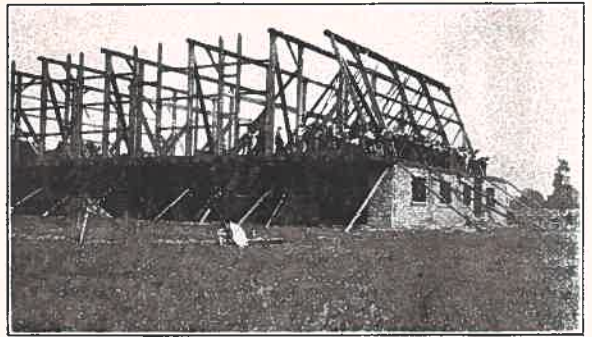


EXPERT HANDLERS OF BIG TIMBERS.



STURDY WORKERS AND PARTIAL RESULTS AT A BARN-RAISING BEE

There came to the offices of the AMERICAN LUMBERMAN the other day a letter which brought with it impressions of the five things that encourage the senses of man to happiness: a smell of the fields, a taste of good victuals, the sound of a laugh, the hand-clasp of an old friend, and a picture of contented industry. Owen M. Bruner, president of the wholesale lumber company of that name at Philadelphia, Pa., has written an account of a barn raising at Rouns Station, Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, the home of his early youth. It recalls to the average man Elijah Kellogg's stories of Hadsrabble days, with their strength of manhood, their community of interest and their lack of complexity of life.

In one of the accompanying cuts is portrayed the four men who figured most prominently in the barn raising. Reading from left to right, they are Owen M. Bruner, wholesale lumberman who supplied some of the timbers; Joseph H. Esbenshade, owner of the barn and one of the richest farmers in Lancaster county; John A. Umble, retail lumberman at Bird-in-Hand, from whom most of the lumber was bought, and W. C. Eckman, the carpenter who superintended the construction and erection of the barn. According to Mr. Bruner, Lancaster county is the garden spot of the world and the richest county in the whole United States. The farmers of the county are the model farmers of the world—rich, frugal, hospitable and happy. Many of them are as active as cats and strong as oxen, with a zest for feats of agility, strength or endurance. It would surprise some of the lumberjacks to know how easily these men can handle a piece of big timber.

There were almost two hundred farmers gathered from all around, for a barn raising is an event. The second cut shows the manner in which the men grappled with the timbers. Some of the sticks measured 12x14-55. The barn itself when finished will cover space 66x86 feet, and will rise forty-seven feet into the air. Forty or fifty men tackle a timber together, while others swarm over the timbers already erected, ready to set the new stick into place. Each stick must be cut and mortised before the assembling is begun, so much responsibility devolves upon the carpenter. Mr. Eckman has recently put up no less than thirty-two of these immense barns.

When time came for lunch, the farmers turned to the watering trough to wash up before sitting down to eat. Having completed their rough toilet, grace was said; and then the whole bunch waded in—not into the trough, but into what the visitors pronounced "the riches of the fields." Lima beans, coldslaw, potatoes, corn, cheese, cherry pie, dried peaches and prunes and plenty of real milk and coffee, with all the accessories of a farmer's pantry. A meal fit for a king.

The lumber was sold by the Owen M. Bruner Company to John Umble & Bro., of Bird-in-Hand, Pa., who in turn filled the specifications for the structure. Mr. Bruner, accompanied by Samuel Shoemaker, a prominent builder of Philadelphia, and C. S. Williams, son of F. B. Williams, manufacturer of cypress at Patterson, La., combined his wish to visit his former home with a desire to witness an unusual sight, and the three men pronounce the trip to have been filled with pleasure.