

# Caroga Lake The Durey Years

## The Durey Purchase

The story of Canada Lake resumes the day after the bankruptcy sale of the property of Alfred Dolge. On October 6, 1904, the Fulton County Republican revealed that Cyrus Durey and the Caroga Land and Lumber Company were behind the purchase made by Attorney DeWitt C. Moore.

### CANADA LAKE PROPERTY FALLS INTO GOOD HANDS

BEAUTY OF RESORT NOT TO BE MARRED

#### Purchased By Caroga Lumber and Land Company of This City

Present Prospects Are That Canada Lake Will Become One of the Leading Adirondack Resorts – A Trolley Line to That Section is a Possibility – Land Company is Composed of David A. Wells, James S. Ireland, Cyrus Durey and Supervisor Frank Sherman

The sale of Adirondack lands surrounding Canada Lake and located in the town of Caroga, which was struck off to Attorney Dewitt C. Moore last Thursday afternoon for \$29,000, was consummated at the court house at 10 a.m. Friday, to which time the sale was adjourned. At that time Mr. Moore appeared as attorney for David A. Wells, of this city, whose check for \$5,920, the required per cent of the purchase price according to the conditions of the sale, was presented to Referee J. Keck.

Mr. Wells is one of the members of the Caroga Lumber and Land company which is soon to be organized and which is the real purchaser of the property. The company is to be composed of David A. Wells, James S. Ireland, and Postmaster Cyrus Durey, of this city, and Supervisor Frank Sherman of Caroga. The amount of capital stock has not been determined as yet, but will probably be \$40,000. It is stated by members

of the company that the timber on the south side of the lake will be lumbered, but that the cutting will be done with due regard to the landscape features of the section and to the preservation of Canada Lake as a summer resort. The cottage lots around the lake which have been in great demand, but which could not be purchased on account of the tie-up of the Dolge property, will in all probability now be offered for sale. The fact that the property has been purchased by this company will be a source of much gratification to many Canada Lake cottage owners in this city and Gloversville, who are now assured that the beauty of the immediate section will not be marred and they will have an opportunity to protect their own property.

The prospects for the future of Canada Lake as one of the leading Adirondack resorts are bright, not only from the purchase of the property by the Caroga Lumber and Land company but there is a railroad rumor afloat that may mean a great deal to that section.

One of the New York attorneys who was present at the sale stated to a Republican reporters Friday that he had it on pretty good authority that the plan is under way for running a trolley line from Gloversville to Dolgeville, and that it will be promoted by the New York Central Railroad company although not directly. The plan as he understood it, is to connect Gloversville and Dolgeville to Little Falls into a trolley, which would carry passengers in the daytime and freight and express at night.

While the proposed line from Gloversville to Dolgeville might not go directly to Canada Lake, it would go within two miles of the resort and would be a great improvement over the present means of reaching the lake. This trolley line it is claimed, would furnish the connecting link between Syracuse and Albany and is much desired by the Central officials.

### CANADA LAKE PROPERTY

The land surrounding Canada Lake which aggregates nearly 5,000 acres and was sold Friday to the

Caroga Lumber and Land Co., was purchased by Alfred Dolge on June 17, 1892, and consists of the following tracts of land: Great Lot 59 on the south side of the lake and Great Lot 60 on the north side of which were sold to Mr. Dolge by Hon. William Claflin, ex-governor of Massachusetts; Great Lot 65 located on the north side of the lake including West lake and Great Lot 66 on the south side west of 59 through which the outlet of Canada Lake passes including Lily Lake which were sold to Dolge by Simmons & Van Nest [sic]. Mr. Claflin also sold to Dolge sub-divisions 5 and 7 in Great Lot 52, which are located on the east side of Green Lake so that the great lots and subdivisions contain all of Green Lake, the Great Lot 60 extending a short distance easterly of Green Lake. The land and water area of the purchase aggregates about 4,000 acres of which about 3,000 acres is land, some of it well timbered.

In the early part of 1897 Mr. Dolge organized the Caroga Land company with a capital stock of \$60,000 and conveyed all these lands to the Caroga Land company, which executed a mortgage for \$60,000 to secure the bonds for that amount to be issued by the company.

