Lumberjack's Lament

Composed by Vernon Price

When this bloody job is over
Oh how happy I will be
No more foreman's bloody orders
No more lumbering for me.

No more chopping with our axes
No more pulling with a saw
We will finish up the skidding
Before the weather gets too raw.

No more lice to kill at midnight
No more sleeping in a bunk
We will tell the busy choreboy
To throw our bedding out for junk.

No more loading with a jammer
No more shouting up and down
We will take the blocks and cable
And sell them to a man in town.

When we come unto the sandhill
And we're travelling far too slow
We will tell the trusty groundhog
To shovel on a little snow.

No more trips to run on Sunday
No more begging for a break
We will tell our bloody foreman
To go and jump into the lake.

We will shout our own 'lights out'
We will bid you all adieux
No more early morning rising
No more frigging shanty stew.

Away from all our wives and sweethearts
Jokes and cards were all the fun
From home, a letter was so welcome
Better than a drink of rum.

We are getting old and feeble
And we're going down the hill
We are like a lot of others
We have always paid our bill.

So good-bye to all the groundhogs
And camps where one would nearly freeze
Replaced by skidders, trucks and chain saws
The lumbering now is just a breeze.

Honest men and very humble
We always tried to do our best
The shanty days are just a memory
Tucked away among the rest.

Tune: What a Friend We Have in Jesus

Log makers have just felled a tree and are limbing it up and measuring it before making it into logs.

The Habitant

There is not better way I can describe our good friends the French Canadians than by this great song. It expresses their simple life and jovial wit far better than any way I could. I envy their camaraderie, wish I had more of it.

De place I get born, is up on de reever
Near foot of de rapide dat's call Cheval Blanc.
Beeg mountain behin' it, so high you can't climb it
An' whole place she's mebbe two honder arpent.

De fader of me, he was habitant farmer,
Ma gran'fader too, an' hees fader also,
Dey don't mak' no monee, but dat isn't funny
For it's not easy get ev'ryt'ing, you mus' know.

All de sam' dere is somet'ing dey got ev'ryboddy,
Dat's plaintee good healt wat de monee can't geev,
So I'm workin' away dere, an' happy for stay dere
On farm by de reever, so long I was leev.

Oh dat was de place w'en de spring tam she's comin'
W'en snow go away, an' de sky is all blue,
W'en ice lef' de water, an sun it get hotter,
An back on de medder is sing de gou-glou—

W'en small sheep is firs' comin' out on de pasture,
Deir nice leetle tail stickin' up on deir back,
Dey ronne wit' deir moder, an' play wit' each oder,
An' jom all de tam' jus' de same dey was crack—

An' ole cow also, she's glad winter is over,
So she kick hers'f up, an' start off on de race
Wit' de two-year-old heifer, dat's purty soon lef' her,
W'y ev'ryt'ing's crazee all over de place.

An' down on de reever de wil' duck is quackin',
Along on de shore leetle san'piper ronne.
De bullfrog he's gr-rompin' an' dore is jompin',
Dey all got deir own way for mak' it de fonne.

But spring's in beeg hurry, and don't stay long wit'us
An' fir' t'ing we know she go off till nex' year;
Den been commence hummin', for summer is comin'
An' purty soon corn's getting ripe on de ear.

Dat's very nice for wake up on de mornin'
An' lissen de rossignol sing ev'ry place,
Feel sout' win' a-blowin', see clover a-growin,
An all de worl' laughin' itself on de face.

Mos' ev'ry raf' it is pass on de rapide
De voyageur singin' some ole chanson
'Bout girl down de reever, too bad dey mus' leave her,
But comin' back soon wit' beaucoup d'argent.

An' den w'en de fall an de winter come roun' us,
An' bird of de summer is all fly away,
W'en mebbe she's snowin', an' nort' win' is blowin',
An' night is mos' t'ree tam so long as de day.

You t'ink it was bodder de habitant farmer?
Not at all, he is happy an' feel satisfy,
An' cole may las' good w'ile, so long as de wood pile
Is ready for burn on de stove by an' bye.

W'en I got plaintee hay put away on de stable
So de sheep an' de cow, dey got no chance to freeze,
An' de hen all togedder, I don't min' de wedder,
De nort' win' may blow jus' so moch as she please.

An' some cole winter night how I wish you can see us,
W'en I smoke on de pipe, an' de ole woman sew
By de stove of Tree Reever, ma wife's fader geeve her
On day we get marry, dat's long tam ago.

De boy an' de girl, dey was readin' it's lesson,
De cat on de corner, she's bite heem de pup.
Ole Carleau he's snorin', an' beeg stove is rourin'
So loud dat i'm scare purty soon she bus' up.

Philomene, dat's de oldes', it sit on de winder,'
An' kip jus' so quiet lak wan leetle mouse,
She say de more finer moon never was shiner,
Very fonny, for moon isn't dat side de house.

But purty soon den, we hear foot on de outside,
An' some wan is place it hees han' on de latch;
Dat's Isidore Goulay, las' fall on de Brule
He's tak it firs' prize on de grand ploughin' match.

Ha Ha Philomene dat was smart trick you play us,
Come help de young feller tak' snow from hees neck,
Dere's not'ing for hinder you come off de winder
W'en moon you was look for is come, I expec'.

Isidore, he is tole us de news on de parish
'Bout hees Lajeunesse Colt, travel two forty, sure,
'Bout Jerimie Choquette, come back from Woonsocket
An' t'ree new leetle twin on Madame Vaillancour.

