

**Taken from Newspaper:** The Virginian, Virginia, St. Louis County, Minnesota, January 1, 1903

## **VIRGINIA'S NEW SAW MILL.**

**Frame Work for First Story Nearly Up and Work is Being Pushed Energetically.**

**FINEST IN THE NORTHWEST.**

**Will Saw From Fifty to Fifty-Two Million Feet Each Year.**

When a saw mill was first talked of some four or five months ago, the businessmen and other citizens of Virginia very naturally thought it would be a fine thing for the town. But after considerable talk and a great deal of correspondence the John O'Brien company decided not build here. They gave as their reason that they were unable to secure sufficient timber tributary to the mill to pay them to build. The citizens were of course disappointed but bet the discouraging report in the same matter of fact manner that they have met with other reverses here and concluded to make the best of it. A number of the foremost citizens, among whom we may mention Mayor W.H. Eaton, City Attorney M. C. Palmer, E.Z. Griggs, E.J. O'Rourke, P.W. Scott, Albert Olson and H.G. George, decided not to give up and though it would not be a bad plan to induce the Cook & O'Brien interests to look the field over. Those who were interested in the fire case brought against the Moon & Kerr Lumber company share also in the credit with those mentioned above for assisting in inducing the company to locate there. The company were considering the building of a large mill up the line of the Duluth, Virginia & Rainy Lake Railway and with the splendid site and shipping facilities which Virginia offered it was thought, perhaps, that they might build here. After a number of meetings a proposition was made the company which they accepted. They promised to build one of the finest saw mills in the northwest, and they are certainly living up to their part of the contract.

A Virginian representative visited the new mill Tuesday morning and we were amazed at the progress that is being made. Less than two months ago the old Moon & Kerr forty, directly west of town on the other side of Silver Lake, was the grazing ground for a number of cattle, but since that time there has been a wonderful change. The spiteful spit of an engine together with the ringing of a circular saw is heard as the logs are quickly transferred from nature's pattern to huge square timbers. The ground around the portable mill, is latterly strewn with numerous pieces of timber which are being rapidly put into the frame work. Most of them are 12 x 12 but in some instances 16 x 16 are used. When these are squarely bolted together there need be no question as to their strength and durability and they will be capable of holding up with positive safety the different machinery, shafting, network of belting and the hundred and one other things which are numbered among the necessities of a finely equipped saw mill.

A portable mill was erected a few weeks ago for the purpose of sawing the lumber and dimension pieces for the construction of the mill. The mill has a capacity of about 20,000 feet per day and it has been worked to its full capacity since the first logs were cut. A well equipped blacksmith shop was also built and among other temporary equipments is a small dynamo which will soon be furnishing light so that work may be carried on during the night.

The new mill will be 48 feet side 170 in length, and two stories in height. On the south side of the building at the west end the foundation is now being laid for a lath and shingle mill. The building will be attached to the main building and will be 48 feet square. The piles have been driven for the boiler house which will also be on the south side. This is laid out in the same intelligent plan that marks the whole structure. The boiler will be an exceptionally large one,

capable of furnishing driving power equivalent to 500 horse power. The engine will also be large and powerful and of the most modern design. Perhaps the best way to describe the mill without going into a minute detail is by merely saying that it will have a capacity of 220,000 feet per day when both day and night crews are working. The double band saw system of conferring logs into lumber will be introduced and all modern machinery will be installed. No mill in the northwest will have a greater capacity and but few can equal it. Old saw mill men who are in a position to know and who have seen the plan of the mill, claim that without question, it will be the finest mill in the northwestern part of the state. The mill will face east and the slip where the logs are conveyed from the lake to the mill runs out to the bridge which crosses the little stream at the outlet of Silver Lake. In the winter time a large hot pond 300 feet out in the lake will be built just on the other side of the bridge and here the frost will be taken out of the logs before reaching the saws.

