

***Chips***

*and*

***Sawdust***

**A Newsletter**

From

**Forest History**

**Association of Wisconsin, Inc.**

403 McIndoe Street

Wausau, WI 54401

**Vol. VI No. 4 - November, 1983**

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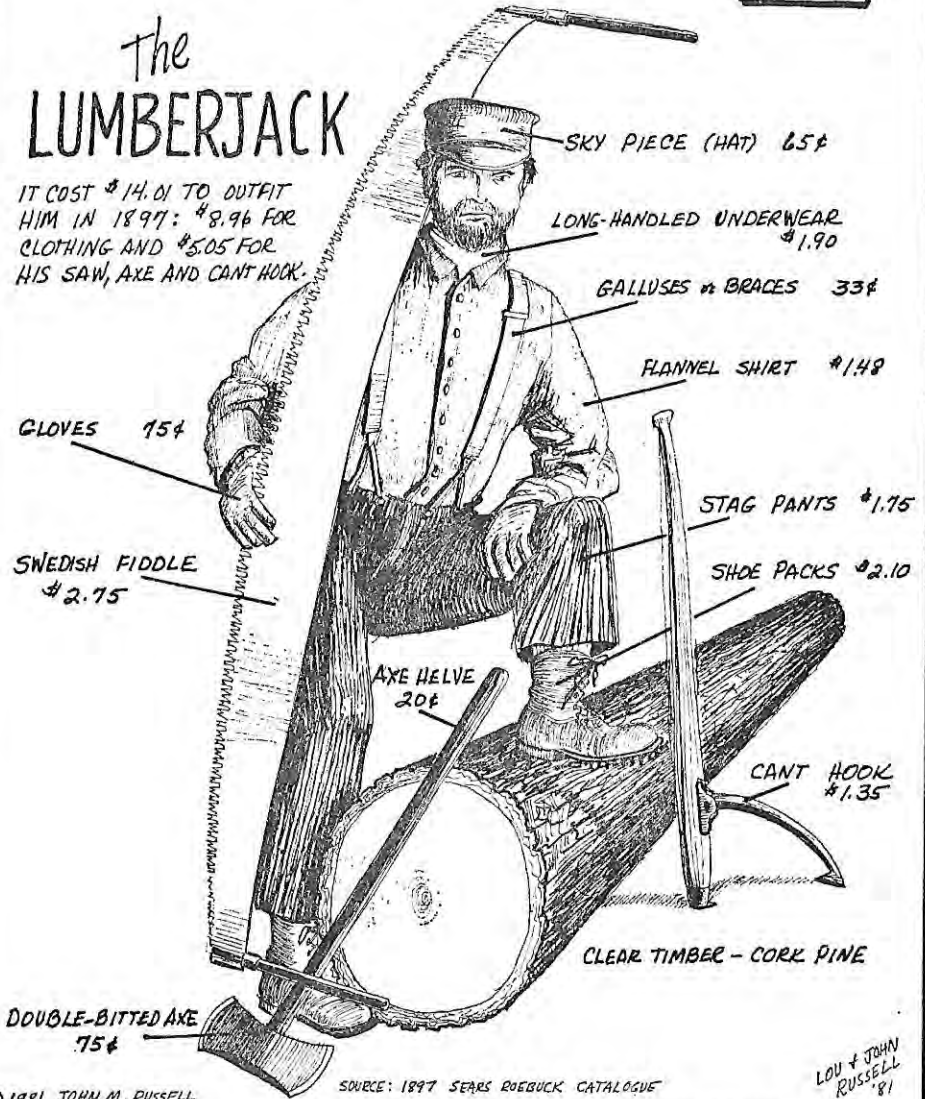
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# WISCONSIN LORE and LEGENDS



## The LUMBERJACK

IT COST \$14.01 TO OUTFIT HIM IN 1897: \$8.96 FOR CLOTHING AND \$5.05 FOR HIS SAW, AXE AND CANT HOOK.



