

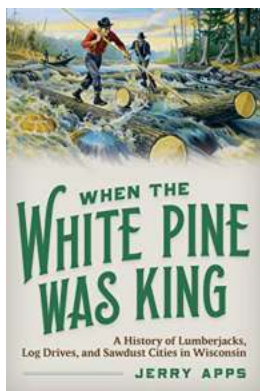
The Fascinating History of Lumberjacks, Log Drives, and Sawdust Cities in Wisconsin



Wisconsin, known as America's Dairyland, has a rich history that goes beyond just cows and cheese. In the late 19th century, the state played a pivotal role in the lumber industry. The massive forests of Wisconsin provided an abundance of timber resources that attracted lumberjacks from all around the country.

The Rise of the Lumberjacks

In the mid-1800s, as settlers moved westward, the demand for lumber grew exponentially. Logging camps sprouted up across Wisconsin, and these camps became the homes for the brave and rugged lumberjacks who risked their lives in the dangerous wilderness.



When the White Pine Was King: A History of Lumberjacks, Log Drives, and Sawdust Cities in Wisconsin by Jerry Apps (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 27179 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 192 pages
Screen Reader : Supported

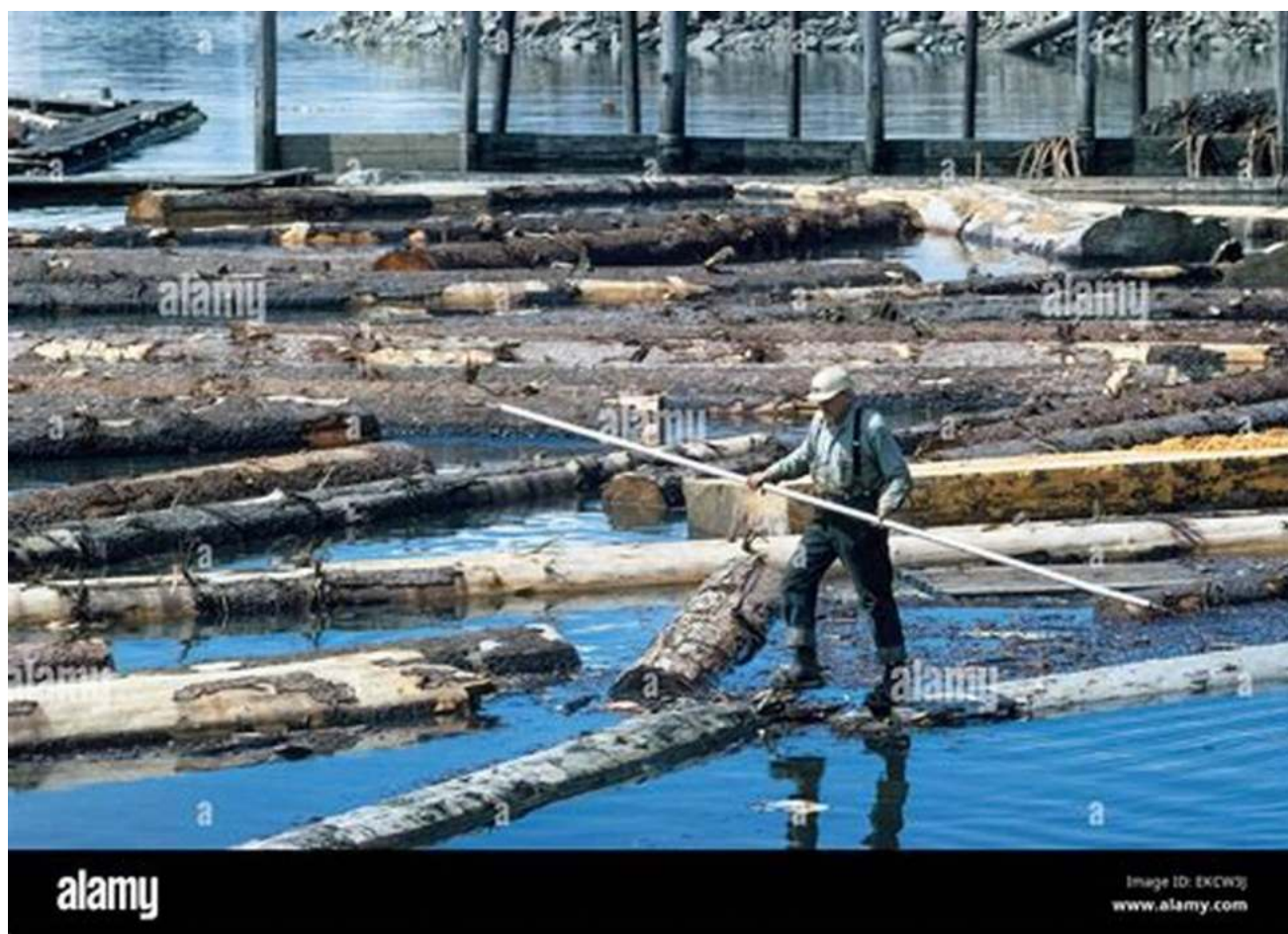


The lumberjacks, often of Scandinavian descent, were known for their incredible strength, agility, and skill in felling trees. Equipped with axes and crosscut saws, they would chop down enormous pine trees, some as tall as 200 feet, with great precision. Their work was physically demanding, and they endured harsh conditions year-round to meet the growing demand for timber.

The Log Drives

Once the trees were felled, the next challenge was transporting the logs to the sawmills. Before the advent of railroads, the most efficient method was to float the logs down rivers. This gave birth to the log drives.

The log drives were spectacular events that witnessed hundreds of logs floating down the waterways. It required tremendous skill from the rivermen, who guided the logs with long poles, avoiding obstacles and preventing jams. These log drives were not without peril, as the rivermen faced the constant risk of injury or even death.



