

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name U.S. Spruce Production Railroad XII, Spur 5
other names/site number Blodgett Tract Railroad, Pacific Spruce Corporation Railroad

2. Location

street & number Sect. 30, T. 14 S., R. 11 W. N/A not for publication
city, town Yachats X vicinity
state Oregon code OR county Lincoln code 041 zip code 97498

3. Classification

| | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Ownership of Property | Category of Property | Number of Resources within Property | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> building(s) | Contributing | Noncontributing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district (linear) | _____ | _____ buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site | _____ | _____ sites |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <u>3</u> | _____ structures |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object | _____ | _____ objects |
| | | <u>3</u> | _____ Total |

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Evan J. DeBlasis 3-27-89
Signature of certifying official Date
USDA Forest Service
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] May 12, 1988
Signature of commenting or other official Date
Deputy Oregon State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) _____

Bruce J. Noble, Jr. 6/8/89
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

railroad grade

logging incline

log landing

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

abandoned

abandoned

abandoned

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____

walls _____

roof _____

other earthen roadbed

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See continuation sheets, item 7

 See continuation sheet

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7. Description

The fork of Spur 5 proposed for nomination is the only well-preserved portion of the five logging spurs built on the Blodgett Tract. The spurs were surveyed by the U.S. Army and the Spruce Production Corporation in 1918. Approximately 3.6 miles of grade were built during 1918, but no rail was laid until the Manary Logging Company began its operation in 1922. The Manary Company followed the Army surveys on most portions of the spurs, but chose slightly different routes on the lowest portion of spur 5.

The rugged terrain of the Blodgett Tract dictated some design characteristics for the railroad logging system. Extensive trestling carried the spurs over watercourses and across terrain too precipitous for conventional earthwork. Lumber journalists Johnson and Whisnant (1924) cite examples of track on the spurs that averaged 50% trestling. Field examination has confirmed their estimate.

The proposed linear district consists of 1.5 miles of spur 5, from its junction point with Forest Road 5362 to its terminus. The spur is preserved as an earthen roadbed with wooden ties and other artifacts in place. Features consist of the roadbed itself, a logging incline, and a log landing site.

HISTORIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SYSTEM

Features

1) Roadbed

The spurs on the Blodgett Tract were built as temporary spurs of the Alsea Southern Railroad, which ran from South Beach, on Yaquina Bay, to a point nearly 1 mile beyond Camp One, near Waldport.

The spurs were designed to be temporary, serving as long as the timber they reached was being cut. There was no reason for extending the life of the spurs beyond 3-4 years, since the

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logging practices employed on the Blodgett Tract did not provide for selective cutting or a sustained yield. Construction standards were appropriate for temporary service, and evidence from contemporary accounts establishes that the rail was removed from the spurs as soon as their timber was exhausted (Lincoln County Leader May 8, 1930). This was the conventional practice within the industry.

Blodgett Tract Spurs

| <u>Spur</u> | <u>Length</u> | <u>Survey</u> | <u>Grading</u> | <u>Complete</u> | <u>Remarks</u> |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Spur 1 | 1.6 mi. | 1918 | 1918 | 1922 | first logging |
| Spur 2 | 0.3 mi. | 1918 | 1918 | 1922 | spur of 1 |
| Spur 3 | 5.2 mi. | 1918 | 1925 | 1925 | |
| Spur 4 | 8.1 mi. | 1918 | 1918 | 1923 | extended 1933 |
| Spur 5 | 7.6 mi. | 1918 | 1926 | 1926 | |

Walter Mason Camp (1904) remarks that a civil engineer's three considerations in railroad construction are gradient, curvature, and drainage. Standards of gradient on the spurs were more extreme than standards for the Alsea Southern, the main line that served the spurs. Grades ran as high as 7.3% and curves ran as sharp as 14 degrees/100' chord. No significant adverse grades were found on the spurs, however. The extensive trestling, which solved the drainage problem, solved the gradient problem as well. Deep cuts and fills, which are used to maintain the gradient on most railroads, are rare on the Blodgett spurs, since trestling was more expedient than earthwork. On the extant portions, the depth of cuts does not exceed 8' and the height of fills does not exceed 6'. The material of the roadbed is earth, and the ballast material was sand, according to historic accounts (Inventory of Properties 1919). None of the ballast remains visible.

2. Forks, Switchbacks, Wyes, and Sidings

Forks, switchbacks, wyes, and sidings are configurations of track that enabled the loggers to operate their equipment on the spurs.

A fork is essentially a spur of a spur--i.e., a branch off a spur line that taps a stand of timber out of reach of the main spur. Spurs 3, 4, and 5 were built with forks incorporated into their design. Spur 3 forks in section 12 (T.14s R.12w), spur 4 forks in sections 18 and 16 (T.14s R.11w), and spur 5 forks in

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section 30 (T.14s R.11w). In addition, there are short forks on several spurs that were added as the spurs were built. These are found on spur 3 in section 13 (T. 14s R. 12w), on spur 4 in section 16, and on spur 5 in sections 19 and 30 (all T.14s R.11w).

Switchbacks were built to enable a locomotive to negotiate terrain too steep for conventional road building practices. The switchback has a lower and an upper leg contoured into a hill with a switch connecting the two legs. The locomotive advances up one leg, switches, and then backs up the second leg. A switchback was located on spur 4 in sections 20 and 21 (T. 14s R.11w).

Wyes were features which enabled the locomotives to turn around. They were configured as a triangle of track which permitted the locomotive to advance over one leg, switch and reverse over the second leg, then switch and advance over the third leg. Wyes were located on spur 4 in section 16 and on spur 5 in section 30 (T.14s R.12w). At Camp One on the main line of the Alsea Southern was a large wye that served the entire system.

Sidings were parallel lines of track built to switch cars or locomotives off the spur for loading or temporary storage. Sidings appear in historic photographs of the spurs, although none was identified in the reconnaissance.

3. Trestles

Logging railroad trestles were of two types, the vertical bent trestle and the horizontal or cribbed trestle. The vertical trestles were larger, both higher and longer, than the horizontal. Vertical trestling is also characteristic of more permanent installation, although it was used as a temporary form of trestling on the Blodgett spurs. Photographic evidence suggests that trestles of both types were built on the Blodgett spurs, but the reconnaissance found no extant trestles on the tract. The fire of 1936 burned the trestles, and any remains deteriorated rapidly in the warm moist coastal climate.

Vertical trestles were built by a pile driver, which drove the vertical members of each bent into the soil (Johnson and Whisnant 1924). This practice differed from construction practices on other railroads, where the bents were set on

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concrete, stone, or timber pads to protect them from contact with the soil. Horizontal trestling was built from logs laid across each other on the ground. This type of trestling was subject to rot from contact with the soil as well as stress from the weight of the railroad equipment.

4. Camp

The main camp for the logging operations on the Blodgett Tract was Camp One, located off the tract in section 14, T.14s R. 12w. Johnson and Whisnant (1924) refer to a second camp, which was composed of railcars on spur 1. Archaeological evidence of this camp may remain.

5. Log Landing or Donkey Setting

At suitable points along each of the spurs donkey engines were set to log using the skyline or "swing" system. As described by Johnson and Whisnant (1924), Manary's version of this system required three donkey engines and used a head spar tree near enough to the railroad line so that a McLean boom could be used to load log cars or disconnected railroad trucks. Two donkey setting sites remain discernible. These are both located in section 30 (T.14s R.11w) on the portion of spur 5 that is proposed for nomination. On each site, the donkey sleds remain in place.

6. Incline

The logging incline was a radical device which lowered a railcar down a very steep grade by a winch or donkey engine. Inclines were never common, but they enjoyed a vogue during the 1920's, especially in the coast range of Oregon and Washington. One contemporary source suggests that inclines were less expensive to build and operate than switchbacks (McGillicuddy 1921). Grades on inclines from logging operations throughout the west ranged from 10% to 68% (Cowling 1926). Spur 5 had a short (c. 1000') incline with a grade of c.28%. A donkey engine was used to raise and lower the railroad trucks on the incline. Evidence of wreckage at the bottom of the incline shows that at least one set of trucks went off the end of the track.

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7. Artifacts

Artifacts found along the grades include railroad and logging related debris.

Railroad-related:

Rail Steel rail in 20 foot sections is found on spur 5, especially in section 30 (T.14s R.11w). Rail dimensions are base width 4 3/8", height 4 1/4", width of head 2 3/8". This conforms to A.S.C.E. standard 60-pound rail (Weitzman 1980).

Ties Ties that escaped the 1936 fire are limited to spur 5, and are now submerged beneath the forest floor. Dimensions were apparently the conventional 8"x8"x8'.

Spikes Rail spikes are a common artifact on all railroads. Those from the Blodgett Tract are too rusted to measure accurately, but they appear to have been 5 3/4"x1/2" square, a common dimension.

