

4. Central California Dry Kiln Club

"Devices and Procedures that aid in Lumber Drying"

Aids in Loading and Unloading Track-Type Kilns

By John Owens, Winton Lumber Company, Martell, Calif.

I wish to speak briefly on two practices that have proven practical in loading and unloading track type kilns.

We are all familiar with the use of a power winch on an electric-or gas-powered transfer car. The power winch and cable can be used in both single-end and double-end kiln installations. Splitting and breakage of the lumber sometimes occurs where the cable is hooked to the load.

At the Winton Lumber Company in Martell, Calif., we have developed and are using a guard to help minimize this end splitting and breakage of lumber in the crib or load when the power winch cable is hooked to the load and the power applied. The guard is fabricated from a section of standard 5.4 pound per foot, 4" channel iron, 24" long, bent at a 90° angle 2" from each end. The sides of the channel are removed from the ends. In use, the tool is hooked over a course of lumber on the end of the crib so that the lower angle is under the bottom course of lumber. The cable is then hooked to the load at the desired height where the best support can be expected. The cable is then placed in the channel so it follows down and under the load. This is done by the transfer car operator.

We will now have some pictures to help you visualize the tool and its use.

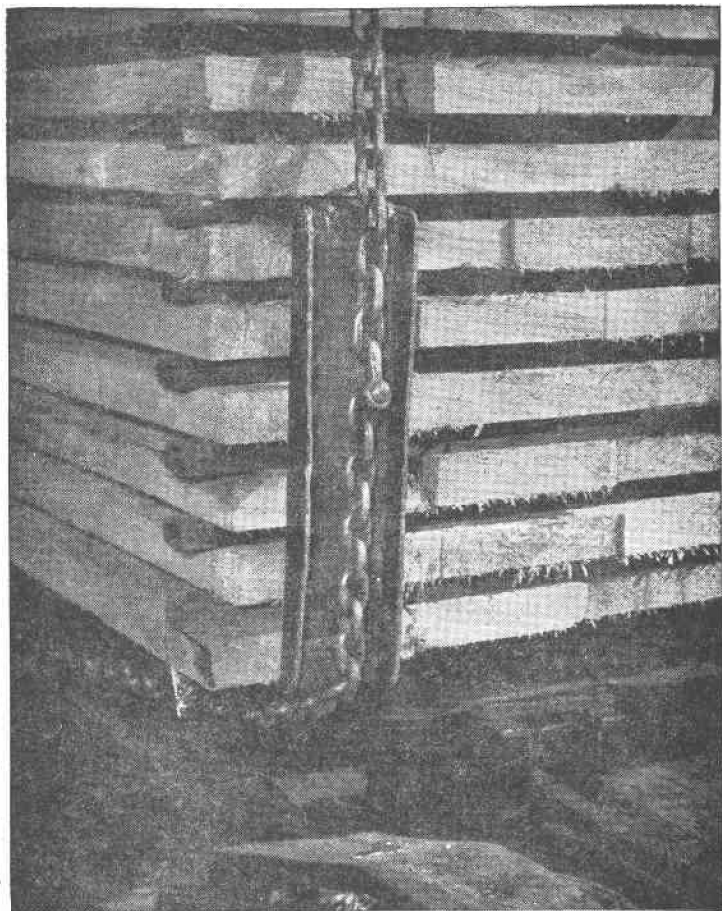
The cost of this small "crutch," as my boys like to call it, is insignificant.

The material can be purchased for \$1.00 or less and the labor requirement is approximately the same. A close estimate of the savings realized from reduced lumber splitting and breakage is \$125.00 per year, which is not bad for a \$2.00 investment.

We are also familiar with the use of a fork lift for motive power in loading and unloading track-type kilns. Let us now consider an aid or tool the Western Dry Kiln Company in Oakland, Calif. developed and uses with success to assist them in loading and unloading their track type kilns. It is a rectangular block of concrete 55" x 59" x 30" high and weighing just over 4 tons. Stirrups or pockets were cast on the underside of the block. These pockets are 6" high, 8" wide, and spaced 47" apart center to center to accommodate the forks of the lift. When kiln bunks of lumber are to be pushed into the kiln, the fork lift operator picks up this fabricated block to aid in moving the loads into the kilns. The block furnishes a flat surface or face to contact the ends of the boards in the load. The principal benefits are less end damage to the lumber and greater traction for the lift truck, thus enabling it to move more footage at one time. The block is also used on the lift to push or switch railroad cars in the yard. Besides the added traction, the concrete block protects the forks of the lift in pushing against the car. Previously, the metal-to-metal contact between the forks and the car had resulted in damage to the forks. The following pictures were taken of this block at the yard of the Western Dry Kiln Company.

This block contains two yards of concrete. The cost of the concrete and the form was approximately \$35.00. Although the savings have not been accurately computed, it is easy to visualize the value of this relatively simple tool.

I am certain that you men here in this room know of numerous other practical aids in loading and unloading track type kilns, as well as aids for other phases of the lumber seasoning. Wider application of these aids will result in a marked improvement in the lumber industry as a whole. We must have a happy mixture of this practical knowledge with technical knowledge to achieve our ultimate goal of better lumber at the lowest possible cost.



Steel guard to protect bottom courses of lumber when pulling a kiln charge.