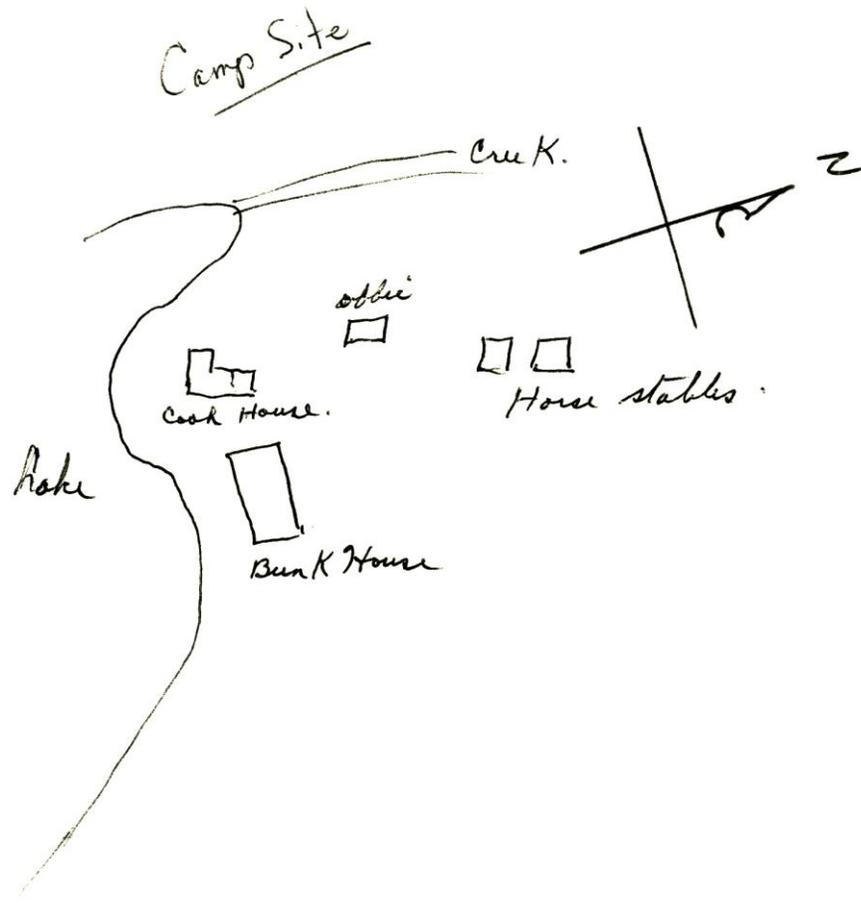


**Account of Bill Tibble on Stony Lake (now Bon Echo Lake)
(as told to Ken Hook, Feb 28, 2009)**

My first experience in a lumber camp was at the north end of Stony Lake during the winter of 1944-45. T.A. Wilson Lumber Co. from Cannington, Ontario operated the camp. Tom Wilson (owner) and his son Hugh managed the businesses in Cloyne, Denbigh and Matawatchewan areas.

The camp consisted of a cook and dining house, a bunk house for about 30 men, a small building for the foreman's office and 2 separate horse stables made of logs. Each horse stable had room for 4 teams (2 horses) for a total of 16 horses.



Most of men in the camp were from Northbrook, Cloyne and Harlowe although after 60 years it's hard to remember all of the people. My recollection is:

Foreman	Basil Gray	Harlowe
Handyman/Sawfiler	Horatio (Racie) Ellis	Harlowe
Cook	Clifford Mills	Harlowe
Cook helper	Clayton Whiteman	
Teamsters	Sam Armstrong	Northbrook
	Jack McCausland	Cloyne
	Art Garey	Cloyne
	Burt Thornston	Northbrook
Road Boss	Bob Cuddy	Harlowe

My first job at the camp was to help the Road Boss cutting the roads. He showed me how to use a double bladed axe- the first I'd seen. You use one side for cutting roots in the ground and you keep the other side sharp for cutting wood. I later became Chore Boy but I always preferred working in the bush.

The Road Boss looked after cutting of the roads and skidways and generally had 4-8 year-round men for this job. Jack Black from Harlowe looked after skidways and acted as log roller when hauling started- also as top loader. Other men included:

Oss Huffman and Andrew Snider from Cloyne

Howard Charles and Ross Peters from Georgian Island

Gordon and Lionel Scott from Henderson

Phil Harlock- a Polish man who repaired the winter road and sanded the hills when the sled haul started (to prevent the sled from going downhill too fast).

There were other men too but I have forgotten their jobs and their names as there were many men coming and going.

