

1920s Roy Bodenbug was head sawyer on the night shift.

There were two engines, 101 and 102, which ran from the mill to the several camps in Flambeau township to pick up cars. When the company was dissolved, 101 went to a buyer in Mexico, and 102 was junked.

On May 19, 1922, the sawmill at Phillips burned for the third time. It was rebuilt the same summer and the saws began to hum again on November 11, 1922, but the end of the pine harvest was in sight. The *Phillips Times* on June 18, 1926 wrote the obituary, and eulogy:

After forty-four years of continuous logging operations by the Phillips Lumber Company, the John R. Davis Lumber Company and the Kneeland-McClurg Lumber Company, successive operators of the sawmill plant in this city, the last of the company's great holdings of timber located east of this city will be hauled to the mill and their logging camps will be closed. By the first of August the Kneeland-McClurg Lumber Company expects to completely finish the taking up of the steel rails of their logging railway over which has been moved to their mill during those forty-four years nearly a billion and a half feet of logs, at a conservative estimate. The annual cut of logs has been from twenty-five to sixty million feet.

Established in 1882 as the Phillips Lumber Company, with John R. and B.W. Davis, the controlling managers. A few years later the name was changed to the John R. Davis Lumber Company and in 1912, the name was again changed to the Kneeland-McClurg Lumber Company. John R. Davis the real founder of the industrial enterprise still retains an interest in the business.

This fine lumber manufacturing plant which we understand to be the largest electric driven sawmill in the world, has always been recognized as the industrial support of Phillips and has ever been most liberal in all matters of public improvements that has made Phillips a modern city and furthered its progress and commercial development. The Company has never sought to dominate in municipal affairs, but rather harmoniously assist in the upbuilding of the city.

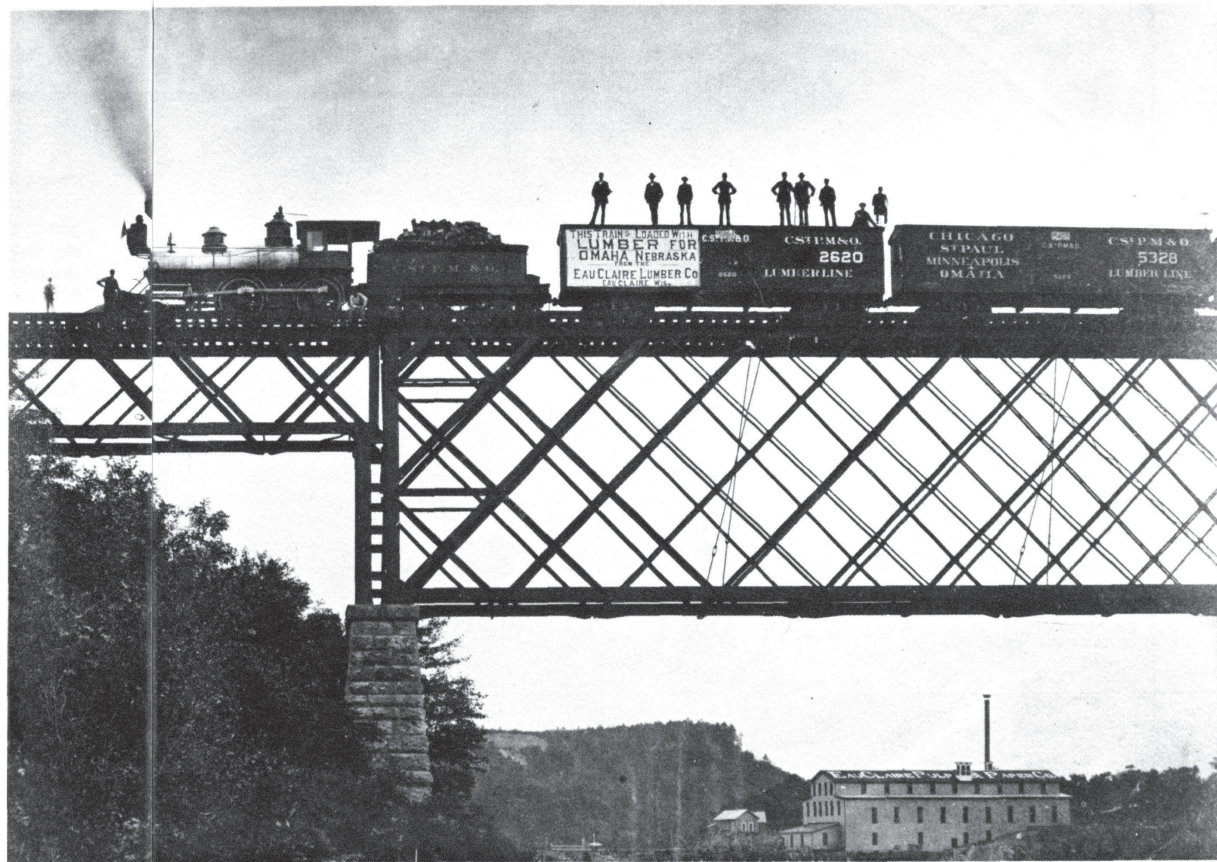
The exhausting of the timber supply east of the city is a loss that we will feel, but it does not mean that the sawmill plant will be closed down now, or for years to come. The company's timber holdings in other points, Morse and elsewhere, assures the operations of the plant as heretofore. Phillips, without unforeseen conditions arising, will yet remain a great lumber center, and a prosperous city.

