

1969 SUPPLEMENT to EASTMAIN

Supplementing: Material on Mistassini and Eastmain from Neoskweskau to the Bay

Additional Material on: Wabassinon - Lake Baudeau - Shigami Route toward Nichequon. Route from Shigami to Upper Eastmain. Upper Eastmain to Neoskweskau. And alternate route through Prosper Gorge.

Mistassini Lake --

Campsite just around bend from fishing camp at top of Abatagush Bay is terribly dirty -- was used in '64 and as a dinner stop in '66. Cabin on southeast corner of large island just above was not found in '69 (on '68 notes)

We used the '68 lunch site, but tent sites are terrible.

To North of Rupert Mouth --

Opening above that used in '68 is larger and easier to get through. Next opening also wide and easy. Lunch site on east side of little island, but no campsite.

Third opening is largest of bunch.

We ran north a couple miles and had dinner on a little rocky island in a bay just behind first little island on map.

Headed out north of little island on bearing of 330° and hit mainland just north of Rupert. Crossing took 2 hours or better -- 6:00 to 8:00 pm.

Campsite on sand beach just in bay to north of land fall. Only two old Indian sites -- held 4 tents -- one more bushed out. Poor, but worked.

North of Mouth of Rupert to Wabassinon River Mouth --

Looks to be a campsite on northwest corner of large island 2 miles north of previous night.

Definitely one on west side of 2nd small island 2 miles above that. Cabin on northeast shore of reasonably deep bay above small islands, probably an outpost of Rupert fishing camps.

Several campsite on way into Wabassinon portage -- also one at start of portage -- one at top is cleaner and more spacious, however -- we used top one.

Portage on left just as river enters bay, about 50 yards, well cleared, goes around very heavy rapids -- one trout taken from rapids in afternoon and two more in morning. Good swimming hole at top of rapids off a rock ledge.

Many places on west shore of Mistassini with rock shoals and shallows that have to be watched -- approach to Wabassinon is shallow and rocky also.

Wabassinon Mouth to 4th Portage on Wabassinon River --

Just above campsite is a low falls. Portaged over left side of island in center of stream -- just a lift over.

Current noticeable, but not great on stretch straight north. A couple poor Indian sites along way.

At branch to northeast country is burned and both sides of river are sandy banks with stands of jackpine.

About 2-3 miles up stream portage on right a small rapid. About 30 yards up a ridge and down the other side. Loading for only one canoe at a time at the upper end.

Just above, 200-300 yards, is another portage, 75 yards on right around a longer rapid. Excellent Indian site at head of carry.

Unloading for only 1-2 canoes, but loading easy. Grave of small child on bank above unloading spot -- carry easy through sparse jackpine.

Stream widens and then goes through a marshy area with stronger current than before.

About 2 miles above marshy area is another carry around a longer rapid, on left; 150 yards through jackpine again. Excellent Indian site at head of carry. Trout in rapids, but not plentiful. Grassy landing at top.

Fourth Carry to Stream to Baudeau --

Less than a mile above previous campsite portage on right around short rapids. Grassy landing at start -- 50 yards. Loading for only 1-2 canoes at top.

About 2 miles up -- just above pond-like area there is a short rapid with a trail on right. About 30 yards, but easily pulled up on right.

Several small rapids or swifts to paddle up all the way up to the Baudeau portage.

Just above pull-up is a pond -- river leaves on right side rather than straight ahead.

After split -- Indian takes left channel -- sort of a T shaped event -- on right, very soon, there is another portage -- 150 yards -- grassy landing at both ends and campgrounds at both ends -- one at top is probably better.

At narrows on stretch north we pulled up 2 short places just a little too steep to paddle.

Good lunch site on south side of a small island in last wide stretch -- on a smooth rock kitchen area.

Portage to Baudeau leaves just after last turn to north is made on a grassy landing -- 500 yards with last 50 very wet. Campsites at both ends, but one at start is infinitely better -- drawing water at lower one would be a real chore.

Fine view of high mountains to east just after portage.

Indian campsite on left in pond before stream narrows looks better than one at foot of carry.

Stream twists and turns with shallows and a few rocks.

Just before next wide stretch, portage on right around chute and rocky rapids. 250 yards. Campsite at top good. No fish found in rapids.

Stream to Baudeau to North End of Baudeau --

Little tiny riffles run after carry down to pond.

Just after pond a short carry on right -- 30 yards around a chute.

Puts in just above a ledge that reaches across the river. We handed the canoes across ledge on right shore -- maybe could be run, but has sharp stone. Landing at start of carry very shallow and rocky.

