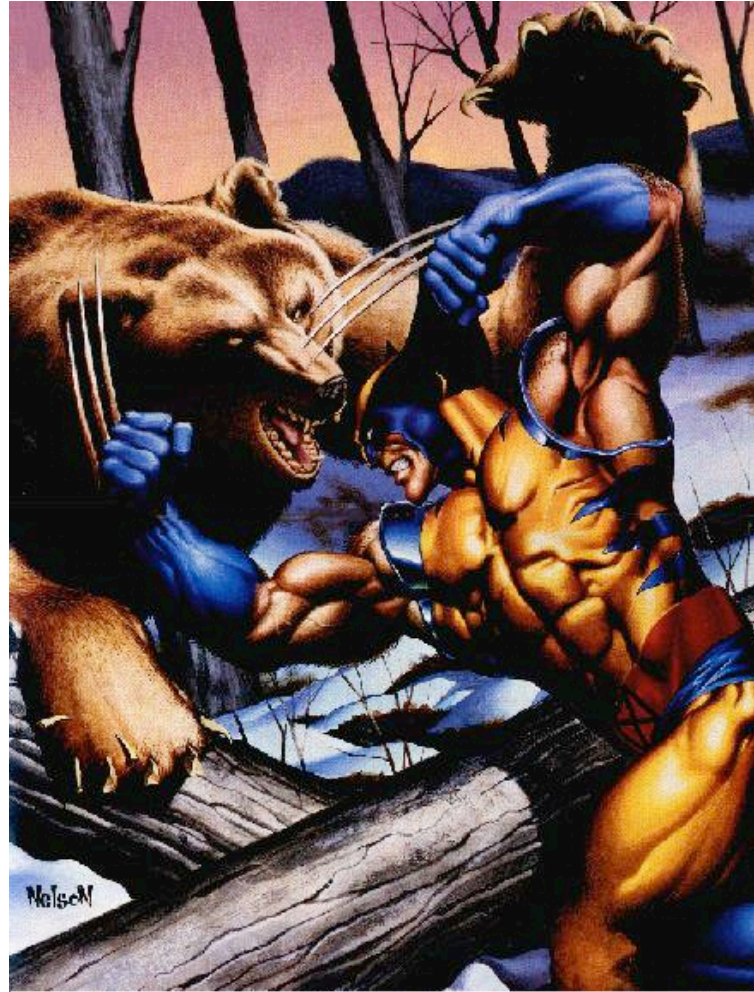


Lumberjacks

Harvesters of the Land or Environmental Visigoths



By Matt Kuhn

Logging In Vermont

Logging has long been an important profession in Vermont. The methods, equipment, operations, industries and landscape impacts surrounding logging were numerous and varied considerably. These activities have impacted Vermont landscapes drastically, leaving marks still observed today. This presentation tells the story of these activities and their impacts. Hopefully this story will interest you and make you want to learn more about logging history and it's role in landscape change. LS12007



Equipment



The equipment used for harvesting trees has evolved over time. One of the most traditional methods is seen above as a man fells a tree with an axe at the Lumberjack Roundup in Salisbury Vermont, 1962. LS09092

Saws



Hand saws were used to both fell trees and, as seen here, cut them to length as well. These men are using a two-handed crosscut saw. LS05124

Chainsaws



Eventually along came the chainsaw, simultaneously increasing efficiency and danger for loggers. LS08895

Horses



Once trees had been felled, limbed, and cut to length they had to be removed from the woods. Here you can see one of the oldest methods for skidding logs as a man leads a team of horses from the woods. LS08979