Following out the plans to modernize the whole plant there will be something entirely new to this section of the country introduced to carry the lumber into the yard. At most mills the lumber is loaded onto wagons or tramears and taken to the different parts of the yard. A system of trams will be installed at this mill which will carry the lumber into any part of the streets each of which will be of considerable length. In each street there will also be a side track so that flat cars may be switched into easy access of what ever kind of lumber may be desired. The old Moon & Kerr company's yard will not be used for piling lumber but no doubt will be utilized in some manner by the company.

The building of the mill means a good deal to Virginia. An institution of this size means the employment of from 300 to 500 men, many of whom may be classed as high priced labor. That the mill is no temporary affair may be seen by the good and substantial manner in which it is being built positive as the Cook & O'Brien interest have upwards of 500,000,000 feet of lumber north of here and scarcely a week passes but a transfer is made to this big company. So taking things as they really are the Cook & O'Brien company are with us to stay for many years to come and will do a great deal toward building up our city.

C.T. Plummer, of Duluth, has the contract to saw the timber and will have complete charge of the mill. He is a very busy man these days and may be seen daily hustling with his men. They hope to begin sawing by the 15<sup>th</sup> of March.

Ben. Fisher, a well-known saw mill man of West Duluth, is foreman of construction and like his employer is especially busy looking after the work.

S.C. Hancock, who by the way is a descendent of John Hancock, has charge of the sawing. All of those gentlemen will make Virginia their home in the future. The Virginian is indebted to these gentlemen for this article and we thank them heartily for the courtesies shown us.

# NEW SMOKY CITY.

**A Town With a Good Name But  
Without One Favorable  
Prospect.**

**A DELUSION AND SNARE.**

**Hasn't Even the Stability of House  
Built By the Unwise Man In  
Historic Past.**

Pittsburg is the name of a new town on the Duluth, Virginia & Rainy Lake Railway. It was platted some time ago by an incorporation composed largely of Duluth men. The Duluth papers have had much to say regarding the town and have made glowing word pictures of the wonderful importance it will soon take in the industrial world. But Duluth papers, in some cases, are very much on the Baron Munchausen order.

The new town takes its name from a great city in Pennsylvania where the smoke from the blast furnaces and other manufacturing plants hangs in great clouds over the city and at times excludes the pleasant rays of cheerful Old Sol. There was a time when the Pittsburg of the far east presented as desolate an appearance as the Pittsburg in Minnesota. That was long ago. It had, however, bright prospects, developed rapidly and became a great city. Its surroundings contributed largely to its upbuilding. From its birth it was a city with a future. There was something, besides speculation, to build it for.

How unlike its eastern namesake is the new town of Pittsburg platted in the wilds of northern St. Louis county. It is true that the Duluth, Virginia & Rainy Lake Railway will pass the town, but the mere fact of a railroad passing a huge pine tree will not build saw mills.

For the benefit of the sawary The Virginian advises them to go slow. We have made inquiries regarding the proposed new town. We did not go to its promoters because we know the kind of a story they would tell. We interviewed men who knew every foot

the  
four  
and  
qua  
prom  
B  
it is  
pos  
The  
occa  
ever  
dust  
have  
poli  
is a  
plat  
pock  
hard  
poo  
If  
vest  
your  
feel  
in te  
town  
W  
that

Fa  
ed a  
8:30  
na, c  
Enri  
the h  
John  
the p  
ative  
Cate  
right  
May  
of th  
priat  
S. Co  
tert t  
breat  
party  
Mr  
train  
trip  
gatbe  
The r  
was  
Dako  
were  
be  
Marc

The  
of the  
impor  
at the  
bell  
son's  
glori  
of Ea  
the M

to its promoters because we know the kind of a story they would tell. We interviewed men who knew every foot of the country north of here and who are informed as to its future in a large degree. They tell an altogether different story than the Duluth papers. The Cook & O'Brian interests have absolutely no intention of building a saw mill there. The new railroad will not even build a water tank or a coaling station on the proposed site. Those who are in charge of the Duluth, Virginia & Rainy Lake Railway are men of wide experience and they do not build tanks and telegraph stations at points where there is a heavy grade. Pittsburg, it is said, is located on a one per cent grade.