Small S-shaped run follows

After next pond, portage takes out on right, apparently around a falls -- pond below can be seen from top, but trail goes off to right around the back side of a hill and avoids a whole stretch of river. 1200 yards -- excellent trail. Campsites at both ends with one at foot more spacious.

After a long thin pond there is a runnable chute to next pond -- chute has good swells and below is a rock dodging area -- but an eddy exists between the two.

At end of pond just before Baudeau there is a steep falls -- lifted over on right about 10 yards -- to right of falls about 30 yards. Surveyor's camp at south end of Baudeau -- very large Indian site on left about 400 yards north of falls. Baudeau very attractive with high mountains to east. Campsite on rock point about 2 miles south of river on left. Tent sites far back on an old Indian winter camp -- kitchen on rocks in front. Very badly grown up, but useable.

Baudeau to First Rapid on Shigami --

River cuts through top of lake -- paddle past a marsh toward solid land before turning right. Map says north shore of river is marsh -- marsh comes first. -- River's north shore is good solid land.

Two winter Indian camps on north shore -- 2nd quite large -- another on north shore after large island.

Current is slack until a couple miles above the island and then strengthens enough to farce paddling the shore.

At first rapid, about 12 miles up, river splits. Right channel is smaller, but ends in a 6-7 foot falls with no portage -- Left channel is main river. Portage at rapids on right, about 40 yards, with windfalls and poorly used. Indian must run just left of center coming down. Might be lined up on right shore, but easier to carry. Campsite at start of carry ok. Area nearby is burned -- plenty of dry wood. Swimming on sand beach at start. Lots of bugs and no fish.

First Rapids on Shigami to Shigami Turn --

Above portage river runs smooth around bends to wide stretch flowing east-west -- rapid too steep to climb comes at eastern end. Portage on right 50 yards poorly used -- Indian must run rapid. Small campsite for 1 tent at least at top.

Around bend is another swift too steep to climb -- lined up on right for a fair distance -- the lining can continue on right or river can be crossed and lined on left.

Just around next bend is a very heavy rapid -- portaged 100 yards on right. Well used trail. Small campsite at top in a burned area -- no shelter. Good lunch site at foot. Indian probably does not run this one -- there is a canoe minus canvas in bush on left shore.

At river split 2 miles above portage on main river on right 250 yards -- well walked except start is a little vague -- Campsite at top in burned area -- very exposed.

Then follow a long series of pull ups and short paddles -- we did all on right -- takes a good while to line up with alder along bank in a good number of spots.

River runs clear to turn to north. Possible campsite in jackpine just to right at start of creek, but we used an old Indian site just past 1st island in creek on right up a steep hill, also in a stand of jackpine. OK for a night, but nothing to get excited about.

Bugs were terrible all day -- mostly black flies on all portages and at every landing. Weather sticky and muggy with an east wind.

Turn on Shigami to Top of Shigami Rapids --

About half a mile above campsite was a large Indian winter camp --

lots of beaver skulls, a dug out pit for a house, three dog houses, etc.

Just above was an ancient winter camp with a couple canoes cached.

One short pull-up between camps on left.

After turn to east there is an almost continuous pull up on left shore. Water runs too shallow to paddle. Tracking is mostly quite easy, however, with banks clear enough to walk and mostly tracking just shallow water.

About a mile and a half up there is a portage 100 yards on left around steep rapids and a falls. Coming down Indian puts in below falls and runs rest, but portages coming up. There would be a good campground right at falls.

Just above is an old winter camp -- looks like same Indian as below with same house arrangement.

Short paddle and then pull up on left again -- hardest of the bunch -- to a creek mouth -- paddle across to start of carry around rapids above. Excellent site at start of carry.

Portage 200 yards to pond -- campsite at upper end also.

Paddle across pond to continuation of trail -- 900 yards to an L-shaped body of water -- a widening of the stream.

Paddle left and then up creek as far as possible to next carry -- 800 yards to another pond. Campsite about 200 yards from end -- water drawn from creek 25 yards away. Several trails through a muskeg area in middle and there is also a trail from a high water take-out on creek. Carry ends in a burn.

Next carry slightly to left across pond. 600 yards ending in a sloppy bog for last 50 yards.

Then paddle to east end of pond for last carry 400 yards to bay off river. Campsite at head of carry is OK. There could be one made at start also.

Top of Shigami Rapids to Lake over Height of Land --

Two Indian campsites on left after river is reached -- both look good.

Another about 2 miles farther up on left -- also looks good. A couple little swifts have to be lined for short distances because of shallow water.

River all the way up to departure from it has an esker on either or both banks -- lots of stands of jackpine and lots of possible campsites -- most attractive section of the river by far.

At a narrows about 6 miles up portage on right around heavy short rapid 40 yards -- small campsite at top of carry.

