



Chips

and

Sawdust

A Newsletter

From

Forest History

Association of Wisconsin, Inc.

403 McIndoo Street

Wausau, WI 54401

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Officers & Directors 1991-92

Thomas R. Albrecht
304 W. Richmond Street
Shawano, WI 54155

Karl Baumann
1119 Florence Street
Marinette, WI 54143

Frank N. Fixmer - Secretary-Treasurer
604 9th Street
Mosinee, WI 54455

Eugene Harm - Vice President
Route 2, Box 468
Cadott, WI 54727

Don Lambrecht
1665 Patton Street
Green Bay, WI 54301

Randall Rohe
UWW 1500 University Drive
Waukesha, WI 53188

Michael Sohasky - President
1435 Neva Road
Antigo, WI 54409

Forest Stearns
3040 Sorenson Road
Rhineland, WI 54501

Jacque D. Vallier
10243 N. Westport Circle
Mequon, WI 53092

Editor's Notes

Our 17th annual meeting held at Trees for Tomorrow near Eagle River proved quite successful. Those who attended heard a variety of papers on forest history and had the opportunity to visit the Sylvania Wilderness Area. Our annual auction generated some much needed capital for the Association. The auction brought in over \$900.00. Thanks to all those who donated items.

As my tenure as editor of "Chips & Sawdust" nears its end, I would like to thank everyone who's helped me over the years, especially the following members who often sent me material for use in "C & S": Frank Fixmer, Larry Easton, Tom Becher, Walt Goldsworthy, Wally Youngquist, and Paul Brenner. Thanks also to Pat Collins (now Rohe) who often helped with the proofing and assisted with the copying and assembling of almost every issue of "C & S" over the last five years and to Lynn Paque who did the typesetting for all those issues.

Anyone interested in assuming the editorship of "Chips & Sawdust" should submit a letter of intent detailing their qualifications to Frank Fixmer or Mike Sohasky. Members are also encouraged to suggest possible replacements to Frank or Mike.

Randall Rohe

Memories of Logging Camp Stirs Memories

Typically logging camps were constructed for two to three years use and then abandoned or moved. As a result few examples of the different kinds of camps have survived, Olive

Glasgow described one of the few exceptions in an article in the *Appleton Post Crescent*, March 5, 1967.

The discovery of any old logging camp is rare in Wisconsin today since most of the remnants of that colorful era in Badger history have long since succumbed to the ravages of time.

Many of the ruins have been reclaimed by new growth replacing the virgin timber that spawned the camps. But one small-scale jobbers' camp, abandoned over 30 years ago, still stands in the upper regions of the Wolf River Basin to stir memories of early Forest County residents.

The roof of the horse barn gave way years ago and was covered with canvas. But the camp weathered the elements in somewhat better shape.

The old camp door is ajar, jammed by repeated frost heavings. The iron range has long been cold and the stove pipe rusted from the roof. The well gnawed table, benches and floor are overlain with dust and the litter of generations of birds and pack rats.

A wildlife hostel of many years standing the old camp was erected by the late Andrew Yocum and once housed a crew of woodworkers including his son Wallace. Wallace and his brother-in-law, Harry Zurawik have been logging some distance from the old campsite, cutting pulp near a clearing where the round house of an early steam hauler was once located.

"I can still remember seeing the old steam engine stuck in the swamp here one winter when I was a boy," Yocum said, "and you can still see the right of way across the swamp where the cinder-belching steamer used to pull sleigh loads of logs from the woods to the river."

Yokes of Oxen

Zurawik recently came across a relic representing an even earlier method of skidding timber when he picked up an old ox shoe on an overgrown logging road. Clifford Murray, Crandon, reported that two of Forest

County's early settlers, had logged the region with yokes of oxen and had a camp located on the old Military Road not far from the Wolf River.

Other woodsmen report that the Brown Brothers of Rhinelander and the Wolf River Lumber Co., of Antigo operated the largest camps in this virgin timberbelt.

Cecil Knott, retired Crandon lumberman, worked for the Wolf River Lumber Co. from 1913-1916.

"The big camp was located above the old Wolf River dam rebuilt by John Waite in 1909," Knott reports. "The log buildings were located on the northwest shore of the Rice Lake flowage. The layout included a long low structure which combined the cook shanty with the bunkhouse which accommodated up to 60 lumber-jacks.

"There was an office and wanigan and four other cabins which housed foreman and piece workers. In addition, there was blacksmith shop and a big barn which sheltered 18 skidding teams.

