

Dismal Swamp Operations of Camp Manufacturing Company and The Franklin and Carolina Railroad

By Clifford A. Hedgepeth, Jr.

On May 2, 1944, The Franklin and Carolina Railroad was incorporated. It was wholly owned by Camp Manufacturing Company but was chartered by the Interstate Commerce Commission as a common carrier.

The main purpose of the line was to connect Camp's Franklin paper mill and sawmill with the Atlantic Coast Line, in what was then Nansemond County.

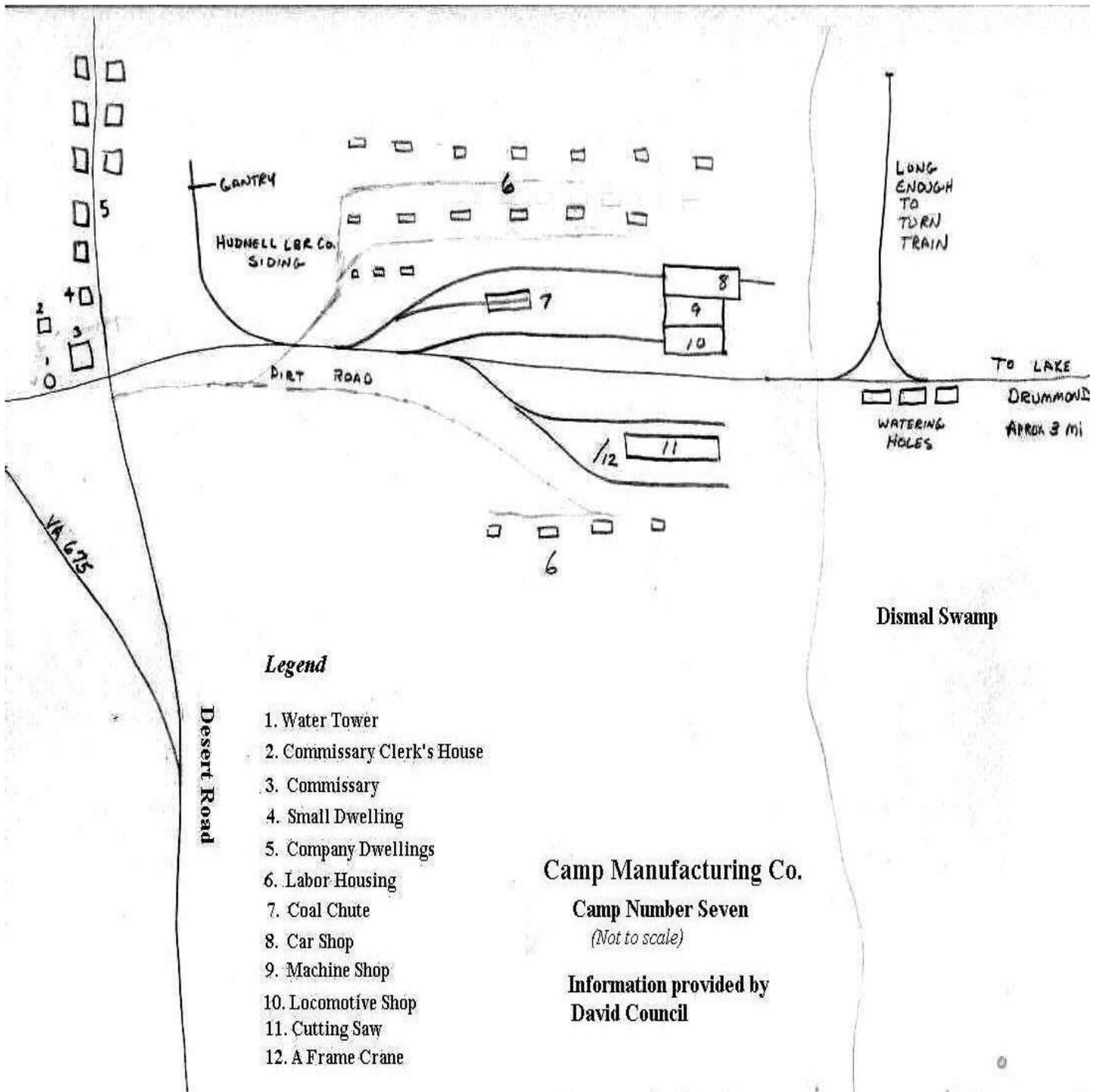
Construction was made over right of way that had been used to haul logs from the swamp after the Norfolk Southern abandoned its Suffolk line. The connection was made just south of Harrell's Siding and north of Whaley Station at a place called Franklin Junction.

Originally the line had continued across the ACL to Camp 7 on Desert Road at what is now called the Railroad Ditch. Camp 7 had been moved in 1937 from its location at the Jerico Ditch because of the abandonment of the NS line. From Camp 7 the line continued on to Lake Drummond, with branches into the swamp for logging.

