

welcome, posed for pictures, and finally took us for a sail about the harbour in an open whale boat. These fellows are very bright and jolly, expert sailors and good hunters. They had just completed the purchase of another season's supply of goods and were preparing to return to Chesterfield Inlet. They invited us to dine but at sight of a huge slab of blubber which constituted their menu we quickly found excuses. On the other point opposite the old fort is to be seen the remains of an old battery and nearby a powder magazine in a fair state of preservation.

The country surrounding Churchill is rough and rocky and almost devoid of forest, only a few small stunted spruce trees being seen. In tramping around we started up a silver fox which scurried off to safer quarters. A number of white whales were observed in the harbour. The Esquimaux hunt these with harpoons or catch them in nets made of cod-line or clothesline. These whales like to wallow and play in shallow water and groups of four or five could often be seen floundering on top of the water. They are desperately afraid of motor boats and Moir described how he catches them by setting nets and driving the whales into them with his motor boat. A number of seals were also seen. These appear very curious. Popping their heads above water they would take long steadfast looks at us and then leisurely disappear.

The harbour at present would probably accommodate four or five large ocean going vessels. With a little dredging out it could be made to serve several more as well as numerous smaller vessels. The ebb and flow of the tide, especially the ebb being augmented by the current of the river, makes a very strong current at the mouth of the harbour. This is one of its drawbacks. However it is not a serious defect and could be easily relieved by blasting out a channel across the point of land about a mile and a half above the old powder magazine. On the right bank of the river there is an excellent location for railway terminals. Indeed the whole situation appears infinitely superior to that found at Nelson.

This then completed the extent of my journeyings for the season. After having visited all points of interest and exhausted our supply of negatives we reluctantly bade farewell to this most interesting spot and turned our faces homeward. The white population here consists only of Moir and his assistant. Esquimaux and Indians make up the rest. At 1.35 on the afternoon of August 30th we steamed out of the harbour with an ebb tide and heading into the bay were soon out of sight of land. A heavy swell was all that remained of the violent storm we had encountered on our upward passage. The weather continued fair though the night was cold. Wrapped in our overcoats we sat out on deck to watch the sunset and save for the wake of our boat and the black streak of smoke no sign of civilization could be seen. Port Nelson was reached without mishap the next day at noon. In summing up the varied attractions I expressed the wish that a polar bear might have exhibited himself. My wish was no sooner expressed than satisfied, two polar bears appearing between the tug, which had anchored in mid-stream, and the dock. One of these was driven ashore and shot. Next day at noon polar bear steak appeared on our menu at the engineer's camp.

On Sunday evening, the first of September, we left Nelson by motor launch and taking advantage of the incoming tide soon reached Seal island where we camped for the night. The next day the launch took us as far as the head of navigation on the Nelson, a distance of some 60 miles above the port. The weather was quite raw and cold and snow flurries continued nearly all day. The launch then turned back. Our Indian canoemen with our baggage proceeded up stream, fighting their way against the heavy rapids that lay between this point and the end of steel. We chose to walk and leaving the river followed a path for some four miles through the bush to intercept the right of way of the Hudson Bay Railway. Walking along this was fairly good and we covered forty-five