEVATIONS 0.1242
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN FOR
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 L. E. "LARS" CARLSSON, ARCHITECT AIA EMERITUS 1/2011, REV. 3/2/12



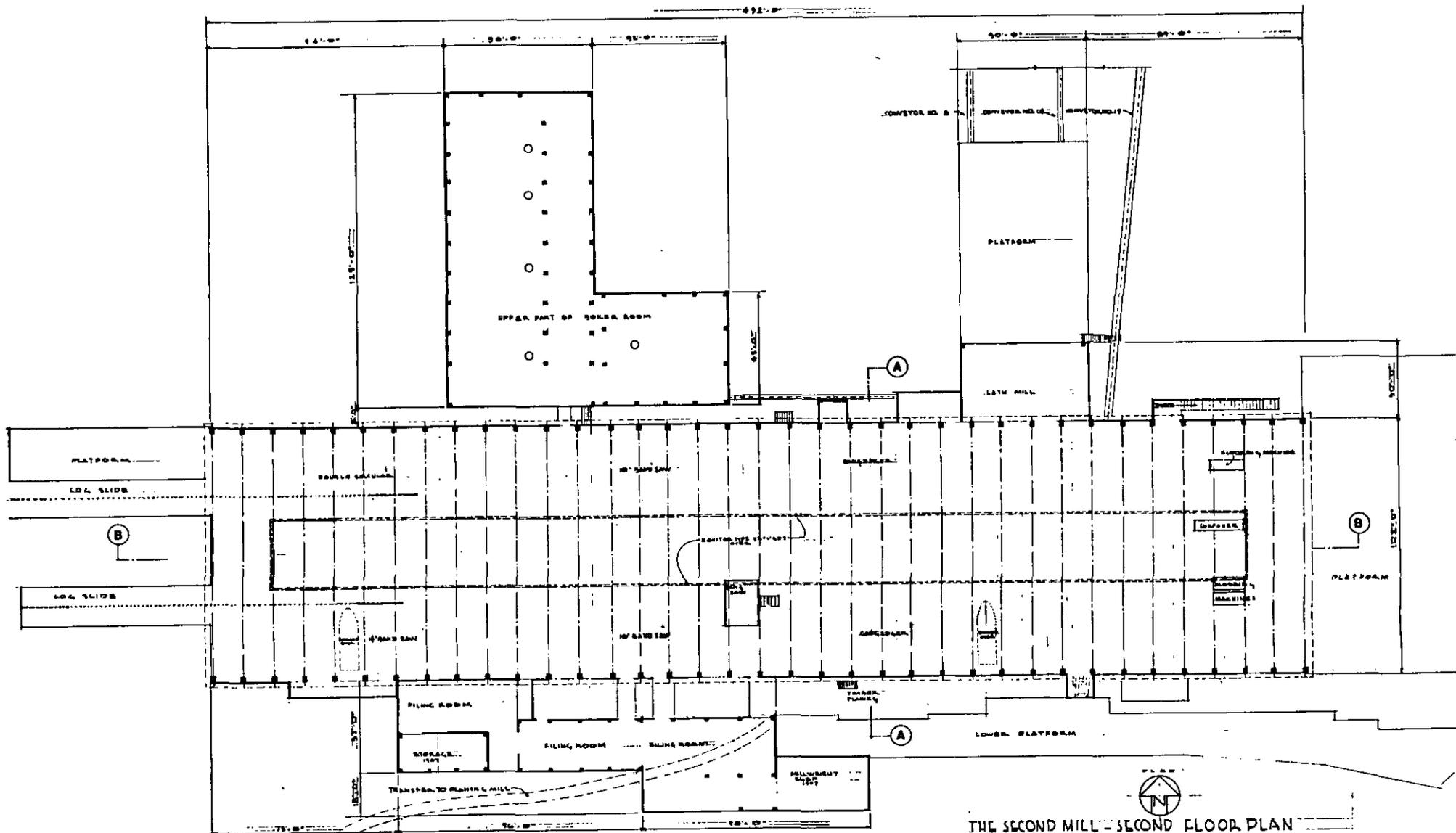


AREA:
 FIRST FLOOR 55,300
 SECOND FLOOR 31,500
 TOTAL 106,800 SQ. FT.



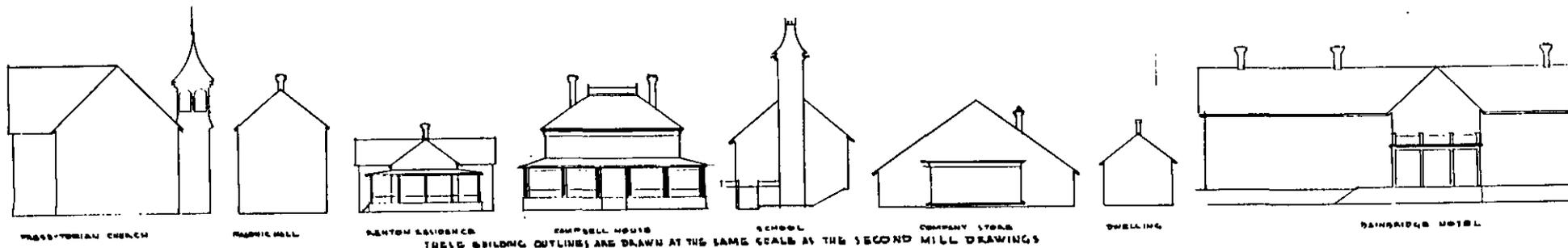
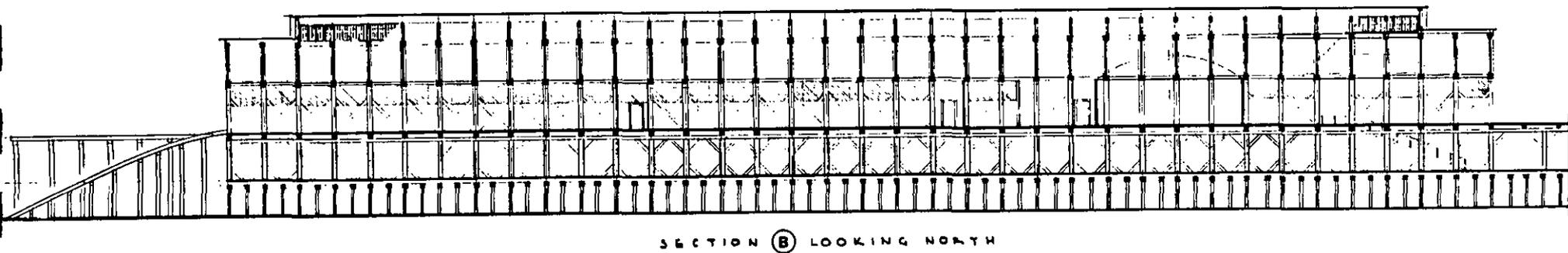
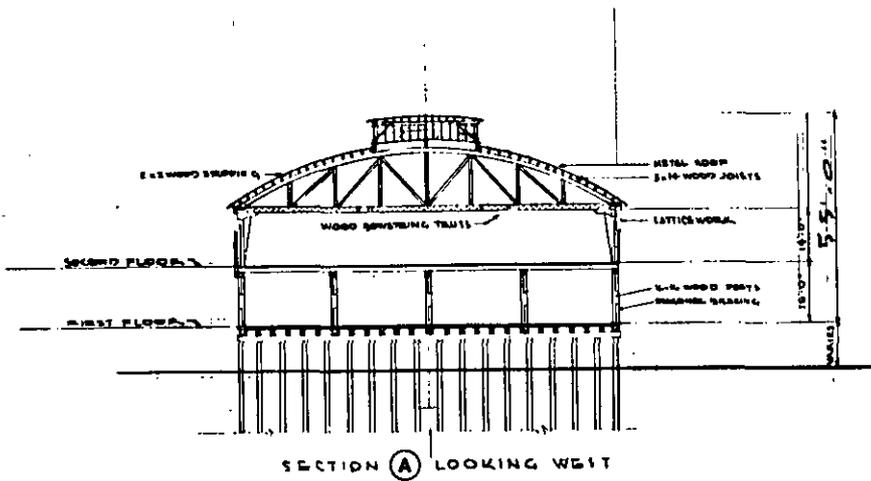
THE SECOND MILL - FIRST FLOOR PLAN
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 L. E. LARSEN CARLSSON, ARCHITECT AIA EMBERTUS ARCHITECTS



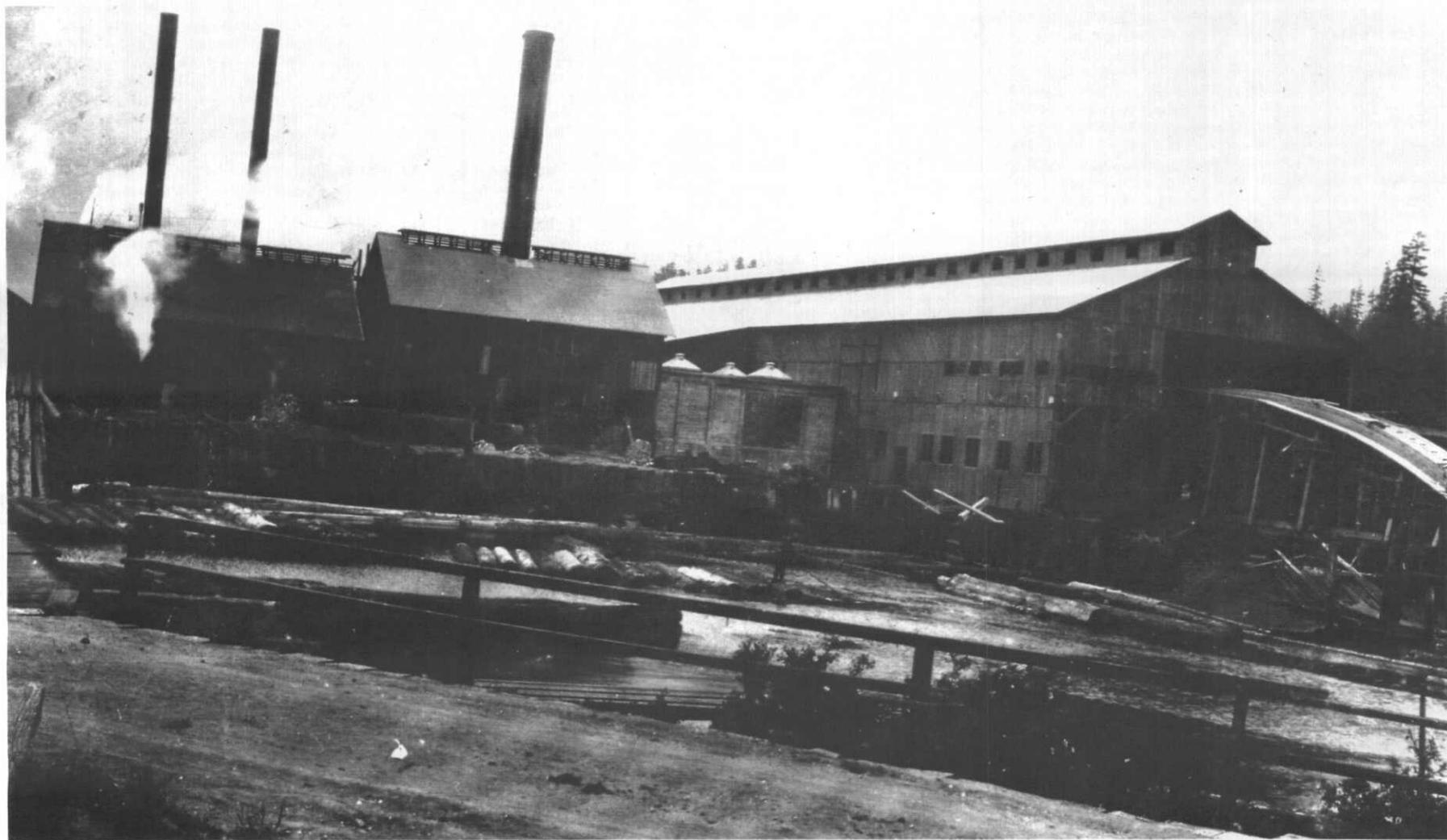


THE SECOND MILL'S SECOND FLOOR PLAN
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 L. B. "LARRY" CAHLSON, ARCHITECT AIA EMERITUS 07/70, REV 02/92





THE SECOND MILL - SECTIONS
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN FOR
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 SAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 L.L. "LARRY" CARLSON, ARCHITECT AIA EMERITUS 1/9/12



THIRD MILL w/ POWER PLANT

2 The Third Mill Power Plant

Built in 1908, this reinforced concrete structure is the only remaining evidence of the sawmilling industry. It also represents an example of early concrete technology. Choice of fireproofing material for the structure was, no doubt, due to the 1907 fire that destroyed the "big" mill. Its existence was due to the transition from steam to electrical power in the industry.

The building is supported on a concrete plynth with diagonal buttresses providing lateral support for the fill that in turn supports the floor slab, motor mounts and pipe chases.

The walls are formed with reinforced concrete pilasters at about 7 foot centers, built in a period when concrete was rather expensive and labor was relatively cheap. Rough 2x2 chamfer strips were used in the formwork on all exterior vertical corners. 1x12 horizontal formwork was used for the thin walls between pilasters. Plain round reinforcing bars indicate that deformed-bars were not yet available.

The pilasters of the east and west walls support ends of American Standard beams. These beams are supported in the center of the building by composite columns: two 6 inch channels held apart by 6½ inch long diagonal straps at 60 degrees, all joints rivetted, 14"x1"x1'-2" baseplates. Here again, a very labor intensive solution indicates expensive steel, cheap labor.

The concrete ceiling contains four 7x10 foot skylight openings with concrete curbs to level the skylights.