Another mile and a half up river turns right and rapids can be seen ahead (broken canoe in bush at foot). Keep going straight ahead into a bay to portage on a sand beach -- 400 yards -- good campsites at both ends -- one at upper end is larger, and has a view of top of rapids, but is more open.

Less than a mile ahead a tiny creek comes in on left over a rocky bed -- too narrow for a canoe. Then a small point just out from left shore, and portage leaves river on left. Another rapid higher up can be heard in the distance. Portage 400 yards to a pond. Campsites at both ends, but one at upper is much better. Some wet areas in middle when trail passes close to stream.

Paddle to right of end of portage through narrows and as far as possible. Portage 800 yards to bay off lake above -- avoids ponds that might be used along the way. Campsite about 2/3 of

way across with water drawn from wide spot in creek nearby -- some wet spots.

Paddle through lake very confusing with islands and rocks. Follow right shore to narrows and then north shore to find small creek to next lake. Head northeast to creek and follow up creek about 600 yards -- rapids can be heard ahead -- to portage on left.

Carry 1200 yards to next lake. Trail goes over height of land -- not very high. A good bit of wet area with a swampy bay in middle for about 100 yards. Campsite at top of carry much better than one at foot that is back from water a good distance. Pretty good swimming right in front of site.

Height of Land Lake to Junction of Two Branches out of Lake --

Portage out of lake just to right of creek that falls out -- about 50 yards right of creek -- About 300 yards. A little wet in spots.

River is very narrow leaving to left and very soon portage on right 50 yards around rapids. Trail is much less used than previous trails.

Leave next lake by north branch of river. About a half mile before river leaves lake, there is a fair sized Indian camp on right. Portage out starts in a bay to right of head of river -- 400 yards -- Also not as well used as before. Small campsite at head of trail.

Calm stretch of river follows and then starts breaking over shallows and is very rocky -- three portages were taken all on right side on no trail at all -- walking not too bad, but would be better up on ridge above river.

Campsite on left about 500 yards below junction of two branches of river in a stand of jackpine -- OK, but river is shallow.

South branch of river would be worse -- head needs a portage and so does foot and volume of water is much less.

Junction to Half Way Down Narrow Stretch of River --

Right after campsite rapids proved to be too shallow and rocky to do anything with -- carried 600-700 yards on right mostly through jackpine to point where stream from north comes in.

Two more portages on right before wide section of river -- both around rapids with rocks across the foot -- each about 150 yards -- very little to be run on way down.

Wide section goes for a couple miles and then first couple rapids can be run.

Then falls and rapids start. First drop portages on right by taking a little stream in behind an island on right -- about 30 yards.

Then on right rest of cascade is carried about 400 yards. Falls are spectacular.

Little run right below and then a calm stretch between high hills. A couple small runs and then another cascade -- campsite at top on rock and moss in a stand of young jackpine.

Halfway to Foot of Rapids --

Several short rapids after portage about 400 yards on left out of campsite. Then a rapid that makes a curve to left, with lower half shallow and tricky.

Right below another rapid too stiff at foot portaged on right 250

yards mostly on rock.

Very soon a very short chute of 3 feet or so run easily, but a falls is just below. Portage on right just at foot of chute 400 yards on top of ridge in jackpine mostly. Drop to river too steep to carry canoes with one person.

Falls is a perfectly straight drop and most spectacular of river. Best view is about 2/3 of way along carry or from opposite shore at foot of carry -- up a steep bank.

Rapids to foot then all run. Last one marked on map run to left of island and is a short steep pitch with a rock in center of foot --- run to left near steep wall.

After that a series of horseraces for a mile to wide part of river. Campsite on left just before finish of horseraces in a stand of jackpine. Good for everything except depth of water in river in front.

Foot of Rapids to First Portage on Eastmain ---

Some current in river the rest of the way to Eastmain.

Two pretty falls come in on south side where stream from Lac Sorbier enters.

Portage at falls on right channel, left side, about 30 yards, mostly down hill. Branch being portaged is more attractive than left side.

Good current in Eastmain, particularly through narrows.

First portage on right about 30 yards from start of drop in a bay sort of eddy. Goes straight up a hill. Trail poorly used. 75 yards. Puts in in a bay off the 8 foot chute. We made a campground using a rocky point just below as a kitchen and tent sites up on ridge behind -- terrible.

First Portage to One Mile below Second Portage --

Low says next rapid has a 400 yard portage on north shore -- we found only vestiges of such a trail.

Run right shore -- very tight to shore avoiding one rock about 10 yards from head of run and then into large eddy to right just above a small falls.

Lift over small falls on rock at right, paddle to next bare rock, and carry 50 yards on right, mostly on rock to foot of falls.

