



Canoe Trips
in Western
Canada

CANOE TRIPS IN WESTERN CANADA

MANITOBA, SASKATCHEWAN, ALBERTA,
BRITISH COLUMBIA, YUKON



Canoe on Sand Beach

Department of the Interior
CANADA

HON. THOMAS G. MURPHY,
Minister

W. W. CORY, C.M.G.,
Deputy Minister

National Development Bureau
F. C. C. LYNCH, Director
OTTAWA, 1930

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR CANOEISTS

Build your camp fires small, close to the water's edge on a spot from which the leaves and moss have been scraped away. Drown it with water when leaving, and stir the ashes with a stick to make sure no live coals are left.

Leave your campsite clean. Bury all rubbish, bottles and cans. Never throw glass or tins in the water where others may bathe.

Learn how to swim, and first aid methods.

Do not sit or lie on bare ground.

Never run a rapid without first making sure that it can be done with safety. Examine it carefully for logs, boulders and other obstructions. Two canoes should not run a rapid at the same time.

Do not make your packs too heavy; about 40 pounds is a good average.

Avoid crossing large lakes or rivers in rough weather.

Make camp before dark. Erecting a tent, or preparing a meal by firelight is not easy.

Learn how to prepare simple meals over a campfire.

Unless familiar with wilderness travel never attempt a trip through uninhabited country without competent guides. Charts of the route, and good maps of the surrounding country are essentials.



WESTERN CANADA CANOE TRIPS

The waterways of western Canada, in days gone by, provided thoroughfares for the explorer, hunter and fur trader, and assisted materially in the unveiling of the mystery of the great country between lake Superior and the Pacific Ocean. Radiating from lake Winnipeg, are routes of romantic interest. On the great rivers of the prairies and the north one may relive the days of the pioneer. Nestling among the mountains of the coast are many lakes awaiting the dip of the canoeist's paddle, and rich in legend and story are the streams that wind through the hills. Here will be found sport for the angler and huntsman, and scenery that varies from that of the level plain to rugged, snow-capped mountains. The canoeist may follow the ancient water highways, or penetrate the lesser lakes and streams whose solitude is rarely disturbed.

Some of these routes have been charted and are briefly described on the following pages. The time needed to complete each route is given approximately as it is seldom that two parties travel at the same speed.



Entrance to Kingsmere Lake
Prince Albert National Park

Detailed descriptions with accompanying charts have been prepared, or are in course of preparation by the National Development Bureau for the convenience of the tourist. *Those for which detailed descriptions have been issued at date of publication are marked with an asterisk, thus **.

The descriptions have been compiled from information secured from various sources and are believed to be correct. Rapids and the condition of portages change decidedly in the various seasons of the year. Development operations, fires and other causes contribute their share to alter the condition of a route from season to season. Taking these factors into consideration, it is impossible to guarantee these descriptions as correct beyond the essential details.

MANITOBA

To the north and east of lake Winnipeg, will be found many water trails leading to seldom visited lakes and every variety of country, from open prairie to rock and water and heavily forested areas.

CROSS LAKE TO CROW DUCK LAKE AND RETURN

One hundred miles—Seven days

Tucked away in the southeast corner of Manitoba lies an interesting route running north from Ophir, on the Canadian National Railway, by Cross lake and the Whiteshell river to the Winnipeg river. Turning eastward it touches the Ontario boundary and continues southward by Crow Duck lake and Whiteshell lake back to the starting point. The traveller over this route will discover that the rushing streams of Manitoba are not all confined to its grain elevator chutes, and besides rippling wheat fields the province also possesses many rippling lakes.

LAKE WINNIPEG TO GOD'S LAKE AND ISLAND LAKE

Three hundred and fifty miles—Thirty days

Eastward from the northern extremity of lake Winnipeg a series of lakes and streams take the canoeist through a barely explored region extending to the Ontario boundary. The route leads along Playgreen lake to Norway House and on by the Echimamish river to Oxford House on the lake of the same name. From this point the course turns southward to God's lake and on to well named Island lake, where the surface is dotted with thousands of islands of varying size and form. So numerous are these islands that it has been estimated they approximate in area that of the water.