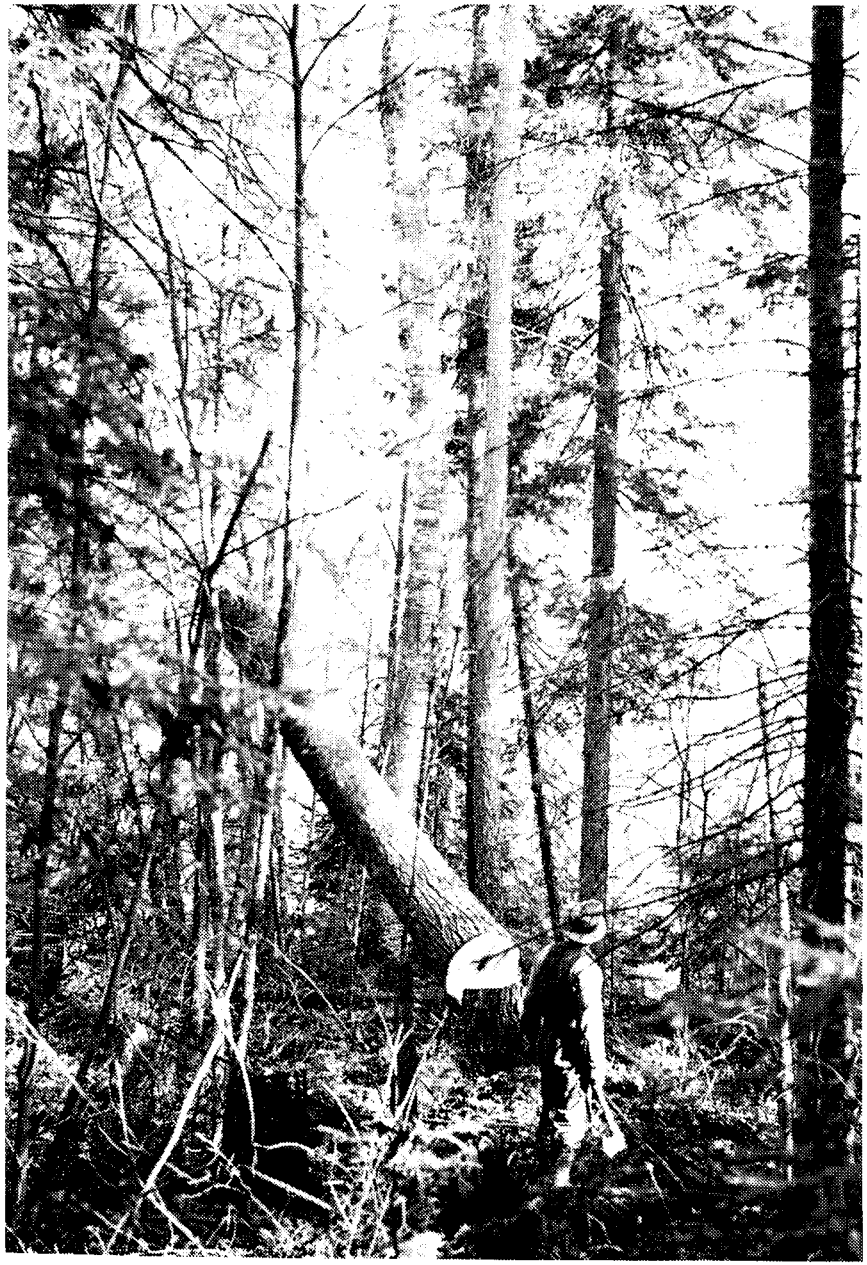
But nine o'clock strike, an' de chi'ren is sleepy,
Mese'f an' ole woman can't stay up no more;
So alone by de fire - 'cos dey say dey ain't tire-
We lef' Philomine an' de young Isidore.

I s'pose dey be talkin' beeg lot on de kitchen
'Bout all de nice moon dey was see on de sky;
For Philomene's takin' long tam get awaken
Nex' day, she's so sleepy on bote of de eye.

Dat's wan of dem t'ings, ev'ry tam on de fashion,
An' 'bout nices' t'ing dat was never be seen
Get not'ing for say me - I spark it sam' way me
W'en I go see de moder ma girl Philomene.

We leev very quiet 'way back on de contree;
Don't put on sam' style lak' de big village;
W'en we don't get de monee you t'ink dat is fonny
An' mak' plaintee sport on de Bottes Sauvages.

But I tole you - dat's true - I don't go on de city
If you geeve de fine house an' beaucoup d'argent.
I rader be stay me, an' spen' de las' day me,
On de farm by the rapide dat's call Cheval Blanc.



Another tree falling. A different gang.

Here are two stories about portaging, out of Rusty Leach's collection. I'm sure an awful lot of old timers will enjoy them more than I did, which is saying something. One is up the Black River and the other the Dumoine. I'm sure some will chuckle when they read these, about all the depots and stopping places. Their memories will be of the hard times as well as the good, but most of all of the names of the stopping places. I have listened by the hour to these old lads tell their stories ("I mind one time up the Dumoine . . .") Thanks again Rusty.

Not an easy job . . .

My father contracted for a number of years to supply hay and oats to camps belonging to J.R. Boothe at Moose Creek Depot.

The last trip I made to Moose Creek Depot my father sold hay at fifty five dollars a ton, and oats at a dollar five a bushel, and that was delivered to the Depot.

When you made a trip like that you had to take along enough grub for yourself and your team to last six days, mending equipment and spare parts, a bag of blankets, all this plus your load under a big tarp or canvas.

The first day wasn't so hard so we didn't leave before eight in the morning and we would travel as far as Oxbow Lake above the dam on the Black River and from there the road went straight up the centre of the river till you got to the foot of the rapids.

After dinner we went as far as Sammy Cassemer's place; they call it the Black River Hotel now. It would cost you thirty five cents to put up your team at Sam's, that's with hay and grain. I slept on the floor but got hot tea night and morning.

Next morning we were away by seven and didn't noon till we got to a place called Stone Creek. Don't know what it's called now but that's where we built a fire and ate out of that damn box.

That night we stayed at Schyan Post Office, or Shannon's Depot. It was so busy there it was hard to get stabling for your team and many a time you fed your team outside and built a fire and slept beside it all night.

Next morning you were away by seven and your next stop was for dinner at a pull out called McLaughlin's Forks where you would grain and hay your team. There was always somebody at these stops to talk to while you ate out of that box.

Every teamster on the portage either had cramps or the runs or was blocked up from eating frozen food out of their grub box.

That night you stayed at Duquette's Stop Over at Raymond Lake. I remember seeing Florence Murray there teaching school. She later married Lewis Millar at Fort William.

Next morning after a night on the floor and a hot tea you were away on you last leg when you would noon at a spring hole and you would be at Moose Creek that night where you would unload and get your weigh-in slip for your pay.

Next morning you would head out empty and it was double time 'cause you were running light and could do thirty miles. That night it was Shannon's Depot.

Next morning you left a little early 'cause that night you slept at home and had a hot meal after lunch-boxing for five days. Cassemere's was your noon stop.

You know back then your hay was baled with a horse press and each bale was 160 or 170 pounds with three wires, and you tagged each bale with its weight. You made them heavy like that so your load would not be too high.

The oats were thirty four pounds to the bushel. Your bags held three bushels and an extra two pound for the bag 'cause it was made extra thick to take the trips.

After you got back home you had to take your pay slips to Boothe's office in Coulonge in order to get your money so that meant catching the six-thirty train out of Waltham, cashing your slip at Coulonge, then walk back to Waltham on the tracks. And then home by noon or shortly after, or you could sit around Coulonge all day and catch the late afternoon train back, and walk home inthe dark.

I'll tell you if it was an easy job and comfortable nights you were after in life, then portaging up the Black River to the depots was not it.

