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LYCOMING COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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MEMBERSHIP MEETING PROGRAM

1971-1972

September 11, 1971 (6:30 p.m. dinner, Lycova Grange Hall)

CHARLES E. NOYES, Executive Director and Secretary-Treasurer of the Keystone Shortway Association, and HON. Z. H. CONFAIR, President of the Keystone Shortway Association,
"Progress along the Keystone Shortway"

October 21, 22, and 23, 1971

Pennsylvania Historical Association annual convention co-hosted by Lycoming College and the Lycoming County Historical Society

(A list of programs for the remainder of the 1971-1972 year will be sent to all members the first part of October.)



COVER PICTURE—This sculpture was done particularly for our lumbering gallery by Steven Collier of Muncy.

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

As the President of your Society, I wish to address a few remarks to the membership describing in brief some of the projects with which the Society is currently very much involved.

In particular I am thinking of a Historic Sites Survey which is in progress in the county to determine a county-wide inventory of important historic locations and buildings. This survey is being funded through the Lycoming County Planning Commission, and is spearheaded by the Architecture Committee of the Greater Williamsport Community Arts Council and other cooperating organizations.

Another item of interest to the members of the Society is the fact that in 1970 the Tiadaghton Elm was seriously damaged in a storm. With the financial assistance of the Williamsport Foundation, Inc., and under the supervision of our Past President, Mr. Donald M. Carson, expert repairs are being made to the Elm in order to save it for posterity.

I would strongly urge members to visit the Museum periodically to examine the many interesting temporary exhibits displayed there.

Andrew K. Grugan, President

LYCOMING COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MUSEUM SHOWCASE:

A SUMMARY OF LYCOMING COUNTY HISTORY

(Museum Director's Note: In the course of preparing an orientation exhibit for the Museum, capsulizing the human history of the County, Mr. James Bressler produced the following summary of county history which may be of value to readers of this publication.)

THE INDIAN PERIOD

Incredibly, ninety-eight per cent of the history of man in the West Branch Valley belongs to the American Indian. From the close of the last Ice Age to the middle of the 1700's, the Indian was always the hunter. Living in harmony with nature, with just the tools that could be fashioned from natural objects, he left behind only a few indestructible relics which hint of his meager existence. From the Paleo Indian hunter to the semi-agrarian village dweller, as the white man found him, we can trace his history in changing types of weapons, domestic tools, pottery, and the kinds of shelters he built.

THE COLONIAL PERIOD

Northward expansion into the hinterland of Pennsylvania following the close of the French and Indian War brought white settlers into the rich bottomlands of the West Branch Valley. The typical pioneer was hardy and self-reliant, surviving only by his brawn and ingenuity. First the land was cleared for farming. Barns and cabins were built from felled trees. Isolated in the wilderness with only the river and Indian trails to connect him with the outside world, the first Lycoming settler lived off the land and hunted for most of his meat.

In less than a decade he was to face his most severe trial. Repeated incursions by the British and Indians from the north reduced all his efforts to ashes. All but forgotten now are the numerous murders on the Loyalsock and Lycoming Creeks and on the river flats that were Lycoming's contribution to the cause of freedom. Without adequate weapons for defense, these hardy pioneers nevertheless stood foursquare to guard the backdoor to the Pennsylvania settlements. It was because of men like these that freedom prevailed.

LYCOMING COUNTY IS BORN

What is now Lycoming County was originally a part of the vast wilderness embracing all of North Central Pennsylvania, lying north and west of Sunbury and known as Northumberland County. Pressure to create a new county mounted as more settlers pored into the rich West Branch Valley. As early as 1786 a bill was presented to the legislature to create a new center of government, but not until 1795 was the effort successful due to much opposition from the mother county of Northumberland. The building of the Williamson Road to the Genesee country helped swing the sentiment.

The new Lycoming County embraced a vast territory of 12,000 square miles out of which 16 counties have since been subdivided. It took in all of north central Pennsylvania from Luzerne County to the Allegheny River.

After a bitter rivalry between Jaysburg, then the most settled part of the West Branch, and William Hepburn and Michael Ross (owners of most of the land that is now Williamsport) the county seat of government was finally given to Williamsport. Under the stimulus of monetary values that would accrue if the county seat could be located east of Lycoming Creek, Michael Ross laid out 111 acres of his land in 302 lots. Thus Williamsport was born.

LYCOMING COUNTY
IN THE CIVIL WAR

The war between the states aroused much patriotic excitement in Lycoming County. The Woodward guards, an artillery unit, was formed in 1856 and was one of the first three regiments to go into service. The eleventh regiment, in which the first companies served, achieved an enviable record and suffered severe losses. At the second

Battle of Bull Run it lost 52 killed and 57 wounded, while at Antietam it lost 27 killed and 89 wounded. Its losses were in similar proportions at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg. Lycoming Countians were prominent in the famous "Bucktail" regiment. In all, men from Lycoming served in 33 regiments. They served solidly in the cause of the Union.

GROWTH OF INDUSTRY

Because it was isolated beyond the limits of effective transportation, early industries of Williamsport were mostly for the convenience of its immediate inhabitants. But with the coming of the canal in 1833 and the railroads around 1839, extensive commerce was at last practical. The first iron foundry was started by John B. Hall in 1832. He made many of the components for sawmills and the canal. He imported the first steam engine ever used here. Early manufactures centered largely in producing machinery for the growing lumber industry. The Valley Iron Works was established in 1865 to make steam engines for export as well as for local use. Machinists and machinery repair shops were popular from 1850 to 1890.

In 1850 Williamsport had a population of 1615. By 1860 it had jumped to 5,664, largely reflecting the dynamic spirit of Peter Herdic, who seems to have dominated the industrial growth of his day. It was largely through his leadership and that of a few others that the great lumber industry developed on the scale it did. Lumber was the story of Williamsport to the extent that by 1880 the city became known as the lumbering capital of the world.

THE LUMBER INDUSTRY

Put together the far-sighted ingenuity of one Major James H. Perkins, the dynamic spirit for promotion of Peter Herdic, an almost unlimited stand of trees on the Susquehanna watershed, and a young nation's need for lumber, and you have all the ingredients for an explosive industrial enterprise. The result was the rise of a rich young city almost overnight.

Mills had been springing up along the river front in the late 1830's but it remained for Major Perkins to demonstrate

that a boom in the river was not only practical but essential if logs cut upstream and floated on the river were to be caught and stored for large-scale operations. When the Susquehanna Boom Company under Perkins finally completed its gigantic project, 300 million feet of logs could be stored at one time. In spite of periodic flood ravages, the advantages were so great that it served the approximately 25 mills that lined the river banks and mill ponds. Williamsport soon became a huge lumber mart.

Vast supplies of Williamsport lumber were used for the Civil War. Soon lumber-related industries as well sprang up in the city to add to the growing importance of Williamsport as an industrial center.

By the time of the First World War, the greater part of the forests was gone and the river cities on the West Branch had to look elsewhere to maintain their prosperity.

INTO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

At the dawn of the twentieth century many of the industries that were to become the lifeblood of Lycoming County's prosperity were already established. The wealth that lumber had brought could not be sustained, and the river towns had to look elsewhere if they were to grow and prosper.

A major industry, AVCO Corporation, had its roots in the Demorest Manufacturing Company, which was started in 1845 by Madame Demorest for the manufacture of sewing machines. The factory was built in 1889 to make not only sewing machines but bicycles and opera chairs. Later this factory became Lycoming Motors, and it is world-famous for its excellent product.

E. Keeler Co. was established in 1864 by J. Heathecote and Co. Its best known product line is Keeler boilers, which also enjoy an international reputation.

To John A. Otto goes the credit for establishing the first furniture factory in Williamsport in 1859. Williamsport has long since become famous for the production of fine furniture, a natural by-product of the lumber industry.

Williamsport Wire Rope, now a division of Bethlehem Steel Co., traces its history to 1886 when it was incorporated under the name of Morrison Patent Wire Rope Co., Ltd., by the Van Dusen's, Mr. Morrison, and

a Mr. Jones. In 1888 it was reorganized as the Williamsport Wire Rope Co., at which time J. Henry Cochran became associated with the firm. Its products have been used in many of the world's most impressive engineering projects.

Lycoming Rubber Co., established in 1882, was once a major industry in Williamsport. It was well known for the quality of sporting shoes it produced.

The Henry Distin Manufacturing Co., chartered in 1888, was a well-known maker

of band instruments.

In 1882 another world-famous institution, GRIT, America's most famous family newspaper, was born. Founded by Reverend Henry M. Wolf as a Sunday paper, it has grown steadily into America's leading weekly paper.

The Williamsport Academy, erected in 1814, after a long and trying period of development eventually became Dickinson Seminary and later Lycoming College.

- In Memoriam -

GIBSON G. ANTES

We honor the memory of Gibson G. Antes who died April 19, 1971. He was elected President of the Lycoming County Historical Society in 1957 and served until 1959. For many years he was one of the most active and concerned members of the Society. His wealth of information on the early history of Williamsport was most valuable.

A native of Nisbet and a lifelong resident of Lycoming County, he was descended from West Branch Valley pioneers. His great-great-grandfather was Col. John Henry Antes who served in the American Revolution and built Fort Antes, opposite present day Jersey Shore, in 1778 as a defense against Indian and Tory invasion.

We shall miss the reminiscences of Gibson Antes which so often added a bit of humor and zest to our programs.



MARGARET BINGHAM CORYELL

An inherent interest in every aspect of community life and a background of major family activity in local history — both factors pointed toward Miss Margaret Bingham Coryell's longtime support of the Lycoming County Historical Society.

