

operations until spring. But by creating a special enclosure in the pond below the bull-slide, and warming the water, frozen logs could be rolled into the water all winter, and the ice, debris and sand dissolved in the water. The *Phillips Times* on November 24, 1888, explained how it worked. "They [Phillips Lumber Company] will keep the lake open by charging the exhaust pipe so that it will exhaust into a condenser near the foot of the [bull] slide . . ." The news item ends with the note that the "John R", a pet name given by the crew to one of the two locomotives owned by the company—after John R. Davis—would "endeavor to keep the mill supplied with logs."

On July 8, 1889, the Phillips Lumber Company was dissolved and all debts and assets were absorbed by its successor, the John R. Davis Lumber Company. The announcement appeared in the *Phillips Times* but no reason is given for the change in corporate status.

By early 1894 the John R. Davis Lumber Company was being referred to in the *Northwestern Lumberman* (February 10th) as "among the greatest of great lumber plants of the Wisconsin pine country."

By this time, a big planing mill and a dry kiln were in operation, but on June 23, 1894, both burned, a prelude to an even greater catastrophe on July 24th when a fire spread from a burning swamp nearby and, fanned by a strong wind, destroyed the entire city, mills, homes, stores and Court House, with a loss of fifteen lives. Box cars and coaches on the Wisconsin Central were pressed into service to evacuate women and children to Prentice, but there was little the fire fighters who remained behind could do to stop the holocaust.

A marker erected by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin on Highway 13 overlooking Lake Duroy calls attention to the fire and after the smoke died away "these same valiant people built a new Phillips on the ashes of the ruins."

The lumber company mills were rebuilt and the most advanced machinery installed. The company also built another railroad, this one south of Fifield east along Sailor Creek. Another spur was built off the main line of the railroad which extended to Coolidge, today a ghost town, where the

Boyington & Atwell Company of Stevens Point was sawing hemlock in the late 1880s and early 1890s.

The accompanying map shows a branch line off the Wisconsin Central running northwest from Luger Junction to Lugerville, with short spurs out of Lugerville into the timber, actually Camps 6 and 7 in Flambeau township of Price County. This sawmill community was founded in 1904 by Louis & William Luger who came from Minnesota to build a mill on the east bank of the south fork of the Flambeau River. They picked a spot well suited for sawmill operations directly below Little Bull Rapids, although these rapids are not as well known today as Little Carry and Rocky Carry Rapids located a short distance upstream.

In 1909 the big sawmill at Phillips burned, and the Davis company took over the sawmill of the Luger brothers at Lugerville. The mill was remodeled for greater efficiency, and green lumber was shipped by train to Phillips to be planed and dried. But production declined and in 1912, Davis conveyed the mill at Lugerville and all his mill properties, planing mill, dry kilns, machine shops and yards at Phillips, to Davis Kneeland and Percy McClurg, two out of state lumbermen who moved to Phillips.

A new sawmill at Phillips was begun in the summer of 1910 but construction was delayed by Davis. It was finally completed in February 1913, presumably under new management, and, in order to keep the Phillips mill supplied with logs, new camps were opened as far east as the Willow River in Oneida County (northwest of Rhinelander).

In 1914, George A. West and partners of Milwaukee acquired the Kneeland-McClurg mill at Lugerville and began operations under the firm name of West Lumber Company. The company sawed until about 1933, and Volume I of *Corporations* (p. 191) for Price County shows that the company was dissolved December 24, 1935. James T. Drought was president, and George A. West, secretary, at the time of dissolution. George Heckman was also a member of the firm.

After 1914, Lowrie Lowe was mill superintendent and Herman J. Johnson was manager of the West Lumber Company. In the