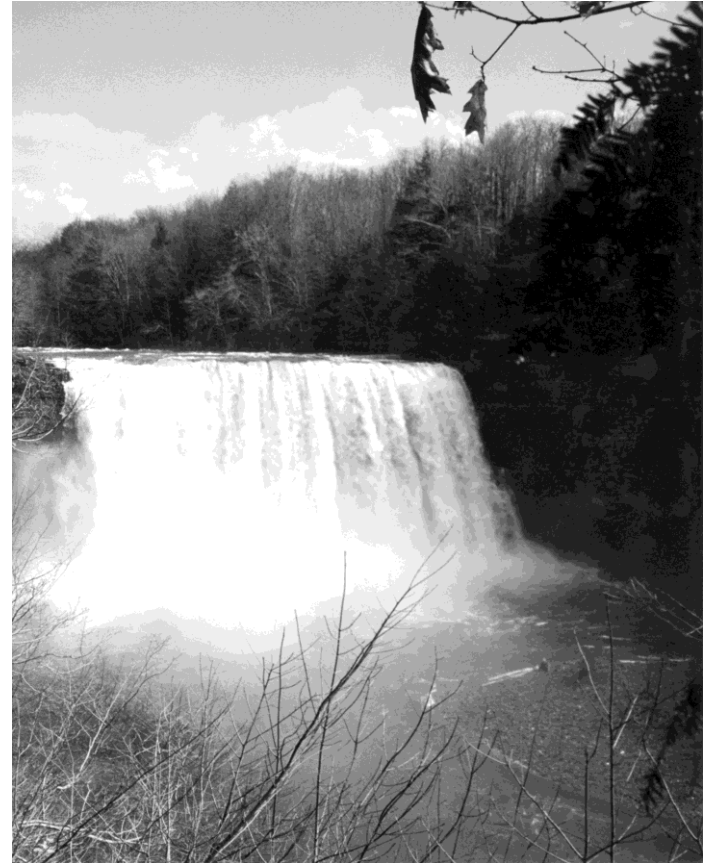


# TUG HILL LITERARY REVIEW

SUMMER 2005

“RIVERS AND RAILS



SALMON RIVER FALLS, ORWELL, NEW YORK

VOLUME I, NUMBER II

Black rise the walls that shut me in  
From all the world apart,  
Bright flows the stream that in God's hand  
The miracle hath wrought.

We sing thy praise, O, Wondrous glen  
Wrought by our Father's hand,  
We sing thy praise that thou art still  
A guide to constancy.

The soft breeze stealing down the glen  
A tribute pays to thee,  
The sunshine's bright and cheering ray  
Exults thee face to see

Thou'rt neither great, nor wise, nor strong,  
Thou dimpling woodland stream;  
But thou art will just to watch  
The lights of heaven gleam.

And guided by thy Father's hand  
Work out in His great plan  
The destiny which he directs-  
A lesson sweet to man.

Are talents few, are we but weak  
Still are we in God's plan  
And he can lead the willing feet,  
And guide the willing hand.

A work He has for everyone-  
A work none else can do,  
Which, like the wonder of the glen,  
Must still be wrought by you.

Then why not now, as did the stream  
Long centuries ago,  
Whisper, "My Lord, Thy way is best,  
I yield myself to you

If willingness of hands and heart  
Can make a work so blest,  
To thee I set them now apart,  
And leave to Thee the rest.

~

We hope you have enjoyed our second issue! We are looking forward to receiving some more current poetry to go along with our growing collection of older works. The theme of the autumn issue will be "Gone but not forgotten Tug Hill epitaphs and eulogies", and will center on epitaphs and poetry found on gravestones and memorials across Tug Hill. Currently, this little tome is sent out as a supplement to the HASJEFF and Half-Shire newsletters. At some point we may make this a stand alone periodical. Submissions can be sent to: **Tug Hill Literary Review, c/o Half-Shire P.O. Box 73, Richland, New York 13144-0073**, E-mail can be sent to: [Halfshire@hotmail.com](mailto:Halfshire@hotmail.com) Please send along your name, source of work (if not your own) and your complete contact information.

