

HUDSON'S BAY POST, METAGAMI,

JUNE 25TH, 1904.

DEAR SID,

NO doubt ere this you will have received the extremely sad intelligence of Neil's drowning. We were within about four miles of the post when the catastrophe occurred. It was in running a rapid. We had two canoes, one 16 feet and one about 19, in which we were bringing our supplies.

LARRY Larone and I were in the small canoe, and had run it safely and waited below. The other canoe rounded the bend and struck a rock when about half way down. Neil was in the bow, Roby in the middle, and Hubert in the stern. They managed to get off this rock, but had gone only a short distance when they hit another. The canoe swung around, and the stern caught. She filled and swung free. Just between an eddy and the current Roby struck for shore, thinking that the canoe would not hold the three.

NEIL took this as a tip to follow, and that was practically the end. You know he could not swim. He splashed around in the water for about ten seconds, then sank. By the time he went down, Hubert who had remained in the canoe, had grounded, and Roby had reached the shore.

FROM where Larry and I were waiting across the river to where the accident occurred was about a hundred feet, and the current was between us. We were waiting in an eddy on the opposite side of the river. It would have been madness for us to try and cross the current, but as soon as the canoe started to fill we started across below and up the current. Neil went down when we were within about twenty-five feet of him.

THERE is a series of rapids below this one for about a mile, but this was the last one we would have had to run. He was drowned right between the swift water and the eddy, in the swirl. The accident happened about 10 a.m., and we got to the post about noon. Four of the boys went up after dinner and stayed all afternoon. We are going up again this morning . . .

THIS thing has overwhelmed me. I feel lost; the country overpowers me; it is so big, so untamed, so strong, and withal so magnificent.

Yours in sorrow

TOM.