

HICKS, FIGHTERS, AND CLOG DANCERS: EARLY LUMBER CAMPS IN FREEMAN RUN VALLEY

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Decorations by Julia Comstock Smith



This is a chapter from a forthcoming book entitled THE FREEMAN RUN VALLEY, by Marie Kathern Nuschke (Mrs. Walter L. Nuschke), Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Mrs. Nuschke is the daughter of Delphis Brisbois, one of the seven Brisbois brothers who came to the Freeman Run Valley in Potter County, 1882, six of whom were engaged in lumbering business. Here is a list of them:

John, foreman and later jobber; Stanislaus (Dennis), the cook; Fred, the bookkeeper; Emilien, the blacksmith; Joseph, the scaler and woodsman; Ovide, woodsman; Delphis, the youngest, who followed his brothers, was promptly sent away by them to learn the barber trade in Boston, and afterwards came back to open a shop in Freeman Run, now Austin.



The Author.



IT HAS been impossible for the writer to find the location of the first Brisbois camp, where John Brisbois was jobber for the Costellos.* When he left the Costellos, he became a foreman for the Goodyears near Sizerville, where they were cutting trees for the Four Mile mill. Later, when he became a jobber and cut the Freeman Run timber for the newly opened Austin mill, I am under the impression that the camp stood at the mouth of Jones Run, and I may be correct. The camp is supposed to have been burned down when a forest fire swept over the newly-cut lands in 1891.

John Brisbois never had a "board" camp; all buildings at his three different camps were made of logs and had only one story. This I know, because years later my father took me to see the Darien Run Camp, at which time it was falling down with no occupants other than a family of woodchucks and two red foxes. I could see that it had been a highly primitive affair—long and narrow with square doors so low that a six-foot man would have had to stoop to enter. John's last job was on Darien Run, and that camp may have been one of the last with log cabins, although the writer remembers seeing old log camps that were in a better condition on both the right and left-hand branches of the Portage.

In those primitive log camps, each cabin had only two rooms besides the kitchen. One room was the bunk house, where the men spent all their spare time whether in bed or out. Each narrow, homemade bunk was covered with a tick filled with straw, but the woollen blankets were of good quality. By the time the lights

*The Costellos—P. H., P. C., Alfred, and John H.—comprised the company which built the great tannery in North Wharton Township, where the town was later named Costello for them.

were put out at night, that room was packed with men as tight as sardines in a can.

No matter what the number of men, they were forced to eat in relays, since part of the dining room was the main office and store where the bookkeeper sold staple clothing, Spear Head cut plug tobacco, and snuff. It seems inconceivable that so many men could have eaten, slept, and even breathed in such close quarters.

As soon as the board camps were built, the lobby, office, dining room, and kitchen were on the first floor and the sleeping quarters upstairs, allowing more room for everyone. Even then, the lobby had no chairs—just loose benches around the room—and all the men who worked at the camp could not sit down at one time.



When the jobbers first put in double beds, the hicks* did not like them and protested loudly. In order to show their displeasure, many of them went into the woods and cut poles which they ran under their mattresses or ticks through the center of the bed so that their sleeping companion would not touch them in the night.

For years, in the first camps, the beds, bedding, and clothing were covered with body lice, and little effort was made to get rid of them. The hicks were bitten continuously, but they accepted the disagreeable results in a passive manner, merely saying, "They can bite and be damned." Some camps kept an old-fashioned wash boiler which the men could use for delousing their clothing if they cared to.

There was a large sink in one end of the lobby over which hung several wash basins, a mirror and roller towels. On a small bench, stood a pail of water and dipper for drinking purposes. In cold weather, there was always a huge kettle of water steaming on the big stove in the center of the room, which the men could use when washing themselves. Low crocks or wooden boxes, filled with either ashes or sawdust, were placed equidistant around the room but were usually ignored by the "tobaccy" users, who spit at the stove hearth in the center of the room with uncanny accuracy.