Her fund of local information was invaluable. She was always ready with assistance and/or with pertinent advice towards the solution of the Society's never ending flow of problems.

Miss Coryell's activities in support of the Historical Society covered a considerable span of years; and although failing health in recent years limited her physical activity, she retained her interest and was always prepared to assist in at least a passive fashion.

We shall long miss our friend "Margaret Bingham."

DEDICATION OF COURTHOUSE

Saturday, May 1, 1971

(Speech by Judge Charles F. Greevy)

Lycoming County's history is a proud one, and today, May 1, 1791, is a very special day in that history—a history that dates back to April 13, 1795, when the then governor of Pennsylvania, Thomas Mifflin, approved a bill which created Lycoming County. The following day, April 14, 1795, the first Lycoming County officials received their oaths of office. From log cabin tavern and other temporary quarters in Jaysburg and Williamsport to this beautiful modern structure is the interesting story of our community's growth and development, as reflected in its several courthouses and sites. This detailed history is contained in the April, 1971, issue of the Lycoming County Historical Society's Journal.

In 1804 Lycoming County's first real courthouse was erected on this site and it was reputed to be the finest in the Commonwealth outside Philadelphia. Within 50 years, however, population and business increase made it apparent that the building could no longer fulfill its purpose, and in the spring of 1861 the second courthouse on this site was completed. After 75 years, further development of the county, increase of court services and of population brought a demand for a larger building. The population tripled—in 1861 the population of Lycoming County was 39,463. By the 1940 census it had grown to 93,633, by 1960 to 109,360, and by the 1970 census it is 113,296.

Responsibilities tripled. By State mandate many obligations, duties, and new departments were added. These taxed the already crowded conditions and made it necessary to rent a number of outside offices.

These conditions were recognized by grand juries for over 30 years, and they unanimously recommended that something had to be done to relieve the congested conditions, and almost without exception, the recommendations were made that a new courthouse be built.

Quoting from Grand Jury Reports:

In 1941 — "It is the opinion of the grand jury that court officials give serious consideration and thought to the erection of a new and modern courthouse."

15 years later — 1956 — "A new courthouse be erected as soon as possible."

1959 — "We all agree that a new and efficient courthouse is badly needed. It is the only answer to the crowded, antiquated, inadequate building that the county now possesses. We recommend that the county commissioners and the courts of Lycoming County take immediate steps to correct this situation."

Five years ago — 1966 — "We find that the reports of the prior grand juries that a new courthouse be constructed are entirely justified."

The numerous recommendations by grand juries, of county officials and citizens, and independent official surveys, did not go unheeded. In 1936 an eight-story city-county building was proposed. These plans were not approved.

In 1939 articles of incorporation were granted to the Lycoming County Court House Authority. As a result of their findings a Philadelphia architect was hired, and plans were submitted for a new courthouse, with retail stores on the first floor. The court did not approve these plans.

The Second World War delayed planning until 1948, when a Harrisburg firm was retained, with a Federal grant, to draw up plans for a new courthouse. The design, submitted the same year, was for a 7-story building but was not acted on by the Commissioners.

In 1955 a public survey was made that showed that over 90 percent of the civic leaders favored expansion of county facilities by (1) construction of a new courthouse; (2) a new city-county building; or (3) an addition to the then existing courthouse. As a result, in 1956, the Lycoming County Court House Authority retained a

second Harrisburg architect and plans were presented, but the then board of county commissioners decided not to proceed at that time.

Further surveys were made and plans considered, and it was found that the building having been in five major floods that it was not feasible, or in the interest of good government, to remodel or put on an addition or annex; and the very important decision was made late in 1967 that a new building be erected on this site and that a local firm of architects be retained to submit plans. The plans were carefully drawn, considered, accepted and adopted, bids asked for and accepted. Demolition of the Courthouse that served for 108 years began Monday, May 12, 1969; and two weeks later, Monday, May 26, 1969, ground-breaking ceremonies were held, and today we stand in awe of the fruition of those plans after many years of waiting.

As the January, 1971, Grand Jury noted—"For over 30 years Grand Juries have recommended the erection of a new and modern courthouse for Lycoming County. Today this recommendation is a living reality." They further noted that they were "especially pleased at the convenience of having all the county row offices, agencies, and bureaus under one roof for the first time in Lycoming County history", and concluded, "We Grand Jurors are unanimous in our praise that the new Courthouse is a structure of which all residents of Lycoming County can be justly proud."

NEW GENERATION OF MEN ENGAGED IN LUMBERING

Starting about 1850, a new generation of men was engaged in lumbering. Their heyday came after the Civil War; and perhaps they were still fighting that war as they plundered the luxuriant forests, laying about them with sharp axes. Their songs are similar to those of the canalers, one song speaks of their work, another of their favorite sport, drinking:

Swing the axe, and pull the saw,
All through a twelve hour day;

Today, May 1, Law Day, 1971, is a most appropriate day for this dedication ceremony. The theme this year is "Channel Change Through Law and Reason." Although speaking more directly to the vast technical and social changes, in our human society, this theme winds its way into our thinking this morning.

As we have seen, the decision to remedy the multitude of courthouse problems, of space, facilities, and functional use, was not an easy one, or one of a quick nature to decide. Only after years of thinking and planning and an ever-changing array of county officials was the final go-ahead given and the responsibility assumed to construct a new court house.

Today we stand before this beautiful building, the newest product of the 175 years of Lycoming County's history. Each and every citizen of Lycoming County, past and present, has had and continues to have the dominant voice in the construction of this building and joins me in this dedication.

With deep and solemn pride, with fervor and devotion, we, on this first day of May, 1971, dedicate this Courthouse to all the people of Lycoming County, and through them to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the nation.

May God's grace and direction flow through all those who will use and serve in this Courthouse in the many, many years ahead.

We're the bullies on the job
We've got to earn our pay.

The barroom roars and glasses crash,
Blood stains the dirty floor;
Each wood-hick has his fill of fun
Till the dawn comes through the door.

From "Song and Verse of Lycoming County and Nearby Areas", written by Elizabeth Hall, December, 1965.

EARLY ENGLISH SETTLERS ON THE LOYALSOCK

(Extracts from a paper compiled and delivered by Fred M. Rogers of Forksville before the Lycoming County Historical Society on February 16, 1928.)

The early English settlements on the Loyalsock date back to 1794 when the section was a vast wilderness. Dr. Joseph Priestley, a noted Englishman, owned a large number of tracts of land on the Loyalsock and its tributaries. Upon his decease, his son, Joseph, Jr., together with other members of the family, came into possession of his lands in the Loyalsock region, as his direct heirs at law.

Samuel Wallis, of Muncy, had purchased a number of tracts of land on the Loyalsock for Colonization purposes, some of which were later sold to Joseph Priestley, Jr., who was the moving spirit for the first permanent English settlements in what is now Sullivan County.

Joseph Priestley, John Vaughn, and other Englishmen had planned an English colony, as the English settlers were coming to Pennsylvania in large numbers at that time. The project was soon abandoned by most of those early settlers, except for Mr. Priestley, who owned and controlled lands that had belonged to his father in addition to those he had purchased from Samuel Wallis. These lands along the Loyalsock and its tributaries now comprise Elkland, Forks, Fox, and Hillsgrove townships in Sullivan County.

EARLY ROADS

These first settlements on the Loyalsock and vicinity were reached by what was known as the Corson Road, which was built in 1793 by Samuel Wallis over which to transport the supplies to the surveyors, who were locating the land which Mr. Wallis had purchased from the state. This road extended from Muncy to the summit of the Allegheny Mountains, thence to the Loyalsock at Hillsgrove and up the 'Sock to Forks.

Another important road which was opened in 1800 was the Genessee Road taking the early settlers through central Pennsylvania to the southern part of New York

state. This road started at Muncy and passed over the mountains by way of Huntersville, Highland Lake, Hillsgrove, Elk Creek, Lincoln Falls, Kings Creek, Eldredsville, and thence over the mountains to Monroeton. It was at Eldredsville where the first postoffice was established in the Loyalsock section.

Another road that proved to be of great benefit to the early settlers was built in 1810, about the time the Rogers woolen mill was built at Forksville. This road was from Forks to the Edkin farm on Muncy Creek, and it was over this road that the old dye kettle was brought when the factory was built and equipped with machinery. Materials and supplies were transported by horses and wagons, or sleds, from Philadelphia to Forks.

These roads hit the high and low levels of the section through which they were built, and were very rugged. Mr. Montgomery, who carried the first mail on horseback from Muncy to Towanda, when asked about the roads remarked, "I traveled through one mud hole nine miles long and have another one to go through that is longer."

EARLY SETTLERS

Joseph Priestley sent William Molyneux and Powell Bird to settle on the Loyalsock in 1794. They made a clearing and built a house about a mile and a half above the forks of the Big and Little Loyalsock, at what is known as Millview. Mr. Molyneux then returned to England for his family.

John Warren came on from Northumberland to the settlement at Forks, in the spring of 1795, and took possession of the Molyneux house until he could build his house on the tract he had purchased from Mr. Priestley and which joined the Molyneux tract.

Powell Bird built his house on land adjoining the Warren tract in 1795.

The Rogers family was a great factor in developing Forks and vicinity. Samuel Rogers came to America from Barmley,

England, in 1801. He was married to Ann Gaunt in England, and at the time of his arrival in Philadelphia there were ten children living, four having died in England, and four were born after the family came to America.

