

This territory has also suffered severely from fires. As early as 1864 the whole north shore, known to have been green as late as 1857, was burned from Bruce Mines to Wahnapiatae river. In 1871 fire swept over the country from south of the French river up the Sturgeon and westward to the headwaters of the Vermillion, Spanish and Mississauga rivers; over 2,000 square miles are estimated to have been burned. Mr. J. F. Whitson of the Department of Lands, Forests and Mines, Ontario, estimates that fire in the last 50 years has reduced the pine area north of lake Huron by one-half.

North of the central portion of this region lies the Mississauga Forest Reserve of 3,000 square miles, mostly white and red pine and burned in various places to the reported extent of at least one-half the area. In this reserve four townships in the southeast have been licensed.

(3) FROM SAULT STE. MARIE NORTHWARD

This route is open only as far as the Batchawana river. The southern part of this region continues of the same forest type as just described, but is more largely hardwood (sugar maple and yellow birch principally) with scattered aged white pine. Much of the hardwood is over mature, and only the birch is suitable for manufacture into lumber. At present much cordwood is cut for charcoal manufacture in Sault Ste. Marie.

Travelling northward the pine and hardwood gradually drop out, until after some 50 miles, about the Agawa river, the type passes over into the spruce type of the country farther north. Besides the spruce there is considerable cedar, with also balsam fir and jack pine.

This region has been surveyed by the Algoma Central Railway Company, whose line traverses the middle and will eventually reach the G.T.P. For building the railway the Company has a land grant of 81 townships. Practically the only lumbering on this territory has been that of the Algoma Central, now transferred to the Superior Pulp Company with large mills at Sault Ste. Marie, using some 40,000 cords of spruce yearly.

As regards fires this region has not been quite so severely burned. The southern portion for some 20 miles, or as far as settlement extends north from Sault Ste. Marie, has suffered somewhat, as well as the northern part towards the C.P.R. The country between these sections is mostly still green timber. Surveyor A. P. Salter in the report of his 1867 base line from Michipicoten eastward describes the devastation even at that early time, stating that "the country north of my line along the Height of Land is now for an area of 2,000 square miles a desolate wilderness."