

June 17, 1965

The place: Johnson Crossing on the Teslin River, Yukon Territory, Canada.  
Members of the party: Bob Henry, Rollie White, Bruce Tannehill, Marc Wermager, and David Wolfe.

We left Fargo, N. D. on the 14th. Driving around the clock, we arrived here about midday. After unloading the Camper and trailer, Bruce started off to Fairbanks with it. Those remaining carried the gear to the river. We set off upstream, looking for a campsite, but found none. Marc wished to stay upstream, but the three of us outvoted him, so we came back down to the bridge. Our supper was stew and tasted fine, probably because it was our first real meal of the day. We have washed things up and put everything in the tent, being afraid that kids or Indians might carry off anything left out. Dave and Rollie went over the Bridge to an Indian family where they ordered moccasins for the trip. Cost: \$9.. They should be ready Saturday noon when Bruce arrives and we head for Ross River.

Characters to remember: Art Gordon, who fixed the trailer hitch; Andy Smith, Indian guide, who will take us to Ross River for \$80.

June 18. Johnson's Crossing.

We were told that it got down to 29 degrees last nite. It felt like it. This morning we discovered our salami was missing. We suspect "Fang", an anemic husky that shows up each time food is ready. The day was busy, but at a relaxed pace. We arose late and prepared a creative breakfast. We had oatmeal, raisins, cinnamon, egg and "rootin-tootin raspberry"—in one pot. It was good! But we'd hate to have to live on the stuff. After eating, we prepared the two poles by putting the spikes on them. Bob put on a coat of linseed oil. Rollie made a sheath for the new ax. Dave painted the canoes where they had rubbed together in transit. Right now, Marc is trying to set up the tent so that it looks really trim. Bob is reading his book—while he's got it away from Rollie, who is at the Lodge. Supper was stew and "rootin-tootin rasp-

berry, plus some oatmeal bannock which turned out quite well.

June 19

We broke camp and carried everything up to the Lodge. Andy Smith showed up in the early p.m. Bruce returned from Fairbanks about 3:00. He was tired, having had very little sleep. We set off for our jumping off point.. Three of us had to ride in the back of the pickup. It was cold, mainly because of the wind. We set up camp near the river. Camped nearby were two archeologists, one a Doctor from the National Museum, the other a graduate student from the University of Wisconsin. They were very interesting and showed us a few of the artifacts they had found in the Yukon. One thing they asked us to look for was the extent of volcanic ash from an eruption to the west, about 300 a.d. Andy had supper with us. We shared our stew and his fish and tea. We took a picture of him at 10:30 p.m. It doesn't get dark here this time of year. We left our leger at the Lodge, it seems, and all our papers are in it. Bob went back with Andy and will look for it. He should return the 20th. This puts us behind schedule even before we start.

June 20— missed.

June 21. Day One

We awoke late and got up later as it was raining. We were up before it quit, however. Packing was rather slow, but we expect the process to speed up. Just before we left we went over to see Father Riguard. He has been here for 14 years and has traveled the Bush a great deal. He thought we could make it up the Ross, but doubted if we could make the Divide or the Nahanni. The danger of the latter, he says, is that there are sudden waterfalls that cannot be seen before it is very late.

Our trip started with a few difficulties. Marc and Bruce had to go back a hundred yards to get the poles they forgot. Shortly thereafter we almost swamped the other canoe, and Rollie got all wet. Poling was awkward and we turned to lining. The first six miles of the Ross are continuous rapids. The

going was slow and several times we came very close to swamping. After a while we learned to ease the canoe back downstream when the bow got caught by a current. Our last mile was much easier since we were out of the rapids. Poling was easier and faster than paddling. We are camped on a point of stone and sand. Camp was set up quickly, supper and tomorrow's bannock cooked. We have seen bear tracks, moose tracks and think we heard a moose. It seems to be getting lighter and we haven't gone to bed yet. Our worst tragedy is that Bob tore the seat of his pants. We noticed a few extra mosquitoes. The Canol road was washed out in a number of places.

June 22. Day Two.

Got up a bit late. It was hard to crawl out of the sack. One difficulty is that we have no idea of time without the sun. Packing took too long again. We started out poling and most of the day saw the same mode of travel. We had a couple miles of good lining. Our ability to pole was increased greatly throughout the day. Bob and Dave were quite exhausted by lunch time. We made fairly good time for the hours we spent traveling. Covered 12.5 miles, we figured. We camped on a sandy, rocky point again. Beautiful valley! We had a couple showers pass over us after we pulled in for camp. We have seen many moose tracks and several of bear. We're hitting the sack a little earlier this time. We had a good supper of Spanish rice, pudding and cocoa. Baked cornbread for tomorrow's lunch. Marc insists on a notation in the diary that he arose first and got breakfast for the rest of us. Mosquitoes were bad, except for brief intervals of wind or rain.

June 23. Day Three.

We got up too late, but it didn't take quite as long to break camp. We spent a good part of the day lining. When we have to, we pole. Paddling is done only to cross the river or in short stretches up backwaters. Bruce, Bob and Dave took the Old Town today. It was much easier going than the heavily loaded Chestnut. We will have to find some way of loading so that we have three of us

in the Chestnut. When the wind blew, as it did occasionally, we got relief from the mosquitoes. The country is so beautiful! We can see a couple mountains in the east. The weather was good for traveling. It was cool and the couple light and brief showers we had were of no bother. We camped late today after covering  $10\frac{1}{2}$  miles. This means that we have caught up to the average we had planned—30 miles in three days, and 100 miles to Sheldon Lake in ten days. We will have to cover more than ten tomorrow as we are sure to make less than average going up Prevost Canyon. Supper was rice again. This time with jerky, salami and onion soup and seasoned with Italian seasoning. Spice cake made our desert. Bruce missed two shots at some ducks. They would have tasted good! Marc had one try and did no better. Bruce has tried again to make bannock. We'll try to eat it before we comment on its nature.

June 26. Day Six.

Missed a couple of days. Bruce's bannock wasn't too good., but was still a mite better than Dave's. We missed a couple good chances to get some geese. We covered 17 miles one day, 13 the next and today about 15. Most of our travel has been by lining. Today we saw our first moose and also a pair of bald eagles and their eyrie. Tonite Bob made the bannock. He used five tlbs. of baking powder for four cups flour. It still has not quit rising! It is raining as we crawl in the sack.

June 27. Day Seven.

It rained this morning, and as a result we laid in the sack quite late, hoping it would quit. It just sprinkled as we broke camp. The first part of the morning was fairly easy going, but the afternoon saw the river straighten out and the last five miles were slow and hard.

June 29. Day Nine. In the a.m.

Yesterday was spent going up Prevost Canyon. On two occasions, before we really got into the canyon, the Old Town swamped when Marc couldn't get the bow into the current. It was not really his fault: the canoe is too shallow. Luckily, no food was ruined, although each time three food packs went into the

drink. On the last swamp, Dave had to swim after a paddle and map case. On top of all this, it was cold and raining! When we got to the canyon, itself, Marc went on ahead to look for the portage trail while the rest of us built a fire to dry off with. We sneaked by another set of rapids and lined up to the big set. Here we portaged up a hill where we found the old trail. Where it started we do not know. It continued to rain most of the nite, but the sun is out now. We are camped on a point of an island, just above some rapids. We have things out in the sun to dry. Bob and Dave have done some sewing. Bruce went back over the portage trail to look for a missing map case. We had a good breakfast of scrambled eggs and bacon, plus fruit stew with barley. The tent is still up as we wish it to dry out. So far, the Chestnut has had rough treatment. Several planks and one rib are cracked. It needs to be touched up with paint. We have enough breeze that the mosquitoes are not bad. Most of us suffer from hands that are in tough shape. They are cut, dried, chapped, and swollen, but they should toughen up after awhile. In Prevost Canyon we have passed a milestone, and the trip now seems well under way.

