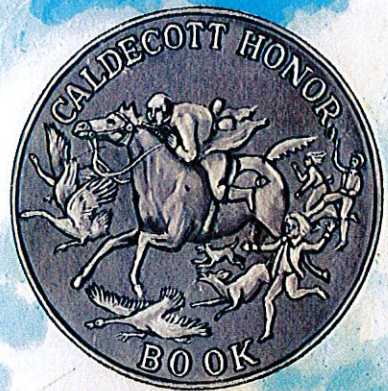


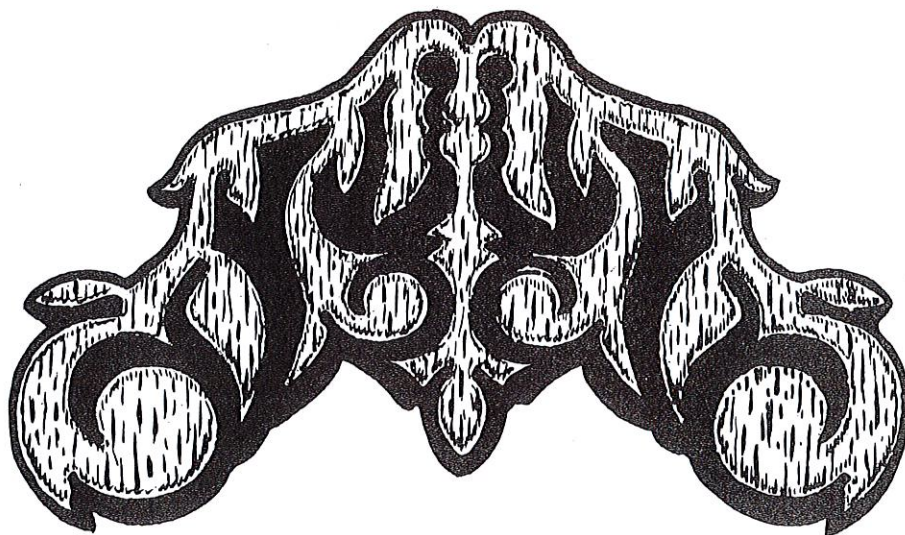
# Paddle- to-the-Sea



Holling Clancy Holling



# Paddle·to·the·Sea

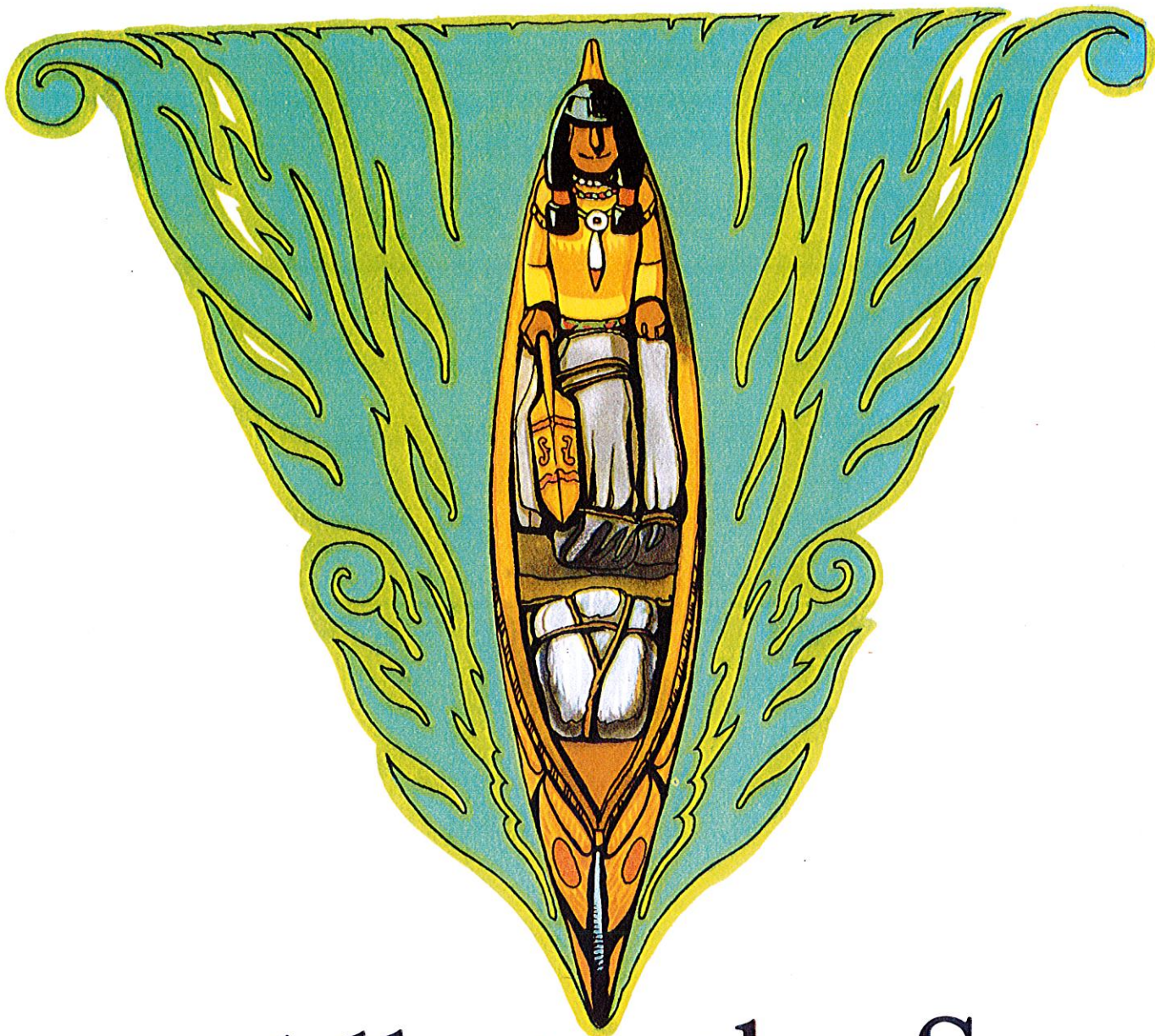


THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

to

JOHN HENRY CHAPMAN

with whose father I have paddled  
under, over, and through many a  
Great Lake wave.