Anglebars Also called "fish plates," these common items of railroad hardware were used to join pieces of rail.

Trestle Hardware Spikes and bolts used in trestle construction remain in place on several sites. They are too rusted to measure accurately.

Logging-related:

Donkey sleds These log structures were used to mount the donkey engines. They were manufactured in Toledo, and were transported to the Blodgett Tract by rail. Once on the ground, the donkeys could move into position by winching themselves along the ground. Sled dimensions average 40' long and 14' wide.

Cable Cable was needed for yarding and loading logs, as well as other uses in construction. Dimensions range from the 2' (diameter) cable used for the skyline to material as small as 1". Cable ends were finished by splicing or by zinc sockets.

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CURRENT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SYSTEM

Railroads are nominated to the National Register as linear districts--i.e., as features which constitute a continuous route from point to point and preserve the characteristics of original construction. Few historic railroads remain with the rails and ties in place, but the characteristics of the grade and earthwork must remain essentially as they were built. Railroads deteriorate in predictable ways. The wooden parts rot or burn, the roadbed is modified for motor vehicles, and untended portions of the roadbed are overgrown by vegetation or washed out.

The spurs on the Blodgett Tract have suffered three major threats to their integrity. The first is the original construction standards, which featured soil roadbeds and extensive trestling. Soil roadbeds are vulnerable to human and natural disturbances, and unmaintained trestling weakens and collapses within a matter of years.

The second threat came from the forest fire of 1936. Forest fires are especially damaging to historic railroads since the wooden parts--trestles, road crossings, and ties--burn out. In addition, many railroad builders incorporated logs and stumps into their roadbed construction. These buried wooden elements also ignite during hot fires and burn out, leaving voids in the roadbeds which hasten their erosion (Tonsfeldt 1986).

Finally, users who came after the fire modified the spurs for motor vehicles. The modification consisted of building new grades around trestle sites and pouring tons of crushed rock on the original grades to make an all-weather surface. As a result, most of the spurs have been re-routed at trestle sites and buried under as much as 2' of rock surface.

Spur 5, however, escaped these damages. The lower portion of spur 5--below the fork--was burned in the 1936 fire, but the upper portion has one fork (section 30, T.14s R.11w) that has neither conversion damage nor fire damage. This is also the part of the system which has the highest concentration of features, including the incline and extant donkey sleds.

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The features of the fork consist of the roadbed itself, the incline, and the log landing or donkey setting at the end of the fork. Each feature includes earthwork which is a permanent resource as well as artifacts which are decaying. Unless the earthwork is destroyed by future ground disturbances, it should remain indefinitely.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Industry (logging)

1925-1935

Cultural Affiliation

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheets, item 8

See continuation sheet

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The civil engineering features and artifacts that are left on the nominated portion of Spur 5 are the material vestiges of a complex industrial system formerly located on the Blodgett Tract. They are also the vestiges of the political, financial, and social sub-systems that the industrial system created. The timber on the Blodgett Tract brought midwestern capitalists to Oregon's Lincoln County at the turn of the century. Their methods of acquiring lands from the public domain precipitated a national scandal. In 1918, the U.S. Army Spruce Production Corporation purchased the Tract as a source of spruce lumber for aircraft. The Army designed and surveyed the logging spurs on the Tract, but the Armistice intervened before logging began. The Tract was logged during the 1920's by the Pacific Spruce Corporation through its subsidiary, the Manary Logging Company.

Logging the Blodgett Tract influenced the settlement of south Lincoln County, and milling the logs into lumber aided the prosperity of Toledo, Oregon, where the Pacific Spruce Corporation mill was located. Portions of the mill built there by the Army in 1918 are still in use as part of the huge Georgia-Pacific complex, and the Blodgett Tract itself--which was virtually abandoned when its timber was exhausted in 1935--now supports a second forest of merchantable fir, spruce, and hemlock

Criteria

The material resources on portion of Spur 5 proposed for nomination conform to N.R.H.P. significance criteria A (association with events significant in the broad pattern of our history), C (embody a distinctive method of construction), and D (may be likely to yield information important to history).

Areas

The historic background of the Tract relates to four distinct areas of significance. These are Commerce, Military, Industry, and Conservation.

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Category 1, Commerce, relates the tract to the timber speculation activities of the midwestern lumbermen who wrested it from the public domain and then sold it back to the Federal government during World War I (Puter 1908; Disque Papers 1918). Their business practices skirted the law, and in many instances led to prosecution and conviction for land fraud. Whether the Blodgett Tract was in fact acquired by extra-legal means is beyond the proper scope of this discussion, but its association with land speculators of regional and national notoriety is clear.

Category 2, Military, relates the tract with the U.S. Army Spruce Production Division and the U.S. Spruce Production Corporation. These agencies of the government bought the tract from Michigan lumberman John W. Blodgett in 1918 and built the Alsea Southern railroad (S.P.D Railroad XII) to reach it. The routes of the five spurs were surveyed by the Army, although spurs 2 and 5 deviated from the original surveys as they were built. Since the Blodgett Tract was the only timber land purchased by the S.P.C., the associations with this part of regional (and national) history are especially strong.

Category 3, Industry, is the railroad logging theme, an important chapter in the industrial history of the Pacific northwest. Although the water-based cargo mills preceded the railroad-based mills on the coast, the latter combined the technological advantages of railroad logging with the business advantages of railroad marketing. The result was a manufacturing and merchandising system that was particularly well suited to the American mood in the 1920's. Enormous quantities of timber could be logged, and the resulting lumber could be sold throughout the nation-wide rail network. The logging spurs built by the Manary Logging Company--a subsidiary of the Pacific Spruce Corporation--represent the extension of that system into an otherwise obscure corner of the west.

The final category, Conservation, includes the efforts of the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Civilian Public Service group who reforested the Tract during World War II. The C.P.S. crews were made up of conscientious objectors to the war. They provided services in the forests of the west--often in circumstances where no civilian labor was available.

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Historical Background

The Blodgett tract is currently part of the Siuslaw National Forest, in Lincoln County, Oregon. It was originally a 12,700 acre tract of timber assembled from the public domain by several midwestern lumbermen. The Blodgett Company of Grand Rapids, Michigan, owned the tract when the U.S. Spruce Production Corporation bought (or commandeered) it in 1918. Located in a remote area near the center of the Oregon Coast, the tract had its rather amorphous boundaries formed by patterns of land sales agreements rather than any geographical features. Although European and American settlement on this part of the Oregon coast dates back to the middle of the nineteenth century, the tract itself remained unpopulated in 1918 when it passed into Federal ownership.

The history of the Blodgett tract connects with four themes important to the regional history of the Pacific Northwest. These include a) timber acquisition at the turn of the century, b) the U.S. Army's Spruce Production Division during World War I, c) railroad logging, and d) the forest conservation efforts in the 1930's and 1940's.

Acquiring Timber Land

Lumbermen from Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin began moving their businesses to the Pacific coast forests at the turn of the century. They brought a concentration of capital with them, as well as an acute awareness of the need for railroads and timber supply if their new mills were to thrive. The Weyerhaeuser interests, the Shevlin interests, T.B. Walker, C.A. Smith, and other lumbermen from the lake states had prospered in the later decades of the nineteenth century and were anxious to extend their prosperity into the new century. The Oregon coast offered attractive opportunities:

In a region that is so rich in timber resources and where the timber is of a size unknown elsewhere developments are invariably on a large scale. Great aggregations of capital are needed for the investment in mills, logging machinery, railroads and other equipment; and when such investments have been made they must be made secure by timber holdings adequate to insure operations at full capacity over a long period.

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(American Lumberman April 14, 1922: 48)

Acquiring adequate "timber holdings" was especially important to these transplanted lumbermen. The first western lumbermen had not worried greatly about their log supply because there was little value attached to timber. Mature stands in Lincoln County often contained above 50,000 board feet/acre. Since the local mills seldom cut more than a few hundred thousand feet each year, their needs were modest enough.

The larger mill operators, however, needed several years' stumpage laid out in continuous tracts to make the best use of their logging equipment. If a medium-sized railroad mill was cutting 100,000 board feet each shift, it would extract the timber from 4-5 acres/day during good markets. This would mean at least 1500 acres each year, so a 10-year supply of stumpage would require a tract of 15,000 acres. While small parcels of timber were readily available, tracts as large as 15,000 acres were difficult to assemble from the public domain by legal means.

By about 1910, the lake states lumbermen's activities west had become a national scandal. Some of their tracts of western timber had been acquired by extra-legal means, and the largest represented an unhealthy concentration in the ownership of an important national resource. In 1908, Stephen A. Douglas Puter, the self-styled "king of the Oregon land fraud ring" wrote his confessional book Looters of the Public Domain "from the dank recesses of a prison cell" where he was incarcerated for his land frauds. Puter's book was a sensational account of his life of crime, with detailed information about his associates and their schemes.

