

Footprints Through the Sands of Time

The Copalis Lumber Company at Carlisle, Washington

Byline: Kelly Calhoun, Executive Director/Curator of Museum of the North Beach

Carlisle was a company mill town located six miles east of Pacific Beach along the line of the Northern Pacific Railway from Hoquiam to Moclips. Articles of Incorporation were filed in May 1913 by George W. Pennell and William Carlisle of Kansas.

The town was named Carlisle and the corporation established the Copalis Lumber Company located next to the Copalis River on Ocean Beach Road. The mill, considered a model of its time, opened in June 1914 after months of construction. The Copalis Lumber Company employed hundreds of workers, many of whom were Chinese or Japanese who lived in company housing. The population was about 600 with around 450 men who were employed. The mill workers were paid with tokens in denominations from five cents to five dollars. This mill town was considered one of the best and cleanest in the region.

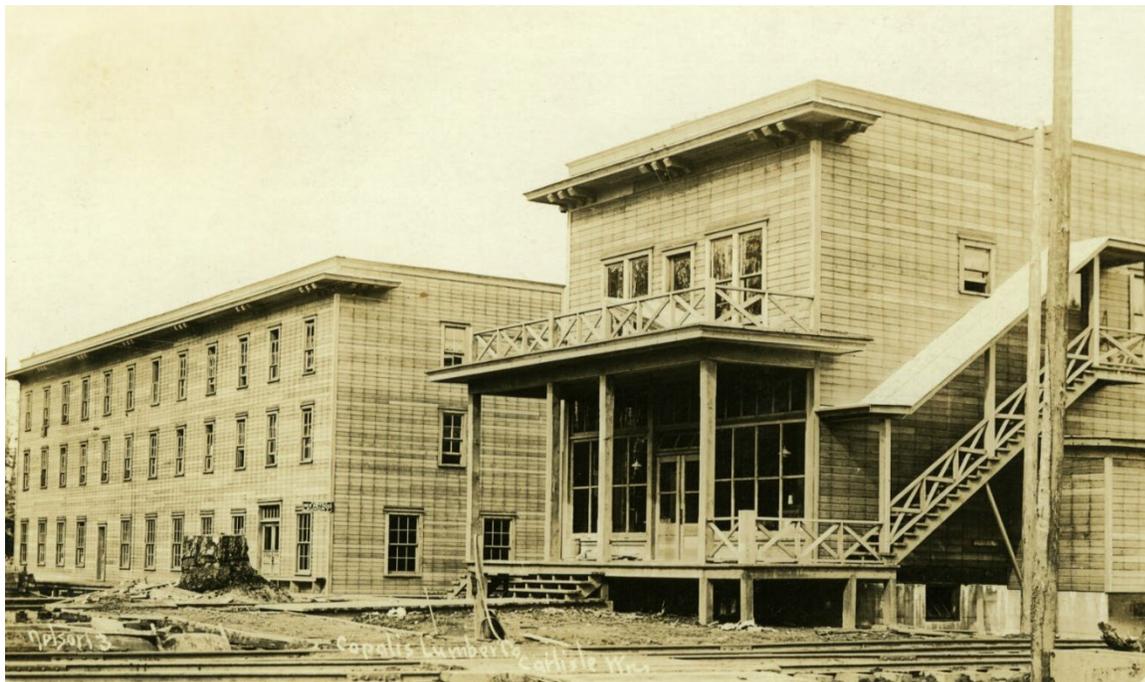
The town consisted of a company store, three-story hotel, school, theater, bank, billiard and pool hall, dancing pavilion, cigar and soft drink establishment, and an athletic field for the men to play baseball and football. Of all the local mills that operated for decades, the Copalis Lumber Company had a very short life. A fire on July 30, 1923, less than ten years in operation, completely destroyed the mill and it was decided that it would not be rebuilt.

Today, two vaults can be seen along Ocean Beach Road. One was for the bank and the other was inside the company store. Also viewable is a three-story stone and masonry structure that for decades, was hidden in the dense forest. The trees have been recently cleared and this remnant of the Copalis Lumber Company is partially visible from the highway.

(five photos ahead)



Ink Blotter of the Copalis Lumber Company, Circa 1910s



Copalis Lumber Company Office, Store, and Three-Story Hotel, Circa 1910s



Vault from the Office Building



Bank Vault Hidden in the Brush on the Edge of a Deep Basement



Recently Exposed Three-Story Structure of the Copalis Lumber Company Mill