

REGION TEN  
WILDERNESS CANOE TRIPS  
RECORD OF PADDLE AWARDS

NAME	OTTENSON, PAUL
ADDRESS	213 S. Lincoln, Owatonna, Minnesota.
COUNCIL	
DATE OF TRIP	August 14 - , 1943.
GUIDE	John Cresby

PADDLE AWARDS :	DATE
BRONZE	Through Regional Office 12/18/43
GOLD	
SILVER	

# Mutual Implement and Hardware Insurance Co.

OWATONNA, MINNESOTA

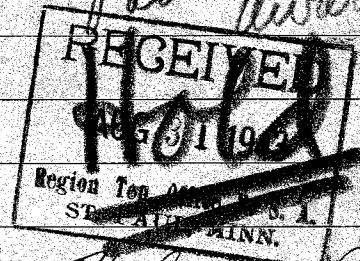
MEMO

To

Date

From PAUL OTTESON

Subject



Dear Chuck:

I'm sorry we missed you on the Canoe Trip. Had a grand time and was surely pleased about the whole business.

Attached is a log of the trip which I hope may earn a Bronze Paddle. Concerning the pictures - I will submit my movies for your approval. Could have some of the frames enlarged to snapshot size if this is necessary to meet the requirements.

Taking pictures was an awful lot tougher than I had figured but I guess they are O.K. Will run them tonight at the Council Meeting in Fairbault. When I have them edited and titled will send them to you for a lookover - or better still ~~will~~ maybe you can see them in Owatonna.

MEMO

# Mutual Implement and Hardware Insurance Co.

OWATONNA, MINNESOTA

MEMO

To

Date

From PAUL OTTESON

Subject

The Owatonna Cubs will have a big Indian Day here September 24. Each den will set up its teepee after school and then will have fun until 6 o'clock. We will then have a supper for the Cubs (make flapjacks probably). Later we will have the stunts, program and ceremonies. Parents will be out for this.

Hope that you get down this way to give us some ideas for this event. Looks like a busy Fall. - In Stevens Point most of this week, the baby coming and a week or two in Toronto in October.

Hope that you are still planning on a weekend in Owatonna this Fall. Make it any time

Paul

By - *Paul Otteson*  
213 So. Lincoln St.  
Owatonna, Minn.

### Scout Canoe Trails

Time - August, 1943

Voyageurs - Bob Neulieb, Dale Torgerson, Harold Isaacson, Joe Rollins, Rev. Walter Meyer,  
Paul Otteson

Guide - John (Bing) Crosby

We left Owatonna at 6 A.M. on Saturday, August 14 and arrived at the Canoe Base at about 5:30 P.M. We then took a few pictures, bought a little fishing tackle and asked numerous questions concerning the trip. Bing ~~then~~ fixed some supper - consisting of flapjacks and coffee. Tents were now pitched before dark.

At 9:30 P.M. a campfire session was held with two of the guides. They explained the history of the Border Canoe Trails in the early days of the Hudson Bay Company fur traders. We then got our instructions as to what to take along on the trip, how to load our Duluth Packs, and how to carry three loaded packs at one time. The trip now began to look like a bigger adventure than we had previously anticipated.

The guides then helped us chart our course on the big wall map. We wanted a trip that we would be able to handle but at the same time ~~would be~~ tough enough so that we would know ~~that~~ we had been on a canoe trip.

At about 11 P.M. we found our way to our camp site by the aid of a flashlight. I did not sleep too well as this was my first experience at sleeping on the ground, and the thoughts of carrying canoes and heavy packs over the long portages probably haunted me.

We got up at 6 A.M. <sup>and</sup> Had Ludlow, the director of the Canoe Base fix<sup>ed</sup> us a breakfast of corn-flakes, toast and coffee. Our packs and ponchos were then loaded up. I had my movie camera and tripod and expected to set this up on the way to take pictures. Had convinced me to carry the camera in the pack and strap the tripod to the canoe. He has right.

At about 10 P.M. we started out in rough water. In our canoe I paddled bow, Bing paddled stern and Bob was in the middle. We were breaking a strong wind and good sized waves and <sup>the</sup> load was a little heavy. The waves would come over the bow and, of course, I was getting drenched constantly. We stopped at a small island and transferred part of our load to another canoe. After that the going was better but paddling in a kneeling position was surely hard on the knees.

We arrived at Prairie Portage at about 1:30 P.M. and set up camp. A side trip to a Canadian Forest Ranger's cabin was necessary for reporting in and getting our Canadian fishing licenses. Some scouts came across the Portage though and reported that the waves were five feet high in Bayley Bay. It then seemed best to stay at camp that afternoon and make the trip in the evening.

In the afternoon we had lots of fun fishing, exploring in the woods and getting our camp set up in good order. Bing fixed Mulligan stew for supper.

At 7 P.M. we set out for the Ranger's Cabin. Going was tough but we made it there by 8:30 and after getting all lined up, set out for home.

The waves were still running high. Going into Bayley's Bay one hit our canoe the wrong way and we upset. Dale and Bob were in my canoe. The canoe was bottom side up but we turned it up and hung on until Walt and Bing reached us. I hung on to their canoe with one arm and on to ours with the other and they towed us ashore. A canoe serves as a perfect life preserver and there really was no danger. None of us were scared but we did get a little cold. I lost my hat, but my glasses and mocassins stayed on.

The boys built a big fire on shore. We took off our wet clothes and really absorbed some heat. Walt gave me his sweat shirt which really felt good.

We decided not to try for camp so Bing and Walt paddled back to get the Ranger. He came after us in his big boat and we spent the night in his cabin. He had a big dog which was half Husky and half wolf and was really some dog.