My last portage on the Big Dumoin Road

I started on the portage when I was about 25 years old and drew hay and oats for my own family's well being. I contracted to a company named Fenton and Smith in Pembroke. They operated a big supply store near the old Pembroke Hotel. We would have to haul so many ton of hay and so many ton of oats, and that was delivered to Booth's Camp at big Lake Dumoin.

I would leave Demers Centre at daybreak with about 2500 to 3000 pounds depending on your team and enough hay and oats to noon my own horses plus my own grub box and blankets.

My first stop was at Keon's Hotel in Sheen where I fed my team and had a good hot meal for twenty cents. When we left Sheen we would get on the ice at Downey's Bay and head up the Ottawa River and we would overnight at Meilleur's Keepover this side of the Swishaw a wee piece. First thing in the morning you were on your way and you breaked for lunch at Tate's where you got all the hot tea you could drink for a nickle, and then after dinner it was on your way and held over that night at Madore's Trading Post and Layover. It cost a quarter there for hot tea night and morning and you got to sleep on the floor with your own blankets.

Sometimes you had to leave at three thirty or four A.M. so you would be in early at night in order to get a warm place on the floor to sleep. Back then there was over a hundred teams on the road between the Ottawa River and the Big Dumoin Lake.

I don't know for sure, it's been a long time, but I think we nooned at Souve's Stop at the Shearway and slept over at a place all the loggers and portagers called the Russell Hotel, like what's mentioned in the song Chapeau Boys. It wasn't in Ottawa at all but up the Dumoin Road. Well this place had the finest food and lodging in the whole damn area and was also a blind pig that made the finest and strongest poteen you ever tasted. Always got a quart every time I passed. Cost only $1.25.

When we got to Big Lake Dumoin, five days had passed and next morning bright and early the clerk would weigh our goods. You always weighed your bales and tagged them before you left home. Anyways we always gave the clerk a few shots of Pontiac Palsy and he gave us a good weigh in.

Many a time on the way down about ten of us would stop at Souve's Depot and we would all have a few drinks and dance half the night away. There was always a fiddle or harmonica or windjammer (accordian) to make music and I had a girl there I always danced with. God Souve's was the best damn place on the Dumoin Road to have a party.

You could haul up that road all winter and never unload at the same place twice. There was Buckshot Depot, Rabbit Lake Depot, Butcher's Stop, Rowanton Depot, and you knew everybody you met on the road because they were from the Island or Pembroke or Sheen.

After we finished hauling our own supplies we hired on with Hunter's Supply Co. in Pembroke and hauled for them from Moore Lake Station up to

Big Dumoin or the other depots. Their building was across from the post office inPembroke and they sent the goods to Moore Lake by train.

My brother and I both took a sleigh load of potatoes up to Big Lake in the spring and you had to travel at night when the roads were froze and the movement of the sleigh kept the spuds from freezing. The slush on Dumoin was nearly to the horse's belly and it was nip and tuck if we would make it out. It was a nine day trip if everything went smooth but if it didn't all hell broke loose.

I was about a mile from a stop one day when I took sick from eating too much frozen meat I think, and I began to swell up like a poisoned pup. There was a chap there by the name of D'Arcy and one named Hayes, and two other chaps, all from Sheen. I felt like I was going to bust so they took the centre wire off a couple of bales and wound them tight around me and took me the mile into camp. They would walk me around and make me drink hot tea and soups. I probably would have died without their help. That was the last damn time I went portaging up that Big Dumoin Road.

A snap of a tree falling. Note how the log makers are getting away from it in case it kicks back.

A good load of logs is drawn into the dump in the Sudbury district in 1938.

Camplife

One thing that was common in every lumber camp was the gong. It was a piece of very hard steel in the shape of a triangle with one open end. When you hit the gong on the inside with an iron bar on a frosty morning you could hear this for miles. It was a nice sound or a hated sound. Nice to call you to supper, but sure did not sound too good at 4:30 in the morning. About 15 minutes after they rang the gong to get up they would sound it again for breakfast. It was a cookie that sounded the gong by whatever time you had to get up and for all meals. There was only one clock in the camp that I can remember and that was the cook's alarm clock. The regulations were nearly the same in every camp and never seemed to be questioned. No one talked at the table—only asked for someone to pass a dish of food or more bread or tea if it ran out.

At night, after supper, the teamsters had to go out to the stable and look after the horses—feed and water them for the night, curry and clean them as you did not have time in the morning, and look for any sores or scratches they might get during the day. Then back into camp to tell stories, play cards until the bull cook came in and shouted, "Ten to nine!". That was the signal to get ready for bed because at nine o'clock sharp—not one minute after—the bull cook shouted, "Lights out!" and they were out. No excuses or argument would stop him. It would take a few moments before they were all out as they were either kerosene or gas hung in different places in the camp.

In the morning, the bull cook went around to each teamster and would shake him to waken him, time to feed and harness the horses. He did this about 20 minutes before the gong sounded to wake the rest of the men. Some of the bigger camps had a teamster's shack and the barn boss called you. There sure were some mornings you would like to have slept more. It sure would have been interesting to have a tape recorder in the sleep camp at night—all the different sounds of the men snoring, some sawing logs, shouting: "Timber!"; others shouting "Turnout!", going down a sand hill in their dreams; some had nightmares; some of the worst men to snore would be covered with footwear or anything you could throw at them to get them to stop.

The only picture I have left taken up at Azen near Sudbury for Zadows. Note bigger loads here drawn on ice roads—not many hills. This picture is Bette and Birnie with Henry Wisenburg driving them. I would have liked to have more pictures, but we were not paid to take pictures and maybe I did not have the 35 cents to buy film. Most of these pictures were taken while I had a road monkey drive my team for one trip. 1938.

