



Using truck mounted crane, Ontario tree trimming contractor, Andy Hamilton, removes entire sections of tree in single cut. Without crane, method would be impractical on removal projects near power lines and buildings.

efficient

Tree Removal

with 2-man crew

By BUCKLEY JOHNS

ANDY HAMILTON may have one of the smallest tree removal operations in terms of crew size, but he's one of the busiest.

Hamilton's operation consists of mechanized equipment, himself and one man. He has developed a technique for tree trimming and debris removal which he says permits him to handle many jobs faster than normal 5- and 6-man crews.

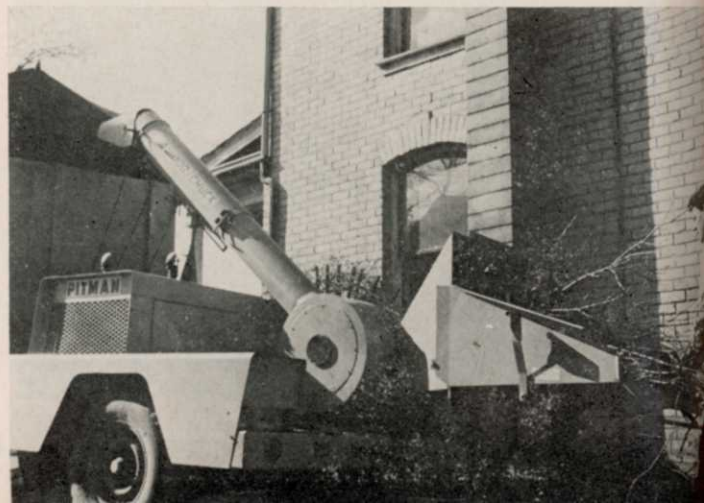
A Canadian of the province of Ontario at Brantford, Hamilton started tree trimming and removal to boost income during the winter months when his material handling business was at a low point. Result has been development of a solid business

and an efficient tree operation with up-to-the-minute equipment and only two men.

Equipment in the operation

consists of a truck-mounted, 5-ton telescoping crane—a principal unit used in his material handling business—power chain

Limbs 8 inches in diameter and smaller are fed into 12-inch chipper. Hamilton reports chipper saved \$1000 in labor costs on recent Brantford, Ontario, project.





Two men handle removal job in less than 2 hours. Stump, logs, and chips are all that remain of 85-foot tree. Hamilton says mechanized equipment makes this type operation possible.

saws, a 12-inch brush chipper, and a chip truck.

Hamilton's technique has enabled his 2-man crew to remove 85 foot trees in less than two hours. This includes chipping the branches, loading limbs too big for the chipper, and raking the area.

Rather than starting at the top of the tree and working down by removing each limb in 4- and 5-foot sections, the procedure used by many, Hamilton starts near the bottom and removes large sections of the tree in one cut. This is where the crane pays dividends.

Crane Is Key To Easy Bow Removal For Hamilton

To remove a tree, the crane—a Pitman Hydra-Lift with 47-foot telescoping boom, is positioned alongside the tree and outriggers extended. The crane operator extends the boom and positions it over the center of the first large bough to be removed. Meanwhile, Hamilton has climbed the tree and is ready to connect the crane's loadline to a choker placed around the limb. The loadline is used to steady the limb as it is sawed from the tree trunk.

During the sawing operation, the crane operator, as necessary, picks up on the bough to keep it from pinching the saw. Once the cut is completed, Hamilton's operator rotates the boom in order

to bring the bough out from the tree and spot it on the ground near the chipper. This procedure is continued until the tree is stripped of all main boughs.

While Hamilton works his chain saw through the tree trunk, at an approximate height of 2½ feet above the ground, his helper—who has already trimmed the protruding branches and has cut the large limbs in 10 foot sections—begins loading the logs on the truckbed. The mounting position of the crane, 23 inches behind the cab, permits full utilization of load space.

All branches 8 inches in diameter and smaller are fed into the Pitman Wood/Chuck brush chipper which reduces them to 1/15 their original volume and deposits them in a tarp-covered chip truck that also tows the chipper. The chipper, powered by a 330 cubic inch V-8 Ford industrial-

Mounting position of Hydra-Lift truck-crane enables Hamilton to make maximum use of load space. All limbs of 85-foot tree, except those on truck, were fed into brush chipper.



type engine, has a 12 inch solid steel rotor, 4 self-aligning cutting knives, blower and dust suppressor. The dust suppressor provides a fine spray of water over the wood as it enters the chipper. This curtails dust and also prolongs life of the blades.

After Hamilton has felled the trunk of a tree and then sectioned it, both trunk and logs are lifted onto the truck with the crane. All that remains is chipping the small branches.

Hamilton says that the crane and chipper combination which allows him to remove an entire section of the tree at once, eliminates waste time due to over-cutting. "Without the chipper, we would make at least three and possibly four trips to the dump in removing trees in the 65-foot to 85-foot height range. Instead, we end up with about a half truckload of chips and one load of logs. As for the chips, I'm working on a couple of ideas to sell them in the future," he concluded.

Hamilton recently used his mechanized system to remove 93 trees in a Brantford Winter Works project. His tender for the job was \$4,000—approximately \$1,000 under the nearest bid. He attributes his low tender to mechanized equipment which reduced three men, or 24 manhours per day, from his labor cost.

Hamilton, who finished the job in 15 days, claims his total labor cost was \$885. When figuring his tender for the job, he estimated his labor cost at \$2,200 and allowed five weeks for the job. Thus, Hamilton says, the chipper saved approximately \$1,000.