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PART F. ANNUAL REPORT, 1886.

GEOLOGICAI, AND NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY OF CANADA ALFRED R. C. SELWYN, C.M.G., LL.D., F.R.S., Director.

PRELIMINARY REPORT
O.

AN EXPLORATION OF COUNTRY
berween

## LAKE WINNIPEG AND HUDSON BAY.

BY
A. P. LOW, B.Ap.Sc.


PUBLISHED BY AUTHORIT Y OF PARLIAMENT.
(t)ontreal:

DAWSON BROTHERES.
1887.

Price Thirty Cents.

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ri. 1.
'Tl Alfred R. C. Seliyn, Esq., C.M.G., F.R.S., LL.D., Director Geological and Natural IIistory Survey of Canada.

Sir,-I herewith beg to submit a Preliminary Report on my explorations of last senson in the comntry between Lake Winniperg and Hudson Bay.

In it I have merely mentioned the geologital formations observed along the route followed. To define their probable distribution in the region, one or more seasons work will be required. I have great pleasure in tendering thanks to J. Wrigley, Esip., Chief Commissioner of' the Hudson Bay Company, and all the officers of the Company, at the posts visited, for their kind hospitality and able assistance, to whieh, in a great measure, the suecess of the expedition is due.

I remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
Ottawa, February 24th, 1887.
A. P. LOW.

## PRELIMINARYREPORT

ON AN HXILOR ITION OF COENTHE RHON

## LAKに WINN゙PEG TO ILUDNON BAY,

Between $88^{\circ} 30^{\prime}$ and $97^{\circ} 30^{\prime} \mathrm{W}$. Lovo.
I left Ottawa on the 10th of May, accompanied by Mr. J. M. Macoun Departure, as nssistunt and botmist. Wo proceeded to West Selkirk, in Manitoba, where we were detuined eight days, awaiting the departure of a vessel which could take us up Lake Winnipeg.

We then secured passuges in a small schooner, which sailed on the 21st of May, but which, owing to head winds, did not reach our starting point-the mouth of Berens River, half way up the lake on its oastern side-till the 28th of May.
The spring was exceptionally early, and the ice had, we were told, broken up fully a week earlier than usual.
At the IIudson Bay post, Mr. Flett informed us that large canoes, suitable for our expedition, could only be obtained at the Company's post on Family Lake, some distance up the river. We therefore purchased two small canoes in which to take a part of our provisions and outfit, and we engaged Indians, with three canoes, to take the rest up to Family Lake. All necessary arrangements having been completed, we left the mouth of the river late on the morning of the 31st, and the Commence. micrometer survey was carried as lar as the first portuge, oleven and a ment of surves balf miles.
The conntry near the river in this distance is made up of many low, hummocky, gneiss hills, which seldom rise twenty feet above the water; and are partly covered with a heavy clay soil. In the valley; and along the river banks the soil is thicker, and the Hudson Bay Company; and the Indians on the Reserve, grow good crops of potatoes and other roots. Little or no grain is raised, and the locality seems unfavorable for such erops, being exposed to the full sweep of the cold north-west winds that blow so frequently over Lake Winnipeg. The tree growth is small and poor, consisting of blaek spruce, aspen poplar, tamarac, white birch, banksian pine and balsam. None of

Character of Berens liver
these nttain a diameter of eightsen inches, and, branching near the ground, are mostly covered with knots and erooked, and of little value for lumber.
$\mathrm{U}_{1}$, to the first portage, the river thows between rocky banks from ten to twenty feet high, alternating with low, swanpy ground. The current is sluggish, the water deep and of a dark hrown color, although comparatively free from suspended mutter:
The Indinn Reserve extends six miles up the river; its banks being dotted with log houses. The Methodist mission stution consists of a good church, sehool house and parsonage.
Sturgeon are plentifil in the spring about the mouth of the river, and up it as far as the firnt fall,

On the 1st of June we did not leave camp, on necount of pain, until 11 a.m., and we then made a portage of forty yards to pass a chute of nine fect, caused by a ledge of gneiss in the river. Three hundred yards further, another portage of twenty yards was made to pass a similar full of three feet. From thin point up to Fumily Lake the river's course is broken by a great number of small chates, varying from two to forty feet in height, und all have to be passed ly short portages; between the chutes there is little or no current in the river, and it somewhat resembles the locks and stretches of a canal. During the day six other chutes wero passel, being respectively four, three, five, ten, and three feat high, with portages of fifty, thirty, eighty, forty and thirty yards, and the total distance surveged was nine and one-guarter miles. In this distance the banks are less rocky, with more good land and heavier timber. Some white spruce being eighteen inches in diameter, with poplar and lanksian pine of twelve to fifteen inches.

