

BENTON COUNTY CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY II 1984 - 1986

COUNTY AREA: Bellfountain

RESOURCE #: 474B

PHOTO #: TT 1A - 10A

PROP. CLASS: 331

ORIGINAL USE: Sawmill

SIZE: 19.31 acres

PRESENT USE: Sawmill

PROPERTY ADDRESS: Rt. 1, Monroe, Oregon 97456

T 14S R 6W s 9,10,15,16 1/4

TAX LOT: 800

COMMON NAME: Hull-Oakes Lumber Co.

HISTORIC NAME:

PRESENT OWNER: Hull-Oakes Lumber Co.

OWNER'S ADDRESS: P.O. Box 48, Monroe, Oregon 97456

ORIGINAL OWNER: Ralph Hull

ARCHITECT:

BUILDER:

THEME: Industry: Processing/ Culture: Engineering

PERIOD/ DATE: Mid 20th Century/ c. 1939+

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNATION/ TYPE: Sawmill

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Condition: Good

(Excellent, Good, Fair, Deteriorated, Moved-Date)

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION AND IMMEDIATE SETTING

The Hull-Oakes Lumber Company is located on the south side of Dawson Road in the town of Dawson. Dawson is located at the head of a narrow valley in the foothills of the Coast Range approximately three miles east of Bellfountain. The Hull-Oakes Company buildings are located at the east end of the mill pond. The mill pond was originally shared by the I.P. Miller Lumber Company whose abandoned mill site is located on the west end of the pond. A Southern Pacific railroad spur line accesses the mill.

NOTEWORTHY LANDSCAPE FEATURES

None noted.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

There have been several sawmills in Dawson during the 20th Century. In about 1913, Fred Malcom built a sawmill in Dawson on or near the site of the current Hull-Oakes Lumber Company. In 1920, W.J. Miller leased Malcom's mill until he built a mill on this site in 1922. The W.J. Miller Mill burned down in 1936 and in 1938, Ralph Hull purchased Miller's mill site and built a new sawmill which began processing lumber

in the spring of 1939. Ralph Hull had previously operated several mills beginning in 1934 when he leased a mill north of Bellfountain from Merle Gragg.

In 1946, Ralph Hull sold the Dawson mill to Homer Hull who operated the sawmill as the Hull Lumber Co. Inc. Ralph Hull and Chester Oakes purchased the mill in 1955 and organized the Hull-Oakes Lumber Company.

Today the mill complex consists of a large planing shed, a building housing the sawmill, a building for the boilers, a shed for de-barking logs, a wigwam burner (see form # 474A), mill pond, office, and lumber storage area. On the west side of the mill pond are several abandoned sheds and buildings formerly belonging to the I.P. Miller Lumber Co. Several residences are located in Dawson to the north of the mill. a spur line of the Southern Pacific railroad serves the mill.

Hull-Oakes Lumber Company specializes in large fir timbers, such as those used for bridge beams. Although the market for large timbers is not great, the demand is steady. For this reason, there has never been a lay-off at the mill. Large timbers from the Hull-Oakes mill are used around the world.

The Hull-Oakes Lumber Co. is one of the last steam-driven sawmills in the nation. Two steam boilers, which date to the early part of this century, power the head rig, the bansaw, the edger, a number of smaller saws, and the carriage which carries logs to the head rig or main saw. Sawdust is used as fuel. Electricity is used elsewhere in the mill but steam provides at least half of the mill's power.

With the exception of the planing shed which pre-dates 1939, the majority of the structures at the mill site post date 1939. The Hull-Oakes Mill is potentially significant because of the technology employed in processing logs. Hull-Oakes Lumber Co. exemplifies a sawmill operation more typical of the earlier 20th Century, prior to the advent of electrification and computerization in the logging industry. In general, the mills in Dawson have played a large role in the economy of the area since at least the turn of the century.

SOURCES CONSULTED

"Dawson Mills Date to 1850's," Gazette-Times, Corvallis, Oregon, June 10, 1959.

Hull, Ralph, Personal Communication, Jan. 22, 1986.

Jones, Steve, "Steam Power Keeps Mill Humming," Gazette-Times, Corvallis, Oregon, Oct. 6, 1985.

Kadera, Jim, "The Mill That Time Passed by," Oregonian, Portland, Oregon, July 7, 1984.

