

Diversity Research Study

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By

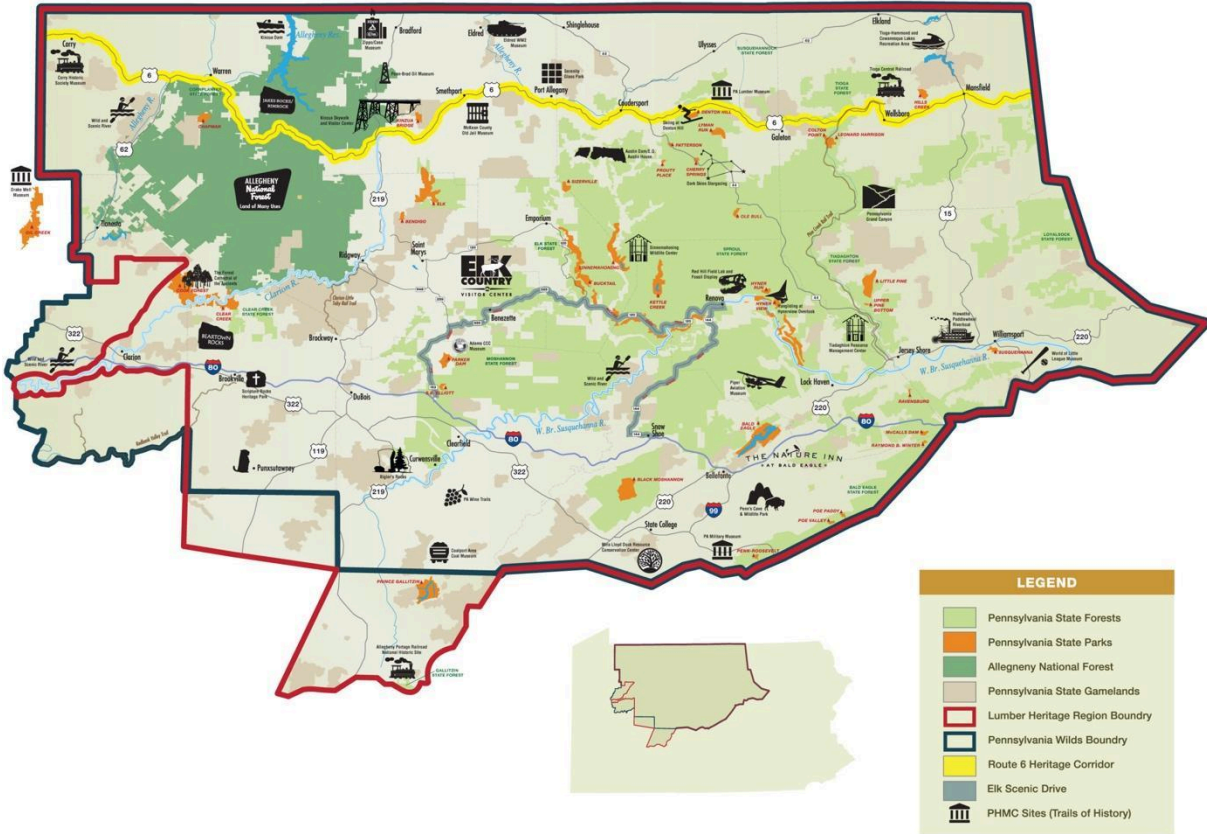
Hilary Folwell Jebitsch



¹ LM2019.4.1, untitled image, Newell Collection, courtesy of the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

Forward

The purpose of this research project was to identify, record and summarize any stories, scenarios and events that highlight the historic role of women and of individuals of diverse and/or marginalized ethnic and cultural identity in the history of the Pennsylvania lumber industry, within the Lumber Heritage Region (LHR). The completion of this research study will assist the LHR in relating and teaching a more comprehensive and inclusive history of the region. The funding for the research came from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Heritage Area Program Grant Round 24. Approximately 250 hours of research was conducted throughout the 15-county region of the LHR from July 2020 through January 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional information was added during 2021.



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Map illustrating the Pennsylvania Lumber Heritage Region

The research found in this report is preliminary. It is important to understand that all areas can be expanded upon. I am truly thankful to all of the historical societies, staff, researchers and individuals who were willing to open their doors to me in the middle of a pandemic. Others were able to communicate over email, phone, and Facebook to share information and answer my questions. A number of historic societies and sites remained closed due to pandemic related restrictions and their holdings may contain additional information and images that would help to enhance the research.

² <https://lumberheritage.org/about-us/>, accessed on 1 May 2021.

The histories of women and people of color as they pertain to the lumber industry are elusive. Various accounts and histories may only have a passing reference to a name or place. African American and Indigenous American cultures often relied on oral traditions to record and pass down their histories. In this region, during the early 19th and 20th centuries, those documenting the area's history were primarily white European males. The early historic accounts we have were up to the discretion of the people who were recording them and their biases. Regardless, the stories of lesser documented populations exist and I'm sure that there are more.

Some of the stories in this paper were truncated to provide balance within the report. For example, the stories of Rose Kocjancic and Mary Bizzak could be a separate project unto itself. The history of the segregated CCC camps was also shortened and could be the focus of another report. Throughout the course of my research, I was able to accumulate a number of images documenting the African American CCC companies that served in Pennsylvania. Again, this could be another relevant project. As I was writing this paper, I continued to ask questions and follow up on threads of stories. I also fell down some rabbit holes. Some information came to me too late in the writing process to include in this report. A favorite professor of mine from graduate school, Dr. Lanny Wright, once told me, "Research is never done. You just come to a point where you need to stop- usually because of a time constraint." So simple and so true, that comment has always stuck with me. It is my sincere hope that I will be able to continue on with additional phases of this project. This version, updated since the original May 11, 2021 submission, does contains edits and a few more stories, which I am grateful to have included.

The historic photographs found throughout the region provide an incredible amount of visual history. Only some of the images have documentation that explains their context and content. When we are fortunate to discover images that relate to one another, we can start to decipher and understand a broader picture. This was the case with Alma Swanson. There is definitely more to research and discover in the photographic collections of the region.

I sincerely thank Holly Komonczki for her support and encouragement during the course of the project. I am indebted to all of those who helped provide me access to historic collections and grateful to the individuals who spoke with me about their private stories or collections, specifically the Kocjancic and Bizzak families.

This project could not have been completed without the help and support of: Linda Devlin from the Allegheny National Forest Visitor Bureau, Samantha Mize from the E. O. Austin Home and Historical Society, Jack Bartok, Alexandria Kaelin from the Cambria County Historical Society, Susan Hoy from the Cameron County Historical Society, JoAnn Bowers and Kathy Arndt from the Clinton County Historical Society, Melissa Mann from the Drake Well Museum and Park, Bob Imhoff of the Elk County Historical Society and Ridgeway Heritage Council, Mary Alice (Jake) Knauff of the Forest County Historical Society, Jonathan Bogert of the Historical and Genealogical Society of Indiana County, Dr. Harrison Wick- Special Collections Librarian and University Archivist at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Carole Briggs and the staff of the Jefferson County Historical Society, Royce Novosel-Johnson, the Kane Historic Preservation Society- Wendy Oaks, Denny Driscoll, and Richard Bly, Tim Morey and Carey Huber from DCNR,

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Diversity Research Study

The history of the Pennsylvania lumber industry is marked by the stories of men. These accounts were often written by white men and rarely spoke to the diversity of the region. Accounts of women and people of color are rare and often dismissive. In reality there are stories that relate to the strength, perseverance, and quirkiness of women and men, abled and disabled, white and black, indigenous and foreigner. Their stories are often elusive. Sometimes mentioned only as a passing comment or footnote to a bigger, larger story, but they are just as relevant. They speak to another audience. They tell a more accurate, compelling, and inclusive

story to a region filled with hardwoods and tenacity- two characteristics still found in the region today.

Women cooks and “cookees”:

According to the Eight Census of the United States, taken in 1860, 40 women were employed in the lumber industry in Pennsylvania. Thirty-two of these women were listed as working in Forest County.³ More than likely, these women were working in lumber camps. Women had distinct, albeit traditional, roles in logging camps. Typically, they were present as wives and mothers with the domestic roles of cooks, cleaners, and caregivers. Their children, if old enough, functioned as helpers, performing basic chores. At some camps, the women came along as part of the family unit of a jobber or foreman, an experienced woodsman who functioned as a contractor with landowners to timber cut a tract of land over a given length of time. Jobbers often had or hired their own crew. As a cost saving measure, they could “employ” their wife, children, and/or extended family members. In the case of the Kettle Creek image below, one of the cooks was the camp blacksmith’s wife. Widows and their children were also hired to cook and keep the camps. These instances were often captured in the black and white photographs of Pennsylvania’s lumber camps, universal in all of the state’s lumber regions, proving that women were involved with daily logging camp life. As illustrated in the images that follow, women can be seen grouped together in the background or along the side of the “woodhicks” or lumberjacks. In some cases, the jobber’s family or a group of children are in

³ <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1860/population/1860a-30.pdf>, accessed June 4, 2021.

the center of an image, surrounded by woodhicks and bark peelers, indicating their place of importance or prominence within the structure of the camp.



Taken in Lumber Camp at the source of Kettle Creek when I was 10 yrs old, my mother on the left & Herb Cooper's wife. They cooked for 60 to 80 hicks. Dad was the blacksmith. Calvin Carpenter

Mrs. Carpenter, Calvin Carpenter and Mrs. Cooper, Lumber Camp Cooks
According to the picture's caption, Mrs. Carpenter and Mrs. Cooper cooked for a lumber camp on Kettle Creek for "60 to 80 hicks". It can be surmised that both women obtained their positions based on their husband's employment at the camp. The drudgery of cooking for upwards of 60-80 men, three meals a day, seven days a week, would have offered these women little free or leisure time to themselves. Here they are seen enjoying a moment in nature. Mrs. Carpenter's hand protectively, or lovingly, on the shoulder of her son, Calvin.

⁴ "Kettle Creek Cooks," courtesy of the Potter County Historical Society.



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John Coggin's Camp
June 10, 1907

In the preceding image from June 10, 1907, the camp owners, Mr. and Mrs. John Coggin, are pictured off to the side of the lumbermen. Mrs. Coggin is sitting and holding their son, Robert. The women and children in the middle of the group are standing and were probably the camp cook staff. Mrs. Coggin may also have cooked at the camp. However, that fact that she is seated, and the other women are standing, may indicate her prominence in the camp structure as the jobber's wife. Notice the man lying on the roof top of the center building. Scraps of wood and scattered logs are prominent in the foreground.

⁵ "John Coggins, Camp," courtesy of the Potter County Historical Society.



Dan McLaughlan's Camp

The women of Dan McLaughlin's camp in Potter County are all seated in this image. All of the men are standing. This image speaks to the social norms of the time. The men and women are in visibly separate spheres- home vs. industry. One woman holds a child on her lap. Some of the men are holding the tools of their trade- axes. Being seated, the women are visually and physically lower than the men. Expected to be strong and healthy, they often worked hours longer than their male counterparts.

⁶ "Dan McLaughlan camp," courtesy of the Potter County Historical Society.

The following image is of an unidentified lumber camp in Indiana County. Although lumbering was common in the county, few pictures exist of those who labored there. This image features men and women of various ages. One woodhick holds a child and at least one, possibly two, of the women appear to be pregnant, illustrating those who had and raised their families in lumber camps. There are two distinct types of clothing worn by the women, perhaps pertaining to their age, the work they performed, their physical condition, or their relation to the camp. Lumber harvested in Indiana County supplied timber and pulpwood to various industries including paper, steel, coal, glass, and brick. Specifically, lumber was harvested to use as mine props, cross bars, and drift timbers in the coal mines in Indiana, Clearfield, and Cambria Counties.



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Unidentified Lumber Camp, Indiana County

⁷ Unidentified image of a lumber camp, Indiana County. Courtesy of the Historical and Genealogical Society of Indiana County.



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Clara Moore, Short Run, Potter County

The image above is inscribed on the reverse, “J.C. Goding’s Camp/Short Run, Potter Co./Pa”
“Clara Moore/presented to me/Christmas/by Frank Pound/1897”. It can be construed that the women standing are the wives to the men by their sides. All of the women may have been involved with the cooking and care of the camp. The three seated women were probably helpers or assistants. Clara Moore would likely be one of these women. The buildings in the background indicate the size and scale of the lumber camp. The woodsmen are prominent in the foreground as well as grouped in the back on and around an outbuilding’s roof. Another

⁸ “Clara Moore, Short Run, Potter Co. Pa.,” courtesy of the Potter County Historical Society.

man is visible in window below the eaves of the roof line. Some of the lumbermen are holding their tools of the trade: a cant hook, axes, and “a misery whip” or a two-man crosscut saw. One man holds a jug of an unknown liquid, possibly used for work, not for pleasure. Alcohol consumption in lumber camps was commonly prohibited as was foul or crude language. These two rules were universal in lumber camps throughout the country.

Based on the handwritten description on reverse of the image, Clara Moore presented this photograph to Frank Pound. They are no longer identifiable in this image. However, the gift is indicative that they had a relationship. According to courting rules of the time, it would not have been appropriate for her to have given him a gift, had he not already given one to her.⁹ It was not uncommon for the single or widowed women who worked in the lumber camps to meet their future spouse there. According to Hiram M. Cramer, a self-declared “Pennsylvania Wood-hick,” from Hammersley Fork, Clinton County... “Many men that worked in the pine woods became farmers when they quit the woods...Most men that worked in the bark woods quit the woods when they got married and moved to the town to work in the brickyards and factories...”¹⁰ Other men brought their wives and children into the woods.

Boarding houses could hold small crews for periods of time and also catered to those who needed temporary housing due to the transient nature of logging in the region. In the early 1800’s, James Downing and his wife ran a boarding house along the Allegheny River, one mile

⁹ Green, Harvey. The Light of the Home: An intimate View of the Lives of Women in Victorian America (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), 14.

¹⁰ Cox, Thomas R., “Harvesting the Hemlock: The Reminiscences of a Pennsylvania Wood-Hick.” Western Pennsylvania History 67 (1984): 127.

above Horse Creek, in Forest County. Their dwelling was a log cabin and was available to raftsmen, who would sleep on the floor or along the shore outside the house.¹¹ The men who stayed there were satisfied because they could get a well-cooked meal and plenty of it, a testament to Mrs. Downing and her cooking. “Raftsmen, as a rule never complained about the lodging. If they could get enough to eat, they were always satisfied.”¹²

Other references throughout the region refer to husbands and their wives who jointly operated these establishments, “Bill Rowley and his wife conducted the boarding-house...”¹³ There are also situations where they appear to be solely run by a women, “Mrs. Perkin’s Boarding house in Cameron...”¹⁴ The following image of the interior of a boarding house in Hammersley, Clinton County, provides a glimpse inside one of these establishments. The figure of a woman, with an apron tied at her waist, is blurred, a testament to the multiple chores she performed. She is positioned to serve. The table is set with care and order for at least 40 men. The room is narrow. The building is constructed of plank lumber. Gaps in the planks are visible at the rear of the room. It is easy to imagine Hiram Cramer, the self-declared “woodhick,” seated on one of the benches.

¹¹ Leeson, Michael A. History of the Counties of McKean, Elk, and Forest, Pennsylvania With Biographical Selections, Including their Early Settlement and Development. Chicago: J. H. Beers & CO., Publishers, 1890. 841.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Huntley, George William, Jr. A Story of the Sinnamahone, 1936 (Butler, PA: Mechling Bookbindery & Bookbinders Workshop, n.d.). 160.

¹⁴ Ibid., 185.



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Hammersley Boarding House interior

¹⁵ "Hammersley Boarding House," courtesy of the Pennsylvania State Archives, RG-6.20, WTC, no. 3873.

The woman pictured would have had the ability to multi-task, be organized, and understand time management in order to have everything properly prepared at the meal times. She would have needed to be flexible and know how to handle the needs of an ever-changing work crew. The women who worked in the camp or boarding house kitchens had to be good cooks and possess literal and figurative strength. Huntley ascertains in his, A Story of the Sinnamahone, that,

“The hiring of a man or woman cook usually depended on the size of the crew. Those who put in timber for rafting had small crews and in that case women invariably kept the camps. But crews for putting in saw logs often consisted of fifty to one hundred men, which required larger kettles, skillets, and pans with which to cook than for a smaller number of men. These large victuals were too heavy for women to lift and carry, and for that purpose men were employed as cooks.”

Although both men and women cooked at lumber camps throughout the Lumber Heritage Region, it is clear and documented that women were cooking at camps that had upwards of 50 to 80 men at their peak season, a clear testament to their strength.



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James Harvey Stephens Camp- early 1890's

A handwritten note on the reverse indicates that the above image is of James Harvey Stephens' (1825-1895) camp in Inez, Potter County. The photograph was taken in the early 1890's. Mrs. Stephens died in 1888. Her daughters, Estelle Goodnoe Griswald and Mary Davis Stephens are identified as the camp's cooks. This provides another example of a lumber camp where the cooks were hired internally as part of a family unit. The women are seen in the background on the porch, presumably close to the kitchen. The camp's woodsmen are visible in the foreground holding their axes and a peavey. The teamster's horses are in the midground. The man closest

¹⁶ "James Harvey Stephens Camp- Early 1890's," courtesy of the Potter County Historical Society.

to each team of horses is holding their reins, indicating that they are the teamsters. Each of their individual roles are defined by the tools they hold and their placement when the image was taken.

These capable women persevered under often difficult and isolated circumstances. Sometimes referred to as “flunkies,” women often did the cooking, cleaning, and washing at many logging camps. Some camps did have cooks who were men, particularly larger camps. What mattered most, regardless of gender, was that they could cook well and served an abundant amount of food. Those who prepared tasty and filling meals featuring items that the men enjoyed succeeded. According to woodsman Hiram M. Crammer, originally of Hammersley Fork, Clinton County, “The work was hard so men had to be fed well. The food was well prepared and seasoned. Plenty was furnished and if the cook didn’t put it on the table, he or she was quickly discharged...”¹⁷ Meals were cooked three times a day, seven days a week, and always on time. Lack of time management was another cause for the dismissal of a cook.

The Wiley Camp Cooks

Logging crews were willing to quit a camp and move to another over the issue of the quality and quantity of the camp’s meals. Primarily relating to food that wasn’t cooked well or to food that was different from what they were used too. For example, at the Wiley camp near Four Mile Run, in Cameron County, in the early 1870’s, Jack Wiley had hired the “widow Spiegelmeyer and her daughter Daisy, from Dauphin County,”¹⁸ to do the cooking in his logging camp where the

¹⁷ Cox, “Harvesting the Hemlock: The Reminiscences of a Pennsylvania Wood-Hick,” 115.

¹⁸ Huntley, A Story of the Sinnamahone. 114.

men were harvesting “spars,” or white pine masts for a sailing ship. By all accounts the widow and her daughter cooked for the camp without complaint. However, when the women quit, a new cook, Sabra Ann Adams was hired. She faced a dilemma when Wiley had a group of men under foreman, John McGuin, complain regarding her cooking. The woodsmen hailed from Maine and were accustomed to eating baked beans, codfish and brown bread. Sabra Ann served them, what was considered to be local fare influenced by regional offerings and German heritage: sauer-kraut, sow-belly, apple butter, and griddle or buckwheat cakes. The crew from Maine threatened to quit over the issue of food. Wiley came to the defense of Adams, stating, “I would rather lose the crew than discharge Sabra Ann.”¹⁹ The crew from Maine quit and chose to move on and was quickly replaced by a crew of local woodsmen under foreman, Mark German. The crew had previously worked for Wiley, harvesting spars. Wiley understood the value and importance of a cook who could manage the camp kitchen and cook well.

A large amount of the food served at the camp was raised on Wiley’s farm, which allowed the camp to be partially self-sustaining. What Sabra Ann chose to cook did depend on the supplies and resources to which she had access to. The buckwheat flour used for her griddlecakes was made from buckwheat grown on the farm. Apples from its orchard were used to make sauce, apple butter, cider, apple dumplings, and apple pie. The farm also provided a source of work for some of the woodsmen during the summer months, as the majority of logging work took place in the late fall, winter and early spring when the loggers could take advantage of the ice, snow and spring freshets to help move the spars and logs. During this time period some camps

¹⁹ Ibid., 123.

closed during the warmer months. Common foods in the region during the latter quarter of the 1800's consisted of wheat and corn bread, corn mush, molasses cake, griddle cakes, root vegetables such as potatoes and turnips, onions, sauer-kraut, beans, dried corn and rice, smoked ham, corn beef, salt pork, salt fish, fresh beef and pork during the cold weather months, apple pie, apple sauce, apple butter, cider, molasses, honey, sugar, prunes, dried apples, coffee, and tea. Fresh fruit or vegetables were only available seasonally. Eggs and milk were a rarity due to lack of cold storage, although some camps did have a springhouse where they could keep items cool.

As documented in George W. Huntley's, A Story of the Sinnamahone, Jack Wiley purchased the Mersereau property in 1870 at Four Mile Run. The property included a sawmill, tract of timber and a farm.²⁰ His operation was typical of the time and provides an excellent example of the turnover and type of cook and housekeeping staff typical of a lumber camp.

Widow Sally Baum and her two daughters, from Lebanon County, were employed first to cook and keep camp. Shortly after the women were hired, "Ma Baum" started "sparking," or courting, with Jake Chandler, a teamster (a person who led or drove the horses who were hauling the loads of lumber) at Wiley's camp. Sally was the camp cook but began neglecting her duties to spend time "sparking" with Chandler. As a result, Sally apparently began oversleeping and her daughters were forced to pick up her workload in addition to their own. Wiley became aware of the situation and decided to fire the mother, because if her daughters were doing her

²⁰ Ibid., 99-104.

work, then he had no need to retain her services. Timing was also a factor, as winter was approaching and the camp would have been extremely busy, needing meals to be ready without delay. It was imperative for a lumber camp kitchen to run smoothly during the busy winter months. In the end, Wiley fired all three women. Chandler left with the women and married Sally. They returned to the Lebanon Valley farm that the widow owned.²¹ You can look at this several ways. Did Chandler “spark” with the widow because of her property? Did Baum “spark” with Chandler because she was looking for a worthy and dependable man to help run her farm out of necessity? Or did they truly mutually fall for one another?

Next Wiley hired a male cook, Dan Mundy. Mundy did not last long due to issues with drinking that caused him to neglect his work at the camp. Wiley repeatedly found Mundy drunk in a bar at town, instead of at work in the camp kitchen. Mundy was followed by the widow Spiegelmeyer and her daughter, Daisy, of Dauphin County. A few months after they started at the camp, Daisy became engaged to a local man, Dave Rankin. Shortly thereafter, the widow and her daughter quit cooking. The Spiegelmeyer’s were replaced by Sabra Ann Adams. She was known to be a good cook and stayed through at least one, possibly more, season. Adams then became engaged to Harry Miller, one of the camp teamsters. Miller suffered a hauling accident and was partially crushed by a spar. He died soon thereafter. His death affected the morale of the camp. Adams did not continue to cook at the camp after the accident. Instead, she married another camp teamster, Phil Wolverton. Following Adams, Wiley hired a widow from Lycoming County, Mrs. Seacrist, as the cook. At the close of camp that year, Mrs. Seacrist

²¹ Ibid., 104-107.

married camp foreman, Mark German. The following year Annie Highgetter from St. Mary's, Elk County, was hired. She was known as an excellent cook and manager. At the close of camp that year, she married Sam McDonald, a teamster who owned his own team and worked for Wiley. Annie and Sam latter went on to run a hotel in Emporium. It appears that she was the last cook at Wiley's camp. Wiley went on to become an elected Commissioner of Cameron County.²²

The Wiley lumber camp is an interesting example when looking at the lives of women who were employed as cooks in a lumber camp, in the 1870's, following the Civil War, in Cameron County. Wiley hired 6 camp cooks in a relatively small period of time, approximately 6-8 years. Five of the cooks were women, only one was a man, Dan Mundy. None of these women came with a jobber as part of his family. Mundy did not succeed due to what could be construed as alcoholism. Three of the women were widows. Two were unmarried women. Two of the widows had daughters to care for. Of the five women, four married staff from the lumber camp and quit their positions as a result. The fifth woman, the widow Spiegelmeier, did not marry. However, her daughter, Daisy, did marry a local man. As a result, they quit the camp. Presumably, Daisy and her new husband took care of the widow. The women were coming to the Four Mile Run area to work from outside of the region. Some of them owned property in their home locations. Finding a woman with property and the ability to cook well, would have been attractive to a man. Finding a man who knew how to work hard and prove his ability, would have been beneficial to a woman in this time period. These women also had to be industrious, independent, and resourceful.

²² Ibid., 106-162.

Although phrased in a manner that would now be considered demeaning, Huntley acknowledged the occurrence of matches made between the women cook staff and the working men in the lumber camps.