From the second to the tifth of June, wre continued our ascent of the river, and passed twenty-seven fulls and rapids, entuiling as many Nhort portages in a distance of fifty-one miles, the country being rocky, with poor soil and small trees. Hero the route leaves the river and crosses a short portage to a small branch, which it follows for fom aall a half miles to where it re-joins the river at a small lake, and thus a very rapid and difficult stretch of the main river is avoided.

Family Lake, A fall of six feet connects this lake with unother, passing through which, a distance of fonr miles, the river is again reached. From here to the outlet of Family Lake the distance is eleven miles. Three portages occur in the interval to pass falls of eight, ten and forty feet, the last and highest being just at the outlet of the lake. Family Lake is triangular in shape, having irregular sides of about ten miles in length. The river comes in at the north-east angle, where
renerve in the vicinity for the Indinns who trade at the pust. Two streams tlow out of the lake, the Berens River at the western angle and the Pigeon liver at the southern. These streams, after following irregularly parallel courses, untor Lake Winnipeg only six miles upurt. Considerable arean of good land oecur nong the shoren of the lake, ulthongh thoy are often vory rocky,

The trees ure somewhat larger than those along the river, and at the Hudson Bay Compuny's post good crops of potntoes ure grown.

The total length of our mensurod line from Lake Winnipeg to the inlet is one hundred aud two miles, with a general course of $\mathrm{S} .7^{\circ} \mathrm{K}$. The grenter part of the timber has bcen lestroyed by frequent fires. On tho 9th ot June, having exchanged our small canocs for larger ones at the Hudson Bay post, and ongaged two Indians to take a load of provisions as far us Deer Lake, on the Severn River, we continued our ascent of the Berens River. A fall and rupid of thirty-five feet, passed by a portnge one-quarter of a mile long, occurs one mile from the lake. Above this the river is deep ant rapid for one mile, when it widens into Back op Fishing Lake. This lake is nine miles long from north to south, and from two to fom miles wide, with a large number of islunds along the eastern side. A lage stroam, called the Mattawa River, which risos in the neighborhood of Cat Lake, enters on tho enst side. The lake is surrounded by hills, rising twenty to forty feet above its level; theso are covored with a growth of spruce, poplar, bireli and tamarac, much of which has, however: been burnt by recent fires. Asconding between the islands, we left the lake at its northern end by a small stream, which flows in a ve,y crooked course throngh low, swampy gronnd, with protruding bosses of gneiss, the poorlant. whole covered with a small growth of black spruce and tamurac. After following this stream fonr miles, Fisher Lake was reached and traversed, a distance of three miles, to its upper end; thence the river was again followed, through four small unnamed lakes, to the height of hand between the Poplar and Berens rivers. The country along the route, with the exception of some patches of bog, is rocky, with very little soil. The trees do not exceed eight inches in diumeter, and are chiefly banksian pine, black spruce and tamarac, with some suall timber. birch and poplar: Crossing the height of land by a portage two hundred yards long, the route followed a branch of the Poplar River, passing through three small hakes to Big Jack-fish Lake, a large body of water on the man brumbh of the Poplar River. After aseending , varying 1 liy shor't the river, During mir, three, $y$, eighty, nine and cky, with ace being of twolve sut of the as many 'y being the river llows for lake, and avoided. through From $n$ miles. ten and he lake. of about $e$, where urvey a the river seven iniles, in an easterly direction, a small northern branch was followed, leading, in a crooked comree, through three small lakes, to the height of land dividing the waters flowing directly into Hudson Bay from those falling into Lake Winnipeg. This point was

## 8 F

GEOLOGICAJ. SURVEY OF CANADA,
not reached till the 17th of June, much delay having been occasioned by the low state of the water in the emall streams; four days were also lost on account of rain, it being impossible to carry on a miciometer survey in wet weather. The distance from Family Lake to this height of land is sixty-six and a half miles by the route followed,

Meight of land portage.

