



# Forestory

Volume 2, Issue 1, Spring 2011

## NEWSLETTER

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If you have articles, photographs or images, interesting facts, web links, personal reflections or events that would be suitable for this newsletter, please contact the editor.

## *Local Forest History*



***Flying Our Colours!***

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# ***Request for Content***

Do you have an interesting story to tell about some aspect of forest history in Ontario? Or are you prepared to write an article for the newsletter on some aspect of forest history? Do you know of interesting photographs, documents, web sites or other items that would be suitable for inclusion in the newsletter? If so, please contact the editor to discuss the possibility of publishing your information in the newsletter.

Please provide your comments to the editor on items or themes you would like to see in the newsletter.

## President's Message

One year old! At our annual meeting this February we celebrated the Society's first birthday. In looking back I believe we must feel a sense of accomplishment in having established a newsletter and website that provides for and indeed relies on the participation of members. It is only by our membership through their financial support and contributions to the newsletter and projects that we are able to continue our efforts to promote the forest history of Ontario.

We and the other provincial forest history organizations in Alberta, British Columbia and Québec have received a grant of \$10,000 each in support of our efforts to promote forest history. The grant was made possible by Jim Farrell, Assistant Deputy Minister, Canadian Forest Service, prior to his retirement late in 2010. Thanks Jim ! The grant is administered by the Canadian Institute of Forestry-Institut Forestier du Canada which also received a grant of \$15,000. At a budget meeting of the executive of your Society in March it was decided to use portions of the grant to further the development of the newsletter and website and in the promotion of developing greater interest in Ontario's forest history. A first step was a financial contribution towards the establishment of a memorial plaque that will celebrate the naming of the *Dr. E.J. Zavitz Forest* at St. Williams in August.

The identification of significant forest history collections and their safekeeping is an important function of the Society. I'm pleased to report that working with the Ontario Forest Industries Association and the Archives of Ontario the Association's collection of records dating back to their establishment and up to 2002 have now been transferred to the Archives of Ontario.

Early this year I received an invitation from the Forest History Association of Alberta to attend their annual general meeting in Edmonton on March 16 and speak about the formation of our Society and what it has accomplished so far. They had approximately 60 members at the meeting and my presentation was well received. I think that such visitations between the four provincial forest history groups should become a regular feature of annual meetings. We were fortunate at our AGM in having Steven Anderson the President of the Forest History Society present; he was also the banquet speaker at the Ontario Forestry Association's AGM the next day.

Since we are very dependent on membership fees for our revenue some members have asked about our application to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) for charitable status. In mid March we received a notification from CRA stating that our application will be assigned for review and analysis "within five months from the date of our application"! It is important for members to encourage friends and colleagues who are interested in forest history to join with us in support of our projects and activities. With the support of members in the Timmins area the Society will have a booth sporting a banner to attract new members. The Newsletter is a very important means of presenting information and in this issue we are breaking new ground with the first article *en français*. It is our hope that subsequent issues will carry one or more articles in French.

I wish all a most enjoyable summer and look forward to meeting many of you during the next few months.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Armson', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Ken Armson R.P.F.**

## Editor's Message

Wow! One year, three newsletters and a website! It is hard to believe that we have achieved this much in one year. I am so happy to see the Society doing so well. Thanks to our contributors for helping to make the newsletter an interesting and informative publication. Please keep those articles and items coming!

I have come to realize over the past year that forest history flows through so much of our Ontario history – whether it is a family history, or a town's history, or our cultural history. I am always amazed at the information I discover when I go on an internet surfing tour related to Ontario forest history.

Over the past year I have also come to realize the importance of local archives as a source of forest history. Again, surfing the internet has led me to all sorts of gems from local archival or museum or municipal site. David Brownstein's project to document archival information is an important project for the Society to support, and as Editor, I look forward to the information that we will be able to use in our newsletter and on our website from this project. I encourage all members to discover their own local museums and archives and to either get these organizations to write a short item about them, or to write one yourself or to ask us to do it. I spent a very enjoyable afternoon at our local Trent Valley Archives, with Archivist Elwood Jones, and learned a tremendous amount about the forest history of Peterborough and the material that the Archives hold on this topic.

I have also enjoyed perusing the various volumes of *Sylva*, the journal published by Lands and Forests in the 1940's and 1950's. Not only are the articles interesting, I am very impressed by the arts content of these journals. Every issue contains several pictures of well known artists depicting the forest in different ways. I hope one day to be able to include some of these pictures in our newsletter. As a member, if you know of a local artist, present or past, who has created artistic works related to the forest, please let me know.

I am also encouraging members to write their personal recollections and send them in. These stories give us glimpses into what was happening in our forests in the past. And the personal aspect always makes these articles a joy to read.

And remember – it is your active participation, whether in writing an article or a personal recollection, or doing a book review, or letting us know about something interesting to write about or pursue, that makes the Society a success.

Have a great summer, and send me those articles!

Sherry Hambly M.Sc.F.

# Genealogy and Ontario Forest History

## Hadden Family Genealogy Reveals a Connection to Ontario's Early Forest History

*The information contained in this article is based on the Hadden Family genealogical history developed by Barbara Hadden and Wendy Gust and presented on the web by Bob Hadden as part of a web site (managed by Jack Brown) devoted to the history of Surrey, British Columbia ( <http://www.surreyhistory.ca/haddenfamily.html> ).*

*The history in this article is typical of much of Ontario's early history. Sawmills and timber harvesting were an integral part of the settlement of the province. There are many sites on the web that contain similar types of information. Genealogical history can be an important source of forest history.*

James Hadden was born near Aberdeen, Scotland and immigrated to Canada with his family in 1850 when he was six. In 1861 James married Mary Kennedy in Hamilton. They lived in nearby Nelson Township and had two children before Mary died in 1868. A year later, James married Mary Elizabeth Trimble. The couple lived in East Flamborough Township, Wentworth County, and raised eight children. James was working as a millwright for Robert Thompson, a mill owner.

In 1873 Robert Thompson sent James up to Medonte to set up and manage a saw mill. Thompson had acquired 324 hectares of timber and by agreement James Hadden built a mill and dwellings on this land. James owned the mill and machinery, but he sawed lumber for himself and Thompson. The two men paid the wages of an accountant to keep records of the entitlements of each partner. The mill was large with a cutting capacity of three to five million board feet annually. The mill was in operation from 1873 to 1875 when it disappeared from the assessment records. The mill probably burnt and was not rebuilt.



**Hadden sawmill at Medonte**

In 1878 the Haddon Family was living in Orillia Township. In July of 1881, James purchased 100 acres of timber bearing land from the Georgian Bay Lumber Company for the sum of \$10,000.00, \$5,000.00 was cash and the rest mortgaged. During the next few years James acquired more land and became one of the largest lumber producers in North Orillia. The business flourished throughout the 1880s and in 1883 James built an addition to the mill. In 1884 disaster struck with part of the mill burning down when a spark from a passing train started a fire. The saw mill and shingle mill burned to the ground with only the planning mill being saved. James was not fully covered by insurance but rebuilt a larger and better mill. By 1891 James had 14 men, including his two sons, working the mills. In the fall and winter James hired extra men for the logging camps. These camps were built along the tram lines James built to carry the logs to

his mill. The tramway was about three miles long and was used to transport not only James' own logs but also logs for other lumbermen and farmers. These logs were either sawn at the Hadden Mill or shipped out on the Grand Trunk Railway, which ran alongside the mill.

In 1888 James and his wife separated. In 1892 James moved his new family to New Westminster, British Columbia. James and one of his sons continued their connection to the milling business in British Columbia where they built a saw and shingle mill in Cloverdale. James Hadden died in 1916 in British Columbia at the age of 82.



# ***The Anti-Sawdust Crusade, Peterborough***

**By Elwood Jones**

Peterborough was a major centre for the milling of lumber by the 1850's, and the fast-flowing Otonabee River was a lumbering river. Logs were floated down the river, and saw mills along the way dumped sawdust into the river. In 1858, Peterborough had several saw mills, including the very large Perry's Mill at Nassau Mills that was cutting 90,000 board feet of lumber a day. William Snyder, near the present-day zoo, was cutting 60,000 feet a day. James Bird's mill at Blythe Mills was cutting 20,000 feet a day. Dickson's Mill was cutting about 20,000 feet a day, the same as J. Ludgate's mill on Little Lake.

The prevailing sentiment in Canada was that if people could make use of a stream they should do so, as long as they did not create major inconvenience for others. However, in Peterborough, there was major inconvenience. By the 1880's the Otonabee River was getting clogged with sawdust. During 1885 and 1886 the Anti-Sawdust Association protested. They believed that the mill owners should honour the federal legislation against obstructing Canada's rivers, and burn the sawdust rather than dump it in the river.

The anti-sawdust people estimated that local saw mills cut 20 million feet of lumber every season, of which one-fourth by volume was refuse, most of which reached Little Lake. The key mill owners in 1885 were George Hilliard and William Snyder at Blythe Mills near the Auburn dam; J. M. Irwin at Nassau Mills; and the Dickson Company, headed by T. G. Hazlitt, on the Dickson Race near London Street. Each of these companies had timber limits as far north as Haliburton, and brought logs down the system each spring.

The Anti-Sawdust Association, which was active in 1885 and 1886, successfully sued these mill owners, who admitted there was damage but not illegal activity. Their case was best argued by lawyer E. B. Edwards, the president of the Peterborough Rowing Club, who had invited the American Canoe Association to hold their annual regatta for 1883 at Stoney Lake. His law office was at 435 George and he lived in a splendid double detached villa at 387 Reid Street, designed by J. E. Belcher and built in 1885. Edwards moved to Edmonton in 1906 where he was also active in law, sports and the militia. Edwards and G. C. Rogers had gone to Ottawa with John Burnham, MP, to argue that mill owners along the Otonabee should not be exempted from the rules to prevent obstruction of our waterways. The exemption had been granted to the Ottawa River, which was a much mightier river. Edwards, writing in October 1885, under the nom de plume "Danger Signal" summarized the "sawdust nuisance" succinctly. "Nature gave us a magnificent and a beautiful lake to add to the charms of our fair town, and furnish a healthful breathing space for its citizens. For years past three or four mill owners have been trying to fill both up with sawdust and slabs, until now, as revealed by the recent lowering of the water at the locks dam, it is found that the lake is filled to within a foot or two of the surface, and in some places above the surface, with a vast mass of decaying sawdust and mill refuse, the foul gases from which render any near approach to the water dangerous to health as well as disgusting to the senses." Several people considered evacuating their homes and at least one person left town for health reasons. He believed that the mill owners should stop polluting the river and then it would be possible to ask the government to dredge the river and the lake so that the water would be deep enough to accommodate boat traffic.

Alderman James Kendry (1845-1918), who owned the Auburn Woollen Mills, claimed he lost money each year because of the sawdust, slabs and bark from Snyder's Mill, just across the river. He opposed giving an exemption to the mill owners because the Otonabee was "in a perpetual state of pollution". We would not attract textile manufacturers to town if the river were polluted. With R. M. Dennistoun, and John Carnegie, he had bought the Auburn Woollen Mills in 1881. Kendry was one of the town's leading entrepreneurs, and served as mayor, 1892-95, and was our Member of Parliament, 1896-1904.

On the other side, the mill owners had petitioned the federal cabinet to pass an order-in-council that would exempt the Otonabee River from the provisions of the Navigation and Fisheries Act with respect to obstructing the waterway. The Ottawa River was the only exemption. Behind the council debate was the awareness that Peterborough was trying to attract manufacturers to town, partly to create jobs for workers. The sawdust lobby sought support from the town council, while the anti-sawdust group wanted the town council to insist that the mill owners meet the requirements of the federal legislation.

In the first meeting of the town council, in January 1886, Aldermen Kendry, John McClelland and Andrew McNeil wanted the mill owners to obey the law. McClelland worried that Little Lake would soon be full of sawdust and be as disgusting as Spaulding's Bay. He claimed, already, that when steamboats passed they stirred up the decaying vegetable matter, and raised bubbles which were sickening and unhealthy. McNeil felt the mill owners should burn their sawdust as the law provide. He said Dr Bryce, secretary of the Provincial Board of Health, called the lake a "disgrace to the town." He added, "It was certain to bring about an epidemic." Aldermen William H. Moore, Thomas Menzies, Arthur Rutherford and Mayor James Stevenson were sympathetic to the mill owners. Moore, a lawyer who specialized in municipal law, said that mill owners only put fine sawdust in the river, and that the slabs and

bark thrown in earlier could be removed by dredging and the sawdust to flow to Rice Lake. Kendry said Moore was misinformed for the lake would fill up even without slabs. Menzies, who went bankrupt in 1888, did not want to cause financial harm to the mill owners, and he thought the county and the town could pay some of their expenses. Rutherford noted that the fish were still there and the issue really was between the boat club and the mill owners. He thought the town council should support the mill owners.