The pilasters on the south wall are facing the interior, since this wall was contiguous with the north wall of the sawmill. The north wall openings of the power plant provided access to the boiler room.

Disregarding the graffiti and deteriorated pilaster corners, the structure has a classic honesty about the design, representative of a period of emerging concrete technology. This, together with its age and the fact that it is the only remaining mill building, qualifies the structure to be termed significant.

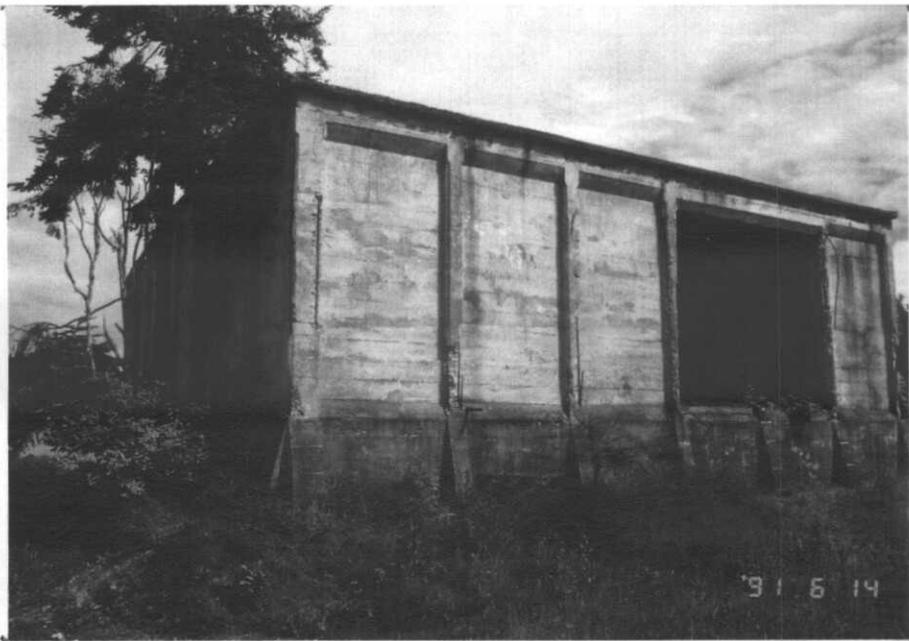
The first step in restoration should be to have a licensed structural engineer examine the building, make recommendations for rehabilitating it, removing the graffiti, defining any restrictions of the building's use, etc.

Any future compatible use should take into account the significance of the structure, recognizing the importance of maintaining its integrity as a functional sawmill building. Covering up all important features such as the buttresses, pilasters and structural details would be inappropriate.

An appropriate adaptive use, highlighting these significant architectural/structural elements for interpretive purposes, would be desirable.

Such adaptive use with compatible additions would assure the continuing cultural impact of this important building.

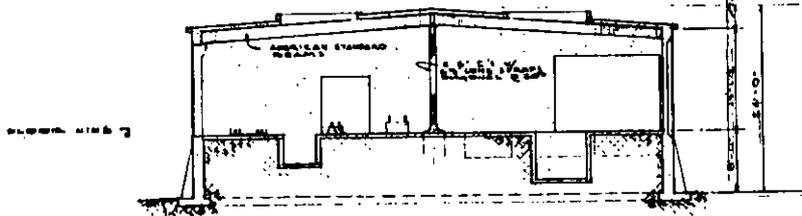
In a similar vein, a bridge design over the former gates to the millpond should be compatible with the functional sawmill structures of the heyday of the Port Blakely sawmill industry.



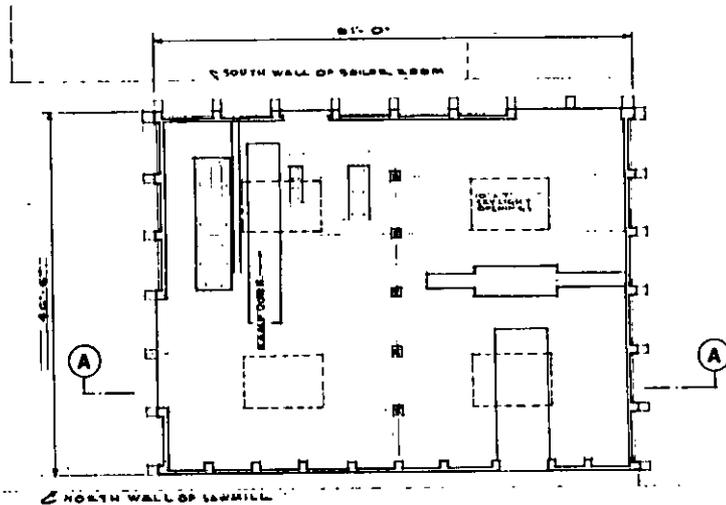
LOOKING EAST



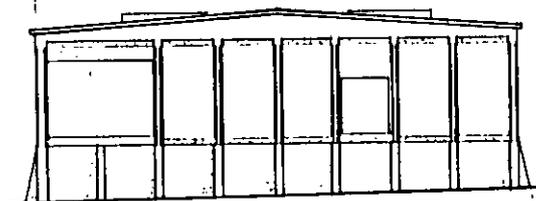
LOOKING WEST



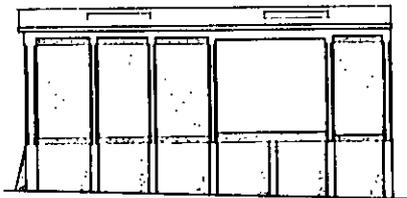
SECTION A



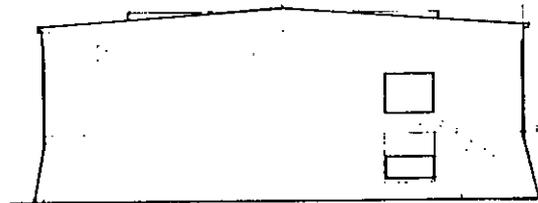
FLOOR PLAN



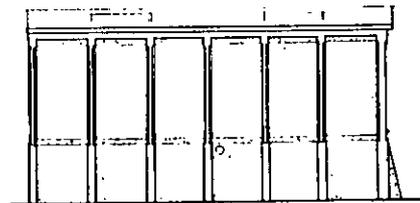
NORTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION



AREA 2,640 SQ. FT.

THE THIRD MILL POWER PLANT
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILL TOWN
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 L. B. LARSEN ARCHITECT AIA SPOKANE 23 MARCH 1994



COMPANY STORE & OFFICE

254

53

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

3 The Company Store & Office

This was the most significant building of the Port Blakely complex, except for the Second Mill, being the economic and social hub of the community from the earliest days of the first mill.

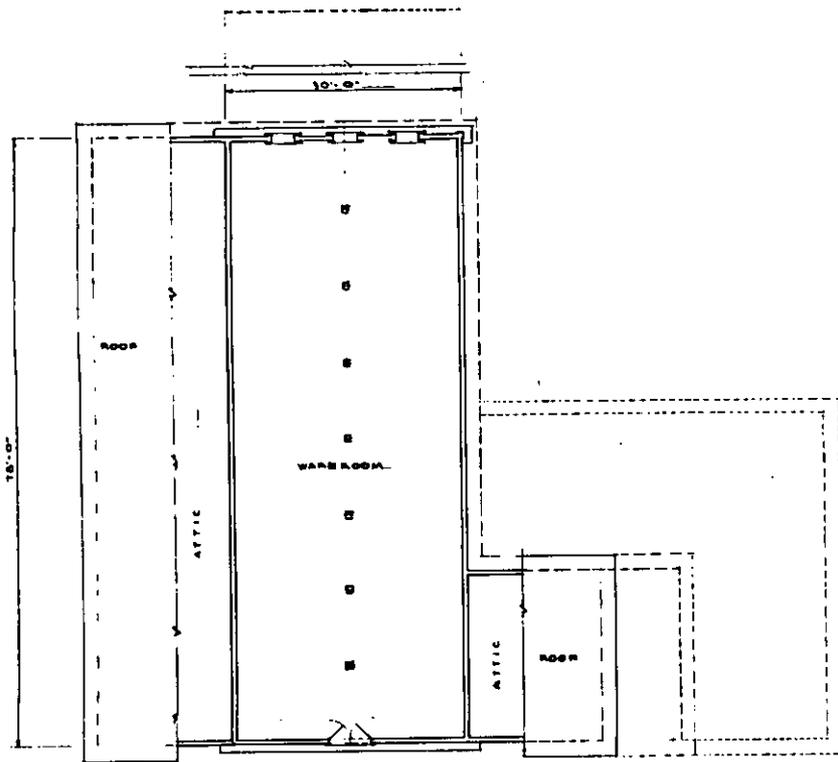
The office, once a part of the original structure, was expanded in Captain Renton's lifetime, and a larger addition, including a large steelvault, was added shortly after his death in 1891. Bills of lading for millions of board feet of lumber per month were processed here.

The company store, in its glass cases and on its shelves, stocked most everything required of a mercantile store. It had adequate storage space on the first floor and a "wareroom" on the second floor with access to the wharf via pulleys and a double door. A thirty foot tall flagpole was mounted on this pulley support.

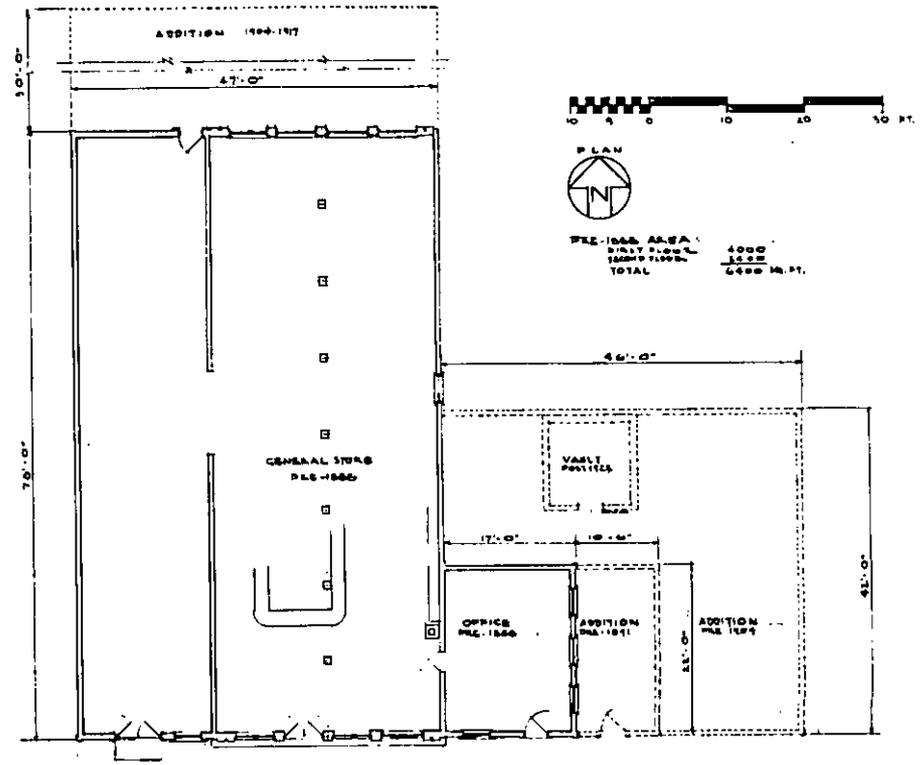
The building's strategic location on the wharf, near the mill and machine shop, and its simple classic symmetry and detail, fulfilled its function as a dominant structure on the harbor.

The building was supported on piling. The heavy timber construction appeared to be crafted by shipbuilders: first floor beams were fashioned by elliptical brackets supported by 12"x12" wood posts at 10' on centers. These supported floor joists spanning 16 feet to bearing exterior walls. The walls were frame construction with 12" horizontal drop siding, 11" to the weather. The gable roof was cedar shingles at an 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ /12 slope.

A 30 foot long entablature crowned the sensitively detailed window/doors, with double pilasters at the ends and three single pilasters between. These pilasters were trimmed with wood mouldings, giving the appearance of cast iron columns of that era. Between the pilasters were four 9 feet high double french doors, three used as windows, and all with 4 foot high transoms. This entry assembly had a one riser plynth; just outside was an 8 foot wide boardwalk over the planked wharf. The brick chimney was topped by a terra-cotta cap. 6/6 double-hung wood windows had surrounds with a simple entablature head.