Mr. Rogers lived with his son Samuel on a farm near Philadelphia until 1802 when he came to Forks and purchased one hundred and twenty-four acres of land on the Loyalsock, where the village of Forksville is now located, from Mr. Priestley.

Mr. Rogers and his son, Jonathan, built a cabin below the cemetery at Forksville, and moved his family into the cabin in the spring of 1802. This was the first dwelling in what is now known as Forksville.

The Rogers brothers decided to build a factory on the Loyalsock. They first built a sawmill and then a woolen factory. This gave employment to many settlers.

The Rogers brothers contracted with the government to furnish kersey cloth for the army in the War of 1812, and several teams of horses were employed in transporting the fabrics to Philadelphia and bringing back the raw material and supplies to the settlers. The round trip took six weeks.

The woolen factory continued in successful operation until 1816 when a flood in the Loyalsock wiped it out. A second woolen mill was built by Jonathan Rogers in 1826 on land purchased from his father. Mr. Rogers operated the factory until his decease in 1830.

Another purchase of land from Joseph Priestley, Jr., was made by Edward J. Eldred, a native of England, who located at Eldredsville in 1800. Here he built a house for entertaining travelers on the Genessee Road. A memo made in November, 1801, stated that "two hundred travelers, mostly horsemen, passed by since June last."

Theophilus Little, Jr., pioneer of the

Eagles Mere section, came to the Loyalsock early in 1800, and settled on land which his father had purchased from Mr. Priestley in 1799. Mr. Little married Elizabeth Holmes. Their family consisted of nine children, most of whom settled in the vicinity of Forks.

John Little, son of Theophilus, located on a portion of his father's farm where he built a sawmill and cut and rafted his lumber down the Loyalsock for a number of years.

The village of Hillsgrove was located by John Hill about 1789. He had purchased a large tract of land on the west side of the Loyalsock, which was then surveyed and patented in 1794. It is said that his grandson, John H. Rogers, was the originator of the postage stamp.

Other early settlers of the Loyalsock whose genealogies have been recorded were the Green family who came to Hillsgrove about 1810, the John Bown family who settled in the Elkland area about 1800, the John King family who also settled in Elkland township, and the John Brown family who settled below Forksville.

Most of these early settlers were from manufacturing centers of England and were accustomed to living entirely different lives from what they were compelled to face when they reached the rugged, cold wilderness of the Loyalsock. The forests were extremely hard to contend with. The mighty virgin trees were heavy to handle in every way, and the settlers were not accustomed to lumbering and contending against such odds as they found in the forests of the Loyalsock. A constant menace to the settlers were the panther, wolf, and bobcat, and many narrow escapes were related by the settlers.

(The full account of this narrative may be read in the archives of the museum. The genealogies of these early families of the Loyalsock have been recorded by the Genealogist, Mrs. Don Carson.)

DO YOU KNOW ?

Do you know the origin of the name "CROMAR"? It is a combination of the

names of the two families who founded the company (Crooks and Dittmar).

THE RING OF THE AXE AND WHIR OF THE SAW

The archives of the Lycoming County Historical Museum contain photographs and records which illustrate scenes of the lumber industry, so let us turn back to that glowing period when Williamsport was called the lumber capital of the world, when timber turned to gold in the pockets of its adventurous citizens.

In 1768 the Proprietary Government of Pennsylvania purchased land from the Indians of the Six Nations, opening territory for settlement which contained the present Lycoming County. The Land Office was besieged by persons hoping to buy 2 or 300 acres. Samuel Wallis came at that time, attempting to acquire as much as he could. Some came and squatted on a portion that pleased them. Traveling by canoe, horses, or on foot, they arrived from Maryland, Delaware, the lower counties of Pennsylvania, New York, and the New England states. They found immense virgin forests reaching in all directions. This was the forest primeval, a vast wilderness to be conquered. They proceeded to cut down trees to clear the land and build their crude log cabins, and in the process burned great trees just to get rid of them. Forest fires occurred in the Spring and Fall. They either died out or the rain put them out.

Many settlers built along the lovely Susquehanna River. The earliest industry was the grist mill where the pioneers took their grain to be ground into meal. The first such mill established near Williamsport was in 1773 by Andrew Culbertson. In 1792 Roland Hall built a small mill four miles from the mouth of Lycoming Creek. Sometime previous to 1795 Michael Ross became owner of about 600 acres near the river, including the land on which Williamsport is now situated. James Russell and wife bought a portion of the Ross tract, and erected a building of logs two feet thick, located on the north side of Third Street, at the corner of Mulberry. They opened Russell Inn in 1796. Subsequently, Mr. Russell died and Joseph Dumm married his widow. The Inn then became known as the Dumm House. Affie Dumm was born there in 1807. This building stood until 1871 when it burned

to the ground in a great fire. By 1798 there were several sawmills in the vicinity, used mostly in the construction of houses. They were built along streams and powered by water. With the lumber from these mills, improvements of timber frames, clapboards, board floors, and shaved shingles could be made to the houses.

The "Big Water Mill," built in 1838 on the south side by a Philadelphia company, which failed in a few years, was bought by J. H. Perkins. It used water for power and had four up-and-down saws called "English Gates."

Williamsport became a trading center with its convenient water transportation, and grew slowly for a number of years. Development of the lumber business gave the town a boost. The early water mills converted to steam. Logs could be floated to mills and rafted from there to distant markets. From 1850 to 1860 the number of sawmills increased greatly, and from 1843 to 1863 progress in the lumbering industry was rapid. Some prominent names of the time were John Charles Dodge, John DuBois, Fletcher Coleman, White, Lentz & White, and the Goodyear Lumber Company. In 1854 Peter Herdic came to Williamsport when it had about 2000 inhabitants and became active in the business of the town. By 1860 Pennsylvania ranked first of all the states in lumber production, and from 1862 to 1894 lumber was king. The peak year was 1873 when more than 1½ million logs were cut from the mountain slopes in one year.

The West Branch of the Susquehanna River is 200 miles long, and traverses the wildest and most mountainous part of the state. It drains a large watershed with all its tributaries: the Loyalsock, Lycoming, Pine, Larry's, Muncy; and, farther up, the Sinnemahoning with its three main branches—First Fork, Driftwood, and Bennetts.

The valley abounded in a magnificent growth of pine, hemlock, and hardwoods. The trees covered the ground so thickly that it became known as the "Black Forest"—dark even on the sunniest days. Nearly all the trees felled in the early days were white

pine. The white pine belt ran diagonally across the state from northeast to southwest. The quality stand was confined to the West Branch valley of the Susquehanna, and was valuable because of its size and texture. The giant white pine trees measured 130 to 200 feet tall, and from 2 to 6 feet in diameter. The lowermost branch was often 100 feet above the ground. The forest generally averaged 100,000 feet to an acre of land.

The most highly developed use of the Susquehanna pine was in the production of spars, or masts, for the famed fast-sailing clipper ships. Because of the length and strength of these spars, they were the pride of every skipper. They were called "export spars", many being exported to shipyards in England. A No. 1 spar was required to be straight, round, free from large knots, 92 feet or more in length, and not less than 18 inches in diameter at the top end. The bark had to be peeled off cleanly.

Spars were delivered to rafting landings on the river; the top ends were loaded on a bobsled which was dragged to the landing by 3 to 8 teams of oxen or draft horses over roads of snow and ice. In the Spring spars were rafted on the high water, with lash poles laid across from one side of the raft to the other and tied with tough hickory withes. Nine or ten spars formed a raft. They were floated down to Marietta, the market place. Williamsport was never a raft-buying town.

Rafts, with a cabin built on them to board the men, were called "shanty rafts". Raftsmen had the right to stop at night and tie up at anybody's land. A man called the "snubber", holding a strong manila rope fastened to the raft at one end, would jump ashore and snub the rope around a tree, often running along the bank to catch a second or third rope to bring a huge, unwieldy raft out of a swift current into the river bank. In later years, spars were transported by railroad.

QUOTATIONS

FROM MY FATHER'S DIARY

"May 11, 1885. Vinyard Run. The spars are finished and they went out tonight. Fifteen spars on nine cars to Philadelphia, and five more to New York. It was a grand

sight to see the spars go out."

Other kinds of timber floated down the river. Trees shaped in rectangular fashion by hewing four sides were called "square timbers". They were cut as long as the trees would permit, and run to market in rafts.

"Then o'er the water came a cry,

The shout of raftsmen on their way."
(Tonkin)

Strong hickory poles were lashed across the ends of the timbers and fastened with U-shaped ash, or white oak, bows, and tightened with wooden pegs. Trees cut into short pieces were called "saw-logs" and floated down in "drives". Pieces of timber of any kind, size, or length were called "sticks". Men who worked in getting out the timber were called "wood hicks".

As protection against sleet, snow, and piercing winds, raftsmen dressed in heavy red-checked woolen shirts, fur caps, pants coated with pine pitch, and high-topped boots, not of the laced variety until later. Their caulked boots required up to 116 steel spikes per pair. Raftsmen were a strong, hardy, carefree, rollicking lot. Frequently they tied up for the night at Williamsport, and for a while practically owned the town. There were times when as many as a hundred rafts would be anchored along the river banks. Bootlegging was very profitable. Men rowed out to passing rafts with a jug of whiskey, to sell as a whole or by the drink. They did a land-office business.

Later with exhaustion of the white pine growth, the forests were cleared of hemlock, which became valuable. Pine and hemlock were not the only species to be rafted or driven. White oak was in demand, but the limited supply prevented it from reaching the height attained by white pine in world commerce.

