

# Breaking the Jam.

The spring drive of logs down the West Canada Creek, an Adirondack stream, five years ago was remarkable for a number of unusual events. To begin with it was larger by millions of feet than any ever before floated down the stream. It was floated in record time, too, for the snow went off with a rush after the ice had gone out. Consequently the creek was brimming, and on this flood-tide came the logs by the tens of thousands.

To roll standard logs from the banks and to break the jams, there was a gang of more than sixty strong, daring men. They rode the torrent and fell in a dozen times a week, but at last they learned caution.

Bill Kennedy rode a log into Haskell's rifts before he knew it one day. A mile of white water full of rocks was before him. Kennedy lost his courage, the more completely because his courage had never before failed him. He uttered a wild cry. Dan Cunningham saw his peril, and jumping to a passing log, pushed out to the rescue. It was a wild race, but the approach of help steadied Kennedy and enabled him to keep his balance. Cunningham, guiding his log into the swiftest current, overtook the helpless rafterman, and with his pike-pole steered both logs for shore.

There was an eddy just a little way below, and Cunningham, with all his might, allowed Kennedy's log into it. But that thrust pushed his own far out, rolling and thrashing. Kennedy was ashore in a moment, but before Cunningham could recover his balance the log he rode bit a rock, one end flew up, and the rescuer was thrown twenty feet into the air. He came down head first on a froth-covered rock and disappeared. It was dark before the body was recovered. After that the men took the log way round, even at dinner time.

No man is a rafterman unless he can ride a log. So, in a lumbering country every riverside boy learns the knack on creek still waters. It is a good thing to know how to do. It means a good job when one grows up, and may be the saving of a life besides.

Among the rest of the boys at Wilmut, Will Conway, sixteen years old that spring, was renowned. He knew the creek, the places where the deer crossed it, the brooks that the minks followed and the pools the trout lurked in. But he wasn't satisfied with the money he earned selling trout and trapping mink. He wanted to make daily wages like a man. So he went to George Koch, the boss driver, and asked to go with his gang; but Koch told the lad he wasn't big enough yet to handle a cant-hook.

It was a heavy disappointment to Will. It hurt his pride; besides, the family needed the money. But an argument was of no avail, Will was a mere spectator on the bank just above Mad Tom's Gorge when the driving crew arrived there on a Saturday morning.

That was the best place on the creek to see the drive. A big boulder had come out of the deep water above the gorge and lodged there in midstream at the brink of the tumult, its broad, ugly head two feet above the surface level. Making the worst jam of the season, it was already two hundred years old.

The mere fact that it was a big jam was something, but that was not all. Whoever broke this jam must surely go through the gorge—a third of a mile of the wildest plunging water, where the flood piles up first against one rock ledge, then against the other, and finally glides into the foaming tumble at the head of Mad Tom's pool, in which men have disappeared.

Haskell's rift, broad, open and comparatively shallow, had cost Cunningham his life. Here was water ten feet worse. At night of the jam above it the men hesitated and shook their heads. They ate their lunch of cheese, bread, canned beef and coffee. Some hoped the water would rise and lift the jam over the boulder; they pointed out that the stream was just thinning a bit, for it was higher in the center than at the sides. At any rate, a little delay would do no harm.

At the head of the jam the water sucked and boiled, with little whirlpools diving in one another. One by one the logs, wide, black and smooth, gurgling along the edges as it drew bits of ice and sticks under the ends of the logs. Where the water was divided and its bed narrowed, the current ran swifter and swifter till, at the entrance at the gorge, the water was lined and the foam stretched out, and even the bubbles were oblong, slanted back by the wind or whirled off the surface into shining, evanescent threads. Under such conditions,—with water sucking and boiling,—no man in the crew volunteered to go to the jam. As a matter of business the boss offered twenty five dollars to the one who would try.

There never was a log jam that river drivers wouldn't break sooner or later, no matter how high or rough the water, but in this case the men wanted time to think. And that was a boy's opportunity.

Will Conway's father had been a noted jam breaker, and men of the crew who knew the boy relieved their uneasy feelings by joking with him a bit.

