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A MERIDIAN LINE TO JAMES' BAY.

Having received instructions from the Department of Crown Lands to continue the survey of the boundary line between the Algoma and Nipissing Districts from a point 132 miles North of the C.P.R. to the Moose River, emptying into James Bay, I set out on 20th May last to carry out those instructions.

My party numbered 19 in all, including Mr. Parks, of Toronto University, as Geologist, with his assistant, Mr. Carter. My assistant was Mr. E. Neelands, of the School of Practical Science, Toronto, and Mr. J. L. Biggar, also of Toronto University, formed one of the party. The others were mostly from Haliburton, and these, with four halfbreed Indians from Lake Temiscamingue, completed the number.

The journey was made to Mattawa on the first day, and the following morning we boarded the train on the Temiscamingue branch line of the C.P.R., and arrived at Lake Temiscamingue about noon.

We then took the steamer "Meteor," up Lake Temiscamingue to Haileybury, where we remained over Sunday. Here our journey may be said to begin, and on Monday morning, May 23rd, we set out across a portage of six miles to Sharp's Lake, carrying our canoes and survey outfit, and sending the supplies over by the wagon-road or trail. From here, by lake and portage, we reach the Montreal River, and proceed up it, passing the H. B. Co.'s posts of "Bay Lake," and "Matachewan." From Matachewan Lake we proceed again by lake and portage, and on the 4th of June reached our starting point, the 120th mile post, a little North of Redstone River, to which point the "line" had been run in 1896.

On Monday, the 6th June, the survey was commenced, the line being opened out due North, blazed and chained, all streams and lakes noted, kind of soil, and timber, and a post planted and marked at every mile.

The camp and a few supplies and one canoe are carried along the line. The remainder of the canoes take all supplies, and everything not required on the line, around by water route to where we expect the line to cross a lake or river ahead, and where we do not expect to cross water, the canoe men have to carry in supplies to where we may be with the line.

The line was carried on from day to day, from the 6th of June to the 7th of October, moving camps almost every day and running 180 miles in that time. Very few lakes were met with, but we crossed numerous rivers and streams; crossed the Abitibi twice (109 miles between crossings), and the Moose River once. The line for over 100 miles from the starting point ran through a good track of farming land, the soil being clay, and the timber, spruce, tamarac, and poplar, chiefly, with birch, balsam, and balm of gilead in

places. The 50 miles next Moose River was largely "muskeg," and the timber, as a rule, scrubby spruce and tamarac. Game of all kinds was very scarce along the line, but a number of beaver were met with North of the Abitibi River, and a few prairie chickens and wild geese were seen.

I went down the Abitibi from where the line crosses it to its junction with the Moose—perhaps 15 miles, and thence to Moose Factory, 20 miles, on the 6th October. The time going was about 7 hours, but it took 2 days to come back. The Hudson Bay Company's post of "Moose Factory" was established over



MR. NIVEN AND CANOE—VERMILION LAKE.

200 years ago. Between officers and employees of the company, and Indians, the population is said to be about 500, exclusive of the Bishop of Moosonee and his family. They get all their goods and supplies from England by the ship that comes in August.

I left there on the 8th of October, and travelled every day (two Sundays excepted), till the 27th, when we reached Abitibi Lake. The journey up the Abitibi was a very laborious one, the canoes having to be "tracked" and "poled" a great part of the way.

We had three inches of snow on the 5th of October, and about 18 inches on the 25th and 26th, after which Abitibi Lake froze over on the night of the 27th. Here, then, we were obliged to remain until the lake would again open, or the ice become strong enough to walk on. We were now about out of food, but fortunately were able to get a bag of flour, a beaver