A demand arose for bark for the tanbark industry. First the oak trees in the early days, and then the hemlock, were stripped of their bark for the tanneries, which used it to tan hides. The men on this work were called "bark peelers". A criminal waste of timber resulted just for the sale of the bark. The stripped trees were left in the woods to rot. Hemlock could be cut only

in early Spring to about July 1. Then, sap conditions prevented stripping.

At one time rafting was the chief mode of getting timber to market on the Susquehanna. The first commercial raft to go down the West Branch was in 1796. There were rafting divisions on the river:

Div. 1—Clearfield to Lock Haven

Div. 2—Lock Haven to Columbia, or Marietta

Div. 3—Marietta to Port Deposit, or Tidewater.

Rafts were made of logs, and lumber sawed from logs, by mills situated near the places where the trees were cut. The ordinary raft was 150 to 200 feet long. In early days, the longest raft was 320 feet, and the longest piece of timber 115 feet. The general width was 24 feet, this being the greatest width allowed by the chutes through which the rafts had to pass. After coming through the Lock Haven chute, rafts ran double through the chute and dam at Sunbury, and were not separated till they reached Shamokin Dam which was a single chute, the same as Lock Haven. From then on, they ran double to Marietta. As many as 2000 rafts floated down the West Branch on high flood water each Spring, 20 to 70 thousand feet of lumber to each raft, totaling possibly 100 million board feet. In 1853 square white pine timber sold at Marietta at 5c or 6c a cubic foot, and 1873 at 26c per cubic foot. About 20,000 men were engaged in the rafting industry during the short Spring season.

DIARY QUOTATION

"Mar. 7, 1885. River filled with ice. Plenty of ice and snow all along the river. Ice 20 feet high in places."

"Apr. 8, 1885. River rising. Logs running quite freely. Saw 25 rafts on the river from Lock Haven to Keating. Met an old man today who said that in 1857, on the 14th and 15th of April, there fell 4 feet of snow, and on the 19th and 20th 2 feet more. It broke down many buildings."

Ark rafts could be accommodated on the larger streams like the Loyalsock. Many

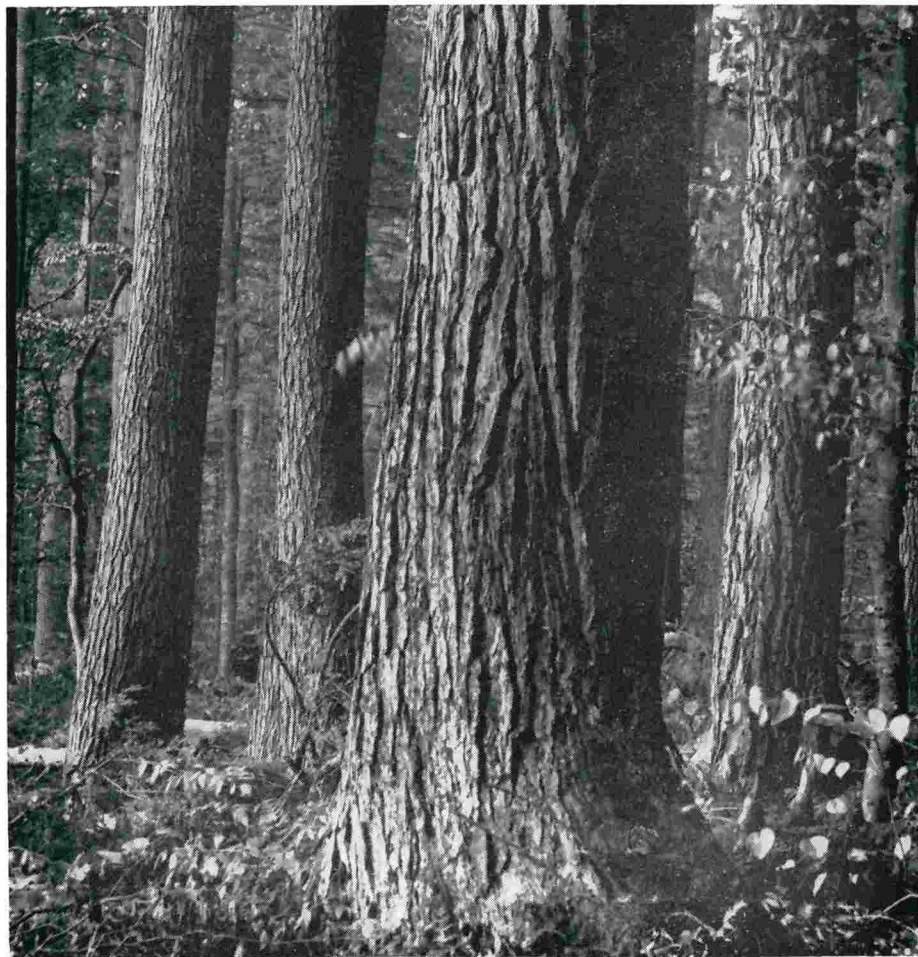
were constructed at School House Point above Hills Grove. They had runners on the bottom to pass easily over obstacles in the bed of the stream, and were generally made of hemlock and pine as the hardwoods were too heavy. Usually as many as a hundred rafts were launched from up the 'Sack near Forksville and Hills Grove, and from other points lower down. The 35-mile run took from early dawn to dark with danger spots to pass, such as Figgles' Turn, Biddle's Dam, Old Watch, and The Yellow Jackets.

Board rafts, as well as log rafts, were floated down the Susquehanna. Made of 12 to 15 "platforms", of an overall length of 100 feet, each platform consisted of 25 or 30 layers of boards. Cabins or tents were usually erected on them, and immense oars were placed in the front and rear to guide them. By 1900 very few rafts were going down the river. The last known raft floated down the West Branch in the Spring of 1912.

Rafting crews varied from 2 to 10 men, usually having a pilot at the front oar who was in charge of running the raft. He knew the river channel, every current, rock, and bend in the river. Generally there were oarsmen for helpers and two steersmen who managed the heavy oar at the back of the raft. Women occasionally substituted for raftsmen, especially during the Civil War years. Courage was needed to steer clumsy rafts on dark nights to avoid large rocks, rapids, bridges, dams, and changes in the river channel. Collisions occurred, lives were lost, and rafts destroyed. A raftsmen sometimes made as many as seventeen trips in a year, during the Spring and early Summer. After delivering the rafts, the men had to walk back. It was the quickest, cheapest, and almost the only way to travel. Men could outwalk a horse and take short cuts over the mountains.

After the Civil War lumber was transported by canal and railroad. During the years from 1869 to 1871 the canal carried more lumber than the railroad. Then its use declined. After 1881 the railroads carried most of the lumber, it being a speedier and cheaper way.

Log driving was the start of mass production. When woodsmen began pushing their logs into the river, these free-floating logs



A VIRGIN FOREST OF PENNSYLVANIA



LOYALSOCK CREEK, 1917

Original Drawing by J. Wesley Little

caused much damage by bumping into the rafts. Enmity and trouble developed between raftsmen and log drivers. About 1857 each group was fighting for its rights. Raftsmen stealthily drove spikes deep into banked logs. When the logs hit the saws in the mills, destruction and even death resulted from flying metal and wood. Log drivers countered by carrying guns. Finally a law was passed forbidding anyone to "iron" logs. Some raftsmen continued rafting, but many adopted the new way of lumbering and became log drivers.

Most hardwood trees could be cut in the Fall and Winter. The chopping of trees was generally over by January or the middle of February. Then the choppers left the woods. As many as 4,000 would be in the woods for a period of about five months. They ground their own axes at night on their own time. The lumberman's two-bladed axe was made by the local blacksmith in the early days. One blade was ground thin to a keen sharp edge. The other was left thick, with a bevel of about 1½ inch ground to a sharp edge, for trimming branches. In later years the saw was used almost exclusively to fell the trees. After the logs were all cut and banked on the stream, when high water came they were rolled into it by pike poles, or cant hooks, and the "drive" started for the river and boom.

"Hear the rumbling, mumbling, grumbling of the logs . . . groaning, moaning, down the flooded creek they came." (Tonkin)

A timber estimator could travel over a tract and calculate quite accurately the amount of lumber it would produce. Another method was for expert scalers to determine correctly the number of log feet in each log after the trees were cut. A jobber was one who cut logs at an agreed price per 1,000 feet. Lumberjacks felled the trees, cut them to the proper size, and piled the logs on nearby skidways or along streams. In later years, a stand of timber, or a stand of trees of a certain size, would be bought outright, leaving the title to soil and mineral rights to the owner of the land.

D. L. Paddock, a timber cruiser for Silas Billings (lumber and timber king of Pine Creek) had an unique way of estimating

timber. When a prospective purchase was being considered, he was sent to a tract, equipped with compass, a month's supply of provisions, thousands of round tin tags, and nails for fastening tags to trees. When the tree was estimated, he tagged it so as to avoid doing it a second time.

Certain brand marks were adopted by the owners and stamped on the end of the log by a branding sledge. This mark was put on the log when cut in the woods, a facsimile was registered in the office of the company and in that of the prothonotary. The logs belonging to each manufacturer could thus be identified when the work of "rafting out" and sorting was in progress.