BERENS RIVER TO PORT SEVERN*

Seven hundred and fifty miles—Fifty days

Adventure and romance are linked with the name of Hudson Bay and it is the mecca to which the venturesome canoeist turns when looking for a trip out of the ordinary. The routes leading to it are varied and approach it from the east, south and west. An interesting one from the latter direction is via the Berens and Severn rivers. From lake Winnipeg the Berens river is followed to a chain of lakes and streams extending some hundreds of miles eastward from the Ontario boundary. Many of these lakes are large; at least three of them are over forty miles in length. The upper Severn river is followed to Severn lake where the route detours by Trout lake and the Fawn river, rejoining the Severn lower down and following it to Fort Severn. The route leads through a wilderness region where game and fish abound but portages are numerous and one needs to be well equipped for the strenuous journey.

NORWAY HOUSE TO YORK FACTORY

Three hundred and seventy-five miles—Twenty-five days

The Hayes river, which this route follows, has been the avenue of communication between the northern part of Hudson bay and the interior. By it the Hudson's Bay Company brought from the bay annually the great quantity of goods used for the fur trade of the whole interior country, and it is still used for the more limited communication that is maintained between lake Winnipeg and the bay.

From lake Winnipeg the route follows the Nelson river to the Echimamish river which is then followed eastward to Oxford lake and island-studded Knee lake. Ten miles beyond is Swampy lake, a narrow strip of water and the last lake on the route. Beyond this lake the river is a labyrinth of islands for nearly twenty miles, and the current is broken by a great number of rapids, all of which, however, may be run by boats. The trip ends at York Factory on Hudson bay.

THE PAS TO PORT NELSON*

Six hundred and forty-four miles—Thirty-two days

The last link in a canoe route from the far side of the Rocky mountains to Hudson bay, takes one through a region formerly occupied by Indian trappers and hunters. The discovery of copper and gold ores has attracted many prospectors to the district and evidence of their operations are particularly evident in the vicinity of Wekusko lake. Pike and pickerel may be caught while the hunter enjoys good sport with both large and small game. Experienced guides are indispensable for a trip of this nature.

The route leads through Reed, Sandy, Wekusko and many other lakes before junction is made at Split lake with the Nelson which is then followed down to Port Nelson.

SASKATCHEWAN AND ALBERTA

The great rivers of Western Canada offer much of interest and novelty and at the same time, routes which can be made long or short as fancy dictates. Portages past rapids and falls are just frequent enough to provide a change of exercise and prevent monotony.

JASPER TO ATHABASKA LANDING*

Three hundred and fifty miles—Twelve days

The canoeist who follows the Athabaska river from Jasper to Athabaska Landing will graduate from the novice class if he has not already done so. The first part of the journey is through the mountains and foothills, then follow long clear stretches of river and portions where the islands are thickly dotted, splitting the current into many channels. There are quite a number of rapids but these are of a character that need cause no alarm to careful canoeists. Several sizeable streams are tributary to this portion of the Athabaska and open up a way to regions of excellent fishing and sport.

LOVETT TO ENTWISTLE

Two hundred miles—Ten days

The Pembina river carries the canoeist through a region wooded with jackpine, spruce and poplar. Trout, grayling and jackfish are plentiful, also geese, teal and mallards. No portages, good camp sites and unsurpassed scenery add to the enjoyment of this trip.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE TO EDMONTON

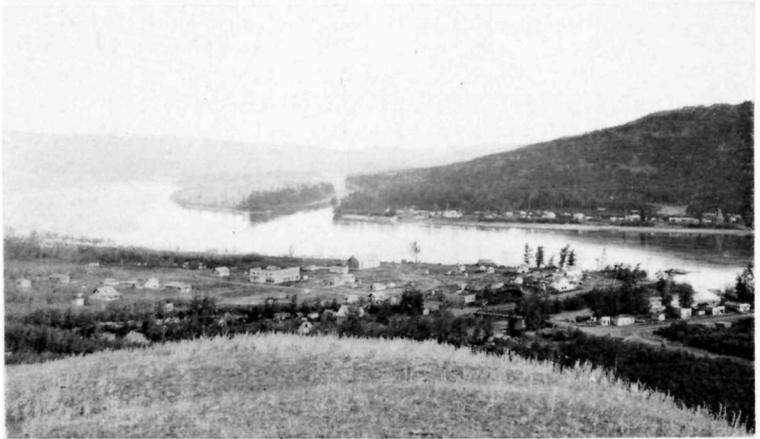
Two hundred and fifty miles—Ten days

Those who have taken the trip down the Saskatchewan river, report that while it is an enjoyable trip it is also strenuous.