Top Loaders

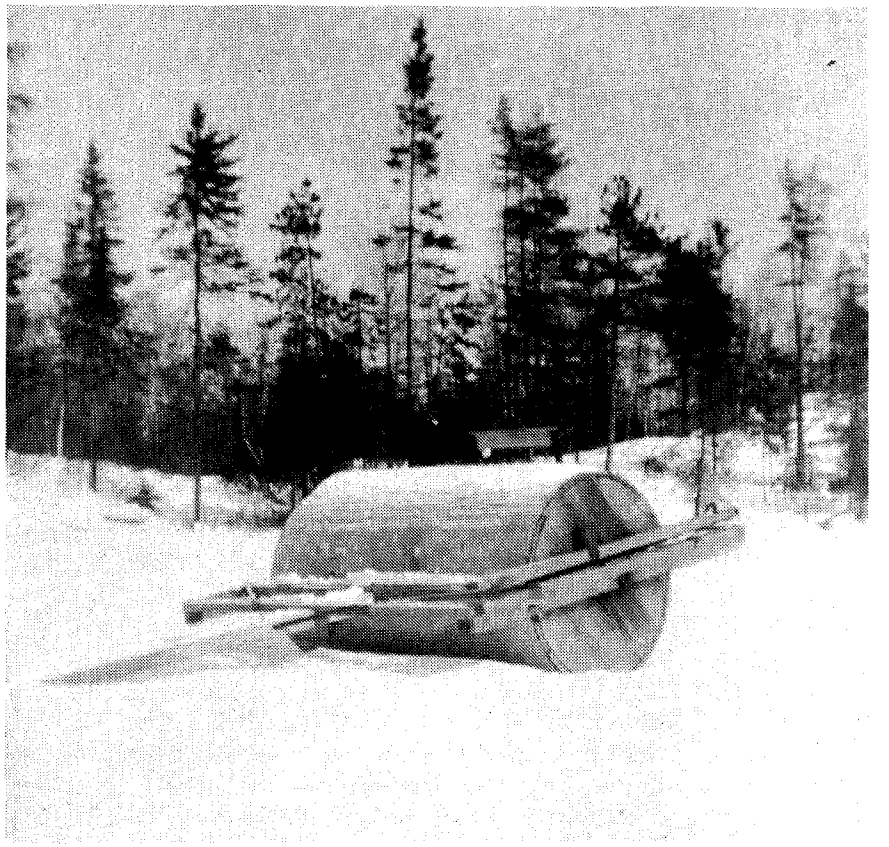
The top loaders were very smart men. They were the best judge of logs I ever saw as they could tell from the skidway just where every log would fit into a natch. They could build a load of logs just as straight up the sides as they do today with stakes. A tremendously smart piece of work to build big loads or they would run out of natches and end up with what was known as a horse cock peeker. Now in every camp there is some top loader or teamster who likes to take out the brag load. Now to do this everything has to be in their favour such as iced roads, a good team and teamster, a good top loader, good senders or bull rope men, a high jammer, no sand hills and close to the dump and most of all a good run of logs not too big in size if they want a big count. It was really unbelievable the size of loads they put on.

A teamster skidding a log to a skidway. Note he is standing on the log to go around a stump—very dangerous trying to ride a log.

This is a good picture of a jammer. Notice the guy line on the top right which would have been anchored to a stump or tree to hold the jammer up.

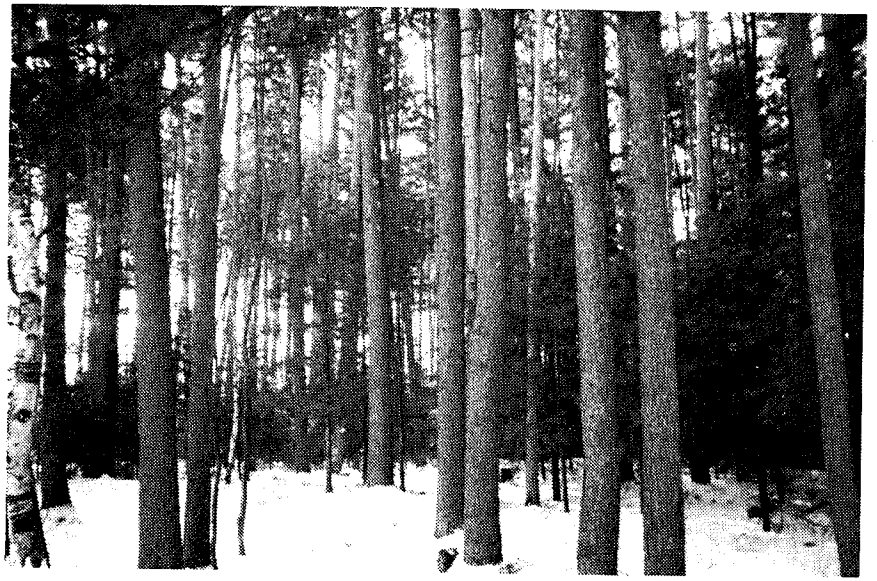
Making Ice

Getting the dump ready took an awful lot of patience if the weather was not cold enough. You had to make ice and without the cold weather it was impossible. There were different ways of making ice, but I only worked on one dump and this is how it was done. The blacksmith and handyman made a very big roller out of plank. It was about ten feet wide and about six feet high. They made the ends and centre like big wagon wheels made out of plank, and bolted plank to these wheels to form a cylinder, perfectly round. They made a frame around it and put a tongue in it to hitch your horses to, and kept rolling the ice day after day to build it up, also at night. This was the only time I ever saw a team in the water. The team went through the ice and the wooden roller

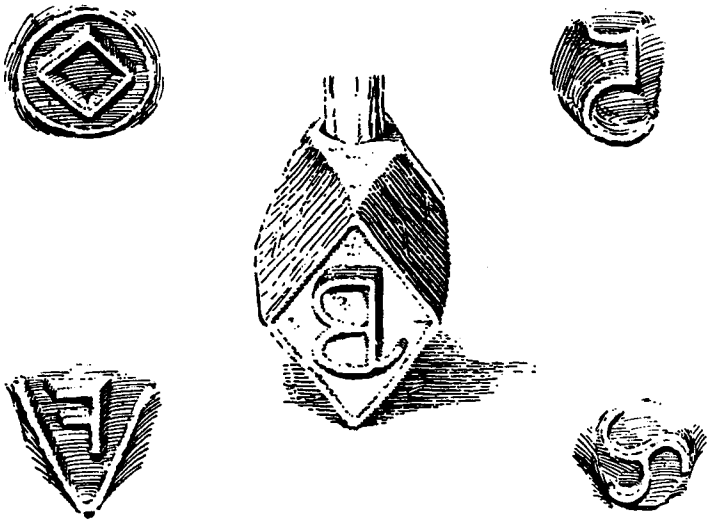


This wooden roller was made in the bush by the blacksmith and the handyman. It was used to roll trails for the teams to travel.

floated so here were the horses in the water with only their heads above water and this big roller way up above them. It was very hard to unhitch them as the whiffle trees was under water so we had to take off the harness. Both horses would have drowned but there was an old man there knew exactly what to do. One horse came out quite easily as he was fighting to get out so we just pulled on the halter shank and out he came. The other horse would not try, and pull as we liked we could not get him out. This old man told us to shove him under water and pull on the rope so we did and sure enough when his head went under water he took a tremendous jump and out he came. Now I am told the secret of this is when his ears fill with water they will make an awful effort to get out. I know it sure worked here. A horse can only stay in the freezing water so long before they stiffen up. As soon as we got them out, the teamster ran them to the stable at camp as fast as he could travel, but there were no harm to them. A very sad sight to see the horses in the water—a very great risk of them drowning. Not every horse can be brought out of the water.



