

*A Thrilling Story of the Adventures and Dangers of the Lumberman's  
Life in Canada*

By **PERCY LONGHURST**

**W**HEN a Canadian lumberjack talks about a "drive" he does not mean a pleasant outing behind a fast-trotting horse, or a run in a motor-car. Each of these can be exhilarating, but the lumberjack's drive is a whirl of fierce excitement. Sometimes it is a fight all the way, and more often than not someone gets hurt.

The gang Steve Chandler worked with had piled the great tree trunks, that the summer had been spent in cutting down, beside the river. And when the river was swollen by the autumn rains, the "drive" commenced. The "sticks" were heaved and tumbled into the rushing water which would carry them down to Lake Nipissing. Once there, they would be taken over by the company to whom the boss lumberman had contracted to sell his season's "cut."

Getting the logs down to the lake formed the "drive." And if there were a jam and they didn't get down, or arrived after the agreed-upon time, Big Ben Burnet's contract was broken. The company would pay him nothing.

If all goes well, the boss lumberman makes a small fortune. But if the logs get hung up in a "jam," or for some reason aren't delivered on time, then he goes broke. Next season sees him cadging a living around the hotels, or working as an ordinary lumberjack.

But no decent boss ever went broke if his

men could help it. They will risk drowning and broken limbs, work like madmen for forty-eight hours on end, wet to the skin, half-frozen and without grub—but they will get the drive through—somehow.

If they've a grudge against their employer or the river boss—the foreman who has charge of the drive—then it is a mighty poor chance the boss has of seeing any money to repay him for six months' work.

Big Ben's gang swore by their employer; he was a white man all through; the river boss, Tom Tower, they tolerated. He was a man with more nerves than a lumberjack ought to have, irritable and fault finding. Worse than that, he showed he had little trust in the gang—was continually worrying and prying around, suggesting his belief that they would not work as they ought unless he was continually looking them up.

And if there is one kind of man the lumberjack despises it is the boss who insinuates that he isn't up to his work. He'd rather have a boss who told him outright that he was a lazy lubber and was prepared to prove as much with his fists.

For the lumberjack has pride. He hates being bossed by a fellow whom he does not take to be at least as good a man as himself. If the boss is a better, then the lumberjack respects him.

For four days the "drive" went well enough.



Down came the log with a mighty "Swish!" Steve, jumping from its path, came into collision with Tower, and went down in the water. (See this page.)

Then Joe Lemoine, who had been sent on ahead, came back and reported that at Elbow Corner the water had shoaled and they'd have to look lively to avoid a jam.

Which made Tower get rattled.

He began fussing around, finding fault, showing rivermen more experienced than himself how to do their work. He tackled Steve Chandler one day.

"That ain't the way, kid, to handle a peavey," he yelled, his eye falling on Steve, who was engaged in prying a big stick from a snaggy shallow. "Land sakes, who taught you?"

Steve Chandler might be a kid, that is, he was no more than eighteen, nearly six feet of slim strength of the wire and whipcord type, and with merry blue eyes that seemed to look upon most happenings as a good joke. But more than half of his years had been spent in a lumber camp or on the river. The old hands called him "Kid" all right, but they knew he owned a man's experience.

"Taught me, boss! Why, no one," he returned good-temperedly. "I just picked it up. What's wrong?"

"Everything yer doin'!" snapped Tower. "Here, let me show ye!"

He snatched the peavey from Steve's fingers.

"You ain't puttin' all yer strength into it, an' what yer are is in the wrong place," asserted the river boss.

"Go ahead," smiled Steve, splashing through the water to give Tower room. There was a grin on his lips.