"Why, Billy," they said, "your dad would have been out there hours ago if he were here. He wasn't afraid of the gorge. Huh, I should say not! I seen him the time he went through it—the only one as ever did it alive, I reckon, though some say they have. Them days they used to break jams with a cant-hook and ax, 'stead of dynamite. There was a jam just like this one. You'd ought to have seen it, the way he rode the first log, stiddy as a wagon, and he saved his skin, too. Fity ther' ain't no such men alive nowadays!"

To this bantering narrative Will listen-

ed without undue gravity, but after awhile unobserved by any one, he opened the cheese-box in which were the dynamite and fuse used by the floaters to blast jams and dangerous rocks. He put four sticks of the stuff into his hip pockets, and a length of fuse into his blouse.

Then he went up the creek round the bend to his house and took a small corked bottle full of dry matches. The old pike-pole his father had used was used all the evening of the wood shed. He threw it over his shoulder and started for the creek.

He was soon afloat on a little log that was easy to guide, and he worked his way to the middle of the stream, dodging or fending off other logs. He watched the current ahead to see that an unexpected log did not carry him out of his course; he stood with ankles slightly bent and his head forward, and the quarter-inch spikes in the soles of his shoes gripped the log till it splintered.

Ahead of him was the jam, with logs hitting it every minute. Some of them dived out of sight instantly. Others alined round sideways and climbed the back of the jam. The whole head of the jam was rolling, twisting and heaving; there could hardly be a more dangerous place for a man's legs.

To miss those rolling logs and yet find a landing was Will's hope. To go too far down would be to risk the pike into the gorge and the probability of being carried past the jam. But as he plunged into a drift of logs and was unable to steer out of it in time, he had to take his chances as they came.

There wasn't really any great choice in the matter. It would be a leap for life, anyhow, wherever the log struck, and it might as well be a big leap as a little one.

Will was within a hundred feet of the jam before any one saw him. Then a small boy shouted, "There's Will Conway on a log!"

A hundred men, and as many women and children, looked in time to see Will poise himself for the leap as his log approached the jam. Instead of holding the pole for a mere balance as he had been doing, he turned it parallel to his log and stooped for a vaulting jump.

Log after log struck, each with a heavy musical thump—a half dozen of them. Suddenly Will crouched, dropped his shoulder, struck the iron point home in a log, and then sprang forward and up—up, while the log he had just jumped plunged down into the vortex.

He struck fairly on his feet and ran lightly over the uneasy logs to the motionless ones. Then the crowd on shore tossed its arms and cheered. The first and least of the dangers was overcome.

Will walked down the jam, stepping from log to log, taking his time all the way. The crush at the boulder was very great. He looked the tangle over; some of the logs fairly stood on end, others were piled crosswise and lengthwise. A big one, its back splintered,—almost broken,—was evidently the key. As it lay broadside to the current, the water poured over it six inches deep at one end.

The other logs were thrust over and under it, and were lodged against the boulder. Just below the key log, in the water beside the boulder, was the place for the dynamite, so Will decided after the examination. Then he went to work.

While the crowd on shore looked on, wondering what he would do next, not knowing that he had dynamite, Will moved his pike along the jam, and found a straight spruce sapling, eight feet long and bare of bark, which some lumberman up at the log dump had used as handspike.

He carried this to the key log, and kneeling down, tied the dynamite sticks, one by one to his sapling, lashing them fast with a stout string, as he had seen the men do. Then he fastened the fuse and ran it along the sapling, steadying it by twine. This took only a few minutes—breathless ones to the onlookers.

Then Will examined the logs again, to be sure that he would put the charge in the right place. When Boss Koch saw him doing that, he said: "The coolest chicken I ever see!"

At last the sapling was shoved home, the dynamite was fastened under water and the end of the fuse was nearly a foot above the surface. Then Will stood up and looked into the gorge below.

"He knew how the water ran there, for he had lived within a mile of it all his life. The story of his father's ride was not a new one; indeed, his father had pointed out to him the black streak of navigable water he had followed on that memorable drive of years ago.

Will could see the streak for a short distance along the right bank of the gorge to the left of the logs that missed the jam were lifting their noses against the ledge and tumbling over backward.