“The men did not care much about the appearance of a man cook or his cook-room, but they would not tolerate a woman cook who kept herself or cook-room in an untidy condition. She had to keep herself ‘dolloed up’ because the men were just as particular about her personal appearance as they were about her cooking. They showed her much courtesy, and if she were not a married woman, she could pick out the best marriageable man on the works for a husband.”

This double standard would have subtly put more pressure on women working in the camps to keep up their appearance in addition to their work load. This sentiment is an example of the idealized societal and social standards of the nineteenth century. Women represented what was considered good, pure and moral. They were considered to be delicate and the “weaker sex.” Men and women lived in separate spheres, the women’s being focused on home and the domestic arts. The lives of men were more public, focused on industry and commerce. They were expected to be working and had looser social restrictions. Like many women of the era, those who worked in Pennsylvania’s woods lived in an era of contradictions. The work they completed was not easy and was never ending. In 1936, Huntley adequately conveyed this outdated philosophy:

“In those days the women worked very hard in the homes. They had to cook food, clean house, and wash clothing, besides making wearing apparel, bed clothing and carpets. They nurtured the children, gave religious and educational instruction to the young, provided social enjoyment, nursed the sick and helped bury the dead. Women had no political and very few property rights. They had no place in politics, business, or war, because they could not defend their rights on the field of battle. Woman’s divine duty was to get married and raise a family, usually marrying between the ages of fourteen and twenty. Her greatest

influence was in the home. It was said, 'The hand that rocked the cradle ruled the world'. She was proud of her sphere and satisfied with it, until 'he-women' agitated a change and indulgent men granted it."²³

His last sentence is a direct reference to women's suffrage and his resentment towards it.

The travel patterns of both the men and the women involved with lumber camps varied. While some camps used labor from local communities, others relied on transient labor from other regions. Some of the women who cooked at Wiley's camp in Cameron County came from Lebanon County, Dauphin County, and Elk County. One of Wiley's early crews came from Maine. It was not uncommon for logging crews to move throughout Pennsylvania, Maine, Canada, the New York Adirondacks, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, West Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, or further seeking experience and employment.

Wilber and Allen Russell ran several lumber camps, putting in spars, on and around Hunt's Run, Cameron County, from approximately 1873-1883. The Russell brothers built their first logging camp at "Russell Hollow" in 1873. The camp consisted of roughly 60 men. Unlike Wiley, the Russells hired married couples to keep their camps, rather than individual women. The brothers first hired Dan Crawford and his wife to keep their camp.²⁴ The next year the brothers hired Rodney McSwan and his wife. Mrs. McSwan handled the cooking while her husband acted as the "cookee" or cook's assistant or helper. The "cookee's" responsibilities included, but were not limited to washing dishes, waiting on tables, peeling vegetables, washing towels/linens/laundry, packing lunches, calling the men to meals, cleaning tables, gathering

²³ Ibid., 334.

²⁴ Ibid., 168.

wood and water. Both Mr. and Mrs. McSwan were instrumental in keeping the camp clean.²⁵ This included delousing the woodhicks beds in the spring, replacing the straw in the sleeping mats, cleaning and whitewashing the bunkhouse. The McSwan's, like the women at Wiley's Camp, would have resided in separate living quarters from the men, possibly attached to the kitchen. The McSwan's appear to have stayed on as the camp cook/cleaning staff and provided consistency for the remainder of the camp's existence. The married couples who cooked and kept the Russell's logging camp offer a different perspective from the individual women who cared for Wiley's camp.

Idessa Roupp

Relying on their domestic skills, women continued to find employment as cooks at logging camps in the early twentieth century. The industrial era saw advancements in food preservation and access which would impact the kitchens of Pennsylvania's lumber camps. There were also developments in logging equipment. Rail access continued to increase to more remote regions of Pennsylvania's forests. Related industries continued to grow and develop including tanneries, stave, kindling, resin, chemical, furniture, veneer factories and paper mills. The need for wood continued to thrive. In some regions second growth would begin to be harvested.

²⁵ Ibid., 184-197



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Possibly Idessa and Viola Roupp

This photograph, from the Lycoming County Historical Society, depicts two young women, most likely cooks, seated upon a pile of firewood. Presumably that firewood is what that they used to heat the camp's stove to cook and to heat water to wash dishes and laundry. Next to the perched women is a wooden milk crate proudly advertising, "VAN CAMP'S/EVAPORATED/MILK/WILL KEEP INDEFINITELY IN ANY CLIMATE". The box speaks to their responsibilities in the kitchen and the remoteness of their location. Access to canned evaporated or condensed milk would have helped provide more diversity in the items they were able to make and serve. Fresh milk was a rarity as access to it was limited and the only cold storage available would have been a springhouse cooled by a stream. Behind them is a large stack of Hemlock bark, indicating that they are working at a bark peeler's camp. In the background there is a young girl standing in

²⁶ ESU.LL.C.19, "Two Girls on Woodpile with Young Girl in Background." From the Collection of the Lycoming County Historical Society and Thomas T. Taber Museum.

front of an outbuilding. Next to her is another large pile of bark. Behind the women are some of the camp's buildings. The tall one was most likely the bunkhouse. Tree stumps and fallen trees are visible in the distance.

Although the women in the photograph are not identified, the image came from Lycoming County and could possibly be of Idessa and Viola Roupp.²⁷ If not, the photographic evidence still illustrates their story. Around 1903 their brothers, John and Grant Roupp, built a lumber camp for a bark peeling job on the Flooks Run timber lands, near their home in Beech Grove, Cogan House Township, Lycoming County. "Their sisters, Idessa and Viola, were the camp cooks. Laura Weaver was hired to help in the kitchen. Sometimes when the crew was extra large, their mother [Harriet Eva Roupp] came to the camp and helped the girls."²⁸ This is another example of a family effort. Woodlands were still visible behind the young women in the photograph. Within ten years, the entire area would be denuded and desolate. At the turn of the century, women were still not seen as risktakers or physically capable of the same type of work done by the woodsmen, Idessa bucked the social norms of the time. The following story indicates her fortitude, strength, independence, and resourcefulness:

"One cold, crisp mid-winter's day one of the teamsters came down with a severe sickness and was compelled to put his team in the barn and go to his bunk. The slide was in perfect condition and the logs were coming faster than the teams could shove them down the slide. Idessa could not allow this waste of horsepower and against the protests of her helpers and the men alike, she dressed in warm clothing, went to the barn and hitched up the team and with

²⁷ Idessa Edith (Roupp) French, 1884-1969. Jessie Viola Roupp, 1886-1960). Born in Cogan House Township, Lycoming PA. Children of Charles Henry Roupp and Harriet Eva McCracken. <https://www.wikitree.com/genealogy/ROUPP>, accessed 9 April 2021.

²⁸ Landis, Milton W., "Sliding Logs in the Old Lumbering Era," The Journal of the Lycoming County Historical Society Vol. V Number 2, (Fall 1968): 12.

great determination drove team all that day and the next until the teamster was well enough to resume his job.”²⁹

Idessa took matters into her own hands and prevented a loss of work, and ultimately profit to her brother’s business, by literally taking the reins of the horses. She would have worked side by side with the other male teamsters and woodhicks from the camp. The fact that she worked as a teamster (one who would take care of and drive a team of horses used to pull loads or sleighs of logs) for two days, indicates that she was accepted in this role by her brothers and the men in the camp.

Idessa’s granddaughter, Bonnie Staughton, was shown the picture of the two young women on the pile of wood and believed that she recognized them as her grandmother and Aunt, Idessa and Viola. Although Mrs. Staughton was not aware of Idessa’s role as a teamster, she did recall that Idessa loved horses and was an accomplished horsewoman, perhaps attributing to her ability to “take the reins.”³⁰

²⁹ Ibid., 13.

³⁰ S., Bonnie. “Re: Idessa French’s profile on WikiTree.” Message to the author. 14 April 2021. E-mail.



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Idessa Edith (Roupp) French (1884-1969)

Idessa went on to marry Nathan Edwin French on December 23, 1908, in Wellsboro, Tioga County. Together they had three children. It was recorded that Idessa shared this story again with her brother, William Roupp (1895-1967), when he came to visit her in Mansfield, in 1967, shortly before his death.³² Idessa's granddaughter recalled that her grandmother spoke of her time as a cook at a logging camp and referred to it as "Canoe Camp," but never indicated that this camp belonged to her brothers.³³ Canoe Camp is located in Richmond Township, Tioga

³¹ Staughton, Bonnie. "Idessa Edith (Roupp) French." Genealogy site, January 30, 2019. <https://www.wikitree.com/genealogy/ROUPP>, accessed on 9 April 2021.

³² Landis, "Sliding Logs in the Old Lumbering Era," 13.

³³ S., Bonnie. "Re: Idessa French's profile on WikiTree." Message to the author. 14 April 2021. E-mail.

County, and was possibly the site of another logging camp that Idessa worked at. Timber was harvested in Canoe Camp along Whittaker Creek at the turn of the century.

Anna Haberger Eckert

Anna Haberger Eckert was interviewed by Thomas Taber somewhere between 1958 and 1976. Her oral history provides important insight to the life of a woman working at a Pennsylvania lumber camp during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Taber's interview does not include questions, but rather flows just as a stream of consciousness. The information regarding Anna's story is derived from her oral history. Anna worked for several lumber camps, starting when she was only 14 or 15 years old. The first camp she cooked for belonged to Joe Erich and was located at Beechwood³⁴, near Shippen, in Cameron County. More than likely she started as a "cookee" or cook's assistant. Her father worked for the camp and may have been instrumental in helping her to find employment. She worked at Erich's camp for a couple of years before she married Henry Eckert and moved to her husband's camp along Trout Run, near St. Mary's, in Elk County. Henry was a teamster at Joe Weisner's logging camp. The camp had as many as 35-40 men in the summer, but usually less than 30, and up to 50 men during the winter.³⁵ Anna began cooking at Weisner's camp around 1910. During this time, she and Henry had several children, who were then raised in the lumber camp. In addition to cooking and caring for the men, she had the additional responsibilities of raising her young children in a relatively isolated environment.

³⁴ Taber, Thomas. "Oral Memories of Eastern United States Logging." Muncy, PA.: The Author, 2006. 235.

³⁵ Ibid., 235-236.

As the camp cook, Anna worked from roughly 5am until 10pm, with a two-hour respite in the afternoon to wash and care for her children.³⁶ Anna did have a helper, referred to as “the girl,” in her interview. The helper or “cookee,” would have worked similar hours and helped Anna with her children. According to Anna, “I got paid \$18 a week and I had to pay my girl. I paid her \$5. That good pay for the girl. Lots of them only got \$3-4, but I had the children and she helped me there. The youngest girl I had was about twenty.”³⁷ Anna recalled the responsibilities they had and the food they cooked:

“The girl took care of the table and clearing up. I did the cooking. She helped feed them. We served breakfast at 5:30 in the morning when the men had far to go. They started work at 6:00. I got up before five. I had almost everything ready. You had your meat cut, your potatoes sliced, and everything the night before. You cooked the oatmeal and the pancakes. There were fried potatoes and beef in the summer mostly. In the winter we had pigs which were raised in the summer.”³⁸

Anna was able to place orders for supplies. She had to manage and calculate which food and supplies would be needed, and in what amounts. Undoubtedly, she had a budget to adhere to, although this was not mentioned in her interview. The goods arrived once a week by a supply train. During the summer months fresh vegetables could be acquired from local farmers. They may also have been able to pick wild berries from the brush that grew up in areas where the trees had already been harvested near their camp.

“Everything came in by the tub full. We used the lard for frying and pies and cake. You made pies of anything you had. All kinds of fruits in the summer. In the winter you had dried fruits and you cooked them and put them in pies. And you had chocolate and all kinds of pudding pies like vanilla and coconut and had lots of custard pies. I would bake a cake every day for breakfast and supper. I

³⁶ Ibid., 235.

³⁷ Ibid., 235.

³⁸ Ibid., 235

cooked bread and donuts. In the summer the crew wasn't as big and so I didn't have to bake every day. Sometimes we had less than 30 men in the summer. In the winter you baked every day."³⁹

Anna and her helper would have also prepared soups, gravies, mashed potatoes, vegetables, dried rice and beans, roasts, beef, ham, fritters, cookies, and coffee. The stove they used to cook on was twelve feet by four feet and was heated by wood, which they would have been responsible for.⁴⁰ Water was constantly boiled on the stove to wash the dishes with.

According to Anna's husband, Henry, the men were served eggs and fish on Fridays. Fridays were the only day that they had eggs. The fish was a salted white fish that came in tubs.⁴¹ He reiterated that they had "good cooks in the camps" and that "you were never hungry." In the lumber camps loggers were routinely provided with ample quantities of food. Given the amount of work these men completed on a daily basis, it can be estimated that that they could consume anywhere between 5,000 and 8,000+ calories a day, well beyond our current dietetic recommendations, but necessary for the difficult work they completed. During this era the loggers and their counterparts in the sawmills were probably the best and most consistently fed workers in the country.⁴² Although their living conditions in the lumber camps may be construed as primitive and rough, the loggers who worked in these camps were provided with housing and food, in addition to their pay. Those working in the woods, away from the lumber

³⁹ Ibid., 236.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 236.

⁴¹ Ibid., 237.

⁴² Conlin, Joseph R., "Old boy, did you get enough of pie? A Social History of Food in Logging Camps." Journal of Forest History 23 (October 1979): 165.

industry related mills and factories, also had the benefit of working in the fresh air, unlike their counterparts who worked in Pennsylvania's coal mines and steel mills.

Alma and Jake Swanson

Cooks and jobbers sometimes had families who lived at the camps where they worked.

Growing up in these lumber communities must have been a profoundly unique and prolific experience. Early exposure to hard work, long hours, and isolated conditions, surrounded by the beauty of Penn's woods and later the devastation of the logging industry, and the ever-present woodhicks. These woodsmen came from varied backgrounds and locations but consistently they seemed to abide by common camps rules: no swearing, no drinking or fighting at camp, demonstrate respect for the cook, work hard, and work safely.

The story of Alma and Jake Swanson slowly emerged through the following series of photographs. Separate, they are indicative of the region and similar to other images. Together they provide a more cohesive story of a jobber and his family in Potter County.



Alma Swanson and Cook, Potter County

The 1902 image above illustrates the lives of two women lumber camp cooks. Handwritten notes label the woman on the left as “Alma Swanson” (1875-1911) and the other woman simply as “Cook.” Alma appears to be working as the “cookee” or cook’s helper. Included are the blurred and labeled images of her two children, Mary and Leon, ever present in the camp kitchen. Alma was married to Jake Swanson, a jobber who worked near Hulls, Potter County.⁴⁴ More than likely, Alma was able to secure her position because of her husband’s role in the camp. Notice the basin piled high with dishes and the stacks of bread loaves on the barrels. The

⁴³ “Cook and Cookee,” Image courtesy of the Potter County Historical Society.

⁴⁴ Roth, Joshua. “Camp cook image request.” Message to the author. 26 March 2021. E-mail.

shelves are neatly lined with decorative edging paper. The walls are uniformly plastered with sheets of newspaper, possibly providing insulation and a connection with the outside world. As expected, the kitchen was well kept and organized. The cook's tools are visible, neatly organized on shelves and hooks.



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Jake Swanson's Camp

William T. Clarke was a photographer who at times lived in Potter and McKean Counties. He is known for his images of lumbering in Pennsylvania's forests. The above photograph of Jake Swanson's camp is credited to him. It provides a visual image as to where the Swanson's lived

⁴⁵ "Jake Swanson's Camp," courtesy of the Potter County Historical Society.

and worked, as well as their surrounding environment. Three women are visible in the back, standing in front of the mid-sized building, flanked by horses. Presumably one of them is Alma. Slightly in front of them are a group of pigs along the railway. Some camps raised animals as a food source. The pigs would have been raised in the summer and then butchered and consumed in the winter. There are two sets of rail tracks. The number of men, horses, cut trees, and scalped landscape is a testament to the physical strength of the men, the scale of their work, and size of the camp.



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The Swanson Family with James Reed

The above image features “lumbermen” Jake Swanson and James Reed, as well as Swanson’s family. Taken a few years later than the previous image of Alma as a cook’s helper, this view

⁴⁶ “Swanson Family,” courtesy of the “Kettle Creek and Cross Fork Remember When” Facebook page. Posted by Lanny Nunn on March 7, 2021. According to a comment posted on the page by John C. Wetzel, “Alma Berfield Swanson, 1st wife of Jake. Born 1-17-1875, died 6-5-1911- Daughter of William and Mary (Brooks) Berfield.”

demonstrates how the Swanson family has grown and indicates that they were still present in the lumber camps of the region. The image was likely taken in the Cross Forks area. Notice the size and scale of the logs surrounding them and that the woods have been selectively cut.



East Fork School about 1906

Not all children who grew up in and around lumber camps had the ability to attend, or access to, a formal education. Taken around 1906, this image of the East Fork School, Potter County, indicates that three of Alma and Jake Swanson's children were able to receive some schooling. Leon, Norman, and Mary Swanson are recorded in the picture's label. Notice the barren,

⁴⁷ "East Fork School about 1906," courtesy of the Potter County Historical Society.

denuded landscape surrounding the schoolhouse, a testament to the clearcutting practices of the day. Alma died 5 years later, in 1911, at the age of 36.

Bertha Whitton

Nebraska, located in Forest County, was founded in 1827 and consisted of woods that were harvested by the T. D. Collins Lumber Company on the Tionesta Creek. The town had a number of lumber mills, all of which were torn down around 1940 when the Tionesta Dam was constructed. Nebraska is now just a footnote in history. Lois Lackey, of Tionesta, recalled that her grandmother worked as a cook at one of the lumber camps for T. D. Collins. Her grandmother, Bertha, started cooking at the camp when she was 16, around 1900. When Bertha was 18 years old, she married one of the men who worked for the logging camp, Amos Whitton. They met while she was employed as a cook at the logging camp. Amos was double her age. Lois recalled that her grandfather often kidded Bertha and joked to his children and grandchildren that one of the reasons he married her was because he *knew* that she could cook!⁴⁸ A sentiment often repeated by lumbermen who met their wife while working in the woods.

Minnie Showers Test

Numerous children grew up in and worked at the region's lumber camps. According to Duane Test, his mother, Minnie Showers Test, moved to Clearfield County from the coal regions of West Virginia, in 1922, when she was orphaned at 9-years-old. She lost her parents and came

⁴⁸ Lois Lackey, interview by author. Fieldnotes, Tionesta, Pennsylvania, 8 June 2021.

to live with her aunt Lizzie and uncle Jim Dodge. Together they raised her in several of the area's lumber camps.⁴⁹ Minnie was interviewed by Jane Elling, a former staff writer and columnist for Clearfield's newspaper, *The Progress*, in 1998. Much of what was recorded in Elling's article, was collaborated by her son.

The first camp Minnie lived at was between Medix Run and Benezette, Elk County. The camp was housed in a large farmhouse and had 15 men. Minnie and her aunt Lizzie cooked for them. Next, they moved to a camp at Coleman Siding, Clinton County, along the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. This camp was one of several operated by her uncle, Jim Dodge. 11-year-old Minnie and her aunt were the cooks for roughly 25-30 men. The number of men rose to 35-40 during bark peeling season. In addition to helping prepare the meals, Minnie's responsibilities included: cleaning the oilcloth table linens, setting the tables at mealtimes, and washing, cleaning, and filling the oil lamps. At this camp, Minnie's uncle hired a man who helped the women in the kitchen. He routinely washed the dishes, cleaned the floors and started the fire in the woodstove before breakfast.⁵⁰

Minnie and her aunt woke at 4:30 each morning to start to prepare the daily 3 meals. A regular breakfast included eggs, bacon, biscuits, and fried potatoes. Supper and dinner consisted of meat, vegetables, potatoes, bread, and desserts. They prepared numerous desserts daily including pies, cakes, and rice pudding. Her uncle constructed a springhouse to keep butter,

⁴⁹ Mr. Duane Test, interview by author, fieldnotes. Curwensville, PA., 21 September 2020.

⁵⁰ Elling, Jane, "Childhood memories of lumber camps and Dimeling vacations," *The Progress*, (Clearfield, Curwensville, Philipsburg, Moshannon Valley, PA), 17 April 1998.

diary, and meats cool. All of the camps supplies were ordered from catalogs or purchased from Lauderbach and Zerby, in Clearfield, and delivered to the camp by a weekly supply train. Spring and fall brought on additional cleaning tasks for Minnie and her aunt. During these seasons all of the camp blankets were washed and deloused. Fires were built and water was hauled up from the camps wells and heated for washing the bedclothes. Kerosene was used to kill the bedbugs. The men were responsible for cleaning their own clothes.⁵¹ Bedbugs and lice were common nuisances in the bunkhouses of lumber camps. Fall and spring cleanings were typically performed at all lumber camps.

Eventually, Minnie's uncle became the superintendent of three camps, and they were able to move into a bungalow with running hot and cold water, as well as indoor plumbing. This must have seemed like a luxury to Minnie! Minnie related the kindness of the woodsmen. She relayed to her son, Duane, that they used to bring her back little trinkets and candy when they went into town. She fondly remembered the songs they sang and the music they played on guitars and accordions. Although Minnie was brought up with love and a strong work ethic, she did not have the opportunity to attend school after 3rd grade. Like many children who worked in lumber camps, there were no schools for her out in the remote woods and her help was needed at camp. The camps closed when Minnie was around 15 years old. The lumber company her uncle worked for went bankrupt. This coincided with the Great Depression.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Minnie then returned briefly to West Virginia, before moving to Curwensville with her aunt and uncle. She married Leon Test in 1937 and had three children: Joseph, Kenneth and Duane.⁵²

Wheeler's Woods and Dave Frost's Camp



“Cooks at Wheeler’s Camp”

Women continued to be present in Pennsylvania’s lumber camps entering the second quarter of the twentieth century. The above image was taken at “Camp 19,” one of “Wheeler’s camps,” in “Wheeler’s Woods,” in Forest County and features two women cooks. The Wheeler and Dusenbury Lumber Company once owned between 40,000 and 55,000 acres of pine, hemlock and hardwood timber in Warren and Forest Counties. “In 1922, the company sold approximately two-thirds of its land to the Federal Government to become part of the Allegheny National Forest. In 1930, the company’s remaining lands were known as ‘Wheeler’s

⁵² Ibid., Test interview, author’s fieldnotes.

⁵³ “Cooks at Wheeler Camp.” courtesy of the Forest County Historical Society. Image is inscribed, “Cooks at Wheeler’s Camp” on the reverse. A similar image with it identifies the camp as, “Camp 19”.

Woods.”⁵⁴ In addition to the women’s clothing and hair styles, this information helps to identify the era of the photograph, as well as giving context to its location.



Dave Frost’s Camp at Big Run

Pictured are the cooks and woodsmen of Dave Frost’s Camp at Big Run. The camp was positioned along the Tionesta Valley Railroad, in Elk County, and was part of the Central Pennsylvania Lumber Company’s holdings. The area thrived during the 1920’s but fell victim to the 1929 Stock Market Crash and the Great Depression.⁵⁶ The women are seated in the front, middle of the grouping. Perhaps the woman positioned in the center, with her arms crossed,

⁵⁴ Warren County Historical Society, “Wheeler’s Woods,” *Stepping Stones*, Volume 15, Number 3, Warren, PA: Warren County Historical Society, n. d.

⁵⁵ “Frost Camp, Big Run, Pa,” from the private collection of Bob Imhof.

⁵⁶ Imhoff, Bob. “The History of Big Run, Elk County, Pennsylvania.” Pennsylvania Great Outdoors Visitor Bureau, December 1, 2020. <https://visitpago.com>, accessed on 9 April 2021.

was the cook and the two younger looking women, her helpers. Either way, the women were essential to the camp and its function. They were as critical as the men who harvested the timber. Like Wheeler's Woods, Frost's Camp is only a memory recorded by historic photographs. It's location now isolated and overgrown within the boundaries of the Allegheny National Forest.

Rose Kocjancic Paar

The life of Rose (Komidar) Kocjancic Paar (May 15, 1908 - June 28, 1997) unequivocally exemplifies the incredible, challenging, and inspiring life of a Pennsylvania lumberwoman. Rose Komidar was born on May 15, 1908, in St. Mary's, Elk County, to John Komidar and Rose (Valentine) Komidar. She was the oldest of seven children. Her siblings were Mary, Antonia, Ann, Francis, John, and Frank. Rose's parents immigrated to the United States in the early 20th century.⁵⁷ Her father immigrated from Slovenia, then part of Austria, then a province of Yugoslavia, now referred to as the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. Like so many other immigrants, they sought out work in the woods of Northwestern Pennsylvania. Her father began as a wood cutter who helped supply logs for the wood chemical industry. John and Rose Komidar soon became lumber camp operators and raised their family in their camp. As was common, Rose met her first husband, Joseph Kocjancic, at her parent's camp.⁵⁸ She was 17 years old when they married.