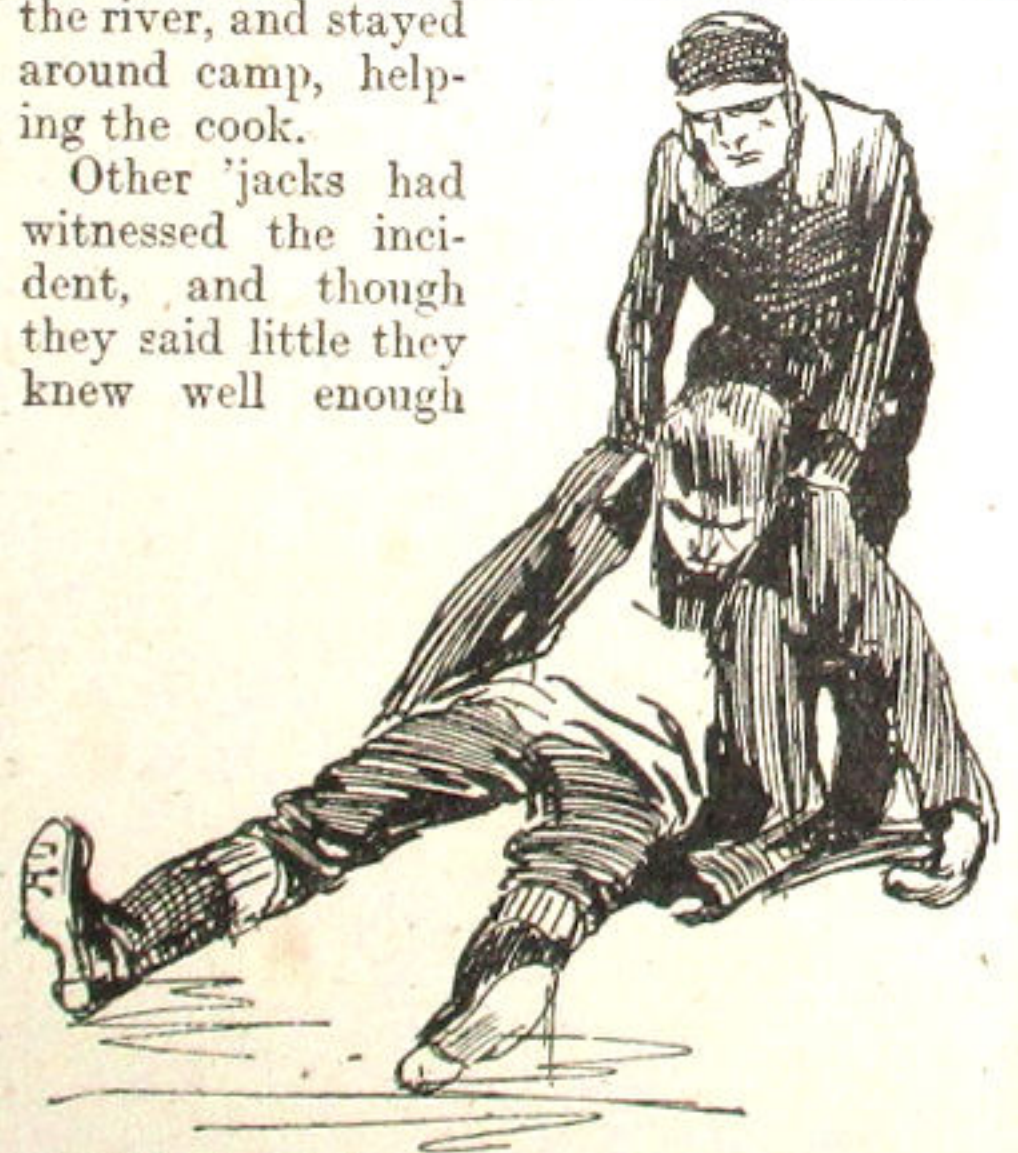
Down went the peavey under the stuck log—Tower put all his weight into a mighty heave, and up went one end of the log, nicely balanced athwart a snag. But it did not slide forward, and when it had reached its highest point down it came with a mighty "swish!" Then it rolled, and Steve, jumping from its path, came into sudden collision with Tower, who also had jumped—blindly. Tower was the heavier by fifty odd pounds and Steve went down in the water, and the log on top of his legs.

Five seconds later he had regained his feet, his face suddenly white and drawn with pain.

"Hurt?" exclaimed Tower. Then he growled, "It's clumsy people allus do get into trouble."

Steve limped away. His left leg had narrowly escaped being broken, and the next day he could barely move. He was no use on the river, and stayed around camp, helping the cook.

Other 'jacks had witnessed the incident, and though they said little they knew well enough



At midday Leggatt was fished out with a broken thigh. (See page 41.)



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### RISKY WORK!

The picturesque life of the Canadian lumberman is full of peril, and calls for the greatest pluck and skill

the river boss's folly had lost to the gang one of its hardest-working members.

Two days later the cook moved camp to Elbow Corner. As Lemoine had reported, it was a likely place for a jam.

