

The little house is the home of an old lady who had been born in the Mackenzie River country, and, familiar with all the perils of journeyings in this wild land, greets us first with amazement at our escape, then with wrath at our folly, and, last of all, with kindly welcome. She feeds us with the best she has, after which we fall asleep on the grass for an hour, and wake ready once more for battle.

Meantime the old lady's son-in-law has arrived, and undertakes to pilot us in his punt through the marshes to the sand bar, beyond which lies our lake. For an hour or more we follow him, marvelling at his instinct for an open passage, till sure enough he brings us to the bar. We lift the Sylph across and point her for home, which we make as the sun is disappearing behind the tall trees in the west.

We stagger stiffly out of our canoe, hardly believing that we have arrived. We have broken the record, sure enough, and for the next three days it is quite safe for any enemy to vaunt himself over us. Even my iron and steel bound elder, as I afterwards learned, bears with meekness the jeers of one of the youngsters who had done it in sixteen hours.

But as often as I turn upon my bed to ease the hot spot under my steering shoulder a threefold resolve shapes itself in my brain: First, that I shall announce no record till it is made, and, second, that when next I seek the Red River's multitudinous mouth I shall carry with me three days' grub, and, lastly, and chiefly, I shall take my elder with me.