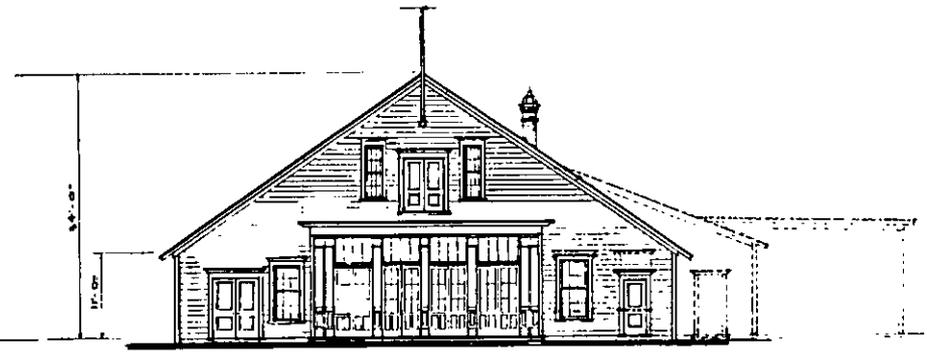
SECOND FLOOR PLAN SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



FIRST FLOOR PLAN SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



NORTH ELEVATION SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



SOUTH ELEVATION SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

COMPANY STORE & OFFICE
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN 70A
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 L. E. "LARI" CARLISSEN ARCHITECT AIA EMERITUS 10/21/91, REV. 9/26/92



PORT BLAKELY/ BAINBRIDGE HOTEL

4 The Port Blakely/Bainbridge Hotel

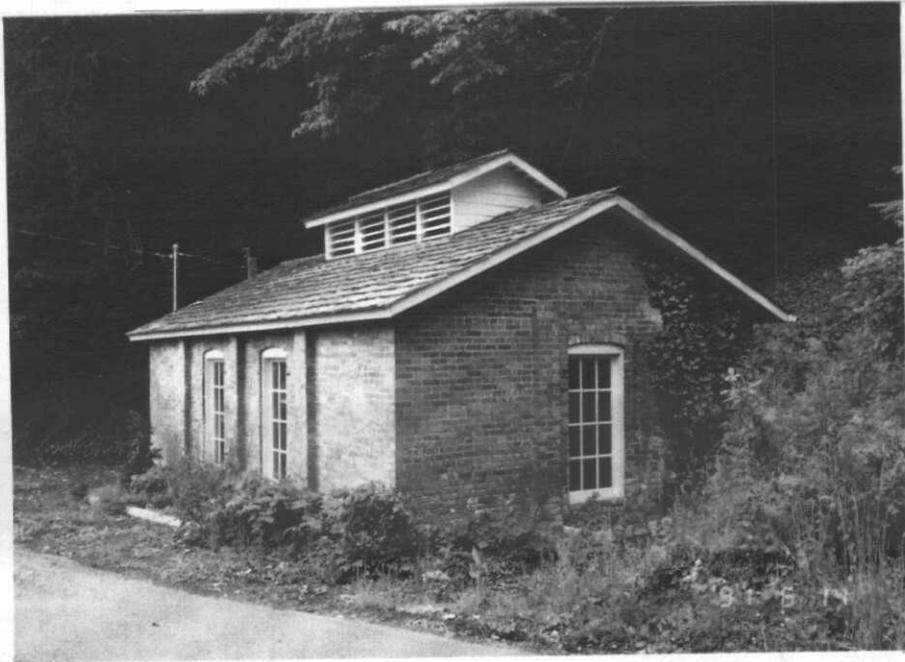
These drawings derive from an 1886 photo of the front facade, an 1882 distant view of the west elevation, a detail photo of the veranda, and a later front facade showing the porch. The 1888, 1893, 1904, 1917, and 1923 Sanborn maps were plotted to assist in ascertaining the configuration of the building (there were considerable variations). The interior layout was suggested by the fenestration, the study of similar hotel designs of that period, and by an understanding of construction techniques of that era.

The 1886 photo identified the building: "The Port Blakely Hotel", as did the 1888, 1893 and 1904 maps. However the 1917 map and other records labeled it the "Bainbridge Hotel".

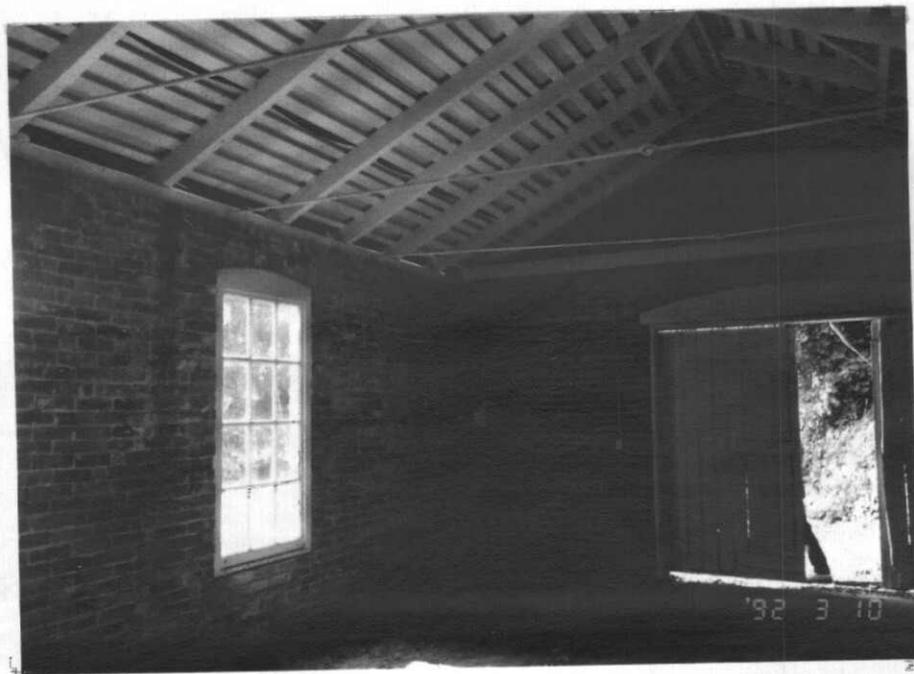
The hotel was built in 1875. There were several changes over the years, as indicated on the floor plan. By 1923 everything was gone on the site except a small storage shed and a portion of the east wing of the hotel used for "General Merchandise" and "ice machine". This wing became dilapidated and was boarded up. It burned on August 12, 1928.

The hotel was constructed of wood frame, wood beams and posts, with a crawl space, first and second floors, a cross gable roof with cedar shingles, 8 inch bevel siding at 6½ inches to the weather, wood double hung windows. Double doors to the lobby and barroom resembled those of the Company Store. The Victorian bracket scrollwork was about the same as those in Captain Renton's porch. The exterior porch railing design was like the School railings. Interior hallways, no doubt, had a 4 foot wainscot (vertical 1x6 tongue and groove fir with base and cap trim), panel doors with 1x6 surrounds and shelved heads, as did the windows. Seven brick chimneys vented cast iron stoves.

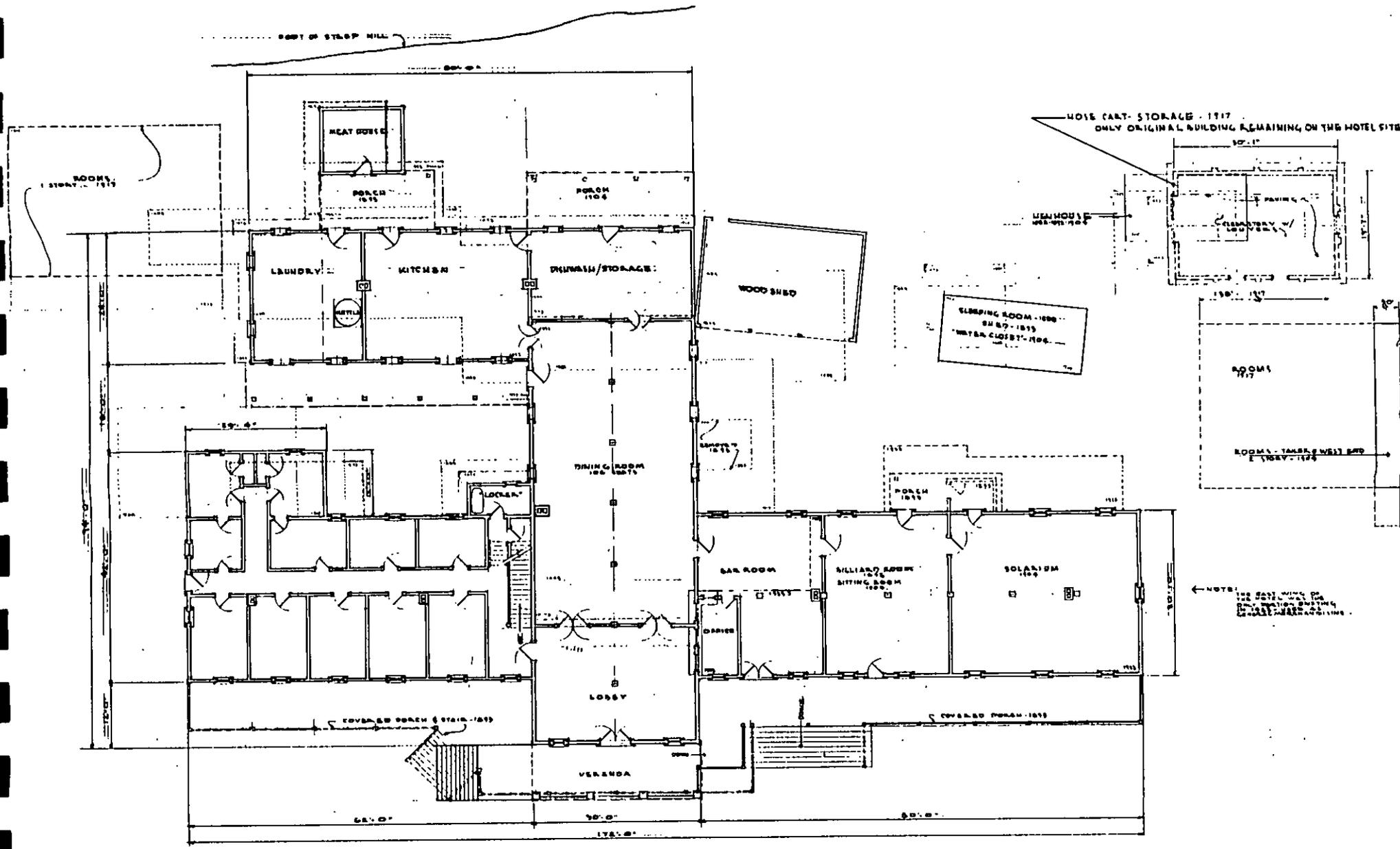
There were some 88 rooms in the hotel and the east and west annexes, plus a dining room, a one story kitchen and laundry, an office, a barroom, billiard room, and a solarium.



HOSE CART STORAGE ~~LOOKING WEST~~



INTERIOR ~~LOOKING WEST~~

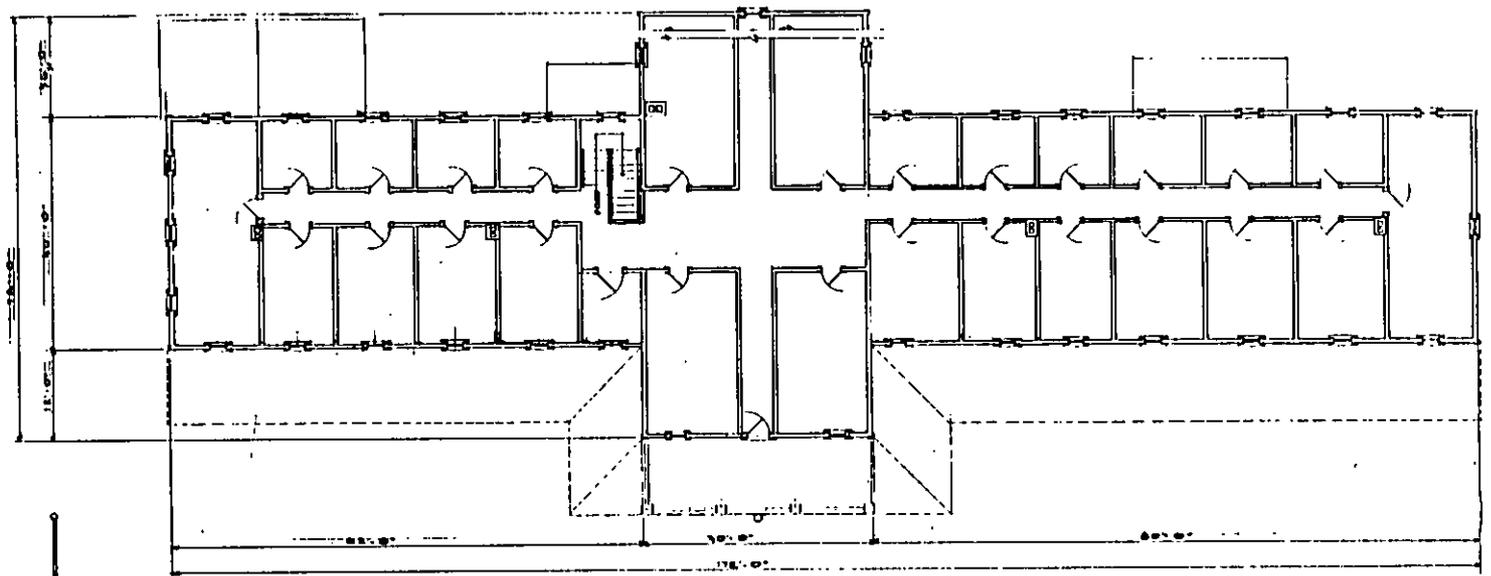


AREA

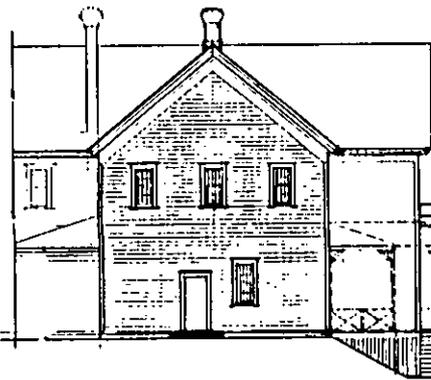
1917	5100 SQ. FT.
1918	1900
1919	2100
TOTAL	9,100 SQ. FT.



PORT BLAKELY / MILLTOWN HOTEL
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 L.B. LARSEN CARLISSEN ARCHITECT AIA EMERITUS 8/8/92 REV. 1/26/92



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



PORT BLAKELY / BAINBRIDGE HOTEL
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 C.B. "LARRY" CARLSSON ARCHITECT AIA EMERITUS 2/1/10 REV 1/2 6/12



SCHOOL - BEFORE ADDITION(S)

5 School

The original School appeared on a Carleton Watkins photograph in 1882. A wood frame building 36 feet wide and 60 feet long, plus a bell tower south of the classrooms, presented a significant architectural feature of the milltown landscape. The School was located some 900 feet north northeast of the mill site, about 110 feet above the harbor, about 70 feet south of the lower dam. The 6 inch pipe from the pump and 16 inch supply to the mill sprinkler systems, etc., would have run very close to the building.

