

Guide to the North Western Lumber Company Records, 1870-1955

Last Modified on 07/12/2021 10:57 am CDT

Summary Information

Title: North Western Lumber Company Records

Inclusive Dates: 1870-1955

Creator: North Western Lumber Company

Call Number: Eau Claire Mss A

Quantity: 24.3 c.f. (53 archives boxes and 2 drawers of maps)

Repository: This collection is managed jointly by the Eau Claire Area Research Center and the Wisconsin Historical Society, Library-Archives Division.

Archival Locations: UW-Eau Claire McIntyre Library / Eau Claire Area Research Ctr.

Abstract: Records of North Western Lumber Company, an Eau Claire, Wisconsin company, organized in 1873, which engaged in lumbering in northwestern Wisconsin until the depletion of timber supplies halted operations in about 1920. Correspondence relates primarily to the management and gradual liquidation of the company's assets after 1920. Most of the letters were written by George W. Hipke of Stanley, an officer of the company. Among these are many which pertain to his campaigns for the state legislature in 1934 and 1936 and to legislative bills and issues. Journals, ledgers, cashbooks, and tax records cover the company's operations after 1894. Annotated plat books and land inventories show property holdings, and two volumes of appraisals give a detailed description of the plant and equipment at Stanley in 1909. The collection also contains scattered records of related or subsidiary firms: the North Western Mercantile Company, 1919-1932; the Stanley, Merrill, and Phillips Railway, 1902-1926, both in Wisconsin; and the Del Norte Company, a lumber company operating in northern California. Oversized maps are of Stanley, Eau Claire, Altoona, Jump River, and other areas of Wisconsin. Also present are office building blueprints.

Language: English

Search Terms/Subject Terms

- Laird, Norton Co.
- Del Norte Company (Calif.)
- Montreal River Lumber Company

- North Western Mercantile Company
- Stanley, Merrill, and Phillips Railway Company
- Elections—Wisconsin
- Lumbering—Wisconsin
- Lumber trade—California
- Lumber trade—Wisconsin
- Railroad companies—Wisconsin
- Real estate business—Wisconsin
- Wisconsin—Politics and government
- Eau Claire (Wis.)—Commerce
- Hayward (Wis.)
- Hipke, George W.

Biography/History

The North Western Lumber Company of Eau Claire, Wisconsin was organized in 1873. An amendment to the Articles of Incorporation, June 22, 1881, stated:

The business and purpose of the corporation shall be to buy, sell, lease and generally to deal in all kinds of property, real, personal and mixed, to mortgage, bind and encumber any or all of its property, real and personal.

The company engaged in lumbering operations from its inception until 1918, when the depletion of timber supplies became critical. From 1918 until the dissolution of the company in 1972, its main business was the management of its land assets and their liquidation. The company sold its main saw mill in Stanley on January 26, 1921. A carpenter shop, planing mill, and various barns and buildings previously used in lumber operations, were sold shortly thereafter. Land sales of cut-over areas increased as timber sales decreased. From 1910 to 1920 the company sold 51,300 acres of land worth 1,165,104 dollars. Almost half of this acreage, 25,600 acres, was sold in 1919 and 1920 alone. The value of land sales for the year 1930 was 92,409 dollars. Land records show that in that year the company still had 78,349 acres of land yet to be sold. The year 1940 brought 18,586 dollars in sales. In 1955 land sales by North Western Lumber were about 14,000 dollars. The land sales occurred primarily in Price, Taylor, Sawyer, Chippewa, and Clark Counties.

The Stanley, Merrill, and Phillips Railway Company was a wholly-owned subsidiary of the North Western Lumber Company. It was organized August 12, 1893, and continued operations until 1924, when it leased part of its line to the Sault Ste. Marie Railroad. A minute book in the collection shows that the railroad was reorganized in 1902.

Arrangement of the Materials

This collection was received in multiple parts from the donor(s) and is organized into 3 major parts. These materials have not been physically interfiled and researchers might need to consult more than one part to locate

similar materials.