LOU & JOHN  
RUSSELL  
'81

© 1981 JOHN M. RUSSELL

SOURCE: 1897 SEARS ROEBUCK CATALOGUE

The above drawing is reproduced from "Wisconsin Lore and Legends" with permission from the author-artists, Lou and John Russell of Menomonie, WI. This publication is a compilation of historical drawings that appeared as a syndicated feature in newspapers throughout the state during 1981 and 1982. They present many facts and legends about Wisconsin's heritage.

## Three Receive Distinguished Service Awards

Highlight of the dinner program on the first day of the Forest History Association's annual members meeting was the presentation of Distinguished Service Awards to the Dunn County Historical Society, to M. N. "Mully" Taylor of Merrill, and posthumously, to the late K. M. Elliot of Rhinelander.

Association Vice-President Jacque Vallier presented the awards with special citations. The first was given to representatives of the Ken Elliott family, Mr. and Mrs. Mel Johnson of Appleton. Elliott, a retired U. S. Forest Service employee who died in September, 1982, was recognized for his authorship of the "History of the Nicolet National Forest", and for his zeal and tireless efforts toward making a Wisconsin Civilian Conservation Corps Museum a reality.

Representing the Dunn County Historical Society, John Russell of Menomonie accepted the organizational award recognizing the society's long-term efforts in establishing and maintaining its "Empire in Pine" Lumber Museum at Downs-ville, WI. The museum contains artifacts, replicas and a diorama representing the logging and lumbering era when the Knapp-Stout Lumber Company operated in that area what was considered to be the largest lumbering enterprise in the world.

"Mully" Taylor was cited for his pioneering contributions to conservation education as a co-founder and executive director of Trees-for-Tomorrow during a 31-year tenure, and for his authorship of "The Saga of New Wood Country", an historical account of the exploitation and restoration of a forest area in southwestern Lincoln County.

## Logging Railroad or Tramway?

Few aspects of forest history seem to inspire more interest than logging railroads, their beginnings, their operations and their eventual demise. Among the "firsts" listed in the Association's Educational Leaflet No. 1 was the Crescent Springs Railroad of the Shell Lake Lumber Company, which was credited as having been the first steam-powered logging railroad when it was built in Washburn County in 1881.

It now appears that there may be some question about the authenticity of that claim. Robert Gile of Merrillan wrote to tell us that he thought he may have found an earlier "first" than the Crescent Springs Railroad and went on to state: "My great grandfather was the editor and publisher of a weekly newspaper published here in Merrillan . . . . Due to . . . . my interest in my ancestors, I have been able to obtain bound volumes to this paper starting in 1878 . . . . The following article is from Volume II, Number 10, July 5, 1878:

"A new departure in the tram railroad line was inaugurated on Wednesday, by Wakefield, Trow, & Co. of this village, by the introduction of a steam engine, to be used in hauling logs to their mill. The engine is from the shop of J.M. Morse, of Oshkosh, and seems admirably adopted to the purpose for which it was intended. It weighs five and a half tons, and is expected to haul eight cars of logs. One admirable arrangement of the machine is a hose attachment by which the machine can be turned into a steam fire engine in two minutes. This machine will enable the firm to get their logs in much cheaper than by horse power."

Gile further quotes from that Merrillan newspaper's edition of July 26, 1878 as follows:

"Wakefield, Trow & Co. made the first business trip with their new tram-engine last Saturday, having previously been engaged in fixing their track. The trip to the camp, four and a half miles, and back was made in less than an hour, four cars of logs being brought down."

Copies of Gile's letter were sent by the Association's Secretary to several members who are especially knowledgeable about logging railroads asking them to respond to Gile's "suspicion" that he may have a new "first". Subsequently, we received a copy of the letter written to Gile by one of our directors, William Rector, professor of history at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville. Although rather lengthy, it provides many interesting facts about the differences between a logging railroad and a steam-powered tramway which many of our members may not have known before, so it is reprinted here in its entirety:

"The road of a historical revisionist is a difficult

road and to amend a current historical theory requires solid proof and evidence."

An inference that the Wakefield, Trow & Co. "tram railroad line" was a logging railroad is simply not proven at this date, although you may prove it at a later date.