Stevenson felt that the mill owners did their best, and that only the fine dust from under the saw escaped to the river. As it would be prohibitive to develop a system to keep that dust out of the river, a prohibition would be forcing them to close. He thought it prudent to leave the debate for another night. A town council committee would investigate, and the federal government would be asked to take no action for now.

When the issue came to town council two weeks later, on February 8, it agreed to hear three sawdust and three anti-sawdust speakers, limited to ten minutes each, who mostly repeated by-now familiar arguments. The anti-sawdust group wanted the saw dust removed, limits on adding more sawdust, and prevent malaria. They hoped the mill owners could make adjustments during the off-season. The adjustments, they felt, were about \$300. J. J. Lundy knew many cases of illness tied to the foul river and navigation had been affected.

Irwin, Hilliard and Hazlitt, the three speakers for the sawdust side, were worried about expense. The lumbering industry had been the major source of wealth for Peterborough for 30 years, but if the changes were enforced they would need to raise their mills six or seven feet, install new machinery, and purchase incinerators; this would be about \$7,000 to \$10,000 for Irwin's mill, and about \$30,000 for the Dickson mill. They also said that the slabs and bark from thirty years of dumping were now integral parts of the banks and would be very hard to remove. "The mills," Irwin argued, "had built up Peterborough to be the banner town of Ontario." Lumber mills had built the manufacturing sector, some producing the machinery for the lumber mills. Hazlitt did not think navigation had been affected; and he thought the sawdust was a disinfectant.

George A. Cox, who described himself as an investor "in brick and mortar," said he would suffer if the mill owners moved. The mills employed 600 workers; health statistics suggested that Peterborough was a healthy town; it cost \$8,000 to \$9,000 to build furnaces. It was cheaper to buy new mills than to rebuild them in town. Cox had made his reputation and fortune in insurance, but at this time owned about ten per cent of the town's real estate. The town council eventually agreed to specify the situations in which mills could let refuse enter the river, and inform Ottawa. Sawdust from approved saws could be dumped in the river. No one wanted Little Lake to get as bad as Spaulding's Bay was already. Edwards commented that the motion had been worded to sound as if everything was all right, but it was not. Town council adjourned about half an hour after midnight.

The Anti-Sawdust Association made an impact but became quiet once the town council decided that it was possible to limit the sawdust in the river at least a little. Little Lake was dredged a few times, most completely in 1906, when the fill from the dredging filled Spaulding's Bay and allowed the extension of George Street. Our first green movement made some solid arguments, however briefly.

*Special thanks to Diane Robnik.*

*First published in the Peterborough Examiner, Fall, 2010.*



**The Irwin Mills at Nassau Mills**  
(Trent Valley Archives, Electric City Collection)

**Trent Valley Archives Web Site:**  
<http://www.trentvalleyarchives.com/>

# Tom Thomson's First Northern Canoe Trip, 1912

By Terry Schwan

*Tom Thomson was a Canadian Icon and helped define the wildness and ruggedness of the forests of Ontario. Roy MacGregor has written a new book about Tom Thomson called "Northern Light". In this new book, MacGregor makes reference to the article below, but I had collected it a few years ago while researching my family history. After moving from Leith where Tom grew up, the Thomson family lived in Owen Sound just down the street from the Schwan Bros Brewery. Thomson's trip to northern Ontario was his first time to the North. The fall after that trip he sold his first painting Northern Lake for \$250.00, which convinced him he could make a living painting.*

*A number of the lake names in the news article have been changed; Canoe is now Bardney, and Green is Upper Green. Osagama Lake is not found in the old records and I suspect it maybe a misunderstanding by the reporter of Mississagi Lake. Aubrey falls is actually Aubrey Falls and it is upriver of the Aubinadong River. Also from the description of the route I don't think they traveled in to the James Bay watershed. The height of land referred to is between the Spanish and the Mississagi watersheds. Thanks to Jeff Ball, Geographic Names Specialist with Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, for providing updated geographic names.*

*Thomson and his companion probably passed the cabin of Archie Belaney and MacGregor states they "are said to have met" him before he became more famous as Grey Owl. References to the Aubinadong River may actually be to the Abinette River, a tributary of the Mississagi about half way between Upper Green Lake and Aubrey Falls.*

## Local Man's Experience in Northern Wilds

*Reprinted with permission from The Owen Sound Sun, September 27, 1912*

A well known Owen Sound Man, Mr. Thos. Thomson, son of Mr. John Thomson of 528 Fourth Avenue East, formerly of Leith, accompanied by his friend, Mr. W. S. Broadhead of Toronto, arrived in town on Monday night on the steamer Midland after spending two months in the wilds of new Ontario. Mr. Thomson and Mr. Broadhead are employed by The Photo Engraving Co., Designers and Illustrators, Toronto, and took this novel means to spend their holidays and incidentally to do some sketching and secure some snapshots in the forests of the north. The Sun interviewed the young men, who were bronzed and weather beaten from exposure to sun and wind, and secured from them an account of their interesting trip.

Taking the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway they stopped at Bisco and remained there a few days getting supplies to take in with them. These were procured at the Hudson Bay Company's store in Bisco and consisted of flour, sugar, pork, beans, rice, prunes, baking powder and other commodities which are not affected by the dampness and are most easily carried. They also procured some desiccated potatoes, onions and milk which are light to go a long way. These articles together with their tent, blankets and clothes made packs about two hundred pounds each.



Thomson's campsite  
(Provincial Archives  
Of Ontario)

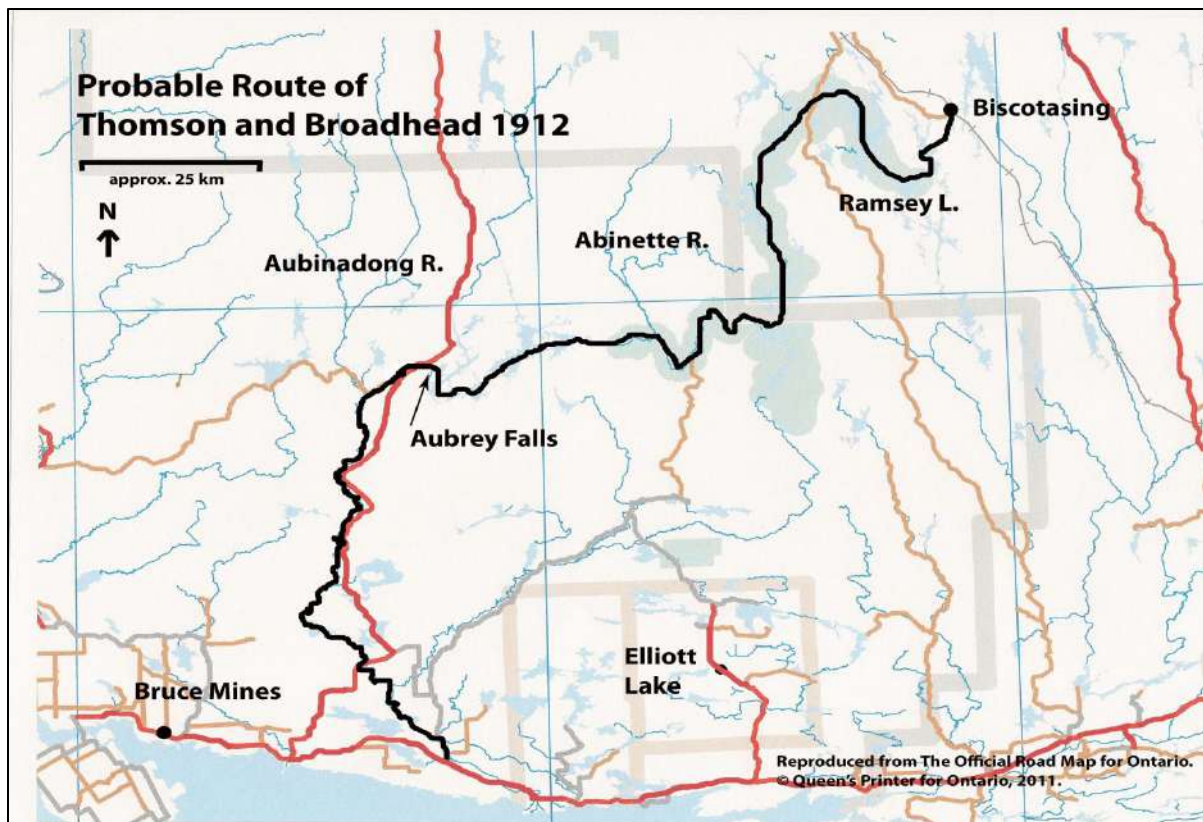
With a light Peterboro canoe they left Biscotasing about the last week in July and paddled down the beautiful Bisco Lake, camping where night overtook them and sketching and photographing where the scenery was grandest. From Bisco Lake they went on to Ramsey Lake, another fresh water body of unsurpassed beauty, then up the Spanish River and portaged into Canoe Lake. Here the moose became more plentiful and they secured some splendid sketches of these immense creatures of the Northern Forests. Out of Canoe Lake there is a portage of about three miles and near this portage is a beautiful little falls just at the head of Osagama Lake. From this lake they proceeded into Green Lake and here the two men were held up for some days by a storm and a cloudburst. The cloud burst happened as they were paddling down the lake and it swamped their canoe throwing the men into the water and wetting all their blankets and provisions. However they didn't lose anything and recovered the canoe as both men are expert swimmers. Owing to the continued rainy weather the lakes and rivers in the north are very high and one place near Clear Lake portage there had been a washout. The young men discovered a tent here that had been partly buried by the sand which was washed up on the bank of the river and thinking that some fire rangers might have been buried beneath it they investigated but didn't find anyone.



Proceeding on their trip, they entered the Mississauga Forest reserve and in this reserve the portages are cleaner because the fire rangers kept them cleared. They had now left the waters flowing to the James Bay and crossed the height of land which divides the head waters of the Hudson and those of Lake Huron. The canoeing became easier as they were going with the current and not against it and soon they reached the Aubinadong River, a branch of the Mississauga. They spend some days at Auberry Falls, one of the most superb beauty spots in the North and secured some more pictures, although, as Mr. Thomson says, the weather was not favourable for either sketching or photography. Wolves are plentiful all through the Reserve and Mr. Broadhead was fortunate enough to be within about five feet of one, a splendid specimen of the Canadian timber wolf and of which he got a photograph. Deer and bear are also plentiful and ducks and partridge are in abundance. The fishing was not very good although the two young men got some fine speckled trout in Clear Lake. In the upper waters of Hudson Bay only pike are to be caught and the trout and bass are a minus quantity there.

Leaving Auberry Falls, the two companions made their way along the mighty Mississauga River, running between rocks of immense height and grandeur and through forest wealth of pine, jack pine, spruce and poplar. Entering the forty mile rapids, where the river rushes for forty miles over rocks and boulders and especially so this season because of so much rain, they made rapid time to Squaw Chute where an old character, well known to tourists and sportsmen, Mark Ripley, lives, his only companion being the tame deer and the rabbits with which he has made friends. A settler, Mr. Dan Mitchell, formerly of Sullivan, drove the two men out to Bruce Mines where they embarked on the Midland Saturday.

The young artists think it is a grand country and are only waiting until next year when the call of the wild will take them back to that land of rich resources and scenic beauty – rich in mineral wealth because iron and copper have already been discovered and the time may not be far distant when some lucky prospector will strike something that will make it a second Cobalt – rich because of its forests and red and white pine and spruce – rich because of its immense waterfalls and consequently water power, and rich because of the fish and game to be found there. Mr. Broadhead said a part of English aristocrats started in from Bisco after they left, taking with them camp beds, chairs, carpet slippers, table napkins, and other civilized luxuries but how they have since fared he does not know, but can easily imagine. The two young men leave this week to resume their work in Toronto.



**Probable Route of Tom Thomson's first northern Ontario canoe trip, 1912**

# Hearst : une région exportatrice de bois à pâte!

By Danielle Coulombe

Lorsque la Grande Zone argileuse (région de Cochrane à Hearst) s'ouvre au peuplement, au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, le gouvernement ontarien met en place des structures visant à y favoriser l'implantation et le développement de l'industrie des pâtes et papiers et de l'agriculture. Comme on considère que les conifères de cette région ne conviennent pas à la production commerciale de bois d'œuvre, rien n'est cependant prévu pour encourager cette industrie.

On assiste donc rapidement à l'établissement d'usines de pâtes et papiers, ce qui entraîne la naissance des villes d'Iroquois Falls, de Smooth Rock Falls et de Kapuskasing. Par contre, même si l'industrie forestière domine aussi l'économie de la région de Hearst, aucune papetière ne s'y établit. Le présent article s'intéresse succinctement à certains des phénomènes ayant modelé les débuts économiques de cette région et ayant par la suite permis au secteur du bois de sciage de graduellement se tailler une place.