Different methods were used for transporting logs. White pine and hemlock were light wood and would float. Some floated fully 300 miles from the source of the river above Clearfield and Cherry Tree all the way to Chesapeake Bay. Floating, or "driving", began with high water in the Spring. Splash dams, by releasing water at intervals, helped push the logs along. Drivers, dressed in thick woolen clothes and high-topped, caulked shoes, chased logs and broke up jams, using a peavey or cant hook. Log jams extended from two to six miles, exerting a tremendous weight of logs and dammed-up water. It took a skillful man to find the key log and release it. Drivers entered the downstream side of the jam prying logs apart. When the key log snapped loose and the jam broke, the drivers were right in the center of a whirling mass of logs and water. Sometimes dynamite was used, but this resulted in losing much timber. Men and horses followed the drive — sometimes horses with men on their backs swimming in log choked, icy streams, or the men boldly riding the logs themselves. A logger was sometimes drowned or crushed, but the work went on.

Weighty hardwoods, such as oak and maple, were hauled all the way to the mills by a team of four to eight oxen yoked to a bobsled. The sled was low, easy to place large loads on, and had a narrow track which could negotiate mountain trails. Oxen and horses could draw a very large load over roads of snow and ice. In the winter they often hauled day and night, the trails being illuminated by torches. They left no

logs in the woods over winter.

Another way of moving logs was by the slide. Logs were hewed to form a long trough or chute from the top of the mountain down to the water's edge. It was oiled or iced to carry the logs easily and swiftly. Spikes were inserted to retard the fast movement, but logs often jumped the speedway on their wild ride.

An ingenious method was a cableway, erected in 1888, and used by the Glen Union Lumber Co., Glen Union, Pa., from 1888 to 1914, to convey lumber and props across the Susquehanna River to the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks on the north side. Towers, built of heavy timbers 65 feet high, were erected on each side of the river. Two steel wire cables, 850 feet long, were drawn over the towers and anchored at each end. The large carriage, which carried a 20 ton load of logs, was placed on the cables and operated by a "pulling line" with a hoisting engine on the north side of the river.

Lumber crews went into the woods in the late summer and fall, staying in great camps of 60 to 100 men or more. The camps were first made of logs and later were constructed of cheap slabs as temporary buildings. The first floor contained the kitchen and dining lobby; the second floor was one large bunk room, with a smaller room for the boss. The exhausted men often crawled into their bunks with their wet, cold clothes on, but they did not suffer rheumatism or colds. Food consisted chiefly of bread, meat, potatoes, beans, fish, and soups.

Before booms were constructed, logs simply floated down the river and had to be watched. Something was needed to stop them for the mills. The first dams were merely stones and brush piled on riffles, extending diagonally across the river. One was at Culbertson's Riffles, near the site of the Big Water Mill. An early method of securing logs was by means of small boats fastened together to form rafts. To prevent logs escaping during night, large fires were built along the banks of the river and on flatboats anchored midstream. Men had to be stationed at several points to catch the logs as they came sliding swiftly out of the eery black-

ness. To help slow the logs, Peter Herdic built a dam near Culbertson's Riffles, consisting of three rows of oak piles, draw-bolted together, and sheeted with plank. The lower ends had steel points to penetrate the bottom of the river.

The father of the log boom was Major James Perkins, who had come to Williamsport in 1845 and purchased the Big Water Mill. His construction of a boom revolutionized the lumber industry and made Williamsport famous in all lumbering states and countries. A line of large cribs, composed of heavy square logs, placed about 50 feet apart, were sunk in the river. The cribs were filled with tons of huge rocks to keep them in place. A chain of logs was fastened between the cribs. To resist floods and hold the logs required great strength in the piers and boom sticks. These boom sticks of white pine ran between the cribs the full length of the boom. At the boom's lower end was a double gate where the timber could be picked out and scaled when floated out of the boom for the prospective owners.

After the temporary boom was built in 1849 at a point in the river known as the "Long Reach", a seven-mile stretch of deep water and slow current, the logs floated freely from up-river till they reached the boom. The flood of that year subjected this structure to a severe test, but it withstood the stress well enough to convince lumbermen that an improved boom should be built. It was reinforced in 1855.

When fully developed, the boom stretched diagonally six miles to Linden and was able to hold three million feet of logs at one time. When the boom was full, logs were packed solid by pressure to the bottom of the river, thirty-five feet thick, and held there until time came to start up the mills. The average annual expense of keeping the boom in repair was \$40,000. Christ Haist was the last of the superintendents of the Susquehanna Boom, and its last use was in 1909 to receive a drive out of Pine Creek.

Fresh impetus was given the lumber business after the boom was erected. The Civil War created a demand and prices were high. A sheer boom was built, slanting down-

stream, on the other side of the river, designed to sheer the logs over into the main boom. Booms were erected at Lock Haven, Jersey Shore, Shamokin Dam, and various other places. Peter Herdic, Mahlon Fisher, and John G. Reading bought the log boom from Major James Perkins and others in 1857, and increased the tolls from 75c to \$1.25 a thousand feet. The profits were enormous.

In the boom, logs belonging to each firm were easily identified by their brand marks. Men who sorted the logs were called "boom rats". They selected the logs for the owners and put them in floats to be towed to certain points. The logs were then jacked into the various millponds by machinery. Water pirates sometimes chipped off the branded ends and sold the logs.

Many mill owners joined with the firm of Brown, Clark, and Howe in contracting for the removal of logs from the river, to bank the logs. A steam mill, known as a "jack mill", picked the logs up an incline and down into a basin. They were pulled out of the water and stored above the level of high water. Banking was begun early in November and finished sometime in mid-January. Then the mill firms sent men to scale the logs and count the number of each firm's logs by the brand. By March the mill owners were ready to have their logs put back in the river and rafted to their respective mills. The men were often waist-deep in icy water, and icicles still remained on the horses' legs and tails when they were stabled at night.

Construction of the boom stimulated the building of many large mills near Williamsport for the manufacture of lumber. They contained expensive machinery and came to be recognized as the best equipped in the United States. Great houses lined 4th Street, containing fine woods, marble, leaded glass, and imported fixtures. It was a beautiful street, called Millionaire's Row, the first to be paved with wood.

One of the earliest devices in manufacturing lumber was the Pit Saw, a two-handled crosscut saw. This operation was performed by two men sawing a log placed over a pit, the top sawyer standing above the log, the bottom one below it.

An improvement was the Sash Saw, a toothed strip of steel stretched in a sash or frame. It had an up-and-down movement and was used in mills powered by water.

The first steam sawmill, built by Peter Tinsman in 1852 on the river bank at Williamsport, was an important innovation. With that came the Circular Saw, a thin round blade mounted on a shaft driven by belting or gearing, operated by water wheel or steam engine.

The Muley saw was used extensively in the smaller Williamsport mills because of the great reduction in weight of parts. In this arrangement, the ends of the saw were attached to two light crossheads opposite each other. The cutting was accomplished entirely by a downward motion. It was capable of turning out 6,000 feet per day. All of these saws could cut only one board at a time.

The Gang saw, which followed, had six or eight upright saws set in a square sliding frame. They were spaced the width of the board desired to be sawed. Thus a whole log could be cut in one operation.

The Band saw, finest of all, revolutionized the lumber business all over the world. It was an endless, flexible steel band revolving around two broad-faced wheels, one above the other, the logs being fed in a traveling carriage edgewise to it. A single band saw could cut logs of large diameter. It was capable of sawing as high as 30 million feet of boards a year.

About 2000 men were employed in manufacturing lumber for an eight-month period. The largest and strongest men were the "pilars". They placed the heavy planks in an orderly pile. All the men worked from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. and received \$2.00 a day. As many as 30 sawmills, great and small, in the lumber district of Williamsport lined both sides of the river from Jaysburg and DuBoistown to the Loyalsock. The names of a few, picked at random, are: Coleman, Weed, Payne and Cochran, Emery and Reading, Munson, Maynard and Co., Merriman, Shaw and Merrill. At one time Dodge Mills converted 300 million feet of logs to building material, thus topping world records in sawmills. The counties of Clinton, Clear-

field, Cameron, Elk, and a portion of Potter contributed logs to the growth of the lumber industry in Williamsport.

In 1872 a labor dispute occurred, which was given the name of the "Sawdust War". At this time the county had 75 sawmills employing about 3,000 men. The mills operated from twelve to fourteen hours a day. The season was short, and it was important to clean up the work of sawing before the next winter. That year a branch of a nationwide labor political organization was established in Williamsport. They met at Bender's Hall on Market Street. There were meetings, parades, and rioting. Most mills closed. The local militia was called out. The lumbermen camped in front of the Court House and then in Herdic's Grove. The main objective of the men was to obtain shorter hours. Their slogan was "A ten-hour day or no sawdust." The leaders were jailed, but later pardoned, and the men returned to work after some concessions had been made by the employers.

Many fires occurred in the lumber yards. Here are some eyewitness accounts from a diary:

"Apr. 28, 1876. Just at bedtime the fire alarm sounded. The fire was started at Herdic and Maynard's mill. The mill was saved but a good deal of the lumber burnt up. They had a loss of about \$125,000, and insurance of \$67,000."

"May 7, 1876. Large fire in town in the Beaver Mill lumber yard. They had to send for fire companies from Lock Haven, Milton, and Watontown. Burnt 12 million feet of lumber. Great loss. Insurance of \$119,900 which is pretty heavy insurance."

"Oct. 15, 1876. Heard the cry of 'Fire!' Hastened down and saw the flames south of Dodge's Mill in a row of board piles. The flames were very hot as the wood was dry. We could feel the heat clear across the pond. It did not take long for the flames to catch in the rest of the piles. The fire engines could do nothing as they could not get near the flames. It was so hot they could not stand it. Sparks were car-

ried all the way across the river and set the woods afire in two places. Burnt about 3 million feet of lumber. The loss was \$50,000, but it was fully insured."

