



**A Newsletter**  
From  
**Forest History**  
**Association of Wisconsin, Inc.**  
403 McIndoe Street                      Wausau, WI 54401

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## Editor's Notes

Recently I received a letter from Richard Jones of the Jones Lumber Corporation (previously known as Jones Brothers, G.W. Jones Lumber Company, T.T. Jones Lumber Company). The company once operated sawmills at Buckbee, Elcho, Wabeno, and Appleton, Wisconsin. It will be celebrating its hundred year anniversary in 1993, and is looking for photos of G.W. Jones' operations, any records of the company, and information on its early history. If you can be of any help or know someone who might be, please contact the editor at UW-Waukesha, 1500 University Drive, Waukesha, WI 53188.

John Russell of Menomonie produces a series called "Wisconsin Lore and Legends" that appears periodically in many state newspapers. Many of them deal with forest history and John has kindly consented to allow me to reprint them in "Chips & Sawdust." The last issue of "C&S" contained the first reprint and as space permits I'll include more. Several members recently sent in some interesting articles that will appear in the next "C&S". I hope other members will do this. It makes my job easier and results in a better newsletter.

Randall Rohe, Editor

# The Camp Cook

In the April 19, 1916 issue of the *Eau Claire Leader*, F. E. Cummings related his experiences as a logging camp cook.

Thirty-three years ago, on the Flambeau river, about eight miles above Flambeau Farm, I did my first real cooking. At least I called it cooking, but as I now recall those crude efforts, I cannot help but feel that it is a high tribute to the good nature and tolerance of that crew that I am alive to tell the tale.

For two winters I had washed dishes and done ordinary cookee duties. By the way, one of the cooks I served under was "Whit" Kennedy or "one-eyed Kennedy." Nearly every early woodsman will remember him. Kennedy was called a good cook for those days. He also possessed one of the choicest and most extensive vocabularies of cuss words of any man on the river, and was always equal to the coining of new words when he was frying salt pork and the fat spattering up into his face was something to be remembered. "Whit" had his good qualities and many old timers will have a kindly remembrance of him.

## TRYING IT ON THE CREW.

During my third winter as cookee I served under an old fellow whose only experience in cooking had been acquired in "baching" it several years on a farm. He and I practiced on the crew that winter, and by spring we both had the notion that we knew about all there was to be known along that line. There was no over supply of men cooks in those days, and it was not uncommon for fellows with very limited experience, like myself, to set themselves up for the real article.

The camp where I cooked that first winter belonged to the Daniel Shaw Lumber Company, and Miles Mitchell was foreman. Chas. Pelletier, or "Pelky," as he was always

called, later a policeman in Shawtown and still later the proprietor of a small grocery store on Chestnut street in this city, was a member of the crew and drove team. Mr. Pelletier is still living in the city, but, I understand, is not running the store and is something of a capitalist.

Perhaps this would be as good a place as any to speak of camp crews in general.

### **CAMP CREWS IN GENERAL**

Only a few days ago I was asked if lumber camp crews were not a pretty tough lot and hard to get along with. After upwards of twenty-five winters' experience with many different crews this would not be my verdict. I think they will rank up pretty well both in morals and good nature with the average run of men.

The cooks have always had the reputation of being the worst cranks in the lot and probably we have deserved the reputation. If there was trouble between cook and crew it was as likely to be the fault of the cook as of the crew. Good nature went a good ways. One of the best cooks on the river, but a notorious crank, was cooking one winter for John Anderson. The boys got down on him and as the only means of getting rid of him complained of his grub. A new cook was sent up and found the old cook still on the job, and asked him what was the trouble. He said the boys complained of his cooking. The new man sampled the grub and then said: "Well, if they are not satisfied with that kind of cooking there is no use for me to tackle the job," so both cooks "took the tote road," and an oxteamster was installed in the cook shanty until another cook could be brought up from below.

### **FIGHTS WERE FEW.**

I was always, as a boy or man, able to hold my own physically fairly well with my associates, but in all my camp experiences I have never been obliged to try conclusions in a unfriendly way with any member of a crew and never but once have I seen any fighting among the men of those crews. On several occasions it has looked as if I might have a little scrap, but the outcome was always amusing rather than

gory. The cook is supposed to be the boss of the cook shanty and it is up to him to keep order. I never would allow vulgarity in my department. In one camp the foreman was the worst offender. I quietly told him that while he was foreman of the crew I was running the cook shanty and would not stand for vulgar language there. At first he resented taking orders from the cook and bristled up considerably, but after a little while he cooled down and everything was agreeable.