The working hours in those first camps were from dawn until darkness. Men arose in the dark, dressed (with shirts hanging out,

*Local jargon for "lumbermen."

pants turned up, caulked shoes on their feet, and on their heads little felt hats turned up in front—quite the modern fashion), ate breakfast, and were ready to leave for the woods when the first streak of daylight crossed the sky. They had little time for pleasure after the evening meal, since at 9 p.m. came the order, "Douse the glimmer." All lights—kerosene or candles—went out, and peace and quiet followed or the offender was struck with flying shoes.

All jobbers were rightfully proud of their teamsters. The camp horses were very valuable and they expected them to be taken care of properly. Ofttimes when the woods crew would be asleep, the teamsters would be working on their horses—currying them, braiding their tails and manes, and stringing white rings with red and blue braid which were worn on their sides and heads. There was considerable rivalry between the teamsters of different camps as to the festive daily appearance of their horses. Many of the first camps had an ox or two to assist with the work when the heavy horses were all in use on the mountains.

There were quite a few people employed at the camp who were not the regular woodsmen: a mechanic, a blacksmith, a book-keeper, a boy to feed and water the horses, teamsters to haul supplies as well as logs in the woods, a cook, cookee, foreman, and a jobber. Ofttimes, the jobber and foreman lived in nearby towns and went back and forth between the home and camp daily. On a big job, there was usually one man who did nothing but brand logs before they went down the river in the spring. Logs had to be branded on both ends with a heavy branding hammer. All brands were registered in the Boom Company offices at Williamsport and Lock Haven.

Every cook had a different method of waking the men. Some pounded on the stovepipe that ran through their sleeping quarters, others rang a bell, but the most popular method was to hang a piece of railroad iron on a nearby tree and pound it with a hammer as the sounds carried farther than the bell.

Although the kitchen in the Brisbois camp had a cast iron cook stove with two ovens decorated with the word "Ironsides" on their doors, a designation of quality, Dennis Brisbois refused to make bread without an outdoor oven such as he was accustomed to using in Canada. In this outdoor oven he made bread

every day to feed one hundred men on two different jobs for both lunch and dinner. He also baked beans every day out of doors. For regular dinners nearly every day in the week they had beef stew, with ham and barbecued pork occasionally.

The first camps had no refrigeration, so, when a watering trough was built for the horses and oxen, a second one was built for kitchen use. In it, they submerged half a hog, veal, or beef, and it kept perfectly until all was eaten, since they used meat in such large quantities.

Nearly every camp had a few pigs running loose around the lot to take care of the garbage and dishwater. The story is told that one night in a Fee camp, Dick Fee was kept awake by two hogs fighting under the floor of the bunk room. He became angry and got up and threw them a bale of hay. He got back in his bunk and all was quiet for a minute, and then a hick in a nearby bunk began to snore loudly. Fee yelled, "Do I have to give you a bale of hay, too?"



All the meat came from the farmers near the camps until Bev Carter and William Walsh opened up butcher shops in Freeman Run. They delivered the freshly butchered meat to the camps daily. All the vegetables—carrots, potatoes, turnips, and cabbage—were bought from the farmers.

Breakfast was a sorry affair: oatmeal served with butter and sugar, hot baking powder biscuits, doughnuts and Arbuckle coffee with sugar and no cream. It was several years before pancakes and maple syrup became the common camp breakfast. Dennis Brisbois said that he had to make at least fifteen dozen doughnuts every day when they had one hundred men. The cooks had milk and eggs for cooking, but there was none to serve the men. On the end of each table, there was always a big pitcher of black strap molasses which they poured on their hot biscuits.

Many have thought that the lumbermen ate venison or wild pigeons in the early camps. They may have eaten some venison previous to 1882, but after that year deer were almost extinct in the Freeman Run Valley. The last deer ever seen in the Borough of Austin was killed by George Doane, who lived in the

Frederick Keck house on School Street. He killed it as it was running down a path from the Garretson spring to the flat in the winter of 1890.