It is possible to put in after carrying only 20 yards and then run a chute just to right of major swells, but it is really too steep.

Campsite on right 1 mile below on point just as river widens.

Really only a 1-tent Indian site, but we enlarged it and it worked, but was cramped. Landing on sand on western point of land.

Below Second Portage to Rapid below Palms Portage --

Lake expanse for a couple miles follows.

When river narrows there is a reasonable rapid run to right of a small island toward the north shore, next to the island, and then down the main river. Watch rocks and ledges below the island -- they can be avoided easily running blind.

Small swift when river swings north just before Mountain 1801 Surveyor's camp on left shore opposite Mountain 1801.

We took long way around large islands --- sounded like short cut had a rough rapid at start of it. Territory on right just in this area would make excellent campsites.

Afterwards land becomes low through islands at top of bend -- we did not quite make full circuit and cut right behind a point and to east of last large island -- a couple spots of fast water, but that was all.

Just before sections of river join there is a good rapid run to left of center.

Just as sections join there is a good camping area on left shore. Palms Portage in bay behind western tip of long island. 1000 yards. Poorly used. Damp in spots, but not bad. 2-tent Indian site at top of carry. Puts into a pond.

Second half takes out about 15 yards short of left end of pond and goes up a slight hill. 250 yards. Also poorly used. 2-tent Indian site at foot. Puts into a creek.

Paddle right, down creek -- a little swift water and a few rocks -- to main river.

Cascade is really spectacular -- over bald rock. Supposed to fall 55 feet -- some in a straight falls.

About 3 miles below is a heavy rapid. Apparently Indian goes up and down in his freighter -- but too heavy for our canoes.

Lots of beaver cuttings on left. Old portage was on right -- so that is where we will cut one.

Camped about 1/2 mile above rapid on left shore in partial old burn in stand of jackpine -- poor -- particularly steep descent to water.

Rapids below Palms to Top of Veneur Island --

Portage about 100 yards around rapid -- trail across was moss most of the way to just below last pitch -- cuts arc of point.

Small rapid below run on right.

Shigami lake route should enter here -- stream falls in in a rapid.

Turn to north and Sunday Portage follows immediately. Portage on right 150 yards. Reasonable trail.

Second branch comes in below in a lower rapid than at Sunday -- maybe some Indians run?

Rapid after bend to north, run down left shore -- stones at foot to be avoided.

Rapid before Kawatstakau River -- run was easy?

Portage at Kawatstakau River was very well used. Campground has room for 6-7 different large Indian tents. Trail much better used than others we have been over. On east side of rapid-like falls. Not followed any farther.

Rapid 4 miles below Kawatstakau run on right by sneaking around a point.

Rapid marked on map is a ledge -- ran opening on right side, but toward center where there were less swells. There is also an opening in ledge on right bank.

Rapid before Shigami run on left shore, sometimes moving out to center to avoid stones and run out in center.

Shigami enters with a shallow rapid. There may be a canoe stuck in the middle of the stones a couple hundred yards upstream.

Sloping rock areas on left just after Shigami enters.

Current slackens through islands 3 miles from Shigami, but otherwise has been good all day.

Campsite on right about 1/4 - 1/2 mile after tip of Veneur in an old surveyor's camp in a stand of birch. Very buggy, but possible for a night.

Note: Indian Route from Baudeau down Shigami is supposed to leave Shigami about half way between Baudeau and Eastmain from north-east section of area of river containing numerous islands. Supposed to be a portage from here to a small lake, then should follow a creek upstream to a larger lake, leaving that lake at northwest corner via a portage over a height of land to a lake just south of Eastmain, and then down creek into river just above Sunday Portage. This is the route Jarden missed on his '57 trip.

Veneur to Nasacauso --

Good rapid about half way down Veneur in narrows where river flows north -- run on left starting out toward center to get by a couple rocks -- cutting across swells below rocky point and then to left of large bald rock about 3/4 of the way down. Below rock move toward center watching for rocks and ledges.

Reasonably good current to section of islands about 5 miles from end and then it peters out.

Ress Gorge --

In high water it is possible to paddle right to Indian campsite on pond, cutting off 1st part of portage. Has no effect on rest of portage really.

Reoutfitting Area --

Right branch has a rapid just below stream to right that leads into water around Prosper. Rapid could be run easily more or less down center. Right below is a cascade or falls that would require a carry -- we did not get down as far as the falls. Stream to right might at one time have been used to get around Prosper, but is log choked about 25 yards in from river and is no longer serviceable.