Deux entreprises ferroviaires, Algoma Central and Hudson Bay Railway (ACR) et l'Algoma Eastern Railway (AER) façonnent d'abord le profil économique de la région de Hearst. À partir de Sault-Sainte-Marie, l'ACR parcourt 296 milles (476 km) vers le Nord et arrive à Hearst en 1914. En plus de recevoir du financement gouvernemental, l'ACR obtient 85 cantons de la province dont 11 se trouvent au nord de la ligne du chemin de fer du Canadien Pacifique (CPR), dans la région qui s'étend de Franz à Hearst. Octroyés en alternance de chaque côté de la voie ferrée, les cantons Alderson, Derry, Franz, Glasgow, Irving, Landry, Martin, Mildred, St-Julien, Templeton et Way<sup>1</sup> couvrent une superficie de 498 580 acres ou 779,4 milles carrés.<sup>2</sup> Reconnu pour la qualité et la quantité de sa matière ligneuse, ce territoire est rapidement convoité par des papetières américaines. En 1917, deux d'entre elles, la Consolidated Water Power and Paper Company et la Northern Paper Mills en possèdent déjà 550 milles carrés. Conscientes que l'exportation de bois à l'état brut ne fait pas l'unanimité en Ontario, ces compagnies se dotent habituellement de filiales ontariennes. Elles camouflent ainsi leurs origines américaines et peuvent s'associer plus facilement à des entrepreneurs et des politiciens locaux.<sup>3</sup>

En Ontario, la filiale de la Northern Paper Mills, installée à Coppell, opère sous le même nom que la compagnie mère.<sup>4</sup> Quant à la compagnie Consolidated Water Power and Paper, elle dissimule ses acquisitions de diverses façons avant de les transférer définitivement à la Newago Timber Company Limited, le 24 août 1929.<sup>5</sup> Propriétaire des cantons Alderson, Derry, Landry, Templeton et d'une partie de Franz et de Way,<sup>6</sup> cette compagnie va couper le bois qui s'y trouve et l'expédier vers ses usines américaines, sans aucune restriction, pendant plus d'un demi-siècle, car cette matière ligneuse n'est pas soumise à la condition manufacturière.<sup>7</sup> En plus d'obtenir leur matière première à bon marché, les compagnies américaines utilisent la voie de l'ACR pour la transporter jusqu'au lac Supérieur; formule avantageuse pour les deux parties.<sup>8</sup>

L'ACR procède également à la vente de terrains dans les environs de Hearst. Parmi les premiers résidents du village de Jogues et du patelin de Wyborn (aujourd'hui intégré à la ville de Hearst), nombreux sont ceux qui achètent des terrains de l'ACR. Il s'agit habituellement de terres de 150 acres vendues à 1 \$ l'acre.<sup>9</sup> Plus dispendieuses que les « lots » de la Couronne, qui se vendent ordinairement 0,50 \$ l'acre,<sup>10</sup> les terres de l'ACR offrent néanmoins plusieurs avantages. Contrairement aux terres de la Couronne, aucune obligation de défrichement ou d'établissement ne s'y rattache. Le propriétaire peut exploiter le bois qui s'y trouve et l'exporter vers les États-Unis sans contraintes; attrait important pour les nombreuses personnes à la recherche de « terres à bois ». En 1916, le ministre des Terres et Forêts note que le peuplement est lent dans la région de Hearst et que la plupart des colons se consacrent à la coupe de bois à pâte. Il ajoute que l'ACR a transporté une quantité considérable de ce bois vers Sault-Sainte-Marie.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Archives Sault Ste. Marie Public Library (ASSMPL) A-3b 3/3 Box 9, Unlabelled, file 72, Land Grant Lands Algoma Central Railway, s.d. Le gouvernement ontarien transfère ces cantons à l'ACR entre 1914 et 1916.

<sup>2</sup> Mark Kuhlberg, *In the Power of Government, The Rise and Fall of Newsprint in Ontario, 1894-1932*, Thèse de doctorat, Université York, 2002. p. 126.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>4</sup> Une autre filiale porte le nom de Pattern Logging.

<sup>5</sup> Ontario Land Registry Office #1, Sault-Sainte-Marie, Parcel 1469, Vol. 8, Algoma West Section p. 4-5. Le siège social de la compagnie Newago se situe à Thunder Bay, mais elle possède un bureau régional à Mead.

<sup>6</sup> Ces cantons font aujourd'hui partie de l'Unité de Gestion de la Forêt de Hearst.

<sup>7</sup> Archives Ministère des Richesses naturelles, Peterborough (AMRNP), Memo to W.C. Cain, Re: Exportation of Pulpwood, Grant to Algoma Central and Hudson Bay Railway Company, file 1173, le 4 octobre 1926. Depuis 1900, la condition manufacturière interdit l'exportation, à l'état brut, de bois provenant des terres de la Couronne. À l'époque, le règlement comprend plusieurs échappatoires et ne sera jamais complètement imposé. Il sera mis en veilleuse pendant la crise économique des années 1930.

<sup>8</sup> Les cantons Alderson, Derry, Mildred, Glasgow, Martin, une section sud du canton Franz et une partie du canton Way sont vendus à 1,42 \$ l'acre. Ontario Land Registry Office #1, Sault-Sainte-Marie, Parcel 1469, Vol. 8, Algoma West Section, p. 4-5. Pendant la saison 1928-1929, on exporte 61 800 cordes de bois en provenance du territoire longeant l'ACR de Hearst à Franz. ASSMA-2 Box 6, G6 Miscellaneous Reports Box ½ File 60, N. Gray Report, le 3 janvier 1929, p. 3-4.

<sup>9</sup> ASSMPL, Land Ledgers canton Way, Sheet 1 à 5.

<sup>10</sup> J. Grimard et G. Vallières, *Travailleurs et gens d'affaire canadiens-français en Ontario*, St-Laurent : Études Vivantes, 1986, p. 79.

<sup>11</sup> Ontario, *Report of the Minister of Lands and Forests for the year 1916*, Toronto, Printer to the King, 1917, p. 108.

Chemin de fer de la région de Sudbury, l'AER reçoit 682 405 acres de terre de l'Ontario, soit 16 cantons complets et 1/5 d'un autre.<sup>12</sup> Une partie de ses acquisitions, soit les cantons Caithness, Doherty, Dowsley, Langemarck, Nassau, Shetland, Storey ainsi qu'une section du canton Orkey se trouvent dans la région de Hearst et font actuellement partie de l'Unité de Gestion de la Forêt de Hearst.<sup>13</sup> Très rapidement, la Transcontinental Paper Company, une filiale du groupe Backus, achète 11 de ces cantons, dont certains bordent la concession Nagagami.<sup>14</sup> Conçue en 1921 à la compagnie Transcontinental Development Corporation, aussi membre du groupe Backus, la concession Nagagami demeure inexploitée jusqu'à la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. Le concessionnaire s'était pourtant engagé à entreprendre des activités de coupe immédiatement et à établir une papetière au cours des trois prochaines années.<sup>15</sup> Étant donné que la concession Nagagami demeure inexploitée, ce sont les entreprises américaines ayant acquis du territoire de l'ACR et de l'AER qui vont dominer l'économie de la région de Hearst et la confiner dans un rôle de pourvoyeuse de matières premières, à la merci des moindres oscillations des papetières dont elle dépend.

Même si, depuis l'ouverture du territoire, de petits entrepreneurs installent leur moulin à scie dans les villages de la région, leur présence ne modifie pas véritablement la structure économique de la région. Ce sont de très petits moulins, qui se montent et se démontent facilement afin de toujours être situés près de leur source d'approvisionnement.<sup>16</sup> Très souvent, l'entrepreneur transporte son moulin avec lui, lors de sa venue dans le Nord. Répondant d'abord aux besoins locaux en matière de bois de construction, ces moulins fonctionnent tout au plus quelques mois par année et requièrent peu de main-d'œuvre. À l'époque, le bois en provenance des terres des colons s'avère leur principale source d'approvisionnement.<sup>17</sup> Souvent, ces petits entrepreneurs se font aussi « jobbers » en obtenant des contrats de sous-traitance avec les papetières de la région et les compagnies exportatrices.

À compter de 1936-37, les petits entrepreneurs ont aussi accès à de minuscules concessions sur les terres de la Couronne.<sup>18</sup> C'est ainsi que Noé Fontaine, propriétaire d'un moulin à scie, qu'il déplace à travers la région depuis 1924, obtient sa première concession. Il acquiert des droits de coupe pour le bois de sciage et à pâte, sur un mille carré, dans le canton Hanlan. Quelques mois plus tard, son fils Zacharie obtient ¼ de mille carré dans le même canton. Ils installent leur moulin à l'endroit maintenant identifié comme la Passe-à-Fontaine.<sup>19</sup> Selon les rapports annuels du ministre des Terres et Forêts, la Fontaine Lumber and Timber obtient une concession de 12 milles carrés dans le canton Bannerman, l'année suivante et une concession de 15 ¾ milles carrés dans les cantons Bannerman et Hanlan s'y ajoute en 1940-1941.<sup>20</sup> La même année, Arthur Lecours acquiert une concession de deux milles carrés dans le canton Stoddart<sup>21</sup> et il construit un moulin à scie à Carey Lake. En 1942, il le vend à Ernest Gosselin et en établit un autre à Calstock. Quelques années plus tard, J. D. Levesque, fondateur de Levesque Lumber arrive à son tour dans la région.<sup>22</sup> Ainsi prennent forme les scieries familiales qui vont dominer l'économie dans la région de Hearst pendant quelques décennies à partir des années 1960.

Entretemps, avec le retour à la prospérité engendré par la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, de plus en plus de voix s'élèvent contre l'exportation du bois ontarien et forcent le gouvernement provincial à annoncer un retour progressif à la condition manufacturière. Graduellement, le bois en provenance des terres de la Couronne devra être partiellement transformé avant d'être exporté. Quand leur contrat d'exportation arrive à échéance, les compagnies américaines oeuvrant sur les terres de la Couronne choisissent de cesser leurs opérations plutôt que d'installer des usines de transformation. La région de Hearst en subit les contrecoups et se retrouve, au début des années 1950, dans une situation économique précaire.

Pourtant, une grande partie de la forêt autour de Hearst, notamment la concession Nagagami, demeure inexploitée! Après de nombreuses tergiversations, la compagnie Marathon (devient American Can en 1967) obtient cette concession. Son contrat stipule qu'elle doit établir une papetière, ce qui suscite énormément d'espairs dans la région de Hearst. Son choix s'arrête cependant à un

<sup>12</sup> AMRNP, Land File 1173, J. Hutcheon, Ruling in Re Grant to the Algoma Eastern Railway Co., le 21 juin 1916, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> AMRNP, Land File 1173, R.V. Scott à H. C. Rickaby, le 21 mars 1952.

<sup>14</sup> AMRNP, Land File 1173 Sous-ministre à Peter Heenan, ministre des Richesses naturelles, le 22 novembre 1934. Sur le document consulté, la date n'apparaît pas complètement et se lit 19\_4. Nous croyons qu'il s'agit du chiffre 3 puisque P. Neenan a été ministre des Terres et Forêts de 1934 à 1941. Diverses entreprises fondées Edward Wellington Backus, notamment la compagnie E. W. Backus Lumber Co, la compagnie Minnesota and Ontario Paper et la Great Lake Forest Paper appartiennent aussi à ce groupe.

<sup>15</sup> Ontario, *Report of the Minister of Lands and Forests and Mines for the year 1921*, Toronto, Clarkson W. James, Printer to the King, p. 9, 1922 p. 282-286.

<sup>16</sup> AMRNP, Land File 8160, Paul Vasseur au sous-ministre, ministère des Terres et Forêts, le 8 novembre 1927. Dans cette lettre Vasseur indique qu'il souhaite remonter à Hearst un moulin qu'il a opéré ailleurs pendant un certain temps.

<sup>17</sup> AMRNP, Land File 8160, Tel est notamment le cas de Paul Vasseur qui en 1927 indique avoir scié le bois fourni par les colons des environs de Hearst.

<sup>18</sup> Ontario, *Report of the Minister of Lands and Forests for the year ending March 31, 1937*, Toronto, Printer to the King, 1937, p. 14.

<sup>19</sup> Archives publiques de l'Ontario (APO), RG1-122, boîte 256, Noé Fontaine., RG1-122, boîte 30, Zacharie Fontaine.

<sup>20</sup> Ontario, *Report of the Minister of Lands and Forest for the year ending March 31 1939*, Toronto, Printer to the King, 1940, p. 46. Ontario, *Report of the Minister of Lands and Forest for the year ending March 31 1941*, Toronto, Printer to the King, 1942, p. 47. Étant donné que les rapports annuels se chevauchent parfois d'une année à l'autre, il est possible que la première concession obtenue soit incluse dans les chiffres présentés dans le rapport de 1941. Autrement, la compagnie Fontaine Lumber and Timber aurait possédé une concession de 27,75 milles carrés, ce qui nous apparaît peu probable.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p.53. Dans le district de Cochrane, plusieurs entrepreneurs obtiennent des concessions de moins d'un mille carré au cours de la saison 1940-1941.