Thousands of logs would be gathered near the rivers during the winter months, and as soon as the snow melted, the log drives would commence. It was a mesmerizing sight for the locals who gathered alongside the riverbanks to witness this grand spectacle.

Sawdust Cities

As the timber industry thrived, sawmills sprang up all across Wisconsin. The boom in the lumber business led to the establishment of numerous sawdust cities. These makeshift towns emerged as hubs where the lumber workers, known as sawyers, millwrights, and carpenters, built homes for their families.

The sawdust cities were vibrant places with bustling streets, saloons, hotels, and stores selling provisions to the hardworking lumberjacks. These communities were characterized by sawdust-covered roads and an air filled with the smell of freshly cut timber.

Decline of the Lumber Industry

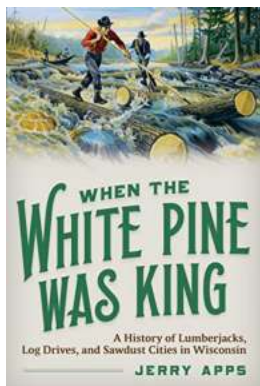
The lumber industry in Wisconsin reached its peak in the late 1800s, but it eventually declined as the supply of timber diminished. The once-thriving sawdust cities slowly faded away, and many of them became ghost towns.

However, the legacy of the lumberjacks and the sawdust cities lives on. Today, Wisconsin maintains its love for the outdoors and its appreciation for its rich history. Efforts are made to preserve the remaining logging camps and sawmills as reminders of the state's golden era in the lumber industry.

The history of lumberjacks, log drives, and sawdust cities in Wisconsin is a tale of adventure, hard work, and perseverance. The brave men who dedicated their lives to this industry played a significant role in shaping Wisconsin's identity as more than just a dairy state.

As we walk through the forests and witness the majestic pines that still stand, we are reminded of the days when the sound of axes echoed through the woods and the rivers carried the lifeblood of the timber industry. The history of the lumberjacks is forever etched into the story of Wisconsin, and it deserves to be celebrated and cherished.