In the lumber camps, as well as in most other places, if there is trouble, whisky is very likely to be at the bottom of it. The rules have always been strict in regard to its use in camp. Of course there will be some smuggled in but the amount is comparatively small. In the early days with camps far from settlements or saloons whisky gave little trouble. Now that logging camps are usually near railroad lines where there are always booze joints, the task of keeping it out is more difficult. Some years ago in one of the camps where I was cooking one Sunday some of the crew had gone out to the railroad and came back to camp well tanked up. There was only a log partition between the cook shanty and the men's shanty. We could plainly hear the carousing in the other part and fully expected to see a "rough house" when the crew should come in to supper. When the call was sounded, they came tumbling in and in the lead was a big half breed, standing six foot four, who gave an old time war whoop as he entered. He had scarcely got through the door when I stepped in front of him and said: "Will--you--shut--up?" "yes, sir, yes sir," he said politely as could be, and the meal passed off without the slightest disturbance. There are bullies and bluffers in lumber camps, but that is not the only place where they are found.

During the summer my occupation has been the running of shingle mills. A few years ago I was at Phillips and a big Frenchman, belonging to the sawmill crew, made himself very offensive but no one seemed anxious to try to stop him, as they all said he was a "bad man." One day a few

of us, including the woman cook, were sitting in the boarding house when the Frenchman entered and immediately began to inform those present, with a good deal of profanity and vulgarity, that he could lick anyone around the place. Stepping around to the other side of the table where he was, I said, "I believe those remarks were intended for me." "No, sir," said he, "I did not mean you at all." "Well," said I, "I mean you, and I want you to dry right up." He dried up, but a little later he met me outside the building and said, "You darn fool. What did you want to butt in for? I had these fellows all bluffed to a turn, and now you have spoiled it all. I have a great mind to give you a thrashing," but he did not try it and he gave no further cause for offense.

Woodsmen are a good ways from being angels, but the rip roaring "lumber jack" that we read about does not represent the great majority of the crew. A large proportion of the crews of my experience were made up from the men who worked in and around the saw mills during the summer, with a few mechanics whose regular employment might be slack in the winter season, also quite a number of farmers, especially the younger ones, who had little farm work to do in winter and improved the opportunity to earn some money outside. Every crew would contain a number of veterans of the camps and river, and also a number of new recruits. The great majority of the woodsmen were as sober and steady going men as one would find in almost any occupation. There were some among them who spent their winter's wages in the saloons soon after coming down from camp, but after giving the matter some thought, I would not place the proportion of that class higher than about one out of ten.

Physically a lumber camp crew would be hard to beat. It is no place for invalids or shirks, and that class will be "shown the tote road" in short order. Even those addicted to drink when in town take on a healthy color after they have been a short time in camp.

A more generous kind hearted lot of men cannot be found any where that the average camp crew. In these later

years with logging trains running right to camp, if a man is sick or injured it is a simple matter to send him home or to the hospital. In earlier years when it meant perhaps a trip of twenty-five to fifty miles with a "tote" team to the nearest railroad station, the sick or injured had to depend more on what care could be afforded them in camp, and they never lacked for any care their fellow workmen could give. Although not able to take advantage of hospital privileges as well as at present, nearly all woodsmen had hospital tickets. For a certain amount yearly the holder of such a ticket was entitled to free hospital treatment for sickness or injury serious enough to warrant it. Of late years the sale of hospital tickets has been largely given up.

#### SUNDAY WAS WASHDAY

Outside of the shoeing of horses and oxen and some repairs to equipment the crews were required to do little Sunday work. That was the day they took for their weekly washing and mending. The washing was all done out of doors, the water being heated over an open fire, in a large iron kettle. A barrel sawed in two usually served for a tub, the wash board being about the only appliance of an ordinary laundry equipment that was in evidence.

During my earlier camp experience full beards were the rule rather than the exception. In these later years most of the crew shave on Sundays, if not oftener. Some shave themselves, but a barber chair, a crude home-made affair, is a part of nearly every camp equipment and quite a number are shaved by their fellow woodsmen.

