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Cody August Vrba  
CSUSB

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**Book Review: When Money Grew on Trees: A.B. Hammond and the Age of the Timber Baron. By Greg Gordon. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press: 2014.**

In *When Money Grew on Trees: A.B. Hammond and the Age of the Timber Baron*, Greg Gordon explores the transformation of land, labor, and lumber in the West, during the life of lumberman Andrew Benoni Hammond. Gordon shows Hammond to be a pervasive figure successfully riding the tides of change. The many periods of Hammond's life reflect his ability to develop modern business practices, while retaining ideas about business developed during his youth. Successfully transitioning from frontier capitalism to modern incorporation, Hammond moves across the country with the lumber industry on the forefront of development in the west. From his childhood in New Brunswick to his amassing one of the largest concentrations of timberlands in the country, Gordon characterizes Hammond's journey from lumberjack to lumber baron through the resource-based conflicts that Hammond fought to his final days. Gordon uses the company records and personal information to create a portrait of not only an individual, but a time.

Gordon often reflects on the environments that fostered Hammond's thoughts and motivations. Hammond's upbringing in New Brunswick, Canada sets the stage for later developments in his life. The early shapers of Hammond's life were his family library and his maternal grandfather, Leonard Coombes, who would act as an early mentor to Hammond as he lost his father early in life. Gordon points to Coombes Anglo-Saxon Protestant influence as a central pillar to Hammond's success, due to the extolment of values such as saving and investment over spending. Gordon states, "By the time he was sixteen, Andrew had exhausted the family library that consisted of the Bible, the *Works of Shakespeare*, *Pilgrims Progress*, and Alexander Kinglake's *Invasion of the Crimea*." The books are a massive insight into the man Hammond would become. The Hammonds valued education and were bilingual, speaking English and French. Hammond would capitalize upon this many times during his life. Even after moving toward modern corporate practices, Hammond would hire his New Brunswick relatives as a trustworthy staff.

Hammond's family history is used by Gordon to give insight into his willingness to completely ignore property ownership. Gordon uses the Hammonds and Coombes to explore the culture of New Brunswick at the time and how this shaped Hammond. Gordon typifies the culture of New Brunswick as one of farmers that sold lumber on the side to provide capital. The idea of natural resources as a commons developed in New Brunswick allowing poaching timber to emerge as an acceptable

practice. The economy of the area being dependent on a single commodity, however, led to cycles of boom and bust that were noticed by the young Hammond and would shape his business practices for the rest of his life.

Armed with a love of poetry and Napoleon, a strong Protestant work ethic, and a disregard for ownership, Hammond leaves home at sixteen for the logging camps of Maine. Transitioning mentors following his grandfather's death to his eldest brother George, Hammond does not stay in Maine long leaving for the gold fields of Montana. Here the dream of gold enters the mix creating a drive toward the accumulation of wealth. Gordon discusses Andrew Hammond's separation from his brother as his first test of his individual abilities. As the dream of gold falls short, George continues on while Hammond stays on looking for other means of acquiring wealth. Hammond becomes a "woodhawk," chopping lumber and trapping. Gordon describes the practices of the woodhawks. Woodhawks would often kill a buffalo and then using a porcupine quill dipped in strychnine poison the corpse. Gathering forty or so of such traps in an area the woodhawks would then leave and return for the more valuable pelts of wolves that thought they found an easy meal. The issues that arose from such actions as these put Hammond and other woodhawks into conflict with indigenous peoples that resented such the wholesale cutting of their trees and killing of their game. After narrowly avoiding death during raids by local peoples Hammond leaves for the area around Missoula Montana.

In Montana Hammond flirted with many occupations, finally finding a new role model in his future business partner Edward Bonner. Hammond becomes a clerk in the local mercantile shop owned by Eddy and Bonner. Within a few years of his straightforward dealings with others, Hammond, would become a partner in the mercantile shop. Gordon also looks deeply into Hammond's diverse investments in businesses throughout the Missoula valley. Hammond in attempting to avoid the booms and busts that he saw in his childhood would often diversify his investments into many fields. Gordon points to the over extension of individuals around Hammond and their eventual ruin, as leading Hammond to always maintain reserves and pay back bonds before releasing dividends. Hammond's safe practices are shown by Gordon to be the cause of his rise in times where others fell. Hammond invested into railroads and lumber heavily while maintaining the mercantile as a secure line of credit for his investments. Hammond would often grow during periods where others contracted buying up businesses during economic downturns. Gordon evaluates Hammonds slow accumulation of lumber lands, mills, and railroads as the foundation for his empire stretching out of Montana eventually dominating the lumber industry in Oregon, California, and parts of Arizona.

Gordon explores Hammond as an important figure in the development of infrastructure in the Western United States, noting the importance of regionally economically important individuals as the developers of railroads and resource infrastructure. In exploring Hammond Gordon explores the development of the lumber yards and mines that allowed for the construction of the great rail systems of the west. Gordon uses Hammond's promotion of anti-union ideals throughout the areas he worked within to show a greater movement of ideological stratification within the greater United States. Gordon shows Hammond's ties to individuals like C.P. Huntington who would be major figures in Hammond's later life. Fighting unionization within Humboldt County, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and throughout Oregon Hammond hired strikebreakers, opposing any reform to address labor concerns. Often Hammond would fight other lumber companies, the government, and native peoples over access to resources within a region. Hammond would fight accusations of timber poaching and land fraud throughout his life often using political maneuvering to avoid prosecution and fines. Gordon uses these instances of Hammond's life to illustrate the nature of capitalism during the period as it evolved.

At the end of his life Hammond became owner of the largest redwood lumber company and lumber yard in the world. Hammond accumulated a massive amount of wealth as a result of clear cutting redwoods at a prodigious pace. In many ways the seemingly callous nature of Hammond can be seen in a constructive, or destructive light. Gordon leaves ascribing moral conditions on Hammond's actions to the reader. An enjoyable read on the subject of regional regional capitalists, Gordon relies heavily on production and development data to form the bulk of the book. Gordon discusses the personal nature of Hammond's business style as a pillar of his success, and the inclusion of personal letters would of been an excellent additional source of information for the reader. The broad subject of Hammond's life is presented without focusing on single aspects leaving the reader wanting more information on specific sections. Gordon writing is colorful and relates stories on the periphery of Hammond's life quite well. The only thing that the reader will regret at the end is that it is not a longer text. Largely the text shows an individual that did not disregard nature, but rather regarded it as a commodity only measurable in board feet.

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