<sup>22</sup> La petite histoire des scieries de Hearst, Ville de Hearst, <http://www.scierieshearst.com/autres.html>, site consulté le 31 mars 2011.

site sur la rive nord du lac Supérieur, ce qui va d'ailleurs entraîner la fondation de la ville de Marathon. Une fois de plus, Hearst voit le secteur des pâtes et papiers lui échapper! Pendant un certain temps, la compagnie Marathon exploite sa concession à l'ouest de Hearst et expédie cette production vers sa papetière, ce qui s'avère très onéreux. Elle obtient ensuite une concession plus près de son usine, ce qui permet au gouvernement ontarien de reprendre la concession Nagagami et d'en concéder une partie aux scieries de la région de Hearst.

Entretemps, les nouveaux propriétaires de la Transcontinental Development Corporation devenue la Transcontinental Timber Company Limited accordent des droits de coupe, dans leurs cantons, à des sous-traitants, dont certains entrepreneurs et propriétaires de scieries de la région de Hearst. Henry Selin, entrepreneur de la région de Sault-Sainte-Marie acquiert cependant les plus importants droits de coupe et installe un village forestier à environ 50 kilomètres à l'ouest de Hearst (lac Nassau). Dotée d'installations ultra-modernes, l'entreprise sera, à la fin des années 1950, la plus importante scierie de la région. Ses succès démontrent qu'il est maintenant possible d'utiliser la forêt de la région pour produire en quantité du bois d'œuvre de qualité.

Si le départ des compagnies exportatrices et l'installation d'une papetière à Marathon plongent d'abord la région de Hearst dans le marasme économique, à moyen terme, ces circonstances jumelées au début de l'exploitation des cantons privés favorisent indéniablement le développement de l'industrie du bois de sciage dans la région de Hearst. Cette conjoncture n'explique cependant pas à elle seule les succès que connaissent à partir des années 1960 les scieries familiales. D'autres facteurs tout aussi importants entrent en ligne de compte. Parmi les plus déterminants, mentionnons l'esprit d'entreprise des fondateurs et les efforts incessants de leurs successeurs pour obtenir des droits de coupe sur les terres de la Couronne. Grâce à leur acharnement, une partie de l'ancienne concession Nagagami fait maintenant partie de l'Unité de Gestion de la Forêt de Hearst. Par ailleurs, à la suite des recommandations de la commission royale d'enquête sur la forêt ontarienne (le rapport Kennedy de 1947), le ministère des Terres et Forêts modifie considérablement ses approches dans la gestion de la forêt ontarienne. Ces changements favorisent entre autres, l'introduction graduelle des copeaux, produits par les scieries, dans la production de pâtes et papiers. En plus de libérer de la matière ligneuse pour les scieries, la vente de copeaux leur permet d'augmenter leurs revenus. Notons cependant que seule une analyse approfondie de ces phénomènes et de plusieurs autres nous permettra de véritablement comprendre comment une région, presque entièrement vouée à l'exportation de son bois à pâte, a pu se transformer en productrice de bois d'œuvre.

#### Abbréviations

APO	Archives publiques de l'Ontario
ASSMPL	Archives Sault Ste. Marie Public Library
AMRNP	Archives Ministère des Richesses naturelles, Peterborough
ACR	Algoma Central and Hudson Bay Railway
AER	Algoma Eastern Railway
CPR	Canadien Pacifique

**Bateau de la compagnie Fontaine  
Lumber pour transporter du bois**

**(photo gracieuseté de  
Mme Jeanne Forcier)**





# ***The Blue Ox Forwarder - It's Brief History at the Hay Company, 1957-1960***

**By Peter Murray**

"The times they are a changing" was the theme in the early 50's for the hardwood logging and saw milling industry of North Eastern North America. A compounding set of circumstances required an assessment of the procedures involved in logging and milling the yellow birch and sugar maple that were the staples of the industry. New labour saving devices such as chain saws, a growing shortage of draft horses and teamsters, the need to operate sawmills year round, improved haul trucks and road building equipment, and the desire of woods and mill workers for year round work, were all components of the equation leading to change.

Nineteen fifty six was my first year in Huntsville as Division Forester with Hay & Company, a hardwood and veneer manufacturer with the Canadian head office and veneer mill and pre-finished plywood plant in Woodstock Ontario. The "Company" also owned 75,000 acres of freehold in Haliburton County, with a sawmill at Kennisis Lake, and operations in Sault Ste Marie Ontario and South River. The large saw mills were all steam powered with line shaft drives and one or two "setters" on the double cut band mill carriages. But that's another story.

In the early 1950's the chain saw had arrived, but skidding was with horses, and logs loaded by "A" frame to be hauled out on single axle trucks with a set of "dollies". There were few tandem axle trucks available. At the mill yards, the logs were high decked, or with conifers, ponded, to last till early fall. To keep the mills running till winter freeze up, operators often attempted "hot logging" in the fall with horses and crawler tractors, in stands close to gravel access roads. The logging foreman spent the summer in the bush building main roads and winter trails for the teamsters to deck logs when cutting started in late September. Come winter, these trails were frozen up and the logs hauled out till half loads called a "stop". Getting a supply of suitable trucks, teamsters and horses was becoming increasingly difficult.

The Hay & Company's answer to the problems was to go to mechanical logging for a continuous supply of logs and a reduced mill yard inventory. The Company had tried using a large skidding "arch" behind a Caterpillar D6 tractor, but it was slow, awkward and expensive.

A salesman named Bob Kerr of Kerr Equipment arrived at our door with the enthusiastic answer to our needs: The FWD Blue Ox. The first wheeled tractors used in logging were essentially four-wheel drive trucks. Such a machine was the FWD Blue Ox, named after a mythical North American creature noted for his pulling power. Its main period of use was 1956 to 1960 and there are few, if any, of these units operating in the forest today. Designed for skidding tree lengths, specifications were 4 wheel drive, a 6 cylinder gasoline engine of 131 hp, 5 speed forward transmission, 1 reverse, 2-speed auxiliary transmission. The weaknesses of this type of machine lay in its use of conventional two wheel tie-rod steering, conventional truck drive axles and the rigidity of its frame. The winch was essentially a tractor unit, mounted so the 5/8" skidding cable could pass through a fairlead mounted on an A frame behind the winch. In good conditions, an Ox could skid 4 or 5 medium size tree lengths or 2 biggies. The production objective was 20,000 net merchantable fbm per day produced and shipped to the mill.



**The Blue Ox forwarder at work**

In those days harvesting was a selection hi-grade operation. Over 50% of the cut was yellow birch and only the best quality maple and other species were felled well ahead of the bunching and forwarding operations. The plan was to skid tree lengths with two D4 Cats, one with a blade, one without, to where the Blue Ox could forward them to an all weather or winter roadside landing. A chokerman would hook the extended winch cable line to the cable or chain chokers, which had been placed around the butt end of the trees. He serviced the Cat crawler bunchers and the Blue Ox forwarder. He also had to keep a supply of chokers on the go. At the landing the trees were dropped, the chokers removed and sent back, and the loader operator would either deck the tree lengths or spread them for log manufacture. The landing "bucker" with a chain saw, would measure the tree for the best product. Yellow birch veneer logs were the top of the list, and the bucker would have the time and skills to really assess where to make the most advantageous cuts. This was deemed to be, and indeed was, preferable to having three or



four fallers making these important cutting decisions at the stump. A tracked Caterpillar 944 front end loader would sort the species, and load the trucks. At the landing a Department of Lands and Forests log scaler would tally up the load and away it would go.

On June 19, 1957 near the head waters of the Big East River in Algonquin Park, it all began. There were the expected difficulties, but the concept proved to be sound. The Blue Ox performed well in good topography and soil conditions, but if it was rough, rocky or wet, large ruts were left in the bush and there was the inevitable breakdown. We found that the standard butt plate below the fairlead was too narrow and tree butts would ride up on the tires and damage the chains. Our shop welders very soon built a much larger butt plate with wings, which did the job. Axles were a continuous problem. The excessive torque required to haul large tree lengths proved to be too much for the standard truck axle. Strengthened axles did help but only a bit. Tires and chains were also subject to failure, and became a significant operating expense

In smaller timber all went well, but the big hardwoods were almost too much. So, when the news that a Pettibone forwarder with planetary axles, but still two wheel steering was on the market, we were hot to try one. We did, and it was a much better but too expensive, so it was a no go. In 1960 the articulated Timberjack skidder with a small front end blade was introduced. This spelled the end of the crawler tractor bunchers and the large truck based forwarding machines. The smaller TJ 200's could go directly to the stump, and forward to the landing.



Although the Blue Ox had a short time on stage, it was indeed the reason that we were able to initiate the mechanical logging operations, which were to expand and become refined over the years. The Ox had its “15 minutes” of fame, and in our case ended its useful life by plowing snow and dragging a grader. May it rest in peace.

**The Blue Ox Forwarder**

#### **GLOSSARY OF TERMS (for this article)**

**A FRAME:** An A shaped structure to serve as a fulcrum for a cable for lifting or pulling.

**BUCKER:** A person who cuts tree lengths in desired log lengths.

**BUNCHERS:** Skidding machines used to pull tree lengths to a forwarding site.

**CHOKER:** A 10' length of cable or chain wrapped around a tree or log for skidding.

**CHOKERMAN:** Person who places choker on tree or log for skidding purposes.

**CRAWLER:** A tractor with metal chain link tracks, (like a tank)

**DOUBLE CUT BAND SAW:** A mill head saw with teeth on both sides of the band so it can cut a log in both directions.

**DOLLIES:** An axle fitted with dual wheels affixed to the back of a single axle truck to lengthen the load carrying capabilities. (It did not increase the legal load limit).

**FAIRLEAD:** A roller at the top of an A frame to guide the winch cable.

**FALLERS:** Men (almost always) who cut down trees.

**FWD BLUE OX:** Trade mark name of a skidder of the Four Wheel Drive Truck Co.

**HOT LOGGING:** The process when logs are cut, skidded, and delivered to the mill in a continuous operation.

**LINE SHAFT:** A long central shaft below the mill floor, driven by steam or a diesel engine and driving by use of pulleys and belts, all the machinery in a mill.

**PETTIBONE:** Trade mark name of log handling equipment manufacturer.

**PLANETARY AXLE:** Sun gear mechanism to reduce the torque on drive axles.

**SKIDDING ARCH:** Large two wheeled rubber tired A frame with fairlead for forwarding.

**SETTERS:** Men who rode on a sawmill carriage to “set” the size of the next cut.

**TIMBERJACK:** Trade name of manufacturer of rubber tired skidders.

**TEAMSTERS:** Men who drove and maintained the horses for log skidding and loading.

Photos provided by, and used with permission, of the author.

# A History of the Rockland Plantation

By John Bacher

One of the first reforestation efforts took place in Rockland, Ontario, near Ottawa. Here, in 1914, Edmund Zavitz directed the planting of three year old red and white pine seedlings on pasture lands belonging to a powerful Ottawa area lumberman, Senator William Edwards. One of his homes, 24 Sussex Drive in Ottawa, is now the official residence of Canada's Prime Minister.



**Rockland Plantation  
(with permission, M.L.J. Bacher)**

Edwards, one of the Canadian lumber industry's forest champions of conservation, met Zavitz at a 1910 meeting of the Canadian Forestry Association. He served as one of Quebec's representatives on the Commission of Conservation. The protection of Edwards' lands in Quebec from farmers using fire to clear land became the occasion for the first lengthy jail time for illegal forest destruction.

Unlike other logging industrialists of his time, Edwards made an effort to reforest his own lands. He commissioned Zavitz to supervise the planting of white and red pines in Rockland on a hill near the Canadian Pacific Railway. After Senator Edwards died his family remained for many years in the lumber business and, in 1935 the still privately owned plantation was placed under the management of the Canadian Forest Service (CFS).

The studies<sup>1</sup> of the CFS of their management of the Rockland plantation were beneficial for both forest ecology and lumbering. They demonstrated how pine thinning in plantations, in addition to encouraging a more diverse and natural forest, also increased the basal area of pine, and hence the total amount of merchantable timber. By the late 1930s, the forest became quite a magnificent site, with tall pines soaring above a predominately sugar maple forest. Sugar maples originating from a seed source found on adjacent lands suppressed the growth of young pine seedlings creating a mixed woods forest.