Notwithstanding their hard work the woodsmen have their sports and recreations. It used to be a stock practical joke to send new comers from the "works" back to camp to get a "cross haul," or a "round turn." As the former is the track at right angles to the logging road where the horses or oxen walk in rolling logs up on to the logging sled, and the latter, the circular track where the teamsters turn around at the end of their trip, it was not an easy matter for the novice to fill the order. Every camp had one or more fiddlers, and usually several who played the accordion so



frequently on Saturday night, a "stag dance" would be held in the men's shanty. A stag dance in a lumber camp is some sight. A simple game played by the boys in the city and called "hot hand" when played by a lot of husky woodsmen, is a unique exhibition.

The Miles Mitchell camp, where I cooked that first winter, broke up in March. We had expected to work several weeks longer, but one day Charles Newell of the Daniel Shaw Lumber Co., dropped in at camp and told me to tell Mitchell to break camp the next morning. We had put in a good winter. Had banked three million three hundred thousand feet with twenty-eight men. As soon as the announcement was made the crew were eager to start. Some did not go to bed at all and the entire crew started soon after midnight, with logging teams and camp equipment for home.

That was the pleasantest winter I ever spent in the woods. The location of the camp could not be beat. There was a fine spring of water near the camp door. Mitchell was a good foreman and we had a fine crew of men.

I have cooked many winters since, also cooked a number of springs on the drive. After I got married my wife went into the woods with me several winters. This is a common arrangement and works out very well. In fact, I sometimes think that my own wife can cook almost as well as I can myself. Hoping that many others may be induced to recall their experiences of early days in the lumber camps, an experience which will soon be of the past, I will close my rather lengthy story.

## **New Exhibit Makes Debut**

**T**he first public showing of the Forest History Association of Wisconsin's new travelling exhibit was made at the annual Logging Congress in Green Bay September 6-8th and

brought many favorable comments from the thousands of visitors that passed by it. The display featured a dozen photos of early-day logging scenes, generating animated conversations among "old-timers" as well as present-day loggers and forest products haulers.

A good number of Association members were also among the viewers and expressed their pleasure over the interest that was shown by those attending the three-day event. The booth was manned by President Karl Baumann and Secretary Frank Fixmer, who made sure that passers-by became acquainted with the Association and its objectives by passing out its membership solicitation brochures. In that process they managed to sell almost \$100.00 worth of Association publications.

The display was subsequently shown at a convention of the Wisconsin Society of American Foresters at Wisconsin Rapids on October 3-4th and then provided an appropriate background for the Association's annual meeting on October 5-6th at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. We soon hope to have artifacts from the Sherry & Gerry logging camp excavation to add to the display.

## Letter To The Editor

I was very much interested in the article, "Foster and Fairchild" in the May 1990 issue of "Chips and Sawdust." I worked in that area in the 1920s and stayed at the Fairchild Hotel. It was, of course, long after the Foster era, but nevertheless, there were a few Foster stories around. I was a member of a State Highway survey crew that laid out a new

highway between Fairchild and Neillsville in Clark County. That route is now part of U S Highway 10 which crosses the state from the Mississippi to Lake Michigan. There was no standing timber along our survey route, but numerous white pine stumps blackened by fire, gave evidence of early logging.

We knew the proprietor of the Fairchild Hotel only by the name of Cal. Cal told us that the Foster logging railroad used the initial F and NE, presumably for Fairchild and Northeastern. Cal said that some old timers had told him that many said that the initials stood for Foster and Nobody Else.

Cal also told us that Mr. Foster, as president of the F and NE at times wrote to the presidents of other US railroads and offered them the use of his private railroad car on a reciprocal basis. When I read the article, I recalled that there was a community in the area by the name of Foster. The State Reference Bureau in Madison informed me that Foster is an unincorporated village in Eau Claire County.

The Fairchild Hotel was located near the mainline tracks of the Chicago and Northwestern Railway, at a point where the engineers blew the whistle for the main crossing in town. One day Cal told us that his ambition was to become a movie actor in Hollywood. A few years later in Eau Claire, I spotted Cal in a minor role in a Western movie. Cal was using a rope to secure the boxes and trunks to the back of a stage coach. I was glad that both Cal and I had finally escaped those loud whistles.

In making our survey, we had with us the notebook used by the original Government Land Surveyor in the area. He referenced some section corners by giving the dis-

tance and direction to some large pine trees. The trees were gone but we found evidence of massive root systems.

