

CHAPTER 4.4

PINE AND BABBS CREEKS



Charles Gee

Main Street of Asaph looking south. The mill and yard were to the right. The unpainted homes are company built by Campbell and Hagenbuch. They have since been torn down. Most of the painted homes on the left still stand, but the board walk is gone, and the trees are full grown. The building at the right is a store.

The drive north from Jersey Shore along Pine Creek reminds you of a good mystery thriller — the further you get, the better it gets. After turning off U. S. Route 220, you find the farm land gradually narrowing until it melts into the mountains near Waterville. The road crosses interesting steel truss bridges, each of a different design, several built about 1889. Gradually it becomes narrower and rougher, particularly above Slate Run. At Cedar Run the pavement ends, and finally at Blackwell the road gives up trying to proceed further into the Grand Canyon and instead follows Babbs Creek to Morris. All of which suit the fish above Blackwell very well, for few fishermen care to hike into their retreats.

I have followed the lone school bus serving the valley as it leaves Jersey Shore. The bus paused at Waterville and four children alighted. They changed to a station wagon serving as a school bus for their trip up Little Pine. Imagine! The once thriving Little Pine Valley today — only four children.

Pine Creek Valley is dotted with cottages but few year round residents above Waterville. The population of Brown and McHenry Townships, thru which it passes, is only 15% of what it was in 1900. The Telephone Company has consolidated its switchboards from Avis, at the

mouth of the creek, to Slate Run, thirty miles away. Whether you call Avis or Slate Run, it costs the same or nothing. In contrast, the Post Office maintains its historic past with five offices in homes and general stores.

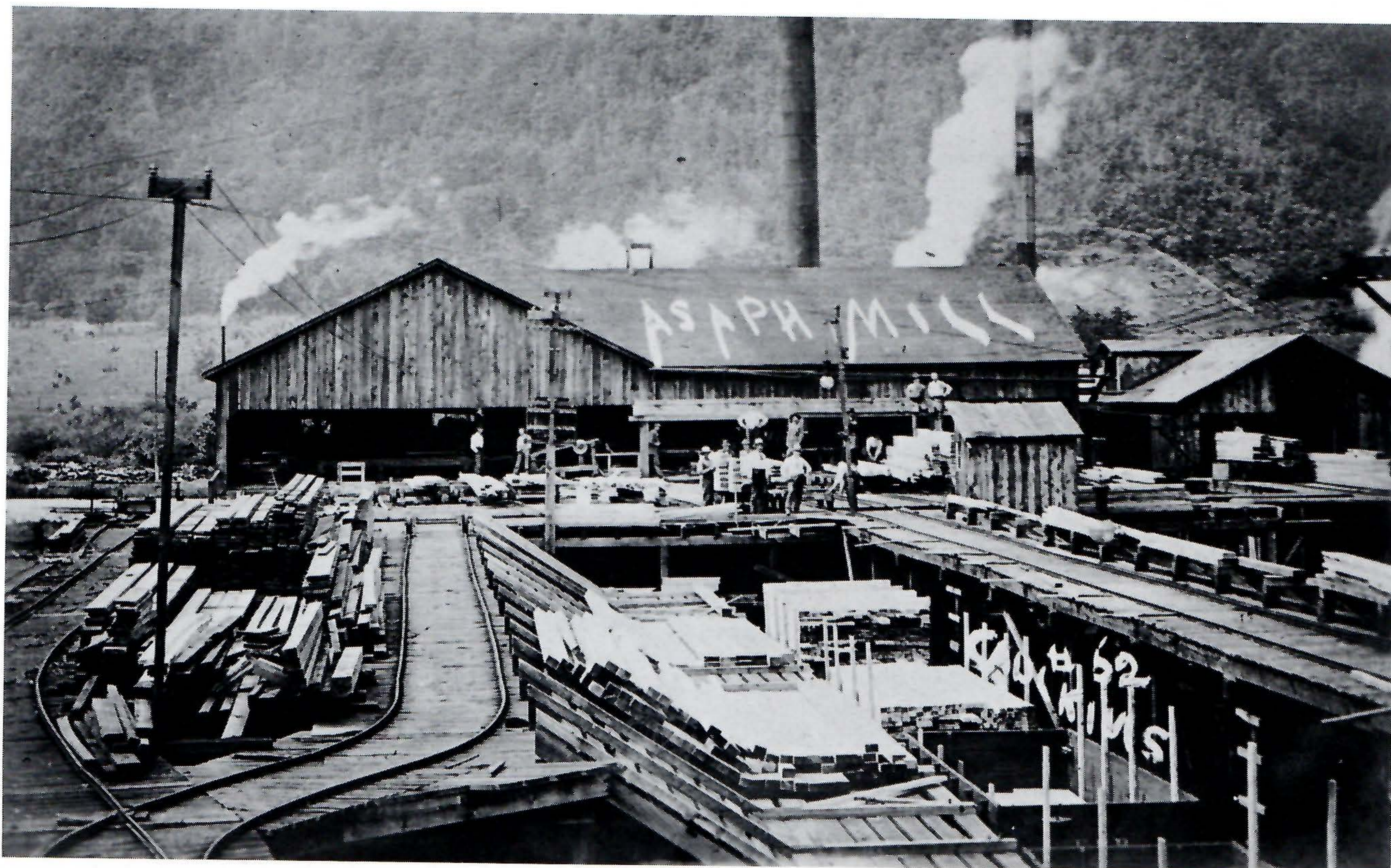
With its unusual bridges, general stores, post offices, and an abundance of native fish on its northern reaches, the valley of the Pine Creek is unique in Pennsylvania. It was along these waters in Lycoming and Tioga Counties that thirteen different lumber operations used logging railroads between 1886 and 1921.

