THE TIMBER INDUSTRY IN ITS RELATION TO EASTERN SHORE

Address by William D. Corddry

The following address was given by Mr. Corddry at the annual meeting of the Maryland Forestry Association, at Batimore. Mr. Corddry is widely known as a dealer in all kinds of building materials.

I esteem it a privilege and a pleasure as well to have been invited to takepart in your meeting here tonight.

I always feel at home in the company of men and women who are interested in Forestry or Forest Products.,

I want to tell these boys, on the front row, first of all, that the first money I ever earned was paid me for nailing up peach boxes at forty cents a hundred. In fact this was my first connection with the lumber or timber business. This was back in the late seventies and I worked during the vacation periods. It occurs to me now that I experienced a feeling at that time which I have not had since—the feeling of having all the money I needed or wanted.

The mill, where I nailed up these boxes, was big. I say "Big Mill" advisedly, for it was so called when it was built and continued to bear that name until it was destroyed by fire in 1909.

The mill was built by Richardson, Moore, and Smith, on the ashes of a mill that had been standing on the same site since before the Civil War. This marked the entry of Senator John Walter Smith in the lumber business.

The mill was at first a saw mill or a log mill (and my peach box stuff was a by-product made from slabs and trim boards). It was later converted into a box shook mill. It was of course located in Snow Hill, in Worcester County.

I am not sure that all these boys know where Worcester County is and since I am talking partly to them, I am going to locate it for them so they will remember it: It touches the State of Delaware on the north; the Atlantic Ocean on the east; the State of Virginia on the south: the rest of the State of Maryland being to the west. It is the only county in the state touched by the ocean or two states.

This mill was built on the banks of the Pocomoke River and its supply of logs were cut on the high or forest along the river and floated up and down the stream. It had a cutting capacity of some six million feet a year and was operated as a saw mill for perhaps twenty and ceased sawing logs only when the owners had cut all the available timber.

The timber that they had been cutting was Virginia Pine—pine trees that the Lord had planted and caused to grow with no assistance or protection from man.

Our country was wonderfully blessed with natural resources and our state had its share. There was coal in abundance on the Western part of the State and timber covered the land of the Eastern Shore. As I see it now, the timber lands were more valuable than the coal lands. When coal comes from the earth, nothing takes its place. Not so with timber lands. If properly treated timber will reproduce itself.

Now what I have said about Snow Hill and its "Big Mill" could have been said about practically very town on the Eastern Shore. They have all had their big mills and they have all been operated along the same general lines as the Snow Hill mill and have all had the same experiences.

However, it can be said, that these mills of fifty and sixty years ago cut practically all of our Virgin Pine, which they cut more wisely than they knew. They cut only the trees that would measure more than twelve inches at the stump, and I submit Mr. President, and Mr. State Forester, that when they stopped cutting, that a new Forest had already started to take the place of the old. The cut over land of that period was a forest still. So far as I can recall, none of the timber land in our region has escaped a second cutting, and I regret to say that no thought was given to the on-coming generation when this was being done.

The policy of the Saw Mill man of fifty years ago, was to bring the timber to the mill; we take the mill to the timber now. He cut the trees that would measure twelve inches and more at the stump; we cut it all.

Hundreds of ground mills are operating all over the Eastern Shore today and have been for thirty years past. And the end is not yet. These have all been cutting second growth timber.

As already intimated, the present day saw mill man, is leaving the land devastated, taken little or no though of tomorrow. This lack of consideration is more often our misfortune than our fault. The owner of timber lands in his desire to get the last dollar out of his timber, sells without reservation or to six or eight inches at the ground, hoping that it will re-set itself in Pine without any effort or expense on his part. I find however, that much of our cut-over land grows up in Oak or other hardwood bushes, which absolutely prevent natural reseeding.

I quite agree with the thought advanced by the State Forester that it is better to clear the land by burning or other methods and see to it that our devasted lands are reset in Pine.

I am convinced that Pine timber will grow in this section to splendid saw timber in thirty five to forty years. In fact our company is cutting a tract of timber now, splendid second growth timber, a part of which tract was in cultivation less than forty years ago. And it occurs to me to say, that this tract of timber sold twenty five years ago for less than a thousand dollars and was sold by its present owner for more than ten thousand dollars.

It may not pay to grow timber in Southern Maryland, as has been stated by the speaker who just preceeded me, but my observation has been that timber can be grown from the seed profitable on the Eastern Shore.

The State Forester has asked me to touch upon the future of the Planing Mill business on the Eastern Shore. This is a question that I am very deeply interested in and am frank to say, that in the light of the knowledge that we are cutting more timber than we are growing in all counties except Dorchester and Queen Anne, that the future does not look very bright. This is especially true in the three lower counties, where in response to a demand for timber in the Coal mines of Pennsylvania, thousands of carloads of prop timber have been cut and shipped in the round to this market. I am inclined to think that the Mine Prop operators have done more to devaste our forests in the last ten years than the saw mill man had done in a quarter of a century previous.

When timber is cut into lumber and that lumber manufactured into building materials, shooks for boxes and the like, then it is that we get the best returns for our natural resources and the most satisfactory results. Every thousand feet of timber, worked this way, puts ten dollars a thousand feet in the pockets of the wage earner of that vicinity.

There are some twenty planing mills on the Eastern Shore doing a general planing mill business and making shooks for boxes and crates. The capital invested in these enterprises will exceed two million dollars. Their annual payroll exceeds a half million dollars. Fifty million feet of lumber will not keep them running full time. They have depended largely upon local lumber.

