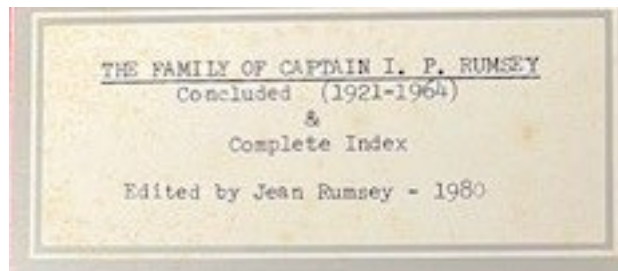


# Lucy & William Holt Family Diary Excerpt

Feb. 1903 Entry About Lucy Holt's Sister's Visit to Several Lumber Camps in Northern Oconto & Marinette Counties

- *Her guide was her brother-in-law (William "Arthur" Holt) President of the Holt Lumber Company*
- *Holt's Spur was a major train siding located in the Town of Riverview near the intersection of Tar Dam Road and Hwy. 32.*
- *Holt's Ranch was a logging camp and farm east of Lakewood near the intersection of Smyth Rd. and Holt Ranch Rd.*

# Cover of Source Diary Source Book Which is Part of the Lakewood, WI Lakes Country Library Collection



*Note: I.P. Rumsey was the father of Lucy Rumsey Holt*

Having thus filled out the full compliment of four Holt children, let us go back for a moment to the mention of Jamie Fales joining the church in 1900. Minnie May saved a memento of her teaching days at the Alcott School in 1899, (see p.282). She attached a typewritten note as follows: "Given to M.M.R. after disciplining History Class at Alcott School. Jimmie Fales had been rude. I refused to recognize him until he apologized. This came as a valentine, or an Easter card, can't be sure which!" It is a sheet of heavy deckle-edged paper of good quality, 10"x 7", on which James Fales had written:

The History Boys of 95 hereby resolve  
to stand by their Alcott School colors  
and not to be impolite or rude to their teacher.  
Yours truly

Signed [by each]  
James Fales  
Cleveland Cobb  
Noel S. Anderson  
Percy Hinckley  
John L. Loey  
Evelyn P. Cobb  
James G. K. McClure

Minnie's diary told some of the trip she and Ellen took with Arthur Holt, visiting various lumber camps in the Wisconsin woods in February 1903. (See p.389-90.) A letter has turned up giving full details of this expedition.

Round, Wis., Feb. 27, 1903  
"Hotel Belleview" (or at least it ought to be so called  
as the outlook shows mud, a station, wood piles, beer  
barrels, saloons and an occasional granger)

Dear Mother,

Here Ellen & I sit while the rain is falling outside and Paul & Arthur have gone to the camp which we had hoped to visit today. It was a beautiful day yesterday & so we were hardly prepared for the patter of rain drops to which we awoke this morning, tho' Mr. McDonald said yesterday that rain was coming. We are to take the train for Oconto at 1:20 this afternoon & until that time we are to amuse ourselves. Expecting to be occupied every minute of our trip, we brought neither literature nor work nor writing materials. But Arthur supplied us with the paper & the maid of all work brought up pens & nibs & after reading some Scripture, that being the only book brought, we have betaken ourselves to literary efforts. You may not find this a very interesting letter as I am going to write an account of our trip, following the order of events & places so as to fix it in my mind. It tries any orderly mind to have been on trips like this four times, & then only have scrappy & isolated memories of places.

To begin with our start, Wednesday morning at 5:35, which turned out to be six. It was not very cold fortunately, and our walk to the station in the twilight dawn was not unpleasant. The train was the usual palatial affair, made up of discarded cars, heated much over head & a little under foot, but the journey was not tiresome, for there was an interesting family in the seat ahead of us, a very nice father & poor weary, headaching mother, & their little children, about nine, three and one years respectively. The mother was so patient in her management of the children, first getting the baby to sleep & putting him in care of the father, then taking out the family wash rag & performing the oldest girl's toilet, brushing her hair & binding it very neatly. Finally she got around to attending to the three year old, & there had not been an impatient or



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GENERAL TELEPHONE  
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*Wisconsin... In General*

## First Logging Camp In State Still Stands

In the midst of one of the most vast white pine regions in the Midwest, Holt and Balcom Logging Camp No. 1 was erected in 1880 to house the Lumberjacks of that era. Skilled woodsmen carved the corners, floors and benches with much expertise.

Commonly called "Depot Camp", the loggers transported supplies on foot via a winding trail, which followed McCaslin Brook.