These bonds were issued and it is understood that \$50,000 of these bonds passed into the hands of Walter N. Kernan as assignee for the benefit of the creditors of Alfred Dolge at the time of his failure and \$10,000 of bonds were held as security by Mrs. Kate Bidwell, of Brooklyn for a loan.

Mr. Dolge also organized the Auskerada Park club as an offshoot of the Caroga Land company, the members of which were to have lots at \$500 per lot and to have the privilege of hunting and fishing on the lands. It will be remembered that in 1897 Mr. Dolge issued illustrated pamphlets advertising the Auskerada Park club to foreclose the mortgage.

Judge J. Keck, of this city, was appointed by the court as referee in the action to sell the property and after the sale to take testimony as to who are the legal holders and owners of bonds held by Plaintiff Brown as trustee and the amount due to each owner and to make a report to court; also to report as to the commissions and allowances or other sums which Plaintiff Brown as trustee may be legally entitled to after debiting him with such as he may heretofore have received.

The "soon to be organized" Caroga Land and Lumber Company existed mostly on paper and for a very short time.

There is certainly a mystery surrounding it.

Frank Sherman was running a lumber company at Canada Lake in 1904. He built a fine home for himself on the lake shore, and seemed to be prepared to settle into the business of lumbering at the mill site between Canada Lake and Green Lake. He superintended the building of the mill and seemed to be prospering.

Then, in 1908, Frank Sherman built a dam on

Pine Lake and moved his mill there. Some of those interviewed to determine what happened say the Cy Durey drove Frank Sherman away from Canada Lake. In Durey's own words, "When my company erected its mill at Green Lake in 1904, there was a recurrence of industrial life and since the timber available for use of that mill has been cut, the life of the Town lies in its summer business, which business has marvelously increased since the construction of the improved roads into the Town." There is no mention of the role Frank Sherman played in the mill.

On the 3rd of July, 1912, the Caroga Land and Lumber Company ceased to exist and the Durey Land and Lumber Company was incorporated. The company was capitalized with \$30,000 and 300 shares distributed as follows: Cy Durey, 100 shares; James S. Ireland, 20 shares; Donald Frasier, 20 shares; William H. Flack, 40 shares; William C. Mills, 20 shares.

Between July 3 and 26 when the incorporating papers were filed, Mills dropped out of the company. The corporation was to begin business with \$20,000 capital. Frank Sherman and Dave Wells were no longer in the picture.

### Cyrus Durey

So much has been said of Cy Durey and the things he did in the Town of Caroga, that perhaps his biography would best be served by quoting an article from the Johnstown paper which was printed during his lifetime.



#### HON. CYRUS DUREY HAS BEEN IMPORTANT FIGURE IN FULTON COUNTY'S PROGRESS

Began Political Career as Supervisor;  
Was Also Clerk of Board  
SERVED IN CONGRESS  
Has Been Capable Leader of  
Republican Party of County for Years

When discussion centers around Fulton county and those men most prominent in its development and progress, the name of the Hon. Cyrus Durey, of Albany and Pine Lake invariably comes to mind. For his outstanding career and the satisfying forward movement of this region have come marching side by side through the years.



Former Congressman from the 25th New York district, lumberman of extensive interests for many years, and now serving as collector of internal revenue, with headquarters at Albany. Mr. Durey's life has been fruitful in accomplishment and service.

#### STATE-WIDE REPUTATION

Mr. Durey, who has a state-wide reputation as collector of internal revenue, is a native of Fulton county. He was born May 16, 1864, in Caroga, the son of Josiah and Anna Van Buren (Bradt) Durey, who reared seven children. His mother was born in Glen, Montgomery county, but his father was an Englishman who came to this country as a young man about 1840.

After receiving a common school education Cyrus Durey attended the Johnstown Academy, from which he was graduated in the class of 1880, being the first person to receive a diploma granted by this institution. For four years he taught school, then turned his attention to the lumber business, in which he has been engaged ever since. Mr. Durey's participation in public life, covering a long period of years, has entitled him to a position among the leading citizens of his county and consideration as one of the Republican chiefs of this state.