Moreover, internal evidence indicates that this was a "tram road" and not a logging railroad. This is indicated by the use of the phrases, as you noted, of "tram railroad line" and "tram-engine." At that time, "tramways," "tram roads," and even "tram-railroads" were common terms in use in America and especially among the lumbering fraternity. Some of these were one of several varieties of plank roads (like board walks) although this is obviously not the situation in your case. Some consisted of planks laid end to end to form sort of a primitive plank road bed and internal evidence rules this out in the case of Wakefield, Trow & Co. Other, more permanent types, consisted of rails made from dimension timber upon which flanged wheels rolled, poles with the inside ripped off so that the flange of a wheel would fit, and poles upon which rolled a concave (double flange) wheel. All sorts of supports, like cross ties, were utilized in varying combinations and the poles or dimension timber were held in place by stakes. The action of the weighted wheels tended to spread the rails apart, especially on curves, so periodically the rails had to be relaid. Incidentally, the Shay locomotive did the same thing at a later date with iron and steel rails.

One advantage of a wooden rail tramway over a traditional logging railroad was the cost. In 1878, the year of your tramroad or pole road, S. T. McReany in the Chippewa Valley built a tramroad two miles long at a cost of \$125.00 a mile and his two cars cost \$75.00 apiece. He was hauling 25,000 board feet of lumber in logs a day. (**Mississippi Valley Lumberman and Manufacturer**, June 7, 1878, p. 1). That same year a tramway near Wausau was using horses on a tramway that cost \$50 to \$60 a mile (*Ibid.*, March 15, 1878, p. 4). A few years later when logging railroads appeared in Wisconsin the cost ranged from \$500 to \$1,200 or more per mile.

As early as 1873 southern lumbermen were using steam locomotives running on wooden rails to haul logs. One engine was supposed to do the work of thirty mules. (**Lumberman's Gazette**, July, 1873, v. 3, No. 1, p. 23). These were not called logging railroads at that time. Instead they were referred to as "wooden track railways," "tramways," etc. The term logging railroad was to be reserved exclusively for a locomotive.

whose rod piston engine was connected directly with the driving wheels, and riding on steel and iron rails until the coming of the Shay locomotive with its gears.

When logging railroads did appear upon the scene they were powered by locomotives made by regular locomotive manufacturers such as Baldwin, Porter, Norris, Schenectady, American, Rogers, etc. Then they would be joined by the geared locomotives made by Shay, Climax, Heisler and Blackburn. The lumbermen simply had too much money invested in a logging railroad to depend upon some unknown and unproven type of locomotive.

This was not true of tramways, pole rods, etc. Many of these locomotives were made by small foundries or engine builders and many by the loggers and lumbermen themselves. I have often thought that the lumbermen who lived during the 1870-1900 period were among the most ingenious group of men who ever lived. And they fell in love with steam. Small steam engines and boilers were relatively common. They were used for pumping water and for a variety of mills (saw, grist, flour, etc.). Many different varieties of locomotives were created. The cheapest type featured an upright boiler set on a wheeled platform. Power from a relatively small steam engine was transmitted to the driving wheels through an ingenious arrangement of pulleys, gears, or both. Often there was no cab on this "engine." I might add that in the early part of this century loggers often used the engines of Model T's, Fordson tractors, etc. to cut the cost of hauling small log loads over the rails.

The year of your tramroad is significant. January and February of 1878, the traditional sleighing months, were unusually warm and dry. As a result, a great many logs did not get to the mill in Wisconsin. That summer a number of Wisconsin lumbermen, apparently including Wakefield, Trow & Co., built tramroads, poloroads, etc. in an effort to keep their mills supplied with logs. It is significant that this is the first time that "Big Wheels" were used to any great degree in the Wisconsin forests.

There is something else that intrigues me about your road. This is the statement that the locomotive was doing the work of "twelve men and twelve horses." The ratio of men to horses makes me wonder what the previous transportation mode had been. Had it been a horse powered tramroad?