W. G. Youngquist

## Stillness of the Night

by **Ronald Parkinson, Rhineland**

The squat tar paper shack  
sleeps quietly in the night.  
Smooth tamarack poles frame walls and rafters,  
peeled with a drawknife by an old shacker,  
gassed in "The Great War"  
now living his life alone.  
Walls of rough sawed hemlock  
sheathed with thick roofer's felt;  
red pine floors never sealed or painted,  
stained with the droppings of three generations.

The faint fragrance of balsam  
drifts through raised windows,  
carrying memories of forgotten loves.  
Line of sight warmth from a battered wood stove,  
the musky sharpness of drying wool,  
pungent smoke from sweet yellow birch;  
smells of yesterday and generations before.

Ivory brown plates with three lifetimes of cracks  
sit expectantly on a hand hewn table

that once fed twenty men at a sitting.  
Thick-walled coffee cups that fit a man's hand  
far better than today's fragile offerings;  
razor sharp knives with well worn handles,  
hand crafted from the sawyer's file;  
all remnants from the logging days  
when men were larger than life,  
and the tall white pine was king.

The hypnotic hissing of a Coleman lantern,  
its circle of light defining the universe.  
Flies revived by rising warmth  
humm a chorus of gratitude.  
An owl's hoot defines his sphere of influence.  
Rain falls lightly on crisp autumn leaves;  
each drop is heard distinctly.  
The wind softly phrases its tune  
and adjusts its pitch through dark branches  
Sounds of yesterday and generations before.

Wood split and stacked high for next day's fire;  
a hard maple log to last the night.  
Enameled white buckets hold cool well water;  
chilled to taste by last winter's snow.  
An overstuffed chair, rescued from prim city life,  
sprawls contentedly in well worn comfort.  
Steel frame beds with sagging springs;  
long wooden benches where once  
the camp boss laced his high top boots.

Deer antlers span a hunter's dream.  
Twenty men dressing for a drive through the swamp,

each with his own private hopes.  
Fish hooks in a tin box seventy years old,  
a trophy trout minus fins and tail,  
shotgun shells that have outlived their owner,  
old fishing hats, "The World Record Bear",  
a calendar from 1948.  
Men long dead but living still.  
memories of yesterday and generations before.

Fish quotas, skeet contest, bullseye shot full of holes,  
adjust the damper, prime the pump,  
"Did you hear the news? Morse has closed its dump"  
Duck boat parked just off the road,  
poker and Jack Daniels at three in the morning,  
freshly caught trout sizzling in rows on a griddle,  
pancakes so large they embarrass the plate.  
"Down at the big hole, be back at eight."  
Old memories, new dreams; yesterday and generations  
hence.

## Logging Camp Presentation

The *Three Lakes News* (August 22, 1990) mentioned a presentation on logging camps given at the most recent meeting of the Three Lakes Historical Society.

The Three Lakes Historical Society held its August meeting Thursday of last week with a small but enthusiastic crowd that enjoyed the presentation given by Lee Mayer of Rhineland.

Mayer, a well-known Rhinelander artist, wood carver and historian, added depth to his talk with the aid of maps and pictures he had prepared for the Wisconsin Bi-Centennial program some years ago. He displayed the original drawings that were used in a map of the local area.

In 1886, there were seven logging camps operating full blast east of Three Lakes. These are designated on the map which has now become a collector's item, copies of which can be purchased at the Three Lakes Museum. His partially-complete diorama containing hand-carved horses, logging sleds, workmen and various tools used in the camps and saw mills of the bygone era added a note of reality.

Meyer was invited by President Tom Bredesen to give a repeat lecture later this year for the fourth grade students of the Three Lakes Grade School.

Members seeing such notes in their local paper are encouraged to send a copy to the editor for inclusion in "Chips and Sawdust."

## Empire Logging Railroad

Dave Epperly, Douglas county Forest Administration, recently supplied FHAW with some notes on the history of the old "Empire" logging railroad in Douglas County, Wisconsin compiled for Ken Smith, Solon Springs, by a local historian on early railroad logging in northern Wisconsin, Mr. Howard Peddle, Hawthorne, Wisconsin.

The following is taken from a personal letter from the young civil engineer--named Geo. W. Dulaney, Jr., who helped lay out the original grade, and from old newspaper accounts, old railroad directories, and from the memories of certain old timers that worked on the road when it was operating.