Used for over half a century, the oldest and still-standing lumber camp in Wisconsin is located near Lakewood in Northeastern Wisconsin.

*Photo Compliments of State Historical Society of Wisconsin*



After driving some way, & conversing with the scaler, Billy Pettigrew, we turned around & Mr. McDonald let the horses go their fastest back to the camp. It was fine. When I got out, one of my poor lamb's wool shoes was found to be in tatters on the sole, so I put on over these Arthur's low overshoes & we proceeded to walk up a hill in search of an appetite. I decided it was a good plan to have large feet as we could cover ground. We found the appetite & a nice dinner waiting for us when we returned. Willing to run no risks, I ate only tea & toast & peas, & half a cookie. After dinner we sat around on large logs or stumps or a load of cedar, waiting till the driver had had his dinner & was ready to proceed to the tow-hill where we wished to see the engine do its work.

We rode on the load as far as the hill, & then watched it march or slide majestically up in answer to the puff-puff-puff of the engine. At the bottom of the hill was a much scattered load of cedar poles. One of the sleighs had broken loose at the top of the hill & gone dashing back. No one was hurt, & I should

cross word from children of parents. It was really quite a refreshing sight, for often with people in these circumstances you miss the thoughtful care of the husband & father, & the mother is too tired to be loving & gentle.

A little while after leaving Mountain, the train stopped at Holt's Spur & we disembarked, finding Mr. McDonald just arrived with the team, his fur coat all frost, like the trees and bushes which had been a delight to the eye all the way up. Later I learned that a spur was a switch or siding on the R.R. which had only one connection with the main track. Here, which is called "Camp 3 Landing", we pieced out our early breakfast at Oconto with toast & tea, warmed up our feet, donned extra wraps, above & below, & were seated in the sleigh & started on our trip by 8:15.

It was a beautiful drive along a road bordered with sparkling bushes & trees. Mr. McDonald had put the bells on the horses which sounded too much like civilization & not like the silence of the great woods. About ten we came to the hill where one of the engines, about whose troubles & difficulties we had heard much, was stationed to pull up loads on a heavy grade. Then we came to Camp 3 where we were to have dinner, but as it was still early, we drove on down the pond to where the logs were being piled up for the drive in the spring. There were lots & lots of logs, to an inexperienced eye. It was beautiful sleighing & the weather was simply perfect, bright & gorgeous sunshine & blue sky & warm enough to go with uncovered ears.



like to have seen it go. (Henry Cronk was in charge of this camp.)

We then turned about & went up the pond again, turning off at a place which I remembered from ten years ago. We passed one of Oconto Company's camps where Miss Metcalf & I enjoyed luscious doughnuts ten years ago, on past Camp 4, where we helped with the prayer meeting ten years ago when Mr. Biswell was along, & where Mr. Macartney & an Evangelist went back for a meeting from the Ranch 3 years ago. Arthur held many conversations with the camp bosses which were interesting & amusing. I did more sitting still in this sleigh than ever before, while the men made excursions into the woods. But I enjoyed sitting there & looking & listening & breathing. After a while I drove, until we reached the ranch with its cunning, cozy cottage where we have spent so many delightful hours.

I wish you could see it. Clean as white wash can make it, everything primitive but charming, an airtight stove which heats up the house in almost no time. We had the fur robes spread down for carpets, & the men left us to clean up while they went to interview Mrs. Crooks, George Crook's daughter-in-law, & to make peace with her, because Arthur had sent word we would be there last week Friday & had found no way to let her know of our change of plan. However she didn't mind, & prepared a delicious supper, chickens, whose cries we heard, chocolate cake, raspberry jam, cookies, doughnuts, tea, jelly roll, two kinds of pickles, potatoes, milk & bread & butter. We retired quite early that night, preparatory to an early start next morning.

Paul came to wake us up & build a fire for us so it was soon as warm as toast. A breakfast consisting of soft boiled eggs, meat, etc., with chocolate cake & raspberry jam, prepared us for our drive of fifteen miles, the balmiest sleigh ride I ever enjoyed. We had the interesting experience of breaking the road part of the way. We drove up around a settler's cabin, for Paul thought he would have a way out, but he had gone so long before that only his sleigh track was present. The horses had hard work as there was a crust under a light covering of snow and about every other step they went in almost up to their knees. The bells had been left off at my request, & we enjoyed the silence.

Our next encounter was an abandoned sheep ranch, where we turned off into the field & after driving a little way, Arthur & Mr. McDonald decided that they would walk a mile or two & save driving around Chat six. So they took off their coats & started, but went only about ten feet, sinking thro' the crust up to their knees & turned around & came back, Arthur saying he didn't like to leave us so long. But we decided that was not the only reason.

