

Northern Lumber Company (Cloquet, Minn.), creator.

Northern Lumber Company and affiliated companies records, 1882-1967.

20.75 cubic feet (15 boxes, including 74 volumes).

## INTRODUCTION

This collection contains the records of several companies, all of which have been grouped together because of their close affiliations as Weyerhaeuser business interests operating in northern Minnesota. In addition to these companies, the researcher will find records of two other Cloquet Weyerhaeuser affiliates cataloged separately: the Cloquet Lumber Company and the Johnson-Wentworth Company. The following History of the Organization contains historical sketches of the Northern Lumber Company and the several affiliates whose records are included in the collection.

## HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATION

The Northern Lumber Company began in 1880 when the C. N. Nelson Lumber Company (originally headquartered in Stillwater and Lakeland) constructed a lumber mill at Cloquet, having acquired a large timber tract in the area from the St. Paul and Duluth Railroad. In 1886 Charles N. Nelson moved his Lakeland mill operation to Cloquet, where it became known as the Upper Mill. In 1896 all lumber and related interests were sold for \$1.9 million to Frederick Weyerhaeuser. He organized the Northern Lumber Company to receive the properties, which included 600 million feet of white pine stumpage, 2 lumber mills on the Knife River, a commissary, a hotel, the St. Louis River Boom and Improvement Company, and the Knife Falls Boom Corporation. Originally a Wisconsin corporation, the company was reorganized in 1911 under the laws of Minnesota.

With the organization of the Northern Lumber Company, Cloquet became a distinct Weyerhaeuser town, since Weyerhaeuser interests (Cloquet Lumber Company) in Cloquet before then had been rather minor. Rudolph M. Weyerhaeuser was selected to manage the important new properties, and under the Weyerhaeuser policy of aggressive timberland acquisition the company came to hold over 915 million feet of stumpage in 1908. During the company's 1901-1917 heyday it shipped an annual average of about 90 million board feet of lumber. In 1902 the

company acquired a joint interest in the Johnson-Wentworth Company in partnership with the Cloquet Lumber Company.

In October, 1918, the company's two mill plants, its shop and barn, and 70 million board feet of lumber burned in the disastrous Cloquet fire. Following the blaze the company was operated much more cooperatively with the Cloquet and Johnson-Wentworth companies. Its last major lumber shipment went out in 1919, and in 1928 the company's operations, along with those of the Cloquet and Johnson-Wentworth companies, were transferred to the Northwest Paper Company (Cloquet), the remaining major Weyerhaeuser interest in Minnesota, and were operated as its lumber division. The company maintained a legal existence until its dissolution in 1945.

The Northwest Paper Company (incorporated in 1898) was organized by Weyerhaeuser interests as a West Virginia corporation (capitalization: \$150,000) and was reincorporated in 1910 as a Minnesota company (capitalization: \$1 million). It began operations with four small pulp grinders and a paper machine, added another paper machine and three more grinders the following year, and built a second mill at Knife Falls in 1903. In 1914 it constructed the North Star Mill in Cloquet to supply sulphite pulp for book paper, and in 1915 it built the Frederick Paper Mill in Brainerd. During this period it also purchased the Cloquet Tie and Post Company to increase its pulpwood supply and constructed a large new plant at Cloquet in 1918. After 1928 the company was the preeminent Weyerhaeuser operation in Minnesota.

The Eastern Lumber Company (incorporated in May 1907) was formed, with its headquarters in Tonawanda, New York, to serve as the eastern lumber distribution center for the Northern and Cloquet companies, by which it was jointly owned and controlled. It was apparently dissolved in 1937, along with the Johnson-Wentworth Company.

The St. Louis River Dam and Improvement Company (incorporated in November 1889) was organized by the C. N. Nelson Lumber Company to build dams and make other improvements on the Knife River to facilitate the movement of logs to the mills. It became a Northern Lumber Company subsidiary in 1896, and the Cloquet Lumber Company acquired a half interest in 1900 for \$30,000. The corporation was dissolved in October, 1925.

The St. Louis Power and Improvement Corporation was incorporated in April, 1901, by Weyerhaeuser interests to construct dams and other facilities on the St. Louis River and its tributaries in order to generate water power. In June, 1901, it purchased several lots from the

Northern Lumber Company and the Knife Falls Dam from the Knife Falls Boom Corporation. Its assets were divested throughout the 1940s and it was finally disincorporated in 1951.

