



Wisconsin Logging Camp, 1921

A Boy's Extraordinary First Year in America

by James Bastian



Fiction - Historical - Personage

202 Pages

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Book Review

Reviewed by Lisa M. Schlegel for Readers' Favorite

Wisconsin Logging Camp, 1921: A Boy's Extraordinary First Year in America Working as a "Chickadee" by James Bastian is an interesting tale about an 8-year-old boy, born in Poland, who immigrates with his mother to America. During the voyage, the boy's mother dies, and he enters America alone. He befriends a fellow immigrant who takes him in as a younger brother and sets him up as a chickadee for a logging company in Wisconsin. Other characters tell their stories along the way, bringing to life a wealth of history, not academic, but alive from characters who joined the Polish resistance and fought in the world wars.

James Bastian does a wonderful job in Wisconsin Logging Camp, 1921. History comes alive in the personalities of the characters. The main focus is on Will, the 8-year-old Polish orphan, who chooses to live, despite having lost both his parents. His father was killed in the war and his mother died of pneumonia during the voyage to America. Once Will decides to live, he is very clever in escaping being trapped in the US system as a displaced person. Instead, he finds an older boy who has plans to meet family members. Together, they travel to Wisconsin and join those who work in the logging industry. Will grows so much during his internship as a chickadee. The loggers aren't easy on him, yet the reader gets a sense of both the harshness and the kindness of the times. I enjoyed learning a little history along with the thrill of a good story. I'll rate this novel as highly recommended to those who enjoy historical stories with positive messages.