**On October 15, please join us at the Barneveld town hall (north of Utica) for a book signing sponsored by Tug Hill Tomorrow.**

# Tug Hill Literary Review

## Summer 2005

### "Rivers and Rails"

*"A collection of original poetry, prose and book reviews by writers past and present from the greater Tug Hill Region"*

*Compiled and Edited by*

Shawn Doyle, George Widrig and Debbie Quick  
A joint project by **Half-Shire Historical Society** and  
**The Historical Association of South Jefferson**

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Our premier issue of the *Review* was well received by the membership of both of our societies. Since that time we have talked to the members of Lewis County Historical Society, and we hope to include some of their material later to truly balance our coverage across Tug Hill. For this, our second issue, we are featuring some early works of poetry, featuring the theme *Rivers and Rails*.

As the summer traveler follows the back roads that wind through Tug Hill, the beauty and romance of our many spring-fed streams and gulfs are ever present. On a bright sunny summer day the heat of the highway can be left behind, if one takes the time to walk into the woods and sit down beside one of Tug Hill's crystal waterways. Beneath the surface of one of these cool, refreshing creeks tiny tadpoles and the treasured speckled trout can often be found.

Along the banks of these waterways, Oswego Tea or "Bee Balm" mint grows wild throughout the summer months. Raspberries, wild huckleberries, elderberries and strawberries all appear in their season to tempt the hiker and feed the birds, among other denizens of the woods.

From The Black River in the north and east, to the Salmon and Mad Rivers in the south and mid section, Tug Hill's wild rivers and creeks are the life-blood of the region. These waterways have inspired poets from the earliest settlement days to the present.

A member of one of Pulaski's first families, John Gardner Calkins Brainard, penned our earliest piece two hundred years ago. He left in the 1820s to seek his fortune as an editor of the *Connecticut Mirror*. This young poet was born in 1796 and died in 1828 at the age of 32. Brainard is listed in some American poetry bibliographies. This selection appeared in the December 22, 1897 *Pulaski Democrat*.

Some sixty years later E. H. Minot, also a poet from Pulaski, composed a tribute to the Salmon River. It was published in the January 13, 1887 issue of the *Pulaski Democrat*. Minot is a name still known and respected throughout western Tug Hill; his descendants may take pride in his sensitivity to, and interpretation of nature.

Osceola has long been a locale where native wit and creative talent flourishes. Kenneth R. Stephenson is one example. Stephenson's 1910 poem reflects on his longing for home and the pleasures of fishing. Stephenson lived in Missouri at the time.

An Amboy native, Frank Williams, is remembered by his family for his plainspoken jottings and witty rhymes. While visiting with his daughter Helen Cornell recently, we discovered a short piece by Frank. It reflected his thoughts on taking time out to enjoy nature.

Debbie Quick has loaned us a nice piece by Mary E. Cowles that celebrates the Mooney Gulf in Lorraine Township.

In contrast with the quiet beauty of the Tug Hill waterways, is the clatter, steam and whistle of the early railroads. We have selected some

## **The Story of the Glenfield and Western RR**

**By Brian D. Mumford and Frederick J. Schneider,**

*Reviewed by George O. Widrig*

**T**his perfect bound, soft-covered book by Mumford and Schneider opens up the "lesser wilderness" of the Tug Hill plateau.

Through primary research, interviews and personal knowledge, the authors have recorded an interesting, illustrated history of a little known railroad, the logging industry, which caused it to be founded, and the communities, which grew beside the tracks and within the forest.

The resulting story gives the reader from the outside world a glimpse of life, business and changing economy during the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and into the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, of a little known area which was an important part of upstate New York in its day. (Released in 2002)

**The price of this soft cover book is \$17, \$19 by mail**

### **Ode to Mooney Gulf**

**By Mary E. Cowles, 1889**

Surprised I stand upon the bank  
And Gaze with wondering eye  
Upon a strange, wild, woodland glen,  
The rough brown pastures nigh

The wild birds' song, the insects' chirp,  
And the sound of murmuring run,  
Fill all the vale with melody  
That greets the morning sun.

Suspended like a Fairy thing  
Half-way 'twixt earth and sky,  
A rustic bridge with rough gray piers  
Bespeaks man's presence high.

And, winding down on either side  
Across the wild ravine  
A dusty road, cut through the rock,  
The rustic bridge between.

A ruined mill around the curve,  
O'er which the woodbine twines,  
Is mirrored in the limped stream  
That whispers to the pines.

And these alone in all the glen  
Give thought of aught but thee  
O'murmuring stream, O, beasteous gorge,  
O' wild birds minstrelsy.

What is it that with magic power  
Thy hidden rocks betray,  
And what, O glen, the force that shaped  
Thy deep and sinuous way?