The Mesabe Southern Railway Company (incorporated in 1895) was organized by the C. N. Nelson Lumber Company to build and operate a logging railroad north from Cloquet. It was transferred to the Northern Lumber Company in 1896 and operated 28 miles of main line and 12 miles of spurs northwest of Cloquet, on which it annually hauled 20 to 45 million feet of logs to the St. Louis River. The Cloquet Lumber Company acquired a half interest in 1904.

The Seine River Lumber Company, Ltd. (incorporated in September, 1907), was chartered at Toronto by a provisional group of Ontario residents and in November it came under the control of three prominent American lumbermen: Edward Hines (Chicago), Wirt H. Cook (Duluth), and William O'Brien (St. Paul) with whom it made a timber purchase agreement. In December, 1908, the company was conveyed to the Virginia and Rainy Lake Company, a Weyerhaeuser interest, which processed its timber holdings. All active corporate affairs were terminated by 1932.

The Minnesota Land and Construction Company (incorporated in August 1901) was organized for the general purpose of railroad and related construction and to hold land and securities. The company constructed 27 miles of main line, plus sidings and logging spurs, for the Duluth, Virginia and Rainy Lake Railway during 1901-1903. The company came under the control of the Virginia and Rainy Lake Company in 1905. The corporation expired in August, 1931.

The Northern Water Power Company (incorporated in May 1901) was organized by Robert L. McCormick to construct and manage waterpower facilities on the Mississippi River and its tributaries. The company constructed a dam and power facilities at Brainerd that it operated until January, 1934, at which time all its assets were conveyed to the Northwest Paper Company. It maintained a legal existence until its charter expired in 1960.

The Companies Store, Inc. (incorporated in October 1907) was organized by the Cloquet Weyerhaeuser interests and was jointly owned by the Northern and Cloquet Lumber companies. Its purpose was to provide centralized general merchandising and lumber product sales facilities to serve the Cloquet firms, since it was felt that a single store serving all related companies could command greater volume and thereby secure certain economies. The store was destroyed in the October, 1918, fire and was never revived. It was officially dissolved in February, 1926.

The Ranier Townsite Company (incorporated in October 1906) was organized to acquire land for and to develop a townsite in Koochiching County to be known as Ranier. In July, 1907, it purchased lots from the Minnesota Land and Construction Company in exchange for its entire capital stock issue of \$50,000. R. M. Weyerhaeuser thereupon became a director. The corporation was dissolved by a charter amendment in March, 1932.

The Northland Power Company (incorporated in April 1905) was apparently organized on behalf of Weyerhaeuser interests which very soon assumed control. It existed to construct and manage waterpower and electrical supply sources in the Cloquet area. Pursuant to a June, 1905, resolution, all dams and related power facilities and rights at Cloquet and Knife Falls were leased to the Northwest Paper Company.

The Cloquet Tie and Post Company was jointly operated by the Cloquet and Northern Lumber companies to log and process their tamarack (railroad ties) and cedar (poles) stumpage so that the parent companies could concentrate on the more valuable white pine timber. All the company's buildings burned in the October, 1918, fire and the company was dissolved in 1929.

The Minnesota Northern Railway Company (incorporated in November 1910) was formed to construct and operate a logging railroad in St. Louis County, and was controlled by the Virginia and Rainy Lake Company. The company was dissolved by amendment to its articles of incorporation in March, 1932.

The above information was obtained from the records; from the transcript of an oral history interview with Hugo Schlenk, an officer and director of the Northern Lumber Company and Northwest Paper Company, located in "Forest History Foundation, comp., Interviews, 1953-1957," Division of Archives and Manuscripts, Minnesota Historical Society; and from Ralph W. Hidy, Frank Ernest Hill, and Allan Nevins, *Timber and Men: the Weyerhaeuser Story* (New York: MacMillan, 1963).

9066  
12,583  
13,085  
16,945

Dennis E. Meissner  
March 1980

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December 2014

### DESCRIPTION OF THE RECORDS

The records for all the companies mentioned above are rather incomplete. Some companies are strongly documented in minutes, stock records, and other secretary's and treasurer's records, but are very weakly documented in accounting records and other basic financial data; the reverse is sometimes also true. There is almost no correspondence for any company, and production, operating, and sales records are also infrequent. The researcher will also find significant temporal gaps in the existing series for most companies. Still, when taken together, the records provide a very valuable documentary picture of the functioning of the many Weyerhaeuser affiliates operating in the Cloquet area.