The Garden of Eden: this is a term given to a really good cut of pine, something all log makers looked for, but seldom found. It was a cut of big pine long in length, the trees close together and practically no limbs until you hit the top. A good clean bottom, no hazel brush or small evergreens. To an old lumberjack, this is a sight to behold. I only hit one spot like this up at Temagami. You sure can put up a lot of logs under these conditions and the skidways even look nice and you usually get a good scale in this kind of timber.



Stamping the Log

One job we never liked to do was stamping the logs. This was done by the roler or the teamster. The roler did it most of the time, but if he got behind then the teamster helped him at dinner time while his horses were eating. Now it took a long time as both ends had to be stamped not only once, but many times as each company had a different stamp. This was so the logs could all be sorted going through a boom or log slide. Some companies painted the end of each log, and each company would have a different colour. The bark mark was another job we detested. It had to be done by the log makers. There were two methods—one you chopped the bark off each side of the log on both ends and you carried a scraper to make the bark mark such as ◊X referred to as the "diamond X" or "X diamond." I have forgotten what order they were in now. Another early method was to use an axe to chop the mark in. These marks were put on so you could recognize who these logs belonged to while they were still in the water. I forget the different stamp marks and bark marks. It sure made an awful lot more work for us, but no more money.

Clothing

The clothes we wore in the lumber camps were mostly made of wool for two reasons—for its warmth and resistance to dampness. Nearly everyone wore heavy woolen underwear as when you sweat it would seem to breathe through it. We also wore woollen shirts or sweaters, and woolen pants or woollen riding breeches. "Humphries" and "Woods" were the best and most popular. In the Fall you wore a woollen machinaw shirt. When winter set in, especially, the teamsters wore sheepskin coats or sheepskin-lined mackinaws as you had to stay on top of the load to drive your horses all the way to the dump. That morning air at 40 below was sure good for you. There was a great variety of footwear worn. The most popular was the gum rubbers with 12 inch tops but some found these very cold. Some wore oil tan or deer hide moccasins. They were quite warm, but very slippery both on ice and on logs. The socks were always heavy woollen or home knit socks. Anywhere from two pair to six pair were worn to suit each person's needs. Headwear varied from toques, which were quite popular, to peaked fur caps with leather or fur lined ear lugs. You sure had to protect your ears as frozen ears were common. The most popular mitts were horse hide mitts—everyone wore these when the cold weather came. You wore woollen mitts inside them. The teamsters wore deerhide mitts. They were warmer and more pliable and not so slippery for handling the lines while driving horses in the very cold weather.

The dumpers take well deserved break. Included in the photo are Bill Price and Agal Martin, both on the right.

Harness

The harness used in lumber camps was practically all Yankee or American harness. Some hired teams came in with Canadian (better known as "long tug") harness. The main difference was the American harness had shorter tugs with a hook in the dee. These tugs were held up by fork straps from the rump to the hames and held in place by a crouper which went under a horse's tail. Trace bearers were fastened to the dee which held the traces up so your horses would not get their legs or feet over the traces when turning around. Your heel chains stayed on the whiffle trees at all times fastened to the hooks in the dee. The long tugs had 7 links of heel chain at the end which were hooked to the whiffletrees. We had an awful lot more trouble keeping the horses from stepping over the traces, so the Canadian harness was not near as serviceable.

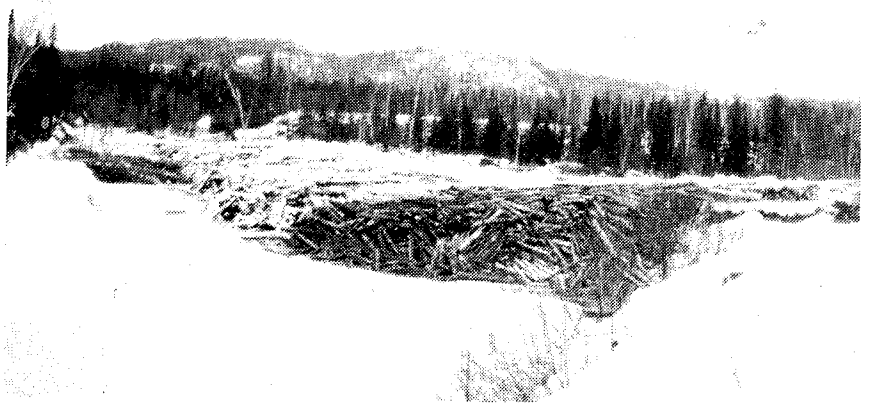
Depots and Stopping Places

Depots and Stopping Places are something we old lumberjacks remember well, but they are all gone now. Some of those depots were like small villages in the bush, where they stored hay and oats for the horses and sugar and flour and other staples for the men. Now all of this was portaged in the winter when there was snow, as you could draw far more on sleighs than by wagon. Each big lumber company had depots at central points up each river where farmers contracted to draw their produce—mostly hay and oats were kept in these depots or keep overs for the next year's operation where each jobber could get feed early in the fall. In the winter beef and all supplies for the lumber camps were portaged in. Most of these depots or keep overs had a man to stay and look after them all summer. What a lonely job all by yourself. Now portaging was very hard work both on men and horses—a tremendous hardship as sometimes there were so many teams on the road there was no stable room for horses and no room for men at the stopping places, so they had to sleep out. Everyone had to carry their own feed and grub with them always frozen so it was a very hard life. I am fortunate I never worked at it, but sure heard and read about it.

In the early sixties a friend of mine and I made a trip up to the John Bull where he portaged as a young boy. It was a very interesting trip for me as he told me and showed me where all the stopping places were. Now they were beginning to make better roads for trucks to haul material and to haul logs. I sure enjoyed the cuts of pine that were there. Miles and miles of pine and not very rough country. In 1984 I made the same trip with a young man who enjoyed hearing me tell of the lumber camps, stopping places, keepovers and big pine. To our disappointment there was nothing left. I could not show him

but not forgotten. I am sorry I did not copy the names of the stopping places I heard from by dad, grandfather and all others who portaged. I sure got a kick out of hearing their stories, but I'm happy to have missed the hard times they had!