Will pulled his belt a hole tighter, and drew his trouser-legs out of his stockings; if he had to swim for it there wouldn't be bags of water on each leg drawing him under. He glanced back and saw where the pike pole was. Then he took a match from the bottle and struck it on a bit of dry log. The flame spluttered into the fuse, and Will, grasping his pike, ran for the head of the jam, where the logs were thumping and rolling.

In the days when jams were broken with cant-hooks and axes, the floaters always tried to keep ahead of the rush of logs lest they be crushed among them; but in these days of high explosives one must take one's chances at the other end; and this is not the safest place, when all the logs are moving and grinding together.

The fuse was long and burned slowly. Will was at the head of the jam long before the explosion came. He waited with the pike-pole balancing.

The onlookers stood on tiptoes. The roar in the gorge was not quieting to any one's nerves, but at last a dozen logs were lifted into the air, splintered and broken, and the boulder disappeared in smoke and spray.

There was not so much noise as one might think; just a sound that travelled low down, but a long distance.

A fifty-foot dam of gray spray, speckled with large black sticks and yellow splinters ten feet long, flashed up, and then Will Conway poised for a life and death struggle.

The jam quivered from end to end. It broke to pieces in great masses. Some logs came jutting up out of the black water; hundreds plunged in mighty splashing. All were tossed and pitched.

In a moment Will was stepping and jumping from log to log, running toward the gorge. Once he fell, and the cry of gasped; but agile of body and cool of mind, he sprang to his feet again with only a shoe wet.

As he whirled into the gorge, one voice alone was raised. Boss Koch shouted: "Good boy! Keep your nerve!"

Will lifted a hand in reply, and was then whirled out of sight.

At that time hardly any one had stirred, but now everybody turned and ran for the road. Koch and his drivers leading. They raced over little patches of snow, through a brook waist deep with black water, and broke down a dozen lengths of fence getting over it into the highway. The river men were dressed in flannels of bright colors, blue, red, checked and plaid blouse waists, and mackinaw trousers of all shades and hues. On them the sun shone with extraordinary effect as they sprang out along the road, the best runners leading and the women bringing up the rear, all headed for Mad Tom's pool, where the gorge ended.

Down the gorge, below the first turn, the right bank is worn out and hangs far over the quick water. The turn is a gradual one, and the logs, once clear of the lifting wave above, swing round to the left again, end on, and along the side of a huge molasses like roll.

On the opposite side is a fierce eddy, in which logs dance on end and are split over and by the crush. The rocks on either side are hung with moss wet by a cold, thick spray, dashed up by the wind. Here Will found himself drawing toward the grinding mass in the eddy.

He was too far to the left. Quick as thought he jumped to a swifter log higher up the roll, then to one beyond, and on to a third, clear of the eddy by a yard.

Not time to think of it though, for ahead was business quite as dangerous—perhaps the worst of all.

The gorge narrows below the second turn, and the water, crowded into it, foams so high on both sides as almost to curl over. Down the center runs the black streak. Will got into that, and the white water was higher than his head on each side. He shot forward with increasing speed. He saw one log three feet in diameter strike a ledge, to be hurled end over end through the air.

As the spray lifted, he saw ahead the black level of Mad Tom's pool, where there was safety.

But before that the water gushed out suddenly in a like, until rollers ten feet high took up the speed, and only a greasy little trough lay down the center.

Once more Will saw that he was off his course, headed too much for the waves. Among them he could do nothing; he would be tossed as from a catapult.

He jumped again. The log caved, and he had to go to one beyond. For a moment he hung, almost toppling, but he got his balance again, now too soon.

Ten seconds of awful roar followed. His pike pole, which he held as a rope walker holds his balancing pole, was in the foam at oath ends. Up and down on short, solid three foot waves went his log, and through some soot, foamy ones.

A water soaked log came lumbering at him, but fell short. Another plunged across, just ahead of him. It seemed as if the whole jam was there, waiting for him.

The next instant the tumble of water was left behind. The current became broad and level; its dancing was over for a while. The logs, after a bit of teetering ceased their plunging, and floated on with rigid dignity. Will quickly pulled himself to shore and started up the road with his pike over his shoulder, heating the spray drops off his woolen cap.