- Part 1 (Eau Claire Mss A): Original Collection, 1888-1955
- Part 2 (M2003-062): Additions, 1870-1905 (Located in Madison)
- Part 3 (PH 1443): Additions, circa 1890, 1906-1909 (Located in Madison)

Administrative/Restriction Information

Acquisition Information

Presented by Mrs. Norma L. Knar, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, October 4, 1956; the Chippewa Valley Museum, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, December 15, 1975; Peter Beck, August 12, 1977; the Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota; and Mrs. R.C. Chandler, Menasha, Wisconsin. Accession Number: M2003-062

Processing Information

Original Collection processed by John Pfeil and John Fleckner, August 30, 1977.

Contents List

<p>Part 1 (Eau Claire Mss A): Original Collection, 1888-1955</p> <p>Physical Description: 24.3 c.f. (53 archives boxes and 2 drawers of maps) Scope and Content Note The papers of North Western Lumber Company are divided into seven series:</p> <p>Correspondence; Land Sale Records; Legal Records; Financial Records; Records of the Stanley, Merrill, and Phillips Railway; Maps; and Miscellaneous Records. The CORRESPONDENCE series dates from November 1896 to April 1955, although only a few letters written prior to the cessation of lumbering operations in 1920 have survived. Most of the correspondence is for the period 1930-1940. The letters are arranged chronologically.</p> <p>Most of the letters after 1920 were written by George H. Hipke, an officer of the company. They are routine business letters or are related to his political campaigns. Hipke, a resident of Stanley, Wisconsin, was elected to the legislature in 1934 and 1936. In processing this collection several hundred of Hipke's campaign letters were discarded as repetitious, and about ten percent saved as examples. Those discarded were letters to friends and constituents, announcing his candidacy or thanking them for signing his nomination papers. A letter from Hipke to</p>

the stockholders of Northwestern Lumber Company, January 11, 1937, recommended the liquidation of the company's assets. By 1944 the assets had been so reduced that Hipke suggested in a letter of June 8, that all stock should be sold to the company president, C.D. Moon, for \$2.60 a share. One letter book in the series, October 22, 1919-August 30, 1928, contains company correspondence primarily by Theodore Hoidahl, a cashier for the company. Many of these letters related to land sales. The LAND SALES RECORDS, 1888-1955, form the largest series in the collection and include land sale volumes; deed books; deferred land sales; land sales paid and canceled; land inventory records; plat books; and land options. Similar information found in many of these headings includes land sale number, name and address of purchaser, legal description of the property (section, township and range), purchase price and credit arrangements, stipulations or reservations in the contract, date of final payment, and correspondence relevant to the land sales. Two volumes of plat books furnish a graphic inventory of the company's land and timber holdings, with many annotations and distinctive markings to show ownership, date of transfer, manner of acquisition, and quantity of various types of timber. The land sales paid and cancelled are case files of papers relating to a single land transaction. Land Sales Records are arranged numerically, by land sale number, except for the land options, which are arranged chronologically, and the land inventory records, which are arranged by county, town, and range. LEGAL RECORDS, 1896-1953, consist of contracts; mortgages; and satisfactions of mortgages. Contracts in the collection include timber sales, building sales, and sand and gravel sales. There also are leases, easements, and miscellaneous contracts. The mortgages and satisfaction of mortgages concern property held by the North Western Lumber Company. FINANCIAL RECORDS, 1896-1955, document the firm's changing business activities during these years. The Special Ledgers record the stock and capital invested in other corporations and companies by North Western Lumber Company. The other journals and ledgers record cash receipts, vouchers payable, profit and loss, expenditures, accounts with