It is a very sad sight for us old lumberjacks as we take a trip up these rivers now where all the timber was cut, to see no more pine. In latter years I have been up the Madawaska, Bonnechere, Petawawa, Mattawa, Montreal, all the Temagami district, Iroquois Falls, Kapaskasing, Foleyet, Dunrankin, Chapleau, Gogama up Highway 17 to Sault Ste. Marie at the Rainy River district right up to the Manitoba border. The forests are gone. The same up the Coulonge, Black, Schyan and Dumoine rivers in Quebec—the same thing. I am only writing about what I have seen—some places where it is recently cut out. What trees they don't cut, the skidders will knock them down. If you had to cut a brawla to whip your horse you would have a hard time finding one. One consolation is to see where some of it is seeded and young pine are growing again, but it will never be logs again in our time. Another thing I miss is the big sawmills. In my home town of Pembroke how well I remember the big sawmills on the banks of the Ottawa. Today, only the site of one is left. You would have a hard time to tell your sons and daughters there was once a big sawmill here. I went through these mills when I was a boy going to school. I watched the logs going up the jack ladder into the mill, how they were kicked to each saw, how the sawyer judged each log, and how the man on the carriage stayed on without falling off. I remember seeing the logs go through the gang



A consolidated dump on the Sturgeon River up at Azen near Sudbury. The river was filled with logs and acted as a bridge. Four different jobbers used the dump—2 on each side. It really must have been hard to get these logs started on the drive in the spring.

A typical team of greys, Billie and Rex. Ernest Ladouceur from Coulonge driving them, Schyan Point, 1939.

saw and following the lumber all the way to the sorting table to be loaded on wagons drawn by horses to be piled in the yard. How amazed and thrilled I was by the skill of these workmen—gone but not forgotten.

In April of 1986, I took a man up the Schyan River to show him the remains of Schyan Point Depot. Now they have a gate to check anyone going in. I asked the man at the gate to direct us to a spring I remember, where the water ran out of a pipe set in the side of a hill. He told us to turn around and go back about one minute and I would find it on the right hand side of the road. This water was so clear and cold! You would not believe water could be so cold, and it has been running for as long as I can remember.

I have also visited the remains of the Crow Bridge Camp on the Crow River. There is still a monstrous eight-burner stove there. In some camps, instead of the one monstrous stove, they put two four-burner stoves-end-to-end, giving them two ovens and two water reservoirs.

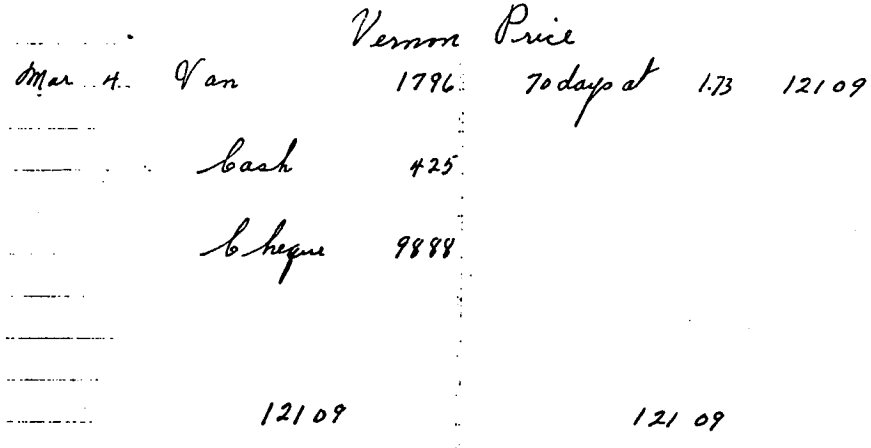
I can't understand how the stove and dishes are still there after fifty years. It may be used as a hunt camp now, as the camp seems to be in fair shape. But those big stoves were very seldom left behind, as they were hard to come by.

Thomsie Fitzpatrick

As you cross the bridge from Pembroke to Alumette Island, you have to cross Morison's Island. Now the man who owned Morison's Island was Thomsie Fitzpatrick. He was my bunk mate when I worked for Willie McCool. We slept together in a top bunk. Now Thomsie and his good wife were the only people on the Island. He told me he would cross over to Pembroke twice yearly in a rowboat—spring and fall—to get the dire necessities for the house such as sugar, salt, flour and a few clothes because money was an oddity. He kept a milk cow to have milk, cream and butter, and a few more head for meat. He had a team of horses to work the few acres that were cleared. I thought it would be a lonely life. He said only for the wife when he went to the lumber camps. He told me he had to go as that was his only income. I don't recall if he told me his wife stayed alone or he had someone to stay with her. He sure was a real gentleman.

Reminiscences

Just recently, 48 years after I was in the lumber camps, I was given a ledger by a very good friend, listing all the men who worked in the camp that year. I sure was surprised to see my name with my van bill (cash I drew) and my total earnings, which were as follows:



I drew one hundred dollars at Christmas. I had over 3 months in for Willie McCool, but came down to Joe McCool's camp on New Year's day, 1939, as he was not finished cutting so I had a total of $98.88 take home pay for over 5 months work. I was quite surprised to see my van bill as big as it was because I did not smoke, but I do remember buying a pair of leather mitts for 75 cents and a pair of riding breeches which were $4.25 made by Humfries—the best in woollen wear at that time. Woods was another brand which was very good. It doesn't look like very much money by today's pay, but I sure was glad to get it. I had walked 17 miles in to get that job and had to cross the Ottawa River in a rowboat. I remember that day so well. I got into camp about 5:00 p.m. and met the foreman, Willie McCool. He says "What are you doing here?" and I answered, "I want a job!" He says, "We are turning men down everyday, but come in and have supper and stay the night." In the morning when he shouted "Aboard!"—all the men went out but me, so McCool says, "Do you want to work the main road?" I says "Sure!" The worst job in the world—about 10 o'clock he came and asked me if I wanted to go and take a team and skid logs—I said "Sure". That was the sweetest music I ever heard—anything to get off the main road.

Now this ledger has some statistics that are unbelievable. Today I will give a few illustrations. By my count, at one time there were 69 men in camp. I don't know for how long, but at least for the month of January, 1939, which was their biggest expense wages $1,966.36, board $584.55. The reason January was the highest was that they had gangs cutting and some hauling logs. February had an unbelievably small bill as when the log cutting was over, some men were laid off so there were only the teamsters, loaders, dumpers, sand hill men, men to look after the roads (chickadees), cooks, cookies, etc.: wages $753.36, board $190.80.

I think there were either 3 or 4 gangs hauling logs. I think 3 teams to a gang. Some interesting figures: a team of horses was charged 80 cents per day for their hay and oats, which amounted to 51 pounds of hay and 45 pounds of oats for each team. The men's board was figured at 45 cents per day, quite a contrast from what it costs today. A very interesting item that really caught my eye was 7 new logging sleighs built by the blacksmith and handyman at $50.00 per set or $350.00 for the seven. How well I remember them, as I had one set—some took one half set and one old set as there are two sleighs to a set. The rest of the sleighs were sent up to Willie McCool's camp about 6 or 7 miles away.