#### July 1. Day 11

Yesterday we made it to Sheldon Lake, where we camped on the north shore beneath Mount Sheldon. Getting there was lots of fun since we got to go across Lewis and Field Lakes. It was a real treat for a gang of old Quetico Guides. The stream (Ross River) between Lewis and Field Lakes was tough going and rather long. However, we saw a cow and calf moose very close to us. We also saw a lynx—or rather, Rollie, Bruce and Marc did, as they were in the second canoe. They tried to shoot it, but the cartridge had gotten wet and did not fire. We suffered the same fate on Lewis Lake when we tried to shoot some ducks. All the cartridges we had in our pack however, are still good. The stream between Field and Sheldon Lakes is very short and the old settlement is located on it. There were several cabins, a cache building on stilts and a trading post which is still in fair shape. We explored it and found 5 tins of baking powder. We took

two of them. A trap door led to a storage cellar which Bruce entered. It was cool down there. After we set up camp and started to cook supper it began to rain again. We set up the dining fly for the first time on the trip and were well satisfied with it. We made pizza's for supper, a couple of them with jerky--not bad either. Marc also made some donuts, which were very good. We had four apiece. Would have liked more. We were camped near a cabin which contained a vee-sterned boat, two cans of fuel oil and various odds and ends. Much writing was on the walls, most of it by a "Hudson Bay Expedition" of 1953. Today we arose fairly late and had breakfast of pancakes covered with fruit stew, with bacon on the side. Very good. Once again, Dave outate everybody else. That made two meals in a row that really filled us up. We fired the 30-06 and set the sights fairly well. The bullets wne thru both ends of a 55 gal. drum and thru the cabin. Bruce's shot also got the boat and the paddles. It rained during the nite so the canoes were too wet to work on. We broke camp without lunch, as we had had such a large breakfast, and started up the Ross. At first, the going was easy and we made good time. But later things slowed down. We have been able to paddle most of the way, keeping out of the main current except to cross the river. On occasion, Bruce poled a bit. We saw a cow moose with twin calves. This brings our total moose count to eight. The river is high, due to the rains we have had and we can see grass that is a foot under water. We covered seven miles of river in our short day which is what we hope to average to the Itsi Lakes. The mountains to our right are beautiful. Their tips are gold with a bit of red. We are camped on a small hillock and we feel lucky to have found a campsite as the country is very low. Bruce waded into a swamp to try to shoot a duck, but had no luck. Rice for supper, with beef gravy. Cake for dessert. Dave made the cornbread tonite, and it appears to have come out fairly well. Bob tried some fishing but had no luck.

July 2. Day 12.

We are camped nine miles above where we were last nite. We had hoped to make ten miles, but the one remaining is all portage. Our camp is at the foot of a canyon down which the water really cascades. The going was tough when we tried to paddle, due to the fact that the river rose another five inches last nite. Most of our travel today was by lining. We got up late today and were slow to break camp. As a result we left about noon and did not eat lunch until near 6:00 p.m. It was about nine by the time we had checked out the portage and started to set up camp. We were a bit careless today: Dave had to walk back half a mile and find his camera's ditty bag that he'd dropped. After lunch, Marc had to go back about the same distance to get the .22 we had left behind. Rollie made macaroni and cheese for supper and a dessert of cornbread was provided by the skill of Bob. We brought up some buckets of water and did the dishes around the fire as the bannock baked. No rain at all today as we had beautiful weather. The mosquitoes have been very bad in camp tonite, but did not bother much while lining. We saw a cow and calf moose and the remains of an Indian cache.

July 3. Day 13

Our day began with a good portage. The first part of our day was not too productive. There were many islands in the river and we did not always choose the right channel. The current is quite strong. After lunch we had some good tracking ground and made good time for a spell. About 8:00 we ran onto some rapids the end of which we still have not reached. We crossed the river to camp since the south shore was too swampy. We had only the slightest sprinkle of rain, which makes it two dry days in a row. The river appears to have dropped an inch or two, but is still quite high. We are camped, we hope, in the middle of the stretch of rapids. If the remaining six miles to John Lake is all rapids we will not make it in one day. It was a good day's work getting seven miles today. We have left the beautiful range of mountains which were

to our south. We have been trying to think of a name for them and for the canyon which we left this morning. We saw no moose today. If we see some on the Itsi Lakes we will be tempted to shoot one. We do not, however, wish to have more meat than we can eat before crossing the Divide. Bruce finally made some bannock that rose. We gladly overlooked the fact that he burned the bottom a bit. Marc and Bob are down doing the dishes now. Bruce is sharpening his and the kitchen knife and Rollie is putting the food away. We had Spanish rice and pudding for supper. The country is vast and beautiful. The Itsi mountains seem much closer today. Their snow and glacier capped peaks are often hid or obscured by clouds. This little campsite we are on is quite free of mosquitoes, probably because it is so cool tonite. Cool enough, in fact, that Marc put on his jack-shirt for the first time. As we sat around the fire after supper Bruce informed us that the temperature was 46 degrees.

July 5. Day 15.

Yesterday we did not get started until late again, and it rained while we waded thru the icy waters of the Ross. We finally made it to camp when the Old Town capsized again, almost taking Marc with it. Had he not hung on to it, however, it would have been swept downstream, probably onto the rocks in the rapids. Thanks go to Bob for having grabbed Marc. Otherwise we might have lost Marc and the canoe. The lining rope had been lying loose in the canoe and was lost. The packs were saved and it appears that no food got wet enough to spoil. Dave's and Bruce's sleeping bags got a bit wet, and on top of that, the ground cloth is not completely waterproof so the water in the rain-soaked moss below it seeped up and caused all of us to be chilled thruout the nite. It was raining this morning, and intermittant showers plagued us thruout the forenoon and a bit in the p.m. Yesterday we made only two miles, but today saw only a mile and a half covered. We are camped by some more rapids which we chose not to walk up as they are bad and the water is cold. So, while Bruce and Bob, troubled by bad knees and ankles, stayed in camp and set up camp and cooked



supper, the rest of the crew took the canoes and a food pack across a "portage" and around the rapids. We can only estimate the distance we portaged, but it's about a mile and  $\frac{1}{4}$ . This will leave us with five loads for tomorrow morning, which is just right. It was nice to have the Swedish Rice pudding and bannock ready for us when we got back. We made a double batch of pudding and bannock and will eat the rest for breakfast and lunch, hoping to get a fast start for a change. The sky has cleared and we hope it will stay that way for a spell. We could see the moon tonite for the first time we can remember on this trip.

July 6. Day 16.

We got up to clear skies. Ate our cold pudding and bannock, which was good but lacked quantity. We made our portage in good time, stopping three times. We had very little walking up rapids and were able to get to John Lake and eat lunch on the east end by 1:00. We were pleasantly surprised to find the going very easy up the River and stream to the Itse Lake. We were halted at the entrance to the lake for about ten minutes by a squall, but used the time to rig the fishing lines. Bob and Rollie fished as we traveled. Rollie caught a small lake trout and lost another one, along with the line. We have traveled most of the length of the lake and are camped on the north shore. Supper consisted of spaghetti, cake and the fish. All were very good. Marc and Bruce will go out now after more fish. Bruce and Bob tried with no luck before supper. The weather is fine now and we hope for more of the same tomorrow. We could all use a day to keep our hands dry, as they are chapped and split to the point of being open wounds. We are ~~out~~ out in the boondocks and we feel it, even though there are a couple 55 gal. drums to be seen on the shores of the lakes. They were certainly brought in by air for hunting parties. The Itsi mountains are obscured largely by the smaller ones that rise from the shore of the lake. We do not have enough sinkers to get down for the Lake trout, so we are making some from the leads of the .22 cartridges that got wet. Bruce and Marc came in late with two good trout which we fried up before going to bed.

July 7. Day 17.

We arose to clear skies and the weather continues good thruout the day. After a breakfast of 18 pancakes apiece, topped with fruit stew, Bob and Dave went fishing. They had great luck, bringing back 12 good trout. Bob caught the three big ones and it took at least half an hour to land the largest. Meanwhile, Bruce fixed up his canoe, and Marc made an apple pie. For supper, we cooked the five largest fish—probably 20 lbs. of meat—drank hot lemonade and ate a small yeast bannock. Dessert was the pie, which was a monster. We really had enough to eat—perhaps too much! The bannock for tomorrow just came out of the oven and it should be ok. It's good to have a day to rest, relax and get things in order. The weather could not have been better and everything, including our sleeping bags, is dried out. We took the seven remaining fish and set up a rig to smoke them. Bruce made a tripod with a shelf and set the fish on it. Then we covered the rig with a tarp. Pulpy logs were set to smoldering and we now have a cool, smoky fire going. Bruce is taking good care to see that we don't get a flame, as we don't want the fish to cook. We've got to do the dishes now, then go to bed.

July 8. Day 18.

Another day of layover. Today, Bob, Rollie and Dave stayed in camp while Marc and Bruce went fishing and exploring a high mountain lake. We had the bannock for lunch and it was great. We've decided to make some more for tomorrow. We left some dough out and put it in a plastic can to be used for starter in the future. Before Bruce left he and Dave put the white lead and ambroid on the canoe's bad spots. Dave has mended his pants and hopes they will stay together until the next layover day. Rollie painted the canoe after the white lead had set. Bob has been taking care of the smoked fish, and Rollie has been reading Bob's first-aid book. We have all gotten our boots oiled. Bob, Dave and Rollie waited until about 10:00 p.m. for Marc and Bruce to return. They finally came down the mountain behind camp. We all cooked a rice supper and

ate one of the smoked fish which was good but would have tasted better if it were all well smoked. Bruce and Marc, tired as they were, had to paddle down the lake in the Chestnut to get the Old Town. Those remaining did the dishes around the fire. We are looking forward to travelling tomorrow.

