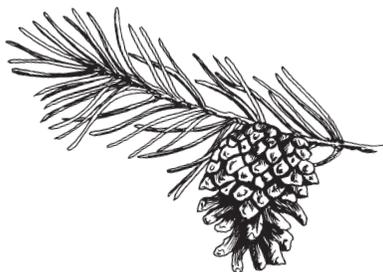




WISCONSIN FOREST TALES

BY JULIA PFERDEHIRT ILLUSTRATIONS BY PAMELA HARDEN



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CHAPTER FOUR INTRODUCTION



FOR ABOUT FIFTY YEARS (from the 1850s to the early 1900s), lumberjacks and logging companies harvested trees in northern Wisconsin. Most logging companies cut every tree that could be sold, then moved on to new, uncut land. They left behind a terrible mess of brush, stumps, and piles of branches. People called northern Wisconsin “the cutover.”

The government believed that the forests should be cut so the land could become farms and towns. The government, logging companies, and railroad owners even printed booklets advertising cutover land in Wisconsin. Booklets were handed out in Chicago and New York, to appeal to people who wanted to take their children out of the dirty cities. Booklets were sent to Finland, Ireland, Germany, Poland, and other countries where land was expensive and poor people dreamed of owning their own farms.

Cheap, good land in Wisconsin, the booklets promised. A farmer’s dream! Photos showed huge vegetables and crops taller than a grown man. The University of Wisconsin even published a guidebook telling farmers how to make their farms a success. But these booklets didn’t tell about the risks of buying land in the cutover.

Most northern Wisconsin land was good for trees but not for crops. Winters were long and the summer growing season was short. Much of the land was stony, swampy, or sandy. Thousands of families spent their life savings to buy land where crops didn’t grow. When crops failed, people couldn’t pay their bills. Many families lost everything.



DREAMING OF WISCONSIN

I first saw our farm on March 21, 1925—my tenth birthday. I thought a giant had shaved it bald, leavin’ nothing behind but stumps. Our land ended at the bluffs overlooking the river and miles of land that had once been forest. There we were, Ma, Pa, Elsie, Margaret, Clara, and me, Will.

We came from Chicago. The whole city smelled like chimney smoke, cooked cabbage, and horse manure. Men worked in the slaughterhouses or the mills. There was bad air in the mills and disease in the slaughterhouses. Pa said it was no kind of life.

One March day, Pa brought home a little book. *Wisconsin: The Farmer’s Dream*, the title read. The book said Wisconsin wheat grew taller than a man. Cows gave rivers of milk. That night, I sat in bed listening to Ma and Pa talk.

“If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is,” Ma said.

I got out of bed and peeked through the doorway. Pa spread the booklet on the table. “Sophie, here’s a picture of oats taller than a grown man. Pictures don’t lie.”

Ma said, “You can’t do this alone.”

“Will’s strong. He can work like a man,” Pa replied.

“But school?” Ma’s voice sounded small and tired.

“One year. Then Will can go to school,” Pa said.

My heart was heavy in my chest. No school for a year? I wanted to be a teacher someday. What would happen to that dream?

“Where will we live?” Ma asked. “It’s winter.”

“Wisconsin Land Company is selling cleared land with houses up in Chippewa Falls,” said Pa.

Whose houses? I thought. And why did they leave?

“I’d rest easier if I’d seen this land with my own eyes,” Ma said. And so would I, I thought.

When I woke up, Pa had gone to the bank—walking as always to save streetcar fare.

Ma always said, “Give a little, save a little, and spend the rest on food, good books, and love.” So Pa always put a dime in the poor box at church. Ma saved pennies for books. And every week, since Pa and Ma had come to America ten years before, Pa put one dollar in the bank. “It’s our hoping money,” Ma always said.



WHS 2118

Here’s a good crop of oats! This picture was used in pamphlets to bring people to the cutover to farm. But it didn’t tell the readers that the land was good for farming only for a few years. After that, nothing grew well but trees.

But that morning, Ma looked worried. She knew Pa was taking \$500 from the bank. Every dollar of their hoping money.

Then, at the Wisconsin Land Company office, Pa would lay \$400 on the table. *William Albert Meyer*. He would sign the papers promising to pay for a farm far away in Wisconsin.

Ma said, "Farming's a hard life."

"Then why does Pa want to go?" I asked.

"Your pa wants better for you than working in the slaughterhouses or the mills."

"You worried about the money?"