In the morning we heard the Ranger at his radio - "Basswood Lake calling Fort Francis. May be a little late with my 9:15 report. Some Americans got dumped out here last night and I have to take them back to their canoes."

A hot fire dried our clothes and after a cup of hot coffee the Ranger took us back to our canoes. We then paddled back to our camp and had to pack up. It was tough to tear up the beds we had so carefully made up of balsam boughs and which we did not have a chance to use.

After paddling through Carp Lake and crossing Carp Portage we stopped for our lunch consisting of sausage, bread, butter, and fruit nectar. In the afternoon the water was rough and one of the portages was really difficult. This portage was a half mile long, rocky, and every little while a giant <sup>fallen</sup> tree would block the path.

Emerald Lake was next. At about 7 P.M. we arrived at our camp site, set up camp and ate large quantities of Bing's macaroni and cheese. The moonlight shining on the water was so beautiful that night that it was hard to go to bed.

I got up before daybreak and took some pictures of the Lake as the sun rose. It is impossible to describe the beauty of this place, either in the early morning as the mist rises or later in the day as water turns to a brilliant blue.

I then took quite a few pictures of morning activities including flipping the flapjacks in the pan. Also of Harold stretched out in bed so comfortably on his air mattress. The boys were all up early this morning because some loons came in close to camp and ended all possibilities of sleep.

Fishing Emerald Lake for a couple of hours failed to get us any lake trout, so we struck out again.

Paddling that afternoon was nice as we travelled a long narrow river where there was very little wind and no waves. This finally gave me an opportunity to take some movies of the boys paddling.

We had a little trouble in finding a place to camp as the shores were all solid rock. There seemed to be a break in the wilderness on the other side of the lake, so we paddled across and found a swell camp site. After supper some of the boys fished a while and Walt caught a Northern Pike.

In the morning we fished again but had no luck so we moved on. After paddling northeast for about an hour a high rocky point appeared, on which a camp was set up. Nobody seemed to be around so we paddled on. After going a little way we saw a big motor boat with a man, woman and child in it.

We told the man (Dr. Blum of Kansas City) that we were having bad luck with our fishing. He assured us that he would take us to a place where we would surely catch some lake trout.

After setting up camp and eating lunch we struck out for the secret lake. Bing didn't like to fish so he stayed home and slept. A portage of about ten chains right up a steep cliff was necessary before the lake was reached.

Fishing was good and we caught five lake trout. I fished about 150 feet deep using a daredevil and 8 lead sinkers. It was fun to catch these fish as they had lots of fight.

That evening there was finally fish for dinner. The fish were cut up and each piece was dipped in cornmeal and fried. Bing fried potatoes to eat with the fish. This was probably the best fish I have ever eaten.

After dinner some of the boys went fishing again but I sat on the rocky cliff hanging over the edge of the lake to rest, watching the loons frolic and enjoy the wonders of the wilderness.

Our camp site was right on a rock foundation so our bed was kind of hard in spite of the moss we used for a mattress.

The next morning we pointed the bows of our canoes homeward. We were to circle down through Ester Lake, through Knife and down through Ensign. However, we got a bad start, missing our portage and then crossing Swamp Portage and getting nearly to Cache Bay and Saganaca Lake before we discovered we were in the wrong. The ore in the rocks forming the shoreline of the lakes threw the guides compass off. It surely was tough to have to carry our canoes back over Swamp Portage again, but we had been out long enough to take such minor disasters in stride. A hard rain beating in our faces did not make matters any easier.

After a couple of tough portages we came to Knife Lake. Here the water was really rough and we had to do all of our paddling from a kneeling position. We paddled hard until about 7 P.M. and then set up camp. Bing fixed macaroni with tomato paste and we fried the rest of the bacon. I mixed up some cocoa <sup>as</sup> we had used all <sup>of</sup> our coffee. We had some onions left so we each ate a raw onion with our dinner.

As this was our last night out some campfire singing seemed to be in order. We sang mostly scout songs and everyone surely pitched in enthusiastically. The wilderness, a campfire, and songs make a real combination. After singing "Taps" we went to bed.

The next morning we had flapjacks and cocoa for breakfast. About an hour of scouring on the kettles was necessary to make them nice and shiny before we got back to the Base.

We paddled through Knife Lake and then through Vera Lake. The portage between Vera and Ensign was a tough one but as with the others we made it. This was about 2:30 P.M. so it was time to eat lunch.

The nourishment was helpful for we paddled into a strong headwind and high waves all the way down Ensign Lake. Finally we came to a short portage around some rapids and then completed our trip through Newfound and then Moose Lake. While paddling through Newfound Lake we ran into a heavy rainstorm, but we were paddling so hard down the home stretch that the rain did not bother. We were too close to home to get tired.

After checking in at the base we went down to Ely and had a big dinner at the Forrest Hotel. I am sure none of us will forget how good this tasted.

~~I am sure that none of us will ever forget~~ <sup>And we always remember</sup> the thrills and adventures that we enjoyed on the Scout Canoe Trails.

SEPTEMBER 3, 1943

MR. PAUL OTTESON  
OWATONNA, MINNESOTA

DEAR MR. OTTESON:-

I ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR APPLICATION FOR BRONZE  
PADDLE WHICH WILL BE CONSIDERED A LITTLE LATER.

WE ARE VERY ANXIOUS TO HAVE YOUR MOVIE AND  
WOULD LIKE YOU TO SEND IT UP WHEN IT IS FREE. I  
PRESUME YOU WOULDN'T MIND IF WE HAD A COPY OF IT  
MADE.

CORDIALLY,  
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

KENNETH G. BENTZ  
REGIONAL EXECUTIVE