There is a fine agricultural territory twenty-five miles north of here. This is more than six miles from Pittsburg. There are also a number of iron mines south of the town. They, however, are located at Virginia. East of the townsite is a large rice bed and in the center of this is a pool of water. On the west lies the virgin forest. The soil around the town is boggy in places and rocky in others. The tadpole crop is said to be a never failing one. In the distance one may see the tepees of an Indian reservation which lends a primeval charm to the future metropolis.

There is plenty of pine around Pittsburg. The Virginian is informed, however, that the timber will not be cut for more than five years. When it is cut it will be manufactured either at the company's mill in this city or at Ash Lake where a townsite is to be established and a large mill erected.

It is possible that a mill may be built at Pittsburg, but not probable. It is likewise possible that the rocks near the new town may be pulverized with the mighty arm of a tiller of the soil, but in this advanced age no scientist bespeaks of the fertilizing qualities of the rock. Bogs are difficult to fill in and the song of the frog from which springs the productive tadpole is unpleasant music to the ear. Frogs legs are a great French dish but Pittsburg is a long ways from Paris. The rice crop is harvested by the Indians and they subsist on it. There are also mineral possibilities at Pittsburg. Some of the greatest mineral deposits in the world no doubt lie within a stone's throw of

gin  
of  
the  
ser  
apl  
wa  
had  
el  
into  
any  
fou  
an  
of  
sue  
this  
cei

M  
Bu  
W.  
Fre  
W.  
Eat  
Ry  
acc  
lan  
eve  
init  
dat  
a n  
oth  
ing

C  
the  
sur  
ma  
The  
unc  
sig  
like  
bee  
has  
the  
inc  
nes  
us

T  
sys  
ing  
and  
\$50  
190  
T  
190  
\$15  
gal

the town. Diamonds and such precious metals as gold, silver, copper and iron will be found in immense quantities if the utterances of the promoters are believed.

Before investing money in town lots it is a good plan to investigate the possibilities of the town. From what The Virginian can learn there is no occasion to fear that the smoke will ever hover over the town from its industries, nor will its farmers ever have an opportunity to discuss politics in the town hall. Pittsburg is a myth, so we cannot help but feel; platted for the purpose of filling the pockets of the incorporation with the hard earned money of perhaps many poor men.

If you are planning seriously on investing in Pittsburg real estate keep your hand on your money until you feel assured that there is one chance in ten thousand of its ever becoming a town.

We have good reason to believe that it never will.

2/20/1903

month's visit.

Mrs. M. C. Palmer spent Sunday with her husband, Register of Deeds Palmer, in Duluth.

D. B. McDonald, of the Cole & McDonald Exploration company, was in Duluth Tuesday on business.

Superintendent C. T. Fairbairn of the Lincoln transacted business in Duluth Wednesday and Thursday of this week.

R. A. Eys, general manager of the Duluth, Virginia & Rainy Lake Railway, was a business visitor in Duluth the first of the week.

Mrs. J. Morillo Todd has issued invitations for a parcel shower to be given March 28 in honor of Miss Josephine Edwards.

Fred Parmelee of Iron Mountain, Mich., was the guest this week of his

from Herman J. Sedore, the well known Ishpeming, Mich., cigar manufacturer.

Automobiling will be a popular sport in Virginia this summer. The Virginian is informed that a number of our citizens are planning on buying new machines.

Don't forget the spelling contest next Friday night, March 27, in the Fay opera house. The high schools of Ely and Grand Rapids will be present. Music by the local school.

Alderman Gust Johnson and Fred Anderson shipped a car load of material last week to their farms in the Little Forks country. The farmers up there expect to harvest big crops this year.

3/20/1903

**Taken from Newspaper:** The Virginian, Virginia, St. Louis County, Minnesota, May 22, 1903

## **RAINY LAKE COMPANY.**

**Files Articles of Incorporation with Capital of \$5,500,000.**

### **HEADQUARTERS IN VIRGINIA**

**Will Build New Saw Mills Along Line of D., V. & R. L. Railway.**

Articles of incorporation of the Rainy Lake company were filed with the secretary of state yesterday, with a capital of \$5,500,000. Similar articles will probably be filed here today with the register of deeds.