Head of
Severn River. the course being a few degrees east of north.
The height of land portage, six hundred and seventy-five yards long, passes through a gulley between hills from fifty to seventy-five feet high, and ends on the north side at a small lake on the headwaters of the middle branch of the Severn River. This lake lies about fifty feet below that at the other ond of the portage, and shows that the land on the north side falls abruptly. The dividing ridge stretches away in asoath-easterly cirection, rising from fifty to one hundred and fifty feet above the water surface.
Th ) first lake or pond, one-quarter of a mile long, empties into a second by a brook to smal! and shallow to float canoes, so that a portage of thirty-five yards has to be made between the lakes. The second lake, three-quarters of a mile in length, empties into Black Birch Lake by a brook, having six feet fall; passed by making a portage one hundred and ten yards long.
We reached Black Birch Lake about its middle, and then coasted its shores in an easterly direction for three miles to its outlet. The
Burat timber. shores rise from thirty to fifty feet almost perpendicularly above the e:ghths of the timberger than those last deseribed, but nearly seventhe stream, varying in width from ton . Turning north down the outlet, half a mile, was followed ten ten yards at the falls and rapids to barren and rocky country, almost to Deer Lake through a rough, eight and six feet were passed in this whilly burnt; chutes of twelve, Deer Lake was reached on the in this distance, and the eatrance of we found the provisions fore 18 th of June. Here, on a small island,

Having transferred them to from Family Lake, safely stored. along the north side of the lake, our canoes, we continued the survey which, however, proved to be an in nine miles, to the supposed outlet, out a guide, we were obliged to cossting stream, As we were witharound each small bay. Thus the north efully along the shore and veyed to its extreme end, where, at a distence of the lake was sursupposed outlet, another large stream was forty miles from the that the chances were greatly in favor found flowing in. Knowing side, and thinking that it might have of the outlet being on the north the coast for twelve miles, ant have been passed, we carefully retraced bay. It passed through a nucceeded in finding the outlet in a small visible, even wien close to its enow cleft in a high rock, and was not
occasioned r days wore on a micro. ly Lake to te followed,
five yards reventy-five headwaters about fifty 8 that the 3 stretches e hundred ies into a so that a ses. The to Black naking a
asted its et. The bove the y seven. 10 outlet, apids to rough, twelve, ance of 1 island, tored. survey outlet, 'e withre and as suron the 10wing north traced tsmall as not arrow

2ow.]
Lake winnipeg and tituson hay.
body of water, surrounded by rocky hills, riving from fifty to two hundred feet above the lakr. These hills are rounded, and appear to rum parallel to the range forming the height of land. The lake runs in a general course of N. $\boldsymbol{7}^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$. Its greatost length is about forty-five miles, with a breadth varying from one to four miles. Three doep bays indent its eastern end, the entrances into which are narrow and Deep hays. easily overlooked, unless the shore is very closely followed. The outlet is in the north bay, four miles from its entrance. Besidos the bays above mentioned, several large and many smaller laternl bayw deeply indent the shores, which are generally steep and rocky, mul the lake itself is full of rocky islands rising from its clear whters. The surrounding hills have been almost wholly burnt by fires of varions dates, and present all the different appearances of a burnt country, from the standing blackened trunks left by recent burning, to the smatl secont growth of poplar and banksian pine of earlier fires. The soil sune wod woil. is very thin and the timber correspol gly poor, except on a few low points, where some white spruce, balsam and poplar exceed fiftern inches in diameter. The river runs in a northerly direction, with a swift current, for one mile, and then expands into a small lake, mie mile begond which it turns sharply to the west and contracts, flowing with a rapid current for five miles between high, rocky banks coveroll only with dry moss and a few stunted black spruce, birch and banksian pine, all less than four inches in diamoter. In this distance there are five chutes, which together give forty-nine feet fall; or sixtoen, ten, six, five and twelva feet. Here the river again turns north, und, Rindidnarl spreading out, flows with a steady current for eighteon miles to Favorable Lake, but interrupted by chutes of three, twenty and twelve feet and a few small rapids. As the river descends, the surrounding country gradually becomes smoother and the timber larger until within throe miles of the lake, when the stream passes through low, nwampy. land, covered with thick, wet moss and a small growth of black spruce and tamarac. We entered the lake at its south-west corner, und followed the north shore for nine and a half miles to the end of a point; Favorabie Lake here the lake took a short turn to the northward, and again stretehed out east and west. Supposing the outlet to be to the castward, we surveyed to the end of the lake in that direction, soven and a quarter miles, and found two small streams flowing in. Returning to the point, we proceeded westward six miles to a smull channel from the north, and discovered that the point was the end of a peninsula alout seven miles long, joined to the main shore by a narrow neek of sand, over which a small portage might lave been made and fifteen miles of paddling avoided. After passing through this channel one mile, the lake again expanded, and we then followed the west shore nine milos,

Gond soil and timber.

