

8-9 GEORGE V, A. 1918

I wanted to get ahead of him in order to see the game. I could just see the tail of his canoe going around the corners. Coming back I told him I thought he was a fool to carry so much dunnage. I thought we would not get the boat. The boat left, I think, about 4 o'clock from Bear Island and I did not think we could possibly make it because some of the trails that were good on the way up, were not good coming back. Some trees had blown down, and that makes quite a difference in packing out. However, he did not heed my advice at all. He just did what he always did, packed everything he could carry in order to make time. When we came to Temagami Lake a big storm came on and there was a very heavy sea with an east wind, and we had to paddle 12 miles, I think it was, and it was a hard paddle, but we made the boat, although we were all wet through, and we packed all our stuff on the boat and did not pay the Hudson Bay Company, and had to send a cheque afterwards to pay for the stuff we had taken in for the camping material. The night before we left, when we got this message I said, "For the Lord's sake you are fifty years of age." I did not see any particular necessity of him going to war, unless he was going to help matters along, and he said, "Oh no, I have been a soldier all my life, and it would not do for me to buck now." I said, "If you feel that way, all right," and I also said, "Let me have a look at you." I had not examined him for a couple of years. I operated on him in 1912 for this gall bladder trouble, and I took out his appendix at that time. Col. Labatt never showed any evidence of any heart lesion when he was up there. We had some pretty heavy trails, and he packed over that ground. He did more work, really, than either of the Indians, carried more, and he was also on the hustle. He was one of the hardest campers I ever went with. But the night before we left, the message came about two o'clock but we did not get out until nearly four. We packed up and made an early start in the morning. I said, "Let me look over you," and I do not know why I said that, but I thought I would just see what his condition was. He is an enormous, big, thick chested fellow, and although it was only a cursory examination I detected nothing at that time. His heart was not out of line, and there was nothing marked at all. He would go over those trails and he did not puff except when we first started, as any man would starting with such an exercise. He started paddling hard. I thought I could hold my own with anybody paddling, but they always kept ahead of me going out and coming back. I thought he was in very good condition indeed. I never thought of his heart being affected at that time. Yesterday when he called me up and came over and took lunch with me, and told me he wanted a certificate as to the condition he had been in at that time, I said I would very gladly give it, and then afterwards he telephoned me and asked if I could come down here. I said I could not come to-day, and then I arranged my work. I thought I would be very glad to come down if my evidence would be of any use at all so I arranged my work and came down. His condition now I consider is very serious. I do not think he will use the pension he will get an awful long time, unless he gets rest. It was an awful shock to me to see him.

Q. You performed certain operations on Col. Labatt? I see certain operations are mentioned?—A. Yes, I took out his gall bladder and appendix I think in 1912.

Q. Did you look over his file in his case?—A. Yes.

Q. Having looked over the file what is your opinion of his present disability from heart trouble. Do you agree or disagree with the finding there?—A. Oh, I quite agree with it.

Q. What do you say on the question of his suffering from serious trouble at the time he enlisted?—A. Well, I do not think there is any question about it. A man could not do that amount of work and that sort of work if he had a serious heart lesion.

Q. That is the work to which you refer?—A. On that trip, yes. You cannot have a week of hard driving down as we had, because I have been camping on camping trips, I have camped every year, and I know what it is, and he had nothing that showed at

[Dr. I Oimstead.]