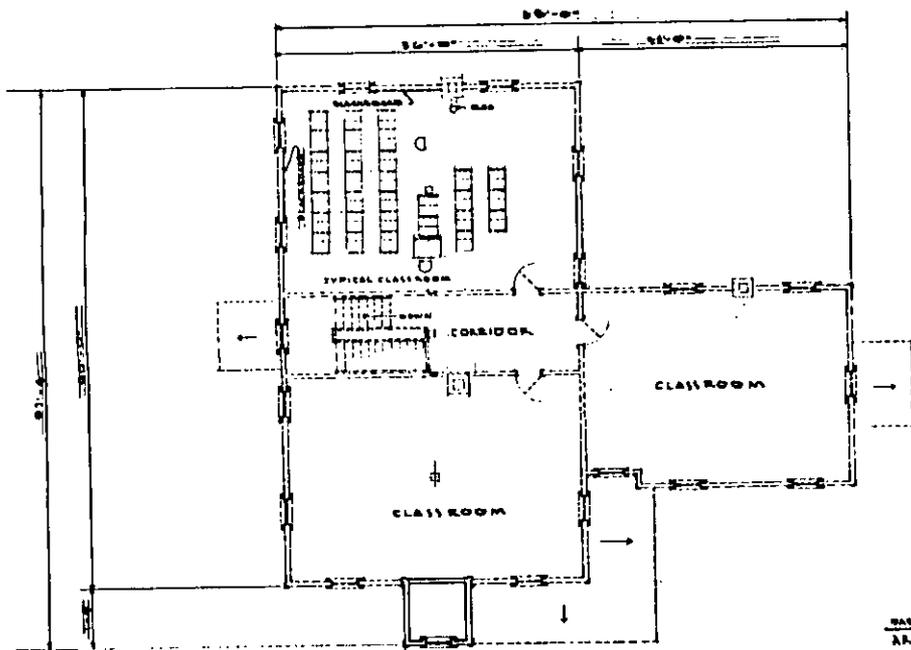
The exterior cladding was drop siding, 7 - 1/8 inch to the weather. The roof, 10/12 slope, was cedar shingles. The tower was 61 feet high measured from the lowest riser, had louvered grills on three sides topped by semicircular wood trim, and had a concave pyramid roof with an ornamental crown, all adding to the significance of the tower. The wood lintels of window and door surrounds were shaped, with a 9 degree slope, each topped with a slightly projecting wood hood. The three exterior wood doors were single leaf panels with the upper panels glazed, and two pane transoms.

An open porch on the west side extended around to the entrance at the tower. Paths led to a toilet room outbuilding to the northeast.

Three doors led to three classrooms, each 19 feet by 35 feet. Window stool height was 40 inches with a vertical fir wainscot at the same height. Ceiling height: 13 feet. A center beam and columns under the ridge line supported the roof structure.

The addition of the second floor resulted in the replacement of the gable roof with a flat roof. Alterations included a center hallway for the stairs, and a door to this space from the porch. To the east a flat-roofed two story addition provided two classrooms, making for a total of six (25 feet wide) classrooms, each with a capacity of 30 desks, 8 foot by 4 foot blackboards, a cast iron stove and a teacher's desk and chair.

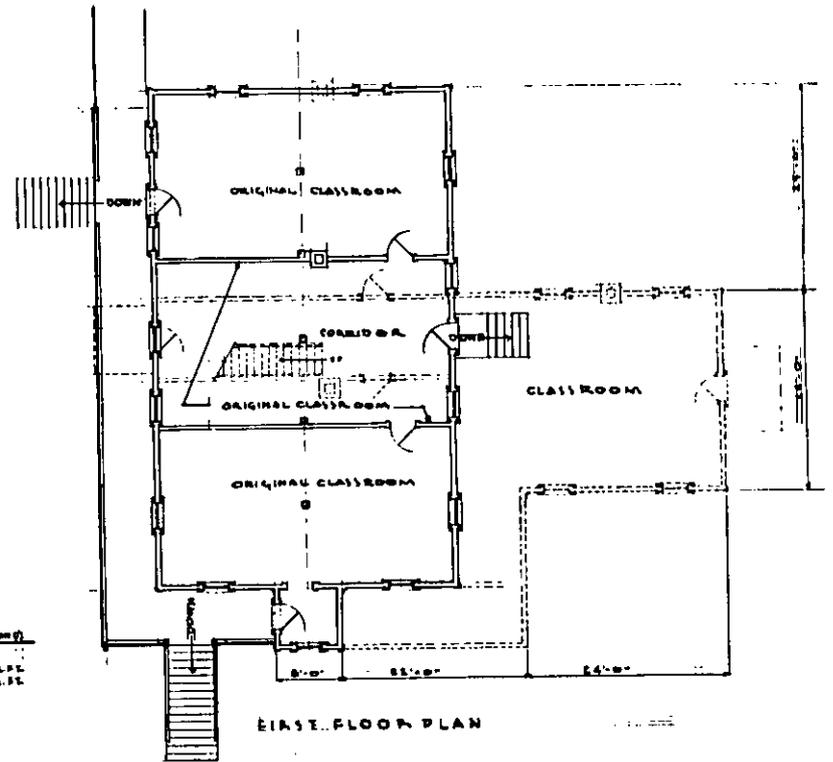
These design changes markedly detracted from the significance of the building. The simple symmetry, and the vertical impact of the tower were gone. The awkward second story solution no doubt was a result of the turn of the century flat roof fad that also altered several buildings in the town: part of the second mill, the hotel, the Masonic lodge, and some dwellings.



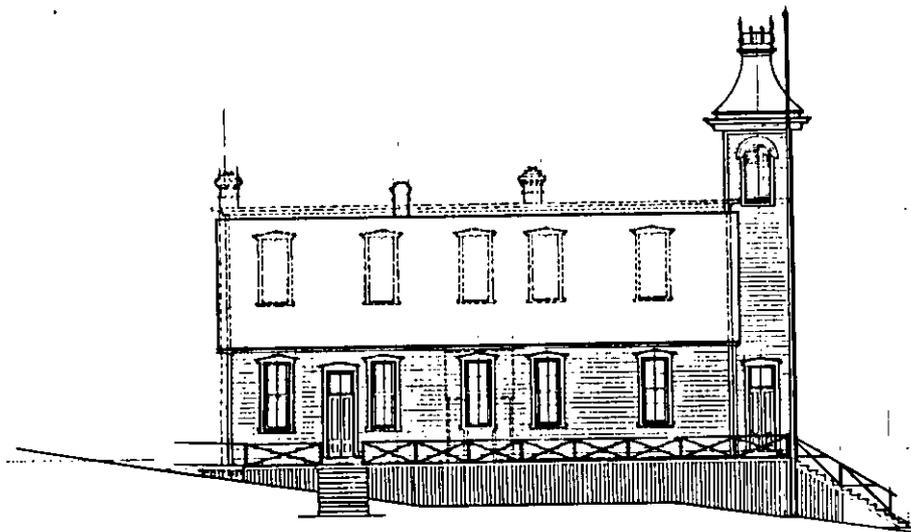
SECOND FLOOR PLAN



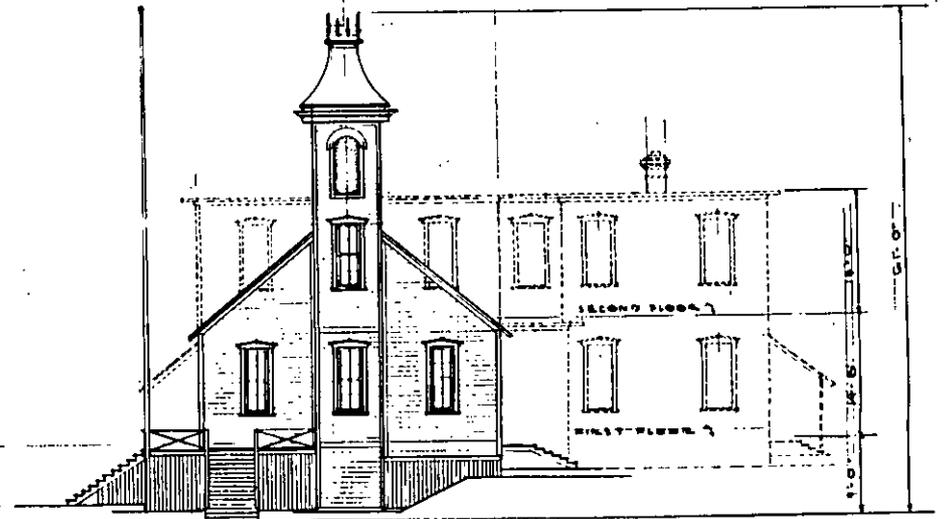
DASHED LINES INDICATE ADDITIONS
 AREA:
 ORIGINAL BUILDING: 2,820 SQ. FT.
 WITH ADDITIONS: 4,130 SQ. FT.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



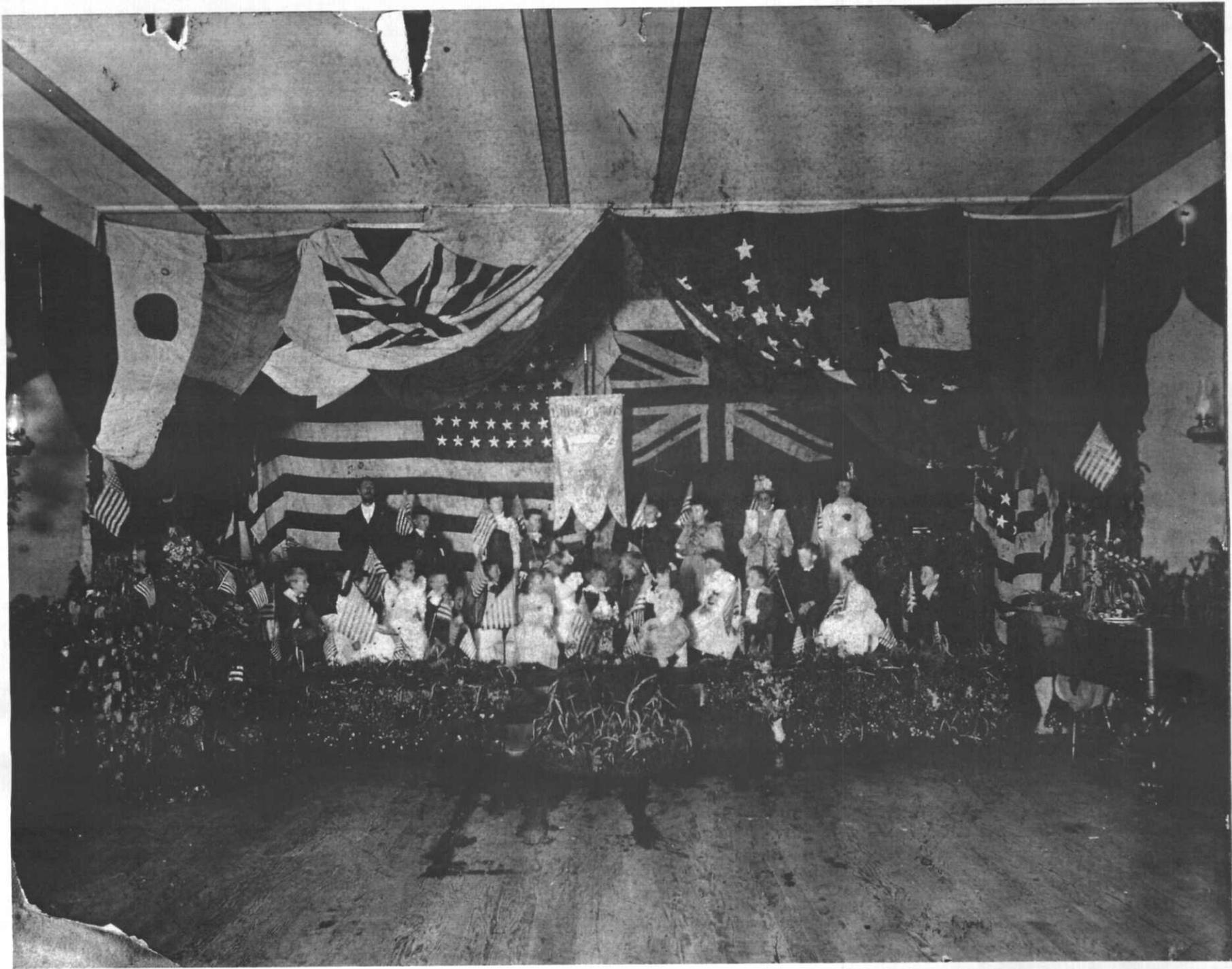
WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



THE SCHOOL
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN FOR
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 L.S. LARS CARLSSON ARCHITECT AIA EMERITUS 8/27/11, REV. 7/26/12



MASONIC & PUBLIC HALL - FIRST FLOOR INTERIOR 1489 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

6 Masonic Hall/Public Hall

This building contributed much to the social life of the community. Captain Renton had become a member of the Masons years earlier during a stay in Ireland. The Masonic Order was the first but not the only fraternal order in Port Blakely. Others included: Woodmen of the World, Knights of Pythias, Evergreen Lodge, and Independent Order of Oddfellows--I.O.O.F. They cared for sick and orphans, arranged funerals, and their money raising served as a kind of insurance policy for community members in a barely settled region of the country where there were no financial safety nets. Their existence helped take some of the trauma out of frontier life, stabilizing and civilizing the community.

The building was located some 450 feet north-northeast of the mill, 100 feet northwest of the Renton residence (later the Campbell residence), and 50 feet east of the Cookhouse. A timbered hill was just back of the building to the north, and its elevation above the wharf made it easily identifiable from most of the harbor.

