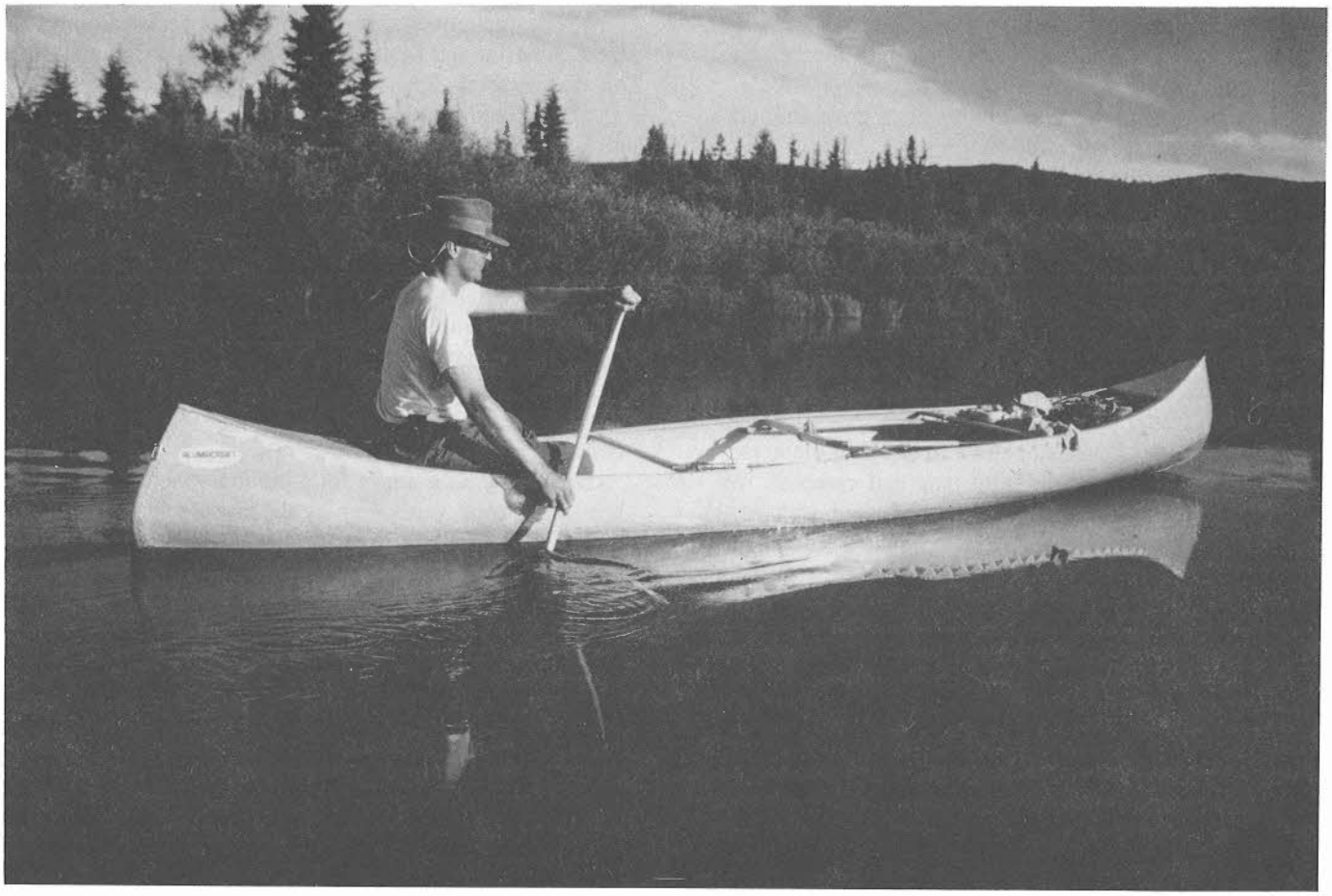
nastawgan

Summer 1991 Vol. 18 No. 2 Quarterly Journal of the Wilderness Canoe Association



THE CLEARWATER

Dave and Beth Buckley

You don't have to paddle "North of 60" to find untrammelled Wilderness, Whitewater, and Wildlife...

"This terrain is a real surprise," Beth shouted over the roar of the engine. "I expected it to be flatter, more like the prairie."

The shadow of our Otter floatplane slipped over the vast sweep of Saskatchewan wilderness. Not a road or cutline anywhere, just kilometre after kilometre of low jack pine hills and muskeg meadow, set into a random spatter of lakes.

At the hazy edge of the northern sky lay the 60th parallel, and beyond, the Northwest Territories. But the pilot eased the throttle and dipped a wing toward the silver expanse of Lloyd Lake. As the plane settled toward a long bay, brief glimpses of a narrow, white-flecked river reeled past the windows.

The river was the Clearwater. Over the next ten days we would follow its course across northern Saskatchewan and into Alberta.

I always look forward to the intense stillness after the roar of the departing floatplane has faded. But this beginning would be different, on a couple of counts.

For one, just as we were unloading, a squall broke, threatening to blow the Otter onto the rocky shore. I was out

on a pontoon, loading gear into our Mad River Explorer tied alongside. Without comment, the pilot cranked 'er up and briskly taxied off toward a protected cove. I grabbed a strut and cowered in the propwash with the Explorer bouncing along on its tether. I had the crazy thought, "*This* is how they should test high-tech raingear." My own outfit, for example, would have failed the test miserably.

After gaining the cove, and with the prop still ticking over, our friend and trip partner Harold Deal handed out the rest of the gear. He then joined me on the float, as the pilot eased Harold's new Crossfire soloboat through the Otter's rear door. On the other pontoon, Doug Taylor untied his Alumacraft from the struts and loaded up. Beth climbed into the Explorer with me and we all cast off.

As on every trip, this was a moment of great anticipation. Too great . . . as it developed.

The pilot shouted "Good luck" and the rumbling Pratt and Whitney roared. The three canoes set out from the surging floatplane, paddling directly *away* from the mouth of the Clearwater River!

The plane, now airborne, circled back to us and then headed off to our rear. In a few moments it was back, circling again.

"What's he trying to say?" questioned Beth, as the plane waggled its wings.

"I don't know," I said, impatient to be rid of the noise.

The mystery was solved with map and compass. We were headed out into the open lake! Embarrassed, we turned back toward the river. The amused pilot signaled his congratulations with another waggle of wings and finally sweet silence prevailed.

At this point, I'm pretty sure Doug Taylor was wondering just who he was travelling with. Harold's strong suit, of course, is his photography and prowess in whitewater. And Beth's claim to fame is her cooking and sunny disposition on a long portage. But planning and navigation are supposed to be my bag. Chagrined, I muttered something about losing my bearings during the rain-suit test.

Doug is on the staff of the Museum of Natural History in Regina, Saskatchewan. He is wonderfully familiar with the Native history, geology, and wildlife of the Clearwater area. Doug was District Conservation Officer when the 2300-square-kilometres Clearwater Wilderness Park was established in 1986. Although he had flown along the upper river by helicopter, this would be his first time canoeing this lightly travelled section. Provincial authorities told us they knew of only two parties running the upper Clearwater in recent years.

We found the uppermost section to be a real challenge. Several of the rapids below Lloyd Lake are among the toughest on the river. The streambed is still small here, and sneak routes through the pushy drops are very tight indeed. Harold was a godsend. Bobbing down through the froth, he calmly pointed out the holes and washovers as he tested the route for us.

A fair bit of the upper river is quick-flowing, braided flatwater sliding past sub-arctic scenery. Wildlife is abundant, due, no doubt, to the remote setting. The moose are huge and black bears omnipresent. We saw many species of shorebirds: gulls and terns, passerines, herons, bitterns, and others, all of which Doug enthusiastically identified. Bald eagles were a special treat, being almost as common as robins. Otters, ducks, and muskrats cruised close to the muskeg shoreline, always with an eye skyward, lest they become fare for hungry eagles.

Just downriver of the last rapid below Lloyd Lake, Doug waved us over to the base of a towering rock outcrop. He fairly jumped from his canoe onto the steep slippery rock. "Pictographs!" he exclaimed, excitedly. Sure enough; and these were clear, almost vivid examples.

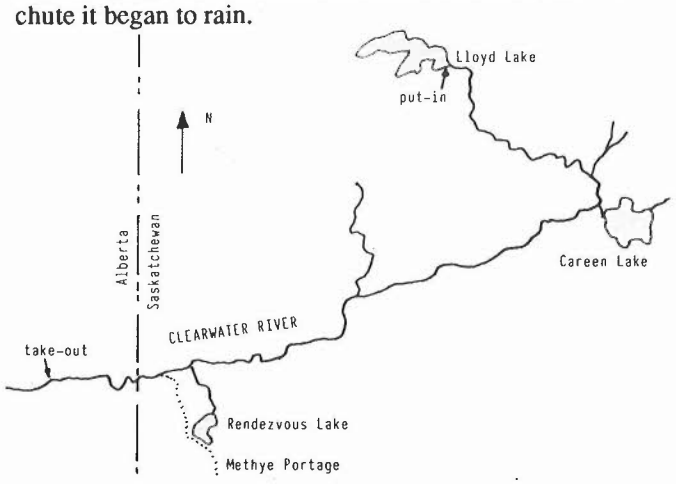
"They're remarkably similar to the rock paintings on Lake Superior and Missinaibi Lake," Beth observed. "How old do you think they are?"

Doug launched into an animated dissertation on Native rock art. Pictographs are one of his main areas of study at the museum, so he had a lot to say. The paintings do indeed carry a striking similarity in style and theme across much of northern Canada. The oldest visible paintings are thought to date back about 250 years. Doug believes native artists created them with fingers dipped in a pigment of burned red ochre mixed with fish oil. It is astounding these paintings persist so exposed to the harsh northern climate. In fact, the more exposed paintings may last longest, because the dryness and sunlight discourage formation of rock-dissolving lichen.

This is great country for a photographer. Huge hills of gravel and sand, pushed up by the last glacier thousands of years ago, provide a dramatic backdrop to vistas of open taiga forest and muskeg. Campsites are abundant, and the long evening light makes it easy to put off after-dinner chores, just gazing at the sweep of river, land, and sky.

We came upon several old native campsites. Wooden hoops, used to stretch beaver hides, or weathered moose antlers, left by native hunters more interested in meat than trophies, marked these sites. There was no sign of recent passage anywhere . . . and absolutely no litter.

We were obliged to watch landmarks carefully as we neared the end of a long flatwater stretch. An old trip description told of three sets of rapids, followed by an unrunnable chute at the head of a gorge. The first proved to be just a swift. The other two were more entertaining. We finally took out just at the lip of the big chute and began the carry around it to the gorge below. As Beth and I reached the base of the chute it began to rain.



A long Class II-III boulder garden rambled away down the gorge. We could run the stretch, but several healthy ledges would demand energetic cross-river manoeuvring. "And that means we'll get wet . . . either from the rain or the wave splash," I mused, walking along comfortably dry under cover of the boat. But the run was really tempting . . . more so, because it was obvious the portage would climb a steep rock wall just ahead.

My eyes swung back to the river. Just at the far end of the gorge, the Clearwater hooked out of sight around a bend. I couldn't see any "bail-out" eddy that far down, and the last wave visible was a big soft white one. So Doug, Beth, and I carried up over the rock outcrop.

Now we could see around the bend. And it wasn't pretty. The whole river pitched over a steep chute and into a killer boulder garden. It couldn't be run without crashing on rocks at the base of the chute. We hurried back to dissuade Harold, but needn't have bothered. We met him half way over, scrambling up from the lower gorge with his boat.

"Not much of an eddy down there, and it dumps over another big chute," Harold explained. He had eddy-hopped as far down as he safely could, and then climbed up to the portage.

As we waited for Harold and Doug to finish double-carrying, Beth and I explored a campsite just downriver of the rapids. There we found startling evidence that the run through the gorge had tempted other canoeists . . . and the outcome had been disaster. A smashed Alumacraft canoe and a full compliment of sun-rotted camping gear were strewn about: tent, sleeping bags, clothing, and cookware; everything, right down to socks and boots. By appearances, it had been there for a year or more . . . and the bears had chomped on all of it, even a can of Raid.

Doug provided further insight into what probably happened. He recalled hearing of two tandem canoes descending the upper Clearwater. One portaged the gorge, the other tried the rapids that had so tempted us. Unable to stop, they swept over the lower chute and crashed onto the boulders. Both paddlers were injured.

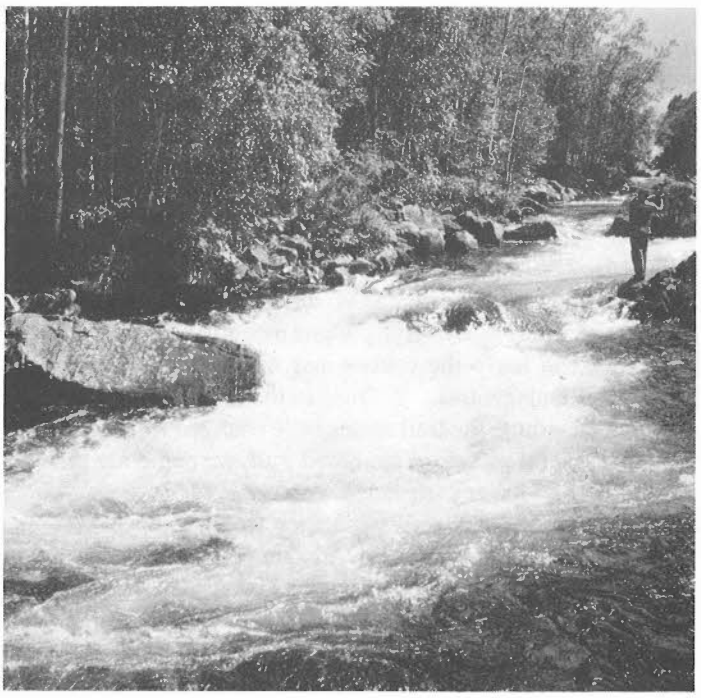
The pair who portaged went for help. A day's travel downstream, they ascended a tributary and crossed sprawling Careen Lake to an outpost camp. A helicopter was summoned by radio to fly out the injured paddlers. Due to the urgency and the tight confines of the river valley, no effort was made to retrieve the gear. Besides, as Doug told it, the injured paddlers wanted nothing more to do with canoe tripping. We piled and burned the scattered gear.

Though now torn and bashed, the Alumacraft appeared to have been spanking new at the time of its demise. Doug decided to salvage it. We all helped bang and bump the aluminum back into shape, then duct-taped over the ripped hull. Further down river, Doug would detour up the Virgin River and take the beat-up Alumacraft to the outpost camp across Careen Lake. There he planned to radio for a passing plane to pick up the canoe. If all went well, the Alumacraft would be waiting for him on our return to the airbase at Buffalo Narrows.

We continued on down the river, with Doug carrying the resurrected craft across the gunwales of his own canoe. That worked OK . . . until the first rapid. A wave snagged one stem of the wobbling Alumacraft and it swung around, almost knocking Mr. Taylor out of his boat. Thereafter, he trolled the extra canoe behind him.

The next day, while Doug was off portaging over into Careen Lake, we fished for arctic grayling in the Virgin River. Pouring out of Careen, the Virgin tumbles and bounces down to join the Clearwater. The grayling lie right in the boiling whitewater and are incredibly strong fighters on light tackle. We caught and released several trophy-sized fish.

Below the Virgin River confluence, the Clearwater breaks into a long series of rapids. We ran most of these in unhurried playful descent. Harold led the way in a game of "Follow the Leader" as we made the most of one long boulder garden after another.



Virgin River

Skull Canyon

At Warner Rapids, the Clearwater is bridged by an access road to a uranium mine. There is a rudimentary campground intended for use by canoeists running the lower river.

Here, the river begins to drop into the deep glacial spillway that made the Clearwater so important in Canadian history. In the late 1700s, explorer Peter Pond was searching for a river to link the Hudson Bay watershed with the vast Arctic land to the northwest. He ascended the Churchill River to Churchill Lake and finally poked over into Lac La Loche, the top of the Churchill watershed. It seemed to be the end of the line. But, natives told Pond of a trail to a river in a deep valley running westward to the Athabaska and MacKenzie. The trail was the Methye portage and the river was the Clearwater.

Pond first crossed the 19-kilometre carry in 1778. Then, for more than a century, the Methye portage and the Clearwater River became "Main Street North" for virtually every major trapper and adventurer seeking wealth or glory in the Arctic.

Rendezvous Lake lies about midway across the portage. It was here traders from Hudson Bay brought trade goods to be exchanged for furs carried up out of the Clearwater Valley by the MacKenzie Brigade of trappers.

Though unmarked, we had no difficulty in locating the weedy cove where the Methye portage meets the Clearwater. We decided to leave the canoes and walk up the historic portage to Rendezvous Lake. Once in the forest beyond the overgrown landing, the trail seems little changed from early times. At several places on the broad trail, we could see the ruts left by Red River carts laden with arctic fur.

The view of the Clearwater Valley from the upper rim is the same scene that greeted Alexander Mackenzie, Sir John Franklin, George Simpson, and a host of other famous explorers. It is a rare privilege to stand literally on the pathway of North American history and see what these early travellers must have seen, without benefit of stairways, railings, and rubber-tomahawk shops.

Not far downriver of the Methye portage, the Clearwater crosses into Alberta. About 24 kilometres below the border, Whitemud Falls defines the westward edge of the Pre-Cambrian granite shield and the beginning of limestone bedrock. Our trip description outlined a tricky approach to the portage at the top of this waterfall. Doug, who had paddled this section before at lower water, seconded the need for caution, especially considering the much higher volume the river was now carrying.

It proved to be a nifty little run to the portage. With Doug leading, we dropped over a ledge and bounced through a narrow rapid on the right of a "flower pot" island. Then, sweeping our bows upstream, we ferried hard across the current at the top of the falls. Like ducks in a row, we slipped into a fast little snye at the right bank and were swept around an island, back toward the brink. With the falls yawning, the canoes swerved into an eddy and we all hopped out onto the portage landing. Whew!

Actually, there are three major waterfalls in the Clearwater Valley: Smoothrock Falls, Skull Canyon, and the

Methye Portage

aforementioned Whitemud. All three have fine campsites and wonderful vistas of the tumbling Clearwater. All three deserve a cautious approach.

Our stay at Smoothrock Falls was particularly memorable. Leaving the canoes at the upper landing, we dawdled well into the evening twilight, exploring the polished rock of a dry river bed and climbing about for different views of the spectacular waterfall. Then Doug led us to a campsite that hovered right over the churning drop.

As we returned to the canoes for our gear, I commented pointedly about all the bear signs. "There sure is a lot of bear poop around here, Doug. Maybe we'd better camp away from the noise of the falls."

"Relax," Doug assured me, "It's the cranberries, bearberries, actually. They're left over from last fall. The bears eat 'em as soon as the snow melts. I'm sure they've moved on to greener pasture by now." (This, as he picked his way among piles of berries that had obviously been through the bear's plumbing very recently.)

"Just the same," I said, "We'll set up our tent away from the roar. I'd like to hear what's going on outside."

After a great dinner of Doug's "D.T. Fish Chowder," Harold and I took extra care to hang our food packs between two jack pines, well out of bruin-reach. Doug apparently harkens to a different drummer. He sets his foodpack only about shoulder high in a tree just outside his tent and figures he'll deal with the bear more directly.

"If a bear hassles the pack, I'll hear him and change his mind before he gets into things," Doug confided.

Beth and I set up our North Face on a flat shelf about 150 metres back from the falls.

In the golden light of dawn, we suddenly awoke. Had something bumped the tent? As we shook off the cobwebs of sleep, the tent *did* move! The whole wall pushed way in over Beth!

WHOA! I knew what it had to be.

"Bear!" I shouted, sitting up and ripping at the door zipper. Poking my head around the side of the tent, I was face to face with the bear that had just taken a big bite of our wilderness home.

