

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

"LET US ALL BE OPTIMISTIC FROM NOW ON."

OSCAR STYFFE LIMITED 1927-1945:

THE MIDDLEMAN OF NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO

AND THE PULP AND PAPER TRADE

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

BY

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THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO

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For my parents, and my sister Wendy - three of the most unselfish and optimistic people I have ever known.

ABSTRACT

In the 1930's and 1940's, one way for pulp and paper firms to acquire supplies of pulpwood from the forests of Northwestern Ontario was through pulpwood dealers or middlemen. An analysis of one of these timber dealers, Oscar Styffe, and his pulpwood supply firm, Oscar Styffe Limited, reveals a great deal about the role that the middleman of Northern Ontario played in the pulpwood industry. Research seems to indicate that operators such as Styffe were quite diverse and to a certain extent flexible within the industry. This would suggest that they were not totally without control over their own destinies.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those individuals and institutions who were vital to the creation of this work. First and foremost is my supervisor, Victor C. Smith, who challenged me to look at my material in fresh and critical ways. He has always been one of the most open-minded and authoritative individuals I know. At the same time, I am thankful to Vivian Sharp of the Chancellor Paterson Library and the staff of the Northern Studies Resource Centre. Their courtesy and efficiency which was displayed as I worked in the Oscar Styffe Collection was greatly appreciated.

Special thanks should also go to the staffs of the Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society and the Ontario Public Archives (Toronto). They proved themselves to be important resources of historical knowledge. First-hand knowledge of logging operations was provided by Ron Thomson of J.F. Thomson Timber Incorporated and Andrew Olson (formerly of the Pigeon Timber Company Limited), and for that I am truly thankful. I also owe gratitude to John O. Styffe for his information on Oscar Styffe's early life and the Lakehead Centre for Northern Studies for the research grant they

provided me with. Special thanks go out to Joanne Kosoris for her fine efforts as my typist, as well as to David Black for his help and support.

Last, and certainly not least, I would like to thank my family for their love and support over the 2-1/2 years that it took to prepare this work.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the late nineteenth century, the pulp and paper industry has left its distinctive mark on the physical and economic landscape of Northwestern Ontario.¹ For decades the inhabitants of the region have found work in the industry, first in the cutting of pulpwood for export to the United States (which began in the area as early as the 1890s)² and then manufacturing paper beginning in the second decade of the twentieth century when Northwestern Ontario's first paper mills appeared.³ Although the paper trade has clearly been a vital one for the people of Northern Ontario, its impact on that section of the province has not captured a great deal of attention in the historical literature. Much has been written on the industry in general, however. Two examples of this are works by Nelson Cortlandt Brown and Stanley F. Horn. J.A. Guthrie examines the industry in a North American context, while authors such as David C. Smith and Lyman Horace Weeks consider the paper trade in one nation, that being the United States. The

¹J.P. Bertrand, "Timber Wolves" (unpublished manuscript 1960).

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

American forest industries had a great impact on their Canadian counterparts and this influence is examined in detail by A.R.M. Lower, and at the same time he considers the paper business in Canada as a whole. At times, historians have taken a specific region and discussed the industry in that context as J.P. Bertrand did with Northwestern Ontario. Other authors analyze one specific aspect of the paper industry. Ian Radforth and Edmund W. Bradwin consider the point-of-view of the bushworker, while H.W. Nelles, and Richard S. Lambert and Paul Pross examine the Ontario government's involvement in the province's forests. There are also historians such as Carl Wiegman, Eleanor Amigo, and Mark Neuffer who write on the histories of pulp and paper firms and contribute to an understanding of the pulp and paper industry in that manner. Finally, the student of the paper trade should not forget those who view the forest products industry from a conservationist stance. These would include R. Peter Gillis, Thomas R. Roach and Donald Mackay.⁴ From what has been written about the industry in general, much is known about paper mills and their operations, as well as about how the industry first expanded in the United States before increased American demand for newsprint caused the paper trade to thrive in

⁴For complete bibliographical information, see the bibliography of this work.

Canada.⁵ However, while some concerns erected mills in Canada, other U.S. firms simply continued to import pulpwood from their northern neighbour and produce paper products in their own mills.⁶ One important source of supply of pulpwood for these companies was Northwestern Ontario.

Between the 1920's and 1940's as the Northern sections of the province provided both Canadian and American firms with a supply of pulpwood, an economic chain or a kind of vertical integration was created. The various parts of this chain interacted with each other, but most of the ability to act on other components of the hierarchy rested at the top. At the apex were the paper companies. These economic titans with their extensive capital resources exerted much influence over the other players involved in getting the wood from the forest to the mill. The settlers and farmers of Northern Ontario were at the bottom of this vertical integration. Their main activity was farming, but to help

⁵David C. Smith, History of Papermaking in the United States (1691-1969) (New York: Lockwood, 1971), A.R.M. Lower, The North American Assault on the Canadian Forest (New York: Greenwood, 1938), J.W. Shipley, Pulp and Paper-Making in Canada (Toronto: Longmans, 1929), and Richard S. Lambert with Paul Pross, Renewing Nature's Wealth: A Centennial History of the Public Management of Lands, Forests, and Wildlife in Ontario 1763-1967 (n.p., Department of Lands and Forests, Hunter Rose, 1967).

⁶David C. Smith, History of Papermaking in the United States (1691-1969), and J.A. Guthrie, The Newsprint Paper Industry: An Economic Analysis (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941).

develop this enterprise they cut pulpwood from their land and sold it. Compared to the operations of paper mills, their economic endeavours were minuscule. Thus, the individual farmer cutting pulpwood did not have any way of influencing the markets for his wood. In the centre of the pulp and paper hierarchy was the middleman. The middleman or pulpwood dealer purchased wood (most times from settlers) and then resold it to paper companies. At the same time, in his search for pulpwood, he often produced his own wood by operating logging camps in the bush of Northwestern Ontario. The timber merchant helped to move pulpwood south to U.S. mills as well as to mills in his own country. He provided the link in the chain between the sources of pulpwood and the paper machines. The middleman was not a great reservoir of capital so he obviously could not even approach the economic standing in the pulp and paper industry of a paper company. The timber merchant, however, was not to be reduced to the position of an insignificant individual desperately searching for a market for his pulpwood. He did have a measure of independence. The middleman could not act upon market conditions and prices, but he was not totally without control over his own economic destiny. A better understanding of the role that the middlemen of Northwestern Ontario played in the industry sheds much light on how pulpwood actually found its way to the mill.

A great amount of primary material is available on one of these timber dealers, namely Oscar R. Styffe (1885-1943), the founder and owner of Oscar Styffe Limited, a pulpwood supply company that existed in different forms in Port Arthur, Ontario, from the late 1920s to the late 1960s. Since Oscar Styffe was a middleman, an analysis of his operations reveals much about the Northern Ontario pulpwood trade in general. The question that may be asked at this early juncture is: what is to be gained by examining a relatively obscure company in what many would have once considered a less important section of the country? The answer is that Oscar Styffe and other middlemen played a vital role in the forest industries. They helped to keep some of the largest paper companies in North America supplied with pulpwood and, at the same time, employed thousands of bushworkers each year in Northwestern Ontario. A close examination of Styffe's operations helps make clear not only some of the costs and complexities of doing business but also the backward and forward linkages which made that business possible. Timber merchants were able between the 1920s and 1940s, to prosper during good times and survive difficult economic times in part because they were in the middle. In other words, the timber dealer of Thunder Bay naturally had certain similarities with the other players in the vertical integration of the pulp and

paper industry. He took on elements of the players that were both above and below him in the chain. This combination of elements enabled the middleman to be flexible and to persist, because his operation was of the scale that it could take advantage of a greater number of markets and sources of supply. Yet, the economic activity of the pulpwood dealer was not as extensive so as to require incredible amounts of capital in order to operate (as was often the case when it came to paper companies). The middleman operated as a forest industry company, but that did not entail investing in expensive paper mills.

Following an initial investigation of how and where Styffe secured his pulpwood, a more detailed examination will be made of one such source - Styffe's own logging camps. This section throws light on the nature and sequence of pulpwood logging operations in Northwestern Ontario in the 1930's and 1940's, and on the labour relations that prevailed in Styffe's own camps. The final section focuses upon Styffe's customers, his negotiations with them, and the means by which he ensured that his pulpwood reached its final destination.

In each of these sections, consideration will be given to the extent to which Styffe's operations illustrate the role and status of the middleman in the forest industry of Northwestern Ontario. The time period of this work is 1927

to 1945. Styffe's firm existed from 1927 to 1970 (Oscar Styffe Timber Contractor 1927-1931, Oscar Styffe Limited 1931-70) but for the purposes of this thesis, a shorter time period, 1927-1945, will be considered. The reasoning behind the 1945 cutoff point is that Styffe himself died in 1943, and it is his management of the company that is being considered. Furthermore, the end of World War Two provides a natural ending point.

Beyond these specifics looms a larger issue. Northern Ontario has always had a relatively small population and a limited economic base. The region seems to have had little or no control over its own destiny, and to have served as a hinterland to more populous territories. Does an analysis of the history and inner workings of Styffe's firm support or cast doubt on these assertions? It would appear that the manner in which Styffe managed his company, the challenges that he overcame, and the successes that he enjoyed suggest that the people of this region are not totally without control of their own destiny.

It should be noted at this time that this thesis is not intended to serve as an exhaustive history of Oscar Styffe Limited. It will have served its purpose if it encourages others to investigate other aspects of Styffe's operations, and hence to learn more about the crucial business activities of these forest industry middlemen who lived and

died by the cord.⁷

Behind any business lies one or more individuals, whose personal history, experience, and character help shape the day-to-day operations and long term survival of the firm. In this particular case, the key player was Oscar R. Styffe who, to all intents and purposes, was the company during the period with which we are primarily concerned. The following brief biographical sketch may help remind the reader of the individual human being whose aspirations and talents underlay the activities analyzed in the subsequent chapters.

Oscar Styffe was born in Bossekopp, Norway, a community in a mountainous region surrounded by fjords⁸, in the year 1885 to Mr. and Mrs. Johan Styffe.⁹ Johan Styffe, who had been crippled in a childhood accident, was a shoemaker by trade, and it was this occupation that the elder Styffe taught his son.¹⁰ However, by 1906, he seemed to be headed

⁷A cord is the standard measurement used in the cutting of pulpwood. For purposes of this work it shall be defined as "a measure for wood ... equalling a pile 4 X 4 X 8 feet, or 128 cubic feet." [Funk and Wagnalls Standard Desk Dictionary (n.p.: Funk, Wagnalls, 1980, p. 142)].

⁸Oscar Styffe Collection (Library Archives Lakehead University Chancellor Paterson Library), Item 12 of (MG7 Series B, Box 11, Folder 4, Items 1-86) (hereafter referred to as OSC). For further information on the collection, see the bibliography.

⁹"Outstanding Citizen, Oscar Styffe Dies," Port Arthur News Chronicle, 8 January, 1943.

¹⁰OSC I12 of (B, 11, 4, I1-86).

toward a different future as, at age 21, he had just graduated from a military academy in Tromso, Norway. (It is not clear if Styffe chose to go there, or if it was a government requirement).¹¹ At that institution Styffe studied such areas as "... mathematics, forest mensuration, cartography, forest surveying and accounting."¹² This formal education provided Styffe with the practical knowledge to enter a number of careers besides shoemaking.

Oscar Styffe's future wife, Ragna Iverson, was also a native of Bossekopp, and it seems that the two met in that community and fell in love. However, Ragna decided to leave Norway. She disliked working in her father's bakery, so "... she wrote to her brother who was working for the Ford Motor Company in Detroit and arranged passage to Michigan."¹³ Oscar Styffe was obviously deeply in love, since "... his main priority after graduating was to get enough funds to follow her."¹⁴ The couple were reunited in Calumet, Michigan, in 1907 and were wed that same year.¹⁵

¹¹John Styffe, Oscar R. Styffe 1885-1943: The Man and His Companies (Thunder Bay: Lakehead University Library, 1985) p. 2.

¹²Ibid.

¹³"Knighthood Bestowed on Local Vice-Consul," undated article from Lakehead newspaper sent to author by John O. Styffe of Switzerland.

¹⁴Styffe, Oscar R. Styffe, p. 3.

¹⁵Ibid.

Styffe then found work at the Hecla copper mines at Hancock, Michigan.¹⁶ The young family began to grow as John Styffe, the couple's first child, was born in Michigan in 1908.¹⁷ It was not long before new challenges arose for Styffe. He lost his job as "... the boom dropped out of the copper market"¹⁸ The year was 1911, and it was time for Styffe to move his family to a different environment. John Styffe revealed that, at that time, his father decided, that he would use his education in forestry to his advantage in a region that "... was a tree country."¹⁹ He therefore took his family to Port Arthur Ontario (population 11,220).²⁰

Styffe had little or no capital, but his education served him well when it came to finding work. By the early 1920s, he could add a long list of jobs to his resume. His first job was with the Canadian Northern Railway grain department as an accountant.²¹ Later, he worked at the

¹⁶OSC I12 of (B, 11, 4, I1-86).

¹⁷Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society Biographical File, John Styffe interviewed by Olga Jagodnik, April 22, 1977, p. 2.

¹⁸"Knighthood Bestowed on Local Vice-Consul."

¹⁹John Styffe interview, p. 2.

²⁰Chris Southcott, "Ethnicity and Community in Thunder Bay," Polyphony (The Bulletin of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario) 9, no. 2, (1987): p. 18.

²¹"Oscar Styffe, Norwegian Vice Council Here, Dies," Fort William Daily Times Journal, 8 January 1943.

Kimberly Hotel in Port Arthur (1913) as a clerk, at the Sioux Lookout Hotel (1914) and "... then for the next three years tried his hand in various jobs, steelcorker at the drydock, insurance agent, brewer"²² Over time Styffe was able to gain more knowledge and insight into the pulp and paper industry. Soon after the Provincial Paper Mill was opened in Port Arthur in 1918, Styffe found a job in the mill making pulp and then later worked as a scaler (someone who measures pulpwood). As part of this latter job,

... he made several trips to Erie, Pennsylvania to check scale boat cargoes of pulpwood. Through this he gained valuable experience in pulpwood shipping, stowing, unloading etc., which was to help him when he started out for himself.²³

By that time, Styffe's family had grown. Edward was born in 1917,²⁴ and Roy in 1919.²⁵ There was also a fourth son, Bert, and two daughters, Ingrid and Ethel.²⁶ Styffe had come a long way by 1922 when he was hired by C.W. Cox

²²OSC I12 of (B, 11, 4, I1-86).

²³Ibid.

²⁴OSC I49 of (B, 8, 24, I1-84).

²⁵OSC I37 of (B, 8, 24, I1-84).

²⁶Archives Inventory Master Binder Oscar Styffe Collection, Library Archives, Lakehead University Chancellor Paterson Library, p. ii. Different sources had to be used to list Styffe's children because no one source identified all of them.

Limited "... as an accountant and office manager"²⁷ Charles Cox had entered the pulpwood supply business in 1911 and re-entered it again in 1918. When Styffe joined Cox's firm in the early 1920s, Cox was already a successful pulpwood dealer.²⁸ Through his association with Cox's business, Styffe learned how a timber dealer purchased or produced, and exported, pulpwood. Styffe probably also acquired knowledge regarding how to negotiate with paper and shipping corporations, when to accept a business deal, and when to turn one down. In sum, then, he would have gained a clear understanding of how to operate a pulpwood supply company.

After working for Cox for five years, Styffe decided that the moment had arrived for him to go into business on his own. Thus, in 1927, with the help of his eldest son John, Oscar Styffe formed his own pulpwood contracting firm.²⁹ The new business was known as Oscar Styffe: Timber Contractor.³⁰ (As this company forms the central focus of

²⁷Beth Boegh, "Oscar Styffe: Conservationist and Lumberman," (Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society.) Papers and Records 21, (1993):7.

²⁸A.W. Rasporich, "'Call Me Charlie.' Charles W. Cox: Port Arthur's Populist Politician," (Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society) Papers and Records 19, (1991):2-4.

²⁹Boegh, "Oscar Styffe: Conservationist and Lumberman," p. 7.

³⁰OSC I18 of (B, 2, 14, I1-18).

this thesis, its history will only be touched upon at this point so as to avoid needless repetition later.). Styffe's firm initially had its offices in the Walsh Block. He rented Room 7 from the Louis Walsh Coal Company for \$20.00 per month.³¹ The contracting company offered to "... provide on request, pulpwood, ties, [and] piling poles."³² From the start, the U.S. market loomed large. Then, on 1 June 1931, Styffe had his company incorporated as Oscar Styffe Limited.³³ The timing in this case is significant, this expansion took place at the height of the Great Depression. This expansion was not just a limiting of personal liability on Styffe's part, for the growth continued. In 1932 Styffe acquired "... the George Fineout Sand and Gravel Company [renamed Gravel and Lake Services Limited in 1933],"³⁴ and this added an additional dimension to the firm. With this purchase, Styffe acquired "... a two-story frame office and the self-loading sand and gravel barge 'Tange' as well as the 80-foot steam tug 'Thos. A Tees.'³⁵ He also gained access to No. 5 Dock where he

³¹OSC (B, 1, 16, 11-5).

³²"Substantial Supplementary Income For Farmers in Port Arthur District Selling Pulpwood to Oscar Styffe Co.", Port Arthur News Chronicle, 31 August, 1948.

³³John Styffe interview, p. 3.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 3-4.

³⁵Styffe, Oscar R. Styffe, p. 7.

laid out a boom in the water in order to store pulpwood.³⁶ Oscar Styffe's company became quite solidly established in the pulpwood trade in the 1930s and 1940s.

As the 1930s drew to a close, and the 1940s began, Oscar Styffe faced a series of personal setbacks. His wife of 30 years died in 1937. Then in 1940, one of his brothers was killed when Nazi Germany invaded his former homeland of Norway.³⁷ His company struggled through hard times in the latter part of the 1930s, and another personal challenge arose when he saw three of his sons go off to war during the early 1940s.

There was more to Styffe than just his business life. He was involved in other areas of local life. In 1935 he was elected an alderman for the city of Port Arthur.³⁸ During his life as a timber merchant, he was a member of the Port Arthur Rotary Club, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, the Port Arthur Chamber of Commerce, and the Shuniah Masonic Lodge. He was also the honorary president of the Boy Scout's Association of Port Arthur.³⁹ He was truly active

³⁶Bertrand, "Timber Wolves."

³⁷"Oscar Styffe, Norwegian Vice Council Here, Dies," Fort William Daily Times Journal, 8 January 1943.

³⁸Boegh, "Oscar Styffe: Conservationist and Lumberman." p. 12.

³⁹"Oscar Styffe, Norwegian Vice Council Here, Dies," Fort William Daily Times Journal, 8 January 1943.

within these organizations as well. For example, in 1936, he served as chair of the Forestry Committee of the Chamber of Commerce.⁴⁰ Later, in 1939, he was appointed chair for one year of the Forestry and Power Committee of the Chamber of Commerce.⁴¹ He had not forgotten his native land, either. After the German invasion of Norway he became active as the president of the Norwegian Relief Society,⁴² and in 1941 he was named Norwegian Consul by the government in exile.⁴³

Nevertheless, it was his timber export business that was the main focus of his life. Oscar Styffe worked to make it successful through the worst of times. On 6 January 1943, he died from cancer, and left the company under the management of his son John.⁴⁴

In this work, Oscar Styffe will usually be referred to as a middleman. He was, however, much more than that, and various terms used to refer to him in this thesis will emphasize this fact. He will also be called a timber merchant, a timber agent or a pulpwood dealer since,

⁴⁰OSC I24 of (B, 11, 38, I1-43).

⁴¹OSC I6 of (B, 11, 38, I1-43).

⁴²"Oscar Styffe, Norwegian Vice Council Here, Dies," Fort William Daily Times Journal, 8 January 1943.

⁴³Boegh, "Oscar Styffe: Conservationist and Lumberman," p. 18.

⁴⁴John Styffe interview, p. 9.

although he sold other kinds of wood, pulpwood was his main product. Styffe will also be identified as an independent operator for he not only purchased timber from others, but often cut his own. Furthermore, at times he functioned as a logging contractor. This was because he did not always perform all of his cutting himself with his own men but would hire subcontractors as well. Therefore, because of the fact that Styffe's overall operations were not one-dimensional in nature, it is only logical that references to his business activities, require various titles or names.

In a general sense, Styffe does fit the description of the basic middleman, but a more specific analysis of his business activities reveals that there was clearly much more to this man and his company than ensuring that a given commodity - in this case pulpwood - was moved from the producer of the article to the processor of it.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT EVERY MIDDLEMAN PRAYS FOR: A GOOD SOURCE OF SUPPLY

All industries, whether primary, secondary, or tertiary, follow the law of supply and demand: increased demand for a product usually results in a greater supply being made available. A.R.M. Lower talked of demand centres acting on supply centres.¹ In Oscar Styffe's day, the United States metropolitan centre turned to the hinterland region of Northwestern Ontario to meet its demand for a raw material that Northern Ontario was well endowed with - forest resources. These forests were valuable for the wood that they could supply mills with in order to manufacture paper products - pulpwood. Paper is made up of "... an enormous number of fine fibres." Since the mid-19th century, pulpwood, with its fibres has become the major source of papermaking material. Pulp used in the making of paper is created by extracting the wood fibres "... from the state in which nature provides them"² If the pulpwood

¹A.R.M. Lower, "Author's Preface," in his The North American Assault on the Canadian Forest (Toronto: University of Ryerson Press., 1938), p. 21.

²Shipley, Pulp and Paper-Making in Canada, p. 1.

is ground into pulp without the use of chemicals, groundwood pulp is produced. The use of different chemicals in making pulp from pulpwood produces sulphite, soda, and kraft pulps. These pulps are used in making different grades of paper. The tree employed in manufacturing pulp must have long, strong, dense fibres (among other properties). The species best suited are spruce and balsam.³ The preferred type of spruce, the black spruce, can grow to a height of thirty to fifty feet and has a diameter of six to ten inches, while the white spruce (which is mainly turned into timber but is also used for pulpwood) usually reaches heights of eighty feet, and grows to a two-foot diameter. Of slightly less importance is the balsam fir that grows to between fifty and seventy feet high.⁴ Finally, there is the poplar which, although its fibres are not as strong as those of the spruce, is used to make soda pulp.⁵

Northwestern Ontario's main forest area is the Boreal Forest Region (and to a lesser extent the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence forest region) where "white and black spruces are the predominant species,"⁶ together with balsam and

³Guthrie, The Newsprint Industry, p. 50.

⁴Donald Mackay, The Lumberjacks (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1978), p. 58.

⁵Shipley, Pulp and Paper-Making in Canada, p. 8.

⁶Ian Radforth, Bushworkers and Bosses: Logging in Northern Ontario 1900-1980 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), p. 11.

poplar. Jack pine, used to make railroad ties, is also present in abundance. These are the trees that Oscar Styffe and other middlemen used in their cutting operations. Cutting such trees, however, did not involve simply opening a logging camp anywhere in the region. The habitat of the above species extended east and west of Northern Ontario,⁷ however "... these species grow in a profusion of combinations and patterns between the lakes, streams, and rivers that drain the woodlands"⁸ Different trees had to be cut at different times of the year. Black spruce, growing in "swampy areas," was best cut during winter.⁹ Poplar was often produced in the spring when the sap was running so that its bark could be peeled off more easily.

In Oscar Styffe's day, the timber of Northwestern Ontario could be used for a myriad of purposes. The forests of Northern Ontario first became of real economic importance in the latter part of the nineteenth century when lumbermen began operating in the Lake Huron - Sudbury areas, concentrating mainly on red and white pine.¹⁰ Northwestern

⁷Elbert L. Little Jr., Forest Trees of the United States and Canada and How to Identify Them (New York: Dover, 1979), pp. 8-9.

⁸Radforth, Bushworkers and Bosses, p. 9.

⁹OSC I12 of (B, 3, 67, I1-20).

¹⁰Gwenda Hallsworth, "'A Good Paying Business': Lumbering on the North Shore of Lake Huron, 1850-1910 with special reference to the Sudbury District" (M.A. Thesis, Laurentian University, 1983).

Ontario's woodlands were also of economic importance. In the latter 1800s and into the 1900s, construction of grain elevators, docks, and wharves along the Port Arthur waterfront created a great demand for piling timber (wood driven into the ground to serve as a building foundation). Tamarack and, when its supply was exhausted, jack pine and spruce were used for such contracts. The early 1900s also saw jack pine being used to make railroad cross ties. This was also an early major industry for, as J.P. Bertrand indicates, railway lines required 400 replacement ties per mile, per year.¹¹ As Ian Radforth reveals in his Bushworkers and Bosses: Logging in Northern Ontario, 1900-1980, the region's forests could also be utilized in producing sawlogs, boom and dimension timber, posts, telephone poles, etc.¹²

The primary forest product at the heart of this thesis also had several utilizations. Pulpwood, as was shown earlier, can be made into pulp by four processes and, as a result, very different paper products can be produced. Groundwood pulp "... is generally used for such cheap forms of paper as newsprint,"¹³ while the soda process results in a pulp that is well "... suited to the manufacture of book

¹¹Bertrand, "Timber Wolves."

¹²Radforth, Bushworkers and Bosses, p. 248.

¹³Stanley F. Horn, This Fascinating Lumber Business (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1943), p. 174.

and magazine paper."¹⁴ Kraft pulp is used to make "... wrapping-paper and bags."¹⁵ Finally, sulphite pulp is "... used with ... groundwood pulp in inexpensive papers to give them greater strength."¹⁶ The products made from such processes and pulps encompass everything from catalogue paper to wallpaper.

What did these various paper products mean to Oscar Styffe? A variety of paper items developing from the use of pulpwood meant that Styffe did not have to depend on selling his wood only to paper mills that manufactured newsprint. This was significant because it gave Styffe other options and, because he had a company structure, he had the resources to explore those options. This would later become important in the survival of his business.

The existence, then, of Northwestern Ontario's forest resources has been established. The issue now concerns who was actually cutting the timber. In the 1930s, there seems to have been a considerable number of timber producers of various sizes. At one end of the timber spectrum invariably come the settlers and farmers of the region. These were people who applied to the provincial government for a plot of Crown land in order to farm land (how a settler actually

¹⁴Ibid., p. 174.

¹⁵Shipley, Pulp and Paper-Making in Canada, p. 58.

¹⁶Nelson Courtlandt Brown, Timber Products and Industries (New York: John Wiley, 1937), p. 113.

acquired such land will be discussed later). Thomas R. Roach, in writing of settlement in Northeastern Ontario, argued that the Ontario government "... chose to give a minimal amount of direct support to settlers"¹⁷ This seems to have been true for Northwestern Ontario as well. In writing about settlers in Northern Ontario, Lower mentions the various loans made available to settlers under certain conditions.¹⁸ The Ontario government believed, however, that settlers would be able to initially establish their farms by "harvesting" the pulpwood on their land and selling it to timber merchants.¹⁹ Although not all were cutting pulpwood, Northwestern Ontario's farm population by 1931 was 37,924, of which the Thunder Bay area comprised 17,611.²⁰

At the other extreme of the economic chain were the camps operated to supply mills such as that of the Provincial Paper Company. Their operations were geared to satisfying the demands of continuously operating paper

¹⁷Thomas R. Roach, "The Pulpwood Trade and the Settlers of New Ontario, 1919-1938," Journal of Canadian Studies 22, no. 3 (Fall 1987):78.

¹⁸A.R.M. Lower, Settlement and the Forest Frontier in Eastern Canada (Toronto: Macmillan, 1936), p. 107.

¹⁹Roach, "The Pulpwood Trade and the Settlers of New Ontario," p. 79.