The 1888 Sanborn map indicates a rectangular building labeled "Public and Society Hall"; the 1893 map: "Masonic Hall - Public Hall First Floor; Lodge Room Second Floor"; in 1904 it was labeled "Public Halls First & Second Floors" and indicated a 30 foot extension of both floors to the north and adjoining 11 foot by 30 foot one story additions to the east and west of the two story addition; the 1917 map called it "Hall"; in 1923 it was "Halls".

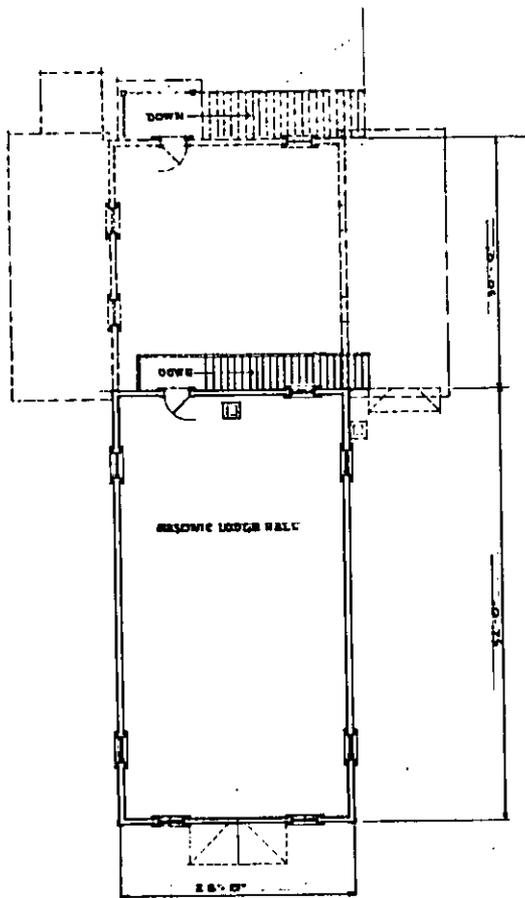
The gable roof was removed when the additions were done and replaced by a flat built-up roof. Later photographs show signs above the south door: "Renton No.29, F.& A.M.", and later "Theatre".

The two nine foot high corinthian columns supporting the south porch present an amusing "architectural" treatment. They had been designed with entasis, a method used by builders of Greek temples such as the Parthenon. The reason for the use of entasis (widening the columns in their middle portion) was to correct for the optical perception that a straight column in a colonnade would appear narrower (thinner) in the center (midsection) of the column. The Grecian columns were some five times larger than these two posts, there was no colonnade, yet entasis was used, resulting in a good example of the misuse of an architectural heritage! Also fake shutters were added to the South Elevation windows.

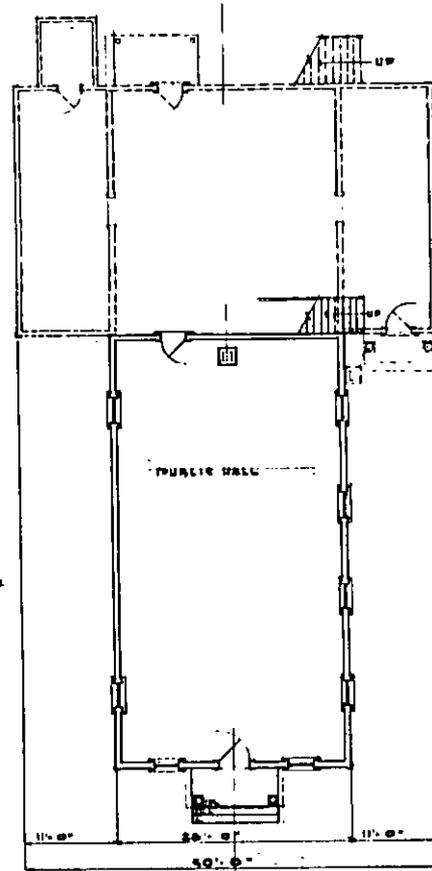
The building was clad with six inch drop siding, 5-3/8 inches to the weather with wood exterior corner trim, wood surrounds on windows and doors with shelved head trim. The 10/12

slope gable had cedar shingles. The only masonry beside the chimney was the front stoop with a three riser stair to the south entrance.

The 23 riser exterior stair to the Masonic Lodge room was of wood construction. Windows were wood double hung with 6/6 panes, these apparently painted to obscure the view. Interior was wood lath and plaster walls and ceiling. Finished floors were tongue and groove fir. The interiors were draped and festooned and a grand piano graced the public hall. This hall had a two riser platform.



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

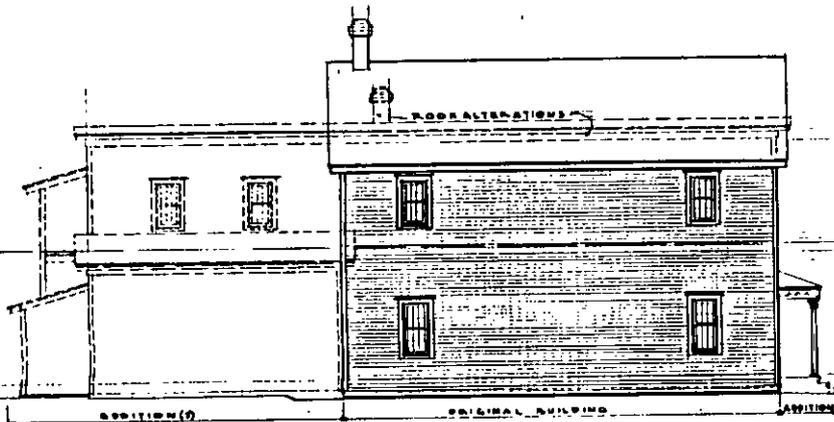


FIRST FLOOR PLAN

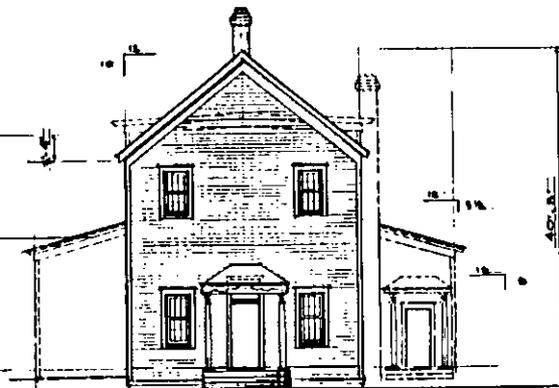


AREA

ORIGINAL BUILDING	1,100 SQ. FT.
ADDITIONAL	1,200 SQ. FT.
TOTAL	2,300 SQ. FT.



WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



MASONIC HALL & PUBLIC HALL
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 L. E. "LARRY" CARLSSON ARCHITECT AIA EMERITUS 1/12, REV. 3/17/12



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2123

68

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

7 Presbyterian Church

The church was located about 1200 feet north of the mill on high ground, approximately 150 feet above the harbor; this building was at the highest elevation of any structure in the complex. The Port Blakely cemetery was some 600 feet to the northwest of the church.

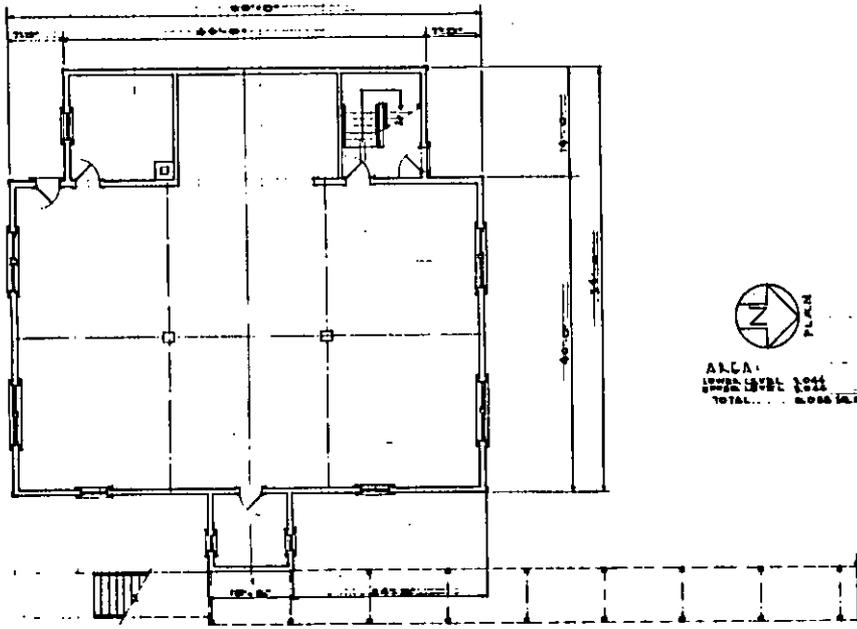
None of the available Sanborn maps show this building. Photos of the second mill show the church, so it was built between 1888 and 1907, probably around the turn of the century (1904). A later photo shows a church located halfway between the school and this building, and a 1923 Sanborn map shows a Presbyterian church close to downtown (presumably rebuilt there after the original burned down in 1920).

The significant features of the building: the bell tower, 60 feet high with a double-door entrance on the second level, a bellcast elongated pyramid cedar shingle roof, courses of round shingles on the tower roof and on the tower walls, interrupting the drop siding; round shingles were also used on the gable end walls, each wall with a diamond vent; the 90 foot long ramp to the front entrance necessitated by the sloping terrain and the dangers of navigating the 16 riser front exterior stairway; the plan of the church was different than most with the narthex entering into the long side of the nave, resulting in seating close to the chancel; the sloping floor of the nave; the choir facing the nave, typical of many churches; the use of Victorian details; 12/12 roof slope.

The building: wood frame construction with wood trusses, probably "King Post", spanning the 40 foot nave, and wood beams and columns at the lower level; wood lath and plaster interior walls and ceilings; three inch vertical tongue & groove, grooved in the center, served as a 52 inch high wainscot, and horizontally at the 45-degree-angle furred ceiling; the nave and chancel were fully carpeted with a protective runner down the center aisle; large wood windows with screens; panel wood doors with the (surround) head shelved, and a jamb trim with two grooves.

An uncovered porch with a gable roof and pediments at the front entrance did not fit with the existing design. Also the openings in the belltower, topped with two semicircular arches were later covered with louvers, thus distracting from the design.

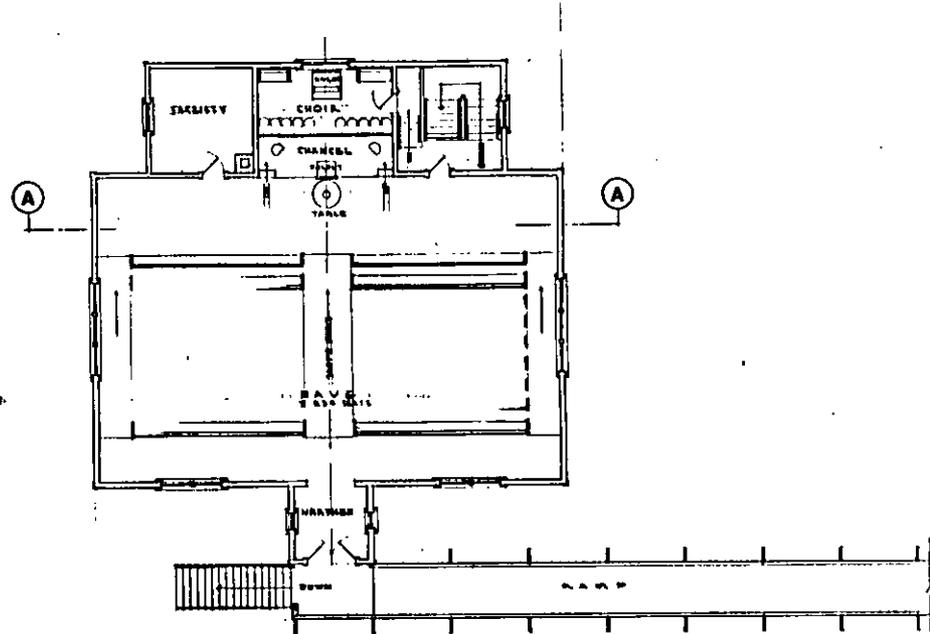
All in all, the building design was somewhat typical of the small churches of that era, horribly out of scale, as you can see by comparing the elevations with the interior section. However the significant features and the site make the building quite unique.



