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“A comprehensive and informative survey of archaeological findings on one of America’s earliest, most widespread, and longest-lived industries.”

—PAUL J. WHITE, author of *The Archaeology of American Mining*

“Franzen has done a real service to historical archaeology by providing this synthesis of the logging industry, an important element in the American experience that has languished invisibly in the archaeological gray literature.”

—LOUANN WURST, Michigan Technological University



**T**HE AMERICAN LUMBER INDUSTRY helped fuel westward expansion and industrial development during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, building logging camps and sawmills—and abandoning them once the trees ran out. In this book, John Franzen surveys archaeological studies of logging sites across the nation, explaining how material evidence found at these locations illustrates key aspects of the American experience during this era.

Franzen delves into the technologies used in cutting and processing logs, the environmental impacts of harvesting timber, the daily life of workers and their families, and the social organization of logging communities. He highlights important trends, such as increasing mechanization and standardization, and changes in working and living conditions, especially the food and housing provided by employers. Throughout these studies, which range from Michigan to California, the book provides access to information from unpublished studies not readily available to most researchers.

*The Archaeology of the Logging Industry* also shows that when archaeologists turn their attention to the recent past, the discipline can be relevant to today’s ecological crises. By creating awareness of the environmental deterioration caused by industrial-scale logging during what some are calling the Anthropocene, archaeology supports the hope that with adequate time for recovery and better global-scale stewardship, the human use of forests might become sustainable.

**JOHN G. FRANZEN** is a consultant in archaeology and historic preservation. He served as an archaeologist for the USDA Forest Service in northern Michigan from 1980 to 2013.

A volume in the series *The American Experience in Archaeological Perspective*, edited by Michael S. Nassaney

*Front:* Loggers and their tools after cutting Douglas fir, Washington, circa 1905. (National Archives and Records Administration, USDA Forest Service Photograph Collection, Negative No. 16191, Washington, D.C.)

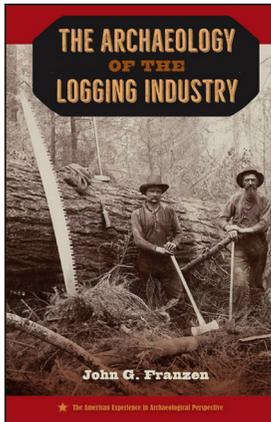
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## The Archaeology of the Logging Industry

John G. Franzen. The American Experience in Archaeological Perspective series, [University Press of Florida](https://www.upf.edu/), 2020, ix-240 pp., 40 figures, references. \$85.00 Cloth.

*Reviewed by Sean B. Dunham, USDA Forest Service, Chippewa National Forest, Cass Lake, MN*

Logging and lumberjacks are an iconic piece of North American history, and the logging industry is still a critical part of the economy in the Pacific Northwest, the upper Midwest, the Northeast, and parts of the South. Logging is also part of current discourse relating to a variety of topics including tropical deforestation, climate change, and environmental justice. John G. Franzen's *The Archaeology of the Logging Industry*, published in 2020 as part of part of *The American Experience in Archaeological Perspective* series, addresses all these topics and more.

The volume includes 9 chapters. The first seven provide an overview of logging at different times and places across the U.S. as well as overviews of topics ranging from history, archaeology, technology, and lifeways. The logging industry was far from static in the late 19th and early 20th century and serves as an ideal case study of the changes in technology as well as the organization and structure of the American workforce. For example, technological innovations over time transformed how wood was procured, transported, and processed. Likewise, the transient nature of the workforce allowed loggers a degree of agency as they chose companies based on factors such as the quality of food and workplace conditions. In turn, this agency may have led companies to improve conditions in the camps and mills to attract and retain better workers.

Chapters 8 and 9 present new research and thought on the themes presented in the preceding chapters. Chapter 8 shares the results of excavations from two late 1860s “camboose shanties” in northern Michigan. Camboose shanty is a term that was used to describe logging camps with a single, combined living (shanty) and eating (camboose) structure. The camboose is a raised hearth that was used for cooking food as well as for heating the building (most logging was done in the winter in this era). The etymology of these terms is presented on page 167 of the book and both represent English variations on French words.

The camboose camps examined by Franzen were in operation well after cast iron stoves were available. Cast iron stoves were more efficient than cambooses and these raised hearths required specific knowledge to construct. It is generally thought that camboose shanties largely disappeared by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and were replaced by multi-structure camps with separate mess hall and barracks buildings that were heated with cast iron stoves. Franzen associates the use of camboose shanties to the presence of French-Canadian loggers working on the early camps in Michigan who brought the form as well as the expertise to build them. Bolstering this hypothesis is the persistence of camboose shanties in Ontario into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in places where the workforce was largely French-Canadian.

## *Book Review*

Thus, the camboose shanty may serve as an indicator of the persistence of an ethnic form as opposed to an anachronism.

The final chapter is provocatively titled “Logging, Archaeology, and the Anthropocene.” Franzen offers the Anthropocene concept as a potential framework for archaeologists to pursue topics like inequality, climate change, and pollution from a multidisciplinary perspective allowing the past to inform our understanding of the present and future. American logging in the 19th century, along with rapid industrialization in the U.S. and Europe, was certainly a harbinger of the Anthropocene, if not a direct trigger, making it ripe for this line of inquiry. Franzen ends the book with the following words on pages 193–194: “Historical archaeology depicts industrial logging as a significant part of the American experience but a relatively short episode in the long history of humans and trees. If we better accommodate all the values of our forests and accept that we influence but do not control them, perhaps the Anthropocene can become an age of destruction and renewal, rather than a linear path toward mass extinction.” This is a great example of using archaeology to make the past relevant in the present!

Franzen has been exploring the archaeology and history of the logging industry in Michigan since the 1970s. His thirty some year career with the USDA Forest Service in northern Michigan provided an ideal setting to pursue this research as well as many other aspects of “north woods” archaeology. This volume shares much of that knowledge and experience as well as builds on each to provide a well written and comprehensive interdisciplinary overview of the archaeology of logging across the continental United States. *The Archaeology of the Logging Industry* is a critical resource for anyone engaged in the archaeology of logging or any later 19th and early 20th century industry.