**Aerial view, Rockland  
plantation**

The great historical significance of the Rockland plantation was that it played a major role as an impressive demonstration model in encouraging reforestation throughout Eastern Ontario. This was largely through the tours of the site organized by the visionary agronomist, Ferdinand Larose. He used these tours to inspire municipal politicians to support the Agreement Forest Program that facilitated such massive reforestation efforts such as the Larose Forest.

The most important tour of the Rockland Plantation was on September 20, 1938. It was the highlight of the first Eastern Ontario Field Days of the Ontario Conservation and Reforestation Association, (OCRA). This organization, headed by a former Ontario Agricultural College student of Zavitz, Watson Porter, spoke at this OCRA Field Day. According to the Ottawa Citizen, "the field day was a revelation to him". "The 30 acre lot in Rockland" he said, "was without peer in all Ontario. The forest we have seen should be just symbols of what every farmer should be doing on his own land".

Studied extensively in published CFS studies and secondary literature, the Rockland Plantation continued to grow until the ice storm of 1998.

At this time the rapidly growing Rockland community was going through a process to identify a location for a new arena. Eventually all but six acres of the forest were cut down for the arena complex and parking area.

**Rockland Plantation with foresters (left to right) Phil Anslow, Wim Vonk and Clarence Coons. (Ed Borczon took the photograph in September, 1975, and has given permission for its use)**



<sup>1</sup> von Althen, F.W. and W.M. Stiell. A red pine case history: development of the Rockland plantation from 1914 to 1986. *Forestry Chronicle*. 1990 Vol. 66 No. 6 pp. 606-610.

# ***From Timber to Town: The Emergence of Dubreuilville***

**By Mike Commito**

In the summer of 1948, a massive conflagration known as the Mississagi fire ripped through the Mississagi and Chapleau areas of northern Ontario. Scorching approximately 745,520 acres, this fire was the largest in provincial history in terms of burned area.<sup>1</sup> It left the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests (DLF) with a charred tract that was roughly the size of the state of Rhode Island. With millions of foot board measure (fbm) of merchantable timber still left standing in the form of undamaged and slightly damaged trees, the provincial government quickly formulated a salvage plan.

Since many of the province's large timber operators were reticent about participating in a temporary and potentially unprofitable salvage, the DLF was forced to organize the project, and in the process, entice many smaller firms from northern Ontario and Quebec to undertake much of the work. The Dubreuil & Frères Lumber Company (DUBF), was one of these firms. Originally from Taschereau, Quebec, this company was a fraternal organization comprised of four brothers - Joachim, Augustin, Marcel, and Napoleon Dubreuil.



**Company founders (Napoleon, Joachim, Augstin and Marcel Debreuil with mother Cecile)**

Although the brothers had finalized its salvage contract negotiations with the Crown on June 29, 1949, they lacked many of the necessary resources that some of the province's larger firms possessed. As a result, the firm began its salvage contract in lacklustre fashion, plagued by numerous financial issues. They consistently found themselves at loggerheads with the DLF. But by the time the contract had finished, they had evolved into a stable and prosperous company. The salvage contract they secured with the Ontario government provided DUBF with opportunities to branch out into other sectors of the forest industry, allowing it to solidify itself as a viable lumber company.

After spending two years cutting and hauling out charred timber for the province, DUBF began cutting railroad ties for the Algoma Central Railway (ACR) in Sault Ste. Marie. While this new venture drew the ire of DLF officials, who believed DUBF should continue focusing on its salvaging commitments, the additional contract with the ACR provided the brothers with the impetus to establish a forest village near its operations along the Magpie River.

With the development of modest accommodations from 1951 onwards, DUBF was able to recruit approximately thirty men and their families from their hometown of Taschereau. With the influx of more personnel, the company capitalized on more opportunities to expand its operations. In addition to cutting railroad ties for the ACR, they also began producing lumber from jack

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen J. Pyne, *Awful Splendour: A Fire History of Canada*, Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 2007, 430 pp.

pine and pulpwood for the Abitibi Power and Paper Company in Sault Ste. Marie. Success gained from these ventures allowed it to expand its settlement into what would become known as present-day Dubreuilville.



**Dubreuilville in 1961**

While the initial settlement in 1951 had been moderately impressive, its expansion to include two sawmills and thirty houses was truly significant because they were the company's first permanent accommodations. According to Napoleon's son, Jean-Paul Dubreuil, his father wanted to provide shelter for more than just bushworkers, he wanted "to bring families with him to his community."<sup>2</sup> This commitment to making Dubreuilville more than a forest village is evidenced through Napoleon's generous efforts to personally pay teachers to settle in the village and teach the children of employees in a company built schoolhouse. In addition to the company's accommodations for permanent workers and their

families, DUBF could boast about the excellent accommodations for the single or temporary worker in the form of innovative motel-style housing. The burgeoning town also had a cookhouse, a church, and a park. By 1961, the settlement was officially recognized as a company town; in 1977, Dubreuilville was incorporated as a municipality.

The emphasis on developing a permanent infrastructure for its workers reveals the degree to which DUBF was committed to innovation. They recognized the importance of "encouraging a permanent workforce by providing housing and contributing to the town's infrastructure" much like lumberman John Waldie in the Midland area roughly a half century earlier, studied by Ken Armson and Marjorie McLeod.<sup>3</sup> In many ways, the company was ahead of its time when it came to accommodating its workers and fostering a sense of community. Soon after the Second World War, many of the province's industry leaders recognized that semi-permanent accommodations would help reduce operating costs; however the idea did not fully catch on until the 1970's.<sup>4</sup>

At the apex of their operations in the 1970's and 1980's, DUBF had acquired a workforce of approximately 400 employees. Moreover, during this booming period, the town's population had reached 1,100 residents.<sup>5</sup> The company remained in the hands of the Dubreuil family until it was sold to Ken Buchanan of the Buchanan Group in 1989 and renamed, Dubreuil Forest Products. Unfortunately, the company's prosperity did not last; major administrative and logistical changes occurred, which led to the layoff of 140 employees and ultimately the terminations of operations in 2007.<sup>6</sup>

Although the Mississagi fire and salvage may have provided DUBF with the impetus to establish long-term operations in northern Ontario, it was the acumen of the company's executives that created its enduring legacy. The Dubreuil brothers' shrewd insight allowed the company to prosper in an era when, in Quebec, it was the norm for French Canadians to earn a living by operating

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<sup>2</sup> Phone conversation with Jean-Paul Dubreuil, January 19, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth A. Armson and Marjorie McLeod, *The Legacy of John Waldie and Sons: A History of the Victoria Harbour Lumber Company*, Toronto ON: Natural Heritage Books, 2007. p 110.

<sup>4</sup> Ian Radforth, *Bushworkers and Bosses: Logging in Northern Ontario, 1900-1980*, Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1987. 169 pp.

<sup>5</sup> Frank Dobrovnik, "Co-founder of Northern Town Dies", *Sault Ste. Marie Star*, February 11, 2011.

<sup>6</sup> Shirley Mills, "Dubreuil Forest Products far from out the Woods", *Sault Ste. Marie Star*, February 28, 2008.



subsistence farms supplemented by winter work in the forest.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, historian William D. Coleman argues that a survey of Quebec farms as late as 1956 revealed that “only 46.1 per cent lived entirely from the income of their farm operations. Another 32.3 per cent added to their incomes by working as bûcherons [lumberjacks], and 21.6 per cent had jobs in industry.”<sup>8</sup> In comparison to some of their francophone brethren in Quebec, DUBF did exceptionally well with its year round woodworking operation.

The success of the company can also be gauged by other measures as well. During the 1950s, Quebec’s economy had isolated pockets of successful francophone entrepreneurs, but for the most part this group was still shut out from secondary industries.<sup>9</sup> Following the Second World War until the 1960s, lack of francophone control in Quebec industry became one of the main grievances in the struggle to obtain significant economic



**A recent picture of Dubreuilville**

and social restructuring, known as the Quiet Revolution. As Coleman writes, “the overall objective of economic policy during the Quiet Revolution was to obtain significant control over production in Quebec for the francophone business class.”<sup>10</sup> For the forest industry in particular, this meant appropriating control and putting it in the hands of the province’s francophone workers. Traditionally, Quebec’s pulp and paper industry had been “in the hands of a small number of large companies controlled by interests outside the francophone community.”<sup>11</sup> Therefore, at a time when much of francophone Quebec was still vying for economic and industrial reform, DUBF had gained an unprecedented amount of control over production as a French firm operating in Ontario. Lastly, one cannot overlook the cultural impact that the company had as well. Not only did the firm bring in hundreds of workers, and by extension their families, from Taschereau, Quebec, but it also imported French culture and language to a part of Ontario that had been predominantly Anglophone.

In spite the setbacks the town has experienced in the past few years, most notable in the recent passing of one of the town’s founding members, Augustin Dubreuil, Dubreuilville soldiers on. In fact, as we approach the summer of 2011, the municipality is planning on organizing a jubilee in July to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the town’s creation. The event should be a joyous occasion celebrating the legacy that the Dubreuil brothers have provided to northern Ontario. Had the company not participated in the government’s massive salvage operation in 1948, it is doubtful that the company would have developed forestry operations in the Algoma District along the Magpie River. Yet, such correlations are far too deterministic and fail to factor in the power of human agency. Building off their success attained through the cutting operations in this region of northern Ontario, the Dubreuil brothers were able to literally carve out a section of forest, thereby establishing a new community and effectively changing the demography of northern Ontario for years to come.

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<sup>7</sup> William D. Coleman, *The Independence Movement in Quebec, 1945-1980*, Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1984. 32 pp.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 121.



# People

## 🌲 Ralph S. Carman B.Sc.F., University of Toronto 1921 (1892-1989)

### Contributions to Forestry and Conservation in Southern Ontario 1928 to 1954

By Bob Carman

Ralph Carman attended the University of Toronto's Faculty of Forestry during 1914 and 1915, completing the first two years of the program. He then enlisted in the armed forces to fight in the First World War where he served in the forestry corps in the United Kingdom until 1918. On returning to Canada at the end of the war he finished third and fourth years at the Faculty of Forestry, University of Toronto, and graduated in 1921.

From about 1921 to 1931 he worked with the federal forestry service in Western Canada doing inventory on forest lands, primarily in Manitoba and Alberta. In 1932 he moved to Ontario to undertake inventory work in Rondeau Park, and that same year was recruited to the position of Superintendent of the park.

Ralph served as Superintendent of Rondeau Park for five years. The role of superintendent at that period of time was much more comprehensive than is today. In addition to the management of the ecology and recreational facilities, the park superintendent was the local magistrate and was responsible to ensure that all persons who violated Ontario's statutes within the boundaries of the park were apprehended and charged!

His significant contribution to the ecology of this park was to recognize that the deer population of the park was inhibiting the regeneration of important species of trees that were native to the Carolinian forest found in this sanctuary. He was able to secure local support for a cull of the deer herd, obtained approval to implement the cull and organized and carried out the program. Needless to say, it has been done a number of times since the early 1930's, although public opinion and political issues have become more problematic.

In the late 1930's he transferred to the Reforestation Branch of the Department of Lands and Forests in Toronto.

In 1939 and 1940 he carried out detailed studies in Durham County on a watershed basis that dealt with soil erosion, flooding and ground water levels. The first study resulted in a report on the Wilmot Creek Drainage Unit and the second study was reported in the September 1941 issue of the Forestry Chronicle under the title "The Glacial Pot Hole Area, Durham County, Ontario".



**Ralph Carman**

His concern was that the continued cultivation and/or grazing of marginal and sub-marginal farm lands located in headwaters of streams was having a detrimental impact downstream on farm communities and farmlands. He showed that certain previously year-round streams were drying up in the summer months and that wells had to be drilled deeper to obtain a reliable water supply. He traced this to farm husbanding that was resulting in soil compaction, the reduction of organic material and the erosion of the more productive surface soil layers.

Carman concluded that "unrestricted private enterprise has made an unfortunate showing of its stewardship up to the present time".

His strong recommendation in the article was that protection forests should be established on marginal and sub-marginal agricultural land (particularly in the headwaters of streams) with the objectives of:

- (i) Recharging ground waters by creating more effective reservoirs,
- (ii) Controlling spring floods,
- (iii) Reducing soil erosion,
- (iv) Providing a wildlife sanctuary, and
- (v) Providing a moderating influence on (local) climate.

He recognized that the townships and counties might not have the resources to carry out the proper stewardship and the investment required and that provincial or federal assistance might be necessary. In particular, he expressed concerns about the relocation of farmers who presently owned the "light" lands. He suggested that the value of their sandy properties would not be adequate to purchase productive agricultural lands. Thus, he proposed that governments could assist financially in their relocation.

It is interesting to note that this study provided a cogent framework for forest conservation on a watershed management basis a full three years before the Ganaraska Report was published in 1944.