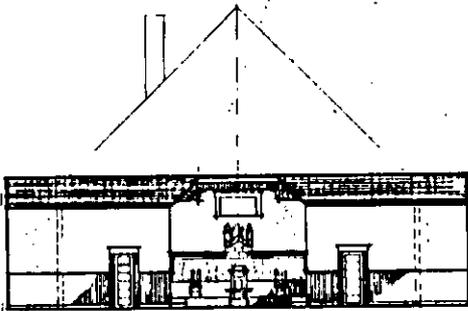
LOWER LEVEL PLAN



ALCA
 LOWER LEVEL 1921
 TOTAL 1921



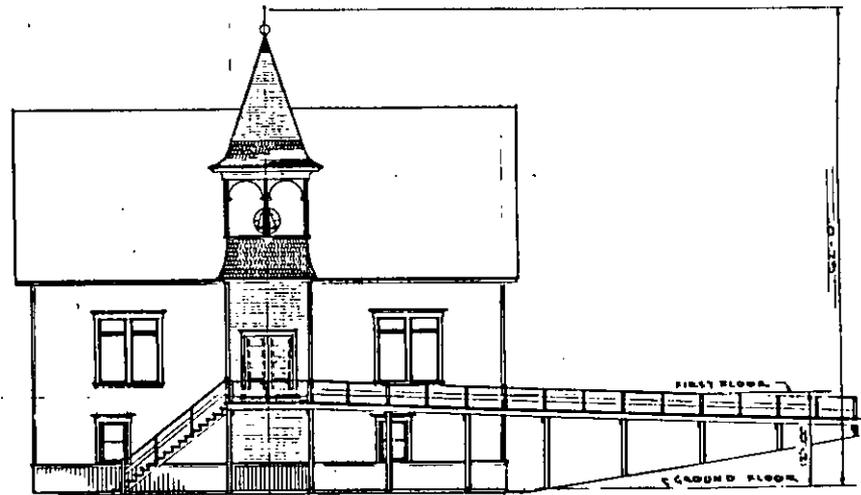
UPPER LEVEL PLAN



SECTION A



SOUTH ELEVATION



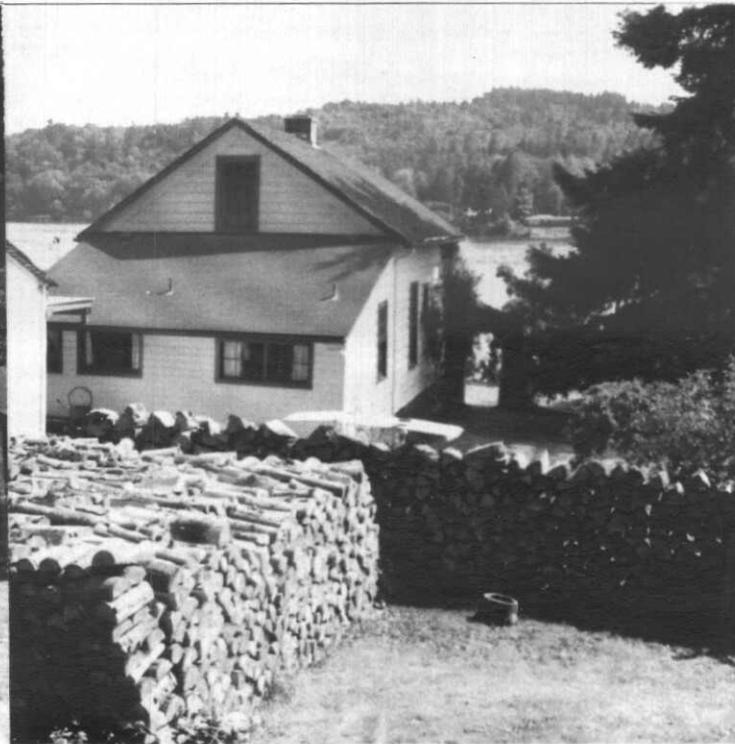
EAST ELEVATION



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 L. G. "LARRY" FARLSON ARCHITECT AIA EMERITUS 1/20/1921/22



LOOKING NORTH WEST



LOOKING SOUTH

8 Burnett House

A few company dwellings remain along the north shore of the harbor. All of these, except one, have been changes greatly by additions and material changes.

The exception is the Burnett house, located about 600 feet east of the Bainbridge Hotel location and the second house west of the creek.

Originally, a boardwalk and a rail track connected the sawmill area and Hall Brothers Shipyard. Each dwelling had its own small fenced front yard facing the walkway and harbor. Shortly after the houses were built, front porches appeared complete with railings and decorative scrollwork similar to that used on the hotel porch and Captain Renton's porch.

The front entries of the dwellings were typically offset to one side. A five inch step from the porch to the threshold was typical on almost all buildings. The living room with an 8'-9" ceiling height contained a wood stove. A steep stairway separated the living and dining rooms. A kitchen/storage area completed the first floor arrangement. Two bedrooms with limited headroom (7'-1½") were separated by the stairway.

The gable building is supported by creosoted squares of lumber with joists spanning to center wood beams. The exterior walls: 2x4 studs and drop siding 9 inches to the weather. 2x6 second floor joists span to a center beam. Rough 2x4 cedar roof joists, 1x4 wood strips spaced apart, and cedar shingles complete the 9.5/12 slope roof system. Shed roof (in back) slope: 3.5/12.

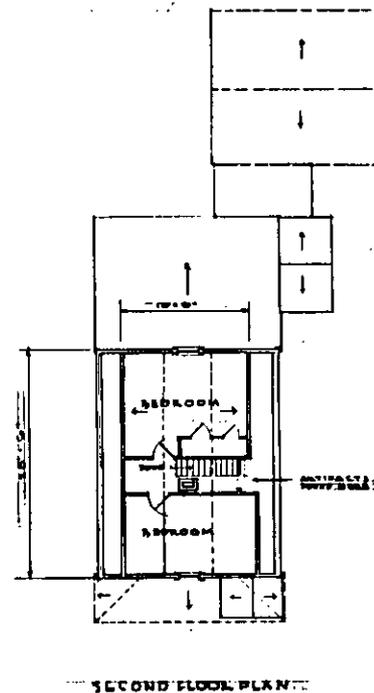
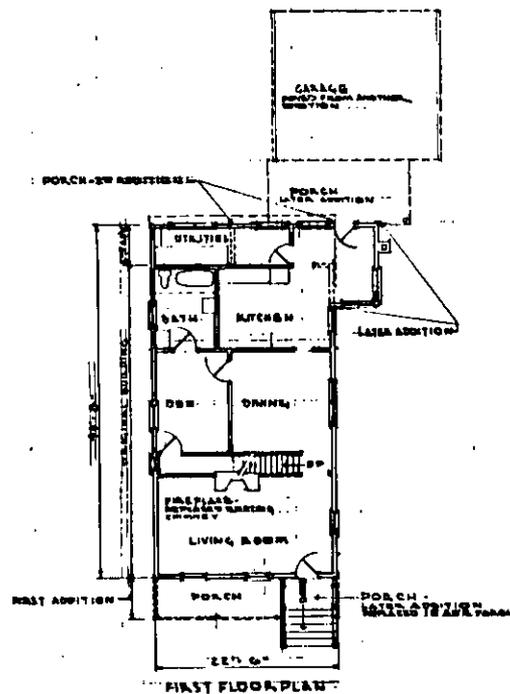
Exterior doors: wood glazed, protected by screen doors with quarter circle decorative corner stiffeners. Windows: wood double-hung 6/6 panes. Interior doors: wood panel with plain 4-¾ inch surroundings. Stair newel posts 4x4s, with 2x2 rails two inches apart. Floors: fir, tongue-and-groove, 3½ inch centers, 2x3 interior studs. A brick chimney was centered on the ridge. Vertical beaded wainscotting appeared in kitchen areas. 7-¾ inch high baseboard with ¾ inch quarterround.

The shed north of the house had been moved from another location on the site.

The house is significant because of its integrity and lack of major changes. Restoration would be relatively simple: replace the present porch with a replica of the first addition; removal of the later addition; replicate the original chimney; remove the composition

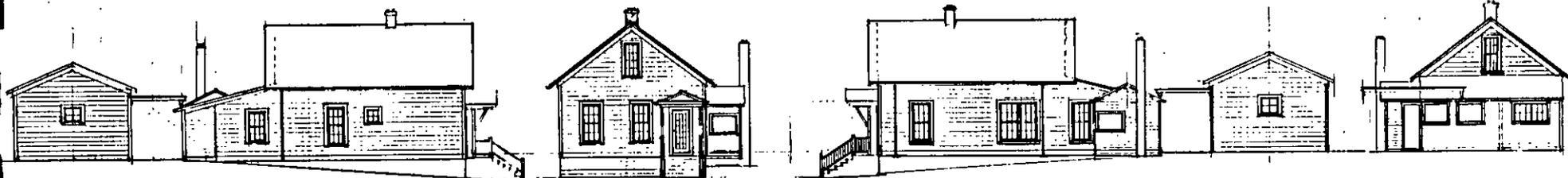
roofing and restore or replicate the cedar shingle roofing.

Being on the original site is an element considered for registry. Moving the building may impact its significance somewhat. However, the choice between razing the building and saving and restoring it, is very clear.



AREA

FIRST FLOOR	ORIGINAL BLDG	870
	EW ADDITION	40
	LATER ADDITION	130
SECOND FLOOR		1040
TOTAL		1,500 SQ. FT.



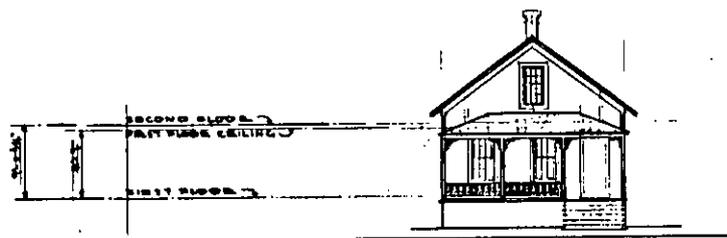
WEST ELEVATION

SOUTH ELEVATION

EAST ELEVATION

NORTH ELEVATION

RECORD DRAWINGS



SOUTH ELEVATION

FIRST ADDITION

BURNETT HOUSE
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILL TOWN
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES (SURVEY
 L. B. "LARI" CARLSON ARCHITECT AIA EMERITUS 11/11 AND 9/02/12



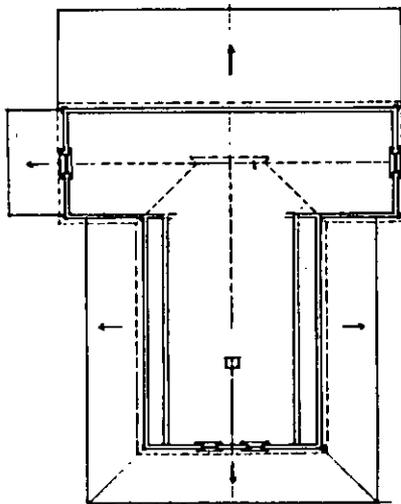
THE DENTON'S RESIDENCE

U of W NEG. NO 5242
75

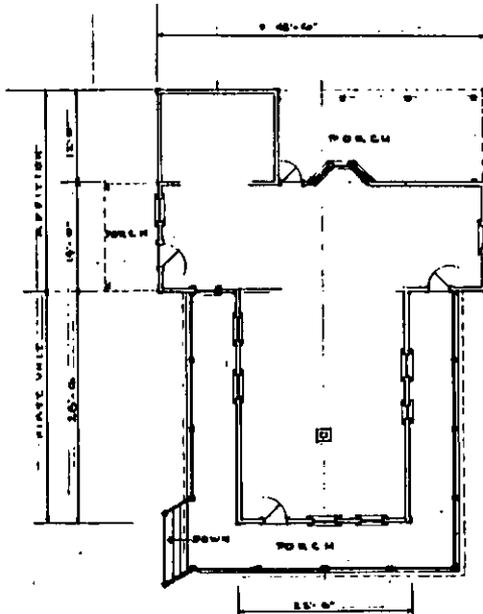
WATKINS

9 The Rentons' Residence

Located on the first rise above the harbor, the wood frame Renton residence was built around 1864 with major additions in 1878. It started out as a typical Company dwelling with an area of 1300 square feet, plus a 500 square foot porch. Around 1878 a 600 square foot addition was constructed. The only ornamentation was the porch railings and brackets, typical of those used in other dwellings. The height of the highest roof ridge was 23 feet. Its exterior cladding was typical drop siding, used on most buildings. The railings of the porch steps were angled toward the direction of the mill, located about 500 feet to the southwest. The Renton residence was the closest dwelling to the mill and machine shop. The house was demolished around 1891, except for the fence, 140 feet in length.



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



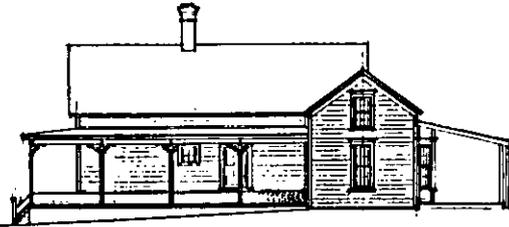
AREA :
 1ST FLOOR 1600
 2ND FLOOR 1800
 TOTAL 3400 SQ. FT.
 PORCHES 2,000 SQ. FT.



WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION



FENCE - SOUTH ELEVATION

THE RENTON'S RESIDENCE
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILL TOWN 1862
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 L. E. "LARS" CARLSON ARCHITECT AIA GBR/IT/1 1990/11, 2011, 2012

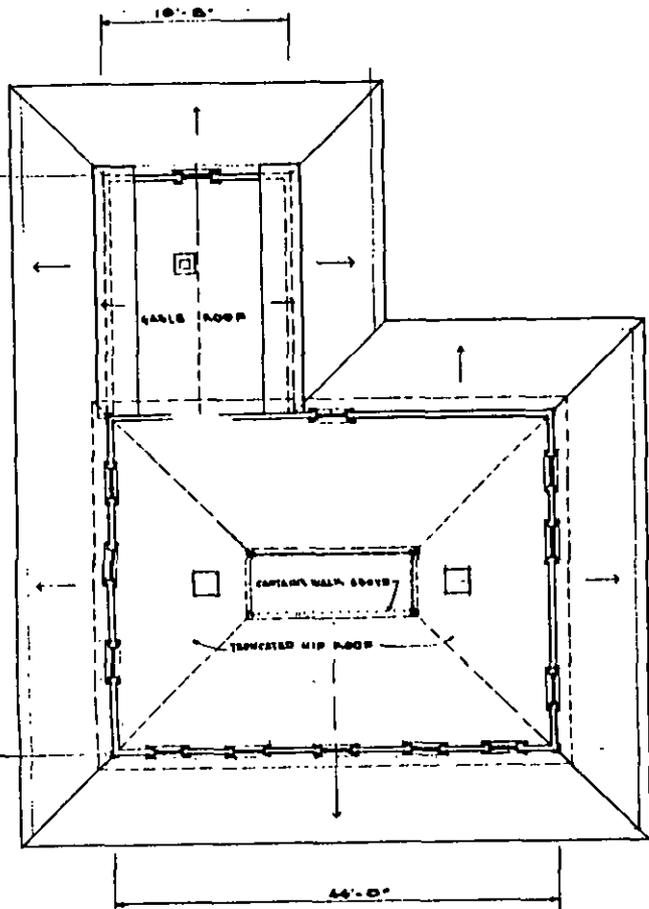


CAMPBELL HOUSE-LOOKING NORTHWEST 778 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