The floods also caused disastrous losses:

In 1860 the spring flood broke the boom at Williamsport and 50 million feet of lumber were carried down the river.

In 1861 the flood was almost as damaging. The boom at Lock Haven broke, releasing a heavy mass of logs which came down and broke the Williamsport boom. The loss was great.

In 1865 the boom broke and 50 million feet of logs were lost.

Diary entries:

"Apr. 14, 1876. Went down to the river this morning; found there is a 13 or 14 foot flood now and still rising at the rate of 3 inches in 20 minutes. There was such a fog I could not see far. Saw the Old Steamboat go up the river to see about the boom."

"June 18, 1876. River rose 9 inches in 29 minutes. Dodge & Co. have their men out trying to secure their logs. It is an 18 foot flood by the bridge mark. Everything secure here. The drives will be apt to come in on this flood."

"June 8, 1877. Flood in the river - logs coming in fast. The Lock Haven boom filled in 10 hours. Quick time."

The great floods of 1889 and 1894 caused severe damage and loss. The Williamsport boom broke each time. In the great flood of 1889, which attained a height of 33 feet 1 inch, 300 million feet of lumber were released. Thousands and thousands of logs were carried down to Chesapeake Bay and the ocean. More than half was recovered as the men worked to pick up the logs strewn along the shores of the river and its islands. Years later some of the white pine logs floated ashore in the British Isles. Mills were wrecked and some manufacturers were ruined. Damage to the lumber industry alone was estimated at four million dollars.

Here are a few interesting figures:

In 1876 woodsmen were bearded.

In 1896 they had drooping mustaches.

In 1916 the woodsies were clean shaven.

The long-horned oxen of the 1870's were gone by 1886.

Horses were out of the picture by 1920.

Log-loading machines replaced horses and man power. Narrow gauge railroads gradually penetrated into every hollow, and later trucks were supplanting the railroads in transporting lumber.

From 1916 to 1920 timber operations were in second growth stands. The pick of the trees had been taken out. That glorious stand of white pine was all cut down, mill smoke drifted afar, and the echo of caulked boots faded away.

After more than 200 years of lumbering, this vast wooded area had been reduced disastrously. When the lumber business died out about 1891 and the mills closed, owners deserted thousands of acres of timberless

land. Not many jobs were available. Much of this land was bought by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and reforested. Today you will find 110 different varieties of trees in the state forests, which have an annual capacity of many millions of trees to yield an income.

Forest roads and trails have been constructed, fire observation stations built, game refuges, hunting preserves, and recreation parks established. Floods have been moderated by these forests. All of which is of great value to present and future generations in conservation of our natural resources.

Those days of the lumbering era which seem glamorous to us now, but were difficult, tough, and dangerous, are long over; but I daresay the people were happy. They worked hard, built a fine city along a beautiful river, and made the name of Williamsport known throughout the world as the Queen Lumber City.

Gladys Tozier, Archivist
1970

CHRISTMAS, 1872, FIRE

One of the most tragic events in the history of Williamsport occurred in Newberry in 1872 when a church floor collapsed. Thirteen people died and thirty-eight were seriously injured.

It was at the Second Baptist Church at the corner of Arch and Boyd Streets that the church floor crashed onto the floor below during a Christmas entertainment on Christmas night. Without warning there came a peculiar tremor and a quivering of timbers. Oil lamps kindled fires several times, but they were extinguished by the heroic work of John Carson, William Harper, and George Foster, who did much to control and put out the fires. The Volun-

teer Fire Company was having its annual Christmas dance.

A farmer's team was hitched to a bobsled across from the church. A man unhitched one of the horses and started on horseback for Williamsport. The doctor's horse and sleigh were standing in front of his house already hitched. The man and the doctor started at once for the scene. The man forgot his horse, which wandered around town for two days.

News of the fire spread fast, and many gathered to lift people out of windows and carry out others and aid as they could.

PIRACY ON THE PENNSYLVANIA CANAL

By Dr. Lewis E. Theiss

How pictures lead us astray, especially man-made pictures like that ridiculous painting of Washington crossing the Delaware in a little footboat, and that other picture that shows us a double row of log cabins at Plymouth. Washington crossed the Delaware in a Durham boat, like the rest of his army. That was a boat sixty feet long, eight feet wide, and capable of carrying a whole company of soldiers. The ice was the thinnest of sheet ice, only a fraction of an inch thick, and not several feet thick as shown in the painting. As for log cabins, early Plymouth never saw one. They were a Pennsylvania creation. And so we get incorrect ideas.

For much the same reason, I suspect, we have fallacious ideas about the Pennsylvania Canal in its early days. The pictures of idyllic, quiet, delightful stretches of the canal tell us nothing as to the deaths and dangers and crime on that artificial waterway. Yet these things constitute a part of the true history of the Pennsylvania Canal.

We all know that frontier life was a hard, desperate struggle. Only hardy and tough persons could endure it. Boating on the early canal was a pioneering experience in an absolutely new field, and was no different from pioneering elsewhere. Intended to connect towns and cities far apart, the canal necessarily had to traverse great stretches of country that were almost as wild as virgin territory. As this artificial waterway pursued its way through the mountains and forests of the new country, it traversed wide areas where crime could flourish and criminals live almost undisturbed. Desperate men took full advantage of this situation.

The canal in this immediate region was completed about 1834. It had been several years in the building. The West Branch region, first opened for settlement as late as 1769, had been sadly held back in its development. First, there were Indian war-fares. Then came the Revolution which produced the terrifying Wyoming massacre, the Great Runaway, and the second Runaway. Thus all of the inhabitants were

driven back from the frontier. Many never returned. Indian depredation continued. So it was not until a few years before 1800 that local settlement began in real earnest. Land speculators were another delaying factor. Buying land in great parcels, the speculator aimed to dispose of his holdings in one great sale, if possible, and so reap a quick profit and get out. This hindered the division of the land into small parcels for genuine settlers. Thus, for one reason or another, we came to the canal days in a still almost primitive condition. And so the region was ideal for crimes of violence.

Furthermore, the building of the canal had brought into the area great numbers of characters of the roughest sort. They came in the main, to work. They got jobs and dug the canal, but they were rough beyond belief. It was a day when men showed their prowess by doing battle, so these men fought as individuals and in gangs. Strife was to them as natural as existence. Unfortunately, many of them were so attracted to the countryside that they remained after the canal was completed. Some became boatmen. Some continued as laborers. Some started small businesses. And some became pirates.

In a way, the Pennsylvania Canal must have been as attractive to pirates as was the Spanish Main to those earlier pirates of the sea. For here were rich cargoes to be looted. There had never been anything like it before. A conestoga wagon, with a few tons of goods, had previously been about the biggest prize obtainable. But here were canal boats, loaded with booty—vast quantities of it. Even if the cargo were something unattractive, like coal or lumber, nevertheless the captain of a canal boat had money enough to make it worthwhile to rob him. He had to carry cash to pay canal tolls, buy provisions, pay wages, and so on.

The very construction of the canal facilitated robbery. When a sea pirate tried to rob another ship, he had first to catch that ship, then board it. And usually a sailing vessel had quite a crew to defend it. A canal boat crew consisted of the captain,

the bowsman, and the mule driver, who was usually a lad of seven to ten years. They could put up little opposition to a gang. But the thing that most facilitated robbery on the canal was the vast number of low bridges that spanned it. When a farmer had land that lay on both sides of the canal, he had to have a bridge that would enable him to pass from a field on one side of the canal to a field on the other side, so there were hundreds of these bridges. They were just high enough to allow a canal boat to pass safely underneath. The phrase "low bridge" comes to us from canal days. The mule driver had to call out when he approached a bridge so that the men on the boat would notice it and not be knocked overboard by the bridge. So low were these bridges that a person could with perfect safety drop from a bridge to the deck of a passing boat. Thus robbers would drop on a boat, sit passive until the craft reached some secluded bit of woodland or mountain, then bear the crew to death, and rob both them and the craft. It was an ideal setup for crime.

Photographs of the canal give us the impression of its peaceful beauty. With regard to photographs, we should remember that the very first pictures of human faces made by sunshine in the U.S. were not produced until about 1840. And photography, that is the manufacture and general use of sensitized films, did not become common until perhaps 1876. That was almost half a century after they began to dig canals in America. In a half century nature makes amazing changes in landscape. There were probably never any really accurate pictures of our canal in its earliest days. These that we have seen were necessarily taken years after the canal was dug. Nature, meantime, had smoothed up the rough areas and made that lovely landscape that seems typical of the canal. No doubt the canal, as dug, was a rough affair like the men that dug it.

However, there was much besides isolated and rugged landscape to promote crime. There was whiskey. In those days men drank it as freely as today they drink water. Whiskey sold for as little as a fip a half-pint, a fip being $6\frac{1}{4}$ cents. And that deadly stuff that we call applejack sold for 25 cents a gallon. A favorite drink was "black strap."

This was a mixture of rum and molasses. It sold for three or four cents a glass. Boatmen drank it endlessly. They could hardly avoid doing so. At every canal basin and dock, and in some cases even at locks, drinks could be had. Also, there were floating saloons.