The following is an entry into the log by Bruce, in which he tells of his and Marc's experiences on their hike: Marc and I left camp the second layover day to walk up to a small lake just below the glacier on the Itsi mountain. We paddled down to the West end of the lake and left our canoe on shore as we took off to climb the first ridge to the tree line. From here we were going to follow the ridge to a place above the lake and drop down to it. We foolishly took with us a fishing rod and the .22. After we had climbed to the top which took us about two and a half hours, we found quite a view and another ridge just a little higher than the one we were on. Naturally we thought that here was our chance to really get a view of the mountain so we started up there. All of this time we were very thirsty and we were glad when snow patches began showing up. We found, however, that this did not quench our thirst. On many of the snow patches there were tracks which were not quite sure whether they were moose or cariboo. As I was coming over one small rise I noticed a set of antlers sticking up. This is all we could see. We foolishly loaded the .22 and forgot the camera and approached. At about 30 feet it got up and looked at us. It turned and ran but not too far. When I rounded the corner it was standing there about 50 yards away and remained there for some time. It was quite a sight.

We continued on up, quite slowly, stopping to rest every 200 steps or so. As we did so we began to see other cariboo down below us in the snow patches. Lord only know how many there were. About 5:00 we came over the crest and from there we could see our little lake which turned out to be a jewel. At this point we began to think of starting back, but Marc pointed out that by follow-

ing the ridge we were on we could come out just above the camp and come down the hill there. We started out on this with fantastic views on each side. The ridge that we were on was actually very difficult walking and it took us a long time to reach the summit, which was about 6500 feet. From there we could see we were on the wrong ridge and would either have to go back or drop down at least 500 feet and climb back up to close to 7000 feet. By then, I felt almost high from the intoxicating view so I wanted to go on and we did. During this time we passed thru a large snow field. After another long climb we reached the peak. I happened to look back and see four Dall Sheep standing on the ridge up which we had come 30 minutes before. We also found a lot of their signs and wool hanging on the rocks. We then started down a long ridge which lead toward camp and crossed many snow fields. The view of the glacier was even more spectacular from here. We reached the hill above camp about 10:00 p.m. and even here found signs of Dall Sheep. We finally descended the hill which turned out to be long and hard and it must have been 11:00 before we reached camp. It was a long day and we were very tired.

July 10. Day 20.

Yesterday we left Itsi Lake, portaged to the other one, then again to the Ross River. At this point it was considerably smaller than when we had left it. Our portages were not too long but in places were rugged. The first saw us climb quite a bit and the second led thru a lot of brush. When we got to the Ross, we were in the territory covered by our aerial photos. Stretches which Bruce and Marc had feared were bad rapids were not nearly so bad. The photos are very good and we have even learned to read the rocks in the river from them. We continued on the river to Wilson Lake where we were glad to be able to find a campsite. The shores were low and we had a hard time finding a dry place. While Marc and Bob went out fishing, the rest cooked supper. Rollie made up a very good main dish of spuds, ham and cheese. Bob caught a good sized lake trout that we had just before going to bed. The lake is very

shallow and is really little more than a wide spot in the river. Today we arose about 7:30 and were a bit better organized and as a result we got on the water within a reasonable amount of time. Part of Rollies reel had fallen into the lake the night before, and we wasted a bit of time looking for it in the morning. At first we made good time thru the delta, but then the current picked up and we slowed down. In places we had very slow going when we had to paddle. After a while we got to where there was good lining shore although the stretches were rather short. We made nine miles of river and should get close to our portage tomorrow. As a result of being able to compare the photos with the actual river, we are hopeful that we will be able to avoid most of the portageing after the Nahanni Lakes. We were travelling up wind and came upon a bull moose today, the first bull we have seen. Bruce and Dave got quite close to him and got a couple pictures. The weather has remained warm and quite clear. We made about nine miles today and pulled in for camp about 7:30. We had Spanish rice for supper and dessert consisted of cake, topped with pudding.

July 11. Day 21.

We are camped very near the place where we will begin our portage across the Divide. We left camp this a.m. about 9:00, an hour and a half after we arose. Most of our day was spent lining. We paddled only very short stretches, usually only to cross the river. The lining shores are short and we have to cross quite often. The river now has become very narrow and is only a little too wide to spit across. The current is fast and the big canoe is tough to line if the current is fast and the water shallow. It was a long day but not really too tough going. We made almost 10 miles in about 11 hours of travel time. Mount Wilson has been our landmark and is quite a spectacular mountain. It rises very steeply, is rugged and barren, being covered in many places with snow. The anticipation of crossing the Divide has been a stimulus to us today. We're looking forward to getting over the hill and being able to go with the current for a change. As we have done a few times before, we made some dumplings to go with supper, which was macaroni and cheese. We had jerky for dessert, due to

the lack of anything else. We have been very glad to have the smoked fish along with our bannock for lunch. It rained a short spell before we arose this morning, but after that things kept on getting sunnier, until just about an hour before we got to camp. At that time it looked like a storm might be brewing, but it passed by us and the sky is now clear again.

July 12. Day 22.

We have done it! Over the Great Divide! We arose about 8:30, Tannehill Standard Time, and while Marck took off to scout the portage the rest of us broke camp. A brief shower hit us during this time, but the skies cleared about 11:00. We began our trek near noon as we crossed the river from our island campsite. First, thru some alders, across a small meadow to a small swamp, up a hill to swampy creek and then up another small hill to a meadow and game trail where we took our first rest. From then on the going was easy and we believe that our first stop was very near the actual Divide. From here on the going was along a game trail all the way to the first Nahanni Lake. We arrived at the lake about 6:00. The portage was much easier than we expected. We took four stops and each time two fellows had to go back and get the personals. We always left one fellow and three packs behind as we did not wish to loose them. Nahanni Lake is quite shallow, about six feet deep we estimate. Right now we have a moose cow wading across to us. She is only about 60 yards off, if that far. Marc made some hoots and she left, but not in too great a hurry. We finished the #2 food pack tonite and had a very good potato stew. Marc made a scratch cake with cocoa and lemon crystals for flavor--very good, actually. Then we had jello with peaches. Our drink was hot rootin-tootin raspberry with peach juice and lemon crystals--very good. We have done the dishes around the fire as tomorrow's bannock bakes. Showers have passed by on all sides since we were hit by one just before making camp. Other than that, the weather has been very good today. We have a nice campsite, one of the few meadows near the lake. Most of the rest of the shore is covered with alders. There are very few trees

and we had to go back away to get some logs for firewood. Our camp is at the east end of the lake, right on the end of a beaver dam which raises the level of the lake about three feet. Mount Wilson sits behind us, a barren hulk of rock that rises from the surrounding plane. To the north and east we can see where the Nahanni River comes from.

July 13. Day 23.

Due to the fact that Bob and Bruce caught no fish yesterday, we decided to skip or postpone our scheduled layover day on the Nahanni Lakes. So, as we broke camp we noticed all sorts of grayling just above and below the beaver dam. They were only about 6-7 inches long, but a mess of them would have done wonders for us.. We paddled down a beaver stream to the lower lake. What a pleasure it was to go with the current for a change! From the second lake it was only a matter of yards to the South Nahanni, which was only 15' across and very shallow. It grew deeper quite soon and soon we were whizzing along. Alders grew up from the shores. At one point we heard something to our left and surmized it to be a moose. We checked and found it to be one, a cow. Later, we paddled into a little lake to our left and saw a bull moose. We got within 30 yards of him. At one point, Rollie and Marc saw still a third moose. Below this we entered a broad valley. The river increased in size and in rate of descent. Soon we were shooting rapids and in places we had to walk the canoes down. In many cases we shot rapids that were too shallow and the canoes suffered as a result. At one point Bruce and Dave got hung up in a bad spot and the rooster tails came over the gunwhales. We had a little trouble getting to a place where we could empty the canoe. We made camp shortly after 6:00. Supper is over, the tent is up and we are all sitting around the fire as the bannock bakes. It is a very pleasant evening. We are well satisfied with the nearly 15 miles which we covered today. It is more than we had expected to make.

July 14. Day 24.

We arose early today--6:00. It took us a bit longer to break camp than the last couple days, but we were in no real hurry. We began by walking the canoes,

saw a place we thought we could run. We could, but couldn't stop when we wanted to. Both canoes got banged up pretty bad and both took on water. The Old Town got some canvas scraped so thin that we can see the planking. We ate lunch by a stream that came in and then travelled for about an hour and a half before stopping to camp. Across the stream is a sheer rock ledge, on the sides of which a large number of swallows nest. It is a beautiful little campsite, even if the tent site is on a slant and is sandy. We had a light shower hit us while setting up camp and more have threatened. But we have been caused no discomfort. Supper consisted of macaroni and cheese, and later we will have some sourdough bread. We have spent our "spare time" mending clothes, and we also oiled the 30-06, which got wet today. We had yeast bread just before going to bed and it was very good even it took a long time to bake, due to the cold weather that set in.

July 15. Day 25.

