

# REGION TEN

## WILDERNESS CANOE TRIPS

### RECORD OF PADDLE AWARDS

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ADDRESS	1235 Fauquier, St. Paul, Minnesota.
COUNCIL	St. Paul
DATE OF TRIP	
GUIDE	Al Viste

PADDLE AWARDS : DATE	
BRONZE	- Through Hesser
GOLD	
SILVER	

Bronze Award  
Canoe Trip Story.

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Troop 62. St. Paul Council

## The Canoe Trip

For Herb, and myself, the canoe trip started when we left St. Paul by bus for Ely. From the start everything went wrong. It was raining when we left home and our bus was twenty minutes late in starting. By the time we arrived in Duluth, we were one hour late. As a result, we only had one stop, in Hinckley, where we felt at liberty to wander away from the bus. We arrived in Ely at 8:45---one hour late, hungry, and with a swell headache.

Our first move was to get a hotel room, which we discovered to be more of a job than we expected. Not a room was to be had in any of the hotels because of the State C.I.O. Convention. Well, now what to do? Then upon the scene entered Ely's one and only squad car. When it stopped for the intersection I leaped to the side of it and asked if they knew of any place where two scouts might get a room for the night. The answer, surprising and yet satisfactory, was to come up to the jail. It turned out that we had run into the Chief of Police. We were each given a separate cell which contained a cot with a mattress. Hot and cold water was ours for the asking. Everything was just spotlessly clean. Well, that took care of the lodging problem, so with our minds at ease on that score we went out for supper.

On the way up on the bus we got to talking with people from Ely and asked where the best places were to eat. These discussions had led us to believe that Vertines was our best bet and after the meal we agreed with them. We wrote several letters and cards and then decided it was time to turn in. The town was full of girls and drunks but we decided we would rather turn in then watch the guys and gals make fools of themselves.

Had a good nights sleep and was awoken at 6 A.M. to see the sunlight streaming through the barred windows. Walked out of the jail into a very sleepy town. We were hungry so went to a nearby resturant and had a dish of French-fried toast and coffee. After breakfast we took a look at the mines and saw the biggest locomotive I have ever seen. It had two sets of four drive wheels on each side or 16 drive wheels in all. Later on, we took a hike out to one of tourist cabins to see if a fishing rod handle lost by one of my friends could have been left there---but no such luck. Upon getting back to town we found it was time for church so proceeded directly to the church. We found ourselves getting a little restless when the service was longer than we were used to.

We had a good noon-day meal and then proceeded to kill time. There is nothing harder to do--we sat on the hotel's railing, we sat in the lobby, we read the paper, we walked around the town, we drank cokes---and yet it just dragged along. At 4:10 things really started to happen. A group drove in from No. Dak. and who should be behind the wheel but Charlie Kendall--a former St. Paul Field Man. He said we could have a ride to the base camp if we were willing to ride in the trailer. Were We Willing? After sitting around all day we were willing to do anything.

Got under way and went out to Winton to register and get clearance with the Border Patrol. Discovered that we were 270 miles from St. Paul and 12 miles from the Canadian Border--the closest you can get by car in this area. One of the cars in Charlie's party got lost so the trailer was unhooked and

Charlie went in search of them. He returned without them so I helped attach the trailer and we were off again. My helping hitch the trailer on was nearly our finish. While on a down-grade the bolt dropped out, but, Charlie realizing what had happened, slowed the station-wagon down and as a result the trailer hit the car and was held in this position by the grade until we were just barely moving. Then the tongue fell to the ground and we came to a quick halt. If this had happened when we were going up a hill or if Charlie had pulled away, I might not be here to write this. My error, in the putting on of the trailer, was in putting the washer on the underside as is the general rule. In this case the bolt-head was too small. We finally arrived at the base camp at 6:55 without further incident.

The first thing on the docket was supper which consisted of Goldash. We then put up our tent, and had a race<sup>with</sup> a storm that eventually passed over us without damage. As yet we have been doing everything because it just seemed the correct thing to do. No one seems to be in authority or at least exercises it so that a clear-cut plan is in operation. Paid ten dollars and checked in my valuables. Then just waited around until 10 P.M. to find out what we were to do. In the meantime one load of boys went back to Winton to register and we made the acquaintance of five boys from Milaca, who were to become our bosom pals for the trip. The meeting finally got started and we chose a long trip rather than the lesiurely fishing trip. Our guides were to be Al. Vista and Jerry Patterson. A couple of short talks were given on how to pack a knap-sack, First Aid, Correct canoeing procedure, and the history of the north country. It is then we saw what all the commotion had been upstairs--two of the boys had been given Mohican' haircuts. We wrangled for a half an hour after the meeting on what our route should be, and then we were off for bed.