We turned around without tipping over, thanks to the finest bob sleigh I ever rode in, good driving & horses who understood their business. We then continued on our way, passing a summer resort on Crooked Lake, & finally turning into a logging road which led to where a jobber, Grandel, was cutting, getting \$900. for the job & his crew consisting of his sons. It was a beautiful drive thro' a cedar swamp part of the way. Back on the same road till we came to the landing where Hansen was working, a man who didn't know Mr. Holt. Back into the woods, where we found Mr. Crawford, & finally to the camp, a small one, only seven men working there. Paul knew the cook & thanks to him we had a good dinner of pea soup, delicious fresh pork, fine boiled potatoes, cake & current pie, which I did not eat. Ellen & I before dinner luxuriated in a bunch of pine tops by the side of the lake upon which the camp was located, while Art & Paul crossed the lake & came back with some green arbutus leaves. It was a beautiful spot & we think we could build a cottage among the pines & quite enjoy the peace.

Then we started on the long drive which ended here at Pound last night at about seven o'clock. The fast part was delightful thro' cedar swamps, along by the Waupee where the track was hardly broken, down by the Peshtigo, where St. Mary's logs were piled, then onto a logging road, where the men looked out at us from a hay thatched tent. We passed two loaded sleighs & two empty, the stock remark being "Getting pretty soft, aint it, eh?" "You bet it is." In some places



the ice was practically gone. Before turning off into the supply road, we met Le Clair, & conversed a bit, later passing his prosperous settlement & seeing the maple trees where the syrup we had last summer came from. About there Mr. McDonald said it was a mile or so to Bateman's old camp where Guy Ramsey was keeping watch. But before we got there, I decided it was a mile as the crow flies, not as the road winds.

The descriptions of Guy Ramsey made me quite curious to see him. When Arthur last visited him he was living on sauer kraut & baking powder biscuit left by the old cook, melting snow because the spring was frozen over & otherwise appearing very shiftless. Mr. McDonald expressed this scene by his remark, "Why he just knows that he is there, but has no idea where that is."

The rest of the drive was over practically bare roads. At the Pound Laundry we stopped a while & Paul brot us out some doughnuts & cookies. Then the rest of them walked into town. I couldn't because Arthur's rubbers wouldn't stay on & I had no others, and it was very soft. Arriving at the hotel, we were ushered into the family sitting where, Wallace would say, were eleven besides women & children. The room was about the size of our upstairs hall bedroom & there were three children, who had been about the saloon so much that their manners & language were painful, except the baby of about 9 months. The mother, a frail little young woman had been sick 4 weeks, & couldn't get around after them as she wanted & so she slapped them & threatened them but all to no purpose. We were finally ushered to the "sitting room" also our bed room, a large room over the bar room, heated by a stove pipe going thru from the stove in the hall. It is a curiously built house, two of the rooms opposite had no light except what came in from the hall.

After supper of ham & eggs & accessories, we sat awhile & then to bed, but not to sleep for some time as the bar was not closed till twelve & the noise kept me awake. And now it is morning & here we sit at 10:30. Ellen is waiting to read to me, so I better stop. This is a scrawl & I am sorry for you to have to read it, but it may amuse you sometime when you haven't much else to do. You might let Anne Metcalf see it as she might be interested to hear about what she missed.

It is now 12 o'clock and we shall have to go to dinner soon. It has been a funny experience. Ellen has written a long account to her mother, so you need not exchange letters. Lucy, I find, has set her heart on paying some social debts so I may have to stay till Saturday of next week or over Sunday. I don't know. Let me know if there is any reason why you specially want me. I hope the new cook is all right, & the new man will be. I am anxious to get back & hear about things.

Please forgive this awful scrawl. With much love to each one.

Minnie May

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George Holt had been pictured in the Rumsey records first as Henry's boss, and then as Minnie's fond friend. (The moonlight was always more beautiful in his company!) The letters he wrote to Ellen and Minnie, on his way home from their trip to Egypt and The Holy Land in 1908 as they continued on their tour of Europe, bring out a lighter side and show a hitherto unknown (to me) ability to sketch. Let me give you some excerpts from those letters, to make your picture of him more three-dimensional too.

Off Sardinia  
May 2, 1908



DAMPFER 'FRIEDRICH DER GROSSE'

NORDEUTSCHER LLOYD  
BREMEN.

My dear da-M-E-n,  
. . . The night slept well, and  
I had my coffee at 7 and my  
cold bath at 7:30, after wait-