Eau
Claire
Mss
A

individuals and companies, and other routine business entries. Cashbooks record receipts and disbursements of the company. Closing papers include state and federal income tax returns and a great variety of financial papers associated with the annual financial accounting. Some correspondence between the Treasury Department and North Western Lumber is among these records. A 1909 appraisal of the North Western Lumber Company's installations at Stanley gives a detailed survey of the company's plant and equipment. Land expense distribution records show the distribution of expenses in connection with company's land holding and office expenses. The volume which include rent rolls, contains names of tenants of company property, identification of the property, rent rates and tenant privileges. Notes held by the company are recorded in the collection register. The tax record lists parcels of land owned by the North Western Lumber and the taxes paid, while the tax certificate register lists land obtained by the company through redeeming tax certificates for unpaid taxes. The RECORDS OF THE STANLEY, MERRILL, AND PHILLIPS RAILWAY COMPANY span the years 1893-1939. These records are arranged into corporate records; general records; and maps. The corporate records include organization papers, 1893-1902; a minute book, 1902- 1937, recording board of directors meetings and annual stockholders' meetings; and the certificate of dissolution of the corporation dated February 15, 1937. Many of the regular minutes deal with leasing land, dissolution of the corporation, and routine business matters. The railroad patent is found in the organization papers. General Records encompass a wide variety of information including annual reports to the Interstate Commerce Commission, 1917-1926,; annual reports to the Railroad Commission, 1915, 1916, August 1924, and December 1924; annual report to the Wisconsin State Tax Commission, 1924; balance sheets and closing papers; deeds; inventories; land sales; leases; miscellaneous contracts; and miscellaneous records. Both corporate and general records are arranged by type and chronologically thereunder. There are 23 maps in the papers of the railway company. These depict sections of railroad right of way, often sections between small

towns in the area. The MAPS series of the lumber company papers includes forty-two maps divided into six headings: maps of Stanley; maps of Eau Claire; maps of Altoona, Jump River and Seymour; road maps; blueprints of company buildings; and miscellaneous maps. The individual maps are numbered and an attached sheet describes each of them. MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS span the years 1895-1937. This series contains some records pertaining to Del Norte Company and Northwestern Mercantile Company. North Western Lumber Company owned stocks in both companies. U.S. Treasury questionnaires are also included. Articles of Incorporation of the Northwestern Mercantile Company, August 22, 1919, and of its dissolution, April 27, 1932, are included in the collection. The Mercantile Company was partially owned by North Western Lumber and was located in Stanley. It carried on a general mercantile business.

