

engaging in some of their numerous "little games" to which they are all so addicted. The women were busy cutting wood a mile or so down stream. In engaging my guides for the next stage of the journey it was decided to pay them for the trip instead of by the day. Terms were arranged with alacrity by Tom Bear. Without doubt he has the science of handling the Indian down to the finest point. It was agreed that six days was sufficient for the round trip, three going and three returning. I therefore paid Bear their six days' wages and agreed to board them going and furnish them at Pelican Narrows with three days' rations for the return trip. Later it occurred to me that, should they become storm-bound returning, their provisions would run short. I suggested this to Bear. "True," he said, "that might happen." Calling the Indians into the store he informed them of our interest concerning their return. Taking from the shelf a large hook or troll he tossed it over the counter with the remark, "Here, take this, and if it storms, catchum fish."

Leaving Stanley on the morning of July 18th we made our first stop at the mouth of Rapid river, which drains Lac la Ronge into the Churchill. Less than half a mile from its outlet this river flows through a narrow rocky gorge, which has a considerable fall affording an excellent power site. The falls and rapids here are the finest seen on our journey.

During the day we found it necessary to make five portages to pass very heavy rapids. At the end of the last portage, which was over a quarter of a mile in length, we made camp for the night on a grassy bank overhanging the foot of the rapids. Wishing to cut some tent poles I discovered that my axe was missing. It had probably been left on one of the portages and it was only when we were forced to get along as best we could without it that we appreciated its value. After the camp was made in order, and the evening meal partaken of, I was strolling aimlessly along the banks overhanging the rapids, when, lucky to relate, I stumbled upon another axe, rusty and dull, but nevertheless very welcome. The sighing of the wind through the tree tops above, and the roaring of the rapids below, were music that made this camp one of the most restful sleeping places we had yet found.

The next day, being Sunday, might have been spent here with enjoyment had not the pest of flies made life in the woods unbearable. Rather than spend the day in a stuffy tent when the weather was so glorious, we set out again on the limpid waters of Trade lake, where the refreshing breezes banished every fly. Paddling leisurely along beneath sunny skies, on sparkling water that rippled to the gentle breeze, I could not but remark that this lake of islands with its purple hills in the distance exceeded anything we had yet seen on our travels. All too soon Frog portage came in sight and beckoned us away. It seemed that we were leaving the Churchill too soon to enjoy the best of its scenery.

Frog portage represents another strategic point on the old fur trading route. Here the traders left the waters of the Churchill, and turning south followed a chain of lakes and rivers leading to Cumberland House and the Saskatchewan. The lakes of the upper portion of this route are very similar to those we had passed through before reaching Lac la Ronge, though the surrounding hills are not as well wooded. Pelican Narrows was reached on schedule time and at the Hudson's Bay post I provided the Indian canoe men with their rations for the return trip. This village consists of a Roman Catholic church and mission, a cluster of log houses belonging to the Indians, and the trading posts of the Hudson's Bay and Revillon's. At Revillon's post I was informed that their district manager was in the residence, where he had his office, and would be glad to see me. Imagine our mutual surprise and delight when on meeting I recognized him as Clarence Umbach, an old Edmonton friend and former office assistant.

During our all too short stay under his hospitable roof I learned much of the great Reindeer lake district, on which his company maintained a post at Du Brochet. From various sources I had gathered scraps of information of this