## Old trading post.

and found the outlet in the north-west angle, where two bays were seen stretching away to the eastward. Favorable Lake is very irregular in shape, the two portions forming a $T$, the stem of which lies north and sonth, with a crooked head stretching irregularly east and west. The width varies from two to tive miles. Hills from fifty to one hundred nud fifty feet high surround the lake, more than half the timber on which has been burnt. Along the shores there are consideruble arens of good land, the best being on the peninsula and along the nouther'n part of the luke, where the underlying rocks are hormblendic and ehloritic schists; the northern portion is more barren, the soil resting on gneiss. The soil is a fine, rieh, sandy loam, quite suitable for growing good crops, and summer frosts seem to be the only drawback to successful ugrieulture. These are said not to occur at Trout Lake, though situated further to the north-eastward. The trees aromad Favorable Lake consist of white and black spruce, aspen and halsam poplar, white birch, balsam and tamarac, many of which exceed eighteon inches in diamater. Sturgeon are plentiful in the lake; it is remarkably free from islands; the water is a dirty light yellow color, and not deep. At the end of the peninsula the foundations of several old houses were discovered, out of which trees twelve inches in diameter were growing. Theso ruins evidently mark the site of some old Hudson Bay Company, or more probably Northwest Company trading post. Nothing was known about it at the Hudson Buy Company's post we visited. Favorable Lake was left on the 29th of June, and at two miles due north a fall of eight feet was reached; this full is formed by a horizontal ledge of gneiss, which closely resembles a mill-dam. Three-quarters of a mile further on, a portage of seventy-fise yards was made to pass a chute of twenty-fivo feet. Beyond this, the river flows in the same northerly course seven miles, when another chute of fifteen feet was reached.
From hore tho stream bends gradually westward for ten miles, then turns sharply north for tive miles, and again bends slightly north of cast for ten and $n$ half miles. Here the river apparently forked; thinking that the nerth branch, which looked the larger, the correct road, we massed up it and entered a lake, only to find, aftor making a survey of its shore, that we were once more at the place we entered by, that no other outlet existed, and that we had gone ten miles out of our way. Continuing down the river seven miles due east, a sharp. turn to the south was made, and passing four and a hulf miles along this course, Musk-rat Dum Lake was entered.
For the entire distance between Favorable Lake and this lake, the river, with the exception of the three falls mentioned, flows with an imperceptible current between low, muddy banks, covered along the
elges with grass and weods, and hum an werage broadth of two hunhundred fcet. The water is of' 11 whilinli-yellow color, and is highly charged with surpended mutter.
The surrounding eountry is 11 vinat, lovel swamp, broken only by a Swamps. few knobs of gneise, that rime from ("ul to fifty feet above the general surface. The swamp is covered with moss, and supports a small growth of black spruce and trumarne; hotter timber growing on and around the hills. Musk-rut Dam Lake wim entered July 3rd, on its north side, some distaece from the west end. Owing to the smoky state of the atmosphere, and lios mimerous islands which obstruet the view, neither the west onfl hor tho nouth shore were seen, and so the exact size of the lako is unknown. We coasted along the north shore to the south-castern auglo, " dintance of nineteen and a half' miles, passing many islands of various sizes, Where the river enters the lake, it has deposited mueli of tho surtter it carries, and formed a long point of low marsh, now covered with graswes ind small willows. and surrounding several small, pocky imhuls ; the name of the lake is Long mints. probably due to this feature. Eisewhoro, the shore rises from thirty to seventy-five feet above the water, tho grenter part consisting of clay and loam soil with several rocky pribits und outlying islands. The Good land. timber, with the exception of thit growing on the points and islands, corresponds in size and varioty to that deseribed around Favorable Lake. The islands, many of which wre quite large, are rocky, and coverel chiefly with a dense growth of black spruce. Several extensive fires were burning around the litke while we were on it, and the Fires. smoke was so thick that it chused comsidernble delay in the work of surveying. We left Musk-rat Dum lako nt itm soutli-enst angle, and followed the siver in a S. $30^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$, conime for tour miles to Sandy Lake.

This lake was also entered on itm north nide at some distance from the western end, and the shore followed to the eastern extre from sandy Lake. distance of forty-three and a half mllow, 'This is probably themity, a body of water passed through on tho route, its extreme len largest breadth being unknown, as the sulfince is covered by innugth and islands, so close together thut $n$ view of tho opposite shore conal be had.

