

## TIMBER OF LITTLE SMOKY RIVER VALLEY

The boundary of the territory examined may be outlined as follows: On the south, a stretch of the Athabaska river from the northwest corner of Township 52, Range 22, west of the 5th meridian, to a few miles below the entrance of the Sakwatamau river; on the north, the summer road leading from Sturgeon lake to Lesser Slave lake, and the southwestern corner of the latter; on the east, the Driftpile river, the summit-plateau country forming the watersheds of West and East Prairie rivers, Driftpile, Sakwatamau and Freeman rivers, and the valley of Christmas creek. In accordance with instructions, inspection of the timber and soils was directed along, west of the Grand Prairie road, from the Athabaska river to the Waskabigan river, defining the western boundary, approximately between Ranges 12 and 13, west of the 5th meridian. Further instructions received at Whitecourt, October 30, added to the territory outlined above, the district (called Athabaska and McLeod River district) bounded on the west and north by the Athabaska river, east by the McLeod river from its entrance to the mouth of Wolfe creek, south by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway from Wolfe creek to Medicine Lodge.

### DISTRIBUTION AND METHODS OF WORK.

The survey to be made was of a purely reconnaissance and delimitation nature and as such required much moving and travelling, while it must be noted that the territory was very extensive.

On the route the main camp was always left in charge of the cook. The packing of the supplies through muddy trails, hampered by the bad condition of the weather, which was remarkably wet from July to mid-August, and by the discomfort caused to the horses by the flies, kept a man and six horses busy during June, July and August. Moreover, on account of the bad condition of the trails, it was necessary on many occasions, in order to safely lead the pack-ponies, to put two men at that work.

As a matter of fact, the packing of the supplies through such a country means a good deal of labour. Experience shows that under such conditions, especially when the number of horses is insufficient, the general progress and the accomplishment of the real object of the work is delayed considerably and this fact seems to add to the loneliness and distance of the journey.

From the beginning of June until August 5 the party moved along the Grande Prairie road. Side-trips were made at intervals of six to eight miles on both sides of the road. Among the most important of these were the trip east along the 16th Base Line. Here the sub-party ventured as far as the junction of that survey line with the Athabaska river. It might be of interest to say that these sub-parties are generally composed of three men, and two or three horses carrying provisions and bedding. One man walks ahead with an axe, another one leads the horses, while the forester in charge studies the conditions of the forest and the soil, climbing trees occasionally to form an idea of the surrounding country.

Another important trip was made west on the same base line, up the Little Smoky river to Range 23; a third, east of the Little Smoky to Buck lake, and a fourth, west, along the 17th base line, over the divide to the valley of the Simonette river.

Whenever it was possible and convenient, the base lines were used to penetrate back into the country. There, one can always locate his position, and by following these lines over ridges, and across valleys, a more correct idea of the character of the land and the nature of the soil can be obtained, than by following the water-