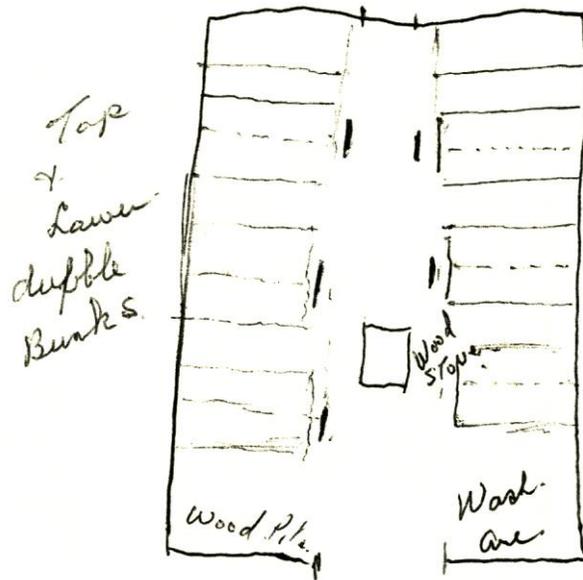
My typical day at the lumber camp as Chore Boy would be to get up at 4:30-5:00 am. I started the fires in the bunkhouse, kitchen and dining room office. The Teamsters got up shortly after the fire was going. They fed and harnessed the horses and cleaned the stables. Men got up around 6:00 as breakfast was at 6:30 am. Men left for the bush as soon as you could see as some times it was ½ mile or so to the job.

Most days you had the same job as the day before. If there was a change the Foreman, Basil Gray would come to the bunkhouse the night before or early in the morning. I think at this time we got \$1.00 per day plus board although the skid men got a little more. In cases of bad weather it was no work- no pay although we still got our board.

Lunch was in the bush. Our lunch box (grub box) was a butter box about 18 inches square with a strap so you could carry it over your shoulder. Lunch consisted of homemade bread, roast of meat (sometimes sliced) and a can of corn syrup. The lunch box was generally left in a tree from day to day until it and the tea pail were gone. The tea pail had loose leaf tea and each man had a tin cup which he also left with the tea pail. Each man had a sharp knife or a knife and spoon- most men made a wooden spoon and left it with the cup for the corn syrup.

After the men went to the bush in the morning, my job as Chore Boy was to help with the breakfast dishes. I got wood in for the bunkhouse stoves, kitchen, dining room and office. I cleaned the bunkhouse and filled all the coal oil lamps. I helped get potatoes and whatever for the supper crowd. One good thing about Chore Boy was I had my lunch with the cooks.

The bunkhouse had a stove made from a 45 gallon drum. On this rested a large metal pot to keep water hot for washing. Entertainment at night was card playing and reading. Lights were out at 9:00 pm. There were top and lower level double bunks. I remember only one window in the bunkhouse- in the end.



Breakfast for the men usually were eggs, fried meat, potatoes and sometimes pancakes, and tea. Supper was potatoes, meat, vegetables, beans, pie or prunes and tea (this was time of sugar ration).

Work started in early fall. There was lumber to move up to the lake camps to build and lay out the cutting areas and roads. Then there was cutting, skidding and opening new roads. After the New Year, the men were still cutting and skidding and getting the snow on the roads tamped down and holes filled in. This was done with a team dragging a log cross ways to pack the road down. They did have a water tank on a sleigh- it was made so the horses could pull it from either end so it did not have to be turned around.

The log haul started some time in January and went on into March. Logs were loaded on the sleighs and brought out the north end of Stony Lake and taken down to the south end. Here they were put in large piles for a saw mill to be moved in.

At March break-up they wanted the bunkhouse moved down the lake. It was too big to move as it was so they took a crosscut saw and cut the bunkhouse in half- hooked 2 teams of horses to it and away they went with the two halves.

The horse stables were left behind for wood or it may have rotted down. The office and cookhouse were given or sold to Americans who used them as a hunting camp. The Park later tore down the cookhouse around 1970.



Barrels, cans and bedsprings found at the Camp at the north end of Bon Echo (Stony Lake) in September 2014 by Ken and Cathy Hook

I started working for Bon Echo Park some time after 1967 although I'm not sure of the date. The area had returned to the MNR and included Stony Lake which became Bon Echo Lake. The cookhouse and another cottage were removed. The cottage at one time was owned by Leo Meeks.

In 1945 I went back to the farm at Cannington. I worked several years in the winter for T.A. Wilson Lumber Company at:

Loon Lake

McCaw Lake

Smith Lake

Gull Lake (at the Harlowe saw mill)

Green Lake

Barker Lake

The lumber camp at Loon Lake (now Skootamatta) was located at the present day boat launch site on the upper lake. This was around 1946-47.

Bon Echo Park was developed at this time. Mike Schwagger- a renowned artist- and painter of many pictures of the rock, was caretaker at the time. Many of the older buildings were removed around 1980 and a lot of repairs to some of the other buildings were made from then on. This was an OK line of work.

Note: Leo Meeks reports that he frequented the cottage Bill refers to above to visit his good friend Austen Holland who was the rightful owner of the cottage. The cottage was built by Archie Meeks Sr. in the 1950's as a hunt camp and sold to Austen Holland of Toronto in the 1960's. The hunt camp was built after T.A. Wilson had finished logging at Stony Lake. The camp/cottage and property were sold to the MNR in the 1970's. Austen Holland is buried in Dempsey Cemetery.