⁵⁷ Kocjancic, Tricia. Junior High School interview project with Rose Paar, 17 February 1988. Private collection of Tricia (Kocjancic) Bell.

⁵⁸ Lion, Michael. Timber Issue, March 20, 1992. 29.



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John and Rose Komidar with their children Rose, Mary, Antonia, Ann and John, c. 1922

Joseph Kocjancic was in his early 20's when he immigrated to the United States. He arrived in New York in 1925. Originally, Joseph went to West Virginia to work in the coal mines, but then migrated to the Pennsylvania in search of work, after he was laid off by the mines. According to the family, he then worked in a mine around Pittsburgh, but it went on strike. Joseph then

⁵⁹ "Komidar Family, ca. 1922," from the private collection of Ed Kocjancic. Rose is holding her baby brother.

headed north to in search of logging work.⁶⁰ It was at the Komidar's lumber camp where he met Rose. They were married on May 15, 1925, at St. Joseph's Church in Mt. Jewett. According to Ed F. Kocjancic, in an interview with Michael Lion in 1992, "She got married on a Saturday and she ended up cooking, washing, cleaning and sewing for a 25-man crew the following Monday, when they started their own lumber camp."⁶¹ The location of their camp varied over the years, but were all located in either Elk or McKean Counties. The last and longest running camp was in Burning Well, McKean County. Rose and Joseph operated their camp together. She was also known to take on tasks in the woods including removing trees, pulling the cross-cut saw, and chopping wood. Joseph and Rose had four boys, all of whom were born at one of their camps. Together they raised their four boys, Ed, Joe, Rudy, and John, at their various lumber camps. "The boys said that from as early as they could remember they worked at the camps. First their jobs were to ensure a supply of water and firewood, and as they grew older, they would join the men in the woods, felling and cutting trees, stacking wood, leading teams of horses, and loading narrow gauge railroad cars."⁶²

Rose's son, Ed, recalled how his parents ran the camp:

"My mother getting up at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, preparing breakfast, if you can imagine, eggs, bacon, pork chops, potatoes, toast, oatmeal (they could eat all of that). We had different ethnic groups and there were different likes and dislikes. She learned to know what individuals liked. She would make enough food for everyone and usually could figure out just exactly how much to make. Some of the men would not come in for lunch, but if some were close to camp, she would prepare a noon meal. Others would take sandwiches and a jar of coffee. Between breakfast, lunch and supper, my mother was busy keeping the camp clean, washing all the clothes, doing all the sewing, and fixing in all the beds. She did this all day, in between cooking all the meals. By 8 o'clock at night

⁶⁰ Kocjancic family, interview by author. Fieldnotes, Kane, Pennsylvania, 11 November 2020.

⁶¹ Lion, Michael. Timber Issue, 20 March 1992.

⁶² Bartlett, John. The Erie Times News, "Pennsylvania hardwoods: All in the Family." Section E. 21 July 1991.

she was totally exhausted and went to bed. Unfortunately for her, all her children were boys and there was no daughter to help her. When her mother died, her youngest sister, Francis, who hadn't been married, came and stayed. She was a big help. My mother even hired summer help.... My mother baked a lot of bread. She was an excellent cook and baker. I never heard my mother complain all the years she worked. My father would run the camp, after breakfast he would help my mother and then he'd go to the woods. One thing my mother did, in addition to everything else, was to go out into the woods and help my father pull the crosscut."⁶³

The couple ran the camp together until Joseph was tragically killed in a car accident in 1937.

Joseph was picking up his brother, Frank, from the train station. The two had not seen one another in years. When their father was killed, Rose and Joseph's oldest son, Joe, was only 11 years old.

Rose was resilient and determined. Although she was offered options to have others raise her children and the County offered the orphanage, Rose chose to raise her boys together, as a family, in the woods. She took over and continued to run the lumber camp that she and Joseph had started. She raised the boys with the lumberjacks and involved them with the work of the camp. Her children all learned the work involved with logging and became skilled woodsmen. Rose also instilled the value of an education in her children. Rose only had five years of schooling at a Catholic school. She stopped attending school in order to help at her family's lumber camp. Accessibility was also an issue. Her parent's camp was remote and too far away from the school. Good grades were stressed, and Rose made sure that her children all completed high school. Her youngest, Ed, went on to graduate from Penn State with a degree in

⁶³ Kocjancic, Edward F. "Logging Camp History and Consulting in Northwestern Pennsylvania." 20 October 2005. 7-8.

Forestry.⁶⁴ This was something she was very proud of. John related that they were always the best dressed in school. They never wore jeans. They wore knicker-style pants and then regular pants, but never jeans. They bought their clothes in Kane and got a new pair of pants before the patches came.⁶⁵



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John, Rose, Ed, Joe, Frank, and Rudy Kocjancic

In addition to the management of the camp and raising her boys, Rose still did all of the cooking and cleaning. She is remembered as being frugal and business savvy. Her son Joe emphasized the challenges his mother faced, “This was an era when few women drove, let alone ran rough

⁶⁴ Kocjancic family, interview by author. Fieldnotes, Kane, Pennsylvania, 11 November 2020.

⁶⁵ Kocjancic, John, during family interview by author. Fieldnotes, Kane, Pennsylvania. 11 November 2020.

⁶⁶ “Kocjancic Family portrait,” from the private collection of Ed Kocjancic.

and tumble businesses and bossed men, but she did and never made it look hard. She would do 10 jobs and never complain. I remember at times after our father died, I would hear her cry late at night. She cried then because it was the only time she had.”⁶⁷ Rose learned how to drive after Joseph’s death. A necessity, as she would need to get provisions for her camp. Her son, Ed, remembered going with his mother to the A&P in Kane.

“We’d get four or five carts filled up with groceries.... That was just the breakfast foods and canned goods and stuff. Then we’d drive around back to the warehouse part for bushel bags of potatoes and 100-pound bags of flour and sugar. Some provisions, fresh vegetables and fruits would last us about a week but the major stuff, the bulk of the stuff, about a month.”⁶⁸

The family’s camps were made of lumber with no insulation. Water was piped in from a nearby stream. Rose had a large wood stove on which she cooked. She and her family had separate living quarters and the lumberjacks slept upstairs in the loft. The large dining room was attached to the kitchen. Their bathroom was an outhouse. More remote camps had supplies delivered weekly by rail car. Some supplies were ordered from the Sears catalog. Later their groceries were purchased at the A&P and the Triangle Store in Kane.

The last Kocjancic Family lumber camp was in Burning Well, McKean County, and functioned from 1950 until 1968. The wood their camp harvested was originally purchased by the Clawson Chemical Company and later the Susquehanna Chemical Company. It is believed that Rose Kocjancic operated the last active lumber camp in Pennsylvania. Her boys lived at the camp until they married. She retired in 1968 and married John Paar, on June 20, at St. Joseph’s Church, in Mt. Jewett. After the wedding, Rose moved from the camp to a farm near Rasselas

⁶⁷ Bartlett, John. The Erie Times News, “Pennsylvania hardwoods: All in the Family.” Section E. 21 July 1991. n.p.

⁶⁸ Kocjancic, “Logging Camp History and Consulting in Northwestern Pennsylvania.” 8.

with John Paar. The Burning Well Camp was a place that Rose's children and grandchildren frequented before she retired. Rudy's daughter, Cindy Iorfido, shared her memories of her grandmother:

“Grandma was a tough and good businesswoman. She worked from morning to night completing the many chores needed to run the logging camp. She was up at the crack of dawn, cooking, baking, and getting breakfast, lunch and dinner on the big table in the dining room. Then she would wash dishes in the wooden sink in the kitchen fed by a pipe delivering water from the spring and the boiling water out of the reservoir at the back of the giant wood stove that was always fired up in the kitchen. She washed clothes, dried them on clotheslines, cleaned the camp floors with big buckets of water and lye and a huge mop. When you stayed at camp, you were willing to help with these chores! The wood cutters at the camp respected her and knew she was the boss. After eating they would stand at the doorway to the kitchen and Grandma would supply them with items from her ‘general store/pantry’ as requested. This included the homemade wine and brandy that Grandma would make! I think the woodcutters were afraid to cross Grandma...she could easily switch from English to Slovenian with a raised voice when necessary to get her point across and to express her displeasure!”⁶⁹

The camp was retained by the family and used as a hunting camp. In 1995 the camp caught fire and burned to the ground. Ed remembered: “It was already completely burned by the time we got there- nothing left but ashes. The upstairs beds where the lumberjacks slept fell to the bottom in ashes. It was just like losing a dear old friend.”⁷⁰ Rose's sons, Ed and John, rebuilt the camp after the fire and it is still used by the family today, a testimony to the camp's history and sense of place. The following images are of the Burning Well Camp prior to the fire.

⁶⁹ Iorfido, Cindy. “Re: Meeting.” Message to “Jackie Johnson for the author. 6 November 2020. Email.

⁷⁰ Kocjancic, “Logging Camp History and Consulting in Northwestern Pennsylvania.” 3.



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Exterior of the Kocjancic Burning Well Camp



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Exterior of the Kocjancic Burning Well Camp Kitchen

⁷¹ Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

⁷² Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.



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Exterior of the Kocjancic Burning Well Camp



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⁷³ Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

⁷⁴ Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

Wood stove on which Rose Kocjancic cooked for her family and boarders.

Each of Rose's children went on to work in the lumber industry. Joe was the head sawyer of a sawmill and owned an equipment and implement sales business. Rudy and John operated a logging and trucking business. Ed owned Ed Kocjancic Foresters Inc., and was a consulting forester, timber buyer and forester.⁷⁵ His son now operates the business. The family also competed in lumberjack and logging skills contests and competitions. They used cross-cut saws, axes and rolled logs and were champions for decades. Even Rose was known to compete and pull the crosscut saw in the Jack and Jill contests. Ed recounted,

“The national champs used to come in to Cherry Springs for the PA Championships, and when they left, they were beaten by the PA team, the Kocjancics. When my mother was 60 years old, we were in a little contest in Sheffield, a Jack and Jill, she pulled the saw with my next oldest brother, John, and he actually had to hold her back, she was so anxious. They beat everybody. We learned how to pull a crosscut from our mother. She was an amazing woman. She was the oldest contestant in the contest, she probably could have placed in the men's event too.”⁷⁶

Rose Kocjancic Paar's life is probably the most iconic and arguably the epitome of a Pennsylvania lumberwoman. Born and raised in a lumber camp as a child, she met her husband to be at her parent's camp. They married and started their own camp less than 48 hours after they were wed. She helped operate their camp, and cooked and cared for its woodsmen. Her children were born and raised in their family camp. When her first husband was killed, she literally took over running the camp and all of its responsibilities- the financial management of the camp and the running of the business, the care and boarding of the lumberman, the

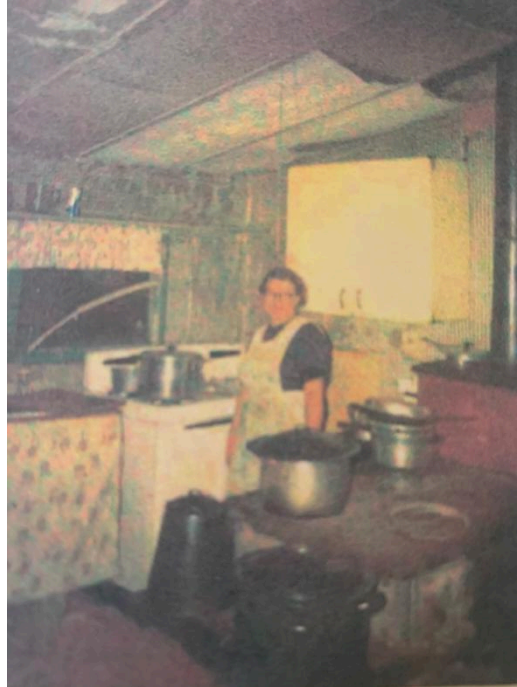
⁷⁵ Bartlett. "Pennsylvania hardwoods: All in the Family." n.p.

⁷⁶ Kocjancic, "Logging Camp History and Consulting in Northwestern Pennsylvania." 10.

management of the kitchen and all of the food needed to sustain everyone at the camp without making or ordering too much or too little, plus being a mother and raising her children on top of everything else. She could wield the tools of the trade. Her hobbies included crocheting, sewing, gardening, and splitting wood!⁷⁷ Even her recreational activities involved lumber competitions, at which she excelled, a testament to the physicality of her strength. Her children all grew up to be involved with various aspects of the trade. The Kocjancic lumber camp at Burning Well, was possibly the last of its kind in Pennsylvania. Her story is one of perseverance, resilience, strength, and love. She was an inspiration to her children and remains so to her grand and great grandchildren. Rose's family continues to keep her memories alive and instills her values and work ethic in their families. As Joe so adeptly stated, "The forests have been good to all of us. [but] Our mother deserves the real credit for everything. She is who made it happen."⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Kocjancic, Tricia. Interview with Rose Kocjancic by Tricia Kocjancic. School paper, February 17, 1988.

⁷⁸Bartlett, John. The Erie Times News, "Pennsylvania hardwoods: All in the Family." Section E. July 21, 1991.



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Rose Kocjancic Paar in the Burning Well Camp kitchen

Rose Simcic Ulyan and Mary Bizzak

Mary Bizzak was born on January 14, 1915 in a lumber camp in Dahoga, Elk County without a doctor. Her mother, Rose Simic Ulyan, had just finished preparing breakfast for the loggers when she had Mary. After her birth, her mother “went right back to the kitchen with me [Mary] to prepare lunch and clean laundry.”⁸⁰ The story of Mary’s birth and that of her mother, Rose Simcic Ulyan, set the stage for Mary’s life and her work ethic.

Mary’s father, Joe Ulyan, was born in Austria on December 19, 1876. In 1902 he and his brother came to Pittsburgh and then Cleveland, Ohio to work in the steel mills and earn enough money to bring their families to America. Joe returned to Austria in 1906 to marry his girlfriend, Rose Simcic. The couple had a daughter, Fanny, in 1907 and immigrated to Mayburg, PA, Forest

⁷⁹ “Rose Kocjancic in the Burning Well Camp Kitchen,” private collection of the Kocjancic family.

⁸⁰ Bizzak, Mary and Counts, Rose Ann. “The Lumber World from A Women’s Viewpoint.” Private manuscript, no date. 1

County, in 1912. Joe knew a family who was operating a lumbering camp there. Together, he and Rose operated a boarding house. The camp housed 20 men and Rose did all of the cooking, baking, and washing for the family and the boarders. She awoke at 4 am to start the wood fire in the stove and make breakfast for the men. The hearty breakfast could include home-fried potatoes, pork chops, rice, sausage, pancakes and oatmeal. The mid-day meal, or dinner, was served at noon with a menu of beef soup, potatoes, vegetables and home-canned fruit. Supper was at 5:30 and usually consisted of some sort of meat, potato, spaghetti or polenta. The meal varied each day.⁸¹ The men would go to bed by 9pm and Sunday was considered a day of rest. The lumberjacks at the camp cut wood that was used as charcoal by a local chemical factory.

When the job in Mayburg was finished, the young family moved on to another lumbering job. The jobs would typically last 6 months to a year and were located in Sergeant, Hutchins, and Crosby in McKean County; Warren and Tiona in Warren County; Sugar Run in Bradford County, and Bolivar, New York State. The Ulyan's had 11 children. Fanny and a brother, who died at three months, were born in Austria. The rest of their children were born in lumber camps: Melan (July 1913) and Mary (January 1915) were born in Dahoga- Elk County, Joe (1916) in Glade- Warren County, Frank (1917) in Crown- Clarion County, Josephine (1919) in Dahoga, Rose (1920) in Kane, Stella (1922) in Betula- McKean County, Gertrude (1924) in Bolivar, NY, and Ann (1925) who was born and died in Kane- McKean County. In 1927 Joe Ulyan took a job in North Fork, Potter County. The camp was very remote and was located 7 miles back in the woods, assessible by train only. The train would come in with supplies and groceries and would leave

⁸¹ Ibid.

the camp with the harvested wood. The wood was brought to the rails by horses and sleds.

There were 10 camps located in North Fork that had children at them. All of them missed a year of school due to the remoteness of the camps. This job lasted 15 months.⁸² Only two of the Ulyan children would go on to graduate high school.

Mary and her siblings all helped with chores in the camps. They carried wood and filled the lamps with kerosene and washed the lamp globes. When her brothers were 8 or 9 years old, they would go out with their dad into the woods to help cross-cut, split and pile wood into 4-foot x 8-foot piles. They would also cut wood for the heating and kitchen stoves. The girls would usually carry in the wood and water. There was little time to be bored or to play. If you weren't working, you were taking care of the younger children or learning how to sew and crochet. Mary's mother would say, "If you do nothing, you don't have anything to show, but if you sew and crochet, you have a lot to show."⁸³ Her mother taught her well. Before she was married, Mary had 15 pairs of pillow cases, one quilt, and a bedspread all made by her own hand.

The last boarding camp that the Ulyan's operated was in Hutchins, McKean County, from 1935 – 1936. Rose was preparing dinner when she lifted a large kettle of soup off the stove. "She was carrying it to the sink when she hit the edge of the sink and upset the soup all over her."⁸⁴

Mary's mother was scalded from her waist, down both of her legs. She was hospitalized for

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid., 2.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

three days before she succumbed to a gangrene infection on April 26, 1936. She would not allow the doctors to remove her legs.⁸⁵ Women were not immune to dangers, and experienced hazards of their own, while working at lumber camps.

After her mother's death, Mary began to work at a shirt factory in Kane. On June 20, 1936, Mary married Joe Bizzak. Joe hauled wood for the Day Chemical Plant in Westline. There was an opening for a boarding house in Westline, and it was the only house available. According to Mary,

"The houses were owned, at that time, by the chemical plant owners. My husband wanted to know if I was willing to keep the boarders. I thought it was a good idea. Since I was raised in the lumbering camps, I knew I could do the work and it would save us a lot of time by not having to drive back and forth to Kane every day. The difference between a lumbering camp and a boarding house was, when the lumbering job was completed, sometimes the camps were dismantled and built in a new location.

...The Day Chemical Company [was] where 'charcoal' was made from wood. There were several women in addition to the men who worked their bagging charcoal. It was a dirty, dusty job and when they finished, they were covered with this charcoal dust; they were so black, you couldn't tell who they were."⁸⁶

Mary and Joe were supposed to move into the Westline boarding house on December 7, 1937. Instead, Mary went to the hospital and delivered their first child, Mary JoAnn. Mary was released from the hospital on December 26 and went to the boarding house.

"When I got home with my new baby, I found eight boarders staring at me as I stared back at them. I wondered what I was getting myself into. I was out of bed at 5 am every morning to get breakfast ready for the boarders. Lunch was still served at noon and dinner at 5:30. Along with cooking three meals a day I also did a lot of baking. I made bread, pies, and cakes. The men worked hard and so

⁸⁵ Bizzak family, interview by author. Fieldnotes, Kane, Pennsylvania, 9 June, 2021.

⁸⁶ Ibid., Bizzak, Mary and Counts, Rose Ann. "The Lumber World from A Women's Viewpoint." 2.

did I, taking care of a new born baby while cooking and doing the laundry for all the boarders.”⁸⁷

The boarders paid 30 cents per meal, if they ate. Four of their original boarders were from Kentucky. They held a variety of positions: a scaler, a chemist, chemical plant workers and woodcutters who worked for Joe. Mary went on to have a set of premature twins in 1940, Joseph and Judy. Only Joseph survived. Things changed drastically in 1942 when the country entered World War II. Several of their boarders and three of her brothers left to go to war. “The logging industry, in addition to other industries, lost their men workers to the war effort. But this became the beginning of [Mary’s] life in the logging world.”⁸⁸

Joe had two logging trucks that hauled to the Day Chemical Plant, but only Joe was left to drive them. Mary decided that she wanted to drive one of the trucks. Her “husband insisted it was a man’s job and that [Mary] couldn’t do it.”⁸⁹ This made Mary more determined than ever, and she learned! According to Mary,

“The first day was rough! You had to manually lift the wood and pile it on the truck. My arms were so sore and ached so badly, I could hardly sleep at night. The soreness lasted about three to four weeks and then it got better. As I’m only five feet tall, to reach the pedals of the log truck, I shoved the seat as far forward as possible and to see out of the window, I used pillows to sit on. As I also drove the school bus, my sister Gertie and Margie Patrick would help with the boarders and my children. I would leave Westline at 7:30 am, bus the children to the H. J. Ryan School at Lafayette and return home by 8:45 am to drive the log truck to Mead Run where our wood job was located. Joe would have one truck already loaded. I would drive it to the chemical plant, unload the wood by hand, drive the empty truck back to Mead Run and return with another load of wood. When I finished unloading, it was time to drive the school bus back to Lafayette to pick

⁸⁷ Bizzak, Mary. Letter. *Sister Mary Bizzak to President Joseph C. Evanish, SNPJ Lodge 391*. August 2006.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Bizzak, Mary and Counts, Rose Ann. “The Lumber World from A Women’s Viewpoint.” 3.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

up the children and my husband would bring in the last load of wood about 5:00 pm.”⁹⁰

Mary also learned how to drive their tractor to skid logs. During the War, German Prisoners of War were held at a camp in Red Bridge, McKean County. These men also cut wood for the Bizzak’s during the war. At the end of the war, chemical plants in the region began to close and their boarders had left. They operated their boarding house in Westline for 12-13 years, until the Day Chemical Plant closed. Rather than buy the boarding house, Mary and Joe moved to Kane in 1950. Their son, Jerry was born before they left Westline.

⁹⁰ Ibid.



Mary Bizzak pictured with the school bus she drove

⁹¹ Mary Bizzak pictured with the school bus she drove. From the private collection of the Bizzak Family.



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Mary Bizzak pictured with the logging trucks she would load, unload, and drive to the Day Chemical Plant

After Mary and Joe moved to Kane, Mary continued to haul wood to chemical plants in Marvindale, Sergeant and Morrison. They also hauled paper wood to the Johnsonburg Paper Mill. No longer having a boarding house, the Bizzak's built cabins for their woodcutters to live in at their job site. They were simple dwellings that consisted of a room with a stove, a bed and an outhouse. They had a logging job at Bloomster Hollow for 13 years where they cut and delivered paper wood. Mary also "girdled trees." This involved carrying a heavy bucket filled with green poison. Mary would use a large brush to apply the liquid on a circle around the tree.

⁹² Mary Bizzak pictured with a log truck. Private collection of the Bizzak Family.

The poison would kill the bark. After the trees were treated with the poison for a year, they would remove the bark from the tree for paper wood. Mary would drive the truckload of wood to a “scaling dock” where the scaler would scale or weigh, the wood. Then she would unload her wood into an empty “buggy” by hand.



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A wood delivery truck about to empty its load into an empty “buggy”

In 1958, Mary had her fifth child, Steve. She continued to work after he was born. Mary’s last job was near Nansen Hotel during the mid-1960’s. She continued to girdle and poison trees for paper wood. By the late 1960’s mechanical debarking was developed, and Mary was “eliminated.” Mary lamented, “As history swept away a need for chemical wood, mechanical debarking replaced manual brushing and technology developed trucks that could pull out three

⁹³ Wood truck next to a “buggy.” From the private collection of the Bizzak family.

or four loads in one day, I wasn't needed anymore. That's what made me so mad, they didn't need me!"⁹⁴ She went on to say,

"I have seen changes over the decades in the lumbering world. Today, there are eye goggles, chaps, hard hats, earplugs, special footwear, we had none of these. Today, there are sophisticated machinery to take a tree down, chainsaws, skidders. We used two-man crosscut saws, sledges, hammers, horses with sleds to get the wood out. In the late 30's, my log truck's dashboard contained a temperature, oil and gas gage. I had a simple clutch with a hand emergency brake. If you wanted to stop, I would manually pump and pump those brakes. The back bed was a wooden rack where I manually loaded 52-inch pieces, three racks long by five feet high to make a load of wood worth two-and-a-half- to three cords split. My old truck had four tires. Today's trucks have everything imaginable on the dashboard, even telephones and air conditioning; the beds are constructed of steel with mechanical loaders and instead of four tires they have 12, which can carry tons of wood on a load. What took you a week to produce in the early days of lumbering can now be accomplished in one day."⁹⁵

In speaking with her family and in reading Mary's accounts of her life, it was clear that she felt, as she said, "eliminated" by modernization. But Mary went on work and fill her life with the love of her family. From 1970 until 1985, Mary, harking back to the skills she learned from cooking and preparing meals for boarders, worked as a cafeteria cook in a local school. Joe retired from logging in 1975. Their sons went on to haul logs for the Mallory Lumber Company in Emporium. Mary loved her time in the woods. She was strong, literally and figuratively, and incredibly determined. She is remembered fondly by her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. They recalled her incredible work ethic- she never stopped and was known to be painting and wallpapering buildings and houses for family members while in her 80's and 90's. Her stamina lasting longer than those of the younger generations. After so many years of cooking for others, she was remembered by her great granddaughter, Marissa Cassolo, as

⁹⁴ Ibid., Bizzak, Mary and Counts, Rose Ann. "The Lumber World from A Women's Viewpoint." 4.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

someone who was always “trying to shove food in my mouth....do you want any spaghetti?
There’s ice cream in the freezer, do you want any pop?”⁹⁶ Like Rose Kocjancic, Mary Bizzak
touched generations. Her love and her life lessons continue to live on.