A large black bear with a bit of grey fur around the edges, looked at me quizzically and backed off. I grabbed for my britches and camera and struggled outside. By then 'Brer Bear had faded into the bush across the portage trail. I showed Beth the bite-mark on the tent wall and told her to keep an eye on things while I checked our companions.

We hadn't finished quite all of D.T.'s fish chowder and the ever casual Mr. Taylor had just set the pan on a rock outside his tent to await breakfast. I was sure the bear had found it.

As I approached Doug's tent, nothing seemed amiss. The chowder pan was undisturbed. Bruskly, I strode up to the netting door to check the foodpack, expecting Doug to waken. But he slumbered on, only centimetres from my crunching feet, blissfully unaware that Beth and I had nearly become the filling in a North Face sandwich.

Later at breakfast, we tried to figure why the bear had bitten the tent.

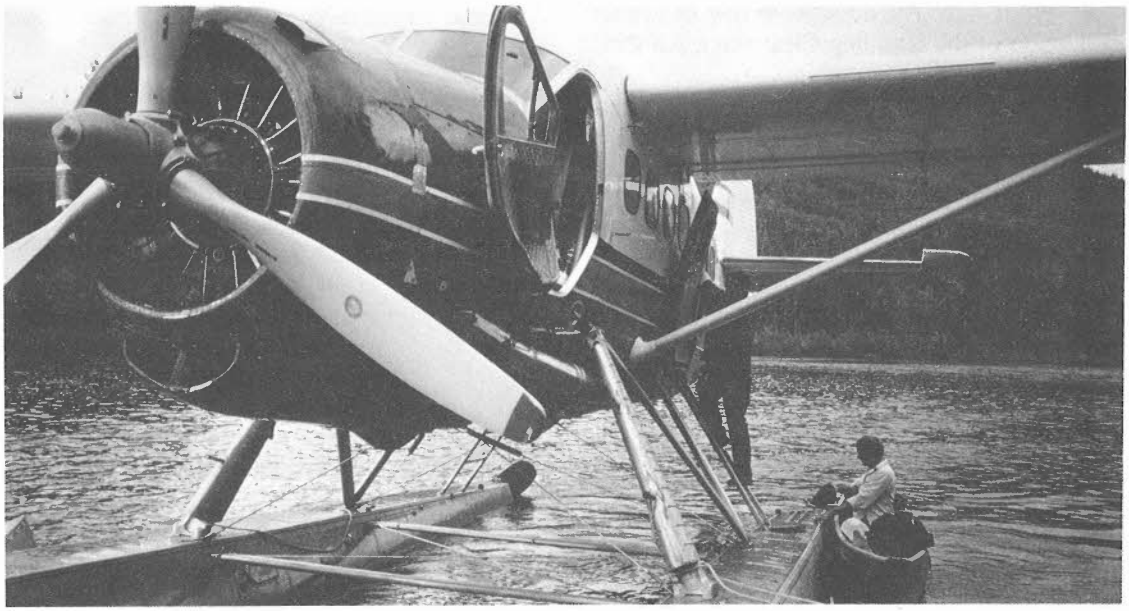
"You pitched it right in the middle of a bearberry patch!" Doug laughed.

"Remember the chewed-up Raid can upriver? I'll bet these Saskatchewan bruins bite anything strange . . . just to see if it's edible," opined Harold.

Beth was convinced it had been the sweet-smelling Skin-So-Soft she uses as black fly repellent.

Only the bear knows for sure.

Pesky wildlife aside, the Clearwater wilderness really exceeded our expectations. Unlike so many areas of relatively easy access, this Canadian Heritage River just hasn't been noticed much, either by extractive industry or the adventure-travelling public. To those paddlers who will enjoy the Clearwater in the future, we say "Take care to leave the river as you find it, and Bon Voyage!"



CLEARWATER RIVER LOGISTICS

Important Note: The Clearwater is a whitewater river in a remote setting. Careful planning, accurate assessment of individual ability and prudent behavior are essential to safety. *The route is not appropriate for inexperienced canoeists.*

CLEARWATER WILDERNESS PARK – Yes, the Clearwater area is a park and the river has been designated a Canadian Heritage River. But only the barest facilities exist (the campground at the Cluff Lake Rd. bridge). The entire interior of almost 2300 square kilometres is as wild as ever. We congratulate Saskatchewan on disavowing establishment of regular campsites or marked portages, at least until greater use dictates. That's what it's all about. The privilege of travelling untrammeled wilderness is worth the price of self-reliance.

PADDLING SEASON – Ice goes out around 1 June. Water level was still high and cold in mid-June of 1990, with some ice still present in shaded cracks along the shore. Higher water would increase difficulty of some rapids, particularly on the upper river.

Rainfall may be light in July and August. Resulting low water would complicate whitewater manoeuvring and necessitate more lining over exposed boulders and sandbars. Also, this is forest-fire country.

PORTAGES – Generally few, short, and clear. Though some are very lightly used, and not formally maintained, the portages were remarkably free of obstruction in June of 1990.

BUGS – Black flies and mosquitoes were light to occasionally moderate. It was daylight most of the time, with long hours of twilight.

TRIP DISTANCE – Approx. 216 kilometres from Lloyd Lake to Whitemud Falls. We paddled it in 10 easy days with plenty of time for fishing and photography. Somewhat longer and shorter trips are possible.

REGISTRATION – Canoe trips must be pre-registered with the RCMP in La Loche. Still, prompt rescue would be unlikely. The RCMP makes it clear they have many higher priorities than searching for overdue canoeists.

ACCESS – We flew into Lloyd Lake from Buffalo Narrows, a distance of about 340 air kilometres round trip. Buffalo Narrows Airways carried two tandems on the struts and one soloboat in the fuselage. Total air charter for the flight in and back out (from Whitemud Falls, Alberta), cost about C$1800.

Canoeists can also fly in from Fort McMurray, Alberta, and then paddle back to vehicles at the junction of the Clearwater and Athabaska rivers.

MAPS – We used 1:50,000-scale Canadian topos. They were generally adequate, considering the location. Still, many rapids are not marked on the maps or may be mismarked. Be especially careful of older descriptions of the lightly-travelled upper river. One we used from 1973 proved quite inaccurate.

The lower river (below Warner Rapids) is detailed in a booklet entitled CANOE ROUTE #40, available through the Park Office in La Loche.

AIR CHARTER CONTACT – Buffalo Narrows Airways, Dennis O'Brian,Box 176, Buffalo Narrows, Saskatchewan, S0M 0J0 Canada, phone: (306) 235-4373.

CLEARWATER WILDERNESS PARK OFFICE – Norman Fontaine,Conservation Officer, Box 40, La Loche, Saskatchewan,S0N 1G0 Canada, phone: (306) 822-2033.

OUTFITTED TRIPS ON THE CLEARWATER – (may be offered in 1991): Horizons Unlimited, Churchill River Outfitters, Box 1110, La Ronge, Saskatchewan S0J 1L0, phone: (306) 635-4440.

SASKATCHEWAN TOURISM – A toll-free phone number is available for requesting information and publications on canoeing in Saskatchewan: (800) 667-7191.

FLIES!

My companions and I first heard an account of this gruesome accident from the QNS&L train crew on our way up to Labrador for a canoe trip around 1980. It sounded so incredible that we figured it must have been at least slightly exaggerated, as some of their tales tend to be. Subsequently I heard essentially the same story from other sources. I now have a presumably reliable account given by a fisherman who was there when the victims were taken out by helicopter to Sept-Iles. Believe it or not, here is the story.

A party of four canoeists started down the Moisie River early in the season in high water. On a bright, sunny, warm day they were wearing only trunks as they approached the first big drop below Lac Felix. Evidently it was just before the beginning of the fly season. In the rapids just above the main falls, they had some sort of mishap and lost their canoes and all or nearly all of their gear. They then chose to try walking out downstream, which would be over very rough terrain for about 150 to 200 km depending upon their luck at finding someone at fishing camps along the way. Note that the railroad was only 80 km away, but they probably had lost their maps so would not have known the way. Wabush was even closer, but on the wrong side of the river.

They made their way painfully downstream for 100 km to the mouth of the Taoti River. At this point, nearly naked and half-starved, two of them swam the Taoti and continued on for help. The other two couldn't swim well enough, so they had to remain there. When finally rescued by helicopter, they were badly swollen, completely blind, and in a pathetic state of helplessness from black fly bites. One of them did not soon recover, so the story goes, and ended up in a mental hospital where he remained for long afterwards.

Submitted by Stewart Coffin

GIBSON-MCDONALD 1990

Don Smith

I didn't want to alarm the boys but I thought I should give them the option. We'd reviewed the procedures and gone through the first-aid kit the night before. I warned them to watch where they were stepping and putting their hands. Is it just my snake phobia? But God, they give me a start. At least the Massasauga rattler lets you know where it is.

We'd just carried the portage from Hungry Creek to Gibson Lake. The first carry with the packs was uneventful and then we went back for the canoes. Fraser (17) and Lorne (15) carried the rented red fiberglass and Steven (14), my sons' friend, and I carried the Blue Bardge, our old beaten and patched fiberglass canoe.

The boys had wanted to bring Steven along on our canoe trip for the last couple of years. I'd always been reluctant. Steven had never camped and canoed before and we had only been doing it for the last four years. So I thought that the Gibson-McDonald would be a good place to start.

Six Mile Lake is only two hours from Toronto. We'd drive up in the morning, rent the other canoe, get some paddling in, crawl into bed early, and paddle Six Mile and Gibson lakes to Gibson River the next day. Well, teenage friends don't settle down too early and I'm an early riser, so maybe I was a bit on edge. As Steven and I carried behind Fraser and Lorne I heard this buzzing. Before I could form the words Steven shouted: "rattlesnake!" and we both backed up with the canoe.

I'd never seen a rattlesnake in the wild before. All coiled up, no bigger than a dinner plate, its tiny head about the size of my thumb so out of proportion to its fat body, and here we were standing in its dining room. We put down the canoe and picked up big sticks. I thought I could coax it to move away but it kept striking at the stick. I didn't want to hurt it so we scouted a wide path on the other side of the portage away from it. By the time we got the canoe over to Gibson Lake, dug out the camera, and gingerly worked our way back it was gone.

As we ate lunch on the Gibson Lake put-in, I thought it best to ask the boys. Should we go back? We were half a day's paddle to the park. Should we go back by road? We were on a road connecting to Highway 69; I could hitchhike to the car. Or should we go on? Well, without hesitation they all said we should go on. There was nothing to worry about. We were all going to be careful and we were going camping. Their biggest worry was, what mom would say

(but that's another story).

So we carried on, camping on the Gibson River that night, McRae Lake the next, and we were at the car by noon the third day. It sure was nice to come off the lake and into those Six Mile Lake Park showers. It's interesting to see wildlife like the Massasauga rattlesnake. I hope we can allow it some space to live. When we travel the Gibson-McDonald route we are canoeing through its home and like anyone we must respect them in their own place.

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Published by the Wilderness Canoe Association — Editor: Toni Harting
Nastawgan is an Anishinabi word meaning 'the way or route'

The WILDERNESS CANOE ASSOCIATION is a non-profit organization made up of individuals interested in wilderness travel, mainly by canoe and kayak, but also including backpacking and winter trips on both skis and snowshoes. The club publishes a quarterly journal, *Nastawgan*, to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas of interest to wilderness travellers, organizes an extensive program of trips for members, runs a few basic workshops, and is involved in environmental issues relevant to wilderness canoeing.

EDITORIAL

This issue is the biggest one ever (36 pages, 27,700 words), in part because of the good number of submissions I have received in the past few months. There is now a comfortable backlog of articles in my files, especially longer ones, which makes it easier for me to produce the journal. Please keep submitting your stories, especially shorter ones. New material is of course always needed.

The main reason for this issue's size, however, is the inclusion of a 12-page report on a trip down the Kazan River. The explanation why I decided to publish the complete article, as a tribute to two courageous people, is given in the comment at the end of the report.

SPORTSMEN'S SHOW

A lot of thanks to all those who volunteered their time and energy into making the WCA's participation in the 1991 Toronto Sportsmen's Show a success. Special thanks to the set-up and take-down crews, all booth attendants, Toni Harting for the slide show, and George Luste for his display and petition related to preserving the wilderness around the Missinaibi River.

The WCA participates in this show to promote itself, to exchange information about wilderness-related issues with the public, and to gain new members.

Mike Jones

MORE ON LICENSING FEES FOR CANOES

On 25 March I wrote to the Hon. Doug Lewis, P.C., M.P., Minister of Transport, regarding the above subject (see item on page 5 of the Spring 1991 issue of *Nastawgan*). This is his reply:

Department officials have recently concluded seven months of public consultations on proposed new cost recovery policy for facilities and services provided by Transport Canada. Included in these proposals is the introduction of a new marine aid to navigation fee for commercial vessels. There are no fee proposals for pleasure boaters to recover the cost of aids to navigation which can be attributed to that user group.

If, in the future, my department wishes to recover the costs of marine aids to navigation attributable to pleasure boaters, it would only do so after extensive public consultations. As canoes and kayaks generally do not make use of navigational aids, such as buoys and lighthouses, fees may not apply to these types of craft.

For the time being, it would appear that canoeists and kayakers are off the hook.

Jim Greenacre

NEWS BRIEFS

NASTAWGAN MATERIAL AND DEADLINE Articles, trip reports, book reviews, photographs, sketches, technical tips, or anything else that you think might be of interest to other readers, are needed for future issues. Submit your contributions preferably on floppy computer disks or in typewritten form; contact the editor for more information. Contributor's Guidelines are available upon request; please follow these guidelines as much as possible to increase the efficiency of the production of our journal. The deadline dates for the next two issues are:

issue: Autumn 1991 *deadline date*: 11 Aug. 1991
Winter 1991 27 Oct. 1991

WCA MEMBERSHIP LISTS are available to any members who wish one for personal, non-commercial use. Send five dollars in bills (no cheques, please!) to Cash Belden at the WCA postal address (see WCA Contacts on the back page).

WCA FALL MEETING will be held on 13-15 September in Presqu'ile Provincial Park, Brighton, Ontario. Please see the enclosed flyer for details.

JOURNAL COLLECTION REPRINT INDEX is finally ready (sorry about the delay, these are busy times . . .), and should reach the members concerned before the end of July. Those who have not bought the reprint set can also order the index, which covers most of the material published in the first 16 volumes of the WCA journal, by sending $4.00 in bills to the Editor.

CRCA PHOTO COMPETITION The Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association presents *The Nikon/CRCA Canadian Canoe Photograph Contest*. The nine categories are: canoeing skills, natural environment, heritage, heritage rivers, wildlife/plantlife, people and canoes/kayaks, coastal paddling, international, CRCA members. Entries should be submitted to the CRCA before 15 September 1991, 5:00 p.m. The contest is open to anyone who wishes to enter, and many prizes are made available to the winners. For more information contact the CRCA in Hyde Park, Ontario; tel. (519) 473-2109.

PADDLER A California publishing house, Tanis Group, has bought the subscription list liability for *Paddler*, *Canoesport Journal*, and *River Runner* to create one large magazine dedicated to paddling. The new magazine is called *Paddler* and covers paddling in the U.S. as well as some Canadian content. It will be published six times a year. Those who subscribed to the original Canada-based *Paddler* or to the two U.S. magazines have recently received the first issue of the new magazine.

CANADIAN HERITAGE RIVERS SYSTEM In its February 1991 update, the CHR Board announced that the nomination of the Main River, located in northern Newfoundland, was formally accepted by the federal Minister of the Environment. The formal designations of the St. Croix River in New Brunswick and The Thirty Mile section of the Yukon River were also announced. Nineteen rivers have now been nominated to the CHRS, totalling 4,114 km in length. Thirteen of these rivers, totalling 2,597 km, have now been designated.

BOARD ACTIVITIES

(This new column will be used to keep WCA members up to date on the activities and decisions of their Board of Directors *occurring prior to the Nastawgan deadline*.)

The period since the AGM has been a relatively quiet one for the Board. Their first duty was to formalize the election of Tony Bird as Chairman and Herb Pohl as Vice Chairman for the coming year.

A budget for 1991 was laboriously developed. Based on an estimated final membership of 600 and expenses consistent with other years, we reckon to be able to operate with an approximate operating surplus of $1000 without any change in membership dues.

Plans to hold the Fall Meeting at Presqu'ile Provincial Park have hit a snag. Glenn Spence, who has been working on arrangements for some time, was informed, just prior to the meeting on 20 April, that *duck hunting* is permitted in the park on autumn weekends, including the planned weekend of the Fall Meeting. Nothing like waking up to the sound of shotguns! Glenn will try to change the date of the meeting or, failing that, seek an alternate venue. (The date has been changed to 13-15 September; see the enclosed flyer. Ed.)

The staff lounge at George Brown College has been booked for Friday, 29 November, for the annual wine and cheese party.

A committee under the leadership of Mike Jones has been formed to look at plans for the 1992 Sportsmen's Show. At the AGM the membership voted a maximum of $3000 for upgrading of the booth. The Board has requested that options in multiple price ranges be presented.

The WCA, through Cash Belden, has acquired a printer to go along with the computer equipment intended for the use of the Membership Committee.

A report from the Conservation Committee indicated a marked upswing in activity and enthusiasm, thanks in no small measure to the ongoing efforts of its chairman, Stephen Crouch. Richard Culpeper brought the Board up to date on the threat to the Aux Sables River which was the subject of the flyer included with the last journal. Other issues which the committee is monitoring include: James Bay II, the Heritage Rivers program, logging in Algonquin Park, and the controversial granting of hunting rights in Algonquin Park to the Golden Lake Band. The Board passed a resolution that: *the WCA disapproves, in principle, hunting by anyone in Algonquin Park*. The Committee would appreciate any input from the members on these or other issues.

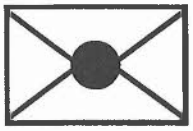
With respect to the issue raised in the last issue of *Nastawgan*, Tony Bird will send a letter to Transport Canada expressing the WCA's opposition to the enforced registration of non-motorized watercraft.

Expect quarterly updates on the highlights of Board meetings. Next meeting is scheduled for 11 June.

Bill King

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A WORD OF CAUTION



I would like to comment on Jim Greenacre's story (in the Winter-1990 issue of *Nastawgan*) of his potentially fatal accident on Lake Superior. The account leaves unsaid the fact that, as people become more and more experienced in what they do, whether canoeing, hiking (or driving), they tend to become overconfident and complacent about the dangers that exist — dangers that are just as real now as they were when we were novices. This is not a criticism of Jim but a plea of guilty . . . on my own part and a suggestion that most of us are probably guilty.

— After camping for years in bear country and experiencing no bear problems we might decide this evening not to bother hanging up our food supply out of reach – big mistake;

— After years of drowning our campfires at night before going to bed without ever having the wind pick up; oh well, it's a long way to the lake for water, tonight I won't bother – big mistake;

— After years of scouting rapids before running them and encountering no (serious) difficulties; today, it's getting late, we have to find a campsite, the rapids look easy, at least between here and the bend in the river, let's go for it – big mistake, possibly fatal.

I'm sure that if we all thought about it we could all recall incidents similar to the above and others such as not needing a compass on *this* trip, failure to keep at least some matches in a waterproof container, assuming that another member of the party has brought along an indispensable item, and so on.

So as we pursue our outdoor activities, let us remind ourselves that we should retain the kind of caution we had as novices or that we exhibit as we teach beginners, regardless of the sum total of our present knowledge and experience.

Gerry Lannan

QUETICO

It was with considerable dismay that I read an article in your Spring 1991 issue on Quetico Provincial Park. Quetico is a Wilderness Park. That's what I thought your magazine was about.

Mr. Greenacre clearly misunderstands the meaning of true wilderness. I would suggest he gets a baby-sitter if he wants to canoe in true wilderness – the whining in this article was simply ridiculous.

Unmarked campsites, some rough portages, occasional map inaccuracies, and being 'on-your-own' – are these not part of wilderness? The comparisons to Algonquin Park are inappropriate. Algonquin is not a wilderness class of park.