#### POSTMASTER OF JOHNSTOWN

He began his career in this direction as supervisor of Fulton county for three years and was also clerk of the board for a year. From 1898 to 1906 he was postmaster at Johnstown and in November of the latter year successfully contested the election for the post of representative to the 60th Congress from the 25th New York district. He was re-elected to the 61st Congress.

Mr. Durey is a Republican and has long been a capable leader for his party. In 1904-06 he served as a member of the Republican State committee and has held an important place in the councils of his party ever since.

Mr. Durey is not married. He lives in his Summer home at Pine Lake during part of the year and divides the remaining months between Johnstown and Albany. He is a member and past master of Caroga Lodge, No. 300, F & A.M., and is likewise affiliated with numerous fraternal orders and social clubs. A student and a reader, Mr. Durey rejoices in the possession of an unusually fine private library, which is the source of much of his pleasure and recreation when his duties enable him to remain at home.

#### LEADER FOR 30 YEARS

He has been a leader of the Republican party for 30 years in Fulton county. One of his greatest achievements was the building of the Town of Caroga from an almost unknown hamlet to a place that annually attracts thousands of visitors.

As president of the Durey Land and Lumber company, which conducted immense lumbering operations in the lower Adirondack section, Mr. Durey directed a firm the holdings of which embrace thou-

sands of acres of mountain and forest lands. Most of this has been appropriated by the state and made part of the great Adirondack forest preserve.

Mr. Durey first was elected to Congress in 1907 and re-elected in 1908. While in Congress he served on the committees on Banking and Currency, Land Claims, the World's Fair, Postoffices and Post Roads. As a member of a sub-committee of Postoffices, Mr. Durey co-operated in the framing of laws under which the Postal Savings bank was inaugurated.

On expiration of his term in Congress, Mr. Durey was named by President Taft as internal revenue collector in the Albany district, in which capacity he served when the income tax law was put into operation. President Harding again appointed him internal revenue collector in 1921.

#### UNDER SEVEN PRESIDENTS

Mr. Durey has held official position under seven presidents, McKinley, Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson, Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover.

Exact as have been his numerous official duties and his business interests, Mr. Durey has found time and inclination for fraternal and social associations with his fellows. He has won many friendships and numerous admirers through the sheer power of personality, which through his life has been one of his fine assets.

Behind the achievements of Mr. Durey and his manifold services to his community, his state and his nation, has been always a devout faith in those about him, in his homeland, and its people. Of his time and efforts he has given freely to many enterprises of public benefit, and the honors which have been his have come justly- the reward of diligence, foresight, and devotion to duty. 🍷



Cartoon by Charles Sarka from a letter dated November 16, 1913 to Paul Bransom.





*The Durey family reunion.*



*The Durey sawmill in 1905.*



## Development at the Lake

The The Durey Land and Lumber was incorporated for the purpose dealing in timber and lumber products and for developing and selling lots around Canada Lake. The effectiveness of the latter effort is demonstrated by the surge of building that occurred in the early twentieth century. Almost every deed bears the title, Durey Land and Lumber Company.

One of the reasons that land sold so well was that roads were built or improved all around the lake. The north shore was paved in 1914 and Cy Durey's political strength is given credit for all the macadam roads in the vicinity.

In 1912, the East Canada Lake Protective Association petitioned the Board of Supervisors to pave the road from Gloversville to Caroga, via Peck's Pond. It was several years before this project was completed and there is little question that the macadamized roads helped the lumber company as much as it did the summer people. With trucks instead of horse drawn sleds winter traffic was impossible and muddy roads in spring and fall meant that most lumber could be shipped

only during the summer months.

The new macadam roads were so important that when Andrew Peck placed a large ad for his seven and eight room cottages in the local paper in 1917, the largest type in the advertisement boasted of the *"NEW MACADAM ROAD FROM GLOVERSVILLE AND JOHNSTOWN TO THE LAKE."* Of course, he also claimed that *"Canada Lake is the most beautiful lake in the Adirondacks, 1600 feet above sea level, and a newly improved summer resort...People trouble with hay fever, asthma, and nervous-breakdowns will find Canada Lake their long-looked-for haven."*

Durey enlarged the saw mill in 1912. With his brother, Guy, who served as Town Supervisor for 26 years, Cy ran the mill actively until 1919 when he moved to Pine Lake. He lived at Pine Lake and Albany until his death in 1933 at the age of 68.