"No." Tears shone in Ma's eyes. "I'm worried about your pa. His heart is set on that farm."



The whole family got ready to move. "You'll get more schooling in Wisconsin," Ma said. "I promise."

Maybe, I thought. But, Pa needed me to work.

Pa sold most of the furniture. Ma cried as she filled wooden crates with clothes and dishes. We packed feather mattresses and lamps. Ma packed salt pork, potatoes, cornmeal, flour, molasses, oil, and beans. She carefully wrapped rags around jars of vegetables, meat, and applesauce.

Then Ma packed her books. "We might live in the middle of nowhere," she said, "but I won't see my children grow up ignorant." On top, she carefully laid her grandmother's silver candlesticks and the big German bible, with every birthdate, wedding, and funeral written inside.

Pa bought railroad tickets to Chippewa Falls. A man from the Wisconsin Land Company said we could hire a truck or buy a wagon and team from the company's office. "Just ten miles to your farm from the train station," he said.

I should have known the Land Company man was a liar the day the train whistled into Chippewa Falls. There wasn't a wagon for sale anywhere. Pa paid too much for a team of oxen and a cart.

He hired a truck to take us to the farm and paid too much for that, too. Ma, Elsie, Margaret, and little Clara squeezed into the truck. Pa walked with the oxen.

I helped the driver load our crates. “**Greenhorns**, huh?” he said, and scowled.

greenhorn: newcomer

I wasn’t sure what a greenhorn was, but I didn’t like the sound of it. “My pa was a farmer in Germany,” I answered.

The man spit a plug of tobacco into the snow.

“Pa says there’s a house on our land.”

The driver laughed. “A house? It’s a tar paper shack. The stove will eat wood like a starving army. But at least you won’t freeze.”

I’d seen shacks in Chicago with black tarred paper for walls. Stove or no stove, we’d freeze in Wisconsin with tar paper walls.



MILWAUKEE PUBLIC MUSEUM

Thousands of people came to northern Wisconsin for a chance to farm. But because the land wasn’t good for crops, many farmers failed and lost their farms.

The rickety truck bumped along the two wheel ruts they called a road. I half froze in the back.

We passed one farmhouse made of logs. The fields were filled with stumps. Another farmhouse was empty and falling down. The door flapped in the wind like a shirt on a clothesline.

Soon, my teeth were chattering and my feet had turned into big cubes of ice. I peered over the side of the truck. The driver pulled to a stop in front of a shack covered with black tar paper. Our house. A crooked tin chimney pointed toward the gray sky. Behind the house, a tumbledown shed leaned into the wind.

Somebody had plowed and cleared some land, but mostly I saw stumps—hundreds of black stumps sticking out of the snow.

“Well,” the driver said. “Now you see why they call ’em stump farms. Farmers pull ’em out with ox teams. Blow ’em up with dynamite. You’ll wish you’d never seen a stump before this land is cleared.”

Ma bundled up Clara and led the girls into the house. Elsie’s eyes were as big as half-dollars. “This is it?” she said. She started to cry. I felt like crying right along with her.

The driver’s voice scraped in my ears like a rusty gate. “What’s your pa thinking, bringing you all out here?” the driver asked. “You’ll starve. Land’s poor. Stones everywhere. Oh, you can grow potatoes, but there’s no one to buy ’em.”

My eyes burned. I would not cry. I would not speak against my pa.

“Marry off them sisters of yours and you’ll have fewer mouths to feed.”

The driver’s words made my stomach turn, like sour milk. Finally we carried the last crate into the house and the man left, taking his nasty ideas with him.

I helped Ma settle. Inside the house, boards were nailed up to make walls. Thick black paper coated with tar covered the outside. The roof was tin. There was one room for living and another for sleeping. Everything was covered with dust and a sprinkling of

snow, like sugar on a fried cake.

A rusted black stove took up a whole corner of the big room. They'd left a table and one broken chair. In the sleeping room, I found a pile of boards and a small wooden barrel.

Elsie found a half-bald broom behind the door and began to sweep. By the time I **scrounged** up some firewood and Ma started up the stove, Clara had wrapped herself in Ma's warm shawl and fallen asleep right on the floor. I set to work with a **crowbar**, prying open the crates.

scrounge: look for

crowbar: metal bar

By the time Pa and the oxen walked up the road, Elsie had unpacked the pots. Ma boiled potatoes and heated one of the precious jars of meat and gravy. We ate every scraping, huddled by the stove to keep warm.