²⁰Nancy M. Wightman, and Robert Wightman, "Agricultural Settlement in Northwestern Ontario to 1930," (Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society) Papers and Records 27 (1989):52.

machines and consequently, they were on a much larger scale. For example, it was reported in 1922 that the Fort William Paper Company was preparing to cut 45,000 cords of pulpwood²¹ while, during the 1931/32 season, settlers were cutting and selling to Oscar Styffe Limited an average of roughly 40 cords each.²²

It was not only Canadian mills that had a presence in Northern Ontario. There were such American paper companies as the Detroit Sulphite Pulp and Paper Company and the Hammermill Paper Company. Both had offices at the Lakehead from which they coordinated the cutting or purchasing of wood for their mills in the United States²³(they probably operated their own camps or employed jobbers). On a smaller scale were such companies as the Newaygo Timber Company which was "... an American subsidiary [of what company it is unclear]."²⁴ Such companies produced pulpwood for whatever parent companies they had in the United States.

There were also what Oscar Styffe described as Canadian firms that were independent of American firms and sold to

²¹"2,500 Men Start Winter Task Getting 248,000 Cords of Pulp[Wood], 650,000 Ties, 8,000 Cords Fuel[Wood]," Fort William Daily Times Journal, 11 November 1922.

²²OSC I30 of Series E.

²³Bertrand, "Timber Wolves."

²⁴John Styffe interview, p. 3.

markets that they had developed.²⁵ These are the middlemen discussed in this thesis, the businesses that cut and/or purchased wood and sold it to American firms. John Styffe indicates that, in the late 1920s in "Port Arthur and Fort William [combined], there were at least 25 private companies that ... [took out] ties, piling, poles, and pulpwood"²⁶ D.A. Clark, Charles Cox Limited, Thomas Falls, Oscar Styffe Limited, and Pigeon Timber Company are just a few of the more well-known establishments.

In terms of size and output, how did Styffe's company compare with those of his competitors? Much is known about Styffe's establishment, but much less is known about his fellow operators. The best that can be provided is a general impression. It would require extensive research to establish the relative size of all of the timber organizations. At the same time, it is difficult to acquire good comparable statistics for each operator for each year. The Fort William Daily Times Journal reported in March 1923 that, over the past season, Charles Cox had cut 25,000 cords of pulpwood, whereas Thomas Falls, J. Greer, the Scott Lumber Company, and G.E. Farlinger had each cut 10,000 cords. The Russell Timber Company (an American operator)

²⁵OSC I8 of (B, 10, 3, 11-27).

²⁶John Styffe interview, p. 5.

cut 30,000 cords.²⁷ The Ontario Timber Agent's Book for Port Arthur District illustrates various totals for the operators in the 1930s. Cox, Falls, and Clark had annual totals ranging from roughly 10,000 to 30,000 cords and sometimes higher.²⁸ Some operators were even larger. The Fort William Daily Times Journal reported in 1931 that the Pigeon Timber Company was preparing to cut between 65,000 and 70,000 cords of pulpwood for the Great Lakes Pulp and Paper Company.²⁹ The Ontario Timber Agent's Book also reveals high totals for this company later in the 1930s.³⁰ Where did Styffe fit into this economic environment? Like his fellow timber merchants, Styffe had a diverse operation that cut other wood besides pulpwood (although pulpwood was the most important product) and operated camps and loaded pulpwood for other operators. Table 1-1 shows total amounts of pulpwood cut by Styffe between 1932 and 1942. Then Table 1-2 shows Styffe's exports of pulpwood in roughly the same period. It will be noticed that the numbers shown in Table 1-1 do not correspond well with the export figures. This is

²⁷"Bush Army Demobilizing, Bringing Savings Here," Fort William Daily Times Journal, 24 March 1923.

²⁸Ontario Timber Agent's Book Port Arthur District Volume Three 1933-1946 (Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society, G1/6/3 vol. 3 (hereafter referred to as OTA Book)).

²⁹"Big Force of Men Will Cut Wood in Bush," Fort William Daily Times Journal 27 November 1931.

³⁰OTA Book.

likely due to the fact that the income tax figures are based on fiscal years, while the export figures show calendar years. Though there may be some discrepancies between these two sets of figures, the general picture represented is probably a fairly accurate representation of the magnitude of Styffe's operations in the 1930s and 1940s.

Table 1-1.--Oscar Styffe Limited Production of Pulpwood as Shown on Income Tax Forms and Other Sources 1932-1942.

| <u>YEAR</u> | <u>PRODUCTION (in cords)</u> |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| 1932-33 | 19,000 |
| 1933-34 | 29,000 |
| 1934-35 | N.A. |
| 1935-36 | 54,608 |
| 1936-37 | 39,824.99 |
| 1937-38 | N.A. |
| 1938-39 | 19,987.86 |
| 1939-40 | 26,940.08 |
| 1940-41 | 16,893.63-28,961 |
| 1941-42 | 22,345-33,147.65 |

Source: Compiled from OSC "Correspondence Culled" Series Box 2, (B, 13, 1, I1-55), I27 of (B, 24, 21, I1-58) and I30 of (B, 26, 50, I1-42).

Thus, when data from Oscar Styffe's firm are compared with the general statistics of other operators, it is clear that, while Styffe was not a colossus among the Lakehead's middlemen, at the same time, he was not a dwarf either. He seems to have been of roughly moderate size (in terms of by independent operators). His was a company operation which,

Table 1-2.--Oscar Styffe Limited Exports of Pulpwood For Selected Years

| <u>YEAR</u> | <u>AMOUNT (IN CORDS)</u> |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| 1932 | 11,200* |
| 1933 | 13,696* |
| 1934 | 20,150* |
| 1935 | 11,691.05 |
| 1936 | 22,578.85 |
| 1937 | 17,709.69 |
| 1938 | - |
| 1939 | 9,643.06 |
| 1940 | 16,995.59 |

Source: Compiled from OSC (B, 4, 81, 11-28), (B, 4, 82, 11-24), (B, 7, 46, 11-36), 171 of (B, 9, 7, 11-81) and 16 of (B, 25, 3, 11-49).

Note: *These figures are minimum amounts, the actual totals may have been higher.

by the mid-1930s, had a total value of \$151,336.57³¹ (which included capital, equipment, etc.).

These timber merchants were obviously cutting pulpwood for someone. In fact, they had a very considerable market for their wood. Middlemen such as Oscar Styffe were not limited to a single buyer or group of buyers. In general, the major customers for Styffe were the pulp and paper companies of the United States. Styffe's customers were located in both the eastern and mid-western United States. They included such companies as the International Paper

³¹OSC "Correspondence Culled from Invoice Boxes" Series Box 2, folder entitled "1935 Income Tax Return Oscar Styffe Ltd. 1935 Invoices."

Company, and St. Regis Paper Company in New York State, the Hammermill Paper Company in Pennsylvania, the Detroit Sulphite Pulp and Paper Company, and the Munising Paper Company in Michigan and the Rhinelander Paper Company and Hoberg Paper Company in Wisconsin.³² The fact that these above companies represent only a portion of the U.S. pulp and paper industry in the 1930s and 1940s means that some mention should be given as to how this industry developed. An excellent account of the evolution and later maturation of the U.S. paper industry is provided by David C. Smith in his History of Papermaking in the United States (1691-1969). The industry started off slowly in the Thirteen Colonies, and it was not until the colonies became more established (economically and culturally) in the New World and the coming of the Revolutionary War that demand for paper increased.³³ At the end of the colonial period, paper was still hand made, and the new Republic had about one hundred paper mills.³⁴ At that time, the industry was found mainly in Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts.³⁵ A number of dynamic events took place in

³²OSC Series B.

³³Smith, History of Papermaking in the United States, pp. 1-16.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Lyman Horace Weeks, History of Paper Manufacturing in the United States 1690-1916 (New York: Lockwood, 1916), p. 77.

the 1800s that propelled the industry forward, and it slowly began to expand across the U.S. westward. Handmade paper was replaced by machine-made paper in the period 1830-45 as the paper machine known as the Fourdrinier came to the fore and increased the rate at which paper could be made.³⁶ The second half of the nineteenth century saw literacy in the U.S. grow and this swelled the demand for newspapers and other reading materials. Rags, which had been used extensively in papermaking, were in short supply. By the 1860s a number of processes (as mentioned earlier) had been developed for manufacturing paper out of wood. In truth, "it wasn't just newspapers that shifted to wood pulp paper. A paper revolution took place, and a paper world seemed to unfold in the 1880s and 1890s."³⁷

As these developments were taking place, the paper industry in the U.S. spread initially to the western portions of the east coast states, and then into the mid-west, far west, and the south. Smith reveals that, as the century drew to a close, because of new machines and increased demand, it became more and more expensive to finance the industry. As a result, consolidation of paper mills took place creating such giants as International

³⁶Smith, History of Papermaking in the United States, pp. 17-48.

³⁷Ibid., p. 139.

Paper.³⁸ At the same time, the eastern mills found themselves running out of a good supply of pulpwood and mills in that region and looked "... farther north and east in their search for the new sources of supply."³⁹ World War One saw further expansion in the industry (except for a short slump after the war), as more and more paper mills dotted the mid, and far west, although the most of the mills were still located in the east.⁴⁰

These developments were to become crucial to Northwestern Ontario and Oscar Styffe and his fellow middlemen. As pulpwood supplies in the U.S. declined, and the need for pulpwood grew, Canada became a major source of raw material. Therefore, by the time Oscar Styffe's company appeared on the scene in the 1920s, several American pulp and paper mills were acquiring supplies of pulpwood from Northwestern Ontario each year. This fact draws attention to one part of the thesis. Styffe's operation was large enough that he had the financial resources to acquire various markets in the U.S., and yet, like the settler, he was simply selling an unprocessed commodity. This latter fact increased his market area. He would not have been limited to two or three mills.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 153-88.

³⁹Ibid., p. 154.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 364-65.

Yet, the story does not end here. The middlemen of the North also had a paper industry in their own region. In the late 1800s, Ontarians realized that the U.S. lumber industry was cutting increasing amounts of timber in Canada and making it into lumber south of the border. This arrangement was entrenched with the passage of the Dingley tariff in 1897. This American tariff placed a duty on Canadian lumber entering the U.S., but sawlogs from Canadian sources entered free.⁴¹ Lumbermen in Ontario believed that sawmills and the jobs that they provided should be in Canada. Thus, their demands for action caused the Ontario government in 1898 to establish the manufacturing condition which clearly stated that pine timber from Crown lands had to be made into lumber in Ontario.⁴² The pulp and paper industry soon felt the impact of the new law. With the "manufacturing condition" imposed on the lumber industry, American capital was invested and sawmills were being constructed in Canada.⁴³ Pulp and paper production was becoming a giant industry in the U.S. Therefore, in order to create a similar industry in Canada, the manufacturing condition was extended in 1900 to state that spruce pulpwood cut on Crown

⁴¹H.V. Nelles, The Politics of Development: Forests, Mines and Hydro-electric Power in Ontario, 1849-1941 (Toronto: Macmillan, 1975), p. 66.

⁴²Ibid., p. 74.

⁴³Hallsworth, "'A Good Paying Business,'" pp. 84-85.

land had to be manufactured into mechanical (groundwood) or chemical pulp in Canada.⁴⁴

The fact of the matter, however, was that pulp and paper mills by the end of the 1800s required a great deal of capital with which to operate. Consequently it was not simply a matter of relocating a mill because of an Ontario law. More incentive was required. The motivation for erecting papermills in Canada materialized in 1913 when American newspaper publishers pressured President Taft to lower the tariff on imported newsprint. Then in 1913 Woodrow Wilson signed the Underwood-Simmons tariff bill. It gave free entry to "... printing paper worth not more than two and one-half cents a pound" Then, "the revenue bill enacted in 1916 amended the tariff of 1913 by placing on the free list printing paper - paper of value up to five cents a pound"⁴⁵ These bills brought the pulp and paper industry to Canada. Of course, mills had existed in Canada before the Underwood tariff but suddenly, after 1913, the immense market of the United States was open for Canadian newsprint.

Mills appeared at the Lakehead in rapid succession. They were: The Port Arthur Pulp and Paper Company Limited (1918), the Fort William Paper Company Limited (1920-21),

⁴⁴Nelles, The Politics of Development, p. 87.

⁴⁵Weeks, History of Papermaking, p. 318.

Great Lakes Paper (1924), and the Thunder Bay Paper Company (1927).⁴⁶ As the above events created a domestic industry, a place for Oscar Styffe - pulpwood exporter - was opened in the industry as a whole. The prohibition against the export of pulpwood was not total. As will be indicated shortly, there were legal ways to export such wood. The "manufacturing condition" should have prevented Styffe from exporting pulpwood to the United States. It did not. Paper mills at the Lakehead might have been Styffe's only customers for pulpwood. They were not. In fact, he did not sell much pulpwood to Canadian firms. It might appear, then, that Styffe was not so flexible. However, if he did export pulpwood, where did he acquire his own supply of this commodity? This was no easy task for most of the pulpwood was to be found on Crown land.

Crown land was simply land owned by the provincial government; in other words it was public land. Thus, with the lumber and later the pulp and paper industry, the reality was that it was not a matter of buying land as in the United States and cutting on it whenever the company so desired. In Ontario, permission had to be obtained from the Department of Lands and Forests to cut on Crown land. Even then, the land was actually "rented" to a company, not sold

⁴⁶V.C. Smith, "Factories in the Forest: A History of Pulp and Paper in Northwestern Ontario," in The Engineering Heritage of Northwestern Ontario (Thunder Bay: Lakehead University 1987), pp. 87-88, and Bertrand, "Timber Wolves."

to it. From colonial times up to and including the twentieth century, various governments set forth rules and regulations concerning under what conditions timber could be cut from Crown limits. The laws regarding the cutting of wood before the 1890's are interesting in themselves, but it is the use of Crown land on Ontario for the production of pulpwood that interests us here. The 1866 Regulations, however, established a system of cutting timber that was similar to the regulations existing during Styffe's day, and consequently should be indicated. The Province of Canada set forth and the Department of Crown Lands enforced a system whereby Crown limits were sold through public auction and the Department established what the lowest acceptable bid would be for the limit (the upset price). The operator had to pay Crown dues, ground rent (a rate per square mile established by the Department), and the amount of his bid (the bonus).⁴⁷ This system of acquiring permission to cut timber from Crown limits was basically the one that Styffe knew in his time (except that public auction was replaced by submission of written tenders, pulpwood, not lumber was being produced, dues were by the cord, and the government department supervising the regulations was known as the Department of Lands and Forests).

Beginning with the 1890s, a new forest products

⁴⁷Lambert and Pross, Renewing Nature's Wealth, p. 142.

industry began to make itself felt in the forests of Ontario. The Department of Lands and Forests had to respond to the new demand being placed on the province's Crown land. The year was 1892, and Francis H. Clergue, an American businessman signed a precedent-making agreement with the Department of Lands and Forests. The agreement specified that:

The company could cut spruce, poplar, tamarack, and jackpine, paying dues of twenty cents per cord for the privilege. The lease was for twenty-one years; Clergue was to post a cash bond and agree to spend \$200,000 on construction before December, 1895, to bring into production a mill employing 300 men for ten months of the year.⁴⁸

The early 1900s saw further agreements of this sort, emphasizing long-term cutting rights and the construction of paper mills. In fact "... agreements had been negotiated for the construction of five more mills on the Nipigon, Spanish and Mattawa Rivers, at Renfrew and Sturgeon Falls." However, by 1903 the expected boom had not materialized, and at that time more of these mills were either bankrupt or still under construction than were actually producing.⁴⁹ There were two reasons why the Ontario government chose to grant cutting rights to paper firms for long periods of time. The first, was that paper mills unlike sawmills

⁴⁸R. Peter Gillis and Thomas R. Roach, Lost Initiatives: Canada's Forest Policy and Forest Conservation (New York: Greenwood, 1986), p. 93.

⁴⁹Lambert and Pross, Renewing Nature's Wealth, pp. 251 and 252.

required a great deal of capital and a constant and guaranteed supply of raw material with which to operate. The second factor was that paper firms "... employed large numbers of workers, many of whom were skilled; they involved considerable capital investment; and they were universally identified as examples of dynamic economic growth."⁵⁰

The disappointing results of the paper trade's first real foray into Northern Ontario would not be replaced by success until the Underwood tariff. Prior to that event, the Ontario government was cautious in granting pulpwood limits. However, after 1913 and especially following World War One, American investment in Northern Ontario's forests rapidly increased and so did the agreements to build mills if Crown limits could be acquired. A.R.M. Lower, writing in the 1930s wrote of the cutting rights that had been awarded to paper firms that:

they have followed the lines originally laid down but there has been a gradual development in the following directions: the size of individual concessions has increased; permanence of tenure has become more and more assured⁵¹

These limits were measured in hundreds of square miles or more. The cutting right was not for a year as it had previously been with the lumber trade; by Styffe's time, a paper company was allowed to cut for as much as 20 years

⁵⁰Gillis and Roach, Lost Initiatives, p. 93.

⁵¹Lower, Settlement and the Forest Frontier, p. 120.

before having to renew its right. By the 1920s, "practically the entire forest resources of the Lake Superior region ... were held ... either by permit or by concession by a few companies."⁵² Under such circumstances the question again arises of how Oscar Styffe was able to find a supply of pulpwood.

The manufacturing condition did not completely end exports of pulpwood to the United States. From 1919 to 1931, a species less valuable than spruce, poplar, was allowed by the Department of Lands and Forests to leave the country.⁵³ Then, from 1931 to 1934, contractors were allowed to export pulpwood species just as long as "... clearances for a like quantity of exportable wood cut on patented or settlers' land were supplied to paper mills in Ontario."⁵⁴ In other words, amounts of wood exported had to be matched by amounts of wood sold to Canadian mills. In regards to poplar pulpwood being exportable from Crown lands before 1931, although there are references to Styffe paying Crown dues before 1935 on pulpwood (Crown dues would indicate that the pulpwood had been cut from Crown land), there is little evidence to suggest that public lands were a major source of timber for Styffe in the early 1930s.

⁵²Bertrand, "Timber Wolves."

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid.

Poplar was an important species, but spruce (which was not so easily exported) was more so. As for the substitutional clearances to Ontario mills, Styffe himself stated in 1940 that he often aided the local mills in the cutting of their own wood, but he did not actually sell pulpwood to Lakehead mills.⁵⁵ At the same time, as was shown earlier, rights to cut on Crown lands were difficult to come by.

Styffe and his contemporaries often used a source of pulpwood to which the manufacturing condition did not apply: they purchased wood from farmers and settlers. Agriculturalists acquired Crown land on which to settle in two ways. The first was through a free grant. As the term suggests, the settler received a parcel of land in an area that the Department of Lands and Forests had opened up for settlement. The settler received the patent (or title) to his land after he had met certain requirements set forth by the Department (for example, erecting a dwelling and part of the area of the lot cleared). Free grants in the District of Thunder Bay began under the Free Grant and Homesteads Act of 1868. Northern Ontario also witnessed various schemes to settle war veterans and, during Styffe's time, the Relief

⁵⁵Although there is at least one reference in the Styffe collection to Styffe sending a substitutional clearance to a Lakehead mill (see OSC (B, 2, 12, I1-29)), the evidence suggests that Styffe did not cut a great deal on Crown land before 1935.

Land Settlement Act of 1932, was passed to cope with the economic downturn by settling individuals and families that were on relief in the North.⁵⁶

The sale of land to settlers involved the potential settler paying eighty dollars for 160 acres of land.⁵⁷ The pioneer farmer of Northern Ontario could secure loans from the provincial government in order to buy farm stock or livestock.⁵⁸ Table 1-3 illustrates how, in the District of Thunder Bay, free grants were more common than sales, whereas throughout Northern Ontario the opposite was true. The reason for this is unclear.

Although settlers could take advantage of government loans for capital purposes they needed income in order to survive. In theory, "Ontario's pioneers were to use the forest covering their lots to provide them with the capital needed to develop their farms."⁵⁹ The 1931 Department of Lands and Forests Report went so far as to say of the settler that "... the revenue derived from a ready market

⁵⁶Lambert and Pross, Renewing Nature's Wealth, pp. 94-95, and 300-312.

⁵⁷Lower, Settlement and the Forest Frontier, p. 107.

⁵⁸Ontario Department of Lands and Forests Annual Report (Toronto: King's Printer, 1927), p. 8 [hereafter referred to as DLF AR].

⁵⁹Roach, "The Pulpwood Trade and the Settlers of New Ontario," p. 78.

Table 1-3.--Department of Lands and Forests Free Grants of Land and Land Sales in Thunder Bay District and Northern Ontario (1933-1941)

| <u>Year</u> | <u>D. of Thunder Bay</u> | | <u>Northern Ontario</u> | |
|-------------|--------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| | <u>Free Grants</u> | <u>Sales</u> | <u>Free Grants</u> | <u>Sales</u> |
| 1933/34 | 77 | 39 | 416 | 936 |
| 1935/36 | 74 | 15 | 533 | 683 |
| 1936/37 | 46 | 16 | 351 | 514 |
| 1937/38 | 30 | 6 | 316 | 442 |
| 1938/39 | 35 | 12 | 277 | 386 |
| 1939/40 | 37 | 19 | 196 | 395 |
| 1940/41 | 20 | 16 | 143 | 350 |

Source: Compiled from Ontario Department of Lands and Forests Annual Report (Toronto: King's Printer, 1938-1942).

for his wood, is the mainspring of his existence."⁶⁰ The crucial point for Styffe and other middlemen was that pulpwood cut on settlers' lands was exportable. Since this land was freehold or patented, the manufacturing condition did not apply to it. Here then, was one of Styffe's supplies of pulpwood (he had more than one, since he was flexible).

The farmer was a small-scale operator when it came to the timber trade. He had a limited supply of wood so that, unless he received permission to purchase more land, it was expected that his farm would be viable by the time his stock of pulpwood was exhausted. It should be noted that, settlers were marketing a raw material that was in demand

⁶⁰DLF AR for 1931 (Toronto: King's Printer, 1932), p. 9.

and required cutting and transporting, but no processing such as making pulp out of the wood on their part. It was a simple enough matter for Oscar Styffe to estimate whether or not, in a particular season, district settlers were capable of supplying him with the wood he required. He contacted potential sellers through newspaper advertisements which stated the amount of pulpwood that his company needed to purchase to meet its contracts.⁶¹ Upon viewing the advertisement, probably in the Port Arthur News-Chronicle, the farmer would write Styffe and initiate the negotiation process. The agriculturalist informed Styffe as to the location of his homestead and the approximate quantity and species of pulpwood he was able to offer. Styffe received countless overtures, but he did not accept every one. He took economics into account. In each case, it was not simply a matter of buying wood. The pulpwood had to be delivered to Styffe from a farm and consequently transportation mode and cost were prominent factors.

Complete documentation for any one contract is not available, so various ones will be utilized to illustrate the nature of the business. In 1932, Styffe wrote Mr. R. Pike of South Gillies advising him that, due to the high costs of shipping pulpwood to Port Arthur from South Gillies, the advanced payments that Styffe would be

⁶¹OSC I28 of (B, 4, 61, 11-38).

furnishing the seller would have to be reduced. Styffe assured Pike that he and other settlers in the area could opt out of their respective contracts, if they so desired.⁶² Oscar Styffe was an intelligent and experienced operator by the 1930s. He had academic knowledge, however, as he told his son John "... you've been to a business college and you've learned a few things but you are still green as can be."⁶³ Styffe also understood how to treat people. He was not cold and calculating in his business dealings. In fact, he often looked out for the settler. In 1934 he instructed a farmer who wished to ship his wood by rail during the winter that, "at these prices [the additional cost of shipping during the winter] we do not think it would be to your advantage to sell your wood"⁶⁴ Styffe, it would seem, could afford to turn down offers of pulpwood. In 1932 he told another farmer

I am unable to purchase any poplar pulpwood in the vicinity of Dorion. I am filling all my requirements for poplar from the farming district surrounding the two cities [Fort William and Port Arthur].⁶⁵

If a settler's offer were acceptable to Styffe, he put forward a price. If the farmer agreed to the suggested rate per cord, the actual contract was mailed out for him or her

⁶²OSC I6 of (B, 4, 61, I1-38).

⁶³John Styffe interview, p. 6.

⁶⁴OSC I25 of (B, 7, 22, I1-52).

⁶⁵OSC I24 of (B, 4, 61, I1-38).

to sign. At that time, the contract still had not begun. Styffe was not a timber wolf. He did not believe in circumventing the law in order to obtain pulpwood. At the commencement of each contract, he had attorneys scrutinize the land held by the various settlers in order to verify that each had actual title to the land in question.⁶⁶ If proof of title could not be established, the onus was on the settler to prove his or her right to cut pulpwood on the land in question (or face cancellation of the contract).

Over the eighteen year period being considered (1927-1945), the specifics of the contracts changed, but the framework remained essentially the same. It would take up too much of this work to consider the contracts in detail. Instead, the important aspects need to be stressed. Some contracts began in the early summer and ended in the fall, whereas others were undertaken in the summer and ran until the following spring. The carrying out of a contract was quite simple. The settler (often with a few individuals working for him) cut the pulpwood from his land in the fall, and hauled the wood to a railway siding (if the timber were to be shipped by rail) or a road (to be picked up by truck) or to a riverbank (if the wood were to be driven). In the late winter and/or early spring, the pulpwood was delivered to Styffe on the Port Arthur waterfront at Number Five Dock

⁶⁶OSC (B, 9, 12, 11-23).

(the dock he had acquired when he purchased the George Fineout Sand and Gravel Company in 1932).⁶⁷

The prices settlers received for their pulpwood depended on the species and the general state of the pulp and paper industry. For example, "in the period from 1921 to 1934 pulpwood prices fell from a peak of \$22.22 to \$8.20 per cord in Ontario due to the declining value of newsprint."⁶⁸ Table 1-4 illustrates some of the prices paid out by Styffe to settlers for pulpwood. Complete information for prices in the Styffe collection is difficult to come by. A brief examination of how Styffe paid farmers for their pulpwood will better illustrate the contract system. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, settlers shipped their pulpwood to Styffe by rail. The middleman would have a railway like the Canadian Pacific Railway leave cars on a rail siding for the settler to load his wood.⁶⁹ As the wood came into Port Arthur, Styffe measured the wood (culled or scaled it), determined the amount in cords, and mailed a cheque to the settler. In the years 1928-1930, the price was \$8.25 per cord for spruce and \$6.00 per cord for balsam. However, in each case, Styffe held back \$2.00 per cord until

⁶⁷Styffe, Oscar R. Styffe, p. 7.

⁶⁸Roach, "The Pulpwood Trade and the Settlers of New Ontario," p. 84.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 81.

Table 1-4.--Sample Prices Paid by Oscar Styffe Limited to Settlers for Their Pulpwood.

| <u>Period</u> | <u>Kind of Pulpwood</u> | <u>Price per Cord</u> |
|---------------|-------------------------|--|
| 1928-30 | Spruce | \$8.25/delivered to Port Arthur by rail. |
| " " | Balsam | \$6.00 " " " " " " |
| 1931-32 | Old spruce | \$4.75-5.00/F.O.B. delivered to No. 5 Dock. |
| " " | Old balsam | \$4.50 " " " " |
| 1933 | Old spruce | \$6.50 " " " " |
| " | Poplar | \$3.75 " " " " |
| 1936-37 | " | \$5.00/delivered to Coldwater River. |
| 1937/38 | Spruce | \$6.25/delivered to No. 5 Dock. |
| " " | Poplar | \$5-5.75 |
| 1938-39 | " | \$4-5.00/delivered to Coldwater River or No.5 Dock |
| 1942-43 | " | \$6-7.00/delivered to Arrow River |

Source: Compiled from OSC Series B.

the "Crown clearance" was produced by the settler.⁷⁰ For the settler to sell pulpwood from his land, he had first to receive a permit or clearance from the Department of Lands and Forests. After 1930, "... this permit was not issued unless an inspector [a government official] was convinced the settler was 'improving' his lot and turning it into a farm."⁷¹ After Styffe saw the permit, which stated that the settler was actually working his land, the pulpwood was officially "... passed free from Crown dues."⁷² The balance of what he owed the settler (the \$2.00 per cord),

⁷⁰OSC I2 of (B, 2, 44, I1-12).