"My uncle, Ed Rodgers, was the woods superintendent, or in the vernacular of the day the bull of the woods. I hired on as a road monkey, going on to fill in wherever an extra man was needed, which ranged through the years from helping load logs on sleighs behind the old steam hauler, to icing roads, driving tote team and carrying lunches to men on the spring log drives.

Cleared Skidways

"To start out with, however, Uncle Ed had a skeleton crew of swampers and road monkeys go into the woods early in the fall to construct a network of logging roads necessary to reach the sections of timber to be harvested that winter. We cleared skidways and ramps where the logs could be decked beside the road to await hauling and in the swamps and lowlands we laid corduroy base, over the proposed roadways. This was a matter of laying logs sideways and covering them with dirt before freeze up.

“After freeze up the roads had to be iced and this was one of the bitterest jobs I ever tackled in camp. A cutter with rotary blades dug ruts in the roads to accommodate sleigh runners and ease the burden of steamer and teams pulling huge loads of logs.

“Icing the roads was an all-night job. Hanging lanterns on the sleigh, we’d start out right after supper. We filled the wooden water tank from streams along the way using a cross haul team chain and pulley to haul the big barrel from water holes to the top of the sprinkler. Starting out we pulled the plugs above the runners and water drizzling from the sprinkler would usually freeze as soon as it hit the road.

“We had about a 10-mile run from camp to Monico. Much of this trip was through a solid block of wilderness and we often rode through the dark and frosty nights accompanied by the howling of wolf packs hunting the deep timber around us. This night duty generally continued for two months each winter and by spring we usually had about a foot of ice built up on the roads so we could continue hauling for two weeks after the breakup,” he said.

Knott also make quite a few trips with the steam hauler, riding up front of the engine opposite the steerman. “On these occasions I helped load logs on the sleigh bunks at each stop along the way, a portable log jammer simplified the job in those days.

“Then I also filled in as a tote teamster a couple times a week and drove into Monico to purchase supplies at Joe Kurtz’s general store. We bought meat, salt and flour by the barrel back then and sugar in hundred pound bags. In addition to provisions for the cook shanty I hauled back hay and grain for the horses and the trip took the better part of the day.”

“Highway 8 was in pretty rough shape in spots 50 years ago,” Knott recalls. “I’ll never forget the stretch of corduroy in the long swamp west of Charley Mays’s crossroads. I always carried my fishing pole along on spring trips as the water was so high through there. On

occasion the flood water of the spring runoff would wash out sections of the corduroy and there were times when I had to wade the icy water to retrieve and secure the log rafts in order to get the wagon across the swamp.

“I also recruited labor on these trips to town when the need arose. There was always a certain turnover and when a sawyer or swamper hit the road Uncle Ed would instruct me to see if I could pick someone to fill in.”

“As a rule there were always from two to ten lumberjacks hanging around the Monico hotel and when they’d go broke and sober up they were usually eager to shoulder their packs and head for camp,” Knott added.

“Since Uncle Ed wouldn’t tolerate any booze in camp we were never troubled by brawls. But I can remember one time when thirst overcame the better judgment of two lumberjacks. Despite sub-zero temperatures they hiked off to Jennings to wet their whistles. One came straggling in after supper that night without his partner who had laid down along the way to rest in the snow. This was a serious matter since it was 18 below.

“So Uncle Ed and his top loader hitched a team to the stone boat, broke out a couple of lanterns and started backtracking. The jack was stiff but still alive when they found him but died before they got him to Monico. The sheriff who came out to investigate the incident later is the only outsider I can recall visiting the camp outside of an old packsack peddler who used to hike in every winter to sell watches to the men.”

For the most part camp life was simply a matter of hard labor, relieved only on Sundays when the men washed their clothes, lounged, played cards or amused themselves playing mouth organs and fiddles. Recreation was actually no great problem since the men were roused before daylight and after working in sub-zero temperatures till dark they were ready to pile into their bunks after supper.

“We were there to get out the timber and this we accomplished. I can recall one year when we cut and

peeled 2.5 million feet of hemlock. The bark, used to tan leather, was piled high on racked sleighs and pulled by the steamer to Monico and shipped from there by rail to the tanneries. The timber was hauled out onto the ice to await breakup, then floated downstream to Ackleys Hoist, below Jennings where it was pulled from the water and boom loaded on flatcars for the remainder of its journey to the mills in Antigo."

The last drive down the Wolf was run in 1916 when Ronald Waite of rural Crandon was 16 years old. The drive was supervised by his late father, John. Ronald participated in the historic event in the role of "cookee."