Pine timber has grown rapidly in the past, is still growing and I think it is entirely possible and probable that the cut-over lands of today will produce another harvest. But I am bound to say that the future of our industries demand that we "Stop, Look and Listen."

I believe that the Planing Mill people of the Eastern Shore are in hearty sympathy with the activities of your Association, Mr. President, and are willing and ready to cooperate with the State Forestry Board.

I want to urge intelliget systematic reforestation. The protection of our timber land is of the greatest importance. Our laws should be so well enforced that persons owning adjoining cleared land could not afford to be careless with fire. The State Game Warden will do well to cooperate with the State Forestry Board in a campaign of education, looking towards fire prevention; for I am quite sure more game is destroyed by forest fires than is bagged by the hunters.

Some Facts and Figures for Eastern Shore Counties Within the Loblolly Pine Belt, Compiled by Wm. D. Corddry.

CLASSIFICATION OF TOTAL LAND AREA AND PERCENTAGES

	Woodland		Improved Farmland		Waste Land		Salt Marsh	
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
Caroline	62,844	30	120,613	58	19,996	9	1,664	2
Dorchester	138,291	38	117,094	32	30,529	8	78,848	21
Queen Anne	59,270	25	162,915	71	41,505	2	2,880	1
Somerset	68,387	32	70,756	34	26,536	12	43,480	21
Talbot	45,822	27	115,753	67	4,082	3	3,392	2
Wicomico	111,608	47	98,390	41	14,626	6	14,144	6
Worcester	148,182	47	114,567	36	28,199	9	22,656	7

NOTE—In every one of these counties the decrease in acreage of improved farm lands since 1910 ranges from 5 to 30 thousand acres.

ANNUAL FOREST PRODUCTION AND VALUE

	Growth Cu. Ft.	Cut Cu. Ft.	Value
Caroline	3,140,000	4,134,750	$401,842.00
Dorchester	6,910,000	4,764,910	594,525.00
Queen Anne	2,963,000	2,361,455	222,677.00
Somerset	3,420,000	5,037,423	581,450.00
Talbot	2,290,000	3,801,244	266,243.00
Wicomico	5,580,000	8,099,470	905,525.00
Worcester	7,410,000	8,463,200	747,329.00

NOTE—Every county but Dorchester and Queen Anne is cutting timber much faster than it is growing.

MISS GERTRUDE WILSON WINS KENT COUNTY PRIZE FOR ESSAY

The Eastern Shore Society of Baltimore City Announces Another Historical Essay Contest

At the meeting of the Eastern Shore society of Baltimore City, held in the Maryland Historical Building, Baltimore City, last evening (April 27,1923) President George L. Radcliffe announced the continuation of this work so auspicidously begun last year, in the high schools of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, which culminated last evening in the delightful meeting at which the prize winners of the 1922 contests were guests of honor of the Eastern Shore Society, and were presented the prizes won in that contest.

Mr. Radcliffe, who is also the chairman of the Historical Essays Committee of the Eastern Shore Society, Mr. Samuel K. Dennis and Mr. W. Thomas Kemp being the other members, on behalf of the committee announced that the contest in the High Schools of the Eastern Shore will be continued this year.

The Essays in this new contest will deal with the Historical period beginning with July 4, 1776, and closing with the war of 1812. Full particulars concerning this contest will be announced by the committee later.

The joint meeting last evening of those two societies was most successful, with ladies and gentlemen in attendence. The Maryland Historical Society and its guest of honor, the acting as host for the Eastern Shore Society and it's guest of honor, the prize-winning young ladies and the young gentlemen from the Eastern Shore high schools.

Miss Gertrude Wilson, of Rock Hall, wins the contest in Kent County with essay on Colonial Kent.

These contests not only bring to light buried Historical events of the Eastern Shore, but instills interest and pride in each County which is a more valuable asset to any community.

Boost Your Town And County.

ROCK HALL

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Hogans entertained last Friday the latter's parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Cooper and sister, Mrs. Donald Ross, of Worton, and on Sunday Mr. and Mrs. Fred Robinson, of Chestertown.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Pippin, of Chester, Pa., are spending a week at their home here.

Mr. Howard Happersett, of Coatesville, Pa., spent the week-end at home. He will return permanently.

Capt. and Mrs. Charles R. Kerr were Sunday guests of their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Ruthwin Strong, in Quaker Neck.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Parker visited Baltimore friends recently.

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Stevens, of Baltimore, spent several days with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Jacquette, recently.

DR. M. E. PARSONS
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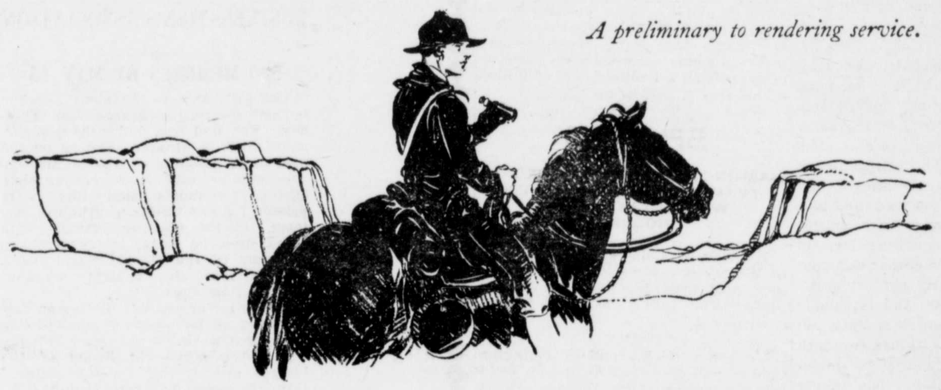
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