Series: Correspondence

Box 1
Folder 13 1896 November-1933 December

Box 2
Folder 13 1894-1936

Box 3
Folder 12 1937 January-1942 July 3

Box 3
Folder 3 1942 December-1955 April

Box 3
Folder 4 Correspondence Relating to Taxes, 1906 April-1928 May

Box 3a
Folder 1 Letterbook, 1919 October-1928 August

Series: Land Sales

Land Sale Volumes

Box 4
Folder 1 Index

Box 4
Folder 23 1896 October-1915 February

Box 5
Folder 12 1915 February-1955 August

Box 6
Folder 12 Deed Books

Box 6
Folder 12 1888 July-1919 October

Box 7
Folder 1 1919 October-1955 October

Box 7
Folder 2 Deferred Land Sales, 1917-1932

Land Sales Paid and Cancelled

Box 8 Land Sale Nos. 701-840

Box 9 Land Sale Nos. 841-960

Box 10 Land Sale Nos. 961-1060

Box 11 Land Sale Nos. 1061-1170

Box 12 Land Sale Nos. 1171-1260

Box 13 Land Sale Nos. 1261-1370

Box 14 Land Sale Nos. 1371-1480

Box 15 Land Sale Nos. 1481-1590

Box 16 Land Sale Nos. 1591-1710

Box 17 Land Sale Nos. 1711-1830

Box 18 Land Sale Nos. 1831-1940

Box 19 Land Sale Nos. 1941-2080

Box 20 Land Sale Nos. 2081-2220

Box 21 Land Sale Nos. 2221-2320

Box 22 Land Sale Nos. 2321-2450

Box 23 Land Sale Nos. 2451-2610

Box 24 Land Sale Nos. 2611-2740

Box 25 Land Sale Nos. 2741-2802

Box 26 Land Inventory Records, Plat Books
Folder 12

Box 27 Land Inventory Records, 1919-1923
Folder 1

Box 27 Land Options, 1913 June-1917 May
Folder 23

Series: Legal Records

Contracts

Box 28 Timber Sales, 1896 February-1927 December
Folder 16

Box 29 Building Sales, 1912 September-1940 July
Folder 1

Box 29 Sand and Gravel Sales, 1913 November-1940 April
Box 2

Box 29 Leases, 1897 April-1949 August
Folder 36

Box 30 Easements, 1901 December-1917 January
Folder 12

Box 30 Miscellaneous Contracts, 1897 November-1953 March
Folder 3

Box 31 Mortgages, New and Cancelled, 1898 February-
Folder 12 1923 November

Box 32 Satisfaction of Mortgages, 1896 June-1927 September
Folder 1

Series: Financial Records

Special Ledgers

Box 33 1896 December-1909 December
Folder 1

Box 33 1910 January-1937 January
Folder 2

Special Journals

Box 34 1896 December-1909 December
Folder 1

Box 34 1910 January-1936 December
Folder 2

General Ledgers

Box 35
Folder 1 Index

Box 35
Folder 2 1919 January-1928 August

Box 36
Folder 1 1919 September-1926 January

Box 36
Folder 2 1928 August-1942 December

Journals

Box 37
Folder 1 1920 June-1928 July

Box 37
Folder 2 1928 August-1942 December

Box 37
Folder 3 1943 January-1945 September

Cashbooks

Box 38
Folder 1 1910 January-August

Box 39
Folder 1 1925 August-1942 December

Box 39
Folder 2 1943 January-1952 December

Box 39
Folder 3 1952 December-1955 September

Closing Papers

Box 40
Folder 15 1910-1920

Box 41
Folder 15 1921-1928

Box 42
Folder 17 1929-1936

Box 43
Folder 18 1937-1955

Appraisal of North Western Lumber Company, 1909

Box 44
Folder 1 Book No. 1

Box 44
Folder 2 Book No. 2

Box 44
Folder 3 Summary of Inventory

Box 45
Folder 1 Land Expense Distribution Records, 1910-1928

Box 45
Folder 2 Tax Record, 1921-1935

Box 46
Folder 1 Electric Light, Rent, and Insurance Records, 1900-1941

Box 47 Collection Register, 1896 October-1940 April
Folder 1

Box 47 Tax Certificate Register, 1894-1928
Folder 2

**Series: Stanley, Merrill, and Phillips Railway Company
Records**

Corporate Records

Box 48 Minute Book, 1902 August-1937 February
Folder 1

Box 48 Organization Papers, 1893 June-1902 October
Folder 2

General Records

Box 48 Annual Reports to the I.C.C., 1917-1926
Folder 35

Box 49 Annual Reports to the Wisconsin Railroad Commission,
Folder 1 1915-1916, 1924

Box 49 Annual Reports to the Wisconsin State Tax Commission,
Folder 2 1924 December

Box 50 Balance Sheets and Closing Papers, 1904 June-1915 June
Folder 1

Deeds

Box 50 Quit Claim Deeds, 1903 June-1924 September
Folder 1

Box 50 Right of Way Deeds, 1903 April-1934 October
Folder 3

Box 50
Folder 4 Trust Deeds, 1903 May-1924 October

Box 50
Folder 5 Warranty Deeds, 1903 June-1925 May

Box 50
Folder 6 Inventories, 1904 June-1916 July

Box 51
Folder 1 Land Sales, 1904 November-1906 October

Box 51
Folder 2 Leases, 1906 June-1924 May

Miscellaneous Contracts

Box 51
Folder 3 1902 August-1909 December

Box 51
Folder 4 1910 March-1939 October

Miscellaneous Records

Box 51
Folder 5 1902 August-1921 December

Box 51
Folder 6 1922 April-1932 January

Oversize
Folder 78 Miscellaneous Rail Line Maps

Series: Maps, North Western Lumber Company

Stanley, Wisconsin

Oversize

Folder 1
Map Map of Stanley, Wisconsin, 1896
No. 1

Oversize
Folder 1
Map Map of Stanley Subdivision
No. 2

Oversize
Folder 1
Map Plat of Subdivision of Stanley, 1909 January 20
No. 3

Oversize
Folder 1
Map Plat of addition to City of Stanley, Wisconsin, 1895
No. 4

Oversize
Folder 1
Map Plat of addition to City of Stanley, 1901 June
No. 5

Oversize
Folder 1
Map Second addition to City of Stanley
No. 6

Oversize
Folder 1
Map Map of Land Intended to be incorporated into City of Stanley,
1895 April
No. 7

Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Oversize
Folder 2
Map Map of City of Eau Claire From Putnam Street to OtterCreek
No. 8

Oversize
Folder 2 Mt. Tom and Surroundings, Eau Claire
Map
No. 9

Oversize
Folder 2 Map of Bellevue Avenue Lots and surroundings, Eau Claire,
Map 1925 March
No. 10

Oversize
Folder 2 Mt. Tom Park, Eau Claire
Map
No. 11

Oversize
Folder 2 Putnam Park Preliminary Sketch, Eau Claire, 1912
Map
No. 12

Altoona, Jump River, and Seymour, Wisconsin

Oversize
Folder 3 Map of Land Along Eau Claire River, 1939 May
Map
No. 13

Oversize
Folder 3 Map of proposed Beach road near Moonlight Bay Subdivision,
Map 1959 June
No. 14

Oversize
Folder 3 Map of Moonlight Bay Subdivision, 1955
Map
No. 15

Oversize
Folder 3 Small Plat of Altoona and Surroundings
Map
No. 16

Oversize
Folder 3 Map of Village of Jump River
Map
No. 17

Oversize
Folder 3 Plat of Village of Jump River
Map
No. 18

Oversize
Folder 3 Map of Village of Jump River
Map
No. 19

Oversize
Folder 3 Map of Indian Hills Subdivision, Seymour, Wisconsin, 1938
Map
No. 20

Oversize
Folder 3 Map of Indian Hills Subdivision, Seymour, Wisconsin, 1938
Map July
No. 21

Road Maps

Oversize
Folder 4 Road Map of Chippewa County, 1941
Map
No. 22

Oversize
Folder 4 Road Map of Clark County, 1941
Map
No. 23

Oversize
Folder 4 Road Map of Eau Claire County, 1941
Map

No. 24

Oversize

Folder 4 Road Map of Jackson County, 1941

Map

No. 25

Oversize

Folder 4 Road Map of Western Wisconsin, 1939

Map

No. 26

Oversize

Folder 4 Road Map of Northwestern Wisconsin, 1939

Map

No. 27

Blueprints

Oversize

Folder 5 Basement Plan of Office Building, 1916

Map

No. 28

Oversize

Folder 5 First Floor Plan of Office Building, 1916

Map

No. 29

Oversize

Folder 5 Second Floor Plan of Office Building, 1916

Map

No. 30

Oversize

Folder 5 Blueprint of front and rear elevations of office building, 1916

Map

No. 31

Oversize

Folder 5 Blueprint of North Elevation, 1916

Map

No. 32

Oversize
Folder 5 Blueprint of Chippewa Falls, A&P Building **Physical**
Map **Description:** 8 sheets
No. 33

Miscellaneous Maps

Oversize
Folder 6 Map of City of Chippewa Falls
Map
No. 34

Oversize
Folder 6 Map of Gillette Rubber Company, Eau Claire
Map
No. 35

Oversize
Folder 6 Map of Flowage Plan for Five Mile Dam on Eau Claire River,
Map 1897 October
No. 36

Oversize
Folder 6 Map of Land along Eau Claire River
Map
No. 37

Oversize
Folder 6 Map depicting Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and
Map Omaha Railway Near Otter Creek
No. 38

Oversize
Folder 6 Map of Lots North of Eau Claire River
Map
No. 39

Oversize
Folder 6 Map depicting Land Near Otter Creek
Map
No. 40

Oversize
Folder 6 Map of Otter Creek Mill Property
Map
No. 41

Oversize
Folder 6 Map Showing Flowage Land Along Eau Claire and
Map Otter Creek, 1898
No. 42

Series: Miscellaneous Records

Box 52 Del Norte Company, Northwestern Mercantile Company,
Folder 1 1907 September-1939 November

Box 52
Folder 2 Land and Timber Records, 1905-1924

Box 52
Folder 3 U.S. Treasury Questionnaires, 1917-1920

Box 52
Folder 3 Final Tax Report, 1937

Box 52
Folder 4 Merlin Hull Legal Papers, 1895-1902

Box 52
Folder 5 Working Papers for U.S. Treasury Questionnaire, 1919

Box 52
Folder 6 U.S. Treasury Questionnaire, 1913-1918