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Mary and Joe Bizzak

⁹⁶ Cassolo, Marissa. School paper, “My Great-Grandma: My Hero.” No date.

⁹⁷ Mary and Joe Bizzak. From the private collection of the Bizzak Family.

Carol Zuzek

Carol Cook was born on December 19, 1935 in Kane, McKean County, to Carl and Elizabeth (Dippo) Cook. Carol married Emil Zuzek on September 26, 1959. Earlier that spring, Emil and his father, Andrew Zuzek, started the Zuzek Lumber Company, a business that Carol Zuzek would later go on to manage and operate. “When Zuzek Lumber was established, there were only four employees, one sawmill, and many hours worked. Both the elder and younger Mr. Zuzek worked in the woods, cutting timber and hauling it to the mill on West Wind Road [in Kane]. Then the two men, along with a sawyer and other employees, cut the timber for sale.”⁹⁸ Carol Zuzek would learn to operate the high lift, used to move logs along in the milling process, and to operate the debarker. She learned by trial and error and eventually became very accomplished at working the machinery of the sawmill. Carol’s husband “trusted her most of all his employees on the debarker because she was the most careful and skilled at debarking.”⁹⁹ Carol Zuzek joked, “I ran high lift and debarked. And I broke a lot of bones.”¹⁰⁰ Although she made light of her responsibilities and the dangerous nature of the work to a reporter in 1994, her words are testament to her skills, perseverance, and dedication to a profession in which few women were part of.

Carol credited hard work and a strong work ethic to their businesses success. Together she and Emil had three sons: Emil Jr. (Joey) in 1965, Paul in 1968, and Andrew in 1971. They also lost an infant daughter, Amy Sue. As their family grew, Carol spent more time working administratively,

⁹⁸ Piccirillo, Michele. “Zuzek Lumber: Years and Years of Hard Work.” The Kane Republican, Timber Issue. October 28, 1994, 32.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

keeping the books and bidding on timber, then operating equipment. Emil Zuzek passed away in 1989. After his death, Carol took on the operation and management of their lumber company. Her sons would all go on to work in the family business. In 1994, Joey (Emil) ran the mill, Paul handled the trucking, Andy oversaw the logging, and their mother was the boss!¹⁰¹

Carol was 81 years old when she passed away on February 2, 2017. She excelled as both a worker in and an operator of a lumber company at a time when women did not hold those roles in the timber industry.



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Carol Zuzek

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

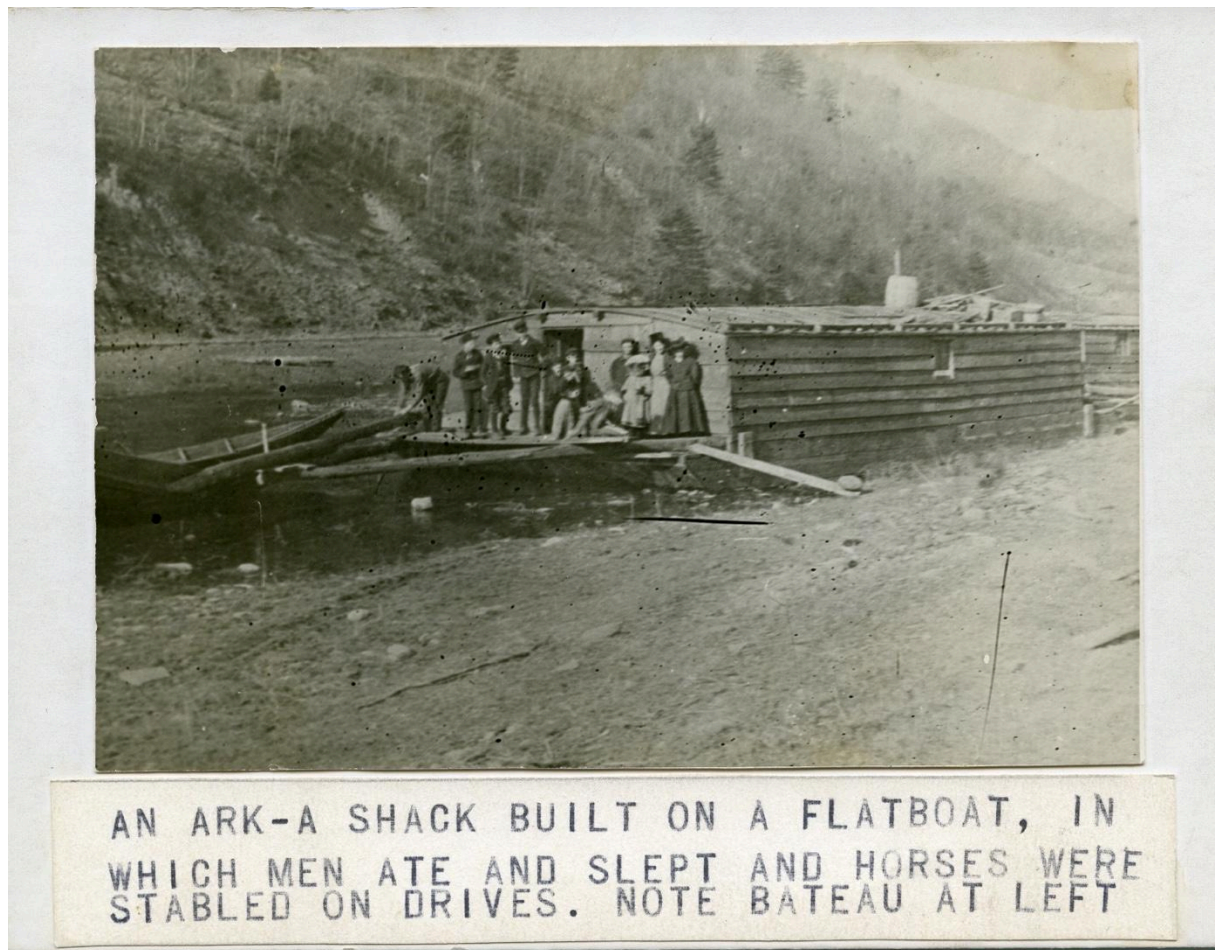
¹⁰² Ibid.

Women and Rafting:

Throughout the 1800's, Pennsylvania's rivers became a highway system for the transportation of its harvested timber. Lumber was harvested during the fall and winter months to take advantage of snow and ice to help move or "slid" the logs. The logs would then be stored along the banks of a river to be floated downstream using the naturally occurring spring freshets to move the harvest to the mills. In some areas splash dams were built to hold the timber until rains allowed for additional drives. This method could be extremely dangerous as log jams often occurred when the harvested timber would literally jam together, preventing the logs from moving downstream. In these cases, lumbermen would climb out onto the floating logs with pikes, peaveys and cant-hooks to try to free the jam. In some cases, dynamite was used to blow open the jam. If a man fell through the logs, he rarely survived.

Later in the 1800's rafting became a viable way to move the timber downstream to markets. The Susquehanna River allowed for travel to markets in Lewisburg in Union County, Marietta in Lancaster County, Havre De Grace and Baltimore, Maryland to the Chesapeake Bay, and other points south. Men would tie the spars together to form rafts. Large sweeps, or oars, were used to help guide the raft downstream and around obstacles, including rocks and islands, in the waters and manmade objects, such as bridge piers. When the raft reached its intended sawmill, it was disassembled. Long spar rafts of white pine were specifically run on the West Branch of the Susquehanna River and its tributaries. Rafts varied in sizes, but typically had a crew of men who helped navigate the rafts, cooked for the staff, and cared for any animals on board. Typically, women and children were not part of the raft crews because it was considered too

dangerous. Raft accidents happened frequently and could often prove fatal. However, there is photographic evidence and written accounts that prove that women and girls were present on ark rafts as both thrill seekers and as essential help.



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Ark Shack

The above photograph features an “Ark Shack” built on a flatboat on the West Branch of the Susquehanna. Ten people are visible including two women and a girl. Given their dress and the blurred nature of the image, it is difficult to ascertain their roles. The bateau in the water

¹⁰³ ESU.LL.A.3, “An Ark”, from the Collection of the Lycoming County Historical Society and Thomas T. Taber Museum.

alongside the ark is a flat-bottomed boat that was used by lumbermen who worked on log drives. The bateau provided a stable base for a driver to stand on as they used their pikes to move logs along on a drive. The pike could also function as a punting pole to propel the boat forward.

White pine spars were harvested in Cameron County in the 1870's and were sent down the Sinnemahoning Creek to the West Branch of the Susquehanna during the spring when the rivers ran high due to the snowmelt. Rafts were constructed with sleeping quarters, a cook's cabin and sometimes a cabin to stable the teamster's horses and any other livestock needed for provisions. These were known as Shanty Rafts or Ark Rafts. Smaller rafts would be sent down the creeks to the larger Susquehanna River, where they could be tied together, forming a larger raft. A fleet of rafts consisted of at least two rafts lashed side by side. Rafts that undertook longer trips typically had a male cook for its crew. However, there are several accounts of women and children being involved. Jack Wiley from Cameron County frequently ran rafts to the mills at Marietta, Lancaster County, in the early 1870's.

“It took eight days to run to Marietta. Cabins were built on the raft as cooking and sleeping quarters for the crew. Mrs. Swope, who was an experienced camp cook, went along and boarded the men. This was an unusual feat because women did not cook on rafts as it was considered too dangerous, but Jack Swope was regarded as the safest pilot on the Sinnemahoning, and his wife had no fear. We find no history of any other woman having cooked for eight days on a raft as it floated down the Susquehanna River.”¹⁰⁴

Jack Swope went on to work for the Russel brothers after his time with Jake Wiley, but it is not known if his wife cooked on any of his other shanty rafts.

¹⁰⁴ Huntley. The Story of the Sinnemahone. 114.

George Huntley documented the following account of two young girls who road on a raft from Russell Hollow, near Cameron, to Keating, where the Sinnemahoning Creek meets the West Branch of the Susquehanna in the mid 1870's. The raft then continued on to Marietta.

“John Strawbridge was pilot on one raft and Web Russell on the other raft. Kate, eldest daughter of Web Russell and her cousin Ada, the eldest daughter of Al Russell, each about 12 years old, went on the raft with Web Russell as far as Keating and came back on the evening train. This was an unusual event because it was considered too dangerous for women to ride on rafts. These brave little misses felt quite distinguished, and their friends were much elated when they arrived safely home.”¹⁰⁵

While these two young ladies may have chosen to ride on the raft for excitement or experience, there may have been other children who rode out of necessity. Below is an image of a series of shanty rafts. The first shanty, located in the foreground, features the telltale signs of a kitchen: a stove pipe for the cookstove protruding from the roof of the shanty, basins hung on the exterior, a cast iron Dutch oven to the right of the young girl, a bowl of food placed on the barrel, the two men on either sides of the young girl wear a typical cook's apron, the two aproned men and the young girl each hold a kitchen/cooking implement, indicating their purpose. Perhaps she is the daughter of one of these men. Cleary she is part of the cooking crew. She could very well be there out of necessity, not just as a helper, but as the child of one of the workmen. The men who cooked on these rafts may have had their wives and/or children with them out of necessity due to the transient nature of their work and higher mortality rates. They would have been fully aware of the dangers involved with river travel.

¹⁰⁵ Huntley. The Story of the Sinnamahone. 177.



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Ark Rafts

What is particularly interesting about this image, is that it was turned into a postcard. On the back of the card is printed the following description:

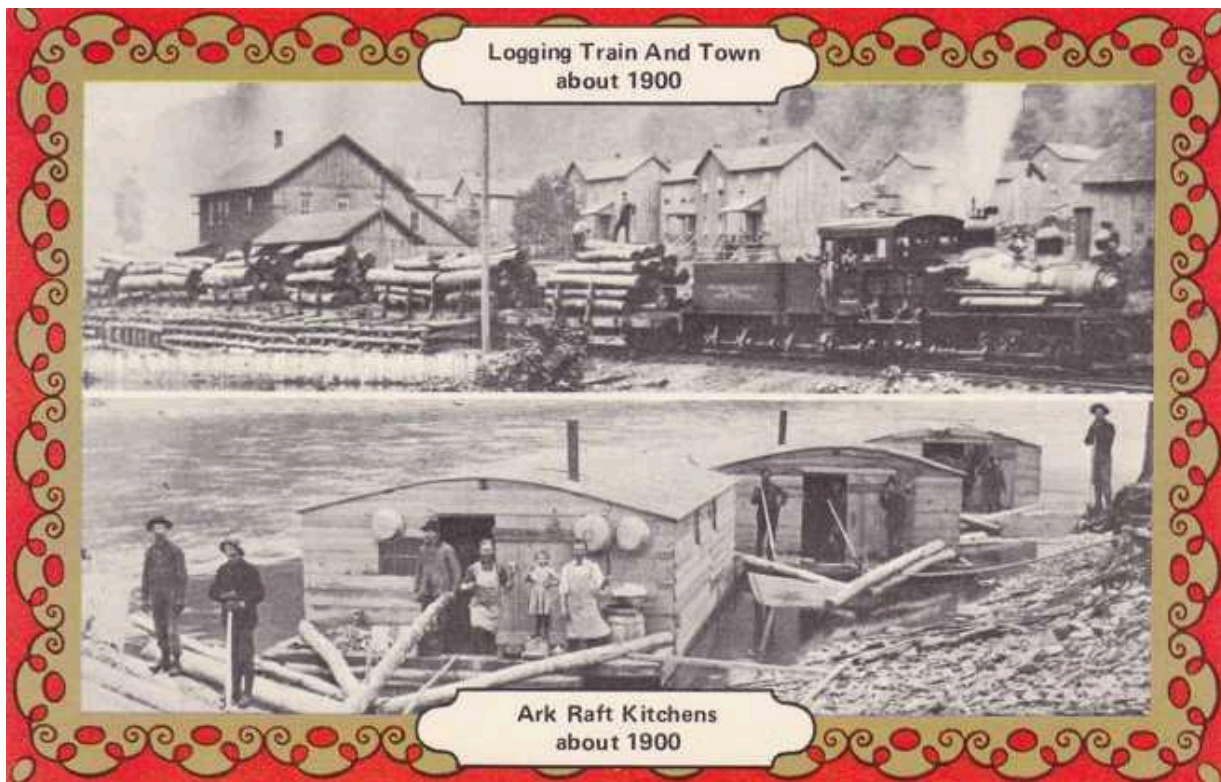
“Logging scenes reminiscent of the 1870’s when Central Pa. was the logging center of the world. Top photo – Train load of logs enroute to lumber mills. The village is typical of logging towns of the era. Bottom photo – Ark Raft Kitchens and bunkhouses following the logs downstream housed the lumbermen during the journey.”¹⁰⁷

For some, Pennsylvania’s lumber industry became a destination for a pose or picture, making it an early form of tourism. Postcards of lumber scenes were common. Women and men were captured in images as they posed on piles of lumber or stacked board. This particular card was printed throughout the region. Other versions read, “when Williamsport, Pa. was lumbering capital of the world,” rather than, “Central Pa.” Other versions have promotions printed on the

¹⁰⁶ “Ark Rafts”. From the Collection of the Lycoming County Historical Society and Thomas T. Taber Museum.

¹⁰⁷ 73-49-1 F, postcard. From the collection of the Cambria County Historical Society.

back for local businesses. Notice that the description refers to the image being taken in the 1870's while the front of the postcard states, "Ark Raft Kitchen about 1900". Regardless, the scene captured in the photograph is most likely from the Williamsport area of Lycoming County, along the West Branch of the Susquehanna River.



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Postcard with Central Pennsylvania Logging Scenes

Annie Myers

Annie (Schroat) Myers was born on October 7, 1855 (- July 8, 1949) in Lock Haven, Clinton County. She married Thomas Myers (1851-1928) and together they had 15 children between

¹⁰⁸ 73-49-1 F, postcard. From the collection of the Cambria County Historical Society.

1873 and 1896. They lived in Lock Haven and her husband, Thomas, was a river pilot on the West Branch of the Susquehanna. George William Huntly Jr., notes in his book, A Story of the Sinnamahone, that the Myers Bros. picked up spar rafts delivered from camps along the Sinnemahoning Creek to Lock Haven, and took them to the mills at Marietta, Lancaster County during the late 1800's.¹⁰⁹

On Wednesday, May 1, 1901, *The Clinton Republican* newspaper published a story entitled, "A Novel Experience. Mrs. Annie Myers Journeys in Marietta on a Raft". The article read as follows:

"Thomas Myers and Family Take a Fleet of Rafts to the Lower Market in Three Days. Mrs. Annie E. Myers, wife of Thomas Myers, the well-known pilot and a returned Klondiker, enjoys the honor of being the first woman and only woman who has made the journey from Lock Haven to Marietta on a fleet of timber rafts. Last week Pilot Myers left here with a pair of rafts for Marietta, with his three sons Robert, Thomas, and Henry as the crew. The weather promised to be fine and Mrs. Myers decided to accompany her husband and sons and enjoy the novelty of a rafting trip.

Last Thursday at 10:00 a.m. the fleet was started, and Linden was the stopping place that night. The second day's run took them to Northumberland, then the evening of the third day the rafts were tied up at the "White House" for the night. The next morning the run through the Conawago Falls was made and at 10 o'clock a.m. Saturday the fleet was safely landed at Marietta. The return trip was made on the [field, or perhaps "on foot"?] the party arriving here at 3:42 o'clock Sunday morning. Mrs. Myers speaking of her trip said it was a delightful outing. The first night was spent in a hotel on account of rain, but the other nights she slept soundly and sweetly in a tent that was pitched on one of the rafts. At the new bridge at Rockville, when a fleet in front of the one Mr. Myers was running, came near stoving on a pier, there was some anxiety among Mr. Myers' crew. Mrs. Myers says she felt a little bit nervous but concluded if the rafts stoved she could save herself by clinging to one of the timber sticks. The ride through Conawago Falls was a delightful experience for the lady and one that she will never forget. Since her return a dozen or more ladies have asked permission to accompany Mrs. Myers on the trip she already planned to make next spring, and rafting parties are likely to become a fad in Lock Haven."

¹⁰⁹ Huntley. The Story of the Sinnamahone. 144.

This article offers a large insight to Annie Myers and her life. It credits her with being, “the first woman and only woman who has made the journey from Lock Haven to Marietta on a fleet of timber rafts,” indicating how rare or unique her trip was for the time and her physical location. It could also refer to someone in her station of life. The article does not refer to her as someone who cooked for or cared for the raft’s crew (albeit they were her immediate family). Rather, it completely details the trip as one of pleasure and choice. Even going as far as to state that such experiences, “are likely to become the fad in Lock Haven.” Had a woman been on a timber raft cooking and caring for the crew, like Mrs. Swope twenty years or so prior, would she have obtained the same notoriety? Probably not. Nor would it have been likely to be recorded.

Annie Myers’ husband, Thomas, was a known and respected river pilot. As such, he would have had to have been keenly aware of the river’s currents, eddies, the placement of its hazardous rocks, sandbars, and bridge piers. He had worked on the river for years and it can be assumed by Huntley’s reference that he worked with his brother(s) at some point. His older brother, Marcellas Ellis “Dad” Myers, was also a river pilot and raftsman in Lock Haven.¹¹⁰ In 1901, Thomas Myers had three of his sons (Robert, Thomas and Harry) rafting with him. Similar to those families who worked at the lumber camps in the woods, Myers had his family involved with his river piloting. Robert Myers (October 27, 1873 – October 28, 1964) obituary states that, “As a young man he worked as a raftsman on the River.”¹¹¹ It also notes that he worked at

¹¹⁰ *Find A Grave*, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/132043971/marcellas-ellis-myers>. Accessed on 22 April 2021.

¹¹¹ Robert Myers Obituary, *The Lock Haven Express*. 28 October 1964. n.p.

a paper mill as a repair crewman for 30 years; paper being a byproduct of the forest industry. The 1898 Lock Haven City Directory also identifies him as a “Raftsmen.” The 1910 Lock Haven City Directory refers to Thomas Myers (November 28, 1878 – September 29, 1941) as a “Boil Maker at the Paper Mill.” Later he is found in Johnsonburg, Elk County, working as a “Paper Mill Sealer” in 1920. The 1930 Lock Haven City Directory finds him and his family back in Lock Haven and he was working as a “Mill Wright at the Paper Mill.” Harry was listed as a “Laborer” and “living at his parents address at 515 E. Church St.” in the 1898 and 1900 Lock Haven City Directories. The paper mills were directly related to the lumber industry.



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Annie and Thomas Myers

¹¹² Image of Annie E. (Schroat) Myers from the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum, Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission. Image of Thomas Myers from *Find A Grave*, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/124481664/thomas-s-myers>. Accessed on 22 April 2021.

Although the Myers' crew was experienced, they still had a near incident at the "New Rockville Bridge," just north of Harrisburg, Dauphin County. This bridge was completed in 1902 and still stands. It was preceded by two other bridges. Pilots and their rafts needed to navigate around the large piers of the arches of the sandstone masonry railroad bridge. Rafts could easily "stove up" or sustain damage and break up due to hitting one of the bridge's unyielding piers or unseen rocks, some of the many dangers of river travel at the time. Their next hazard was Conewago Falls, below Harrisburg in Lancaster County. Historically, this section of the Susquehanna River considerably drops in a short span of river and is full of natural hazards. The falls are located around where the Conewago Creek merges with the Susquehanna River and was considered to be one of the most dangerous sections of river.¹¹³ This would have been a risky trip for Annie, but as reported she hoped to repeat the trip the following year.

In addition to her trip on the timber raft, Annie faced the challenges of raising a large family. Annie and Thomas had 15 children, 13 of whom made it in to adulthood. Annie would have faced periods alone when Thomas was rafting. Undoubtedly, her children helped in raising their siblings, which was a common occurrence. However, Annie faced an even longer period without Thomas, when he and his brothers went on a "Klondike." In 1898, Thomas, along with some of his brothers, went to Alaska seeking fortune in the gold rush hoping to find a fortune. According to the *Clinton Democrat*, July 28, 1898,

"Coming Home. Gold Seekers Have Had Enough of the Klondike. Robert, Thomas, and John Myers and John Grittner who left this city several months ago for the Klondike gold fields, have had enough of the deprivations and hardships

¹¹³ Magee, Daniel F. "Rafting on the Susquehanna," *Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society*, v. 24, no. 9. 1920. Np.

of that region, and are now on their way home. From intelligence received by the relatives of the men, it is learned that the gold seekers left Dawson City about the 17th and floated down the Yukon river in their own boats. They then proceeded to Seattle, which city they reached in safety. They expect to reach Lock Haven some time Saturday or Sunday next.

Samuel Myers will remain in the gold fields. He states that he intends remaining as long as his food will last, which will be about a year. He also states that no one should be misled or deceived by the newspaper articles that are being sent out as to the rich finds of returning gold hunters. He states that they are given out with the hope of inducing others to spend money to go to that region. The letter also states that there are so many men around Dawson City and farther north who are very anxious to return, but they have no money to pay for their passage. There are many disappointed gold seekers, as there are many more seekers than is yellow dust.”

Thomas was lucky that he was able to return to Lock Haven. His rafting skills may have helped him on the Yukon River. As a testament to the power and strength of family, in 1940, Annie was 84 years old and was living in Lock Haven with her son, 3 daughters, grandson, and granddaughter.¹¹⁴ At this point, Annie had already lost five of her children, two of which were sons who committed suicide. Again, Annie represents a woman of determination and spirit. She, like the rest of her family, were part of the lumber and logging history of Lock Haven.

Women and Lumber Related Industries:

Pennsylvania’s lumber industry was not just secluded to its forests. Lumber related industries developed throughout the region including sawmills, chemical plants, pulp and paper mills, stave mills, shingle factories, tanneries, clothespin, toothpick, butterdish, bowl and broom handle factories, kindling factories, resin plants, toy factories, veneer and furniture factories.

¹¹⁴ “Annie E. Myers in the 1940 Census,” *Ancestry.com*, https://ancestry.com/1940-census/usa/Pennsylvania/Annie-E-Myers_q7zw9. Accessed on 21 April 2021.