PEACE RIVER TO McMURRAY

Seven hundred miles—Twenty days

The Peace River carries the canoeist northward past Fort Vermilion and Red River Post, then along the southern boundary of Wood Buffalo Park and on to lake Athabaska. Crossing this lake the Athabaska river is ascended southerly to McMurray.



Peace River

Flowing by Mountain, Wood and Prairie

McMURRAY TO THE PAS*

Seven hundred and sixty-three miles—Thirty-six days

Following the Churchill river and a string of lakes and streams, the canoeist passes through many waterways and treads many of the trails worn by the fur traders and Indians for hundreds of years. The route crosses the northern parts of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and though it was once well travelled it is now difficult to secure guides that are familiar with the route from end to end. The most satisfactory procedure is to make the trip in stages, engaging guides from post to post.

The Clearwater river is first followed, then the Methy portage is crossed to Methy lake. The Methy river is followed to Peter Pond and Isle à la Crosse lake, then the Churchill river with its many lakelike expansions forms the course for the next two hundred miles. The route leaves the Churchill at Frog portage and enters a chain of lakes and streams leading to Cumberland House and the Saskatchewan river which winds down to The Pas.

Many interesting spots are located on this route and trout, pike and pickerel may be caught. Game and wild-fowl may also be had in season.

LITTLE TROUT, CREAN AND HEART LAKE ROUTE, PRINCE ALBERT NATIONAL PARK*

Seventy-five miles—Six days

The ideal canoe trip is hard to define, but the canoeist who is fortunate in having an opportunity to cruise through the new park, which has recently been opened up in Saskatchewan, will be in an excellent position to give an opinion as to what the main features should be. The Park is reached by way of Prince Albert, which is on the Canadian National Railways and is the principal outfitting point for northern Saskatchewan.

At Primeau landing on Waskesiu lake the canoe is launched and the south shore followed to the Narrows where spruce sentineled points thrust out to meet birch and poplar crowned counterparts. Long sweeping beaches invite one to tarry but the mystery of the unknown draws one on to further exploration and the forestry cabin at the head of the lake.

A mile and a half beyond is Kingsmere lake and here again sweeping beaches greet one. Not wishing to miss any of the pleasures of the cruise, a side trip is made across two short portages and a small lake to the southern end of a lakelike bay extending from midway of the western shore of the main lake. Little Trout cabin is passed at the northern extremity of the lake and the course continued down the eastern shore to another cabin and the trail to Crean Lake, which lake stretches eastward for ten miles. Circling this lake, poking into numerous inviting bays, the returns journey is made by Heart lake and a 500-yard portage to Waskesiu lake. A five mile paddle from this portage brings one back to the dock where the trip started.

Prince Albert National Park covers over one thousand three hundred square miles, is largely covered with green timber and contains many beautiful lakes in addition to the ones touched by the foregoing cruise. The lakes abound in fish and the timber areas constitute excellent breeding ground for game. The carrying of firearms in National parks is restricted and this makes "shooting" with a camera more certain of successful accomplishment.



The Narrows, Waskesiu Lake
Ideal Canoeing Water

**PELICAN RIVER AND LAVALLÉE LAKE ROUTE, PRINCE ALBERT
NATIONAL PARK***

One hundred miles—Ten days

An extension of the Little Trout lake trip is open to the canoeist wishing to see more of the beauty spots in Prince Albert National Park. From Primeau landing the former route is followed to the forestry cabin at the north end of Kingsmere lake. Six portages, two of which are long, and five intervening small lakes lead the way to Lavallée lake. The direct course cuts across the southern end of this lake to the Paquin lake portage, but time should be taken to explore this nine mile lake.

From Paquin lake the course is westward to the fork of the Pelican river where a turn southward is made along a shallow, willow-lined stream, which old timers state is navigable by canoe until low water time in the fall. This stream leads to Whitefish lake, from which a portage leads to Blade lake. A series of short portages and small lakes form that portion of the route which leads back to Kingsmere lake. Here the former route is rejoined and the route retraced to the dock at Waskesiu lake.

Other and longer routes are available starting from Primeau landing and it is possible to extend the Lavallée lake route northward to Smoothstone lake and beyond to form a junction at Snake lake with the canoe route from McMurray to the Pas via the Churchill river. Another route to the Churchill leaves Waskesiu lake at its eastern end, crosses Montreal lake and follows the Montreal river to Lake la Ronge and the Churchill river.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

The canoe routes of British Columbia provide many features that are novel and characteristic. The mountains, no doubt, contribute largely to this and provide picturesque scenery for many of the trips. Cruises are open to the traveller wishing to stay in civilization, as well as to the one desiring a holiday on lakes where the paddle of the white man has as yet rarely been dipped.