This chapter includes Campbell and Hagenbuch at Asaph, Francis DeLoy at upper Trout Run and Millers Run, H. A. Miller near Jersey Shore, and the Blossburg Coal Company and the Slaght Lumber Company at Morris. With the exception of the Emporium Lumber Company at Watrous, the remaining companies are covered in succeeding chapters. Emporium is included in section 6.

CAMPBELL AND HAGENBUCH

Asaph

The largest of the Williamsport mills was the Dodge mill of the Pennsylvania Joint Land and Lumber Company. Not only was the mill the largest, but the company



Four gondolas are being loaded with a special order of timbers. The saw mill was of typical construction and appearance for a band and gang saw mill. Marshall Welch

had the greatest acreage of timber lands. The owners, William E. Dodge, James Stokes, and Henry A. James, were the principals in a much larger company — Phelps, Dodge and Company, a huge mining company still in existence today.

By 1900 the lumber operations had only a limited future; the mining activities were growing rapidly. The lumber operation was a burden on their management time so that a decision was made to halt all lumbering. This probably occurred in 1901. Beside the Williamsport mill, they owned and operated the Medix Run Lumber Company in Elk County and had several other large uncut tracts. The Medix Run Lumber Company was sold to the Goodyears. The timber in Cameron County was sold to a group known as the Cameron Lumber Company. Another tract on Asaph Run was sold to Eben B. Campbell and Girard G. Hagenbuch of Williamsport.

Considering the size of the mill and length of time to cut the Asaph timber, there were probably about eight thousand acres involved. Pennsylvania Joint Land and Lumber Company maintained the land ownership until they sold all their holdings to the Commonwealth on June 1, 1904 for \$114,601.75. More than 100,000 acres changed hands.

Campbell and Hagenbuch located their mill at the north end of the village of Asaph. A lath mill was also constructed adjoining the mill to use the edgings.