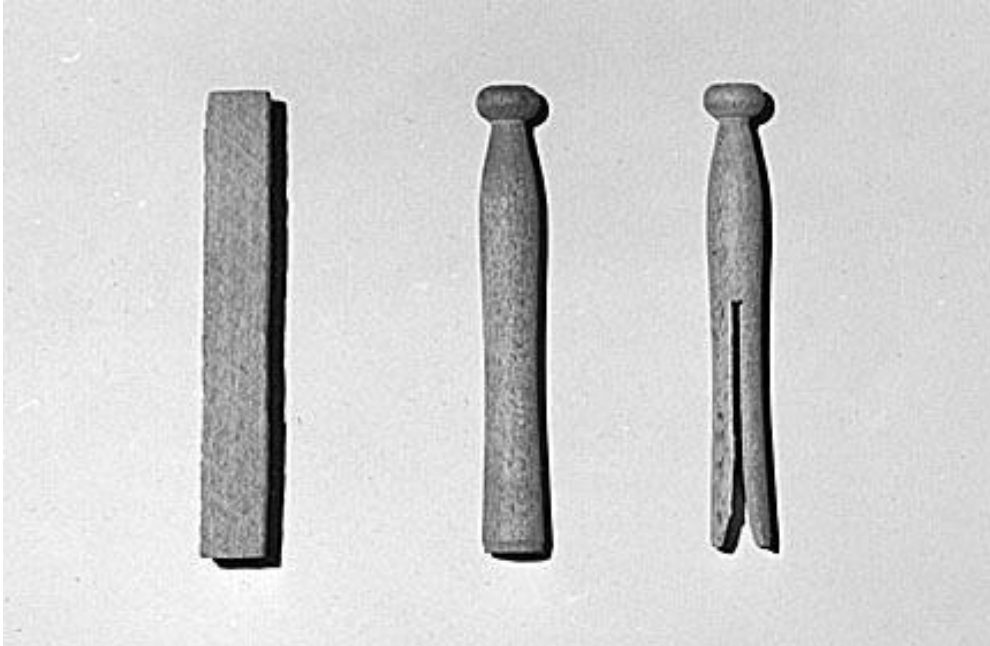
While these industries typically employed men, some of them also employed women. The late 18th and early 19th century saw a shift for women from domesticity and domestic arts to an active role in industry.

Clothespins

Clothespin factories were found throughout the Lumber Heritage Region in towns including Kane, Mt. Jewett, Kushequa, Coudersport, Duhring, Masten and nearby in Lopez and Stonestown, Sullivan County. The Kane Clothespin Factory operated by David Howells, M. W. Moffitt and Joshua Davis, opened in the fall of 1889. The following year it was purchased by Howells, Moffitt and Co., The following describes the process of making a clothespin at their factory and is representative of how they were made.

“The process of making these is an interesting one. It is done in just six motions. The first one cuts a four-foot chunk off the log, the second saws a board from the chunk, the third saws the board into square strips, the fourth cuts the strips into clothes-pin lengths, the fifth turns the pin, and the sixth cuts the slot into it. This is done very rapidly, and they are then dried and polished in revolving cylinders, after which they are at once boxed and shipped. The capacity is 300 boxes of 720 pins per day, or twenty-nine miles in length.”¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ Leeson, M.A., History of the counties of McKean, Elk, Cameron, and Potter Pennsylvania: with biographical selections, including their early settlement and development, a description of the historic and interesting localities, sketches of their cities, towns and villages, portraits of prominent men, biographies of representatives citizens, outline history of Pennsylvania statistics. (Chicago: J. H. Beers & Co., 1890), quoted in <http://genealogytrails.com/penn/mckean/1890history13.htm>, accessed on 3 March 2021.



“Steps in Making Clothespins”

Clothespins were a common item found in homes, camps, residential businesses and facilities throughout the country. A simple utilitarian tool, essential to every housekeeper’s inventory, the clothespin was commonly made of Beech wood, because it would not stain when it was placed against damp material. Beech was not typically harvested by the lumber companies and was a perfect species for the clothespin industry.

Men and women were both employed in Pennsylvania’s clothespin factories. Although some factories may have only employed men, it is evident that women were employed in some clothespin mills. The Dodge Clothespin Factory in Coudersport, Potter County and the Lopez Clothes Pin Factory in Lopez, Sullivan County are two examples. In 1900 Lopez Clothes Pin Factory employed Mary Hunsinger, 20, as a “Turner,” and Grace Carrington 36, Maude

¹¹⁶ “Steps in making Clothespins,” *Lopez, PA: The Icebox of Pennsylvania*, “Items of Interest”, <http://lopezpa.com/items-of-interest/>, accessed on 30 July 2020.

Werkeiser 17, Pauline Gross 16, and Alta Fenner 16, as “Sitters,” and Emma J. Steele 15, did “packing.”¹¹⁷ Although only a listing of names, these women are representative of the roles and responsibilities that women had in clothespin factories.

The Dodge Clothespin Factory in Coudersport, Potter County, was built in 1896 by Alfred Dodge. Dodge consolidated two similar operations he owned in Michigan into the one factory at Coudersport. He moved east due to dwindling supplies of Beech. Dodge brought with him his machinery and any employee who was willing to move. At this time Beech was plentiful in Potter County. Dodge contracted for what he estimated to be a 15-year supply of standing Beech trees in the surrounding forests.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Lopez, PA, *The Icebox of Pennsylvania*, “Items of Interest,” <http://lopezpa.com/items-of-interest/> accessed on July 30, 2020.

¹¹⁸ Castano, David, “Three Hundred and Sixty Million: A History of the Dodge Clothespin Company 1896-1921,” *Potter County Historical Society Quarterly Bulletin* No. 215, (April 2020): 3.



Dodge Clothespin factory, Coudersport

Alfred and Ann Dodge also moved their whole family to Coudersport, and they were intimately involved with the Clothespin company. Their oldest son, J.B. Dodge, worked in the office. Their younger son, Herbert, was a foreman in the factory. Their 17-year-old daughter, Lula, was a lathe operator on the production line. In addition to 30 more employees, including at least 18 women, they completed every task from sawmill to shipping.¹²⁰ The women in Dodge's factory typically operated the lathes and the polishing machines. Operating the band saws, rip saws, slotters and planers, the power plant, log pound and warehouse were male responsibilities.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ "Dodge Clothespin Factory, Coudersport," Courtesy of the Potter County Historical Society.

¹²⁰ Castano, "Three Hundred and Sixty Million: A History of the Dodge Clothespin Company 1896-1921," 4.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 4.



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Interior view of the Dodge Clothespin Factory, Coudersport, Potter County

The above interior image of the Dodge Clothespin Factory, features what appears to be the machine room. This section held the lathes, spotters and polishers, typically operated by the women, including Dodge's daughter, Lula.

In 1899, Dodge, along with his brother, Albert, bought out a competing clothespin factory in Duhring, Forest County. The factory was moved from Pennsylvania to Richwood, Virginia. In 1904 another factory was built in Lincoln, New Hampshire. Dodge owned lumber camps in all

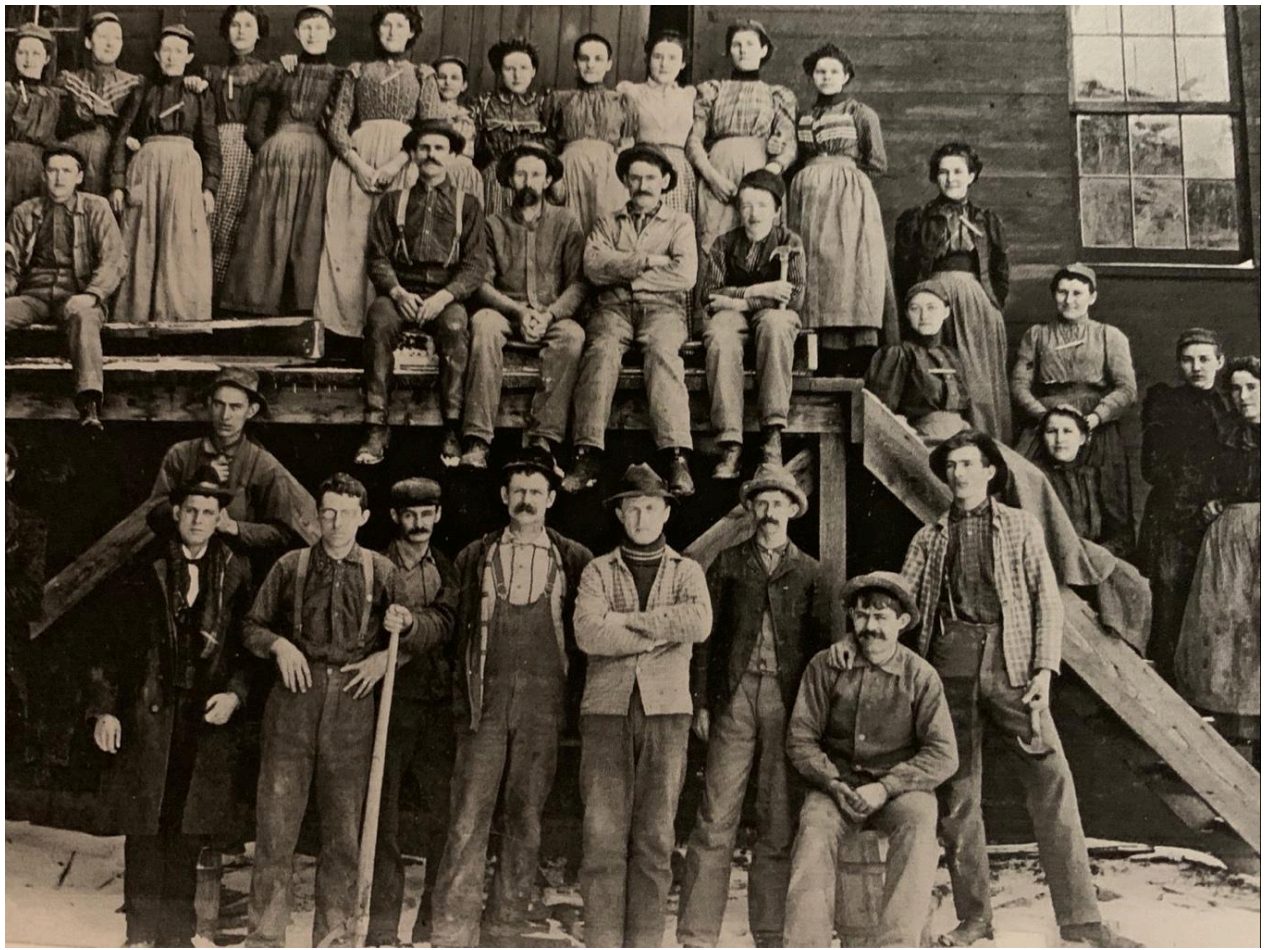
¹²² "Interior View of the Clothespin Factory", courtesy of the Potter County Historical Society.

three states. By 1905, the annual capacity of all three facilities was 360,000,000 clothespins.¹²³

Undoubtably, all of his factories would have employed both women and men.

The following two images are of the men and women who worked at the Dodge Clothespin Factory in Coudersport at the turn of the century. The first image features a group on a loading dock. There are 18 women in this image. Five of the men hold tools of their trade in their hands. Taken around 1907, the second image features 8 women near the log pond entrance to the factory. Notice the log about to enter the building at the top of the ramp, from the log pond below. The women are standing on the dock section. Some of the individuals are numbered, but not identified. A note attached to the picture stated, “No. 1 Ralph Lloyd. No. 2 Smith/Loyd [sic] and Smith married Stebbins sisters/(believed one named Gegia)/Loyd [sic] and Smith opened an oil well supply company in/Bradford – known as the Lloyd Smith Corp. and operated/there for many years. The company was dissolved in/the late 70s.” Perhaps the Stebbins sisters are also in this picture.

¹²³ Castano, “Three Hundred and Sixty Million: A History of the Dodge Clothespin Company 1896-1921,” 5.



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“Workers at Clothes Pin Factory”

¹²⁴ “Workers at Clothes Pin Factory”, courtesy of the Potter County Historical Society



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“Workers at the Coudersport Clothespin Factory about 1907”

¹²⁵ “Workers at the Coudersport Clothespin Factory about 1907”, courtesy of the Potter County Historical Society.



Dodge Clothespin Factory Workers

The above image features employees of the Dodge Clothespin Factory posed on a group of cut logs. There are 22 women and 14 men. Several employees are labeled and identified as “1. Barbara Fath 2. Anna Frieberg 3. Mike Fath 4. Frank Bate”. Women were instrumental in the production of the clothespins. The operation brought notoriety, capital and people to Coudersport during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Dodge clothespins were found around the world. “A Potter County Doughboy in WWI sent a label home to his family from France. Printed prominently on the label was, “DODGE CLOTHESPIN COMPANY COUDERSORT, PENNSYLVANIA.”¹²⁷ Imagine how this tangible memory of his home made this young soldier

¹²⁶ Untitled image, courtesy of the Potter County Historical Society.

¹²⁷ Castano, “Three Hundred and Sixty Million: A History of the Dodge Clothespin Company 1896-1921,” 5.

feel. His pride and wonder are evident in that he sent the label back to his family in Potter County.

Kindling Wood

Another common byproduct of Pennsylvania's forest was kindling wood. Kindling factories were common throughout the lumber regions of the state. They were typically located within the vicinity of a sawmill. Kindling factories used the leftover slab and scrap wood from those sawmills to make the kindling. Much of the kindling wood produced was then shipped to New York City and Philadelphia for use in coal stoves for heating and cooking. During the late 1800's wood was scarce in these cities, particularly New York. The wood bundles were tied with a twine that was soaked in wood tar, fashioning it as a wick. Once the bundle of kindling was placed in a stove, a person, typically a woman, only needed to light the burning twine to ignite the bundle, which would consequently ignite the coal in the stove. This image of a cast iron parlor stove with a bundle of kindling wood illustrates what these bundles looked like. The bundle featured was made at one of the Lopez, Sullivan County, kindling wood factories. The burning twine is visible. A typical bundle would sell in the cities for 5 cents.



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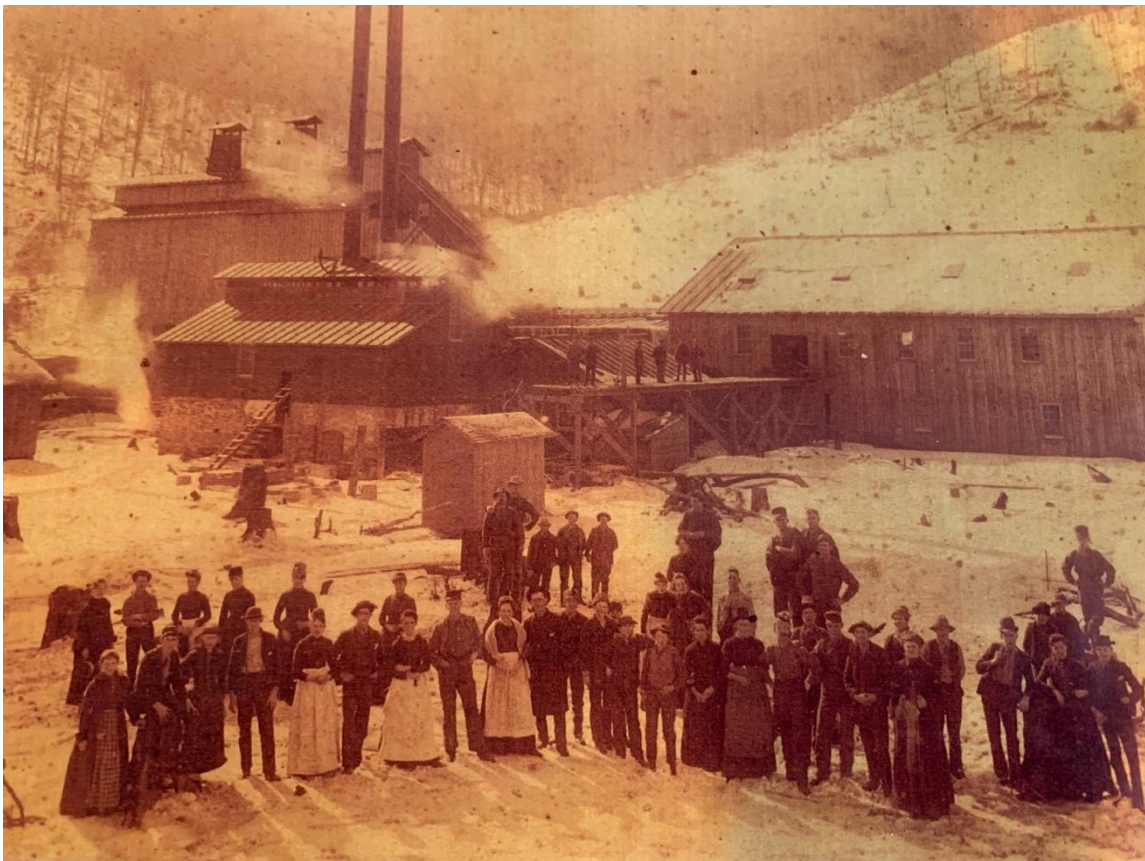
Parlor Stove with Kindling Bundle

In 1979 students from the Olean High School, in New York, interviewed Elizabeth Borst Gilmore when she was 90 years old. Gilmore was the daughter of Ezer Borst, who was the owner and operator of a kindling wood factory in Weston Mills, just over the state line from Potter County. She recalled the process of how kindling wood was made: the “scrap wood would be cut into

¹²⁸ “Bundle of Kindling made at one of the several Lopez Kindling Wood factories,” from <http://lopezpa.com/items-of-interest/>, accessed on 30 July 2020.

blocks 2 ½ to 3 inches in length. A chain conveyor took these blocks up to the top of a silo-type kiln where they were discharged and dropped into a kiln's interior, which was lined with steam pipes. The blocks came out of the bottom of the dry kilns, where the bundling operation was set up."¹²⁹ According to Gilmore,

“Philo Blaisdell invented the press that was used in bundling kindling wood. He and his seven brothers controlled a vast enterprise of kindling factories in Bradford, St. Mary’s, and Austin, Pennsylvania and Carrollton. They rented the bundling machine to other kindling factories. The Blaisdell Enterprise was an immediate success, so much so that the firm shipped five railroad cars of wood bundles to Brooklyn weekly.”¹³⁰



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¹²⁹ “State of the Union: From wood-kindling industry to the world-famous Zippo,” Olean Times Herald, 25 March 2016. https://www.oleantimesherald.com/news/here_and_now/state-and-union-from-wood-kindling-industry-to-the-world/article_f5be0cfa-f238-11e5-bcd7-ffd8aeaddff43.html, accessed 7 July 2020.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ “The Kindling Wood Factory at Austin,” courtesy of the E.O. Austin Home and Historical Society, Austin Pennsylvania.

Kindling Wood Factory at Austin

This image is of the large Wood Kindling Factory in Austin, Potter County, owned by the Blaisdell Brothers. The photograph was taken around 1888 and a number of women are visible amongst the staff. Angie Rideout is identified in the image. A period description of those who worked at the Austin Kindling Mill in 1887/1888 follows below:

“There are 100 bundling presses at the factory which are mostly handled by boys and girls in equal number from 15-20 years of age. These presses are worked automatically by steam screw presses, with a pressure on each bundle before tying of 40,000 pounds. The pressure and release is made by a simple touch of the foot of the bundler. The gearing of the presses are made to turn one half inward and one half outward; the side with the outward turn being for the girls so that their skirts cannot be caught in the machinery. These children soon become expertly, binding 700 or 800 bundles a day, each while some very expert and nimble ones bind twice as many. They receive 20 cents per hundred bundles, which it will be seen gives them excellent wages.”¹³²

The above description of Blaisdell’s Austin Kindling Mill is incredibly telling. It subtly speaks to the dangerous nature of working in the factory. The machinery moved fast and there was little room for error for the young men and women who worked there. If a woman’s skirt was caught in a press, the presses ran automatically and would not just shut off. The woman could be pulled into the press, causing harm or severe injury. Blaisdell’s bundling press invention speaks to the rising pace of industrialization in the latter half of the 18th century. Industrialization and its hazards were not limited to the textile mills and such in the big cities, they were present in the rural regions as well. The air in these factories would have been filled with sawdust.

Splinters would have not just been a nuisance but a hazard, particularly for the eyes. A 1908

¹³² Leeson, M.A., History of the counties of McKean, Elk, Cameron, and Potter Pennsylvania: with biographical selections, including their early settlement and development, a description of the historic and interesting localities, sketches of their cities, towns and villages, portraits of prominent men, biographies of representatives, citizens, outline history of Pennsylvania statistics. (Chicago: J. H. Beers & Co., 1890), 1117.

account from *The Forest Republican* newspaper demonstrates the hazards of splitters from an accident, at the Kellettsville Kindling Factory, in Forest County:

“Mat. Cunningham met with a serious accident Friday. While working in the cutting room of the Kindling wood factory, a splinter was lodged in his eye. A visit to Dr. Hall, eye specialist, of Warren, resulted in its removal. He was getting along nicely at last report.”¹³³

The age and gender of the Austin Kindling mill employees was also mentioned in the description of Blaisdell’s mill; “...boys and girls in equal number from 15- 20 years of age.” This is instrumental in visually developing and mentally understanding that a large number of young women and girls were working in equal number to that of the young men and boys in the Austin mill. Their work expectations and salaries are also included. In this case, the men and women also appear to be paid at the same rate, based on the number of bundles they produced per day. Following is a picture of the staff of the Blaisdell Brothers Kiln Dried Wood factory in Austin. Notice the number of employees and the variety of their ages. Some of the workers are holding strips of wood or kindling in their grip, indicative of their labor.

¹³³ [The Forest Republican](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/2796824/mat-cunningham-injured/), Tionesta, PA. 5 February 1908, Wednesday, Page 4. <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/2796824/mat-cunningham-injured/>, accessed on August 12, 2020.



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“BLAISDELL BROS. KILN DRIED WOOD”

In 1903, the Blaisdell Brothers founded the Standard Wood Company and built a plant under the same name, in Laquin, Franklin Township, Bradford County. The plant was constructed for the manufacture of kindling wood made from the waste of a hemlock sawmill. The mill operated from 1903 until 1918. It was first run by R. Lorem and later by W. F. Beers. The kindling factory employed roughly 70 people, half of whom were women and girls who bundled the kindling wood.¹³⁵ Blaisdell’s Laquin Kindling Factory also had an equal number of men and women employed. Using the Austin and Laquin mills as examples, it can be assumed that all of the kindling mills owned by the Blaisdell’s employed both men and women in equal numbers.

¹³⁴ “BLAISDELL BROS. KILN DRIED WOOD,” courtesy of the E. O. Austin Home and Historical Society., Austin PA.

¹³⁵ Clarke, Staley N. *The Romance of Old Barclay*. (Towanda, PA: 1928).
<https://www.joycetice.com/booksb/barcla14.htm>, accessed on 5 April 2021.



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Two unidentified women Kindling factory workers

Kindling factories were also subject to fires due to the nature of their production and the vast amounts of dried wood in the hold. For example, in the Lopez region along the Loyalsock River,

¹³⁶ "Kindling Workers," courtesy of the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

in Sullivan County, adjacent to Lycoming County, The Jennings Brothers started a kindling wood mill in 1888. Built by McCartney and Hall, the mill burned down in 1890. It was rebuilt the same year and was later sold to the Standard Kindling Wood Company, belonging to the Blaisdell Brothers. In the same vicinity, the Fisher Kindling Wood factory was built in 1895. It burned down six months after it was built. The factory was rebuilt in 1896 and burned down again the same year. Sixty days later it was rebuilt, only to suffer a smaller fire again in 1897. It was destroyed by fire in 1907 and was the last operating business in Lopez.¹³⁷

Austin and Laquin were both also home to hub and veneer factories. These factories were present through the Lumber Heritage Region. Between 1903 and 1904, Fay Burroughs built the Laquin Pennsylvania Hub and Veneer Company for the manufacture of wagon hubs and brewer's chips. The plant employed roughly 15 people, 5 of whom were "girls" who sorted chips.¹³⁸ Like so many lumber towns of the era, Laquin was founded in 1902, but once the surrounding forests were harvested, the town was abandoned, and is now a ghost town.