He was met by a whooping crowd of raftermen, crying, waving, and screaming boys, who all talked at once.

A few minutes later the drivers hurried away down stream, and Will accompanied them. He was to have a man's wages for handling the dynamite at jams too big for cant hook work.

Of course somebody went back to tell Will's mother what had become of him; in fact, they've been telling her ever since greatly to her satisfaction.

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**The Pace That Kills.**

"I was readin' the other day," began the genial farmer, as he seated himself comfortably in the office of the Basswood Corners Hustler, "an article on metropolitan journalism. The writer says that there is such an intense strain on everybody connected with it that they all get old before they're forty. There is so much hurry, activity and hard work, you know. And I suppose that is a characteristic of running a newspaper anywhere."

"You're right, Mister Reubenjay," re-

plied the successful editor. "We are compelled to do prodigious tasks in the briefest possible time. Now, only yesterday I had to change two double column ads, write an obituary and two wedding notices and carry two cards of stove wood upstairs!"

**Done to Death.**

It is a modern notion that fancy work is an invention of the evil one for keeping the foolish from applying their hearts to golf, yet the young ladies of long ago, who held to samplers and mourning pieces of an afternoon with a fervor better imagined than experienced, sometimes had their hobby in its utility rudely disturbed.

An anecdote in some reminiscences of Mrs. Anne Jean Lyman, a prominent New England woman and a contemporary of Mrs. Lydia Maria Child, records what may be considered a standing epitaph for fancy work.

When Mrs. Lyman was Miss Robbins, and a very charming young lady, she went to visit some friends of hers in Hingham. A young man, calling on the ladies one day, found them busy embroidering mourning pieces in which tall women in short waists and long skirts stood weeping by a monument. They begged for a motto for their pieces, and instantly got this bit of wit:

In useless labors all their hours are spent. They murder Time, then work his monument.

**Unprovoked Proverbs.**

How many of us do God's work by the day and the devil's jobs by the piece.

Smoke from the industrial chimney never clouds the bright star of hope.

A man who acted as treasurer seldom has a wife who is a treasure.

A woman can do more than she thinks she can.

Birds, banks and beans are known by their notes.

You'd be surprised if you used Magnetic Dyes to see what splendid results can be obtained, with slight effort and at a cost of ten cents.

## BORN.

- Digby, Dec. 30, to the wife of Capt. Trusk, a son.
- Queens, Dec. 14, to the wife of C. McLean, a son.
- Annapolis, Dec. 25, to the wife of E. G. Smith, a son.
- Amherst, D. C. 31, to the wife of T. Rogers, a son.
- Shelburne, Dec. 28, to the wife of T. White, a son.
- Digby, Jan. 1, to the wife of Daniel Dillon, a son.
- Digby, Dec. 23, to the wife of F. Blackford, a son.
- Bristol, D. C. 28, to the wife of F. Wagner, a daughter.
- Quebec, Dec. 12, to the wife of D. Smith, a daughter.
- Milton, Dec. 24, to the wife of H. Porter, a daughter.
- Elton, Dec. 12, to the wife of Fred Haley, a daughter.
- Charlottetown, Jan. 1, to the wife of Dr. Dickey, a son.
- Brooklyn, Dec. 21, to the wife of Rev. R. Carter, a son.
- Yarmouth, Dec. 28, to the wife of F. Weddleton, a son.
- Yarmouth, Dec. 27, to the wife of Isaac Nickerson, a son.
- Little Cascapedia, Jan. 1, to the wife of J. Starnak, a son.
- Herring Cove, Jan. 3, to the wife of Francis Thomas, a son.
- Middletown, Dec. 28, to the wife of W. Pines, a daughter.
- Weymouth, Dec. 27, to the wife of E. Nickerson, a daughter.
- Walderville, Nov. 24, to the wife of M. Turbit, a daughter.
- Selwood, Dec. 30, to the wife of Alfred Lake, a daughter.
- Mount Densor, Dec. 25, to the wife of Capt. Smith, a daughter.
- Bishopville, Dec. 29, to the wife of Arthur Vaughan, a daughter.
- Campbellton, Dec. 31, to the wife of W. Chandler, a daughter.
- New Westminster, Jan. 3, to the wife of W. Edgecumbe, a daughter.
- New Ross Road, Dec. 23, to the wife of H. Lockhart, a daughter.