Machinery from the Williamsport Dodge mill was

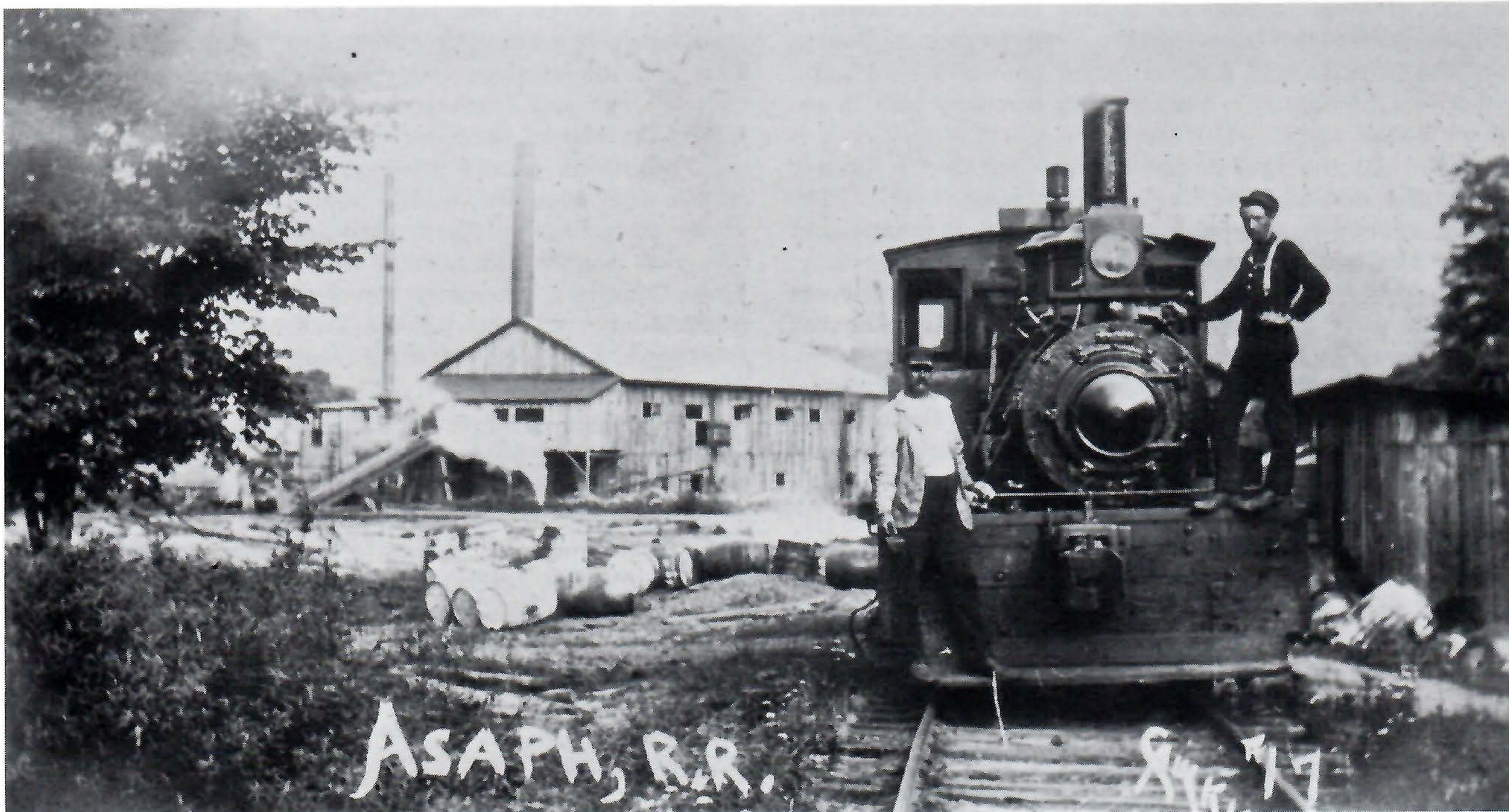
moved to the new mill late in 1901. A band saw and a resaw gave it a capacity of 100,000 feet in eleven hours. The little locomotive, which had been used to switch cars of logs and lumber at the Dodge mill, was transferred for use on the new log railroad. The 0-4-0 saddle tanker proved totally inadequate. An old Shay locomotive was acquired, and a year later, February 1903, a new sixty five ton Shay was purchased.

The Asaph Railroad did not connect with the New York Central. Instead it was built two miles south to Ansonia to connect with the Buffalo and Susquehanna Railroad. Six miles of tram road were built on both branches of Asaph Run.

A reporter from the Wellsboro Gazette visited the mill after it had been operating several years. The May 24, 1906 issue presented his lengthy article on the employees and operation of the mill. The article is particularly interesting for it names everyone working there, and in so doing, probably accurately describes the number of persons necessary to do each of the jobs in a mill of its size. For instance, ten men were involved in moving the finished lumber from the mill out onto the docks for storage, and nine men were required to load the lumber being shipped out. Compare these manpower requirements with today when we have fork lifts, cranes, and many other labor saving equipment — plus an eight hour day instead of eleven. Unfortunately a comparison with Pennsylvania mills cannot be made; not a single



Campbell and Hagenbuch had one Barnhart loader, which was operated by Henry Stricker. Locomotive No. 1, shown with the loader, was an old Shay purchased second hand from an unknown owner.



Engineer Ed Baker on the left and fireman Steve Baker wait to have their train unloaded. Not visible behind the locomotive is the huge carbon arc light that hung over the track for night time work.

Charles G



Ijma Historical Society
Ready for shipment from the builder in February 1903 is Campbell and Hagenbuch's sixty ton Shay. Although lettered Asaph R. R., the railroad was never incorporated. Charles I. James, whose name appears on the cab, was general manager of the Pennsylvania Joint Land and Lumber Company. Strangely, both Shays No. 1 and No. 2 carried his name and at the same time. No. 2 was run by Ed Murray and George Hoadley was the fireman. After Asaph closed, the locomotive was sold to the Emporium Lumber Company for use near Galeton.

mill is cutting even half as much per day. The article follows:

"Campbell and Hagenbuch's Asaph mill is fifty feet by one hundred seventy five feet with a fifty by fifty foot lath mill. It has a band saw, resaw, edger, four foot slasher, and trimmer. It cuts 85-90,000 feet per day of lumber, 35-40,000 feet of lath, and one large car of 12" wood. It uses a 250 horsepower steam engine. F. D. Mitchell is engineer and Charles Butler is fireman of the engine room. The planing mill is twenty four feet by fifty feet. There are one hundred employees.

"Perley Ling is in charge of the pond, and Walter Schoonover operates the jack slip. John Nan runs the band saw, Fred Preset does the setting, Harry Preset also sets and Fred Perry the tail sawing. Charles Bailey and Shay Hoffman are the filers. B. O. Van Valkner runs the resaw with Ben Fowler feeding and W. Glisby and Fred Simmons taking away. Calvin Martin runs the edger assisted by John Kreisler. Tom Chaffee runs the slasher. Frank Wood and George Kriner do the trimming. William Hoadley, C. Dean, and C. Austin load the lumber on trucks to take it out to the yard.