In 1912, the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Corporations began its investigation of the lumber industry, which resulted in a two-volume report The Lumber Industry published in 1914. The Bureau of Corporations' report was an analysis of timber ownership throughout the U.S. The Bureau argued that the concentration of timber holdings in the hands of a few firms would lead to a monopoly of timber resources.

Oregon's Lincoln county went from obscurity to a certain prominence during these years as some of the nation's most conspicuous (and notorious) lumbermen acquired land there. South Lincoln County lands--in and around the Blodgett Tract--were acquired by C.A. Smith, F.A. Kribs, John E. Du Bois, and finally by John W. Blodgett (Lincoln County Deed Books, Indirect Register

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1893-1948). All of these investors were from the lake states group. C.A. Smith and his associate F.A. Kribs were convicted of land fraud on several occasions.

...Trainloads of women school-teachers from Minnesota were sent to Oregon to take up lands under the timber and stone act, which were afterwards duly transferred to a single ownership. ...The Government has won cases against C.A. Smith, recently affirmed in the Federal circuit court of appeals, canceling the patents to 38 timber claims aggregating about 6,000 acres, on the ground of fraud (196 Fed., 593). (Bureau of Corporations 1914, II: 57)

Puter was even harsher in his estimate of Smith, dedicating his book in part to "C.A. Smith, with his army of 'dummy' entrymen, and his 100,000 acres of perjured titles, which the Government ought to cancel" (Puter 1907: 9).

Puter, Smith, and Kribs were associated after 1900 in a fraudulent scheme involving Oregon school lands. The Territorial Act of 1848 had reserved for the state sections 16 and 36 in each township for school support. If those sections had a prior claim, as Donation Act claims, Indian Reservations, or Forest Reserves, the state could receive indemnity lands from other parts of the public domain in lieu of the lost school sections. The state could then sell the "lieu" lands. As long as the purchasers could provide a legal description of the "base" school sections which had the prior claims, they were free to select their lieu lands from the public domain.

By this method, prime timber lands from the public domain could be purchased for a very small cost. Each individual was permitted only one purchase, but the lumbermen were able to find "dummy" purchasers who used the lumbermen's funds and agreed to transfer their titles at a later date. An unscrupulous agent in the state land office was bribed to provide the locations of unsold base lands, and the "dummies" were able to purchase as much as 320 acres for \$2.50/acre (O'Callaghan 1960: 65; Puter 1907: 316). There were additional costs, of course, to bribe the state land office functionary and to pay the "dummy" claimant, but the value and safety represented "a great inducement to buy from the State" (Puter 1907: 316).

Most of the activity in fraudulent lieu land sales took place during the 1895-1905 period. A Marion County grand jury report in April of 1905 estimated that 50% of the 1,000,000 acres

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of school land sales then pending were fraudulent (Oregon Journal Dec. 22, 1918; Blodgett Papers, Brumley to Blodgett, Dec 22, 1918).

Much of the Blodgett Tract was assembled from such lieu land between 1898 and 1910 (Finucane 1980: 3-5; Oregon State Land Office Plat Books). The Oregon State Land Office records the accumulation of an especially large parcel of former lieu lands in south Lincoln County by John E. Du Bois in 1898. Significant portions of the 9705.64 acre parcel were later included in the Blodgett Tract. Du Bois' cost for the land was \$12,132. Twenty years later, John W. Blodgett sold the Blodgett Tract back to the government for \$635,000.

After Du Bois had assembled his tract, he sold portions of it to other speculators, including C.A. Smith (Lincoln County Deed Books). Smith added lands to the tract and then sold it to another lake states timber investor, John W. Blodgett. Blodgett was associated with his father in the Blodgett Company, which owned timber in the western states and in the south. In Michigan, the Blodgetts had operated logging and milling interests in Muskegon, and later near Grand Rapids (American Lumbermen 1906: 213-216). Besides the Lincoln County holdings, Blodgett had other holdings in Tillamook County and Benton County in Oregon and additional west coast holdings in the northern California redwood country (Bureau of Corporations 1914 II:104; Blodgett Papers). The Bureau of Corporations report mentions that Blodgett and Du Bois "were among the early timber holders of Western Oregon, their holdings having been assembled in the nineties when the Pacific coast timber region was just beginning to attract investors in timber."

John W. Blodgett's interest in the Smith lands in south Lincoln County apparently dates from April 1915. Smith was in financial trouble, and Blodgett was looking at some of Smith's pine holdings in the Eldorado County, California and some of his fir holdings in Coos County, Oregon. Blodgett's Portland agent, P.S. Brumby, warned him that Smith's titles to timber lands--as well as his general business practices--were regarded as scandalous in the lumber industry:

The very best thing that could be done for the lumber business of the Pacific Coast Country, is, close him [i.e. Smith] down and close him out, he is putting lumber on the market for less than the manufactured cost, I understand 15.000.000 feet per month goes from his Mills to the California market, and sold for any

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price he can get for it, Smith has no thought for any other operator, on the Coast, he would'ent [sic] enter into any agreement with anyone that would help to curtail the output of lumber and sustain prices, but he would undersell, and drive every other operator in lumber to the wall, if he could be underselling him.

The above is my idea of how C.A. Smith should be treated, and I believe every manufacturer of lumber on the Pacific Coast country would be in full sympathy with the idea. (Blodgett Papers, Brumby to Blodgett April 14, 1915)

In January Blodgett wired Brumby that he had made an offer on Smith's Alsea Bay property "to clean up the bond deal" since Smith had defaulted on some mortgage bonds. The mortgages on the tract included the "Poole mortgage" that was in default, as well as earlier mortgages by Smith's Linn and Lane Timber Company, and his Coos Bay Lumber Company. Neither Brumby nor Blodgett were impressed by the south Lincoln County property, but Blodgett noted that spruce was enjoying a strong war market, and that the opportunity for a quick re-sale would likely materialize within the next year two (Blodgett Papers, Brumby to Blodgett Feb. 26, 1917; March 7, 1917; Blodgett to Brumby, March 2, 1917).

On May 31, 1917, John Blodgett purchased from C.A. Smith (d.b.a. the Coos Bay Lumber Company) the Blodgett Tract in substantially the form it is now (Lincoln County Deed Books 35: 502). In November of that year, John and Minnie Blodgett conveyed the property to the Blodgett Company (Lincoln County Deed Books 27: 153). Blodgett's estimate of the value (but not necessarily the price) was based upon 12,732 acres at \$539,500.00, which represented a price of \$1.25/mbf for the spruce and .50/mbf for the fir (Blodgett Papers, Blodgett to Brumby, Nov. 21, 1917). While the configuration of the property was similar to its later form, the total acreage at the sale was 10,985 instead of the 12,732 figure or the 12,705 listed in the Spruce Production Corporation inventory of properties.

World War I and the Lumber Business

While John W. Blodgett was consolidating his purchase of the Blodgett Tract during May of 1917, the United States was moving closer to entry into the European war.

During the spring of 1917, the need for a special strategic

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material became apparent. This was the clear spruce lumber that was used for manufacturing aircraft. Sitka spruce was plentiful in the coastal areas of Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. Since the trees were large and old, they yielded a high percentage of clear lumber. During the winter of 1916-1917, the Europeans discovered that Sitka spruce was the best material for airframe construction. West coast spruce prices rose, stocks went down, and by mid-winter, one mill manager reported that "there is an unlimited demand for aeroplane spruce stock, at exceedingly high prices" (The Timberman Jan. 1917: 35).

The problem was that the west coast mills were not oriented to spruce production. What little Sitka spruce was cut was used for box shoo or for piano sounding boards--the first product was too common to be lucrative, and the second too specialized. Before the war, U.S. spruce production was concentrated in the Appalachian states. The west coast (16.5%) and the lake states (7.5%) were a distant second and third ranked producers (Bureau of Corporations 1914 II:682). In addition to being unprofitable, west coast Sitka spruce was inconvenient to log. Ralph W. Burnside, president of the Willapa Lumber Company, summarized the situation spruce producers faced:

Spruce is really a by-product of our other woods, and can as a rule only be produced only as it comes in with cedar, fir, or hemlock. There are some small tracts of timber along the coast where spruce predominates. The greater proportion of the spruce on these lowland tracts is of inferior quality, so that only a very small percentage of upper grades is produced from it. Growing in with this spruce is a very inferior quality of cedar and hemlock which must be logged at the same time as the spruce. By the time the logger or mill man disposes of the low grade cedar and hemlock...and 50 percent of the spruce for box lumber, he begins to realize that he needs a very fancy price for the shop lumber and aeroplane stock which remains... (The Timberman Jan. 1917:36)

By the summer of 1917, the Aircraft Production Board had established a War Emergency Spruce Council made up of west coast spruce producers. This body was charged with the task of procuring 100,000,000 board feet of clear spruce lumber during the next four months (The Timberman Aug. 1917: 41). The lumbermen in turn formed the Pacific Aircraft Spruce Production Board to try to meet the demands of the War Emergency Spruce Council (The Timberman Aug. 1917: 31).