"My duties included everything from pitching tents along the river bank as the drive progressed to chopping wood, peeling potatoes, carrying water and doing dishes. My day started at 3:15 a.m. when I rose to build the fires for breakfast. We prepared four meals a day and I carried tea and lunches to the men at 9:30 and 2:30 while supper, like breakfast, was eaten around the campfires," he said.

The "river hogs" were a special breed of lumberjacks. The job just didn't appeal to the run of the mill woodsman. Despite the caulked boots a man had to be pretty catty to retain his footing as he danced over the logs. In addition to the danger involved the men were usually wet most of the day.

"Experienced drivers weren't always easy to find. I remember Dad hired some skilled men from as far away as Hayward. I particularly recall one nimble footed Chippewa from Lac Du Flambeau that helped that spring. It was an experience just to watch that agile Indian run over the rolling mass of timber maneuvering maverick logs with pike pole and peavie to keep them headed downstream," Waite recalls.

"Despite the best efforts of the 'river hogs' some logs invariably went astray and when a few got lodged in a mudbank the rear vanguard would pile up like a bunch of match sticks. On occasions like this log jams had to be blasted apart by dynamite. To illustrate the

extent of the work involved - it took the men 25 days to drive that 6 million feet of timber 25 miles downstream. Once the logs were boomed at Ackley's Hoist the job was done and in high spirits the crew took off for saloons in Jennings to celebrate. I doubt they realized they were celebrating the end of an era. But this was the last drive down the upper Wolf."

Today there is little left to indicate the scope of early logging operations in Forest County. Fortunately museums and faded photographs record this chapter of the past, for the number of residents who worked in the big camps or carved homesteads out of the forests is rapidly dwindling. Few remained who viewed this section in its original wilderness majesty.

It would be interesting to know if the old camp buildings mentioned in this article are still standing.

Soperton - A Company Town

When the lumbermen set up their mills away from existing settlement, they often built entire towns - lumber company towns. Their unity of function made them self-contained and self-sufficient and in time contributed to their decline and often extinction. Charles House outlined the history of one such community, Soperton, in the *Green Bay Press Gazette* (November 25, 1962).

Soperton - This quaintly suburban Forest County community boasts its own moniker and borderlines but it is an unincorporated village in an unincorporated village named Wabeno. The fact that it exists at all as a separate entity is nothing more than a courteous nod to yesteryear.

Soperton was established long ago as a company town. Built in the heart of rich stands of virgin timber the community - like the lumber company - was geared to last just 10 years. Take the timber off the lands and

scoot - that was the philosophy of those past years; and it was the intention of the company to do just that.

In 1904, the Menominee Bay Shore Lumber Company, of Menominee, Mich., bought vast timberlands from the Chicago and North Western Railroad and, just on the outskirts of Soperton, it constructed its mills and other buildings. The company built a boarding house, a store, a post office and a scattering of homes. The forest was to last 10 years and no more, the community was to last as long as it pleased.

The company erred in its projected lifetime here. It raced with profit through its expected lifetime of 10 years - and then remained almost another 30 years. At last it closed its doors in 1940.

The community thrived, and it retained its entity as well as its name, Soperton, which it took from the prime owners of the lumber company - A.C. and James P. Soper.

Soperton's economy is changed profoundly

Today there is little to remind one of Soperton's early beginnings. The boarding house was torn down years ago. The post office is gone and the store, which was on the site of Soperton's present boat factory, has burned down, and at least some of the old company houses have disappeared. And, of course, the economy or Soperton has changed profoundly.

There is no doubt, too, that Soperton's very spirit has altered. Time was when the bustling community boasted its own baseball team, its own stentorian brass band, and even its own kind of animosity for its neighbor, Wabeno. Today these things are gone. The people of Soperton have been generally swallowed into the heart of Wabeno and the nearby Nicolet Forest. Now populated by about 200 people, Soperton - for all practical results - is really a segment of Wabeno which has a population of 800.

Though it contains the Wolfgram boat factory which also manufactures some tavern furniture, the wild, free-spending days are gone. The big mills

here (there were once five of them in the immediate area) have disbanded, the hardwood timber has been cut off and burned out and most working citizens of Soperton find their employment elsewhere—in Laona, in the progressive Schlafke bakery in Wabeno, and in the work of cutting pulp in the popple woods of the region.

Harry McGraw, 70-year-old former executive of the big Bay Shore Lumber Company, attests to the fact that this, indeed, was a region of magnificent hardwoods.

