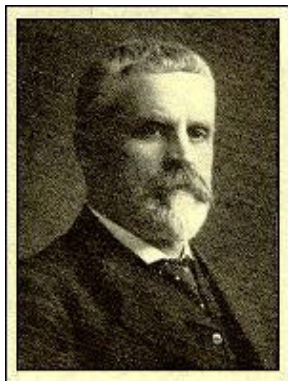

MARSHFIELD NEWS-HERALD

THE HISTORY OF RODDIS PLYWOOD CORPORATION GIVEN

Highlites from the History of the Roddis Plywood Corporation was the subject of a talk given by August Roddis to the Northwood County Historical Society.

The Roddis enterprise was the largest employer in Marshfield for about 40 years and the second largest for about 26 years before that so its influence on the history of Marshfield are significant.



W.H. Roddis

W.H. Roddis came to Marshfield in 1894 to invest in and assume the direction of the Hatteberg Veneer Company, founded in 1890 by A.K. Hatteberg, a former Upham Manufacturing Company employee, and in four years was in serious financial difficulty.

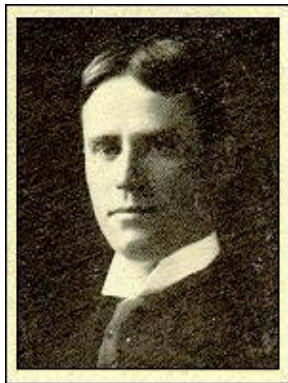
W.H. Roddis was able to effect almost immediate improvement in the fortunes of the Hatteberg Veneer Company but his efforts received a decided setback by a fire in April of 1897 which destroyed the main plant. At that point Hatteberg and another stockholder were relieved to sell out to Roddis who then changed the name of the company to Roddis Veneer Company. The new and improved plant built by Roddis which started operating just two months after the first plant was destroyed was so successful that in 1899, it made \$30,000, a huge sum in those days.

One of the far reaching decisions W.H. Roddis made for the company was to upgrade its products. He recognized that the abundance of valuable hardwood species in the area - birch, maple, oak, basswood and elm - demanded a higher end product than the cheese boxes and butter tubs that were a large component of Hatteberg's products, so as soon as it was possible he began producing more plywood and eventually doors.

The Roddis Company did not invent the flush door (a flat slab door) but was the first to recognize its potential and to manufacture it on a large scale.

The flush door was almost an immediate success as architects recognized its superiority for hotels, hospitals, schools and apartment buildings. The Roddis Company made a national reputation on the excellence of its flush doors. It also made a fine reputation on its custom-made plywood. In 1903, the company went into the manufacture of lumber to utilize trees that were not sufficiently high-grade for veneer and that established a lumber mill at Park Falls and also one in Marshfield.

Fire struck again in 1907 with the destruction of both the Marshfield and Park Falls plants within two weeks of each other, but they were quickly replaced by new plants and the business was again flourishing in a short time. The following year W.H. Roddis was elected mayor of Marshfield. During both World Wars the Marshfield plant was largely devoted to producing materials for the war effort. During World War II it was making interior plywood and doors for the Liberty ships and aircraft plywood for the famous British Mosquito Bomber a reconnaissance plane whose lite frame was made entirely of wood and powerful Rolls Royce engines which enabled it to fly higher and faster than any German plane.



Hamilton Roddis

After graduating from law school, in 1899, and seriously considering a career in law, Hamilton Roddis, the son of W.H. Roddis, yielded to the pleas of his father and joined the company permanently in the fall of that year. Hamilton Roddis assumed the presidency in 1920, after the death of W.H. Roddis, and headed the company until his own death in 1960. By that time the company had 1,000 local employees, 25 warehouses and sales outlets throughout the country, had expanded into Canada, and had annual sales of more than \$59,000,000. The company was merged into Weyerhaeuser in August of 1960.

Thus the firm started by A.K. Hatteberg in 1890 has existed for more than 100 years, four under Hatteberg, three years under joint Roddis-Hatteberg ownership, 63 years under Roddis family alone and 31 years under Weyerhaeuser.