Is it because it is a park that he expected it to be 'civilized' wilderness with paved portages, signposts, etc.?

His comment about a book on canoeing coming from an American publisher is well taken. The Friends of Quetico Park are trying to publish a book on canoe routes of Quetico. Tell Mr. Greenacre to put his money where his mouth is and send them some money.

I could go on and on, I'm so upset, but enough said. The tone of this article is extremely biased and negative. I'm surprised that you would include such a piece in your journal – it affects the credibility of *Nastawgan* – hard up for material were you?

Andrea Allison

QUETICO

We are moved to respond to Jim Greenacre's short article on Quetico Provincial Park in the Spring *Nastawgan*.

Jim is quite right in his characterization of Quetico as a sort of "Algonquin-West," dominated by American paddlers from the adjacent Boundary Waters Canoe Area. But there are a couple of points that I believe Jim may have overlooked and which we hope might encourage more Canadians to use Quetico.

* – Fishing there is far better than in Algonquin, Temagami, or most other easy-access parks. Many of the interior Quetico lakes offer pickerel, bass, and lake trout fishing that is as good as, or better than, fly-in areas to the north.

* — While Quetico is on the pre-cambrian shield, its topography is generally rougher than eastern Ontario parks. Except for the northeastern corner (the locus of Jim's entry), there is relatively little low marshy land. The central interior and northwestern corner of Quetico are particularly scenic. There are many cliffs, intricate bays, and fine high vistas set in light jack pine.

Some years ago, an MNR official, thinking we were Canadian (I guess we may have had our pants tucked into our socks), told us that Quetico badly needs the support of Canadian paddlers.

The economy of nearby Canadian settlements has been depressed, apparently through depletion of nearby timber and mineral resources. Yet, right on their doorstep is this large park, with lots of timber and considerable resort/fishing potential. Small wonder some local residents bristle at preserving Quetico "wilderness," largely for the enjoyment of Americans.

Nor is it surprising that U.S. canoeists find Quetico so attractive, considering the relative crowding and development of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area.

Quetico is wonderful lakeland canoe country, generally a bit wilder than provincial parks in eastern Ontario. The unmarked campsites and portages and reduced MNR hand-holding make it a logical step toward routes in bona-fide wilderness.

As aliens, we are very grateful for the privilege of paddling Quetico every once in a while. But we respectfully submit that the MNR officer was correct. Increased use by Canadians is the best way to ensure Quetico isn't lost to resource extraction or tourism development.

Beth & Dave Buckley

PS: There is no denying that the southern reaches of Quetico can be relatively crowded. And it's busy too, along such popular routes as the "Hunter Island" circuit. But as Jim Greenacre relates, there are areas of Quetico that aren't much travelled. A little extra effort in planning and portaging will pay off in solitude, scenery, and great fishing. We would be happy to share some of our favorite routes with canoeists planning to visit Quetico.

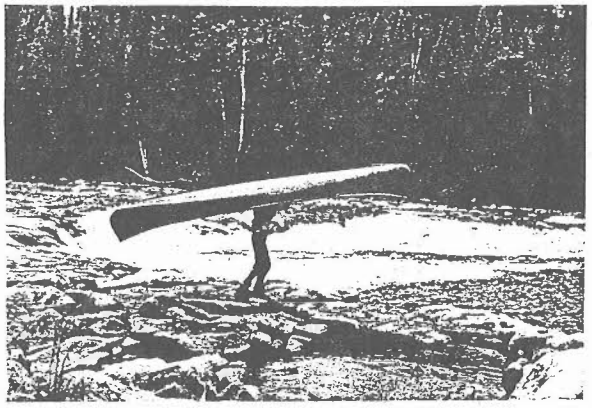
PORTRAIT OF A PADDLER: ROBERT PERKINS

Many canoeists are essentially loners, and Robert Perkins is one of them.

Paddling solo is what he prefers, travelling in the most remote and uninhabited places he can find, free to follow his own path, the only moving, "living" companion being his faithful shadow.

He is the opposite of the gung-ho type of northern canoe tripper who wants to get to his take-out point as fast as possible without having much of an eye for the country he travels in. No, Perkins is an astute and patient observer, very much a participant in the rapid flow of nature's life, a dreamer in the best sense of the word.

His true self shines in his eyes: introspective, responsive, searching, guarded, keenly observant, looking at the world around him with a poet's recognition of beauty, soul, and meaning. Indeed, Robert Perkins is above all else a poet, a sculptor of language, a thinker with an easy, somewhat sad smile. But also a realist who understands that more than dreaming is needed to reach his goals. And those goals are very clear to him.



His 1979 canoe trip down the Korok River in the far northern tip of Labrador resulted in his first book, *Against Straight* Lines. Here he already shows his personal style of writing a trip report of sorts, interwoven with reflections ranging from the profound to the delightfully funny.

His second book, *Into the Great Solitude*, was published early this year (see the book review section in this issue of *Nastawgan*), and recounts his adventures and experiences while on an extended solo trip down the Back River in the Northwest Territories in 1987. His intimate style of telling us about himself while travelling these northern lands is even more direct and effective than in his earlier work. This is a glorious book, literary travel writing at its best: intelligent, informative, human, sensitive, open, accessible, honest.

Robert is presently working on a book about his 1990 visit to a previously almost completely closed-off part of the Soviet Union, the Kamchatka Peninsula, a California-sized natural treasure of rocks and rivers, volcanoes and ice, meadows and tundra, which forms part of the easternmost border of Siberia. In the six-week trip he and his party covered an amazing variety of land- and waterscapes on foot and by truck, canoe, helicopter, motorboat, and even by military amphibious tank. He was the first American to visit Kamchatka since 1863. The fascinating film about this trip — *Yankee in Kamchatka* — premiered on PBS-TV on 17 June and gives us a intriguing glimpse of this never-before filmed (by westerners) part of the world. The book will be out in the near future.

Perkins reveals in his work that he is a gifted man, an original who knows what he wants and how to go after it. Not a hugely 'successful' man in the conventional, materialistic sense of the word, but a dedicated idealist who wants to become famous and influential in order to be in a better position to tell the world more effectively about the beauty of the natural world and the frightening damage we're inflicting upon it. His work in this field will increase in importance and he is bound to become a major voice in the fight to protect our natural environment.

The last words he speaks in his Kamchatka film are: " . . . all I wanted was to go on a canoe trip and catch the Siberian blue trout." In his life Robert Perkins will no doubt be going on many trips and catching many 'blue trout.' We can only hope he will keep enchanting us with his words and images while on the quest to fullfil his dreams.

Toni Harting

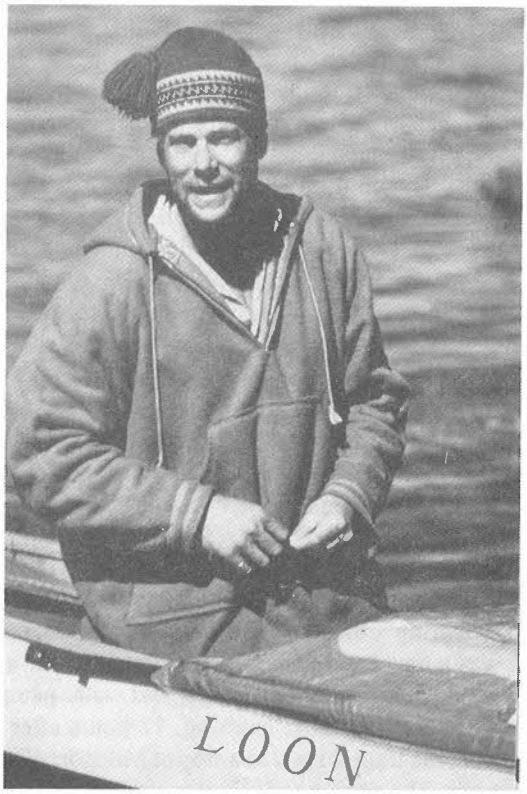


Photo by Susanne Lingemann

MILEPOST 474

Dan Jenny

I often reflect why the North has such an attraction, in fact obsession, for me. Why am I drawn there year after year? It's not just the beauty. Maybe it's the simplicity, the reliance on my own skills, or even the fact that I have room to think and dream. There is none of the clutter of mankind. That could explain why I leave the high-tech Goretex rain gear, Quallofill sleeping bag, and Geodesign four-season tents back home. Give me the feel of a wool blanket and a simple tarp to sleep under. Besides, if I die in the bush, I want my gear to decompose as fast as I do. Part of the attraction is the challenge: finding my limits. The modern world challenges the mind but not the body. The North challenges both. I think the Psalmist David said it best in Psalm 19:

> The heavens declare the glory of God;
> the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
> Day after day they pour forth speech;
> night after night they display knowledge.
> There is no speech or language
> where their voice is not heard.
> Their voice goes out into all the earth,
> their words to the ends of the world.

The North is one of the few remaining places where we can experience nature as God created it so long ago.

This year (1990) a river in Manitoba beckoned. The maps showed the Deer River flowing within 140 metres of the rail line connecting the towns of Thompson and Churchill. By canoeing the Deer River until it merges into the Churchill River, one could then float the Churchill River to the town of Churchill on Hudson Bay, the end of the line. This area is located north of the tree line where geese, ducks, and ptarmigan are plentiful. Caribou and polar bear are occasionally sighted. There are also grayling, a member of the trout family, which are native to arctic streams.

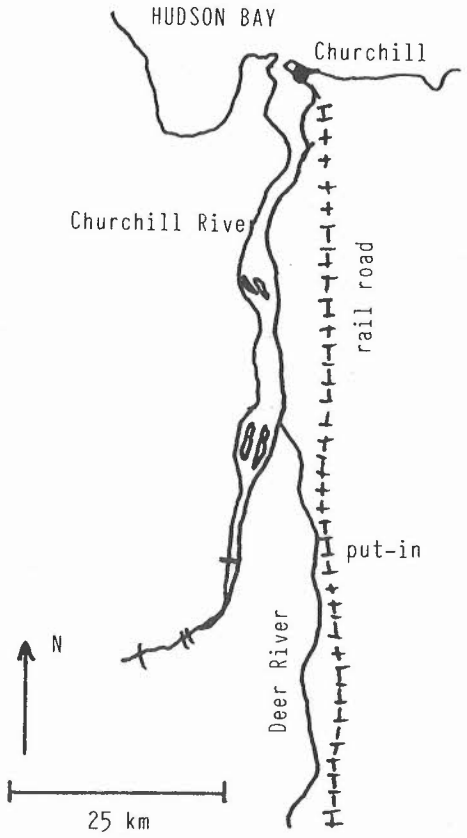
Phil Zivkovich and I made the 36-hour drive from Pittsburgh to Thompson where we purchased tickets for the train-ride north. The cost for a one way ticket was $45 per person, $51 for the canoe, and $18 for our fearless bear dog, Kelly. The train was packed. Canada was also celebrating the Labor Day weekend and all the local Indians who had been shopping and/or visiting relatives in Thompson were now returning to their homes in the bush.

Our destination was Milepost 474 which had formerly been a watering siding to feed the old steam locomotives. There was a nice level path from the tracks to the concrete building which housed a steam-operated water pump.

At 7:30 a.m. the next morning, 12 hours after we left Thompson, the train slowed to a stop at Milepost 474 and we jumped out. The conductor's final words were: "Watch out for the polar bears. Last spring, one chased two guys up the telegraph lines and wouldn't let them down until the train came by. They spent all night in the cross arms of the pole." The baggage handler chimed in: "Watch out for the last waterfall!"

All I could see was tundra-moss and an occasional stunted spruce tree with branches growing on the leeward side because of the powerful winds. My dog looked at me as if to say, "Now what have you gotten me into?" She was right. What *had* I gotten myself into? We were alone and the nearest help was at least 160 kilometres away. Well, not quite alone; we had the wind, a powerful, penetrating wind. A wind that never slacked off. Bone-chilling, coming right out of the North. It was a dramatic change from the more than 32 C heat in the States.

After donning every piece of clothing we owned, we portaged the canoe and equipment 140 metres to the river. The wind was so strong that carrying the canoe on our shoulders became nearly impossible. We spent a half hour fishing for lunch. Unable to get one bite, we loaded the canoe and headed several kilometres upstream to where the topo showed a treed area that would be a likely spot for spruce grouse, ptarmigan, and an abundant supply of firewood. What the topo didn't show was several series of "white horses" that were too rough to pole through, making us portage around them.



We paddled to a wooded area that looked promising. After beaching our canoe, we climbed the 12-metre banks to the flats and stared at the kilometres of tundra. There were hundreds of small ponds on the flat plain. We saw flocks of Canada geese through our binoculars. What we couldn't see we could easily hear. Their distinctive honking cut through the rushing wind for several kilometres. Just this sight alone made the 2900-kilometre drive worth every uncomfortable kilometre.

To the right was a small wooded area. The trees were all spruce, none more than three metres tall. Small willow bushes were also common. Blueberries and cranberries, loaded with ripe fruit, were everywhere. There were also Labrador Tea bushes covering the ground.

We headed downstream to find a spot for dinner. Every time I bake bannock, I think of the Robert Service poem "While the Bannock Bakes."

> Light up your pipe again, old chum and sit awhile with me;
> I've got to watch the bannock bake--how restful is the air!
> You'd little think that we were somewhere north of Sixty-three,
> Though where I don't exactly know, and don't precisely care.

We washed the dishes, packed our gear, and put several kilometres between us and the cook area with all its good smells. We never camped in the same area where cooking was done, just in case "Nanok" was in the area.

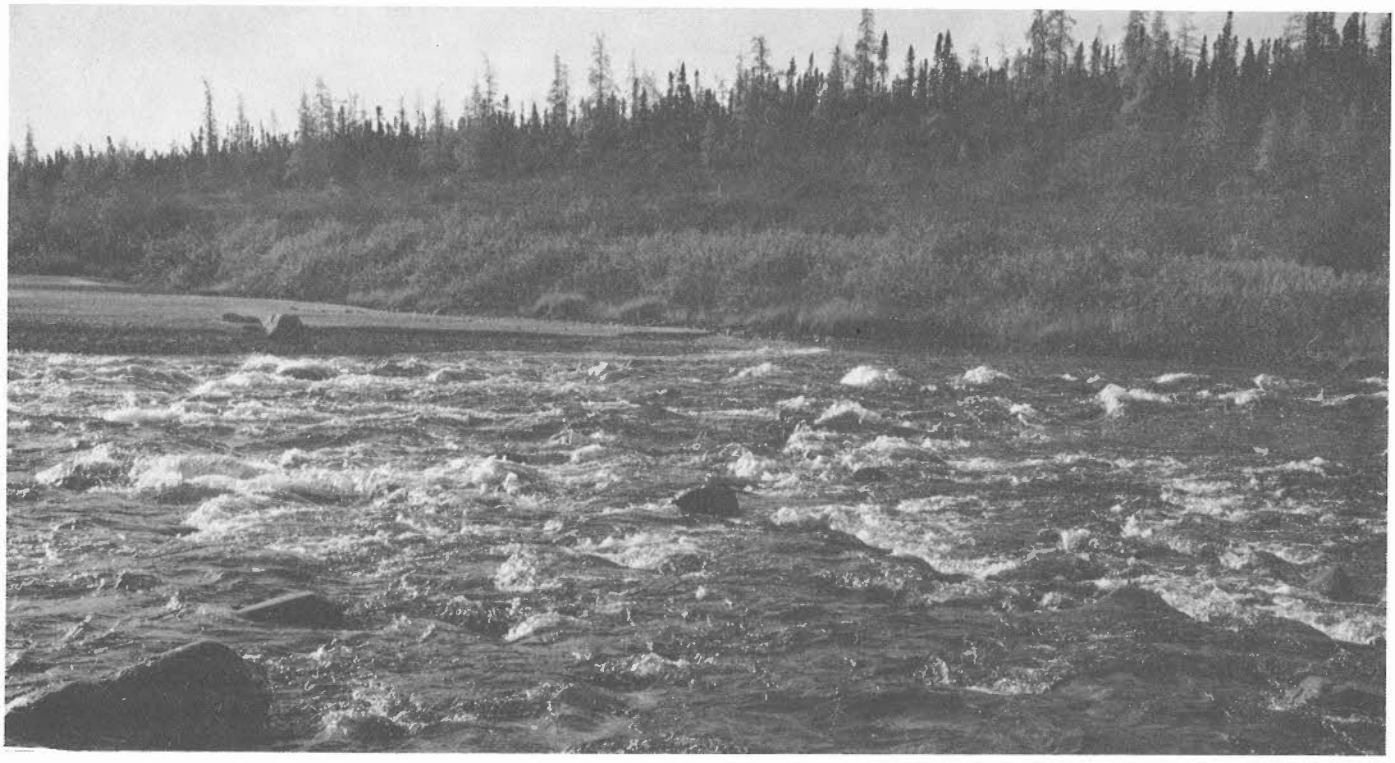
We found a sheltered area on the north side of the river. It was a small valley that had been created from water drainage on the tundra. The tundra floor was about eight metres above the river. The valley was blanketed with moss about 30 centimetres thick and dotted with small spruce. We put up a sleeping tarp and stowed our gear underneath it as night fell. The temperature was beginning to dive and the wind quit. We climbed up to the tundra plain and rolled up in our blankets. It was going to be a bright, clear night and we were ready for the Northern Lights.

This area is famous for its spectacular display. Further north, in the town of Churchill, is a rocket range that at one time launched sounding rockets to study the Northern Lights. That night, ribbons of light, blue, green, and white stretched and swirled across the sky in a show so vibrant it seemed alive with sound as well as sight.

We were up early Sunday morning. It was a crisp 7 C. Breakfast consisted of oatmeal, bannock, honey, peanut butter, and coffee. We were going to hike overland to the Dog River, about five kilometres due west, to explore some of the surrounding tundra.

Because the terrain is so flat, without distinguishing landmarks, we were concerned that on the return trip we might miss our camp. The tundra had many ponds and lakes across it so travelling in a straight line was impossible. Lacking any distinguishable landmarks, a compass bearing would be of little value. Phil hung a florescent game bag high in a tree near the river by camp so we could spot it (hopefully) on the return trip.

Hiking across proved to be somewhat challenging. Finding passageways around ponds was not always easy. Sinking to your knees in muck, boots filling with cold water, and then getting stuck, soon wore me out. The actual distance to the river was probably more like six or eight kilometres. We found signs of caribou, antlers, and skulls from previous years, but didn't see any animals. I suspect they had not migrated this far south yet.



Deer River

The Dog River was in fact a much smaller river than we thought, but the area looked like prime ptarmigan cover. We went south along the river. Heading back across the tundra toward camp wasn't easy. We couldn't see the florescent orange and I was getting anxious. We were sure of the general direction, but weren't certain how far north or south of the camp we were. In this barren land, it's hard to explain the eerie feeling you get being away from the relative safety that the base camp provides. Well, after glassing the far horizon, Phil spotted the orange and we trooped back to camp.

Back in camp, Phil tried his luck at fishing again but struck out. We made dinner, cleaned up, and prepared to move to a new area for night camp.

We paddled several kilometres downstream just short of a nice set of rapids. We climbed the steep banks of the river on the east side. From the top of the bank we could see the tundra plain to the east. It stretched for kilometres with only a few dwarf spruce in view. The night promised to be really cold. The sky was crystal clear and the temperature was already zero degrees. We watched another spectacular red sunset. As I rolled in my blankets, Kelly mooched up beside me, circled her typical three times, and sat right on top of me. I guess she knew it would be cold too.

The cold woke us up early the next morning. Kelly had been shivering for the last hour, but a fire and breakfast soon had us thawed out. It was a great morning. The frost laid heavy on the brush. The air smelled crisp and clear and a light fog hugged the water. The only sound was that of water rippling at the rapids several hundred metres away. As the red sun broke over the horizon, the hustle and bustle of the corporate world seemed light-years away and I was truly at peace. I can understand why the voyageurs of old loved this land. They were truly free; free of chains of civilization; responsible for only themselves. For a brief time, Phil and I could experience that freedom.