⁷¹Roach, "The Pulpwood Trade and the Settlers of New Ontario," p. 86.

⁷²OSC I29 of (B, 2, 12, I1-29).

was then paid out.

The majority of the contracts found in the Styffe Collection reveal a preference, or at least the practise, of not paying the farmer all at once for his wood but in instalments. A good example of this was the 1937 contract signed between Anton Bohler of Dorion and Oscar Styffe Limited for poplar pulpwood at \$5.00 per cord. The settler was to receive \$2.50 per cord in June, July, and August in a progress advance as the wood was being cut and peeled. After that, as the pulpwood was being hauled and piled on the bank of a river (in this case, the Coldwater River), the farmer received another \$1.50 per cord. Finally, ten days after a company representative had scaled the wood and it had been driven down the river, the balance owing the settler was paid.⁷³ Although absent from this contract, most of Styffe's contracts spelled out that, after the Crown clearances were presented, the final amount owed to the farmer would be paid out.⁷⁴

At times, the pulpwood that Styffe was purchasing was "old wood" (it had been cut the year before). Such a contract again was centred on encouraging production. A 1932 contract with Y. Anderson stated that the contractor was to be paid \$1.00 on the execution of the contract. The

⁷³OSC I8 of (B, 15, 42, I1-15).

⁷⁴OSC I9 of (B, 15, 76, I1-63).

wood was to be scaled on the farmer's trucks and \$2.50 per cord was to be paid out once a week as the wood was delivered. The balance was due within a month after the contract was completed. Styffe did not begin paying for the wood (in this case balsam) until the settler produced the Crown clearance. Since old balsam was involved, Anderson did not receive \$6.00 a cord (the rate for balsam in 1930) but only \$4.50 per cord.⁷⁵ One can see in each of these contracts, the previously mentioned system of paying in instalments. Buying pulpwood in this manner would have eased Styffe's cash-flow situation as he would not have had to pay over a hundred farmers for thousands of cords of wood all at one time. Often, in addition to the early payments, the settler would ask Styffe for advances in order to pay people who had helped the farmer cut and haul his or her wood or to pay for equipment or supplies. In every case, all such expenses were deducted from the final balance so that one farmer, who had sold Styffe 54.80 cords of poplar at \$5.00 per cord received only \$54.79 in the final payment because \$219.21 had already been paid out to the settler.⁷⁶

In terms of how the pulpwood reached Styffe, the early contracts (1928-30) regularly mention rail whereas the later ones occasionally allude to shipping via truck or rail or by

⁷⁵OSC I2 of (B, 4, 30, I1-3).

⁷⁶OSC I1 of (B, 15, 43, I1-15).

river drive to waiting booms. It is not clear which method of conveying the pulpwood was most common in Styffe's purchases from settlers. If he or she lived near a rail line, road or river, that particular mode of transportation would have been utilized.⁷⁷ Obviously, if the settler were too far from Port Arthur or the rate was too high for shipment, for example by rail, Styffe would advise the settler (as he John Groves of Silver Mountain) that "... we do not think it would be possible to ship this kind of wood ... at the prevailing rates."⁷⁸ Such a situation could result if hauling by truck were also considered too expensive because of distance. At other times, water was seen as the appropriate method of shipping the wood. For example, in the Bohler contract mentioned earlier, a number of other settlers were placing their wood on the Coldwater River and Styffe offered to increase the price per cord from \$5.00 to \$5.25 if they drove the pulpwood themselves.⁷⁹ At any rate, since the cost of getting the pulpwood to Port Arthur came out of what Styffe paid to the settler, distance and the price Styffe was to receive from his customers for the pulpwood being sold, would have been important considerations.

⁷⁷Taken from author's interview of Ron Thomson of J.F. Thomson Timber Incorporated, 20 September 1993.

⁷⁸OSC I37 of (B, 7, 22, I1-52).

⁷⁹OSC I8 of (B, 15, 42, I1-15).

The above information is important to this thesis. Like the settler, Oscar Styffe lived in a region that was providing a raw material to the metropolitan centres. Both the settler and the middleman lived by external markets but, at the same time, neither had to concern themselves with processing the staple. Styffe operated as a company with a well-established organizational structure that was geared towards the efficient production of pulpwood. This organization entailed being able to deal with large numbers of settlers at a time (as Table 1-5 indicates). A company structure also meant being capable of handling large amounts of money as well. Yet, Styffe was still "small" enough to deal with his subcontractors on an individual basis.

Table 1-5.--Oscar Styffe Limited's Purchases from Settlers and Farmers for Selected Years.

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Number of Completed Contracts</u> | <u>*Cords</u> |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1932 | 60 | 1,799.25 |
| 1933 | 102 | 11,739.61 |
| 1934 | 175 | 20,322.73 |
| 1935 | 196 | 22,070 |
| 1936 | 184 | 9,062.39 |
| 1937 | 80 | 7,224.66 |
| 1938 | 154 | 10,714.01 |
| 1941-42 | - | 5,600 |
| 1942-43 | - | 6,015-6,715 |

Source: Compiled from OSC "Correspondence Culled from Invoice Boxes" Boxes 1-2, and (B, 24, 21, 11-58).

Note: *Some of these figures are minimum amounts; the actual totals may have been higher.

The size of Oscar Styffe's operation was such that, unlike the small settler but like the colossal paper company, he was not limited to a single source of pulpwood. He managed his own logging camps. This fact was significant for it meant that, if the source of supply represented by settlers became deficient, there was another to replace it. Styffe's firm also utilized another form of subcontractor known as the jobber. Interestingly enough, in the Styffe Collection, the term "subcontractor" is used to refer to jobbers and settlers. The author believes that rather than being an incorrect use of the term; Styffe called settlers subcontractors because they were cutting pulpwood that would be used in the main contract that he (Styffe) had with a paper company. A jobber was "a contractor who cut wood using his own crew of men for a logging company."⁸⁰ As part of his cutting operations, Styffe employed jobbers in at least two ways. Some of those subcontractors supervised the cutting of settlers' wood. Ben Renshaw was such a jobber. If Styffe had a contract with a farmer who required assistance in producing his pulpwood, Renshaw was available to perform the task. The contract and its schedule were unchanged, except that Renshaw did the cutting. The John Petrunka/Ben Renshaw arrangement serves as an illustration. Petrunka signed his contract with Styffe in 1938, with the

⁸⁰Mackay, The Lumberjacks, p. 308.

actual cutting of the pulpwood to commence during the spring of that year. Renshaw arrived on the scene to supervise the six men who were performing the cutting (settlers cutting without a jobber would probably have employed the same small number of men)⁸¹. Like contracts in general, when the men had to be paid, and/or when Petrunka obtained supplies or services from various businesses, he wrote Styffe for an advance to pay for such expenses. A record was maintained of the advances to Petrunka and, at the conclusion of the agreement, a settlement sheet indicating the total wood supplied and the cost incurred was drawn up. Petrunka provided Styffe with 404.66 cords of pulpwood at \$4.25 per cord (it was probably poplar). This added up to \$1,719.80. However, because of the advances paid out to Petrunka, Renshaw's charges to Petrunka, and sundry charges, Petrunka ended up owing Styffe \$1.74!⁸² This should not be seen as being a common occurrence when Styffe sent a jobber to help a settler cut and haul his wood. Renshaw was there to provide assistance, not to syphon money out of the settler. Depending upon the amount of wood cut and the expenses incurred, other records in the Styffe Collection reveal some settlers were paid amounts ranging from \$19.25 to \$160.44

⁸¹OSC I26 of (B, 17, 42, I1-55).

⁸²OSC I2 of (B, 17, 42, I1-55).

(remember that this was during the Great Depression).⁸³

Jobbers also cut wood for middlemen by using camps set up by the middlemen. In 1944 Styffe signed a contract with another jobber, Andrew Ahola, to cut rough poplar (not sap-peeled) at \$5.50 per cord. Ahola and his men were allowed to make use of one of the camps of Oscar Styffe Limited, on the "Stewart Location" near Pigeon River. The jobber and his workers were placed on the company payroll, were to begin cutting in the fall, and were to continue producing pulpwood until they were told to stop.⁸⁴ Subcontractors were thus a valuable asset to a middleman, in providing another source of pulpwood.

As was indicated earlier, Styffe's operation had similarities to the small-scale pulpwood cutting activities of the farmer. The middleman was not in the pulp and paper industry however, in order to sell wood for one or two years in order to raise capital for other economic activities. Selling pulpwood was his economic raison d'être and Styffe's company called for an annual supply of that raw material. Styffe was a timber merchant who took on some of the characteristics of a paper company. Like paper mills Styffe utilized timber limits and cutting rights to produce his own

⁸³OSC (B, 17, folders 21, 25, 27-28, 34, 36-37, 40, 51, 55, 61, 65-66.

⁸⁴OSC (B, Box 27, folder entitled "Ahola, Andrew Jobber 1944.").

pulpwood.

A perusal of his company's records creates an impression of Oscar Styffe as an individual who was constantly on the move. Imagine him arriving at No. 5 Dock each morning to correspond with his customers and keep track of his accounts with subcontractors, whether they were farmers or jobbers. At the same time, the businessman had to ensure that he would be able to meet his own contracts with American paper mills. An important part of this routine was keeping track of his camps' operations. Styffe, like other middlemen at the Lakehead, operated logging camps in the summer and in the fall and winter.⁸⁵ Poplar was cut in the spring when it could be sap-peeled, and spruce and balsam were cut in the fall and winter when the bogs that the spruce grew in were frozen.⁸⁶ The next phase of the operation took place in the winter when the snow was deep and the temperature low. Horse teams hauled the wood down roads covered with ice and piled it up beside a river. With the coming of milder weather the ice on the river melted and the wood was dumped into the river. The pulpwood was driven down the river to waiting booms (these were usually placed at the point where the river emptied into Lake Superior).

⁸⁵OSC Series A and B, and Fort William Daily Times Journal, 1914-1941.

⁸⁶Ron Thomson interview, 20 September 1993, and OSC I12 of (B, 3, 67, 11-20).

Here the wood was stored until it was loaded onto ships or towed to Port Arthur by tug.

Styffe operated camps in various parts of Northwestern Ontario. According to John Styffe: "these camps were located primarily in Long Lac, Kama (Jackpine River), Arrow River, Pigeon River, and North Umfreville (on the C.N.R. near Sioux Lookout)."⁸⁷ Evidence suggests that Styffe was operating at least some camps each year from 1929 to 1945. This is shown in Table 1-6. These camps seem to have employed a considerable number of seasonal workers. It can be stated that, within Styffe's camps, "... the number of employees was quite significant, peaking each year [at] from 350 to 500 employees"⁸⁸ (More discussion of the company's camps is provided in the next chapter. They are mentioned here to impress upon the reader the number of sources of supply Styffe utilized in his search for pulpwood.)

In order to have operated camps, however, one required limits and cutting rights. These were not easy to come by. As Styffe himself said in 1929, "... worst of all is to get hold of timber -- There are of course all kinds of it around us here, but it is all gathered up by big concerns, whether

⁸⁷Styffe, Oscar R. Styffe, p. 9.

⁸⁸Ibid.

Table 1-6.--Approximate Number of Logging Camps Operated by Oscar Styffe Limited 1929-1945.

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Camps "Referred To" In Styffe Collection</u> | <u>Camps Clearly in Operation</u> |
|-------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1929 | 3 | 3 |
| 1930 | 6 | 2 |
| 1931 | 4 | 4 |
| 1932 | 3 | 3 |
| 1933 | 4 | 4 |
| 1934 | 2 | 0 |
| 1935 | 8 | 1 |
| 1936 | 6 | 3 |
| 1937 | 6 | 5 |
| 1938 | 7 | 4 |
| 1939 | 3 | 1 |
| 1940 | N.A. | N.A. |
| 1941 | 8 | 4 |
| 1942 | 8 | 5 |
| 1943 | 4 | 1 |
| 1944 | 4 | 2 |
| 1945 | 8 | 2 |

Source: Compiled from OSC Series A, B and E.

it is on Crown or privat [sic] lands."⁸⁹ Besides the problem of thousands of square miles of limits in the hands of a small number of companies, there was the manufacturing condition forbidding the export of pulpwood cut on Crown lands. Again, although it is true that pulpwood could be exported from Crown land under certain circumstances, Styffe, was apparently not able to take advantage of those situations. But Styffe needed cutting limits for his camps. He therefore turned to holdings not covered by the manufacturing condition, private land.

⁸⁹OSC I4 of (B, 1, 31, I1-7).

Of course, one first had to obtain the right to cut on private territory. No complete records of the transactions involved from beginning to end of acquiring cutting rights on private land are available so that various examples must be used to illustrate points. The first step was to locate limits. Often sales were advertised by individuals. On 14 November 1929, Styffe wrote Mrs. Roy Clark of Carlyle, Saskatchewan, regarding mining locations on the Black Bay Peninsula.⁹⁰ At other times, a company would be selling cutting rights.⁹¹ Another potentially large source of limits (at least for Styffe) was Judge W.A. Dowler of Kenora. Dowler (and probably other judges) received notices from companies that were selling cutting rights on lots. Mulholland and Company Timber Lands wrote to Dowler in 1929(?) indicating that "... we have ... lots for sale in the Rainy River and Kenora districts and would be glad to receive best offers for all or any of them."⁹² Dowler received a five per cent commission for each offer accepted.⁹³ Unfortunately, it is not clear how often Styffe acquired limits through Dowler. In the early 1930s, however, Oscar Styffe, contacted Dowler in order to

⁹⁰OSC I1-2 of (B, 2, 11, I1-2).

⁹¹OSC I2 of (B, 3, 23, I1-2).

⁹²OSC I2 of (B, 3, 1, I1-3).

⁹³Ibid.

determine where private limits were available. By way of illustration, he wrote Dowler on 31 May 1930 stating that, "I would appreciate if you would put me next to any property with timber on [it], that you may know of and have anything to do with."⁹⁴

Other limits could have come through other operators. For example, in 1929, while Styffe was negotiating with the Pigeon River Lumber Company (of Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin) to cut wood for the American company, (in other words to act as a jobber for it), the actual cutting rights for the pulpwood were unexpectedly offered by the company outright to Styffe.⁹⁵ Styffe had simply been cutting wood for the American firm, now he was being offered the cutting rights to the land in order to produce wood for himself. It is not known if he purchased the rights. There were even cases when Styffe would contact a land owner (for example of mining land) and state, "... as I have cutting rights on locations, in the vicinity [of the mining land] I would like to know if you would care to sell the timber."⁹⁶

Once Styffe found a seller (of cutting rights, of not the land itself) he would submit an offer. He would either suggest a price per cord on spruce, balsam, and poplar, or

⁹⁴OSC I9 of (B, 2, 13, I1-10).

⁹⁵OSC (B, 2, 3, I1-4).

⁹⁶OSC I20 of (B, 2, 35, I1-22).

he would propose a lump sum. In 1933, Styffe advised the Pioneer Land Company Limited that, as the pulpwood was being produced, he would pay \$1.00/cord for spruce, \$0.50/cord for balsam, and \$0.25/cord for poplar.⁹⁷ He stated that he required six years in order to cut the wood and that he would "... make a payment of \$300.00 as deposit towards the stumpage [as a down payment]."⁹⁸ In the early 1930s, when Styffe paid by the cord for cutting rights on private land, the amount was usually \$1.00 - \$2.00.⁹⁹ The lump sums paid out varied, depending upon the situation. In one case in 1929 he had to compete with others for what appeared to be cutting rights for a large area, so Styffe offered the seller (Camp, Stratton and Lindsey) \$12,000.¹⁰⁰ In this particular case, Styffe was outbid.

The negotiations that Styffe undertook dealt not only with prices but also with the time needed to cut (which could range from two, three, or six to twenty-five years!). As with settlers' contracts Styffe would have had to pay a certain amount as a kind of down payment, and the remainder as the wood was cut (if not later). At times, the seller of the cutting rights would seek proof that Styffe could

⁹⁷OSC I1 of (B, 9, 14, I1-4).

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹OSC (B, 2, 13, I1-10), (B, 3, 23, I1-2), (B, 3, 24, I1-5), and (B, 9, 14, I1-4).

¹⁰⁰OSC I1 of (B, 2, 18, I1-5).

complete any contract that he entered into.¹⁰¹ It was also not uncommon for Styffe's bid for a limit to be too low, and he would see the limits go to another party.

Notwithstanding the challenges involved, Styffe also found himself able to secure a seller of limits. In 1934 a contract was drawn up between Oscar Styffe Limited and Col. G.H. and M. Christine Shaw. The agreement gave Styffe permission to cut the timber on the specified plot of land (the south fifteen acres of Lot 13 Concession 1 of Nipigon Township). He was to pay \$100.00 for use of the limits and he was allowed to cut on the territory for a period of three years.¹⁰² In this case, no specific price per cord was mentioned. It was on such terms and such limits that Styffe generally operated before 1935.

However, the supply of pulpwood from freehold, patented, and private land was not inexhaustible and, by the early 1930s, those sources were becoming more and more scarce.¹⁰³ In truth, Styffe himself reported in 1940 to a provincial committee examining the operations of the Department of Lands and Forests that the lesser-valued poplar pulpwood was still to be found on settlers' lands but

¹⁰¹Ibid.

¹⁰²OSC I9-12 of (B, 21, 1, I1-39).

¹⁰³OSC I1 of (B, 10, 3, I1-27).

that the valuable spruce had all been cut.¹⁰⁴ The middlemen of the Lakehead had one option left open to them and that was to obtain greater access to Crown lands in order to export pulpwood from them. The annual reports of the Department of Lands and Forests for the 1920s and 1930s reveal what has already been emphasized in this chapter, namely, the dominance of paper companies in terms of holding Crown land. Some individual operators such as Charles Cox and Eddie Johnson would gain rights at times to areas as large as fifty square miles or more, but most of the limits were under twenty, and often under ten square miles in area. The largest limits by far were those held by such paper firms as the Nipigon Corporation, Thunder Bay Paper Company, Provincial Paper Mills, etc. Such holdings were usually well over a thousand square miles in size.¹⁰⁵

Paper companies were obviously considered to be of prime importance by the Ontario government. The manufacturing condition on pulpwood had been imposed in order to attract them, and to bring manufacturing jobs to the province. The amount of capital involved in a paper mill required that it have access to extensive limits over a long period. In the eyes of the government, guaranteed

¹⁰⁴Archives of Ontario RG18 Commissions and Committees D-I-36, Select Committee: to Inquire into the Administration of the Department of Lands and Forests. Proceedings, 1940, Box/Vol. 2, p. 507 [hereafter referred to as 1940 Inquiry Proceedings].

¹⁰⁵DLF AR (1921 to 1943).

employment in the pulp and paper industry warranted such treatment. Styffe was informed in 1942 by the Minister of Lands and Forests, N.O. Hipel, that "domestic mills must always, in my opinion, receive first consideration in the matter of timber requirements"¹⁰⁶ In the 1930s, however, the smaller timber operators had occasionally challenged such policies. The 1920s were a decade of extraordinary growth in the pulp and paper industry, especially in Canada where, "the total newsprint tonnage capacity per day increased from 2,200 tons in 1919 to 12,200 tons in 1932."¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, "between 1925 and 1929 total investment in pulp and paper rose by almost \$194,000,000 ..."¹⁰⁸ To finance this expansion, paper companies sold stocks and bonds to investors. Unfortunately, these were often bonds "... whose retirement had been calculated on production at close to 100 per cent capacity."¹⁰⁹ However, in the latter part of the 1920s, paper mills (especially in Canada) could not operate at full capacity. Production greatly outstripped demand, and over

¹⁰⁶OSC I6 of (B, 27, 10, 11-11).

¹⁰⁷C.P. Fell, "The Newsprint Industry." in The Canadian Economy and Its Problems, eds. H.A. Innis and Plumptre (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1939), p. 40.

¹⁰⁸E.A. Forsey, "The Pulp and Paper Industry," Canadian Journal of Economic and Political Science 1, No. 3 (August 1935): 502.

¹⁰⁹Nelles, The Political Development, p. 444.

time, the price of newsprint fell from \$79.30 per ton in 1924 to \$40.00 in 1934.¹¹⁰ The fall in prices meant that many mills in Ontario could not meet their debt obligations and subsequently fell into receivership. The mills at the Lakehead were brought to a virtual standstill, although the Provincial Paper Mill took less time to recover than the other firms.¹¹¹

In the 1930s as today, Northwestern Ontario was largely a hinterland whose economic health was determined by factors and decisions made outside of the region. That was simply a fact of life. Nevertheless, Styffe and his fellow middlemen decided to force the metropolis to notice their region. They were running out of pulpwood resources while the timber on huge tracts of Crown land lay unused due to the collapse of pulp and paper firms. Hence, in 1935, a delegation of operators led by Charles Cox and including Oscar Styffe approached the Ontario government "... putting up a plea before them that it was necessary to lift the [export] embargo on ... Crown timber"¹¹² High unemployment at the Lakehead caused by the Depression resulted in the plea of the middlemen being heard. On 23 March 1935, it was announced by order-in-council that the manufacturing

¹¹⁰Lambert and Pross, Renewing Nature's Wealth, p. 276.

¹¹¹John Styffe interview, p. 6.

¹¹²1940 Inquiry Proceedings, p. 508.

condition was to be suspended (at least for that year). Operators were allowed on to areas previously held by paper companies to cut and export pulpwood. Crown dues were reduced from \$1.40 per cord to \$1.00 for spruce pulpwood and the export charge was eliminated. A ground rent and fire tax levy of \$11.40 per square mile was however to be charged on limits. The paper companies that had previously cut on such limits were not giving them up completely, for the Department stated that terms for cutting on limits had to be jointly agreed upon by the operator and the party that held the limits. Finally, it was stated that the operator was to be allowed to cut in an area for only one year, and that the pulpwood cut could only be exported if it were not to be used in the manufacture of newsprint.¹¹³

In 1935, several middlemen including Cox, Styffe, Thomas Falls, and Charlie Gardner were allowed onto limits around the Jackpine River watershed.¹¹⁴ It is not known if these limits had previously belonged to Great Lakes Paper, the Nipigon Corporation, or Provincial Paper (the Great Lakes limits were enormous at that time, 8,895 square miles.)¹¹⁵ It is appropriate at this point to expand upon the earlier discussion on Crown limits to understand what

¹¹³DLF AR for 1936 (Toronto: King's Printer, 1936), p. 17.

¹¹⁴1940 Inquiry Proceedings, p. 510.

¹¹⁵Lambert and Pross, Renewing Nature's Wealth, p. 339.

kind of limits Styffe and others gained in 1935. The right to cut timber on Crown land was obtained in one of four ways, as outlined in the 1947 Ontario Royal Commission on Forestry. Each of the four required that Crown dues, ground rent, and fire charges be paid. The first type, the "License," was acquired through public competition, could be renewed each year, and dealt with a specific area.

"Agreements" were contracts signed between the government and companies for large areas and usually involved such conditions as erecting a mill. If negotiations for an area were not yet complete, an operator might be allowed to commence cutting by receiving "Permission." Finally, "Permits" were given out by the Department for operators cutting a small, but specified, amount of timber in a location (for one year).¹¹⁶

In 1935, it seemed that desperate times called for desperate measures. It appears that limits were simply "granted" to Styffe and his fellow operators. When recalling that year, Styffe stated "... they [the government] saw fit to open that area [the Jackpine] for us."¹¹⁷ Peter Heenan, the Minister of Lands and Forests at that time, spoke of negotiating with the holders of the limits to let the smaller operators "... in on the various

¹¹⁶Report of the Ontario Royal Commission on Forestry, 1947 (Toronto: King's Printer, 1947), pp. 51-54.

¹¹⁷1940 Inquiry Proceedings, p. 508.

watersheds"¹¹⁸ In May of 1935, Styffe wrote the Department of Lands and Forests to ask if he could cut pulpwood in the Jackpine River area as he had a contract with Detroit Sulphite Pulp and Paper Company.¹¹⁹ No mention was made of competing for the limit; it was just a question of the Department's approving Styffe's application. In the fall of that year (1935), Styffe secured a contract with the Rhinelander Paper Company for eight or nine thousand cords of spruce pulpwood. He wrote the Department to say: "... we hereby beg to apply to your Department for the cutting right to such timber on the Jackpine River"¹²⁰ Thus, it would seem that, after the manufacturing condition was lifted in 1935, Styffe and other middlemen simply had to apply for permission to cut on Crown lands not being utilized by their original holders. He did not have to submit a tender for an area (and only receive the limit if his bid were high enough). This would probably be true for other operators as well, for it seems unlikely that Styffe received special treatment. This kind of arrangement would seem to fall into the "Permit" category, or perhaps it was a kind of "License" without the public competition.

This system continued for a number of years. The

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 92.

¹¹⁹OSC I28 of (B, 10, 33, I1-127).

¹²⁰OSC I17 of (B, 11, 7, I1-33).

contracts made in 1935 were only for a single year, but they were extended and Styffe continued to apply for cutting rights in the Jackpine River area. In 1941, Styffe wrote the Minister of Lands and Forests to state:

for the past number of years, this Timber Company [Oscar Styffe Ltd.] has been granted yearly rights by the Department of Lands and Forests to cut and remove spruce, and balsam from the Jackpine River Watershed for export purposes. The first such rights was [sic] granted in the year of 1935.¹²¹

Each time the cutting rights were extended (except for the Lake Sulphite affair which will be discussed shortly), it was always only for a period of one year. It is not clear if, along with Crown dues, ground rent (usually \$5.00 per square mile or fraction of a mile) and fire charges (\$6.40 per square mile or fraction of a mile had to be paid)¹²² Styffe was also to pay a bonus or upset price for the Jackpine cutting rights.¹²³

After 1935, as permission to export pulpwood was extended year upon year, middlemen such as Styffe also

¹²¹OSC I3 of (B, 27, 10, I1-11).

¹²²OSC Series B, and DLF AR for 1936 (Toronto: King's Printer, 1936).

¹²³During the 1930s and 1940s, Crown dues were \$1.40, \$0.70, and \$0.40 per cord for spruce, balsam, and poplar respectively. The dues for spruce were reduced to \$1.00 in 1935 but, by the 1940s if spruce were to be exported, the dues were \$1.45 per cord. In the 1930s the export levy seems to have been \$0.25/cord for spruce while by 1944 it was \$0.65/cord for spruce, and \$0.30/cord for balsam (see DLF AR for the 1930s and 1940s, OSC I1 of [B, 26, 6, I1-18]; DLF AR for 1936; and OSC I9 of [B, 27, 24, I1-33]).

gained access to Crown limits in the conventional way by acquiring a licence through competition. A glance at Styffe's attempts to procure such cutting rights through public tender reveals much about how the selling of Crown limits worked for a middleman. The Department of Lands and Forests would open up an area for competition. It would specify the size and location of the area according to lot and concession. The type and approximate amount of pulpwood to be cut would also be given (in cords). For example, in May of 1941, the Department issued a call for tenders for the right to cut poplar pulpwood on N.E. 1/4 Lot 5, Concession B, McTavish Township, amounting to one quarter mile. The official call for tenders reported that the limit contained 900 cords and that tenders were to be accepted up until Friday 23 May 1941. As with all tenders for Crown land, in addition to paying \$0.40 per cord in Crown dues for poplar, the operator had to indicate how much of a bonus he was willing to pay (in addition to the Crown dues). The minimum bonus per cord was listed as \$0.10 per cord in this case.¹²⁴ It was expected that the bidder would propose a sum greater than the minimum bonus. In the end, the limit would be awarded to the highest bidder. The Department required that a deposit be submitted by cheque, and most of that amount was then held by the Department until the

¹²⁴OSC I59 of (B, 22, 1, I1-121).

contract was complete. In the tender under consideration, a deposit of \$126.40 was asked for (the size of the deposit depended upon the extent of the limit). Of this, \$115.00 was held until the contract was complete, and \$11.40 went to pay for the annual ground rent (\$5.00 per square mile or fraction of a mile) and fire protection (\$6.40 per square mile or a fraction of a mile) charges. The timber was to have been cut by 31 March 1942.¹²⁵ Obviously, the figures would differ in each case, but this was the basic form of the calls for tenders.