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West Coast Radicalism

The early World War I years were also years of labor activism and radicalism throughout the western states. The radical (and often visionary) Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) enjoyed a solid following among the "homeless, womanless, voteless migratory workers in the West," particularly in the agricultural, mining, and maritime trades (Jensen 1945: 106).

On March 5 and 6, 1917, the I.W.W. organized the Lumber Workers Industrial Union in Spokane. The organizing convention included a demand for better wages, improved camp conditions, and a 8-hour working day. The convention also set a strike date for July unless their demands were met. The shingle weavers unions convened in May and made similar demands, with a July 16 strike date, and the A.F.of L. International Union of Timber Workers joined them.

The stage was set for a major confrontation between the west coast lumbermen and the workers, and on July 16, the strike began. By August 1, no more than 15% of the mills were running (Jensen 1945: 126). The result was a rare combination of forces: the workers saw their best chance for improved working conditions at hand, the lumbermen saw their opportunity for war profits slipping away, while political and military authorities watched the production of lumber the needed for ships, aircraft, and cantonments plummet. Neither the workers nor the lumbermen were prepared to compromise; they had been at each others' throats too long. Each side turned the strike into a political showcase. The industry spokesmen indulged in a shameless display of red-baiting:

At close range it appears that the powerful, unseen, foreign hand, which has directed this campaign of industrial unrest, is bent solely on the destruction of the social fabric. When the entire facts are known this country will be shaken to its very depths. (The Timberman July 1917: 1)

The I.W.W., for its part, opposed capitalists' wars and took the opportunity to raise the workers' consciousness about political as well as industrial matters:

I love my flag, I do, I do,
Which floats upon the breeze,
I also love my arms and legs,
And neck, and nose, and knees.
One little shell might spoil them all

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Or give them such a twist,
They would be of no use to me;
I guess I won't enlist.
(Tyler 1967: 117)

When the summer was over, the season's production of aircraft spruce stood at 300,000 board feet instead of 100,000,000.

Ostensibly as a result of the west coast lumber industry's inability to meet spruce production goals, the Army formed the Spruce Production Division on October 17, 1917. Col. Brice P. Disque was placed in command. Disque opened headquarters in Portland and pursued an initial policy of counseling the industry, much on the model of other wartime cooperations between industrial groups and the government.

After a brief period, the complexion of the relationship changed:

It was soon found that the industry could not expand to meet the Government's requirements and that the Government must take steps to supplement the output of the industry.

This led to the next step:

It was found early in October [1917] that mills were not equipped to cut to grain and that much valuable spruce was being spoiled. A cut-up plant to operate at Vancouver Barracks, under the charge of the Division, was decided upon.

And to the next step:

Enlisted men of the draft were asked to volunteer for duty in logging camps and 34 squadrons were organized by January 16, for this purpose. (Disque Papers, Historical Report 1918: 2)

By the end of 1917, then, the Army had entered the west coast lumber industry not simply as a regulating force in chaotic time, but as a factor in the industry, assigning labor, building mills, and eventually buying timber land. Folk humor records that Disque "came to see and stayed to saw."

The Spruce Production Division's role in neutralizing west coast labor radicalism was established even before the S.P.D. was formed. General Pershing, commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force, summoned Disque to Washington DC in May of 1917 to discuss

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the proposed assignment. Pershing, who was generally anti-labor, had become concerned about the west coast lumber situation. Since the American military would be supplied in part by wooden ships, and since wooden airplanes were held as the best hope for breaking the stalemate in the trenches of France, Pershing's concern was not unreasonable. If the west coast industry was unable to produce lumber the war effort would suffer; worse, if the west coast radicalism was successful, the "infection" might spread to other parts of the country (Hyman 1963: 35ff).

Disque attacked the "labor problem" on three fronts. First, he put soldiers into the camps and mills to undermine the threat of a strike. Then he established the 8-hour day and improved health and safety conditions so that the radicals would lose their strongest arguments for reform. Finally, he created the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen as a surrogate union which included both management and labor.

The Spruce Production Division's attack on the "production problem" concentrated on two unconventional techniques. The first of these was riving or splitting the spruce logs rather than trying to take them out of the woods on one piece. The second strategy was operating a huge milling-in-transit system that had the private mills cutting cants that were shipped by rail to a government mill at Vancouver, Washington for re-manufacture into airplane lumber. Before the end of the war in November 1918, Disque was to reconsider both these strategies.

World War I in Lincoln County

By April of 1918, the idea of riving spruce timber, which Colonel Disque had hailed as a success in February, was being phased out, and the centralized milling scheme which he had developed in November of 1917 was showing signs of weakness. Records from Disque's day-books and general orders suggest that the Colonel completed the plans for his two most ambitious (and most conventional) projects during this month. These were the Siems-Carey project on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington and the South Lincoln County project in Oregon. Each project included securing large tracts of timber, building new railroads to log them, and building large new integrated mills to manufacture the product. This strategy was, of course, the conventional wisdom of the western industry, which the lake states lumbermen had gambled their fortunes on two decades earlier.

The new projects grew to the point where they required a new

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operating aegis for the Spruce Production Division, since both the Lincoln County proposal and the Olympic Peninsula proposal went beyond the original charter. The Army connection was to be maintained for the personnel, but the new industrial activities were modeled on the Emergency Fleet Corporation. Accordingly, the Spruce Production Corporation was created by the Army Appropriation Act of July 8, 1918. The act authorized the S.P.D. to form "one or more corporations for the purchase, production, manufacture, and sale of aircraft, aircraft equipment, or materials therefor, and to build, own, and operate railroads in connection therewith" (Van Dorn 1926: 249). The act capitalized the projects with funds of up to 100 million dollars and transferred S.P.D. equipment to the new corporation.

As early as January of 1918, the S.P.D. had identified the Blodgett Tract as an outstanding source of spruce. Lincoln County newspapers carried an announcement of a proposed railroad to the Blodgett Tract on February 8 (Lincoln County Leader Feb. 8, 1918). Disque's General Orders for that week, however, described the proposed line as a spur "south from Alsea Bay" that would "open up a tract of 250 million board feet of spruce." In Disque's day-book, the proposed road was named the "Alsea Spruce" line (Disque Papers, Day-books, Feb. 7, 1918). On February 15 the first S.P.D. soldiers arrived in Toledo (Lincoln County Leader Feb. 15, 1918).

The Army's new railroad, eventually named Railroad XII or the Alsea Southern, was discussed again in Disque's General Orders for the week of April 6-13. The next week found Disque sanguine that the new line could be finished by October 1, 1918, and that the Tract would furnish 300 million board feet of spruce (Disque Papers, General Orders, April 13-20). Construction on the new line started during the next week from a camp at South Beach.

On April 16, Disque asked A.S. Benson of the Benson Timber Company to go to the "Alsea Bay district" to reconnoiter the timber available there (Disque Papers, Day-book, April 16). This presumably referred to the Blodgett Tract, and perhaps some other south Lincoln County holdings that C.A. Smith had not sold to Blodgett. Disque called a major meeting to consider the Lincoln County situation, inviting three representatives of the Southern Pacific Railway and Mr. Van Orsdel of the Portland Lumber Company, [Disque] took up the question of the best method of sawing logs from Toledo. To haul to Portland they said that a three day round trip would have to be figured on and that this would mean the withdrawal of about 300

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cars [i.e. boxcars] from service. It was agreed that it would require 4 or 5 times the cars to haul logs that would be needed to haul lumber. ...Mr. Benson suggested that barges might be used on Yaquina Bay to supplement the railroad, but the discussion indicated that there might be considerable trouble with the bar. ...Mr. Van Orsdel thought they [i.e. the S.P.D.] should build a mill to saw at least part of the output, and one which could be enlarged if needed. (Disque Papers, Day-book, May 29, 1918)

After lunch, the meeting re-convened with Disque, Reed (of the Simpson Logging Company), Benson (of the Benson Timber Company), Yeon (of the Yeon-Pelton Lumber Company), and Ladd (of the Ladd and Tildon Bank) in attendance.