Box 1 contains all the unbound records arranged by company, and the remaining boxes contain the bound records, which are also arranged by company. The order in which the companies appear reflects the volume of records that are extant.

CONTAINER LIST

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
145.H.7.5B	1	Financial and legal files. 20 folders. Volumes 1, 3-5.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
148.E.4.7B-1	2	Volumes 2, 6-7.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
148.E.4.7B-2	15	Volumes 8-10, 22.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
142.D.17.1	3	Volumes 11-13.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
142.D.17.2	4	Volumes 14-16, 18.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
148.E.4.8F	5	Volumes 17, 19-20.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
148.E.5.1B	6	Volumes 21, 23, 26.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
148.E.5.2F	7	Volumes 24, 25, 28.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
142.D.17.3	8	Volumes 27, 29, 29a, 31.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
148.E.5.3B	9	Volumes 30, 32-34.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
148.E.5.4F	10	Volumes 35-41.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
148.E.5.5B	11	Volumes 42-49.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
148.E.5.6F	12	Volumes 50-59.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
145.F.13.1B	13	Volumes 60-64, 66-69.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Box</b>	
142.D.17.4	14	Volumes 65, 70-74.

## FOLDER LIST

## Northern Lumber Company:

Acreage statistics, 1918-1922.

Annual accounting reports and related records, 1897-1908.

Annual accounting reports and related records, 1909-1912.

Annual accounting reports and related records, 1913-1916.

Annual accounting reports and related records, 1917-1920.

Annual accounting reports and related records, 1921-1924.

Annual accounting reports and related records, 1925-1930.

Annual accounting reports and related records, 1931-1945.

Correspondence and related papers re stock ownership, 1920-1943.

Land contract correspondence, 1920-1938.

Legal instruments and related correspondence, 1911-1945.

Letter from Hugo Schlenk concerning Rudolph M. Weyerhaeuser's affairs, 1942.

Schlenk was secretary and assistant treasurer of the Northern Lumber Company.

Payroll records, undated, 1918.

Reduction of capital stock, 1937-1938.

Returns of capital, 1916-1942, 1944-1945, 1967.

Eastern Lumber Co.: Annual accounting reports, 1908-1910.

Northern Water Power Co.: Legal instruments and related records, 1902, 1918, 1930-1954.

Northwest Paper Co.: Miscellaneous records, [1905], 1929-1937.

St. Louis River Dam and Improvement Co.: Financial statements, 1900, 1901, 1918.

St. Louis River Power and Improvement Corp.: Miscellaneous records, 1901-1943.



## VOLUME LIST

Northern Lumber Co.

- Volume 1. Minute Book (Wis. corp.), May 1896-Jan. 1932.  
Volume 2. Minute Book (Minn. corp.), Sept. 1911-July 1945.  
Volume 3. Stock Subscription Book, May 1896.  
Volume 4. Stock Ledger (Wis. corp.), 1896-1912.  
Volume 5. Stock Ledger (Minn. corp.), 1912-1945.  
Volume 6. Land Transfer Register, Oct. 1927-March 1958.  
Volume 7. Land Contract and Payment Register, 1903-1945.  
Volume 8. Land Contract and Payment Register (misc. entries), 1930-1946. Plat Book, Townships 54-56, 1924-1925.  
Volume 9. Acreage Change Record, 1922-1928.  
Volume 10. Daybook, Oct. 1918-Oct. 1922.  
Volume 11. General Journal, Jan. 1896-July 1897.  
Volume 12. General Journal, Dec. 1926-July 1945.  
Volume 13. Bank Journal, Jan. 1926-Dec. 1940.  
Volume 14. Cash Book, April 1896-April 1898.  
Volume 15. Cash Book, Jan. 1928-June 1936.  
Volume 16. Cash Book, July 1936-April 1958.  
Volume 17. Voucher Register, Nov. 1905-April 1907.  
Volume 18. Voucher Register, May 1930-July 1945.  
Volume 19. General Ledger, Jan. 1896-Dec. 1900.  
Volume 20. General Ledger, Jan. 1901-Dec. 1909.  
(Part 1: current folios)  
Volume 21. General Ledger, Jan. 1901-Dec. 1909.  
(Part 2: noncurrent folios)  
Volume 22. General Ledger, Jan. 1910-Dec. 1911.  
Volume 23. General Ledger, Jan. 1912-July 1945.  
(Part 1: current folios)  
Volume 24. General Ledger, Jan. 1912-July 1945.  
(Part 2: noncurrent folios)  
Volume 25. Log Scale Record, 1896-1901.  
Volume 26. Log Scale Record, 1902-1911.  
Volume 27. Payroll Record, June 1918-April 1919.  
Volume 28. C. N. Nelson Lumber Co.: Petty Cash Journal, Oct. 1889-May 1908.  
Volume 29. C. N. Nelson Lumber Co.: Lumber Sales Record, Jan. 1882-Feb. 1885.