“We could cut 100,000 feet of lumber a day and the company operated one of the largest sawmills in the world right here in Soperton. There were at least 200 employees at the plant and about another 200 in the woods. There were wonderful stands of hemlock, hard maple, birch, elm, ash, cherry and butternut trees and there was a market for them all over the world.

“The hardwood lumber sold in those days for \$10 or \$12 per thousand feet. Now it goes for something like \$150 per thousand - but it's gone from around here,” McGraw said.

The Menominee Bay Shore company owned up to 40,000 acres of these valuable timberlands. It established its own railroad titled “The Wabeno, Otter Lake and Eastern” which chugged into its forestlands to haul the timber back to the mills.

McGraw is probably the oldest former employee in point of service in the region. He began his career with the lumber company when he was only 11 years old, and he ranged through menial jobs to high office. Though the local branch of the lumber company liquidated in 1940, McGraw still serves as trustee for the stockholders.

The Soper brothers were, said McGraw, “good for the community. They were wonderful people and they did good wherever they were.”

One element of the once far-flung company remains to this day in Chicago, in the Soper Lumber Co., Chi-

cago's oldest. It is operated by James P. Soper Jr., son of the former official here.

Most of the lands of the big company here were sold at deflated prices to the federal government when it was establishing the Nicolet National Forest here, and the plant and immediate grounds were sold to J. V. Quinlan, a former works manager; Rudolph Glassl and Joseph Berghardt.

Now the plant stands, aged and tottering, on the sawdust-filled grounds which once supported generations of workers and families - a sad vision of what was once a brisk and bustling lumber company.

Except for a few more permanent homes which retain much of the elegance which was built into them half century ago, much of the Soperton sector of Wabeno still has the appearance of being a onetime company town. Some of the old homes, erected to linger not too long in the world appear tired and ready to give up after an over-long existence.

Nevertheless, there is grim, stark natural beauty in the immediate community. The land, once cut-over and bare, is coming back to trees. And if Soperton is happy with its diminished fortunes and its memories, it is reasonable that it should be.

Many Soperton people love the place, tucked as it is into the national forest and amid many streams and lakes and superb hunting and fishing grounds. Hundreds of deer hunters visit- and agree.

Perhaps most citizens of the one-time village would happily echo the sentiments of Mc Graw, who said, "I love the woods and the lakes and the streams, and I love Soperton because it is here."

So, despite the fact that Soperton is no longer a separate entity, a community of its own, and now seems an integral part of Wabeno which it abuts at the south, it still retains its prim, proud sign on the road - "Soperton," it reads.

And perhaps its citizens remember in its name that gaudy brass band, the swaggering, hard-drinking lumberjacks, the flush economy, the hardwood trees, its ribald baseball team and its brief period in the world as a place all of its own.

If anyone sees similar articles in their local newspaper, please send them to the editor for inclusion in an issue of "Chips and Sawdust".

Recently in going through the *American Lumberman*, I found the following note about Soperton in the July 17, 1920 issue.

Mill Employees Make Merry

Soperton, Wis., July 13. - Sunday, July 12, will be remembered by the employees of the Menominee Bay Shore Lumber Co., their families and friends as the occasion of the company's biggest and best picnic. The day, which was as perfect as only a northern Wisconsin day can be, drew out merry makers three hundred strong for the outing. They were accommodated in five box cars drawn by the company's locomotive to Otter Lake, nine miles out, where they dispersed about the summer cottage of M.J. Quinlan, vice president and general manager, and at old Camp 2 on the lake shore.

After dinner in the cottage and under the trees, bathing and boating became the order of the day. The two beaches were well patronized by young and old who reveled in the water while a band under the shade trees on a distant bank furnished music.

The annual picnic was inaugurated by the company shortly after locating here fifteen years ago, and the three hundred who attended the latest are, every one, boosters for it.

**Paper for this issue of "Chips & Sawdust"
was provided courtesy of
Badger Paper Co., Peshtigo, WI.**

The 4th at a Logging Camp

Tom Becher sent in an article by A.T. Anderson from the July 4, 1971 *Milwaukee Journal* that describes how one lumber town celebrated the Fourth of July.

My grandchildren never tire of hearing "When I was a girl, and how we celebrated the Fourth of July!" We lived in a small lumber company town in northern Wisconsin, and all males, from the time they quit school, or went on to graduate from the eighth grade, worked for the company.

The Fourth was one of the great highlights of the year, and from 1900 through 1910, those grand and glee-or-ious Fourths were the essence of now forgotten Americana.