Tractors



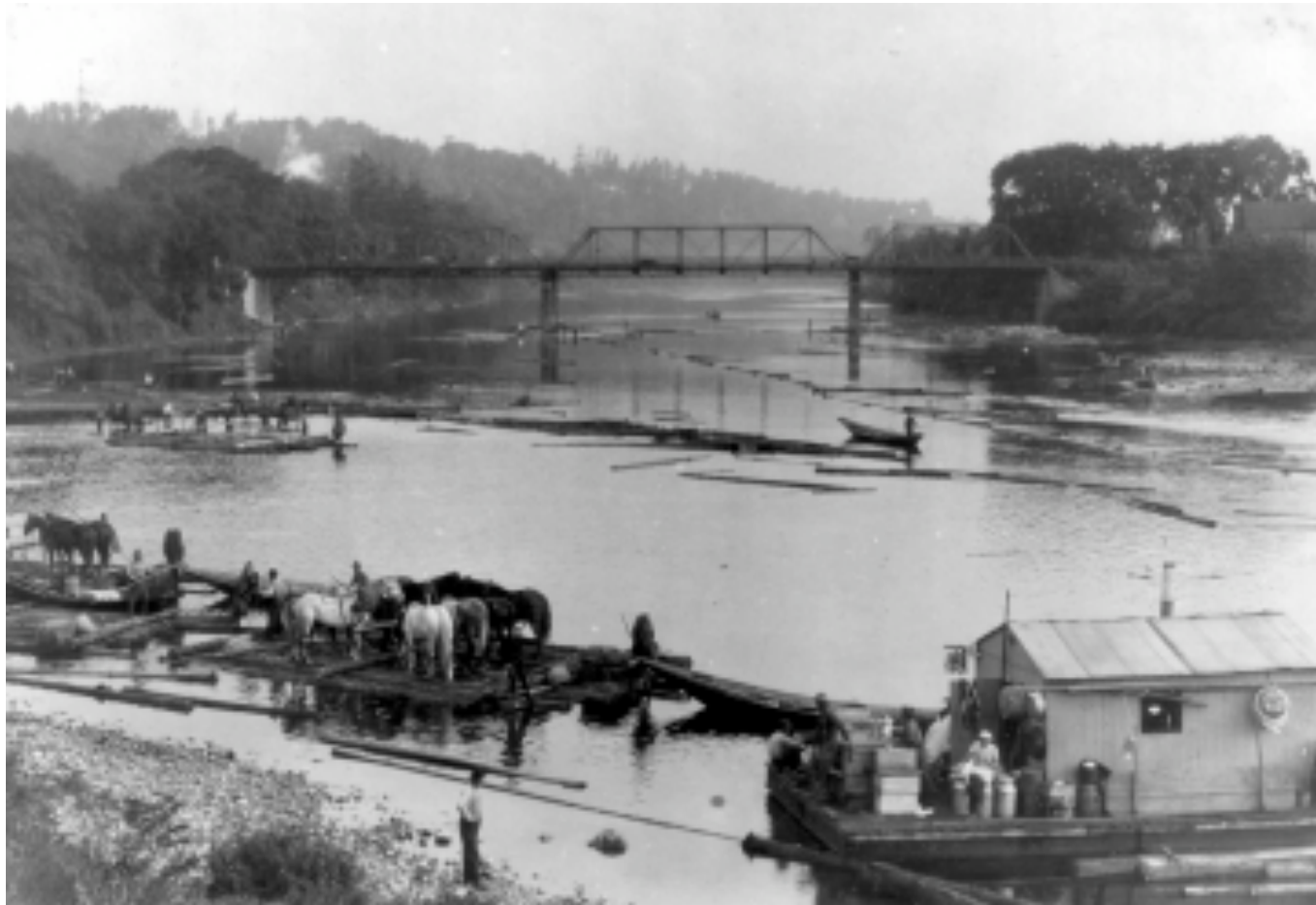
Powerful Tractors were used to transport trains of logs. LS07965

Trucks



They were transported with trucks as well. LS11705

Rivers



Rivers were a very important for transportation, sorting, and storage of logs. This picture shows a river logging camp. Men in canoes are seen grouping and directing logs. LS09624

River Hogs



These men called river hogs had the precarious job of driving the logs down the river. They followed the logs down the river on river banks or riding on logs. This job lasted from sunup to sundown. Many of these men lost their lives in the process.