During World War I, the mill employed over a hundred men and operated in two shifts around the clock. To facilitate the lumbering operation and to improve the lake for summer residents, Cy Durey negotiated with the power company to build a



*The Lakeside Drive in 1907 before macadam.*



new power dam built at Stewart's Landing at the outlet of Canada Lake.

A store, boarding house, a school, a postoffice and several logging camps in the wilderness were all in operation because of the lumber mill.

The development of summer residences at Canada Lake, plus the surge of building at Caroga, had an important effect on tax assessments. In 1915, the assessed valuation in the town had grown to \$134,768, or double the valuation of a decade earlier. This occurred in spite of the fact that in the previous two decades, the state

had purchased nearly one third of the land in the entire town for part of the Adirondack Park Forest Preserve, lands that are to be forever wild.

A further note in the town tax structure of 1915 is the observation that the entire town tax bill for the year was a very low \$1,184.

In addition to cottages built on Durey lots, some were built on the last seventeen Claflin lots. These finally became available for development between 1914 and 1919 when they were sold for tax arrears. By 1919, the tax rolls had jumped another fifty percent, but the taxes had more than doubled.



*On the left is the house that Frank Sherman built.*



*Early photograph of the Canada Lake mill.*

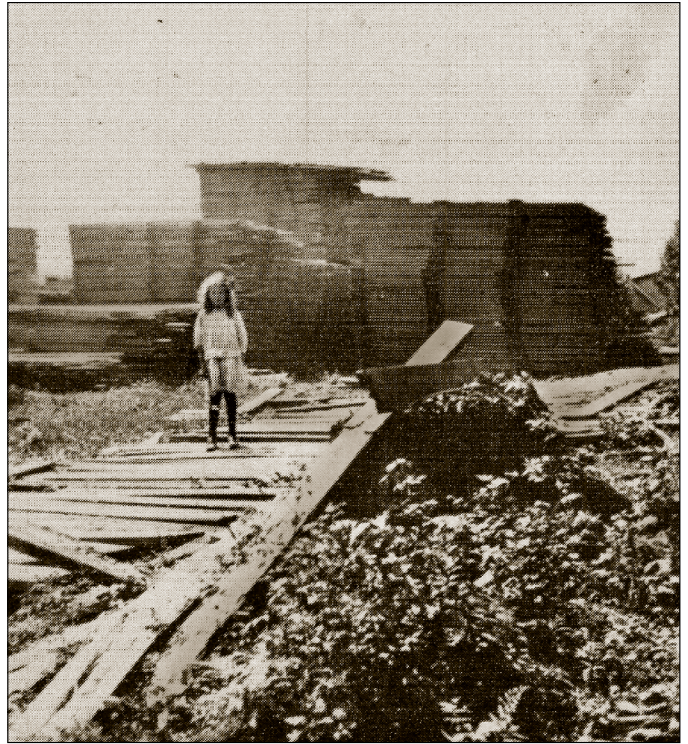


## The Mill Community

William Hunter was head sawyer for the Durey Land and Lumber Company. Bertha Ballou, the daughter of steamer captain Lewis Ballou, was adopted by the Hunters in 1911 after the death of both her parents. She remembers the years at the mill.