PRINCE GEORGE TO PEACE RIVER*

Five hundred miles—Twenty-five days

Cruising from Summit lake down the Parsnip and Peace rivers to the interesting town of Peace River, while a long trip, is accomplished with a minimum of labour. The first stage of the journey is covered by freighting canoe and outfit thirty-two miles to Summit lake. Crooked river, McLeod lake, the Pack and Parsnip rivers are all traversed before junction with the Peace river is effected at Findlay Forks. The journey down the Peace takes one through the heart of the Rockies and many interesting spots may be visited a short distance from the river in addition to those passed as the descent of the stream is made.

From the head of Rocky Mountain Canyon a portage by wagon road leads to Hudson Hope a distance of fourteen miles, where the journey on the river is resumed. A few miles below

Hudson Hope "The Gates" are reached and farewells may be said to the rocky walls of the mountain section. During the remaining two hundred miles of the run that lies between Hudson Hope and Peace river the old Hudson's Bay Company's settlement of Fort St. John and Dunvegan are passed.

Good fishing for trout, pike and whitefish may be enjoyed on the way.

OOTSALAKE*—(Round Trip)

Two hundred miles—Fifteen days

The charm of British Columbia scenery is well displayed to the canoeist travelling over the route which circles through Whitesail, Eutsuk, Tetachuck lakes and the Intahtah and Ootsabunkut rivers back to the starting point. Leaving Burns lake on the railway the outfit is transported by motor truck to Ootsa lake. No settlements are encountered but the wilderness welcomes one and, as the canoe glides through the clear waters, provides snowcapped mountains, glaciers and heavily timbered areas for entertainment. Deer, moose, bear, caribou and goats, duck, geese, ptarmigan and grouse are some of the subjects offered to the sportsman. On Whitesail lake swans are plentiful but enjoy strict protection.

STUART, TAKLA AND BABINE LAKES*

Five hundred and sixty-four miles—Twenty-one days

Journeying up the Stuart river from its junction with the Nechako, and on into Stuart lake, one passes the historic Fort St. James built over one hundred and twenty years ago by the Hudson's Bay Company. Six miles across the lake, a limestone peak towering several thousand feet above the water, rewards the energetic climber with a wonderful panorama of lakes, forests, and snow capped mountains. Many islands in the lake provide shelter and camp sites. Interesting Indian villages are situated on the eastern shore and at the end of the lake. The route leads on through Trembleur lake, Middle river (which has been called the sportsman's paradise) and on to Takla lake. This mighty lake is over seventy miles in length, and many interesting days may be spent travelling along the eastern shore and returning by the western.

From the lower western end of Stuart lake a portage leads to Babine lake, which is over 100 miles in length and varies from two to eight miles in width. The scenery throughout the district is remarkably beautiful, and with the excellent fishing and hunting to be found offers considerable attraction to the pleasure seeker.

BOWRON AND SPECTACLE LAKE

One hundred and sixty miles—Twelve days

To the party looking for a district with excellent hunting and fishing possibilities and that has not been over-run by vacationists, the route through Bowron, Spectacle and Isaac lakes offers an opportunity. The country traversed is mountainous and the scenery fascinating. Few settlers have located in this region, consequently the canoeist will find virgin territory for exploration.



Unveiled by Morning Mists

The Canoeist is Not Always First to Reach the Water

TROPHY RIVER

One hundred miles—Ten days

Leaving Dome Creek on the Fraser river, a ten mile run takes one into the Torphy river whose windings are followed past many riffles where trout and salmon lie, to a small creek leading into Pass lake. The return to the starting point is made over the same route.

PRINCE GEORGE TO QUESNEL

One hundred miles—Ten days

As one progresses on this trip the hills get higher and the river narrower and many interesting canyons are passed. Scenery, fishing and thrills await the canoeist at every point.

QUESNEL LAKE TO 100 MILE HOUSE

Two hundred miles—Sixteen days

The Quesnel lake region is an excellent one for the fisherman and hunter, while the scenery is also very interesting. The lake is Y-shaped with arms running north and east. At the western end the hills rise only a few hundred feet but as one approaches the north or east arm they rise to seven or eight thousand feet. From the end of the last arm a portage leads to Hobson lake, from which a portage leads to Clearwater lake. The Clearwater river is then followed to Bridge creek which is followed through Mahood lake and beautiful Canim lake to the journey's end.