Dennis Brisbois said it was impossible to serve pigeons to one hundred men or any lesser number. "Firs', I 'ave to take my flambeau [little can of kerosene oil with wick] out to zee woods an' club my t'ree 'undred peegeons. [They had to be knocked out of their roosting trees with a club after dark, and he had to allow three pigeons for each man.] Den, I 'ave to peek dem, dress dem an' cook t'ree 'undred peegeons for one meal. Oh, no, I not make myself all dat troub'. Eet eez too bad work for one cook an'



Dennis sets the table.

cookee." In plain English, to kill, pick, dress, and cook three hundred pigeons for one meal was too much work for two men.

One time the meat failed to come to the camp in time for the big dinner at night. Dennis said, "I 'ave to t'ink awful fas'. Eet was in zee spring. I rush to zee brook an' scoop up two bushels yellow greens (cowslips) an' I cook dem with thirty-five pounds salt pork. Eet makes one fine deesh. Everybody liked eet an' nobody geeves one dam 'cause zee meat she no come."

One time Dennis hired a farm woman at the mouth of Darien Run to pick and "look over" six quarts of wild strawberries. He only had forty men for dinner that night. He also ordered her to

bring sweet cream, since she said she had two fresh cows. That night for dinner, he gave the men hot buttered biscuits with mashed strawberries and cream, which he always said was the first time anyone ever served strawberry shortcake made with biscuits. I always doubted the truth of that statement but said nothing. Why disillusion him?

Dennis had a technique all his own when setting the tables for meals. Each table sat twelve men. All the dishes were tin and unbreakable. He would stand at the head of the table and shuffle the plates, sending them flying through the air, each plate landing on the correct spot. He often had quite an audience as it was an accomplishment. He said, "Mai oui! I 'ave no time to run 'round zee table to set zee plates. I 'ave one 'undred men to feed—I 'ave to hurry, hurry, hurry."

George Hart says that as late as 1888, the food was much the same in all camps, with each camp having a man who specialized in one particular kind of dish. His cook, John J. Lannin, who stayed with him for thirteen years, made baked beans every day in a beanhole back of the camp, and they were delicious. As yet, food in tin cans was not popular, and it was a reflection on the ability of the camp cook to have a pile of empty tin cans near the kitchen. The only vegetable ever served in Hart's camp that came from a tin can was tomatoes. He added, "We had never heard of vitamins or balanced meals in those days. All the men worked fifteen hours each day, ate hearty, and I remember one winter when I gained fifteen pounds, altho I lost it when spring came and I went down the river on a drive."

It was years before the men cooks were replaced by women. By that time, more food was available and different dishes appeared on all camp menus. It was not uncommon to have beefsteak for breakfast besides the customary pancakes and syrup. In a camp for forty to sixty men, it took one hundred pounds of flour for both bread and pastry daily. Pies and puddings were served at all dinners; and, occasionally, on special holidays, bananas and oranges appeared as a special treat. By this time, all vegetables came out of cans.

Every jobber knew that a good cook was a necessity. The better the cook, the less trouble he had keeping his men. Although there was little variety from day to day, portions were enormous

and second helpings were always on hand. No man left the table hungry.

At no other time in the history of the Freeman Run Valley, have so many different types of men lived together under one roof as were gathered in those lumber camps. It took a good cook and a foreman whose word was law to control the men in each camp and keep them in good condition so that work could progress smoothly at a profit for all concerned. Every foreman had a headache over Sunday and holidays, and some evenings in summertime, if the camp was within walking distance of a town where pigsears* were open around the clock. More than one jobber hired a big fighter for a foreman in order to insure a more peaceful camp since the men respected a fighter.

Every camp had a set of rules for the men to live by, and they followed them fairly well for a few years; but, as time passed and many of the hicks began to suffer physically from the effects of too much liquor, the foremen had problems to know what to do with them. They were classed as bums when drunk and only second-rate workers when sober. They would travel between camps and check in for work over Sunday in order to get a few good meals before starting to work on Monday morning. They would eat a hearty breakfast on Monday morning, but before the foreman could interview them and assign their work, they would disappear. Sometimes, they would work a week and then disappear and move on to another camp. Some of the camps had to keep a roster of those men, and if they came to the camp looking for work they were politely throwed out.