Eastern Lumber Co.

- Volume 29a. Minute Book, March 1907 - June 1937.  
Volume 30. Stock Certificates #1-13, May 1907-March 1937.  
Volume 31. General Journal, May 1907-1937.  
Volume 32. General Ledger, May 1907-May 1912.  
Volume 33. General Ledger, May 1912-Dec. 1920.  
Volume 34. Cash Book, May 1907-Feb. 1915.

St. Louis River Dam and Improvement Co.

- Volume 35. Minute Book, Nov. 1889-Oct. 1925.
- Volume 36. Stock Certificates #1-20, June 1895-Dec. 1924.
- Volume 37. General Journal, Nov. 1889-Dec. 1899.
- Volume 38. General Journal, Jan. 1900-Dec. 1922.
- Volume 39. General Journal, Feb. 1923-Jan. 1925.
- Volume 40. Voucher Register, June 1905-Nov. 1924.
- Volume 41. General Ledger, Nov. 1889-Dec. 1899.
- Volume 42. General Ledger, Jan. 1900-Dec. 1925.

St. Louis River Power and Improvement Corp.

- Volume 43. Minute Book, April 1901-May 1947.
- Volume 44. Stock Certificates #1-56, April 1901-May 1945.
- Volume 45. General Journal, April 1901- March 1953.
- Volume 46. Cash Book, Jan. 1922-March 1953.
- Volume 47. General Ledger, April 1901-Jan. 1922.
- Volume 48. General Ledger, Jan. 1922-March 1953.

Mesabe Southern Railway Co.

- Volume 49. Stockholders' Minute Book, Sept. 1895-June 1929.  
(Includes articles of incorporation.)
- Volume 50. Directors' Minute Book, Sept. 1895-June 1929.  
(Includes by-laws.)
- Volume 51. General Journal, Aug. 1895-June 1912.
- Volume 52. General Journal, June 1912-Feb. 1914.
- Volume 53. General Ledger, Aug. 1895-Feb. 1914.

Seine River Lumber Co., Ltd.

- Volume 54. Minute Book, Nov. 1907-Feb. 1932.
- Volume 55. Secretary's Record Book, Sept. 1907-Dec. 1908.  
(Includes letters patent chartering company and list of stockholders.)
- Volume 56. Stock Certificates #1-27, Dec. 1907-Dec. 1908.
- Volume 57. Stock Transfer Record, Nov. 1907-Dec. 1908.
- Volume 58. Journal, Dec. 1907-Dec. 1908.
- Volume 59. Ledger, Dec. 1907-Dec. 1908.

Minnesota Land and Construction Co.

- Volume 60. Minute Book, Oct. 1901-July 1905.
- Volume 61. Minute Book, Dec. 1905-Feb. 1931.
- Volume 62. Stock Certificates #1-95, Oct. 1901-July 1905.

Northern Water Power Co.

- Volume 63. Minute Book, May 1901-May 1959.
- Volume 64. Cash Book, June 1903-Sept. 1936.

The Companies Store, Inc.

Volume 65. Minute Book, Sept. 1907-Feb. 1926, Nov. 1935.

Volume 66. Stock Certificates #1-9, Sept. 1907-Dec. 1924.

Ranier Townsite Co.

Volume 67. Minute Book, Oct. 1906-March 1932.

Volume 68. Stock Certificates #2-6, Feb. 1907.

Northland Power Co.

Volume 69. Minute Book and Stock Record, May 1905-May 1916.

Northwest Paper Co.

Volume 70. Mortgage Loan Record, 1919-1950.

Cloquet Tie and Post Co.

Volume 71. General Ledger, Oct. 1903-April 1929.

Minnesota Northern Railway Co.

Volume 72. Minute Book, Nov. 1910-Feb. 1932.

Miscellaneous Records

Volume 73. List of unpatented lands, Northern Pacific Railway, St. Louis County, sold to Weyerhaeuser and Humbird, 1900.

Volume 74. Payroll Accounts and Cash Disbursements Record, Jan. 1925-July 1930. (Company not identified.)