It started raining a couple hours before we got up. We had farina for breakfast and began the day's travel by portaging. While Rollie and Dave went back for the two extra packs, Bruce and Marc paddled out to free the fishing line that Bob had snagged on the opposite shore yesterday. On our first run of rapids, one of the canoes took a little water, but after that we had no trouble. For a while, Bob walked along shore to lighten the load of the three-man canoe. Finally, Bob asked to paddle bow on one stretch of rapids. He did very well. Later we got him in the stern as Dave walked. He did very well then. At one point, when he and Marc had looked over a stretch of rapids, Bob came back with a grin on his face. "How much do you trust me with your canoe?", he asked Dave. He was told that it was the crew's canoe and we all trusted him 100%. He and Rollie went thru in fine shape. The water is deeper now and the rapids are easier to run without getting hung up on rocks. We made camp after covering a fun but wet five miles. We have camped at the juncture with another river, 12 miles above where we believe the rapids to end. We figure it to take us at least two days to cover the remaining distance, probably three. It rained since



lunch and is still doing so. We have put up the tarp and are thankful for it. Supper was spuds with gravy and jerky and cake for dessert. Going to bed hoping for a sunny day tomorrow altho the prospects for it don't look good.

July 16. Day 26.

It rained all nite and all morning. We kept sleeping, hoping it would let up, but to no avail. When we finally did crawl out it was about 11:00, as near as we could figure. By the time breakfast was over we figured that with the continuing rain it was not worth packing up and breaking camp for the short day ahead. We had another reason for waiting, too. The last couple days we have been seeing signs of other people. It appears that we are getting close to them. We don't want to overtake them, so we are sitting around camp, doing a fair job of keeping occupied. We had such a late breakfast that we figure on skipping lunch and eating an early supper. Marc is finally getting around to sewing up his pants, which are in sad shape. He has quite a job ahead of him. We hauled in a huge log for the kitchen area and trimmed it up. It is our "sitting log" and keeps us off the cold, damp ground. We have cut and split a fair supply of firewood and have more available if we need it. Bruce has gone fishing, the prospects don't look too good.

July 17. Day 27.

This is a day to remember and regret. We covered only about 1/2 mile, did that the wrong and hard way. We were camped above some rapids and tried running them without really looking them over. First, the Old Town with Marc and Bob swamped. The rest of the crew couldn't pull the Chestnut over in time and they too were swamped as the water poured in over the gunwhales. The water was powerful and the chestnut was smashed into a rock that caved in the bottom of the canoe. We saved the packs, but lost two paddles which puts us in a tough spot with only three left. Dave grabbed a pack and hauled it to shore while Rollie and Bruce fought the canoe to shore downstream. Meanwhile, Bob had dragged a pack from the Old Town and got it to shore. Marc turned the Old Town over, lowering its chances of being damaged, and rode it downstream a considerable distance.

He finally made it ashore. It was not damaged, it appears. How the other pack and the tent stayed in the overturned canoe, we'll never know. After Marc got the canoe ashore he ran downstream to try to get a paddle, but without success. Meanwhile, the rest of the crew brought the gear together on the west shore and pulled the food bags out to dry them. Then the personal gear was spread out. Marc returned. As things would be, it began to rain. We moved camp downstream a few yards and set up the dining fly. Both canoes were put under it. We discussed our situation and possible solutions. One consideration was to send two fellows down to navigable water to try to hunt a moose or cariboo. We decided that we'd better stick together. Bruce and Dave hiked downstream to where Marc had seen some popple. We wanted them for making ribs for the Chestnut. They found them, cut one, and brought back a 9' section. We worked on the wood for a while, but found the heartwood to be of poor quality. Next, we got a spruce log and worked on that, getting it shaved down quite a bit. But when we tried to split it for the individual ribs, the twisting grain confounded us and the ribs split off. Marc went out and found a good big log from which he has started to hew a paddle. It is good wood and does not have a great deal of twist to it. Bob made supper after we warmed ourselves with some delicious hot onion soup. The rains continued until supper time. They have stopped, but the sky is still cloudy with only occasional patches of blue. We really need some sunshine tomorrow. We made a foolish mistake, consider ourselves to have bitten into a sweet lemon in that we are all alive and have all our food and personal gear. The Chestnut is in bad shape but the canvas is not torn, so we should be able to get it in shape. A number of ribs are broken. We've got to make at least partial ribs to support them. They will have to be tomorrow. It has not been mentioned that to get the Old Town to camp we had to bring it across the river. We got the lining ropes, tied them together, put one end around Rollie and let him wade and swim to the opposite shore. He tied the rope to the canoe, emptied the water from it, put the pack

and tent in and rode it back as we lined it over.

July 18. Day 28.

Today began the second half of the trip. We realize the seriousness of our predicament, but feel confident in our ability to overcome our problem. It was cloudy when we got up and has remained so with a couple showers and brief interludes of sunshine. For breakfast we tried something different. Dave cooked some rice and added it to some cornmeal and attempted to fry it. It wouldn't hold together, so we took some out for making bannock and added flour to the rest. That worked quite well. After eating, Marc worked on making a paddle. Bruce, Bob and Rollie have been making partial ribs to join the broken places in those of the canoe. We have been forced to use spruce for ribs. It is split and whittled down to lengths of 18-24". We've got the big pot on the fire and we boil one end while steaming the other by inverting a pot over the sticks. At intervals, Bruce takes them out and bends them, each time getting them to go a little farther. We are concerned as to how we will fasten them to the ribs we must repair. We fear the brass tacks won't hold too well if they aren't snubbed over, and that's impossible in this situation. Dave has hewed out two 10' planks to run lengthwise in the canoe. We hope they will help distribute the weight over the canoe. Bob cooked supper which was lacking in quantity only. That's going to have to do as we are not doing hard physical labor and we wish to save our bigger meals for such days. Both Dave's and Marc's camera got wet. The lenses got wet as did all the other mechanisms. It is raining now, which will give us a lot of trouble in putting in the ribs. The canoe has been hauled up under the tarp again and the work on putting the ribs in has begun. Marc has pretty well completed work on the paddle. We may wish to paint it so that it won't soak up water. However, since we can't sand it down, that may not work as we don't have much paint left and may need it for the canoes. Bruce has been in charge of putting in the ribs. This is not of his own volition, necessarily. The rest of us appointed him. None of us really

know much about what we are doing. We can only analyse the situation and make do with what we've got at hand, which is not necessarily the best material. One problem is that the spruce wood has a twisted grain and it is impossible to get a length that does not twist. We will work tonite as long as the weather and light permit us. We almost have to get the ribs in while they are steamed up. We don't wish to waste another day here. We still have almost 12 miles to go to what we call navigable water. After that we dearly need to shoot a moose or cariboo, to supplement our diet, altho we're certainly not anywhere near starving---just a mite hungry. We anticipate the going to be slow tomorrow, but expect to put in a long day. We want to get off fairly early as we really want to cover as much milage as possible so as to get out of here and into navigable water in tow days. (In the evening) The canoe appears to be seaworthy..Bruce and Bob tacked in 9 partial ribs. We will lay in the long planks in the morning but not fasten them down. The food has been sorted and about ready to be packed in the morning. The pots were really blackened and we've spent a lot of time trying to get them clean. We're still not done. Right now we're sitting around the fire doing them. Rollie is working on the 30-06. It appears we will be ready to move out in the morning. We hope the tacks will hold in the ribs. It is still cloudy, but the clouds are higher. Marc is trying to clean up the .22. It hasn't done us any good so far and we wish that we'd brought a shotgun along instead. We put on a pot of tea yesterday and have been keeping it going ever since. It's been good to have it and it saves the cocoa for travel days.

July 19. Day 29.

We got up before 7:00 this morning and got off in reasonable time considering the fact that we had a couple layover days. Before we set out, Dave went upstream to where we had spread things out after the swamping. Here he found a ditty bag with his pendleton in it. We took off with Bob and Dave in the Old Town. The Chestnut promptly hit a rick and swamped. It held together very

well, loosening only one partial rib. We walked the canoes on down for quite a spell, and just before eating lunch took a portage. Below that were some rapids. Bruce and Marc shot them in the Chestnut, but the others chose to portage the shallow-draft Old Town around the rapids. From below, they looked much easier than from above, but we don't regret our caution in this instance. Below this point we had two more rapids we shot, and one more set that we walked. Then came a nice stretch of about two miles without rapids. We really clipped this off in good time. Then came another stretch of white water which Marc and Rollie shot with the Chestnut. It was "only" standing water, but that was too much for the Old Town we knew, so we walked that. One more stretch of walking rapids and we were in our second clear run of water. We are now camped at the lower end of it, but still out of sight of our next rapids. Bruce cooked the macaroni and cheese, and baked a cake and Bob the bannock, which is still in the oven. Marc and Rollie put up the tent. Rollie is now cleaning the rifle. On the portage around the rapids that Bruce and Marc shot we had to come down a steep muddy embankment. Bob came down the last half on his tail. It was quite a sight. The mosquitoes are bad tonite and it will be nice to get in the tent and away from them. We are all looking forward to reaching navigable water tomorrow. We've got five miles of rapids left and from the photos they appear to be our worst. We don't expect to be able to run any of them. No rain today, for a pleasant change.

Day 33. July 23.