Just over the border from Cambria County lies the town of Windber, Somerset County. Although recognized more for bituminous coal, Windber also had a kindling factory at Arrow that employed 14 "girls" in 1908.¹³⁹ The building of the Arrow Kindling Factory in 1904, was under the direction of F. L. Blaisdell of the Standard Wood Company, New York. The factory cost \$40,000 to build and the raw material was provided by the Babcock Lumber Company. Their

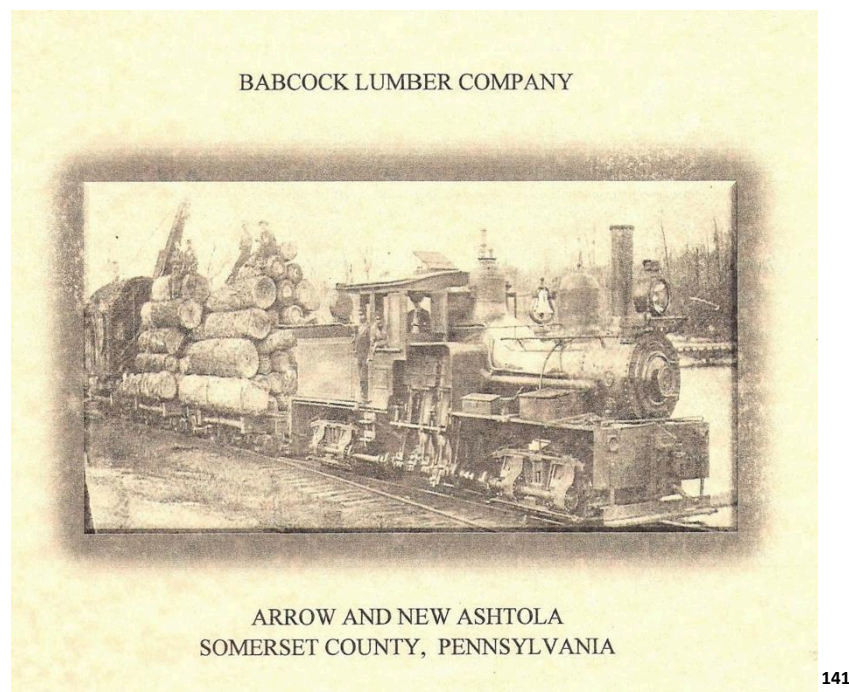
¹³⁷ "Lopez History." <http://lopezpa.com/lopez-history/>, accessed 7 July 2020.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Maclean, Annie Marion. "Life in the Pennsylvania Coal Fields with Particular Reference to Women." *American journal of Sociology*, vol. 14, no. 3, 1908, pp 329-351. *JSTOR*, https://www.jstor.org/stable/2762714?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents, accessed on 17 March 2021.

kindling bundles were sold to “big eastern markets” including Philadelphia and New York.¹⁴⁰

While just a reference, the placement of this kindling factory in Somerset County indicates just how far south they were regarding the Lumber Heritage Region. This also demonstrates the continued success of the Blaisdell brothers, their Standard Wood Company, and their hiring practices. It is relevant to understand that some coal companies also had their own lumber businesses and mills to supply their need of wood for use in their coal industries. Kindling factories were also located in Lycoming, Warren, Potter, Elk, McKean, and Forest Counties.

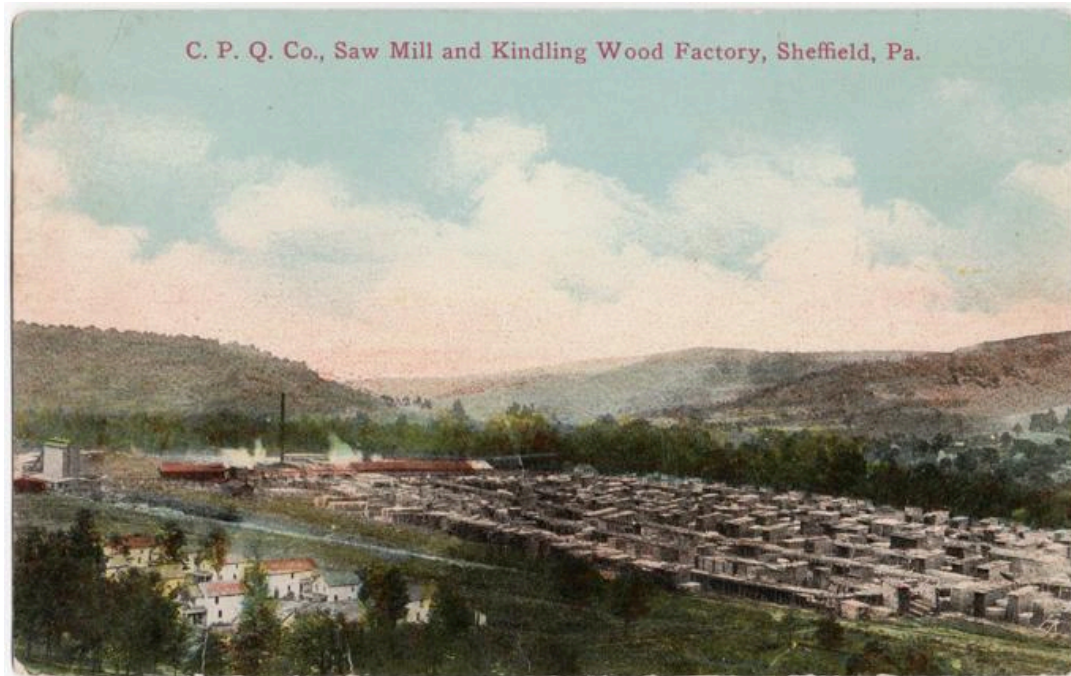


Booklet cover representing the Babcock Lumber Company

¹⁴⁰The New York Lumber Trade Journal, Volume 37, July 15, 1904, p 16.

https://books.google.com/books?id=DL9PAQAAIAAJ&pg=RA2-PA16&lpg=RA2-PA16&dq=Arrow+kindling+factory+pa&source=bl&ots=0bDBxawbo9&sig=ACfU3U3pC0tuUquchxs37YXcxCaNiFuKhW&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewiJ0fCwpdr-AhV_k4kEHOe7Dfs4FBD0AXoECAIQAw#v=onepage&q=Arrow%20kindling%20factory%20pa&f=false, accessed on 31 March 2023.

¹⁴¹ Cover of booklet, *The Babcock Lumber Co. in Ashtola and Arrow*, PA. Facebook post, The Windber Area Museum, May 9, 2014. Accessed on 31 March 2023.



Postcard depicting an image of the C.P.Q. Co., Saw Mill and Kindling Wood Factory, Sheffield, Pennsylvania

Women and War Efforts

During the war efforts of the first half of the 20th century, there are few references to women working in industries related to lumber in Pennsylvania, but there are some. During the first World War the Mansfield Novelty Works, in Tioga County, hired women to make foot rulers, yard sticks, and small wooden novelties.¹⁴³ The Mansfield Novelty Works was one of the largest manufacturer of wooden tops and children's tops in the country. The toys and utilitarian objects were all made of locally harvested wood. The factory burned down on July 29, 1920. "The fire was caused by a hot box just after the women's shift ended."¹⁴⁴ This quote referenced from the *Wellsboro Agitator*, indicates that the men and women may have worked separate

¹⁴² "Postcard- C. P. Q. Co. Saw Mill and Kindling Wood Factory. Sheffield, Pa.", image courtesy of the Warren County Historical Society, Warren, PA.

¹⁴³ <https://www.joycetice.com/business/novelty.htm>, accessed on 27 April 2021.

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.mansfield.edu/mansfield-history/mansfield-borough/fires.cfm#item6>, accessed on 27 April 2021.

shifts apart from one another and that the women were still employed after the Great War. The Novelty Works was rebuilt after the fire and closed in the early 1970's.

Between 1921 and 1924 a tar refinery was built in Roulette township, Potter County. The refinery produced jet resin, solvents, wood creosote, inhibitor oils and guaiacol. These items were crucial to government needs for the war effort, but due to men enlisting, there was a shortage of employees. As accounted below, a group of Roulette women came to the rescue.

“During World War II, labor was so scarce it appeared that the refinery might have to shut down. A group of Roulet [sic] women heard of the problem and offered their services. After a period of training, they operated the difficult and complex process until the war ended. These women were: Vera Bloomer, Leitha Treat, Marie Brown, Ada Corbett, Hazel Gross, Margaret Barr, Tillie Pransky, Alice Main, Amelia Johnson, Isabel Arnold and Agnes Franklin.”¹⁴⁵

These heroic women took on a mighty task and prevented the refinery from shutting down. Like other women of the era, these women assumed what were considered dangerous and male dominated jobs as their civic duty to help their community and their country.

During WWII in Eldred, McKean County, women worked at the National Munitions Factory making motor shells, incendiary grenades, thermite aerial bombs and bomb fuses. 95 percent of the plants 1,500 employees were women. Together they produced eight million devices.¹⁴⁶

The conditions they worked in were dangerous and many were exposed to TNT. Those women developed a yellow skin tone and were referred to as the “Canary Girls.”¹⁴⁷ In Warren County

¹⁴⁵ Lyman, Robert R., History of Roulet, Pa. and the Life of Burrel Lyman (The Founder). Coudersport, PA, Press of T-C SPECIALTIES CO, 1967. 166.

¹⁴⁶

https://www.bradfordera.com/news/working-women-of-world-war-ii/article_7541169c-1fdd-11e8-b637-1b8900a28b4f.html, accessed 17 March 2021.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

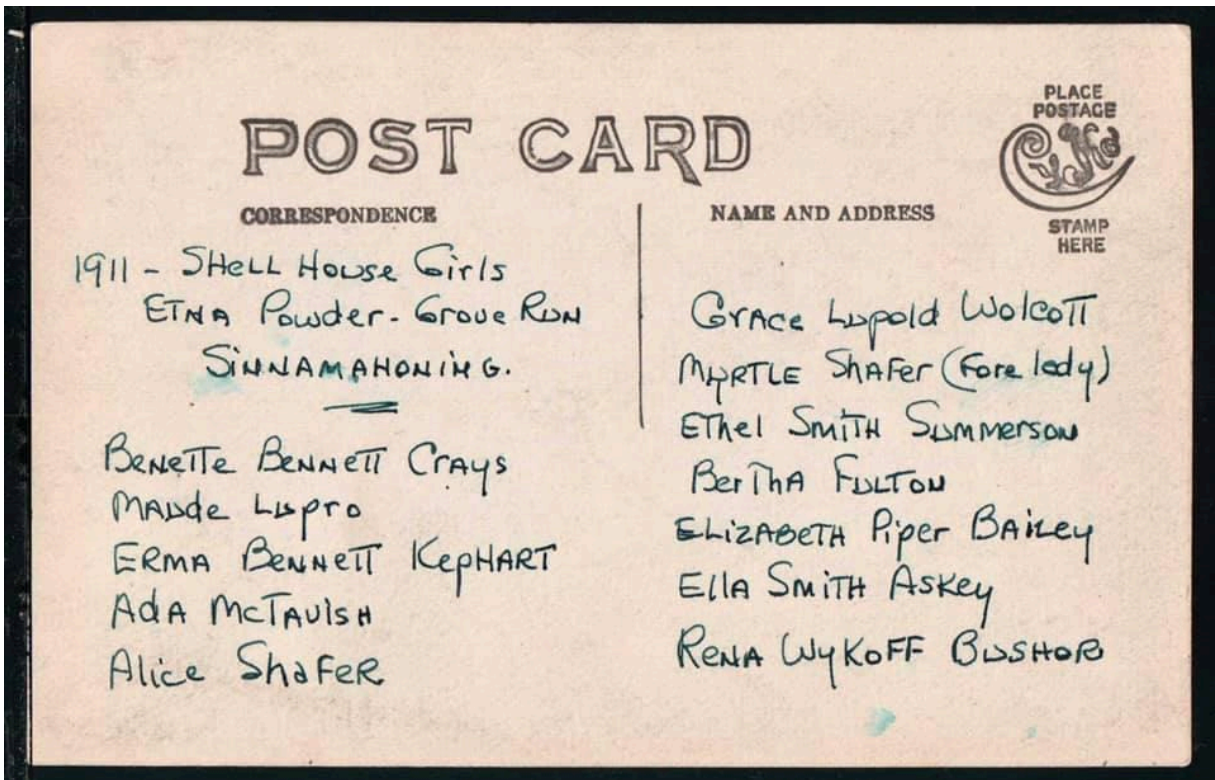
women took on jobs at the National Forge & Ordnance Company of Irvine, the Struthers Wells Corporation, and at the Penn Furnace and Iron Company of Warren. In Cameron County, the “shell house girls” worked at the Climax Dynamite Plant. Although not working at lumber related plants and industries, their contributions are worth telling. Together these women crossed gender lines and worked in multiple industries to help and serve their country and win the war. All lost their positions or were forced out after the men returned home from WWII.

One fact to note regarding the dynamite industry in Cameron County, is it’s relation to the construction of the Panama Canal. The Panama Canal was built between 1904 - 1914. In 1910, Keystone National Powder combined the Keystone, Emporium, and Sinnamahoning plants to fill an order of 25 million tons of dynamite. The plant’s “shell house girls” were hired because of the delicacy of their fingers which helped in making the dynamite.¹⁴⁸ Some of the women who worked at the factory, in 1911, are pictured and named on the postcard below. Notice that Myrtle Shafer is listed as the “fore lady.” It is plausible that they also made some of the dynamite used by the lumbermen to brake-up log jams along the rivers.

¹⁴⁸ Susan Hoy, interview by author, the Cameron County Historical Society, Cameron, PA. Fieldnotes. 11 November 2020



Front of a Postcard featuring an image of the Shell House Girls



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Reverse image of the Postcard displaying the names of the Shell House Girls

There are instances of women working in the woods, specifically harvesting wood, during WWII in the United Kingdom and in the United States in both the Northwest and New England.¹⁵⁰

During WWII Pennsylvania had 16 POW (Prisoner of War) camps. These camps held primarily German prisoners. Some of the prisoners were housed at camps within the Lumber Heritage Region. Some of which were repurposed Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps. These POW's worked in the woods during WWII and may be the reason that we did not see women

¹⁴⁹ "Shell House Girls," postcard image courtesy of the Hygrade Inn, Emporium, PA.

¹⁵⁰ See <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/20/world/europe/britain-lumberjills-world-war-ii-.html> for information on the United Kingdom's Women's Timber Corps. For information related to the United States and Canada read: Felt, Margaret Elley, *Gypso Logger*. 1963. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002. Print. And Smith, Sarah Shea. *They Sawed Up A Storm, The Woman's Sawmill at Turkey Pond, New Hampshire, 1942*. Portsmouth, NH: Jetty House, 2010.

loggers as part of the region's war effort. In his, History of Roulet, Pa., Robert Lyman gave a personal account of the German POW's:

“World War II was on. The need for wood chemicals and charcoal was vital to the government.... In all the history of the Gray Chemical Co. the factory was never shutdown for lack of wood. When World War II raged in all its fury, man power ‘was scarce indeed. Only a few old woodcutters continued to work. At times there were only a few days supply of wood in the factory yard. When the situation became desperate, the army sent in Captain Sharp, Lieutenant Bartley, a detachment of guards, and about two hundred German Prisoners of War, to cut wood and logs. Milton Braun, of Germania, was in the army. A request for him to act as interpreter was promptly granted.

The prisoners were quartered in barracks, on Lyman Run [Potter County], surrounded by a high wire fence, and under constant guard. These Germans were a cross section of all classes of society. There were artists, opera singers, actors, authors, mechanics and all kinds of highly skilled men. Some were expert woodsmen. Some had never had an axe in their hand. And a few were boys, only fifteen years of age. As this writer knew them, they were good men who hated war, and were content to be here even as prisoners, under forced labor with very limited rations of food. They started cutting on 14 May 1945, and quit on 29 November, the same year, after cutting 14,000 cords of wood and 300,000 feet of logs.¹⁵¹

The women who worked as secretaries in the office of the Gray Chemical Company during this period were Madie Burt Valentine, Mildred Dexter Moshier, Jane Rossman DeStevens, and Marie Sieber Ostrom.¹⁵² The Company closed in 1948, after the war ended. Lyman went on in his book to discuss the folks who were employed by the Gray Chemical Company, including those thousands of woodcutters who sustained the company through the years harvesting the county's forests. His comment speaks to their diversity and varied backgrounds:

“They were a motley multitude. They were the riffraff of all the classes. They were a ragtag of old time lumberjacks. They were farmers, masons, carpenters, teachers, priests, preachers. They were criminals who had served time, or were

¹⁵¹ Ibid., Lyman. History of Roulet, Pa. and The Life of Burrel Lyman. 167-168.

¹⁵² Ibid., 168.

out on parole. They were professional woodcutters from Austria and Italy—mighty men who could work at nothing else. Several were women.”¹⁵³

Who were these elusive women? He does not go on to expound on them, but his comment proves they were there. Some of them exist in pictures, nameless, their stories yet to be told.



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Unidentified image from Potter County featuring one man and 6 women

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 169.

¹⁵⁴ Unidentified image, courtesy of the Potter County Historical Society.

Hidden Industries, Religion, Diversity and Reform:

Lumber towns and industries brought about the needs and desires for other businesses including boarding houses, hotels, supply stores, dry goods, bars and brothels. George William Huntley Jr.'s book, [A Story of the Sinnamahone](#), and Hiram Cranmer's account both make numerous references to religious faiths, ethnic diversity, boarding houses run by married couples or widows, peddlers, bars, those who knitted/sewed clothing for the lumbermen, and "scarlet women." Although these stories are abundant throughout the Lumber Heritage Region, their accounts provide an enlightening perspective on the lives of women and elements of diversity within the region. They can be complimented by other stories and references from the surrounding counties. Without these small allusions and the inferences we draw from them, their stories and relevancy would be lost.

Clothing

Lumbermen and raftsmen alike needed clothing that protected them from the elements. Some pieces were acquired by traveling peddlers and tailors, others were made by local women for purchase. Hiram Cranmer described the everyday attire of a woodsmen:

"A 'wood-hick' (lumberjack) wore calked shoes, overalls with the bottoms cut off so they wouldn't catch in the calks, in the summer-time a woolen undershirt, no outside shirt. Wool was a protection against sunburn and catching cold when caught in a shower. In the winter a heavy outside woolen overshirt was worn."¹⁵⁵

The men wore woolen shirts, as opposed to other types of fabric, because when wool gets wet, it still retains heat, as opposed to cotton, which dissipates heat. Wool is natural fiber that is also known for its moisture wicking capabilities and is a breathable fabric. It was an essential

¹⁵⁵ Cox, "Harvesting the Hemlock: The Reminiscences of a Pennsylvania Wood-Hick." 115.

material for the woodhicks. Notice the woolen socks hanging from the woodhick's bunks and on the feet of the men seated below.



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Interior Woodhick Bunkhouse with Socks Hung to Dry

Mike Tulis was from Emporium. He originally came to the region as a foreman on a railroad construction crew. He and his family stayed in Cameron County after the rail was completed and he became a peddler. According to Huntley, Tulis' wife Hanna (White) "conducted a shop at home in which she employed several women, making flannel underwear and overshirts out of cloth bought from Rich's Woolen Mills at Woolrich [Clinton County]. Mike could sell all of the kinds of goods that his wife could produce."¹⁵⁷ Additional items made by Hanna Tulis, and the

¹⁵⁶ Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

¹⁵⁷ Huntley. The Story of the Sinnamahone. 135-136.

women she employed, would have included mittens, socks, hats and towels. Tulis also sold a variety of Irish linens and utilitarian objects including, “yarns, buttons, needles, pins, combs and hair pins.” Tulis was able to earn enough money “pack peddling” to eventually build and own a mercantile business in Emporium. His wife’s labor, and that of the unknown women she employed in her cottage industry, contributed to the family’s success.

The need for mittens, socks, overshirts, and underwear was great because there were no factory-made items available to the woodhicks during the nineteenth century. This provided a natural market for women who knit and sewed. Huntley’s book contains multiple references to these women. “Mrs. Ellen Peters and Mrs. Margaret Logue were two of the best knitters in the First Fork neighborhood.”¹⁵⁸ “Mrs. Mattie Batron was the expert sewer of the East Fork Neighborhood. She made men’s overshirts and ‘wammuses’ out of colored flannel and decorated the fronts with braids and buttons of different colors, which were worn for ‘dress-up’ without a coat.”¹⁵⁹ “Aunt Delilah Williams was an expert knitter. She knitted socks and mittens and sold them to the men in the camp.”¹⁶⁰ In essence, women were the support network for the men. Without proper food, nourishment, clothing, and care, the men would not have been able to properly do their jobs in the woods and along the rivers. This private and poorly documented support industry was essential to the care and wellbeing of the Pennsylvania woodhick, bark peeler, and raftsmen.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. 303.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 332.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 332.

“Scarlet Women”

Often nameless, varying in ages and in numbers unknown, women also found employment in the region’s woods and lumber towns as prostitutes. In the late nineteenth century prostitution was common and considered a “Necessary Evil,” a way to protect innocent women and girls from sexually charged men. “That would soon change, but during most of the nineteenth century, Americans viewed prostitution as a safety valve for sexually active men who might attack respectable young women or for wandering husbands who strayed from their uninterested wives.”¹⁶¹ References to these illicit women are found throughout the region. Cranmer referred to them almost mundanely when he stated, “I carefully avoided all strike territory and closed towns that were completely ruled with only one company store, company hotel, and company controlled red-light district...”¹⁶² Indicating the commonality of brothels. Huntley also makes reference to “red-light districts” and remarks on the men who had interactions with these “scarlet women,” and “jades.” He referred to one of the working girls as “an inmate of a dive in Lock Haven,” and another as “a dirty trollop.” He attests,

“When the ‘wood hicks’ were drunk in town, they would pick up immodest women for sociable companions; but when they were sober, they cared nothing for this class. They respected and protected modest and polite womanhood.”¹⁶³

Bits and phrases come together to tell the story of Cora Brooks, arguably the most famous madame of Potter County. Cora was 19 years old when she married her first husband. After her husband died, she started a boarding house and brothel to support herself and her children. She married again to a man by the last name of Brooks. The marriage did not end well. He

¹⁶¹ Johnson, Robert Flynn, Working Girls: An American Brothel, circa 1892, The Secret Photographs of William Goldman. (New York: Glitterati Editions, 2018). 13.

¹⁶² Cox, “Harvesting the Hemlock: The Reminiscences of a Pennsylvania Wood-Hick.” 131.

¹⁶³ Huntley, A Story of the Sinnamahone. 200.

apparently had relations with her help and left her for another woman. He had a sister who died in childbirth and Cora assumed the role of foster mother to [her] children.¹⁶⁴ Cora chose to willingly take on this responsibility to help keep the children together and prevent them from going to a county orphanage. Cora then entered her third relationship with Harry Davis and remained with him until she died in 1943. They were never formally married.

Cora's establishment was interchangeably referred to as a home, boarding house, a "bawdy house," and as a "Redlight house," depending upon who was speaking of it. In essence, it was all of those things. Rumors exist that her cliental consisted of men of all walks of life; workmen, lumbermen, politicians and husbands who sought company with her "girls." Her house was located on the outskirts of town, on a hill near the Austin Dam. By 1911 the morals of the country had shifted and middle-class female reformers- suffragettes, feminists, and members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union were trying to "protect the home" by targeting the vices of alcohol, gambling and prostitution.¹⁶⁵ Cora and her girls may have visited and shopped in the town of Austin, but they weren't welcomed by everyone.

¹⁶⁴ https://www.pennlive.com/midstate/2011/09/prostitutes_kin_seeks_pardon_f.html, accessed on 26 October 2020.

¹⁶⁵ Johnson, Working Girls: An American Brothel, circa 1892, The Secret Photographs of William Goldman. 14.



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Cora Brooks Boarding House

One mile below Cora's establishment was the town of Austin. George Bayless had the dam constructed for the purpose of supplying water to his paper and pulp mill. The dam was built of concrete and steel reinforcing rods and was completed in December 1909. Bayless used the cheapest method to construct the dam, resulting in dangerous flaws. On Saturday, September 30, 1911, the dam began to split at 2:15 in the afternoon. Few houses in Austin had telephones during this time, but Cora Brook's did. While it is debated whether she or Harry Davis first heard the dam begin to break, Cora has been given credit for calling the Austin switchboard operators at the Bell Telephone office. At least two women were on duty. Phone operator Lena Binckley ran into the streets and yelled for people to run to higher ground. Another phone operator, a young girl named Katherine Lyons, stayed at her post ringing everyone she could until her switchboard stopped working.¹⁶⁷ She then took to the street and helped warned the

¹⁶⁶ <http://www.familyoldphotos.com/photo/pennsylvania/24756/cora-brooks-gave-alarm>, accessed on 1 May 2021.

¹⁶⁷ https://www.pennlive.com/midstate/2011/09/prostitutes_kin_seeks_pardon_f.html, accessed on 26 October 2020.

town's people of the pending disaster. With over 250,000,000 gallons of water rushing to town, Cora's warning and the actions of the switchboard operators saved countless lives.



Bayless Paper Mill Dam at Austin

Torrents of water destroyed the town. Fire and gas explosions followed. In total, 78 lives were lost. In comparison, the Johnstown Flood of May 31, 1889 killed over 2,200 when the South Fork Dam gave way. The flood waters traveled 14 miles from Lake Conemaugh to Johnstown in only 10 minutes. The flood waters from the Bayless Paper Mill Dam had only one mile to travel to the town of Austin. It is believed that the lower death rate was a direct result of Cora's quick thinking to call the town.