Just as the mid-west had the James boys and the far west had the Daltons, the Freeman Run Valley had the Mundy Brothers—Charley, Jim, Buz, and Beef. The leader of this gang was not a Mundy but a big red-headed Irishman by the name of Kelly. Those five gentlemen had a reputation so unsavory that fewer women walked the streets and fewer men went into the saloons when they came into Austin. Eventually, they were outlawed in every camp.

George Hart says: "My camp on the Wild Boy was the nearest logging camp to Hulltown so I got more than my share of those bums to feed and I got sick of it. Men were scarce and

*Unlicensed drinking places.

wages good and Hulltown was swarming with bums who were able to work but not willing. I was bothered with them through bark peeling, getting madder and madder every day. One morning my cook, John Lannin, said to me, 'Why do you put up with that big red-headed Kelly? He and those Mundys have been coming in here every Saturday, staying until Monday and then disappearing?' I decided that I would put a stop to it. I did not want Kelly nor the Mundy boys enjoying their meals at my expense. I waited until the next week when I saw a big red-headed Irishman come in and go upstairs to bed. I went up after him and found him in bed with all his clothes on even to shoes and hat. The men had left for work. I did not ask him why he did not go to work—just grabbed him by the shoulders, jerked him out of bed, kicked him down the stairs and right out on to the road and watched him until I saw him safely on his way to Hulltown. When I walked back to camp, I found Jack Lannin and his wife laughing so hard they could hardly tell me what it was all about. Lannin said, 'Just who do you think you threw out?' 'Why, Kelly, the leader of that Mundy gang,' 'You fool,' said Lannin, 'that wasn't Kelly. It was Ed Demmins.' Demmins had never worked for me but I knew he was a fine woodsman so I knew something had to be done quick. I went upstairs in the camp, picked up his hat, which I knew had fallen off when I kicked him downstairs, and walked the two miles to Hulltown, where I found him ranting on a corner about me to a group of men. I returned the hat, apologized, set up drinks for the whole crowd standing around and got Ed to return to camp with me. It was lucky it happened because I never saw Kelly and the Mundy boys in my camp again. News has a way of traveling and they evidently heard what I did; they knew what would happen to them if they tried the same trick on me that they had tried before."

At this same time when the Mundys were roaming throughout this area, Jim Hart, brother of George, lived at Sizerville. Although he had a fine chicken-coop, with a door which was carefully locked each night, one by one his chickens disappeared. Ofttimes, he would find the chicken heads in the yard in the morning. The lock on the door never seemed to be tampered with and Jim could not understand how those chickens were getting out of the

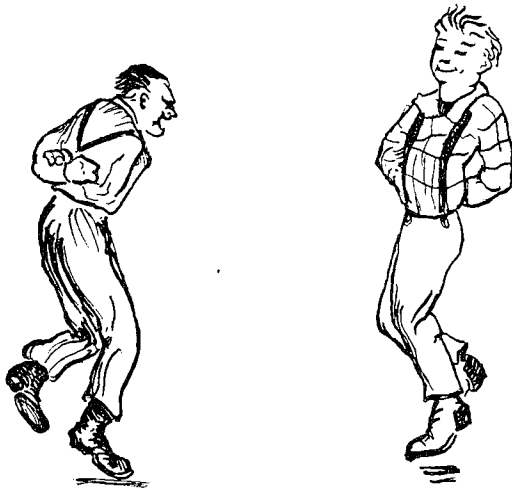
coop. Everyone said that the Mundy brothers were the thieves so little was done about it. Many years later down in Mississippi where the Hart brothers now live, they had a caller—one of the Mundy gang. Anxious to talk over old times in Potter County, they invited him in to dinner. During the conversation, Jim Hart said, "Just how did you steal all my chickens up in Sizerville years ago?" "Easy," said Mundy. "All we did was unfasten the board that the chickens walked on when going in and out of the chicken coop. We would stick it through the little hole and the minute one jumped on it, we would jerk it out quick. Nothing to it." So the mystery was solved by the culprit.