As the Fourth dawned, there was bustling activity in every household, as mothers prepared hasty breakfasts and got all the children ready. Promptly at 10 o'clock, the big event started. Everyone in the town and outlying small farms, young and old, from babes in arms to grammas and grampas, left their homes and walked the short distance to the company roundhouse where, on the tracks nearby, a puffing lumber company engine stood waiting.

Gondolas Trimmed in Patriotic Colors

Two big open gondolas had been readied for this occasion. The gondolas were gaily draped on each side with red, white and blue bunting, while a big flag, attached to a metal pipe, waved in front of each gondola.

Long wooden benches had been newly built and placed on either side of the gondolas, with an opening in the center for entering. There was plenty of room for everyone to sit without crowding.

The day, as I remember, was always sunny and bright, and at that time of day, pleasantly cool. As soon

as we were all safely seated, making our town truly a "Deserted Village," the engineer would pull the rope of the big bell, blow the whistle several times, to the utter delight of the small fry, and start the 25 mile trip to the company's big lumber camp, deep in the woods. The route would wind through deep forest, past many mirror lakes and crystal clear rivers teeming with fish.

The Train Ride Was Too Short

The train, winding slowly over hill and valley, afforded a relaxing time for tired mothers, whose children sat in quiet fascination at the glorious panorama and watched the antics of the many birds flying overhead, as though in wonderment at this intrusion into their quiet paradise.

All too soon, in a little more than an hour, the lumber camp buildings appeared, and with a gentle pant, the engine would come to a stop. Wooden steps were placed at the entrances and all would dismount, heading first for the big barrel of lemonade.

The Saw Filer Showed His Work

This was a 50 gallon wooden barrel, placed in the breezeway between camp kitchen and storehouse, and it held to its brim the coldest, sweetest lemonade ever made. A big square of ice was in the middle, and all around the rim of the barrel, nailshad been driven, from each of which hung a blue enameled dipper, so all could help themselves. Germs hadn't been invented at that time.

Then everyone went on a tour of the camp, for everything was absorbing. The big barns, housing the magnificent Belgian Persherons, 40 of them, were always a big point of interest, and the gentle animals would look at the excited youngsters and awed parents, as though they, too, were wondering about the commotion.

Then came a visit to the saw shop, where an obliging saw filer would show wide eyed youngsters the proper way to file the big crosscut saws, which the sawyers changed daily in their work.

A visit to the blacksmith shop, where the smith was busy at his forge, was also on the agenda. Some would race back and forth among all the buildings, playing lively games of tag, skin the cat, hide and seek, or ball.

The long bunkhouses, with their rows of double bunks, in two tiers on each side, also came in for inspection. The lumberjacks having had an early dinner, were away at some nearby lake, fishing, doing their laundry or enjoying a snooze in the July sun.

The clang of the triangular dinner gong would announce that dinner was ready, and everyone would rush to the cook shanty. It took a few minutes of good natured scrambling before all were seated.

The long tables, covered with well scrubbed white oil cloth were centered with various condiments, steak sauces, margarine and huge pitchers of cold milk for every four persons. At each place was a tin plate, tin cup and flatware.

A Half Dozen, Busy 'Cookees'

Then six "cookees," assistants of the cook and second cook, would bring on the food. These cookees were dressed in immaculate white—starched white pants, white shirt, white shoes, and a tall cook's cap on their heads.

What mountainous quantities of food had been prepared for our famished appetites!

There were baked hams, evenly sliced to inviting perfection, tender, juicy beef roasts and hot, steaming home-baked beans, dripping with salt pork in generous amounts. Mounds of cloud white mashed potatoes, string beans, oceans of rich gravy, coleslaw and what we children dearly loved, those crisp, crunchy dill pickles.

The long tables groaned with the weight of all this abundance, and the cookees were kept busy making sure everyone was served and filling the empty serving dishes.

Ah! I must mention those melt in the mouth rolls. Cinnamon rolls, sticky with all that brown sugar and

butter, parkerhouse rolls, buns and dark and white breads, all freshly baked daily in the camp kitchen. I remember how our grammas loved those rolls!

Plenty of Pie and Other Pastries

When everyone had his fill the tables were quickly cleared, and then the cookees, brought the desserts. Huge platters of baked cookies, large as a saucer, doughnuts, cupcakes and such tender, flaky crusted pies! Pumpkin, mince, apple, as well as several kinds of berry pies.

Many of the young lads sampled several kinds of pieces, for there were no restrictions on anything. Some of the boys would take cookies of different kinds, and put them in their pockets for snacking.