*"The millyard was my playground and the aromatic smell of freshly cut lumber is still pleasant to me. I remember the smell of the hot oil and grease and steam that greeted me as I walked the catwalks past the huge, slapping belts that ran the machinery upstairs in the mill. There I could stand in the sifting sawdust and watch the huge saws bite through the big trees still dripping with water from the lake.*

*"As head sawyer, it was Papa's duty to see that the big saws were filed to perfection. Long after the tired loggers had gone to bed and the noisy wheels had ground to a halt, Papa began his nightly chores. Far into the night we could hear the shrill rasping of metal against metal coming out of the darkness across the water. The saws must be sharp and ready for morning."*



*Ann Kukla walking along the plank road in the mill yard.*

*Below, the supply of logs necessary to keep Fulton County's largest saw mill in operation.*







*Clarence Shutts, Cecil Lettis, Mary Shutts and teacher Minnie Luff Sargent in back, Dorothy and Ann Kukla and Agnes Shutts in front at the Canada Lake School.*

The Ballou home was in Wheelerville across from the Nick Stoner Inn. Minnie Luft Sargent lived there until quite recently. *"It was she who was the very capable school teacher at our school there on the Schoolhouse Road those many years ago. There were few pupils. Ann and Dorothy Durey, Harold and Lilian Gage, Glenn Willett and myself. Mrs. Holliday who lives in what once was the schoolhouse says she found names on the boards behind the partition.*

*"In time the big mill burned to the ground ---a shocker for the Fire Observer on Kane Mt. who didn't know it had burned until he went down on his day off--- at any rate. Papa was out of his*



*Canada Lake Store and boarding house.*

*job with Durey Land and Lumber. His friend, Cy Durey was called Old Cy, not a term of disrespect, but rather to distinguish between himself and young Cy, his nephew. It was then that Old Cy interceded politically in Papa's behalf and made it possible for him to become Forest Ranger with the Conservation Department and later to become caretaker of the short lived Arietta Game Refuge."*

Jack Durey remembers the fires that burned almost continuously to dispose of the waste lumber. There was a tramway over the road which carried logs into the mill and a conveyor which carried logs into the mill and a conveyor which took waste out to be burned. Herman Jensch of Johnstown tells of the oxen which were used to haul lumber from the deep woods. One time when the south



*Mrs. Still, Minnie Luff Sargent, Stella Brown and Minnie Lamphier on top of Kane Mountain.*

shore was being logged, a team of oxen which was being used to help skid logs, was driven to the lake for water. The noon whistle blew at the mill and the oxen started swimming toward it. The oxen could not be stopped, so the men had to open the boom of logs and let the oxen swim through. Oxen were used in the water to tow booms of logs, and a special yoke was even used for them, one that kept the oxen far enough apart so they could not kick and cut each other.

Chris Groshans ran the store for a time, then the Gage family took over. At one time a man named Shaw worked in the store as a clerk. He told the story of the arrival of a new mill manager's wife who was unaccustomed to backwoods' ways. She came in and stared about the store for some moments. Noticing the direction of her gaze,





*Pastel sketch of the saw mill yard by Canada Lake artist, Paul Bransom.*

toward the thundermugs, Shaw became aware of her embarrassment, and asked her if she wanted a "left handed mirror." She blushed and said, "Yes, she needed three." Shaw said he would deliver them later when he closed the store. He arrived at her house at the same time as a large group of guests was being received. She blushed again on seeing Shaw, who said, "Madam, I've brought your soup tureens."

The Shermans operated the boarding house for the lumbermen before Frank moved to Pine Lake. Lewis Ballou and his wife ran it for a while, then the Willetts did. The old building stood until 1941 when the new road was put in, at which time it was moved across the way and cut up to make parts of summer homes.

The schoolhouse still stands, and has been

enlarged to become the home of Bea Holliday, who used to cook for several of the logging camps.

During the mill years, the official post office at Canada Lake was called the Green Lake Post Office. William B. Hunter became the postmaster in 1907 and Christian Groshans followed in 1910. William H. Flack held the post from 1913 until James C. Luft took over in 1915. When Viola Gage became postmistress in 1920, the name was changed back to the Canada Lake Post Office. She held the post until 1934.

Pictures tell much of the story of the enormous piles of logs that were sawed up and shipped. An account of Helen Ireland Hays, whose father was one of the Durey stockholders, recreates life at the mill and at the distant logging camp at Eastman Lake.





