



Paul Bunyan

Paul Bunyan, giant lumberjack, mythical hero of the lumber camps in the United States, a symbol of bigness, strength, and vitality. The tales and anecdotes that form the Paul Bunyan legend are typical of the tradition of frontier tall tales*. Paul and his companions, Babe the Blue Ox and Johnny Inkslinger, are undismayed by rains that last for months, giant mosquitoes, or adverse geography. The tales describe how Paul, who fashions lakes and rivers at will, created Puget Sound, the Grand Canyon, and the Black Hills. They celebrate the lumbermen's prodigious appetites. Paul's camp stove covers an acre, and his hotcake griddle is so large that it is greased by men using sides of bacon for skates.



*Tall tale — narrative that depicts the wild adventures of extravagantly exaggerated folk heroes.

According to folklore, Paul Bunyan together with his companions constructed some of the continent's most breathtaking rivers, mountains and canyons. Here are some of the most famous:

- *The Mississippi River*

One day, as Paul was leading Babe down a treacherous road with a heavy tank of water in tow, the container sprung a leak, which trickled southward and eventually formed the mighty Mississippi.

- *The Grand Canyon*

While braving through a storm in search of firewood, Paul absent-mindedly dragged his heavy axe behind him: carving one of the world's Seven Natural Wonders in the process.

- *The Finger Lakes*

One day while hiking through upstate New York, Paul tripped and threw his hand down to break his fall, thus inadvertently carving the aptly-named Finger Lakes.

- *The Great Lakes*

Unable to find a suitable watering hole for his favorite bovine, Paul carved five of his own in the upper midwest.

- *The Missouri River*

In some stories, when Babe passed away after growing to a ripe old age, Paul's tears were so large and so numerous that they formed the Missouri River.

- *The Bay of Fundy*

- *The Black Hills*

- *The 10,000 Lakes*

- *Niagara Falls*

- *Mount Lassen*

- *Mount Hood*

Sources: mentalfloss.com

britannica.com