The Rainy Lake company is to be the holding corporation for the Duluth, Virginia & Rainy Lake road, the Virginia Lumber company and associate interests controlled by Charles F. Ruggles, Wirt Cook and others in northern St. Louis and adjoining counties.

The new company will control the several other large companies. There are 55,000 shares of a par value of \$100 each, of which 35,000 share are preferred and 20,000 shares are common.

The names of the incorporators are as follows: Charles F. Ruggles, Mitchell J. Smiley, Chicago; Robert E. Parcher, Wausau; E. Golden Filer, Manistee; Wirt H. Cook, Hansen Smith, Duluth and David O. Anderson of Virginia. The first officers are: President, C. F. Ruggles; vice president, W. H. Cook; secretary, Hansen Smith, and treasurer, C. F. Ruggles.

The railroad controlled by the new Rainy Lake company is under construction north from Virginia, and will be built as far as Pelican Lake this year. Its ultimate destination is Koochiching. The company gives promise of being one of the greatest factors in the development of the territory between Virginia on the Mesaba range and the Rainy River. It has plenty of capital and the officers have enterprise and experience. It is learned that the Rainy Lake company has plans for the construction of two saw mills this year on the line of its road. Their location is not known outside of the company, but they will each be of 100,000 feet capacity per day. The Virginia Lumber company, which is now in the new Rainy Lake company, owns 1,200,000,000 feet of pine.

The Rainy Lake company's scope of operations is wide under the articles of incorporation. In addition to the owning and operating of the railroad, timber, construction of sawmills, planning mills, factories of other kinds that may be desirable to develop the resources of the country embraced by St. Louis, Itasca and Lake counties, it is provided that the company may own and operate mines and smelters for reducing iron and copper ores, own and operate brick yards, stone quarries, erect buildings and colonize lands. — Duluth News Tribune.

**Taken from Newspaper:** The Virginian, Virginia, St. Louis County, Minnesota, May 29, 1903

**PLUMMER & ASH MILL.**

**Said to Be One of the Finest in the Whole Northwest.**

**BEGAN SAWING LAST WEEK.**

**Is a Double Band Mill With Daily Capacity of 250,000 Feet**

The busy hum of saws are again heard on the west shore of Silver Lake after a silence of nearly three years. Three years ago on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of next month the Moon & Kerr saw mill plant was destroyed by fire, a catastrophe yet fresh in the minds of a majority of the citizens of this city. That "time doeth all things well," is once more proven. A short distance from where the charred remains of a once flourishing industry lie a similar industry, but larger in ever respect and with a capacity four times as great, has sprung up.

The new Plummer & Ash mill made its initial run about two weeks ago, but after a run of four days closed down for some alterations which required nearly a week's time. The mill is now running again and both day and night crews have been put to work. With the exception of an occasional stoppage for repairs it will be operated day and night all seasons of the year for many years to come.

The accompanying pictures give one a very fair view of the mill. As a rule pictures lend a flattering presence to the object taken but in this instance they prove an exception to the rule. The pictures are good, so far as the pictures go, but one should visit the mill in order to gather a more complete idea of its magnitude.

There are a number of large mills at the head of the lakes and in the northern part of the state, but none excel and few equal this one. This is the general opinion of lumbermen. Those who have visited the mill and are familiar with the operation of an up-to-date plant, unhesitatingly say that it is a model in every way. Uppermost in the minds of the builders was the desire to construct a mill that would manufacture lumber rapidly and at the lowest possible cost. Messrs. Plummer & Ash are delighted with the showing it has made so far and feel that their efforts to build an ideal mill have not been in vain.

The dimensions of the mill are 50 x 175 feet. This, however, does not include the engine and boiler house nor the lath and shingle mill. The latter structures are 50 x 50 and 40 x 50, respectively. The mill proper and the lath and shingle department are built of heavy pine covered with corrugated iron. The engine and boiler house is constructed of brick.