In the sleeping room, I piled the boards in one corner. Pa would use them to build beds. But, for that night, Pa laid straw on the sleeping room floor and spread blankets on top. All six of us slept together, like **herring** packed in a barrel. It was crowded, but at least we were warm.

herring: fish, often salted or dried

"Happy birthday, son," Pa said as he piled blankets over us. "Ten years old. You're a man today!"

Maybe that day I did become a man. I don't know. I only know that on my tenth birthday the hard times began.



Before the last snow, we planted greens and potatoes. The neighbor lady, Mrs. Karlov, taught Ma how to start onions, tomatoes, rutabagas, and cabbage from seed. Pa bought a wagon and two cows with the last of the hoping money.

In April, the snow melted. Days were warmer. Tiny green sprouts poked their heads above the ground. Ma started to smile again. Then, the first day of May, we woke up to six inches of snow. The greens froze. So did Ma's smile.

That first year was a mix of good luck and bad. Mr. Karlov traded work with Pa. Come harvest time, Pa and Mr. Karlov dug potatoes. Mr. Karlov helped Pa nail boards over the tar paper.

Mrs. Karlov invited Ma to the church supper in town. For two days they baked and talked and even laughed. Ma washed our Sunday clothes. She filled the big boiler with hot water and made us all scrub every inch—even Pa. And it wasn't even Saturday night.

At harvest, Pa piled potatoes in the wagon and drove into town to the potato buyer. At suppertime, he brought the whole load home again. "The Wisconsin Land Company said potato prices were good," Pa said. "Maybe they're good in Chicago. Here they pay pennies."

So we ate potatoes that second year. Potatoes and milk gravy. Potatoes and turnips. Venison and potatoes. Pa trapped rabbits and partridges. In fall, I hiked to the lake with Pa's shotgun and filled a burlap sack with ducks. We ate duck and potatoes. Ma kept the feathers for pillows.

During the winter, Pa got work checking track for the railroad. He hauled wood into town and sold it to the Methodist church. He and Ma paid the taxes and the mortgage. They wrote away for papers on farming from the university down in Madison. Pa had hope in his eyes.

Come spring, we plowed and planted again. I walked behind the plow, picking stones. Pa said if folks in Chicago would buy rocks, we'd be millionaires.

Mr. Karlov taught me to catch fish with a net in our creek. Did we catch fish! I filled the ox cart with fish, enough for us and the Karlovs, too.

Ma and Mrs. Karlov salted fish in barrels. Pa dried fish. And for three weeks, we ate fish. Fried fish, baked fish, and stewed fish.

We ate fish till I expected to sprout scales and fins. And, of course, we ate potatoes.

The papers from the university said to plant oats. So the second year, Pa became an oat farmer. I hauled twenty-one wagon-loads of rocks. Ma grew potatoes, turnips, and rutabagas to fill the root cellar. She planted cabbage for sauerkraut, and beans and rhubarb for canning. We all worked, even little Clara. We saved on shoe leather by running barefoot all summer.

Come fall, the oats sold for good money. Pa's hope grew like sunflowers. Ma smiled some, too. Pa talked about buying a tractor with Mr. Karlov.

Between planting and harvest and winter blizzards, I went to school four months in the first two years. I still read Ma's good books and even the papers from the university. But, when I thought about school, my heart felt heavy as a stone. Forget about school, I told myself. There's no use hoping for what you can't have.

The third year, good luck and bad balanced like a shopkeeper's scale. Early that spring it rained for two weeks straight. Mosquitoes swarmed like dark, buzzing clouds. Folks got sick. Nice Mrs. Karlov died of the fever and my ma cried. A few days later, Mr. Karlov came to visit.

"Ten years we put into this farm," Mr. Karlov told Pa. "The land never was good for much." Mr. Karlov laid his face in his hands. "With Laina gone I can't make it," he said.

My ma set a steaming cup of coffee in front of Mr. Karlov. "My brother in Pittsburgh wrote to say the steel mills are hiring," he said. "I've decided to go back and let the county take the farm for taxes."

Mr. Karlov sold two cows to Pa and brought some of Mrs. Karlov's clothes to Ma.

"The **forester** from the county says they're thinkin' to plant trees on my farm," Mr. Karlov said. He laughed, in spite of the sadness in his eyes. "Funny thing is, it makes sense. This country was made for trees, not corn."

forester: forest expert

The next day, Mr. Karlov loaded his wagon with children and trunks. In town, he sold the wagon and bought train tickets to Pittsburgh.