We had already scouted the set of rapids near camp and shot through them easily. For the next 18 kilometres we encountered rapids about every 400 metres. Most didn't have to be scouted but a few were more challenging.

As the Deer River widened, the rapids and rock gardens were getting more difficult. Our confidence in running rapids was getting high. We had successfully manoeuvred through them, ferrying across the river missing rocks with the classic skill you would see on adventure films. We could pick the correct shoot, slide through, and barely take on any water.

The last set of rapids looked pretty easy. We got out to scout and choose our path--no problem! We climbed back in the canoe. Kelly didn't look too confident. She was right. Halfway through the shoot, a BFR (Big Frigging Rock) jumped up, grabbed our hull, and turned us sideways, but fortunately we didn't tip. Truly a humbling experience. One that served to remind me that we are not in control of our destiny. By the time my knees quit shaking, we came to the delta of the Deer River that flows into the Churchill River.

Off in the distance, we could see something on the shore of a big island but couldn't make out what it was. As we paddled closer, it turned out to be an airboat just like the ones used in the Everglades. I thought we must have made a wrong turn somewhere back south. As we closed in on the camp a local couple hailed us. They served us coffee and we talked about the local fish and goose hunting. Apparently the Churchill River used to be much deeper but much of the water was diverted south to a hydro-electric project on the Nelson River. The grayling fishing died off once the water level was lowered. The low water level turned the Churchill into a shallow rock garden for the next sixty kilometres.

True to Northern hospitality, the couple offered us a place to sleep for the night but Phil and I decided to push on. They told us of places to camp along the river and even offered the use of their truck once we got to the town of Churchill.

Churchill River

Back in the canoe, we put more than eight kilometres behind us until we found camp. The Churchill at this point was about eight hundred metres wide and very shallow but swift. We averaged eight km/h without too much effort.

The river was alive with wildlife. Thousands of geese lined the shores- Snows, Blues, and Canadas. Seals sunbathed on the rocks. Snipe combed the shallow pools searching for insects. We could have easily made the rest of the trip in one day because of the swift current, yet Phil and I spent three more days exploring the river.

As we canoed within about 16 kilometres of the town of

Churchill, we could see the large grain silos in the distance. It only took a couple of hours before we pulled our canoe on shore in town and stowed it. After a shower and hot meal we rented a truck and began to explore the town and its surroundings.

Churchill's main employer is the grain mill located in the harbor. Grain from the prairie provinces is shipped by rail from the south. Churchill's tourist industry seems to be thriving. Tourists come to see the Beluga whales in the summer and polar bears in the fall. There is also a bird sanctuary nearby attracting bird lovers from all over. The other focal point of the town is the hospital which provides medical care for the people of the eastern part of the Northwest Territories.

We spent several days in Churchill and its surrounding area. We even saw a polar bear. It had been a good trip. We had done things and been places some people only dream of. The fun wasn't over, there was still the train ride south! There was time to reflect on the past 10 days and time to plan the next Great Escape.

Hudson Bay

A MODEST MEMBERSHIP PROPOSAL

I read Bill Ness's outgoing Chairman's Letter in the Winter 1990 *Nastawgan* with some degree of sadness, but I am afraid with not much surprise. In that letter Bill outlines the sorry state of the club, and concludes that "unless we all get off our behinds now ... the club has no future." The problems Bill describes all involve lack of participation, in meetings, committees, and trips.

He states that: "We want your active participation; not just your twenty-five bucks." Since Bill wrote this as Chairman, I assume the "we" refers to the Board of Directors. Well, I have a simple proposal for the Board that I think will accomplish this end. (It comes from reading about the Roofrack Yacht Club – a sea kayaking club in Massachusetts – where failure to join in a certain number of club trips gets you dropped from membership.)

I propose that the WCA institute a new regulation that *requires participation in at least one club trip or meeting, service on a committee, or contribution to the newsletter, in the course of a year*, in addition to the annual membership fee, *as a condition of membership renewal.*

Such a regulation is within the power of the Board of Directors to implement. The by-laws state: "Membership ... shall be open to individuals and family units who support the aims ... and who agree to abide by the provisions of the by-laws and *rules and regulations the Board of Directors may from time to time designate.*" (By-law 28) Further: "The membership shall consist of such individuals and family units *as are admitted by the Board of Directors.*" (By-law 27)

The result of such a participation regulation would be either a dramatic increase in participation in the club, or a dramatic decrease in the membership. Most likely it would be a bit of both. Either way the relative level of participation in the WCA would increase.

There are, certainly, details to be worked out; such as exactly what will be considered participation, the number of activities, the time frame in which the participation must take place, etc. I would suggest that the minimal participation outlined above would be sufficient, and that the inclusion of service on committees and contribution to the newsletter makes it possible for any members no matter where he or she may live, to participate in the club. There will also be the mechanics of renewal to work out; I would propose a simple renewal form asking members to outline their participation over the past year. Finally, there would be a need to keep records of participation, but surely that would not be too onerous. All of these are technical details that I would leave to the Board to consider.

If the club *really* wants our participation not just our money, as Bill claimed, then I would urge the Board of Directors to adopt a participation requirement as a condition of membership renewal.

Sandy Richardson

CONSERVATION

SILVICULTURAL SYSTEMS

Judy Sewell

"When out canoeing in this neck of the woods, how can I know what kind of forestry work has been done along the river?" That was Richard Culpeper, from the Wilderness Canoe Association, telephoning from Sudbury. Richard thought I'd be a good person to ask, since I'm a forester working for the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR).

The best way for any canoeist to find out what's going on is to visit the MNR district office that administers the area your canoe route runs through. Bring your maps with you. The local foresters can use their maps to show you exactly what has been done along your route. They can also tell you when the work was done, so you'll be able to see what an area looks like several years after it's been clearcut and planted, or perhaps a few years after a shelterwood harvest has been done. If you're taking a longer trip, your route might run through several districts. In this case, make a few telephone calls to see which office would be best to visit. If a visit isn't possible, perhaps you can find out enough over the telephone.

Understanding a few forestry concepts will help you get more out of your chat with a forester.

When planning to harvest a stand or group of trees, managers consider both biological and economic factors. Building roads and trucking wood to mills are the most expensive parts of a forestry operation, so they're a big factor in deciding where trees will be cut. Many people, both inside and outside MNR, are involved in the "where" decision. The way a stand is managed is determined primarily by the forester. Forests are managed according to silvicultural systems. A "silvicultural system" is the way a forest is harvested, replaced, and tended.

The choice of silvicultural system is based mainly on tree characteristics such as shade tolerance, ability to reproduce from seed or vegetatively, growth rate, windfirmness, susceptibility to insect and disease damage, and competitive ability.

THE CLEARCUT SYSTEM

The **clearcut system** is the most widely used in Ontario. It consists of a single harvest in which all, or nearly all, of the trees are cut in one operation.

Clearcuts are best suited to trees that are intolerant of shade and require a lot of overhead light for reproduction, such as poplar, red pine, and jack pine, and to species which require special measures such as intensive seedbed preparation and planting in order to regenerate, like black spruce or boreal mixedwood stands on competitive sites.

There are several variations of the clearcut system.

In **clearcuts with seed trees**, some trees are left as a seed source. This method works only with windfirm species on sites that will remain competition-free during a relatively long regeneration period.

A **clearcut with group seed trees** has seed trees left in groups to accommodate non-windfirm species such as black spruce growing on sphagnum moss.

The **clearcut with standards** method leaves some immature trees standing after the harvest. This system is used primarily with the windfirm species hard maple, in stands that contain a lot of defective trees. Stands must have enough young trees growing to re-stock the area cut along with some immature trees of good form, health, and vigour to be left as standards.

Strip clearcuts are laid out in strips at least 40 metres wide. The uncut strips act as a seed source and provide site protection until the cut strips have regenerated adequately. Strips normally are laid out perpendicular to the prevailing wind for optimum seed dispersal.

This method, like the clearcut with group seed trees, is used in black spruce stands where there is a sphagnum seedbed suitable for natural black spruce regeneration. It is also used in black spruce on other site conditions within "areas of concern," such as lakeshores or highway corridors.

Strip clearcuts are not used where clearcuts or clearcuts with seed trees are viable alternatives. Strip clearcuts are more expensive and can result in high losses to blowdown.

Block clearcuts are laid out in squares or rectangles with corresponding "leave" blocks between the cut blocks. The leave blocks are harvested after the cut blocks have regenerated. Block clearcuts are used to improve wildlife habitat, or to reduce the visual impact of harvesting along waterways and highways. **Clearcuts in other configurations** are also used for these reasons.

THE SHELTERWOOD SYSTEM

In the **shelterwood system** only part of the mature stand is removed during the first harvest. Space is made for younger trees to grow and the remaining mature trees provide seed and cover while the younger trees get established. The remaining mature trees are then cut.

The shelterwood system is best suited to trees that are at least intermediate in shade tolerance and that need some protection during establishment.

In a **uniform shelterwood**, harvest and removal operations occur uniformly across the stand. This system is used mainly in stands of white pine and/or red pine, hard maple and/or yellow birch, and hemlock.

The **strip shelterwood system** is the same as the strip clearcut system, except that the strips are less than 40 metres wide. This provides more shade for the young crop. It is used

primarily in yellow birch or yellow birch/hard maple stands where yellow birch regeneration is desired.

Large mature stands are necessary for strip clearcuts and strip shelterwood cuts to be operationally and biologically feasible. They can't be done on rugged, broken terrain or in small stands.

In the **selection system**, trees are harvested as they mature and replaced with younger ones. Harvesting and thinning of some trees provides growing space for the remaining trees and increased light for seedlings on the forest floor.

The selection system is used only in shade-tolerant, windfirm stands that are all-aged and that have a variety of tree sizes. These conditions are found mainly in hard maple stands in southern Ontario.

To find out which of these systems you might see on your next canoe trip, give us a call.

ALGONQUIN PARK

The new revised Master Plan for the Park is now waiting for the approval of the Minister of Natural Resources, Bud Wildman. What is in the plan will not be made public until it has the Minister's signature on it.

The Wildlands League, the local chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, are asking, with reference to Algonquin Park: "Will 1993 be a birthday celebration or a goodbye to an old friend?" Some of the concerns raised by the League are:

1. Continued logging in much of the Park (75%) which, if continued, will drastically affect the whole ecosystem, changing a mixed forest into one of predominantly softwood (balsam, hemlock, spruce).

2. Logging roads. Logging in Algonquin Park will require 190 km of new and reconstructed roads to be built between now and 1995. Those of us who explore the Park during the winter on snowshoes are amazed at the number of logging roads we encounter, and the amount of damage done to the forest ground cover by the machinery used to haul the selected trees out to the roadways. Even foresters with the Algonquin Forestry Authority admit they do not keep a record of all the minor roads in the Park. To find minor roads and their offshoots would require close study of aerial photographs.

3. Development and resource extraction in the areas surrounding the Park, especially on the east and west sides. (If you have been to the Park recently, no doubt you will have noticed those luxury condominiums on Highway 60.)

4. User concentration. Park policies which encourage heavy concentration of users in the Development Zone along Highway 60 and in the western Wilderness Zones, away from interaction with logging operations. For example, the development of many new campsites on lakes adjacent to Highway 60 where you drive right to the lake and a short paddle gets you to a campsite. This overcrowding could cause garbage problems and rapid deterioration of those campsites and the forest ecology around those lakes.

5. Hunting. The hottest and most controversial issue of the moment. Algonquin Park is part of a large land claim being made by the Golden Lake First Nation, and they (the Nation) claim that they have a constitutional right to hunt and fish for their own use only within the borders of the land claim. The Ministry of Natural Resources, fearful of what this might do to Park attendance, are currently negotiating with the First Nation to resolve the problem which will likely be: 1) a limited kill decided annually; 2) hunting only during the months of October through January (winter campers beware).

Conclusion. The greatest threat to Algonquin Park is not hunting but logging. Although logging in the Park is on a selective basis as against clear cutting, the amount of logging is still greater than the natural regeneration of the forest.

TEMAGAMI

All is quiet on the Temagami front. There are three timber cutting licenses still valid but because of the depressed lumber market no cutting is currently being done. Selby township and part of Sladen township have been added to the four townships already under the jurisdiction of the Stewardship Council. The Stewardship Council is comprised of an equal number of representatives from the Ministry of Natural Resources and from the Teme-Augama Indian Band.

During the coming summer the Temagami Wilderness Society will continue building hiking trails into the region.

Jim Greenacre

AMABLE DU FOND RIVER Paddlers have had portage access problems at a new small hydro dam on the Amable du Fond River. If you encounter any problems, please take names and contact the Conservation Committee.

SMALL HYDRO DAMS Approximately four hundred small hydro dams are to be built in Ontario. They do not usually require environmental assessments. Paddling groups are seldom notified of proposed dams, and do not have the resources to oppose them. Currently, the Ministry of the Environment is preparing guidelines for small hydro class environmental assessments. You must write the Minister of the Environment now if you want your views taken into consideration in the planning process. Don't wait until it is too late! The Honourable Ruth Grier, Minister of the Environment, 135 St. Clair West, Toronto, Ontario, M4V 1P5.

MAGNETAWAN RIVER Paddlers have had portage access problems on the Magnetawan River at the outlet of Ahmic Lake. If you encounter any problems, please take names and contact the Conservation Committee.

SOUTH RIVER Several small hydro dams have been constructed on the South River near Highway 11. There are problems with clear-cutting, erosion, siltation, impoundment, and filling-in of the natural waterway. There appears to be a transformer leak. There were no signs, flags, or barricades upstream of the dams or water intakes. One dam had extremely dangerous holes.

MISSINAIBI RIVER According to the MNR's Gordon Cosens Timber Management Plan, "The existing camp 95 bridges crossing the Missinaibi and Brunswick rivers in Abbott Township will be retained." Custom saw mill in Hearst will use the bridges to log on the Kapuskasing side of the river. New bridges will not be developed. No mention was made of private, illegal roads built in to Brunswick Lake and the need for them to be closed. Desk-type bureaucrats who have not travelled the river developed the management plan. Therefore, short-term logging demands win over long-term conservation and park development. As a canoeing river, there has not been enough canoeing input into the decisions affecting the river.

AUX SABLES RIVER We are requesting an Environmental Assessment. We have been refused permission to look at the environmental studies done for the Aux Sables dams. The MNR had Electrogen hire a company to do these studies, so they are considered property of Electrogen. Fourteen dams have been proposed by various companies. Five sites have been approved. One dam has been built. The MNR is avoiding the Environmental Assessment process by considering the developments on an ad hoc basis, rather than looking at all the developments as a whole. Thanks to those of you who already have or will write letters to the Minister of the Environment and Minister of Natural Resources.

Richard Culpeper

FORT KENTE

"Ye neck of land where Kente stands" Sir William Johnson, 1775.

Near Carrying Place, a small town 160 kilometres east of Toronto, on the Bay of Quinte, the Kente Portage Heritage Conservation Society (KPHCS) is co-ordinating the reconstruction of Fort Kente.

The 6 x 6 metre wooden stockade was originally built by the Provincial Dragoons under the direction of Captain Coleman in 1813 to protect the Military Express which passed through on this very important nexus, the Portage. The Carrying Place Portage enabled early voyageurs to paddle the more sheltered Bay of Quinte and then portage into Weller's Bay and continue on past what we noiw know as Presqu'ile Provincial Park. This meant that they did not have to paddle out and around Prince Edward County which would have increased the distance and the chances of difficult paddling due to the weather.

In the war of 1812, it was necessary to keep the links open between Kingston and York. Fort kente accomplished this.

It is estimated that the Fort disappeared sometime between 1840 and 1845. The KPHCS located the original site near the south end of the Portage. Actually, this Portage is the oldest road still being used in Ontario. The volunteer work crew will be using nineteenth century building techniques as much as possible to assemble the 104 logs that will comprise the Fort.

The KPHCS hope that Fort Kente will be finished for the third annual Kente Portage Festival on 19-21 July 1991. Some of the festival activities will be: canoe races (marathon, voyageur, and recreational) on 20 July; historical military regiments; authentic camps; black powder brigades; voyageurs; settlers; Loyalists; and arts and crafts. The KPHCS is seeking volunteers to help with canoe demonstrations on 20 July. If you would like more information or can help, please contact: Kente Portage Heritage Conservation Society, RR2, Carrying Place, Ont. K0K 1L0.

WCAers attending our Fall Meeting at Presqu'ile Provincial Park on 13-15 September will be hearing Edythe and Paul Germain, founders of the KPHCS, talking about historical Fort Kente which may be visited during our weekend.

Please join us for our Fall Meeting. Consult the enclosed flyer for more data.

Glenn Spence

POSTER COMPETITION

The Sportsmen's Show Committee encourages members of the WCA to submit photographs for a competition to select a big, conspicuous enlargement to decorate our booth at the annual Sportsmen' Show. There is only one category: *what does the WCA mean to you?* All formats and images are acceptable, but the negatives or slides have to be sharp and with good colors because it is the intention to have the winning photograph enlarged to 24 x 36 in. No limit on number of entries. The judges' decision is final. Send your entries to: Mike Jones, 1105 – 50 Elm Drive East, Mississauga, Ontario L5A 3X2; phone (416) 270-3256. Or give them personally to Mike at the Fall Meeting which will be held in Presque'isle Provincial Park from 13-15 September.

WAKAMI RIVER

What river? Where? We could see it on a map but any canoeist I asked had never heard of it. This was the route our Venturer Company had chosen for their summer 1990 canoe trip. There had to be a reason why no one had ever heard of the Wakami River. However, a phone call by Ross to the Superintendent of the park assured him that there were portages around all rapids and falls. After many more queries, the Venturers finally convinced me that there would be enough water in the river to float the canoes and that the river was safe enough for their skill, or lack of.

We left Aurora in the rain on Monday, 13 August, and then travelled northwest via Parry Sound and Sudbury. From Highway 144 we drove across a dusty, rocky logging road (the rain had stopped) to Wakami River Provincial Park near Sultan, Ontario. After much discussion about where we were to camp, we set up. One of the Park employees very kindly led Ernie and I (in our respective cars) to our take-out point at Big Bear Lodge, near Highway 101 between Chapleau and Timmins.

Wakami Lake was calm early Tuesday morn, but by the time we were ready to embark – closer to noon – there were wind and waves; but hey, the sun was shining. We were ten people in five canoes. The lake flowed into the river, which was narrow and scenic at this point. Our lunch stop was at a railway bridge, where the sun decided to call it quits. There was rain off and on for the rest of the day.

The conditions of the portages made it obvious this was not a well-used route. We camped at the end of a one-kilometre portage. To avoid portaging, some tried lining the rapids, meeting a few rocks in the process, which resulted in two leaky canoes. There were buckets with bear bait hanging on some of the trees. A few of us were tempted to remove the bait but the rest of the group convinced us this would be futile.

After the fog lifted Wednesday morning, the day was bright and sunny. On Ridout Lake there were other humans in motorboats and float planes. Evidently this was a good fishing area, only no one in our group caught anything. We camped with just enough daylight left for swimming, fishing, supper, trying to patch the leaking canoes, and finding the right log to put under my broken bow seat. Then it was off to the tents for euchre and reading.

The sunny weather continued on Thursday and the river remained pleasant with not much sign of wildlife. We had a disagreement over campsites. We passed up a quiet, spacious site for one which existed solely on the map. We ended up crowding onto a tiny site on one of the portages just as it was starting to get dark. I made my own site at the end of the portage.

Friday – sunny again! Lunch stop was a sandy beach with trees and a couple of blood suckers. The river was changing, it was wider now. We lost it in a marsh of wild rice and swamp grass. Often the other canoes were out of sight. As there was no channel through, we had to make our own. Our campsite that night was one of the nicest of the whole trip. We even arrived with enough time to swim, dive off the rocks and wash (phew). A couple of us swam across the river and back before supper, which was followed by euchre around a campfire in the rain.