At the Corner the river made an abrupt swing to the left. A hundred yards above, a small islet lay dead in the centre of the river, and just above that a sudden drop in the river bed formed a rapid. Unfortunately, the drop did not extend wholly across the river, and it was quite likely that the greater flow of water where it did occur would take the bulk of the logs and swing them into the restricted waterway produced by the existence of the island.

With more logs than it would accommodate, one of the passages past the island was likely to get choked, while the passage on the other side would receive few, if any, sticks.

"Two men to keep th' waterway clear," ordered Tower, after an examination of the situation. "You, Leggatt an' Red Joe'll do."

Now this was hazardous work, unnecessarily hazardous, as every 'jack knew. With the rushing water and the hurtling logs, the men trying to keep the waterway from getting choked were gambling with death. Leggatt told Red Joe so, and Joe nodded agreement. But they went. It is not the way of the riverman to shirk a dangerous task.

What followed was as expected. Leggatt and Red Joe failed to keep the passage open—

couldn't do it even with two more men's help. At midday Leggatt was fished out with a broken thigh, and in the neglect of the work consequent upon his rescue the logs jammed.

Tower saw the disaster and lost his nerve and his temper. He cursed and bellowed, issued contradictory orders. Finally, all the 'jacks quietly left the job.

"You've caused th' trouble; you find a way out of it," the men told Tower when he wildly expostulated.

"Can you see what ought to be done?" Tower said at last to Steve, sitting by the cook's fire.

"I could have told you what to do half a day earlier," Steve answered. "I guess it's too late now."

But he went limping to where the 'jacks sat smoking, and for ten minutes he talked to them. Then each man got up and moved to the jam.

"What are you going to do?" Tower asked, coming forward.

They didn't trouble to answer.

While six worked at the jam, trying to pry it loose, Steve and a handful of

others, their lives worth hardly a minute's purchase, jumped from log to log as it came shooting from the rapid, and turned it into the open waterway on the other side of the island, thus preventing a further accumulation at the jam.

And what such work meant to the kid with his injured leg a lumberjack could guess, but only Steve himself really knew.

But the drive was saved. And until the lake was reached Tower was a dumb man.



The Lumberjacks jumped from log to log, as they came shooting from the rapid. (See this page)

TWO LEAVES FROM HARRY WHARTON'S AUTOGRAPH ALBUM

May every happiness be yores Wharton! I've always  
been one of yore stoutest pals. Could you advance me  
five bob on my postal order?  
W.G. Bunter

Life is mostly froth an' bubble  
Two things stand like stone:-  
Dodgin' duty at the double  
Leavin' work alone  
Herbert Mauleverer

I dont as a rule rook kondescend to write ha-  
ughtygraphs in fags books: but hears a bit  
of advice for you Wharton:-  
never be cheeky to yore superiors, ammongst  
whom is Horace Coker.

"If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
With sixty seconds worth of distance run,  
Yours is the earth and everything that's in it,  
and, what is more, you'll be a Man my son!"  
(R. Kipling) H.H. Zurcher

Dear Wharton I autograph, but I cant: I've  
sprained my wrist in the gym.  
Peter Todd

Shoot straight, and hit the target every time!  
I did so in the Rockiss, in my prime.  
Although some scoffers are inclined to doubt,  
There's not a better marksman than Paul Prout.

What i says is this here - May you  
go down to prosperity, Master Wharton!  
William Gosling

I wish you from my heartfulness the bestfulness  
of luckfulness  
I much admire your smartfulness, your zestfulness, and  
pluckfulness!  
And always rememberfully bear in mind, my esteemed  
chum, that it is a long lane that has no silver lining,  
as your English proverb has it.

Murree Jamsel Ram Singh  
I kinder sorter guess and calculate that you're a galoot  
who'll go far - like the merchant who invented dynamite!  
Fisher Tarleton Fish

Yours till the last bellow - Bull

Eat not to live, but live to eat - That's my motto!  
When are you going to invite me over to Greyfriars  
for a little snack?  
Bessie Bunter

You're a cheeky young cub, Wharton, and you can  
take a hundred lines for leaving your autograph album  
on my table for me to write in!  
Gerald Loder

We'll always cling together like the ivy  
Down which Loder climbs at night!  
I'm rather afraid that the metre of this verse  
is several yards too long.  
But I've got the rhyme all right  
Bob Cherry

Bunter had a little lamb,  
And promptly came to grief;  
Said Billy Bunter, "After this  
I'd better stick to beef!"  
Dick Penfold