Ma missed Mrs. Karlov something fierce. I could tell. Some nights she'd sigh and say, "I wish Laina were here." Pa would nod and pat her hand.

Pa plowed another five acres for oats. Mr. Karlov's words kept ringing in my mind. The land never was good for much. What if we didn't have enough money for taxes, like Mr. Karlov?

The year passed. Planting. Harvest. Winter. Pa built a sled to haul logs and trees left behind by the lumbermen. The sawmill would buy all we could cut.

One afternoon, Jake Anderson, a forester from the state, came knocking on our door. "He's a good man," Pa said. "Government hasn't always been friendly to folks in the cutover. But foresters . . . they're good men."

Mr. Anderson checked out our trees at the bottom of the bluff. "They're worth some money if you can cut 'em," he said. "The ground's swampy and the bluff's steep. You'd need ten oxen and a week to haul those trees out."

So Pa left the trees. We'd just find another way to make a dollar. I was glad.

Getting by, Ma called it. She sewed clothes from flour sacks. She made soap. "If the pioneer women could do it, so can I," she said.

She bought baby chicks. Clara squealed and chased the little fluff balls around the yard. Soon enough, their legs grew like skinny pencils and their sweet yellow feathers fell out. Pa built a lean-to next to the cow shed for Ma's chickens.

Ma sold the eggs in town. Margaret fed, watered, and gathered eggs every morning. One night at supper, Pa pinned a flower in Margaret's brown braids and named her "Commander of

Chickens and Chief of All Eggs.” We all laughed.

Clara named Mr. Karlov’s cows Chicago and Nellie. “Chicago?” Pa asked.

Clara nodded. “Chicago had lots of cows,” she said. “Now we do, too.”

Ma milked the cows. Every week she sold butter to the hotel in town. She made cheese. The fourth year on the farm, Chicago had a calf. More butter money, I thought. Every penny helps.

All this time, Pa worked like a tiger. When Ma was lonely, he’d come home with news that the Forest Service was holding a Farmers’ Club Picnic or the church was planning a social. When I was fourteen, Pa swapped work with a neighbor—his work in exchange for the neighbor’s books.

In all that time, I never heard Pa complain. Not when the calf got sick and died. Not when the oat crop was bad. Not even when his friend, Mr. Karlov, moved away.

I had to quit school. We needed the money from tree cutting and Pa couldn’t do it alone. Guess I’d never be a teacher. No use hoping for what you can’t have, I told myself.

One spring afternoon, Elsie, Margaret, and I were picking stones on new-plowed land. I turned to see Pa on his knees in the dirt. Was he hurt? Sick? If anything happened to Pa, there was no hope for us at all. I ran to him.

“Pa! You all right?” My heart was pounding.

Pa looked up. “Karlov was right. This land’s good for one or two crops. Then it’s all used up.” Pa’s eyes looked right into mine. “Son, I remember going hungry in Germany. I promised I’d never let that happen to my children.”

Pa sifted dirt through his fingers. “Karlov was right about other things, too. I grow potatoes, but nobody wants to buy them. If a man builds a fence, the county raises his taxes. If he doesn’t build a fence, the government says he’s lazy. What was I thinking to bring you all here?”

Tears stung my eyes. “Pa, you were thinking of us. Elsie, Mar-

garet, Clara, and me. Clara isn't sickly like city children. I don't have to work in the mill or the slaughterhouse." I knelt down next to Pa and put my arms around his shoulders. "I love you, Pa."



The oat crop was pitiful that year . Mr. Karlov was right, I thought. Maybe we should go back to Chicago.

Nineteen twenty-nine was our fifth year on the farm. "This land's good for trees," Pa said. "But little Clara will be a grandma by the time trees are grown." So Pa set his heart on cows. He wrote to the university for books about cows. We started saving pennies—hoping money. Pa was hoping for cows. I was hoping we'd survive.

One Saturday, Pa came home from town with a newspaper. "Stock Market Crash" the headline read. "Millionaires Lose Everything." After supper, Ma read to us.

In every city and town, businesses were going broke. Suddenly rich people were poor. Banks shut their doors. Millions of regular folks like Ma and Pa were losing their hoping money. I felt sick. Was the country falling apart?