Saturday while I was in my tent, packing, I heard a loud splash followed by strange laughter. Evidently Ross had camped too close to the cliff and walked the wrong way around the tent to visit the bush. His tent partner was grateful the early morning swimmer had not grabbed the tent as he fell.

There was no more rain for the rest of the trip. Lunch break was at an old mining exploration camp. We were now on the Woman River. After running an easy rapid we were beckoned vigorously to pull out. Beyond was the tallest, fastest falls of the trip. We hadn't heard them due to the commotion of the easy rapid. Later in the day we left that river system via a creek and portage to Horwood Lake. We camped at the end of the portage at dusk.

Sunday we were on the water early to try and get across the lake before the wind picked up. The first part of the lake was calm but when we reached the open part, the wind had picked up considerably, two-foot waves and gosh darn cold. I sure was glad that I wasn't paddling solo. One of the canoes was now leaking so much (18 holes) that one person paddled while the other bailed. We hoped one of the motorboats passing us would offer us a tow. None did. We rested at a nice campsite which unfortunately wasn't marked on the map. Back on the water, it was more wind and waves. The take-out point seemed to get further away, but finally we were there about mid-afternoon. Then it was on to Wawa for supper, then Agawa Bay on Lake Superior before returning home.

I would suggest to anyone considering this trip to take a couple of days longer, especially two days just to cross Horwood Lake.

Gail Vickars, with help from the 3rd Aurora Venturers.

TRAVELLING THE KAZAN

Anne B. Spragins-Harmuth

The Kazan River of the Northwest Territories has an appeal that calls to many a wilderness canoeist these days. "Its character is the most varied of any arctic river I have seen. Every day brings new landforms ... The river itself changes from wild white water to lazy current ... you sense the ethereal presence of past inhabitants," writes canoeist and free-lance writer David Pelly in James Raffan's *Wild Waters* (1986, p. 77). Flowing through the Barren Lands, the Kazan is steeped in history. It shares with other rivers of the region that special, difficult-to-define wonder, that is the Barrens.

My husband and I decided to explore the Kazan in the summer of 1989. We travelled in our usual fashion: we two alone in an open canoe. Our trip took a total of 40 days on the water, beginning with a charter flight from Lynn Lake, Manitoba, to Kasba Lake in the Northwest Territories, and ending at Baker Lake settlement, on the northwest shore of Baker Lake. The following are excerpts from my journal, kept for my own memories, but shared here with the notion that there may be others, like ourselves, who would appreciate a bit of information about the lay of the land, the rapids, and the feelings of a fellow traveller along the Kazan.

Monday, 3 July. We have landed at the southeast end of Kasba Lake, approximately 200 kilometres north of Lynn Lake, on a rocky beach of little beauty. Our plane deposited us and gear this afternoon, then skimmed across the water, rising to the sky, the pilot dipping his wings in farewell. We watched him leave and experienced that eerie sense of loneliness and anticipation known to all who have travelled the rivers of the north. Ahead of us, 925 kilometres of river and lake to the Inuit village of Baker Lake — in between, only ourselves — no one else lives here but the ghosts of the past.

Tuesday, 4 July. Windbound. There is no moving today. Last night brought a cold, chilling rain just as we had set up the tent on the only high spot in a bog on this rocky lakeshore. Setting up camp we fell into our usual routine as though our last long canoe trip in the north had not been three years ago, but yesterday. The canoe is tied to our two heavy rubber food bags and lined up with the prevailing wind. Our kitchen duffel bag, containing a week's food and cooking gear, is stowed in the tent with our sleeping bags and air mattresses. All else is tucked under the canoe.

We carry food for 50 days, which at a pound and a half (680 g) per person per day is 150 pounds (68 kg) of food; it's the heaviest part of our load but one that will diminish over time. All is packed in anticipation of those hellish portages around heavy rapids. Food is double-packed in plastic, then in individually labeled cotton bags, prepared for the inevitable wetting from rain or spray.

Every wilderness canoeist has his or her own idea about the "right and proper" way to travel, the food to carry, the pace to maintain. There are pros and cons of travelling in a group versus travelling alone in one canoe, as we do. Alone we move faster, experience the wilderness without the intrusion of the "civilizing" group, but we miss the social sharing of the night-time campfire and the safety factor of the group. Each to his own. The wilderness has room for all of us in our own ways.

Wednesday, 5 July. A beautiful day for lake paddling and we managed to push this canoe a good 33 kilometres. Not bad for the first day of paddling given our ages: my husband Henning 60, and me 52. Now all we need is one more good day and we leave this huge open lake for the more protected waters of the Kazan River, our waterway to the north.

Distance today 33 km; to date 33 km

Thursday, 6 July. Camped on a sand beach at the entrance to the Kazan, we are almost off this 100-kilometre-long expanse of water called Kasba Lake. As we paddle we dip our cups into the icy water for a refreshing drink, note the remaining snow banks along the way, and follow the flight of an arctic tern, a gull, a flock of ducks or a loon. The world is silent around us. The sun glimmers through the shallow water as we approach a shore, touching the rocks below.

The scourge of the north joined us today: the black flies. For two days we had peace—too cold for the flies. Even the mosquitoes were lethargic. Today's sun turned the world into a buzzing fury. On the water with a slight wind we were free from the varmints, but once we landed we were under heavy attack. Our mosquito nets came down over our hats quickly, my bug jacket, impregnated with mosquito repellant, was on in a flash, and the routine of setting up camp was underway, bugs or no. Now we sit in heavenly bliss, the mosquito-protected opening of our tent facing a mirror-still lake. Clothed against the bugs, we can hike along the beautiful esker where we have camped.

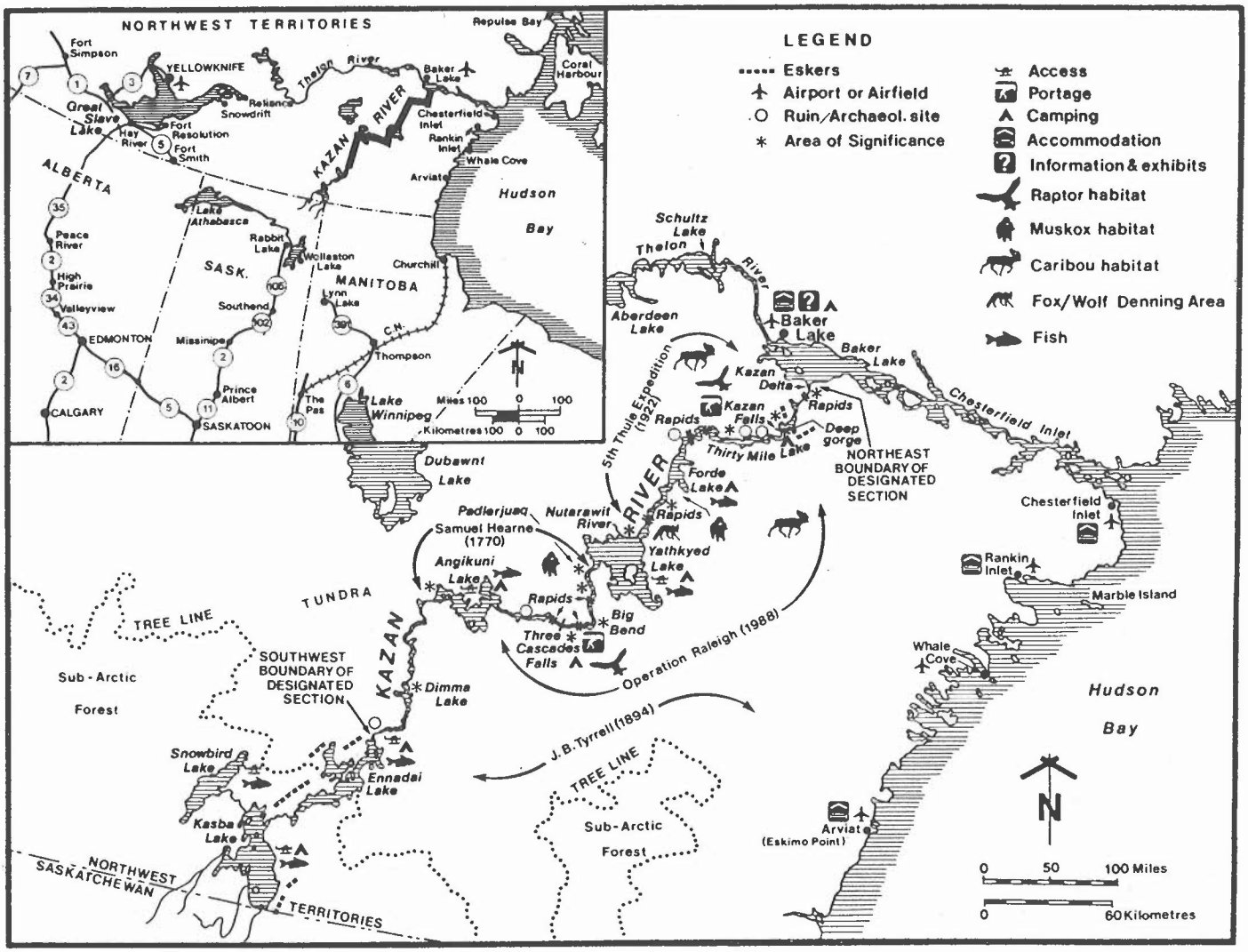
Tomorrow, if the weather holds, we begin our travels on the Kazan, called "Inuit Ku" (the River of Men) by the inland Inuit of the Barrens.

Distance today 34 km; to date 67 km

Friday, 7 July. Finally, the Kazan. At its beginning, flowing out of Kasba Lake, it is a small winding river flowing through stands of trees. We are south of the tree line now; in two days we should be on the tundra. From here on we expect rapids. All rapids that we judge to be class four or higher (given the water conditions of this particular year), we will designate using the military grid of the 1:250,000 topographic map. Maybe these notes will help some kindred spirits who follow us.

(Editor's Note : the military grid system is described by Henning Harmuth in *Nastawgan*, Winter 1985. It identifies a position to the nearest kilometre. For example, the RCMP detachment at Baker Lake is at grid reference PG4436, indicating map square PG, 44 kilometres east and 36 kilometres north from the southwest corner of the square.)

In its exit from Kasba Lake, about five kilometres down-



Map from Canadian Heritage Rivers System

river, the Kazan creates an exit rapid (FT5718). The imperceptible signs of current leaving Kasba grew to a heavy haystack rapid, which we ran on the right before pulling over to the left, to a well-defined portage trail around the major part of the exit rapid. Henning saw the portage trail immediately, and out he hopped to scout the rapid. Given the water level, our spirits, and the fact that we are a single canoe, we decided to walk around this one.

Out came the back packs and, loaded like mules, we began the mindless toil of a walk over a marshy tree-strewn path. Early in the trip, our bodies not yet hardened and our load heavy with food, this portage of 250 metres hurt. Following this, the river roamed through the trees and swamps looking for an outlet, twisting and turning on itself. Each bend brought a stretch of fast-water rapids as the water funnelled through narrow passes.

The banks teemed with birds, ducks, and geese jealously guarding their newly-hatched young. A shrike dived and swore at us in her high-pitched wail as we almost ran down her tiny offspring paddling away like a ball of fluff with legs. Geese, unable to fly as they hatch their young and moult, scampered over the banks to hide, and little sandpiper young tried to lose themselves in the shore rocks. How much more alive is a river than the huge lake. Grasses wave underwater between the rocks and sand as we skim along at a swift pace, carried by the current that finally aids our paddle-weary arms.

Distance today 35 km; to date 102 km

Saturday, 8 July. Twisting and turning with the current and searching for the true course of the river — today was a navigational challenge. With our set of 1:250,000 maps we plotted the meandering course of the river in our usual fashion. Henning keeps the map, well-encased in plastic, in the stern and I have the compass around my neck in the bow. As bays, inlets, and lakes try to lure us into a wrong turn, we check map, compass, appearance of the land, the look of the water, and "instinct" to find the sometimes elusive turnings. The compass declination at this point is 16 degrees easterly. Throughout this trip the declination will change and must be calculated as we change maps and areas of the country.

Approaching the final turn before the entrance rapid to Ennadai Lake that was marked on our map, we ran on the left a high-wave rapid at a sharp left-hand turn (LC4528). Shortly after comes the entrance rapid that we also ran on

the left — again with high waves. Now for about three days we leave the current as the Kazan widens into Ennadai Lake and we slog along in lake paddling. This river-lake-river pattern is typical of Barren Land waterways as we know from previous trips. The unknown is the type of rapids entering and leaving the lakes and at the river bends.

From what we have seen yesterday and today, high waves with rocks rather than boulder-strewn fields are characteristic of the river. We will see if this pattern continues as the terrain changes. Kasba Lake is at 367 metres and our end point, Baker Lake, is about sea level. Kazan Falls, close to the end of the trip, accounts for only 30 metres of the drop we must take. The rest of the drop we will gradually eat away — or be eaten by it, if we are not careful.

Along our route today were two lovely white swans gliding peacefully. The river banks were covered in places with flowers of pink and the snowy-white arctic cotton, looking like white, fluffy buttons. It is difficult to believe that the ice has been out of these waters only two weeks. Summer flowers must bloom fast before winter's death in all too short a season.

We, like other canoeists, use as a guide J.B. Tyrrell's description of his 1894 trip on the Kazan exploring for the Geological Survey of Canada. The river he saw was peopled with encampments of "Eskimo"; our river is peopled with their ghosts. They are all gone now — dead or moved to villages on the sea.

Distance today 33 km; to date 135 km

Sunday, 9 July. Windbound. The wind hurls against our 30-year-old Klepper canvas tent. We huddle inside wrapped in sweaters and down clothing, reading and talking. Maybe tomorrow we can move.

Monday, 10 July. Today we could move. As we paddled along, the view began to change. We left the trees behind and moved into the tundra. Scraggly patches of jack pine and spruce remain in clumps, hugging together like forlorn outcasts as the tundra dominates the landscape. We moved out of the territory that was Indian and into the plains that were inland Inuit. Neither can claim them now. They have all left. The land returns to its own. They left hardly a dent.

The weather could not have been more perfect, and perfection we needed to safely cover large expanses of open water and bays. The air was cool enough to chase away the bugs and the wind low enough to keep down the waves. We travelled up the east coast of this large lake and passed a small cabin on an island. This must be the Dubawnt Sports Club we have read about, owned by a group of Chicago fishermen who fly here to fish this lake.

Last night I woke and went out of the tent at 2:30, just in time to catch the golden-red sunrise. The sky was streaked with beauty, the water still, and our little island bathed in color. Sunset and sunrise are only a few hours apart with a dim twilight in-between in the summer world of the north country.

Distance today 35 km; to date 170 km

Tuesday, 11 July. Beating into the wind this morning, I thought today was heading for the horrors; just the reverse happened. Around noon the wind died and we slogged along on this huge lake hoping to reach what we thought was the abandoned radio station near the northeast end of Ennadai Lake. As we approached the station, we saw a three-wheeler moving along the ridge, and two fellows heading toward the beach. Walter Ballentyne and his crew from Environment Canada Weather Service were at the usually unmanned station to do some once-a-year repair and rebuilding. They invited us in for coffee, which lead to cocktails and to dinner — fresh food — and topped off with Drambuie. Fantastic.

We learned that the radio station — a pile of boarded-up red and white buildings — had been sold to a fellow in Manitoba who planned to start a fishing camp but has not. The weather station is higher up on the esker and every hour sends out weather information, which is picked up by a satellite, beamed to an island in Virginia, and back to Ottawa: the US and Canada sharing weather information. The station is solar-powered with a battery (buried in the ground to keep the temperature constant) for winter assist. It is serviced once and sometimes twice a year. The Environment crew are now building a tight new shelter to use for servicing equipment and to live in when necessary. Maybe the grizzly who has been prowling through here every year destroying the old buildings will be foiled by the new arrangement.

Distance today 25 km; to date, 195 km

(crossed 61° N latitude)

Wednesday, 12 July. As we paddled out of Ennadai Lake this morning we passed the contraptions used for monitoring the water flow. Shortly after, we met the first stage of the exit rapid and ran it easily. As the river took several more turns, the rapid continued until it finally made a sharp right-hand turn and huge boulders had to be dodged. From this point on the river moved swiftly through monotonous low country, churning at every turning but never reaching full rapid stage. Here the river seems to be running through sedimentary rock, sand, and muskeg; carving itself a deep channel, dropping boulders along the way, but not throwing them up as the major barriers we have faced on other Barren Land rivers. Maybe the rock barriers are yet to come.

Distance today 40 km; to date 235 km

Thursday, 13 July. Decent campsites are difficult to locate on this meandering section of the river. Shores are low with reed and willow or rock. Eskers dot the area, but their beaches are willow and marsh rather than sand. When the ground does rise a little above waterline it is boulder-covered. Signs of the granite of the Canadian Shield are beginning to emerge. The sedimentary rock we have been seeing was mostly pushed over the Shield by advancing glaciers, so geologists have told us.

As the river meanders it cuts many different paths through gravel, sand, and boulder heaps, before dumping into widened areas we call lakes. Our morning paddle was peaceful as we watched numerous pairs of swans and their young glide through the water. Afternoon brought another opportunity to torture muscles, as we portaged on the left around a rapid too heavy to run (MD1617). The portage was approximately 250 metres, footing was not bad, and it would have been a nice spot for camping.

But our camp tonight is further along the way, in a spot containing remains of an old Inuit camp. We have seen piles of old caribou bones which we know are typical of the Inuit living sites. On a small hill close by, overlooking the water, we found an area paved with these bones. Though dwarf willow bushes and lichen threatened to envelop the site, signs of Inuit camp life peeked through the growth: a few pieces of metal trade goods, the top of a can, a hammer head with a broken but carefully carved handle, a large anchor. Most poignant of all was a small circle of fur that must have been a bracelet or the cuff of a child's deerskin coat, and in one place the carefully-piled stones with wooden pole at the end that mark an Inuit grave.

Standing on the small hill we looked out over emptiness: muskeg, plains, low willow bush at water's edge, kilometres and kilometres of river, a lake in the distance — desolation. Peopled with the ghosts of those that have been and are no more.

Distance today 37 km; to date 272 km

Friday, 14 July. Unseasonably warm, fair weather continues longer than we have ever experienced in the Barrens. We paddle madly to make use of it, knowing the storms, rain and cold will come. We could use a rest day, but we dare not stop while the weather is fine. We are well into a routine now: waking at 7:00, getting on the water by 8:30 for a seven-hour paddle broken only by a brief lunch and pit stop. When we were younger, the pace was different. Our present routine works well for us now.

The south end of Dimma Lake today was a sight to behold: lichen-covered eskers with sand beaches and peninsulas jutting invitingly out into the water. As we progressed up the east shore of Dimma and on to the no-name lake to its north, the beauty vanished. There were nothing but low, swampy willow shores with rocky slag barriers to landing.

As the end of our seven hours of paddling approached we looked forlornly at our surroundings and thought nature had played an ugly trick — no place to set up our little home. On we paddled, until finally we spotted a rounded little island covered in lichen with shores free enough of rock for canoe landing. The only problem was a mad screaming attack by the resident arctic tern population. We did not see their young or their eggs but knew they must be nearby, judging from the ferocity of the attack.

As we explored the island later we found the tern's eggs — big eggs the size of a duck or chicken — laid right in the lichen with no nest or covering. No wonder the poor birds screech and dive at us every time we leave the tent. One egg is only three metres away. As we lie inside we can hear the terns clucking over their egg, then quieting as they judge the danger is past.

Distance today 35 km; to date 307 km

Saturday, 15 July. In the night a heavy south wind rattled the tent and the water around our little island, forcing us to delay our start until late in the morning. Our afternoon paddle of four hours was unbelievably hot. The wind stopped completely and the world was a silent hot haze. The low willow banks made a narrow green line on the horizon dividing still water from hazy blue sky. We passed from no-name lake to stretches of river again and again, with the current speeding us like an express train at every river section. Rocks whizzed beneath us as we shot over the boiling fast-water rapids at each lake outlet. As the river

continued to run wide and deep in places the rapids were still friendly. Will they continue so until we reach the Three Cascades?

