

## GREEN GOLD

Getting ready to build. The town never had electricity or telephone service, other than the Dotson house where Duke build a waterwheel generator for the family. No store, mostly just a place to work, eat & sleep. Yet there were some really good parties here. Elsewhere you can read about a happy group taking over JD's house (he was gone) for a dance.



No insulation, no indoor plumbing, but these folks led a very happy life—some former residents have told me so. There is a former employee of Hudspeth Sawmill Company who returned to Oklahoma when he “retired.” Toolie Ryan still keeps in touch with yours truly. Warren Ball, now living in Montaque, California, writes me two or three times a year. Meeting all the wonderful people is one of the rewards of my project.





Clarence Hudspeth on the company's "cat". When the family moved to Oregon their intention was to log with mules, at least initially. Someone misjudged what those mules could pull. That oversight was quickly noticed and negotiations were undertaken with Oregon Lumber Company at Dee, Oregon, for the machine you see here. The cat was driven overland from Dee to Camp Watson. When fences were in the way, they were cut then repaired. In any case, Dee to Camp Watson isn't a short day-trip.

Hudspeth would call upon Oregon Lumber again in the mid-1940s when building the large mill in Prineville.



Duke Dotson in his 1928 Dodge pickup. The Dotsons weren't part of the caravan from Oklahoma to Oregon. They had been living in Arkansas and knew the Hudspeths from their early days in Marble, Arkansas. These were tough times and if it were even a possibility that a job could be had at Camp Watson the trip from Arkansas to Oregon was worth the effort. Duke's son, Royce, grew up and worked for the Hudspeth family in various jobs for many years. Royce has been extremely helpful to me in gathering information.

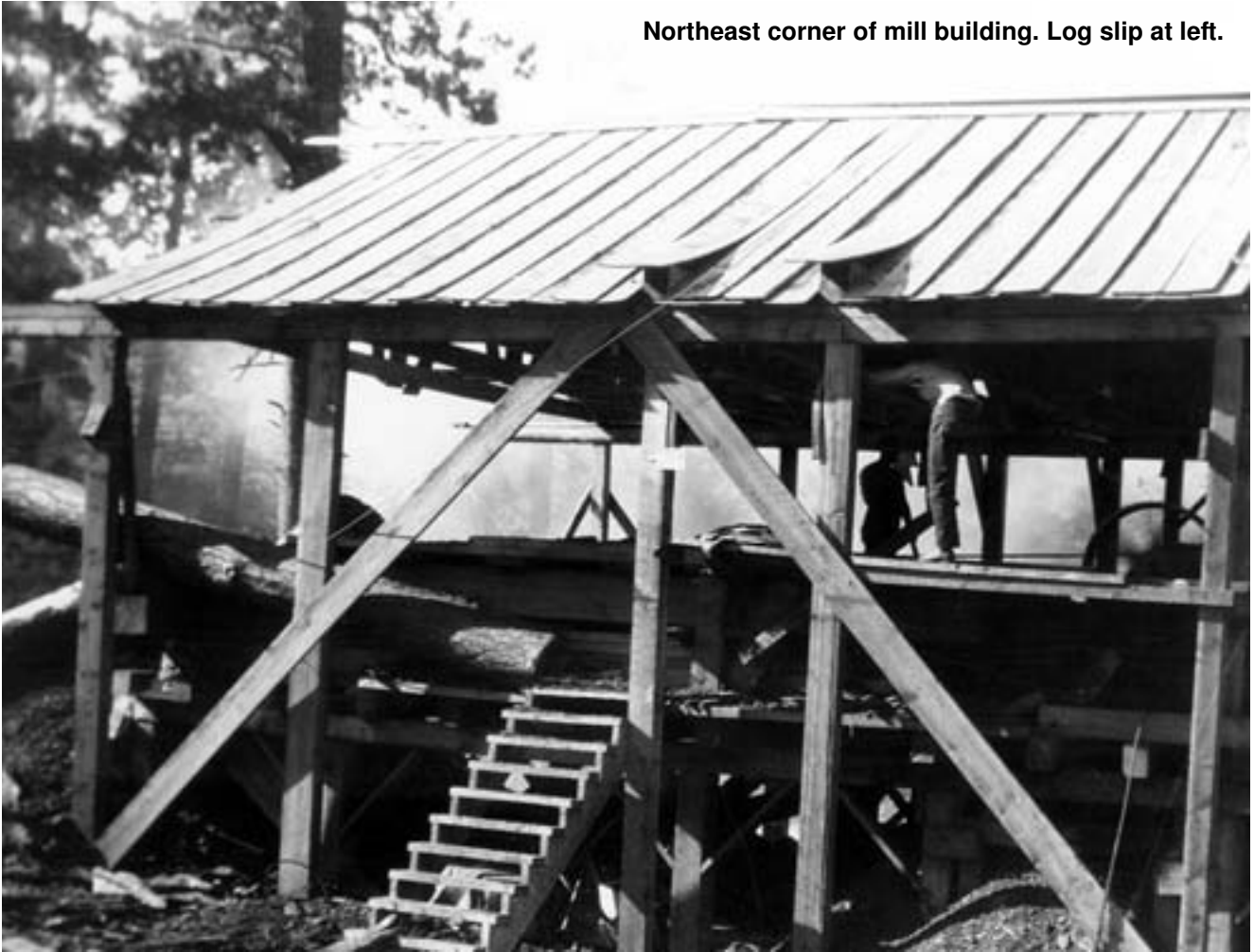
Royce is also an artist himself and is currently working on a series of sawmills.