Reoutfitting to Prosper --

There is an Indian trail around 1st rapid on left branch -- starting about 30 yards up creek on right side of rapid and carrying about 500 yards across point putting in after turn in river and below little shallows after rapid -- small campground about 75 yards from foot of portage. There is really unloading area for one canoe at a time, and loading for only 2 at a time.

There is a 2-tent Indian site on left just below entrance of other river after steepest of rapids on left branch (after portage).

Campsite at Prosper is quite good with tents in spruce and kitchen on rocks. Portage heads straight ahead after passing through spruce -- 60 yards. Trail to kitchen turns sharp left leaving spruce and has a little jog back into trees just before rocky area.

Prosper to Foot of Prosper Portage --

Eddy at Prosper is left on right, but at end of circular bay, run right shore for a very short while and then cross to left to avoid shallows and rocks on right.

1/2 mile below first rapid is run on left, starting out from shore 20-30 yards and then angling back to left shore. Look over first -- easier to walk back in burn than along shore. Fairly long walk after first swift water.

Then cliffs start on left. Run to eddy before 2nd rapid and look over from high rocky hills.

Extremely large swells. Run starts out from shore and angles back to left and runs 100 yards or more of really large swells. There is one little rocky ledge-like sticking out from left shore before falls.

Looks like right side would be better for running this last rapid. Less white water, although looks to be rocks jutting out from shore that would have to be rounded. Plenty of room at foot to cross to portage around falls.

Portage around falls best done from deepest bay just at foot of second rapid and before rocky ledge-like shallows. Cuts across point about 300-400 yards starting by rising up rocky slope and then finding an approach to right to drop to lower plateau and then to water through alder at end of last major swift. Area is all burned except last 15 yards, so walking is not too bad. Trail stays left of a high rock hill that separates trail from actual falls.

Falls is split in half by an island in the center -- west side is a pretty straight drop. East side a cascade. Then river runs in a narrow deep channel between rocky banks for another 200-300 yards that all must be carried. Best view of falls comes right down next to them or after portage looking back up -- with telephoto lens. From just below start of portage there is a good view of left side of Prosper Falls

About 1/2 mile below river narrows again and runs through a narrow rocky gorge. We went right around a peninsula and cut a portage across neck of peninsula to river -- about 150 yards. Easier than portaging on left shore which would be longer and harder. Walking is only fair for last part and area is green through which portage goes.

Below 2nd portage there is a small rapid run pretty much on right and in center.

1/4 mile below is a stronger one run on right.

Followed by a last one in the series also run on the right. Only middle one of the series was walked (on left).

The river widens. There is a swift to the right of the second of two islands just below -- map shows only one island.

Prosper portage landing is hard to find. In a small bay after a small point on left. Landing is on clay-sand with alder around. Hard to see. Campsite very small but could just hold us. If using trail, there are a lot of new windfalls across the foot of it.

Prosper Portage to Bauerman --

No change in route

Good lunch site on a rock ledge island just as turn is made into rocky area running west before sharp turn to Bauerman. High ground behind ledge with good dry wood.

Rapid before Bauerman comes after sharp right turn and is on left turn that follows.

Bauerman River can be seen for a distance from hill behind Bauerman campsite. There are two short rapids or falls that can be seen that would have to be portaged if going up the river. It is probably possible to get to Bauerman River entrance by crossing about the sand beach eddy and staying away from the falls. It might also be possible to run right shore instead of left coming down -- but looks rougher.

Bauerman Falls to Below Village Lakes Portage --

No change really.

Water lower in '69 than before and run off from Bauerman was taken a little farther out from shore than on previous years.

A one-tent or so Indian campsite about a mile above that used for lunch, on right shore in a slight bay behind a point.

Below Village Lakes Carry to Start of Lichteneger Portage --

No change

Campsite at head of second carry to Village Lakes would not be much for a section.

Lichteneger Portage to Top of Clearwater River ---

No change to Clarkie --- there is no real rapid leaving Lichteneger --- just current and shallows

Note: According to some Indians at Eastmain there is supposed to be a route leaving Lichteneger just slight east of north of the portage from the Village Lakes that would lead to the Little Opinaca, but no particular portages were identified.

There is a very attractive lunch site on rock on left after 2nd rapid below portage out of Lichteneger.

A little fast and shallow water after rapid below split of river --- we ran left of island again --- right does not look nearly as good from foot at least -- then some shallows and current to rapid that has to be carried.

'68 notes say campsite on Clarkie is on left of river exit -- it is really on right.

Leaving Clarkie there is only one rapid in water that heads north -- one with rock in center

To avoid getting lost in next stretch -- just head due west as indicated by the sun and everything comes out right.

Little bit of fast water -- it is a chute really -- is run right of center and is farther along than marked in '68 -- probably between left shore and island marked on map.