## **Salmon River Odyssey** by Hope Irvin Marston

*Reviewed by Shawn Doyle*

**S**almon River Odyssey was published in 2002. It was the product of years of work by the Pulaski Historical Society to assemble stories and history from the towns and villages adjacent to Pulaski NY. Hope Irvin Marston, well-known North Country author was selected to edit and coordinate the project producing an attractive readable format.

Marston pulled material from the extensive archives of the Pulaski Historical Society and many private collections. She worked closely with Mrs. H. Douglas Barclay (Dee Dee) and was allowed to examine and cite many of the Price-Douglas-Moody papers and diaries, which had until this time not been available to researchers and writers.

Through the book research papers by some of Pulaski's school children are also mentioned. Most of these papers had been written

under the guidance of Joy Oliver, High School English teacher at Pulaski. Many area residents from all walks of life took part in provocative personal interviews. One intriguing story is Dorothy Deans' account of the night the old Pulaski Academy building burned.



**(Above) The Historic Pulaski House**

From accounts of Indians, and early pioneers through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Salmon River itself is in the background not only as the picturesque gorge that divides the community physically, but as a waterway that nourishes the community and binds it together.

Since its introduction, "Odyssey" has become both a valued reference book and a coffee table conversation piece. One can open to nearly any page and pick up the Salmon River "story". Richly illustrated, the book is printed on high quality paper with an easily readable font. At \$26 the book is a bargain. It should be a prized resource for generations.

**The price of this soft-cover, perfect bound book is \$25.95, or \$28 by mail**

poetry that reflects on the nature and history of railroads across the region. At one time the Tug Hill region was encircled by some of the busiest rail lines in New York State.

Traffic began on The Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg Railroad in 1851. Its replacement lines ran, until the 1950s, along the south and west edges of Tug Hill: through Camden, Williamstown, Altmar, Richland and north through Pierrepont Manor, Adams and the city of Watertown. Two "short lines" spurs were built to travel north into Tug Hill from the main tracks: the Camden and Osceola Railroad (never finished) and the Redfield and Williamstown Railroad ran three miles into Redfield and which ended at Samuel Dent's Mill.

On the eastern side of Tug Hill, the New York Central tracks were laid along the Black River. They followed the natural contours of the valley. From this line two short lines developed: the Glenfield and Western, and later the Glenfield and Eastern Railroad. Each one was a logging railroad that penetrated the "big woods". They helped draw out huge amounts of timber, but fell victim to the drop in hardwood prices during the 1920s. Later the tracks were taken up.

On the western fringe of Tug Hill, closer to Lake Ontario, the Syracuse Northern Railroad ran through Pulaski into Sandy Creek, carrying freight and passengers for just six years before going broke. Part of this old line was later incorporated into the New York Central system, and is still actively used on north-south runs.

We have selected four poems with a railroad theme. The first poem, *Inspiration*, by Gleason Sperling, was discovered in an old *Pulaski Democrat*. While no information has been found on the author, we believe Sperling was a resident of Mannsville, and are seeking more information on him.

A recently written piece refers to the "bygone days" when lumber was "King" on Tug Hill, before the market collapsed in the 1920s. This poem is written by Redfield native Ron Bumpus. Ron grew up in Redfield, often accompanying his father Lloyd and other skilled loggers. He had listened intently to their stories and retained much of their now lost lore. A logger himself, Ron speaks here in the voice of an older man, drawing on his own experience and knowledge of Tug Hill's rich logging history. We hope to present more of Ron's poetry and prose in future issues.

Next we have a celebration of a speed record in 1924 by Shawn Doyle's Great-Grandfather William Fanning. The poem names many of the old railroad towns along the way. Fanning's young fireman, R. E. Hooker, of which we know nothing more, wrote it. The original piece was printed in the New York Central Magazine for December 1924.

The last railroad selection is by Oswego native Patrick Fennell. His *nomme de plume* (pen name) was "Shandy McGuire". This piece is

written from an engineer's perspective with appreciative reference to is fireman. Fennell printed his poems in the 1890s.

The book section offers three reviews. George Widrig examines a recently published book on the Glenfield and Western Railroad. Shawn Doyle looks at *The Salmon River Odyssey*, which chronicles the history of Pulaski and the Township of Richland. Greg Monette reviews a recently reprinted book on the Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg Railroad.