Mr. Ladd brought up the question of whether it would not be best to avoid building a mill at Toledo, and rather attempt to make use of the mills here [in Portland] where the side cut could be more easily marketed. Colonel Disque was of the opinion that the means of hauling logs could not be relied upon and that it would be safer to mill at Toledo. ...It was moved by Mr. Reed, seconded by Mr. Benson, and passed unanimously that a mill to cost approximately \$750,000 be constructed at or near Toledo. (Disque Papers, Day-books, May 29)

As the plans were finalized, then, the Toledo mill would consist of a primary mill to cut logs and a remanufacturing or cut-up plant to make airplane stock. The three spruce railroads were to produce 900,000 feet of timber each day, with 250,000 coming from the Blodgett Tract. The capacity of the sawmill would be 300,000 board feet/day at the outset, and 800,000 board feet/day by January 1919. The remanufacturing plant would be "similar to the one at Vancouver" which had grown to a capacity of 500,000 board feet (The Timberman October 1918: 37). The prime contractor, the Warren Spruce Company, was building 2 miles of track on the Alsea Southern each day. Employed on the project were 4200 soldiers and civilians working out of 33 construction camps. The railroads cost over \$30,000/mile for labor and material, including 15,000,000 board feet of timber for trestles, camps, and ties.

The only detail that Disque had overlooked in his grand scheme was--ironically--the Blodgett Tract itself. When the

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railroad construction was under way (or perhaps because it was under way) Blodgett decided that he was no longer certain about selling the timber. In July, Disque was still haggling with Blodgett in a way that he seems to have found undignified:

Mr. Potter [of Warren Spruce Co.] outlined his proposition which was to furnish rail from 19 miles of main line and 6 miles of spur..., to sell all of his equipment, then to negotiate with Blodgett for his timber, the Gov't to operate the road and turn it back to them after the war. ...Mr. Potter said that whether they made anything out of the deal was entirely dependant on the deal they made with Blodgett, and that while he had an option on it [the tract] he was not sure that it would hold, but felt that Blodgett...only wanted to get as good a deal as others in the same circumstances. (Disque Papers, Day-book July 11, 1918 underline in original)

By the end of July, Disque threatened to "take the matter to the U.S. Courts unless we heard from Mr. Blodgett very soon," and opined that it might be "easiest and quickest" to place the tract under a "friendly commandeering" (Disque papers, Day-books, July 25, 1918). On July 20, Disque wired Blodgett, notifying him of his determination to commandeer:

We must have permission to start operating in your timber commonly known as the Wright Blodgett Tract south of Alsea Bay (stop) Will you agree to this entry with the understanding that if we cannot agree on a price that the same will be legally commandeered (signed)
Disque (Blodgett Papers, Disque to Blodgett, July 20, 1918)

Blodgett's objections to the purchase were based on Disque's plan to log the spruce from the tract while leaving the other species. The result of this, Blodgett argued, would be to leave the remaining timber damaged and highly susceptible to fire (Blodgett Papers, Blodgett to Stark, Aug. 3, 1918). Subsequent events proved that Blodgett was right; when the tract was eventually logged in 1922-26, it contained a high volume of waste and the entire area burned in a serious fire in 1936. The sale remained unsettled as late as September of 1918, although Brumby was confident by that time that "the government will pay Mr. Blodgett the price he asks for the timber before cutting begins" (Blodgett Papers, Brumby to Blodgett Company, Sept. 11, 1918).

Unfortunately, neither the Disque Papers nor the Blodgett

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Papers record the outcome of the negotiations. The Spruce Production Corporation's banker recorded a payment of \$635,000.00 to the Blodgett Company in December of 1918 (Disque Papers, Bleakley to Disque, Dec.16, 1918). If this sum represented the total payment for the tract, and the tract was considered as 12,700 acres "more or less," the final price was exactly \$50.00/acre. The S.P.D. cruise of the tract showed 786,102,000 board feet of timber, not all of which was spruce (S.P.C Inventory 1919: 56). With an average stand density of 62,000 board feet/acre, the mixed timber on the tract would have sold for \$.80/thousand, which would have been reasonable.

Construction began on April 26, 1918, and continued until the railroad reached Camp One on November 8 (Palmer 1982: 37ff; Finucane 1980; 11). By mid-July, the road was progressing well and the trestle across Alsea Bay was partially completed (Lincoln County Leader July 12, 1918). Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the construction was the difficulty in supplying timbers to the construction crews for bridge building. Since the bridge crews worked well in advance of the track crews, and there were no adequate roads along the coast, the timbers had to be floated through the surf to reach the crews.

Piling and large bridge timber was put in rafts and towed outside the bar. When off its destination it was turned loose and washed ashore by the waves. Here horses were attached to it and it was snaked through the sand to a point where it was to be placed. (The Timberman Oct. 1918: 37)

For soldiers and civilians working on the railroad, life was busy but probably better than it was in the trenches in France. The Warren Spruce Company was working on a "cost plus" contract which gave them seven cents profit on each dollar spent. This scheme did not encourage thrifty management. Civilians and enlisted men worked 10 hours each day on the railroad. The 8-hour day was appropriate for loggers, apparently, but not for others. The wages ranged from \$3.55/day for common labor to \$10.00/day for the most highly skilled (The Timberman Oct. 1918: 37).

When the armistice was signed on November 11, 1918, the activities in Lincoln County came to an abrupt halt. The Alsea Southern had reached Camp One only three days before, and the Blodgett Tract had produced only 1 million board feet of spruce, which had been bucked into logs, but was still lying on the forest floor. The mill complex at Toledo was unfinished, with the sawmill 70% complete and the remanufacturing plant ready for

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machinery. Despite the Army's intentions to finish the mills, they were abandoned in a state of partial completion. By January 24, 1919, all soldiers were out of Lincoln County (Lincoln County Leader Jan. 24, 1919).

The Pacific Spruce Corporation

At the time of the Armistice, the Spruce Production Corporation had spent \$24,000,000 of its authorized capital of \$100,000,000. "To make a salvage of every possible cent was the task to which the leaders of the organization turned" (McCollister and Gill 1919: 97). The single largest asset was the Blodgett Tract:

Foremost among the real property is the big Blodgett tract in the Alsea basin, tapped by Division Railroad Number XII, and comprising 13,440 acres of land, covered with spruce, hemlock, fir and cedar. Cruises made show a total of 786,101,000 feet of timber on the land; of which 32.5% is spruce, 25.5% is hemlock, 49% is fir, and 2% is Port Orford cedar. (McCollister and Gill 1919: 97)

The Lincoln County properties lay idle for the remainder of 1919 and most of 1920. Then, on September 3, the Lincoln County Leader announced that the Alsea Southern, the Toledo mill, and the Blodgett Tract had been sold for \$2,400,000 to an eastern buyer. This announcement was apparently premature, since the eventual buyer emerged two months later, the price was \$2,000,000, and the group was headed by a San Francisco capitalist.

The Pacific Spruce Corporation was incorporated in Delaware on November 9, 1920 by Fentress Hill of San Francisco, R.J. Dunham of Chicago, F.S. Scritsmier of Portland, and Wendell S. Kuhn of Portland (PSC Corporate File). Fentress Hill was the west coast manager of Lyon, Gary and Company, a Chicago firm. In January of 1918, Hill had asked Blodgett to "name the lowest price" he would take for his property south of the Alsea (Blodgett Papers, Hill to Blodgett, Jan. 2, 1918). Hill expressed interest in the tract at the time because he was anxious to "do his part towards winning" the war. The fact that he remained interested in it after the war suggests that his interest was practical as well as patriotic.

In December of 1920 Pacific Spruce negotiated with the Spruce Production Corporation for Railroad XII and the Blodgett Tract. The January 8 issue of The American Lumberman broke the story, commenting that Fentress Hill and his associates had purchased the

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mill, the Blodgett Tract, and the railroad for \$2,000,000. The terms of the sale were not disclosed, but the bid forms had offered a 10-day settlement (plan 1) or a six-month settlement (plan 2). The eventual arrangement was that Pacific Spruce Corporation put \$50,000 down on the Lincoln County properties, agreeing to pay the remainder over a period of ten years, and to improve the property during the first year by \$300,000 (Johnson and Whisnant 1924: 13).

As a result, title to the Blodgett Tract remained in the hands of the Spruce Production Corporation. Pacific Spruce paid a "stipulated amount per thousand feet log scale" for the timber as it was cut.

The lumber market had deteriorated during 1920, and by year-end, the industry was in the midst of one of its cyclical recessions (The Timberman June 1920). The Fentress Hill group apparently did complete their purchase, but moved rather slowly, perhaps because of the market conditions. In January of 1922, work began on the mill in Toledo (Lincoln County Leader Jan. 6, 1922). The Alsea Southern was prepared for use, and the Multnomah Lumber and Box Company of Portland purchased the Yaquina Northern Railroad for \$400,000 (The Timberman February 1922: 110). During this period, C.D. Johnson emerged as the president of the Pacific Spruce Company. Fentress Hill and A.S. Scritsmier remained as Directors of the corporation after the March 1922 election (American Lumberman April 15, 1922: 49). In December of 1922, a corporate election showed Johnson voting 119,625 of the 150,000 shares outstanding (PSC Corporate file). None of the original incorporators remained as a major stockholder in 1924 (Johnson and Whisnant 1924: 16).

