

How High Can You Go?

"High Lead Logging" was a term used to describe the concept of using heavy cables run through blocks (huge pulleys) held far off the ground by a tall specially-rigged "spar tree", in order to haul logs out of the woods. Those blocks often weighed 1400 pounds or more!

The height of those spar trees caused the cables to lift the front end of the logs as they were being pulled in by a steam donkey, skipping over stumps and debris left in the way.

Actually a fairly simple concept, but dangerous work, it required intrepid young climbers to clear the limbs from a high quality fir tree and "top" the tree, before the blocks could be hauled up and hung in place.

You can visit the Granite Falls Museum to see the top 25 feet of a fully-rigged tree, but imagine the thrill of being 175 feet off the ground, sitting on the tree you just topped, taking a short breather before starting the heavy work of rigging it as a spar tree.



This fellow has finished preparing a tree to be rigged as a spar tree.



This fully-rigged top of a spar tree sits in the Bruce Miller Room of the GF Historical Museum.