This new literary quarterly has found favor with its readers. Comments and feedback are valuable in making future quarterly selections. Reader submissions are welcome for consideration

~

### ***Inspiration***

***By Gleason Sperling***

*A railroad is a commonplace affair,  
Except to boys of eight or ten perhaps,  
Who realize better than we older folks  
That they are big and strange and wonderful.  
But to us oldsters, they are every-day,  
A way to travel where we want to go  
Or even just a means of shipping freight.*

*I used to feel that way until I rode  
Across the Rocky Mountains on a railroad.  
You men, or super-men, or demi-gods  
Who dreamed that dream and made it all come true,  
Who faced a barrier insurmountable  
Yet drove your railroad thru it, over it  
I thank you for the privilege that you gave me  
To see what CAN be done, what HAS BEEN done*

### ***To the Salmon River***

***By E. H. Minot of Richland Twp.***

*What bard has sung thy beauty, O! Lovely Salmon-water,  
Flowing, hastening on forever in thy course unto the sea  
From where thy waves first ripple and then do grandly loiter  
And down the yawning gorge they plunge so roaringly?*

*And of thy bounding, seething waters, as they go foaming, whirling,  
Sweeping on with hurrying current and a hundred streams are hurling  
Their tossing, turbid torrents to swell thy weakened roar?*

## ***The Story of the Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg Railroad***

**by Edward Hungerford  
(reprinted by the Historical Association of South Jefferson)**

*Reviewed by Greg Monette, Oswego, NY*

**T**his book was written by Edward Hungerford in 1922. He was the grandson of Orville Hungerford, a local banker and one of the R.W. & O. founders. Edward Hungerford experienced and traveled more than 75,000 miles each year on railroads!

The book takes the reader to the first meeting at Montpelier VT on February 17, 1830. Here a group of financiers discussed construction of a railroad into the North Country. The story continues to the end of the RW&O in 1914, when it ceased to exist legally as well as technically. It was merged into the New York Central Railroad.

The book takes the reader along the tracks as they are surveyed, built and eventually put into use. A visit to many old railroad communities is made in these pages: Watertown to Utica, Rome to Oswego, Richland, Rouse's Point and down to New York City. It reflects on the towns and villages along the way, some of which are either gone or have been renamed.

This story is not just about the RW&O Railroad. It is a tale of the North Country during an earlier slower-paced era. It discusses the lives of the men and women involved with the rails and their communities: their struggles and achievements to bring a railroad, and thus a new way of living, to an otherwise obscure region of New York State.

Hungerford explains the interface with the other railroads of the day. Included in this process are the battles and strategies of various towns and villages attract the new "road" to their community. The book even includes the officers of each railroad throughout its existence.

It is exciting in that it explains how important this "road" was to the residents of Watertown and what it meant to them when it went out of existence.

The RW&O story is 100 pages of easy-to-read print. There are pictures and newspaper articles from the old days; many have been added to this reprinted edition, and not found in the original. The book should stir emotions in the hearts of railroad enthusiasts. Note: A brief afterward by George Widrig, discussing the Oswego County leg of the line, has also been added.

***The Price of the Story of the Rome, Watertown and Ogdensburg Railroad is \$15, \$18 by mail***

## **My Fireman**

**By Patrick Fennell of Oswego**

*There he sits with a smile on his black, smoky face,  
And a droll-looking glance in his eye,  
As he notes how the "pointer" keeps up in its place,  
As our noble old steed seems to fly.  
He's the happiest man to be found on the train,  
For I promised I'd write him a song,  
To the air of that musical, pious refrain:  
"And we'll roll the Old Chariot Along."*

*Yes, I'll write him a rhyme; 'tis the least I can do  
For a lad whom I really admire,  
And, besides, my dear reader, he's one of the few  
Who can closely attend to his fire.  
He imagines he has a fine, musical ear,  
Though he can't tell a march from a jig;  
And his voice, which he fancies melodiously clear,  
Has a trill like the grunt of a pig.*

*But aside from his musical talents, he knows  
He is gifted in ways I despise;  
All the men on the trains are our deadliest foes,  
Just because he's the father of lies;  
And many a time in the cab when we've found  
A full share of annoyance and grief,  
A train man or two we'd see prowling around,  
To berate the uncrucified thief.*

