

ECONOMIC PROGRESS

In the fall of the year 1882, John P. Millet and William McKay started a logging camp on the ground upon which now stands the small, but important, town of Burlington. The Millet and McKay logging camp was one of the most extensive logging companies in the Puget Sound basin. This company acquired fourteen hundred acres of land, on which they logged until 1887, filling orders for the Tacoma Mill Company. They got out the first large order given in this country for cedar timber. This order consisted of six hundred thousand feet of logs at five dollars and a half per thousand. Millet and McKay built the pioneer logging railway in Skagit County at their Burlington camp in August, 1883. This company introduced the use of donkey engines in handling logs in Skagit County and inaugurated the towing system upon the Skagit River. The "Alki," with McCall as captain, was the first steamer to tow rafts under their orders.

Little was done in the way of settlement of the land during the period when timber and logging were the chief industries. It was not until the closing days of the year 1890 that Mr. McKay plotted the town site, recording his plot on New Year's Day, 1891.

In the winter of 1899-1, the first saw mill was erected by T. L. Fox. In 1891 Dale and Company manufactured the first shingles, using a threshing machine engine for power. At about this time the first business building, which was a saloon operated by Burton and Son, was established on the southeast corner of Ancortes and Fairhaven Avenue. This building burned down on Christman night, 1896. In the same year, 1891, the first post-office at Burlington was established with T. G. Wilson as postmaster.

If we could turn back a few pages in history to the year 1891 and walk down the streets of Burlington, we would find a number of new buildings, some completed and some just being built. One of the most notable buildings, not quite completed, is a large two-story building on Orange Street. The lower floor in this building is to be used for a school room, and the upper floor for a hall. This building is now standing on Fairhaven Avenue, and is better known to us as Maccabee's Hall. The Sedro Mercantile Company has just established itself in the two-story building formerly occupied by Joe Woods and Company. The proprietors are the Poulson brothers. The Rowley House, which is a fine two-story building, is located on Fairhaven Avenue with A. Rowley proprietor. On the same avenue Mr. Rowley is just completing another two-story building which will be used for a billiard hall and his entire business will be run strictly on a temperance basis. The Burlington House on Anacortes Avenue is a two-story building with

W. A. Gould, manager, Opposite the Burlington House is Shaughnessy's Restaurant with Thomas Shaughnessy proprietor. Next is the Pioneer Store, proprietor T. G. Wilson, which carries a large stock of general merchandise. F. W. Weideman has a hardware store on Orange street, just west of Anacortes Avenue. The first meat market was built in 1891 and operated by John Deneke and Brother.

The railroad has played an important part in the rapid development of the town of Burlington. In the summer of 1890, the first railroad train passed through Burlington over the Seattle and Northern railway. The Great Northern was just a mere shack which was erected the following year at the Orange Avenue crossing. A few years later, the depot which had stood at Bellville, two miles north of Burlington, and on the line of the Great Northern, was moved to Burlington. This building was later burned and the present depot was erected. The first depot of the Seattle and Northern was erected in 1890 and stood at the crossing of Anacortes Avenue.

By the year 1904, Burlington could boast its shingle mills, which were capable of turning out 220,000 shingles per diem. The O. L. Bridgeman mill was established in 1901 and had a daily capacity of 60,000 shingles. The Burlington,

Electric Company's mill was established in 1894 by local people and had a capacity of 60,000 shingles daily. In connection with this last plant, of which I. J. Howe was the manager, there was operating an electric plant which cost \$10,000 and which furnished public and private lighting.

Burlington had an opera house with a seating capacity of several hundred. This opera house was located in the building where the doctors' offices are now.

The Skagit State Bank was opened in May, 1905. The Burlington Journal was established in 1899 by H. L. Bowner and Son but in the year 1905 it passed into the hands of Thomas Howe.

