

The Old Crow Wing Trail.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It has fallen to my lot to have seen and traversed, with the exception of part of one, all the summer and winter roads which, many years ago, connected the Red River or Selkirk settlement with the outer world, and they may be enumerated as follows :

1. The old North West Company's route, from the mouth of the Kaministiquia through Shebandowan, Lac des Mille Lacs, the beautiful lakes and streams of the height of land between Superior and Lake Winnipeg to Rainy Lake, the lovely river which drains it into the Lake of the Woods, that lake and the river which bears its waters to Lake Winnipeg, which with its rapids, chutes and falls is, I think, unsurpassed in beauty by any river of Laurentian Canada.

2. The Hudson's Bay York Factory route, too well known to need any description, and of which I have only seen a part.

3. The Breckenridge Flats route, skirting the west bank of the Red River to near where it receives the name at the junction of the Sioux Wood and Ottertail rivers, and crossing the Red River at Georgetown or Abercrombie to traverse to the Ottertail Ford the flats which gave the route its name, and enter the rolling lake-dotted country which lay between it and St. Cloud on the Mississippi, 80 miles above St. Paul.

4. The winter monthly mail carriers' dog train route of the old days, which, crossing the Red River at Fort Pembina, sought for shelter and night encampment the skirting of Minnesota woods at the sources of the eastern affluents of the Red River, as far as Red Lake, crossing which on the ice it traversed many of the small lakes which form the extreme headwaters of the great Mississippi down to Leech Lake, and thence southward, passing through mazes of small lakes and through the hunting-grounds of the "Pillagers," to the junction of the Crow Wing with the Mississippi River, and then