Had a surprisingly good nights sleep and then was rudely awaken by Herb. Got every-thing packed and decided what was to be left behind at the base-camp before it was time for breakfast. We had cooked raisins, oatmeal and coffee for breakfast. We still didn't know when we were to start but word finally drifted around that we were to be the next group to leave. Herb and I got a sixteen foot canoe, our personals and the usual food pack to take care of for the trip. It was a beautiful sunny day with very little wind, and therefore ideal for paddling. We went up Moose, Newfound, and then made our first portage into Sucker Lake. The majority of us us were very careful not to get our shoes wet--even to the extent of standing on one foot,, with a canoe on our backs, so a shoe could be taken off the other foot--before we would set the canoe in the water. I didn't have any trouble portaging the canoe because I had been up before, but a lot of the new fellows had plenty of it. No-one had taken the bother to show them how to get the canoes up on their shoulders. The guides went ahead and left the fellows drift for themselves. While on Sucker Lake we saw seven golden eagles. The guides remarked that this was the largest group they had ever seen together. We passed through Sucker into Basswood and on to the Ranger Station. While approaching the station we saw a Government sea-plane come in for a landing and it made a very beautiful sight as the sunlight reflected on the spraying water. We registered and then made the portage into Burke Lake. On the far side of the portage we met the first group out eating their lunch. However, we pushed

on and had our lunch at the portage to Sunday Lake. We arrived there at 12:45 and had bread, canned meat, butter, and water for lunch. Pushed off at 1:30, across Sunday, to a plenty tough one-half mile portage which took us into Meadow Lake. One of the boys from Milaca was on the verge of passing out when he reached the far end of this one. Paddled about one block and hit the jack-pot for the day, as far as portages was concerned. We were to find out that worst things can happen and generally do. After completing the super-natural we found ourselves on Lake Agnes and a fifteen minute paddle brought Louisa Falls into full view. It was only a short distance from there that we were to spend the night, and so we appreciated the sight of the Falls for more than their natural beauty. The guides said that we had made good time as we pulled in at 3:30 P.M.

I went in for a swim and never enjoyed one so much in all my life. The water was just the right temperature and as clear as a ~~sea~~. I just raced around that lake as if it were to be my last swim. It was a pleasure to be able to get a mouthful of water and be able to swallow it without wondering about the after-effects. Later, I went over to the Falls and saw its natural brick-lined bathtub. The tub is about 8' by 20' with smooth-faced stones out-lining the area. A true bath-tub with all the running water you wanted. Everyone was really having a picnic in the tub and many of them took bathes. Herb misjudged the depth of the water when we over to the Falls and stepped out of the canoe into ten feet of water. It was a good thing that he was nude or we would have had one very bedraggled looking Scout. He said he was never so surprised in all his life.

Then disaster struck. We returned to the campsite to find that the evening food pack was missing. Everyone was called together but to no avail. After consultation it was decided that it had been left at Burke Lake. This came about because the one canoe which got out on the lake without a food pack was suppose to get it at the first portage. The guides took it in their canoe with them but didn't give it to the fellows at the first portage. They dropped the pack off at the second portage but neglected to tell the fellows. To add to the confusion, this occurred where the other party was having lunch. A check was made when we got on the lake, but they seemed satisfied that we had everything, so we went on. Nothing to do but go back and find it, so the two guides and one of the boys from Fairmont went back after the pack; leaving the camp in charge of Leslie Weston of Milaca and myself. As a result of this temporary loss we just had rice and raisins for supper. To add to my troubles, I found that one of the lens in my glasses was broken. Some one must have stepped on my pack-sack while I was out swimming. As usual, I hadn't been able to find my glass case when I wanted it. By this time I was ready to call this the "Hard-Luck Trip". Les and I put the kids to work and in no time at all we had the tents up, the supper dishes washed, and the campsite cleaned up. Well, to top the evening off, something stung me on the foot so it proceeded to swell up nicely. After everything was settled, I went over to the Falls and took some pictures. I went alone and found out that I had an awful lot to learn about canoeing alone. When I returned, every-one was moaning about how hungry they were, but really just wanted something to talk about. We all went to bed about 9:15, but in a few minutes the guides returned with the food pack so every-one got up to hear their tale. We learned that Hod's group had picked the pack up and that even Hod didn't know about it until our fellows appeared upon the scene.