MABEL LAKE AND SHUSWAP RIVER

One hundred miles—Five days

Surrounded by high mountains Shuswap lake offers a variety of scenery. Excellent fishing may be enjoyed, especially at the mouth of the Adams river and in the neighbourhood of Sicamous. Trolling for trout gives good results. The main lake divides into three long arms, all affording enjoyable exploration trips. Portaging into Adams lake, which is about 40 miles in length, similar good fishing and scenery greet the explorer.

CANAL FLATS TO UNITED STATES BOUNDARY

One hundred miles—Six days

A splendid scenic route leads from Columbia lake southward to the United States boundary. There are many camping spots and few portages on the way. Many unusual and interesting sites greet the paddler as his canoe rounds the bends of the river.

FIELD TO CANAL FLATS

One hundred miles—Seven days

The route along the Kicking Horse, Beaverfoot and Kootenay rivers provides enough thrills to satisfy the most exacting canoe man. The scenery is unsurpassed and camp sites and trout fishing are available all along the line.

CANAL FLATS TO GOLDEN

One hundred and twenty miles—Ten days

From Columbia northward through beautiful lake Windermere, this route follows the Columbia river. The scenery is beautiful as one travels through low foothills backed by the Rockies on one side and the Selkirks on the other. Many camping spots are available and hotels convenient for those who do not wish to sleep under canvas.

GOLDEN TO REVELSTOKE

One hundred and ten miles—Eight days

Following the Columbia river the canoeist will encounter many canyons and a great deal of white water. The country traversed is mountainous and while wild fowl are plentiful on the river and the many sloughs, fish are not.

COWICHAN LAKE AND RIVER

Thirty miles—Three days

An enjoyable short trip which is best taken during May or June is the one through Cowichan lake and down the river to the sea. Indians and their canoes are usually secured at Duncan and the journey is made by road or rail. The claim has been made that the Cowichan is the most beautifully wooded, flower and fern bedecked river known to anglers, and is not anywhere excelled either from a scenic point of view, or for the gameness of its trout.

YUKON TERRITORY

McPHERSON TO FORT YUKON, ALASKA*

Six hundred miles—Thirty days

Paddling within the Arctic Circle is not one's usual idea of the far north. The route from the McKenzie river to Fort Yukon offers this new and novel experience without undue dangers. Planning for a trip of this nature demands more than ordinary care, however, as the whole route is well out of contact with settlement. Edmonton is the outfitting point and all needed supplies should be secured before embarking, as no other sources can be depended on en route, although staple supplies can be obtained at Crow River and Rampart House, midway on the journey. The exigencies of the trail call for condensed provisions and a minimum outfit, all unnecessary weight and bulk should be eliminated from the supplies.

The journey from Edmonton to McPherson is accomplished by rail and steamboat, and as the steamers only make the trip twice a year and during the midsummer months, the dates of sailing should be ascertained well in advance.

From McPherson, the first thirty miles of the journey is down stream to the delta and on to the mouth of the Rat river, where the course turns to the west, and for the next sixty miles ascends the Rat river, then leads over McDougall pass. The balance of the route, mostly on the Bell and Porcupine rivers is down stream. Guides are necessary from McPherson to Bell river, as the ascent of the Rat river from Destruction City (the name given the rapids where serious obstacles to progress caused the Klondike stampede to abandon great quantities of supplies) to McDougall pass, is difficult. On reaching the Bell river, the guides may be permitted to return overland as any other swift water or rapids can be navigated by careful canoeemen. The trip ends at Fort Yukon, just a short distance north of the Arctic Circle, and from this point the return is made by river boat, rail and coastal steamer.

CANOE CRUISE OUTFIT

The ideal canoe outfit is light and compact, and these features are usually attained by avoiding duplicate articles and non-essentials when selecting its various parts. The following suggested outfit, an adaptation of ones used by canoeists who have covered many miles of Canadian water trails, may be altered to suit the needs of each party and the character of the trip undertaken. The outfit as listed is seemingly a large one, but by making a careful selection of each article the whole can be packed in a surprisingly small space and should not be excessive in weight.

Dunnage bags and pack sacks are best for packing and make for easier portaging. Boxes and loose bundles are troublesome on a long carry.