## MARRIED.

- Canning, N. S., Dec. 28, Samuel Kerr to Julia McCullough.
- Chester, Dec. 24, by Rev. A. M. Bent, Elias E. Walker to Blanche Zisch.
- Truro, Dec. 25, by Rev. A. B. McCleod, John Gordon to Marion Hamilton.
- Millford, Dec. 24, by Rev. A. B. Dickie, John Conley to Mary J. McKay.
- Lower Stewiack, Dec. 25, by Rev. F. S. Coffin, D. F. Burris to J. J. Falton.
- Truro, Dec. 24, by Rev. P. M. MacDonald, Edward Lively to Annie Starnak.
- St. John, Dec. 28, by Rev. G. O. Gator, Harry Dempsey to Josephine Dakin.
- Guyabro, Jan. 1, by Rev. Selley Jefferson, Eva Pinks to Charles Jenkins.
- Springhill, Dec. 19, by Rev. J. M. Brancroft, Thomas Merritt to Dottie Welsh.
- Andover, Dec. 25, by Rev. R. W. Dennings, Adam Briggs to Minnie Sisson.
- Lockport, Dec. 27, by Rev. Geo. F. Day, John D. Perry to Janis Harding.
- Pictou, Dec. 25, by Rev. E. H. Ball, Thomas William Shelly to Annie Powell.
- Truro, Dec. 24, by Rev. P. M. MacDonald, Lewis G. McLellan to Ada Candie.
- Yarmouth Dec. 27, by Rev. R. D. Bambrick, William Lawrence to Desire Mures.
- Pictou, Dec. 25, by Rev. E. S. Rattie, John D. McLellan to Jessie A. Chisholm.
- Lunenburg Dec. 27, by Rev. Mr. Bowers, Stanley Jodrey to Margaret Brum.
- New Glasgow, Dec. 29, by Rev. W. M. Weaver, Lemuel Silver to Lily Silver.
- Lunenburg, Dec. 24, by Rev. J. W. Crawford, Samuel W. Leach to Martha Zwickler.
- Dartmouth, Dec. 31, by Rev. J. H. Davis, J. Frank Boutin to Mary J. Wilson.
- Amherst, Dec. 22, by Rev. J. A. Cresswell, John W. Barnett to Mabel A. Poina.
- Lain Island, P. C., Dec. 10, by Rev. J. H. Logan, John A. Fulton to Mabel Stewart.
- Elgin, Dec. 25, by Rev. Joseph Crandall, Elias Banister to Matilda Dewhurst.
- North Sydney, Dec. 25, by Rev. D. Drummond, And. Lewis to Annie Stewart.
- New Glasgow, Dec. 29, by Rev. R. Cumming, Edward Graham to Mrs. J. H. Fraser.
- Pugwash River, Dec. 25, by Rev. C. H. Haverstock, Carrie J. Eaton to Mack Chisholm.
- Sussex, Jan. 1, by Rev. W. Camp, Frederick Wilkin to Jennie Whipley.

New Ross Road, Dec. 28, by Rev. Mr. Williams, Mrs. W. B. Hodge to Hattie Jones.

Lead-safety Building, Dec. 23, by Rev. D. C. Ross, Owen M. Gagnon to Susan E. Gagnon.

Hants, Jan. 2, by Rev. E. C. Armstrong, William H. Lyman to Ethel Blanche Williams.

Victoria, B. C., Dec. 11, by Rev. J. D. McFarlane, Daniel McLennan to Annie G. Logghead.

Severly, Mass. Nov. 25, by Rev. Robert Johnson, James H. Macdonald to Agnes Wiseman.

Harroville, N. S., Dec. 20, by Rev. J. MacIntosh, Susan Alexander MacIntosh to Annie I. King.