The Styffe Collection clearly illustrates that Oscar Styffe Limited competed for limits in the above way. In 1944, J.F. Sharpe of the Division of Timber Management wrote to Oscar Styffe Limited, stating that the company's tender to cut spruce and balsam on S.W. 1/4 Lot 5, N.E. 1/4 Lot 6, and S.E. Lot 6 of McTavish Township had been accepted. The company was to pay \$1.40/cord for spruce and \$0.70/cord for balsam. The bonus that Oscar Styffe Limited had offered was \$0.60 and \$0.55 for spruce and balsam respectively (the minimum bonus is not known). Finally, in an unusual wartime arrangement, the firm was to provide the Department with five Victory Bonds amounting to \$400.00 and a cheque for \$11.40 to cover ground rent and fire protection. As usual,

¹²⁵Ibid.

the \$400.00 was held as a deposit.¹²⁶ The number of tenders, in this case, is not known, but it is clear that Styffe's company competed for licences to cut in addition to receiving permits or permission to cut in areas without competition. The realm of the middleman was the smaller limits, with shorter periods of time for cutting as compared with paper companies.

One issue being considered is if it was a simple matter to acquire timber limits after the lifting of the export embargo. On one level, it would have been easier for Styffe. The fact that suddenly, in 1935, Crown limits were potentially open to Styffe gave him another source of pulpwood. However, this did not mean that it was simply a matter of obtaining a limit that a paper company was no longer using. It must be remembered that pulp and paper companies were considered more prominent employers than the middlemen were. In 1937, Styffe and other operators had been operating in the Jackpine River area for two years. However, in that year a new company, Lake Sulphite, was given 1,981 square miles of limits by the Department of Lands and Forests because the paper company's investors had agreed to construct a mill at Nipigon to produce bleached sulphite pulp.¹²⁷ The company was to employ 800 men at

¹²⁶OSC I21 of (B, 27, 24, I1-33).

¹²⁷"Mill at Nipigon to be Completed by June 1938," Fort William Daily Times Journal, 12 April 1937.

first and eventually 1,500.¹²⁸ Styffe recalled that

I was told [by the government] that this particular territory was to be included in the area allotted to the Lake Sulphite Co.[mpany] and that we had to get out.¹²⁹

Cutting on limits, then, even after 1935, was not always assured.

The above incident raises the possibility that shortages of pulpwood could occur. In fact, not only could they occur, they actually did. It was during periods of shortage, that the middleman faced his greatest challenge in being flexible. His very existence depended upon it. There were factors that often delayed Styffe as he carried out his operations. Weather was frequently a thorn in Styffe's side. A good snowfall was required during the winter months so that pulpwood could be hauled by horses on ice roads. An excess of snow however impeded hauling activity. Minor delays were possible. In November 1945 a camp clerk reported that the cutting crew had lost one work day because of a snowstorm.¹³⁰ One week later, heavy snow build up had caused trees to fall on roads, and this was hindering hauling operations.¹³¹ The summer of 1946

¹²⁸"Sign Agreement for Nipigon Mill," Fort William Daily Times Journal, 4 March 1937.

¹²⁹OSC I78 of (B, 23, 14, I1-86).

¹³⁰OSC I6 of (A, 1, 10, I1-25).

¹³¹OSC I4 of (A, 1, 10, I1-25).

witnessed days lost to torrential rains.¹³² These were only a few of the problems that Styffe (and probably other operators) faced in their operations. In 1937, Styffe decided to pay his jobbers an additional twenty-five cents per cord for wood they were producing "due to the difficulties encountered in connection with cutting and peeling of poplar with respect to army worms ..."¹³³ River drives could also be held up. Styffe wrote E.B. Hurst of the Munising Paper Company on 29 April 1930:

we are at present praying for rain in order to get the drives out. The snow is all gone and dry weather with frosty nights has prevailed till now, so the break-up [of the ice] has passed unnoticed leaving the wood on the river banks everywhere in the district.¹³⁴

The problems caused by nature were frustrating but short-term delays were dealt with.

Labour disputes could also raise barriers to completing a season's output. Strikes will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter, but a few points can be made here. Labour problems do seem to have been a cause of at least a few delays. Writing to a Mr. H.E. Walby (a lumberman's supplier) in 1933, Styffe indicated that:

at present the labour trouble has been settled but we were held up for such a long time, that whatever new business we might have been able to acquire, we gave up

¹³²OSC I5 of (A, 1, 21, I1-12).

¹³³OSC I35 of (B, 15, 76, I1-63).

¹³⁴OSC I7 of (B, 2, 35, I1-22).

as the season was getting on¹³⁵

It is unclear exactly how many of the strikes that occurred in the north during the hard years of the Great Depression directly affected Oscar Styffe Limited, but it is clear that at least some did. In an undated letter to the editor of the Port Arthur News Chronicle (likely from the mid 1930s) Styffe complained:

... we have been unable to fill our contracts, [because of strikes] and when we again approach our customers for new contracts, the first thing we are confronted with is that they are not keen about purchasing wood from this district¹³⁶

At a Rotary Club meeting in 1941, Styffe recalled strikes in the 1930s and stated that "... markets at that time were good, [but] production could not meet the demand."¹³⁷

Oscar Styffe, in his business career, was also faced with even more serious problems when it came to supply. It was in those situations that Styffe was able to adapt to survive. His pulpwood production activity was not some hit-or-miss endeavour. It was a carefully planned operation. Therefore when difficulties arose, Styffe did not have to face them by himself. He had the resources of a company behind him. This fact enhanced his flexibility. As far as labour went, he and his fellow middlemen found, that during

¹³⁵OSC I4 of (B, 11, 3, I1-33).

¹³⁶OSC I11 of (B, 10, 3, I1-27).

¹³⁷OSC I2 of (B, 10, 3, I1-27).

the Second World War, that there was a terrible labour shortage. Many bushworkers had gone off to war, and Styffe noted in a letter to the Canada Forwarding Company Limited in 1941 that the bushworker had turned to other jobs (for example, manufacturing aircraft at the Canadian Car and Foundry Company) "... where he can earn more money"¹³⁸ Styffe found that, because of such shortages, he "... actually had to refuse contracts"¹³⁹ To cope with the shortage of labour, some operators employed German prisoners of war in their camps.¹⁴⁰ How did Oscar Styffe Limited cope? Except for a scheme to use Japanese Canadians brought from British Columbia to help in the loading of pulpwood¹⁴¹ (which does not appear to have materialized), it would seem that Oscar Styffe Limited survived the labour shortage by utilizing all of the resources open to it as a company. Settlers, jobbers, and camps were all used to fill the contracts with American mills.

Even before the war, other serious supply problems had arisen for Styffe. In 1936, after having cut pulpwood

¹³⁸OSC I52 of (B, 23, 3, I1-67).

¹³⁹Ibid.

¹⁴⁰V.C. Smith, "Lumbering, Pulp and Paper, and Forestry," in A Vast and Magnificent Land: An Illustrated History of Northern Ontario, eds. Matt Bray and Ernie Epp (n.p.: Lakehead University Laurentian University, for the Ontario Ministry of Northern Affairs, 1984), p. 80.

¹⁴¹OSC I41 of (B, 24, 1, I1-58).

(probably spruce) in the Jackpine River basin for export, he was delayed in getting the wood out of the bush. In his own words, "... I was driving and ... I was hung up."¹⁴² The danger of being delayed in getting the pulpwood shipped was that the paper mill that had sent Styffe advances, had in essence already partly paid for pulpwood that had not yet arrived. Soon after this mishap, Styffe was able to ship the wood, but then some disaster occurred on Lake Superior and he "... lost wood and so forth on the lake."¹⁴³ It would seem that like other operators, Styffe sometimes transported his pulpwood in the form of a raft to the United States (more will be said about this in the third chapter). Styffe appears to have lost one such raft in the middle of the lake,¹⁴⁴ and suddenly Styffe owed over \$60,000 (a fair amount during the Great Depression) to various parties.¹⁴⁵ The next season (1937) Styffe was back at the Jackpine River struggling to produce more wood to pay off the debt he had incurred. He was then abruptly ordered to leave his limits as they were to be taken over by the Lake Sulphite Company. As was mentioned earlier, spruce pulpwood from settlers'

¹⁴²1940 Inquiry Proceedings, p. 509.

¹⁴³Ibid.

¹⁴⁴Taken from author's interview of Andrew Olson, former employee of the Pigeon Timber Company Limited, 22 September 1993.

¹⁴⁵OSC I46-76 of (B, 12, 17, I1-131).

lands was, by the late 1930s, becoming more and more scarce. Appearing before the 1940 Inquiry into the Administration of the Department of Lands and Forests, Styffe stated that, "I can't get any wood. If I could get timber from Crown lands I could export."¹⁴⁶ Being able to export wood was crucial to Styffe in order to pay off his liabilities and grow as a firm.

How then did a middleman like Oscar Styffe deal with supply problems? This is where like a paper company, Styffe could be more diverse in his operations. Middlemen often needed pulpwood to be loaded onto ships. Using his tugboat company, Styffe was able to gain another source of income by loading pulpwood for other operators.¹⁴⁷ In 1933 Styffe wrote a paper company indicating that "we specialize in loading pulpwood anywhere on the lakes and our equipment consists of tugs and power boats for purpose of towing and rafting"¹⁴⁸

In terms of maintaining the business of cutting pulpwood, even though settlers in Northwestern Ontario were running short of spruce pulpwood on their land, poplar (although less valuable) was apparently still available. In 1939 Styffe wrote W.C. Cain the Deputy Minister of Lands and

¹⁴⁶OSC I71 of (B, 23, 14, I1-86).

¹⁴⁷OSC (B, 8, 18, I1-4), (B, 3, 87, I1-9), and (B, 4, 16, I1-37).

¹⁴⁸OSC I1 of (B, 8, 18, I1-4).

Forests that he was considering acquiring Crown limits again (in order to specifically to cut poplar) but that:

... the farmers and settlers in the country surrounding Port Arthur were all anxious to sell us poplar, and in order to give everybody a chance to earn some money, we divided our requirements this year amongst them.¹⁴⁹

In December 1945, Oscar Styffe Limited held 65 completed and 66 uncompleted contracts with settlers.¹⁵⁰ Therefore, although settlers could probably not be considered important as a sole source of pulpwood, the fact of the matter was that they could be utilized to help fill supply needs.

Even if no Crown limits were to be secured in a given year, all was not lost for the middleman. It must be kept in mind that Styffe was in the business of supplying a raw material and he lived in a region that was well stocked with that staple. It only had to be cut. Consequently, another option open to Styffe if Crown lands were unavailable, was to become a jobber for a local pulp and paper company. At the same time, what if the U.S. market for pulpwood was bad one year? In 1939, Styffe informed the Controller of Revenue why he was having difficulty paying the debts incurred from the "Lake Sulphite affair." He argued that "we deal only in wood, but if no sales can be made, what will we use for money to pay our debts?"¹⁵¹ At the same time, records seem to indicate that Styffe did not ship any

¹⁴⁹OSC I3 of (B, 24, 1, I1-58).

¹⁵⁰OSC I15 of (B, 27, 51, I1-15).

¹⁵¹OSC I46 of (B, 12, 17, I1-131).

pulpwood to the U.S. in 1938.¹⁵² Nevertheless, Styffe was able to survive such circumstances. Styffe reported to the board investigating the administration of the Department of Lands and Forests (on 1 February 1940 that: "at the present time we are taking out wood for the Abitibi ... that is besides the three or four hundred farmers that we buy wood from."¹⁵³ In the Styffe Collection, the records for 1937-38 indicate that Styffe was cutting pulpwood for Abitibi Power and Paper Company using three camps.¹⁵⁴

Styffe was an exporter of pulpwood to the United States, but the act of being a subcontractor for a paper company was another hat he could wear if the export business slackened off. After Lake Sulphite took over his limits, he began cutting for them, until they collapsed in February of 1938.¹⁵⁵ The central theme is that, whether through the utilization of Crown limits, settlers, jobbers, or paper company subcontracting, Styffe's company was adaptable. Even after all of his problems, and except for missing the year 1938, Styffe was able to continue exporting pulpwood although jobbing for local mills must have helped him to get back into the black so that he could continue his export

¹⁵²OSC I6 of (B, 25, 3, I1-49).

¹⁵³1940 Inquiry Proceedings, p. 511.

¹⁵⁴OSC (B, 11, 43, I1-22).

¹⁵⁵1940 Inquiry Proceedings, pp. 511-512, and OSC (B, 12, 25, I1-106) and (B, 12, 27, I1-78).

business. By March of 1940, Styffe informed his lawyer that he wished to pay off the remainder of his debt, for he said that "the amount is very small, being only \$1687.80 [of the original amount which was in excess of \$60,000]"¹⁵⁶ Therefore, Styffe was able to survive the worst of supply problems because he was immensely versatile, and this resilience came from the fact that he was a middleman.

This chapter has dealt at length with how operators such as Oscar Styffe were able to locate and make use of a supply of pulpwood. More can be said about the man himself. As an operator selling wood Styffe had to maintain his supply. As a Northerner, he had to live with the fact that forces outside of his region often controlled Northern Ontario. Styffe was an astute individual who understood that the future was to be planned for, not rushed into. Styffe as a middleman was not a pulpwood speculator. In other words, he did not cut timber until he was assured of a contract with a buyer. By way of illustration, in 1930 Styffe asked the Underwood Paper Company:

would you be in the market for ... spruce and balsam ... or ... poplar pulpwood for delivery on board vessel at this port [Port Arthur] during season of navigation 1931. [sic] This wood will be cut and peeled this summer and hauled to the water next winter.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶OSC I4 of (B, 20, 5, I1-38).

¹⁵⁷OSC I15 of (B, 2, 35, I1-22).

Another example: April 1935 saw Styffe writing another firm to state that he was planning to cut poplar pulpwood and wished to know if that particular mill required any timber, so that he would have a better idea of what his future production needs would be.¹⁵⁸ In 1934, Styffe informed a paper concern that he was already in the process of cutting pulpwood and that:

should you desire to have any wood for this year's delivery we would like to know it immediately so that we could increase our output before the season gets too far advanced.¹⁵⁹

Thus, Styffe signed a contract to supply a U.S. mill with pulpwood and then proceeded to produce the wood. In this way, he and other operators like him would not end up with a quantity of timber but no customers (and no money to pay workers).

Being in the pulpwood supply business taught Styffe the importance of being prepared for the future. If he were forced to turn down a contract with a mill because all of his wood had "... been contracted for ...,"¹⁶⁰ he would assure the paper company that, if they needed wood the next year, "... we would be very glad to take it out for you"¹⁶¹ Styffe did the same with settlers. He left the

¹⁵⁸OSC I5 of (B, 11, 21, I1-5).

¹⁵⁹OSC I4 of (B, 7, 22, I1-52).

¹⁶⁰OSC I1 of (B, 7, 22, I1-52).

¹⁶¹Ibid.

option of forming a future deal open when he told one settler that, although he could not purchase the settler's pulpwood that year, "[we] will keep you in mind should prices advance in the future...."¹⁶² This attitude was not just an act. In 1941, corresponding with Frank Sharpe, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Lands and Forests Styffe spoke of the middlemen in the early Depression years. He wrote, "it was his [the middleman's] duty to his business associates and also to his customers on the other side of the border to keep contract and to carry on."¹⁶³ Styffe realized that the way to do business, even in troubled times, was to treat people honestly and fairly.

As a businessman, Styffe recognized the value of being able to depend upon a steady and reliable supply of pulpwood. In 1935, when the provincial government allowed Lakehead operators onto Crown land, it was for a one year term. This was a point of contention for Styffe because, only being allowed to cut on an annual basis was hardly enough, when American customers demanded assurance of a continued supply.¹⁶⁴ When Styffe applied for timber limits, he usually argued for extended cutting rights, not one year permits. A brief of the Independent Operators of

¹⁶²OSC I45 of (B, 7, 22, I1-52).

¹⁶³OSC I1 of (B, 10, 3, I1-27).

¹⁶⁴Ibid.

Northwestern Ontario (submitted by Styffe to the 1940 Inquiry already mentioned) argued that, without a longer lease for operators, they "... have had to move from area to area and can therefore make no plans for future years."¹⁶⁵ If a middleman were to be allowed onto a plot of land for years at a time, "he then knows how much he can produce each year."¹⁶⁶ Accordingly, for example, in applying for timber limits near Lake Nipigon in 1937, Styffe requested that he be given the opportunity to remain on the limits (about 60 square miles) for 25 years, (the kind of permission a paper company would receive).¹⁶⁷ It does not appear that Styffe was awarded those limits. In one case, however, he applied for extended cutting rights in the Jackpine River area (the year was 1940) and was told by the Department that he could cut pulpwood in that area for the upcoming season, but that was all.¹⁶⁸

Nevertheless, Styffe was not the type of person who desired more Crown limits for his own personal gain. He was, as strange as it may sound in today's business world, considering everyone's future. He was conservation-minded. Styffe, having been born in Norway, knew quite well that

¹⁶⁵OSC I8 of (B, 10, 3, I1-27).

¹⁶⁶Ibid.

¹⁶⁷OSC I3 of (B, 12, 26, I1-57).

¹⁶⁸OSC I2 of (B, 10, 36, I1-28).

sustained yield cutting practises were being employed in Northern Europe.¹⁶⁹ Sustained yield involves measuring "... annual tree growth to determine how many trees could be cut without destroying a reasonably prompt renewal."¹⁷⁰ Styffe was concerned with the fact that American and other large concerns were cutting large amounts of pulpwood each year in Northwestern Ontario. He was speaking as the resident of a hinterland region trying to exercise some mastery over his area's destiny when he said in 1941: "I am confident that this country and the timber wealth in it is worthy of more care and consideration than has been bestowed upon it up to this time."¹⁷¹

As has been stated time and time again, Styffe usually found some way to cut pulpwood, and his company structure gave him the resources to secure wood from several sources. He was not a timber shark, however, but cared about his region. He once argued that, in terms of the industry in Northwestern Ontario: "... all the profits which should be of benefit to this country are lodged in the pockets of interests on the American side, who least of all are in need of it."¹⁷² It is almost as if Styffe realized that

¹⁶⁹OSC I2 of (B, 10, 3, I1-27).

¹⁷⁰Donald Mackay, Heritage Lost: The Crisis in Canada's Forests (Toronto: Macmillan, 1985), p. 93.

¹⁷¹OSC I1 of (B, 10, 3, I1-27).

¹⁷²Ibid.

Northern Ontario's economy was controlled by external forces and foreign demand and that some internal control had to be exercised to maintain the area's most valuable resource, so that the region could continue to prosper. Styffe was passionate in his plea for preserving the forest. He believed that the forest had to be utilized "not only for profits at present, but having the future as well in mind."¹⁷³ In Styffe's view, "the prosperity of a country or a community does not depend on how many millionaires they have, but rather on how prosperous the population is."¹⁷⁴

Styffe was a man of action, not just words. He was not the first in North America to become concerned about preserving the forest. The conservation movement had come to North America in the second half of the 1800s.¹⁷⁵ Styffe, however, had a plan that he continuously tried to put into use. The first order of business for Styffe was that cutting on limits should be undertaken on a sustained yield basis.¹⁷⁶ He had an even more ambitious scheme in mind. The reason why he desired long-term cutting rights was because he wished to allow his workers to live on the Crown limit year round. Their homes would be built with

¹⁷³OSC I2 of (B, 10, 3, I1-27).

¹⁷⁴Ibid.

¹⁷⁵Gillis and Roach, Lost Initiatives, pp. 31-49.

¹⁷⁶OSC I48 of (B, 22, 1, I1-121).

money earned from the timber they cut for Styffe. In this way, workers would live on the limit year round and not spend all of their earnings each year when they returned to the city in the spring.¹⁷⁷ Styffe put this plan before the provincial government several times in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Suitable areas were difficult to come by and, in one instance, a region seen as being acceptable to Styffe for his "colonization scheme" was given to a higher bidder.¹⁷⁸ Styffe said sadly in 1940 that: "there are no other areas in the Thunder Bay District at present available for such purposes, the rest of the country being blanketed with timber licences."¹⁷⁹

Styffe continued to fight against what he perceived as improper timber cutting practises. He argued in 1940 that "... the best [timber] areas in the Thunder Bay had been ruined by settlers who cut all the timber [on their land] without providing for a recurring crop."¹⁸⁰ Styffe needed limits and pulpwood to operate his business, but he was also in favour of protecting the forest. There is no evidence to suggest that, although he knew people in government such as Charles Cox, he ever used political influence to get the

¹⁷⁷OSC I2 of (B, 10, 3, I1-27).

¹⁷⁸OSC I41 of (B, 22, 1, I1-121).

¹⁷⁹OSC I9 of (B, 10, 3, I1-27).

¹⁸⁰OSC I33 of (B, 21, 1, I1-39).

cutting rights or pulpwood he wanted.

In the search for a reliable supply of pulpwood, the middleman illustrates a hybrid nature. Paper companies had the financial resources and the organizational capability to operate logging camps. Styffe, although on an infinitely smaller scale, could do the same. He could also deal with hundreds of settlers at a time. It is not being said that Styffe's operation was exactly like that of a paper firm's. That would be ludicrous. What is being said is that Styffe's economic activities were sophisticated enough that in order to make his business more viable, he took on a characteristic of paper firms, and that was the ability to effectively operate and co-ordinate several logging camps. Conversely, like the farmer, Styffe's business was concerned only with the marketing of unprocessed pulpwood. He produced railroad ties and loaded other companies' wood as well. He required capital but not voluminous amounts of it. Compared with the operations of a paper company, which would have involved managing paper mills and their paper machines, producing and selling a variety of paper products (and thus having to also keep careful track of power availability and consumption), Styffe's was a relatively simple operation. Settler and middleman were mainly concerned with selling their pulpwood.

As far as Northern Ontario goes, one can see from the discussion that the people of the area were deeply affected

by decisions made by more economically and politically important regions. However, Styffe and his fellow operators did try to determine their own fortunes as, in 1935, when middlemen were able to have the export ban lifted. Styffe understood that his territory's pulpwood and paper trade worked within many limits and restrictions, but he attempted to build a strong company within that framework. As a middleman, he worked with the circumstances in which he found himself.

The running of logging camps figured so prominently in the operation of Styffe's company that it is best to devote an entire chapter to discussing them. This will provide a detailed look at how such middlemen as Styffe cut their own wood and how they treated their bushworkers.

CHAPTER TWO

BUNKHOUSES, HAULING ROADS, AND FINNISH BEER, THE LOGGING CAMPS OF OSCAR STYFFE LIMITED

One of the main components of Oscar Styffe's operations as a middleman were his logging camps. The fact that Styffe's company had the organizational capability and the resources to operate camps made Styffe similar (at least in this respect) to paper companies which also conducted logging operations. Conversely, by cutting wood himself (for sale to others), Styffe became, at least in part, a producer like a settler. At the same time, Styffe's company was still small enough so that, again, like the settler but unlike a major executive of a paper company, Styffe remained close to his cutting operations and took a personal interest in them. Thus, the first portion of the chapter will examine the complexities of administering logging camps (both Styffe's own camps and camps in general), while the next segment will discuss how much direct control Styffe exerted over the day-to-day functioning of his camps. Finally, the problems strikes posed for the middleman will be considered, as well as the important issue of the factors that Styffe believed to be the causes of labour disputes in the pulpwood cutting industry.

The basic operations of timber camps that were touched upon in the previous chapter need to be expanded upon here. This will be accomplished by taking the reader through a step-by-step analysis of what a logging camp actually involved; whenever possible, examples will be taken from Oscar Styffe's camps. This will provide the reader with a clear and specific view of the logging camps of Northwestern Ontario.

The cutting activities of bush camps commenced at roughly the same time each season - the fall. In other words, "The lumberman's year began as the farmer's year was drawing to a close ..."¹ It was at that time of the year that the bushworkers began their trek to the camps. Workers who were hired by a company to toil in its camps usually had their fare paid for the trip out to the camp. This would of course, be a charge against their future wages.² Examples of this in the Styffe Collection come from the early 1940s and indicate fares of \$2.70 per person being advanced to the Canadian Pacific Railway by Styffe to get men to the Kama (Jackpine River) area.³

Although it is not known whether Styffe followed them to the letter, there were Ontario provincial regulations

¹Mackay, The Lumberjacks, p. 73.

²OSC I77 of (B, 23, 15, I1-85).

³OSC I70-73 of (B, 23, 15, I1-85).

which spelled out how logging camps were to be laid out so as to provide for proper sanitary conditions. In a set of regulations approved in 1921 by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, operators had to inform the Provincial Board of Health about each and every logging camp the timber merchant had established.⁴ The provincial government also stated that individual timber merchants were to enter into contracts with registered physicians, who would inspect the middleman's camps on a monthly basis to ensure that they met the specified health regulations (as will be discussed shortly). At the same time, a doctor was also to be hired so to provide:

... for the medical and surgical care of his [the operator's] employees and for the payment of such services [he] may deduct from the pay due any employee a sum not exceeding \$1 per month.⁵

Evidence of the carrying out of the above regulations can be found in the Styffe Collection. On 10 November 1931, Styffe wrote to the Provincial Sanitary Inspector (in Fort William) to inform him that he expected to be operating Camps #1 and #3 at mile 97 east of Long Lac on the Canadian National Railway. Styffe revealed that Camp #1 was to employ 50 men,

⁴Provincial Board of Health, Regulations of the Provincial Board of Health for the Sanitary Control of Lumber, Timber and Mining Camps (Toronto: King's Printer, 1921), p. 3 [Hereafter referred to as PB of H.]

⁵Ibid., p. 4.

while #3 would have 40 men working.⁶ Moreover, an agreement from 1930 illustrates a contract between Dr. R.A. Caldwell and Oscar Styffe. It read in part:

the party of the first part [Dr. Caldwell] agrees ... to visit the camps of the Party of the Second Part [Oscar Styffe] once a month and also agrees to give Hospital Treatment to any man who is in need of medical care."⁷

The agreement went on to say that "the Party of the Second Part agrees to pay monthly to the Party of the First Part the sum of One Dollar (1.00) per month per man in his employ"⁸ Most importantly, the doctor agreed to "... supervise the sanitary conditions of the camps,"⁹ and to:

... inspect and report on same and fully and sufficiently perform and comply with the laws of the Province in connection with the care of the sanitary conditions of such camps.¹⁰

The Board of Health regulations went further than this. The location of a camp was vital. No camp was to be constructed within one hundred feet of any body of water such as a lake or river and, in terms of accommodations, each employee of a camp was to be given 400 cubic feet of air space within the

⁶OSC I3 of (B, 3, 54, I1-8).

⁷OSC I1 of (B, 2, 36, I1-2).

⁸OSC I1 of (B, 2, 36, I1-2).

⁹OSC I2 of (B, 2, 36, I1-2).

¹⁰OSC I2 of (B, 2, 36, I1-2).

bunkhouse.¹¹

Heavy mechanization of the woods industry did not occur during this eighteen year period being considered in this thesis. It was still true that "the pace of the camp was the pace of the horse."¹² Regulations therefore specified that "the stables in connection with a camp or works must be so located as not to contaminate the water supply or drain to any water."¹³ The province not only stated that the camp itself was to be one hundred feet from a river, but the stable was to be 150 feet away from both the camp and the river.¹⁴ The exact lay-out of Styffe's camps over the years is not known, but it seems likely that he would have followed these provincial regulations as he had followed the ones regarding services provided by doctors.