The original survey of the road was made in the late fall of 1898, followed by the cutting through of the right-of-way a few months later with considerable snow in the woods. The twenty-seven miles of main line track was graded, bridges built and 40 lb. steel rail laid the following summer--from Dedham on the GN Ry. south to the log landing on the St. Croix, about one mile upstream from the Coppermine Dam. This landing is shown on old maps as Sauntry or Sauntry Landing. This work (building the grades) was all done by hand--no horses used--the final laying of ties and rail was done with locomotive and cars. The road was officially opened December 15, 1899 and incorporated as the St. Croix & Duluth Ry (some maps show it as the Duluth & St. Croix). This was the property of the Empire Lumber Co. of Winona, Minnesota--Chas. Morton, President; Geo. W. Dulaney, Vice President; William P. Tearse, Secretary; and Roscoe Morton, Treasurer--all of Winona.

The old geological survey map of 1899 shows several sidings along the right-of-way. Starting south from Dedham, they were Summit, Horton (at Black River), McClure (at Bear Lake), Sunrise, Dulaney and Sauntry. Poor's Manual (railroad directory) of 1902 mentions that the St. C & D was a private logging railroad used for hauling logs to the St. Croix R. and ties and board timber (squared timbers) to the GN Ry. The equipment as of September 30, 1900, was 3 locomotives (standard gauge), 2 cabooses and 85 log cars (Russel type--short, light cars with only center beams and bunks on the ends--not flat cars). These, incidentally, had the link and pin type couplings. At least one of the engines was a wood-burner--the No. 2--and old timers recall the wood piles along the right-of-way for the engines.



The Empire Lumber Company bought their timber land from the Weyerhouser Co. Some of the timber was cut near the headwaters of the Black River and driven down to the dam where the main line crossed the river. Just above the dam on the east bank, there was a steam-operated bull chain which hoisted the logs up to a loading platform where the logs and ties were rolled off onto the cars-- 3 cars were loaded at a time and switched out onto the main line to make up a 20 car train for the run to the landing. The unloading track at the river would be kept moving out over the rollways at the river when they would fill up. The winter's cut would be anywhere from 15 to 45 million feet of logs. Most of these went to mills at Dubuque, Iowa. The Empire Co. also had a steam-operated hoist at Bear lake. Later the Tozer outfit loaded out of Bear Lake with a slide jammer.

There was a good-sized camp at the landing at Sauntry where a crew was boarded also. There was a wye here to turn the trains around so as to head back north smoky end first. The engines used to siphon up water at the Crotty Brook crossing. Later the Tozer engines would water up at a wooden water tank standing where McClellan's spur cut southeast off the main line just south of Bear Lake.

When the grade was built across the muskeg south of Bear Lake, full length tamaracks were laid cross ways first so as to keep the grade from sinking. Even then when a train of loads would cross after the spring break-up, one old Empire veteran recalls that the rails would sink out of sight under water and then raise back up after the train passed over.

The Empire Co. operated the road until 1906, excepting for the year of 1905 according to ICC reports, then sold

what stumpage they had left to the Edward Hines Lbr. Co. and pulled out. I figure about 130 million feet of logs were hauled south to the landing on the St. Croix--maybe more.

When the Empire pulled out, they left a considerable amount of equipment up in the woods and invited what settlers there were to come and help themselves to whatever there was at the Headquarters Camp at the Black River crossing--coal, logging tools, blankets, dishes, etc. The old camp office was used by fishermen and hunters for shelter until it burned in 1915. It had a second story and was well built, mostly of cedar. According to my notes, the Hines Lbr. Co. also used some of the Empire trackage when they were operating in that territory. Don't know just how much or where.

Most of the trackage from Bear Lake and southward lay idle until the St. Croix Timber Co. of Stillwater (Dave Tozer, Pres.), moved in in 1911 and operated the line from Hines on the Omaha to about five or six miles south of Bear Lake.

When Tozer took over the line, they cut through a cut-off from the Hines main line straight south along the east side of the Black so as not to have to make the extra miles and river crossing at the old Empire Headquarters Camp.

Only the Empire Co. hauled logs to the St. Croix over the road, all the Hines and Tozer timber went out over the Omaha from Hines Siding. They got out 100 million feet of white pine in four years of cutting and the last of their track was pulled up in October 1915. This was the last railroad logging done in Douglas County.

The southern end of the Empire trackage was pulled up about 1913, according to one informant. Seems it was left in in event the copper drillings at Sunrise--north of the

Crotty Brook crossing should prove profitable and ore could be hauled out north to the GN. Also there was speculation that the Soo Line might want to use the right-of-way when they built up through that country in 1912.