*James Luff, perched on the pile of logs, worked for the Durey mill. His daughter taught in the Canada Lake School.*

*Florence and Ernest Luff, Ruth Peters, and Mabel Durey enjoy winter fun in the mill yard, below.*







*Brush, the Indian, driving cart pulled by oxen which were raised from calves at the mill.  
The oxen also helped pull log booms.*



*Floating logs to the mill.*





*A 1905 picture of the boarding house and mill workers at the Green Lake-Canada Lake mill. The man seated far left is Lewis Ballou, his wife is standing behind and William Hunter, the chief sawyer, is at the far right.*



*The road past the mill went under the tramway which carried logs and lumber.*





*Arriving at the mill in winter, the boarding house and store can be seen in the distance.*

## **Sleigh Bells on the Camel's Hump**

*By Helen Ireland Hays*

More than fifty years ago Father and I visited Cy Durey at Canada Lake, New York, over the weekend of Washington's Birthday. At that time the sawmill at Canada Lake was run by Durey Land and Lumber Company. Every summer the mill hummed with activity. The men working there lived at the boarding house. Lumbermen also stayed in camps back in the woods while they cut trees in summer and piled the logs on skidways near the log roads so they could be drawn out by horse sleighs the following winter and delivered to the mill.

Mr. Durey, our host on that long ago weekend, was a professional politician. He had been Republican boss of Fulton County and our Representative in Washington. These achievements and his skill in poker may have counted in the world, but for me, the thing that mattered was that this tall, lean, stoop-shouldered man, with his deliberate speech and dead cigar, seemed to be a real woodsman. He had grown up in the woods like a scout of the early days. I felt sure he knew all about the life of the forest. I was fascinated by his

personality and the aura of mystery which, in my mind, surrounded him.

His mother presided over his large and loosely flowing household. Relatives came and went. Mr. Durey and his mother took care of them all. This small, laconic woman, whose hair was knotted in the nape of her neck, interested me very much, but we did not become acquainted.

I became well acquainted, however, with Lillian, one of Mr. Durey's nieces who was just my age and at the time of our visit was living in his home. Possibly our giggles and secrets with one another made a circle of warmth around us and kept everyone else, including Mrs. Durey, outside.

Father and I drove up in the cutter. We arrived Saturday just in time for supper at the big oil-cloth covered table. The kerosene lamp was lit. Exploring one another's possibilities passed quickly for Lillian and me.

Father and Mr. Durey talked, warm and relaxed by the chunk stove.

Sunday, as we came down stairs, Father said, "Let's get a breath of air before breakfast."

We walked out into the dry, clear mountain morning. Being warmly dressed, we didn't bother





*Guy Durey is shown working with the oxen to haul logs. Daddy Phelps is the man with long white whiskers.*

about coats or mittens. Father stepped over to the pump and gave the handle several quick strokes. A stream of water gushed out. Before I knew it, Father's head was under the stream! Straightening up, shaking off the water and running his fingers through his red hair. Father exclaimed, "That's great!" His hair stood straight up in points, frozen stiff.

Exhilarated by this experience, we raced to the kitchen door. As we swept across the back porch, I noticed the thermometer read ten degrees below zero.

During breakfast Mr. Durey looked at me, "Uh, uh, uh, Little Miss," he began, managing his cigar with expertise, "Would you like to, uh, take a sleigh ride, uh, back in the mountains?"

Would I? Yes, indeed!

We were ready in no time.

Pierre, a French Canadian, wearing felt boots and fringe mittens, the warmest of all mittens, and consequently, traditional for teamsters, drove his horses right up to the back door. The sleigh was down on the snow, not up a foot or so as sleighs at home had been.

Noticing my surprise, Father explained, "This is a schooner. You see the runners are made of saplings, bent and turned up in front. The boards are strong, and all that straw and bear skin robes will keep us warm. This is far better than if the seats were up in the wind. Yes, it is narrow, but it's just the ticket for mountain travel."

At this moment Mr. Durey came out, placed Lilian and me back of the driver and wrapped heavy fur robes around us. He and Father arranged themselves comfortably facing us.

Calling "Good-bye" and waving to Mrs. Durey, who stood in the doorway, we were off with a jingle of bells!

"Don't you think the horses are going pretty fast?" I asked.

"During the week," Father answered, "these horses work hard. This is a vacation for them. We are going up over the Camel's Hump. Think how many times we have climbed that mountain in summer. Now we slip along so easily, with sleigh bells chiming! Isn't it fun?"