Above, you see the slip where the logs entered the mill. Out the back of the plant on the left you can see the refuse chain moving waste to the open air burn pile where some evidence of burning is still visible. In the upper right you can see a gray-looking plume of smoke from the power house. This unsophisticated looking operation could produce a lot of lumber.

At left is a photo of what was the log pond. Today it provides water for livestock. Taken in 1998 on a field trip Royce Dotson arranged, Pat Bohannon joined Royce and me for a full day at Camp Watson and a side trip to Antone. Listening to those two men remember made for a very interesting day. They remembered who owned every piece of land between Camp Watson and Antone.

Northeast corner of mill building. Log slip at left.



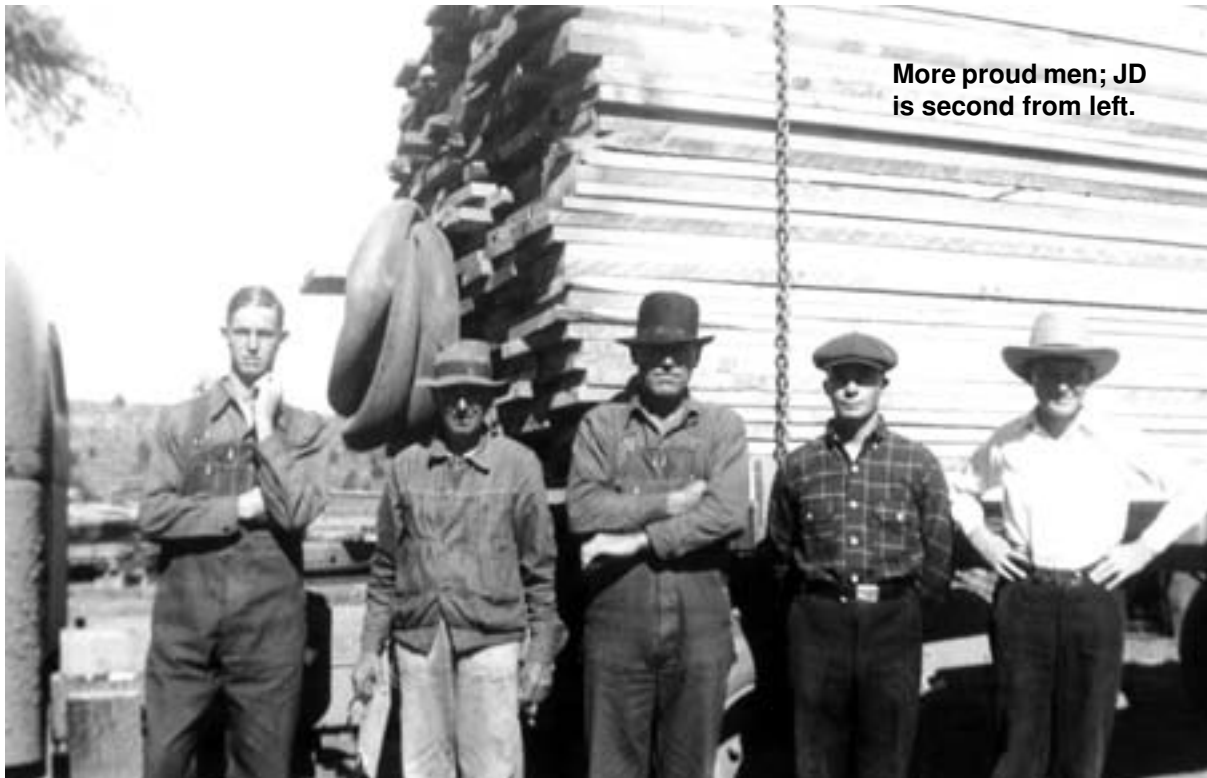
Log dump with town in background. This is also the only road into and out of the site; the town's "main street". The hills in the distance (south) are now within the Ochoco National Forest.

When Hudspeth came to this site no commercial logging had ever been done here. It is currently (2004) being logged again — apparently for baseball bats or toothpicks (my humor). But in "the old days" real lumber came from this site. A sample can be seen on the next page.

**GREEN GOLD**



**These men seem proud of their product. Wish I knew the size of that board. That load of lumber is headed for Prineville or Redmond, transported by a 90HP motor up & over the Ochoco Mountains**



**More proud men; JD is second from left.**

**Blue Mountain Mills  
John Day (early photo)**



Left, unidentified Hudspeth logger, bucking. Right, Blue Mountain Mills, John Day, retail yard. Building today serves as hardware store. No mill operations in plant just behind building. There is some evidence of either pillage or demolition. In any case, not a pretty sight for downtown John Day.



Hudspeth logo stamped on lumber before shipment.