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Dantzler Lumber Company/Lumber Archives

MUM00100

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ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

Open for research. This collection is stored at an off-site facility. Researchers interested in using this collection must contact Archives and Special Collections at least five business days in advance of their planned visit.

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SUMMARY INFORMATION

Repository

University of Mississippi Libraries

Title

L.N. Dantzler Lumber Company Collection

ID

MUM00100

Date [bulk]

Bulk, 1894-1948

Date [inclusive]

1850-1954

Extent

60 boxes and 335 ledgers

Abstract

The L.N. Dantzler Lumber Company operated in the Moss Point-Pascagoula area in South Mississippi from 1880 to 1960. The collection contains correspondence as well as legal and financial records dating from 1850 to 1954.

Preferred Citation

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The genesis of the L.N. Dantzler Lumber Company traces back to the marriage of Lorenzo Nolley Dantzler to Erin Griffin, daughter of William Griffin, a proprietor of an antebellum Mississippi lumber mill. Following service in the Confederate Army during the Civil War, Dantzler returned home to become a partner in the William Griffin Lumber Company. At the dissolution of the partnership in 1873, Dantzler exchanged his interest in the company for a saw mill.

In 1880, he formally established the L.N. Dantzler Lumber Company which included two saw mills and a shingle mill along the Pascagoula River in the Moss Point/Gulfport area. Dantzler completed construction of the most modern double circular mill for the coastal country by 1885. On 1 March 1888, the business was incorporated as the L.N. Dantzler Lumber Company with outstanding capital assets of \$200,000 and became one of the first chartered private corporations in the state of Mississippi. With mill additions at Howison and Handsboro and a new mill constructed at Moss Point, the company was producing 90,000,000 board feet of lumber annually. It exercised a virtual monopoly over raw materials in the area, forcing one competing mill after another out of business. By 1910, only three fairly large concerns remained in the Moss Point/Pascagoula area.

A second major phase of expansion occurred in 1906 following a devastating hurricane which struck and leveled over 200,000,000 feet of company timber. The company quickly set up new mills and storage areas, while placing non-damaged mills on a day and night work schedule in order to salvage the company's timber. Taking full advantage of the natural calamity, The L.N. Dantzler Lumber Company purchased the lumber of similarly devastated rival companies at a fraction of the prevailing market rate. This opportunism allowed the company to make a windfall profit and to weather the timber panic of 1907.

In 1910, the company took over operation of the Bond Lumber Company and later in 1915 purchased the company outright. The L.N. Dantzler Lumber Company also purchased the Ten Mile Lumber Company in 1910 and erected a mill at Kiln in partnership with Edward Hines. Another mill at Piave was acquired and owned jointly by Dantzler and the Standard Export Company headed by J.L. Dantzler.

By 1913, the L.N. Dantzler Lumber Company foresaw the end of virgin timber in Mississippi and moved to acquire timber holdings elsewhere. That year, it bought a timber concession in Nicaragua but political instability in Managua prevented development of the property. In partnership with the H. Weston Lumber Company, L.N. Dantzler also bought timberland in Oregon but never utilized the property. The same pattern followed for an undeveloped concession on Prince Edward Island. Eventually, the company began a reforestation program.

Since the L.N. Dantzler Lumber Company chiefly exported their production, they eventually sought to become involved in distribution. They owned over twenty barges, sailing vessels, and tugs as well as 200 miles of railroad, 300 log cars, and twenty-four steam locomotives. In partnership with the international timber merchants Price and Pierce, the Standard Export Company operated out of New Orleans and was led by L.N. Dantzler's son J.L. Dantzler. In 1924, L.N. Dantzler and his son organized the Dantzler Lumber and Export Company in Tampa, Florida. Export lumber shipped to South America, the Caribbean, Europe and Africa.

The company suffered losses in its export markets due to dislocations caused by World War I. With American entry into the conflict, it recovered and realized a profit in excess of \$7,000,000 in 1919.

Other Dantzler subsidiaries or affiliates were Native Lumber Company, Cedar Lake Mill Company, Vancleave Lumber Company, Jordan River Lumber Company, Dantzler Foundry and Machine Works, Gulf Ship Company, Pascagoula Towing Company, Bethune Turpentine Company, Ellen Dee Turpentine Company, and Kirby Turpentine Company. L.N. Dantzler was also president of the Dantzler Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company. He owned a majority interest in the Standard Lumber Company of Oliver, Georgia and operated over 2,000 acres of Mississippi Delta plantation land in Sunflower, Humphries and Sharkey counties. Dantzler was director and president of People's Bank of Biloxi from 1914 to 1943 and served as a trustee of Emory University from 1918 to 1943.