All this was free, provided by the lumber company, which issued this welcome invitation every Fourth of July. The meal over, all would rise, and someone in the group would ask a blessing on the hardworking kitchen crew, who did not have a day off, and offer thanks for all this bounteous goodness. Then the train would whistle, the signal for "all aboard" and we'd all hurry to mount the steps into the gondolas again.

Band Concert and Baseball

After arrival home, mother would put the littlest ones down for the afternoon naps, and perhaps sneak in 40 winks herself. The men and boys would wander over to the baseball area, where there also was a handmade bandstand, bunting trimmed. The band would play patriotic airs until the raucous "Play ball" sounded. Games were played with rival teams from nearby towns.

After the games were over all would trudge home to supper. As dusk descended, everyone would once again gather, this time at the "Big Rock" on the edge of town, where the company office men were masters of ceremonies at a fireworks display.

When a terrific show lighted up our starlit skies! Pinwheels, snakes in the grass, red, green and blue fire, skyrockets with their bursting sprays, varicolored Ro-

man candles, a thrilling two or so hours. The finale was a huge American flag, burning in glowing colors, flanked with the heads of Washington and Lincoln.

Unfortunately, the author of the article never mentions the name of the town. Does anyone have an idea?

Quits the Woods; Bullets Thick

One of the groups against the DNR's recent attempt to lengthen the Wisconsin deer hunting season were loggers. It seems that even way back in 1910 the deer season curtailed logging operations. The following note appeared in the *Marinette Eagle Star* on November 18, 1910.

"No more northern woods for mine during the deer hunting season; it's all a man's life is worth to meander around in the deer infested districts at this time of the year," is the pointed way in which George Houser, former undersheriff of this county put the matter to a party of friends Wednesday afternoon.

Mr. Houser has been employed as cruiser by a Northern Wisconsin lumber company for some time past and with several other men was sent into a tract of timber to obtain estimates of the amount of timber available and other data that is connected with the work of a cruiser. The cruisers, said Mr. Houser wore cowbells about their necks, red caps and red sweaters as a protection against nervous deer hunters, but in spite of these decorations and warning symbols the bullets whizzed about their heads and on more than on occasion came dangerously near puncturing their anatomies.

First Logging Camp in Vilas County

Walt Goldsworthy sent the following clipping from the *News-Review*. It was written by Joyce Kropetz and Joe Kayla and entitled "First Logging Camp Started near Eagle Waters Resort."

Did you know that the first logging in Vilas County was done on the Eagle Chain of Lakes? In 1855, Mr. Fox erected a good dwelling on the east side of Eagle Lake where the Holzman's Eagle Waters resort now stands. Mr. Fox and his family resided there and also formed and ran the Kee-mi-con trading post.

In the spring of 1865 the firm of Fox, who was the woodsman, and Helm who was the businessman and financier, started the first logging camp just west of the bridge on highway 70, where Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Scharf live now. Helms also started a bank, which was called the Marathon County bank at a later date at the site of where Fox had his home and trading post. Money was actually issued as other wild cat money was about that time.

In the fall of 1880, Al Bradford built a logging camp on the north shore of Duck lake and that same winter along with Frank C. Tambling had another camp on the north side of Cranberry lake.

In 1856 and 1857 the timber cut was about 58,000,000 feet. The logs were floated down the lakes. At that time there was one dam below Long Lake, another between Cranberry and Catfish lakes and one near where the old dam was on the Eagle River. There were three dams on the Deerskin river. In 1878 the lumbermen of the Wisconsin Valley erected and built the dam on the Wisconsin river at the head of Otter Rapids.

The Eagle Waters resort, located on the east side of Eagle lake, was established by a Mr. Malcolm Keyes, who was born in Bennington, Vermont, in 1883. He held a high position with the United States Radiator Co. His health was impaired and his wife, who owned about 100 acres of land in the town of Washington, talked him into leaving his work to retire, in a sense, to the Northwoods.

In 1922 Mr. and Mrs. Keyes established this resort. The main lodge was 26 x 56 feet in dimensions, two stories high. The main floor consisted of dining rooms, lounging room, kitchen, serving rooms and office. The second floor contained sleeping rooms. They had a water system, electric power plant, ice house, tool shed, etc. Later a few cottages were put up.

When the Keyes were there, they had their own vegetable gardens and raised their own chickens for the eggs and meat.

The land was later acquired by the Holzman's. A \$3 bill put out by the first bank of this land is now a prized possession of the Holzmans.