Thos E. McLeod Schyan Limits
Cost of operation Camp #2 1938/39

	Wages	Board	Total
September	$ 316.98	108.00	
October	1591.51	531.45	
November	1757.00	564.30	
December	1582.71	487.35	
January	1966.59	584.55	
February	753.36	190.80	
	$7967.21 +	$2466.45	$10433.66

Hay & Oats at 80¢ per day per team & horses 1141 days at 80¢	912.80
Wages for hired horses	81.00
Cochburn & Richer	496.00
Compensation expenses	1.70
Wait	7.50
	$11932.66
Compensation	694.08
Grand total	$12626.74

Schyan Limits

Repairing Dam	$147.96
Mountain Dam	
Tom Quigg's wages & board charged to #2 Camp	42.77
Wages Pat Brennan Camp #1	113.23
Deduction ⅓ blacksmiths wages and board	73.00
7 new sets log sleighs at 50¢ per set	350.00
Estimated Van profits	157.36
Van sold 786.82 at 20% profit	
	$886.32

Dr.		Cr.	
	12626.74		886.32
	$11740.42	Total dr.	

1489670 board feet cost $11740.42

1000 board feet cost $\frac{11740.42 \times 1000}{1489670}$

= $7.88 F. B. M.

I went into the barroom in Chapeau just recently and was showing my pictures of the lumber camps—left some there with a photographer to get more copies and different people saw them. Now I have some young men coming to shake hands with me thanking me—one chap saw his father with a team of horses he always talked about but never saw. I was having dinner in a restaurant one day—a stranger was sitting in the next seat. I says "You are a stranger here." He says, "I come from Chapeau." I says, "I have some good friends over there, also Chichester, Sheenboro, Nichabeau." I mentioned J.R. Brennan from Sheen. He says, "I'm married to his daughter." Another chap told me how glad he was to see his father's picture as he never saw him alive as his mother was pregnant and his father drowned before he was born (memories). Another chap told me Paddy Brennan was his grandfather.

J.R. Brennan and his team Queen and Tailor descend the steep icy hill. 1939.

A snap of McCool's great drawing team, Barney and Prince driven by Sam McLean from Coulonge, 1939.

Horses and Teams

Here is a story of some horses I knew in the lumber camps. I dropped into Meilleur's Hotel in Chapeau one day in November, 1985 with a collection of pictures taken in 1938 up the Schyan River and there were some lumberjacks there that were in these camps, and we got telling our experiences and talking about the teams of horses we remembered. Now most of these horses are a legend.

There was Barney and Prince. They were McCool's famous drawing team—a big team. Barney was black, Prince a bay. Sam McLean from Coulonge drove them the year I was there. That team could really read Sam's mind. One day Bill McCool came along just as he started to put on a lead and he says to Sam, "When are you going to quit running the mail" meaning he wasn't drawing enough logs. So Sam says you judge the load. So they kept piling on the logs until McCool says enough—so Sam says to me hold them by the heads. I never knew why for forty years. Anyway I held their head and you know they scared me. They started to jump and snort. He dropped a link in the heel chains and crawled up on the load and told me to get out of the way and shouted, "Barney!" Now the team took a tremendous jump and snapped off the gooseneck that you hitch the whiffletrees to and left the load standing, never moved. I was the youngest in the gang so had to run to camp and get a new gooseneck and a wrench to fix it. It seemed that these horses knew what Sam wanted. A teamster that worked for McCool told me 40 years later why he wanted me to hold them by the heads. At the drawing matches he said they won many a match by holding them by the heads as they knew they really had to put more into it.

Another team of McCool's was Billie and Laddie, a brown and a grey driven by Frank Bernie, a deaf man. He could not hear you shouting "Turnout" on the sleigh haul but could always tell when there was a team coming by the way Laddie held his ears. He would always put one ear forward when he heard "Turnout", so Frank always knew when to get into a turnout. He had driven this team for thirteen years. Another fine team was Lottie and Chief. The nicest looking team I ever saw in a lumber camp. Another team was a black team of mares Herb Zadow bought from my dad in 1934, Bette and Bernie. The lumberjacks were talking about them while I was in the hotel in Chapeau in 1985, fifty one years later. Zadow used this team in the lumber camps until the early forties and sold them to the Consolidated Lumber Co. in Pembroke as a shunting team that was moving box cars on the railroad from one pile of lumber to another. I am told that when they tried them first they hitched to the car and it took quite awhile before it started, but when it did start there were three more cars hooked together. A tremendous draw for a green team. Now that team worked for the Consolidated into the fifties, an awful long time for a team to last.

Another team belonged to Jack Zadow—Jim and Dick. Now Jim was a big bay horse that they never thought they could get a mate for him, he was that good. Every year a jobber had to buy more horses so they went to this farmer who had a horse for sale. It was Dick, an awful lot smaller horse. Zadow told

A picture of Lottie and Chief, the best looking team I ever saw in a lumber camp. You can barely see the logging sleighs going back for another load.

This is where we used to dinner out. We had a place a short distance away in the bush. Note the loaded sleighs. They are just pulling out after lunch.

the farmer he would never match Jim so the farmer said if he don't match Jim, come back in the spring and I will give your money back. A very strong guarantee so they bought him and did he ever match Jim. They were an odd looking match—Jim so big and Dick so small, but a better horse never put his head through a collar than Dick.

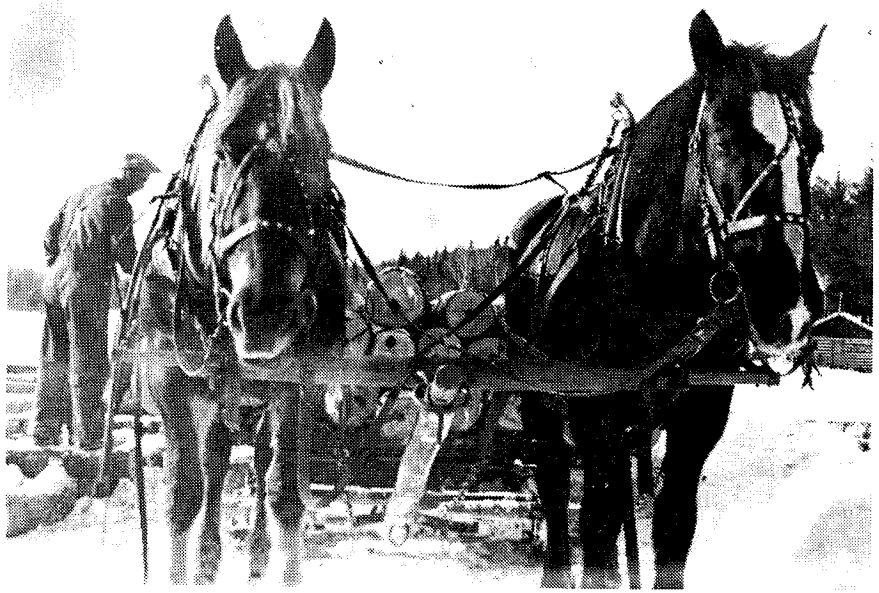
Another team was a team of brown mares—full sisters owned by Garfield England. Kate and Pigeon looked perfectly alike. I never worked in the camp with them, but I heard Frank Remus say they were the best farmer's team he ever hired. A team I broke in for the late Emery Turcotte at age two and three years old was a black and a bay, Tubby and Dick. Drove them for four years skidding. A very quiet and sensible pair—would do anything asked of them. I could leave them standing any place. They would never move. One day I broke a single whiffle tree and had to go to camp to get a new one so told my log maker to watch my team until I came back. When I got out of their sight, the log maker had to tie them as they were going to follow me.

