

river. Progress was impossible, and worst of all, we did not know just where we were. Old Aleck himself seemed at a loss, he would only say, "The country has changed since I was here." No one doubted that, and we all felt sure that it had changed for the worse. At last we found a semblance of a trail, and after following it for two miles, came to a stream almost as bad as the one we had just left. About every thirty yards it was necessary to use the axe to clear a passage for the canoes through the fallen trees. I will not dwell on this part of the trip. Making portages through mud and "muskegs", for three days we continued on the Weasel River and throughout those three days it rained almost continuously. The mosquitoes were as numerous as the leaves of the trees, and the fly grease we used seemed but to whet their appetite.

On the afternoon of the third day, as we were crossing a small marshy lake, we heard two shots, in quick succession. In a little bay we met an Indian, who with his wife, three dogs, a cat and all his camp outfit, was travelling to the Post, in a twelve foot bark canoe. He was armed with one of the Company's old muzzle loading trade guns, which had just failed to kill a muskrat at a range of fifty feet. Muskrat flesh, by the way, is considered quite a delicacy by the Indians, who always carry a few small traps, which they set at night along the shore of streams where the little animal abounds.

That night the Indian made his camp beside ours, and early next day we reached a three mile portage. For four hours we struggled along that trail, over ridges, through mud holes and thickets, and around fallen trees, till at last we reached the Ground Hog River. At that point the stream is about two hundred feet wide and quite deep. The waters teem with pike and pickerel, but there are no bass.

Then came two days of paddling up the swift water and portaging around the many rapids of the Ground Hog. The evening of the second day found us camped near the outlet of Koukatouch Lake, within two miles of the Post. That night it rained, and as we sat mending our clothes preparatory to our visit to the Post, the patter of the rain on the roof of the tent

had a very cheerful sound, so different from those dismal nights on the Weasel River.

The following morning, after an hour's paddling, we reached the head of Koukatouch Lake, and in a deep bay, sheltered from the winds of winter, stood the Flying Post. Three or four long low log buildings, the tall flagstaff, the camps of a few Indians, who still lingered from their trapping grounds—that was all. Aleck McLeod, the Factor, has been at Koukatouch Lake twelve years, and he gave us a cordial welcome—for visitors are rare.

Of all the things at Flying Post the interior of the store is the most interesting. There every article helps tell the story of the long trail, its hardships, its privations and its joys. From the ceiling hang smoke tanned moccasins of moose hide, huskie boots of sealskin, brought down from Moose Factory, the long snowshoes filled with caribou hide, and steel traps of every size. On pegs along the wall are the 44 calibre Winchesters, the favorite rifle of the Indians, which here sell for \$35. Piled in a corner on the floor are the heavy white four point blankets, on the shelves, boxes of plug tobacco, bright calicoes and sashes—and above all there floats a peculiar aroma, suggestive of the woods, the trail, and smouldering camp fires.

Leaving Flying Post, we paddled up the river to Matagaming Lake. On the way we passed a rapid, where, two years ago McLeod's daughter lost her life, when the canoe struck a submerged rock and capsized. Such things are soon forgotten; it is but the price the conquerors of the North must pay for their victory.

From Matagaming Lake, a fourteen mile stretch of water, backed in the distance by a long blue range of hills, we reached Sakkatawichtah Lake. That night it was very cold. Shortly after we were rolled in our blankets, we heard a noise outside among the kettles, and upon investigating found a woodchuck trying to get into the box in which we carried our bread. Young Aleck threw a stick at him, and he fled—directly into a large campfire, emerging all ablaze, from the opposite side, amid roars of laughter from the Indians.

The following day we passed through seven lakes, the largest being Lake Opeesway. On the map these lakes are all