

## BLOOMSBURG AS A LUMBER TOWN

While Williamsport and Jamison City are well-known as centers of the lumber industry around the turn of the twentieth century, few are aware that Bloomsburg was once considered a lumber capital. Below are two old newspaper stories about lumber dealing and manufacturing at Bloomsburg. The C. P. & W. mentioned is the Central Pennsylvania and Western Railroad, which was formed in 1893 by a reorganization of the Wilkes-Barre and Western Railroad established in 1885; the line ran from Watsontown on the West Branch to Millville and later to Orangeville.

Thanks to former editor George Turner for supplying these items.

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*The Morning Press*, January 28, 1903

### CENTRE OF A LUMBER BELT

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More Lumber Passes Through town  
than any Point Between New  
York State and Maryland

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EXCEPTING THE WEST BRANCH

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With the exception of the immense shipments from the West Branch, there is more lumber shipped through Bloomsburg than from any other point along the Susquehanna from New York state to Maryland, a fact that will surprise many.

When it is said that 40,000,000 feet of lumber goes through Bloomsburg each year, direct from the contiguous lumber belt, one gains an idea of the enormous trade handled from this point, and all so quietly that few have any idea of the volume of the business.

### FIRMS WHO CONTROL IT.

In this business the firms who stand out prominent are Creasy and Wells, of Bloomsburg; Yorks & Hummer, Keystone Lumber Company, Trexler & Turrell, together with a large number having smaller operations. The latter named firm is now about to cut the last of the Ricketts timber tract<sup>5</sup>, a very large contract, which will require the extension of either the Bloomsburg & Sullivan or the Lehigh Valley for six miles.

Of this lumber much of it is brought to Bloomsburg over the Bloomsburg & Sullivan, and some is hauled here. Then, too, a portion that is cut from this belt is shipped out over the Lehigh Valley above Jamison City while other shipments are sent over the C. P. & W.

### CREASY & WELLS' INTEREST.

In this business the firm of Creasy & Wells, of town, stand out prominent. For eighteen years they have been recognized as large wholesalers and of this immense output they are the leaders.

It will be a surprise to many to know that this firm gives employment regularly to 275 men and that they employ forty teams a day. Six or seven mills are being operated by them, one at Jonestown, two at Creasyville, one at Pine Summit, and another between Eyersgrove and Millville. They are also handling the output of the large Keystone Mill, at Jamison City, which was recently rebuilt.

#### PLENTY OF LUMBER.

Particularly interesting was the statement of Mr. Creasy that though they have been, and others had been cutting out of this timber belt for years and years, there was no appreciable decrease in the supply and there was not likely to be for generations. The purchase of the timber land is largely a matter in which the price wins. An encouraging fact to those who have believed the forests would soon be no more was the statement by Mr. Creasy that their firm had several tracts which already contained good timber that they would not cut for a number of years, making it their business to cut the timber off every fifteen years. Under propitious conditions pine and hemlock is in excellent shape for cutting after that time.

Other firms in this vicinity are doing likewise so that the disappearance of the forests need not be feared in the near future. The fact that the business of Creasy & Wells has doubled within the last few years is also a convincing indication of the lumber supply.

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*The Bloomsburg Daily*, February 1, 1896

#### **Creasy & Wells, Lumber, &c.**

Among our many industries is that of Creasy & Wells, dealers in all kinds of lumber in connection with their planning mill in which they manufacture sash, blinds, flooring, siding, doors common and veneered, and everything necessary to complete a first-class house from cellar to comb of roof. This business place had its origin in 1883, when S. C. Creasy began handling railroad ties, telegraph, poles, &c.; a very little room was then required to carry on the work, but through the push and energy, characteristic of this young man the business grew to such an extent that in 1885 it became necessary to have larger and more commodious quarters, hence the purchasing of more ground, on the present site, the removal of the yard and office, and the present copartnership formed by the addition of E. C. Wells. Then followed the purchase of the planning mill, which was entirely remodeled and furnished throughout with modern machinery, including a blowing machine which carries all shavings and sawdust to the fire box, thus reducing the cost of fuel[,] and the latest automatic sprinkler, which reduces the cost of insurance. The mill has never been idle for want of work, much of which is sent to Philadelphia, and other large cities.

The wholesale department has grown to a wonderful extent and in order to meet the demand they recently purchased 6 million feet of dry sawed hemlock and twelve million feet of standing hemlock. This in addition to the oak they have standing and are daily sawing on their own tract, besides the shingle and lath mills running on full time to supply orders and stock, will give some idea of the present business. Many men are directly and indirectly employed and during the bark season reaches from two to three hundred. A. B. Pursel is foreman in the planning mill, D. L. Swank has charge of the yard, while F. B. Hartman and J. W. Davis wield the pen and cast up the accounts in the office.

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