"Hard times ahead," the newspaper said. Hard times? I thought. What did rich folks in New York and Chicago know about hard times? They should come to the cutover. Then they'd know hard times.



The newspaper called it the Depression. In Chicago, folks stood in line for soup and bread. Hard times all over, I thought. But here there were no soup lines. Folks in the cutover just went hungry.

Times were hard everywhere. Here in the cutover, they were harder. The hotel stopped buying Ma's butter. The oat buyers paid less and less. One of the banks in town went broke.

In 1930, we barely got by. Nellie had a calf. Ma's chickens laid eggs like gangbusters. We ate eggs and rabbit until Pa said he expected to wake up one morning with feathers or fur. Our hoping

money paid the taxes.

Nineteen thirty-one was harder. One after another, our neighbors quit and left. There weren't jobs in the cities. There sure enough weren't jobs out here in the cutover. Pa couldn't pay the taxes, but neither could anybody else.

In 1932, Pa and I cut trees and hauled logs with oxen and the sled. The lumber didn't pay much, but Pa said, "It's better than nothing. We'll get by."

We worked as long as we had trees to cut and light to cut by. At night, I fell asleep sitting at the supper table. I was too tired even to listen to Ma read. I hurt all over. Pa must have hurt worse, but he didn't complain.

I turned eighteen in March 1933. Money was **scarce** as diamonds in the cutover. I went hunting and spied a real fine oak tree on Mr. Karlov's old land.

scarce: rare or hard to get

We hitched the oxen and set out. The tree was a beauty. But I could see why the loggers had left it behind. It leaned over the edge of the bluff. Whoever cut and hauled this tree would need to work slowly and carefully.

Pa gripped the ax and began to chip a notch in the tree trunk. As he swung the heavy ax, his foot slipped on an icy stone. The sharp ax didn't bite into the wood. It slid across the bark. The next thing I knew, Pa was lying on the ground. The sharp ax had cut deep into his leg.

"Pa!" I ran to him. I ripped my jacket off and unbuttoned my shirt. I fumbled for my knife to cut the cloth into strips.

"You'll be all right, Pa," I said as I wrapped his leg in strips of cloth. I pressed with my hand until the bleeding slowed. I kept saying it while I pulled Pa to the lumber sled. The knot in my belly tied itself tighter every minute. We would have to pull Pa to the road.

I begged and pulled but that ox wouldn't move any faster. By the time we reached the road, the sky was gray.

"You'll be all right, Pa." He was shivering in the cold. Help. *Somebody, please help.* We were at least two miles from home.

Soon the sky was dark. Pa was moaning with pain. "You'll be all right, Pa. Please be all right."

Suddenly I stopped. Quiet! I heard the one sound I wanted to hear most in the world. It was the rumble of an engine. Someone was coming!

"Help! Help!" I yelled and whistled and screamed. I saw headlights shining like tiny candle flames, far down the road. I stood smack in the middle of the road. Finally a truck rattled out of the dark night and slowed down.

"Will? Will Meyer?" It was Pa's friend Jake Anderson, the state forester. I raced toward the truck.

"Help! Mr. Anderson. My pa's hurt." Before I even reached the truck, Mr. Anderson jumped out and ran toward Pa. He knelt right down next to the logging sled.

"William?" He shook Pa's shoulder. "We'll get you to the doc in town. Don't worry. You'll be all right."

We lifted Pa into the back of the truck. Mr. Anderson propped up Pa's leg, and we covered him with blankets and our own coats.

"That leg looks real bad," Mr. Anderson said. "I'll take you to the doc. Then I'll come back and let your ma know what happened."

I climbed in back with Pa. Mr. Anderson jumped into the truck and pushed the gas pedal to the floor. We raced through the cold and the night.



"This is a bad one," Doc Stevens said. "The cut was deep and the bone's broken."

"How long will he be laid up?" I asked. The knot in my belly felt tighter than ever.

"Three months at least," Doc Stevens said.

Three months. What would we do without Pa for three months? I plopped onto a chair and covered my face with my hands.

“It’ll work out,” Doc Stevens said. Maybe, I thought. Or maybe we’ll lose the farm.

Doc Stevens kept Pa overnight. Just as I was bundling up to start the long walk home, Jake Anderson pulled his truck up in front of the doc’s office.

“Let’s get you home,” he said. I stumbled out to the truck and crawled inside.