Finally, the government published rules and regulations that stipulated the sizes of such camp buildings as the bunkhouse and the cookhouse. The standard-sized camps listed by the government were: Class A 100-man capacity, Class B 50 men, and Class C 26 men.¹⁵ Specifications were given as to construction materials (logs or lumber),

¹¹PB of H, p. 7.

¹²Mackay, The Lumberjacks, p. 99.

¹³PB of H, p. 8.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 10-15.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 9-12.

ventilation, bunks, washrooms, and drainage.¹⁶ The major difference between the classes was that a Class A camp had an 85 X 40 foot bunkhouse and a cookhouse of the same size, Class B bunkhouses and cookhouses were 50 X 35 feet and the corresponding structures in Class C were 40 X 22 feet.¹⁷ Interestingly enough, when one takes the 400 cubic feet that the regulations gave each employee of a logging camp and compares that with the Class A, B, and C Camp bunkhouses (and their respective capacities), the cubic feet provided for each worker actually works out to about 270-280 cubic feet! The reason for this discrepancy is unclear. Styffe's camps were probably of varying sizes (more will be said about this later). A plan from 1929 for Camp #7 (Mackie Siding) shows a bunkhouse measuring 32 X 24 feet and a cookhouse of the same size.¹⁸ For whatever reason, these measurements do not conform with a Class A, B or C Camp, although a 32 X 24 size is most similar to a Class C camp's 40 X 22 measurements. This was only one camp of course, and the Styffe Collection shows that Styffe's camps ranged from Class A to Class C size.

How long did it take to construct a camp? The specific proportions of each camp would vary according to the number

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 9-12.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 10-11, 13-15.

¹⁸OSC I7-8 of (B, 2, 10, I1-8).

of workers each housed; an increase in the number of employees would obviously necessitate larger camps. In the early 1900s, "it took a dozen men two weeks to build a camp from spruce or pine logs"¹⁹ By Styffe's time, constructing a camp involved sending a crew to the site with a portable sawmill to cut the necessary logs and lumber.²⁰ In 1946, Oscar Styffe Limited was building Camp #10 near Ancliff Station (east of Thunder Bay). It was reported on September 7 that the camp location was being cleared and the saw mill had been hauled to the site (it was obviously not a full-sized sawmill).²¹ Then, on September 21, it was indicated that "cookery [was] complete except for inside work," and on October 5 it was reported to company headquarters that "camp #10 will be complete this Sunday."²² In general, camps seem to have taken at least one month to build.²³ While the camp was being built, the hauling roads were cut and the area where the freshly-cut timber would be piled beside the river cleared (the landing).²⁴

¹⁹Mackay, The Lumberjacks, p. 228.

²⁰Interview of Ron Thomson of J.F. Thomson Lumber Ltd., 18 October 1993.

²¹OSC I4 of (A, 1, 24, I1-12).

²²OSC I3 of (A, 1, 24, I1-12).

²³Ron Thomson interview, 18 October 1993.

²⁴Bertrand, "Timber Wolves."

In truth, "practically the same number of buildings are found in each camp"²⁵ Each camp had one or more bunkhouses where the men slept and one cookery where the cook and his helpers (cookees) prepared the daily meals for the bushworkers. The cook was "... ever an important figure at any camp ..."²⁶ A good cook kept the men happy and made them more inclined to stay in the camp. There was also the company store, known as a "van," where employees could purchase supplies. In the office were the foreman and clerk. The foreman organized the cutting and hauling of pulpwood, and he basically ensured that the men worked hard. The clerk in each camp was in charge of signing new workers on, ordering and selling goods from the van, and, most importantly, keeping track of how much pulpwood had been cut or hauled each day.²⁷ In addition to the above clerking duties, Styffe (and most likely other middlemen as well) specified that:

it is very important that the weekly report be made out and mailed to us as soon after the end of the week as convenient for you. On this report progress as to how much wood scaled, how much per tally board cut, how much hauled to date should be noted.²⁸

²⁵Edmund Bradwin, The Bunkhouse Man: A Study of Work and Pay in the Camps of Canada 1903-1914 (1928; rpt. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972) p. 76.

²⁶Bradwin, The Bunkhouse Man, p. 159.

²⁷OSC (B, 4, 38, I1-2), and Series A, B and Radforth, Bushworkers and Bosses, pp. 89-90.

²⁸OSC I1 of (B, 4, 38, I1-2).

The blacksmith in the camp performed such tasks as preparing horseshoes for the horses in the camp.

The primary activity of a logging camp was, of course, cutting pulpwood. Each pulpcutter "... worked on his own 60-foot strip of trees and stacked his wood"²⁹ The bushworkers, after felling a tree, cut its limbs off and cut the tree into either four or eight foot lengths. Stanley Horn, in his 1943 publication, This Fascinating Lumber Business, remarked:

in modern practice fellers generally cut the tree as close to the ground as possible leaving a minimum of stump, this in the interest of deriving the maximum value from the tree.³⁰

The pulpcutter was paid on a piece-work basis. In other words, at a rate per cord of pulpwood cut. There were no power saws yet. The actual cutting was performed manually with axes and saws.

The freshly cut pulpwood was skidded (dragged) by horse to the road side of the hauling road.³¹ Stumps were cut especially low in the middle of the strip so that the horses could get in more easily.³² The pulpwood was left along the hauling road to await transportation to the landing

²⁹Mackay, The Lumberjacks, p. 85.

³⁰Horn, This Fascinating Lumber Business, p. 125.

³¹Radforth, Bushworkers and Bosses, p. 57.

³²Ron Thomson interview, 18 October 1993.

where the wood was piled on the banks of a river. When winter arrived cutting usually began to wind down and hauling operations took precedence. What hauling basically involved was a horse or horses pulling a sleigh down the hauling road; each time a pile of pulpwood was reached, the sleigh driver (the teamster) and his helpers loaded the wood onto the sleigh and continued on to the landing. In the winter, the snow on the hauling roads was packed down, one groove was made on each side of the road for the sleigh's runners (this was accomplished using a sleigh with a plow and that made grooves in the snow as it was towed) and each night, the "highway" was covered with water to create an icy surface. Roads were iced because "... ice offers the least resistance to the sliding of sleigh runners and provides a stronger and more durable foundation than snow does."³³ As was shown in the previous chapter, the roads around the camp had to be kept cleared of snow and tree branches. Keeping the hauling roads open often proved quite difficult. The task was accomplished by attaching a plow to the sleigh.³⁴ The 1930s and 1940s saw Styffe and other operators utilizing tractors in their camps. Although these tractors were not yet powerful and well built enough to haul pulpwood, they

³³A. Koroleff, J.F. Walker and D.R. Stevens, Pulpwood Hauling with Horse and Sleigh: Efficiency of Technique (n.p.: Woodlands Section, Canadian Pulp and Paper Association and Pulp and Paper Research Institute of Canada, 1943), p. 27.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 23-25.

were still employed during the winter for "... opening strips and bulldozing main roads and landing strips."³⁵ It seems that a plough was attached to the tractor for this purpose.

The horse teams hauled the pulpwood to a landing where it could be measured by a Department of Lands and Forests culler (or scaler). Each operator who cut on Crown land had to keep a daily record of the "... exact number of logs cut, skidded and hauled"³⁶ This record was called a shanty book, and it "... was to be kept up to date ready for inspection and, at the year's end handed over to the Crown Timber Agent"³⁷ The pulpwood was left at the landing in piles (sometimes actually piled on the frozen river) and there it sat awaiting the spring thaw. Pulpwood could also have been transported by rail (how Styffe did it, will be considered later), but the river drive was generally utilized. A river drive is defined as "... the transportation of wood by water, utilising natural streams and rivers during a period of abundant water."³⁸ For

³⁵OSC I10 of (A, 1, 24, I1-12).

³⁶Archives of Ontario RG 18 Commissions and Committees, B63, Timber Commission 26 June 1922 Interim Report (Toronto: King's Printer, 1920), Box/Vol. 1, p. 9.

³⁷Lambert and Pross, Renewing Nature's Wealth, p. 265.

³⁸J.F. Walker, et al., River Drive of Pulpwood: Efficiency of Technique (n.p.: Woodlands Section, Canadian Pulp and Paper Association and Pulp and Paper Research Institute of Canada, 1946), pp. 4-5. [cited hereafter as River Drive.]

Styffe, as for the settler, water was the most economical method of transporting pulpwood.

The process of driving wood was quite straight forward. Once the ice on a river broke up and the water started running, it was simply a matter of dumping the pulpwood into the current. However, rivers could not just be made use of in whatever condition they were found. The pulpwood had to flow down the river with ease. At the very least, "minimum stream improvements usually include[d] the removal of large boulders, dead and fallen trees, ... and any other obstructions."³⁹ Much more could be done to improve a river. For example when operating on the Jackpine River in 1936, Styffe found the region quite rugged and the river rough. He realized that, "on fixing the river, on building dams, ... the further I got up [the river] I had to fix the river so that I could get the wood out."⁴⁰ Dams were erected to help regulate the flow of water for river drives. Much planning went into the construction. In constructing his third dam on the Jackpine in 1936, Styffe wrote to the person in charge of the operation, L.A. Maki, to specify that a design known as a "Self-loading Style" of dam had to be built. The specific structure that Styffe requested for the dam was clearly important because "... there is no fear

³⁹Ibid., p. 25.

⁴⁰1940 Inquiry, Proceedings, p. 510.

that a dam of that kind will break, as the water is not shoving against it but rather pressing it down."⁴¹

Temporary camps were set up along the river so as to make sure that there was no "... pile-up of logs at a rapids or narrows ... [which was] the worst complication that the lumberman had to face."⁴² If a pile up or jam occurred, the best possible scenario was that a few key logs would be loosened in order to get the drive going again. The worst situation was when dynamite had to be employed to break the pile-up.

Once the pulpwood was driven down the river, it was held at a holding area, the selection of which had to involve "... a maximum of safety with a minimum of cost"⁴³ Oscar Styffe, like other middlemen, laid out logs and joined them together with chains across the mouth of a river or bay to form a boom. This held the pulpwood in place. It appears that almost all (if not all) of Styffe's drives over the years were on rivers that emptied into Lake Superior. In each case, his booms held the pulpwood until it was either loaded onto a vessel bound for the United States or made into a raft and towed to No. 5 Dock in Port Arthur harbour.

⁴¹OSC I7 of (B, 12, 8, 11-12).

⁴²Lower, The North American Assault on the Canadian Forest, p. 36.

⁴³Walker et al., River Drive, p. 103.

At any rate one can see that operating a logging camp required a variety of organizational and managerial skills and a certain amount of capital. Such operations were well beyond the capability of the settler. The idea of a farmer opening up camps and hiring thirty or more men to cut and haul his pulpwood seems ludicrous. Table 2-1 shows wages Styffe paid out to his workers during selected years. Only a company could handle such numbers. The settler was simply attempting to make a little money selling pulpwood to make his farm viable. The paper company, with its enormous capital resources, could easily operate its own camps. The middleman, although his activities amounted to only a fraction of those of a paper firm, was large enough to conduct his own cutting activities.

Table 2-1.--Total Wages Paid to Workers by Oscar Styffe Limited for Selected Years [This does not include salaried employees].

| <u>Period</u> | <u>Wages Paid Out</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Calender Year 1931 | \$ 22,964.31 |
| Mar. 25/32 to Mar. 25/33 | \$ 42,741.83 |
| Apr. 25/33 to Apr. 26/34 | \$ 71,563.27 |
| May 1/35 to May 1/36 | \$135,222.50 |
| May 1/36 to July 28/37 | \$145,103.38 |

Source: Compiled from Income Tax forms from OSC
 "Correspondence Culled from Invoice Boxes" Boxes
 1-2, and I31 of (B, 13, 1, I1-53).

The importance of Styffe's camps, in terms of his

overall operation and how he and his company managed them, is an important issue which will now be considered. An untitled source from the Styffe Collection briefly chronicling Styffe's life states that, in the second half of the 1920s, when Styffe went into business for himself, it was not long before he was operating his own camps (the location of the earliest camp(s) is unknown).⁴⁴ Although comprehensive information on each camp is unavailable, a general picture can be provided as to where the camps were located over the years. From 1929 to 1934, the vast majority of the camps seem to have been located in the Longlac area. For the 1929-34 period, the Styffe Collection also indicates the camp locations of Hogarth and Mackie Siding. Both seem to have been east of Thunder Bay, and Mackie Siding was probably a railway siding branching off of the main Canadian Pacific Railway line. A camp located so near a rail line introduces a number of interesting issues that will be discussed later. From 1935 to 1939, the location mentioned most often in regard to camps was Kama. This was a location on the Jackpine River, the area where (it will be recalled) Styffe had acquired Crown limits in 1935. From 1941 to 1945, the sites were: Pigeon River, Stewart Creek (south of Thunder Bay along the border with the United States), Peninsula (Marathon), Umfreville (near

⁴⁴OSC I12 of (B, 11, 4, I1-86).

Sioux Lookout), and Ancliff (east of Thunder Bay).⁴⁵ There are also references to "Black Sturgeon," which may refer to the Black Sturgeon River.

The pattern that emerges is that, before 1935, Styffe's camps were concentrated in the Longlac area; after 1935, they seem to have been more widely spread. This was probably not by choice. Keeping in line with the themes of Chapter One, before 1935 Styffe most likely located his camps wherever he was able to obtain rights to cut on private limits; after 1935, he set up operation on whatever Crown limits he was allowed to use. A possible reason why he was able to stay in the Longlac area for so long was that it was easier to acquire long-term cutting rights on private land than on Crown land (Styffe was usually only allowed to cut on Crown land for one year periods).

How did camp production compare with pulpwood purchased from settlers? Tables 2-2 and 2-3 set the situations in the years for which the most solid data for both camps and settlers is available. Camp production for the selected years seems generally to have been higher than the total amounts of pulpwood Styffe acquired from settlers, although settlers' totals were often quite high (as Table 1-5 indicated). Over time, it seems that production by settlers became less important than that of the camps, in terms of

⁴⁵OSC Series A and B.

both total amounts, and species cut (settlers, as Styffe himself said, had only poplar remaining after the spruce was cut off their lands).⁴⁶

Table 2-2.--Pulpwood Cut by Camp Crews and Settlers for Oscar Styffe Limited, 1938-1943

| <u>Year</u> | <u>*Cut on Crown Lands (Cords)</u> | <u>*Cut on Private Holdings</u> | <u>Total of First 2 Columns</u> | <u>Settler's Wood (Cords)</u> |
|-------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1938-39 | 3,611.28 | - | 3,611.28 | 16,376.58 |
| 1939-40 | 14,734.70 | - | 14,734.70 | 12,205.38 |
| 1940-41 | 8,842.00 | - | 8,842.00 | 8,051.63 |
| 1941-42 | 16,745.00 | 8,272.34 | 25,017.34 | 8,130.31 |
| 1942-43 | 14,500 | - | 14,500 | 6,015 |

Source: OSC I30 of (B, 26, 50, I1-42) and I1 of (B, 24, 21, I1-58).

Note: * It is assumed that these are camps.

Table 2-3.--Pulpwood Cut by Settlers and Camp Crews for Oscar Styffe Limited in Selected Years

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Settler's Wood (Cords)</u> | <u>Year</u> | <u>Camp Production (Cords)</u> |
|-------------|-------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| 1932 | 1,799.25* | 1931-32 | 15,368.75 |
| 1934 | 20,322.73 | 1936-37 | 19,903.13 |
| 1937 | 7,224.66* | 1937-38 | 32,902 |

Source: Compiled by author from OSC "Correspondence Culled from Invoice Boxes" Boxes 1-2, I46-50 (B, 13, 1, I1-55), and Camp Production Material from Series B.

Note: * These are probably not the annual totals.

⁴⁶OSC I69-71 of (B, 23, 14, I1-86).

Styffe seems to have employed a fairly large number of men in his camps. Keeping in mind the 350-500 men indicated in Chapter One, it can also be said that, in an interview, John Styffe noted that "... I know our peak [at] one time, we had about 550 men in total over a winter"⁴⁷

Another example: speaking before the 1940 Inquiry into the Administration of the Department of Lands and Forests, Styffe emphasized that, if he were allowed back into the Jackpine River area to cut pulpwood, "... we would put in there probably five hundred men or more this spring."⁴⁸

Numbers such as 350 to 550 workers did not mean that this total was employed throughout the season but that 350-550 men represented a peak value for a season. Styffe's numbers can now be compared with those of other middlemen and/or the region as a whole. Table 2-4 displays data for selected years on numbers of bushworkers employed in camps, as reported by the Fort William Daily Times Journal. These figures are for the "Thunder Bay" area and show that the pulpwood supply trade employed large totals of lumberjacks; Styffe's totals were only a fraction of the total figures. As regards other operators, complete figures are not available but it would seem that, in the early 1920s, employment totals for middlemen could range from 50 up to

⁴⁷John Styffe interview.

⁴⁸1940 Inquiry, Proceedings, p. 513.

400 men (but the figures were usually reported as being in the hundreds of men).⁴⁹ In 1928, Charles Cox Limited employed 400 men, Charles Greer 300, and Indian Lake Lumber Company near Ignace 600 men.⁵⁰ The Pigeon Timber Company utilized 800 men in 1931.⁵¹

Table 2-4.--Approximate Numbers of Bushworkers Employed in District of Thunder Bay Camps as Reported by the Fort William Daily Times Journal for Selected Years

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Cutting Season</u> | <u>Numbers of Workers Reported or Expected in Logging Camps</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------|---|
| 1925 | Winter | 4,000 |
| 1929 | " " | 3,500 |
| 1934 | " " | 3,400 |
| 1936 | Summer | 2-3,000 |
| 1937 | Winter | 6,000* |
| 1940 | " " | 6,000* |

Source: Fort William Daily Times Journal 18 November 1925, 12 October 1929, 5 March 1934, 28 May 1936, 1 November 1937, 17 October 1940.

Note: * May also include surrounding area.

These statistics show that Styffe was an operator of at least moderate size. Therefore, in terms of quantity of wood cut and approximate numbers of men employed, it can be said that Styffe's camps were an important (if not major)

⁴⁹Fort William Daily Times Journal, 4 March 1921, 15 April 1922, 24 March 1923.

⁵⁰"Lumber Plans Cover Wide Areas to North and West," Fort William Daily Times Journal, 16 October 1928.

⁵¹"Big Force of Men Will Cut Wood in Bush," Fort William Daily Times Journal, 17 November 1931.

part of his overall operations.

In operating camps, Styffe not only in a small way resembled a paper company; he came to resemble a settler as well. When one looks at the formation of International Paper in the late 1890s, one sees twenty mills that joined together to create the paper colossus which soon after diversified and expanded.⁵² The phenomenal growth of the St. Regis Paper Company over the first quarter of the twentieth century found that company acquiring mills, utility companies, and Canadian timberland at a rapid rate.⁵³ The point is that when these giants operated their own camps, they were not managed by the board of directors but by a person who was in charge of a sub-department of the company. In other words, the leadership of a paper company was quite far removed from its workers. Not so with Styffe. Styffe was close to those who were working for him. His operation was small enough that he could take an extremely active role in the running of his logging camps.

Let us take an expanded look at what it was like to work in one of the camps of Oscar Styffe. The basic routine would have been similar, if not identical, to that of the

⁵²International Paper Company 1898-1948. After 50 Years: A Portrait of International Paper Company (n.p.: International Paper Company, 1948), p. 319.

⁵³Eleanor Amigo and Mark Neuffer, Beyond the Adirondacks: The Story of St. Regis Paper Company (Westport Connecticut: Greenwood, 1980), pp. 37-79.

camps of other middlemen. Besides the occupations of foreman, clerk, cutter, teamster, and cook, there were jobs associated with clearing roads and landings, taking care of camp horses, hauling supplies, and driving tractors.⁵⁴ Returning to an earlier theme, as early as in the 1930s there are references in the Styffe Collection to the use of tractors in company camps. Report after report from Camp #3 in 1934 mentions difficulty with the tractor's bearings, carburetor and drive shaft,⁵⁵ so that it does not appear that these early machines were very sturdy or well-suited to winter weather. This, together with their relative cost, may explain why Styffe used them to haul supplies but not pulpwood. Even in clearing roads, the tractor was far from reliable. It was reported from Camp #3 in April 1934 that "... the tractor had a great difficulty keeping up in advance of the teams owing to the depth of the snow and the scattered nature of the cuttings."⁵⁶ Thus, although machinery was not as important as it would later become, there were jobs in Styffe's camps associated with mechanization.

Styffe's camps seem to have been quite efficient in cutting pulpwood. The main product of the company's own

⁵⁴OSC I1 of (B, 3, 5, I1-20).

⁵⁵OSC (B, 7, 9, I1-54).

⁵⁶OSC I47 of (B, 7, 9, I1-54).

operations was spruce and balsam.⁵⁷ Poplar was most frequently obtained from farmers, though it was not uncommon for camps to cut poplar as well.⁵⁸ Styffe also cut railroad ties⁵⁹ (which were probably made from jackpine trees). Furthermore, Styffe cut fuelwood during the 1930s for use in his own camps, and it would be natural to assume that he sold fuelwood as well. During World War Two, for example, his company had a contract with the Department of Munitions and Supply to cut a quantity of fuelwood.⁶⁰ Styffe also produced boom timber, dimension timber and saw logs⁶¹ but, since he was primarily engaged in the pulpwood supply business, pulpwood would have been the major product of his camps.

Like other timber agents, Styffe paid his cutters by the cord and made certain deductions from their paychecks. There were a variety of piecework rates. These included rates for single and double cords as well as peeled single and double cords, and differed for spruce, balsam, and poplar.⁶² Table 2-5 shows the rates paid over time per cord

⁵⁷OSC Series A and B.

⁵⁸OSC Series A and B.

⁵⁹OSC Series E, I30.

⁶⁰OSC (B, 26, 52, I1-61).

⁶¹OTA Book Vol. 3.

⁶²"Pay Increases Given [to] District Bush Workers," Fort William Daily Times Journal, 5 May 1937.

of spruce and balsam. The author attempted to use actual Oscar Styffe rates, but when they were not available, rates from other sources were used. A few figures are shown as ranges. This is because different sources, for whatever reason gave varying values for the same year. The main point for the reader to perceive is how little the rates changed over time, and that this was roughly what Styffe was paying per cord (for comparative purposes, Table 2-6 shows hourly wage rates for other occupations for the same time period). Of course, rates for a double cord (eight-foot, as opposed to four-foot, pulpwood) and sap-peeled wood were higher, and these are probably the rates of \$3 to \$4 that one finds Styffe paying his cutters during the 1930s and 1940s when a value of around \$2.00/cord is not indicated. Table 2-7 illustrates the actual rates that Styffe paid other workers in his camps. Besides the fact that such employees as the cook earned a monthly salary, the reader will notice a gradual increase in wages and also the extreme ranges of some figures. The increases are probably due to the fact that, during the war, and the resulting labour shortage, these men were desperately needed and their wages increased. As to the range of rates per month in the same year, some employees probably had greater amounts of experience and consequently were paid more than others. Other workers were paid by the day. However, it is the pieceworker that concerns us here.

Table 2-5.--Piecework Rates Taken from Oscar Styffe Collection and Fort William Daily Times Journal Reports [Rate per Cord: Spruce/Balsam Pulpwood]

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Oscar Styffe Collection</u> | <u>Daily Times Journal</u> |
|-------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1929 | \$2.25 - \$2.50 | - |
| 1933 | - | \$2.00 - \$2.50 |
| 1935 | \$2.50 | - |
| 1936 | - | \$2.00 |
| 1937 | - | \$2.25 |
| 1938 | - | \$2.25 |
| 1939 | - | \$2.25 |
| 1940 | \$2.70 | - |
| 1942 | \$2.70 | - |

Source: OSC (B, 2, 6, I1-11), (B, 2, 7, I1-70), (B, 2, 9, I1-18), I7 of (11, 4, I1-86) Series E I27, and Fort William Daily Times Journal, 14 December 1933, 28 March 1934, 5 May 1937, 18 March 1938, 19 April 1939.

Pieceworkers were paid once a month. Like other operators, Styffe deducted board, medical fees, fares, van debts, mail delivery charges, and any previous advances from each worker's paycheck.⁶³ Although the average prices and rates charged by Styffe are not known, it is clear from viewing the settlement sheets in the Styffe Collection of workers that board and van charges and cash advances received by the workers were the most substantial deductions from the gross pay of the employee. It is possible to give an idea of how much a bushworker received in a month after deductions. A sample of 46 settlement sheets from Camp #4 (1929) shows an average gross earning of

⁶³OSC (B, 2, 6, I1-11).

Table 2-6.--Hourly Wages for Selected Occupations in the
Thunder Bay Area for the 1930s.

| <u>Occupation</u> | | <u>1930</u> | <u>1937</u> |
|------------------------------------|--------|-------------|-------------|
| Stone Sharpener in Grinder Room | (APPC) | .68/hr | .79/hr |
| Cooks in Sulphite Mill | " | .95 | .99 |
| Screenmen in Sulphite Mill | " | .45 | .51 |
| #1 Machine Tender (Paper Machine) | (TBPC) | | \$1.60 |
| Head electricians | " | | .90 |
| Labourers at Yard | " | | .51 |
| Coal handler in Boiler Steam plant | " | | .55 |

Source: Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society B 14/1/1
Abitibi Power and Paper Co. Wage Rate Comparison
1926-1947.

Note: APPC - Abitibi Power and Paper Co. Ltd.
TBPC - Thunder Bay Paper Co. Ltd.

Table 2-7.--Monthly Salaries for Selected Occupations in the
Camps of Oscar Styffe Limited in Selected Years

| <u>Occupation</u> | <u>1937</u> | <u>1942</u> | <u>1945</u> |
|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Foreman | \$45/month | \$100-150/month | \$150/month |
| Clerk | \$75/month | \$ 80-125/month | \$ 85-135/month |
| Cook | \$60-75/month | \$100-125/month | \$130-185/month |
| Cookie | \$35/month | \$ 54/month | \$100/month |
| Teamster | \$45/month | \$63.70/month | *\$ 5/day |

Source: OSC Series E I27.

Note: *Wage not given as monthly salary.

\$108.63. The average deduction was \$47.43, so that employees ended up with a net average pay per month of \$60.61.⁶⁴ Camp #5 in the Ancliff area saw similar totals for pieceworkers in 1943. The average gross earning was \$112.26, the average deduction \$56.40, and the average net

⁶⁴Ibid.

pay \$56.77.⁶⁵ In Styffe's camps, a worker could earn a reasonable wage cutting pulpwood but, if he had asked for a large advance and purchased a great deal at the camp van, this, added to his board charges, would seriously reduce his month-end pay. One employee in June 1943 cut \$105.00 worth of pulpwood but, after deductions, he received only \$9.68!⁶⁶ This is, of course, an extreme case. If a bushworker did not ask for an advance and kept his van charges down, however, he was able to collect a substantial amount on pay day. M. Erikson, for example cut \$170.00 worth of pulpwood in a month in 1929, had board charges of \$59.00 but lost only \$18.10, \$3.00, \$3.00, and \$0.75 respectively for van, advances, medical needs, and mail charges. He thus found himself with \$83.10 at the end.⁶⁷ It does not appear that one was left destitute after labouring in one of the logging camps of Oscar Styffe.

An important question for students of the pulp and paper industry relates to how long an individual camp usually remained in operation. This is a fascinating issue because it involves transportation costs, availability of supply, etc. Much information regarding camps is found in the Styffe Collection. It is unclear, however, exactly how

⁶⁵OSC (Series A).

⁶⁶OSC (Series A).