Due to the Great Depression, all manufacturing operations were suspended in 1938. But with the advent of World War II, the company recovered and supplied a great amount of lumber to the government from 1941 to 1944. After 1949, all logging and manufacturing operations ceased, and the company thereafter acted only as tree farmers, selling timber on a selective basis in the form of saw logs, piling, poles, pulpwood, and other products. The family sold the company to International Paper Company in 1966.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The papers date from 1850 to 1954 and provide documentation for one of the largest lumber manufacturers in the South. Early correspondence is sparse, but becomes more substantial by 1906 and illustrates the company's flexibility in responding to the 1906 hurricane disaster. However, company correspondence from 1911 to 1915 is virtually nonexistent. Most of the correspondence dates from 1928 to 1935.

Present in the correspondence and financial records are a tax protest lodged by the company in 1923 over the valuation of timber used in manufacturing charcoal. Correspondence, financial, legal, and administrative records of the Louisiana-Nicaragua Lumber Company document the acquisition of a 1905 timber concession of 9,000 square miles in Nicaragua and Honduras.

The collection also documents the company's concern over labor organization in the mills as well as their half-hearted attempts at reforestation and tung oil production.

The unbound financial records stored in collection boxes include receipts, bills, inventories, accounts, orders, tax records and other material which are frequently replicated in the more comprehensive ledgers. These bound volumes include the Dantzler journals, ledgers, cashbooks, order books, tally books, and payroll records for the years 1894 to 1948. Time gaps are apparent in the container list.

Legal papers are comprised primarily of insurance policies and miscellaneous court litigation, principally over land disputes.

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ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Publication Information

University of Mississippi Libraries 2005

Access Restrictions

This collection is open to researchers.

Use Restriction

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction.

One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use", that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

Accruals

No further additions are anticipated.

Acquisition Information

The University of Mississippi acquired the L.N. Dantzler Lumber Company records in June of 1955.

Processing Information

In the late 1950s, John H. Moore served as part-time director of the "University Lumber Archives" and provided some preliminary arrangement to the records. A grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission in 1979 provided funds for the Archives & Special Collections to process, inventory, and make accessible the records of several lumber concerns, including the L.N. Dantzler Lumber Company. Dr. Thomas M. Verich directed the project with the assistance of departmental staff Franklin Walker, Phillip Hall, Elise Winter, and Naomi Levell as well as help from student workers Suzanne Steel, David Robinson, David Sansing, Perry Sansing, Freda Stanford, and Katherine Ditto. Dr. Linda Matthews of Emory University, Dr. Ellen Garrison of Georgia State University, and Dr. Dale Flesher of the University of Mississippi served as consultants.

In 2014, Dr. Leigh McWhite modified the finding aid prior to Digital Initiatives Librarian Susan Ivey encoding the online version.

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RELATED MATERIALS

Related Materials at the University of Mississippi

Related Sources in the Archives & Special Collections
Other Mississippi lumber company records include the following:

Batson & Hatten Lumber Company Collection (14 boxes + ledgers).

[Andrew Brown and Son/R.F. Learned Lumber Company Collection](#) (117 boxes and 150 ledgers).

Fernwood Industries Lumber Company Collection (94 boxes + ledgers).

J.J. Newman Lumber Company Collection (6 boxes).

[Ernest W. Pettis Collection](#) (1 box).

[Lamont Rowlands Collection](#) (30 boxes).

[H. Weston Lumber Company Collection](#) (116 boxes and over 300 ledgers).

Other material related to forestry and the lumber industry may be discovered in the [Agriculture & Forestry Subject Guide](#).

Related Sources Held Elsewhere

Additional records for the L.N. Dantzler Lumber Company are held by the Mississippi State University Special Collections (80 cubic feet).

Jamie Dyan Bounds, "The L.N. Dantzler Lumber Company: A Prosperous South Mississippi Lumber Company" (M.A. thesis; University of Southern Mississippi, 2003).

Separated Materials

The following publications have been removed for cataloging in Special Collections:

Mississippi Forestry Commission, Forest Fire Law in Mississippi (1955). Call Number: [SD421.32 M7 F67 1955](#).

Southern States Industrial Council, Major Activities of Southern States Industrial Council, 1935: Messages of Approval from Leading Southern Industrialists: Editorial Comment from Southern Newspapers (Nashville, TN: 1935). Call Number: [HC107 A13 M35 1935](#).

Alfred Holt Stone, The Assessing of Public Utilities by the State Tax Commission: An Informal Discussion (Jackson, MS: 1935). Call Number: [HD2767 M74 S76 1935](#).

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hickman, Nollie W. Mississippi Harvest: Lumbering in the Longleaf Pine Belt, 1840-1915 (University of Mississippi, 1962).

"L.N. Dantzler" in *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, Vol. 32 (New York: James T. White and Company, 1945).