When the men were around the camp evenings or on Sundays, they had to make their own amusement. In the summer time, they often played horseshoes, had boxing matches, races of various sorts; but, when confined to the camp, they spent most of their time playing cards. Since the majority of them came from different countries, there was a variety of programs. Many could play bones, a Jew's harp or a mouth organ, and a few of the Irish were good flute players. Usually a soloist would burst into song in his native tongue, and then find himself accompanied by the soft music of a mouth organ. One of the best singers ever in the nearby camps was one Billy Musereaux, a fine tenor, and he was always sure of an attentive audience when he sang.

There were weekly dances at several places on the Sinnamahone, but the most popular place was at Jimmy O'Brian's where a good fiddler by the name of Fred Williams both called and played the dances. If a fiddler was not available, it was not uncommon for the dancers to sing their own accompaniment. They rarely had enough women to fill the sets properly, so the men danced with other men, not seeming to care one whit for the substitution. At every one of the O'Brian dances, Jimmy was the center of attraction at least once during the evening when he happily danced his Irish jigs and reels. There was no more accomplished clog dancer on the Sinnamahone than Jimmy.

When the timber was being cut on the left hand side of Freeman Run, one evening the men put up a "ring" in the center of a clearing and announced they would have some wrestling matches on the following night. Men in other nearby camps heard about it and the next evening, about one hundred men had gathered to witness some boxing matches. Match after match was ended while the motley crowd jammed around the ring and shouted themselves hoarse. After they ran out of fighting material, someone suggested that they have some entertainment of a lighter nature. Why not find out who was the champion clog dancer in the crowd? Several men immediately stepped forth, two men on the side whipped out harmonicas, and the dance was on.



Up until that evening, Oscar Claflin had been the undisputed champion clog dancer of the Freeman Run Valley. He was 6' 4" tall, very talkative, and always became embroiled in a fight through his mouth. One by one, the clog dancers were eliminated until Oscar shouted with great gusto that he was again the champion and for a few minutes he was just that. Then, something happened. Emilien Brisbois stepped into the ring and challenged him. Oscar did not know that Emilien, a short French Canadian, was the champion clog dancer of his home town of St. Josephs, Canada. It was his one and only appearance as a dancer in Potter County. Emilien started with a slow and easy step but, as he increased the tempo of the dance, the harmonicas kept with him.



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EMILIEN BRISBOIS
From an old photograph.

Round and round he spun, wilder and wilder. The audience was amazed. By the time he had raced through some of the most intricate steps in clog dancing, Oscar was speechless. With a grand flourish, Emilien suddenly ended the dance and then bowed to the crowd in a courtly manner, first to the right and then to the left. The applause was thunderous and Claflin knew then and there that he was no longer the champion. He could not take it. He walked up to Emilien and said, "Maybe you can dance, but let me see you fight."

It was almost as though Goliath was taunting David once more. Emilien was the blacksmith for the camp and although small in stature was a powerful man. Without a moment's hesitation, which

gave him the advantage, he struck Claflin such an uppercut to the jaw that it sent him spinning across the platform. In five minutes Emilien had given Claflin a sound trouncing and the crowd went wild. He told his brothers afterwards that he was so out of breath from the dancing that he really surprised himself when he knocked Claflin down so quickly.

But the applause had not entirely died away before Emilien got an idea. He said to himself, "Eef I can leek dat powerful Claflin in five meenutes, why can't I leek dat dirty Garcey?" Garcey, who came from Cape Breton Island, was a big bully who weighed two hundred and twenty-five pounds. He had been working for John Brisbois for several months and had insulted Emilien many times when around the camp. Every man in the camp kept out of his way. For some reason, Garcey left the Brisbois camp shortly after the dance and fight episode, and Emilien was not bothered with him until two years later when John had a camp on Darien Run.

Late one night when Emilien was coming up the Wharton road, after calling on some neighbors where he had had a friendly game of cards, he heard Garcey coming down from Costello. He was singing wildly:

Billy Flynn and John McGin who hold the ready ginger
They lay their plan to build a dam but never raise a
finger.

"Hold her up to the sliding point, don't get the least
might scary

But let her pound and she'll go round," says Cherry Tree
Joe McGarey.*

From the way he sang, Emilien knew he had spent too much time in a pigsear in Costello. It was a cold, moonlight night, and Garcey and Emilien met at the entrance of the road to Darien Run near the site of the present Charley Glover house.