"Charles Holford is the mill foreman. Henry Smith and Robert Dartt are the repairmen for the mill. In the planing mill Jerome Frank runs the machine with Bert Franks and Elias Esten helping.

"The lath mill has Oliver Bailey, Burt Burrell, and Irvin Hawk picking slabs out of the elevator for lath and wood. George Tombs and Anas Smith were doing the bolting while Fred Bailey and William Root cut the lath. Ben Degraw tied. Fred Reese, J. Degraw, and Frank Catalin were taking care of the kindling wood. Arthur Butler sorted lath stock. Tony Petro cut kindling wood. John Smith, Carl Urse, and F. Morrow were loading it in the car.

"On the dock Allen Street was in charge with John Suhr, John Campbell, Lewis Stanford, Frank Hamilton, Archie Taylor, Homer Taylor, Mel Smith, Fred Brown, and John Harding doing the piling.

"For loading cars, J. A. Stover was in charge of Dan Johnson, Sherman Bennett, John Grady, C. Schoonover, Fred Putnam, James Putnam, Walter Moyer, and A. W. Richards.

"The blacksmith shop is used to repair the log cars. Harry Ingram, Guy Ingram, and Ellis Hoadley are there.

"On the log train John Smith is the conductor, Edward Murray, engineer; George Hoadley, fireman; Linus Bigsby, brakeman. Engineer Ed Baker and Steve Baker were repairing the small locomotive. The log loading crew is composed of Henry C. Stricker, Orrie Townsend, and Lewis King. Fred Marquette and A. B. Carnett are the log scalers.

"Mr. and Mrs. Warner run the company boarding house which is two large buildings. The kitchen and dining hall is twenty four by thirty two feet in one building while the sleeping apartments are in the other building which is twenty four by fifty feet and sleeps forty men.

"Eugene A. Shaffer is bookkeeper and stenographer. Campbell and Hagenbuch superintend everything themselves.

"One year the mill ran night and day for the whole year without a single shut down."

For the year of 1906 the mill cut 18,225,000 feet. This averages 60,000 feet a day. However, large timbers are not believed to be included in these figures. The saw mill continued for two more years until the spring of 1908 when it shut down.

Today, Asaph still has its single, tree shaded street, but the post office and store are gone. Many of the original homes remain as do several old timers who grew up there during the lumbering.

FRANCIS DELOY

Brown and McHenry Townships

Francis DeLoy was a jobber on Pine Creek. For many years he splashed his logs out of the runs, but in 1889 he switched to using a railroad. In September he purchased a 42" gauge, sixteen ton Shay for use on five miles of railroad along Trout Run.

Two Trout Runs drain into Pine Creek, one near Cedar Run in Brown Township and the other at Cammal in McHenry Township. McGinness's History of Lycoming County, 1892, states that DeLoy was cutting on Trout Run in Brown Township. McGinness probably obtained his information early in 1891. Interviewing of persons seventy years later failed to reveal anyone aware of a tram road up this run.

The Trout Run Railroad at Cammal was built in 1889, and the Wellsboro Gazette mentions DeLoy on it in 1891 and January, 1892. It is possible that he was there all along, or that he moved there early in 1891. The Wellsboro newspaper on January 21, 1892 mentioned that he was just completing a cut of three million feet of hemlock.

DeLoy's next job was for the Pennsylvania Joint Land and Lumber Company on the headwaters of Millers Run. This stream is located about two miles below Cammal. According to Abner Campbell, he used the railroad to bring logs down to Pine Creek where they were stocked until the spring thaw. The logs were then floated to Williamsport. As the New York Central was on the east side of Pine Creek, and DeLoy's railroad was on the west side, a temporary trestle was built to take the engine and cars across. Mr. Campbell remembered the railroad and the little locomotive, which he said was named Jenny DeLoy on the cab.

During November of '92 DeLoy was killed while trying to board a New York Central train. Mr. Campbell believed that the contract was completed by Kennett and Wilson. There are no records to indicate what happened to the locomotive. The track, of course, was taken up, but strangely, a ton or more of rails and scrap metal were left and can still be seen. It is located about three miles up Millers Run.

HARRY A. MILLER

Furnace Run

Two miles from the mouth of Pine Creek, Furnace Run contributes its trickle of water to the Pine Creek Valley. Careful search will reveal the roadbed of a log-



Mary Herritt

Loading the log train of Miller are ten men; a job which with a log loader three men could do and do faster. Note the lack of large logs. Most of the timber was second growth, the original hemlock having been logged in the early eighties.

ging railroad, the railroad of H. A. Miller of Williamsport. Continued search a half mile or so up the run reveals evidence of his small band saw mill.

In October, 1912, Miller purchased approximately 2,400 acres from the estate of James F. Torbert. The seven tracts cost \$62,300 and contained considerable small hemlock and hardwood. The land included warrant 4068 which lies north of the run and other lands further east on its head waters and on the far side of the hill.