*If it's tallow or waster we're in need of he'll seek  
Out the place where they hide their supplies,  
And will pilfer sufficient to last us a week,  
Right from under the baggage-man's eyes.  
There is scarcely a trip that we make but I'm starved,  
For I never yet know him to fail  
In selecting the tid-bits, all seasoned and carved,  
Which I carry for lunch in my pail.*

*He shall soon change his seat right across to the place  
Where the wrinkles shall furrow his brow,  
And the deep lines of thought shall be marked on his face,  
That looks beardless and boyish just now.  
All his monkeyish tricks shall be brought to a close  
For when once he's promoted he'll find  
That he'll need all his thoughts for protection of those  
Who are riding in coaches behind.*

*Of thy sliding, gliding waters as they kiss the bending willows  
That lean thy fair banks over, as if they would embrace  
And take their fill of loving from thy silver-golden billows  
That aye in flashing splendor, do underneath them race?*

*Of thy banks so thick with beauty, as advancing and retreating  
They trail their leafy banners through the golden summer haze  
From their bold and rocky ramparts, or dip and give thee greeting  
From thy low and flower strewn margin where the vine in freedom strays?*

*Or sung of thy swift currents as they round the frequent headlands,  
And seem hastening in gladness on their glorious, winding way  
Through the fields and forest haunts which were once the roving red man's  
Where he chased the fleet-foot deer and the grim bear brought to bay.*

*Where in his swift canoe he pursued the noble Salmon,  
And captured with a fierce delight, that game so plenty then,  
And took them to his wigwam and smoked them into gammon,  
And burned one to the Manitou, that God of the red men?*

*Dost remember shining river, when the simple Indian maiden  
Disported in thy waters in those distant summer days,  
And roamed along thy shady brink, with vines and flowers laden,  
Bedecked in savage beauty for the young red man's amaze?*

*But no more, O! glorious river! Shall the red men vex thy waters,  
His council fires upon thy banks are quenched forevermore;  
And another race beside thee with fairer sons and daughters  
Listen to thy murmured music as thy glad currents pour.*

*Thou sleepest in the winter like all surrounding nature,  
And naught but gentle babblings disturbs thy white-robed peace;  
But when the springtime wakens thee, thou showest a sterner feature  
And in thy strength arising doest exult at thy release,*

*And with the angered might of ten thousand loosened giants  
Thy rolling, roaring waters in mad haste go whirling by,  
With a turbulence unbounded and a rioting defense,  
And the power as uncontrollable as any 'neath the sky.*

*But most glorious summer time, O! rippling, shining river!  
I love to hear thy murmuring, so soothing and so low,  
And to see those wavelets shimmer, as they hasten on forever,  
Or quiver in the shadow or in the sunshine glow.*

*But strong and noble river, O! limped, winding river,  
In all changing moods thou art beautiful to me.  
Leaping, laughing, dancing forward, as if hastening to deliver  
Thy grand and precious burden to the eager, waiting sea.*

## **The Call of the Stream**

**By Kenneth R. Stephenson, formally of Osceola Twp.**

*There's a spell along in April,  
Just about this time of year  
When the bird's come flying northward  
And we know that spring is here.*

*To the buds the sap is flowing,  
Streams begin to rise and swell  
And 'tis then a young man's fancy  
Fondly turns to thoughts of—well*

*I'll tell you where my thoughts and fancies  
Turn, and where I'd like to be--  
It's up in Osceola fishing,  
That's just what would tickle me*

*I would take my hooks and sinkers,  
If I only had the chance  
And start out 'long 'bout sun-up,--  
'headin for the old West branch*

*There's a likely lot of places  
Where a man might bait a hook  
And return not empty handed—  
Prince, Fall or Baker Brook*

*And a fly east on the river,  
Might reward a fellers' pains  
When the sun is kind o'cloudy  
And o'ercast or when it rains*

*Say Fellers don't your fingers itch,  
To get your poles once more  
And thrash the streams, climb over rocks  
Until your legs are sore?*

*For that's the way we used to do  
Some twenty years ago--  
And the lessons of our childhood  
Are forgotten rather slow*

*There I've fished with Marvis Gifford,  
With Ralph and Ruben Knapp  
With Clint Woodhouse and Burkette,  
And almost every chap*

*That roamed these hills in springtime,  
And drank in the balmy air  
Of good old Osceola—God Bless her  
We who share*

*Such are the tales they tell.  
'Tis hard to rhyme about a little and unnoticed stream,  
That few have heard of-but it is a theme*

*I chance to love.  
And one day I may tune my rye-straw reed,  
And whistle to the note of many a deed  
Done on this river-which is there be need  
I'll try to prove*

## **To Fish or not Fish**

**By Frank Williams of Amboy Twp.**

*If you keep your nose on  
The grindstone rough, and  
You hold it there just  
Long enough  
In time you'll see there's  
No such thing  
As brooks that babble and  
Birds that sing  
These three will all your  
World compose  
Just you, the stone and  
Your darned old nose*



*Frank Williams on his beloved Panther Lake*

# Salmon River

By John Gardiner Calkins Brainard, formally of Richland Twp.