A clearer conception of the mill may be gathered when it is considered that it has a capacity for manufacturing 125,000 feet of lumber every ten hours. As the mill will be operated day and night both winter and summer, the average yearly cut will in all probability reach 75,000,000 feet.

The new industry is built on the west shore of Silver Lake, a large body of water which furnishes an excellent banking place for the logs. A trestle has been built several hundred feet out into the lake for logging trains to run onto and unload. All logs cut at the mill will be shipped in over the Duluth, Virginia & Rainy Lake Railway, the timber being too far distant to admit of team haul in the winter months.

The first floor of the mill shows a complicated system of shaftings, pulleys, belts, conveyors, etc., and to the visitor so much whirling, whirring apparatus is confusing, indeed. The driving power is all located on this floor.

The second floor is where the machinery is located and the manufacture of lumber takes place. In the eastern part there are two carriages. One has a capacity for conveying logs up to 24 feet, and the other 42 feet in length to the saws which operate in unison or individually. Endless chains carry the logs out of the lake and up the slip to a platform opposite either carriage. As fast as they are transformed from their native state into lumber another is taken from the platform and rushed onto the carriage by a "steam nigger," a powerful machine which works with the precision of a skilled mechanic. As soon as boards leave the saws it rolls away on the conveyor. If it is a good one the sawyer merely steps onto a lever attachment which raises a lug and the board is carried to the gang edger where it is cut into whatever size desired. Should the board prove defective in any respect it passes on an automatic transfer to the slasher, which contains seven saws four feet apart, and is cut into strips for lath and shingles. When the boards leave the slasher they fall into another conveyor which transfers them into the lath and shingle mill. Here they are assorted and soon manufactured into the product of that department. The lath and shingle machines are the most modern manufactured and each have a capacity for turning out 100,000 every ten hours.

After leaving the edger the boards or pieces of timber are carried by conveyors to the trams and from there into the immense stock yard which covers forty acres. Following out the plan to thoroughly modernize the equipment of the mill something entirely new in this section has been introduced to carry the lumber into the yard. At many mills the lumber is loaded onto wagons and carted to the different parts of the yard. A system of trams has been installed which will carry the lumber into any part of a number of streets. In each main street there will be a side track so that flat cars may be switched within easy access of the lumber piles.

The engine and boiler room was built entirely of brick for the purpose of making the plant as nearly fire proof as possible. Its equipment includes a battery of six boilers, an engine which furnishes the power to operate the mill and a small engine which runs the dynamo for the electric light plant. The engine was manufactured especially for Plummer & Ash by the National Iron Works at Duluth. It has 24 x 36 cylinders, a 15 foot fly wheel and will develop 400 horse power. It is also equipped with a receiver for operating the steam feed and the "steam jiggers." The boilers are equipped with an attachment through which the exhaust steam passes and heats the water as it passes into the boilers thus assisting very materially in generating the steam.

The filing room is an interesting and most important part of the mill. It is located in the front part on the third floor occupying a space 32 x 47. It is equipped with a lap grinder and all the latest improved machinery for filing. Fourteen saws are constantly kept in the best of condition and it requires but a few minutes to change them. The saws are 12 inch wide and 44 feet long and when in operation run 10,000 feet a minute.

A sawdust and refuse conveyor, equipped with a system of screens, runs the full length of the mill. By this method all of the sawdust is screened into a return conveyor which passes over the boilers. As the conveyor passes over the boilers the sawdust gradually falls into the arch, or fire box, and is distributed wherever needed by the fireman who has charge of the battery of six boilers. The chutes can be moved to any part of the arch by simply moving a chain. This system of feeding the fires is a novel as well as an economical one. One man at this mill

accomplishes as much as six could when the old way of shoveling sawdust into the arch was in vogue.