(3)(4) LS08700

Breaking Logjams



As logs were driven downstream they often became hung up in what was called a logjam. The men had to “pick” the logs that they thought would loosen the jam. Usually when the jam was freed it caused the logs to rush downstream and posed a serious risk to the men riding logs. In some cases dynamite was used to free the jams. (2)(3) LS03725

Tree climbers



One of the more interesting ways of taking down a tree. This logger has climbed this tree with the use of a harness and is in the process of cutting it down piece by piece from the top down. This method was used when a tree was located near something that could be damaged if felled traditionally. LS11979

Fuel wood Harvesting



I-1 Every farmer put up wood - sometimes with powered sawing machines.

Harvesting fuel wood was a necessary part of life for early settlers of Vermont. These men are in the process of putting up wood. The wood had to be cut to length, called bucking, then split, and stacked. LS02630

Fuelwood Harvesters



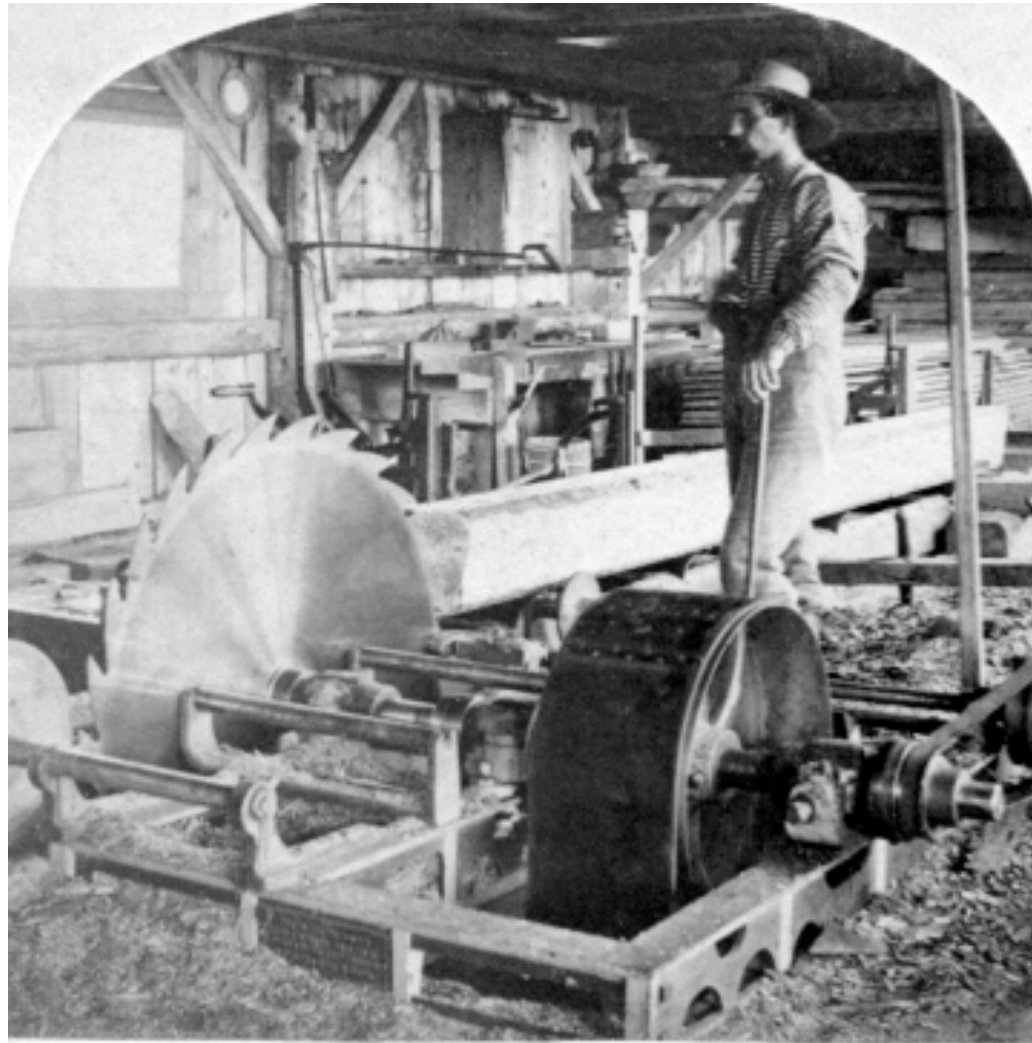
Here is a larger operation of fuelwood harvesting. LS08701

Sawmills



One of the major destination of logs were sawmills. Here the logs were milled into lumber for construction. LS10896

Inside the Mill



"Where they saw."