It certainly was! The snow sparkled in the sunlight as we crossed Green Lake. The horses



seemed to enjoy this level stretch. Their lively pace, the sound of bells, brilliant sunshine and pleasant company filled us with happiness and delight in this beautiful winter world.

At the head of the lake our road entered the forest and bore right. We began to climb. Now the shadow of Green Lake Mountain shut out the sun. Branches of dark evergreens reached toward us. We nearly brushed against them as we passed. Snow commenced to fall, sharp white against the dark robes.

"How lovely the snowflakes are!" Lillian exclaimed, "Look! They are coming faster! They are filling the valleys in the robes!"

We looked up, receiving the snow directly on our faces. Endless flakes, out of an endless sky. It seemed as though they could come forever. There was no beginning and no end –only the muffled quiet that falling snow brings.

"This, uh," Mr. Durey observed, "is the kind of snow that 'makes'"

Presently our driver pointed with his whip.

We looked. There was nothing to see, just tracks where a man had walked parallel to our road.

"Not man, Bear." Pierre corrected our thoughts. "Bear walk on flat foot like man. Regardez, heel too narrow, toe too broad for man. Claw not show much in snow. He big one, just pass by. Snow, she come hard but track not much covered. He go by just before us. Watch. Maybe we see –"

Lillian and I drew nearer together and sat very still.

"Yes, let's watch," Father said. "Our sleigh bells would warn him whether he got our scent or not. I doubt if we see him. If we do, he will go away. You needn't be frightened."

Sure enough, on the next rise the huge tracks turned aside and were lost in the undergrowth.

Presently, beside the road on our right, we noticed a small hut.

"What's that?" Lillian asked.

"That's the Road Monkey's hut," Father answered.

"Road Monkey! Are there monkeys on the



*Hauling logs in a snowstorm.*





*Working on the log roads in winter.*

Camel's Hump?" Lillian and I burst out together.

Father and Mr. Durey laughed. Then Father explained, "The Road Monkey is the man who is responsible for keeping the road in good condition. On cold nights he has the road iced with a horse drawn sprinkler. Then he spreads sand and straw as needed to keep the horses' feet and the sleighs from slipping. The road must be right. Driving loads of logs, piled more or less ten feet high from the sleigh, through these mountains, is dangerous work. You can see right here how steep the Camel's Hump is!"

Then, as though to illustrate Father's words, the road began to rise with an even steeper pitch.

We climbed higher. It seemed to me a hard pull for the horses, but Pierre said we should not walk to lighten the load. The horses could make it. As we reached a thick clump of hemlocks on an outcrop of rock where the road curves around the east side of the mountain, Pierre swore under his breath.

"I tell heem to mend that harness," he exclaimed. "Now look what hap!"

Mr. Durey interrupted his conversation with Father to reply, "Pete, uh, you're just down from



*Ann Durey Kukla and friends visiting the Eastman Lake lumber camp.*





*Leander Bush*

Canada? First time, uh, over this road?"

"Oui," Pierre nodded.

"A little beyond here is the, uh, uh, Stewart Lake lumber camp. You can, uh, mend this strap or borrow one from, uh, Brush. You know Brush, the Indian? He, uh, cooks in here now."

I caught my breath. An Indian! What a weekend!

Pierre stopped the horses and fastened a dangling strap into the mysteries of the harness. We moved slowly until we reached the lumber camp.

Here, at Pierre's firm "Whoa!" the horses came to a halt.

We tossed back the robes and all climbed out. Mr. Durey and Father walked single file down the narrow path, not shoveled but trampled firm by many feet, that led to the door. Lillian and I were close behind them.

A man in a red plaid mackinaw shirt opened the door. This was Brush, the Indian. He invited us in. We passed through the cold entry where a side of beef and the carcass of a deer were hanging, and

entered the camp. We drew off our mittens and held our hands toward the warmth of the stove.

While Father and Mr. Durey were talking with Brush, one of the lumbermen came in. He walked over to the stove and picked up the tea pot that stood, always ready, at the back, and drank from the spout. Lillian and I felt a little sick.