Clarence Dean Johnson, the man who assumed the presidency of the Pacific Spruce Corporation was a St. Louis lumberman who had acquired milling interests throughout the south. In 1918, at the age of 52, Johnson had sold his southern holdings and began dividing his time between New York and San Francisco, "seeking an investment in western timber commensurate with his ideas" (Johnson and Whisnant 1924: 11).

Johnson established four separate corporations to operate the Lincoln County holdings. The Pacific Spruce Corporation managed the mill at Toledo from its offices in Portland. The Manary Logging Company managed the logging activities and operated the Alsea Southern Railway. The C.D. Johnson Lumber Company sold products from the Toledo mill. After 1923, the Pacific Spruce

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Northern Railway operated the old S.P.D. Railroad X, which began as the Miller logging railroad and had recently been operating as the Toledo and Siletz Railroad (Palmer 1982: 32,162).

Logging the Blodgett Tract

In March of 1922, the Manary Logging Company began rehabilitating the Alsea Southern line from South Beach to Waldport. Camp Two, twelve miles south of South Beach, opened with one side logging during the summer of 1922. In September of 1922 Camp One was open and spur 1 on the Blodgett Tract was built. By October spur 1 was delivering logs from two sides. The first side on spur 1 cut 12 million board feet, and the second side cut 4 million board feet. The first side was moved 2000' further on spur 1 in January of 1923, and it cut 5 million feet there by June of 1923, when it was moved to a third set. In February 1923, side 2 was moved onto spur 4, which had been graded and tracked in the interim. During the summer of 1923, spur 4 and spur 4B were extended four miles into the timber. As second side (side 3) opened on spur 4, contributing to the combined cut of 13 million board feet on spur 4 for 1923. Spur 4 was expected to produce an additional 20 million board feet (Johnson and Whisnant 1924: 36-8).

Spur 3, which followed Big Creek, was built during the fall of 1925, between September and Christmas. The roadbed construction was contracted to Jack Tommas and Ron Hadley at \$1.00/ lineal foot of spur grade. Spur 5, on Vingie (or Divinity) and Starr Creeks, was next, with work beginning after January 1926, and ending in May of that year (Hadley to Francy, Oct. 10, 1987).

Spur Construction on the Blodgett Tract

| | | |
|---------------|----------------------------|--|
| <u>Spur 1</u> | Graded by S.P.C. in 1918 | In use after Sept. 1922 |
| <u>Spur 2</u> | Graded by S.P.C. in 1918 | Not built as surveyed |
| <u>Spur 3</u> | Small portion graded 1918 | Built in fall 1925 |
| <u>Spur 4</u> | A and B graded by S.P.C. | In use after March 1923 |
| <u>Spur 5</u> | Surveyed by S.P.C. in 1918 | Not built as surveyed, Built in spring 1926 |

(Map AS-23, Lincoln County Engineering; Palmer 1982; Johnson and Whisnant 1924; Hadley to Francy, Oct. 10: 1987)

Spur construction continued on or more-or-less steady basis during the logging operations on the Tract. The Manary company was content to follow the S.P.C. surveys for the most part, since they took the logical routes up the major drainages. The most

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significant deviations from the original surveys occurred on spurs 2 and 5. Spur 2 was surveyed as a major spur into the Big Creek drainage, but Manary built is as a short spur. Spur 5 was surveyed as a fourth spur off the main line, but it was built as a south tending spur off spur 4, leaving at the Vingie Creek crossing.

The Blodgett Tract's rugged terrain dictated that the spurs would be built with extensive trestling. One extension of Spur 4, for example, was built with 600' of trestle in 1200' of track (Johnson and Whisnant 1924: 37). The Manary company built a pile driver for use in trestle construction, and employed a 10" x 11" donkey engine for logging out spur track right-of-ways. The roadbed itself was built with an Eire 3/4 yard steam shovel, as well as what one source describes as "powder, pick, and shovel" (Hadley to Francy, Oct. 10, 1987). The spurs often had grades in excess of 7%, which would have been close to the limits of safe descent even for the sure-footed Shay locomotives. The most extreme piece of engineering on the system was the incline on Spur 5, which used a donkey engine to lower cars down a 30% grade.

Spur 5 was the last spur built on the Blodgett Tract. Logging continued at a brisk pace during 1926 and a part of 1927, with production reaching peaks of 400 to 500 thousand board feet/day. In the winter of 1927, Camp One closed and the Manary Logging Company was dissolved (Lincoln County Leader July 12, 1928). The camp operated on a sporadic basis during the rest of the decade, and even more sporadically during the 1930's. When the Toledo mill was running, the bulk of Pacific Spruce Corporation's timber came from the Siletz area.

In 1930, Pacific Spruce was insolvent and forced into receivership. Four years later, the receivers sold the Alsea Southern and the Pacific Spruce Northern railroads in July of 1934. The price was \$500,000. In November, the remaining assets of the Pacific Spruce Corporation were sold to the C.D. Johnson Lumber Company for \$700,000 (Palmer 1982: 165; Lincoln County Leader, July 4 and Nov. 28, 1934).

The Big Creek Fire of 1936

During the summer of 1936, the newly-formed C.D. Johnson Lumber Company removed its remaining equipment from the Blodgett Tract. Camp One was occupied by the crew of the O.R. Ross Logging Company, who had a contract in the area. On September 26, a fire began two miles east of Camp One. The summer had been unusually

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hot and dry. On September 26, the temperature was 97 degrees, the humidity was c.15%, and the wind was blowing 24 mph from the east (Finucane 1980: 27). As the fire spread through the slash, fallen snags, and other logging debris, it gained momentum. Camp One lay directly to the west of the fire, and the east winds drove the flames toward the camp. The camp was hastily abandoned, with the residents' belongings moved to Waldport. The fire missed the camp, however, burning some homes in the area and the Camp One school, but not the camp itself.

By the time that the fire was controlled, it had burned over 10,000 acres of the Blodgett Tract and 500 acres on the Siuslaw National Forest (Finucane 1980: 29). More than 500 men had fought the fire, including federal, state, and county units.

The fire burned over a portion of the Alsea Southern Railroad in sections 11, 14, and 23 of T. 14s R. 12e. All of the Blodgett Tract spurs were burned, with the exception of a) the first 1/8 mile of Spur 1, b) a portion of Spur 3 in the S 1/2 of section 17 and the NE 1/4 of section 20 of T. 14s R. 11w, and c) the two upper branches of Spur 5 in section 30, T. 14s R.11w (SNF Big Creek Fire Map). The extensive trestling on these spurs was destroyed during the fire, but wooden equipment and ties on the unburned portion of Spur 5 remained intact.

Management by Public Agencies

During the late 1930's, the C.D. Johnson Lumber Company, the U.S. Spruce Production Corporation, and the U.S. Forest Service worked to resolve the anomalous situation that had developed with the Blodgett Tract.

The U.S. Spruce Production Corporation maintained an office in Portland through 1947 and was, in fact, the subject of some controversy (Clarke Beach Papers, Lansdon to Wing, Aug. 1, 1946). The Corporation had a president, a secretary, a clerk, and a chauffeur on the federal payroll, although its only business after 1922 had been to administer the contract sales of its properties in Washington and Oregon. The Corporation's policy since the end of World War I had been to liquidate the properties at "full value." To this end, the Corporation had "aided buyers to effect reorganizations in the Depression to enable them to continue their payments" (Clarke Beach Papers, MacNab Report). The Corporation was apparently in no hurry for its money, but it wanted every dime.

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Residents of Lincoln County were also anxious that the situation be normalized since the Toledo mill and the Blodgett Tract had remained off the county tax roles since 1918. National Forests contribute a portion of their timber sale revenues to county government, but the U.S. Spruce Production Corporation had not followed this practice, and the result was a significant loss to the county.

Finally, the Forest Service was interested in the property since it was contiguous to the Siuslaw National Forest and the Forest Service was best prepared to manage the land. Lumber Companies throughout the west traded their cut-over lands to the National Forests for additional stumpage or in some cases simply to retire the properties for whatever was available through the Weeks Act purchase plan. Negotiations for the sale followed C.D. Johnson's death in 1940:

According to the Wakefield [Siuslaw NF Supervisor], he [Dean Johnson] was most anxious to proceed with negotiations for sale of the land to the Forest Service. Whether impetus for the sale came from Johnson himself, U.S. Spruce, or the Forest Service is not clear from existing documents, though Wakefield claims Forest Service officials decided it would be in the "public interest" to take over the land. (Finucane 1980: 31)

In July of 1941, the Blodgett Tract entered the Siuslaw National Forest as the Yachats Purchase Unit. Finucane (1980) reports the price the Forest Service paid the U.S. Spruce Production Corporation as \$99,947.14.

