

field, and an hour's drive or so away lies the experimental farm of the Dominion Government, conducted by Robert Jones, where we certainly had good evidence of the agricultural possibilities of this far-off country. Wheat, oats, rye, barley, potatoes, turnips, carrots, onions, beets, cauliflower, peas, beans, many berries, many flowers, etc., all grew in astonishing profusion. We saw also the farms of several who to their material advantage had forsaken the fur trade for the profits of the plow. There are two religious missions here, of different faiths, doing work among natives. It was so long ago as 1876 that Brother Reynier, of the Roman Catholic mission, took the first prize for wheat at the Philadelphia Exposition. He is an old man today, a quaint and interesting figure.

At Fort Vermilion you begin to touch the romance of the past, and feel, indeed, that you are in the Far North, in the fur country of which we have all read. We all invested here still more extensively in Indian work, moccasins, gun covers, dog whips, dog blankets, moose hides, beads, quill-work, etc. It was with genuine regret that we turned back from this old post, feeling that now we were headed toward home—a place which, I am disposed to think, few of us would have preferred to a farther journey into this fascinating wilderness country. We shall long cherish the friendships we made at this far-off frontier post, where we were treated so handsomely, as, indeed, we were all along the line. The hospitality of the frontier is genuine and unrestrained. In the Far North, generosity and kindness are spontaneous and at times we were much touched by our reception.

I shall not say much more of our journey up the river, from Fort Vermilion to Peace River Landing again. It was restful and interesting all the way, with the bear shooting, the scenery, and the continual sense of frontier life which was all about us. The hardships of the frontier were absent. It was on the return voyage, however, that we had another very exciting "adventure" with the bears. It seems that this island where we first saw a bear gaffed like a salmon is rather famous among the river men. It was on our third day of the upstream voyage that we again approached it, from the opposite direction. I saw one of the deckhands take up a board

and bank it against the side of the boat. At first I did not understand what he was doing. An instant later it was perfectly apparent. The cry arose once more, "Bear! Bear! There they go! There they go!" We could see distinctly two little dark objects in the water. The sound of the deckhand's board, and the whistle of the boat, had carried far. The nearest, which seemed nearly white in color, was the best part of half a mile away.

Again the batteries began; pilot house, hurricane deck, main deck and lower deck, all in action at once, with everything from a .405 down to a .22 banging and popping. The two bears were 300 or 400 yards apart, and the farther one seemed to be a grizzly. No one seemed to be getting very close in his work. H—— would not open up with his cannon at such long range, but I have an idea that he entertained a sneaking thought of getting within a couple of hundred yards or so and then killing both bears. We did get within easy range of this bear, but unfortunately for my friend's plan, just as he was raising his rifle for the first shot, Pilot Showan from above "plunked" the quarry through the head with the last shot in his .30-30.

We dropped down to gaff this one, which proved to be a good-sized black bear, but very light in color, almost sandy, and much like the coat of the grizzly. All these robes, while not full-furred, were much better than might have been expected for the middle of August. After that occurred one of the best instances of the power of the modern rifle I have ever seen.

We were still more than 700 yards below the remaining bear when H—— began to fire at it, thinking, I presume, that there was too much chance of someone else killing this bear too. There was only a little dark spot to be seen far up the river, and a long ripple of water trailing out behind. This time I had my rifle, and I fired a few times, but there was no real hope of anyone hitting the bear, which was fast making shore. My friend's guess at elevation must have been fairly correct, because the four shots he fired all seemed to drop in the vicinity of the bobbing black object. At the last shot the black object went under, and a jury of the deckhands, friends and others gave the credit to the .405, whose voice was very unmistakable.