## The Carcajon

One of the diversions that the lumberjack used to relieve the monotony of the long logging season was the telling of stories and yarns. Often their tales centered around some mythical creature of the forest such as a hodag, shagamaw, gumberoo, etc. The following account appeared in the *Shawano County Journal*, February 24, 1882.

The Oshkosh Times camp correspondence has the following about a strange animal occasionally seen in the northern woods. Its size, color and peculiarity of tail and feet, would denote it to be the terrible and fortunately rare "carcajon," described by voyagers and trappers as the most terrifying beast one would wish to look at from a safe place. One has never been killed, that we know of, but we pity the poor lumberman that gets among its claws and ravenous teeth.

The camps in the vicinity of Kempster, a station on the main line of the Mil., L. S. & W. R.R., are in a great state of excitement, simply because a strange looking animal has made its appearance. For some time past surveyors and land hunters have reported that they have seen a savage looking animal that caused them to wish they were at home in the midst of their families, but nothing definite could be obtained in regard to the appearance of the animal until a few days since, when Sam Mokey, of Shawano, who had a camp within 18 miles of Kempster, was going along a logging road and came suddenly upon the much dreaded

animal. Not having a shooting iron with him, he gave the beast a wide berth. He says it is at least nine feet in length, will weigh over 800 pounds, yellowish hair, and its tail at the butt as large as a man's arm. The size of its feet in the snow is as large as that of a bear. It is said that a measurement was taken of the distance the animal leaped, and it was over 30 feet. The boys in the camp do not wander around in the woods much at night. They are not frightened, oh, no; but then they become sleepy when the sun disappears, and they keep close to their little beds.

## Lumbering On The Chippewa

The November issue of "Chips and Sawdust" contained an account from the *Northwestern Lumberman* in 1878 that detailed lumbering on the Chippewa River for that date. For comparison, here's a description from the same trade journal for 25 January 1890, courtesy of Larry Easton.

A review of the lumber business of the Chippewa valley clearly demonstrates the fact that that branch of trade can be made profitable, even when combatting with the most unfavorable conditions. The winter of 1888-89 was discouraging in the extreme. Yet, notwithstanding the lack of snow and cold, the total log cut fell but little short of that anticipated. The absence of snow and the ordinary spring freshets reduced the supply of water to a low degree and were instrumental in delaying the spring drive. The spring season opened in April, about a month earlier than usual, but the low water prevented the drive of logs from being started at that time.

At no time during the summer was there a natural rise of to exceed three feet, and it was only with the utmost care that sufficient water could be collected in the dams to create an artificial splash of any depth. The gates of the

dams could not be opened with any regularity, and while the flood was on large crews were necessary to drive the logs to their destination. As fast as sufficient water was collected it was turned out, and thus it was that the mills were supplied all summer. As the season advanced it was still more difficult to obtain a supply of water, and the intervals between the splashes were necessarily lengthened. It was prophesied from week to week that the mills could not possibly be operated an entire season. Even as early as June, the end of the sawing season seemed probable.

Notwithstanding all the difficulties that hampered the lumbermen, their labors were crowned with success. Most of the mills were supplied with logs until the latter part of September and October. On footing up the total lumber cut of the valley, it was learned that 324,000,000 feet had been manufactured. This amount included the cut on the Chippewa, also on the Red Cedar, at Fairchild and tributary points. The mills on the Red Cedar do not draw their logs from the Chippewa, yet it is a part of the valley. The total cut of the mills in this city and Eau Claire, and to the mouth of the Chippewa, was in the neighborhood of 244,000,000 feet, which was a considerable increase over that of 1888. Nearly all the mills showed an increase, the Chippewa Lumber & Boom Company, of this city, cutting 53,504,168 feet of lumber, which exceeded the output of 1888 by about 5,000,000 feet. The total cut of the valley for 1889 exceeded that of 1888 by about 100,000,000 feet, and was but 45,000,000 feet less than that of 1887, 85,000,000 less than that of 1886, and 50,000,000 feet less than 1885, which year was one of the best on record. The large increase is easily accounted for. The early spring of 1888 witnessed unusually high water, the late fall unusually low, and from these two causes most of the mills lost several week's time. Although the continued low water in 1889 made driving difficult and tedious, the mills lost comparatively little time, and even kept running quite smoothly. The mills in this city did not lose more than three or four days in the entire season. The Chippewa Lumber & Boom Company shipped during 1889

47,149,000 feet of lumber, 9,509,100 shingles and 10,200,250 lath, which compares favorably with the shipments of the previous year. There is on hand a large stock of lumber, with shipments steady.

