

all managed to hang on to that little car. It was a half-frozen party that finally emerged out of the darkness into the welcome lights of Bridge Engineer Campbell's camp. A phone message had announced our coming and Chief Engineer Porter was on hand to receive us.

The Hudson's Bay Railway makes its second crossing of the Nelson river at this point. Steel has been laid from The Pas here, a distance of some 332 miles. A magnificent steel bridge of 1,000 feet span was just receiving its finishing touches. The right-of-way is graded the remainder of the distance to Port Nelson and the building of a few smaller bridges and the laying of the ties and steel is all the work that now remains to complete the road. Its total length will be 424 miles.

Porter had arranged to accompany us on the remainder of our journey and next morning we set out in two Chestnut canoes, each manned by two Split lake Indians, to traverse the mighty Nelson to its outlet. This is one of the greatest rivers in the world. It drains 250,000 square miles, is 430 miles in length and has a drop of 713 feet. Kettle rapids are the most magnificent on the whole route and are capable of generating 1,200,000 horse power. Our fine weather now forsook us and we travelled nearly all day through a drizzly rain. Many rapids occur until the head of navigation is reached. A halt was made for dinner on Long Spruce portage, so called from clumps of exceptionally tall spruce trees found there. Many rapids were run and our canoemen exhibited wonderful skill and dexterity in the manipulation of their crafts. In fact these Indians are infinitely superior in every way to the Norway House tribe. They are not only most expert canoemen but indefatigable workers and of most agreeable dispositions. It was indeed a pleasure to travel with them, the head man David being a particularly fine specimen. My experience has lead me to consider ninety per cent of Indian help as a nuisance but when a good Indian is found he usually proves a real treasure. I could ask for no better guide or travelling companion than this faithful David.

The formation changes from massive granite at Kettle to limestone before the head of navigation is reached, the Limestone rapids being so named. More clay appears and the shores become more thickly wooded but with small stunted spruce. The head of navigation was reached at ten the next morning but the expected launch from Nelson was not in sight. Having passed the heaviest rapids we transferred our load all to one canoe, sending the other back from this point. Our remaining 20-foot freight canoe was therefore well laden down when we continued our journey, for besides our own baggage and mail and express for Port Nelson and York Factory, there were six of us in all including David and his assistant. During the afternoon a large wolf emerged from the woods and trotted for some distance along the shore opposite our canoe. He eyed us attentively but did not appear at all disturbed by our proximity. Though this was the 25th of August hugh cakes of old ice were still to be seen here and there along the shore. In spite of cold weather and the proximity of so much ice, the mosquitoes and black flies were so bad on shore that we camped this night on an open sand bar in order to escape them.

At nine o'clock the next morning Seal island was passed. It was here that Ben Gillam, the poacher, established his rendez-vous in the early years of the fur trade, his post being later captured by Radisson. The tide was first observed at the lower end of this island, being on the ebb when we arrived. At 10.30 we had reached Flamborough Head, the last high point of land over-looking the Bay. It is now capped by a beacon, some 90 feet in height, erected for the guidance of mariners. From here the bridge, leading from the shore at Nelson to the artificial island created for docking purposes, could be seen, the spans appearing like a series of dots and dashes over the water. The Nelson now widens out to majestic proportions, the horizon meeting the waters easterly on Hudson Bay. At two o'clock of August 26th we arrived at Port Nelson and