The Jackladder:
Tie Logging on the Whirlpool
Whirlpool River Tie Logging Area
1919 - 1927

Whirlpool Valley

Marmot Basin

Jasper

To Yellowhead Pass

To Hinton

Athabasca Falls

To Lake Louise

To Maligne Lake
Whirlpool River Timber Limit
1919

Moab Lake
JASPER FOREST RESERVE

WHIRLPOOL RIVER TIMBER LIMITS

COMPASS SURVEY

Scale: 1000 ft. = 1 in.

Jasper, Alta.
30th June 1919

Note: The estimated number of Ties on the 5 square miles is approximately 1,200,000.

The remarks on plan relative to No. of ties per acre apply to only 75% of the area included. There being many intervening tracts of young growth in low ground and along the River Banks.

J. Grant MacGregor – Resident Engineer – 30th June 1919
J. Grant MacGregor

Guelph-Goderich RR to 1909

Alberta Central RR Red Deer 1910

WW I Canadian Army Engineer 1916

Resident Road Engineer Jasper 1919 - 1920

Chief Highway Engineer Manitoba 1921
J. Grant MacGregor
Resident Engineer
1919
Timber Berth
Tie Point:
Large Boulder

Post opposite large boulder"
Survey Control Line
[
[Old Columbia Trail-]

Moab Lake
James McNiece
Austin
1866-1922

Highest Bidder
Whirlpool
Timber Berth
1919
AUSTIN & NICHOLSON
CHAPEAUL, ONTARIO

Largest Producers of Railroad Ties In the Dominion

Pine and Spruce—Lumber—Lath—Piling Railroad Ties—Pulpwood

FIRST CLASS PLANING-MILL EQUIPMENT

Facilities for delivering Pulpwood to Michipicoten Harbour, Lake Superior
Splendid facilities for Dressing and Matching in straight car lots, one or more widths

Mills at NICHOLSON, ONTARIO, Main Line C.P.R.
Astoria and Portal Creeks
Highway 93A in 1949

1920s Tote Road in yellow
Otto’s Cache – Otto brothers
Rapids by Moab Lake
Moab Lake and the Columbia Trail

-- Trail location based on 1919 Timber Berth Survey --

Moab Lake

Ott Creek

Warden Sawmill Site

Whirlpool River

1982 Photo by W.R. Bailey
Whirlpool Tie Camp Locations

Whirlpool River Tie Logging Camps
1919 - 1927

Bob Stevenson photo - 2007
First Camp
First Camp – A Metaphore
Second Camp
Simon Creek area
Whirlpool Tie Camp 2
“Simon Creek” – Camp 2
Otto Brothers
Contractors

James C. Gibson
David E. Conroy
Tom Stapley
Dennis ("Dinny") Hogan
Jack, Bruce and Closson Otto
Otto Brothers - guides, outfitters, garage, taxi
Lethbridge sawmill
Broad Axe – tie hacking
Edd Neighbour

Hauling a sleigh-load of wood.
Sleigh-load of Railway Ties
Watering Ties from a Jam
Pointer – log-driving skiff
Log-driving Pointer – Camp 2

Tom Peterson photo 1987 – Roy Richards & Wally Butler
BODY RECOVERED IN BRIDGE PIER

Identified as Ernest J. Sorenson, a Tie Worker, Who Disappeared

Missing for more than a month, the body of Ernest J. Sorenson, who has been employed with Allen and Hogan, tie contractors, near Jasper, was found last week caught in the piers of the Whirlpool River bridge, a few miles from his place of employment. Sorenson, a Dane, only landed in this country on July 18.

A pike pole and cap were found on the banks of the Whirlpool River, a tributary of the Athabasca, on August 1, and it was presumed at that time that Sorenson had been drowned. The body, lying some feet under water, was found by Dennis Hogan, the man’s employer, and although his clothing had been entirely washed away, identification was still possible.

The R.C.M.P. have had the matter in hand, and the dead man’s only known relative, a brother living in Illinois, has been notified.

Ernest J. Sorenson

Tie Driver
d. 1 August 1924
“Tie Island” Pier
Jackladder, Piers and Log Boom -- 1920s

PJM! September 2009
Pier in Athabasca -- Jackladder Area
Tie Production 1921 - 1927

Bar chart showing tie production from 1921 to 1927 with production levels in thousands (K).

- 1921: 90 K
- 1922: 20 K
- 1923: 300,000
- 1924: 40 K
- 1925: 60 K
- 1926: 90 K
- 1927: 60 K
Boom Logs on the Delta

Cold Sulphur Spring
The Jackladder – End of the Drive