"Hello toad," said Garcey as he swaggered up close to Emilien. Emilien jumped him like lightning and Garcey, taken completely by surprise, staggered backward and lost his balance and fell. There were no witnesses or applause to this terrible fight. In Emilien's own words, this is the way it went:

*McCreery. See ballad, page 461.

"He was not drunk enough to be handled good, but I 'ave zee advantage 'cause I knock 'eem down fas' an' jump on 'eem. Zee devil had on zee cork shoes an' I only 'ave on zee shoes weez zee steel plates. Over an' over we rolled an' bit, an' pounded each other. I am watching zee ditch by zee road; so eez Garcey. We both knew dat zee firs' man in zee ditch eez zee loser. Luck she was wiz me. I got a boxing hold on heez arm an' over in zee ditch he eez rolling. I jump heem fas' on heez head. I say, 'You eez going to eensult deez Frenchman no more—Good-bye Monsieur Garcey' an' I walked fas' back to zee camp."

Emilien went immediately to his brother John and told him what he had done. John was horrified. He got some men out of bed and they went down to the mouth of the run and got Garcey and brought him back to the camp. Emilien had two black eyes but Garcey was unconscious and covered with blood. The steel plates on Emilien's shoes had been as effective as calks. John took one look at him and thought he was dying.

"Emilien, you 'ave to get out of here fas'. I'm 'fraid he eez going to die. Eet is bad whedder he lives or dies. Eef he dies, you'll get hanged for murder; eef he lives, he weel keel you sure because you can't lick heem in zee fair fight. Go queeck an' hide in zee smokehouse until I come."

Something in his brother's face made Emilien obey at once. He stayed in the smokehouse until nearly morning when there was a rap upon the door. He opened the door and in came John with a packed suitcase.

Wildly swinging his arms, John said, "Mon Dieu, Emilien, dees is ver' bad. He eez alive but why zee dam deed you jump heem on heez head and face? You can knock zee man, yes, wiz zee 'ands, but why chew up heez face? Eet eez terrible!"

Then getting down to practical things, he said, "How much money you got?"

Emilien took out a thin purse from the inside pocket of his shirt and displayed several uncashed checks. "I 'ave ver' leetle cash."

"All right," said John as he took out his purse, "here eez one 'undred dollars. Get home to Canada queeck and don't tell mai poor old mudder what you deed."

Exit Emilien Brisbois from Potter County forever.

I might add that Garcey lived to fight many more fights before he left Potter County, but when he left he had only one ear, the badge of defeat.

Let it be written now that common fighting such as was popular with the hicks in and out of the camps was considered an art at this era of history. In 1866, the Marquess of Queensberry had made rules governing fighting and immediately boxing and pugilism spread like wild fire. Men read everything they could about fights and fighting became an art. It was considered a dignified profession.



It was only natural that all those big powerful men working in the woods liked to strut and flex their muscles while they watched others out of the corners of their eyes to see if they might have a "chip on their shoulders." In the camps, if a man threw himself down on another man's bunk (whether drunk or sober) or sat at his place at the table, it was an open insult and reason for a brawl to start at once. In some camps, the cooks forbade talking during the meals in order to avoid arguments and fights.

Every Saturday night in Austin, Bev Carter, who ran a butcher shop where the Nuschke Store now stands, and his next door neighbor, Oscar Claflin, always strutted up and down Main Street arm in arm, carrying the proverbial chip on their shoulders. They were both very tall and powerful, but so were a lot of other hicks who had come into town for the evening, so the chips flew eventually.

They could sit in camp and talk about the Marquess of Queensberry rules where no man could kick, pull hair, hit below the belt, or jump a man when he was down, but when they were full of liquor, especially of the squirrel or red-eye variety, which was

sold by one Costello bootlegger by the name of Billy Jones, they did not remember the Marquess of Queensberry rules.

