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Dynamite Helped Farmers Clear Wausaukee's Fields

In the spring of 1920, the farmers of Marinette county organized a battle against stumps that was to keep things popping in Wausaukee for many years.

Under the leadership of the Marinette County Landclearing association, dynamiting of stumps on cut-over land began. The season's campaign resulted in a clearing of 22,180 acres, an accomplishment celebrated in grand style on October 12 of that year, when a whole acre (129 white pine stumps) was blasted in one shot on the Charles Gee farm northwest of Wausaukee.

The concerted effort to clear the stumps was nothing less than remarkable. It required the cooperation of merchants, bankers, the land brokers, the explosive manufacturers and every individual farmer who had land to clear. Seven carloads, about 150,000 pounds, of dynamite were used to clear the acreage. To buy the explosives at the lowest possible price, the merchants pooled their orders and made deliveries of 50 pounds or more to consumers. They only added one or two cents to their costs as a handling charge, and accepted cash at the railroad car door.

Banks loaned money to farmers at low interest rates so they could purchase the dynamite, blasting caps and accessories. The land companies promoted the association which had developed a definite campaign for instruction of farmers to effectively and safely use explosives. The manufacturing companies provided instructors to teach the farmers how to use the explosives.

Not a single accident is recorded in connection with the blasting campaign that continued for over 20 years.