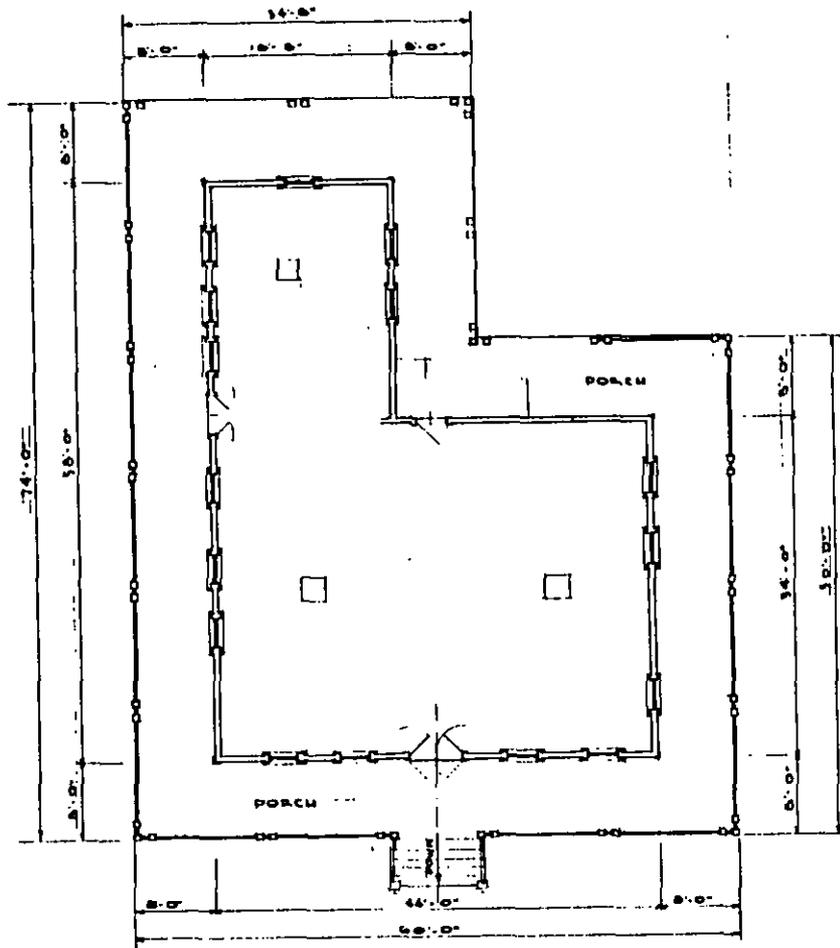
10 The Campbell House

The 3,800 square foot Campbell House was built on this same property as the Renton House, prior to 1893, of almost symmetrical wood frame design with a height of 42 feet from grade, and the bottom of the porch steps were several feet above Captain Renton's fence. This gave the Victorian-style house a preeminent position visible from most parts of the harbor. Significant features were: the 2000 square foot open porch, wrapping the entire building; the double porch columns evenly spaced; the glazed double front entrance doors; lower double-hung windows with no muntins (each sash with a single sheet of glass); high ceilings; 4/12 porch roof, 8/12 truncated hip roof with a captain's (widow's) walk atop; carefully designed ornaments, the cornices boxed, with scrolled porch and roof brackets (consoles) and turned railing details and spindle work below the porch frieze; two main chimneys indicating at least two fireplaces; bevel (clapboard) cedar siding, 4½ inches to the weather, accentuating the height of the building; the gable end with cornice boxed plain with returns; decorative lug sills on first floor windows.

This was the "grandest" building in the area. Trim and details, no doubt, were painted in fashionable colors. The first floor likely had a central staircase, a parlor, music room, library, dining room, kitchen and laundry, with four bedrooms on the second floor, and space over the kitchen for storage with access by a back stair.



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



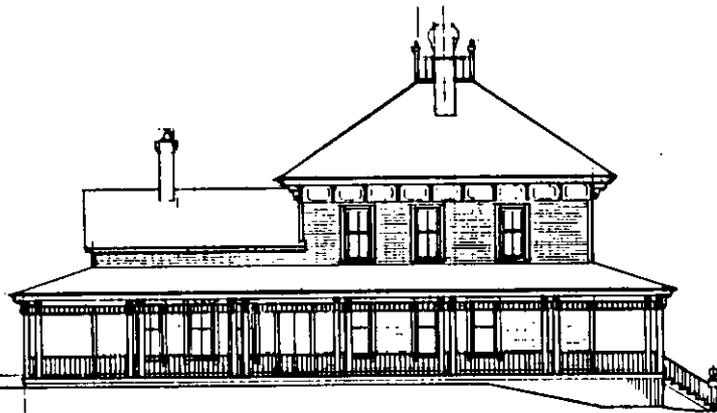
FIRST FLOOR PLAN



AREA:
 FIRST FL. 1,000
 TOTAL 1,800 SQ. FT.
 PORCH 2,000 SQ. FT.



THE CAMPBELL HOUSE
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN FOR
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 S. B. CLARK CARLSSON ARCHITECT AIA EMERITUS 1/23/91, REV. 3/27/92



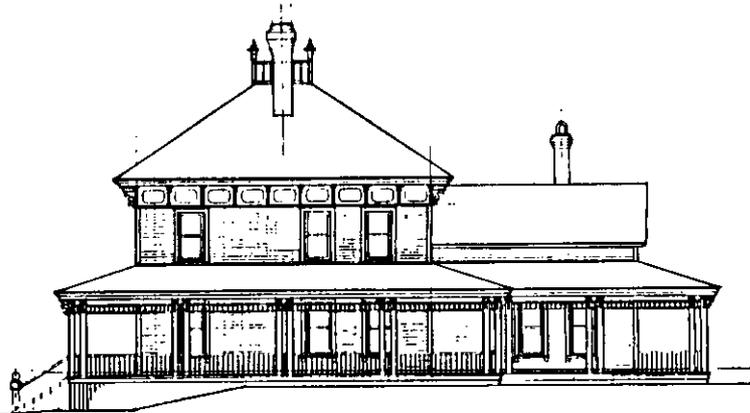
WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION



THE CAMPBELL HOUSE
 PORT BLAKELY MILLS & MILLTOWN
 PORT BLAKELY MILL COMPANY
 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
 HISTORIC BUILDINGS / CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
 L. E. "LARS" CARLSSON ARCHITECT AIA EMERITUS 11/15/01, REV. 5/27/02

ANALYSIS

The most important time for Port Blakely was the period directed by Captain Renton and his nephew John Campbell. An innovative spirit was reflected in the decisions leading to the creation and success of the Second Mill. The fleet of sailing ships, the land purchases, the logging railroads, lumber camps, and the development of the Port Blakely community were all an integral part of the operation.

The community's buildings are representative of a solid, functional, conservative state of mind. The dwellings were well made and adequate, many of near identical or reverse design. All had steep roof slopes, same windows, siding, roofing. The yards were very small (30' wide lots) but each had a porch facing the harbor. Soon the porches were roofed, complete with chamfered columns and scrollwork brackets. Additions were made from time to time, always compatible with the original design.

Similarly, the Company Store, the Hotel, the Masonic Lodge were functional with a conservative touch of classic detail, and had compatible additions.

All the buildings, including the original School and the Cookhouse seemed to fit. The wharf acted as a common connection to the Company Store and Office, the nerve center of the town. The School's simple symmetry and elevated location seemed appropriate. Even the ornate, Victorian Campbell House fit into this organic whole.

Then something weird and disconcerting happened. Steep pitched roofs were replaced with flat roofs on the sharpening rooms of the Second Mill, the Mason Lodge, the Hotel, and several residences. Also, three classrooms were added to the school, and another flat roof appeared, completely destroying the integrity of the original structure.

This compulsion for flat roof remodeling changed the character of the town. Another change was the 1400 foot long elevated tramway along the wharf. This further depreciated the charm of the area.

Then, as the railroads replaced the sailing ships, Port Blakely, once a community of 2000 people, faded away. In the immediate area, one company dwelling remains substantially unchanged, and easily restorable. It is recognized by preservationists that the Burnett House be saved and restored.

The other surviving structure in the area is the Third Mill Power Plant. This concrete edifice should be preserved and an adaptive use found for it, recognizing its place in Port Blakely history and in early concrete technology.

The concept of a Company Store and community center is vital to a community. A replication of this building would serve as a cornerstone for the design of compatible neighboring buildings.

The design of a new school or other public buildings in the area, for instance, should acknowledge this community's important heritage.

It would be appropriate to accurately locate the significant buildings identified in this survey, and to recognize these locations with parks, interpretive signs, plaques and other devices to preserve this unique heritage. These steps would encourage the development and codification of further information and research in the Port Blakely vicinity.

APPENDIX

DESCRIPTIONS: OTHER BUILDINGS

a First Mill

Built in 1863, producing in 1864, the mill was located adjacent to Blakely Harbor's north shore at the harbor's west end. Supported on piling, the heavy timber structure was approximately 70 feet wide, 300 feet long with a 36'x80' three stack boiler room to the north of the mill. Two conveyors dumped slabs over a high masonry wall into a burning area north of the mill.

Two pull-chains (located next to the west ends of the sidewalls, a wide platform between the two) were employed to get the logs from the pond to the second floor. The production line moved eastward through the mill to platforms for loading onto sailing ships. The first floor was reserved for the steam engines, conveyors, belts and other gear.

A bird's eye perspective and two photos show a unique feature of the exterior of the mill: vertical wood walls with each 10foot bay on the south elevation containing a four foot wide diamond shaped opening, and the east and west elevations featured three diamond openings in a triangular pattern in the siding above the second floor openings. These portals no doubt had a functional basis, following the 45 degree bracing in the heavy timber framing and trusses.

The gable roof was sheet metal with a continuous low ridge vent. The perspective shows the original machine shop very close to the mill. When the mill burned on February 3, 1888, it must have taken the machine shop with it. Stacks of molten metal can still be found on the beach in this location.

Correspondence just after the 1888 fire indicated that a reasonable distance between the new second mill and the machine shop be maintained for fire insurance consideration.



FIRST MILL

4372

MUSEUM OF HISTORY & INDUSTRY

85

b Third Mill

After the second mill burned in 1907, a new mill, 60'x360' was built. The first floor had conveyors, motors, belts. The exterior vertical-siding walls had double 6/6 double-hung wood windows in each bay. The second (production) floor exterior walls were mainly latticework mounted on the heavy timber framework. The 6/12 slope gable roof was sheet metal on wood purlins and trusses. A clearstory with rectangular openings extended the full length of the ridge.

Two stacks of the original boiler plant remained from the fire. A new larger stack was added. The only structure remaining, after the third mill was demolished, is the concrete skeleton of the Power Plant. (See 2: Power Plant.)

An identifying symbol of the building was a light colored 12 foot diameter circle painted on the east end of the clearstory.

The mill went into production in the summer of 1909, operating sporadically and ceased to operate by 1914. It began operating again during World War I, but was demolished in 1923, and very few buildings remained on the 1923 Sanborn map.



THIRD MILL

U of W NEG. NO. 17356
87

A. CURTIS

c Machine Shop, 1863-1907

The original shop, located about 50 feet from the first mill, was 50 feet wide and 170 feet long. In 1888 the west 50 feet was the forge shop, the remaining section was a woodworking shop except for a 22'x30' barley-crushing room (in 1893 this was called a grist mill).

Woodworking was relegated to the east 60 feet in 1893 and a machine shop was in the center portion, complete with an engine and a heater.

In 1904 a pattern shop replaced woodworking, the machine shop was sprinkled and had a 60 h.p. engine. The forge shop was replaced with a blacksmith shop with a steam hammer. A lean-to was added for a boiler shop and a dynamo room.

Thirty feet to the north of the blacksmith shop was a new 30'x60' foundry building with corrugated iron on stud walls. The foundry remained and a new machine shop was built a few feet to the east.

The exterior walls were divided into 10 foot bays, each with triple double-hung 6/6 windows creating a strip window effect. The gable roof had a louvered clearstory over the forge area. Wood ladders from eaves to ridge were typical installations on all buildings and dwellings.

d Machine Shop, 1908-1923

Thirty feet northeast of the old machine shop location and directly south across Bay Street from the Campbell House was the 56'x160' building, the western 66 feet a blacksmith shop, east of that a 70' machine shop, a 24 foot pattern shop two stories high, and a 16'x40' pattern storage east of the building.

From the nearest point of the third mill to the blacksmith shop was about 300 feet, no doubt complying with insurance company wishes.

e Planing Mill

Located south of the Second Mill, it was connected to it by a tramway over the millpond gates. The 1904 Sanborn map shows a 66'x330' building. The west 110' has three 22'x110' plastered steam-dry kilns. A 66'x90' lumber shed was east of the kilns, receiving area for rough lumber from the mill. Of the remainder of the building, 66'x130' was the planing mill on the first floor and lumber storage on the second floor.

The lumber shed and the planing mill were sprinkled, along with a filing room and a resaw shed. A duo standard force-pump forced salt water to a reservoir on the hill south of the plant through a six inch line. Another six inch pipe fed the sprinkler system from the reservoir.

A Hester photograph of the building being built: piling/footings at 13' on center each way; 16"x16" floor girders running the short dimension of the building supported the floor joists; heavy timber construction with 16" posts, wind bracing lighter than those of the second mill; second floor beams at 40" center spanned 33 feet to a center girder; heavy planking was used for first and second floors; 16' between first and second floors, 12' from second floor to the roof in the planing mill area and about 22 feet from floor to roof of the lumber shed; the white plastered kiln walls were 14' high; all roofs were almost flat with about a 1/12 slope; light framing defined the window openings between the diagonal bracing.

