

From Lake Pipmaukin a portage route was followed up a small river emptying into the lake, and then through a number of small lakes westward into the Manouan River, a branch of the Peribonka, which flows into Lake St. John. This river was ascended to a large lake of the same name at its head. But few pleasant days had been experienced since leaving Lake Pipmaukin, and here on Oct. 5th we had our first snowstorm about 5 inches falling, part of which never left the ground. From here the men were sent by a similar portage route to the Peribonka River with half loads, as the small streams would not permit full loads being carried. On their return, fearing to be frozen up before ascending the Peribonka, it was resolved to push on as far as possible before the ice rendered canoe travel impossible, so the Peribonka was reached and ascended, a distance of 30 miles to a small western branch on the route to Mistassini. This branch was followed six miles to a small lake, which was found to be frozen over, and so our canoe voyage ended Oct. 23rd. No one was sorry, for the travelling, owing to the cold stormy weather, was extremely disagreeable; the paddles were often caked with ice, and only by vigorous paddling could a moderate warmth be kept in the body, while the feet were always cold, and several times we were obliged to stop during the day and build fires to restore the circulation in our benumbed hands and feet.

From Oct. 23 to Nov. 29th we remained at this small lake, the men being engaged making snowshoes and long narrow toboggans, on which our provisions and outfit were now to be transported. Here traps were set and hunting indulged in. The traps caught a couple of otters, some mink, and a few martens. Good sport was had shooting muskrats on the ice before the lake froze solid, and a stew of these animals proved very acceptable after our long diet of salt pork. Before winter set in little game had been seen, a few spruce partridges, sheldrakes, fish eating ducks, whistlers and sea gulls only being shot, but everything in the shape of fresh meat went into the pot and was eaten with relish. On Oct. 25th the first ptarmigan were seen, and from that time continued to be killed in moderate numbers.

These birds in the winter pass southward from their breeding grounds in the barren lands some distance north of Mistassini, and feed on the buds of willows growing in the marshes and around the lakes.