Nearing end, west end of bay can be seen as portage trail entrance is picked up. Bay for portage is sharply V-shaped.

Campsite at head of portage trail is very poor. Water is hard to draw and room for only 2 tent sites at landing. Other 3 back in bush along trail not very good.

Trail dips down into old dry creek bed after about 100 yards -- turn slightly left.

The odd trout is in rapids reached by paddling from landing at foot. Top of rapid can probably be run down to a bay on right side, but foot would have to be carried, and no trail exists, so easier to use existing trail even if longer. But better to use next campsite down river.

Top of Clearwater to 250 Yard Portage --

Fast water down to chutes has a better drop than just fast water with at least one almost rapid.

1/2 mile trail has a slight left turn in it toward the foot while going down hill.

Rapid just below 1/2 mile portage -- left channel at island has a rock square in center of little run. We ran main channel which starts with a V almost in center, move to left, but not into -- if possible -- a strong eddy -- and then run out reasonably close to left shore -- but out 5 yards or so.

Next carry might almost just as well be joined to one below -- drop down to start next one is only 40 yards or so -- although to continue would probably be swampy in high water.

Carry at falls takes off in a bay behind a rocky island. At foot of 400 yarder below falls there is a little rapid to run. In '68 we probably ran to left of small island. Landed too shallow in '69 so we ran down with run-off from rapid just carried and crossed to right of island -- throw of water takes canoes across.

Then a little semi-rapid below to calm water -- run left of center and then toward center at foot.

250 yard carry goes around a real steep drop. Campsite at foot is possible, but not great. Only one tent site in Indian area -- others on a little knoll toward the water. Fishing is possible -- some trout in rapids -- but difficult. Major rapid follows right shore, but there are side channels, sometimes underground and swampy on left, or campsite side. It is possible to get across them at top on logs and ledges, etc., but really only one pool or eddy in rapid, near top, can be fished.

250 Yard Portage to Foot of Great Bend --

No change to heavy rapid at island just after long wide stretch. Left side had many more rocks in it than were apparent in high water and did not look safe. We ran right side this time pretty much straight down center and catching eddy on right at foot -- quite powerful. Foot is tougher than top with rocks sticking out slightly from both shores -- plenty of room, but run can not be made on shore.

Portage at S-shaped water takes out in northwest corner of bay after running above rapid and little ones that follow. Trail is blazed reasonably well until almost the end when walking straight ahead another 75-100 yards will intersect the creek. Water can be seen on left after last blaze that was noticed -- but can not be used, there is one more chute to go in it. Trail is hard to follow without the blazes. 1/2 mile, or less, not too tough to walk, but a lot of reindeer moss. Most troublesome spot was right at start where trail leads to a little hill and a slight left turn is made either walking on side hill or just below hill until blazes are picked up. No campsite at either end, but a reasonable lunch site in boulder area just before creek meets the river.

Long rapid just below was run completely on left with good success -- look over first -- run tight to left shore for about 1/3 of way down and then out a little to avoid a small ledge, but left of white water and then stay a little out from shore careful not to get caught in eddies on shore and then close to foot there is a little more prominent ledge on left, go out a little more, but still left of major white water and run out at very foot toward center watching rocks that still are in run.

Next to last carry at red shack should be used except maybe in water like in '68. Too many rocks to cut right side. Still have to run with rapid to get out of eddy.

There are only 2 rapids to run before last carry.

Mouth of Clearwater is shallow on left -- right side of exit is much better.

Campsite at Great Bend as before, but in low water landing must be made 50-60 yards short of campsite and loads portaged up to

It. Shore line can be walked in low water to reach fishing holes above.

Great Bend ---

Shore line in low water can be walked all the way to '67 campsite and then old portage trail followed to landing above. Above even in low water, hill has to be climbed and ridge walked most of the time. Pictures taken start at bend in river above old portage and follow down to foot. '67 notes on passage down river would still be correct if traveling Great Bend, but because shore can be walked trip would not be as rough. -- Flying Catch should be just above around the bend where pictures start. Actually at chute which portage bypasses east shore looks easier to walk. A high hill on east drops off just before the chute being portaged.

Other Notes on Great Bend and Lac Pivert Route ---

Prospector net later down river indicated there were at least two drilling rigs working somewhere in Great Bend area. Planes heard while at campsite below Village Lakes might have been so occupied.

Willy Moses at Eastmain indicated that his trapping area now includes Great Bend. Apparently flew in to Lac Natel -- about half way between Great Bend and Clearwater River and had a camp on the lake. Permanent camp for '68-'69 winter was supposed to be a sod house on north shore of southern-most part of Great Bend just before long thin island -- should be in a low area probably in a stand of birch.