The saw mill was built the following year, and a 36" gauge railroad was constructed up and over the hill. In September, 1913 a small Climax locomotive arrived to be operated by Eben Harris. Fred Smithgall became foreman. According to Mrs. M. Bastian of Jersey Shore, who helped as a cook, the camp was located adjacent to the mill where from fifteen to thirty men lived. She remembered four teamsters: Wally and Leonard Herritt, Solomon Keebler, and Fred Stone.

She also remembered the run away of the dinky. All those in camp heard the train coming and could tell something was wrong. Just outside of camp the locomotive hit an S curve and wrecked. No one was hurt, everyone having jumped, but the locomotive had to be shipped away for repairs.

Mrs. Bastian believed that Miller sold out to Lew Tomb after about a year. According to Eben Harris, the mill and railroad operated for about three years. Miller, he said, had expected to buy more timber east of Furnace Run, but was not successful. From this information it appears that the mill closed in 1916, but it may have been a year sooner or later.

BLOSSBURG COAL COMPANY

Morris

The need for mine props and the availability of good timber on the lands of the Coal Company caused it to enter the lumber business. They had several small mills, but as far as is known, only the Morris mill ever used a log railroad. The mill was also the largest and most substantial.

Information on the company is sketchy. The Wellsboro Gazette supplied a few facts: The Coal Company had purchased the Morris mill from Drake, Cummings and Company in March, 1890. They intended to build a narrow gauge railroad up Long Run about seven miles, and a locomotive would be brought over from their Arnot operation. The locomotive was undoubtedly a saddle tanker.

At Arnot they had several miles of railroad. Presumably this was for the coal mine, but possibly could have been a lumber railroad. If so, it operated in the late eighties.

Several months after the mill was purchased, it burned. A new circular saw mill was erected using machinery from their old Blossburg mill. The logging railroad and mill commenced operations in the fall of 1890. The November 6th issue of the Gazette said that the railroad had been operating only a few weeks but had already had a wreck.

The mill continued operating until after 1900, although the railroad may not have still be in use.

Years later the lands of the company east and north-



The mill of the Blossburg Coal Company in the nineties. It was situated at the north end of Morris adjacent to Long Run. This view looks south. What is now route 84 passes under the lumber dock just beyond the two box cars. The logging railroad came down from the left, out of view. A few of the homes and buildings in the picture are still standing.

east of Morris were sold to the C. C. Slaght Lumber Company, who then relaid the track along Long Run.

C. C. SLAGHT LUMBER COMPANY

Morris

More than a half century has now passed since the last steam operated logging railroad was constructed in the northeastern quarter of Pennsylvania. To many of us, 1920 does not seem long ago, but the years have a way of slipping faster and faster into oblivion.

The Slaght (pronounced Slat) Lumber Company was very small. In this respect it was similar to all other independent (not part of C. P. L.) lumber companies that commenced business after 1910. Financially, it was a failure.

Its history is interesting for comparative purposes to the mills in Pennsylvania today. Many are the same size, but they are not burdened with ten or twelve miles of railroad track to build and maintain for a handful of logs each day.

Charles C. Slaght made his home in Buffalo, but his lumbering prior to Morris was near Genesee, Pennsyl-

vania. He was a man in his sixties and well thought of. Every Saturday, while he was at Morris, he drove the 14 miles to Buffalo to teach a Sunday school class. He would drive back Monday morning.

In 1920 he made an agreement with J. F. Diefenbacher of Coudersport and E. L. Diefenbacher of Columbiana, Ohio to purchase 3,300 acres of timberland and 7,139 acres of timber owned by the Blossburg Coal Company for \$120,000. Costing less than twelve dollars an acre, the land had little sizeable timber. The coal company had cut the larger trees twenty five years earlier. His purchase covered most of the northwest corner of Liberty Township with some land just to the west and north of the township.

The C. C. Slaght Lumber Company was incorporated on July 28, 1920 with \$100,000 stock. Slaght owned half and each of the Diefenbachers owned a quarter.

He built his mill at the north end of Morris adjacent to Long Run. A small six inch band saw was used, but there was no resaw or gang saw. The daily cut is remembered by several persons as being about 15,000 feet.



The unloading track of Slaght was on the hillside with the mill at the lower left. The logs were rolled off the cars and down the embankment. Dislodging key logs to allow them to fall into the pond was tricky, but no one was ever seriously injured.

According to Charlie Osborn, who worked many years for Slaght, Slaght had not planned on using a railroad. Instead, he had purchased a large tractor and several trailers which could be coupled together to carry logs. They had wide steel wheels, but they still sank into the dirt and were stuck too often. In 1921 he switched to a railroad. The tractor was sold, and the trailers left to rust and rot near the mill.