One consequence of this was that all the evil in men came out. They fought endlessly. Canal battles were savage affairs indeed. Anything went. Fingers and ears were bitten off; eyes were gouged out; men were kicked brutally in body and face. Any man who fell during a fight might be beaten almost to death by his victorious opponent. Fighting went on almost continuously. One boat crew fought another. One individual battled a second. Canal boat bullies were always picking quarrels in order to have an opportunity to exhibit their prowess. Many a man was killed in these senseless battles, and the number of injured and maimed was amazing. If two boats approached a lock at the same time, the crews fought to win first passage through the lock. If a canal boat managed to overtake and pass another boat, a battle was the inevitable result. Lasting hatreds resulted from such battles. One boat crew held a grudge against another crew, and they fought every time they came near each other.

At the docks where boats might have to wait for days before they could be loaded, terrific battles occurred. Almost always the men were inflamed by drink. Many of them were naturally pugnacious. Again and again they were sneered at, egged on by wily comrades who wanted to be amused by a good fight. For one reason or another, idle boatmen were always fighting.

Perhaps all of this will give us some idea of the rough, tough, brutal, almost barbarous days of the early canal. It goes without saying that such rough characters were more than willing to acquire property by theft. Once they started to commit a robbery, they stopped at nothing. Murder was commonplace with them.

Thefts along the canal differed as they do elsewhere. There were sneak thieves, who wanted to get something by stealth. There were boatmen who stopped at nothing in their efforts to steal. And there were some

so brutal that they seemed to take delight in mutilating, beating, and even killing victims. It seems incredible.

The canal, of course, passed through countless farms. Here robbery was easy as farmers were more or less defenseless. Canal-side fruit trees, henhouses, gardens, and so on, were easy prey. Further, for many years after the canal was opened, boats ran twenty-four hours a day. Thus, in the middle of the night, there was nothing to prevent a light-fingered boatman from helping himself to whatever he fancied. The farmer was sound asleep.

Orchards were robbed. Rail fences disappeared with appalling rapidity for chestnut rails made the best of firewood for cabin stoves. It is said that many farmers who lived beside the canal made a practice of planting three extra rows of sweet corn along the canal because they knew that the boatmen would strip about that number of rows during the corn season. Otherwise their own supplies would have been sadly depleted. Henhouses near the canal suffered sadly. Nothing was easier than for a boatman to step ashore, run ahead (canal boats averaged about three miles an hour), rifle a henhouse, and overtake his boat.

There is one story of a robber boatman who got the surprise of his life when he was attempting just such a nocturnal errand. He slipped into the henhouse nearest the canal and was greeted by the most outlandish racket he had ever heard. The wily farmer had put his watchdog guinea hens in that house. His other poultry were safe in a shed far from the canal. Naturally, that boatman got out as fast as he could before a charge of shot came whistling after him.

Still another story concerns a boatman who was chasing a fat hen along the towpath. The farmwife ran out and began to upbraid him for trying to steal her hen. "Madam," said the boatman, his tongue in his cheek, "I wouldn't think of stealing your hen. This is one we had on the deck. It got away and I am trying to get it back." Thereupon the credulous farmwife assisted the boatman to catch her own fat hen.

Near the lower end of the canal, at Havre de Grace, lived a slatternly family

in a slatternly home, on a farm that seemed to have all sorts of livestock. A vicious gander was part of the outfit. Every time a boat passed, this gander would rush at the little mule driver, hissing, biting, and flapping at him. One young driver was greatly afraid of this vicious bird. On one occasion, when his boat drew near to the farm in question, he determined to get even with that bird. He took a long, strong cord, fixed a strong fishhook on it, and baited the hook with corn. As usual, the gander made a rush at him. The boy ran, but dropped the baited hook behind him. The pursuing gander paused and gobbled up the corn. The little mule driver ran on, and the hooked gander necessarily followed. The slatternly housewife came out and cried, "Don't run, little boy. He won't hurt you." But the little boy ran on, towing the gander until he was around a curve and out of sight of the housewife. Then he slit the gander's throat and that night there was a feast on the canal boat.

Thefts of the sort mentioned, however, although they were criminal, were really of little importance. The thing that mattered was the constant recurrence of robbery, often accompanied by brutal assaults and even murder.

On one occasion when a powerful boatman was beset by a gang of ten robbers, he jumped to a spot where only one or two men could get at him at the same time. As they rushed toward him he beat them down savagely. He kicked them away. He flung them against one another. He smashed their faces with terrific blows of his fists. One after another, his attackers were disabled. Finally he emerged from the fray triumphant, but he himself was a terribly battered individual.

Such an outcome was of course most unusual. More often the man attacked was left sadly maimed and battered, if not even dead. In one instance, a gang dropped on a boat just before it reached a dam. When the boat got to the deep part of the dam, the thugs demanded the captain's money. He said he had none. Thereupon, the pirates beat him savagely. The captain's small son rushed into the cabin, picked up a loaded shotgun, aimed at the leader of the gang, and fired. The charge blew the man's head

off. The gang drew back. Instantly the captain dived into the canal. His small son wriggled through a small stern window and also dropped into the water. Father and son both got to shore safely.

One of the roughest sections of the canal was the Schuylkill division, where much

coal was shipped to market in canal boats. There canal robbers traveled in packs, attacking anything that appeared easy to capture. These organized pirates created a reign of terror throughout that entire region. They became known as the Schuylkill Rangers.

A TOUR OF THE SCHULZE MANSION

(Researched by Jack Schrader and Shawn Schreck for the Annual History Fair Exhibit at the State Junior Historian convention at Pittsburgh, Pa. April 17, 1971)

This lovely old Colonial-style mansion is situated only 100 yards from a busy super-highway in Montoursville, Pa. Built between 1832 and 1834 by former Governor John A. Schulze when he came to this area to retire after his governmental service, the house reflects the craftsmanship and leisurely style of living of that time.

The sturdy double chimneys on either end of the house serve the multiple fireplaces inside, and graceful half-fan windows on the eaves of the home affirm its period architecture. The side entrance opens into the present kitchen of the mansion, and the entryway has the traditional 9-over-6 windows. The porch is a later addition, dating back perhaps half a century.

For the past sixty-two years the Schulze Mansion has been home for two generations of Eck's, the present owners. Our hostess, Miss Mable Eck, graciously met us at the door, and took us through the house. Her family pride and genuine love of the historic landmark showed in every word.

The big kitchen of the present home originally served as a secondary room. The mansion kitchen was located in an adjacent out-kitchen area, which was closed off when the remodeling was effected. Although wainscoting covers it now, the original 14-foot fireplace of native stone is intact, with cooking cranes, iron kettles, and handmade andirons.

The Eck family forebears, who bought the beautiful old house and handsome barns and outbuildings from the Mahaffie Estate when that property was sold at a Sheriff's

sale, made the revisions in order to accommodate more conveniently the needs of a large and growing family. However, the new owners were sufficiently aware of the need to retain original measurements and form in period architecture so that none of the dimensions of the structure were changed, and only the partitions and room usage were modified and revised.

One wall of the kitchen, which leads to the rear entrance, holds the original pine floor-to-ceiling cupboards. Here, also, on the opposite wall, one finds the "back stairs" to the two upper stories originally intended, no doubt, for use of the hired help in the Governor's country home. Tucked along one wall is a modern convenience the Governor's era never knew—a "Porta-Lift," which is a moving chair that can be used by invalid or aging residents of the family.

The large dining room is reached through an open doorway from the kitchen, and here the home's colonial-type architecture begins to assert itself. Soaring 14-foot ceilings, handsomely carved woodwork (apparently of cherry), and thick, massive doors are to be seen. A magnificent multi-tiered crystal chandelier which came from the old Heylmun house in Williamsport, hangs over a banquet-sized dining room table. A handsome oil painting, depicting the professionally-executed barns and stables, hangs over a server. Unfortunately, the largest of these beautiful structures was destroyed by fire in 1932.

Adjoining the dining room, towards the front of the house, the traditional "sitting

room" or "gentlemen's room" is reached through a wide open doorway. It was here that the men traditionally retired for their after-dinner brandy and cigars, leaving the ladies to their coffee, tea, and social chatter. To the right of the entrance the room focuses on a large brick fireplace. This fireplace, like all of the others remaining in the home, still operates and is used to augment the central heating system which the Governor and other inhabitants of the house never enjoyed!

It must be remembered that these fireplaces, so numerous in old homes, were not decorative pieces as they are today. They served as the only means of heating the huge, rambling structures, and they were large because of their functional performance and were not show pieces.

In this room we found two other Eck sisters, who were cozily tucked in rocking chairs, waiting to greet their Junior Historian guests. They pointed with pride to the excellent oil painting that covered the wall above the fireplace. They told us it was painted by their great-aunt, Mrs. Murphy, who then lived at Bath, New York. The talented Mrs. Murphy, they told us, went into the wooded dell that was near her home in Bath and daily worked to complete the canvas. The painting shows a serenely flowing brook wandering down through trees, with soft sunlight filtering onto grassy banks. The brook gently curves around the rocks in the creek bed, and so cleverly has the artist captured its flow that it deceives the eye and seems to "follow" you no matter where you stand in the room.

Passing into the dining room again, we go through another big open doorway and come into the GREAT HALL. It is this hall which unmistakably stamps the Schulze Mansion as colonial. It is wide and high-ceilinged, and runs from the front to the rear of the house, with rooms opening off either side! In this hall certain things demand the visitor's attention. All of them are hallmarks of the original mansion's construction, and all have been restored or lovingly preserved by the Eck family. The doorway is a massive, magnificent colonial doorway, surrounded by a colored full-fan window set with leaded stained glass. The

door is locked with a black iron lock of a type known as "mousetrap" style, and it holds the original handmade key.

