

WOODSMAN CYRIL COURIER WORKED, HIS SOCKS OFF

4/30/96

It's been a full year since I started this column and I can sum up the experience in one word: Fun. At times I have been overcome with laughter as I recalled on incident or another and others have subdued me with sadness. Your response tells me it's been fun for you as well.

Ed Kornmeyer, Boonville native and retired graduate forester friend, spent two hours last week kicking around the old days with me. I envy his knowledge and experiences in the Adirondack and Tug Hill area logging industry. His work ranged over Whitney Park, Moose River Plains, Browns Tract and Tug Hill.

Gould Paper Company was owned by an entrepreneur named Ralph Luthey when Ed started work in the woodlands division in 1951. He stayed with the company through three name changes retiring from the Lyons Fall Pulp & Paper Company. He experienced it all from river drives, bucksaws and horse logging to modern-day chippers and tree harvesters. Much of what Ed did and saw is retained in a wealth of photographs and documents from his workdays.

When Ed wasn't working in the woods he was hunting, fishing or trapping there. Deer camp and the camaraderie inherent with it have long been a part of his life. Ralph Luthey may have been the boss and owner of the company and woodlands, but the boys cut him no slack in camp. He took his turn with the dishes and other camp chores along with anteing up his camp dues. Ed recalled him taking it in stride and never pulling rank or complaining, proving he was a good sport as well as supervisor.

We had many mutual friends in the logging industry and his many photos helped me refresh my memory of some of them. Two such men and a trucking incident are pictured with this article.

Cyril Courier was a legendary woodsman I first met on a Hitchcock log job north of Stillwater on the Fisher Tract. He was operating a log loader on a cold February day about 1959. Perched up in the wind on that loader, ever present pipe clinched in his teeth, he was conspicuous by his footwear. A pair of high-top leather boots – not the present-day insulated type either – graced his feet.

When I remarked to Ranger Emmett Hill that Cyril's feet must be freezing, I could hardly believe his reply. Emmett told me Cyril never wore socks, even during his Army stint. A notation on the back of the photo Ed loaned me reinforces that fact. It reads, "never wore socks, even in the winter."

The other man is well known to many Old Forgers as well as myself. He is Jay Giddings, longtime Hall and Lindsay employee and one of the best mechanics and equipment operators who ever wore a Johnson shirt. They were working on a George Colvin job on Gould's Browns Tract property in 1955.

Believe it or not, the truck pictured did not tip over!

We share too many memories and acquaintances to pursue them all in just one two-hour session. To make a long story short, our conversation shall be continued, most likely on some trout laden lake.