*"Tis a sweet stream, and so 'tis true are all  
That undisturbed, save by the harmless brawl  
Of mimic rapid or slight waterfall,*

*Pursue their way;  
By mossy bank, and darkly waiting wood,  
By rock that since the deluge waxed has stood,  
Showing to sun and moon their crispy flood'  
By night and day.*

*But yet there's something in its humble rank,  
Something in its pure wave and sloping bank,  
Where deer sported, and the young fawn drank*

*With unscared look;  
There's much in its wild history that teems  
With all that's superstitious-and that seems  
To match our fancy and eke out our dreams,  
In that small brook*

*Havoc has been upon its peaceful plain,  
And blood has dropped there, like drops of rain.  
The corn grows o'er the still graves of the slain---*

*And many a quiver  
Filed from the reeds that grew on yonder hill,  
Has spent itself in carnage. Now 'tis still  
And whistling ploughboys off their runlets fill  
From Salmon River.*

*Here, say old men, the Indian magi made  
Their spells by moonlight; or beneath the shade  
That shrouds sequestered rock, or darkening glade,*

*Or tangled dell.  
Here Phillip came, and Miantonimo  
And asked about their fortunes long ago,  
As Saul to Endor, that her witch might show  
Old Samuel.*

*And here the black fox roved, and howled, and shook  
His thick tail to the hunters by the brook,  
Where they pursued their game, and him mistook*

*For earthly fox.  
Thinking to shoot him like a shaggy bear,  
And his soft peltry, stript and dressed to wear,  
Or lay a trap, and from his quiet lair  
Transfer him to a box.*

*Those memories of childhood  
Are scattered far and wide  
From swelling tide of ocean  
To ocean's swelling tide*

*But I'll bet all the fellers  
Are feeling rather queer  
And wishing for a fish pole  
Just about this time of year*

## Tug Hill Logging Song

By Ron Bumpus of Redfield Twp.

*I remember the ways in the bygone days  
When we were all in our prime  
You may have heard tell how we gave the timber hell  
And moved it down the Glenfield-Western line.*

*We'd hitch up the teams in the new-fallen snow two hours before daylight  
And you worked like a dog and you cut sixty logs  
And was four dollars richer at night*

*Over ice, over snow, on the Tug Hill Plateau, we took the timber away.  
With the brush and the bugs, in the deep Tug Hill mud,  
This old man will never see better days.*

*I remember the sound of that train whistle blow as the black smoke drifted away,  
And the road monkeys watered the skid roads at night  
So the Lombards could tug out the sleighs.*

*You misery whip, your teeth are filed down and your dust has sweetened my clothes.  
And now that I'm old, I can't pull you anymore,  
So what else can an old logger do.*

*Over ice, over snow, on the Tug Hill Plateau, we took the timber away.  
With the brush and the bugs, in the deep Tug Hill mud,  
This old man will never see better days.*

*This lumberjack's dream, well, it's broken it seems,  
"Cause the timber has all been cut down."  
And mile after mile has been declared forever wild,  
So now I'm just stuck here in town*

*So I'll stay here in town and just hang around,  
And maybe it ain't so bad.*

*"Cause as soon as they get home, I meet my grandkids at the door,  
Sayin' tell us a story Granddad, won't you tell us a story, Granddad?*

*In the slush and the snow on the Tug Hill Plateau, we cut the timber away.  
Fightin' brush, swattin' bugs, in the deep Tug Hill mud,  
This old man's finally seen better days.  
This old man's finally seen better days.*



# **“Bill Fanning’s Fast Express”**

By R.E. Hooker, 1924

*Come all you high-speed hoppers, a tale I’ll tell to you,  
of “lightning wild” Bill Fanning and his twentieth century crew—  
How they made the trip from Syracuse to Watertown’s front door  
in ninety minutes’ running time in the spring of twenty-four.*