Recorded by: Mary Kathryn Weber
Kathy Schutt

Date: Feb. 11, 1986

BENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

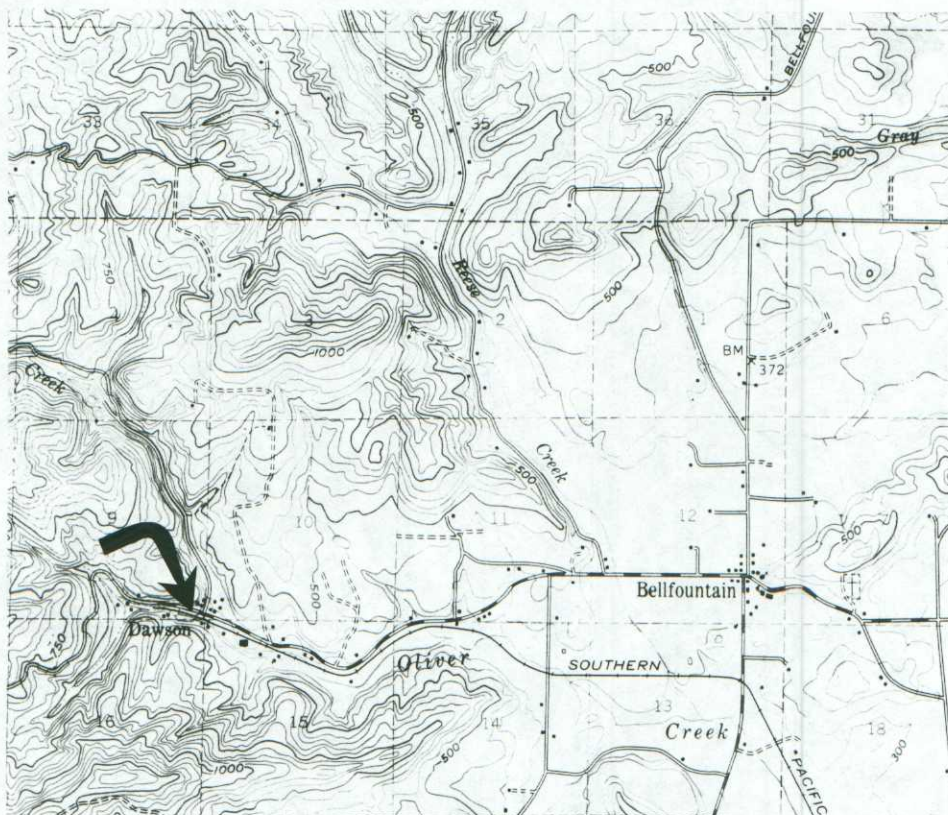
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Resource No. 474B



Photo No. TT 2A

View to west



MONROE QUADRANGLE

T 14S R 6W S 9,15,16



Photo No. TT 10A

View to southwest

Mill building

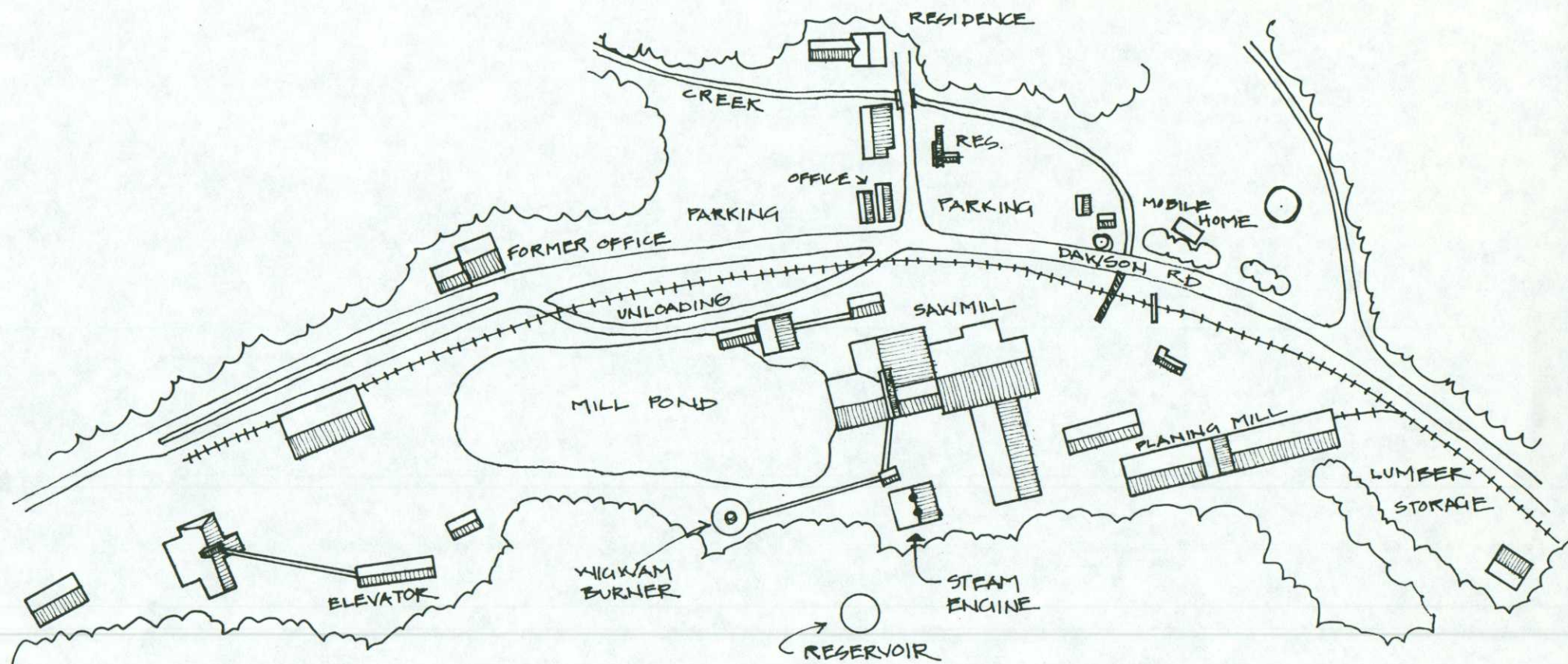


Photo No. TT 7A

View to southwest

Log dump

#474 b



N NO SCALE