CAMP OUTFIT

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1 Canoe—Not under 16 feet. | 1 Tent—7' by 7', preferably silk,
water and mosquito proof. |
| 3 Paddles. | 1 Ground Cloth. |
| 2 Kneeling Cushions. | 1 Camera and Films. |
| 2 Tracking Ropes. | Mosquito netting and dope. |
| 1 Axe. | Map of route (keep in section of
auto or bicycle inner tube,
tied securely at both ends.) |
| 1 Candle Lantern. | |
| 4-6 Blankets. | |
| 2 Flannelette Sheets. | |

COOK OUTFIT

(For two persons)

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1 Coffee Pot. | 2 Knives. |
| 3 Saucepans or Pails and covers to
fit. | 2 Forks. |
| 1 Frying Pan. | 1 Large Knife and Fork. |
| 1 Can Opener. | 2 Tins of Matches. |
| 3 Plates. | 2 Candles. |
| 2 Cups (Granite). | 1 Bar Laundry Soap. |
| 2 Deep Saucers or Small Bowls. | 1 Dish Cloth. |
| 3 Tea Spoons. | 1 Dish Towel. |
| 2 Dessert Spoons. | 1 Large Cooking Spoon. |

FIRST AID KIT

Bandages, Adhesive, Ointment, Quinine Capsules or other personal remedies.

REPAIR KIT

Can Marine Glue.
Canvas Patches.
Few Tacks and Nails.

Coil Fine Wire
Twine.

SEWING KIT

Needles—Large and Small.
Thread and Yarn.

Buttons, Safety Pins.
Small Scissors.

FOOD SUPPLIES

(Two Persons for five days)

This list will bear modification according to the locality selected for the trip, and individual tastes. For a longer trip increase the quantities accordingly and add dry beans, cured meats, etc.

5 Loaves Bread.	1 lb. Cornmeal.
1 lb. Butter.	2 lbs. Flour.
1 lb. Lard or Cooking Oil.	$\frac{1}{4}$ lb. Baking Powder.
1 lb. Oatmeal or Rolled Oats.	1 Jar Honey or Jam.
$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Coffee.	1 pkge. Pancake Flour.
$\frac{1}{4}$ lb. Tea.	1 tin Maple Syrup.
3 lbs. Sugar.	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Salt.
5 Small Cans Condensed Milk.	1 Small Tin of Pepper.
1 Bottle Pickles.	6 Soup Tablets.
1 lb. Rice.	$\frac{1}{4}$ Peck Potatoes.
1 lb. Dried Apples, Peaches or Apricots.	2 Tins Sardines.
1 lb. Prunes.	2 Small Cans Beans.
2 lbs. Bacon.	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Raisins.

Waterproof provision bags should be used for all foods and these safely packed in waterproof dunnage bags as an added precaution.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

1 Felt Hat.	3 Handkerchiefs.
1 Sweater or Mackinaw.	1 Pocket Knife.
1 Rubber Sheet or Poncho.	1 Waterproof Match Safe.
1 Pair Duck Trousers.	1 Compass.
1 Pair Wool Trousers.	Shaving Brush and Soap, Razor, Comb and Brush, Talcum, Mir- ror, etc.
1 Wool Army Shirt.	1 Bar Toilet Soap (floating).
1 Khaki Shirt.	2 Towels.
1 Suit Light Underwear.	Fishing Rod and Tackle.
1 Suit Wool Underwear.	Tobacco, Pipe and Cigars.
2 Pairs Heavy Socks.	
1 Pair Leather Boots.	
1 Pair Canvas Shoes, rubber soles.	

The above outfit should be duplicated by every member of the party—part to be worn and the balance packed in waterproof dunnage bags.

All dunnage bags should be packed so that the most used articles are on top, and in loading the canoe the cook outfit and provisions should be easy of access without disturbing the rest of the duffle when stopping for lunch.

* * * *

This booklet is one of a series of four which have been issued by the National Development Bureau, Department of the Interior, Ottawa. Should you not find on the preceding pages a trip to suit your choice or convenience a copy of any of the other booklets will be sent on request. The titles of the booklets in the complete series are as follows:—

Canoe Trips in the Maritime Provinces.

Canoe Trips in Quebec.

Canoe Trips in Ontario.

Canoe Trips in Western Canada.

PRINTED BY
F. A. ACLAND, KING'S PRINTER
OTTAWA, CANADA