¹⁶⁸ <https://pawilds.com/asset/austin-dam/>, accessed on 6 May 2021



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Flood Devastation in Austin, Potter County, September 30, 1911

Prior to the Austin Dam Flood, charges of operating a “house of ill repute” and selling liquor without a license were pending against Cora Brooks. When the trial took place three months after the flood, she pled guilty. The town and judge recognized her humanity and her efforts to help the people of Austin.

“Had it not been for her, undoubtedly hundreds more lives would have been lost,” residents said in a letter to the sentencing judge. ‘Large numbers of people were fed by her, and the suffering and distressed rendered aid and assistance.’ ‘Cora Brooks,’ the judge declared, ‘proved she was not only human, but humane.’ And he released her with a \$200 fine.”¹⁷⁰

There is more to Cora Brooks than being the proprietor of a “bawdy house.” She was a business woman, a partner, a mother, a heroine, and a friend to her community. While others may have

¹⁶⁹ Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

¹⁷⁰ https://www.pennlive.com/midstate/2011/09/prostitutes_kin_seeks_pardon_f.html, accessed 26 October 2020.

avoided and judged her prior to the flood, she did not keep that from preventing her from helping in a time of need.



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Cora Brooks in center, surrounded by her “girls”

Religion

¹⁷¹ “Cora Brooks and her girls,” courtesy of the E. O. Austin Home and Historical Society, Austin, PA.

Regarding religious diversity, Huntley's book mentions people of various denominations including protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish faiths. Itinerant preachers and "Circuit Riders," like the Reverend John Blackburn, held large revival meetings in hotels during the winter months or outside in clearings or groves during the warmer seasons. These meetings brought about conversions of faith, provided a social aspect, repentance to penitents and an opportunity to testify. Some of the preachers spoke to temperance and the vices the plagued some of the lumber towns. According to Huntley, the Reverend Blackburn held revival temperance sermons in Cameron County on "Woe to the Liquor Drinkers," "Woe to the Liquor Seller," and "Woe to the People who Tolerate Liquor Selling." Adventist Preacher, Reverend Gates (also known as "Mackamoose" due to a medicinal tonic he made and promoted) also held Camp Meetings near Sterling Run on "Liquor and Prayer." Reverend Brother Burnham and Reverend Wash Shafer, both Methodist preachers, also spoke and lead singing at these camp meetings and encouraged Baptism.¹⁷² These camp meetings attracted upwards of 200 people from around the region. They also provided a social outlet to all who attended.

¹⁷² Ibid., 64-72.



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Camp Meeting on Whig Hill, Forest County

Above is a photograph of a camp revival meeting taken at a grove at Whig Hill, in Forest County. The Whig Hill Methodist Church was dedicated on February 2, 1880. An evangelical church, they were hosting revival meetings in the late 1880's. Of particular interest is the Black man and woman seated on the fourth row from the front. There is no context or information for this couple, but they are an indication of the diversity within the region. It is also important to note that they are seated in amongst everyone else attending the revival meeting.

¹⁷³ "Misc-478- Camp Meeting on Whig Hill, Forest County, PA," courtesy of the Forest County Historical Society.



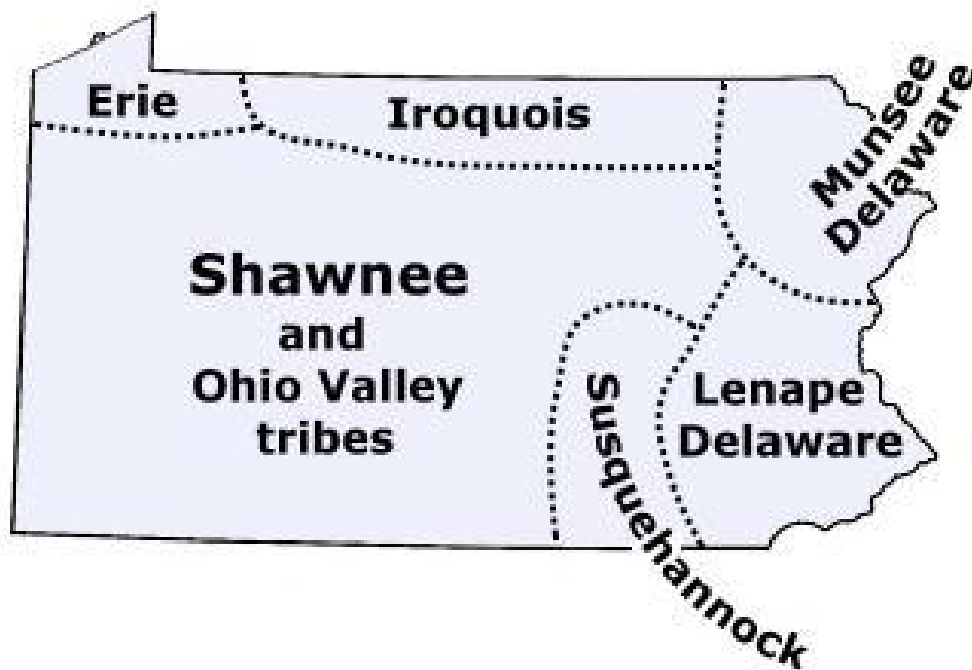
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Close-up of a Black couple attending the Camp Meeting at Whig Hill

They do not appear to be isolated or removed to the side or back of the gathering. They are represented naturally and inclusively amongst all of those in attendance. This does speak to the community at the revival.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., closeup of image.

The diversity in population within the Lumber Heritage region was primarily Caucasians of European decent. Although there were small populations of Black Americans and Indigenous Americans, including Iroquois, specifically the Seneca, during the mid to late 19th and early to mid-20th century. The number of native people within the region had been decimated due to colonialism and disease. The map below indicates the estimated locations of various Indigenous Americans prior to European expansion. Those of native heritage who were living in the region would have practiced the beliefs and spiritualities of their respective culture. Others may have practiced forms of Christianity due to conversionist tactics by early settlers.



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¹⁷⁵ <http://www.native-languages.org/pennsylvania.htm>, accessed on 30 April 2021.

Father Brennan was a Catholic priest and Reverend Tom Holland was a Protestant minister in the Driftwood area of Cameron County during the late 1800's. Both served the counsel of woodhicks and their families. Edward F. Kocjancic, of McKean County, noted that most of the lumberman in and around their camps were Catholic, as was his mother, Rose. He stated that it amazed him that, "...these lumberjacks could recite the Latin mass beginning to end but they wouldn't go to church.... They respected the church, but just wouldn't go."¹⁷⁶ He also recalled Reverend Frank Reed who was an itinerant preacher or "Sky Pilot" who visited the lumber camps in North Woods to conduct services and help those in spiritual need in the 1930's and 1940's. Even though many of the lumber camps were in isolated regions, faith was still practiced and attended to. Although the comments are in passing, Huntley repeatedly refers to "Jewish peddlers" and tailors, some who "talked Yiddish." There are other references to stores in the region that were owned and operated by Jewish families. This infers that there were Jewish communities in the region as well. Jewish immigrants were in Lancaster County in the early 1700's. Huntly also refers to a group of woodhicks who were, "conservative Unitarians" from Maine, and others who practiced "powwowing," which is a medicinal reference to Pennsylvania Dutch (German) remedies and cosmology. This information speaks to the religious diversity within the region.

¹⁷⁶ Kocjancic, "Logging Camp History and Consulting in Northwestern Pennsylvania." 6-7.



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Bill Brewer, "hick preacher"

William T. Clarke took this image of itinerant preacher, William (Bill) Brewer (1845-1928) in the Hammersley area of Clinton County. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Brewer preached at lumber camps throughout the region and was known as the "Sky Pilot of the Alleghenies."

¹⁷⁷ "Bill Brewer, 'hick preacher,' Hammersley region, Clinton County," courtesy of the Pennsylvania State Archives, RG-6.20, WTC, no. 3879.

Brewer was born in Webster, New York and died at the Warren State Hospital, Warren County, where it was reported that he suffered from “senile psychosis.”¹⁷⁸

Diversity

Various accounts from lumbermen speak to their code of ethics while working in forests. The conventionalism of the woodsmen indicated that careless or sloppy work was not tolerated, which prevented casualties. Hiram Crammer, a self-proclaimed woodhick, put it plainly, “The reason few men were killed in the hemlock was the unwritten law of the woods that a care[e]less man who endangered himself and others must be fired. The law of the woods was that a man must not be fired hungry so at the close of the next meal he was handed his pay.”¹⁷⁹

In essence, what mattered most was that you could trust those who you were working with.

This same sentiment was shared by Tim Morey, Natural Resource Specialist for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources at Leonard Harrison State Park. He pondered that when you were working with other men in the woods, it didn’t matter the color of your skin or what your beliefs were. What truly mattered was you could trust those who you were working with.

That you knew they had your back and worked as safely as possible.¹⁸⁰

Although some logging camps certainly had men from similar backgrounds, regions, ethnicities, or faiths, other camps had more diversity. This diversity is elusive, and in some cases, hard to

¹⁷⁸ Ostman, Ronald E. and Littell, Harry. Wood Hicks and Bark Peelers: A Visual History of Pennsylvania’s Railroad Lumbering Communities. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016. 194.

¹⁷⁹ Cox, “Harvesting the Hemlock: The Reminiscences of a Pennsylvania Wood-Hick,” 114.

¹⁸⁰ LHR meeting with Steve Manginell and Tim Morey. Author’s fieldnotes, Leonard Harrison State Park, Wellsboro, Pennsylvania, July 22, 2020.

determine and identify by period photographs. One cannot look at these images and definitively determine faith, what language someone spoke, their ethnicity or their heritage.

Below are three typical group portraits of individuals who worked in lumber related industries. One is a typical “woodhick” photograph, meaning a group of lumbermen posed together, from Potter County. Seated predominately in the front row is a Black man. He is holding his cap in his hand. Along with the other men in the front and second rows, they are seated on the wood scraps and a cut log, indicating the work of a lumber camp. This image also features two women, presumably the camp cooks. Given their appearance, the young woman on the end could be the other woman’s daughter. They could also both be part of a family unit with the man standing next to the older woman. This photograph was passed down through the Newell Family and was eventually donated to the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum, but little information is known about the images other than the camp location. According to Joshua Fox, curator of the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum,

“Fred [Newell] was a farmer and a carpenter who lived on his family farm in Newelltown, PA in Tioga County. During the winter months he would find work in lumber camps. It was not uncommon for farmers to supplement their incomes by working in lumber camps during winter when there was not as much work to be done on the farm. In 1900 at the age of 34 he was struck on the head by a falling tree limb, while working at a lumber camp near Corbett, PA.”¹⁸¹

The other two photographs are from mills in Lycoming County. All three images feature Black men who worked in some aspect of the lumber industry in Pennsylvania, proving that there was an element of diversity, albeit small, within the field.

¹⁸¹ Fox, Joshua. “Curator’s Corner.” *Woodchips*, Pennsylvania Lumber Museum Associates’ Quarterly Newsletter, Spring 2019, 4.



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Newell Photograph taken at an Unidentified Lumber Camp

The next image was taken at an unidentified mill in Williamsport, Lycoming County. There are at least four men of color of varying ages in this assemblage. They are visible throughout the group and are not seated together. The men all appear to be on a loading dock. From the mid 19th century through the early to mid-20th century, Williamsport was a hub of industry, known as a lumber port and home to many mills and factories related to lumber. It was and remains, the county seat for Lycoming County. The city had a larger and more diverse population than the smaller surrounding lumber towns and villages.

¹⁸² LM2019.4.1, untitled image, Newell collection, courtesy of the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.



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Unidentified image of mill employees in Williamsport, Lycoming County

The next photograph was taken at the Brown, Clark and Howe Lumber Mill in Williamsport.

Some of the logs milled here came from Potter and Tioga Counties and were driven from Kettle Creek to the West Branch of the Susquehanna. This photograph features two men of color in the group. Take note of the range of ages of the men and boys.

¹⁸³ E50.LL.C.7, unidentified group of mill workers. From the Collection of the Lycoming County Historical Society and Thomas T. Taber Museum.



Unidentified Employees of the Brown, Clark and Howe Lumber Mill in Williamsport, PA

¹⁸⁴ 2001.28.4, Brown Clark & Howe Lumber Mill, Williamsport. From the Collection of the Lycoming County Historical Society and Thomas T. Taber Museum.

Underground Railroad

In all of the locales studied within the PA Lumber Heritage Region, Williamsport was the most diverse. It was a critical point along the Underground Railroad and was also the home to Quakers, abolitionists, and progressives. It was also the home of slave hunters and after 1865, the Ku Klux Klan. The Underground Railroad helped enslaved people from the South escape to freedom in the North, sometimes going far into Canada where they were not subject to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. Many routes went through Pennsylvania, which was a free state. (Technically, slavery was abolished in Pennsylvania in 1780 under the Gradual Abolition Act of 1780, however, those born into slavery before the Act's passage were still kept in bondage. There were also those bound as indentured servants.) The Underground Railroad roughly ran from 1830 until the end of the Civil War in 1865. Pathways to freedom went through the Allegheny Forest and are documented throughout Pennsylvania, particularly along waterways and railways. Williamsport was a progressive city and had an element of the population that supported abolitionists and progressive movements. The area also had Underground Railroad stations and routes. Although some in the region supported the Underground Railroad and its cause, there certainly were other members of the community who did not and combated its efforts.

Daniel Hughes (1804-1880) was a lumber river raftsman on the West Branch of the Susquehanna in the mid 19th century. He transported lumber from Williamsport to Havre de Grace, Maryland. Hughes is documented as being a towering man, standing over 6' 7" tall, weighing approximately 300 pounds. He was bi-racial, of African American and American

Indian, possibly Mohawk, heritage. He migrated to Pennsylvania from Oswego, New York in 1828. He and his wife, Ann Rotch, who was also Black, had 16 children and lived just north of Williamsport in the Pennsdale-Muncy area. This area was once offensively known as “Nigger Hollow” and is now more appropriately called, “Freedom Road.”¹⁸⁵ Together they helped slaves escape from the south to freedom in the north. Hughes would hide escaping slaves in his raft and smuggle them north to Williamsport. The story of Hughes and his family has been passed down by oral tradition by his great-granddaughter, Mamie Sweetings Diggs.¹⁸⁶ At great risk to themselves, the Hughes family helped protect, hide, and nourished those men and women before they would start their journey further north on the railroad to Elmira, New York. They were hidden on the Hughes’ property in its woods and caves. Hughes’ son, Robert, was recorded as reflecting upon his role in helping his family hide those escaping bondage,

“We would hide them in the woods in brush houses. I was just a little boy, but I remember very well carrying meals out to them in the woods. They usually traveled in groups of two or three men. Often patrollers would come to our place looking for runaways. They never caught anyone at our place. Rich people and good church people in Williamsport, mostly Quaker helped in the work.”¹⁸⁷

From Hughes residence, the runaways would next travel to the Apker House, in Trout Run, Lycoming County. This was the home of abolitionist and owner of the Williamsport-Elmira Railroad, Robert Faires. Faires would hide the escaped slaves in his house and barn. Conveniently, his railroad line ran through his property. Faires would then stow the runaways in the railway baggage cars bound for Elmira, New York.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁵ <https://web.archive.org/web/20120420085941/http://www.newsofyesteryear.com/archives/1075>, accessed on 5 May 2021.

¹⁸⁶ <https://www.lycoming.edu/art/underground/mamie-sweeting-diggs.html>, accessed 1 May 2021.

¹⁸⁷ <https://web.archive.org/web/20120420085941/http://www.newsofyesteryear.com/archives/1075>, accessed on 5 May 2021.

¹⁸⁸ <https://www.lycoming.edu/art/underground/sites.html>, accessed on 4 May 2021.

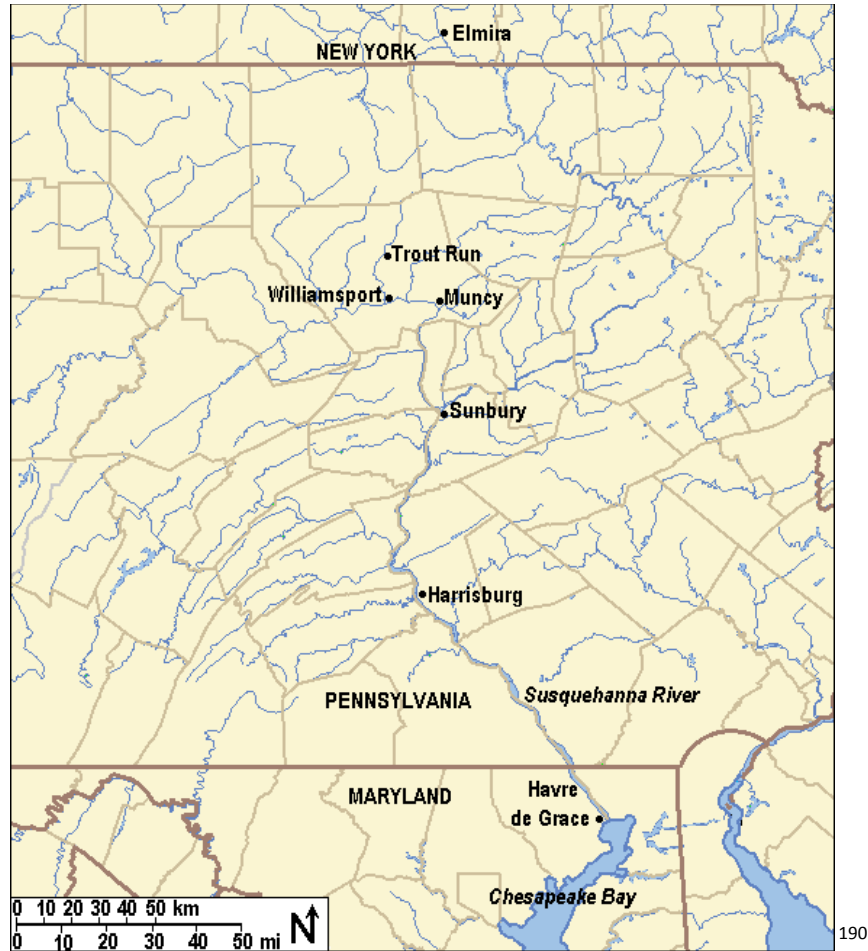
Hughes later donated part of his property to be a cemetery. Nine Black Civil War veterans are buried there. The property is a historic site and is now identified by a Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission marker. It's important to note that Hughes used his profession as a lumber river raftsman to mask his work with the Underground Railroad.



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Daniel Hughes

¹⁸⁹ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Hughes_\(underground_railroad\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Hughes_(underground_railroad)), accessed on 29 April 2021.



Underground Railroad map of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York that details the pathway of freedom and important locations along the route that Hughes used. Notice the importance of the Susquehanna River.

William Whipper (1804-1876) and Stephen Smith (1795-1873) were wealthy Black lumber merchants and businessmen. They owned a successful lumber business in Columbia County, as well as a fleet of railroad cars and canal boats. Whipper was born to an enslaved house servant and her white owner. Smith was born a slave in Dauphin County.¹⁹¹ Both became involved in the abolitionist and antislavery movements. Using their influence and resources, they worked with others involved with the Underground Railroad to help hundreds escape slavery from the

¹⁹⁰ https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/69/Daniel_Hughes_River_Map.PNG, accessed on 4 May 2021.

¹⁹¹ <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/smith-stephen-1795-1873/>, accessed 5 May 2021.

1830's through the 1850's.¹⁹² Using the Pennsylvania's Main Line Canal and the Allegheny Portage Railroad (which connected Hollidaysburg, Blair County to Johnstown, Cambria County), they were able to help hundreds escape slavery by moving them North to Canada, East to Philadelphia or Westward to Pittsburgh and beyond.¹⁹³ Although located just outside of the Lumber Heritage Region's boundaries, Columbia County is adjacent to Lycoming County and along the banks of the Susquehanna River. The story of Whipper and Smith compliments that of Daniel Hughes and involves Cambria County.



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Portraiture and Engraving of William Whipper

Scipio Kane

¹⁹² National Park Service. Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site. Interpretation and Visitor Services Division. Visitor center interpretive signage and displays.

¹⁹³ <https://explorepahistory.com/hmarker.php?markerId=1-A-110>, accessed 5 May 2021.


¹⁹⁴ Both images are of William Whipper and are worthy of inclusion. Portrait of William Whipper attributed to William Matthew, 1845. Courtesy of the Fenimore Art Museum, <http://collections.fenimoreartmuseum.org/william-whipper-0>, accessed 5 May 2021. Block print. <https://www.zinnedproject.org/news/tdih/william-whipper-nonviolence>, accessed 5 May 2021.

Scipio Kane was a runaway slave who became an aid and valet to General Thomas Kane, leader of Pennsylvania's Bucktail Regiment, during the Civil War. Thomas Kane was an abolitionist and supported the antislavery movement. Kane and Young became close friends and settled in Kane, McKean County after the war. According to Wendy Oakes, of the Kane Historic Preservation Society, the Kane's were the founding family and namesake of Kane. She credits Scipio Young's family as the second founding family.¹⁹⁵ Together Kane and Young worked in a lumber mill and went on to start their own successful lumber industry in Kane. Young later brought the rest of his family to the area from Essex, Virginia. He went on to own several buildings and businesses in Kane including a barber shop and billiard hall.

BILLIARD PARLOR
SCIPIO YOUNG, PROP'R.,
Fraley Street, KANE, PA.

☞ This room has been newly finished throughout. A fine new billard table of the latest make has been added, and the pool table thoroughly overhauled and new cushions and cloths added. Any person who enjoys rolling the ivorys can do so with pleasure at this parlor. A first-class

BARBER SHOP!
is run in connection with the billiard room where you can get a good sha hair cut.

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Advertisement for Scipio Young's Billiard Parlor and Barber Shop

¹⁹⁵ Wendy Oakes, interview by author, 11 November 2020. Field notes, Kane Historic Preservation Society Depot, Kane, PA.

¹⁹⁶ <https://kanepa.com/2019/07/31/day-41-the-story-of-scipio-young/> accessed on 15 January 2021.



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Scipio Young and Family

Some of Scipio's buildings are still present along Kane's main street. His property at 54 N. Fraley Street was once labeled "1887/S. Young" at the top of the roofline building. Renovations have covered his name from its modern-day appearance.

Fudgeon VanCamp and Jefferson County

Fudgeon VanCamp is thought to be the first Black man to locate to Jefferson County. He was a free man who traveled westward from Easton, Northampton County, during the winter of 1800-1801. Tradition relates that he brought apple seeds with him and planted them in Jefferson County. VanCamp raised two sons and two daughters on a farm near where present

¹⁹⁷ "Scipio Young and family," courtesy of the Kane Historic Preservation Society.

day I-80 crosses SR28.¹⁹⁸ When Brookville became the county seat of Jefferson County in 1830 it was recorded that “it had a population of 2003 whites, 21 freed colored, and only 1 slave.”¹⁹⁹ Four years later, Elijah Heath (1796-1875), an outspoken abolitionist residing in Brookville, helped two runaway slaves escape from the Brookville Jail. Heath provided William Parker and Charles Brown with tools to pick their cell’s lock.²⁰⁰ The men then fled north to Canada. The slave owners filed a lawsuit against Heath and won due to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793, that allowed penalties to be imposed on anyone who helped prevent the seizure and return of escaped slaves. Stories of diversity are briefly mentioned in the county histories of the region and many of them have a connection to lumber. Even in small-recorded census numbers or passing references, there was diversity.

Women

Located next to Warren County, Crawford County was home to John Brown, slavery abolitionist, and Ida Tarbell, an investigative journalist who tackled complex subjects and was a progressive who promoted reform. Their stories resonate in the topics of abolition, reform, suffrage, and rights that are also found within the Lumber Heritage Region. Although located in Crawford County, the image below was taken in Titusville at the Tarr Farm Tea Party, during the oil boom on the 1860’s. Notice the style of buildings behind the group of women. They resemble lumber camp buildings and are constructed of rough-cut plank lumber. When studying the women in the image, there appears to be elements of diversity. One or more of the women may of either

¹⁹⁸ <https://www.explorejeffersonpa.com/matson-growing-green/>, accessed 23 September 2020 and Briggs, Carole, interview by author, authors notes, Brookville, PA, 23 September 2020.

¹⁹⁹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/96234400/elijah-heath>, accessed on 3 November 2020.

²⁰⁰ <http://paheritage.wpengine.com/article/black-history-pennsylvania-overview/>, accessed on 4 May 2021.

African American or Indigenous heritage, but they stand together. Their dress is common for the time. Most of the women are wearing constrictive hoop skirts.