"L.N. Dantzler" in *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, Vol. 39 (New York: James T. White and Company, 1954).

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COLLECTION INVENTORY

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Box 2 January-June 1907

Box 3 July-December 1907

Box 4 January-July 1908

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Box 6 June 1909-December 1910

Box 7 January 1911-October 1912; 1915; 1916; March-July 1920; January 1921; April 1921; September 1921; November 1921; 1922-1923; February-June 1924; April-December 1925

Box 8 1926; January-June 1927

Box 9 July-December 1927

Box 10 January 1928; March-December 1928

Box 11 1929; January-March 1930; May-December 1930

Box 12 1931

Box 13 1932

Box 14 January-June 1933

Box 15 July-December 1933

Box 16 January-June 1934

Box 17 July-December 1934

Box 18 January-March 1935

Box 19 March-May 1935

Box 20 May-July 1935

Box 21 July-September 1935

Box 22 October-November 1935

Box 23 November-December 1935; 1936

Box 24 1937-1938; October-December 1939; January-April 1940; June-July 1940; September 1940; November 1940; March 1941; May-June 1941; August-December 1941; 1942

Box 25 1943; January-June 1944

Subseries 2: Miscellaneous Correspondence 1912-1944

Box 26: Bond Lumber Company 1912-1925

Box 27: Bond Lumber Company Liquidation 1942-1944

Subseries 3: Financial Records 1894-1944

Box 28 1903-1906; 1894

Box 29 1907

Box 30 1908-1909

Box 31 1910-1911

Box 32 1912-1914

Box 33 1915-1918

Box 34 1918

Box 35: Schooner Records 1919-1922

Box 36: Dantzler Tax Protest 1923

Box 37: Dantzler Tax Protest 1923

Box 38: Dantzler Tax Protest, Schooner Records 1923-1927, 1924-1930

Box 39 1931-1934

Box 40 1934

Box 41 1935

Box 42 1935-1936

Box 43: Requisitions and Purchase Orders 1937-1942

Box 44: Requisitions and Purchase Orders 1942-1943

Box 45: Requisitions and Purchase Orders; Financial

Papers 1943-1944

Box 46: Bond Lumber Company, 1911-1914, 1916-1921, 1937, 1942-1943; Pascagoula Towing Company, 1901-1912, 1914, 1916, and undated

Box 47: Insurance Policies 1919-1921, 1924-1935

Box 48: Insurance Policies 1939

Box 49: Dantzler Tax Protest 1923; Bond Lumber Company 1910, 1941-1943, 1945; General Legal, 1906, 1908, 1914, 1923, 1925, 1928, 1933-1935

Subseries 4: Miscellaneous 1905-1906

Box 50: Reports of Logs Scaled 1928-1929

Box 51: Reports of Logs Scaled 1930

Box 52: Reports of Logs Scaled 1930, 1940-1941, 1943-1944

Box 53: Reports of Logs Scaled 1944, 1946

Box 54: Reports of Logs Scaled 1946

Box 55: Reports of Logs Scaled 1946

Box 56: Reports of Logs Scaled 1942-1943

Scope and Content

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Box 57: Reports of Lumber Cut 1933

Box 58: Land Matters; Photos; Printed Material; Ephemera

Box 59: Records of Louisiana-Nicaragua Lumber Company: Correspondence (1905, 1907-1912, 1917, 1923-1924, undated); Financial Records (1906-1907, 1910, 1917, 1922, undated); Legal Records (1905-1909, 1913, undated); Administrative Records (1908-1911); Miscellaneous Records

Box 60: Records of the Gulf Coast Company Inc.: Correspondence (1915-1916, 1918-1920, 1925-1929); Proxies (1925-1928); Stock Certificates (1929); Charter (12 June 1915); Legal Document (9 October 1920)

Subseries 5: Oversized Material 1914-1939, undated

Oversized Box 1: Map of Mississippi Showing Railroad; Map of Honduras; Map of Cape Graeias, Nicaragua; Map

of Columbia Riou, British Columbia, 1914; oversize financial records, 1922 & undated; Blueprints of Ten Mile Lumber Company

Oversized Box 2: Oversized Bound Volume Office Time Book and Payroll, 1930; Framed land map "Calloway Farm," 1939; Ephemera

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Ledger 52: Pascagoula Towing Company 1912

Ledger 53: Pascagoula Towing Company 1913

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Ledger 314 July 1934

Ledger 315 July-August 1934

Subseries 39: Time Books 1925-1938

Ledger 317 December 1925-March 1929

Ledger 318 May 1929-October 1930

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Subseries 40: Securities Book 1922-1924

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Ledger 335 January 1922-March 1924

Subseries 41: Loose Sheets 1850-1924

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Subseries 42: Checkbook 1875-1876

Ledger 213 September 1875-December 1876

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