Slaght built his railroad on the roadbed of the Blossburg Coal Company's log railroad for the first four or five miles. Then they separated. Slaght's railroad ran across the rolling woodland of Liberty Township almost to Arnot, a distance of twelve miles. For motive power, he purchased a Shay locomotive from C. P. L. Later he bought two more from C. P. L. but only owned one at a time.

The small mill could hardly support the expense of the necessary railroad. Fortunately, a chemical company was induced to build at Morris to take the small hardwood that was so abundant on his land. The Tioga Wood Products Company was incorporated May 19, 1923 by the Quinns of Olean and John and W. Mandeville Troy. In subsequent years, the chemical company took more logs than the saw mill. An average of eight cars of chemical wood and six cars of logs were needed daily. Because the chemical wood aged for a year before being used, the actual quantity cut could and did vary considerably depending upon the season. During slow periods only one train was needed for both logs and chemical wood. At other times two crews worked, one during the day bringing in logs and one at night for the chemical wood. With the two train operation Charlie Osborn was a fireman, but at other times he worked on the track. His experiences on the trains and the tracks follow.

"I started work for Slaght in 1924. Five of us worked on the track plus the foreman, Laurence Galusha. He was an awfully nice fellow. He would tell us what to do, and then go over the track looking to see what work had to be done. He always had an Italian newspaper. When he had no track to inspect, he would go out

of sight to read the paper and take a nap.

"One time we were working at the Kitchens water hole. There were black berries along there in the cut. After Galusha put us to work, he went up the track, but soon came back, puffing and in an awful hurry. He went over to one of us and said, 'Dominic, sharpen the axe. I want it right away. There's a bear up there, and he won't let me get by'.

"He sharpened the axe, and then we watched Galusha go back to the bear which was still in the cut. The bear was standing up on its hind feet eating the berries. The section boss went up so far and cried out to the bear, 'Are you goin' to get otta the way? I take this axe, I take this axe and cut your head off if you don't get out of the road'.

"The bear paid no attention. Galusha jabbered away for awhile, but finally put the axe on his shoulder and came back.

"We used to kill alot of rattlesnakes. The rail would draw heat in the summertime, and the snakes would come out and lie along side. We would kill two to six everyday.

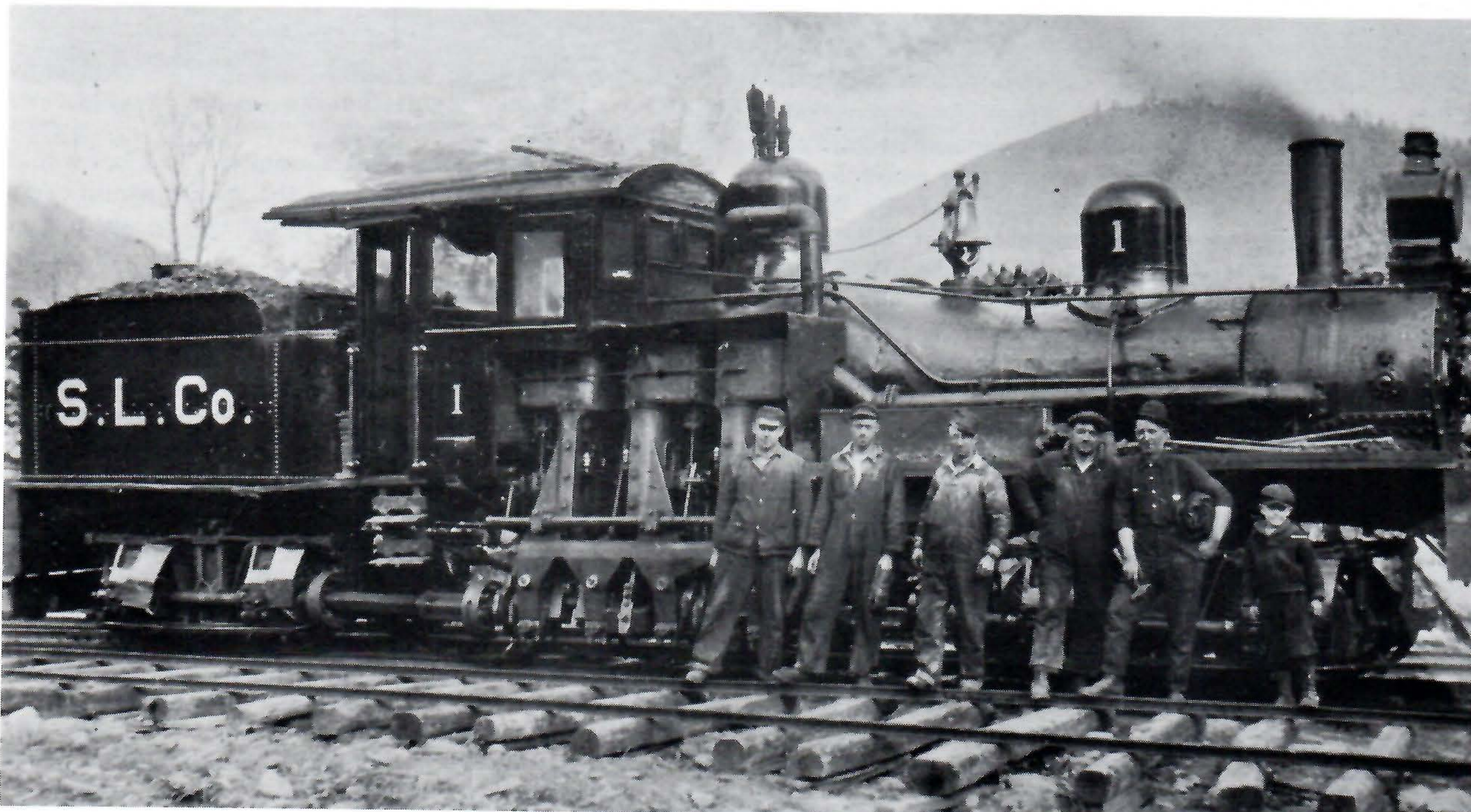
"Our heaviest rail was sixty pounds to the yard, but we had some down to only thirty pounds. We had a three mile stretch of this light rail, and it was continually breaking. This was on Beach Ridge toward Arnot. Each day when the log train came up, one of us on the section would get on the train and ride it in case the track broke. If it broke, he would stick a piece of tie under it and put fish plates on both sides of the rail and spike them to the tie. Sometimes the train derailed before it could be stopped. Then the engineer whistled, and the rest of the gang would come. The whistle could be heard for miles."