MARSHFIELD NEWS-HERALD *April 29, 1897*

THE VENEER PLANT IN ASHES BURNED TUESDAY MORNING

A Spark on the Roof Starts the Maze and Inside of an Hour All is Burned to the Ground

One of Marshfield's best manufacturing industries is lying in ashes. The veneer factory was burned to the ground on Tuesday morning and besides the great loss to members of the company, some 100 hands are thrown out of employment, at least temporarily.

The alarm of fire was turned in from the factory at about 4 o'clock in the morning, fire department and citizens generally responding promptly. It was impossible however to make any headway against the flames as the fire had quickly spread over the entire factory and the dry condition of everything made all like cinder before the fiery element. In the short space of a few minutes all was one roaring sweltering maze of fire which nothing could stain it its devouring program. The morning was a quiet one hardly a breeze perceptible and then fortunately made it possible to save the block of logs, the office and several warehouses. The factory itself was totally destroyed. Inside of an hour it all burned to the ground. Considerable stock was in the building but nothing could be saved. The only salvage will be in the boiler and engine room, which was a solid brick structure, but the loss will be heavy as the fire came into the openings and did considerable damage to the large engines and ruined the structure itself.

The origin of the fire is supposed to have been from a spark falling on the roof near the smoke stack. When discovered there was a small blaze on the roof near the stack, but before a stream could be turned on it had spread so quickly that it became at once apparent that the plant was doomed. A night crew of five hands were at work in the factory at the time.

Manager W.H. Roddis was in Chicago at the time of the fire and only reached home yesterday morning. When seen by a News reporter, he said that he was unable as yet to give any price and could not say whether the plant would be rebuilt or not. The factory has been doing a nice business and he was looking forward to a good run of work. An exceptionally large stock of logs had been purchased the past winter and Mr. Roddis had calculated to increase the force upon returning from his business trip.

It is sincerely, hoped by everyone that the plant will be rebuilt. It was one of the best factories in the city, giving employment to a force at times numbering 70 hands. The plant was built in 1891, but it was not until Mr. Roddis became interested and took the management that it developed to the important position it had among our industries. By his personal effort he made a success out of what seemed a lacking undertaking. Not to rebuild the plant would be the lowest blow to the city it has had in years.

Mr. Roddis could not say exactly what the total loss would be, but it will probably be over \$20,000.00 Insurance carried on the whole plant was \$14,000.00. It will probably be some days before the loss can be adjusted by the insurance companies and until that time definite plans for the future will probably not be adopted. The principal stockholders in the concern are W.H. Roddis, Ernest Schmidt and R.K. Hatteberg.

MARSHFIELD NEWS-HERALD

PLANT HISTORY

The original manufacturing plant used by the Roddis Company was built in 1891 by Mr. A.K. Hatteberg. As depicted in a photograph published from time to time in the Marshfield News-Herald, it was a small one-story building. It started out as a veneer cutting operation and produced butter tubs and cheese boxes with an initial crew of 20. The work week was 6 days long with 10 hour days. Skilled workers received \$2.50 per day, but the average rate of pay for men was \$1.50 per day. Boys took home \$1.00 per day.

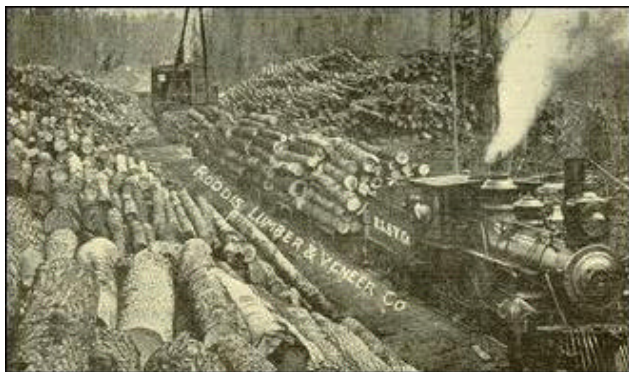
Lack of capital was the main concern, until late in March of 1894 when Mr. William H. Roddis came to the rescue. Under his management the firm that was near bankruptcy took on a new lease in life. It turned toward veneer specialties, such as panels for beds, desks, etc., and was flexible enough to meet any veneer order.