This man called the sawyer operated the circular saw. LS00414

Water Power



Water power was used to power mills. This image shows a series of dams and a paper mill. The dammed water was used to turn waterwheels that would in turn power the machinery. LS02273

Logging Camps

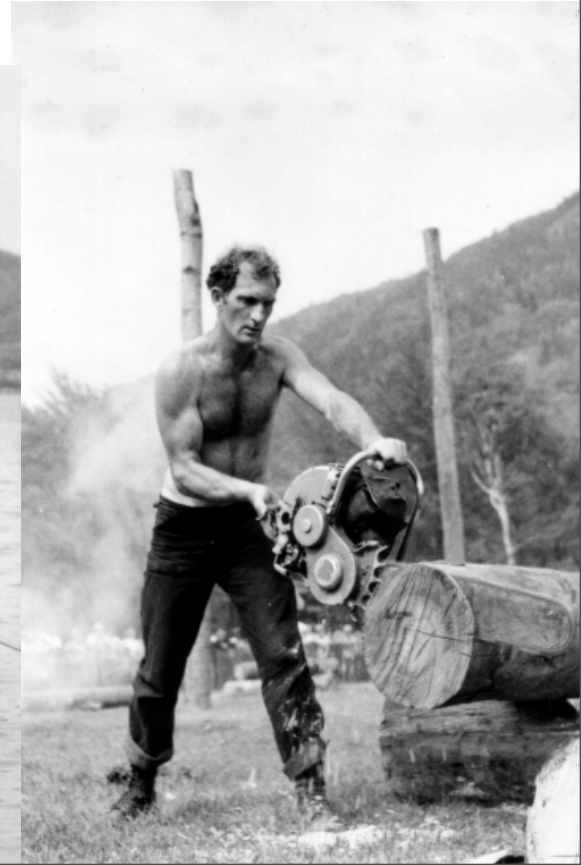


This picture depicts just how large logging camps were. These camps often included churches, schools, dining facilities, stores, doctors offices, stables, and equipment storage facilities. These camps were moved often as the occupants cleared the land surrounding the camp. (1) LS08691

Lumberjack Roundup: Some times lumberjacks need to kick back and have fun. The lumberjack roundup in Salisbury Vermont was one way this was accomplished.



LS 05600, 08939, 05596, 08938



Landscape Impacts



There were many impacts on the landscape due to the activities described in this presentation, typically negative. This was due to poor practices such as clear cutting as seen above. Clear cutting lead to erosion, habitat destruction and sediment deposition in rivers and lakes. This image shows damage from the 1938 hurricane. LS00411

Landscape Impacts continued

Before logs could be transported downstream, the streams had to be cleared. This practice seriously altered the natural system of the rivers. (2)

The building of dams caused buildup of sediment behind the dam. They interrupted the movement of fish up and down these rivers. They sometimes led to floods when a dam broke or overflowed.

Discharge from paper mills was deposited directly into rivers. This discharge included chemicals that were hazardous to wildlife and humans alike. This discharge was often warmer than the river water and affected oxygen levels in the stream leading to the loss of some wildlife.

Riparian zones were often removed so the river hogs could have access to the river banks. This led to riverbank erosion and increased runoff and pollution.

Resources:

1. Harvesting the Hardwoods: Logging, Lumbering, and Forestry in Southern Appalachia.

<http://www.etsu.edu/cass/Archives/Subjects/Hardwoods/intro.htm>

2. Logging on the Connecticut River
New England Transportation Institute and Museum

http://www.newenglandtransportationmuseum.org/river_logging.html

3. Logging and the Use of Rivers

<http://www.geo.msu.edu/geo333/river-logging.html>

4. The Sawmill

Lumbering in Michigan: Michigan Historical Museum

<http://sos.state.mi.us/history/museum/explore/museums/hismus/prehist/lumber/sawmill.html>