⁶⁷OSC I5 of (B, 2, 6, I1-11).

long the average Styffe camp lasted. At the same time, the average size of the limits that Styffe operated on is unknown. Nevertheless, a few general observations can be presented here. Ordinarily, camps remained in operation for a period of about two years. Over that time period, the pulp cutters would have to go farther and farther from the camp to reach their cutting strips.⁶⁸ Consequently, one factor for the operator continuously to keep in mind was the economics of having men walk to work. At what point in time would it become more cost effective to build a new camp?⁶⁹ Camp economics was an important consideration. Once a camp was a great distance away from the supply of pulpwood, a great deal of time would have been lost actually getting to the stands, and this would mean decreased production. Appearing before the Latchford-Riddell Inquiry in 1920, Charles Cox was asked why he had operated six camps in 1918 in the Black Bay Peninsula area. His reply was that he had to cover the territory.⁷⁰ Sometimes an obsolete camp that was adjacent to a rail line would be used as a point from which to haul supplies to the new camp. Styffe's company

⁶⁸Ron Thomson interview, 18 October 1993.

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Archives of Ontario RG18 Commissions and Committees, B63, Timber Commission Proceedings, 1920, Box/Vol. III, pp. 2128-29.

seems to have utilized at least one camp in such a manner.⁷¹ Usually, however, once a given camp had served its purpose, it was abandoned.⁷² Of course, this is assuming that Styffe was able to maintain cutting rights in an area long enough to have to construct a new camp.

An even closer look can be taken at Styffe's camps by exploring how much of an interest he took in them. Styffe had the time and energy to keep a close eye on what was occurring in his camps, and he took advantage of that opportunity. The evidence in the Styffe Collection (including correspondence between Styffe and the camp foremen and clerks) demonstrates that Styffe did not simply assign a foreman to manage a camp and then leave things totally in his hands. Styffe took on a more active managerial role. He had to. He had production quotas and deadlines to meet. The clerk of each camp sent a report to company headquarters each week detailing how much production had occurred in the camp that week.⁷³ These progress reports were quite detailed. One section listed an occupation (for example, a teamster) and then the number of men working in that capacity. Each report also had to indicate how much wood had been cut that week and how much

⁷¹OSC (Series A).

⁷²Ron Thomson interview, 18 October 1993.

⁷³OSC II of (B, 4, 38, II-2).

had been produced and hauled up to that point in the season. The average load of pulpwood hauled and the average distance of the haul was also given.⁷⁴ Such information is shown more clearly in Table 2-8 which displays hauling information taken from Camp #3 reports (Longlac area 1933-34). Besides the production reports, a constant stream of letters flowed back and forth between Styffe and his camps.

Table 2-8.--Information on Hauling Pulpwood Taken from Camp #3 (Longlac) Weekly Reports, Decmeber 1933 to March 1934.

| <u>For the Week Ending</u> | <u>Average Haul Miles</u> | <u>Average Cord Load</u> | <u>No.of Trips Per Day</u> | <u>Average Hauled Per Day This Week</u> |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Dec. 30/33 | 3.5 | 6 | 2 | - |
| Jan. 6/34 | 3.5 | 6 | 3 | 109 |
| Jan. 13/34 | 3.5 | 6.88 | 3 | 165.33 |
| Jan. 20/34 | 3 | 7.70 | 3 | 185.16 |
| Jan. 27/34 | 3 | 7.31 | 3 | 149.2 |
| Feb. 3/34 | - | 7.38 | 2.5 | 120.66 |
| Feb. 10/34 | 5.5 | 6.25 | 2 | 91.66 |
| Feb. 17/34 | 5 | 7.20 | 2 | - |
| Feb. 24/34 | 5 | 6.9 | 12 | 83.1 |
| Mar. 3/34 | 5 | - | 2 | 69.3 |

Source: OSC (B, 8, 12, I1-17).

Such correspondence best illustrates the degree of control Styffe exerted over his camp operations. In order to provide a sound discussion, specific camps (Camps #8, and #1) and a definite time period (1930-31) will now be examined. Camp #8 was located in the Longlac area and its

⁷⁴OSC (B, 11, 40, I1-37).

clerk was Ernest Lindgren. The first thing that can be learned by perusing Lindgren's correspondence with Styffe is that it was not uncommon for Styffe to write (for example, on 25 November 1930) that, "I expect to be up there [at the camp] by the end of this week...."⁷⁵ Thus, Oscar Styffe was in the habit of personally visiting his camps in order to perceive first-hand how the operation was progressing (it is not known if this was a common practise among middlemen). Furthermore, when Styffe wrote to his camps, it was with a specific purpose in mind. The letters did not take on the tone of a discussion. Styffe was simply giving instructions. For example, on 14 January 1931, he wrote Lindgren to state:

I am sending you specifications of jackpine poles, which there is a market for at present. I wish you would look into this together with Fred [the foreman of Camp #8] and give me an idea as to how many possibly can be had
⁷⁶

Other letters reveal Styffe as able to take a situation at a camp and understand what needed to be done. On 26 February 1931, he contacted Lindgren to inform him that:

I have been expecting to get a wire from you for more men as two teamsters came in this morning, but as I haven't anything from you I'm not going to send you any men. You are probably using some of your piecemakers in their places.⁷⁷

⁷⁵OSC I2 of (B, 2, 7, I1-70).

⁷⁶OSC I14 of (B, 2, 7, I1-70).

⁷⁷OSC I22 of (B, 2, 7, I1-70).

Styffe expected his instructions to be followed, and he let people know if he perceived any problems. On 29 June 1931, Styffe wrote Dan Healey, the clerk of Camp #1, which was operating during the summer and indicated "I notice that camps #1 and #2 are not reporting the men's stick-count [probably sawlogs]. I have not given any instructions to discontinue this practise"⁷⁸ He then concluded by stating bluntly that "my instructions were to have the straw boss look after this count in every camp, and it must be carried out without fail."⁷⁹ Styffe also knew how to take charge when a serious problem arose in his camps. When the Lake Sulphite Company went into receivership in February 1938, Styffe was already in the process of producing pulpwood for them. Styffe wrote to the foreman of Camp #10, L.A. Maki, and instructed him to have the workers go to Red Rock for further pay. After that, they were to go back to the camp and continue working, because some arrangement would probably be worked out with Lake Sulphite. In Styffe's view,

no matter what takes place a workman can always place a lien under the woodmen's lien Act which makes it impossible to dispose of the wood until after they [the workmen] are paid.⁸⁰

Styffe clearly managed his camps, and did not appreciate

⁷⁸OSC I7 of (B, 3, 53, I1-83).

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰OSC I57 of (B, 12, 27, I1-78).

clerks telling him how his camps should be run. In 1930, he wrote the clerk at Camp #7 (Mackie Siding) and told him that he did not want anymore "sneering or instructive" letters from him; if he did not have anything better to do, then he was to grab a bucksaw. Styffe put it succinctly:

I am not asking you for any advice in the matter [the operation of Camp #7] what I want you to do is to get the wood out, and if you feel...that you are unable to get it out, I'll see that it get[s] out.⁸¹

If Styffe was so close to the day-to-day activities of his camps, this must have translated into concern about working conditions. Oscar Styffe seems to have been determined to operate camps that were not only efficient, but also easy to live in as well. Correspondence between Styffe and his clerks and foremen provides the most reliable evidence, because it is unlikely that there would have been any secrets regarding camp conditions between those individuals. For example, in 1938, Styffe complained to L.A. Maki of Camp #10 about a lice problem in the bunkhouse there. Styffe made a point of insisting "I have never had a condition like it [in] any of my camps yet and I do not want it."⁸² Concern about the welfare of the workers was shown in a letter Styffe wrote to the clerk of Camp #1 on 17 June 1931. Styffe informed the clerk that he was shipping six empty syrup barrels so that the men could make some "Finnish

⁸¹OSC I14 of (B, 2, 9, 11-18).

⁸²OSC I61 of (B, 12, 27, 11-78).

beer" (a thirst quencher made from raisins and molasses).⁸³ Styffe was hoping that it would "... give the men a chance to bring a cool drink with them into the bush, and keep them from drinking swamp water which is not very healthy"⁸⁴ Styffe also sought to keep his camps well-stocked with food. A sampling of a month's worth of shipments to Camp #5 in the Ancliff area reveals such foodstuffs a hip beef, pork butts, weiners, beef sausage, cheese, shortening, butter, eggs, bacon, smoked ham, potatoes, carrots, fresh beef, spaghetti, etc.⁸⁵

Food and supplies generally reached Styffe's camps, which were often far from large population centres, by rail. Several of his camps seem to have been located near a rail line such as the Canadian National Railway. In fact, Camp #1 near Longlac in 1931 was so close to the tracks that Styffe informed the clerk that if a worker in the camp were ever seriously injured and a train coming through the area but could not be contacted in time by telegraph, then in Styffe's words "... all you have to do is to flag it [down]

⁸³Ron Thomson interview, 18 October 1993.

⁸⁴OSC I53 of (B, 3, 53, I1-83).

⁸⁵OSC (Series A). This reference comes from May 1943, which was four months after Styffe died. However, since John Styffe had aided his father in managing the firm since its inception and took it over after Oscar Styffe's death, there is no reason to assume that it was being run any differently than when his father was alive, or that a different quality of food was being sent to the camps in May 1943.

on the track in front of the camp."⁸⁶ The trains that kept Styffe's and other operators' camps supplied were not massive freight trains. Instead, two or three times a week, small trains carried men and supplies out to the camps. They were called "way freights."⁸⁷ Styffe made a reference to such a train in 1936 when he wrote to E. Nordlander in Camp #6 (Linko) and told him that "the Canadian National Railway tells us that they can have the horse car picked up to-morrow some time by a special train"⁸⁸ Not all of Styffe's camps were on rail lines, but they were so close to one that a short tote or supply road could be cut to take supplies and mail to the camp.⁸⁹ Since Styffe knew what was going on in each of his camps, he had the capability to ensure that they were well-supplied and would keep the men happy.

However, Styffe could not always keep his camps free of complaint. Summer logging camps, for example, were more temporary in nature, possibly because the peeling season only lasted from the spring to the summer. At any rate, camp buildings would have had wooden floors and wooden walls

⁸⁶OSC I3 of (B, 3, 53, I1-83).

⁸⁷Ron Thomson interview, 18 October 1993.

⁸⁸OSC "Correspondence Culled from Invoice Boxes." Box 2, folder entitled: "Camp No. 6 E.N. Correspondence 1936: 1936 Invoices."

⁸⁹OSC Series A and B.

up to the height of the bunks; the rest of the bunkhouse was in the form of a canvas tent.⁹⁰ In June 1936, a representative of the Lumber and Saw Mill Workers Union wrote the advisory board for the logging industry in Port Arthur to state that, in one of Styffe's summer camps in the Kama area, there was no wash house and men had to wash along the river bank.⁹¹ It was also claimed that one of the camp tents with a capacity of eighteen men in fact held twenty-eight. This was apparently because of the temporary stay of a drive crew in the camp.⁹² Finally, some workers complained that the strip that they were cutting balsam on had already been cut over for spruce and the remaining trees were quite scattered.⁹³ Styffe seems to have been attempting to create not only an environment where his men would be most productive, but also a livable workplace. It should be remembered that Styffe had once been a labourer himself.

Another reason for Styffe to remain in steady contact with his camps (mainly through mail shipped by rail) was that, like the camps of other middlemen, they generally had a fluctuating number of workers in them. This is shown in

⁹⁰Ron Thomson interview, 18 October 1993.

⁹¹OSC I61 of (B, 12, 18, I1-112).

⁹²OSC I65 of (B, 12, 18, I1-112).

⁹³OSC I61 of (B, 12, 18, I1-112).

Table 2-9 and 2-10. One can see that the number of bushworkers in the camps did not remain constant throughout the entire season. Table 2-9 illustrates a steady decline for Camp #8 during 1930, while Table 2-10 for Camp #5 (Ancliff) demonstrates several fluctuations over a period of 23 months. What caused these patterns? First of all, when one considers Table 2-9 one notices that from December 13 to March 9, the number of makers (cutters) declined from 32 to 0. At the same time, by March 9, the number of teamsters, loaders, and landingmen had risen from zero to five, four, and four respectively. This gives us one of the reasons why turnovers of men occurred: different stages of forest operation required varying types and numbers of men.⁹⁴ Hauling and loading pulpwood usually required smaller numbers of men than cutting. This consideration also explains in part the figures in Table 2-10. An added feature of these numbers is that summer totals were high, sometimes higher than in the winter months! In general, the total amount employed fell in the spring because the main winter cutting operations were largely concluded. The figures begin to rise again in the late spring and into the summer because that was when sap-peeling of pulpwood took place. Each fall and winter, the numbers began to increase again.

⁹⁴Ron Thomson interview, 18 October 1993.

Table 2-9.--Numbers of Workers in Camp #8 1930-31.

| <u>Month</u> | <u># of Men</u> | <u>Makers (Cutters)</u> | <u>Teamsters</u> | <u>Loaders</u> | <u>Landingmen</u> |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Dec. 13/30 | 43 | 32 | - | - | - |
| Dec. 20/30 | 43 | 31 | - | 2 | - |
| Dec. 27/30 | 42 | 25 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Jan. 3/31 | 40 | 20 | 5 | 3 | 4 |
| Jan. 10/31 | 39 | 19 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| Jan. 17/31 | 35 | 13 | 6 | 4 | 4 |
| Jan. 31/31 | 25 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| Feb. 7/31 | 24 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 4 |
| Feb. 14/31 | 24 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 4 |
| Feb. 21/31 | 23 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| Feb. 28/31 | 24 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| Mar. 7/31 | 24 | - | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| Mar. 9/31 | 23 | - | 5 | 4 | 4 |

Source: OSC (B, 3, 5, I1-20).

However, a turnover of employees took place for other reasons than this cycle of forest operations. At times, workers simply decided to get up and leave a camp. This was a concern that Styffe expressed to clerk Dan Healey of Camp #1 on 9 June 1931. He instructed Healey to have the cutters report how much they had cut to the office each night. Styffe wished this done because men at the camp had been leaving without first reporting to the camp office. Styffe said of bushworkers, when it was discovered that they had actually vacated the camp, "if they are gone, wire your order in for new men to take their places. This will enable us to know exactly every day what is being

Table 2-10.--Number of Workers in Camp #5 (Ancliff)
1943-1945.

| <u>Date</u> | <u>1943</u> | <u>1944</u> | <u>1945</u> |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| January | | 31 | 30 |
| February | | 25 | 29 |
| March | | 10 | 25 |
| April | | - | |
| May | 22 | 30 | |
| June | 33 | 39 | |
| July | 26 | 38 | |
| August | 12 | 14 | |
| September | 14 | 15 | |
| October | 15 | 14 | |
| November | 21 | 13 | |
| December | 27 | 12 | |

Source: OSC (Series A)

cut"⁹⁵ Reasons for leaving a camp could have ranged from disagreements with a foreman to unhappiness with a bad cook. Some people could just not handle the workload.⁹⁶ It is not clear if bushworkers leaving camps was a large problem for Styffe. It appears to have been a minor irritation for him.

Another factor that affected scores of men at the camps was the rate of accidents. Bushwork was the opposite of a desk job; this "... work was often dangerous."⁹⁷ Under the Workman's Compensation Act of 1914, such operators as Styffe

⁹⁵OSC I24 (B, 3, 53, I1-83).

⁹⁶Ron Thomson interview, 18 October 1993.

⁹⁷Douglas Thur, "Beat Around the Bush: The Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union and the New Political Economy of Labour in Northern Ontario 1936-1988" (M.A. thesis, Lakehead University, 1990), p. 24.

had to pay into a fund according to the accident rate in their branch of the industry.⁹⁸ Therefore, it was in the best interest of the operator to keep accidents to a minimum. It is not known how safe or unsafe Styffe's camps were, as compared with those of other operators. Examining accidents that occurred over the 1929/30, 1935, and 1941 seasons in some of Styffe's camps, the accidents appear to have been fairly frequent (at least once per week or more).⁹⁹ They involved axe cuts, men hurting their backs or falling while carrying pulpwood, and men falling off a sleigh while hauling pulpwood.¹⁰⁰ These sorts of injuries were not minor and they seem to have been fairly common ones; often men were able to go back to work after recuperating from the injury.¹⁰¹ There is nothing to suggest that Styffe's camps were less safe than those of other operators.

Thus, Styffe's operations were small enough for him to be able to take a direct hand in managing and running camps. However, in any industry there is the ever present possibility of labour disputes. The middlemen of Northwestern Ontario also had to deal with them. In

⁹⁸Radforth, Bushworkers and Bosses, p. 66.

⁹⁹OSC (B, 8, 29, I1-51), (B, 2, 33, I1-132), (B, 22, 15, I1-41), and (B, 25, 18, I1-29).

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

¹⁰¹Ron Thomson interview, 18 October 1993.

general, conditions in Ontario logging camps were far from ideal. It could be said that, because of "draughty bunkhouses, bedbugs, low pay, dangerous work, sparse time, unfair foremen - bushworkers had plenty to complain about in Ontario's woodlands."¹⁰² It is not surprising that, before and during the time of Oscar Styffe, efforts were made to unionize Ontario's lumberjacks and to improve the conditions under which they worked. A complete look at unionization in Northwestern Ontario's logging industry is well beyond the scope of this work and, in any case, much has been written on the subject already. Instead, a general look will be taken at what the major unions were. This will be followed by an analysis of Styffe's involvement in two major strikes in 1930s, and a discussion of what Styffe perceived as the causes of these strikes.

After the Great War ended, feeling "... released from wartime restraints, workers throughout Canada surged into unions in unprecedented numbers."¹⁰³ The first major union in the Northern Ontario forests was the Lumber Workers Industrial Union (L.W.I.U.). This bushworker's union had its origins in British Columbia and was associated with the large industrial union, known as the One Big Union

¹⁰²Radforth, Bushworkers and Bosses, p. 107.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 114.

(O.B.U.).¹⁰⁴ David J. Bercuson, in his Fools and Wise Men: The Rise and Fall of the One Big Union wrote:

The One Big Union had been intended by its founders to be the vehicle of revolt against capitalism and the craft union system, while offering a more effective trade union for the daily struggle.¹⁰⁵

Although the L.W.I.U. fought hard for improved working conditions, internal disputes and high unemployment in the early 1920s (gave the operators the advantage in dealing with unions)¹⁰⁶ and forced the L.W.I.U. to "... tumble ... into obscurity"¹⁰⁷ From those earlier efforts there arose two other bushworkers' unions in the 1920s. One was the Lumber Worker Industrial Union number 120, which was affiliated with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW),¹⁰⁸ an American-based union that "... advocated the establishment of one big union of all workers, organized into industrial 'departments' or unions"¹⁰⁹ The second union was the Lumber Workers Industrial Union of Canada (L.W.I.U.C.), and it created close ties with the

¹⁰⁴Thur, "Beat Around the Bush," p. 31.

¹⁰⁵David J. Bercuson, Fools and Wisemen: The Rise and Fall of the One Big Union (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1978), p. 252.

¹⁰⁶Radforth, Bushworkers and Bosses, pp. 118-119.

¹⁰⁷Mackay, The Lumberjacks, p. 253.

¹⁰⁸Radforth, Bushworkers and Bosses, p. 111.

¹⁰⁹Bercuson, Fools and Wise Men, p. 40.

Communist Party in Canada.¹¹⁰

Of course, as was true of the bushworkers' union before it, Finnish workers were an important part of these two unions in Northern Ontario. In 1926, the LWIUC and LWIU number 120 worked together in the region's first general bush strike to gain wage concessions from the operators.¹¹¹ The Great Depression created high unemployment in the bush, however, and union organization suffered.¹¹² The two unions ceased their co-operation. By 1933, the forest industry was recovering and the LWIUC (which was also associated with the Workers Unity League) decided that it was time for the worker to push for better pay and camp conditions and an end to the "yellow dog" contract which required "... new employees to pledge they ... [would] not join a union."¹¹³ In the 1933-35 period, a number of significant strikes took place in Northwestern Ontario as bushworkers fought for better wages and working conditions. How one such strike ran its course was reported in the Fort William Daily Times Journal. The strike began on 1 November 1933, when the Pigeon Timber Company and Legrow Timber Company told their bushworkers that they could not pay them

¹¹⁰Thur, "Beat Around the Bush," p. 38.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 41.

¹¹²Radforth, Bushworkers and Bosses, p. 125.

¹¹³Thur, "Beat Around the Bush," p. 45.

higher wages due to bad market conditions. Other workers in other camps decided that they should also demand wage increases. By 22 November 1933, Mayor Robert B. Pow (of Fort William) was pleading with the Department of Lands and Forests to intervene in the dispute because no cutting was taking place and contracts were being lost. The workers made the following demands: \$2.50 per single cord, \$4.00 for a double cord, \$40.00 per month for workers who were paid by the month, and charges of seventy-five cents per day for board. The bushworkers rejected the operators' settlement offer on 25 November 1933 which included \$2.00 per single cord, \$3.50 per double cord, \$35.00 per month for monthly men, and seventy-five cents per day for board. The operators argued that the workers were trying to overthrow capitalism. Finally, on 14 December 1933, the employees agreed to the operators' offer of \$2.00 per single cord, \$3.50 per double cord, \$26-35.00 per month for monthly workers, and seventy-five cents per day for board.¹¹⁴ This was just one of many disputes in 1933-35 between labour and management.

As was mentioned in Chapter One, the 1933-35 strikes in the District of Thunder Bay and the surrounding area reduced Styffe's productive capacity. A labour dispute did not have to arise in one of his camps for him to be affected by it.

¹¹⁴Fort William Daily Times Journal 1 November 1933 to 18 December 1933.

In 1933, as was mentioned earlier, the first signs of unrest appeared in the logging camps of the Pigeon Timber Company and Legrow Timber Company. Once the bushworkers went on strike in those camps, employees of other operators also decided to take up the cause. This is not to say that Styffe was a saint and that no one ever complained about his camps. What can be said, however, is that the general strikes did not seem to begin as a result of poor conditions in his own camps. Strikes did affect him, however. In June 1933, Styffe wrote to an organization called the Lumbermen's Association saying that, because of labour unrest, he had lost two weeks of production and his camps had been temporarily closed. He even stated that his contracts to deliver pulpwood to paper mills were in danger of being lost.¹¹⁵ Styffe claimed that "this was the most serious labour disturbance we have ever experienced"¹¹⁶

Styffe obviously had a vested interest in seeing the various disputes settled. In fact, he took an active part in the settlement of the fall 1933 strike mentioned earlier. The Fort William Daily Times Journal reported on 14 December 1933:

a committee comprising D.A. Clark President of the Lakehead Timbermen's Association, C.W. Cox and Oscar Styffe met the strike committee this morning and informed the committee officially of the agreement

¹¹⁵OSC I4 of (B, 9, 38, I1-4).

¹¹⁶Ibid.

reached by the operators.¹¹⁷

This quote also reinforces the impression that Northwestern Ontario middlemen worked together, especially in difficult times, through the Lakehead Timbermen's Association.

The year 1935 witnessed more disputes and, again, Oscar Styffe was affected by the strikes. In June of 1935, according to Styffe, two labour delegates from Bay Street in Port Arthur (probably from the LWIUC) turned up at one of his camps and informed the men that they should go on strike for higher wages. Many of the bushworkers listened to the call at Camp #1 but, at Camp #2, only one third of the workers even went to the meeting arranged by the delegates.¹¹⁸ Shortly after, Styffe was presented with a list of sixteen demands, including higher wages and greater freedom for union organizers to visit camps.¹¹⁹ Styffe claimed that his men had no serious complaints regarding camp conditions and charged that the workers who actually went on strike did so due to union pressure. He wrote to the Forestry Branch Building of the Department of Lands and Forests (in Port Arthur) to insist that "... arrangements should be made whereby these delegates are kept away from the camps so that the men can perform their work peacefully

¹¹⁷"Contractors Agree Strike Believed Over," Fort William Daily Times Journal, 14 December 1933.

¹¹⁸OSC I78 of (B, 10, 33, I1-127).

¹¹⁹OSC I54 of (B, 10, 33, I1-127).

without being dist[urbed] by these paid agitators."¹²⁰

The labour troubles seem to have continued for Styffe (and the other middlemen) for, on 3 July 1935, he turned down an application for employment and explained to the person that "because of the existing strike we have no work at present."¹²¹ By 20 June 1935, Marshall Wells Limited (a lumbermen's supply company) had written to Styffe to state that J.P. Bertrand of Winnipeg was offering forty to fifty wood cutters to help ease the strike situation. Even though it was too late in that particular season to use them,¹²² this illustrates that the operators were not opposed to hiring "replacement workers." It is not known how often, if ever, Styffe utilized scabs to replace striking pulpcutters.

Styffe, it would seem, sincerely believed that he was doing his best to keep his employees content. Therefore, it is interesting to analyze whom he blamed for the strikes when they did occur. These answers are not difficult to find because they were subjects that Styffe actually talked about in public. On 16 September 1941, he addressed a Port Arthur Rotary Club meeting which was reported in a Lakehead newspaper. In turning to the labour problems experienced by middlemen in the 1933-35 period, Styffe came right to the

¹²⁰OSC I78 of (B, 10, 33, I1-127).

¹²¹OSC I114 of (B, 10, 33, I1-127).

¹²²OSC I10 of (B, 11, 3, I1-33).

point and charged that the ideology of communism had spread its poison to the New World.¹²³ In his view, the problem was clearly the impact of this ideology on the minds of the workers, for "... labour here bowed its head gracefully to the songs of the silvery tongues."¹²⁴ In viewing the 1933-35 strikers as a whole, Styffe was clear in his opinions. He argued that "strike followed strike, and any camp condition or any wage rate no matter how good or how fair was only the basis for higher and higher demands."¹²⁵ At the time of one of the 1933 strikes, it would seem that other operators shared similar views. An undated strike information bulletin (which probably dates from 1933) found in the Styffe Collection and put out by the operators claimed that the wages paid to local workers were better than those paid in other regions (for example, Quebec) and that high production costs left the middleman with only a small margin of profit. The operators argued that the strike was not the work of the workers themselves, but of an "invisible" group bent on increasing the cost of producing Canadian wood so that Russian wood would have a price advantage in the American market.¹²⁶

¹²³OSC I2 of (B, 10, 3, I1-27).

¹²⁴Ibid.

¹²⁵Ibid.

¹²⁶OSC I1 of (B, 9, 38, I1-4).

The organizers of the strikes, not surprisingly, had a different notion of what had caused the labour disputes. For example, on 9 June 1933, the Central Publicity Committee published a strike bulletin that claimed that the infamous "yellow dog" contracts and low wages were the issues. The bulletin exclaimed "get in the ranks and we will fight the masters and their slave contracts to a standstill."¹²⁷

Styffe did not believe that timber merchants were evil exploiters of workers, but he did not hold that all middlemen were totally innocent either. In a letter to the editor of the Port Arthur News Chronicle (which is undated but appears to come from the 1933-35 period), Styffe claimed that most operators were paying their bushworkers a fair wage. However, according to him, there were some timber merchants who were taking advantage of the labour surplus of the time and paying their workers lower wages. Styffe maintained that such actions could only result in strikes.¹²⁸ To be sure, Styffe emphasized that elements of communism within the labour movement were a problem, but he did not discount the fact that:

those who are taking advantage of the labour situation by cutting wages and raising prices for board are operating at an advantage [they would have had a higher profit margin because they were paying their workers

¹²⁷OSC I3 of (B, 9, 38, I1-4).

¹²⁸OSC I11 of (B, 10, 3, I1-27).

less] as compared with the others [operators]¹²⁹
 However, the agitation caused by these operators, Styffe said, meant that even those who were treating labour fairly were hurt by strikes.