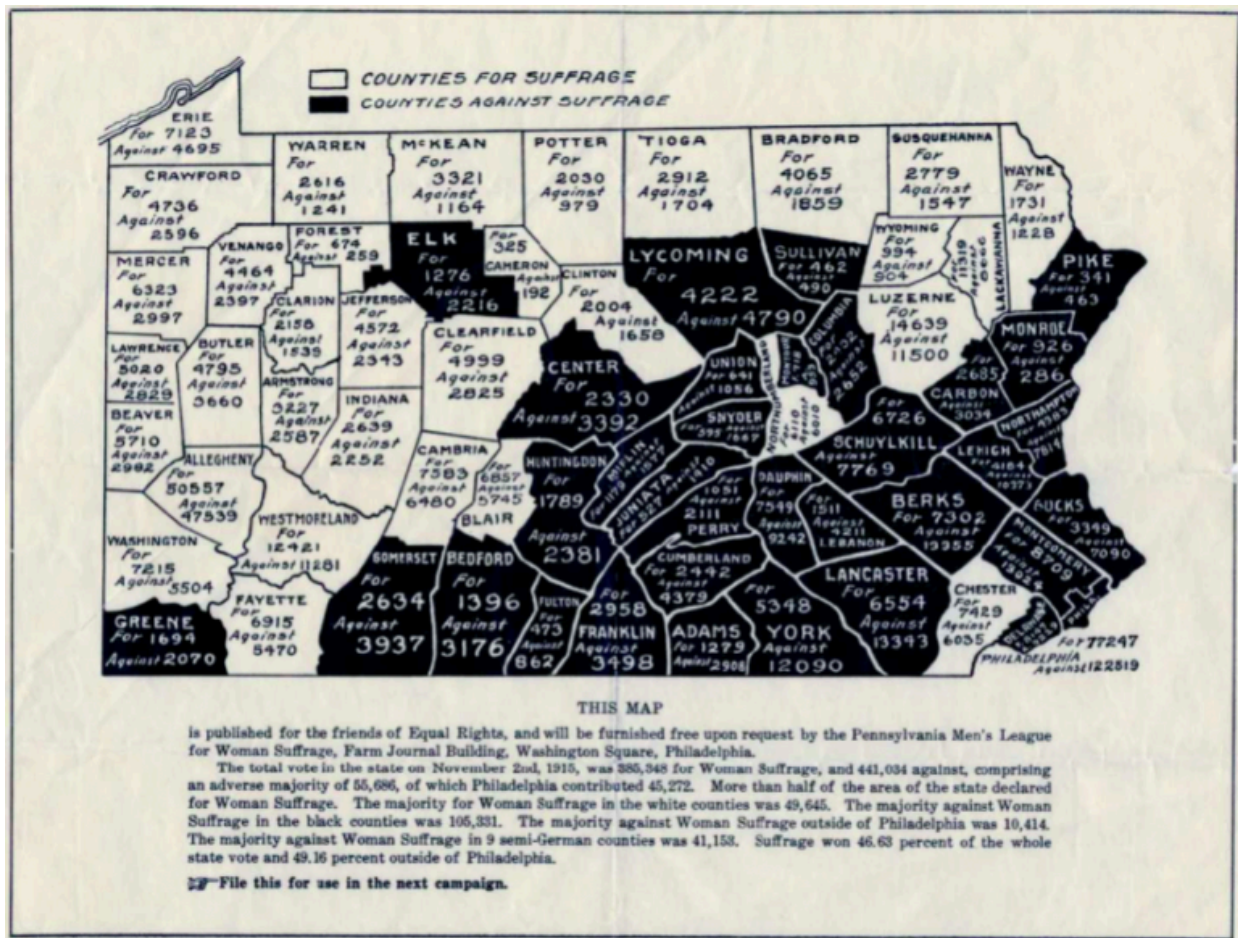
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“Tarr Farm Tea Party”

With respect to women’s history within the Lumber Heritage Region, it is integral to note that of the 15 counties, 12 voted in favor of Women’s Suffrage on November 2, 1915. Those counties in favor were: Warren, Forest, Clarion, Indiana, Clearfield, Jefferson, McKean, Cameron, Potter, Clinton, Cambria, and Tioga. Those who voted against the women’s right to vote were Elk, Centre, and Lycoming. The map below clearly illustrates this. With the exception of Elk, Centre,

²⁰¹ DW129, “Tarr Farm Tea Party,” courtesy of the Drake Well Museum and Park, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

Lycoming, Sullivan, and Pike Counties, the majority of Pennsylvania's woodlands were in favor of suffrage. This is a testament to the strength, fortitude, courage, and independence of the women from the region and the men who supported them.



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Map of the Pennsylvania Men's League for Women's Suffrage: Votes by County, 1915

The Civilian Conservation Corps and Beyond:

²⁰² <https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/woman-suffrage/screen-shot-2017-05-30-at-5-27-54-pm/>, accessed on 3 May 2021.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt took office in 1933 the country was in the midst of a deep depression that started in the 1920's. Industry had ravished America's forests. Farmlands had become dustbowls due to over farming and poor farming practices. Most of the country's population was unemployed and out of work. Such high and lengthy periods of unemployment also prevented the younger generations from gaining work experience and skills. Roosevelt created the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) on April 5, 1933, with the intent of employing the nation's young men. The relief project provided jobs, skills, and instruction, food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and pay to send back home to help their families. The monthly salary for all enrollees was \$30, \$25 of which was sent back to their family. The program was open to unmarried men between the ages of 17 and 23, regardless of race. The men were placed in work camps and sites throughout the country. The leadership of the camps fell under the auspice of the United States Army.

The CCC's projects were focused on the country's natural resource. It was a restoration plan that helped reforest the country. State and national parks and forests were created with resources for the public including picnic groves, camping sites, swimming beaches, bridges, pavilions, and a variety of park buildings. Drainage was addressed, dams were built, and lakes created. Roads and trails were built, repaired or improved. Over 2 billion trees were planted throughout the course of the program. Improvements were made that prevented erosion and helped to prevent and control forest fires. Fire towers were built, and when a forest fire erupted, the men

fought them. The CCC provided adventure, change, and the ability to travel- sometimes across the country.

The legislation which created the CCC prohibited discrimination based on race. Robert Fechner, born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, vice president of the American Federation of Labor, and an officer on the General Executive Board of the International Association of Machinists, was chosen to be the head of the CCC.²⁰³ W. Frank Persons, a Red Cross advisor and administrator was appointed to be in charge of the United States Employment Services, which filled the muster rolls of the CCC units.²⁰⁴ Despite instructions from Persons that enrollees be selected without regard to race, Corps administrators in many states refused to select a proportionate amount of African Americans. The CCC operated during the Jim Crow Era and many officials argued that segregation was not discrimination. Separate but not equal. Pennsylvania had one of the largest amounts of segregated CCC camps in the country, but the relief for African Americans was still disproportionate. Although very much truncated, this history is integral to understand the history of the segregated camps and enrollees in Pennsylvania.

The CCC camps that were located within the Lumber Heritage Region were in the District No. 1, Third Corps Area. The segregated companies, date they were started, and location where they were located is as follows:

²⁰³ Cole, Olen Jr. The African-American Experience in the Civilian Conservation Corps. (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1999). 10.

²⁰⁴ https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/ccc/salmond/chap2.htm, accessed 8 May 2021.

S-84	303-C	6/20/1933	Bennezette
S-119	303-C	7/12/1937	Philipsburg
S-116	303-C	11/15/1941	Clearfield
S-56	314-C	5/6/1933	Mt. Union
S-72	315-C	5/6/1933	Medix Run
S-83	316-C	5/6/1933	Wilcox
NF-5	321-C	4/25/1933	Kinzua
NF-4	336-C	5/6/1933	Kane
S-141	336-C	10/1/1935	Grantsville
S-62	361-C	6/5/1933	Milroy
NP-1	385-C	6/10/1933	Gettysburg
NP-2	1355-C	5/20/1934	Gettysburg
SP-11	2313-C	7/3/1935	Westford
SP-13	2313-C	7/3/1935	Schnecksville
NF-12	2314-C	7/3/1936	Kane
NF-12	2315-C	7/3/1935	Kane
S-154	2317-C	7/3/1935	Bedford
S-145	2336-C	7/5/1935	Austin ²⁰⁵

Out of 170 CCC companies serving in Pennsylvania, only 18 served Black men. The enrollees of those camps came from states including Washington D.C., Texas, Maryland, Tennessee, Georgia, Delaware, New York, Virginia, and various regions of Pennsylvania. The segregated camps often had a letter “C” designation after the company’s number to denote, “Colored.” The same can be said for the “veteran” CCC camps which were denoted by a “V.” Over 25,000 veterans of WWI were selected by the Veterans Administration to work special “Veteran Camps” with no restrictions on age or marital status. Pennsylvania had 19 of these camps.

²⁰⁵ http://www.ccclegacy.org/CCC_Camps_Pennsylvania.html, accessed on 29 September 2020.



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Civilian Conservation Corp Camp S101 Company 321, Ridgway, PA



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Crane at Twin Lakes, setting stones in place for spillway, ANF, near Kane PA.

²⁰⁶ Facebook post, Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy Group, Mike Shultz posted 22 February 2021. "CCC Co 321/Ridgway Pa/June 1 1940", accessed on 21 April 2023.

²⁰⁷ "Crane at Twin Lakes, ANF," courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service



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Dam Construction at Bear Creek, Allegheny National Forest

Much work was completed in the Allegheny National Forest (ANF) by the men of Companies 336-C, 2314-C, 2315-C, all of whom were stationed in the vicinity of Kane, McKean County. The men constructed dams, built lakes, roads, trails, recreational buildings, and pavilions. Their work at the Twin Lakes Recreation Area, ANF, is still visible today and used by visitors and outdoor enthusiasts daily. CCC enrollees learned practical skills in an on the job setting. Many learned how to drive a variety of construction trucks and earth moving equipment. Some used these skills to procure public works jobs in cities and municipalities after they left the CCC.

²⁰⁸ "Dam construction at Bear Creek," courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service.



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CCC construction work at Twin Lakes Recreation Area, ANF

According to the history of Company 2314-C ANF-12, Kane, PA:

“On October 5, 1935, the company moved from tents to permanent barracks. Since occupying camp, the enrollees have made excellent records on work projects, and did heroic work in keeping open snow-drifted roads during the winter of 1935-36. The members of the company have rebuilt five miles of telephone lines, constructed a stone base on Seven Mile Road from Lamont to the Experimental Station, as well as quarrying, cutting, and hauling 1200 yards of stone from Twin Lakes Dam stone cut masonry spillway.

Projects now being conducted include the installation of culverts, and the construction of stone base on Twin Lakes Road No.91, the quarrying and hauling of stones for headwalls, and the actual masonry work for the walls.”²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ CCC-069 “Construction at Twin Lakes,” courtesy of the Kane Historic Preservation Society

²¹⁰ Official Annual 1936, Civilian Conservation Corps District No. 2, Third Corps Area U.S.A. (Baton Rouge, LA: Direct Advertising Company, 1936.) 41.



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CCC construction work at Twin Lakes Recreational Area, ANF

CCC camp enrollees often had to build and/or repair the camps in which they lived. The program also provided educational opportunities for all members to learn additional skills and trades. These vocational courses included, but weren't limited to, mechanics, radio instruction, cooking, art, carpentry, surveying, welding, and driving. Educational classes in basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills were also available. The men of Company 2314-C worked to improve their camp.

²¹¹ CCC-066 "Construction at Twin Lakes," courtesy of the Kane Historic Preservation Society.

“In June of 1936, 1st Lt. Louis D. Hubbard was placed in command of the company, and fostered many camp improvements and a diversified educational program. Under his command the enrollees have laid many brick walks, completed the flag pole plot, finished the parking area, and built coal sheds. In addition, a chicken house, and a Mess utility shed were built, and one barrack remodeled for educational uses.”²¹²



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CCC Enrollees from Company 2314-C, Kane, study Radio Code

The above image depicts members of CCC Company 2314-C of Kane, McKean County in an evening vocational course. The men studied Radio Code in this educational class. The skills they learned allowed them to operate and run the camp’s radio station, which provided amusement, news, and levity. Black men struggled to enter leadership positions within the CCC. Classes like this were typically taught by white officers or instructors.

²¹² Official Annual 1936, Civilian Conservation Corps District No. 2, Third Corps Area U.S.A. 41.

²¹³ <https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2006/fall/ccc.html>, accessed on June 22, 2021



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CCC enrollees in the ANF help provide scale during a forest development study, winter 1933

²¹⁴ CCC enrollees from Company 336, Kane, PA., both images are courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service

Enrollees had leisure time and recreational opportunities on Saturday afternoons and Sundays. Camps had a variety of recreational sports teams including boxing, baseball and basketball. Other members participated in religious activities, wrote and published their own camp newsletters, or performed in bands, plays, musicals, or glee clubs. These activities were demonstrated in the history of Company 2314-C:

“On September 3, 1935, Captain J. Frank Howard was ordered to active duty at Camp ANF-12 as Chaplain. Chaplain Howard organized a singing group that traveled with him when he conducted religious services at Colored camps in what was then Sub-District No. 5. Religious activities conducted were Sunday Morning Church, Sunday School in the afternoon, and Bible Class.

Since its organization, the glee club and quartet have had the pleasure of serving citizens in Kane, James City, and Bradford, Pa., as well as Olean, New York. On one occasion the quartet broadcast from station WHDL, Olean, N.Y. as guests on a program sponsored by the Ministerial Alliance. The various athletic teams have established records of which the camp is justly proud.

Members of the Radio Class erected a building, complete in every detail, which housed radio equipment and provided an operator’s office as well as classroom for the radio and aviation groups. Leader Ernest Paxton and Enrollee Henry Fuller passed their examination for Radio Amateur Operator licenses. The two members are still students of the radio class.”²¹⁵

The collage image from the *1936 Official Annual of Civilian Conservation Corps for District 2 of the Third Corps Area* visually illustrates the variety of activities that Company 2314-C participated in: work, education, skill development, music, sports, religious services, and daily life. The group of CCC enrollee boxers represent several companies and camps. Camps would host sporting events and enrollees were able to travel to compete. Other enrollees could attend as spectators.

²¹⁵ Official Annual 1936, Civilian Conservation Corps District No. 2, Third Corps Area U.S.A. 41.



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Collage of pictures representing Camp ANF 12, Company 2314-C



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²¹⁶ Ibid., 40.

²¹⁷ CCC-042 courtesy of the Kane Historic Preservation Society.

Group of CCC boxers including member of Company 2314-C
According to Susan Stout, Research Forester Emerita from the United States Department of
Agriculture, members of the CCC camps who worked in the Allegheny National Forest assisted
with a long-term study of forest development. Humans were often used as element of scale.
The images below illustrate members of the CCC Camp 4, Company 336-C, in the Highland area
of the Allegheny National Forest, who participated in the project.²¹⁸



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Member of Company 336 -C helping with a long-term study in forest development
in the Kane Experimental Forest

²¹⁸ Stout, Susan. "'African American CCC photos 2- these are all from Camp 4 in Highland.'" Message to author. 6 February, 2021. E-mail.

²¹⁹ "CCC at Bear Tree," courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service.



²²⁰ "CCC at Bear Tree," both images courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service.



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Members of Company 336-C helping with a long-term study in forest development at Bear Tree

Although all CCC camps were structured in the same manner with similar projects, they faced different challenges. Camps could face poor leadership, lack of resources, or be prevented from educational programs due to remoteness. Segregated camps could also face discrimination from white leadership and from their surrounding communities. There were also communities who were just not supportive of having a CCC camp in their midst, regardless of race.

Challenges facing the enrollees were evident at the CCC camp at Benezett, Elk County, S-84,

²²¹ CCC enrollee from Company 336-C at Bear Tree, courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service.

Company 303-C, but the source is hard to accurately define. The men at Benzett worked on a variety of conservation projects.

“Conservation of the forests of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was the task assigned to the company. Up to the present time the company has completed 20 miles of forests roads, partially completed 6 more miles, and has built 11 miles of foot-trails. It has completed 11 miles of roadside cleanup, 19 miles of trailside cleanup, 18 miles of stream improvement, 129 acres of forest stand improvement, and 145 acres of general cleanup. The enrollees have planted 16 acres of Black Locust, Pine and Japanese Larch trees, covered 443 acres of blister rust control, and 1930 acres of timber estimating. A total of 630 man days have been spent in firefighting, 433 man days in fire suppression, and 25 man days hunting missing persons. Feed shelters numbering 45 have been constructed and three bridges have been built, with one bridge now under construction. A total of seven miles of telephone line is maintained. Work in progress at this time is mostly of re-construction, due to the damages done by the spring flood.”²²²



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Enrollees of Camp S-84, Company 303-C, Benzett

²²² Official Annual 1936, Civilian Conservation Corps District No. 2, Third Corps Area U.S.A. 67.

²²³ Official Annual 1936, Civilian Conservation Corps District No. 2, Third Corps Area U.S.A. 67.



Collage of pictures representing Camp S-84, Company 303-C

Regarding educational opportunities and activities, the Company's description in the 1936

Annual states:

The Educational Adviser was assigned to this camp April 1934, and the foundation of the educational program has been laid by an enrollee, who became his assistant. The program has been centered mostly around academic subjects, elementary and secondary. Vocational courses are offered, but they have not met the demands of the enrollees. This has been due mainly to a shortage of adequately trained instructors. Whenever there is a capable person available, his services are used to instruct classes. Classes for illiterates and academic courses are also held.

The relationship between the camp and the surrounding communities has always been pleasant. The camp baseball team, basketball, and track teams have participated in sports with most of these communities and proved ambassadors

²²⁴ Ibid., 65.

of goodwill in promoting better relationship. One of the DuBois elementary schools and the Benzezzet High School made contributions of books to the Educational Department.²²⁵

The representative of the company who wrote these descriptions speaks to lack of resources and of community relations. He is tactful, but by including, “promoting better relationships,” he has indicated that the relationship with some element of the community had been strained. A letter written by the enrollees on June 16, 1936, indicated other issues that were affecting the morale of the men in the company. The letter speaks to issues of leadership, lack of resources, and discrimination. Their frustration is clear, and their questions are genuine. More research will need to be conducted to discover how the issue was addressed and hopefully, resolved.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 67.



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JUN 18 1966
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Director Robert Fechner
Emergency Conservation Corps
Washington, D. C.

Company 303, Camp 104, W. Va.
Bonnettsville, Pa.
June 18, 1966

Dear Sir:

We regret it very much that we hafter to bother you but under the present circumstance we find it impossible to do otherwise. As American Citizens we are asking you do we hafter tolerate with such treatment as we have? We sincerely hope that you will give us due consideration because our camp has the reputation of being one of the finest working camps in the United States. Sirs you know and I know that building roads and bridges is pretty hard work. Do you see any reason why we should work in camp after we come in off the road? By the time we get washed up and change our clothes its chow time and we still havn't had any rest yet, we hafter work in camp or get find from one to three dollars and maybe sent home. Are the officers suppose to find the boys that way? How many men are they suppose to keep in camp? We often wonder if it is simply because we happen to be the only colored camp in the district. During the worlds war color didn't make any difference why should it now. We can't see why we should work on the road and in camp both we think it is very unreasonable. Do our color make any difference in the eyes of the United states Government? We are not blaming the United States Government for our present condition but we really wished that they would look into the situration. Our camp being in an isolated spot like it is, can you see any reason why we shouldn't be allowed to have as many truck as we wished to go to the baseball games that our team plays saturday and sundays. Some games our boys play the officers won't let but one truck go and that one only takes the baseball team. The only good officer we've had here within the last year was Lieutenant Edward Wigman of Little Washington, Pa. He has been release from the Civilian Conservation Corps. Everybody in the 303rd Company liked Lieutenant Wigman. All of us boys would be more than glad to have him back if the Government see fit to send him back to us. Do we get any of these new uniforms for summer ware? All the boys names that are signed below and on the back of this sheet of paper are asking the same questions. Theres hardly ever more than one stay in camp after twelve o'clock saturday thats why when we ask trucks they always say can't more than one truck go to the baseball game because theres only one officer in camp.

Respectfully yours,

Hannibal Pembleton
Charles Johnson
Charles Pinckney
John Grigsby
Harry Humphries
Larry Summers
Curtis N. Jerry
Thomas L. Adderly
Floyd Robinson
William Green

Edward Burris
Louis Brooks
Ernest Harper
Percy Christmas
James Mitchell
Lorizo Phillips
Ivey Ownes
Benjamin Perry

Sylvester Carson
Inman Hill
Edward Gaines
Alphonso Harrell
James Ashew
James Gibbs
Rudolph Elmore
Wilbur Ball
James Gadson
W. N. Parker

²²⁶ Letter courtesy of the private collection of Bob Imhof.

These are just two examples of the segregated CCC camps and companies in Pennsylvania. The men who served in these camps had a profound impact in our forests and helped to create lasting state parks and trail systems. Some of their camps are completely gone, with only partial stone foundations as relics to their time in Penn's Woods. In other areas buildings, walls, dams and spillways exist, a tribute to their labor. Like all men who served in the CCC, lifelong friendships were made. The history of the Black men who served in the CCC program is just as relevant as any man's. The CCC also had separate camps for veterans and Native Americans. Pennsylvania was home to 14 veteran companies and 19 veteran camps. Companies often relocated to other areas once work was completed, or a change was assigned. There were no Native American CCC camps in Pennsylvania.

Youth Outreach

Years later in 2012, the U.S. Forest Service and members of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity (a part of the National Pan-Hellenic Council) comprised of nine largely Black fraternity and sorority groups) Incorporated Iota Phi Chapter from Pittsburgh, came together to host a camp program that would bring Black youth from the city to Chapman and Twin Lakes State Parks in Warren and McKean Counties. The idea was to teach the young men about the history of the African Americans who served in the CCC. Some members of the fraternity had fathers who had served in the CCC, in the camps that were in the Allegheny National Forest (ANF). They wanted to bring attention to the role that Black CCC enrollees had in development of the ANF. The camp provided the opportunity for the middle and high school students to meet peers from Kane,

learn some outdoor skills, gain knowledge about the heritage of the CCC and an understanding of the work the men did.

Thanks to the partnership of Susan Stout from the U.S. Forest Service and Carlton Heywood of the fraternity, fifteen young men, accompanied by seven adults from the Iota Phi Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated, came to the camp. They went through a fishing safety program, practiced casting, and tried to catch a few fish at Twin Lakes State Park. They learned how to use GPS equipment and went geocaching. In the evening, the group met with an astronomer and learned about the stars and constellations. Much to their surprise, they even saw a bear! This unexpected opportunity also taught them about bears, their habitat, and why they are tagged and tracked by the Wildlife Commission. The group toured Chapman and Twin Lakes State Parks and learned about the history of their buildings and features. They also participated in a service project that allowed them to learn some hands-on CCC skills.²²⁷

²²⁷ Ferry, Brian, "Chapman plays host to urban group," Times Observer, 12 June 2012, A3.



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Learning the skills of a CCC enrollee

This partnership program combined history, heritage, and outdoor opportunities to provide a younger generation with a sense of place and self. Sharing our combined histories can be extremely empowering. The students who attended this program gained knowledge and experiences that they will carry with them for the rest of their lives. One of the students, Diamante Jones, shared some of the lessons he learned: “Fishing takes patience. Bears can smell sweet things from 20 miles away. When I’m in the woods, I have to clean up after myself.

²²⁸ Image courtesy of Susan Stout, Research Forester Emerita, USDA.

Safety is everything.”²²⁹ His lessons resonate and are similar to those learned by CCCer’s and woodsmen and women alike, no matter the generation.



Learning about CCC Architecture and Stone Work

As the students learned in this program, the forests are managed today. Active logging still takes place in the Allegheny National Forest and throughout Penn’s woods, but it is now heavily managed to protect our natural resources. Forest management by those involved with the industry and United States Forest Service helps to keep our woods healthy. Diversity among

²²⁹ Jones, Diamante. (2012, June). *Weekend at Chapman State Park* [PowerPoint Slides]. U.S. Forest Service.

²³⁰ Image courtesy of Susan Stout, Research Forester Emerita, USDA.

those working in the fields of forestry and lumber have increased. Women and minorities hold a variety of positions from administrative to educational to hands-on lumbering. The United States Forest Service employs legal migrant work crews within the ANF. These workers help with site preparation, weed and release, crop tree release, fence removal and planting.²³¹ Although not yet documented, their work and their stories are valuable and relevant. It is important to understand that they are part of the story and that the story continues to evolve.

The histories, information, stories, and photographs captured in the research, found in this document, represent and reflect on the history of women and elements of diversity within the Pennsylvania Lumber Heritage Region. This is only the beginning and this work is not the definitive. This document is a starting point. It is my sincere hope that research in these areas will continue. All of the stories have the ability to be expanded upon given time and resources. I have no doubt that there are more histories out there just waiting to be discovered. My challenge to anyone who reads this document is to keep asking questions, listen to the answers, continue to learn, and to keep an open mind. Our combined histories are essential and empowering. They will help to give us all a better understanding of the Lumber Heritage Region's history and those who worked here.

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