

POSTAL MECHANIZATION

A contract for up to \$70 million has been awarded to ITT Canada Limited for the manufacture of postal-mechanization equipment in 14 Canadian cities. It is expected that the manufacture of the equipment in Canada will provide about 150 new jobs directly, as well as a large number of additional jobs through sub-contracts.

The machinery, which is to be manufactured over the next four years, will be part of a mechanized letter-sorting system that will complement the code the Post Office has been introducing gradually across the country. The machines can only be used for coded letters.

The first part of the contract calls for \$6.5-million worth of equipment for post offices in Winnipeg, Regina and Saskatoon, with delivery expected early in 1973.

Halifax, Quebec City, Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, Windsor, London, Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver and Victoria will also be receiving mechanized equipment under this contract. In Montreal and Toronto, there will be several installations at different locations. A separate \$4.4-million contract for Ottawa had already been awarded to ITT Canada Limited.

Mr. Jean-Pierre Côté, Postmaster General, said that the machinery was an investment that would pay for itself by 1981, that it would improve the efficiency of the mail service and create new opportunities for employees of the Post Office. No personnel will be laid off as a result of the mechanization program.

THE ART OF "SKIDDING"

Leonard Desjardines of Kemptville Forest District, Ontario, practises a vanishing art — he's an old-time "skidder" who deftly guides brawny work-horses as they drag pulpwood and sawlogs from the snow-covered tangle of the winter forest.

The job really requires three eyes — one for the plunging horse ahead, one for the twisting, rolling logs and a third for fallen tree trunks and low hanging branches.

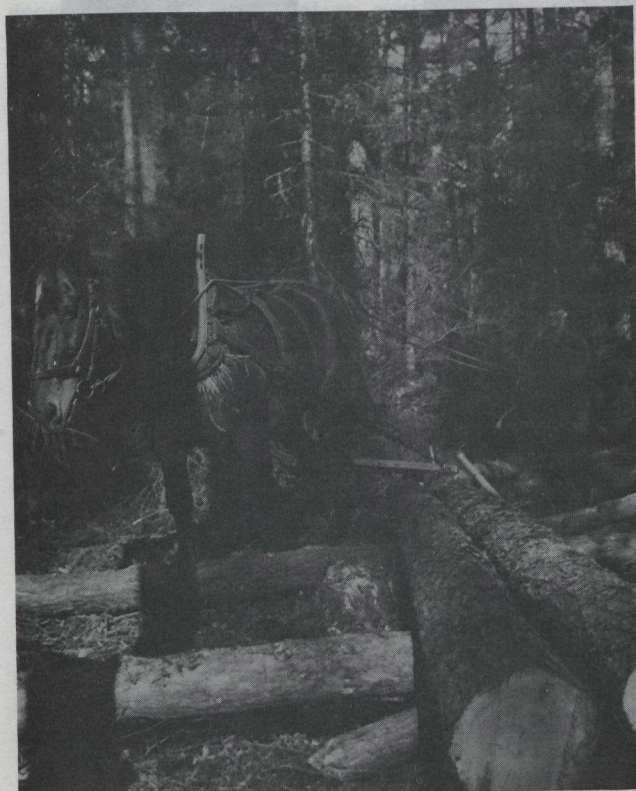
Skidding with horses may be slow and not terribly efficient logging, but it's exact work, with little waste. That's why Leonard's skill and that of his partner, Wilfred Ferguson, are in demand in Lanark County's Lavant Township.

Both are employed in a unique winter-works logging operation near Clyde Forks. It's unique because maintaining the natural balance of the forest has higher priority than the harvesting of as many logs as possible.

The men, for example, are making clearings in the woods and leaving clumps of ironwood and poplar

for wildlife use. Dense cedar stands are being left untouched so that deer can enjoy their favourite type of protective cover. The plan is working too, since, according to workers at the site, the deer have not left the area. Every morning there are fresh tracks in the snow.

This intensely selective logging operation could not be carried out with mechanized skidders which would mow down the young saplings and shrubs. By using horses to remove the mature trees, these small trees are left to grow and replenish the forest.



The program, which employs 21 men from the area, is being funded by the Agricultural and Rural Development Act (ARDA). The sale of the pulpwood and sawlogs will bring an immediate return on much of the money being spent. Already 1,000 cords of pulpwood and 60,000 feet of sawlogs have been cut. If the increase in the value of the forest for recreation and wildlife conservation is added, the taxpayer is actually making money.

"It's hard to find men who still skid logs the old way," said Leonard Desjardines. "It's good work and when things get going, we may need more teamsters. If we don't start training younger men soon, there won't be anyone left who knows how to skid logs by horse."

So the old art may be on the verge of a comeback. If it does, it will be one of the few romantic jobs a young man could have in this age of big machinery and urban living.