Styffe, it would seem, did try to be fair to his workers. In November of 1938, Styffe received a letter from the Department of Lands and Forests stating that a Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union local claimed that some of Styffe's workers were being paid less than they should have been under the Industrial Standards Act.¹³⁰ The Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union (LSWU) had been formed to replace the LWIUC in 1935 after the Seventh Congress of the Communist International instructed the Communist Party of Canada and its affiliated unions to join with American Federation of Labour unions to create labour unity and thus fight fascism.¹³¹ The Industrial Standards Act had been established in 1935 by the Ontario Liberal government. Under the act, management and labour would attend meetings set up by Ministry of Labour officials to:

... discuss wages and hours of work in the industry. Agreement between the preponderance of employers and employees in the district, would result in a binding agreement for a period of one year.¹³²

¹²⁹Ibid.

¹³⁰OSC I23-24 of (B, 10, 36, 11-28).

¹³¹Radforth, Bushworkers and Bosses, pp. 134-35.

¹³²Thur, "Beat Around the Bush," p. 61.

Several examples of these agreements between workers and employers are found in the Styffe Collection. Styffe seems to have broken one such agreement in 1938. He wrote the Department of Lands and Forests to say: "I may say that one of our subjobbers paid off his men at \$2.00 per cord instead of \$2.30 as set and agreed upon with the local union."¹³³ However, Styffe went on to state that, as soon as the matter came to his attention, he informed the workers that he would deduct the proper amount from the advances he was sending the jobber in order to pay the men in full.¹³⁴ He also seems to have done this even before he received the Department's notice. Styffe did seem to desire to treat labour fairly. When he attacked what he saw as the communist element in labour, he was not chastising labour in general. At the September 1941 Rotary Club meeting mentioned earlier, he observed, "how unfortunate [it was] ... that labour here could not produce an outstanding personality who could ... lead the way out of this chaos [communism]."¹³⁵ Of course, it was in Styffe's interests to ensure that strikes were prevented so that he could sell his pulpwood but, it must be recalled that he had once been a labourer himself, and knew what the worker's life was

¹³³OSC I24 of (B, 10, 36, I1-28).

¹³⁴Ibid.

¹³⁵OSC I2 of (B, 10, 3, I1-27).

like.

What this chapter has attempted to accomplish is to illustrate how Oscar Styffe the middleman, in operating his own camps, took on elements of economic units above and below him in the economic chain. He was able to operate camps like those of pulp and paper firms but, at the same time, his operations were small enough to allow him to take a direct hand in managing cutting operations (like a farmer cutting pulpwood on his own land). The important theme that must now be considered in the third and final chapter, concerns how much is known about how Styffe shipped pulpwood to his customers, after it had been cut, and what exactly can be learned about middlemen from such knowledge.

CHAPTER THREE

FROM JACKLADDERS TO PAPER MACHINES, GETTING THE WOOD TO THE MILL

The ways in which Oscar Styffe delivered his product to his customers further defined him as a middleman. The scale of his operation was large enough that although he could not depend upon local pulpwood markets, he could secure external ones. His scale of operations was small enough, however, that he could personally represent his company in the selling and shipping of his timber. He was of the economic size that he could load his own wood onto vessels but he could not ship it himself. That was the task assigned to the shipping company.

Long before the pulpwood was even cut in the bush, Oscar Styffe had acquired a buyer for his timber. He not only operated in this manner to avoid pulpwood speculation but, after 1935, he was also meeting Ontario Government requirements. These regulations stated that, before the right to cut on a Crown limit was given to an operator, he had to demonstrate that he held an agreement with a mill to purchase a quantity of wood. Furthermore, an affidavit had to be produced later stating that "... the pulpwood so

exported would not be used for the manufacture of newsprint and would not compete with established Ontario industry."¹ For example, in 1942, the Department of Lands and Forests wrote Styffe regarding a contract he had signed with the Detroit Sulphite Pulp and Paper Company. The Department indicated that:

in order that this contract may be approved ... send us ... an affidavit stating that the wood covered by the contract will not be used in the manufacture of newsprint²

Often, the mill that was purchasing Styffe's timber would submit an affidavit as evidence. On 16 May, 1940, the St. Regis Paper Company told the Department that, under its contract with Styffe, 14-18,000 cords of pulpwood was being shipped to Deferiet, New York, and that "... none of such pulpwood will be used in the manufacture of newsprint, [nor] go into pulp which will be used in newsprint manufacture."³ This meant of course, that Styffe had to sell to U.S. mills that made paper other than newsprint. This was possible since, after 1913, when Canadian newsprint was allowed into the U.S. duty free, International Paper and other establishments shifted into other lines of production and "... American equipment was gradually converted to the manufacture of higher grades of paper - on which a tariff

¹J.P. Bertrand, "Timber Wolves."

²OSC I16 of (B, 22, 1, I1-121).

³OSC I15 of (B, 24, 1, I1-58).

remained"⁴ Selling pulpwood to American concerns was especially rewarding because mills in the U.S. recovered well from the economic downturn which began in 1929⁵, whereas it was reported in 1934 that:

in spite of a remarkably stable demand "mills having 58% of the total Canadian capacity are in bankruptcy or receivership, or are passing, or have recently passed through, some form of reorganization"⁶

Styffe was selling to American mills before the onset of the Depression and continued to do so through the 1930s and into the 1940s.

First, Styffe had to find American firms who were willing and able to purchase his wood. Before either the fall/winter cutting or the summer sap-peeling season, Styffe mailed out inquiries to determine if any markets were available to him. These introductory letters were meant to capture the interest of the manager of a mill, and thus were concise and preliminary in tone. For example, on 1 May 1930, Styffe asked the Underwood Paper Company of Fulton, New York: "would you be in the market for rough or sap-peeled spruce and balsam pulpwood or sap-peeled poplar"⁷ When writing to the Castanea Paper Company in 1932,

⁴Guthrie, The Newsprint Paper Industry, p. 60.

⁵David Smith, History of Papermaking, pp. 443-475.

⁶This information was taken from an analysis by L.M. Collins and cited by Fell, "The Newsprint Industry," pp. 50-51. Fell used this information in note no. 18 in his work.

⁷OSC I15 of (B, 2, 35, I1-22).

he asked if the firm was in the market for pulpwood and emphasized that "we would be glad to quote prices either F.O.B. [Free on Board] vessel here [Port Arthur] or also F.O.B. vessel at any port on the lower Lakes designated by you."⁸ Actual prices were not quoted by Styffe in these initial letters, because he first had to establish whether or not the mill was even interested in purchasing pulpwood.

If the paper company did prove to be attracted to his business proposal, it would contact Styffe as the Algonquin Paper Corporation of Ogdensburg New York did in 1930 when it asked Styffe to "kindly advise us on the amount [of pulpwood] you have for sale, your price on board vessel, and the loading point."⁹ At that point, Styffe responded with a price per cord for the particular species being sold. As will be shown later, transportation costs, as well as whether or not the pulpwood was sap-peeled, were important considerations in determining prices. Continuing on with the previous example of negotiations with a mill, Styffe informed the Algonquin Paper Corporation that he could offer 5-10,000 cords of spruce and balsam at rates of \$15.00 and \$13.00 per cord respectively, loaded onto vessels at Port Arthur, Nipigon Bay, and other points.¹⁰ In such business

⁸OSC I1 of (B, 3, 92, I1).

⁹OSC I8 of (B, 2, 35, I1-22).

¹⁰OSC I11 of (B, 2, 35, I1-22).

correspondence, Styffe quite understandably attempted to promote his company and his region. He told a potential buyer in May 1930 that:

as to the quality of the wood, I can only say, that the northern Ontario spruce and balsam is considered by the eastern mills ... as a ... better grade of material for papermaking than the wood growing in the eastern territories.¹¹

Styffe's suggestions for transactions were often turned down by American paper companies for a variety of reasons. The Northern Paper Mills of Green Bay, Wisconsin, explained to Styffe in June 1935 that "we feel that your price would be higher than we would consider because of the high water rate to Green Bay."¹² Other economic considerations were also detrimental to Styffe's overtures. The Hoberg Paper and Fibre Company also of Green Bay notified Styffe in 1935 that it had found wood in its own area "... at a more attractive figure than could be hoped from your district."¹³ Styffe also took economics into account and sometimes informed a mill that the price it was offering was too low, as compared with his own production expenses. In 1938, he told the Filer Fibre Company of Michigan, that he could not accept their offer of \$5.50 per cord for rough jackpine, since:

¹¹OSC I9 of (B, 2, 35, I1-22).

¹²OSC I2 of (B, 11, 21, I1-5).

¹³OSC I1 of (B, 11, 21, I1-5).

in addition to that price is the cost of loading and supervision, shrinkage etc., all of which would make last year's cost figures onboard vessel here much larger than the price you suggest.¹⁴

Styffe countered with a price of \$7.50 per cord and stated "there also has to be a margin of profit in our business as well, so it would not be possible to sell at cost only."¹⁵ As will be shown, Styffe had to consider production and transportation costs as much as the paper company did.

Styffe was often able to get into contact with mills through business associates. For example, in February 1934, the Hoberg Paper Company, in its search for poplar pulpwood, wrote to Charles Cox. Cox replied in a letter that "Mr. Styffe ... handles large quantities of poplar and spruce [and] is making a trip to your territory [Wisconsin] ... I have suggested to him that he call and see you"¹⁶ Although this did not lead to a contract, it seems logical that Styffe must have had at least some buyers whom he contacted through intermediaries. Most important among these were timber brokers. A timber broker was an individual who acted as an intermediary between the timber middleman (Styffe) and the paper company. Styffe dealt regularly with at least two timber brokers - Fred Roedter of

¹⁴OSC I10 of (B, 12, 26, I1-57).

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶OSC I5 of (B, 11, 12, I1-5).

Duluth, Minnesota, and Win Schlosser of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.¹⁷ The amount of correspondence Styffe had with Schlosser makes him the prime example of how a timber broker co-operated with Oscar Styffe, the middleman, in locating buyers. It is clear that Styffe utilized Schlosser in his search for markets. He wrote to Schlosser in 1935 stating that:

in one of the places where we had camps this summer there is a considerable quantity of very nice cedar which could be made into ties, posts or poles. If you could find [a] market for such material it might be worth our while.¹⁸

Schlosser would also inform Styffe if he came into contact with any potential buyers of pulpwood.¹⁹

As one examines the correspondence of these two men, the importance for the middleman of being able to secure good markets becomes apparent as well as the situation in the pulp and paper trade during the 1930s and early 1940s. On 7 October 1931, Schlosser wrote Styffe that:

you know the present conditions are about as bad as we have experienced, and in some places both on this side and parts of Canada you can almost get labour for their board.²⁰

That same month he told Styffe that "it is as you say [that] no one is buying [pulpwood] yet and I have no prospect at

¹⁷OSC (B, 8, 8, I1-12) and (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

¹⁸OSC I38 of (B, 11, 34, I1-107).

¹⁹OSC (B, 12, 17, I1-131).

²⁰OSC I4 of (B, 4, 22, I1-4).

present. Seems those who will be in the market are hanging back."²¹

Two years later, in 1933, Styffe informed Schlosser that "the pulpwood market does not seem to be very bright at the present time"²² However, times were not always bad. By 27 December 1935, Styffe was stressing to his timber broker that "with the general trend in business getting better, the people here are expecting an advance in the price of wood instead of a decrease."²³ Another two years later, in 1937, Styffe claimed that:

we are receiving inquiries from everywhere now for both poplar and spruce and I might say that I have recently sold my surplus spruce and balsam at a very high figure.²⁴

In 1939, markets were poor again, but Styffe believed that "indications are that prices will increase considerably... if the war lasts, it will apparently be a "sellers" market next year, so it will be up to the mills, what they can offer for the wood."²⁵

Whether business conditions in general were good or bad, Styffe managed to survive in part because he could offer different products in various markets. If no one was

²¹OSC I1 of (B, 4, 22, I1-4).

²²OSC I8 of (B, 7, 22, I1-52).

²³OSC I35 of (B, 11, 34, I1-107).

²⁴OSC I34 of (B, 12, 17, I1-131).

²⁵OSC I1 of (B, 12, 17, I1-131).

buying poplar, he could sell spruce. If the mills in Michigan were not buying one year, there were always those in New York State. By examining one contract that Oscar Styffe secured through his association with Win Schlosser, much can be learned about how the middleman of Northwestern Ontario sold pulpwood. Although the correspondence found in the Styffe Collection often shows Styffe approaching paper companies directly, Win Schlosser was an important source of business for Styffe. One of the best examples provided in the Styffe Collection of negotiations leading up to a contract with a pulpwood buyer certainly involved Win Schlosser.

The process leading up to an agreement with the Armstrong Forest Company of Johnsonburg, Pennsylvania, began in January 1934 with Schlosser informing Styffe that he could find a buyer in the spring of 1934 for both sap-peeled spruce and poplar.²⁶ Styffe's response was that, since spruce grew in swamps and had to be cut when the ground was frozen, "... such an operation would not be feasible in summer time."²⁷ Instead, he offered sap-peeled poplar and said that "... our price would be \$6.00 per cord on board vessel here at Port Arthur, delivery in July and August."²⁸

²⁶OSC I14 of (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

²⁷OSC I15 of (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

²⁸Ibid.

The quality of the pulpwood was important. In February, even before Schlosser had confirmed the interest of the as-yet-unmentioned mill in a potential agreement, he expressed concern that Styffe's poplar would be in water for at least two weeks before it was shipped. Schlosser was worried that this would increase the weight of the wood (one would then be paying to ship the water trapped in the wood rather than just the wood itself).²⁹ Styffe reassured him by claiming that:

last summer we produced a quantity of poplar which was cut hauled and shipped within three months and some of it remained in water over three weeks but even this didn't increase its weight noticeably.³⁰

The issue of pulpwood quality brings up an interesting point. During the Depression, pulpwood was being shipped to the U.S. from Northern Europe in greater and greater quantities and was thus competing with Canadian pulpwood.³¹ The middleman of Northwestern Ontario had to secure markets by being competitive. As was shown in the first two chapters, Styffe cut wood either in the summer or winter but hauled it during winter. The winter-cut wood would have to be shipped the following summer. In 1932, Styffe wrote to A.B. Buckworth of Mathews Steamship Company and stated that, rather than constantly delivering pulpwood in the way just

²⁹OSC I18-19 of (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

³⁰OSC I19 of (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

³¹Brown, Timber Products and Industries, p. 109.

indicated, "our proposal is to deliver it within a few months."³² In Styffe's opinion:

the purchaser is not called upon to have his money which he advanced on cutting tied up for over a year ... and the life of the wood in the mill yard will be extended one additional year³³

Thus, it would seem that Styffe was attempting to make his operation more efficient and consequently more competitive. Judging by correspondence in the Styffe Papers, he seems to have been able to follow this cutting/shipping schedule: cutting wood in the spring and summer and shipping it during the summer.

Returning to the 1934 Styffe/Schlosser negotiations, this short-term production scheme was what Styffe was offering Schlosser. By March, the real bargaining had begun. Schlosser had found a buyer for 5-10,000 cords of peeled poplar, even though Schlosser had not yet told Styffe that the buyer was the Armstrong Forest Company. The timber broker informed Styffe that the price of \$6.00 per cord he was proposing was too high. He countered with a suggestion of \$5.50 per cord stowed on boat.³⁴ Styffe responded on March 27 by indicating that "... we will be glad to supply this wood if you could see your way through to pay a little

³²OSC I12 of (B, 3, 67, I1-20).

³³Ibid.

³⁴OSC I21 of (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

better price for it."³⁵ He argued that he had contracts at that time for \$6.00 per cord, and other ones for the next year at an even higher price. Subsequently, Styffe asked for a price of \$5.75 a cord stowed on board vessel. He then concluded his letter by saying, "I do hope you will be in a position to handle it at that price as we would greatly appreciate doing business with you."³⁶ Schlosser agreed to the price.³⁷

The pulpwood operator had to secure good prices for his product to ensure that his operations remained in the black, but he had to be competitive as well. The prices that Styffe charged mills for his wood were either F.O.B. Port Arthur or at the mill. "Free on Board" at Port Arthur would mean that Styffe would pay the costs of getting the pulpwood on board a ship. The mill or a timber broker would then pay for shipping the wood to the U.S. "Free on Board" at the mill meant that Styffe would pay to have the pulpwood transported by vessel to the mill. In both cases, the paper company would pay the same price for the pulpwood since, if it shipped the wood itself, it would have to pay a shipping company the same amount Styffe would have added on to his price if he had to pay for the shipment of the timber. Two

³⁵OSC I22 of (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷OSC I23 of (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

documents in the Styffe Collection provide an idea of what sort of a profit Styffe made on each cord of pulpwood he exported. On 5 March 1932, he wrote to Mathews Steamship Company Limited of Toronto, to state that he could quote sap-peeled spruce and balsam to the shipping firm for \$7.50 per cord F.O.B. vessel in Port Arthur. Mathews would charge \$2.50 per cord for shipping the wood, so that Styffe would offer it to the mill at \$10.00 per cord. Styffe concluded by saying:

the price of \$7.50 is make up [by] calculating that this wood can be obtained from the settlers for \$6.00 per cord plus our charge of \$1.50 for handling and loading of same.³⁸

In this case, then, Styffe expected a profit of \$1.50 per cord, minus his costs for handling and loading. The second example is an undated document showing calculations for the cost of producing an unspecified type of pulpwood. Costs per cord included \$1.00 for stumpage, \$3.00 for cutting and peeling, \$1.00 for hauling, etc. The production costs added up to \$6.75 per cord. The document goes onto to mention a suggested sale price (loaded and stowed on vessel) of \$7.75 per cord. This data indicates a profit of \$1.00 per cord.³⁹ It is clear that Styffe took production and transportation costs into account and quoted prices that he

³⁸OSC I7 of (B, 3, 67, I1-20)

³⁹OSC I13 of (B, 4, 16, I1-37).

believed would be seen as fair by his customers, but which would also ensure that he made money. Good, comparable solid price data including type of wood, and whether it was F.O.B. Port Arthur or mill, is difficult to come by in the Styffe Collection. The reader, however, can still be provided with an idea of the dynamics of pulpwood rates during Styffe's time. Table 3-1 illustrates how the prices that Styffe received for his peeled poplar increased over time (as did prices for other types of pulpwood). Prices varied according to the species of the tree and whether or not it was sap-peeled. Therefore, for example, in 1942 when peeled poplar sold for nine dollars to \$10.25 per cord, peeled spruce and balsam (two more valuable species) were selling for \$14.75 per cord.⁴⁰ At the same time, peeled wood sold for more than rough wood. In 1932 rough spruce sold for \$7.50 per cord while in 1933 a mixture of peeled spruce and balsam (normally pure spruce was more valuable than a spruce/balsam mixture) sold at a rate of \$9.75 per cord.⁴¹ There were many variables involved in coming up with a price for pulpwood. For the mill, raw material costs were a crucial variable in profitability.⁴²

Returning to our 1934 example of negotiations, by late

⁴⁰OSC (B, 24, 21, I1-58), and (B, 2, 35, I1-22).

⁴¹OSC (B, 3, 43, I1-5), and (B, 4, 81, I1-28)

⁴²Fell, p. 47.

March Styffe and Schlosser had agreed upon a price, but the

Table 3-1.--Prices Received by Oscar Styffe Limited Peeled Poplar Pulpwood F.O.B. Port Arthur for Selected Years

| <u>1934</u> | <u>1935</u> | <u>1938</u> | <u>1941</u> | <u>1942</u> | <u>1943</u> |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| \$ 5.75 | \$6-7.00 | \$ 8.50 | \$10.70 | \$9-10.25 | \$10.25-10.50 |

Source: OSC Series B.

Note: Prices are per cord.

next issue involved advances from the paper firm. As the reader will recall, Styffe paid out advances to settlers whose pulpwood he was purchasing. This was, of course, not merely because they needed the funds to begin cutting their wood but also because it was more convenient for Styffe to pay the farmers in instalments rather than all at once. At the top end of the pulp and paper chain, Styffe requested companies he was dealing with to send him cash advances. The issue here concerns how vital these advances were in terms of Styffe's being able to finance the actual production of the pulpwood (cutting and hauling it). Analyzing some examples will shed light on this topic. For example, while bargaining in 1938 with the Filer Fibre Company of Filer City, Michigan, he asked the firm in a letter if they were "... prepared to make any advances during the cutting and peeling season to assist in financing until shipping commences."⁴³ Later, in 1940, Styffe

⁴³OSC I12 of (B, 12, 26, I1-57).

notified the Department of Immigration that he had a contract with the Nekoosa-Edwards Paper Company of Port Edwards, Wisconsin, for peeled spruce. Styffe revealed that the paper company was "... supposed to make cash advances ... during the time this work [the cutting and hauling of the wood] is being carried on."⁴⁴ Over the years, Styffe sold pulpwood to the International Paper Company through the Thompson and Heyland Lumber Company of Toronto. Under a 1933 contract, Styffe received advances from Thompson and Heyland as the wood was being shipped.⁴⁵

An interesting consideration to ponder is whether Styffe actually needed these advances in order to finance his cutting operations. The evidence suggests that the cash instalments were important. In other words, it seems that he could begin producing the wood without them, as long as he was certain that he would eventually be paid. On 6 December 1929, he wrote to the Pigeon River Lumber Company of Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, to inform them that he would take the pulpwood in question "out" for them (probably from their limits). Styffe said that he would "... finance the operation myself on conditions of bush estimates and advances as usual from the purchaser of the wood."⁴⁶ It

⁴⁴OSC I16 of (B, 24, 1, I1-58).

⁴⁵OSC I5 of (B, 9, 26, I1-16).

⁴⁶OSC I4 of (B, 2, 3, I1-4).

would seem that he could finance a certain amount of cutters on his own, but that advances would eventually be needed, probably to pay off either settlers or bushworkers.

When in March 1934 Schlosser advised Styffe that the mill that would buy the wood was not going to make any advances,⁴⁷ Styffe replied on 13 April 1934 that:

... if it could be arranged that, part payment could be made as soon as the boat has been loaded here [Port Arthur] it may solve this difficulty [financing the entire operation].⁴⁸

Schlosser was able to obtain such an advance from the mill and Styffe was satisfied. By the end of May and the beginning of June 1934, the price and quantity of pulpwood had been worked out between Styffe, Schlosser and the paper company. All that remained was to contract with a shipping company to transport the timber (the mechanics of shipping pulpwood will be discussed later in the chapter). Styffe then requested that Schlosser provide him with the name and location of the firm that he was to sell to, as well as the agreement itself, so that he could make certain that cash advances were part of the contract.

Thus, on 19 June 1934, Styffe received the contract which read:

agreement made this 19th day of June by and between Win Schlosser of Milwaukee, Wisconsin and Oscar Styffe Limited of Port Arthur, Ontario whereby Win Schlosser

⁴⁷OSC I23 of (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

⁴⁸OSC I24 of (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

agrees to buy and Oscar Styffe agrees to sell three thousand cords of sap-peeled poplar pulpwood, cut 54" long, four inches and larger diameter at top end.⁴⁹

The contract went on to specify that "Oscar Styffe [is] to deliver wood and stow same aboard boat at a rate of five dollars and seventy five cents (\$5.75) per cord"⁵⁰

Finally, the contract carefully spelled out that:

payment [is] to be made promptly by Win Schlosser for each cargo, when Win Schlosser is to obtain an advance of five thousand dollars from the Armstrong Forest Company who purchase the wood from Win Schlosser. This advance to be made as soon as the boat starts loading.⁵¹

For his services, Schlosser was paid 50 cents per cord.⁵²

Five years later, he talked of earning 25 cents per cord.⁵³

This seems to be the commission that Schlosser generally ended up with. This, then, is one example of how Styffe negotiated a deal with a mill through a timber broker. Even though Schlosser was the one buying the pulpwood from Styffe, he was purchasing the timber with what the mill was paying him (Schlosser) for it.

The next point to be discussed concerns just how difficult Styffe's negotiations with paper companies were and how final refusals were. The interesting fact here is

⁴⁹OSC I32 of (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²OSC I33 of (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

⁵³OSC I11 of (B, 12, 17, I1-131).

that Styffe's correspondence with corporations was amazingly similar to that which he carried on with settlers. When a firm informed Styffe that it was unable to accept his offer of pulpwood, it was never an absolute dismissal. The paper concern often instructed Styffe that, although it could not take his wood that season, it was possible that they could form an arrangement in the future. By way of illustration, St. Regis Paper Company assured Styffe in 1930 that "... perhaps we may be able to get together earlier next year."⁵⁴ In 1939, Styffe was told by the Port Huron Sulphite and Paper Company of Port Huron, Michigan: "... although it seems at the present time that our requirements are fully covered, we will be glad to have your quotation for future reference"⁵⁵

At the same time, when Oscar Styffe was turned down, he also attempted to display some flexibility. He once told a customer who had been unable to accept his offer because his price was too high that:

... I can assure you that I am going to approach you before another season is over, in regards to delivery of poplar pulpwood in future years.⁵⁶

This kind of forethought was necessary in Styffe's business. As with supply, markets for pulpwood were never guaranteed.

⁵⁴OSC I14 of (B, 2, 35, I1-22).

⁵⁵OSC I2 of (B, 12, 31, I1-4).

⁵⁶OSC I5 of (B, 3, 88, I1-7).

For example, in 1934, Styffe asked Schlosser for the name of the mill that they were selling poplar pulpwood to because "... poplar is a class of wood for which it is rather difficult to acquire a market, as there are only a few mills using such wood"⁵⁷ In 1932 Styffe had informed the Thompson and Heyland Lumber Company that:

we have expected to hear from you with respect to additional poplar contracts. If there are any possibilities of securing further markets we will be glad to get in on it no matter what quantity it will be.⁵⁸

Once Styffe gained a customer, he endeavoured to ensure an ongoing business. That is why, along with new companies, such firms as the Detroit Sulphite Pulp and Paper Company and International Paper appear in the Styffe Collection again and again.

Styffe realized that, even when it came to spruce and balsam, the most important species in the paper industry, markets were not always readily available because of competition from other sources, and other factors. Hence, contracts had to be negotiated carefully with mills and every effort made to secure future deals with them after the initial one was completed. Styffe seems to have had the correct attitude for such an economic reality. He wrote to the Canada Lumberman Magazine in 1931 that "there is very

⁵⁷OSC I29 of (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

⁵⁸OSC I43 of (B, 4, 28, I1-83).

little demand for pulpwood this year and prices are less now than they have been for the past twenty years" He concluded, however, by saying "... let us all be optimistic from now on"⁵⁹

As was the case with each and every contract that Oscar Styffe signed with a pulp and paper company, one of the most crucial steps (next to actually securing the agreement) was shipping the pulpwood to his customer's mill. In almost every case, this task was accomplished by using water transportation. This meant shipping wood on a steamer or having it either placed on a barge or made into a raft and towed by tugboat. How the middleman conveyed his timber to American pulp and paper mills showed his status in the paper industry. Styffe was clearly able to operate a business which depended upon exporting a product to another country and as will be shown shortly, had the capability and ingenuity to load pulpwood onto vessels for himself and for others utilizing his own specialized equipment. His operation demonstrated a slight degree of vertical integration. Nevertheless, he did not have the economic resources to ship his own pulpwood. This ability was to be found only within the realm of the titans of the industry: the paper companies and their owners. Thus, when the Chicago Tribune desired to transport newsprint from its mill

⁵⁹OSC I32 of (B, 3, 71, I1-142).

(the Ontario Paper Company) at Thorold, Ontario, to Chicago in the early 1930s, it had the capability not only of purchasing vessels for such business, but also of building them.⁶⁰ By way of contrast, Styffe had to obtain the services of a shipping company to move his timber.