The water is turbid and white in color, 'The shore is higher and High rocky more rocky than that of Musk-rut Dum Lake, but much good land, and shores. many trees of white spruce, poplur, lifchi und balsam, were seen, exceeding eighteen inches in diametos, Indeed, the greater part of the land around these lakes would make gow! fin'me.
Severn Lake lies north-east of Sundy Lake, and distant from it one hundred and fourteen miles by the river. Snully Lake was left on the 8th of July. The river passes with it shiggish current between low
hills, mostly bunt; and at six and three-quarter miles, a chute of eighteen feet was passed by a portage one hundred and fifty yards

River narrow and crooked.

Flat country.

Cut banks.
long. Beyond this, the river beconses narrow and crooked, with a swift current, passing low, rounded and rather rocky hills, with good soil between, supporting a growth of black and white spruce, tamarac, poplar and birch, slightly smaller than those seen around the lakes.
Forty-two miles from the portage, the river widens out into two lakos, which, together, are sixteen miles long and not above two miies broad. both being dotted with many small islands. The stlrrounding country is almost flat, with good timber and soil. Beyond this, as far as Severn Lake, over 114 miles north-east from Sandy Lake, the river flows with a swift current, broken by several rapids and falls, entailing six portages.
Cut banks, from five to ten feet high, composed chiefly of a boulderclay, are now seen. The soil and timber become poorer, and good trees grow only on the islands. the shore having a thick growth of black spruce, poplar and tame ne of small size.
While camped on the last portage above Severn Lake, an old Indian with his wife passed in a canoe, the first persons seen since leaving Family Lake. As we had but an imperfect ideal of our exact position, we hurried after and overtook them on an island in the lake, and learnt that we were on Severn Lake, and that, by a portage route, the Hudson Bay Company's post on Trout Lake was distant about three days' journey. As our provisions were running short, not enough remaining to carry the survey to the mouth of the river, we decided to make for Trout Lake. Accordingly, we crossed the lake in a southeast direction, and in nine miles reached the portage.
The shores and the numerous islands of Severn Lake are all low and swampy, corered chiefly with black spruce and tamarac. The portage by which the height of land between the Main and Fawn branches of the Severn River is passed, is one and a quarter miles long, through low, swampy ground, with a rocky ridge at the east end. Here a Portage route
to Trout Lake. lakes, connected by a small stream; leaving the stream at the third lake, three portages of 350,760 and 375 yards, aro passed with two intervening small lakes, the stream being again reached at the end of the third portage. Descending it two and a half miles, Little Trout Lake, four miles long by one broad, was entered and passed through to its east end. Following its outlet four miles, Trout Lake was reached July 19th. The general course of the route was due east, through low, swampy country, out of which rise a few low, rocky hills almost destitute of soil, the whole covered with small trees of black spruce, banksian pine and tamarac, few exceeding six inches in
diameter two feet from the ground. Trout Lake is irregularly oval in shape, forty miles long from east to west, and nowhere more than twenty miles wide. Its shores are generally low and swampy, with some rocky points, the highest land being towards the west and south. Along the north side are several lurge islands and numerous smaller, Large islands. rocky ones. The prevailing trees are black spruce, with tamarac, aspen poplar, white spruce and birch, a few being eighteen inches in diameter.

The water of the lake is remarkably clear, cold and deep, and is Fish. abundantly stocked with large white fish and lake trout, which form the principal food of the Indians and Hudson Bay Company's people living around the lake.

The Hudson Bay Company's post is situated on one of the larger islands, twelve miles from the east end. Here also is a church, sup-Chureh. ported by the Church Missionary Society of England, and the services are conducted by a native missionary.

Nearly 500 Indians trade at this post, but they do not all belong to Indians. the post, part being a roaming population, some of whom belong to Martin's Falls and Cat Lake posts, on the Albany River, while others come from York, Severn and Island Lake. These Indians speak a language made up chiefly of Cree words, with a mixture of the Sautaux dialects; they are all supposed to be Christians, although many of them still believe in the power and charms of the medicine men.

Mr. Tait, the officer in charge of the post, says that good crops of Crops peas, potatoes and other roots are raised here yearly, and are very hyinjured rarely injured by summer frosts. This being the case, the country to frost. the westward, between Severn and Sandy lakes, which is more favorably situated, having all the appearance of a better climate and a richer soil, must undoubtedly be well suited for agriculture, and will at some future time prove valuable land for settlement. At the Hudson Bay Post both our canoes were repaired; and on the 22nd of July, after securing the necessary provisions for the trip to the mouth of the river, and having determined the latitude of the place, we proceeded along the north shore to the north-east corner of the lake, where the Fawn branch of the Severn River flows out. This lake, which varies from thirto to six hundred yards in width, was followed Fawn River. for eleven miles due north, where a small lake, three miles wide, was crossed. From here, for fifty miles, the river, with an average breadth of thirty yards, flows $N E$ with a rapid can average breadth banks. Twenty-four rapids and chutes, causcd by lurrent between low crossing the stream, occur in the disace, the ledges of gneiss Rapids. which have to be passed by portages in ascendine greater number of only eight were made in descending.