The view of the lumber situation has undoubtedly been blacker than circumstances warranted. It is now being urged that the present stocks of lumber are ample for all requirements, and that the large stock of logs to be carried over, together with the large cut that may be expected, will be instrumental in causing the mills to be pushed to their fullest capacity the coming season; hence an overstocked lumber market will be the result. This may be true to an extent, but on the Chippewa there is a confident feeling that the tone of the market will be brighter, and the demand brisk, and there is little apprehension of an over production of lumber. The fact that there is always an effort to increase the product seems to be conclusive that it must be so in order to meet the demand. All evidences at the present indicate that the cut of 1890 in the Chippewa valley will show a still larger increase, that is, if the drives are good. Had the drive of 1889 been more successful the lumber cut of this valley, and all points along the Mississippi, that draw their supply from the Chippewa, would have been undoubtedly swelled to larger proportions, notwithstanding the cry continually raised that lumbermen desired a reduction.

As nearly as can be estimated, about 500,000,000 feet of logs were handled at Little Falls dam, above this city, and floated to the various points along the river. This is against 600,000,000 feet handled in 1888. Of this amount 400,000,000 feet were sent directly to West Newton slough to be rafted to Mississippi river points, which supply was 140,000,000 feet short of 1888. The remainder of the logs handled were detained, to be manufactured at the mills from this city to the mouth of the river. The Dells reservoir, above Eau Claire, was thoroughly cleaned up of logs this past fall, and few are left with which to supply the mills in the spring. On the upper Chippewa and its tributaries, the estimate of logs to be carried over is placed by reliable

authorities at between 850,000,000 and 400,000,000 feet. On some of the smaller tributaries the drive was not even started, consequently this spring there will be an unusually heavy drive. Immediately above Little Falls there are about 1000,000,000 feet ready to go over the dam as soon as the gates are opened in the spring.

The past year was rather uneventful in the lumber circles in this locality. No heavy sales were noted, and land sales especially were light. This was claimed to be partly due to Mr. Weyerhaeuser's absence in Europe, and also to the fact that the heavier companies showed little inclination to invest in more pine at present. This lack of enthusiasm is not lack of faith, but simply an indication that they have things pretty much as they please. Among the heaviest purchases of pine was that by John P. Owen, of Eau Claire, from James B. Brown, S.S. Henry and O.S. Brown, of Williamsport, PA, of a tract lying in Chippewa, Pierce, Taylor, and Ashland counties. The consideration was \$65,000. McCord & Marshall, of this city, purchased land to the amount of about \$100,000, but they were reticent as to locality. These were about the heaviest deals that were consummated during the year.

The removal of the rafting works from Beef slough to West Newton slough on the Minnesota side created an intense furor in this locality for a short time. This move was made necessary, it was claimed, because of the channel of the Chippewa, at the entrance of Beef slough, becoming choked with sand to such an extent that logs could only be run into the slough during very high water. A dredging machine was kept in operation, at great expense, but even then progress was greatly hindered. The only hope of keeping the works at Beef Slough is by the erection of a dam, which will divert the channel of the river. This will be done if the consent of the government can be secured, and such an effort will be made this winter, without doubt. Otherwise the work will be carried on at the new slough, where a sheer or rudder boom is employed in getting the logs across the river. The capacity of West Newton, how-

ever, is not equal to that of Beef slough. Lumbermen on the Chippewa have been hopeful that the Mississippi River Logging Company would decree that more of its lumber should be manufactured nearer the source of supply. The interests of the lumbermen at West Newton, and the government, and also the railroad, have clashed at the new stand of business, and it is on this that the lumbermen of the Chippewa base their hopes. Should by any possibility West Newton be abandoned, Beef slough would be the only resort, and without improvements it is believed that not more than 200,000,000 or 250,000,000 feet of logs could be passed through, hence the reminder--about the same number--would necessarily be manufactured in this region. Only time can tell whether these hopes will be realized

## Lumberjacks' High Jinx

The lumberjacks supposedly often had fun at the expense of newcomers in the logging camps. Mary Starr wrote an article on the subject in the *Oconto County Reporter* (19 February 1953)

I am reminded of a story which a relative once told me about his experiences in the old logging days.