Noone was in a rush to get up the next morning so we just stayed in bed. Herb didn't get much sleep because he was ~~lying~~ on quite a grade, after Al came into our tent. Herb could hardly keep his

eyes open, much less paddle. About 10:30 we had breakfast, which consisted of stewed apples and pancakes. The fellows just couldn't get enough to eat, even with two batches of pancake batter. It was after eleven o'clock before we got started. We portaged around the Falls into a small stream, followed by a portage into Louisa Lake. This started the day of days as far as portages was concerned. Off Louisa we had a quarter-mile portage into a mud-hole, paddle a few strokes, a short portage, another mudhole, and what we then thought a killer---wind-blown trees, mud, weeds, slippery rocks, cliff scaling, and finally Fauquier Lake. Several of the boys got wet when they didn't check signals and as a result the canoe went over with them in it. I had to laugh when I remembered how careful we all were at the first portage not to get our shoes wet and what we plowed through now without even thinking about our shoes. Stopped for lunch but it was already three o'clock. Before I ate I took a short dip to wash off some of the mud. We had bread, cheese, nectar, and pineapple jam for lunch. Off again to the end of Fauquier Lake and the hardest portage of the whole trip. It required getting on your knees and crawling, with the canoe on your back, of course, so you could get the clearance necessary to get under ~~the~~ wind-fall. From then on it got worse, including the crossing of one stream three times from sharp embankments. One of the fellows, Ted Nordquist, stepped off the path???? and one of his legs went in between a fissure of rocks up to his hip. He was so surprised, he didn't even think as to whether he was hurt or not. Luckily, he wasn't hurt a bit. We were then on a stream leading into Rod Lake---Edge Lake--and then into a lake not shown on the map. We didn't get lost here just "misplaced". Finally we found our way out and got into Turn Lake. One more portage brought us into Glacier Lake where we stayed for the night. We arrived there about 7:20. Herb and I had taken K.P. for the day so we had the supper dishes to worry about. However, we first put up the tent. Some of the fellows went over to get some clams but they never found time to cook them. Three of the fellows from Milaca--Ted Nordquist, Gene Johnson, Don Peterson--and Herbie and I made up the complement of ~~our~~ tent. First off we leveled the ground, as much as is possible in that country, so sleeping would be possible. The mosquitoes were really out in full force tonight and as someone so aptly remarked--we could send a message home with the mosquitoes because they must be holding a national convention up here. We, finally, had supper about 9 o'clock and tonight we had slightly burnt Hunters Stew, coffee, and rice and raisins. Right to bed after supper in an attempt to escape the mosquitoes. Pat squirted some dope in the tent but it aggravated our throats so we couldn't fall asleep for awhile.

The dawn came and I found I had had a good night's sleep. Had slept at the base of a big tree with a root passing beneath my floating rib. Mosquitoes came in toward morning but not too bad. We had cream of wheat and apricots for breakfast. It is the first meal where there has been anything left. We got under way about 9 A.M. We discovered that this was the first time the guides had been up in these parts. Had quite a few short portages and then onto a twisting, turning, shallow, weedy stream that led into McEwen Lake. We had a crisp wind blowing with us so we had a lot of fun and some easy paddling. However, two waves did come over while we were going cross-wind. Everyone was ready for lunch when we stopped and devoured the hard-tack, summer sausage, and pineapple jam with great relish. We also got our afternoon allocation of lemon-drops at this time. We went down a small stream after lunch into a small lake, made a