At the rapids the river usually spreads out, and flows in several shallow channels between n number of small islands. This greatly increases the danger of damaging the canoes from striking against

Obstruction
caused by

Swamp. rocks on the bottom while running down stream. In its upper part the channel is greatly obstructed by large boulders strewn over the bottom, often rising to within a few inches of the surface, a good lookout being necessary to keep clear of them where the current is slow, us there is then no sign to show their position.
Throughout this distance the surrounding country slopes towards the north and east with the river, which flows but a few feet below the general surface. Except the few small ridges of gneiss, the whole is swamp, covered with thick, wet moss, and supporting a growth of Northern limit On tack spruce and tamarac, with a few poplar clumps.
of white birch. and tamare ; ands is a better growth of white and black spruce, poplar. course. This the last white birch was seen near the end of this for cultivation, being wet bithe, barren look, with soil totally unfit the last chute the character of the rive possibility of drainage. Below - swift current between bar the river changes; it now flows with a rapids necessitating portages cut in the drift sands and clays, but no Forks.

Character of currounding country.

The country above the river valley is comparatively flat and swampy, with clay subsoil overlaid by sand; the trees are chiefly black spruce and tamarac of small size, the greater part of which have been burnt. These characteristies prevail all the way to the mouth of the river, the whole country being practically useless.
The only timber largo enough for small buildings grows on the islands and in the bottom of the river valley, where the soil is betterand the high banks form a protection from the cold winds. Below the last chute the river first runs $\mathrm{N} .50^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$. for seventeen miles, then in a general course a few degrees south of east, twelve miles, to the OtterRiver, a large branch flowing from the south-east. For this distance the sloping banks of the river vary from ten to fifty feet high, and covered to the water's edge with a thick growth of small willows.
Below the Otter branch the river suddenly expands, being almost fifty vards wide, and gradually increasing with the descent; the channel is very shallow and interrupted by a great number of bars. The water, which on leaving Trout Lake was remarkably clear, gradually becomes discolored by the washing down of the clay banks of the river, and the dirty waters of small brooks that flow in.
High 'anke.
The valley now becomes deeper, the banks rising from fifty to one hundred feet, the upper part being cut almost perpendicular, with the lower part Nloping gradually to the water's edge.

The willows do not grow so thick along the banks, which afford dood traoking good tracking paths, used by the Indians in towing the boats up pathr. stream. Marks on the trees along the banks show that in spring the ice passes along fully fifteen feet above the summer water level.

From the Otter River the general conrse is about north-east for thirty-eight miles, then N. $30^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$. twenty-one miles to the Picticiow River, flowing in from the eastwarl. Here a turn is taken westward, and the stream passes from bank to bank in a valley about half a mile wide, with a general course of $\mathrm{N} .35^{\circ} \mathrm{W}$. for fifty-six miles to the forks of the Sovern. Six miles above this point beds of limestone rise from under the clay banks, and in crossing the "stream cause several heavy Heavy rapids. rapids.

The Severn River, below the junction of the Fawn, is about half a mile wide. Beyond this, as far as its mouth, it varies from one quarter to one mile in width, the average being one-third of a mile. The cut banks are from thirty to two hundred feet bigh, graduality falling as the sea is approached. The channel is very shallow, and in places greatly obstructed by low gravel beds and sand bars. From the forks obstructed the general course is N.E. for sixteen miles, then N. $10^{\circ} \mathrm{E}$. for twentythree, where a fall of thirty feet, ealled the Limestone Rapid, occur's in one mile. This ld caused by beds of limestone crossing the stream, forming a number of small islands, between which the river ponts in heavy rapids.

The portage by which this obstruction is passed is on the west bank and over the baro limestone rock.

Besides this rapid there are several smaller ones, due to the same cause, but none are heavy enough to necessitate portages.

Below the Limestone Rapid the river again flows north-east to the sea, a distance of twenty-eight miles. Many large islands divide the Large islands. stream into different channels for several miles from its mouth.