A number of resorts evolved out of logging camps and the subject would make an interesting presentation for one of our annual meetings. Edmund Espeseth mentions several in his article, "Early Vilas County — Cradle of an Industry," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, (Autumn 1953) 38: 27-34, 51-54.

Bunyan Legend Proof is Found

Of all the folklore related to lumbering the best known, of course, is Paul Bunyan. Even as late as the 1930s, he is mentioned in the papers of some of the mill towns.

That Paul Bunyan lived in this is now an established fact—the Menominee Bay Shore mill has proof. They have his ear.

A tree cut at the camp at Long Lake and shipped here along with others recently, had a perfectly shaped ear about 1 foot long on it. Walter Johnson cut it off and took it to the office. The discovery of the ear proves beyond doubt a legend about how Paul Bunyan lost one of his ears.

One day, so the story goes, Paul told Babe, the famous blue ox, to move a certain immense log. The log was heavy, and Babe was tired. She couldn't make the rattle, so Paul prodded her with a big tamarack log. Babe could take it, but that was too much—even Paul Bunyan couldn't bat her with a log and get away with it. So she whirled around and bit off his ear. Paul, they say, never talked much about how he lost his ear, but woodsmen had guessed what had happened.

The preceding appeared in the *Wabeno Advertiser*, April 26, 1935.

Forest History Society Offers 1993 Travel Grants

The Forest History Society announces the availability of Alfred D. Bell, Jr. travel grants for 1993. Those wishing to study at the Society's library and archives may receive up to \$750 in support of travel and lodging expenses. Five Bell grants were awarded during 1992. For information on the Society's holdings and application procedures, write: Bell Travel Grants, Forest History Society, 701 Vickers Avenue, Durham, NC 27701 or call: Harold K. Steen at 919/682-9319.

Recent Publications

Johns, Lary H. "Nevers Dam: Bulwark of the St. Croix," *Northern Logger and Timber Processor* 40 (September 1991): 16-17. Wooden dam on the St. Croix River, Minnesota and Wisconsin, 1890-1955.

Sunken Treasure

Several past issues of "C & S" noted the intention of Explorations International to raise deadheads from Lake Superior. John Walters of Ashland recently sent in the following article from the *Duluth News-Tribune* August 15, 1992 which describes the company first salvage operation.

The red crane hummed quietly Friday afternoon as it lowered a bright green loop into Lake Superior's Chequamegon Bay near Bayfield.

After several seconds, the loop carried five big logs to the surface. The logs were a deep chocolate brown, after being underwater and away from sunlight for about 80 years.

The crane turned and slowly dropped the dripping logs onto a barge, with a resounding thud. Close to 50 spectators on a hillside nearby and in boats around the barge responded with applause.

The crane, equipped with a clam bucket this time, dipped back into the water for more logs.

Between 60 and 100 logs were to be pulled out of the water Friday.

Many are oak, cherry and maple, left behind by the old sawmills along Chequamegon Bay when the forests were abundant with hardwoods. The logs average about 16 feet in length. Some are three to four feet wide.

They're hand-cut and bear the stamps or signatures of the lumber companies.

Scott Mitchen, the deep sea diver responsible for this unusual bounty, played to the crowd and media crews from the water throughout the afternoon. A smile never left his face.

Earlier, he and state officials signed off on a permit allowing him to move and remove the logs. "It's legal with the state of Wisconsin" he shouted and dived into the bay.

Mitchen had spent the last three weeks on the bottom of the bay in ankle weights, gathering the logs and stacking them in the shallower water for Friday's demonstration.

The thrill's the same — bringing up Spanish doubloons or these old logs, Mitchen said as he hung onto the outside of a boat during a 15-minute interview.

But Friday's loot may have more meaning. While Mitchen has explored more exotic and warmer seas, Lake Superior is his home. He grew up in the area and began diving for treasure on Wisconsin's inland lakes.

In 1912, there was a sawmill on this site. It burned down, he said. But about 3,000 logs lay on the bottom of the bay in that half-mile area.

At every former sawmill site, there's a concentration of logs, he said. His company, Explorations International, will haul tens of thousands of them up and dry them off.

He has received requests from 26 states for the wood, and even Japan. But he plans to keep as much of the wood as he can in Northwestern Wisconsin.

The "Paul Bunyan-sized" logs will go to an 1870s-era working sawmill and museum he intends to build as a tribute to Northwestern Wisconsin's logging history.

Other "choice" logs will go to a state-of-the-art sawmill he plans to build. They will be cut and sold to instrument makers, furniture makers and other artisans,

at a price of \$30 to \$50 a log. Some will be sold at \$500 to \$600 a log for veneer.