Distance today 28 km; to date 335 km

Sunday, 16 July. Our placid river turned rugged today without warning, and caused us a bit of anxiety and no little effort. We began the day in a continuation of the unseasonable heat, no wind, and bugs buzzing us like bombers. Lake paddling was like pulling through syrup, but river current was pleasant and easy to handle, until suddenly we saw dancing whitewater ahead in a narrow spot where rocks came down to the water's edge on both sides of the river.

Henning stood in the stern of the canoe in his surveyor's stance, but could not see what was creating the boiling whitewater on both sides of the river. There was no choice but to go to the side and scout. Now the decision: for which side should we head? We chose the left, a bad mistake as it turned out. The side to head for is the right, from where one can scout. This hard-to-read rapid was created by a rock island in the centre of the river with rock jutting out from the left bank (MD1390). On the right side big boulders stood like sentinels in the water. There was a path between the boulders, if one ran it right. If one did not run it right? Well, one makes decisions and moves. We chose to run and we made it.

Distance today 35 km; to date 370 km (crossed 62°N latitude)

Monday, 17 July. A week of searing heat — a new experience in our arctic travels. We pushed on, paddling our seven hours a day to use the good weather, but the heat eats at our spirits and energy. It is too hot to relax in our tent, but roaming our camp area accompanied by a cloud of bugs in the no-wind conditions is worse. The lake shores are mostly granite slag rock, low willow bush, or some combination of both. The less willow, the fewer bugs.

Today's home is sloping granite for a beach and a lichen-covered hill for the tent. We cooled our hot bodies in a pocket of water on a granite shelf, washed our sweat-soaked clothes, and laid them and ourselves to dry on the rocks. Without wind we were under heavy bug attack even though our campsite was completely exposed. For dinner we ate as many bugs as bites of food, but it was cooler on the exposed granite shelf than it would have been in the inferno of the tent.

Huge Angikuni Lake looks like a spider with a thousand legs when one sees it sprawled on a topographic maps. A thousand islands, bays, and inlets are scattered about in a way that makes navigation a challenge. We have to go strictly by compass: head for a point in the featureless landscape, then take another compass reading. There is a narrow channel between the north and south sections of the lake. As we hit it right on the mark we were gratified to see a pointing stone standing at an unnatural angle on top of a naturally placed stone.

The eye becomes accustomed to the natural lie of the land, rock, and hills. Anything that does not fit the natural setting is immediately detected as the hand of man. Whether some Inuit long ago marked the channel or some recent canoeist set the stone message of cheer, we will never know. We do know that this particular lake was at one time the centre of the inland Inuit camps. Hundreds of people lived here. It may well have been one of their hands that marked this important channel.

The heat and haze over the lake today produced an eerie sense of gliding on liquid glass. No breath of wind rippled the water. Islands appeared out of the haze then merged into nothing. A few desolate clouds hung suspended in the sky only to be reflected in the mirror surface of the water and thrown back up again. No sound but the rhythmic dip of the paddle and the occasional splash of a fish rising to snatch the bugs that hang over the water's surface.

How long will this heat last? Do we dare hope for a break in this weather pattern? Will nature slash us with chilling winds and storms if we beg for relief? We will not tempt our fates but live one day at a time and hope for fair weather tomorrow to get off Angikuni Lake.

Distance today 30 km; to date 400 km

Tuesday, 18 July. A torturous day of heat, but Angikuni Lake is finished, done, behind us. This lake became such a terror to us in only two days, with its inhospitable shores, the difficulty of navigating through islands and jutting land masses, and the unbearable heat. As the windless day progressed, the bugs circled and dived at us even in the canoe. We looked out at the desolate, featureless shores made more depressing by the grey haze of the day, a haze seen through headnets kept lowered around our faces all day. Bugs clung to the nets close to our eyes, crawling in front of our faces, trying to creep in around the hat brim.

As the heat mounted, our headnets became torture chambers, like working in an oven. Sweat rolled down our chins, our necks, soaked our clothes. Nothing moved but us and the mosquitoes and flies; no birds, nothing. We pushed on, determined to reach the outlet to the Kazan, and we did. This is the only sand beach seen on the lake (ME6807). We quickly set up camp, stripped, and buried ourselves in the cold water. Heaven, even though it meant a hellish dash through the bugs to the safety of the tent when we had had enough of the cold water. We dare not stop now. Our experience tells us bad days will come of their own and force a stop. When will that be?

Distance today 20 km; to date 420 km

Wednesday, 19 July. The weather changed with a vengeance — a sneaky vengeance. Last night the north wind blew enough to chase the bugs away, cool the air, and whip the water to its usual icy cold. We slept an extra few hours to recuperate and started down the river at noon in a gentle breeze. The sky was black. It enveloped us in a huge black shroud with a clear light archway open only in the direction we planned to go. Thunder roared behind us. We figured we could make some distance with the current and maybe we could outrun the mounting storm. We did not.

As we approached a turbulent rapid where the lake water made its final hurl into the river, the sky darkened, the clear archway overhead closed, the water merged with the sky in a dark mass, and seething waves a metre high surrounded us. Reading the water was difficult in the half light, but the highest wave point was clear enough. Henning tried to ride the eddy line to keep us clear of the highest waves but missed it by a hair and we were swirled into the eddy. We fought our way uphill in the eddy, saying a prayer of thanks that it had not flipped us, then fought on as the wind increased and the rains came.

On and on the rapid continued as the river swirled, fighting the wind and tossing us about like a thimble. Rain pelted us, the north wind blew in our faces forcing its will on our direction, and the river washed us on down its channel. We knew we had to get to shore and camp, but where? The shore was a swamp. We spotted a potential landing point on the north shore and fought the wind for landing privileges. The battle was gruelling, wet, cold, and a near defeat, but we won.

Now, three hours after starting out, we are cozily ensconced in a tent which we fought the wind to erect, have our wet parkas drying in that same wind, and are clothed in our sweaters once more. The rain has gone, thunder and lightning have disappeared, sun is out, but the wind stays with us.

Distance today 8 km; to date 428 km

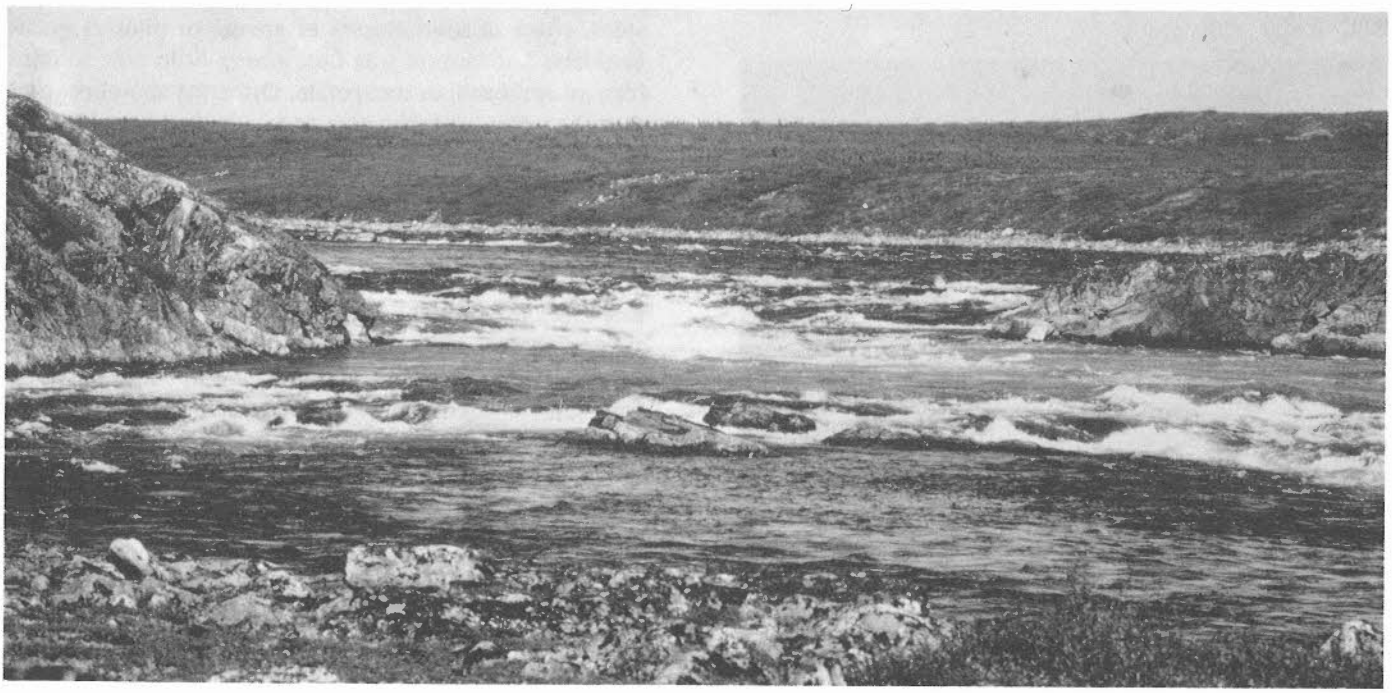
Thursday, Friday, 20 and 21 July. Two days later, still wind- and rain-bound. This land of extremes has us totally at its mercy. We sit wrapped in down clothing and down sleeping bags in our tiny canvas home. First driving rain and wind, then misty fog assaulted us. We, who two days ago were bathed in sweat and sinking into the coolness of the water for relief, now barely can stand to put our fingers in the icy liquid when we wash dishes or brush our teeth.

To look out of the tent door is to court instant depression. Our camp is on a low mossy apron extending to the water. The river rushes by with a constant gurgle and the misty fog sits on its surface reaching forever into a grey, dismal world. A few desolate seagulls hug the shore, shining as white splotches in the mist. Little swamp sparrows chirp in the willow bush behind our camp. The world around us is not dead as Angikuni Lake was dead, but it is enveloped in a grey pall that drives one to the warmth of the sleeping bag for comfort.

Saturday, 22 July. We woke early this morning and peeked out of the tent in nervous anticipation. There was no wind flapping our tent and the mosquitoes were beginning to hum. Maybe we could move today. The world outside was dense fog, but a glimmer in the east showed the sun trying hard to break through. After an hour the fog was burned off; we ripped through our morning routine and sped 40 kilometres down the river on an express ride in only five hours. What a current, and only gentle rapids along the way. Will the weather hold?

Distance today 40 km; to date 468 km

Sunday, Monday, 23 and 24 July. Of course the weather did not hold, and here we are battered by a ferocious wind that has been blowing at this same violent pace for over 24 hours. Where does it get such prolonged energy? I cannot measure the speed of the wind, but it is hard to stand or walk in it, and our tent is being assaulted worse than on any previous trip. Fortunately, Henning strengthened our A-frame tent, now becoming an antique, by adding a metal

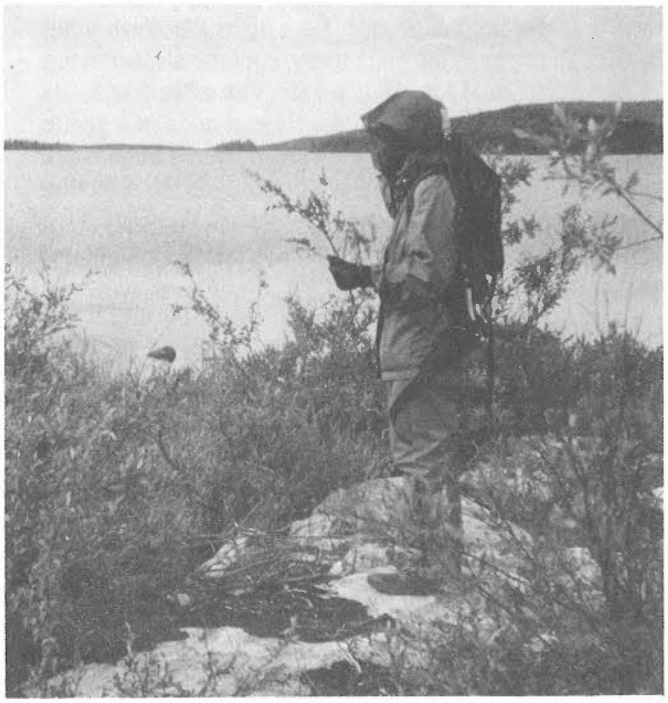


ridge pole. He also devised ingenious ways to tie the fly to tent pegs at strategic points, and added elastic loops at all these points. The resulting flexibility allows our fly to move with the wind without snapping, and still protects the tent from the onslaught of rain. Standing up to arctic winds is a major test for any tent.

Tuesday, 25 July. Gentle winds, blue sky, and we were on the move early, heading down the river to the famous Cascades. About a kilometre from the first one we heard its roar thundering down the channel. Soon we could see the spray rising cloud-like in the air over a deceptively smooth pool. The current hurried us forward, pulling us toward the thunder. We dug in our paddles and moved quickly across the current toward the right shore and a small bay of quiet water (NE1303). Pulling our canoe ashore just three metres from the edge of the stupendous fall we gazed down the drop — this was a bit more than we expected from the Cascades. Our take-out point was where the portage began, as close to the falls as possible.

We portaged about 250 metres around the first cascade, then ran very close to shore on the right side down-river to the second cascade, and again pulled out just above the fall (NE1502). This time the portage was no easy few metres, but a 1.6-kilometre trudge over bog, dwarf willow, some rock, and a few dry lichen patches — a horrendous walk that required a compass reading to guide us. The terrain was so bad that we were almost as exhausted from the non-carrying return trip as we were when we trudged with heavy packs on our backs. The Inuit must have portaged here years ago, but boggy ground leaves no traces. My soggy footprints will fade away just as theirs have all those years ago.

Henning usually has the job of hoisting the canoe on his shoulders for the portage. On this portage we got a bit creative: Henning took a rope around his body and tied it to the canoe. I had a shorter rope around me tied to the same point on the bow. In this manner we moved over the bog and willow like two oxen plowing a field, the red canoe plough bouncing happily behind us as we exhausted ourselves in the haul.



In spite of the drudgery of portaging we took time to notice the beauty of these powerful falls. Each has its special shape and sound, its own way of funnelling the swirling water. The falls are formed by the river's attempt to run over the granite. Everywhere we see great hulks of pre-Cambrian rock. The Cascades are part of a granite gorge that steps its way through the land in these three mighty drops. As we lie here at a beautiful campsite below the falls, comfortable in our tent, we hear the roar of the third cascade. How few people will ever see its beauty — only those willing to work like mules for the privilege.

Distance today 10 km; to date 478 km

Wednesday, 26 July. The river has kept the character and the power it developed at the Three Cascades and threw us from rapid to rapid today. Rock predominated on the sides, either in solid masses of granite or piles of granite boulders. The current was fast, giving little time to think, plan an approach, or recuperate. Often the shoreline, more than the water, gave the clue as to whether the whitewater ahead was a ledge, a huge boulder, or a standing wave caused by a drop.

This gave us little chance to relax and no sense of safety. One error in reading the rapid, one rock in the wrong place, and we are done. There was a point today when I thought we might be. We spotted a particularly harrowing landscape as we approached one rapid: a boulder wall thrown up by the ice on the left, the wide river seething in white foam, and solid granite outcroppings on the right. We managed to find a small area of quiet water next to the left shore and whipped into it, avoiding the eddy. Henning climbed the rock wall to scout. I stayed with the canoe as it was too close to the current to leave alone.

Henning returned looking worried. We had little choice but to run (NE3703). Our course had to be out into the middle of the waves and white foam to get around a ledge from the left, then a quick pull to the left and through an area of very

high waves finally leading to quiet water below. All went as planned except the waves were even higher than they appeared from shore. There was no way we could bob like a cork over them. At each rise we rode the crest then slammed into the trough with water pouring into our canoe each time. I felt the canoe become unstable as it slowly filled with water.

We were in the middle of the wide, angry river. I tried to bail some of the water rising in the bow but Henning said calmly, "Keep paddling, I'll bail from the back, we'll be through it in 20 seconds." We were, with a badly listing canoe filled with water. Henning bailed, I paddled and steered from the bow, and we managed to limp to a rocky island. There we wrung out our wet socks and jeans and poured the water from our knee-high boots. Seeing all our well-wrapped gear was still dry, we had a nice lunch, and proceeded to run fast water for the rest of the day, but nothing so treacherous.

We did not come to the north to run rapids — that can be done in more safety in civilization. It is no challenge to take life in hand or risk losing our canoe far from any help, when we can have all the river challenge we want close to home. The lure of the far north for us has more to do with the wide expanses, the aloneness, the complete separation from all we experience in "civilized" life, the challenge of living in nature for a prolonged period with only a few possessions, and making those possessions serve the purpose, whatever hazard nature hurls at us. It is not running rapids.

The river has grown powerful, but offers few appealing campsites. Huge rock walls have been ploughed up by the pressure of the ice breakup in a number of places. Low swampy banks alternate with the rock walls for a 20-kilometre stretch. A few dwarf willows still survive and small patches of straggly trees manage to hang on along the shores. It is entirely different from the Dubawnt River which is only 100 to 200 kilometres west of here running a similar course.

Distance today 32 km; to date 510 km

Thursday, 27 July. The Kazan grows in its power, grinding its way through the pre-Cambrian rock or hurling itself over the great masses it cannot cut through. We started our day with fast water that later grew to a manageable rapid. Two hours into our day we faced another thundering roar and saw mounds of granite seemingly across the river. A scouting trip defined the roar (NE3921). A rock island divided the river causing a channel of high standing waves on the right and a boulder-choked path on the left, leaving a possible path to run carefully. If we had other canoes with us for protection in a mishap, we might have run. We chose to portage the left for about 250 metres over a bluff, carefully ran another 250 metres, then portaged over the final 200 metres of rock to a lovely sand beach below. Hard work, time consuming.

On the water again, we encountered an increasingly heavy north wind. Two more rapids were marked on the map before Yathkyed Lake and we wanted those behind us. We plowed on, running the next rapid with little difficulty, then faced the roar of the final one. Again we scouted and beheld a lovely rapid stretching across the river — one we might run in Washington but not here alone (NE3827). In honour of Henning's 61st birthday today, we set up camp with a view of the rapid, a sand beach with protecting granite walls for the canoe, and an afternoon to rest and enjoy.

Distance today 20 km; to date 530 km

Friday, 28 July. A peaceful, calm river-run this morning carried us into Yathkyed Lake with excellent paddling conditions. No wind to fight, only the bugs to endure. Since this lake is large and open we need good weather to cross it.

Distance today 40 km; to date 570 km

Saturday, 29 July. Looking out over this ocean-lake, one sees only water on the horizon as far as the eye can see. Yesterday the lake was like glass and we knew something would change. The only question was how soon and how violently. As August approaches in this country, the north winds increase, as does the possibility of major storms. We planned to get up this morning at 5:00 to grab the potentially calmest part of the day. So much for sneaking through nature. As we left our campsite at 6:15 the wind began and continued to rise as the sun rose higher and higher. We fought our way from one island to another, then to the north mainland, then bowed in defeat to the wind two hours later. We can move no further.

Sandhill cranes prance on the hill behind us giving their characteristic squawk. The land is finally tundra as I remember it: hillocks covered in a variety of lichens, no willow bush, no trees, only outcroppings of rock, kilometres and kilometres of rolling land — quiet, unbroken, extending forever.

Distance today 10 km; to date 580 km

Sunday, 30 July. Rain in the night brought a dismal grey-white fog enveloping our tiny world and filling the vast spaces around us. We debated. How strong is the wind? How high are the waves? Do we dare tackle the last two large open crossings on this large lake? We dared.

Figuring the wind had decreased since yesterday and was holding a steady northerly pace, we headed into the fog. Compass reading was our guide as our land goal was lost in the nothingness of the fog. Henning steered by the wave pattern, staying just to the left of the wave crest, as I checked the compass periodically. At times our destination loomed out of the fog for a brief minute, then sank into the abyss.