Quite a bit has happened since the last entry--so much so, in fact, that it has not been possible to make an entry in the log. On the 20th we got off about 10:00 and made quite good time. Bob's bannock was good at lunch time. Were just about out of the rapids when Marc, who had been ahead, looking over the river, came back and told us to shoot the rest of the rapids. Bruce and Dave were in the Old Town with two heavy food packs. They started down, and the standing waves were much higher than they looked from above. They came over

both gunwhales and filled the canoe. They stayed upright and were just about out when the canoe hit a deep rock. They tipped and the packs spilled out. Both food packs and the personal were saved, along with the paddles. Bruce got two packs to shore and Dave brought in a pack and the canoe where he held it until Bruce got back to him. The canoe was caved in in the center bow, with a long tear just above that. The ribs were broken in the center and cracked on the tumblehome. We brought things to shore and made camp right there. It was small consolation that it was a good place to camp. What hurt more than anything else was that this was our last real chance to have anything like this happen. Just around the bend and we would have been in navigable water. We ate a good supper of potatoes, ham and cheese. Marc made scratch cake that was quite good, but not nearly sweet enough. After supper, Bruce took the 30-06 out and went scouting for moose. No luck. Rollie and Bob went out and got a log for making ribs. Bruce and Dave, it was decided, would go to the mountains and hunt the next day, so they turned in a little earlier than the others who stayed up to make some rice pudding for the hunters. They also had three-quarters of a tin of cake to take along. Marc made a sugar sauce to go with it. (The following is Dave's account of the hunt.) Bruce and I arose before dawn on the 31st day of our trip, July 21, and by 6:30 were very near the mountains which are about three miles from camp. Here we stopped atop a ridge and had breakfast. With the field glasses we scouted the patches of snow on the near mountain, but saw no sign of anything. We were discouraged by the fact that the treeline was so high on the mountains. Not too hopefully, we proceeded down the hill we were on and then up the last one before the mountains. We were almost to the top when I spotted a moose on a small lake to the south. We planned our attack quickly and took off to cover the mile between us and the moose. We approached quietly and slowly--too slowly, perhaps, because we found the moose to be nowhere around. I sat down in the rain which had begun while Bruce went back a ways for our pack which we had set down. When he returned he

said he had taken a time reading when the sun broke thru for a moment and it was 1:00. Time for lunch! We ate the cake and then took another time reading, finding it to be only 10:30! The little bit of pudding we had left would not go far for supper we knew. We climbed the high hill behind us. From there we had a great view. Two lakes lay to the north and the one we had left to the south. We figured we could do no better than to sit and watch the lakes for moose. We built a fire to warm us and sat and hoped for the weather to clear. At times we could not even see the lakes below us. Many of the lighter clouds passed beneath our level. Finally Bruce spotted a moose to the north on the far shore of the nearer and larger lake. We took off down the hill which was bare of brush, very steep and had much skree under the moss. On the next ridge we again saw the moose. One more ridge to go! When we got on it we were dismayed to find the moose was gone. Again it seemed best to sit and wait. We dropped back behind the ridge, which had been burned over a few years before, and built a fire. While one fellow warmed himself, the other kept watch on the lake below us. About 5:30-6:00 we were really getting blue. Then Bruce reported seeing ripples coming from the near shore which was hidden by trees. We dropped down the hill and reached the spot. There was the largest beaver I've ever seen. We were hungry, and had decided to stay all night and part of the next morning, if necessary, to get a moose. I was sorely tempted to shoot the beaver for food, and even had the safe off the rifle, but refrained for fear of scaring away any moose in the area. We climbed the ridge slowly, with heavy feet and hearts. We got to the ridge and built up the fire again. I started to sharpen my knife, then, with no hope at all, went back to take another look. Was that a moose? Bruce came and we watched what we first thought was a cow moose, but then we were able to see the rack of a bull. He was still in velvet. Down the ridge and to the left we went as we were hidden by the spruce. The moose was feeding and things looked good. He was about 30 yards out from the swamp grass which extended 15 yards from the spruce covered shore. As the bull

submerged his head to feed, I would move in. As his head came out I would duck down and stop. To the grass and then wading out through it. I reached the edge and pointed the rifle at him, waiting for his head to come up. When it did I could not hold the rifle on him. The wind was right and he did not smell me and was facing away from me. He went under again as I took a couple deep breaths. When he came up, I was faced with a shot at no more than the back of his neck. To make matters worse, we had lost the center of the rear sight. Be this an excuse or not, I missed my first shot. The moose started to fade away as I fired again. He wheeled around and quartered back to left and toward me. The next shot went low. The fourth got him right through the vertebrae of the neck and he was dead just like that. Bruce and I celebrated by eating the last of the pudding. We were then faced with the job of bringing in the moose from the water. We started a fire, stripped off our shirts and waded out armpit deep to tow him in. It was cold. We got him to the swamp grass and split him open. It was tough to draw him in the hip-deep water. We got most of him drawn and were able to drag him onto the grass where the water was only knee deep. Working first at drawing, then dragging, we finally got him to shore. Here we cut off one ham and were able to pull him up well enough to drain him. We got out the frying pan and cooked up some liver and tenderloin. It was much better than beef. Then we went back to dryer ground to build a fire. Here we passed a short night with very little sleep. The morning of the 22nd we were up at first light, long before dawn. We dissected the ham and cut off the other. Taking the ham and half the liver in two packs we set off on the hike back to camp. We were in camp before the others were up. Making no jokes, we called them out for moose steaks. It was a great breakfast as we really had all we wanted to eat. The others in the crew were very glad to be awakened. Marc commented that it was one of the most pleasant awakenings he'd ever had. Even from the tone of our voices they knew we'd been successful. Rollie was a bit groggy and it took him a moment to comprehend the glorious



truth. Bob had mixed emotions as he still wanted to sleep a bit. Then he thought of "moose steaks and pancakes" and sprang out of the sack. The breakfast was great. It was tough to even move after eating so much. Bruce and I had had only 3-4 hours of sleep in the last two nites, so we sacked out as the others took off to bring back the rest of the moose. They were so full of moose steak that the hike to the carcass was harder than the return trip with full packs of meat. In fact reaching the top of one hill, Marc collapsed. Here's Rollie's account of their escapade: The hardest part of the whole day was the hike to the moose. It is almost impossible to describe the hike up the first hill with our stomachs almost stretched to breaking. When we reached the top of that first hill Marc just dropped in front of me. I was about to tell him that I had the pack and should be tired when it hit me too. We just laid there. By the time we reached the moose we had pretty much recovered and were ready to go to work. I can never describe the feeling of inadequacy I had dissecting a moose with two medical students. It was a very interesting course in anatomy. It was a long road back to camp with eighty lbs. (estimated) of meat each, but the thought of the peach pie waiting for us brought us through. After each break we began walking with, "well, we won't get that peach pie just sitting here!"

When Rollie, Marc and Bob got back they had their pie, then we started cooking and cutting meat. Rollie and Dave enjoyed the liver. They cooked up some onion to go with it. The other steaks, of course were excellent. After eating, we started cutting meat. This kept us busy the rest of the day. For supper we got out the poorer of the prime ribs, put it around a spit and broiled it. No other prime rib anywhere that any of us had ever run across has come close to it.

July 23, Day 33 saw us cutting meat all day long. We made a stew pot and it was very good. We hung meat for smoking and other meat for jerky. The skies were clear most of the day, especially in the morning and it looked as if we'd get a good start on the jerky. By the time we went to bed, however, the skies

had clouded. For supper we had stew and cookies that Rollie made. They were just great, being seasoned with mapeline, vanilla and cinnamon. We arose early the 24th, today, and were greeted by light rain. We had to cover the jerky and it remained so most of the day. Our meals were in rather strange order. We started out with stew over rice. For lunch we had sweet rolls made with yeast. Marc made one pan of rolls that had an apple filling and a lemon crystal and sugar icing. They were far better than anything any of us had ever eaten from a bakery. Dave made cinnamon rolls with raisins, which were good, too. We worked on making ribs for the canoes, but did not get nearly enough done, due largely to poor organization. Marc's axe has a split head, of all things, and the head is always coming off. Working at shaving the ribs down with a knife is very slow, and we long for a draw knife, a machette, or more axes which do a very good and much faster job. For supper, we again broiled prime ribs, and they were even better than the others since they had aged a bit and were done to a beautiful medium rare. With them we enjoyed Bob's cornbread biscuits and cocoa. Bruce and Dave, the coffee drinkers, have had a pot on the fire the last couple days, and it adds so much to their meals and breaks. It does not look as if we'll get off tomorrow, but if we can figure out a quick way to steam the ribs for bending, we might be ready for an early start on day 36. It looks as if we might have set aside more fresh meat than we can use. Maybe it will keep. We've buried a ribberized bag in the moss and wet it down. The result is meat kept at refrigerator temperature. The smoking meat is done but the jerky hasn't had enough sun and we might have to smoke it. We need the tarp for steaming ribs it appears. Maybe tomorrow will be sunny. The skies have cleared and the promise looks good. We will be behind schedule when we get out of here, but hope to make up for lost time. So much depends on the nature of the river from here to the Broken Skull River.

July 26. Day 36.