To prove that it was a logging railroad you must obtain

evidence that the rails were made of iron or steel. If you have the newspaper files for 1879 and 1880, check them. Was this road still operating in those more normal years? Is there any further description of your road that produces evidence, no matter what it is? If you can prove that the rails were made of iron or steel you will have a "First."

If that fails you may still have a "First." You may be on to the first steam powered tramway in the state. I am not sure of this, but you are certainly in the running."

## Member-Authors Donate Books To Association's Library

Several book donations by member-authors have augmented the Association's reference library. Among these were **R. C. ("Doc") Brown's** "Logging Railroads of Rusk County, Wisconsin" and **Carl H. Rhody's** "The Saga of Spirit Valley, Parts II and III."

A review of Doc Brown's was written by member **Larry Easton** of Neenah and published in the January 1983 issue of "The Soo", quarterly magazine of the Soo Line Historical and Technical Society. Easton said ". . . it is an excellent companion to his "Rails Into the Pines 1883-1910: The Chippewa River and Menomonie Railway" that was released in 1980. This latest publication concerns all railroad operations in Rusk County and, because of its prominent role as the mainline connection, the Soo Line to a great extent. Much insight is gained into the Soo Line's interaction with the logging industry of Wisconsin and these shortlines. With a dozen or so different logging railroad operations and total mileage over 170, there is quite a bit to cover — and the author does a good job of it! Over 50 photos, several maps, locomotive rosters, ample footnotes, bibliography and glossary of logging terms round out the subject."

Readers of Rhody's Part I of "The Saga of Spirit Valley" (1980) will recall that it was primarily the story of his father and the typical life of a pioneer settler in the remote southeastern corner of Price County during the latter part of the 19th century. In Part II (1982), Rhody gives a detailed account of his early life as a farmer and lumberjack, up to 1938. Part III (1983) continues his saga with the story of his marriage and the trials and tribulations of the Great Depression and



World War II. In the Foreword to this volume, the writer capsulizes all three volumes, but says further, "The day to day struggles of two young people making a life together, told with heartwarming simplicity, is fascinating reading. But the value of the book does not stop there. Rhody's memory of almost forgotten skills, primitive logging methods, building and harvesting routines, along with colloquial vocabulary, makes Volume III as valuable a resource for writers and historians as its two predecessors."

## **Wisconsin Academy Program Featured Association Members**

WILLIAM WOLFF, Jr. of Lakewood and CARL RHODY of Ogema, well-known Association members, were featured speakers at a recent fall meeting of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts & Letters. The event, billed as a "North Country Festival" was held at Nicolet College & Technical Institute in Rhinelander on October 7-8, 1983.

Wolff's presentation, illustrated with a series of slides, developed the theme of "The Civilian Conservation Corps: Fifty Years Later". Rhody's "North Country Tales" consisted of humorous anecdotes typifying the life of the pioneer lumber-jack-farmer at the turn of the century.

## **Member Commentaries**

TED KARAMANSKI, history professor at Loyola University of Chicago, recently acknowledged with thanks the receipt of a newspaper clipping sent to him by the Association's secretary. The item dealt with the corporate history of the Thilmay Pulp & Paper Company which recently celebrated its 100th Anniversary. Karamanski said in part, "My interest in the northern Wisconsin lumber industry stems from my current project, a book-length study called "Deep Woods Frontier: A History of Logging in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan". Thanks to your help, and that of other members, I have been able to gradually uncover the history of many of the logging firms in the region."

WINIFRED JOHNSON SMITH, Hillsboro, Oregon, also thanked us for the assistance given her by Association mem-

bers in her efforts to learn more about the logging and lumbering activities of both of her grandfathers who were early day Wisconsinites. She remarked that "It is usually very hard to get older people to tell of the 'old days', but they should realize, when they are gone, we can't find out the information they have."

## **Contemporary Logging History Made By "Reiny" Krause**

The news media recently took special note of the logging exploits of REINHART KRAUSE, owner of the Algoma Lumber Company in Door County. In feature articles of the September 1st edition of the Milwaukee Sentinel and the August issue of the TIMBER PRODUCER magazine, Krause's selective cutting of his 700 acres of mixed hardwood forest was described in detail by reporter Larry Van Goetham. What made the operation unique was that the tract is located on Chambers Island, 6½ miles out from the mainland in Green Bay.