A middleman commenced his search for a shipper only after he had obtained a pulpwood deal with a buyer which generally occurred before the opening of navigation in the spring at the Lakehead. The question that now logically comes to the fore is whether Styffe used only a small number of shipping firms during his lifetime, or if he utilized several. He seems to have utilized various ones, although some were more prominent than others in the history of Oscar Styffe Limited. Among the major firms that served Styffe's needs were the Detroit Sulphite Transportation Company, a division of the Detroit Sulphite Pulp and Paper Company; the Lakehead firm of Paterson Steamships, the Mathews Steamship Company of Toronto; and Boland and Cornelius of Buffalo, New York.⁶¹ Since Table 1-1 demonstrates that Styffe exported large amounts of pulpwood to the United States, it is logical to assume that more than one shipping firm was involved in the transportation of this timber. This concept

⁶⁰Carl Wiegman, Trees to News: A Chronicle of the Ontario Paper Company's Origin and Development (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1953), pp. 147-49.

⁶¹OSC Series B.

is illustrated well in Table 3-2 which lists the shipping firms that Styffe dealt with from 1931 to 1941. The first half of the period shows a large number of firms, but the Paterson Steamship Lines dominates the remainder of the period. The reduction in the number of firms that Styffe shipped with may have been a result of companies collapsing because of the Depression or of corporate takeovers which would have reduced the number of firms that Styffe could deal with.

As was indicated, Styffe shipped pulpwood on steamships and barges. Both types of vessels could carry considerable quantities of pulpwood. Table 3-3 shows the average size of individual shipments of pulpwood for the years 1931 to 1935.⁶² The average load on a vessel calculated from the examples was 1,176.09 cords. Some firms had even greater capabilities. In 1935 Boland and Cornelius wrote to Styffe to indicate that, in regards to an upcoming contract to carry 12,000 cords of pulpwood to Tonawanda, New York, "what we should like to do would be to load some of our larger boats with this wood - they would carry in the neighbourhood of 2,000 cords"⁶³ Individual shipments in the 1940s of pulpwood for Oscar Styffe Limited were

⁶²There is no evidence to suggest that Styffe ever shipped his pulpwood along with that of other middlemen in a "mixed" shipment.

⁶³OSC I6 of (B, 10, 7, 11-14).

Table 3-2.--Companies Utilized by Oscar Styffe Limited for the Shipping of Pulpwood for the Years 1931 to 1941.

| <u>Firm</u> | <u>'31</u> | <u>'32</u> | <u>'33</u> | <u>'34</u> | <u>'35</u> | <u>'36</u> | <u>'37</u> | <u>'38</u> | <u>'39</u> | <u>'40</u> | <u>'41</u> |
|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| B&C | | | X | X | X | | | | | | |
| BS | | | X | | | | | | | | |
| BT | X | X | | | | | | | | | |
| CS | | | | | X | | | | | | |
| DST | X | X | X | | X | | | | | | |
| DS | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| ES | | | | X | X | | | | | | |
| HS | | | | X | | | | | | | |
| MC | | | | X | | | | | | | |
| MS | X | X | X | | | | | | | | |
| PS | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| SS | | | | X | | | | | | | |
| WN | | | | | X | | | | | | |
| UL | | | | | X | | | | | | |

Source: OSC Series B.

Note:

| | |
|---|---|
| B&C - Boland and Cornelius | HS - Huron Steamships Ltd. |
| BS - Buckeye Steamship Co. | MC - Madden Coal Co. |
| BT - Burke Towing and Salvage Co. Ltd. | MS - Mathews Steamship Co. |
| CS - Colonial Steamship Line | PS - Paterson Steamship Lines |
| DST - Detroit Sulphite Transportation Co. | SS - Sarnia Steamship Lines |
| DS - Diamond Steamships | WN - Western Navigation Co. |
| ES - Eastern Steamship Co. | UL - Upper Lakes and St. Lawrence Transportation Co. Ltd. |

similar to the figures from the 1930s.⁶⁴ Some of the pulpwood as shown in 3-3 was carried in steamships. They therefore compare with the "canallers" that John Styffe discussed in his Oscar R. Styffe 1885-1943: The Man and his Companies. He stated:

these vessels, [canallers] small enough to fit through the canals which preceded the [construction of the] St. Lawrence Seaway, carried a cargo of approximately 1400

⁶⁴OSC Series B.

Table 3-3.--Average Sizes of Loads of Vessels Carrying
Pulpwood for Oscar Styffe 1931-1935

| <u>Year</u> | <u># of Shipments</u> | <u>Range of Load (Cords)</u> | <u>Average Size of Shipment (Cords)</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| 1931-32 | *5 | 582-1,900 | 1,132.08 |
| 1933 | 11 | 150-2,000 | 1,245.09 |
| 1934 | 17 | 400-2,000 | 1,185.30 |
| 1935 | 17 | 100-1,800 | 1,141.18 |

Source: Compiled from OSC
(B, 3, 43, I1-5)
(B, 4, 81, I1-28)
(B, 4, 82, I1-24)
(B, 7, 46, I1-36)
(B, 10, 32, I1-14)

Note : *This figure is a minimum amount, the actual total for that year may have been higher.

cords. Later, when canals were improved, larger carriers were used which had a capacity of at least 2400 cords.⁶⁵

At the same time, the totals in Table 3-3 also include barge shipments. The loads that barges were able to carry were comparable to those carried by steamships.⁶⁶ Many of the shipping companies with whom Styffe did business used both steamships and barges. Styffe was well adapted to the use of barges. Barges had to be towed across the Great Lakes and, from time to time, Styffe indicated that he would "... be interested in chartering your Tow Barges during the

⁶⁵Styffe, Oscar R. Styffe, p. 6.

⁶⁶OSC I18-21 of (B, 10, 30, I1-22) and Series B.

coming season of navigation."⁶⁷ In April 1934 Styffe told John Harrison & Sons Company Limited of Owen Sound that "... your barge the 'Michigan' would possibly be too large for our tug to handle."⁶⁸ Clearly, then, there were times when Styffe chartered barges from shipping companies and towed pulpwood to the U.S. using his own tugboats. It is not known how much of a saving Styffe effected by doing this, but, in 1934, he told Win Schlosser that:

should we be in a position to obtain towbarges ... we might be able to deliver this poplar down to you at a better figure than if you have steamboats for the purpose of freighting the wood."⁶⁹

Whatever the case, steamships and barges were the normal means of shipping timber to U.S. mills, and Styffe seems to have done almost all of his shipping by water.⁷⁰

Styffe had to negotiate with transportation firms for the most favourable freight rates he could receive. Such correspondence was similar to that undertaken with mills. The middleman would instruct the steamship company as to how much pulpwood had to be shipped and where it was to go. Thus, for example, on 5 January 1933, Styffe informed Paterson Steamships Limited that "... we have a quantity of

⁶⁷OSC I3 of (B, 7, 1, I1-9).

⁶⁸OSC I12 of (B, 7, 34, I1-20).

⁶⁹OSC I17 of (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

⁷⁰This is probably the case because there is an absence of documentation regarding any shipping of pulpwood by rail in Styffe's papers.

approximately 11,000 cords of poplar pulpwood to be shipped to Tonawanda, New York"71 He went on to say "we would be very glad to have you quote a rate for the hauling of this wood."72 Complete data on the freight rates that Styffe paid to ship his pulpwood is unavailable, but it is clear that the rates varied slightly over time and by company and destination. It is clear that from 1931 to about 1941, the rate per cord ranged from as low as \$2.00 to as high as \$4.50 (although the rate was usually around \$2-3.00 per cord). The general pattern that seems to have occurred was that the rates fell during the worst years of the Great Depression, and then rose again with the coming of the Second World War.73 As was indicated, rates could differ according to final destination. On 24 October 1931, for example, a Burke Towing and Salvage Company official indicated to Styffe in a letter that shipping peeled pulpwood to Buffalo, New York, would cost \$3.50 per cord, while shipping that same wood to Oswego, New York would cost \$4.50 per cord.74 In terms of differing rates with differing shipping firms, in 1934, the Upper Lakes and St. Lawrence Transportation Company offered Styffe a rate of

⁷¹OSC I2 of (B, 7, 37, I1-23).

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³OSC Series B.

⁷⁴OSC I2 of OSC (B, 7, 1, I1-9).

\$2.40 per cord to Tonawanda, New York, whereas in the same year, Paterson Steamship Lines was quoting a lower rate of \$2.25 per cord to the same destination.⁷⁵ After the rate was agreed upon by both parties, a contract was drawn up. For example, on 29 March 1941, Paterson Steamships Limited and Styffe signed an agreement which specified that Paterson was to carry eight loads of pulpwood during the 1941 navigation season:

... from Port Arthur, Ontario, to port North Tonawanda, New York in canal sized vessels at rate of three dollars and seventy-five cents (\$3.75) per cord free on and off the vessel. It is understood ... that we will allow five (5) days for all purposes loading and unloading ... any time over and above the five days ... demurrage to be charged at the rate of twenty dollars (\$20.00) per hour.⁷⁶

Clearly, besides the freight rate, loading and unloading times were crucial. A steamship company did not wish to have its expensive ships tied up for very long. This was especially the case for the Paterson Company, which was not just shipping Styffe's timber but also transporting a host of different commodities to various points in the 1930s, and even more so during the Second World War.⁷⁷

Efficiency in unloading pulpwood was vital. Here is where Styffe's company excelled. It is not enough for the

⁷⁵OSC (B, 8, 27, I1-2) and (B, 6, 39, I1-20).

⁷⁶OSC I5 of (B, 23, 3, I1-67).

⁷⁷Dave Tremblay, "The Development of Paterson Steamship's First Generation Fleet, 1915-1940," in (Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society) Papers and Records, 14, (1986), 43.

student of the timber trade simply to view the middleman of Northwestern Ontario as a cutter of pulpwood. Styffe wanted to be more diverse. He thus ensured that he had the proper equipment to load his, or other people's, timber onto ships. He tried to control his end of the pulp and paper industry more efficiently. Thus, in the late 1920s, Styffe obtained a scow which had sunk near Nipigon. Using this hull he built a self-loader or a jackladder.⁷⁸ This "vessel" was moved by tugs and loaded pulpwood onto a ship or barge from storage booms. The manner in which the jackladder operated was as follows: "[the loader]... consisting of an endless spiked chain, and floating on its own platform was fed by seven men at water level."⁷⁹ If a ship were being loaded, then "the logs were carried up [by the jackladder] to the deck of the ship and dumped through hatches into the holds."⁸⁰ Finally, to complete the job, "as the loader moved from hatch to hatch, fifteen men known as stowers followed behind, arranging the timber into neat ranks for safe shipping."⁸¹ Styffe worked to become efficient at loading pulpwood. He told one individual in 1931 that, as far as loading went, "... my guarantee is 400 cords per 24

⁷⁸OSC I12 of (B, 11, 4, I1-86).

⁷⁹Styffe, Oscar R. Styffe, p. 5.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Ibid., pp. 5-6.

hours."⁸² By 1934 he had spent \$2,500 on the loader to increase its capacity to 600-700 cords per day.⁸³ The size of the average loading crew seems to have been twenty men.⁸⁴ Workers were paid by the hour. Although complete wage rates are unavailable, it is clear that, in the early 1930s, Styffe's loaders were paid at the rate of 35 cents per hour.⁸⁵ Figures from 1937 show workers being paid for loading the wood (40 cents per cord).⁸⁶

Styffe utilized his tug boats⁸⁷ to help in the loading of vessels. The important point here is that part of his business activity involved contracting himself out to load the pulpwood of other middlemen or larger firms. He was therefore able to expand the scope of his company's operations. For this service, Styffe charged between \$1.20 and \$1.50 per cord in the early 1930s,⁸⁸ and increased his price to between \$1.25 and \$1.75 per cord in the early

⁸²OSC I35 of (B, 4, 16, I1-37).

⁸³OSC I1 of (B, 8, 18, I1-4).

⁸⁴OSC (B, 5, 43, I1-12).

⁸⁵OSC I1 of (B, 3, 76, I1).

⁸⁶OSC Series E I27.

⁸⁷As to the number of tugboats that Styffe used, an undated document by an unknown author in the Styffe Collection (I12 of B, 11, 4, I1-86), revealed that Styffe purchased the "G.A. McLaurin" in the late 1920s. As was indicated in the introduction to the thesis, a second tug, the "Thomas A. Tees" was purchased in 1932.

⁸⁸OSC (B, 4, 16, I1-37) and (B, 3, 70, I1-7).

1940s.⁸⁹ Styffe attempted to be competitive in the loading business. He purchased a second loader in the early 1930s⁹⁰ and since his jackladders could be towed by tugs, they were highly mobile. He told C.W. Milburn of Toronto in 1931 that, "I'll also mention that I go almost anywhere possible [on the Great Lakes] with my loading equipment"⁹¹ It is not known how much wood Styffe loaded for other parties but one document in the Styffe collection indicates that, with his loaders, Styffe:

... soon established a name for himself for despatch and efficiency and was subsequently [able] to load as much wood in one year as has ever been loaded by one party.⁹²

Even more important for Styffe was the loading of his own pulpwood. He had to be as efficient as possible to meet the deadlines imposed by the shipping firm and thereby avoid demurrage payments. When shipping pulpwood, time was measured in days, and each hour counted. For example, in 1932, the Mathews Steamship Company suggested to Styffe that he set up floodlights in order to load at night. He was told "... you will see the necessity of working nights to

⁸⁹OSC (B, 23, 15, I1-85).

⁹⁰OSC (B, 3, 59, I1-11).

⁹¹OSC (B, 3, 70, I1-7).

⁹²OSC I12 of (B, 11, 4, I1-86) In this case, the date, and origin of the document is unknown.

come within the loading time."⁹³ Although not included in the loading time, there was the problem of getting the pulpwood to the actual loading point. If the pulpwood was nowhere near the loading grounds, it would have to be loaded onto rail cars and shipped to the loading area.⁹⁴ At times, the pulpwood was taken by water to a more suitable locale for stowing on board ship. Styffe informed C.A. Gardner in March 1941 that:

... we are to tow from your storage at the mouth of the Cypress river, Nipigon Bay, a quantity of peeled spruce ... to Mazukoma Bay and there load and stow it on board vessel ...⁹⁵

At other times, loading was delayed by poor weather. In September 1940, Styffe was loading wood at Kama Bay that he had sold to a mill in Cape Terminals, New York. However, a heavy storm halted operations for one day.⁹⁶ Much of Styffe's pulpwood was transported to booms at No. 5 Dock (Port Arthur Harbour) and loaded there.

Once a firm made its vessels available to Styffe, Ontario regulations again came into play. Various forms had to be filled out whenever pulpwood was exported to the United States. The first such document was the "Report

⁹³OSC I12 of (B, 7, 29, I1-26).

⁹⁴OSC I9 of (B, 12, 26, I1-57).

⁹⁵OSC I18 of (B, 23, 15, I1-85).

⁹⁶OSC I43 of (B, 23, 3, I1-67).

Inwards." This listed such items as where the vessel that was to carry the timber was arriving from, its owner, and the cargo it was carrying.⁹⁷ The fully-loaded ship would then depart with its cargo of wood, a form was filled out listing the place of lading, the seller of the pulpwood, the name of the ship, the value of the articles being transported, and, of course, its destination. A "Report Outwards" was also completed, and this involved similar data.⁹⁸

After 1935, Styffe faced an additional governmental requirement. Since Styffe was cutting more and more of his pulpwood on Crown land at that time, he had to apply for a crown clearance. Such a clearance was not to be confused with the law that required "... each settler to have a permit to sell his pulpwood."⁹⁹ The clearance Styffe had to obtain was for his own export purposes. This was one more provincial regulation to ensure that no pulpwood cut on Crown land was exported without the government's permission. Styffe and his fellow timber merchants were required to apply for this clearance for each and every shipment of wood to the United States. There were no exceptions to this rule. Styffe made his official applications to the Crown

⁹⁷OSC I2 of (B, 4, 81, I1-28).

⁹⁸OSC I1 of (B, 4, 81, I1-28).

⁹⁹Roach, "The Pulpwood Trade and the Settlers of New Ontario," p. 86.

Timber Agent in Port Arthur. An excellent example of such an application comes from 10 June 1938, when Styffe advised the local Timber Agent that:

we herewith beg to apply for export clearance on 1300 cords of sap-peeled poplar pulpwood at Eight Dollars and Fifty Cents (\$8.50) per cord to be cleared from the port of Port Arthur on the S.S. Torondoc of the Paterson Steamships Limited, bound for International Paper mills at North Tonawanda, New York.¹⁰⁰

The clearance was issued only after the Timber Agent was satisfied that Styffe had paid all of his Crown dues on the pulpwood that he was cutting for export.¹⁰¹ There was also the 25 cent per cord export fee.¹⁰² As was noted earlier, there was also the requirement, that Styffe state that the pulpwood he was exporting would not be used in the manufacture of newsprint.

The final task was to insure the cargo being shipped. It appears that the timber broker sometimes paid for insuring the shipment. As Win Schlosser told Styffe in May 1934, in a letter he sent regarding wood that Styffe was shipping, "I also have to pay cargo insurance, which while it does not amount to much, counts."¹⁰³ When paper companies purchased Styffe's wood and paid for transporting it seems logical that they also insured the cargo. Styffe

¹⁰⁰OSC I22 of (B, 14, 13, I1-31).

¹⁰¹OSC I59 of (B, 22, 1, I1-121).

¹⁰²Lambert and Pross, Renewing Nature's Wealth, p. 339.

¹⁰³OSC I33 of (B, 8, 22, I1-76).

also insured his own shipments. In 1932, he seems to have been shopping around for a better insurance company. The Thompson and Heyland Lumber of Toronto responded to his inquiry by stating that the rate charged by Canadian Companies was too high. Instead, they told him of a Mr. Thomas E. Sears of Boston and said that:

he is at the present time charging a rate of 3% on wood in the bush and we are satisfied that he will give you the same arrangements if you will mention our name and say that we referred you to him.¹⁰⁴

Steamship and barge cargoes were always insured. Styffe also shipped by rafts made up as "...a boom of logs or a boom of pulpwood."¹⁰⁵ In January 1942 Oscar Styffe Limited informed the Export Permit Branch of the federal Department of Trade and Commerce that the company was exporting wood to the Nekoosa-Edwards Paper Company of Port Edward, Wisconsin, and that the pulpwood was to be "... shipped on one raft in Canadian booms and chains and towed by a Canadian tug [possibly one of Oscar Styffe Limited's tugs]"¹⁰⁶ Such a shipment would have been insured as well since, if a raft broke apart, "there would have to [be] a recovery ... [and] it is very expensive and it takes a lot of time."¹⁰⁷ Although it is not known how much it cost Styffe to insure a

¹⁰⁴OSC I34 of (B, 4, 28, I1-83).

¹⁰⁵John Styffe interview, p. 10.

¹⁰⁶OSC I13 of (B, 25, 3, I1-49).

¹⁰⁷John Styffe interview, p. 10.

cargo of pulpwood, it is clear that insurance was of vital importance.

Once the pulpwood reached the mill, it still had to be unloaded quickly in order to avoid demurrage penalties. It does not appear that Styffe was concerned with the unloading of pulpwood at the mill (he neither had to arrange it nor pay for it) other than the fact that, if it took too long, he would have to pay the shipping company for it. If unloading did in fact continue beyond the time set by the shipping firm (roughly five days total for loading and unloading), Styffe would quickly be informed. Such a situation arose with the Mathews Steamship Company Limited in 1933. Mathews had been carrying pulpwood to Tonawanda, New York, for Styffe. On 23 October 1933, A.B. Buckworth, the manager of the shipping concern, wrote to Styffe that:

we refer you to our invoice of the 30th September in the amount of \$542.00 Demurrage S.S. Waterton. Will you be so kind, as to forward your cheque covering this amount, as we are desirous of closing same out on our books.¹⁰⁸

By 26 December 1933, for whatever reason, Styffe had not taken any action in the matter. As a consequence, Buckworth again contacted Styffe, this time to ask:

will you be so kind as to send us your cheque, \$542.00 in payment of your account. We are closing our books, and would ask you to kindly forward your cheque.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸OSC I10 of (B, 7, 29, I1-26).

¹⁰⁹OSC I6 of (B, 7, 29, I1-26).

Styffe finally replied on 8 January 1934. He indicated that on 17 July 1933, the steamer in question, the Waterton, dropped anchor near Caribou Island. The vessel was loaded by 12 noon on Tuesday the 18th. Styffe made the total loading time out to be thirty-six hours. According to him, the Waterton arrived at Tonawanda on July 22 at 12 noon. A local strike delayed the completion of unloading until July 27th.¹¹⁰ Styffe then stated that:

... the total time at the dock on Tonawanda was four days or 119 hours, less allowance for Sunday (24 hours) and strike (30 hours), a total of 54 hours. Time used was 65 hours.¹¹¹

Styffe then added on the loading time and came up with a grand total of 101 hours loading and unloading. Styffe argued that this fit well within the total of five days or 120 hours that Mathews allowed its customers. Styffe stated that:

we must say that we feel that we have not been fairly and justly dealt with by your concern in this matter ... we are justified in saying that we do not feel willing to pay this account unless it is proven by the courts that we are at fault and have to do so.¹¹²

Buckworth said in his reply that his company had never been called unfair.¹¹³ Styffe may have been able to later resolve this dispute, but it is clear that he at some point, had to find other shipping firms to carry his pulpwood for

¹¹⁰OSC I5 of (B, 7, 29, I1-26).

¹¹¹Ibid.

¹¹²Ibid.

¹¹³OSC I26 of (B, 7, 29, I1-26).

him. The reason for this may have involved bad feelings between the two firms, but more importantly was the fact that a letter that Styffe wrote to A.E. Mathews (of Mathews Steamships) on 19 July 1940, indicates that the shipping firm had encountered financial difficulties in the second half of the 1930s.¹¹⁴ Although it appears that Styffe did not have such disputes with shipping firms very frequently, it is clear from this example that demurrage charges were an important concern in the transportation of pulpwood by ship.

The final phase of the production and shipping operation for Styffe was the inspection and scaling of the pulpwood by the buyer, at the mill. Since the firm was receiving pulpwood from a location hundreds of miles away, it was logical that a paper company would desire a high quality of pulpwood. It was vital that the mill find Styffe's wood suitable, for this would help to ensure the paper company as a customer in the future. Thus, using our earlier example of the 1934 Styffe/Schlosser/Armstrong pulpwood sale, once again Styffe informed Schlosser on 31 October 1934 that he had been at Johnsonburg and had talked to officials of the Armstrong Forest Company. Styffe proudly reported that:

they [the company's executives] all seemed to be pleased with the quality of wood shipped through you and we hope that we will be able to sell wood to them again through

¹¹⁴OSC I30 of (B, 21, 2, 11-96).

you.¹¹⁵

These, then, were the complexities faced by Styffe when he sold pulpwood to American pulp and paper companies. Finding customers each year was crucial to his firm's survival. Although in 1937 there were "... more than 1250 pulp and paper mills in the United States and Canada," he still had to work at securing a buyer.¹¹⁶ Even then, as Fred W. Kohlmeyer argued in his Timber Roots: The Laird, Norton Story 1955-1905 concerning lumbermen in Minnesota, "efficient reliable transportation for logs and timber was a key factor to ... success in the lumber business."¹¹⁷ This was clearly true of Oscar R. Styffe, the pulpwood dealer, in the 1930s and 1940s. As with supply and labour concerns, Styffe faced market and transportation issues in a manner unique to pulpwood dealers. Some activities and actions were beyond his financial capabilities. Styffe (and probably other operators like him) worked with the economic resources he had and did more than simply operate in the considerable shadows cast by paper companies. Being in the middle offered the opportunity to be diverse while not requiring the corporate size of a paper firm. As a

¹¹⁵OSC I69 of (B, 8, 22, 11-76).

¹¹⁶Brown, Timber Products and Industries, p. 106.

¹¹⁷Fred W. Kohlmeyer, Timber Roots: The Laird, Norton Story, 1885-1905 (Winona, Minnesota: Winona County Historical Society, 1972), p. 56.

middleman, Styffe was able to do more than simply produce the pulpwood needed by the ravenous mills. He could assert some independence within narrow constraints. He did not have to agree to whatever rates or terms the first mill or shipping firm offered. This was the timber merchant of Northwestern Ontario.

CONCLUSION

This, then, is the story of Oscar R. Styffe and his timber supply company, Oscar Styffe Limited. It should be noted at this point that it has not been the aim of this work to suggest that Styffe was somehow in a more advantageous position as compared with the settler or the pulp and paper company. The thesis illustrates how, by being in the middle of the pulp and paper economic chain, he shared major and minor characteristics with the farmer cutting pulpwood from his land and the pulp and paper firm.

In the long, complex succession from cutting down a tree to making the paper, Styffe held a special position. As a middleman, he could operate his own camps, employ hundreds of men, load his own wood, and sign agreements with American mills hundreds of miles away. In this sense, Styffe's firm was of a size that it was able to be flexible and even diversified in its operations and its markets. Being versatile meant that, if one source of supply became deficient, or a usually dependable market became unavailable, Styffe was not trapped. He could turn to other sources of pulpwood and seek out more open markets. At the same time, Oscar Styffe Limited was still sufficiently small

that Styffe was close to the various operations that made up his enterprises. He thought it vital to visit his camps on a regular basis, and travel to a paper mill in New York state in order to talk directly with the managers of the firm. If a labour union complained about some item in one of his camps, he would visit the camp in question so that he could examine the issue at hand. This combination of characteristics made Styffe adaptable to the changing economic conditions of the Great Depression and the Second World War. This is what it meant to be in the "middle" of the pulp and paper industry.

It has been argued that this knowledge is important to the student of history for it tells us something about the region of Northwestern Ontario. Firstly, the study reveals that, in terms of the pulp and paper industry, the region was dependent upon and heavily influenced by outside forces that it had no control over. If the U.S. paper industry had not run out of American pulpwood, Northern Ontario would probably have been ignored as a supply area. If the Ontario government had not allowed middlemen onto Crown land in 1935 and later, things would have been quite difficult for the timber merchants. Furthermore, the price that middlemen received for their pulpwood was determined to a large extent by how well the market for wood was faring.

In the face of these external forces, which acted upon Northern Ontario, how does an analysis of Styffe's company

alter that reality? In one sense, it does not. This thesis provides many examples of Styffe's having to cope with events and factors beyond his control. However, although Styffe operated in constrained economic environment, the story of his firm's development is still important to consider. The fact of the matter is that he laboured within the Northern Ontario environment and strove to be as successful as possible. He also attempted to gain at least some measure of control over his circumstances; for example by being able to load his own pulpwood. The crucial point here is not what Styffe could not do or how dependent his firm was on markets over which he had no power. The vital idea is, rather, to analyze what Styffe was actually able to accomplish. He started off with very little in 1911 and, by the time of his passing in 1943, he had created a company that produced as much as 30,000 cords of pulpwood in a single year,¹ operated jackladders that could travel to various points in order to load pulpwood, and acted as a major employer in the region. All of this development had to be carried on through the period of severe economic disruption and upheaval that we know as the Great Depression.

What the people of Northwestern Ontario can learn from a study of this man and his company is that development in

¹OSC I10 of (B, 10, 36, 11-28).

this region is not impossible and that a business enterprise located in a hinterland is not helpless and totally dependent upon external compulsions. Even in an area of limited population and economic influence, prosperity is possible if the people dwelling within that region concentrate on the economic activities in which they have a comparative advantage in and work to export them to the outside world. Styffe used the advantages that his territory had to offer in timber resources and access to water transportation and he utilized them to his and the region's advantage. Working within the restrictive framework of a hinterland region, he was not only able to survive but also flourish. Although the firm of Oscar Styffe Limited does not exist any more the determination and ingenuity of its owner should serve as a historical inspiration to the people of Northwestern Ontario as they work to build a better future.

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and paper industry. Finally, Series G is the photograph series, containing 74 photographs arranged by item number. The subjects of the photos range from camp operations and company tugboats to family-related pictures. An index to the Styffe Collection is provided in the Archives Inventory Master Binder for the Oscar Styffe Collection (which is also found the Archives, Chancellor Paterson Library).

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