The finished plant had horizontal cedar bevel siding, double 6/6 double-hung windows per bay, each window 40"x80". North of the planing mill was a 50'x30' two stack boiler plant with a shavings bin on the roof.



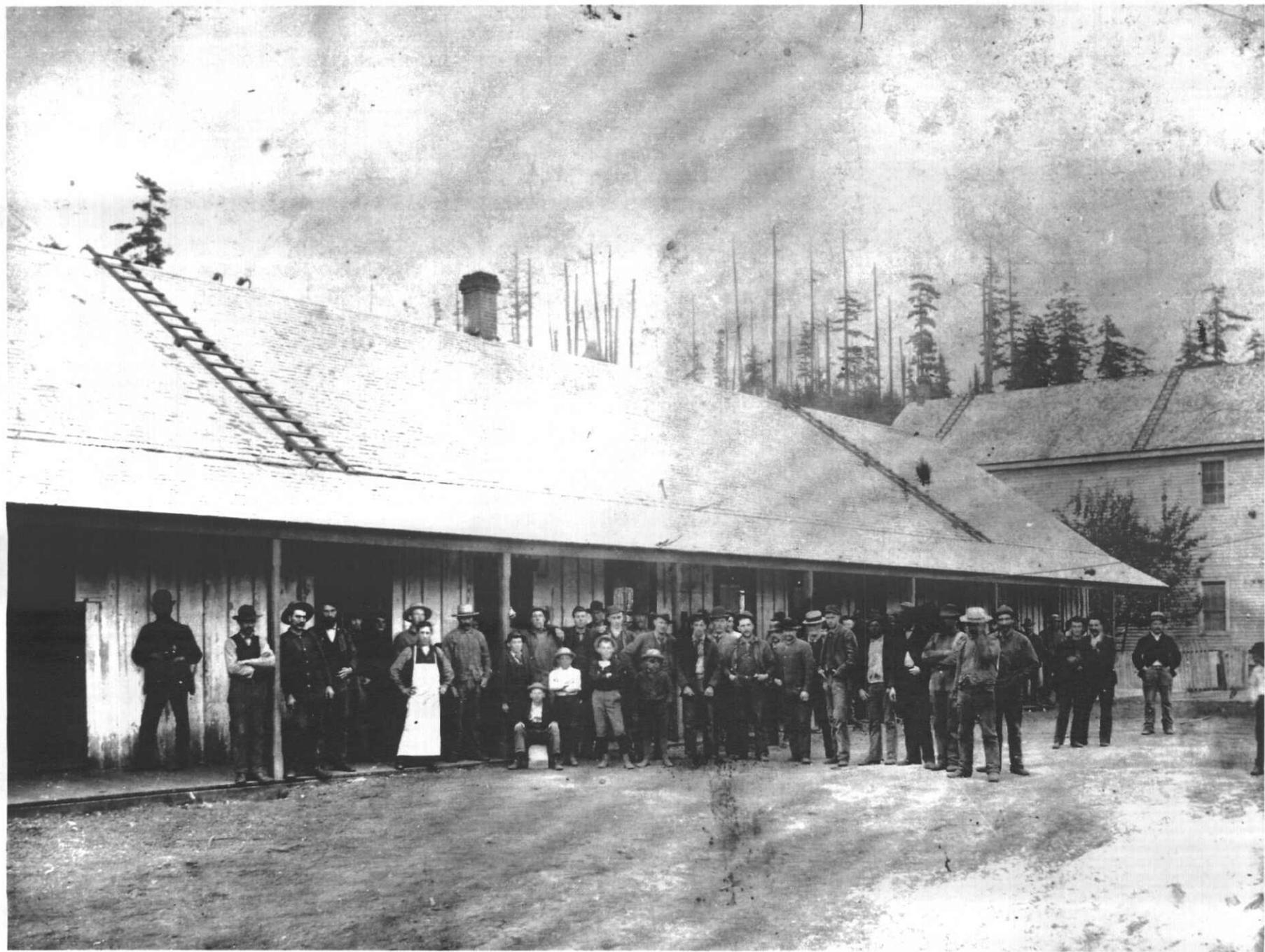
PLANING MILL & THIRD MILL 4636-34 PUGET SOUND MARITIME HISTORIC SOCIETY
91

f Cook House

One of the earliest buildings, its plan was "T" shaped, located about 400 feet north of the mill and 50 feet west of the later-built Mason Hall. The arm of the "T", the dining room, faced the harbor; about 28' wide, 108' long. The base of the "T", 28'x50', housed the kitchen. A wide covered porch was on the south and, later, porches and a 30'x30' room were added.

Vertical board and batten siding, 12" wide boards and 4" battens, was a feature of the cookhouse. The south elevation had four doors and six double-hung windows. The ends of this wing had three large double-hung windows. The cedar shingle 8/12 slope gable roof tapered to a 6/12 slope at the porch.

The 1888 Sanborn map shows two hog houses located a few feet west of the cookhouse. Fortunately by 1893 these had been removed and replaced with hog pens located 150 feet to the northwest, away from prevailing winds.



COOK HOUSE

247 BAINBRIDGE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
93

9 Post Office c.1880-1917

One 12'x20' room in a one story residential looking "L" shaped frame building. This post office was located on the beach just above the high tide, on the corner of Bay Street and the planked wharf running past the Company Store. This area was later filled.

This was a central location, about 200 feet from Captain Renton's gate, 50 feet down an incline to the rear of the Company Store. The 12/12 intersecting gable roof was cedar shingles. A chimney was centered in the post office room. Drop siding and small double-hung windows completed the exterior appearance except for a flag pole that could be viewed from the harbor.

h Cobbler -1904, Post Office 1904-1923

This one story frame building, 22'x32' with a covered porch on the west and south side, was located 37' east of the back side of the Company Store.

The external walls were 6" bevel siding. The 8/12 slope roof: cedar shingles. The porch had a 4/12 slope hip roof with post and brackets similar to those of Captain Renton's porch. A "Post Office" sign and a "Western Union Telegraph Company" sign were displayed on the west porch.

The interior walls were also 6" bevel siding, the 9 foot high ceiling was 4" tongue-and-groove, the floor was tongue-and-groove fir. Windows were 6/6 double-hung wood with plain surrounds.

A gate separating the public and work area was supported by two Victorian newel posts. A steam radiator was centrally located. Exposed knob & tube electrical wires were very neatly installed at the perimeter of the ceiling.



POST OFFICE - 1904-1923

1488
96

SAINBRIDGE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

i Doctor's Office

Located about 50 feet west of the post office on Bay Street, the 20'x25' one story building was constructed about 1889 for Dr. Cecil Kellam, who came to Port Blakely after graduating from medical school. Having a doctor in the town must have been very gratifying to this community, going into the heyday of its existence. He served the community for 40 years. The location was central to the town, the mill and the wharf.

The interior of Dr. Kellam's office had simple window surrounds, 2/2 double-hung window with a roller shade. A patterned wallpaper covered the walls.

This building was not included in the 1917 Sanborn map.

i Lock-Up

Located just northeast of the hotel, up against the foot of the steep slope, was a 10'x10' dirt floor building with two windows with bars.

This jail was known as "The 10x10". As Andrew Price chronicles: "All [the constable] had to do...was holler 10x10" and mischievous youths would scatter.

k Lumber Shed

Located on the wharf 350 feet east of the company store, this 55'x100'x12'(to the eaves) shed without sheathing had a trussed roof with corrugated iron roofing.

By 1904 this building was replaced by a 70'x228' shed oriented to allow the 12 foot high tramway to extend east along the wharf another 800'.

The roof design was rather unusual. It reflected the bow-string truss design of the Second Mill. However it appeared as intersecting segments rather than one arch. From the eaves to the ridge, the ends of the building were sheathed.

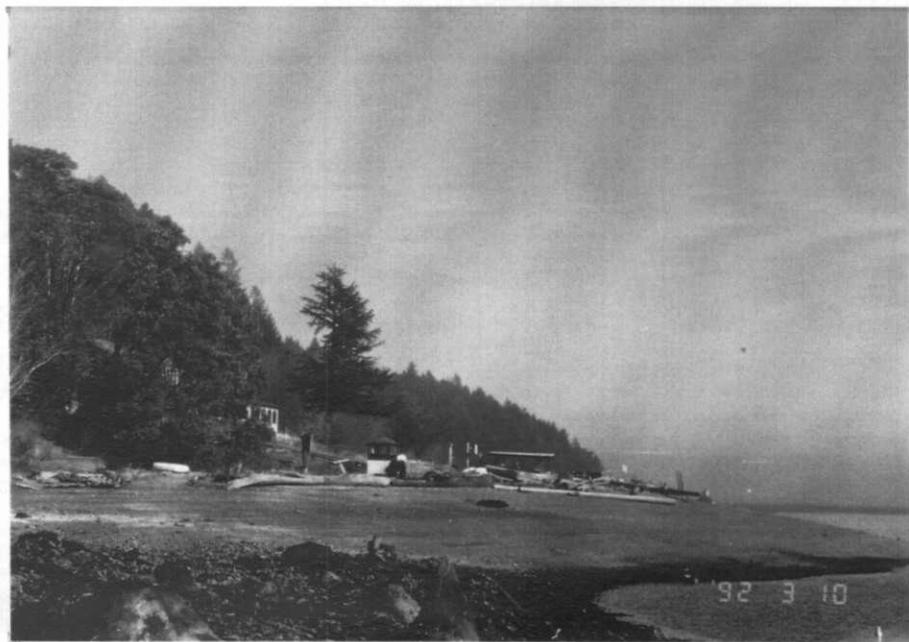
1 Freight Warehouse

This one-story "T" shaped building, 40'x135' with 40'x60' leg, was one of the early buildings and survived through 1917. It was located about 150 feet east of the Company Store, partly on the wharf.

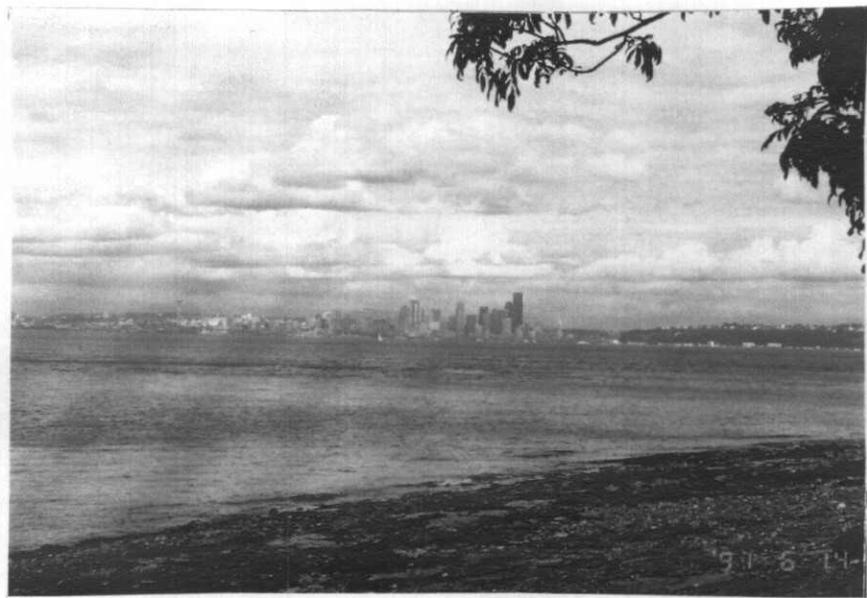
The frame building had intersecting 5/12 slope cedar shingled gable roofs. By 1904 a root house was added. By 1917 a 12'x16' hose cart garage was added, for a 450 foot hose. The typical ladders were placed to the ridge of the roof. Two inch hydrants were spaced along Bay Street at about 150 feet, and near the commercial buildings in the area.



SALVAGED DOOR & WINDOW -
STRAWBERRY HILL



LOOKING EAST - MOLTEN METAL IN FOREGROUND



VIEW NEAR RESTORATION POINT

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CARLSSON STUDIO : DESIGN CONSULTATION

20 July 1992

David Hansen
Deputy, State Historic Preservation Officer
Washington State Office of Archaeology
and Historic Preservation
111 21st Avenue S.W.
P.O. Box 48343
Olympia, WA 98504-8343

JUL 22 1992

Re: *Port Blakely Mills & Milltown
Historic Buildings / Cultural Resources Survey*

Dear David,

A few months ago I talked with you, Greg Griffith, and Leonard Garfield, reviewing preliminary drawings of the significant structures of Port Blakely.

My client, Port Blakely Mill Company, wishes to make the final survey document available to preservation oriented agencies and museums.

This final document is now available and we are sending your office a copy: sixteen 24"x36" drawings, plus the bound survey of 104 pages which includes written history and descriptions along with photos and reduced copies of the drawings.

L. C. CARLSSON CARLSSON ARCHITECT AIA • CSI EMERITUS
7444 HOLMES ISLAND ROAD S.E., OLYMPIA, WA 98503 : 206 • 4

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CARLSSON STUDIO : DESIGN CONSULTATION

The survey is rather unique in that all of the drawings of significant buildings are prepared from old photos, etc., except for the Burnett House and the Third Mill Power Plant. (The preponderance of the buildings were demolished long ago.) This document is sponsored by Port Blakely Mill Company (the long time owner of much of Port Blakely), and is a part of a comprehensive cultural management plan involving archaeologists, hydrologists, zoologists, biologists, etc. We based the preparation of the document on HABS/HAER guidelines.

Those of us involved with the document feel that it is a relevant and significant addition to the comprehension of the heritage of the Northwest.

We hope that the survey will be useful to your office. I would be happy to meet with you and the staff if you have comments and questions.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Carlsson', written in a cursive style.

Attached: bound Survey & Drawings

cc: Charles Wilson

L E CARLSSON CARLSSON ARCHITECT AIA • CSI EMERITUS

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