*Bill registered out of Belle Isle at exactly ten o’clock  
with the 3897 and he took her to the dock.  
He filled her tank with real estate, likewise with water too,  
and drove her to the upper yard where he picked up his crew*

*The Conductor’s name was Kelly, and he had the rheumatiz,  
Bill said: “You want to hold your hat, for I’m going to make her whiz.  
I’ll drive her rough and ragged, for I know she’ll stand the strain,  
and you’ll think when you reach Watertown, that you’ve been in an aeroplane.”*

*He backed the “old girl” down the yard and coupled to his train.  
Sixteen hundred and fifty tons of Milwaukee grain.  
He said to his fire-boy, “High Speed, you’ll have cinders in your hair,  
for we’re going to make a record that will stand beyond compare.”*

*He pulled out for Salina, where he got a clearance card,  
and struck the high speed iron, bound away for Massey yard.  
The “old girl” was doing nicely; the fire-boy had her hot;  
so Bill hooked her up on center and gave her another shot.*

*He wheeled them up through Liverpool and over the big hill,  
And the piercing blast of his whistle seemed to set all hearts a-thrill  
as they listened to the thunderous notes of “Wild Bill” Fanning’s flight.  
While the beam of his brilliant headlight bored a hole into the night.*

*He snatched a card at Woodard and flashed on down the hill.  
At ninety miles an hour—she surely was some mill.  
He gave her a notch on the throttle when he reached the foot of Clay,  
and she leaped ahead like a war-horse that is eager for the fray.*

*He kept the whistle screaming as he passed through Central Square,  
and the way that he was wheeling them made the operator stare.  
Through Mallory, Morse, and Parish his cinders he did strew,  
and sped on by the water-plug when he reached Maple-view.*

*He kept on plunging through the inky night toward the end of single track.  
The fire-boy seemed to enjoy the speed, but not so with the Head Shack.  
He prayed aloud to Almighty God as he clung to the windowsill,  
“They’ll not clear the line in forty days if we ever take a spill.”*

*Bill wandered along up Pulaski Hill at fifty miles an hour;  
the “old girl” carried a plumb in her hat—she sure had lots of power.  
He stopped at Richland for water and to snatch a hasty meal,  
then resumed his dizzy flight along those shining bands of steel.*

*He thundered through Lacona, and brought the natives from their bed,  
for they thought a cyclone coming and they all were good as dead.  
On over the grade at Mannsville like a meteor he sped,  
and the block at Pierrepont Manor he quickly saw was red.*

*He threw her in the corner, slammed his air on with a crash,  
while thoughts just raced like lightning, striving to avoid a smash.  
Then he rolled down to the station, and the operator said,  
“That his right of way was blocked by a fellow up ahead.”*

*For you see that “Old Hod Davis” and his fire-boy called “Spike”  
seemed to want to take things easy, so they dragged along the pike.  
They’d left early in the evening, and were a full six hours late,  
and they stuck old Bill right where he stood for a twenty-minute wait.*

*At last the block cleared up and Bill resumed his way,  
and the run he made from thereon stands a record to this day.  
Down the three-mile grade he raced at a hundred miles an hour,  
and the burning sparks shot from the stack in an incandescent shower.*

*Across the bridge at Gidding’s Creek, in a mad and fiery whirl,  
while the fire-boy, “High-Speed Hooker” fed black diamonds to “the girl.”  
Up through the sag at Adams and over the big hill,  
down into Adams Center—and found the block against him still.*

*Bill rushed into the station, for he had no time to lose,  
and he howled like a canaler when he’s pickled up on booze.  
But the operator seemed indifferent, on her face a look morose,  
as she read the Sunday paper, wrinkled up her freckled nose.*

*At last he got a clearance, and he made the “Old Girl” skate  
on the last lap of her journey as though she had a date.  
And when he pulled into the yard he sure was feeling fine,  
for he’d made the trip in ninety minutes actual running time.*

*He jumped Hod Davis at the Engine-house and alas! ‘Tis sad but true,  
Hod cursed him up and cursed him down, until the air was blue.  
And, at that time, he had some reason, as I’ll explain to you; he’d left four hours  
earlier than Bill on the train called R.D. 2*

*Now when I go to Heaven, I hope I’ll stand a show  
to fire for Bill Fanning, as I did on earth below;  
for Bill really is a fellow that anyone can like.  
And I never was one of those “slow birds” who drag along the pike.*