The offender started by swinging with a right and a left until his opponent's eyes were black, a few teeth were out, and he was as groggy as a swing under an apple tree. Then came the finishing process. Every hick wore "corked" (calked) shoes. As soon as the opponent was down, the victor jumped him, often corking him in the head and face into unconsciousness. Worse yet, at one time, it became popular to chew one ear off the vanquished man on the ground so he would remember his complete defeat when he came to. Joe Garcey, Dan O'Brien, Bob Krebs, Jewell Beck, Billy Mattison, and Jack Swope eventually came out of the lumbering era with only one ear.

Other big fighters at this time were "Peck" Hamilton, Matt Ward, Pat Kilday, "Dirty" Jim Cassiday, the Mundy brothers, and Jim Higgins. Some of these fighters boasted of their prowess and the number of ears they had chewed off just as the killers in the old west liked to show the nicks on the handles of their guns.

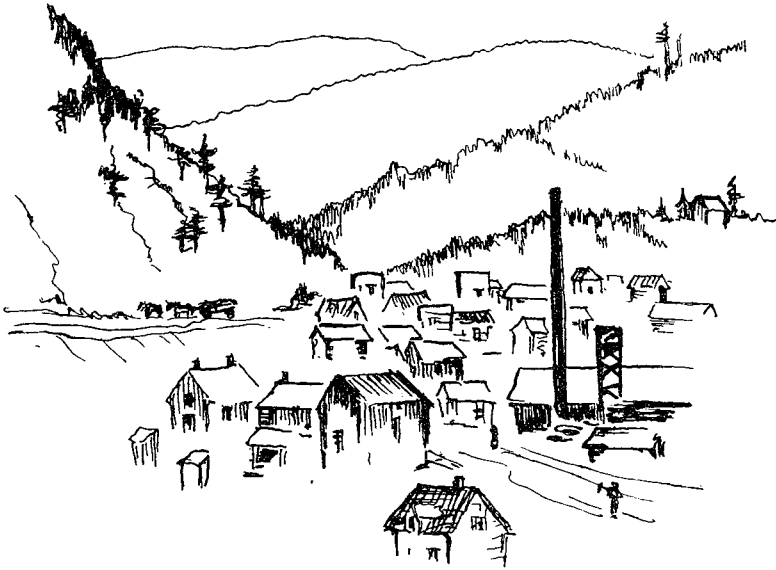
Toward the end of the lumbering days, the big fighters were young Johnny Greenan, Frank Reeves, Jack O'Brien, a fellow by the name of Grover who had only one eye, and Sam Spencer, rated by many as the best fighter of them all.

The writer saw the end of the fighting career of Sam Spencer at Sweden Valley in 1902. As was nearly always the case, the big fighters were undefeated as long as they left liquor alone because a sober man had an advantage over an antagonist who did not have a clear brain.

The writer went to school one year at Sweden Valley and the schoolhouse was close to the village saloon. One winter morning when the snow was deep and the children were on the schoolhouse porch for the recess period, a crowd of men suddenly came out of the saloon and formed a ring in the hotel yard. In the ring were two men fighting a terrible battle. The fight had started in the saloon when a young fellow who hated Sam waited until he saw Sam taking one drink too many. The bartender threw them out of the barroom—hence the fight in the yard. Sam's young assailant, who probably could not have licked a man his own age or size, had trouble handling Sam Spencer when drunk. When he saw Sam was getting the best of him, he drew a knife and stabbed

him fifteen times with not one man in that crowd raising a protesting hand. Finally Sam was left in the center of a large area of bloody snow, supposedly dying. Somebody carried him back into the hotel. His assailant, crazed by the deed he had committed, jumped into his cutter and fled the scene standing up, whipping a beautiful driving horse unmercifully as they went out of sight. Sam did not die. When April came with the first spring thaws, he was out again and ready to go back to work in the woods. He was hired immediately by Nate Hinkley who had a job on Lyman Run. Tough men were those fighters.

Some older readers of this article, if they come from Potter County, will notice many familiar names among those big fighters of the early lumbering camps, and will smile when they also remember that when the fighting era passed, most of these same men married sweet, gentle women, raised fine families, and became model husbands.



Austin (before the flood). From an old photograph.