quick portage, and we were in another small lake. On the next portage the yoke broke on the canoe Don Peterson was carrying and it just about snapped his head off. The bolt had sheared off so they had to tie it with some rope. We were now approaching the most beautiful scenery that we were to see on the whole trip. The lake we were now on was Wet Lake and it sure lived up to its name because three of the canoes got into a water fight that ended up with everyone getting quite wet. We then came on to the three very picturesque falls that made the trip worthwhile. We also had a lot of fun battling the current and missing the rocks in this particular section of the stream. We made our portages around the falls and then went into Saganagon Lake. Went east for awhile--made a portage that saved us fifteen miles of paddling--and found ourselves on the same lake going west. Everyone just exhausted and ready to quit for the day. Had a heavy wind in front of us at one time one canoe was about a mile behind. After we reached the end of the lake we got a heaven-sent allocation of chocolate to help pull us through. It was needed, as we had two rough portages shortly afterwards. I understand that I missed the most beautiful of all the falls when I didn't notice the look-out place as I was going over the portage. We continued up this stream, or perhaps more correctly this inlet of Cache Bay, to Cache Bay itself. The waves were running white caps so we decided to stay on a small island about fifty feet by twenty feet. I was hungry that I decided to eat the blue-berries which were growing on the island, and really had quite a meal of them. I had to hang my blankets out to dry as we had taken in quite a bit of water getting in and out of the canoe while crossing the shallow places. We later discovered that there were six other parties on Cache Bay that night. We met one group at one of the falls having their noon-day meal. I came close to getting a good soaking today as Herb and I missed the signals on the next to the last portage of the day. I started to lift a pack without checking to see if Herb was holding the canoe fast---he wasn't. Overboard I went with the pack, but luckily in shallow water. I threw the pack on shore as quickly as possible and saved it from getting wet but did get a little damp myself---I'll learn.

We really had a job clearing a place for the tent tonight--more rocks and roots than ever before. As it was, Gene had to sleep twisted between a big rock and a tree. We really staked the tent down tonight because of the wind. While writing my notes I was suddenly deserted--food was on. Tonight it was burnt macaroni but being a little late I didn't get much. However, we did have some swell cocoa. Then it started to rain so I grabbed my blankets off the trees, where I had put them to dry, and dashed into the tent. Did get a little rice and raisins later on but not as much as I wanted. Didn't sleep so hot both figuratively and literally, that night. Did you ever try to make a bed roll with four fellows in a tent? Take it from me it is nigh on to impossible.

With the wind howling in from the end I was sleeping on, it was a bit drafty with my poorly made bed-roll. We talked till about midnight about every-thing under the sun. Herb asleep through nearly all of it until we started talking about girls--then he was half a-wake but when the pictures came out--he was wide a-wake. Mosquitoes woke us up in the morning but we took care of that. We lifted up the back flap, opened up the front and went back to sleep. The mosquitoes disappeared with the heavy wind that was blowing.

Got up and first of all took a short swim and then remade my bed-roll. We had oatmeal and apples for breakfast and every-one was full for a change. The boys said I should put in my little blue-book that we saw our first girls this morning since leaving the base-camp. I helped clean up the campsite and soon we found ourselves on the way again. We had straight paddling until noon. We entered the United States about 11 o'clock by the American Point. We went off Cache Bay into Saganaga Lake and ran into some good sized waves. We went through Gold Lake and Red Rock Lake before we had any portage. We had lunch while on Gold Lake and today it was hard-tack, summer sausage, jam, and lemon drops. Our first portage of the day was into Alpine Lake. From there we went into Jasper Lake, and there we really got "misplaced". It took about three-quarters of hunting to find the portage. Here, plowed through waves to later discover we could have gone with them. Of course, we went down the shore looking for the portage so, didn't get any of the benefits of them. One time we started up a trail only to find that it led to a Ranger Station. While looking for the portage we saw a mother duck with four cute ducklings. Well, finally we found it and several other small portages, which brought us into Ogishkemuncie Lake and a lot of hard work. It was fun fighting the waves at first, but later we were willing to get in the lee of any island and rest those sore and creaking muscles. And they talk about hard work at the office. We got a piece of summer sausage when we arrived at the end of the lake as we still had quite a bit in front of us to complete the day. Then it was paddle two, portage one, paddle two, over seven little puddles and portages. Finally, about 8 P.M. we got into Kekabic Lake. We stopped a few minutes at the Ranger Station and then on for another quarter of a mile. Everyone was so tired, hungry, and disgusted that I heard several of the fellows say they would like to sink the guides right there--- to help matters along it started to rain. The rain soon stopped so we were able to get our tent up and in place before the ground got too wet. With that taken care of, we sat around waiting for supper. The menu finally read--half-cooked beans, raisins and rice. Tonight, Wes and I rationed the food out. We finally came to the conclusion that the only way to handle the situation was to take it into our own hands, and, make sure everyone got a fair deal. Finished supper about 10:15. Everyone went straight to bed and to sleep. In our tent everyone was asleep in about three minutes as we were all just exhausted. Started to pour in the middle of the night so Tom moved in with us. Only two of the fellows knew about it until morning and yet all of us had to move to make room for him. We all had a good night's sleep as it was a swell camp-site. No stones for a change. Ted Nordquist dreamt he was paddling at night and said--"Gosh, do we have to paddle all night too". For me it was the best night's sleep of the trip.