Yesterday and today have blended together, and for good reason. We have been

working straight through. Day 35 began with rain, in spite of the previous evening's promise. We had a gigantic breakfast of steak and rice pudding. Afterward, Bruce set off to the sight of the kill in search of his lost binoculars. He returned without them, but did find his side-cutters and the hone. In the meantime we set up a tripod for a sauna and covered it with the tarp. In one corner we had a furnace, stoked from the outside. It was constructed of rock. A fire was built in it, small at first, so as to heat the rocks gradually to prevent them from breaking. Things got hot in there, but, as expected, not hot enough to provide enough good hot steam for bending ribs. So, a trough was dug in the sand and covered with the tarp. This was filled with water, and stones, heated from a huge fire, were thrown in it. We pulled them out when they cooled, and threw in more hot ones. Into the trough we placed the ribs and soon the water neared boiling. We did not get started on this until afternoon, and it was necessary to keep up the hot soaking of the ribs throughout the night. We decided to rotate watch on the process. Marc and Dave began as the others went to bed just before 11:00 (our guess). Dave turned in first, as Rollie got up. Marc came in an hour and a half later and awoke Bruce who worked with Rollie until the latter hit the sack and pulled Bob out. By the time the night was over and the new day had shed its light upon us, it was threatening to rain. Bob and Bruce pulled us out at this time, about 6:30 a.m. With Marc directing the installation we got two ribs in the Old Town before lunch--a rather late one at that. Next we got three of them into the Chestnut. We tried a third in the Old Town, but it broke in many places. None of the extra ribs are perfect, by any means, and where they are cracked, they push some ugly bulges into the canvass, but they certainly do strengthen the canoes. It's a shame we didn't get another into the Old Town. Bruce got some partials in, but they won't help an awful lot. It took all five of us working together, pushing here and bending there, to get each rib into place. Of the 11 we started with only five survived the preliminary bendings

which occupied our morning hours. We celebrated a bit for supper, breaking out the last of the "rootin-tootin". The steaks were the best yet, having aged. We also had two cocoa cakes with lemon icing. Bruce and Bob went down after supper to put the superficial patch on the Old Town, but it was too dark. We went to bed, however, feeling elated over the fact that in the morning we'd finally get out of camp. We've gotten pretty tired of this same old place.

July 27. Day 37.

We awoke about 6:30, after a very short night. Bruce and Bob went right to work on the patch, while Dave applied a bit of ambroid to some bad spots on the canvas of the Chestnut. Breakfast was more steak, the last of the fresh meat. It was the belly meat and quite tough. Good, tho'! With it we had a bit of rice pudding, saving the rest for lunch. We had a lot of packing to do and as a result didn't get out of camp until noon. We now have a third food pack--full of meat, about 80 lbs. as near as we can guess. Most of the weight is from the smoked meat. We began our travel by walking the canoes about 1/4 of a mile. Then we popped in to begin the longest, finest stretch of travel so far in our trip. We encountered no real rapids. At some places the standing waves were a bit high, but with no ill effect. The river that entered about a mile from camp was very green in color and where they joined it was very beautiful. Farther down the river we saw a cow moose on shore and we drifted within 10 yard of her. Meanwhile, her calf came down to shore. We made good time, covering about 20 miles by 4:30, when we had lunch. The area has been burned over about 5-10 years ago, so there is a lot of standing dead wood to be seen. The mountains on either side sometimes rise to 7000 feet. Some are tinted with red or green or yellow. Others are a cold, gray stone. The beauty of the country goes beyond our ability to describe it. The weather has been good all day. We travelled until about 8:30, camping where a muddy stream enters from the right shore. The river is about twice as wide as it was when we left camp this noon. We are elated at having made such good progress, 45 miles, having

had such good weather, and having the canoes hold together. Beyond that, it is good to have gone a day without swamping! We came a bit farther, ie, travelled a bit longer, than we had planned as it took us a while to find a camping place. For supper we had a pot of stewed smoked meat, flavored with spaghetti, tomato paste, Italian seasoning, and just a spot of salami.

July 28. Day 38.

After a light breakfast under clear skies, we were on the water before 8:00. We missed a chance for a day of dry-footing when we had to walk down one set of rapids. Oh well, the next day, maybe. The mountains were beautiful. We named one ragged ridge Moose-tooth Mountain. We reached the Broken Skull by 3:00. It was a beautiful green in color and contained about half the volume of water as the Nahanni. At times the current slowed down, especially the last couple miles before the Broken Skull, but generally it has remained at a good clip. After the Broken Skull the river descended at a good rate, and a good current continued so that we reached our destination by 6:00. That gave us 46 miles for the day. Our lunch was eaten as we drifted down river, so we made time even then. With our corn bread we had some of our smoked meat. The addition to our fare was very welcome. We are camped 15 miles below the Broken Skull, near a small lake which lies about 100 yards inland from the river. We had hoped to get some fish from it, but have not had the time or energy to try. Supper was a sort of Spanish rice with bacon and smoked meat in it. The meat was fried with the bacon before going into the pot. It was good, but for some reason it reminded Marc of split pea soup. He has baked a cake in the lid of the kettle kit and will now add a cream filling to it to make his version of a Boston Cream Pie. It promises to be good. We are pleasantly amazed at two straight days of beautiful weather and no swamping of the canoes.

The pie was rich and good. For some reason, however, Marc could not eat much of his and Bruce and Dave finished it off. One other thing that should be mentioned is that we saw a helicopter in the morning. It flew right over us.

July 29. Day 39.

It's about 6:00, supper is beginning to be cooked and we're in somewhat of a reflective mood. One thing that has been mentioned is that it is easy to forget that we are not just in the Quetico, but actually a long, long way from civilization with nothing more than our wits and ingenuity to get us out of any difficulties that may arise. So far, enough difficulties have come to us, and they could have been avoided had we exercised more discretion. But we'll have to count that as a lesson and hope that we have learned something from it.

The quality of the trip has changed a lot lately. We are eating much better, what with our moose meat. The weather has been superb the last three days, and we all get along so well together. Today has been beautifyl from the very beginning. By 9:00 we were through with a very good breakfast, prepared by Marc's genius, and fried smoked meat. Dave has spent most of the day sewing up his pants. They are now to the place where only a little wind whistles through them. Marc, too, has been doing an awful lot of sewing and he is still not finished. Bruce and Bob went over to the lake with a canoe and tried fishing, but had no luck. Rollie cut some fire wood and did the morning's dishes.

There has been a goodly number of mosquitoes, but this afternoon a strong wind came out of the North and has helped keep them down.

We are not sitting around the fire waiting for Rollie's lemon pie to cool. It looks good. We have gotten to enjoy sitting around before or after dessert, swapping tales of our experiences in the Quetico, talking about what we'll do when we get back, talking about food, etc. It is an especially pleasant evening right now. The dishes are done, Marc is still working on his pants (they are more patch than anything else), and Rollie is putting the food away. The wind has died away. The sky is clear and we're at peace with the world. We plan to get to bed soon and get up early so that we can go see Glacier Lake before moving on to the Rabbitkettle River and Hot Springs.

We counted our remaining days and found we had time for another layover day. Since Marc and Bruce want to go hiking, we figure to spend it here. Bob will go along while Rollie and Dave tend camp.

July 30. Day 40.

We got up quite early, with the exception of Rollie, who slept in a while. The rest of us had our rice pudding, setting aside Rollie's share. We made a double batch and sent the rest along with the hikers. Bruce was running around all over, looking for his hat. He was getting near panic when he found it behind the cooking canoe. Just before the trio left, we shook Rollie out to change film in his camera for them. His is the only one that still works. Since Bob lost his hat the sun has bothered him, so Dave loaned him his cap. Rollie and Dave cut up wood and whittled a spoon. One of the cooking spoons broke at the rivets the other day, and it's been tough with only one left. They hung up the jerky and then took their time about making some yeast rolls with fruit centers. They spared the sugar, so the rolls couldn't really be called sweet rolls. They were eaten hot and were very good. After that they walked over to the lake and took the canoe out to look around. Rollie tried a few times to shoot a duck, but missed, due to the unsteady canoe. Then they went to the far shore and climbed a hill, getting a fairly good look at the countryside. They sat there on the hill for a few moments and took in the perspective and contentment afforded them. Then down the hill to the canoe and back to the landing spot by our campsite. Waterlilies grow there and Dave had heard that their tubers were edible. So he tried to pull one out. The stems broke, however, and he finally resorted to getting out of the canoe, hip deep in water, and digging one out. They brought it back and boiled part of it, but it was very bitter and they threw it out. After a potato and meat supper they did the dishes and sipped tea, wondering if the others would come back tonight or in the morning.

July 31. Day 41.

The trio did not show up during the nite, so Rollie and Dave had plenty of room in the tent. During the nite a light rain fell and they had to run out and take down the jerky. They slept until nearly 8:00. Dave was up first and made some yeast batter for trying yeast pancakes. About this time Rollie was up and shortly thereafter the others appeared from the opposite shore. Arriving, they were a tired lot, but jubilant over having picked about six qt. of blueberries which they brought back. We had breakfast and then broke camp slowly, getting off about 2:00. Our ten-mile trip down to the Rabbitkettle River was pleasant and we had our shirts off most of the way. Our camp is at the mouth of the Rabbitkettle River, and it is the site of a camp for a trapper. Marc baked two blueberry pies which were a fitting climax to a delicious meal of ham, potatoes and cheese. We are delighted with the way our half-dollar size samples of yeast pancakes came out tonite. They rise well. Tomorrow we'll have a big batch with blueberries in them. The weather remains great.

