The Mill on the Boot: the Story of the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company

ISSN 0003-4827
Copyright © 1984 State Historical Society of Iowa. This article is posted here for personal use, not for redistribution.

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.9058

Hosted by Iowa Research Online
Book Reviews

The author does not for example discuss the anti-Navajo sentiment which their powerful and long-time tribal chairman, Peter MacDonald, engendered and which ultimately led to his defeat by a tribal rival. Nor does Josephy portray the full range of activism or militance which led to Wounded Knee II. Josephy describes Richard Wilson’s strong-armed rule on the Pine Ridge Reservation to demonstrate intratribal factionalism but rival intertribal activists also engaged in more than verbal conflicts with other Indian activists. Since Josephy does not provide citations to sources, students will encounter substantial difficulties in verifying crucial passages of text.

Purdue University

Donald J. Berthrong


More than a general history of the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company, The Mill on the Boot is also a well-written account of much of the development of Tacoma, Washington and the nearby Puget Sound area. Tacoma looks down on the “Boot,” which at one time was a boot-shaped tideflat island at the mouth of the Puyallup River. Murray Morgan, who has written several books concerning the Pacific Northwest and is perhaps the best known for Skid Road, his history of Seattle, begins with the old Northwest backgrounds and business endeavors of Chauncey Griggs, Addison Foster, Henry Hewitt, and C. H. Jones, who in 1888 made “... the largest purchase of timberland in the nineteenth century” from the Northern Pacific Railroad and were the principal founders of the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company.

Morgan describes the development of the company, from that beginning until the sale of the St. Paul and Tacoma to the St. Regis Paper Company in 1957, through two major depressions, two world wars, and innumerable problems involving labor, market expansion, freight rates, and natural disasters. Morgan also explains several innovative technological advances made in mill, railroad, and logging camp operations.

Woven together with the company expansion is the increased growth of Tacoma. The founders, along with relatives and company associates, were also involved in area land development, coal mining, dry docks, railroads, steamships, banking, a wholesale grocery, an ice company, and veneer, planing, and shingle mills. Many were involved in Tacoma’s charitable, social, and political activities; Griggs,
a Democrat, was an unsuccessful candidate for the United States Senate while Foster, a Republican, was elected to that body. George Browne, secretary of the company, was responsible for much of the planning and development of Tacoma’s park system.

*The Mill on the Boot* is well researched and the illustrations complement a fine narrative text. The only significant flaw is a photograph purportedly taken in 1924, in which clothing and equipment suggest a more reasonable date within the 1950s. Murray Morgan has provided a valuable history of the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company and early Tacoma.

**Idaho State Historical Society**

M. Gary Bettis

---


Larry Schweikart of the University of California at Santa Barbara has written a traditional narrative and institutional history of the development of commercial banking in Arizona from the 1860s to 1980. Reflecting the banker’s viewpoint, the book focuses primarily on the internal evolution of banking, institutional strategy and structure, leadership, and links with the state’s emerging economy. The story divides into five eras.

The first era (1860s-1900) was one of evolving laissez faire banking. Early Arizona bankers came from mercantile firms which performed semibanking functions, from other banks, or from on-the-job training. By 1900 Arizona contained twenty-one banks, some of which were unorthodox in their policies, experimented with branch offices, and practiced close cooperation with other local businessmen. The years from 1900 to 1920 were an age of innocence and naivete. Many new banks (chartered and unchartered) and mergers were created. The boom peaked during World War I, saw only brief interruptions with the 1907 panic and the 1914 failure of the Valley Bank of Phoenix, and caused loans to agriculture and mining to increase significantly. The Arizona Bankers Association began in 1903 and was symptomatic of growing cooperation among financiers as they helped create new regulatory laws for their industry.

The interwar years composed a third era. In the 1920s “over-banking” by too many banks and economic crises in agriculture (where loans were heavily concentrated) brought many bank closings and mergers. Institutions formerly run by individuals (“one-man