The mill then employed 55 people, doing business amounting to about \$100,000 a year, until the fateful day of April 20, 1897, when the plant was completely destroyed by fire which presumably was started by a spark from the smokestack.

The ruins of the plant were still smoldering when the stockholders met and ordered the immediate rebuilding. The new plant rose from the debris and was running by June 23, 1897. For fire control, the new building was rebuilt with a sprinkler system, kegs of water on the roof ridges. At this time Mr. William H. Roddis was named President and the firm's name was changed to Roddis Veneer Company.

In 1907 the 10-year old plant was destroyed by the second fire to hit the company's manufacturing facilities, and once again an entirely new plant was built, this time a four story structure. The latest addition before Weyerhaeuser took over to this old plant was made in 1955.

In 1908 the company produced the first solid core doors. During World Wars I and II, the plant manufactured airplane plywood, including plywood for the famed British Mosquito Bomber, doors, and other wood products. Among the latter were bulkheads for the Liberty Ships of World War II. Roddis supplied one-half the wood products required by this country and its allies, England and France, during these wars. At least 90% of the production of the Marshfield plant during World War II was devoted to the war effort.



Twenty-eight thousand acres of timber reserves, traversed with fifteen miles of railroads; saw mill, planing and veneer mills; largest and best equipped veneering plant in the world; three hundred employees in the veneering and flush door departments (c.1913)

In August 1969, Weyerhaeuser purchased the Roddis Plywood Corporation, continuing with the traditional products. The veneer and door fabrication mills made the following: (at that time there were 750 employees)

Particle Core Doors
 Stave Core Doors
 Hollow Core Doors
 Mineral Core - Fire Retardant Doors
 Hardwood Plywood, including pre-finished plywood called Roddincraft

Special: X-Ray, Lead Lined Doors
 Sound Retardant Doors
 Architectural (i.e. custom made) plywood

In 1984 Weyerhaeuser committed itself to continue to be the leader in the Architectural Door Business. Major capital dollars were committed to new facilities that are providing a superior product and service to our customers.

MARSHFIELD NEWS-HERALD

HISTORY OF RODDIS LUMBER EMPIRE

Upham Employee Began Veneer Factory in 1890

Longtime Industrial Leader - For more than a generation Hamilton Roddis lead the industry which bore his name. He held the post of President of the Roddis Plywood Corporation until February 18, 1895 when he became Chairman of the Board. In failing health, he gave up daily trips to the office a few months before his death, which occurred in March 27, 1960. He was 84 years old.

Industrial Founder - Axel K. Hatteberg established the Hatteberg Veneer Co. here in 1891. Six years later it became the Roddis Veneer Co., and, as the Roddis Plywood Corporation, was sold to the Weyerhaeuser Company in 1960.

Benjamin Harrison was President of the United States and the Spanish American War was seven years in the future when the Hatteberg Veneer Company opened for business in 1891.

The company utilized a veneer cutter developed by its founder, which was the heart of the infant manufacturing co. He announced that a group of citizens were backing him in a new industry for Marshfield - a veneer factory which would use a cutting machine he had developed.

Hatteberg, an "old-country" Norwegian, was among the city's earliest settlers. When W. H. Upham and Frank R. Upham were busy purchasing machinery from the Marshfield Furniture Company early in 1882, Hatteberg was advising them as superintendent and foreman of the projected plant. That was only 10 years after Louis Rivers had established a log, 1-1/2 story structure, the first building on the site of what is now Marshfield.

There was a "veneering" machine in the Upham plant in 1882, and it was this machine which probably impelled the tinkering Hatteberg to build a better one in the factory's machine shop. He also perfected a veneer dryer.