In 1942 Ralph Carman was appointed Superintendent of the Tree Seed Plant in Angus, Ontario. One of the challenges that he was asked to address was the unacceptably low viability of coniferous tree seed produced at that time from the plant. The forest tree nurseries had become habituated with seed lots that contained a very high percentage of seed that would not germinate. To offset this problem, high volumes of seed were sowed. This sometimes resulted in overcrowding in the seedbeds and stunted growth. It was also very expensive to produce a high proportion of seeds that would not germinate.

He focussed his energies on that task through to his retirement in 1954. The quality of seed that was sown in the forest tree nurseries improved significantly over the years. This resulted in a reduction in the amount of cones that had to be collected and processed and the reduced volume of seed that had to be stored in cold storage facilities. And equally as important, the tree nursery managers could count on a more certain density of tree seedlings in their seedbeds. This improved stock quality and avoided the need for thinning.

The Angus Tree Seed Plant continues today to provide quality seed to nurseries across the province.

## **Quimby Hess 1917 - 2010**

Quimby Hess obtained his B.Sc.F. from the University of Toronto in 1940 and his Forest Engineer designation in 1952. Quimby worked first for Spruce Falls Power and Paper Company in Kapuskasing running survey crews and managing logging camps. In the early 1940s, he joined the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests where he worked until his retirement in a variety of positions including district forester in Sault Ste. Marie, regional forester in Cochrane and Peterborough and on the Ontario Insect Survey in northern Ontario. From 1961-1967 he was Director of the Ontario Forest Technical School near Dorset. His final posting was to Toronto.



Quimby was born in the German-settled hamlet of Zurich, Ontario. He began a life-long love affair with the natural world and in particular the miracle of butterflies and moths when a teacher brought in a Cecropia cocoon so the children could watch the moth emerge. During his lifetime Quimby collected Lepidoptera in Peru, Guyana and across Canada and the United States.

When he was fourteen, his father bought a piece of farmland next to the Hess house so that Quimby could convert it into a small bush lot, which he nurtured for more than 50 years. He was also an ardent birder. His arrowhead collection, found mostly at The Pinery Park, was later donated to the University of Western Ontario.

After retiring, Quimby worked for the Quetico Foundation and for Canadian International Development Agency in Guatemala.

He contributed to many scientific journals and was co-author of The Ontario Butterfly Atlas published in 1991. He was a past president of the Toronto Entomologists' Association where for many years he helped compile its Annual (butterfly and moth) Summaries. In 1967, he received the Centennial Medal from the government of Canada.

Based on Hess's obituary published in the Toronto Star, January 1, 2011.

## James Richard "Mack" Williams 1923 – 2011



"Mack" Williams obtained his M.Sc.F. from the University of Toronto in 1958. During his long career as a professional forester and through his retirement he worked tirelessly for the cause of environmental stewardship. Following his discharge as a Flying Officer (Navigator) from the RCAF in 1946, one of his first actions was to buy an abandoned 100 acre farm near his family's home in the Oro Hills, and with the help of family and friends, convert it into a thriving young forest. One of his last actions was to sign an agreement with the Couchiching Conservancy to ensure that 'Mack's Forest (identified as a 'gold-level woodland' during the Oro Moraine Habitat Project in 2003) will remain a place where 'one can see a bit of what the Creator... can do when we humans give Him half a chance'. An active member of provincial and national forestry associations, Mack's many contributions to forestry drew numerous honours including the 'White Pine Award' presented to him in 2000 by the Huronia Woodland Owner's Association, and the Canadian Institute of Forestry Presidential Award presented to him in 2007 at the University of Toronto.

Based on William's obituary published in the Toronto Star, January 22, 2011.

## *The Archives Corner*

### Historic Data Assets Find New Home

By Daniel Corbett and Laurie McMillan

The most active forestry companies in Ontario in the early 1900's conducted research on their government-allocated 'Timber Limits.' This process was looked upon as 'necessary' in order to understand their new forest. It was the first time an area so far north was commercially harvested, on a large scale, for its high quality fibre to produce paper and lumber. The forest industry valued the data resources acquired. They used them to document and understand their landscape. Additionally, companies used historic data to report successful, lucrative and sustainable work environments to their head offices, usually located in the United States.



**Kimberly-Clark  
historical data records**

Data was kept at central locations for all segments of the organization. There were designated custodians who managed the data and reported research results, wood quality, production and operational forecasts to head office on a regular basis. We know this is true because we have been through their files.

Space for historic data was at a premium, due to minimal office space and a high number of employees, but data was a commodity that was valued in decision-making and reporting. Data custodians, sometimes managers, sometimes foresters, protected the historic data as long as they could.

With attrition and industry slow-down, custodians moved on, and the data and how to store it became a space issue. The people who truly understood (valued) the time and energy investments to collect and use the data were no longer around to support the cause of keeping those valuable data assets. The historic data was pushed off to the side, and new data collected in its place.

In recognition of the value of these high-quality datasets, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR), Northwest Science and Information Section (NWSI), in

Thunder Bay, has undertaken significant efforts to collect and protect these historic data assets. In the current fiscal environment, establishing new trials and/or plots would be very difficult to justify. Reusing historic plots not only allows us to capitalize on the company's previous investment, it also allows us to make use of the benefit of time by utilizing Permanent Sample Plots and trials from a previous era in the forest industry.

#### **What Did They Have as Historical Resources?**

Historic data included original landscape and stand-level maps of the original 'timber limits' and data (tree, soil and waterway surveys) from original industry settlement. Companies created and used their own ecological landscape classifications, and mapped entire regions at a fine scale. Networks of Permanent Sample Plots were established and remeasured on a consistent schedule. For each of the historic resources, there were detailed inventory notes and caveats concerning that data.

#### **Using Kimberly-Clark (Longlac) as an example, what did we do?**

Through industry contacts and a historic plot relocation effort, we (NWSI) became aware that the historic original Kimberly-Clark records were in danger of becoming lost or damaged due to a shift in company priorities. The data would be degraded or destroyed in an unheated building that housed the Kimberly-Clark data vault (truly, a vault - a tribute to the original value and integrity of the data). To protect this data, the original documents and maps were collected by a crew of technicians and moved to Thunder Bay for inventory and archiving. The process involved organizing the data into categories for inventory, and then cataloguing the historic data resources.



**Building the boom**

#### **What did we end up with?**

The most recent collection from Kimberly-Clark (Longlac) included:

- Approximately 1,200 packets of aerial photos with each packet containing from 2 to 65 photos, and a miscellaneous box containing 45 envelopes – each one containing multiple photos or a series of photos.
- Approximately 375 items of written documentation including plantation records, formal project reports, trial reports, silvicultural records and maps in binders, folded maps, indices, surveys and miscellaneous notes. Also, there are another (approximately) 50 miscellaneous maps that include silvicultural project maps. The original establishment records for the Kimberly-Clark (Longlac) Permanent Sample Plot network are contained in this listing.
- Approximately 10,000 cruise cards detailing forest inventory cruises from 1938 to 1984.
- Approximately 900 maps comprising aerial flight line maps, Working Circle Compartment maps (Longlac and Nakina), Base Map Series, Kimberly-Clark timber limits maps, cruise line maps, miscellaneous forest resource inventory maps, silvicultural/forest management maps, river/lake drive/other information maps and company information maps.
- Approximately 125 original (hand drawn) diagrams and specifications for historic forestry items, such as boats, horse-drawn sleighs, harvest equipment and dams, and plans/drawings for various forestry/harvest camp-related buildings.

#### **What can we do with these historic resources?**

The original landscape description documents can be used to recreate the original forest composition to compare against current forest in terms of stand size, species composition, and age-class distribution. This data has been used to re-establish or remeasure historic silvicultural trials and Permanent Sample Plots.

Due to the level of accuracy used to hand-draw operational maps, it is also possible to update current inventory with silvicultural history and verify the time of last disturbance. This is an incredibly valuable asset for supplementing forest information in our new forest resource inventory.

Permanent Sample Plots and historic trials can be used to describe anticipated effects of current-day silviculture. Several trials and Permanent Sample Plots have been remapped and/or remeasured under current-day initiatives and research projects.



### How can people get involved?

NWSI has been conducting historic data collection operations on an 'as needed' basis when the forest industry experiences increased attrition and permanently closes facilities that house data. We are always interested in partnership opportunities to utilize these historic data assets. Because the data is irreplaceable and currently part of an indexed collection, it must be used on-site. Opportunities exist to access funding from other sources to scan documents and maps on a large format scanner, and use a scanned copy to protect the original. A project whereby the paper version becomes electronic would be valuable for all Ontarians because once the scanned versions exist, they will be more accessible to other potential users.

### Acknowledgements

This project would not have been possible without the care and assistance of former data custodians and current technical staff responsible for collection of these valuable data resources. Special thanks to Kelly Hilliard, for her dedicated and organized archiving skill, and to William D. (Bill) Towill, NWSI, OMNR, for his leadership in conducting historic data collection in the northwest region of Ontario.

For more information, please contact Daniel Corbett, R.P.F., Northwest Science and Information, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 25<sup>th</sup> Sideroad, Thunder Bay, ON, P7C 4T9, (807) 939-3110, [ontario.ca/nwsi](http://ontario.ca/nwsi), [Daniel.Corbett@Ontario.ca](mailto:Daniel.Corbett@Ontario.ca).

## Update: Canadian Forest History Preservation Project

### By David Brownstein

Funding and staff support from the Canadian Forest Service, the Forest History Society, and NiCHE (the Network in Canadian History and Environment), have made possible a sustained effort to save historical records relating to Canada's forests. Of greatest concern are those that are in danger of being either lost or destroyed.

The project is in two parts. The first is to survey Canadian archives, to determine which repositories are both willing and able to accept donations of forest history collections. The survey will also try to understand what obstacles might prevent an archive from accepting a possible donation. And then, second, once this list of archives has been compiled, I would appreciate your assistance in tracking down collections of historic value. These might be a few boxes hidden in a basement, or an entire corporate or organizational archive. Once located, I will assist the owner in donating their collection to the appropriate institution.





### Progress To Date

We now have a very solid survey text, in both English and French. Thanks to Eric Alvarez of the Societe d'histoire forestiere du Quebec for providing the initial French translation. Thanks also to Julia Hendry (archivist, Wilfrid Laurier University special collections) and Sarah Romkey (archivist, UBC special collections) for their insightful comments.

Except for some minor tweaking, we are effectively ready to run the Survey in Alberta. Next will be British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec, followed by other provinces without provincial Forest History organizations. Once I have a draft list of Ontario survey recipients, I will share this with the Forest History Society of Ontario membership. No doubt you will know of more archives that should be included in the survey, and I will be keen for your feedback.

Please stay tuned for future updates, and do get in touch with me if you have any questions about this exciting project. My email address is: [dbrownst@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:dbrownst@interchange.ubc.ca).

### Niche Web Site:

<http://www.niche-canada.org/foresthstory>

### The Forest History Society Web Site

<http://www.foresthistory.org/>

### Natural Resources Canada Web Site

<http://cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/>

## Charting A New Course – The Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre

### By Mike Delfre

For the past 20 years, the program focus at the Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre (CBHC) in Sault Ste Marie has been primarily on the aviation-side of bush plane history. That's all about to change. Beginning with a new 3D film called "Wildfire", the CBHC will soon be adding new curriculum-based educational presentations and new exhibits (both permanent and traveling) that are focused on forestry history and forest ecology. The heritage of bushplanes and bush flying is all about forestry- forest mapping, forest inventories, forest fire fighting – anything and everything related to forestry past and present in Ontario will soon be covered at the bush plane centre. The CBHC archives and library will be harvested to bring the wonderful stories and pictures of legends like Holly Parsons, a renowned Canadian forest sketch artist into the spotlight. CBHC intends to create a major new partnership with the Ontario Forest History Society so that together, the long and important story of Canadian forestry history will be preserved and cherished.



Canada's history is mostly about the history of forestry. Images of horses drawing massive piles of huge logs and tugboats pulling gigantic log booms aptly portray the scale of this economic engine that propelled Canada into the industrial age. Forest history precedes bush plane history, yet the two are symbiotically intertwined. Most Canadians, especially children in large urban centres, have a small or narrow view of forests and forestry and little understanding of forestry's rich heritage. Some call it the "nature deficit" that comes from too much television and video game watching - all done indoors! Our goal, in partnership with the Ontario Forest History Society, is to make forestry and forestry history compelling and accessible. We hope people across Ontario will gain a new respect and appreciation for the pioneers and their exploits that literally built this Province. It's an exciting new course that the bush plane centre has charted for its future.

**Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre Website:**

<http://www.bushplane.com/>

## Personal Recollections

**Editor's Note:** *As Editor of the newsletter I really like the idea of the "Personal Recollections" part of the publication. Since we did not receive any submissions for this section of the newsletter for this edition, I have taken the liberty, as Editor, to interview my husband David, to document his experiences in Algonquin Park in the 1940's. Dave spent 10 years associated with Camp Ahmek, a Taylor Statten Camp, as camper, Counsellor in Training (CIT), Outfitter, and lastly, Director of Canoe Trips during this time. His experiences in the park had a profound influence on him and left a legacy of a love of the park and nature. Dave is in his 84<sup>th</sup> year.*

### Summers in Algonquin Park at Camp Ahmek

**By David Hambly (as told to Sherry Hambly)**

Dave has many fond memories of the time he spent in Algonquin Park associated with Camp Ahmek. One of his first memories is of the forest being sprayed for spruce budworm. Dave has a lovely painting by a local artist of the red balsam firs – a legacy of the disease.

He had the opportunity to meet some wonderful people including Carl Laurier (nephew of Wilfred) who was the girls' camp canoe trip guide during the summer. Carl was studying forestry at the University of New Brunswick at the time and was a prime influence on Dave's decision to take forestry at UNB (Class of '52). Dave also met Win Potter, from the Maritimes, who postulated that the park contained red spruce, which was later confirmed by Al Gordon, who was a CIT with Dave at Ahmek, and who later attended UNB with Dave. Dave remembers helping to look after Mark Robinson, past Park Superintendent, who was in his 80's at the time, and who spent time at Ahmek each summer for several years.



**Ghostwalk Creek, Canoe Lake  
by A. Ortiz (With permission, D. Hambly)**

In the summer of 1942 Dave and other campers helped cut portages into McCraney Lake from Canoe Lake. The project was so successful Dave thinks it was the basis for the Junior Ranger program that eventually developed. The leader of the project was Maurice Kirkland who turned out to be Dave's history teacher when he entered high school that fall.

Dave saw lots of different wildlife but remembers most the first thing he saw with his new binoculars – a moose. Moose were rare in the park at this time, although deer were plentiful. He does not remember hearing wolves although he did hear a wildcat fight, and saw mink, otter and flying squirrels, and there were always bears at the garbage dump. Many of the lakes were filled with deadheads created by dams. One of Dave's favourite paintings is of deadheads in Canoe Lake. He also remembers seeing a large mouth bass and a bullfrog fighting to the death. He's not sure which creature won the battle.

Shortly after the art museum opened on Found Lake (called Lost Lake until the highway was put through) Dave ran a compass course for a trail from Lake Tanamakoon and landed at the tip of Found Lake exactly where he wanted to be. In those days permits were not required – he just did it – this trail is now the mushroom trail behind the art museum.



**Deadheads, Canoe Lake by J.O. Henley  
(With permission, D. Hambly)**

One summer Park staff telephoned the camp and said that Ahmek campers had left garbage at a camp site on an island in Smoke Lake. When Dave and his crew arrived to clean it up they discovered that the site had been used by American Boy Scouts, but they cleaned it up anyway and made sure the park staff knew that they had done this good deed even though it wasn't their garbage. The next year the same thing happened, except this time when they arrived to clean it up the first thing they saw was a toothbrush with the Ahmek name on it. Needless to say they did not make a big fuss about cleaning it up.

One September as he was walking towards the dock he met three fellows who were on their way to fight a fire so Dave joined them as he thought he would be gone just overnight. They were put in the back of a Beaver plane without seats or harnesses and just before they took off a load of loose axes was thrown in with them. Their pilot was George Philips, Park Superintendent. They landed at Red Pine Bay on White Trout Lake where Dave could see the triangle of black leaving the campsite where the fire started. The first thing he saw was people drinking out of the fire hose and he said to himself he would never do that – until he got so thirsty he did the same.

He remembers being so tired at the end of the day that he just flopped down onto hose sacks and went to sleep. The next morning he thought he was done for because all he could see and hear was fire crackling at the back of the tent. It turned out to be the ranger making breakfast! Dave thought the Lands and Forests was very generous by giving the fire fighters socks. He only learned later that the cost of the socks came off the \$13.50 a day he got for his work. He says his boots got so hot he had to walk in the lake and his beautiful Quebec River boots got ruined. He remembers an English forestry student fighting fire with them who got typhus and almost died. His overnight excursion turned into three days after which Dave was flown out by Turk (?) another pilot with the provincial Air Service.

And finally, although this is not a forestry story, I couldn't resist including it. Camp Ahmek had a riding stable of 50 horses, one of which died one day. A CIT was sent to bury the horse in Sims Pit. The CIT dutifully dug a hole and rolled the horse into it. Unfortunately there was a problem - the legs stuck up above the ground, so the CIT went to Dave to get an axe to go back and chop the legs off. That CIT was Ted Loblaw of the Loblaw's Company.

These are just some of Dave's memories. His experiences in Algonquin Park had a profound effect on him for the rest of his life, and to this day he fondly reminisces about his experiences.

**Editor's Note:** During Dave's time with Camp Ahmek, there were seven camps in all in the park: Camp Ahmek and Camp Wapomeo, both Taylor Statten camps; Camp Tanakwa; Camp Tanamakoon; Camp Arrowhon; and Pioneer Camp. The Taylor Statten camps were the largest with 700 campers. There were also three fishing lodges: Opeongo Lodge run by the Averys; Killarney Lodge; and Bartlett Lodge. As well, there were two stores: Portage Store on Canoe Lake and Joe Lake Store on Joe Lake. All but Pioneer Camp are still in the park.

As a forestry student at the University of Toronto in the late 1960's, I remember the discussions and debates Professor Love led related to private land ownership in Algonquin Park, precipitated by the development of a management plan for the park. Here is an excerpt from the park's management plan stating policy on commercial properties in the park:

**Ont. Min. Nat. Res. Algonquin Provincial Park Management Plan. Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario. 1998. 86 pps.**

**From Section 5.2, page 12:**

*"The youth camps make a substantial contribution by making young people aware of natural areas like Algonquin Park. Youth camps will be encouraged to pursue programs that foster an understanding and appreciation of the natural environment. The development of new or the renovation of existing facilities to accommodate young people and provide educational programs may also be considered in the Park. Existing youth camp leases also expired in 1996 and they provided for a renewal term of 21 years plus a further right of renewal dependent on prevailing government policy at that time.*

- Ontario Parks recognizes the contributions that both youth camps and lodges make to Algonquin and commenced to negotiate lease renewals in 1997.
- All commercial leaseholders will follow the Construction and Development Standards: Algonquin Park Commercial Leaseholds (Appendix B), which are similar to the non-commercial leases in the Park."



## ***Books / Articles / Web Sites or Other Resources***

🌿 **“Two Billion Trees and Counting” by Dr. John Bacher, Published by Dundurn Press, 264 pgs, to be released in August, 2011.**

### **Reviewed by Dolf Wynia**

On the day that I was hired by the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests in 1957, the Provincial Private Land Forester, John Jackson, introduced me to two outstanding career foresters whom I still vividly remember. One was a pleasant elderly gentleman who took a short time out from his dark room, where he was “organizing” his pictures; the other one was a gruff “all business” gentleman, surrounded by paperwork and telephones, both of them wishing me good luck. The first one was Dr. Edmund Zavitz, the other one was Frank Mc Dougall. The difference between them was amazing to me, seeing that one was the deputy minister and the other had been.

It was not until I read a draft of John Bacher’s biography of Dr. Zavitz that I realized that I had met the man who had created my job many years earlier, when he set up the organization that was to administer professional forestry in Ontario. Dr. Bacher has done an enormous amount of research using a wide variety of sources. Reading this book is a necessity for anyone who cares to learn about the history of forest protection and land conservation in Ontario: the key players, both good and bad; the organizations and their leadership; the turning points and the reversals.

Dr. Zavitz was an accomplished photographer and used his skills profusely, recording conditions as they were. The pictures in the book are a story by themselves and graphically illustrate the pitfalls of ignorance and also the magnificence of some of the old Ontario forests.

The book “Two Billion Trees and Counting” had an earlier title “The Man who saved Ontario with Trees and Determination”. In essence the latter title is the story of his life from an early interest in nature, fostered by his mother, to a total dedication to saving the forests of Ontario for the perpetual benefit of its citizens. He had knowledge, tact, patience, connections and friends and used them all. His best move probably was to marry the daughter of the Minister of Agriculture, which by the way led to a happy long marriage.

Historically, the book gives a good perspective on the establishment of Ontario’s tree nurseries, its fire protection system, timber administration and sale and the establishment of the conservation authorities including the important role that the early professional foresters played.

The book has great relevance today for every person who wants to play a positive role, either as a professional or an “environmentalist” in changing attitudes and practices in our society. It certainly should be read by every student who plans a career in natural resource management: success does not come easy and it can slip away quickly, with the election of the wrong party or even an individual.

Dr. Bacher’s book is interesting reading to all who know of him, but it is even more important that those who do not know of him read it. In my first year in forestry Dean Sisam recommended I read “A Sand County Almanac” by Aldo Leopold. I believe the book gave me a good philosophical perspective on forestry. This book will help to give that perspective to a new generation. The battle now is not for sensible use of our forests, it is for the sensible use of our earth.

*This book is available for pre-order on Amazon.ca, and it will be available for sale at the St. William’s Forest Fest, August 14 and 15, 2011.*



## Book List by Sherry Hamby

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- Ont. Min. Env. *Reasons for Decision, Class Environmental Assessment by the Ministry of Natural Resources for Timber Management on Crown Lands in Ontario*. Toronto: Ontario Ministry of the Environment. 1994. 561 pps.
- Ont. Min. Nat. Res. *State of the Forests Report, 2001*. Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 2002.
- Ontario Biodiversity Council. *State of Ontario's Biodiversity 2010*. Peterborough: A report of the Ontario Biodiversity Council. 2010. 46 pps.

## "Renewing Nature's Wealth"

(Lambert, Richard S. and Paul Pross. Toronto: The Ontario Department of Lands and Forests. 1967). The book cover describes this book as "the exciting story of Ontario's natural resources, and John Robarts, in his Foreword to the book as 'much more than a history of one of the Departments of the Government of the Province of Ontario: it is a vital component of the history of Ontario', reaching back nearly 200 years to the days of the first surveyor General of Upper Canada in 1794. The book describes the impact made by a civilized people upon the primitive forest that originally covered the land, and the development of its natural resources under public administration from an early state of confusion and waste down to the modern era of conservation and scientific management." We will provide a précis of one chapter of this book in each future edition of the newsletter.

**Chapter 3 (The Early Timber Trade):** A number of factors influenced the location and type of timber industry in early Upper and Lower Canada. Britain turned to Canada for pine and oak square timber to supply its navy after Napoleon reduced access to Baltic timber. Due to the lack of transportation infrastructure and a focus on land clearing by early settlers in southern Ontario, the early timber trade was almost exclusively focussed on the Ottawa River and its tributaries. The first raft of timber was floated down the Ottawa by Philomen Wright in 1806, and the industry grew from this first daring try at rafting timber.

A belief by the British that Canadian timber was inferior to European timber led to the enactment of legislation in 1808 to grade and measure timber and in 1819 requiring timber graders (cullers) to pass government exams. Although Britain instructed the governments of Canada to implement inventory, reservation and pricing policies, these were not enacted due to the huge cost and distances. Thus, the early logging industry was an unruly one with might surpassing right out in the bush.

Britain's move to free trade agreements in the 1820's and America's need for a fresh supply of sawn timber changed the dynamics of the Canada's timber industry. By the 1830's the changing focus of America as a market led to increased need for better quality timber standards and administration, as well as an influx of American capital to develop sawmills. It also meant that lumbering could occur beyond the five mile distance from waterways.

The rebellion of 1837, which was fuelled by anger at the Family Compact way of doing government business, also led to improved administration of Crown land and timber resources based on Lord Durham's report of 1839 on how to improve governance in Canada.





## Events and News

### 🌲 Forest History Society of Ontario Annual General Meeting – Sherry Hambly

The Society held its second Annual General Meeting at the Nottawasaga Inn in Alliston on Thursday afternoon, February 3, 2011. Approximately 20 members were in attendance. Agenda topics covered:

- Catalogue and collections projects
- Updates from the president, secretary-treasurer, editor, and financial auditor
- Partnership with the Forest History Society
- Laurentian University archives project
- New Business: National Tree Day, Ken Armson recognition, contribution to St. Williams Centre
- Gifts to Dave Fayle and Sherry Hambly for their contributions to the Society over the past year.

Steve Anderson, representing the Forest History Society, gave a short speech on how the two societies can work together and support each other.