## DIED.

- Hallifax, Jan. 1, Dr. Farrell, 85.
- St. John, Jan. 2, Louis Marshall, 67.
- Petersville, Dec. 31, Kate Morgan, 63.
- Cochester, Dec. 31, Mary Clarke, 53.
- Truro, Dec. 24, Mrs. J. L. Williams, 53.
- New Glasgow, Dec. 31, H. Wright, 77.
- Summersville, Dec. 27, Charles Dixon, 67.
- Portage, Dec. 28, Susan Klemmer, 51.
- St. Andrews, Dec. 24, Eddie Griffin, 33.
- Cedar Camp, Dec. 25, Andrew Klyn, 19.
- Hallifax, Jan. 4, Elizabeth McAlpin, 65.
- Charlottetown, Dec. 29, Mrs. Robertson.
- McMurdoo, Dec. 25, Thomas Kennedy, 79.
- Harro, Dec. 25, Ann Robson Second, 69.
- Northville, Dec. 27, Andrew Feasby, 59.
- Vernon River, Dec. 31, Samuel Wood, 68.
- Charlottetown, Dec. 31, Fannie Gregory, 61.
- Gay's River, Dec. 18, Mrs. William Scott, 75.
- Great Village, Dec. 28, Mrs. Kate Lynton, 58.
- Kensesh, Dec. 11, James R. Macdonald, 33.
- Summersville, Dec. 30, Captain Edward Stecher.
- Lansville, Dec. 27, James H. McFarlane, 77.
- North River, Dec. 31, Catherine Macdonald, 78.
- Tracy Mills, Dec. 28, Alexander H. Kennedy, 69.
- Truro, Jan. 3, Blanche, wife of Edward Johnson, 21.
- Amesbury, Mass., Dec. 15, David P. O'Donnell, 41.
- Boston, Mass., Dec. 30, Mrs. Martha Jane Moore, 78.
- Hallifax, Jan. 2, Rachel, wife of George Williams, 72.
- Berwick, Kings, Dec. 20, widow of Wm. Gridley, 71.
- Jamatic Plains, Mass., Dec. 23, Laura E. Hopkins, 71.
- St. John, Jan. 2, Sarah Jane, wife of Nathaniel Penock, 45.
- Alkerville, Dec. 6, Frank, son of M. and Emma Turou, 2.
- Narmonth, Dec. 22, Deborah, wife of David Murphy, 21.
- Hallifax, Jan. 4, Ann, widow of the late Neil McLellan, 61.
- New Glasgow, Dec. 26, Agnes A., wife of Harry D. Keppah, 64.
- Cowville, B. C., Dec. 31, William M., son of John Cooper, 20.
- Marzaverville, Dec. 16, infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Colin MacLean.
- Yarmouth, Nov. 27, Katie, daughter of Oscar and Mary Bredon.
- Caspio, Dec. 26, Marie A., child of M. A. and Annie Barron.
- North Sydney, Dec. 29, Horace C., son of James and Mrs. Lewis, 21.
- Amherst, Dec. 26, Francis Lorne, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Harrison, 1 year.
- Yarmouth, Jan. 3, Annie A., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Green, 4 months.

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## Intercolonial Railway

On and after MONDAY Nov. 26th, 1900, trains will run daily (Sundays excepted) as follows:—

## TRAINS WILL LEAVE ST. JOHN

Express for Point du Chene, Campbellton and Halifax, etc., 7.30

Express for Halifax and Pictou, etc., 12.15

Express for Sussex, etc., 16.40

Express for Quebec and Montreal, etc., 17.05

Accommodation for Halifax and Sydney, etc., 22.15

A sleeping car will be attached to the train leaving St. John at 11.05 o'clock for Quebec and Montreal. Passengers transfer at Montreal.

A sleeping car will be attached to the train leaving St. John at 22.10 o'clock for Halifax. Vestibule, Dining and Sleeping cars on the Quebec and Montreal express.

## TRAINS WILL ARRIVE AT ST. JOHN

Express from Sussex, etc., 8.20

Express from Quebec and Montreal, etc., 12.40

Express from Halifax and Pictou, etc., 13.15

Express from Halifax and Campbellton, etc., 18.05

Accommodation from Pt. du Chene and Montreal, etc., 24.05

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