But it was the veneer cutter of which the inventor was particularly proud. It was, he boasted, the largest in the country and capable of handling a log of 10 feet long and 4 feet in diameter.

The amount the mill needed for the venture would be about \$25,000 Hatteberg estimated.

And, he added, "with the veneer and drying machine which I have constructed, the veneer can be put on the market inside of 24 hours from the time of its manufacture."

After interesting neither the city nor the citizenry in providing a site for the factory, Hatteberg, in December, 1890, announced that he was going forward with his plans without assistance. At the same time he abandoned an effort to have the city fathers close their eyes to taxes until such time as the plant was on solid footing.

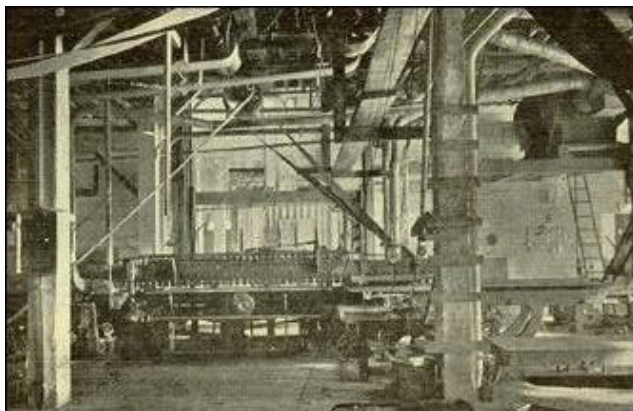
At an organization meeting April 3, 1891, stockholders elected Hatteberg president and Peter Prescott secretary and treasurer. The board of directors included Hatteberg, W.H. Upham and Henry Thuss.

By July, 1891, \$18,000 of the \$25,000 stock company, known as the Hatteberg Veneer Co., had been subscribed. A list of stock holders published at that time included in addition to the directors, John Prescott, Herman Kohrberg, A.B. Cole, John Cole and Thomas Norton.

Shortly after the Fourth of July work on the plant began with the crew of about 25 men headed by Thuss. Framing was supervised by George W. Bishop. The one description of the new plant, written after the foundation was laid says:

"The building will be 32 x 100 feet with two wings each 32 x 48 feet and one story high. It is mounted on a good stone foundation and will be substantially built throughout. A fine fireproof boiler and engine room, 32 x 32, will be added, spurs from several railroads will be built to the factory, giving the best shipping facilities available."

The same report saw a great future for the factory whose prospects were being hitched to the start of an increasingly popular industry.



View of plant showing one of three Linerman Dovetail Jointers. These machines are nearly fifty feet long and were said to be the finest wood working machines made.

"The use of veneer had made wonderful progress in the last 10 years and it is now one of the most stable articles on the market. It is used in the manufacture of nearly all kinds of furniture

and its use is found to be a great saving in expense.”

“Four thousand feet of logs will make 8,000 feet of veneer. This is used for panels, bureaus and a variety of other furniture.”

Hatteberg’s veneer machine was to be used but plans for his dryer apparently went by the wayside. “The dry kiln, which is 8 x 65 feet, is heated by one of the Sturdevant heaters, the hot air being conducted to its destination by tunnels.” The machinery will all be run from a line shaft 80 feet in length, the power being furnished by a 200 horsepower engine with two boilers.

Hatteberg’s veneer cutter, required the services of three men and two boys.

Marshfield was happy in its new industry. The work week was six days long and for a 10-hour stint skilled workmen got \$2.50 a day. The average rate of pay for men was \$1.50 per day, while boys took home \$1.00.

One of the first car loads of cheeseboxes produced in the spanking new plant went onto Illinois concern, which failed almost immediately after the carload’s arrival. The Hatteberg Veneer Co., early in its career, was holding the bag for \$1,500.