About 2 million board feet of sawlogs were cut from the area by Krause's crew this past summer, then transported by barge and tugboat to the Algoma mill by way of the Sturgeon Bay ship canal, a distance of about 45 miles. Previous selective cuts had also been made in 1954 and 1969, and Krause said he plans to continue his 15-year cutting cycle in order to achieve his goal of sustained yield.

## **C.C.C. Convention A Huge Success**

The 50th Anniversary Convention of the National Association of Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni (NACCCA) is now history. However, the memories of the many reunions that took place at Eagle River in late September between former enrollees of the same C.C.C. camps, and the reminiscing over their mutual experiences of those days, will undoubtedly be retained by them the rest of their lives. Most of the be retained by them the rest of their lives. Most of the 1000-plus members of NACCCA, and another 1,500 ex-C.C.C.'ers who had not pre-registered, had not been in contact with each other since those years between 1933 and 1942 when

they planted trees, fought forest fires and performed many other conservation-related projects.

Some of that past was revived when the newly constructed C.C.C. museum at Rhinelander, built by Wisconsin Chapter 23 of the NACCCA with the help of the Job Corps at Blackwell, was dedicated during the week-long convention. F.H.A.W.'s secretary-treasurer, FRANK FIXMER, was privileged to be a part of the dedicatory ceremony. He paid special tribute to the late KEN ELLIOTT, a retired Forest Service employee and director of F.H.A.W., who originally proposed such a museum for Wisconsin to house the memorabilia of typical C.C.C. life. Said Fixmer in his address, "What was just a dream only two years ago, has now become a reality. Because Ken was the driving force that made it possible, it is dedicated to his memory."

The Forest History Association's exhibit, set up and manned by Fixmer, was one of a dozen on display during the convention, and was visited by several thousand convention-goers and sight-seers.

A number of other Association members contributed many untold hours to the planning, organizing and implementation of the convention program, notably WILLIAM WOLFF, JR., general chairman of the conclave and currently president of Wisconsin Chapter 23 of the NACCCA; WALT MAYO, coordinator of area activities and attractions; JIM BERLIN, supervisor of the Nicolet National Forest and coordinator of Forest Service responsibilities for the convention; WALTER TERHUNE, Forest Service public relations officer and coordinator for news media coverage; AL BARDEN, Nicolet College, exhibits; and MIKE LEHOR, registration and information details.

## **More Contemporary Forest History — Wisconsin Conservation Corps**

What may well become a model forestry and conservation program for other states became a reality when the state's budget bill was recently signed by Governor Earl, thus creating the Wisconsin Conservation Corps (WCC).

The W.C.C. will provide jobs for 500 unemployed young men and women between the ages of 18 and 25 during the next two years at a cost of 2½ million dollars per year. One of the program's more unique features is a \$1,000 voucher

for education at a Wisconsin college or vocational school, payable upon the successful completion of a full year's service. Corps members will be paid the federal minimum wage, but will be live-at-home's in contrast to the base camp life style of the C.C.C.'s of the Thirties.

Potential high-priority projects include forestry operations, wildlife habitat conservation, recreational development, erosion control, emergency fire-fighting and flood control. A recent news release announced that three of the pilot projects, expected to begin in November, would be the restoration of a former C.C.C. camp in Washburn County, stream rehabilitation along the Peshtigo River in Forest County and construction of a 40-mile trail on an abandoned railroad bed in Iowa County.

## Geneological Interests Served By Association

Although F.H.A.W.'s primary function is to help with the preservation of forest history, oftentimes this also serves those who are interested in family histories, particularly when these involve some logging or lumbering backgrounds.

A recent example of such geneological assistance illustrates the point: The Director of the Northwoods Audubon Center at Sandstone, Minnesota requested information and source materials for his pending book on land use ethics and policies in Wisconsin. Additionally, he wondered if we had information about his great-great-grandfather (1829-189?) who had been an employee of Knapp, Stout and Company at Barron, WI.