A little story about this team. Now skidding logs for trucks is far harder than work than skidding for the sleighs as the sleighs follow the hollows and the trucks cross them so for the trucks you have an awful lot of uphill skidding to do. Now this day Turcotte and two big shots from Gillies Bros. came to where I was skidding. I had just put the second log on the skidway—a big one. Turcotte says to me, "How are you going to get the butt log?" It was down in a hole over the bank of the road and had to come all the way up the hill. I says, "I

will get it wthout much trouble." He says, "You will have to put skids under it to help." I says, "No way, I never had to do that in my life." When I was going back I took the end of the lines and touched up the black lad on the legs and I says, "Tubby, "(the black horse)" you'll have to fan your ass this time!" So I hooked them onto the logs, backed them up as close as I could, hitched them as short as I possibly could and started. Now it took a good many draws before I landed it on the skidway and Mo Turcotte was an awful man to blink but after a moment he says, "Well, Price, anything you leave in the bush no need of me trying with a John Deere bulldozer." These are a few of the horses I knew. There were an awful lot more like them. Maybe an awful lot better than what I ever saw, but it was unbelievable what they could do if given a decent chance.

Every year when the jobbers came down from the camps with their horses they would fill all the stables at the different hotels in Pembroke. Now every horse lover or men these jobbers bought their horses from would come to Pembroke to see them and pass remarks about them. Now sometimes these horses came down in pretty bad shape. It was soon found out which teams drew the most logs. An awful lot of arguments about which was the best teams—some remarks I heard: "Angie McCoy's team looks well;" "Jack Brown's grey and black toughed it well;" "Dalty Price's black mares are pretty poor this spring;" "Joe Bromley's blacks have changed an awful lot since last fall." Others were so poor you would not recognize them. You would really think they were building a horse as there was only the frame left. The difference in the shape of these horses was the teamster and the care they got. Some of the poorest horses this year may come out in good shape next year if they were fortunate enough to get a good teamster. It was unbelievable what these horses could do and unbelievable what abuse some horses had to take—had to work with sore shoulders, abused with a whip and never cared for, overloaded—over worked just like an old machine.

Here is a story I heard about a habitat team of mares up the Gatineau as told to me by a construction worker making roads with a bulldozer along the Gatineau River just before Christmas one year. The weather had been cold for some time. The river was frozen over, but he was told not to trust the ice as it was spring fed in places and you could not depend on it. He was operating the bulldozer on a Saturday morning, and going to quit at noon to spend the weekend in Ottawa where he came from. He was a son of the man who owned the construction company. Anyhow that night it snowed about four or five inches so you could not see just what you were bulldozing. Anyhow everything was going fine until he hit flat rock and before he got it stopped the rear end swung around and slid into the river, but did not go through the ice.



The horses enjoy a few minutes to rest as the load of logs is unloaded at the dump. Sometimes the horses even went to sleep during their brief stop.

His tractor was looking straight up hill. It could get no footing on the flat rock and he was afraid to try too hard as he might go in the river, so he shut off the motor and sized it all up and of all the equipment his dad had in Ottawa he didn't know how he was going to get out of there. He had a mile to walk to the nearest habitat or farmer to phone for his dad to come out and see what equipment they would need to get out of there. Anyhow he went to the farmer and rapped at the door to see if he could use his telephone. The farmer says "Are you in trouble?" He says, "Big trouble—my bulldozer is in the river resting on the ice and I was going to phone my dad to come out and see what he could do." The farmer says "Maybe I could get you out." He says, "What have you got?" The farmer says "A team of brown mares." Now he nearly laughed in his face but the farmer was so serious about it the man listened. Now being born in the heart of Ottawa, the construction worker

knew nothing about horses and always thought that a team of mice could do as much, but the old man insisted that he would try so he went out and harnessed the horses, hooked them onto a jumper (homemade sleigh), took them around to a leanto built up against his barn and started throwing on double blocks and snatch blocks to no end. There also seemed like a mile of cable. He went down to where the bulldozer was, looked the situation over, spied a big elm tree up the hill and says, "That should be big enough for an anchor," and he started laying blocks and threading cable. The cityman knew a little about using blocks and knew he had a tremendous purchase. Finally the farmer said, "Go down and start your motor, put it in the slowest gear you have, don't let out the clutch until you feel yourself move. It will take some time to get all the cable tight," and the old man started with his horses. It seemed a long time before the cable tightened, but when it did he felt a little movement so let out the clutch and out he came. Now, what a surprise! He kept going until he was back on the road again. He tried to thank the old man because he said he could not see any way he was going to get out of there. He tried to make the old man take one hundred and fifty dollars as that was all he had on him and said he would get any amount more when he got home. The farmer says, "I don't want any money, just glad to help," but the construction worker insisted he take something. You know the most he would take was $5.00. He asked the farmer how he learned so much about block work and he says, "I had to stump my farm so learned the easiest way to draw out the stumps." Anyhow, the man drove home to Ottawa and told his Dad about how an old farmer drew him out with a team of horses. His Dad accused him of drinking because no team of horses could pull a bulldozer that size—a D7 caterpillar, a tremendous size in those days. So the son says "Jump in the truck and I will show you!" You could see all the tracks in the snow so they went and looked at it and his dad says, "I don't think I could have got you out with all the equipment I have." He ended up by telling me that no one needs to tell him that horses are useless anymore.

A year or so after he was building runways at Uplands Airport in Ottawa and a transport plane came in and run over the end of the runway. It had been real wet weather and it was badly bogged down in a matter of minutes. It seemed all the brass out of the air force, army and navy appeared and millions of dollars worth of heavy equipment landed and they didn't know how they were going to get it back on the runway. So this bulldozer operator went up to them and asked if they would like to get that plane back on the runway and they said "Sure!", so he told them there was an old habitat with a team of horses from Gatineau would put it back for $5.00. They got sarcastic and he left, but he was sure the old farmer would put it back for a small fraction of what it would cost them. Now this was told to me as a true story.