We arrived at Fort Severn, situated on the west bank about four miles from the sea, on the 6 th of August ; thus finishing the micrometer survey from Lake Winnipeg to Hudson Bay.
Fort Severn is a small trading post of the Hudson Bay Company, Fort Severn. resorted to by a few Indian families, the majority of whom live along the coast, making their hunts on the small rivers flowing into the bay, and living ehiefly on geese, wh:ch are killed in great numbers in the spring and fall, while on their way to and from the breeding grounds of the north. The soil around the post is a heavy cley and very poor soil and swampy. The climate is so cold and the season so short that nothing cold climate. but a few small turnips are with difficulty grown here. On August 8th we picked strawberries on the clearings around the post; at that time they were only beginning to ripen.

It was the intention to return up the river to Severn Lake, from there to go by Trout Lake across the height of land to Cat Lake, and thence to Rat Portage; but on renching Fort Severn the canoes were found to be so worn out as to make it impossible to return in them, and being unable to procure anything suitable for the trip at Fort Severn, we were obliged to coast along shore to York Factory.

This we attempted to do in our canoes, and, leaving Fort Severn August 10th, in two days had reached Goose River, forty miles on the
Hudson Bay. way. Here we were delayed by a heavy gale from the north-west, which continned for three days. On the second day a violent gust lifted the larger canoe over the stakes driven in the ground to secure it, and, rolling it over the ground, threw it against one of the tents, breaking it beyond repair. I immediately sent Mr. Macoun, with one man, on foot, back to the post with a request to send a boat and men enough to take us to York. They returned on the third day with a small whale boat and two Indians as guides.
York Factors. Embarking, we coasted along shore, being greatly delayed by head winds, and reached York Factory on the 23 rld of August, without other accident than the loss of our other canoe, which broke adrift from the boat while anchored off one night in a gale.
The distance between York and Severn is about 200 miles. The coust is quite flat and low, and is formed, for a considerable distance back from high water mark, of parallel ridges of gravel, from one to four hundred yards apart, the space between being filled up with sand and mud, and dotted with innumerable small lakes or ponds, the water of which is brackish behind the onter ridges, but quite fresh, clear and cold farther inland.

These ridges are each a few inches higher than the next nearer the sea, and drift wood is seen on each, showing more signs of decay on the inner than on the outer banks.
This would tend to show that in this part of Hudson Bay the shores are slowly rising, as has been noted by other observers on other portions of the northern coasts.
The ebb and flow of the tide is between four and six fect. At low tide the water retreats a long way, exposing great sand and mud flats, with gravel ridges mostly parallel to the shore, and in many places

## Absence of <br> Irees.

Evidenco of the shores

## Character of the coast.

 thickly strewn with large boulders. From the mouth of the Severn to near Cape Tatnam no trees are seen from the shore; beyond this small black spruce come to within a mile or so of the water. The distance of the trees from the shore is due to the unfavorable soil rather than climatie influences. Between high water and the tree line the sand and gravel are almost bare, while the mud between the ridges is covered with a rich growth of grasses, affording fine feeding grounds.Beir

The 1 they cor hydro-m Lake, a are higl ore, botl masses. with a

Owins strict in for anot mineral

Being unable to obtain canoes at York, we were obliged to travel in Return journey a heavy flat-bottomed boat. Jieaving York August 26th, Norway Louse, at the head of Iake Winnipeg, was not reached until September 20th, great delay being experienced owing to the very low state of the water in the Hayes River and its branchos. At Norway House our boat whs exchanged for a lighter one, in which we coasted down the east shore of Lake Winnipeg, but were so delayed by rough weather that Selkirk was not reached until October 13th and Ottawa four days later.

## GEOLOGICAL NOTES.

## Archean.

## A.-Laurentian.

With the exception of some small bands of Huroniun, the Lauren- Distribution. tian rocks occupy the whele area of country betwcen Lake Winnipeg and Trout Lake, and probably oxtend much farther to the eastward.
Their northern limit on the Fawn River was not exactly located, the rocks being covered with drift, but it lies somewhere between the last chute on its apper portion and the limestone exposures near the forks; from the physical features of the valloy, it is supposed to be character. near the former point. The rocks consist chiefly of the characteristic red micuccous gneiss, ulong with grey varieties, and also hornblendic grueisses. No limestones were noted.