Freight route past Great Bend used Lac Pivert route -- according to Willy --- Leaves Great Bend from a bay on western side just before '67 island campsite at an old surveyor's camp. Portage looks to be about 1/2 mile to creek. Creek followed until it bends close to Lac Pivert, and portage to lake. Portage out of bay at northwest corner of Pivert into next lake to north. Portage out of northwest bay at northern end of that lake into a pond to northwest. Then a portage on north side of creek to about where two small creeks join. Supposed to be the longest portage of the route. Then two more short portages along last part of creek before arriving at river just below short, steep rapid before '67 site. Willy claims creek on last part of route is shallow, but sandy bottomed, and not rocky, and canoes might have to be walked. Indicated freighters sometimes used smaller canoes on this section.

Great Bend to 6 Miles above Akautago ---

In general lower water turns swift slicks into rapids with more rock showing -- runs would be as before -- except for water conditions.

Rapid just onto Opinaca map was run farther from shore at top and first turn than before -- watch rocks near shore. There is a red water recording shack on right shore at head of rapid.

Swift pitch below is harder to cut close to left shore -- cut pretty sharp and into eddy rather than trying to run with swells any distance.

Four section rapid, 1st around island was the same. 2nd part, pretty much the same, but 3rd and 4th would be better done together since run on 4th right along shore can not be made and

run has to be considerably out and gaining top of 4th run outside a ledge from eddy is hard.
Run-off of falls after portage has to be taken out from shore between two sections of white water -- look over first.
Rapid after sod house and before campsite run on right still, but farther from shore than before.

6 Miles above Akautago to Prospector's Site 4 Miles below Akautago Rapid --

Rapid 3 miles above Akautago had to be carried 40 yards on left on old trail in low water -- run used twice before is a series of small falls and water out from shore is over larger falls. Both points just below have to be run fairly far out from shore to stay off ledges that come off from them. Do not bother with right side again. Foot has at least small falls in it and portage would be on side hill to get by them.

Akautago Rapid looks entirely different in low water. Too many rocks to try a run anywhere. However, lower landing for portage is easy to catch.

No sod house up Wabamisk River entrance. In '69 a prospector's camp on right shore just inside mouth of river -- would not make a good campsite, however, but could be used. A great many prospector's claim markings in area nearby. This prospector was same encountered lower down in '67. Comes from Val d'Or and looking mainly for copper here -- plus nickle, silver, and gold. Said there was another prospector working area also, on a little lake back of 2nd chute below here.

Note: Route to Little Opinaca here is supposed to go up Wabamisk to a point about 4 miles due north of river and then carry west to a stream that eventually flows into Little Opinaca Lake.

Route from there down river was marked in '68.

Old prospector's site 4 miles below Akautago Rapid is a fair, but uninteresting campsite -- exposed to west wind coming up river, shallow water in front, and tent sites only fair at best.

Prospector's Site to 3rd Chute --

No real change -- no Indian cache seen and surveyor's camp coming up through islands should be eliminated from notes.

Eliminate any thought of trying right side of any of these chutes, they all have falls on that side and would be longer portages.

Trail on 2nd chute is very bushy all the way through and run-off needs to be taken farther from shore than usual.

Bench mark before 3rd chute is about 75 yards up river from landing and was way out of water in '69

3rd Chute to Foot of Conglomerate --

Rapid coming into 4th Chute portage is tougher to negotiate in low water -- several stops had to be made to look over next move which often is farther out than in previous years. Portage the same, but run-off was taken in a center channel half way between shore and island at foot. Right shore has been run before, if memory is correct.

5th Chute the same.

Conglomerate portage is wet even in low water. Good walking for maybe 400 yards and then wet areas almost up to 1st Indian site. Then pretty good walking until creek is approached and then gets sloppy. 2nd Indian site is over half way across, but best

move is to carry first load to cut off trail to foot and collect second loads at lunch in Indian site. Walking pretty good past 2nd Indian site and then on left turn until drop to water starts. From cut off trail to foot of carry is about a mile with rock vantage point about half way there.

Not much point in trying to put canoes in at cut off trail. Drop to water is quite steep and would be difficult for sternsmen. In high water it is impossible to paddle out of eddy at foot. In low water there are rapids below the rock vantage point that should be looked over carefully before trying to run. Right shore looks most logical, but can not be looked over except from trail past rock vantage point -- easier to carry the whole thing really.

There is a good view of gorge from right beside it by following short cut trail down a short way until a steep drop in trail occurs passing over a ridge. Instead of following trail, follow ridge to right to water that can just be seen through trees. Much easier and shorter than going all the way down trail and then trying to follow the shore line.