During the summer and fall of 1941, the Civilian Conservation Corps built a camp for forest rehabilitation crews on the Tract. Camp Angell, as the new camp was named, served as headquarters for Company 5436 of the C.C.C. In December of 1941 the C.C.C. group moved into the new camp; within a matter of days, the U.S. entered World War II (Beckham 1986: 4). Assessments of the C.C.C. work on the Blodgett Tract differ, but the chronology makes it clear that if the Corps did any work on the Tract, it would have been limited to the spring of 1942 (Finucane 1980: 32; Palandri 1978-9: 9; Beckham 1986: 4). The C.C.C. itself was an early casualty of the new war, as most C.C.C. enrollees enlisted or were conscripted into the armed services.

In October of 1942, a second national service group came to Camp Angell. This was the Civilian Public Service (C.P.S.) group, made up of conscientious objectors to the war. The C.P.S. had

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been established by three churches (Mennonites, Quakers, and Brethren) in cooperation with the Selective Service System. As surplus manpower available for forestry work diminished, the C.P.S. became an obvious choice to replace the C.C.C. "When C.P.S. camps were established on the C.C.C. sites, the Church [Brethren] administration was substituted for the Army control and the technical agency (Forest Service, Soil Conservation, etc.) remained the same" (Mills mss.1944: 4).

The C.P.S. men found the Oregon weather dismal, and the work even more dismal, for it required manual brush control, road building, and tree planting on the burned over Blodgett Tract. In a 1977 interview, enrollee William Everson commented on the working conditions:

One thing I might mention is the arduousness of the work, as arduous as any camp in the whole system due to the nature of that tree planing burn [sic] that we had. Crawling over logs and whatnot, and dangerous, too, slippery. ...Often times the Forest Service took advantage of us...For instance, they'd set us doing work that we weren't trained for; work that was dangerous. Underequipped, too, without proper helmets or headgear, tin hats or anything like that. (Palandri 1978-9: 15)

Five conscientious objectors were killed during the work on the Blodgett Tract. This number stands as a record for fatalities in C.P.S. activities, accounting for 26.3% of the total mortality among C.P.S. enrollees during the war (Beckham 1986: 8).

Before the C.P.S. crews could work in the tract, they needed to improve the roads. What roads there were had been railroad grades with the steel pulled and the ties either removed or burned. Grades needed to be built around trestle sites and the roadbed needed tons of crushed rock to provide an all-weather surface.

Month after month, the men poured tons of crushed rock onto the road leading to the planting area, only to have it disappear in the mucky ooze that was called a road. (Mills mss. 1944: 5)

As a result, the roads improved, but the logging spurs were lost beneath the new surface. Tree planting went on through 1942 and 1943 until 9000 acres had been planted by 1944. The trees selected were three year old fir, spruce, and cedar trees from Forest Service nurseries in Oregon and Washington (Mills mss. 1944: 5; Finucane 1980: 34).

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By the end of World War II, then, the Blodgett Tract had completed the cycle begun more than 50 years earlier. The original timber was off the land, and the industrial apparatus of railroads and logging equipment was dismantled. The damage left by the logging and the subsequent fire was being repaired by the slow natural process that turned the land once more into a productive forest.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheets, item 9

X See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:
 State hist. preservation office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Specify repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 20.5 Waldport, Oregon 1:62500

UTM References

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---|-------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| A | <u>1 0 </u> | <u>4 1 7 0 0 0 </u> | <u>4 9 0 7 0 0 0 </u> | B | <u>1 0 </u> | <u>4 1 5 9 7 5 </u> | <u>4 9 0 6 8 0 0 </u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| C | <u>1 0 </u> | <u>4 1 5 7 5 0 </u> | <u>4 9 0 7 5 5 0 </u> | D | <u>1 0 </u> | <u>4 1 5 4 5 0 </u> | <u>4 9 0 7 7 2 5 </u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet, item 10

X See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet, item 10

X See continuation sheet

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SEP 19 1988

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10. Geographical Data

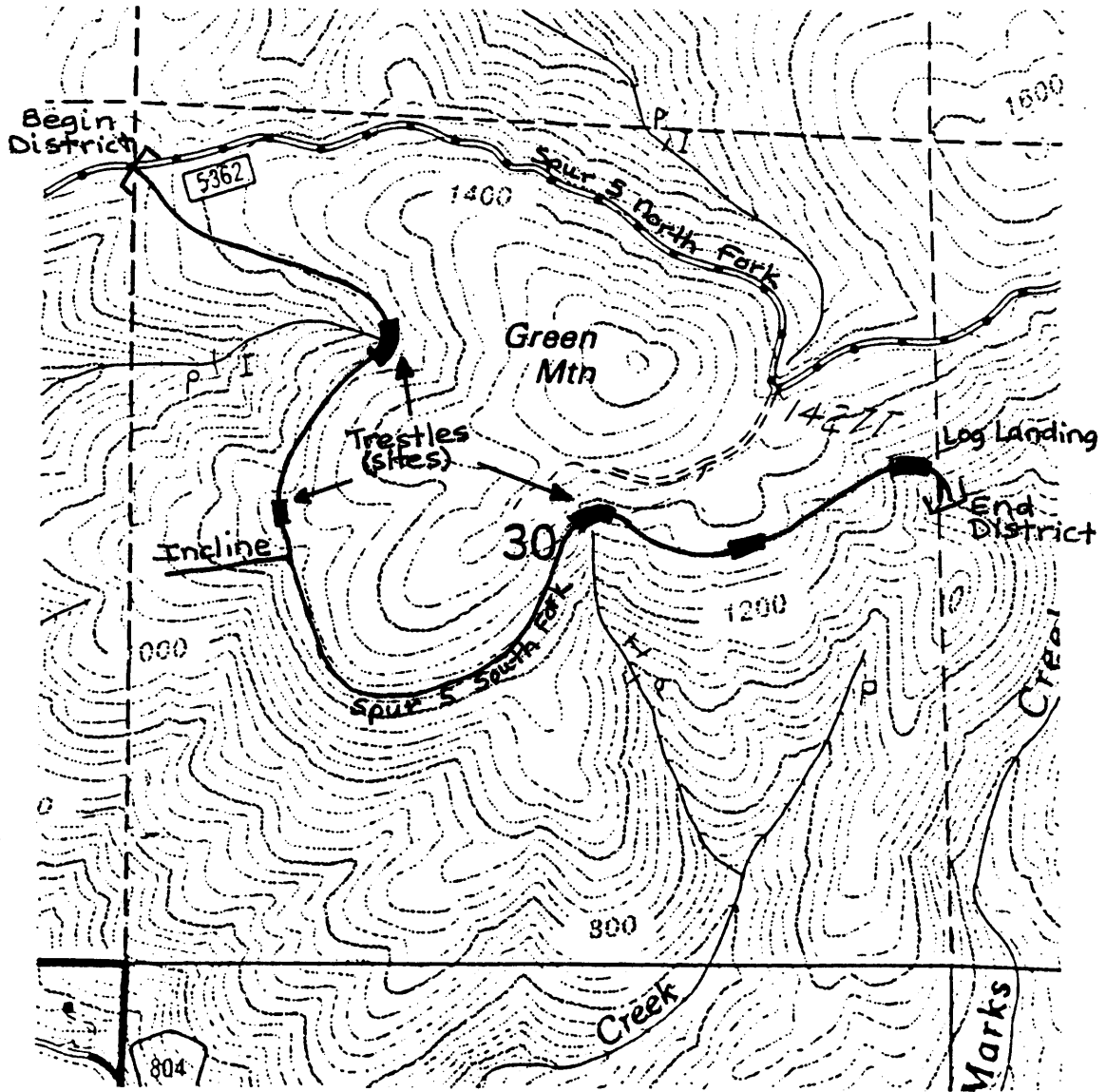
Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the junction of Spur 5 and Forest Road 5362 in the NW 1/4 of section 30, T.11 s. R.14 w., the district will follow the route of spur 5 east and south to the end of the spur at the eastern boundary of section 30, a distance of 1.5 miles. The width of the district shall be 100', 50' on each side of the spur measured from its center point. The total area thus described measures 18.2 acres, more or less. At the junction of the spur and the logging incline, the district boundary will follow the incline route to its terminus, maintaining a width of 100', 50' on each side of the incline, measured from its center point. The total area of thus described measures 2.3 acres, more or less. The total area of the entire linear district measures 20.5 acres, more or less.