A secondary business would use lumber produced in both sawmills for making primitive white pine furniture — what the logs were intended for when they were cut 75 to 150 years ago, he said.

Mitchen had seen the logs for many years on his dives in Lake Superior. But it wasn't until he talked with Buzz Holland, a local lumberman, that he thought about pulling the logs up.

Last year, they experimented with hauling a few up and drying them out. When they sawed them, the boards were perfect.

Just as Lake Superior's fresh water and icy temperatures have preserved gold and other treasures, it did the same for the logs.

Logs Same Land Twice in 40 Years

It is not often that a woodsman logs the same land twice in a lifetime, but such has been the experience of Frank Borth, of Kempster, Wis., a colorful pioneer of the Wisconsin lumber industry. Forty years ago he logged land at Elcho and Price, Wis., for white pine, and this winter he went over the same land cutting hardwood. The yield was about the same each time, although the pine probably ran a little heavier. According to this famous woodsman, the pine grew in clumps while the hardwood was more evenly distributed.

At the age of fifteen Mr. Borth came to Wausau and started working in the woods as a swamper. Walter Alexander, prominent Wausau lumberman, who passed away recently, was working in the same crew driving a team. He started logging in Langlade County in 1882 in the employment of Brooks & Ross, of Wausau. He was

with them eight years and logged in the towns of Price, Peck, Upham, Neva and Ackley, during which time he put in about 65,000,000 feet of white pine. After leaving Brooks & Ross, Mr. Borth operated independently for a number of years. He bought an interest in a sawmill at Kempster with Fred Meyers and sawed about 27,000,000 feet of lumber of all kinds. In 1905 Mr. Borth bought out Mr. Meyers and after running the mill for a year, sold out to the Wisconsin Bark & Lumber Co. Since that time he has been engaged exclusively in logging and for the last five years has been working for the Langlade Lumber Co. along the Hunting River. This winter he put in 6,580,000 feet and also did some logging for himself in Elcho.

Mr. Borth is filled with many fascinating tales of the north woods at a time when it was thought that the supply of timber in Wisconsin was inexhaustible. All logging in his earlier days was done with oxen. Two yoke composed the average team. They were usually put to work when five years old, worked for seven years and sold for beef. It was not until 1895 that horses began to supplant oxen.

Some logging costs given by Mr. Borth are exceedingly interesting in this day of ever-rising prices. In 1895 the cost of logging ran from \$3.50 to \$4 a thousand feet; while it now is from \$10 to \$16. White pine stumpage used to be bought for \$1.50 a thousand. The average cost for hardwood now is \$12. Virgin pine used to average about six logs to the thousand and now it averages about fifteen. While pine was being cut, no attention was paid to hardwood except to get it out of the way, but with the conclusion of heavy pine logging in the late '90s more attention was paid to hardwoods and hemlock and within ten years these woods had supplanted pine to a considerable extent.

(From the *American Lumberman*, April 17, 1916.)

Wisconsin Lumberjacks in Louisiana

As the forests of Wisconsin neared exhaustion many lumber companies moved on to the Pacific Northwest or the South. Sometimes they enlisted Wisconsin lumberjacks to go with them. The *Appleton Crescent*, November 2, 1901 recorded one such example.

W. L. Golden, of Wrightstown, who leaves here next Monday with a crew of Wisconsin lumberman, including a number from this city, to work in the woods at Minden, Louisiana, for the Fitzgerald Lumber Co., will probably have the best furnished camps in the United States. The camps will be equipped with fifty neat iron bedsteads, with blankets, pillows, etc., in direct contrast to the rude bunks of the average lumber camp. The outfit was purchased of Saecker & Rogers, of this city, and the first shipment went forward today. The Fitzgerald Lumber Co., which is a Wisconsin concern, has found the negro labor of Louisiana altogether unsatisfactory, and has determined to secure competent white lumbermen from Wisconsin to man their camps. Realizing the difficult which would be experienced in keeping such a crew together under the conditions of the ordinary southern lumber camp, they have determined to equip their camps in a manner heretofore unattempted elsewhere. The iron bedsteads and up-to-date bedding are one feature, and the food and all appointments of the camps will be on the same scale. The company believes that the additional expenses will be more than offset by the superior efficiency of experienced Wisconsin white lumbermen, and they propose to make it so pleasant for them in camp that they will be content to stay.

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Forest History Association
of Wisconsin, Inc.
403 Melndoe Street
Wausau, Wisconsin 54401