Conveyors carry all the worthless parts of the logs into the burner, which is a large and costly affair. It is 25 feet in diameter and 100 feet high. The first 30 feet has a 12 inch wall built of fire brick: the next 45 feet is an 8 inch common brick wall: then comes a number of feet of heavy iron upon which sits the spark arrestor. There are more than 40,000 brick in the burner. With such a splendid burner there is no danger of a fire starting from that source, but fires are easily started in a saw mill and the Plummer & Ash company are especially well equipped to fight the destructive agent. A 500 gallon Duplex tire pump has been installed and is ready for immediate use and at convenient parts of the mill coils of fire hose and galvanized water pails are placed.

The mill, yard and boom will be lighted by electricity. A 500 light dynamo was set up last week and has since been operating at night. The mill makes a very charming appearance at night with its hundreds of sparkling lights.

Messrs. C.T. Plummer and C.R. Ash of Duluth are owners of the mill. Both gentlemen are prominent in lumber circles at the head of the lakes. Mr. Plummer will devote his personal attention to the mill and will superintend its operations. Mr. Ash is a lumber dealer in Duluth, but expects to spend considerable of his time here.

The establishment of an industry of this kind means a great deal to Virginia. The mill will give employment to more than 200 men, many of whom draw large salaries.

It is understood that the Virginia Lumber company owns all the timber which will be manufactured at the mill and have given the Plummer & As people a long time contract to cut it. As the lumber company owns many hundred million feet of pine tributary to the Duluth, Virginia & Rainy Lake railway and elsewhere in the northern part of St. Louis and Lake counties, it practically insures continues activity at the mill for the next ten or fifteen years.

It is good substantial people like those interested in the mill, the Virginia Lumber company and the Duluth, Virginia & Rainy Lake Railway company ???? largely in building up the ?????. The residents of Virginia ???? they are located here and ??? their relations may be the ??????.

## **Lumbermen Planning on Cutting Large Quantities of Timber the Coming Winter.**

The lumber industry in the vicinity of Virginia will be particularly active the coming winter. The companies who will operate from this point are the Virginia Lumber company, W. T. Bailey Lumber company, and O'Neal & Nelson, who have a large contract with the Taber Lumber company of Keokuk, Iowa. The Virginia Lumber company have been operating all summer but expect to add considerably to their force before snow flies. The W. T. Bailey Lumber company will in all probability cut more lumber than ever before. They have some valuable timber lands near Hohl, which was purchased from the state last fall and it is the intention to cut and saw a large portion of this the coming winter.

Mr. O'Neal and John Nelson both arrived in the city last week and are making preparations to begin their winter's work. When seen by a Virginian representative yesterday Mr. O'Neal said, "We are beginning somewhat early this year, but as our contract is a large one it requires us to begin operations as early as possible and then an early break-out in the spring need not necessarily affect us to any great extent. We will cut fully 12,000,000 feet this winter and perhaps more."

Messrs. O'Neal & Nelson began logging for the Taber Lumber company last year. It will require three or four entire winter's work to complete their contract with this company.

Besides the companies mentioned there will be much timber cut in the woods this winter by the milling companies.

pikes guns used.

r is

Mr.

ie in

effect

the

pays

than

l be

ch a

rfect

atis-

Steel

g on

h.

ings

. A

nder

that

soon

cost

d on

sible

res.

more

ntly,

ittle

### Four Fingers Taken Off.

While engaged in sawing up a load of cord wood Wednesday, William Danahy, of Pine street, had the misfortune to meet with a very serious and painful accident. The saw of the kind usually employed for that sort of work, is run by a gasoline engine, much too powerful for the saw, it is said. It appears that while Mr. Danahy was feeding the logs to the saw, a hard knot was struck, with the result that the piece of wood was completely turned end for end, the whole thing happening so quick that before he had time to remove his hand, the sharp teeth of the saw had shorn its way through flesh and bone, tearing away the knuckles and completely severing all four fingers of his right hand. As quickly as possible the wounded man made his way to the Rood hospital where the injured member was carefully dressed, and when seen at his home by a representative of The Ore, Mr. Danahy reported himself as doing nicely, although it is evident that he suffered considerable pain.—Mesaba Ore.

10/02/1903