He worked on "drives" and in lumber camps from 1897 to 1910 in Oconto County. On the first Saturday night in



camp some of the older fellows who had been in camp before would be busy cleaning up, shaving, etc. When asked by one of the newcomers if they were going somewhere, they would reply. "Oh, we're going to Callahan's Dance." Of course he would ask to go along. Meanwhile a number of the men had started out ahead, a few with rifles. By the time the others would come along with the newcomer they would hear a loud howling like a pack of wolves, and Indian war whoops. Then a shot would ring out and one of the fellows would yell, "They got me!" and drop to the ground, until several of them were lying on the "tote" road on which the newcomer and the others were walking. By this time he was really terrified and would usually start back to camp yelling, "Let me in, let me in." On the path leading to the bunkhouse those who had remained in camp had placed pots and pans etc. over which he would stumble in his frantic haste to reach the door. As he opened the door he would fall into a tub of water--this completed the "Initiation." One night a young fellow took off in the wrong direction and got lost. They searched for him all night and most of the next day until they found him. The camp boss said, "No more Callahan's dance around here from now on. Why, that would have been a state's prison offense for sure if that boy would'a died from cold and fright." I have heard other versions of this since from different parts of the state, and last summer recorded a similar version as told by a former lumberjack up in Forest County.

The snipe hunt was also known among the lumberjacks as well as among hunters in northern Wisconsin. The new "recruit" would be given a large bag or "gunny" sack and told to wait at a certain spot while the others would drive the snipes in his direction. They would fire a few shots when they were out of sight... just to make it look good. After an hour or two of "holding the bag" he would finally realize that it was all a joke and would start back for camp with murder in his heart! A variant of this from Ladysmith was stationing the newcomer in the middle of the bridge while

the others would drive the "snipes" from both sides of the bridge. "You just can't miss 'em that way!"

Many of the indoor games or pastimes of the lumberjacks had a practical joke angle such as "Squirrel," "Shove-shove," etc. There were many forms of wrestling too, with the old fashioned "roller-towel," "Tirer au poigne" (wrist pulling), and one which I remember seeing many times as a child growing up in a typical lumber town, "Jambette." In this each man placed his hands on the other fellows shoulders and had to keep them there. The idea was either to corner him or trip him. As a result two fellows doing the "Jambette" looked like a couple of dancers, as each did his share of fancy foot work trying to trip up his opponent and yet retain his balance and stay on his feet!

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## **Committee Chairmen 1990-1991**

### **Distinguished Service Awards**

Frank N. Fixmer

### **Publicity**

Joyce Bant

### **Student Awards**

John Saemann

Mike Sohasky

### **Annual Proceedings**

Randall Rohe

### **Newsletter**

Randall Rohe

### **Traveling Exhibit**

Alvin Barden





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Passport In Time Project  
Summer 1991  
June 15 through June 28

The Nicolet National Forest invites interested individuals to participate in archaeological excavations during the summer of 1991. The first project of the summer (June 15 through June 28) will offer the unique opportunity to examine a 1870s' logging camp set atop a 7th Century Indian settlement and the cultural and functional contrasts of the two. The project will take place along the shores of Boulder Lake, immediately adjacent to the Nicolet National Forest's largest campground. Forest archaeologists and volunteers will conduct a two week field study including both archaeological survey and excavation. Along with the Nicolet's archaeological staff headed by Mark Bruhy, this study will be co-directed by logging era scholar Dr. Randall Rohe, Professor of Geography, University of Wisconsin Center System.

Boulder Lake is located approximately 15 miles southwest of the community of Lakewood. If coming from Lakewood, proceed south on Highway 32 for seven miles, then west on Highway 64 about five miles to Highway T. Then south on Highway T for about five miles, turning right on Highway W and go about a mile and a half until reaching a sign directing you to the campground entrance. The archaeological site is located west and adjacent to the boat landing within the campground.

Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age, unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. While no experience is necessary, a minimum commitment of five days is required. The Nicolet National Forest will provide free camping for volunteers at the Boulder Lake Campground. The campground offers a sandy swimming beach, attractive campsites, a boat landing, and is short drive to stores and restaurants. Volunteers may obtain alternate lodging at their own expense at nearby resorts on Boulder Lake or at motels in Langlade, Lakewood or Mountain. The project will run from June 15 through June 28. The site will be open to the public for seven days beginning June 19th. For further information contact Project Supervisor: Mark Bruhy, Forest Archaeologist, Nicolet National Forest, 68 S. Stevens St. Rhinelander, WI 54501, phone 715-362-1361.