It is little wonder that Slaght had trouble with his track. The minimum weight that Lima recommended for his fifty ton, double truck locomotive was forty five pound rail. Later, he purchased sixty ton, three truck locomotives, which spread the weight better and were more powerful. Even these were too heavy; thirty five pound rail was Lima's recommendation.



A teamster skids a log to trackside. In 1972 horses are still used to skid scattered logs that can not be readily reached with a tra

Marshall V



The crew of No. 1 pose for their picture. Left to right are: Seth Williams, conductor; George Cobb, fireman; Bill Meeks, engineer; M
man Blackwell, brakeman; unknown; unknown. The locomotive was formerly C. P. L. No. 63, and the picture was taken in 1922.

Seth Willi

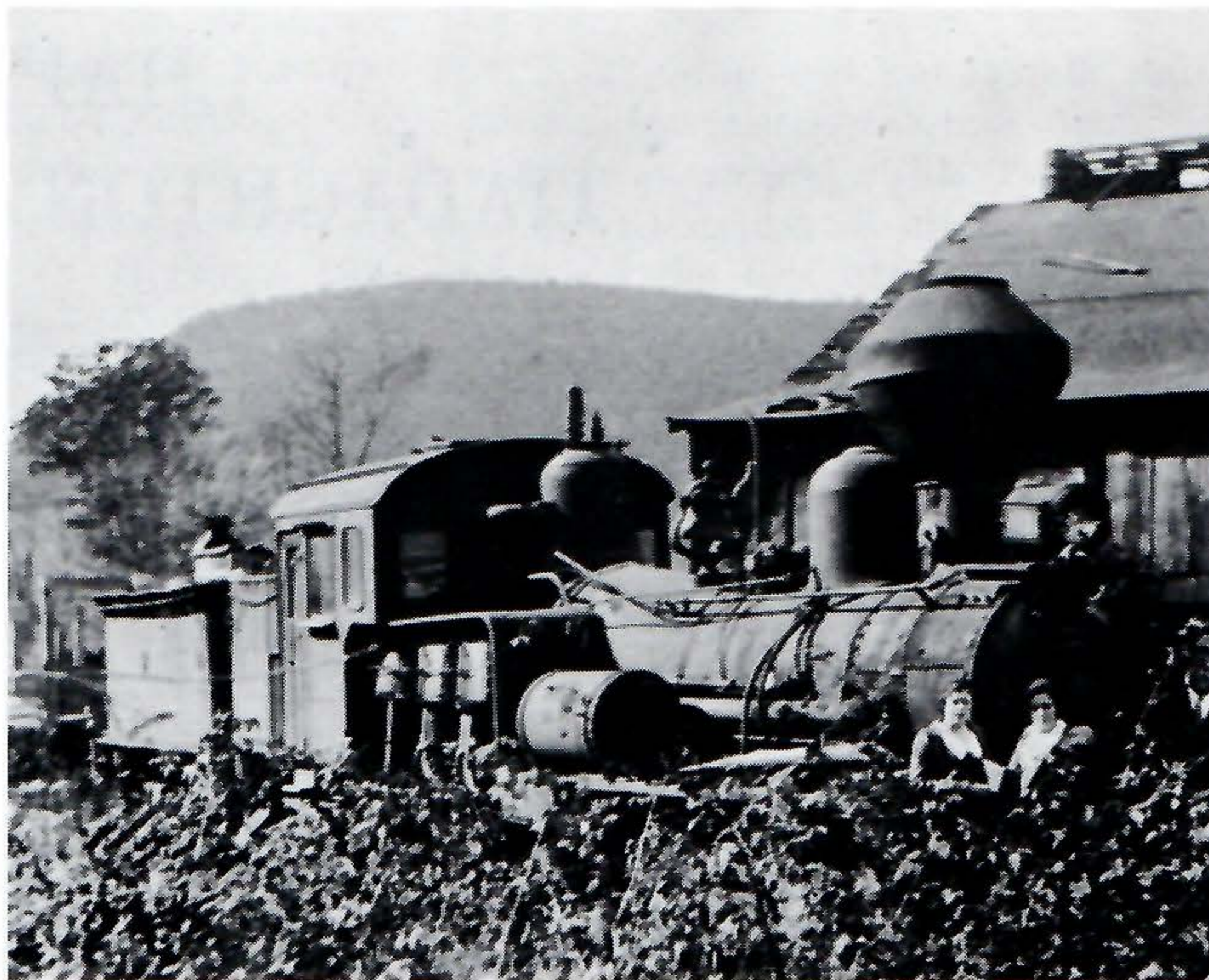
Mr. Osborn continued with information on the trains: "The day train hauled logs. Seth Williams was the conductor and Hershey "Bill" Meeks was the engineer. Williams had worked on the chemical wood train of the Gaffney Wood Products near Galeton before he came here. I also came from there as did some of the others. Lee Cobb and Hugh Boyden each fired awhile, and Clifford Blackwell was the brakeman. When they came in at the end of the day, they had to service the engine and get it ready for us."