## B.-Huronian.

The Huronian rocks were first observed on Favorable Lake, where they consist of chloritic and altered hornblende rocks, with talc and hydro-mica schists. The same band, presumably, was seen on Sandy Lakc, and below it on the Severn River. The rocks in several places are highly magnetic, and probably contain large quantities of iron Iron. ore, both disseminated in small crystals through the rock and in lurge masses. Another band was met with at Trout Lake, in connection with a large mass of eruptive rocks.

Owing to the extent of the country covered in ono short season, no strict investigation of these rocks could be undertaken, and it remains for another season to examine them carefully, both as regards their mineral chauacters and lithological relations.

## Palaozoic. <br> Cambro-Silurian and Silurian.

Age.

Oharacter.

Evidence of ice action.

Drifl.

Fossils.

The limestones of the Suvern and Fuwn Rivers, as roughly determined from the fossils collected, are not older than the Galona, and may be as now as the Niagara, more investigntion is, however, required to fix their precise horizon.
The rock is a coarse yellowish-white dolomitics limestone, closely resembling that of Lake Winnipeg. It lies ulmost fat, being broken only by long, low anticlines and synclines. At the Limestone Rapids of the Severn, where it is more contorted than usual, it rises in a number of low domes, closely resembling $n$ sheot of lettor paper when dampened. The total thickness of the beds exposed does not excced ono hundred feet.

> Post Tertiary.
> Drift.

From Lake Winnipeg to Hudson Bay, almost all exposed rock sur. faces exhibit distinct evidence of ice action, being strongly marked with glacial strie, which vary in direction but a few degrees on either side of north-east, showing that the drift was from that grarter: Scattered all over the surface of the country are rounded boulders, many of great sizo and evidently far-travelled.
The Severn and Fawn Rivers, for over 200 miles from their mouths, have cut valleys into the Post Tertiary deposits. As scon in the banks of these streame, where sections of 200 feet are obtained, the top beds are composed of a light sandy clay, containing many boulders of limestone, gneiss, rod jasper and green chloritic and opidotic rocks. Below these are thin sandy beds, holding a large number of small boulders; while the lowest and thickest beds are made up of a heavy blue clay, comparatively free from boulders.
The following fossils were collected on the Fiwn River, a short distance from the forks:-

Rhynchonella psittacea, Chemnitz.
Cardium Islandicum, Chemnitz. (=C. ciliatum, Fabr.)
Macoma calcarea, Chomnitz.
Mya truncata, L.
Saxicava pholadis, L. (=S. rugosa, Low.)
Buccinum tenue, Gray.
Trophon clatheatus, L.
And a small Balanus.

## Botanical Notes.

It has bech deemed inadvisable to publish with this report a list of
roughly deter. ho Galena, and n is, however;
restone, closely t , heing broken nestono Rupids ul, it rises in a er paper when oes not exceed
seod rock sim. ongly marked rees on either that quartor. ded boulders,
their mouths, in the banks the top beds lders of lime. :ocks. Below all boulders; vy bluo clay,
iver, a short
the plants collected, as many species will probably be ulded during the next season, and after the country has been thoroughly explored a complete llst will be published. A number of species were collected that were new to this portion of Canada and a few that are extremely rare. Among the most interesting may be mentioned Aquilegia brevis- Rare species. tyla, Hook. in two localities on tho Severn River; Nymphea odorata Ait. Var. minor, Sims, growing in profusion between Severn and Trout Lakes. Sisymbrium humile, C. A. Meyer, was found a short distance from the junction of the Fuwn and Sovern Rivers, growing in gravelly soil; and along the coust, between Fort Severn and York Factory specimons were collected of a specios supposed by Watson to be Sisymbrium humifusim, Hook., and has been so numed provisionally by him. This species has not been formil before on this continent, although reported from Greenlund.
A peculiar form of Linum pererine, L., with white flowers and of procumbent habit was noted in one locality along the coast. Although supposed to be rare, Saxifraya Hirculus L., grew in great abundance between !jovern and York. Three specimens of Chicus Drummondii, Grr, var: acaulescens, Gr., were collected along the Lower Severn, not before noticed east of the Saskatchewan. Chrysanthenum arcticum, L., and Matricaria inodora, L., var. nana, grow as far south as the mouth of the Severn. A form of Primula, that appears to be intermediate between P. farinosa, L., and P. Mistassinica, Mx., but placed by Watson with the latter species, was found growing along the coast below high water mark. Scheuchzeria palustris, L., is of frequent occurrence throughout the country. Arctophila Laestadii, Rupt., a rare and beautiful species of grass, recorded but once before, is quite common along the coast.
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fort severn and york factory and froy roite from lake winnipeg to fort severn, between etters referring to Howard's
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