

## EXTENSIVE LOGGING OPERATIONS CARRIED ON NEAR DUPONT

W. E. Lewis In Charge of Mill

FINE CREW OF MEN ASSIST IN MILL

By Thomas R. Hulme

With the opening of a country comes the demand for material. Lumber, perhaps is the most necessary of all materials and so, with the various stages of development of our country, has come the gradual diminishing of timber. The nation today depends on the far west and south, the least two developed sections for its lumber supply. Florida, a state as yet in her infancy, has counties which are a source of millions of feet of valuable timber and Collier County is, perhaps, the richest of all in this respect. The construction of the Tamiami Trail through Collier County and the development of the necessary base there created an urgent demand for lumber, which accounts for the first logging and saw mill operations to be commenced.

Port DuPont, being an industrial center and connected with the Trail by good roads, was accorded the best site for the saw mill. A complete mill was purchased and the plant set up. This mill ran for several years when, owing to the abnormally large force employed to adequately run a mill of its construction, and the unexpectedly swift progress of the Trail eastward, it became necessary to change the location, and the constant demand for lumber on the Trail rendered it necessary to erect a mill in the immediate proximity of the work east. A location was selected about one mile east of Turner's River directly on the Trail. This mill was finally erected and, though with a capacity of 7,000 board feet per day, was not a success, owing to extreme high water conditions and inadequate timber supply. Finally after a thorough timber cruise had been made, it was decided to change the location of the mill and log camp to the junction of the Immokalee highway and Deep Lake railroad about two miles north of Carnestown.

### Mill Is Reconstructed

In October, 1926, Mr. C. G. Washbon, Supervising Engineer in charge of Highway and Railroad construction devised the present plan of our timber operations. The mill was so reconstructed as to increase its daily capa-

### Extensive Logging Operations (Cont.)

city to ten thousand feet, the log camp was moved to the head of some extensive pine stands and a logging road about eleven miles long repaired and extended. John Williams, a Sawyer with many years experience and a splendid capacity to handle labor, was placed in charge of the saw mill and it is largely due to his untiring efforts that the present mill is such a marked improvement over the other ventures.

With the removal of the saw mill to its present site came the start of the new log camp. Situated eleven miles from the mill in a stand of pine, the inner reaches of the which are known only to Seminoles and a few white people, this vast stand of timber assures for years to come the lumber supply of the Trail and the development of the towns which will spring up. The actual logging of this magnificent timber, has proved a tremendous task, especially during the rainy season. A crew of ten men are employed, six men to fell and saw the trees, three to drive 40 odd head of oxen, whose endurance has meant salvation in getting the logs to the railroad, and a foreman to do the timber spotting and supervising. Often it has been necessary to go a mile from the tracks to get a log of the necessary dimensions, for Florida timber is scattered, though plentiful. This, coupled with the long slow haul with the ox teams during the rainy seasons, has made the actual logging a mighty task.

#### Crew is One of Best

Mr. W. E. Lewis, foreman in charge of logging operations, feels the present crew is one of the best, as they have averaged sixty to seventy logs per day and, as yet, the mill has not been forced to spend a day idle for want of saw logs. Timber cutters, H. Rigdon, Tom Lane, and T. Hollman; sawyers, J. Taylor and G. Faison; and the ox-drivers H. Taylor, D. F. Clifton and E. N. May, all have taken special care of their charges, and have done their best to follow the watch work of the camp "keep the logs to the mill." Mr. Lewis, an old and experienced logger who knows oxen as few people in this part of the country do, probably has been most instrumental in the success of the present logging operations. Though not directly connected with actual logging but, nevertheless, holding a very important position, Mr. T. Hollman, camp cook, has contributed much by keeping the men satisfied with her wholesome and economic cooking. All in all, though working under very adverse conditions, the log camp has done its part for "the men behind the guns" of the Trail work.

### Extensive Logging Operations (Cont.)

Almost as important as the actual logging, is the transportation of the logs to the mill by the log train and its crew. Drawn by impromptu, though efficient, locomotives of a converted Fordson tractor with standard railroad driving gear design, an average of three cars of logs have made their daily appearance at the mill. During the rainy season, the log truck is under water fully half its length and no small degree of credit is due L. E. Bishop and his colored trainmen, P. Singleton and Jim Bolton. Often it is necessary for this crew to go to the woods twice daily and always their work has been well carried out even though dusk catches them before reaching their destination.

### Mill Meets All Demands

It has been estimated that the Tamiami Trail bridges, built by Alexander, Ramsay and Kerr solely for their machines and supplies, 20,000 board feet of lumber to the mile. Since the first of October, 1926, when the present mill cut its first stick of bridge lumber, the Trail work has consumed 320,000 board feet of lumber for bridges alone. In addition exclusive camps have been built and repairs have been made so that to date, it would not be an exaggeration to state that the Trail has consumed nearly one million board feet. Besides Trail consumption, there have been endless building programs going on in Everglades, Port DuPont, Carnestown and other bases. The mill supplied the State Road Camp and their Engineering department, various other construction jobs, and has sold the general public. The records show that the mill has cut since October, 1926, close to two million board feet of lumber, besides several thousand piles, telephone poles, etc. This outfit has been utilized to a large extent by the Florida Development Company in the New Bank of Everglades, colored apartments and houses and Port DuPont, the large Carnestown warehouse, new dwellings in Port DuPont and five new houses at Everglades. After the storm the company used great quantities of lumber to raise and repair the damaged buildings, and although the saw mill had just been moved, it adjusted itself quickly to the emergency and supplied the greater amount of the necessary lumber. The lumber and piling for a dock 500 feet long and a sea wall 300 feet along the river front in Everglades was furnished as was the building material for the new Port DuPont shops, after that place had suffered a most disastrous fire. Fifteen thousand cross ties have been cut and an equal number sawed

Extensive Logging Operations (Cont.)

for the Deep Lake Railroad.

Meeting all local demands, the stands show no appreciable loss in quantity. Steps have been taken, however, to conserve the forests from any such devastation as suffered by the former vast woods of the north and middle west. Trees have been left standing for seeding and care has been taken to prevent any waste. Though the Trail is nearing completion, there is much building planned for Everglades and adjacent towns and the logging industry of Collier county will certainly play an important part in the future development of the county.