

The Logging Tractor as a Money Saver

By J. S. INNES.

IT OCCURS to the writer, as a result of close observation over a widespread forest area in Eastern Canada, and in the North-Eastern section of the United States, that our Woods Managers in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes will soon be making some definite and beneficial changes in their methods of handling their drives. Up to date, it appears to have been the popular method to dam small creeks and streams and create a landing or dump above the dam, and when the Spring freshet came, drive the logs to the main river or lake.

In some cases, this method may have been satisfactory, but as it seems a generally acknowledged fact that the ice in lakes and large rivers passed down before the ice of creeks and streams, the main force of the freshet on the main river, or the maximum rise of the lake, is lost, or passed down rather, before the operator can get his wood down his stream to the main water. Therefore, the delayed drive the sweeping of the creek or stream, and the cleaning up of the main water.

Logs Stranded in Late Summer

Last Summer, (in August) I took a trip a short distance up the St. Maurice River, only as far as Grand'Mere, but in that comparatively short distance, I saw a quantity of logs, which must have contained at least 100,000 cords of wood, stranded. It is true that the St. Maurice and its tributaries did not have a heavy freshet last Spring, and, never having visited the upper St. Maurice Valley, I do not know much about the tributary waters, but I feel safe in the assumption that, had these logs been all dumped on the St. Maurice, or the lakes in its course, no such amount of wood would have been anchored, high and dry, in late August.

And yet, heretofore, the wood operators could not have been considered at fault in their methods. Some of their creeks and streams were probably eight to fourteen miles in length, and as it would have been the height of false economy to haul their logs to the main river or lake by teams, they must, perforce, dump in the most convenient water, flowing in the right direction. However, a corrective element has arisen; where the horse could not be used to haul a paying quantity to the main water, the logging tractor can be relied upon to do so. It must be realized at the outset, however, that the log hauling tractor, if it is to fulfil its mission in the lumbering industry, must do the work of many teams, under all encountered conditions. In order to effect the desired economy it must, of necessity, possess the power and capacity for safely handling long trains of logs down steep sand hills, up such grades as are encountered in our woods, over lake and river ice and through deep snow.

Eliminating Small Streams

I have this Winter visited some operations in the Adirondacks, where tractors have been used, and I

found no dumps in small streams. The dumps were located on main rivers and lakes. True, the haul was sometimes as great as fourteen miles, but the method cut the cost in half. The cost of improvements on the stream or creek was saved; the cost of the drive on the stream or creek was eliminated and the expense of sweeping the main river was eliminated, and—pleasant to relate—the actual haulage cost with the Logging Tractor for the necessary extra distance, from six to fourteen miles, was only 72 cents per cord — no greater than the previous cost with teams, for the usual two or three mile haul to the landing at creek or stream.

Using the Main Stream

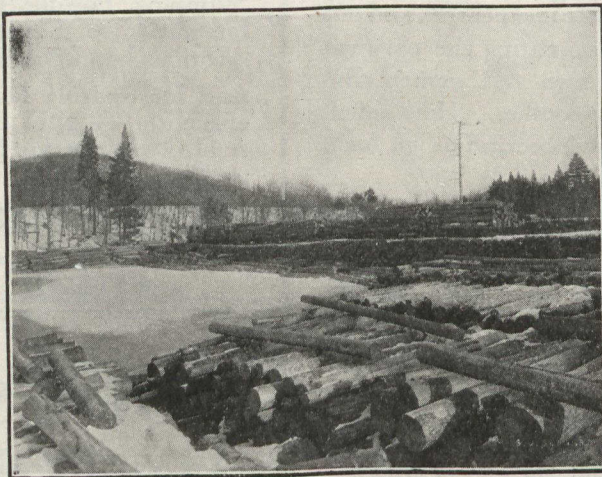
Last year, when they finished hauling they had in their dump on the river, 28,000 cords of spruce and hemlock. The freshet came in the night, and, in the morning, not a log was left at the landing. They drive fifty four miles, and in eighteen days, the entire 28,000 cords was at their mill storage, fifty four miles distant. Had they driven creeks and streams, they would no doubt, have been driving on into August, at any rate.

Eleven logging tractors were in operation on this limit. Five of the eleven logging tractors carried tanks for water, each tank being 14' x 8' x 6'. The summit yard is at the top about two and a half miles, seven and a half per cent. up grade. Each of these tank tractors hauled a train of six sleds, each sled being loaded with

five cords of spruce logs. The tank was filled at the foot of the up-grade, and when returning from the summit yard to the Rollways at the Camp, it watered the roads. The distance from the summit yard to the Camp, is a little over twelve miles. Six filling stations are located on the main hauls for tank filling. The remaining six logging tractors each carried a load of two cords on their own bolsters. Three of these took a train of six sleds from their camp and coupled on to an additional train of six sleds (hauled to the summit by tank tractors) and proceeded to the landing with the long train. All tractors returning, hauled back their empty sled train to the Rollways.

At the landing, solid log bridges were formed at the commencement of the hauling, nine of these being formed as rapidly as logs were brought to the landing. When the bridge was completed, the tractor pulled its train of sleds on to the bridge, and the landing crews emptied the train loads on to the ice. The tractor, of course, left its loaded train at once, coupled up with an empty train, and returned to the Rollways. Each tractor was compelled to make two complete round trips each day.

This system of reliable mechanical log hauling resulting in the feasibility of main river driving, I am convinced, offers the most logical solution of the problem of cost reduction now occupying the attention of so many woods managers.



Dump containing 9,600 cords of spruce and hemlock (20 logs to the cord) hauled, in about two weeks' time, a distance of twelve miles, by eleven Logging Tractors