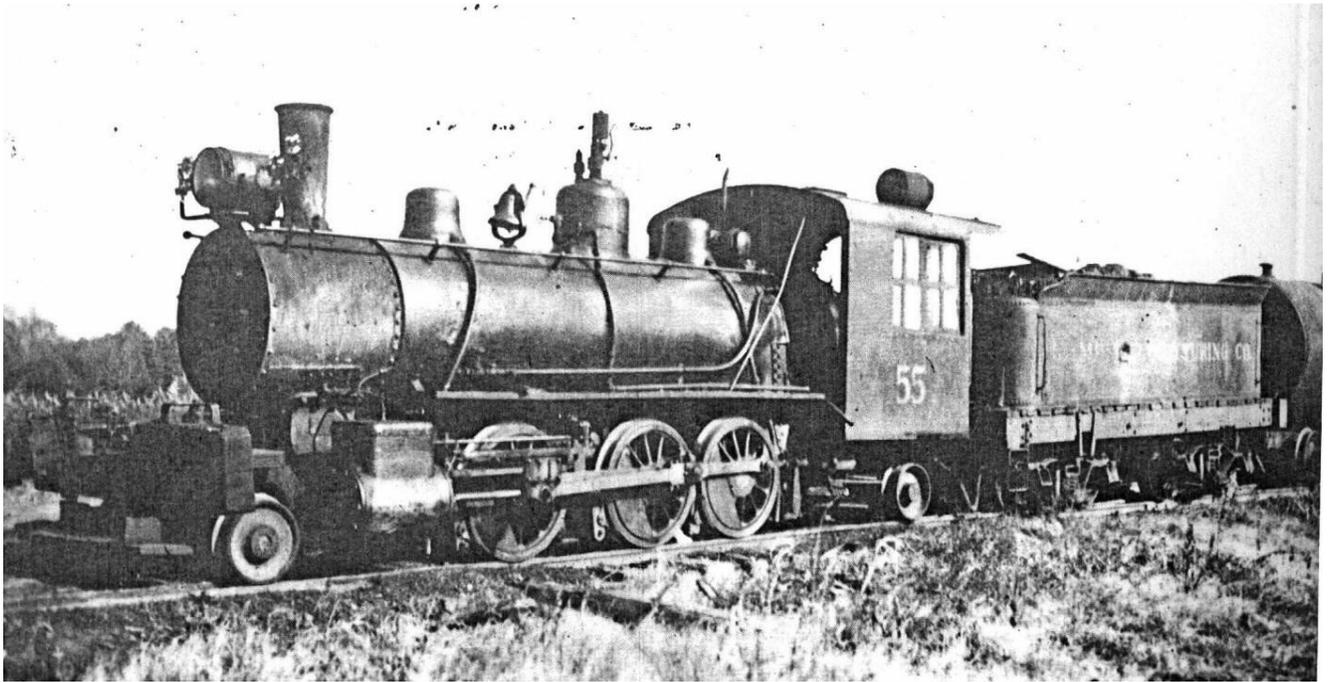
The track east of Franklin Junction was abandoned, along with Camp 7 a few years later when logging operations ceased in the Dismal Swamp.



In a lot of places, logs were placed crosswise and the track laid on them as the peat bog didn't provide a firm bed for the track. 2-6-2 #55 shown here. International Paper Photo



Map of Camp 7 provided by David Council



#55 the Dismal Swamp engine Richard Prince photo



Log train pulling into Camp 7 from swamp International Paper Photo

Primary inbound traffic to Franklin consisted of logs, pulpwood, fuel oil, coal and chemicals - all necessary items for the production of lumber and paper.

Outgoing traffic was paper, lumber, tall oil (a byproduct of paper making used in the manufacturing of cosmetics) and wood pulp. In addition the incoming and outgoing traffic, a great deal of mill switching was done at Franklin, where connections were made with the Atlantic and Danville and Seaboard were made.

While Camp had in its employ several engineers, The Franklin and Carolina only had one that was licensed to handle interstate traffic, Moody Way and one fireman, Eugene Fogan. They had to run all the trains that carried interchange traffic. Mr. Way had come from South Carolina where he had spent a number of years as an engineer. He even brought his whistle with him. He would move it from locomotive to locomotive until it was stolen. He once told me, "I'll keep on railroading until I find my whistle".

Motive power consisted of two steam engines, #30 a Baldwin 2-6-2, and #23, a Baldwin 4-6-0, and two Whitcomb 60 ton diesel-electric switchers, 100 and 110, purchased from the U. S. Army. Mr. Way ran 110 and 30 while mill engineer George Ivey ran #100 and #23. The 110 was originally numbered 8000 but was changed to 110 shortly after delivery. 100 and 110 were painted silver and green. They originally had Buda diesel engines but were changed to 375hp GM diesels in the 1950's.

Some time in the early 50's, the steam engines were sold for scrap.



Moody Way with the 30 International Paper Photo



George Ivey and 100..... International Paper Photo

Sand was provided about 2 miles west of Franklin, near the northern end of what is now the large aeration pond, or "C" pond and water was provided at several points along the way. Water was added mostly with syphon pumps from watering holes. Coal and diesel fuel was at Franklin.

Rolling stock consisted of a large number of log and pulpwood cars.

In 1958, the decision was made to sell the line to the Atlantic Coast Line and the Franklin and Carolina ceased to exist. The Whitcomb diesels were disposed of and locomotive cranes handled mill switching, along with the railroads that served the mill. In 1967, the Seaboard and Atlantic Coast line merged to form the SCL. The Franklin line was no longer needed as the Seaboard line already came to the mill. In 1972, the track was removed from just south of the mill to Franklin Junction.

Today International Paper has a large rail yard, in Franklin and switching is handled by a contractor.

The right of way still remains in a lot of places but is rapidly being reclaimed by nature.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the public relations department of International Paper for providing much of the information. I would also like to thank the late Mr. Moody Way and the late Mr. David Council for providing most of the information about actual operation. This story is dedicated to their memory.

Bibliography

FitzGerald, H. H., *History of Camp Manufacturing Company*, Camp Manufacturing Company, 1955.

Interviews with Mr. Moody Way and Mr. David Council.