Brush was the master of his own kitchen. He turned abruptly. "You want tea? O.K. but not that way," Brush admonished him. "What you say?"

"You know Jake and Tom," the man replied. "They gotta deer over to Eastman Lake. When they went to get it, they put their snowshoes on backward so the tracks all led out. As though no one, had gone in—"

"Aw, they can't do that," Brush interrupted. "Nobody can wear snowshoes backward!"

"Well they say they did."

Just then Pierre burst through the door. "Brush! I can't feex that strap! You got strap?"

"Sure, I got strap. Over there. You take —"

Pierre chose a strap from several hanging on the wall.

"Two minutes now. We be prete."

"Good-bye, Brush. Yes, we'll come back," we called, following Pierre out to the schooner.

As we climbed in, I heard Father say to Mr. Durey, "You know, Cy, Isaiah Perkins said when I was fishing up in his clearing last spring, 'There's no law north of Whiskey Brook.' Seems to me about the same here."

"Right, uh, right," Mr. Durey replied.

The ride back down the mountain was uneventful. When we reached the level of the lake, the horses quickened their pace. The going was easy and they pressed toward home.

How glad we were to be safely down! The snow had stopped falling. We moved to the tune of crisp, clear sleigh bells through an untouched world of white. The near branches were heavy with soft snow, bright against the leaden sky. Tips of branches on far off trees were also ridged with snow but they seemed dark in contrast to the paleness of the distant sky.

Lillian and I sat quiet, watching this world of varied whiteness slip by. We were glad to be here, to have traveled up the mountain and especially glad that in a few minutes we would be back in the cheerful warmth of Mrs. Durey's kitchen, safe again in our own familiar world.



## The Mill Fire

Julius Breckwoldt of Dolgeville leased the mill for two consecutive five year terms, beginning in 1919. At one time, Breckwoldt operated 11 saw mills and employed 270 men.

At 4:00 in the morning of May 20, 1926, fire completely destroyed the Durey-Breckwoldt mill. The mill was valued at \$25,000 and was said at the time of the fire to be the largest in the northern part of Fulton County.

Fire companies from Johnstown and Gloversville were called to the scene, but the call to them was delayed because the phone lines had been damaged by a recent storm.

Fanned by a high wind, a fire originating in the roof over the boiler room of the large sawmill of the Durey Lumber Co. at Green Lake, early this morning completely destroyed the building and contents, involving an estimated loss of about \$25,000. For a time the blaze threatened to communicate to \$25,000 worth of choice hard lumber piled north of the mill, on the opposite side of the highway.

Had it not been for the arduous work of firemen from the Gloversville and Johnstown fire department, who went to the scene with pumpers, following a call for help when it was found the fire was beyond control, it was said that several buildings used for storage, and extensive piles of lumber would have been food for the flames which, driven by the strong wind, leaped the roadway several times and set fire to grass and brush.

The building was partially rebuilt, but the new mill was smaller and produced some finished lumber products. Fay Gage worked in the mill,



*After the 1926 fire*

both for Durey and for Breckwoldt. He thinks the factory produced broom handles and rug poles for the rug manufacturers in Amsterdam. The mill was gradually phased out and dismantled. Stacks of lumber were sold to build cottages around the lake, but by 1931, all sign of the mill was gone.

Cy Durey sold his remaining land holdings to the state for \$4 an acre. The timbered lands became a part of the Adirondack Forest Preserve; and in the intervening forty odd years, new growth has concealed all evidence of the logging days. 🌿



*Cyrus Durey in 1930*

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### CY DUREY

*Cy was lean and very keen,  
Mouthing a dead cigar,  
Our Adirondack congressman  
Shrewd as a chief at war.  
He used to yearn to return  
Where forest lands began  
And there decide and provide  
For neighborhood and clan.  
Legend guards the skill at cards  
Which drew friends to his chair.  
They loved him well, even now some tell  
How he held at least a pair.  
It seems as though he still must go  
Throughout the Empire State  
To help a friend or gain an end  
Maneuvering the great.*

By Helen Ireland Hays  
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