Waves lashed us, rolling across the huge lake gathering power as they travelled. We pulled on our paddles, balanced our bodies on our constantly shifting seats, and hit our land target right on.

The fog closed around us but we made the next target, and then the next. Then, with the major open stretches of water behind us, we looked for a campsite around 13:45, satisfied with our day. A little gravel beach looked promising. Upon landing we saw that years and years ago this same spot had looked promising to the Inuit. Our tent is nestled in the middle of a 2.4-metre-diameter tent ring. Judging from the lichen on the rocks, I would guess this was an old Inuit ring. There are four or five other rings of similar size close by. I found only a few shattered caribou bones and no artifacts on the site, only the cold rock reminder that some Inuit family or hunters once slept where I sleep now. They were probably wrapped in deer skin. I am wrapped in down as the misty rain has become a steady downpour. I am safe, warm, and comfortable. I wonder, were they?

Distance today 25 km; to date 605 km

Monday, 31 July. Last night the rain poured, clearing the eerie fog. With a bright blue sky and sun we headed out in good spirits this morning. But by the time we had fought our way around the peninsula leading to the Kazan, battling huge surfers' waves, my spirits were beginning to sink. Wind head-on, wind slashing waves from the side, wind hitting us constantly. I would call our battle a draw. We got off Yathkyed Lake and into the wide outlet bay of the Kazan, but the wind forced us to stop early about 14:00, then lashed our tent all afternoon and evening.

Decent campsites have often been difficult to find. The banks have been low, mossy, and swampy more than high and dry. Sand beaches are not plentiful. Although we saw several nice beaches on Yathkyed Lake, by the time we entered the river this afternoon the banks were back to low swamp.

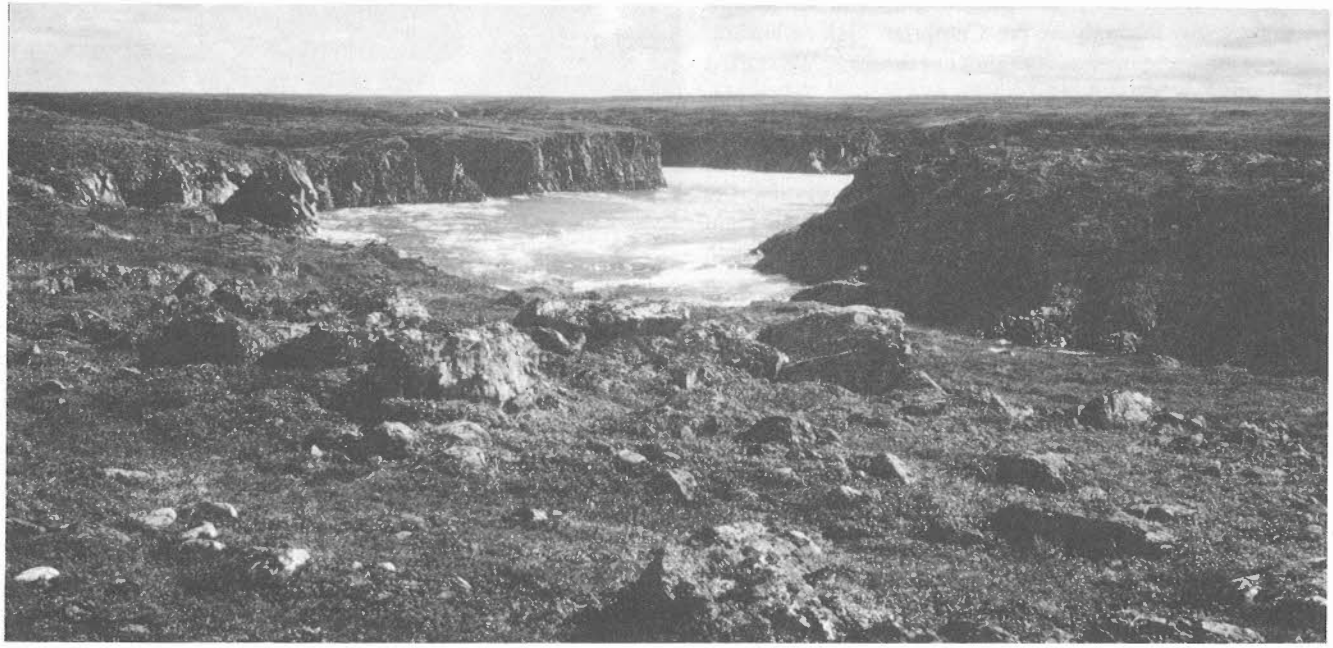
Distance today 30 km; to date 635 km

Tuesday, 1 August. Today threw in a little bit of everything. Since the north wind has been coming up at about 10:30, we planned to get an early start, waking at 5:00 and on the river by 6:30. We thought we had a fairly clear river run ahead. Wrong. We are now on our fifth map of the nine it takes to get to Baker Lake. Each of the maps has a different style in marking, or more usually not marking, rapids. With our new map we blandly paddled along for about eight kilometres until the first roar told us something was amiss. No quiet river this, but a heavy rocky tumbling rapid (NE6983).

We ran part-way down the rapid on the right side, then dashed to shore just above a ledge with a roaring drop. In fifteen minutes we had carried gear and canoe over the rocky shore on a 100-metre portage, and ran the remaining portion of the rapid. About five kilometres further down: same thing. The heralding roar by now familiar, Henning stood in the canoe to survey. Same type of rapid as before but heavier and longer with higher ledge and more rock, including two huge rock islands in the midst of the mess (NE7088). Again we ran the first part on the right, pulled to shore for another 100-metre portage over the ledge on mixed marsh/rock ground, then ran the last long portion of the rapid through high waves, dodging rocky points.

If this was not enough, nature had to get us once more from above. Rain poured as the world around us turned dismal grey. Paddle on we did for an hour, wiping our eye-glasses constantly as we groped along, praying no more unmarked rapids would catch us in such foul weather. The elements relented and blue sky opened up to our right. To improve matters, the river turned to the right as though it wanted to follow the blue. But the river had not finished with us yet. It let us dry out in the sun, paddle along casually in a swift current through high rocky banks, then wham, huge high-wave rapids appeared almost out of nowhere. The deep river channel had caused the water to boil all around us for several kilometres but suddenly the boils became waves that grew higher and higher. We edged through them all without taking in water, thanks to Henning's careful steering, but any one of them could have gotten us.

The final touch to this day was the north wind's arrival



on schedule at 11:00. We fought it as long as possible, then started searching the bleak dismal shores for a campsite. By noon we settled for a fairly dry, low spot nestling more in the waterline than out, but usable.

One bright moment in this day of surprises: we saw two caribou wandering alone, grazing — the first animals we have seen. The herd should be drifting south now. Maybe we will see it as we did three years ago.

Distance today 30 km; to date 665 km

(crossed 63° N altitude)

Wednesday, 2 August. Stillness, no sounds but our own. No wind, no movement of the water, no bugs humming. As far as the eye can see, low green hills leading to higher hills. Vast expanse of nothing. Cold air, clear blue sky, wispy clouds, nothing moves. Shimmering white snow geese on the water today, sparkling up ahead, keeping their distance. Canadian geese beginning to form flocks for their southern departure scampered along the shore at one point.

The morning started with another unmarked rapid heralding itself with noise. We ran it using almost the full width of the river, starting far to the right, then cutting left above white foam signaling rock below, then back right to avoid further turbulence. A long paddle up the west shore of Ford Lake took us finally to this spot of no beauty. We cannot complain as we did pass up sand beaches that came too early for us to quit. The Kazan continues to gather power. It has grown from the meandering stream of its beginning to a mighty river, dropping from the 367 metres of Kasba Lake to 100 metres here at Ford Lake.

Distance today 30 km; to date 695 km

Thursday, 3 August. Glorious day. We left Ford Lake this morning and found a light rapid at its exit as we expected. About three kilometres further down the river we ran another expected rapid, a ledge with a way to run carefully through the centre. Having finished this we looked ahead to a section of river eight kilometres on, which the map showed as a series of rapids. How difficult were they? Would we need to portage? Portaging a series of rapids can be a time-consuming affair.

As we paddled along we suddenly saw a canoe in front of us, then another, and another. Surprise. First people we had seen in 23 days. They were three canoes from a camp in Minnesota, the same camp as that of the boys we met on the Dubawnt River in 1983. We agreed to go together through the rapid section. What a difference it made running rapids with company. Just seeing another canoe up ahead adds a feeling of security. The first marked rapid was a classic ledge, followed by quite messy rock (NF9652). We all portaged an easy 250 metres on the left side. The next three rapids were all runnable and followed fairly closely one after the other.

Having completed the series, we said goodbye to the boys, and stopped to camp on a high, flat sand bank looking out over the river. Walking behind our camp I found an old moss-and-lichen-covered set of tent rings about 3.6 metres in diameter. Inuit long ago thought this was a good spot too.

Distance today 35 km; to date 730 km

Friday, 4 August. The morning's run started with a rapid leading into Thirty Mile Lake. It was marked as fast

water but as it was heralded by noise and dancing whitewater, we knew it was more than that. The current was extremely swift and our only problem was that we did not have quite enough time to manoeuvre out of standing waves beneath a huge boulder, thus taking in a bit of water.

After entering long, narrow, island-covered Thirty Mile Lake we slogged along, sometimes getting current, mostly not, fighting the north wind that started after noon, then quitting for the day at 15:00 in a good position to be off this lake tomorrow — if the weather holds.

Distance today 40 km; to date 770 km

Saturday, 5 August. A long, long paddle as we tread our way through Thirty Mile Lake. It is characterized by huge mounds of granite decking its shores and forming its islands. It looks as though the earth's crust broke through here and allowed trickles of water to run around the upthrust mounds of granite. On some of the rock mounds lichen has done its job and earth has formed supporting green growth; in other areas the rock shines bare and smooth, glistening in the sunlight. The Kazan trickles through this lake area, then tumbles out in a mighty series of rapids (PF4359) to a quiet bay below.

We had two options for our portage around the exit rapid: run right up to the rapid then portage overland as the river turns left, or run into a bay before the peninsula that leads to the rapid and portage into a small lake, paddle the lake, then portage overland to the foot of the rapid. We took the latter. Footing on the first part of the portage was good, but the walk was back-breaking on the second part. Willow bushes about a metre high with tough, grabbing branches grew where there was not a boot-sucking swamp. The final challenge was a steep descent through a high tangle of willow bush to the gravel beach six metres below. What would the other portage have been?

Tomorrow, if the weather holds, we'll repeat this gruelling labor as we face the portage around Kazan Falls, 25 kilometres down river.

Distance today 25 km; to date 795 km

Sunday, 6 August. The north wind moved in. Fortunately, our campsite is terrific with a large expanse of sand and level areas covered by soft grass for the tent. Maybe the rest is good for us. Time to read, think, and let the world go by.

Monday, 7 August. A long day of cold and misery, but we are camped at the mighty Kazan Falls. We woke this morning to the sound of a continuing wind and curled into our sleeping bags in depression. We urgently wanted to get to the Kazan Falls portage, reasoning that if we got there we could use even a usually windbound day for portaging.

A little after 7:00 we realized that the wind was from the west, not north as it had been. Heading east for the falls we could use a west wind at our backs. Out of bed and into our morning routine we dashed. As I cleaned the dishes on the river bank, I looked out and saw paddles flashing in the sunlight. A single canoe, decked over, pulled to shore and out jumped two fellows — Jim Murphy from Fargo, ND, and his partner from La Ronge, Saskatchewan. They had started their trip at Wollaston Lake a day after us. These guys are moving close to 50 kilometres a day. Nice to visit with them, but we will not try to match their pace.

Our first hour of paddling was speedy, with wind at the back and good current. We stopped at a small cabin on the north shore which is used by water resource folk. Excellent conditions in the cabin, neat, clean, equipment well-cared-for, a book for passing canoeists to leave their comments, and all unlocked. After leaving there we ran through one light rapid where the river narrows, folding water in on either side. Then fury suddenly broke loose. The north wind whipped up with a fierce violence turning waves to mountains in front of our eyes. Whitecaps frothed, our canoe rode up on one wave only to plummet with a thud into the waiting trough. Wind snatched at our paddles, current fought wind, creating peaked mountains inside the wave action.

We bent to the paddles, the wind howled, the waves tossed us about seeming to laugh with scorn in our faces, and we were at a standstill. Useless. We went to shore in a little bay with a sand beach and a hill protecting us from the north wind, and waited out the wind. By 13:00 we were back on the water. As the first signs of dancing whitewater, great white spray and noise, appeared, we knew we approached Kazan Falls. Some run the 1.6 kilometre of rapids down to the falls. Not us. We headed for a small bay to the right that started the portage around the falls (UA6168). We loaded up and looked for a trail. All we saw was kilometres of willow marsh and swamp. We headed into the soggy marsh with our heavy loads and trudged on using dead reckoning as our guide.

Finally, as we emerged on a stony high-ground area, we saw the river below, a grassy plain for our tent, and a desolation of rock-strewn landscape everywhere else. We trudged down the hill and dropped our load on a likely camping spot, as Jim Murphy strolled over greeting us with, "That was a fierce wind back there." We all settled in for the evening; they camped over a ridge, not in our view but close.

Distance today 25 km; to date 820 km

Tuesday, 8 August. Windbound. We used the day to explore the falls. The gorge is impressive, lined with banks of granite 15 to 20 metres high through which green foaming water boils, hitting boulders, spewing foam, rolling and thundering. The falls themselves are a three-prong affair of jagged rock with water tumbling through every conceivable crevice. An awesome sight, strangely beautiful. But there in the canyon, for me, the beauty ended.

For some reason the rock area surrounding the falls brought images of a graveyard — Dante's Inferno frozen in hard cold grey/black rock. Desolate blackened boulders were strewn as though thrown in violence millions of years ago before the river cut its great gorge. Solid granite above the falls became slashed, crumbling rock pieces and piles below the falls. Interspersed with the rock, lending some relief to the stark blackness, were patches of green lichen meadows, comfortable grounds for a tent.

The stark scene was relieved only by the screams and cries of the shag-leg hawk and peregrine falcon who nest here and circle and scream at intruders into their territory. The cairn that George Luste's party built some years earlier on the river bank just above the falls shows the hand of man,

but the hand is too small to relieve the sense of bleak desolation and haunting power of the area.

Out on the plains near the falls were bones, antlers, and crisscrossed paths: hoofmarks of caribou making their trek south. We have seen only one or two caribou a day, not the herd, but the Minnesota boys and Jim and his partner have seen large groups of caribou and some muskox.

The wind is driving us all to distraction. Not only are we unable to travel, but it is bringing freezing air straight from the Arctic. Icy cold. We are now in a race against time. Knowing the winds get colder and more ferocious as August advances, we want to be on our way ahead of the arctic blasts.

Wednesday, 9 August. Out of frustration with the wind and a desire to camp closer to our canoe than the rock slag beach of the falls allowed, we moved this morning. We coasted two kilometres in the swift current with island protection from the north wind. When we hit an open area of the river our progress was halted abruptly. North wind slashed us and threw up mounting waves. That was the end of our movement.

Distance today 2 km; to date 822 km

Thursday, 10 August. No gentle trip did we have on this last long stretch — the Kazan would not let us off easily. The powerful river that it has become had its own secrets to share with us this day. Early this morning we left our camp in the open area below Kazan Falls, and turned left into a narrow protected channel where the river ran swiftly. For awhile the wind was a hindrance but the current, running about 10 kilometres an hour, made our progress for us. Following the narrow channel was an open area, beyond that a rapid marked on the map. The rapid proved to be long, with high waves, not easy but runnable with care. The river sped along boiling and bubbling like a thickening pudding. Further along, we faced a second rapid marked with heavy lines on our map (UA7894). We stopped, scouted, and decided to portage. As Henning commented, "Our last rapid on what will probably be our last long wilderness canoe trip. We will play it safe."

We found a fairly easy sneak-through portage. The rapid was caused by a large outcropping of rock on the right shore of the river. The rock was crumbling in huge blocks, as if a giant sculptor had hacked chunks to build a gigantic piece in rust-red tones of rock. Nestled between the crevices, a trickle of water from the river was beginning to carve a path. We carried to this minute river, loaded our canoe, and ran the little stream emerging again into the swift torrent of the main river feeling quite satisfied.

Satisfaction lasted about one kilometre. Then we found that our map showing no more rapids was misleading. In truth, from the marked rapid to the final river delta into Baker Lake, the Kazan was a boiling mass of water that erupted again and again into high wave rapids. A kilometre below the portage the river turned left, and at that point the huge mass of water folded into the centre, creating waves sometimes twice as high as our canoe. Often it folded from two directions at once so that huge mountain peaks of water developed all around us, seeming to engulf the canoe. The rhythm of the waves was such that they could only be approached head-on with the ever-present fear that the next wave would swamp us. We shipped water, but not a terrifying amount. Then on to the next high-wave area, and the next, until the river widened as it sought entrances in a many-fingered delta to huge Baker Lake.

We dodged waves, dodged sand bars, dodged rocks, then Henning said, "There on the left is the little arm of the delta we want to take." Sure enough, current trickled through a narrow canal-like opening through sandbank sides. The mighty Kazan in this small arm was finally dying. The giant became a little meandering stream flowing into Baker Lake — dying as it began, kilometres and kilometres ago in Kasba Lake. Trickling its way into the southern shores of Baker Lake, its mighty waters mingled with the vast lake, flowing on to Hudson Bay, and finally to the Atlantic Ocean.

Distance today 58 km; to date 880 km
(crossed 64° N latitude)

Friday, Saturday, 11 and 12 August. Forty-five kilometres of lake paddling to Baker Lake settlement, people, and a scheduled airplane south. How quickly the Barren Lands become peopled lands, and travelling the Kazan becomes a memory.

Editor's Comment

Although its more than 10,000 words would have made this trip report under 'normal' circumstances far too long for publication in *Nastawgan*, a letter I received in March from its author convinced me that this time an exception should be made.

Not only is the article written in a clear, pleasant, personal style by a woman (a too-rare occurrence in the world of writing about wilderness canoe trips in the far north where male writers dominate the field), but it is also most informative and presents much that is of interest to trippers and armchair travellers alike. Sadly, it is also a report of the last canoe trip these two people will ever make.

In her letter Anne wrote: "Henning has had a bad accident and is paralyzed from the waist down. He was working on the roof of our house and fell and broke his back. He is a fighter and will fight on to be as independent as he can from a wheelchair, but no more rivers for him.

"As we face the limitations on our life from here on, he has said many times how pleased he is that we made that last long trip before this accident happened — he would hate to face never again going on a long river trip if we had not decided ourselves that we needed to slow down. We intended to modify the length of our trips, not stop completely, but life has its own plans sometimes. We have run many a river and the shared memory of each one will be with us forever."

And from another letter I received early June: "Henning is home from the hospital after a three-month stay, and is busily discovering how to live in a wheelchair. Where we used to go to the wilds of northern Canada for adventure, we now find just living is an adventure. Sometimes the simplest tasks take ingenuity from the perspective of a wheelchair. But Henning has never been one to avoid the difficult and I see him being creative in solving life's problems now, as always."

Good luck, Henning and Anne; we're proud of you.

REVIEWS

SEEKERS OF THE HORIZON; Sea Kayaking Voyages From Around the World, Edited by Will Nordby, published by The Globe Pequot Press, 1989.
Reviewed by Sandy Richardson.

Seekers of the Horizon, as its subtitle indicates, is an anthology of tales about sea kayaking voyages from around the world. Editor Will Nordby has selected stories that emphasize, in the words of George Dyson's foreword, "the individual whys rather than the collective hows of modern sea kayaking."

"Adventure, self-discovery [and] a fascination with probing the mysteries of wilderness" are some of the reasons Nordby suggests for people making sea kayak trips. Many others are revealed in the journeys he has selected for this book.