Foot of Conglomerate to Top of Clouston --

No real change -- Again no signs of any cache after Conglomerate. There is a rock ledge on left shore about 50 yards below campsite that causes eddy at the site. Current less noticeable in low water. Took 4 hours plus to make lunch site with some west wind to work against. About 4-6 miles above lunch site there are a couple blazes on trees on right shore; looks like maybe an Indian site back in bush, but we did not check and can not see anything from water. Lunch site comes just before eastern tip of long island -- not where marked on map. Run at rapid the same in low water. Second part is hard to look over from top without walking, but white water goes straight ahead and run cuts close to left shore, and cuts the corner without running the white water.

View of Clouston as before, but if time permits it might be possible to continue down left shore after second vantage point and perhaps get closer to falls. Previous notes say there is a calm below falls -- in low water a heavy rapid can be seen throwing against the right shore as river curves southward below falls.

Might well be good idea to try reaching gorge for view by camping and then trying to walk edge of beaver swamp to right, staying out of water and reach gorge on foot -- deep ravine to right of campsite is therefore missed.

Top of Clouston to Island Falls --

No real change

Directions in '68 report for Clouston trail are good. There are two tall lob spruce trees now just to right of trail entrance into woods, back in trees a little distance, but clearly visible. We left a white bag capping a small spruce at trail entrance -- it might remain for a while.

Rapid below Clouston still run on left, pretty much blind, with no trouble. There are two heavy spots -- one near top with plenty of room on left and one at foot of first section where a large rock not even seen in high water creates a ledge to go around in high water, but we ran inside it in low.

Bottom section was run easily on left and hardly counts as a rapid

in low water.

Surveyor's camp is about a mile east of where indicated on map. No change at Island. Interior kitchen area used because of poor looking weather.

Island Falls to Top of Basil --

Slight rapid before island is passed. We have always run left shore before -- could have been done again, but we ran right. Approach to 1 1/3 mile portage was same until just before landing where it was necessary to go out past some rocks into eddy at landing. Landing area in low water is on a flat rock shelf, below level of normal area, with jagged rock in most places. At foot of 1 1/3 mile in low water there is a flat rock ledge to left that would make a good lunch site if desired. Coming into Talking there is one run after deep bay on right as shown on map. Rather tough in low water. Couple little rapids out of Talking in low water.

Top of Basil to Foot of Basil --

No change -- trail the same. Spring at Indian site campsite at foot is a circular hole about 14" in diameter and about as deep and fills up quickly. Just as easy to camp at foot and walk back to spring, however.

View of Basil hard to secure. Possible to cut down to water from Indian site, but there is a section of swamp on plateau below. Or go back trail, back past deep creek -- that was just about dry as we came through -- and cut toward river through open area. Puts explorer down at, or in first case before, the falls that make major drop of gorge. Sort of horseshoe shaped with a rock on right side that shows. Trip is tough, however, and view would be almost as good from rocky island on right shore behind which eddy on right shore should be caught.

Foot of Basil to Eastmain --

In low water cross to right shore and run right shore all the way down.

First rapid to a grassy bay on right -- stay close to right shore -- swells in center.

From grassy bay to sand cliff we had to go outside a ledge at top and then back to right shore to an eddy just at start of sand cliff.

Then run right shore around sand cliff to a deep bay below -- done in two jumps -- or maybe three -- last of which involved going outside a shallow gravel area and inside a large curl of white water.

After quiet bay is paddled, run on right shore to next curve right, and look again and run right shore to foot.

All the way down there are rocks to dodge and best to walk shore and look rather than running very much blind. Major throw of river through most of it is on left shore. Possible to cross to left shore at grassy bay after first run, and probably possible at several other places.

At foot of rapids there are flat rocks on left of fair extent with a fair looking stand of spruce on top of rocks with good looking camping possibilities. Perhaps in another year, if taking Basil in morning, it would be possible to run rapids in afternoon and camp on rocks. Supposed to be trout at rocks?

Left shore looks to be much rougher than right in low water.

Takes about 2 hours to get down rapids.

Lunch site on north shore at mild point out from shore -- a little rock available if water is high, otherwise a rock beach.

Rapid at Post is where first large island goes closest to shore.

It is a string of rock stretching out from left shore almost to island. Start close to island and follow bulge in island passing below rock ledge.

No change at Post.

Swimming and diving off Mission dock not very safe; water is often quite shallow depending on tide. Best swimming by walking back up sand beach to area back around bend just where small channel the runs behind low island next to south shore come in.

Radio now relocated in store. Indian village has electric power from a generator on shore just before village. Also a deep freezer available to Indians.

Manager in '69 -- Reggie Lake

Anglican Minister in residence -- George C. Daley