A list of the leading establishments of Burlington up until about the year 1906 would include the following: hotels: The Northern with C. H. Harpst as proprietor; The Traveler's Home, built in 1903 with Orson Pease as proprietor, and the Ludin House, operated by Albert Ludin; lodgin houses: Mrs. Madge Worfield and Thomas Shaughnessy; general stores: J. F. Schilder, established in 1900, F. W. Weideman, established in 1891 and now dealing in paints, oils, and house furnishing, in addition to the original hardware business, and J. H. Knutzen and Son, who succeeded to the business of E. K. Barmard in September, 1901, confectionary stores: Harry Knutzen, Otto Engbaum, Chamberlain and Company, and Mrs. Ada Rusk, meat marketes: Burton and Knutzen and Ebeling Brothers; barber shops: E. M.

Simpson and J. O. Forst; tailor: A. Lindbergh; drug store: A. E. Henry, established in June, 1903; physician: Dr. Fred S. Schacht; attorney-at-law: George D. Greene; dry goods: W. F. Schacht; millinery: Mrs. John Doughty; bicycle shop: E. Reno with E. A. Tucher as manager; racket store: J. B. Koch; Blacksmith: J. W. Clark; contractor and lumber dealer: R. H. Hopkins; and there were also three saloons.

Since the time when the first business houses were established, changes have been made in the character and importance of the thoroughfares of Burlington. At one time Orange Street seemed destined to be the leading business street of Burlington, but it had to give way to Anacortes Avenue, which in turn saw the greatest business actually transferred to Fairhaven avenue. At the close of the year 1891, there were probably not over three hundred people in Burlington, but later, settlers arrived in the surrounding country, transportation facilities opened up, and people knew that Burlington had come to stay. Thus "the history of Burlington has been one of steady and conservative advancement."

A list of the leading establishments of Burlington today numbers about seventy-six business concerns and includes approximately the following; eight grocery stores, two meat markets, a bakery, two electric stores, five clothing stores (one just being built), three beauty parlors, two telephone offices, four hotels, nine garages, a shoe repair shop, a paint shop, two dentists' offices, two doctor's offices, a

cannery, a Darigold plant, six restaurants, four barber shops, two lumber companies, a hardware store, a hospital, a newspaper, two plumbing shops (one just being started), three real-estate offices, prospects of a shingle mill, and no saloons.

Burlington has grown from one shingle mill into a booming third class town. Nine new businesses have been started in the last twelve months and only one has closed. The number of business concerns has increased about eleven per cent since last year, and about fifty-eight per cent were operating under the same proprietors ten years ago as they are today.

The pioneers had to go through many hardships in order to start the town of Burlington and we should all appreciate their virtues and sacrifices.

BUSINESS SURVEY

There are more businesses in Burlington than most people realize. Investigation show that there are 76 in town. This is an increase of 11 per cent over the number here a year ago, Jan. 1, 1936, when there were but 68. Nine entirely new businesses have entered the town in the last twelve months, while only one of the old ones closed out. This would indicate that Burlington is enjoying the same return of prosperity that is general throughout the country. Five years ago 49, or 64 per cent, and ten years ago 44, or 58 per cent, of the present 76 business units were here open under the same proprietors. This does not mean that there were but 49, or 44 businesses in here at that time; there were more, but this indicates permanency of the 64 and 58 per cent, respectively, of the present concerns.

There are 349 people employed by the above concerns (this includes owners if they work in their concern). Two hundred fifty-eight, or 74 per cent, are men; 65, or 18 per cent, are women; and 26 or 8 percent, have regular part time work in the Burlington stores and shops. The number of those employed full time is 323. Seventy nine per cent, or 258, are men and 21 per cent, or 65, of the regularly employed are women.

Last year there were but 318, including part time workers, employed in Burlington stores, which means and increase of 9 per cent in employment in the last year. There were 226 men employed a year ago as compared with the 258 now working. There are fewer women working now (65) than a year ago when 70 were

employed, which probably indicates that with the improving times the women are leaving employment for the home. There were 20 part time employees a year ago as compared with 26 today, which is an additional indication of increasing business.

Three hundred twenty-five (some of this group work out of the city) who were known to be employed now and a year ago were interviewed. Of this 325, 217 were employed in the same job a year ago. One hundred eight were in different positions. This means that the labor turnover for Burlington workers was 33 per cent. This certainly is an additional proof of prosperous times in this locality. A small labor turnover is an indication of quiet times in the business world.