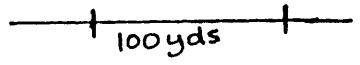
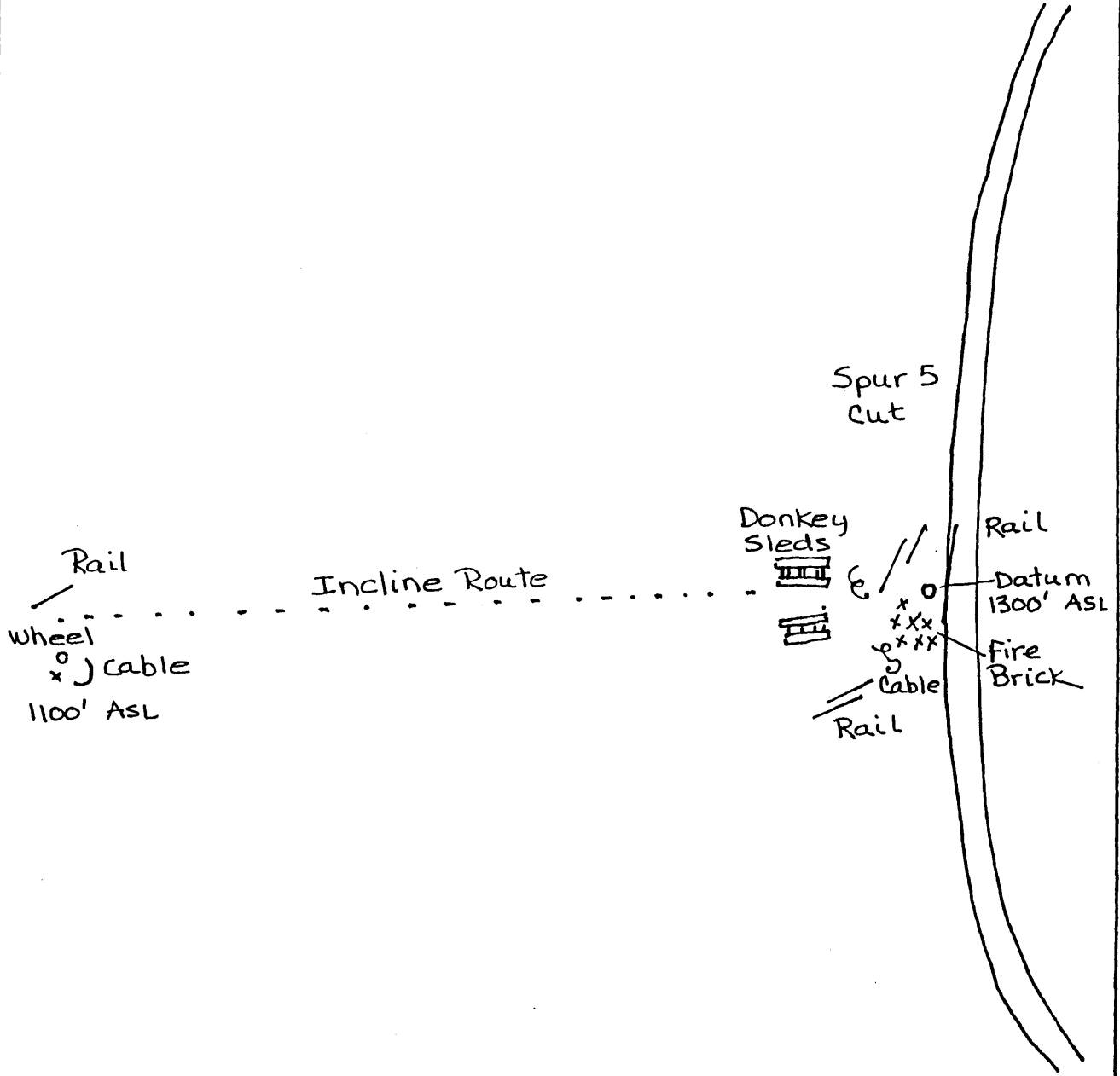
Boundary Justification

The proposed district constitutes the only portion of the original spur system that retains its integrity as a linear feature. The nominated portion of Spur 5 was the only substantial portion of the system not burned in the Big Creek Fire of 1936 or damaged by roadbuilding activities subsequent to the fire. The western boundary of the district is formed by the junction of the spur with a forest road that was built over the spur. The eastern boundary is formed by the end of the spur itself.

Plan of section 30, T. 14 S., R. 11 W.,
showing proposed district, features,
trestle sites, and other grades



Incline Site

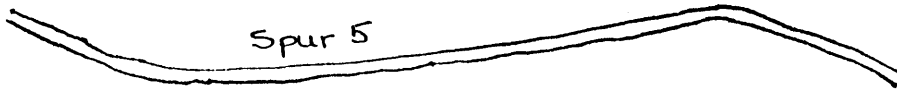


End of Spur 5



Section
30

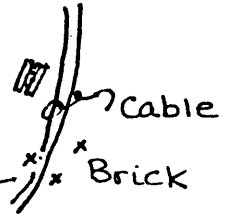
Section
29



Spur 5

Trestle
Route

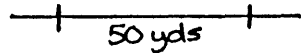
Donkey
Sled



Rail

Brick

End of
Spur 5



50 yds



PLANT 153
NEW YORK
203

NY
P
O

Sitka spruce log

Blodgett Tract

Lincoln County, Oregon

Historic View 1918

University of Oregon Collection
Eugene, Oregon 97403

1 of 16



Warren Spruce Co
Portland, Ore.
October 1, 1918

Building Spruce Railroad XII

Lincoln County, Oregon

Historic View 1918

University of Oregon Collection
Eugene, OR 97403

2 of 16



Warren Spruce Co.
Portland, Ore.
October 1, 1918.

Building Spruce Railroad XII

Lincoln County, Oregon

Historic View 1918

University of Oregon Collection
Eugene, Oregon 97403

3 of 16



NO 37 IN SPRUCE CAMP TO EDDA LINE

Building donkey sleds

Spruce Production Division Camp
Tolado, Lincoln County, Oregon

Historic View 1918

Oregon Historical Society photo

Negative number ORHI 18536

1230 SW Park St.

Portland, OR 97205

4 of 16



Erie shovel used to build spurs

Blodgett Tract

Lincoln County, Oregon

Historic view about 1926

Oregon Historical Society photo

Negative number ORH1 35988

1230 SW Park St

Portland, Oregon 97205

5 of 16



shay locomotives and donkey engines

Blodgett Tract
Lincoln County, Oregon

Historic view about 1926
Oregon Historical Society photo
negative number OR+1 35033
1230 SW Park St.
Portland, Oregon 97205

6 of 16



Spur 5 near beginning of nominated portion (1926)

Blodgett Tract
Lincoln County, Oregon

Ward Tonsfeldt photo, 1967
1363 NW Harmon Br
Bend, Oregon 97701

7 of 16
Looking Southwest

Neg. at Siuslaw NF
Covallis, OR
97339



Grade on spur 5 (1926)

Blodgett Tract
Lincoln County, Oregon

Ward Tonsfeldt photo, 1967
1363 NW Harmon Bv.
Bend, Oregon 97701

8 of 16
Looking South

Neg. at Siuslaw NF
Covallia, OR

47339



Cut on Spur 5 (1926)

Bladgett Tract

Lincoln County, Oregon

Ward Tonsfeldt photo, 1967

1363 NW Harmon Br

Bend, Oregon 97701

9 of 16

Looking Southwest

Neg. at Siuslaw NF

Covallis, OR

97339



Grade on Spur 5 (1926)
Looking SW
Blodgett Tract
Lincoln County, Oregon

Ward Tonsfeldt photo, 1967
1363 NW Harmon Br
Bend, Oregon 97701

10 of 16
Looking southwest
Neg. at Siöslaw NF
Convallis, OR
97339



Grade on Spur 5 (1926)
Looking SW

Blodgett Tract
Lincoln County, Oregon

Ward Tonsfeldt photo, 1987
1363 NW Harmon Br
Bend, Oregon 97701

11 of 16

Looking Southwest
Neg. at Siuslaw NF
Covallia, OR
97339



Shackle and fair lead (1926)
Looking west

Blodgett Tract
Lincoln County, Oregon

Ward Tonsfeldt photo, 1987
1363 NW Harman Bv.
Bend, Oregon 97701

12 of 16
Neg. at Siuslaw NF
Convallis, OR
97339



High lead block (1926)
looking SE

Blodgett Tract
Lincoln County, Oregon

Ward Tonsfeldt photo, 1987
1363 NW Harmon Bv
Bend, Oregon 97701

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Neg. at Siuslaw NF
Curvallis, OR

97339



Wheel at incline site (1926)
Looking West
Bladgett Tract
Lincoln County, Oregon

Ward Tansfeldt photo, 1987
1363 NW Harmon Bv
Bend, Oregon 97701

14 of 16
Neg. at Siu-slow NF
Covallis, OR
97339



Rail (1926)
Looking SE

Blodgett Tract
Lincoln County, Oregon

Ward Tonsfeldt photo, 1987
1363 NW Harmon Bv
Bend, Oregon 97701

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Neg - at Siuslaw NF
Corvallis, OR
97339



Donkey sled (1926)
looking west

Blodgett Tract
Lincoln County, Oregon

Ward Tonsfeldt photo, 1987
1363 NW Harmon Bv
Bend, Oregon 97701

16 of 16

Neg. at Siuslaw NF
Corvallis, OR
97339