Here is an account of the adventures of yesterday's "expeditionary force", as written by Bob: We got up about 5:30 yesterday morning, had Swedish Rice pudding, and left about 7:00 with some extra pudding, rice, smoked meat and bacon. We had our Jack-shirts and were prepared to spend the night away from the camp. The object of our trip was to visit Glacier Lake and perhaps beyond. We climbed a high ridge and stopped at about 1,000 ft. above the river. We had a splendid view of the river and the lake that Bruce and I fished yesterday. Toward the top of the ridge we found blueberries which slowed our progress considerably at times. We rounded the ridge through a burned out area and finally obtained a view of Glacier Lake. It was a very beautifyl lake surrounded by ragged peaks and glaciers which seemed to rise straight out of the lake. The water in the lake was a milky green which had come from the glacier perhaps a mile away. We ate our way down the ridge through scattered blueberry and raspberry patches until we got to a small lake which was about a mile and a half downstream of



Glacier Lake. Then we followed game trails and our noses to Glacier Lake, picking blueberries as we went. When we got to the lake we decided to take a quick swim—which turned out to be very quick indeed. We all three dove in and swam out as quickly as possible. Marc went in again for a picture. Then while Marc and Bruce sorted and cleaned our blueberries I went fishing and eventually caught two Grayling. Then Marc caught an 8-10 lb. "Dolly Vardin" which seemed very odd as his body was small in proportion to his head, and he was very sluggish and fought hardly at all. We thought he might be diseased but upon cleaning him found nothing suspicious and so we broiled half of him and fried the rest with the grayling. The broiled fish was very good. Then Bruce finally caught his first grayling which was a nice fighter—fought more than the Dolly Vardin. So we had the fish and half the rice pudding for supper. I went out and picked some more blueberries for dessert and came back to find Bruce and Marc going to sleep by the fire. We had decided to spend the night there on the lake sleeping by the fire. The night was warm and we were comfortable by the fire until it started raining just before dawn. Bruce and I moved under a couple of Spruce trees but Marc just slept on, face up in the rain. We got up at dawn, ate the rest of our rice pudding and smoked meat, and took off for camp as the clouds above us began to break. We found a well blazed portage trail leading from the small lake down to the river and followed it for quite a ways until we lost it in a burned out area. We then rounded and climbed up the ridge we had crossed the day before and then dropped the 1,000 ft. straight down to the river. It had been a very satisfying trip and we would have liked to have had even more time to explore the glaciers. Note: Marc and I were both stung by yellow jacks—my swelling on my hand went down within the hour. Marc was stung near the eye, however, and is still swollen up two days later. Note again: total distance of our hike was about 10 miles.

Aug. 2. Day 43.

No entry was made yesterday, so an account of that day will be given first. We got up quite early, especially for a layover day. We had breakfast of meat

and blueberry pancakes, then we set off in search of the hot springs. We went up the Rabbitkettle River to where we found it split. We had been camped at the mouth of the smaller of the two branches. We figured we needed the canoe, so we drew straws to see who would go back to camp and get it. Rollie and Dave drew the short ones and set off. They got back to the trapper camp near ours when they saw some spruce grouse. Rollie went on ahead for the .22 while Dave kept an eye on the birds. They got three of them, the rest scattering too much. They cleaned them and at this time Bruce showed up. He had heard three shots and thought somebody might have been in trouble. The three of them portaged to calmer water, then set in and paddled to the others. Then with five of us in the Chestnut we took off, having to line it part way to the Hole-in-the-Wall Creek, where we left the canoe and went afoot. We found a few blueberries along the way. Ahead of us we saw tiers of rock, obviously left by waters. But we saw no water. We climbed up and saw some water coming out of one hole. Most of it drained to the West and north-west. There were a number of pools of water and we selected some for washing clothes and others for ourselves. We were disappointed that the water was not hot, nor really warm--just not cold. We moved in stages from one pool to another, and finally to a third, in washing ourselves. Thus the last was relatively clean. Finally, we crawled into the source hole to rinse off. It was good to get a bit cleaner, although it left a lot of grime. Most of us got our hair fairly clean; Dave had to stop his eight times before he could get a lather. On the way back we saw another spruce grouse which Bruce shot. When we got to camp, he set off with the .22 to try to make it a bird piece. He succeeded and also brought back a red squirrel which he got with a real long shot. Dave made spaghetti and meat balls, Bruce pan broiled the grouse and Marc made raspberry and blue berry dumplings and blueberry muffins. It was a very good meal, but it kept us up very late waiting for the dumplings to bake.

This morning we got up late and moved slowly in getting off. Bruce was in a

tither, being unable to find the compressor for his sleeping bag. He didn't locate it, but we figure it's hidden somewhere. The current remained quite good and we made nice time, even managing to knock off a mile and a half just floating while eating lunch. The weather remained good and we even had a tail wind. While the others took one channel, Bob and Dave took another and were rewarded by seeing a fine trappers cabin. Later, we all saw a lynx on the far shore. Bruce took a shot with the .22 as we whizzed downstream. We trust the lynx to be a sign of rabbits in the area, and hope to add some to our diet for a little variety. We had a little trouble finding a campsite, so we made a little extra milage today--44 miles in all. The sun sets much earlier now, 8:20 by Bruce's reading. We still have not had supper, but it looks like it will be good. Marc is making meatloaf and we'll have potatoes on the side. We'll have pudding for dessert. Meat loaf was a success. The cocoa-nut custard was delicious.

Day 45. August 4.

First comes an account of August 3, which did not see an opportunity to record anything. We got up about 6:45, broke camp after a fair breakfast and began our 28 mile paddle to the Falls. It was a rather uneventful journey, the only spice being added by an attack by a gull trying to protect her young one. We reached the Falls about 4:00. About 2 1/2 miles above them is a cable with three orange balloons as markers on it. It is used in measuring the flow of water in the river. At the portage, we were met by Don Turner and his partner, John Brucker. They are guiding a doctor from Georgia. Don is a tall, strapping fellow, good natured. John is shorter, stocky and quiet, but not unfriendly. We made our camp on a bluff, a rocky point overlooking the rapids above the Falls. It catches the breeze and we've not been bothered by bugs at all. Looking over the area, we were quick to spot the many patches of blueberries in the area. While Marc and Dave set up camp, the others picked berries. We invited Don, John and the doctor over for pies. The doctor declined, but Don and John joined us at dusk. We made pies in the two cake tins, the frying pan

lid to the cook kit, and three little pies in personal dishes. Great! Talking to Don and John has been very interesting. They have given us much information on the river and have promised to mark our maps for us today. They said that an Edwin Lindberg at Ft. Simpson ran a barge most every week to Ft. Providence and would almost certainly be glad to take up up. Don and John mentioned seeing a moose get swept over the Falls the other day. John told of coming face to face with a grizzly, once. Another time, years ago, he and a friend set off in this country with no provisions, planning to live off the land. They didn't eat for a week. The Falls are impressive, as are the rapids above them. The rapids themselves cascade down about 100 ft. in less than a quarter of a mile. A man swept into the rapids would certainly be dead before getting to the Falls. Lying in the sack last night it was pleasing to hear the roar that comes from so near us. The power of the water is tremendous and we watch it in awe.

On the 4th, our layover day at the Falls, a five-man crew from Mankato State showed up. They are members of the "American Expeditionary Society". They claim to be seeking scientific information, but they didn't seem to be doing much in that line. We had already invited John and Don over for pizza that evening, so we included the A.E.A. They brought some lard and bisquick to add to our flour for dough. We also made two tins of blueberry bismarks. Very good snappin's, as Bruce would say. Dave was the last one to quit eating, and by that time it was already getting light out.

August 5. Day 46.

We got up quite early and got breakfast out of the way in good time. Dave went down to Don and John's camp to repack food pack #5. After doing so he was treated to coffee and toast with butter and orange marmalade. Bruce arrived and got some too. Going down the portage to the bottom of the Falls was really much easier than some portages in the Quetico-going down, that is! The other way would be something different. Rollie and Marc took one canoe, while Bruce,

Bob and Dave took the Chestnut. We made the four miles of bad water in an exciting romp through a lot of standing water. Just above the Flat River Rollie and Marc got stopped dead still in a whirlpool. The other canoe came right into them. They swamped as the Chestnut rode right over their gunwhales. Towing them to shore was a tough paddle, but no one in the Chestnut would have wanted to have changed places with those in the water.

We went on downstream, below the camp of geologists with whom Albert Faille is working. We set up camp, ate supper and walked up to the geologists' camp. Here we met the AES boys, Faille and the geologists. Faille is old and bent, but a master of the river. We enjoyed the little bit of conversation we had with him. We sat around the fire (in chairs!!) drank coffee and read a July 22 newspaper. Faille had to go across the river to get a geologist. After he came back we talked a while longer, then walked back to camp and went to bed.