So the next time you enjoy the warmth of a fire or marvel at a beautifully crafted wooden piece, take a moment to appreciate the toil and legacy of the lumberjacks who once walked the very land you stand upon.



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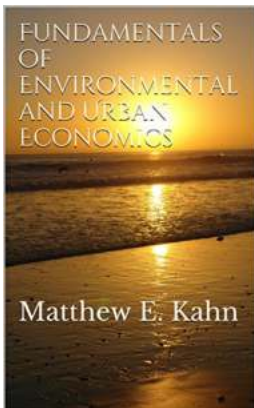


“From the ring of the ax in the woods, to the scream of the saw blade in the mill, to the founding of many of Wisconsin’s communities, Jerry Apps does an outstanding job bringing Wisconsin’s logging and lumbering heritage to life.”—
Kerry P. Bloedorn, director, Rhinelander Pioneer Park Historical Complex

For more than half a century, logging, lumber production, and affiliated enterprises in Wisconsin’s Northwoods provided jobs for tens of thousands of Wisconsinites and wealth for many individuals. The industry cut through the lives of nearly every Wisconsin citizen, from an immigrant lumberjack or camp cook in the Chippewa Valley to a Suamico sawmill operator, an Oshkosh factory worker to a Milwaukee banker.

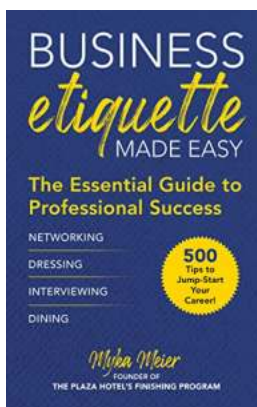
When the White Pine Was King tells the stories of the heyday of logging: of lumberjacks and camp cooks, of river drives and deadly log jams, of sawmills and lumber towns and the echo of the ax ringing through the Northwoods as yet another white pine crashed to the ground. He explores the aftermath of the logging era, including efforts to farm the cutover (most of them doomed to fail), successful reforestation work, and the legacy of the lumber and wood products industries, which continue to fuel the state's economy.

Enhanced with dozens of historic photos, When the White Pine Was King transports readers to the lumber boom era and reveals how the lessons learned in the vast northern forestlands continue to shape the region today.



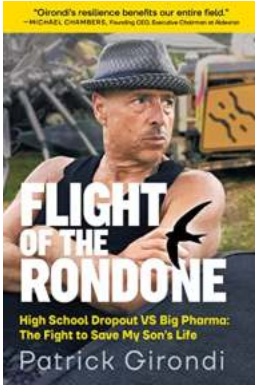
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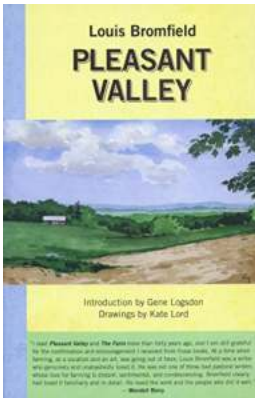
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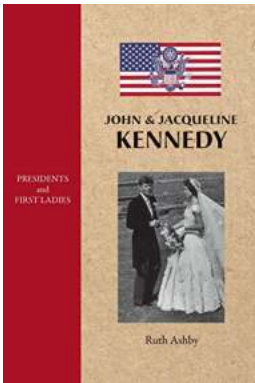
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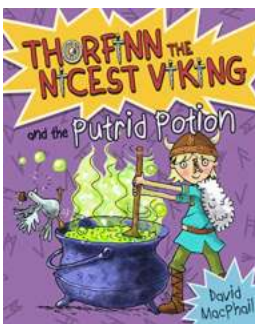
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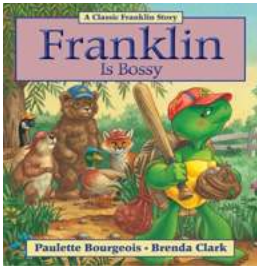
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