Had breakfast consisting of corn-meal and fruit stew. We have used up all the milk and sugar and no neighbor to borrow some from. However, we did have a couple of visitors this morning, a couple of porcupines wanted to see how we did our cooking and nosed around among the Kettles. Got started about 9 o'clock. Went from Kekabic into Pickle Lake. While crossing this portage I saw seven partridge, which were surprisingly tame. After Pickle Lake came Spoon, Portage, and Knife Lakes, in that order. All, but Knife, were small lakes. We went down Knife Lake battling heavy waves, as usual. Does the wind only blow in one direction up in that Country? We had quite a hard portage at the end of Knife but the lunch compensated for that. Today we had Hard-tack and peanut butter. From there we followed a stream and had the usual number of portages, around Beaver Dams.



This stream led into Carp Lake and then came that FINAL PORTAGE in to Birch Lake. The wind got progressively stronger as we proceeded from Sucker into Newfound and then into Moose Lake. We were the last canoe in and we were all worn out. We stopped off at one island and got several lengths of wood to rest our packs on. It was a good thing we did as the waves were breaking over the front at the slightest provocation. I bet<sup>it</sup> would have been a lot of fun going with those waves but after all we were on the "Tough-Luck" trip. Arrived at our camp-site about 5:20 P.M. and I think the most beautiful sight of the whole trip to us was the American Flag proudly waving a welcome to us from the base-camp as we rounded the point. We didn't know we were even near the base-camp.

We put up the tent and really weighted it down with rocks that night as the wind seemed to be getting stronger. We, along with the rest, put in our order for candy bars. They bought fifty-five bars for fourteen fellows.

As per usual, the evening meal was burned. This time it was macaroni and bacon. About 8:15, we also had some hash, potatoes, and carrots. After supper we all went into our tents as rain threatened. It rained shortly afterwards so Tom moved in with us again. We talked for quite awhile and then sang songs which have stood the test of time and then some that haven't as yet. Finally to sleep after two and a half hours of horse-play, this being our last night together. We planned to get up quite early as the gang from Milaca wanted to get away as early as possible.

The next morning the gang from Milaca got up early but Herb, Tom, and I stayed in bed. When we did get up we walked right into a K.P. job. I'll learn to open my eyes when the guides are around.

We had a swell breakfast--plenty of pancakes, raisins and rice. I don't want to see any more rice for many months to come. There was plenty of food for all and all had plenty. I'm afraid I'll have to take that back. One of the boys from Fairmont was a little under the weather. They said that he ate ten candy-bars--little wonder that he was sick. Finished cleaning the pots and pans, took down the tent, and finally<sup>we</sup> were ready to return to the base-camp. Again we headed into the waves but they didn't even seem to be there as we were home-ward bound and only ~~had~~ two blocks to paddle. At the base-camp we turned in our equipment and we got our valuables. We were all given a blue medallion, which is really nice, and a map of the North country. Of course, it was the second medallion for me. Al Vista signed our papers for the Bronze Paddle award and we were then ready to look for transportation back to Ely. Previous to this, I discovered that the itch on my arm was Poison-Ivy and applied some dope on it. This didn't seem to have any effect on it what-so-ever. We stopped Charlie Kendall and asked about a ride to Ely and he said if we were ready in ten minutes we could go along with them. That gave us just ten minutes to hack off a week's beard and get into some presentable clothes--but we made it. The trip in was uneventful but the meal in Ely really hit the spot. Both of us were eager to get home so were impatient for 4:15 and the bus to arrive. Herb wanted to get home to take care of his cold and I wanted to take care of my Poison-Ivy. Finally, we got under way and arrived in St. Paul at 12:20 A.M. Sunday. It seemed a very short trip home because we slept most of the way.

The Poison-Ivy had had a good chance to spread and before I was through with it, it covered both my legs and both my arms. For three days I went to work with my pants rolled up to my knees and without stockings. However, in one week I had it so under control that I stopped applying the medicine. For me the vacation didn't end until

I had cleaned that up. So ended the trip.

This account of our trip was taken from notes that I made each day, generally at noon and at night, and reflects the true feelings of myself and others. I think we all can honestly say we had a lot of fun, but on the negative side, we all felt that we could have had a much better and easier time if things had been planned more thoroughly and with more capable leadership.

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Troop 62  
St. Paul Area Council



Shoving off.

Louisa Falls.



Making a  
Fire-place