These journeys form a wide-ranging and interesting collection. They range in time from Susan Meredith's reminiscences of paddling native baidarkas in the Aleutian Islands in the 1940s to Greg Blanchette's narrative of his circumnavigation of Hawaii in 1985; and in length from Paul Kaufmann's day trip in San Francisco Bay, through Hannes Lindemann's solo crossing of the Atlantic, to Chris Duff's 8000-mile journey down the east coast of the United States, up the Mississippi River, through the Great Lakes, and back to New York.

The craft used on these voyages range from traditional skin kayaks, through folding boats, a paper canoe, and an inflatable kayak, to modern hard-shell sea kayaks. And the locations span much of the globe: England, Iceland, Baffin Island, Alaska, continental North America, Hawaii, and Cape Horn.

As with any anthology, the quality of writing and the level of interest present in the stories vary. The voyages included, however, are generally well chosen and reveal what Nordby calls, "the questing spirit of man."

Nordby believes that most of us paddle out of a deep-seated desire to explore, and that "by so doing, we hope to understand and appreciate the complexities and mysteries of the world and ourselves." While some of the voyages described in *Seekers of the Horizon*, such as Lindemann's ocean crossing, may be somewhat difficult for the average canoeist (or sea kayaker for that matter) to relate to, they illustrate very clearly that "when that exploration is done from the seat of a kayak some truly unique perspectives result." This is a book that will inspire readers to take boat and paddle and set out on their own voyages of exploration.

INTO THE GREAT SOLITUDE, An Arctic Journey by Robert Perkins, published in Canada by Fitzhenry & Whiteside Ltd., Markham, Ontario, 1991, 219 pages.
Reviewed by Ria Harting.

In 1834 the British Navy Captain George Back was the first European to travel down the Great Fish River in the Northwest Territories, later called the Back River. In 1987 Robert Perkins made a solo canoe trip down the same 1200-km-long river which took him more than two months to accomplish. He wrote a book about his voyage and also produced a film which has been shown to much acclaim in several countries.

Ever since I heard Robert talk at the George Luste / WCA symposiums about his experiences as a solo tripper, I have been looking forward to this book. As some of you may remember, Robert delivered his presentations in a semi-darkened room regardless of whether or not there were slides to admire. If there were a few slides accompanying his presentation, they did not seem to relate to his talk but rather helped to focus on listening to Robert.

While reading *Into the Great Solitude* I almost could hear his voice and remember the feelings I connected with his presentations. Although I have never been on a solo canoe trip, not even a short one, I could very much relate to the seemingly unconnected thoughts and memories which he so artfully recorded. Sentences like ... "I find three treasures on my walk: two bones and a thought." ... or ... "That night, in a flush of mixed feelings, I skim across the top of sleep." ... draw me closer to the writer and the contents of this intriguing and literate book. Much more than just a trip report, Perkins' book gives the reader valuable insight in the author's inner feelings and thoughts and makes us understand not only how he is doing this trip but also why he is here, travelling alone in the northern wilderness.

There are also interesting tidbits for the reader wanting some more factual information about the river, the person for whom it is named, the equipment and food used by Perkins, and other technical subjects. These items appear unobtrusively throughout the text. The book has a few maps showing the trip route, and is illustrated with monoprints and line drawings by the author.

BACKING OUT

In the corner packing when the phone ringing downstairs brings me back. Sometimes already on the trip when I go to the corner. Extending the trip by extending the packing. Can get more out of each trip when the packing takes three weeks and the unpacking takes another three weeks. A solid 2 1/2 months out of one trip. Makes the rest of the year of work and traffic easier to bear.

All wilderness canoeists have a corner, a room, a basement, or a garage for packing. A place to go and put gear and make the check against the list. You do wilderness canoeing and you do have a list. Probably one of your most valuable possessions. When the item is in the corner, it's checked off the list. Family and friends kept out of the corner through words and threat postures. Don't want to be 40 km in and find that your five-year old has walked off with the compass or match container.

Trip getting close. Under two weeks now. Details falling into place. Buddies, food, and travel schedules lined out. Deep feelings of comfort, familiarity, and peace in preparing again. Waves of gratitude for the privilege of going well up from deep inside. Thanks. Thanks very much.

Usually only problem at this point is one of the buddies backing out. Happens too often in too many years. Some just don't have their soul held so tightly by the wilderness. That determination to go in spite of work hassles, car problems, or financial difficulties. They don't need it so bad so they can decide to go or not go with less heartache.

Phone has stopped ringing. Wife at the door of the corner. "It's for you," she said.

Greg Went

MAIN STREET ALGONQUIN PARK

John Hackert

The most travelled section of the park is the route that starts at Canoe Lake at the Portage store 200 meters off Highway 60. The permit policy is in effect so only 125 parties of up to nine persons each can leave for the interior from that site for a maximum number of just 1125 people per day. If you go there in the summer you will have lots of company. The area is of special interest because it is the location of the Tom Thompson cairn.

On a Thanksgiving weekend, Sharon and I tried the Canoe Lake route and were pleasantly surprised. My father had travelled the route in the middle forties in the fall and it had been a highlight for him ever since. Even then there was still a fair amount of traffic in the area and he would always see other parties every day.

We left Toronto on Saturday morning and arrived at 10 a.m. Our route was to paddle north through Canoe Lake, then over a short portage of about 300 meters around a small dam to Joe Lake. There is a rocky creek between the two lakes that is semi-navigable and reduces the portage to 100 meters. My philosophy is to keep portages to a minimum and as short as possible. A strong southwest wind was blowing on our backs, which is very unusual, so we hoisted a sail made out of an orange tarp.

Little Joe Lake was crowded with day-trippers who were staying at Camp Arrohon. 'Camp' is not quite a good description. From the water I saw a huge dining room with picture window and I thought I could smell the gourmet food prepared by the cordon bleu chef. With our sail up we hardly paddled at all until we got to the creek joining Little Joe and Burnt Island lakes. The creek was navigable although the current was fairly strong and parts were rocky. I had to get into the water when the current was too strong. However, the final 200 meters must be portaged.

Burnt Island Lake is a large, beautiful lake and is fairly typical of a large lake in the Canadian Shield. We kept a sail up as the wind was on our backs. As the lake runs east-west, the waves can become quite large and it would be easy to become windbound here. If you are going west it would be wise to cross before 10 a.m. when the wind starts. Our sail in the front stopped the canoe from wallowing sideways in very rough water as the wind was quite strong on our backs. Other canoes without a sail seemed to take in water. Our canoe is a 17 ft Miller with high gunwales so it can handle big water anyway.

The portage between Burnt Island and Little Otterslide is fairly flat and about 700 meters long. From Little Otterslide we took a small creek to Otterslide Lake which is another beautiful, large lake. We camped near the portage to Trout Lake near Otterslide Creek. The site would be quite wet and buggy in the summer but because it is out of the west wind it is ideal in the fall. The next morning we were lucky enough to see a bull moose at the edge of our campsite. Once he realised we were there he ran, but the wind was quite high at the time so he probably could not smell us. As heavy rain was forecast we headed back the next day and again we had the wind on our backs all the way home. Previously I thought that there was a park regulation that the wind always had to blow in one's face. The storm chased us to our car.

The route is popular because the portages are flat, short, and well marked. The lakes are quite scenic and there are lots of campsites. I imagine that during the summer it is terribly crowded and has no feeling of wilderness at all. But in the fall there are fewer people and it is a pleasant weekend trip. Only a committed canoeist will brave the cold nights in the fall. It is an ideal trip for someone who is new to canoe tripping and wants to have a shakedown cruise. The map *Algonquin Provincial Park Canoe Routes* can be purchased at the Portage Store at the access point. Remember, the can and bottle ban is in effect.

VANDALISM ON THE TEMAGAMI RIVER

On 29 June 1990, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources announced that two portages along the Temagami River were vandalized. The Temagami River has been an area of contention between recreational canoeists and local residents, who see canoeists as the source of issues and events costing them their jobs with the timber industry.

Fifty downed trees were found along the portage around Island Falls, effectively obstructing the passage. Approximately 90 trees were felled across a former tote road trail around the next falls: Ragged Chute. Fortunately this tote trail is not the actual portage, so the Ragged Chute portage is intact. The Ministry quickly responded to this incident, and fire crews cleared the portages on 2 July. MNR's North Bay District speculates that this action may have been a retaliation for incidents between interest and user groups in the area.

Over the past two summers, some canoeists have completed the enjoyable run down this river, only to find their vehicles and equipment vandalized, or to be harassed while packing up their equipment.

(From the January 1991 issue of *Canews*, the newsmagazine of the Ontario Recreational Canoeing Association.)

WCA TRIPS

13-14 July **LOWER MADAWASKA RIVER**
Duncan Taylor, (416) 368-9748; book before 6 July.

A singing whitewater trip! Come play in the Snake Rapids and sing around the campfire. Intermediate paddlers with lungs and songs. Limit four canoes.

20-21 July **GULL RIVER, MINDEN**
John and Sharon Hackert, (416) 438-7672; book before 17 July.

Air bags required on this technically challenging stretch of rapids. The runout at the bottom is an ideal spot for novice whitewater paddlers to practise their skills. The rapids above this point are demanding and may have changed since last season. Watch for rocks in unexpected spots. Limit six boats.

27-28 July **SOLO WHITEWATER WORKSHOP**
Bill Ness, Jon Kirby, Steve Lukasko, Mike Jones.
Phone Jon Kirby, (416) 276-1718, or Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005, before 9 p.m.; book immediately.

This weekend clinic on the Gull River near Minden is intended for competent intermediate tandem or solo paddlers who would like to enhance their solo whitewater skills on this fast, interesting, and demanding run. Instruction will take place informally on the river banks with no introductory classroom preparation. Participants must have suitably outfitted ABS canoes, PFD, helmet, and appropriate whitewater attire as spills are likely. Members only, limit six participants.

A WORD OF THANKS

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to those members who generously give of their time and expertise to organize "public" trips for others in the WCA. Over the years these people have given us exposure to new rivers and challenges that we would not have otherwise experienced. In addition, I have been very impressed with the care and attention that the vast majority of volunteers have shown. They return phone calls, keep me informed of the trip's status (changes, times, etc.), share information about the river, and check out skill level against local whitewter conditions.

It would be so easy for an organization like the WCA to degenerate into cliques to the exclusion of others. Whereas, these organizers and their trips keep the club open and accessible to all members. The last *Nastawgan* edition highlights this fact. The journal contains a significant number of trips and quite a range of choices. I hope this trend continues for a long time.

I tip my helmet in appreciation.

Earl Silver

3-4-5 August **ALGONQUIN PARK, RAIN LAKE**
Howard Sayles, (416) 921-5321; book before 26 July.

We will start this trip at access point No. 4. The long weekend will be spent in the Rain Lake area, covering a route to be determined by the participants. Limit three canoes.

17-18 August **MINDEN, GULL RIVER**
Steve Lukasko, (416) 276-8285; book before 10 August.

Minden doesn't get any easier. See previous desciption of this exciting man-made watercourse. Limit six boats.

21 August **RIVER RESCUE PRACTICE**
Hugh Valliant, (416) 699-3464; book after 6 August.

I am looking for a few like-minded individuals who would enjoy learning and practising together the various skills and techniques that are needed to rescue people or equipment from moving water. The setting would be a seminar where we would research, practise, and learn together. Some time would be spent on dry land practice before we try the exercises in or on the water. Perhaps one evening a week spread over several weeks would be needed.

24-25 August **SOUTH MUSKOKA RIVER**
Howard Sayles (416) 921-5321; book before 18 August.

A put-in at Baysville allows us to paddle through scenic country towards Bracebridge. There should be few motor boats until the Bracebridge area. There may be time to travel the North Muskoka River towards Huntsville. There are 11 portages varying in length from 45-800 metres. Limit four canoes.

22 September **MISSISSAGUA RIVER**
Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005; book before 15 September.

During years with normal precipitation the water levels in this area tend to rise at the end of September, sometimes to near spring levels. The abnormally dry summers of the past few years have made this fall trip impossible but with this spring's high rainfall it looks as though we are back in business. Intermediate whitewater warriors will find some interesting playable rapids in the grade one to three range, but novices who don't mind some additional portages are welcome. Limit six boats.

29 September **BURNT RIVER**
Bill Ness, (416) 321-3005; book before 22 September.

This trip from Kinmount to Burnt River is an easy, relaxed-paced paddle with a few short portages. Mainly slow moving water with several small riffles. Make this a family outing. Limit six canoes.

12-13-14 October **KILLARNEY PROVINCIAL PARK**
Howard Sayles, (416) 921-5321; book before 1 October.

Turkey time in the park. Hiking and canoeing in some of Ontario's most scenic country. Limit four canoes.

26-27 October **SOUTH GEORGIAN BAY**
Hugh Valliant, (416) 699-3464; book before 18 September.

This could be the last trip of the year. A flatwater route suitable for novices. The trip will begin north of Six Mile Lake Provincial Park at Spider Lake, then loop out to Georgian Bay before heading back to our cars. Trip participants should be prepared for inclement weather. Limit four canoes.

TRIP ETIQUETTE

I am sure that all trip organizers worry about participants who do not arrive at the rendezvous point. When the missing paddler(s) neither cancel in advance nor phone after the trip to explain, then I become frustrated. The whole group is delayed in starting the trip and a canoe that was on the waiting list could not go.

I sincerely hope that both people are all right who did not show for my last trip. In the future, please phone.

Glenn Spence

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

This PRODUCTS AND SERVICES section is available, free of charge and on a first-come, first-serve basis, to members as well as non-members for their announcements regarding items for sale, special products, discounts, services, courses, etc. Contact the editor if more information is required.

DISCOUNTS ON TRIPPING SUPPLIES WCA members who present a membership card will receive a 10 percent discount on many non-sale times at:

ABC Sports, 552 Yonge Street, Toronto,
Algonquin Outfitters, RR#1, Oxtongue Lake, Dwight, Ontario,
Rockwood Outfitters, 669 Speedvale Ave. West, Guelph, Ontario,
Suntrail Outfitters, 100 Spence Str. (Hwy 70), Hepworth, Ontario.

Members should check at each store to find out what items are discounted.

WANAPITEI WILDERNESS CENTRE Experience northern Canada by canoe. Since 1931, Wanapitei has been running quality canoe trips in the Canadian North. Trips and canoe clinics vary in length from one day to several weeks and there are options for all levels of paddlers from novice to expert. Trips are offered throughout Canada, from Quebec to the NWT. From our base in Temagami, Ontario, we also offer complete outfitting services as well as a unique canoe trip camp for youth ages 9-18. For a free brochure, contact Wanapitei, 393 Water St. #14, Peterborough, Ontario K9H 3L7; phone (705) 745-8314.

WHITE SQUALL Join us in exploring the 30,000 islands of Georgian Bay by sea kayak. We teach carefully and with a smile. Our shop has paddling and trip gear that works, fine folk music, friendly chickens, and the best selection of canoes and kayaks on the Bay. White Squall, RR#1, Nobel, Ontario P0G 1G0; phone (705) 342-5324.

VOYAGEUR CANOE TRIPS Guided, fully outfitted canoe expeditions in a replica of the 36-ft Montreal fur-trading canoe. *Follow the route of the voyageurs!* Three- to ten-day trips from May to October on the French River, Georgian Bay, and the North Shore of Lake Superior. Packages for: individuals, groups, clubs, corporate river retreats, lodge-to-lodge trips, high school educational expeditions, summer camps, and more. For information and brochure contact: Ames Adventures, Jackson Station, P.O. Box 57401, Hamilton, Ontario, L8P 4X2; tel. (416) 387-6240.

FOR SALE Peterborough 16' canoe, beautifully restored with cane seats. Covered in Kevlar, red color. Perfect condition. Best offer. Call Dan Bereskin after 6:00 p.m. at (416) 223-4635.

FOR SALE Sawyer 222 Cruiser canoe, 18 1/2 ft Kevlar, grey, 58 lbs, aluminum gunnels, cane seats, Teal yoke. Two seasons light use around cottage; excellent condition. Price $1450. Call Glen at (416) 622-4061.

FOOD Dehydrated foods for tripping; the following are available year-round: mushrooms, bananas, and tomato-paste leather. Seasonal availability of many others, including tomato slices, green peppers, and various herbs. Perk up those pre-packaged meals or create your own. Price list and detailed information on product use available by writing: Bramblewood Foods, c/o 87 Mill Street N., Newcastle, Ontario, L1B 1H8.

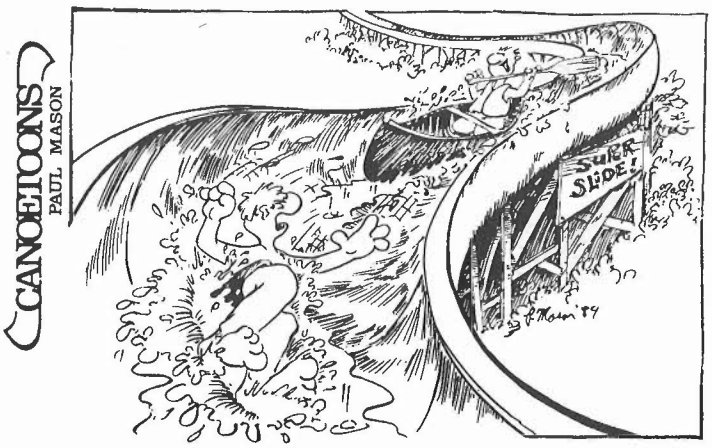
FOR SALE Fully outfitted Mad River Flashback solo whitewater ABS canoe; includes airbags, foam pedestal seat and adjustable foot rests, thigh straps, skid plates. Used two seasons. Asking $950, or best offer. Call Sandy at (416) 323-3603.

KANAWA MAGAZINE Subscribe to the quarterly *Kanawa Magazine* and learn about the world's number one canoeing and kayaking destination: Canada. When you subscribe to *Kanawa Magazine* you're supporting the preservation of Canada's canoeable wilderness in co-operation with the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association. Contact: Kanawa Magazine, c/o CRCA, 1029 Hyde Park Road, Suite 5, Hyde Park Ontario, N0M 9Z9.

FOR SALE Mad River ME canoe, whitewater Royalex, wood trim, Perception saddle. Very good condition; US$770. Contact Dave Buckley at (716) 942-6631.

RAINBOW ADVENTURES Canoe adventurers wanted; no experience necessary. Come share our passion and desire for the great outdoors and wild rivers. We offer custom canoe trips on the Dumoine, Petawawa, and Madawaska rivers. Total or partial outfitting can be arranged. You have total control over the itinerary. Guide and instructional services start at $250 per day, plus expenses. Other trips and clinics are available, including kayaking and rafting on the Ottawa River. For more information contact: Rainbow Adventures, Palmer Rapids, Ontario, K0J 2E0; tel. (613) 758-2244.

CANOE TO TRADE 17' Jensen Tripper, nylon-kevlar. For a smaller kevlar canoe that would make a better compromise for tandem and solo paddling. (I find my Tripper too long and high to solo in winds.) Contact: Peter Attfield, (416) 773-3935 evgs, or (416) 832-2289 days.



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Wilderness Canoe Association membership application

I enclose a cheque for $25 (single) or $35 (family) for membership in the *Wilderness Canoe Association*. I understand that this gives me/us the opportunity to participate in WCA trips and activities, and entitles me/us to receive *Nastawgan* and to vote at meetings of the Association. I also understand that WCA trips may have an element of danger and that the ultimate responsibility for the member's safety is his/her own.

PRINT CLEARLY! Date:_____ ❑ New member Member # if renewal:_____

Name:_____ ❑ Single ❑ Family

Address:_____ Phone Number(s):

_____ (_____)_____(h)

City:_____ Prov._____ (_____)_____(w)

* This membership is valid for one year. Postal Code:_____ Ext._____

* Send completed form and cheque, payable to the WILDERNESS CANOE ASSOCIATION, to the membership secretary at the WCA postal address.