**Dave Fayle receives the gift of a walking staff from Society President Ken Armson in recognition for his work related to the creation of the Society's logo.**

**President Ken Armson presents a gift of wood art to Sherry Hambly for her contribution to the development and production of the Society's web site and newsletters.**

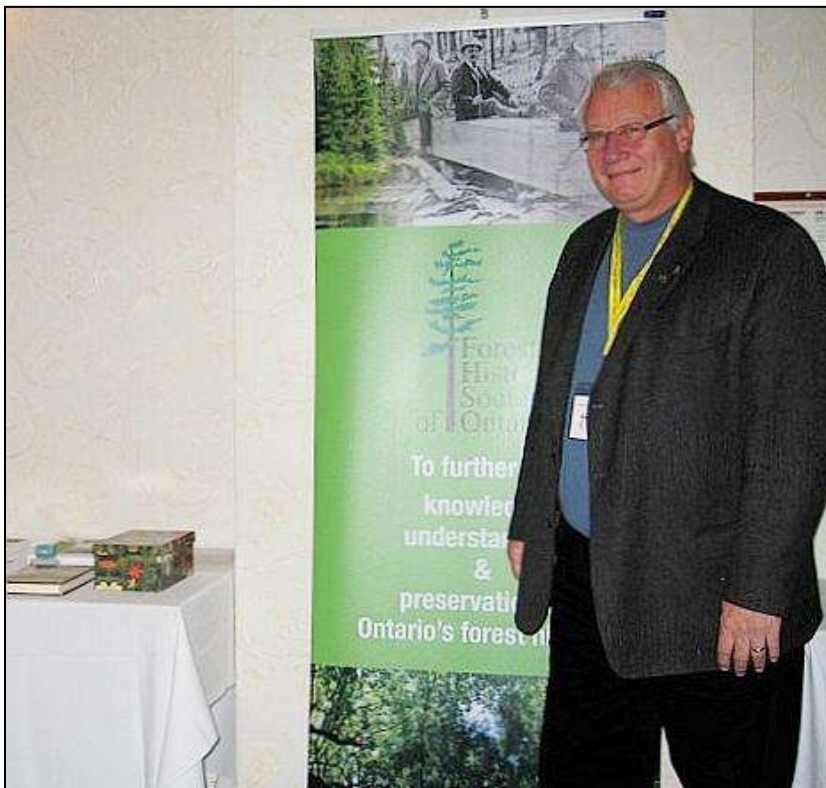


## 🍁 Ontario Forestry Association Annual Meeting

Ken Armson receives his Forest History Society Fellow award from Steven Anderson, President of the Forest History Society. The award of Fellow was also given to Dr. Yvan Hardy. The presentations were made at the annual general meeting of the Ontario Forestry Association in Alliston last February.



## 🍁 Ontario Professional Foresters' Association Meeting – Ken Armson



The first opportunity for the Forest History Society of Ontario to “fly its colours” was at the Annual Meeting of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association in Timmins on April 13-15, 2011. Director Rob Galloway, who arranged for our display space, is standing next to the Society’s banner. And yes, as a result we signed up some new members!

## ***Contest – Update***

The Society received several excellent suggestions for names for its newsletter. The Board of Directors chose the name “Forestory” submitted by Dave Fayle. The title comes from the words Forestry and History, and aptly combines the two key components of the Society’s focus. Many thanks to all of those who submitted names!

## ***Next Newsletter***

The general theme for this newsletter is “local forest history”. Response to this theme has been excellent, so we plan to extend this theme to the next newsletter as well. But remember, we are accepting any and all submissions. If you have a topic of interest, then please send us your articles or suggestions for articles. We are also looking for personal recollections, book lists or reviews, events, articles on people, places and any topic that provides an historical perspective to Ontario’s forest history.

## ***About the Authors***

**Haddon Family:** Descendents of James Haddon.

**Elwood Jones:** Professor Emeritus, Department of History, Trent University; Author, Editor and Archivist, Trent Valley Archives.

**Terry Schwan:** District Forester, Guelph District, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

**Danielle Coulombe:** Professeure en histoire, Université de Hearst.

**Peter Murray:** Retired Forester, Weldwood Company.

**John Bacher:** Researcher, educator, and writer with a long history of involvement with historical and environmental organizations in southwestern Ontario.

**Mike Commito:** PhD Candidate, McMaster University.

**Bob Carman:** Retired senior civil servant and part-time forester on his MFTIP property in Northumberland County.

**Daniel Corbett:** Forest Productivity Specialist, Growth and Yield, Northwest Science and Information Section, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

**Laurie McMillan:** Library / Data Technician, Northwest Science and Information Section, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

**Dave Brownstein:** Project Manager, Canadian Forest History Preservation Project.

**Mike Delfre:** Executive Director, Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre.

**Dave Hambly:** Retired Head of Geography, Eastdale Collegiate.

**Dolf Wynia:** Retired Nursery Superintendent, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

# ***Sylva Recap***

The Ontario Department of Lands and Forests published for many years a journal called "Sylva". The purpose of this journal was to highlight changes in policy, individuals and the comings and goings of staff. This journal contains nuggets of forest history that will be selected for each edition of the newsletter. In the second issue of Sylva two Rangers were highlighted. We reprint one of those articles here.



## **History of the Dymont Mill at Thessalon (Sylva Vol. 2 (1946):25-28)**

**By Ross Hyslop**

Daniel Dymont was the founder of the Town of Thessalon and his mill established here in 1877 was the second on the North Shore. Mr. Dymont came from Barrie where he maintained a mill and lumber yard. He also had mills or lumber yards at many other points in southern Ontario such as London, Brantford, Goderich, Kincardine, Bradford, Fergusonville and Wyeville. He recognized the possibilities of locating at Thessalon, and so bought the township of Kirkwood from the McArthur brothers, who were square timber operators, in 1877. This limit had been originally sold to a Mr. Cook in 1872. In the same year, 1877, he purchased 300 acres on the east side and at the mouth of the Thessalon River from the Department of Indian Affairs for a mill and townsite. The west bank of the river and Thessalon point was still Indian land. The name Thessalon is reported to be an English corruption of the Ojibway word "Tesslon", describing the long point.

The mill site was cleared and a mill was erected to saw about 40,000 ft. per day. It operated during the summer of 1878, the second oldest mill on the North Shore.

For the first few years, until the early 1890's, the whole operation - logging, driving the river and loading the lumber on the boats - was done by contractor. The contractor was Mr. David Gordon. Mr. Dymont resided at Barrie and made only periodic trips to Thessalon to check on the operations.

The first winter of operations, 1877-8 was the winter of no snow. Logs were skidded on the bare ground and dragged to the water by suspending one end to the axle of a pair of high wheels. This device was probably introduced from the State of Michigan and was very useful on the flat sand plains in summer logging, particularly for taking out "Tonawanda" timber.

It is reported that Mr. Gordon logged, drove, sawed and loaded this first lumber on the boat for \$4.50 per thousand, and made money. Later the contract price was higher but never got over \$15.00 per thousand.

By 1884 there were about 200 permanent residents at Thessalon. There were 18 houses, 8 shacks, a general store, a hotel, two churches and a one-room school. Mail came by boat during the summer and by dog team during the winter.

The Soo extension of the C.P.R. was built in 1887 but most of the commerce was carried by water, as about 14 boats docked per week during the navigation season.

All of the lumber was shipped by boat at that time, much of it on Mr. Dymont's schooner "Carter." The Carter made regular trips between Thessalon, Kincardine and Goderich. She took lumber on the down trip and brought back supplies and loads of settlers to the new farm land in Algoma. This helps to account for the fact that many of the North Shore families originally came from the counties of Huron, Gray and Bruce. The Carter ran aground in a fog in Mississagi Straits about 1891 and was wrecked by gales before she could be gotten off. Her remains still lie there about 2 miles off Mississagi Strait Lighthouse.

The year 1888 was almost disastrous. The Algoma Advocate, a weekly newspaper started the previous year, tells of the rapid growth of the community, of settlers pouring in and also the terrible forest fires. The paper of July 20th of that year mentions a very bad fire which started in the Desert (probably Kirkwood) and burned very furiously. At other points fire threatened the new railway and both trains and boats were delayed by dense smoke which covered the whole area. About Sept. 1st the saw mill was destroyed by fire starting in or near the boiler room. The lumber yard was saved but fire smouldered in the sawdust fill for days.



Mr. Dymont immediately ordered the erection of a new larger mill and most of the construction work was done that same fall. In the same year the town was surveyed into lots and the first permanent bridge was built across the Thessalon River.

About 1892 a son, Albert Dymont, became resident manager of the Thessalon operations and continued in that capacity until the mill and limits were sold to the Thessalon Lumber Co., about March 1st, 1906, after almost 30 years of operations. The new company operated the Dymont mill through the summer of 1906 and most of 1907. It was then dismantled as the new operators preferred to locate at McBeth's Bay, about four miles west, which became Nestorville.

The Dymont logging operations were confined almost entirely to the Thessalon River and in time they removed most of the pine from the townships of Kirkwood, Lefroy, Rose, Plumber, Aberdeen and Galbraith. Other townships were held under license but were apparently logged largely by successor companies.

Bush wages were as low as \$14.00 per month through the 90's and the highest was under \$1.00 per day. Mill wages were usually \$1.00 per day and board or \$1.50 for town residents who boarded themselves, for an eleven hour day. Camboose camps were used in the 90's and the regular fare was salt pork, beans, bread, molasses and tea.

When the mill was sold in 1906 the population is given at 1,242, approximately what it is today. The Algoma Advocate of March 2nd, 1906, describes the sale of the mill as follows: "At last the much talked of timber deal between N. and A. Dymont of this town and the Chaney, Bishop Lumber Co., of Chicago, has closed. Mr. A.E. Dymont having completed the transaction in Toronto on Saturday last.

"We understand that the estate of Thomas Nester of Detroit joined with the Chaney, Bishop Lumber Co., in the purchase and that the price paid was about \$695,000.

"This business is the second oldest lumbering operation on the North Shore and has been working continuously for 35 years, first by Mr. Dymont Sr., of Barrie and for the past 14 years by Mr. A. E. Dymont, M.P., who though he was only about 22 years of age when he took charge of the business, has by his energy and ability, brought it up to a splendid state of efficiency."

*Note: Besides the files of the Algoma Advocate information contained in this article has been supplied by Messrs. Jack Ferguson, Ed. Hagen, John Kennedy, Alfred Shaw, George Campbell, David McDougall, Wm. Bridge, Wm. Thompson, Ed. Bridge, James Gordon, Albert Grigg and others.*

#### **Forest Facts From the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Website**

[http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Forests/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02\\_164508.html](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Forests/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02_164508.html)

- Ontario has approximately 85 billion trees
- 66.0% of Ontario is forest (71.1 million ha)
- 80.8% of Ontario's forests are on Crown forest (public forest lands) (57.5 million ha)
- 9.0% of Ontario's forests are within existing and proposed Parks and Protected areas (6.4 million ha)
- 51.6% of the forest in the boreal region are managed by the Crown
- 44.2% of the forest in the boreal is unavailable for harvest
- Less than one-half of 1% of the forest in the boreal region is harvested annually
- The average age of Area of the Undertaking (AOU) forests have increased from 73 years old in 1996, to 79 in 2001 and 82 years old in 2006 and remained at 83 years old in 2011
- 55.8% of the AOU is softwood or coniferous forest types
- 25.5% of the AOU is hardwood or deciduous forest types
- 18.7% of the AOU is mixedwood forest types
- Ontario's most common tree is the black spruce (37.3% of total provincial growing stock), followed by poplar (20.8%), and jack pine (11.7%)
- The most common provincial forest types are conifer upland and lowland, which are dominated by spruce, and make up 55.3% of the boreal forest

# Forest History Society of Ontario

## Membership Form

**Thank You For Your Support!**

The mission of the Society is:

"To further the knowledge, understanding and preservation of Ontario's forest history" and accomplish this with the following objectives:

1. To preserve forest and forest conservation history;
2. To encourage and further the development and recognition of forest history;
3. To support research and studies of forest history;
4. To support the archival preservation of records and materials relating to forest history; and,
5. To promote the better understanding of forest history through public education.



The Society has two ongoing projects, both available on our website:

[www.ontarioforesthistorystory.ca](http://www.ontarioforesthistorystory.ca)

The first is a catalogue of publications dealing with all aspects of Ontario's forest history where members can submit contributions.

The second is in its initial stages of identifying and listing collections and materials relating to Ontario's forest history. The Society works with established archives such as the Archives of Ontario and several university archives in facilitating the preservation of significant collections.

The Society publishes a newsletter available to its members, the Forestory, twice a year – Spring and Fall - containing informative articles on forest history in Ontario.

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Please return this portion to the FHSO with your cheque to the address listed below.

Name			
Address			
City	Province	Postal Code	
Phone	Email		

(The FHSO has a privacy policy. Your information will not be shared or sold.)

### Payment Information:

- ☐ FHSO Annual Membership: \$45.00
- ☐ FHSO Student Membership: \$15.00
- ☐ Institution / Corporate: \$100.00
- ☐ OFA or OWA Member \$30.00
- ☐ Enclosed Payment

**Please make cheque payable to:**

Forest History Society of Ontario  
200 Consumers Road, Suite 701  
Toronto, ON M2J 4R4