Fortunately, we were able to provide a fairly detailed biography of that venerable old gentleman from a reference work in the Association's library: "An Historical and Biographical Album of the Chippewa Valley of Wisconsin", A. Warner, publisher, Chicago, 1892. It is worth noting that this long-out-of-print publication is a 3½-inch thick, leather-bound, gold-edged book which was donated to the Association by the late Walter Scott of Madison.

# New Members

**EDMOND H. DRAGER (9)**

517 E. Division St.  
Eagle River, WI 54521

**MRS. LAWRENCE ELLERMAN (9)**

Star Lake, WI 54561

**HOWARD R. PALMQUIST (9)**

3555 Cote des Neiges Road  
Montreal, Quebec H3H-1V2

**R. H. ROBERTS (8c, 9)**

363 W. Leather St.  
Tomahawk, WI 54487

**JOHN M. RUSSELL (9)**

Route 7 - Box 159  
Menomonie, WI 54751

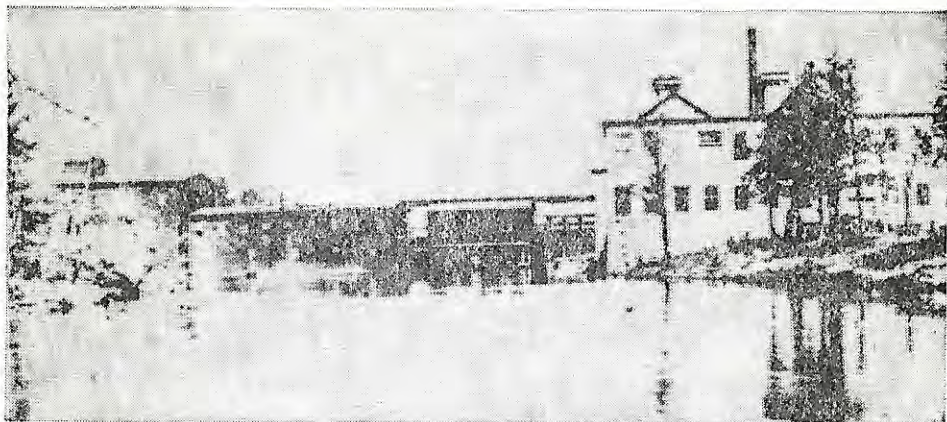
**FOREST W. STEARNS (6)**

Botany Dept. - U. of W. - Milwaukee  
P. O. Box 413  
Milwaukee, WI 53201

We regret to announce the deaths of the following, according to information recently received. Our condolences are extended to their families:

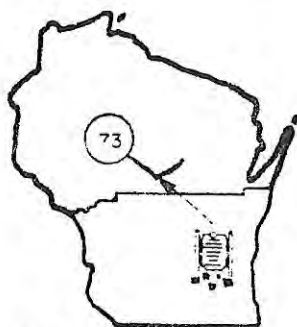
**HOWARD F. CUNNINGHAM**, Three Lakes, October 16, 1983

**ROBERT S. HAGGE**, Wausau, April 20, 1983.



State Historical Society of Wisconsin

1890, Centralia Pulp and Paper Mill



Located: Wis. 54 and 73 -  
south city limits of Wisconsin  
Rapids.

OFFICIAL STATE MAP OF  
WOOD COUNTY



### CENTRALIA PULP AND PAPER MILL

Here the vast Wisconsin River paper industry began in 1887 when the Centralia Pulp and Water Power Company converted a saw mill into a pulp and paper mill.

The pulp mill spanned the river to the island at the site of the present hydroelectric plant. The paper mill and boiler house were located on the island. Paper finishing and shipping facilities were located just south of this marker.

Two paper machines were installed and five water-driven pulpwood grinders reduced logs to pulp. The paper mill operated until 1912 when it was destroyed by fire. The pulp mill was removed in 1920 to make room for an addition to the hydroelectric plant.

From this beginning, the Wisconsin River area now has become the largest producer of printing papers in the United States.





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of Wisconsin, Inc.  
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