If you enter the hallway through this magnificent door, in front of you can be seen the beautiful winding staircase that spirals up to the second and third floors of the mansion. Hand-carved and elegantly simple in design, the cherry staircase borders the wide stairs and spacious landings. The hall and the staircase (like every room in the home) are carpeted in handsome old jeweled-toned Oriental floor covering. Miss Eck told us that her father, noted for the quality of his farm crops, bought the carpeting for these stairs and hallways by "bartering," that is by exchanging grain, vegetables, and dairy products from his farm to pay for the merchandise. The quality of the carpeting was so elegant, she said, that even at that time (more than a half-century ago) it required two years to pay for it.

To the right, against the wall that flanks the entry to the twin living rooms, stands a piece of furniture that belonged to the original occupant—the Governor Schulze desk. The handmade desk, with its sloping pine and poplar front, is the oldest desk of its type in Lycoming County, according to Miss Eck. She said the desk stood neglected in the third floor attic of the house with one leg damaged. Their father cheerfully indulged his daughter's request that she be permitted to have one piece of furniture for her very own, and the daughter selected the Governor's desk. It was accordingly sent off to Mr. Manley, an outstanding woodworking artisan at that time in Williamsport, and he painstakingly repaired the leg and restored the fine old desk to its original condition.

We move into the twin sitting room section of the house that runs the full length of the house, front to rear, along the right of the entryway. Here again fireplaces are the focal points of the rooms. Although there is a subtle separation of the two rooms, the eye follows the straight and flowing line of the area through the wide square arch. Over the twin fireplaces, reaching from the mantle to the ceiling, are two huge landscapes, painted by the late Emily Eschenbach.

Throughout the house many excellent oil paintings and fine prints confirm Miss Mable Eck's background as a public school art teacher for more than 45 years until her retirement.

Climbing the stairs, we pause on the first landing by a leaded glass window to admire the view that takes in the spacious hall and the fine door with its fan-arch window. The top of the stairs opens onto a spacious area, large enough to accommodate a comfortable sitting room, and providing entrance to the hall that leads to the opposite side of the house.

To the right of the main hall are the master bedrooms. In each of these there is a fine old fireplace, and each room has windows overlooking the rear lawns and gardens.

The hallway also leads to three other sleeping rooms. All of them are sufficiently large, according to Miss Eck, that even her parents and their large family never had to use the third floor of the house.

Before we conclude our tour, let's look at the basement. It may seem strange to mention a basement in a mansion tour, but

this one carries the marks of its period of construction. Huge hand-hewn beams of oak and white pine support the upper stories. The massive foundation stones are hand-cut and expertly fitted. The main portion of the cellar holds the remains of a large fireplace. The secondary, or "root," cellar has a handsome vaulted arch of brick, which is so superbly designed and built that it could have stood in the living room of the house—yet its only function in the darkness of the cellar is to give support to the massive fireplaces on the floor above. Two other cellar units are intact, too, which served the original occupants, and the Eck family, for such purposes as storing winter produce, canned fruits, jams, vegetables, and jellies, and even flower bulbs from the gardens. The floors are dirt.

On the day we toured the mansion firemen were pumping out flooded cellars in nearby areas, but the original architect and master builders who engineered the Schulze mansion had done their job so well that everything was dry as bone and appeared ready to support the mansion as a Lycoming County landmark for at least another century!

A SIGN OF OLD TIMES

By Scott Schreiber

A blacksmith of Williamsport, G. F. Morse, once owned a shop behind his home. After his death in 1965 the blacksmith shop was bought by a local car dealer, Larry Heron, West Third Street, for use as a store-room. On the front of the shop hung a fairly (sic) weathered sign. It had been there for 49 years. It read "G. F. Morse — Horseshoer—General Repairing." The sign was removed with the permission of the owner in April, 1970, and transported to the Lycoming County Historical Museum. It was restored during the summer with my

help so that it could be put on exhibit in late September.

The sign can now be seen by the citizens of Williamsport and Lycoming County in the Industrial Section of the Museum.

Ed. Note: Scott is a student at Stevens Junior High School who has taken a great interest in the Museum. It was due solely to his efforts that the Museum acquired the sign described above.

A PRAYER ON AN INDIAN GRAVE

Picture Rocks, Pennsylvania

Among the rills from the Muncy Hills
By the creek among the stones

You may find the grave of an Indian brave,
The Chieftain, "Rest-Your Bones";

And still is told the legend old
Of love so tenderly true

That it floats in rhyme on floods of time
Like a biroquet black canoe.

On Muncy shore in the days of yore
Lived "Laughing Eyes," an Indian maid.

And wherever she came a lovelit flame
In the hearts of her lovers played.

And they courted her with gifts of fur
And deerskins for a cover;

For "Laughing Eyes" was sought as a prize
By many an ardent lover.

Chief "Rest-Your-Bones" with his manly
tones
Attuned to loving power

Had wooed and won as the days panned on
This beautiful Indian flower.

But why do we, why must it be,
That our joy is mixed with sorrow?

For ere they were wed, the maid lay dead,
And their love had no tomorrow.

As bowed with grief their loyal chief
Heard the braves and squaws intoning

The funeral rite on his wedding night,
He wished they would cease their
droning.

To him in his grief how great a relief
If never a word were spoken.

But the Great Spirit knew so He took him
too,
A lover whose heart was broken.

With solemn rites, 'ere the end of night,
They buried the Chief and his flower.

What better place for two of their race
Than this beautiful leafy bower?

Then the pale face came with his shreds
of fame;

But list to the prayer of the story —
"Disturb not the grave of the maid and her
brave
As you hope yourself for glory."

FROM THE "MORNING STANDARD"

APRIL 23, 1868:

"Yesterday we observed a party engaged in removing the remains of the dead buried in the cemetery on Pine Street. But few more graves remain to be opened and when that is done we hope to see all traces of the old graveyard removed and a park or square substituted."

(Subsequently the plot was known as Ross Park until City Hall was built. When excavating for City Hall more skeletons were unearthed. They were put in a casket and buried in East Wildwood with a large granite block marking the grave.)

VOL. II, NO. 10

Shortly after sending the material for Vol. VII, No. 1, to the printer, it was learned Vol. II, No. 10, was published in the Winter-Spring of 1965-66. Mrs. Adam of the Adam Print Shop in Montgomery gave us two copies of this issue, one of which was given to Gladys Tozier for the Archives and the other was kept in the Society's office. Xerox copies of the following articles printed in Vol. II, No. 10, can be purchased at a cost of 10c a page.

ARTICLES FROM THE LYCOMING GAZETTE of Nov. 4, 1829

SAVED BY A CLOCK by Dr. Charles M. Steese

ROSE VALLEY AND ROSE STREETS ARE BOTH NAMESAKES OF JOHN ROSE by Carlton Fink.

LETTER FROM JOHN PENN TO GENERAL GAGE, dated Dec. 31, 1763

APPLICATION FROM PINE CREEK RESIDENTS FOR ESTABLISHING A STORE TO ACCOMMODATE THE INDIANS WITH GOODS IN BARTER — to Gov. Thomas Mifflin, dated Nov. 22, 1793

SERVICE UPON THE HOME FRONT by Clark B. Kahler

BILLY KILPATRICK — as heard on the News of Williamsport on WRAK, May 1, 1965, by Everett Rubendall.

THE COST OF FREEDOM — an address delivered before the Lycoming Historical Society on August 12, 1965, by Frederick L. Rath, Jr.

HYMNS COMPOSED IN WILLIAMSPORT

Williamsport can be justly proud of several hymns composed in our town. About 1880, Rev. John H. Hopkins wrote the words and music of the Christmas hymn, "We Three Kings of Orient Are". Perhaps a trifle less familiar is the hymn "When the Roll is Called Up Yonder", by James M. Black; but another of his compositions takes a back seat to none: his "When the

Saints Are Marching In". With new words and fast clipped tempo, it has become a spirited march, a favorite of Dixieland, and is even heard across the nation during football season, for it is a favorite of high school bands, too. (Mary Landon Russell, *A History of the Music of Williamsport, Pa.*, page 149.)

PUBLIC SALE

OF

LOGS!

WHITE PINE, YELLOW PINE, HEMLOCK, CHERRY,
OAK, AND OTHER HARDWOOD.

The Stray Log Committee of the Lumberman's Exchange, of Williamsport, Pa., will sell at Public Sale, at the COURT HOUSE, in Williamsport, Pa., on

**THURSDAY, JUNE 27th, 1889,
AT 10 O'CLOCK A.M.**

All the logs that have escaped the booms at Williamsport and passed down the Susquehanna River, and now lying in said river and on the islands and shores from Green's Dam down to and in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, divided into sections, as follows:

Section 1. From Green's Dam to Highspire, estimated at 14,000,000 feet, more or less.

Section 2. From Highspire to Columbia Dam, estimated at 14,000,000 feet, more or less.

Section 3. From Columbia Dam to Safe Harbor, estimated at 3,200,000 feet, more or less. etc.

Any party purchasing a section of logs in the Bay is entitled to take up any logs afloat in the Bay opposite section purchased by him or them.

Terms and conditions will be made known on day of sale.

J. HENRY COCHRAN, Chairman
Stray Log Committee Lumberman's
Exchange

(This is an extract from a typical broadside from the lumber era, and the original can be seen on exhibit in our Museum.)

PURCHASE AT

**THE MUSEUM
H
O
P**

Unique Gifts of Significance

contemporary crafts

Roesen note stationery

copper miniatures

decorative tiles

authentic indian artifacts

jigsaw puzzles

postcards

historical literature