We arose today at a good time and were on the water by 9:00 after a breakfast of rice pudding. The river is much tamer now and paddling all day without a portage gets a bit old. We went through the Third and Second Canyons. One interesting landmark was the Gate. Here the river takes a hard right turn, and traveling down it one wonders where the river goes. It appears to run straight into a sheer rock wall. The rapids marked below it are almost nonexistent in our low water. We had lunch below them and reloaded Rollie's camera. We reached Deadman's Valley about 6:00 and camped about a half mile above the RCMP cabin. Shortly after we set up camp the AES boys came by. We renewed our challenge to a pancake fete for the next morning. It was their turn to supply most of the lickin's and they promised to make good their debt. We had a supper of rice with jerky and cake with chocolate pudding. Very good.

August 7. Day 48. Saturday

The day of the big feed. We were up about 8:00 and walked down to the RCMP cabin where the AES boys were camped. They had already begun to fry the pan-

cakes and had a few waiting for us. Also, their syrup was made, and it contained a lot more sugar than we were used to. We began eating the pancakes five at a time. Dave had his own particular eating duel with their self-proclaimed champion, Frank. He started to slow down at 15, almost stopped at 20, then managed 23 with great difficulty. Chickenfeed! Nobody in our crew ate so few. In one hour and ten minutes the 10 of us ate 308 pancakes. Dave was champ with 44; Bruce ran a close second with 41; Bob inhaled 40; Marc sucked up 33, and Rollie managed a mere 31—just a shade above the average of the ten of us. Besides syrup, we had some of our blueberry jam and fruit stew to put on the pancakes. We had about 3 qts of their syrup with the hotcakes. After breakfast we laid around trying to recuperate. It was trying to rain, so Rollie and Dave went back to camp to put things under cover. When they got about 50 yards they had to stop and sit down. After a few minutes rest they went on again, this time going most of the quarter mile before they collapsed on the shore. They made the trip back without a rest, however. When they got back we all started playing whist. Mark and Bruce won everything at their table while Rollie and Dave did likewise against their competition. The AES was coming in second-best at everything. After a few games we tried conversation and reading. Next we did some baking. First came a bannock, followed by three cornbreads and one cake. Then we started cooking some beans. We added nearly a bag of jerky, a can of tomato paste and assorted seasonings. In the meantime Marc started to make donuts, but he had to use some of the AES biscuit mix. The beans were very good, but we couldn't come near eating all of the gallons we cooked. The donuts soaked up too much grease, so we baked the dough for cookies and put a chocolate frosting on them. Delicious! But we were all too full of beans and soup by then to finish eating the cookies. We were so full that we felt and acted like drunken fools. We laughed at everything and lost our coordination. It was finally midnite when we tried to stumble back to our campsite. Our stomachs were so full we couldn't bend over.

The expressions on peoples' faces were really funny. It looked sort of like pained contentment.

August 8. Day 49. Sunday

We got up at a fair time in spite of our condition. Or maybe because of it. The tent really smelled foul. Our breakfast was just a pot of cocoa, but we also cooked up some rice pudding to eat when we got to Gus Kraus'. Georgia's Riffle came up soon. We stopped on the sand bar above it and while Dave held the canoes the others locked it over. They came back thinking we could run it with no difficulty except for one rock at the bottom of the rapids. This is the rock of which Faille spoke. It moves a bit most every year, but it is always a menace to canoes and river boats. Faille said that just about everybody hits it, and we were no exceptions. No damage was done, really. We cracked a homemade rib in the Chestnut, but that just made it fit better.

We moved along at a good clip as the current was quite rapid. Our next landmark was Lafferty's Riffle. We had been told that it was not nearly as bad in low water as in high water. Mark had the map and at one point said we were about a mile and a half from it. In what seemed like two minutes we came around a bend that had some real big standing water on the outside. We stayed just off the point and had no trouble. Any craft larger than a canoe would have had trouble as we had to stay in shallow water that would have been un-navigable for anything else. Not far below Lafferty's Riffle we came upon Gus Krause's wife, Mary, and the Indian boy they were raising. They were fishing in the backwaters. We stopped and talked to them, and Mary invited us to the Cabin. We beached the canoes the canoes and walked to the cabin. On the way to the cabin we passed a tent in which the AES boys had stored some of their gear. In their arsenal of shotguns and rifles. They must have started the trip with three firearms apiece. We met Gus at the cabin. He's a very young 68 years old. He invited us in, in spite of the fact that the cabin had just been cleaned. We talked for awhile, and Gus tried to radio out a message

to our folks. He couldn't get through so he suggested that we take a bath in one of his hot pools. His cabin is located in an area of hot springs. Going to the pool we could hardly keep up with Gus as he shuffled along. On the way we stopped at his garden. Not a very good year, he said. The largest cucumber he could find was little more than a foot long. He gave it to us. The pool was a place in a creek that was dammed up to hold it at a constant depth. Its temperature in the summer was about 96 degrees. In the winter, when the cold streams that also feed the pools are frozen, the temperature rises to 104 degrees. Soaking in that warm water was one of the nicest things to come our way so far in the trip. Finally we got out and dried off as best we could, not minding the sulphuric odor that lingered on us. It's probably better than the odor we left behind. Back at the cabin we continued our conversation with Gus. He told us he had a salt lick just 200 yds. from the cabin and had never gone farther than that for game. Gus is very well read and informed. He can discuss national and international politics and economics in a manner that is enlightening. He also told us a few tales of his own experiences. As for our experience, he said we were the first to ever cross from the headwaters of the Ross to the South Nahanni. In '98, he said, two fellows were said to have tried to go from the Nahanni to the Ross in the winter, but he did not know either their route or their fate. We were about ready to go when he mentioned that he had had the good fortune to have some eggs on hand that had been flown in. He offered us a dozen, then told Mary to cook them up for us, along with bacon and some other trimmings. That was quite a meal! Real live eggs! And Butter! Bob, Bruce and Dave had the good fortune to get seated at the small table. Rollie and Marc sat with their plates on their laps and continued their conversations with Gus and Mary. Meanwhile, the other three chowhounds simply fed their faces. They got the lion's share! Before we left Gus managed to talk us into taking another dozen eggs. He also offered us some jerky. With some embarrassment we said no thanks. We set off shortly thereafter, armed



with information provided by Gus about the Nahanni and the Liard. We thanked Gus for all, including his getting through to Whitehorse to send out the news that we have made it this far.

(No diary was kept during the remaining days of the trip. The following is a post-trip recollection by Marc)

It was a real nice campsite in the spruce the night we left Gus'. It was good to know we had gotten to the outside to tell them we were safe. The next morning dawned clear and bright for our day through the "splits". I guess all of us were a little sad to see the mountains fade away behind us. Because of the low water the splits turned out to be not deserving of the worry they caused us. However, I do remember one real close call of Rollie and myself. Neither of us saw a barkless pole sticking out from a bank of the same color. When we did see it the current was sweeping us right into it. I managed to get the bow around it but can still see all too vividly that stump racing at me on the poop deck. I was sure it would saw me off and swamp and damage the canoe. I was lucky enough to catch the thing with my outstretched hands and shoved out enough before it gave me a solid thwack on the knee. My ragged pants were ripped to shreds, but the canoe was still racing downstream all right. I don't know what it was, through all those places where it looked like curtains for us, Rollie and I came through miraculously. A little later we had corn bread with blueberry jam. Umm boy! This was at about the end of the splits and from then on we really had to paddle to make time on the slow water. Slowly, Nahanni Butte came closer until we passed right next to it. We found the town and said hello to Mrs. Turner. She placed some cake on the table and went outside. I was going to ask if we should wait, but when I turned to look there was only one piece left and everyone had that contented look which only comes from good food. Everything she placed within sight vanished, including the crumbs on the plate. After thanking her sheepishly we paddled out into the

Liard, which seemed about the consistency and color of molasses as we paddled around those two points and finally made camp on a high ridge after searching the lower swampy shore in vain.

I don't remember much of interest the next day except saying goodbye to the last sight of Nahanni Butte and the rest of the mountains. In the afternoon we hit the first rapids near Cape Island and continued on to the Poplar River where we hoped to camp. Finding nothing there we entered the canyon of the Liard and shot the first few rapids. Finally we found a campsite on a sand beach and used the previously picked raspberries in the most delicious pie ever.

In the morning we packed up and shot rapids, including the Beaver Dam, always following the right shore. We worked hard to get some good pictures of shooting rapids. After four attempts, Bruce assured us he had gotten the water breaking over the bow. However, in his excitement all we got was a blurred shot of the sky. After the Beaver Dam we hooked up sails and really flew with the current and a good wind behind us. However, the guys in the canoe without the ruder couldn't control their dining fly. So, after lunch we hooked up the dining fly to both canoes, which we had lashed together, and finished off the trip in style, paddling only the last few miles into Fort Simpson.