MARSHFIELD NEWS-HERALD

DE HAVILLAND MOSQUITO MKJ - 1941

Aircraft:	de Havilland Mosquito MKJ
Manufacturer:	de Havilland Aircraft Co. Ltd.
Type:	Reconnaissance
Year:	1941
Engine:	2 Rolls-Royce Merlin XXI, 12-cylinder Y. Liquid-cooled, 1,250 h.p. each
Wingspan:	54 feet, 2 inches
Length:	40 feet, 6 inches
Height:	15 feet, 3 inches
Weight:	19,200 lbs.
Maximum Speed:	380 mph at 17,000 feet
Ceiling:	28,800 feet
Range:	1,370 miles
Armament:	-----
Crew:	2

Very few planes managed to be successful as reconnaissance aircraft, fighters, and bombers. The de Havilland Mosquito was one of the best in all three roles. It may have been the most versatile combat plane built during World War II. In the photo-reconnaissance model, it carried no armament. Its speed and high operational altitude made it almost invulnerable to enemy attack. The bomber version of the plane was the fastest Bomber Command and was replaced only in 1951, by the twin-jet English Electric Canberra. As a long-range fighter the Mosquito was equally effective in daylight and night missions, and it was a match for the German night fighters as well as for the V-1 and V-2 flying bombs. Between 1941 and 1950 a total of 6,439 Mosquitoes were built in Great Britain in a dozen models and 1,342 were built in Canada and Australia. This plane’s success seems even more striking when one considers that it was built entirely of wood.

De Havilland began the Mosquito project in 1938. It was an original concept, to develop a

bomber-reconnaissance plane that needed no defensive armament, one that relied totally on speed to elude the enemy. The authorities were not immediately receptive to the idea, but they finally accepted the project in 1939. The prototype of the new lite bomber first took to the air on November 25, 1940. It had been built in great secrecy in less than a year. From its initial appearance, the Mosquito created considerable enthusiasm because of its maneuverability and high speed. During test flites it reached about 400 mph. The first prototype was soon followed by two others. The fighter version made its first flite on May 15, 1941, and the reconnaissance version began its tests on June 10.

The Mosquito was a slender and elegant two-engine monoplane powered by a pair of Rolls-Royce Merlin engines housed in streamlined nacelles. Armament varied according to the model. The MK.IV bomber carried 2,000 pounds of bombs, while the MK.VI fighter-bomber carried four 20-MM cannons and four machine guns. The Coastal Command MK.VI's carried rockets instead. The Mosquito's success was due to a combination of factors, including the design concept which resulted in the smallest fuselage compatible with the two Merlin engines, the carefully studied aerodynamic lines, and the favorable weight-to-power ratio.

The first Mosquito to go into service was the reconnaissance model. On September 20, 1941, a MKJ flying a daylight mission over France quickly confirmed the validity of the concept that had given birth to the project. Attached by three Messerschmitt FB.109s, the Mosquito easily outflaw them at 23,000 feet. The first MK.IV bomber went into service in May, 1941, at almost the same time as the MK.F1 night fighter. These first three models generated other, improved models. Later reconnaissance planes were almost always based on the bomber models: The MK.IV was the origin of the five MK.VIIIs, while the MK.IX and MK.XVI bombers gave rise to similar reconnaissance models. The Mosquito MK.IX, the second main bomber version, appeared in the spring of 1943. It had more powerful engines than its immediate predecessor (1,680 h.p.) a higher ceiling, and 50 percent greater bomb capacity. Of the bombers, the largest production series was the MK.XVI, which appeared late in 1943. About 1,200 of these aircraft were built. This model had a pressurized cabin, which allowed it to reach an altitude of 40,000 feet, its bomb load was 4,000 pounds.

After 466 Mosquito MK.I. fighters had been built, two other models were produced: The MK.XII, which appeared in March 1943 (97 aircraft) and the MK.XIII, which appeared in February, 1944 (230 aircraft), because of the Mosquito's great success a fighter-bomber was also developed. This was the Mosquito MK.VI, the largest production series of all. About 2,500 aircraft were built. The prototype of this model was a MK.II modified to carry-in addition to its heavy fighter armament-two 250-pound bombs inside the fuselage and two under the wings. After the first 300 aircraft came off the production line, the bomb load was doubled.