The managerial capability of the Kneeland-McClurg combination was severely tested on two occasions. David Kneeland died suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhage at Phillips on December 8, 1915. Percy McClurg kept the company on a profitable basis and by 1923 had become a national figure in the lumber trade. In August he left on a trip to Czechoslovakia with a group of lumbermen from around the country to study the possibility of American investment in Czech forest products. He returned to Phillips in November and a few days later, on December 4th, he was on an ice skating party on Elk Lake, broke through the ice and drowned. Children of the founders and relatives managed to keep the company going for a time, but, as noted in the *Phillips Times*, the end was in sight for no amount of managerial skill could overcome the fact that there were no more trees to cut except pulpwood.

In the late 1890s and early 1900s there are references in photographs to several logging railways in the Chippewa Valley as far north as the Thornapple in Sawyer County. For example, the Omaha line came from Spooner to Winter in the summer of 1904, and, around 1905, there was a siding east of Winter which connected with the "Stinson Spur," which ran south for about fifteen kilometers (ten miles) to the Thornapple River, crossed the Thornapple and continued east and a short distance to Camp 5. The spur was named for Charlie Stinson of Augusta, woods boss for Kaiser Lumber Company of Eau Claire. Camp 4 for Kaiser stood on the right (west) bank of the Thornapple where the bridge was built. The clearing where Camp 4 stood is still an opening with no trees.

Most of the stumpage taken out by Kaiser was hemlock, birch and basswood. The pine had long ago been cut.

Other logging railroads in the Chippewa Valley would include the Stanley, Merrill and Phillips line



north of Stanley for the Northwestern Lumber Company. Spurs off the Tuscobia branch of the Omaha line for the Edward Hines Lumber Company at Rice Lake, Loreta and Park Falls picked up log cars, and the "Roddis Line" (for Roddis Lumber & Veneer Company of Marshfield) was hauling log cars from the headwaters of the Flambeau River to the company sawmill at Park Falls.

Fountain-Campbell Lumber Company of Donald, later of Ladysmith, laid rather extensive trackage into Rusk and Sawyer counties northeast of Crane. (This company was later absorbed by the Yawkey-Bissel Lumber Company of Hazelhurst.) The logging railroads referred to here were all laid down to bring out the last of the big hardwoods, mainly hemlock.

Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha train crossing Chippewa River at Eau Claire, probably September 1, 1880. Caption on car reads "This train loaded with lumber for Omaha, Nebraska from the Eau Claire Lumber Company, Eau Claire, Wis." This was special train of twenty-four "lumber line" cars each thirty-five feet long which carried lumber as well as lath and shingles. In background is mill of Eau Claire Pulp & Paper Company, one of first paper mills in state.