“Doc says my pa will be laid up for three months,” I blurted. “There’s no work anywhere. We’ll lose the farm.” I wanted to cry. But I was eighteen years old. Crying wouldn’t fix anything.



WHS 6822

Many farmers left when the land wouldn’t produce enough food to feed their families. They left behind their homes and buildings. When they didn’t pay the taxes on their land, the land returned to the government. The county government planted trees on this land. This was the beginning of county forests.

But Mr. Anderson didn’t tell me to stop complaining. He didn’t tell me to act my age. Instead, he pulled the truck to the side of the road. I could see his face in the moonlight.

Thoughts swirled in my mind. Did Mr. Anderson know

about a job? Could he help me find work?

“Mr. Anderson, my family needs money,” I said. “And I want to work.”

Even in the moonlight, I could see Mr. Anderson smile. “Then, son, how would you like to join the CCC?”

“What’s a CCC?”

“Civilian Conservation Corps,” Mr. Anderson said. “It’s President Roosevelt’s big idea. The government’s hiring men like you. You’ll have to work like fury. Tree planting, trail building. They’re even training men to fight fires.”

“This is paying work?”

“You bet! Thirty dollars a month.”

Thirty dollars. My mind whirled like a tornado thinking of what \$30 every month could do for my family.

“And one more thing.” Mr. Anderson gripped my arm. “You can go to school.”

My heart pounded like a blacksmith’s hammer. For the first time since we’d moved to the cutover I felt like running and jumping and dancing. School. I could go to school!

“Will, this is a good chance for you,” Mr. Anderson said.

Suddenly all the hopes I’d hidden away exploded in me. If President Roosevelt had a big idea, I wanted to be part of it. If I made \$30 a month, my pa could take time to heal. Pa and Ma could pay the taxes and buy more cows. Elsie could finish school. I reached my hand to Mr. Anderson.

“Mr. Anderson, I never heard of the CCC, but if you and President Roosevelt say it’s a good thing, then I want to go. This is the first good news I’ve heard in so long.” I smiled. How long had it been since I’d really smiled?

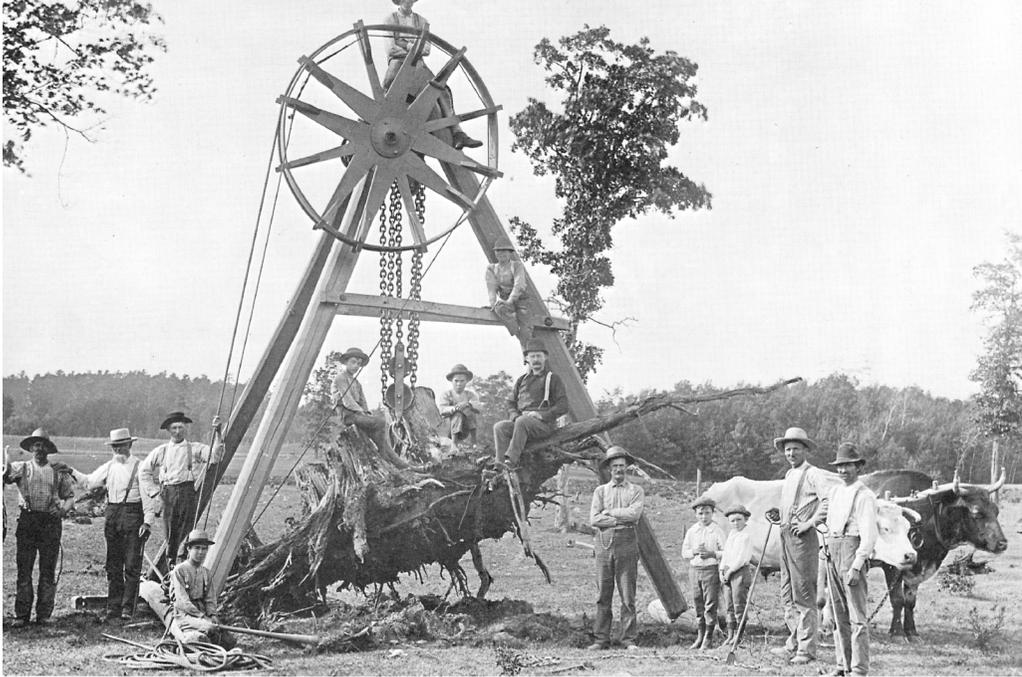
“Sir, I’m the kind of man President Roosevelt is looking for.” I shook Mr. Anderson’s hand. “If my ma and pa say yes, you can sign me up.”



