On a cold January morning 1996 Will Haerter and Lavern Larson were driving to Missouri on a mission. They were going to retrieve one of the best pieces of folk art made in Griggs County. It was Orion Rhodes’ Paul Bunyan’s Logging Camp. After much research Will Haerter and the Griggs County Historical Society had located this lost animation at an amusement park at the Lake of the Ozarks in Missouri. Orion Rhodes after living in Cooperstown retired to Missouri in the early 1950s. There he sold the Logging Camp to an arcade which displayed it until 1996 when Haerter and Larson brought it back to its home in Griggs County.

After constructing the Busy Little Farm Orion Rhodes made a second animation table, Paul Bunyan’s Logging Camp for display at county fairs. There by, Rhodes effectively doubled his income. Odd as it may seem for a man of the prairie to construct a north woods logging camp it does make sense knowing that the Rhodes family had a summer cabin on Lake Lidia in central Minnesota.

This logging camp animation has about 15 animations with 32 figures. Central is a large figure of Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox. Next to these figures are detailed models of a logging saw and board planer. The animation has very detailed models of a cook house, two family cabins and a blacksmith shop including a cabin under construction. The gritty life of a rough logging camp are displayed with a depiction of an accident where a logging cart overturned crushing the leg of a logger with other figures trying to free his leg. The Camp has many snow covered pine trees with loggers at work chopping logs, being chased up a tree by bear, or a group of men watching two loggers fighting on the ground. One of the most interesting animations involves a fox emerging from a hole under a log to chase a rabbit. Three steam engines power the saw and planer. As well the steam engines power an electrical generator which lights the cabins.

Although smaller in amount of animations when compared to the Busy Little Farm this Logging Camp seems to have smoother running animations. Its figures are larger and more sophisticated and it seems to be more artistically unified. Sadly some figures are missing and many of the animations no longer function. It is in dire need of restoration. Nevertheless we can marvel at the ingenuity and artistry of Orion Rhodes. We can be grateful for the vision and work of several individuals of the Griggs County Historical Society for bringing this work of art back home.