

portage around the canyon is on the north shore and winds up over quite a high and rocky hill. Almost immediately above this is "Dead-man's Point" portage on the same side. On this portage some fine specimens of white spruce and birch are to be found. At the upper end is a large sign reading "Stop — Danger — White Mud Rapids."

At noon we crossed the Fourth Meridian, the boundary line between Alberta and Saskatchewan, being the 110th degree of West longitude. The line is well cut out and can be easily observed from a canoe. We had lunch here, in Saskatchewan, and proceeding up stream through a drizzling rain and clouds of mosquitoes arrived at the long portage or Portage La Loche at 5.30. After a hasty cup of tea our guides departed with their canoe bent upon returning to their motor boat that night. Adams and I hastened to pitch our tent and escape from the deluge of rain and mosquitoes.

Two days were spent at this end of the portage and another day in crossing it. After the rain had subsided we hunted up a couple of young Indians who were homesteading in the vicinity and arranged with them to pack our supplies across the twelve-mile portage with their ponies. It was over this trail that for long years the fur trade with the far North was carried on. Here the brigades of the Athabaska were met by the brigades of the east and the arduous toils of the voyagers were made light by the revelries of the yearly reunion. The Clear-water flats at the upper end of this portage are open and grassy and make excellent ranching lands on which the Indians now have a few cattle and ponies. Going south the trail soon begins to rise and for about a mile the ascent is steep and the hillsides are heavily wooded until the height of land is reached. Here the soil becomes sandy and stony. A number of shallow lakes are found and the woods consist of stunted jackpine and birch. This marks the divide between the Mackenzie and Hudson Bay slopes. The southerly end of the portage approaches the shores of La Loche lake through a low swampy flat with occasional patches of dry grassy land. At one time freight teams and wagons operated over this trail and broken down vehicles are to be seen discarded here and there along the route. At present the traveller may have his goods transported by pack pony or ox-team by Indians living on the north west shore of La Loche lake.

We arrived at the south end of the portage at five o'clock on the evening of the 29th of June and found two Indians with a canoe from Ile a la Crosse awaiting us. Quickly shifting our goods from ponies to canoe we struck across the end of the lake and made camp beside the Hudson's Bay Company's post on the west shore. Here we were royally received by that veteran trader Angus McLeod, thirty-six years with "the Company" and still going strong. I was anxious to see his garden as many maps and reports credit this district with remarkable results in vegetation. Accordingly the garden was shown me and while it is true that numerous varieties of vegetables have been successfully grown and even barley has been ripened, such feats appear to be the exception rather than the rule. For instance the Hudson's Bay garden here consists of an uncommonly favoured spot containing about a quarter of an acre of soil comprised of swamp loam and sand washed up from the lake. It lies on a point exposed to the south and well-drained, but it appears to be about the only spot on the lake so favoured. Though this was the 29th of June we were quite content to finish our evening's chat around a rudely constructed fire place of stones and mud in the residence house where a pleasant fire dispelled the chill of evening.

Next day being Sunday and our Indian canoemen being desirous of attending service at the mission adjoining Revillon's post on the east side of the lake, we set out and crossed this body of water in the forenoon. La Loche lake is shallow and sandy, the surrounding country is flat and the whole aspect is dull and cheerless. Arriving at the mission we found that a couple of priests from Lac la Plonge were here conducting a series of services extending over a period of