"I fired for George Cobb hauling chemical wood at night. Norman Blackwell was the brakeman. We just had the three man crew. I helped Norman do the switching. We would go out and bring in six to eight cars of wood. These cars were loaded in the daytime by the logger."

If we didn't have any bad luck, which was seldom, because the engine and cars jumped the track alot, we would get in about 3 a.m. We started at 6 p.m., or as soon as the other crew had the engine ready. It took us alot of time to get the chemical wood. With our two truck engine, we could only haul two cars up some of the grades. There was no place to set them out on a siding. We might have to go two or three miles to a siding, set the cars out, and go back for two more. That could mean four trips. We also had to leave the empties. Later, we had a three truck engine, and it could haul three cars. I think the grade was about ten percent. We also had to split the train near the Kitchen water hole because of the grade coming back.

"When only one train was run, the cars of logs were ahead of the engine and the chemical wood behind. When the train came to the Kitchen grade, the rear cars were left and the log cars were pushed to the top of the grade. Then the engine went back and brought up the chemical wood. It also simplified switching at Morris. However, it had its hazards. Such as when the brakeman was riding on top of a log car, and saw the first car jump the tracks with the logs flying, then the second car, and so on back towards his car until the train gets stopped." This happened to Clifford Blackwell, but fortunately he wasn't hurt when he dove off the log car to escape the pile up.

Many of the men who worked for the company are still living, but they have scattered away from Morris. Among those who worked in the mill were: Harry Osborn worked the log pond with Gale Umpstead later replacing him. Charlie Carlson ran the jack slip. Grant Brown was a lumber piler. George Yoggy and later Joe Mason were setters on the carriage. Bill Emick ran the trimmer, and Bob Harris ran the edger several years.



The years have taken their toll on No. 3, and now the saw mill has closed at Morris. Soon the engine will be scrapped. Comparison with earlier photos, when it was Leetonia Railroad No. 4, reveals a new cab, air reservoir, smoke box, and stack and an electric headlight instead of oil.

Matt Whittle was the lumber grader. Mert Johnson scaled and loaded lumber, and his father was the millwright. Henry Miller was the night watchman. The blacksmith was Curt Winters.

Sometime about 1928 the Tioga Savings and Trust Company took over the finances of the company. Slight was forced out, and Roy Brownell took over. Later he took a job with the Niles Lumber Company. George Elder remained as superintendent until the mill closed. He evidently started before the financial failure although he may have been brought in when R. G. Brownell was named president. Brownell was president of C. P. L., from whom the locomotives had been purchased. Elder had been a mill superintendent for C. P. L. at Laquin, Costello, and Kinzua. Watson Barclay, who was associated with the Quinns, also owned stock in the Slight Lumber Company. In 1928 he listed his \$9,000 of stock as worthless due to a high mortgage that the company had.

The company struggled into the Depression. Finally the timber was cut, and the mill and chemical plant closed. The railroad was left in for a short while. In April, 1934 Abe Fischer, a Williamsport scrap dealer, purchased the railroad for \$7.25 a ton. His Keystone Iron and Metal Company tore the track up immediately. The mill was dismantled, but the chemical plant remained. It later changed hands and resumed operations on a much reduced scale.