In 1933, thousands and thousands of young men like Will Meyer lived in America. Some watched helplessly as their farms were lost. Others traveled around, searching for work and getting into trouble.

Then President Roosevelt's big idea happened. Will Meyer and thousands of other young men joined the CCC. Thousands of families received \$25 a month from their sons' paychecks. Farms were saved. Families were able to get by. A whole generation of young people was put to work. All because of the Civilian Conservation Corps.

THE ADVERTISEMENT FOR THIS STUMP-PULLING MACHINE SAID, "A MAN, A BOY AND A HORSE CAN PULL ONE HUNDRED STUMPS A DAY."
WHAT DO YOU THINK?



OSHKOSH PUBLIC MUSEUM

Farmers in the cutover fought the "battle of the stumps." Stumps left behind by loggers had big roots that broke plow blades and took up space in farmers' fields. Farmers dug, burned, chopped, and pulled stumps. They plowed around stumps and blasted them with dynamite. Mostly, they dreamed of farms without stumps.

FROM FOREST TO FARM TO FOREST AGAIN

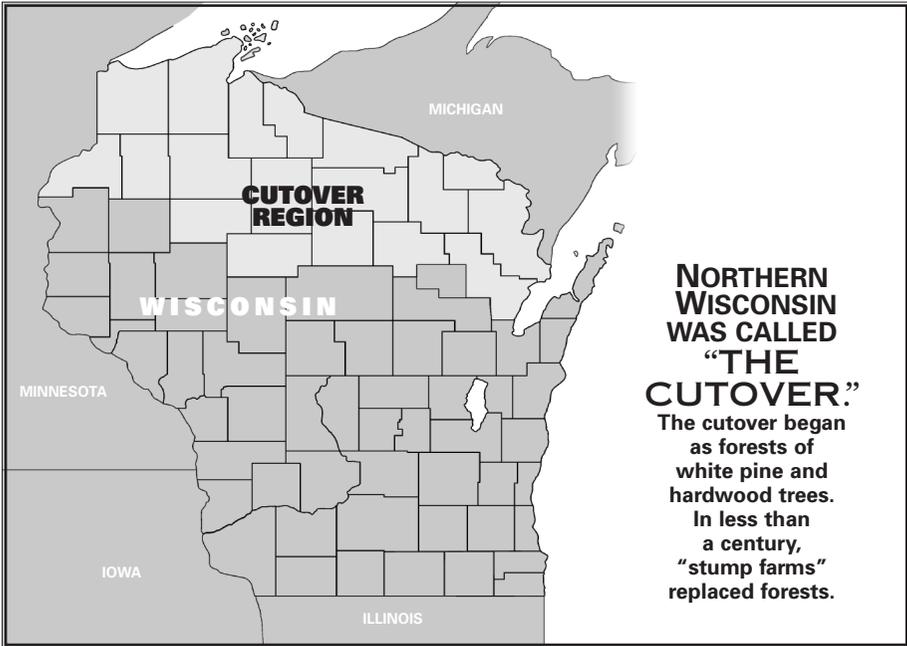
IN OUR STORY, Will Meyer's neighbors couldn't pay their taxes. They lost their farm. Many cutover farmers left their farms. The land became wild again. Whole towns were abandoned. Folks called them "ghost towns."

What happened to all this land?

Many ghost towns and abandoned farms became county, state, and national forests.

Foresters realized the land was better for forests than farms. They planned the best way to replant the forests. At first, red and white pine trees were planted. Later, land was planted for animal habitat. Soft and hardwood trees were planted, like the old forests. Some land was planted with trees to harvest and sell.

So, from forest to farm to forest again. We play, work, and enjoy nature in our national, state, and county forests.



**NORTHERN
WISCONSIN
WAS CALLED
"THE
CUTOVER."**

The cutover began as forests of white pine and hardwood trees. In less than a century, "stump farms" replaced forests.

**MANY FARMERS USED WAGONS AND HORSES.
IN THIS PHOTO, ONE RICH MAN HAS A TRUCK!**



WHS (WG) 19734

Big city companies bought wheat, corn, potatoes, and other crops. The farmers hauled their crops to town. Often, buyers paid too little. Farmers had to choose between too little money and no money at all. Buyers shipped the grain and vegetables by train to big cities like Chicago or Minneapolis, where they received higher prices.