# Paddle·to·the·Sea

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY

Holling Clancy Holling

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY BOSTON



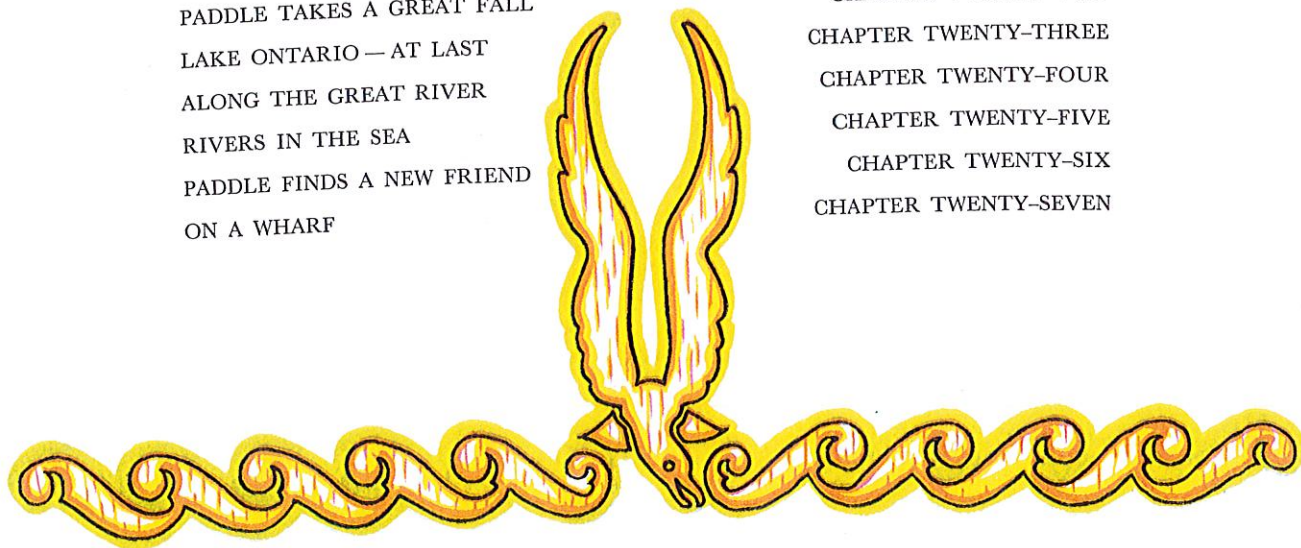




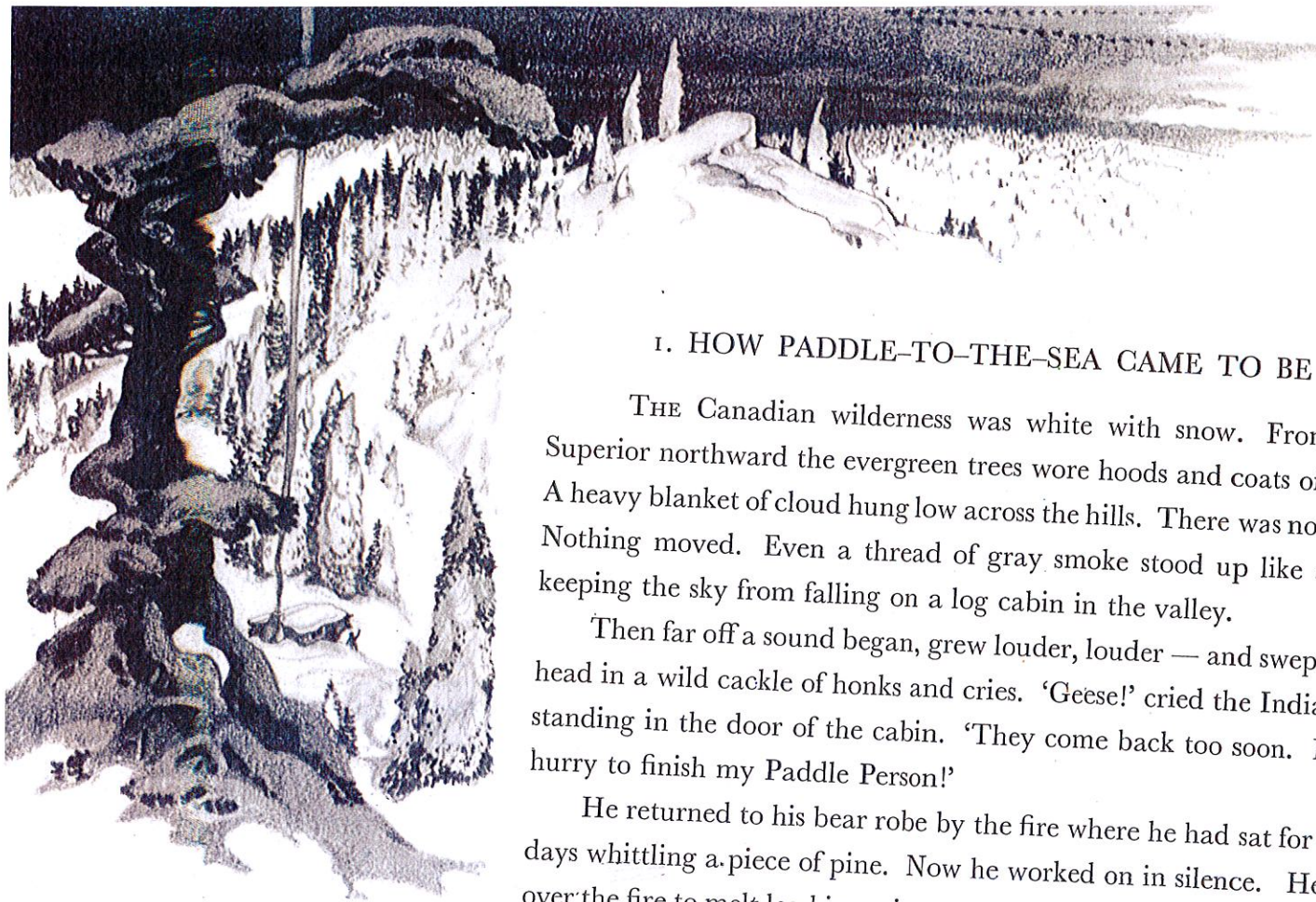
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## 1. HOW PADDLE-TO-THE-SEA CAME TO BE

THE Canadian wilderness was white with snow. From Lake Superior northward the evergreen trees wore hoods and coats of white. A heavy blanket of cloud hung low across the hills. There was no sound. Nothing moved. Even a thread of gray smoke stood up like a pole, keeping the sky from falling on a log cabin in the valley.

Then far off a sound began, grew louder, louder — and swept overhead in a wild cackle of honks and cries. ‘Geese!’ cried the Indian boy standing in the door of the cabin. ‘They come back too soon. I must hurry to finish my Paddle Person!’

He returned to his bear robe by the fire where he had sat for many days whittling a piece of pine. Now he worked on in silence. He bent over the fire to melt lead in an iron spoon, and poured it out to cool and harden in a hollow of the wood. He fastened a piece of tin to one end of the carving. Then he brought out oil paints and worked carefully with a brush.

Satisfied at last, the boy sat back on his heels. Before him lay a canoe one foot long. It looked like his father’s big birchbark loaded with packs and supplies for a journey. Underneath was a tin rudder to keep it headed forward, and a lump of lead for ballast. This would keep the canoe low in the water, and turn it right side up after an upset. An Indian figure knelt just back of the middle, grasping a paddle. And along the bottom were carved these words:











## 2. LONG RIVER REACHING TO THE SEA

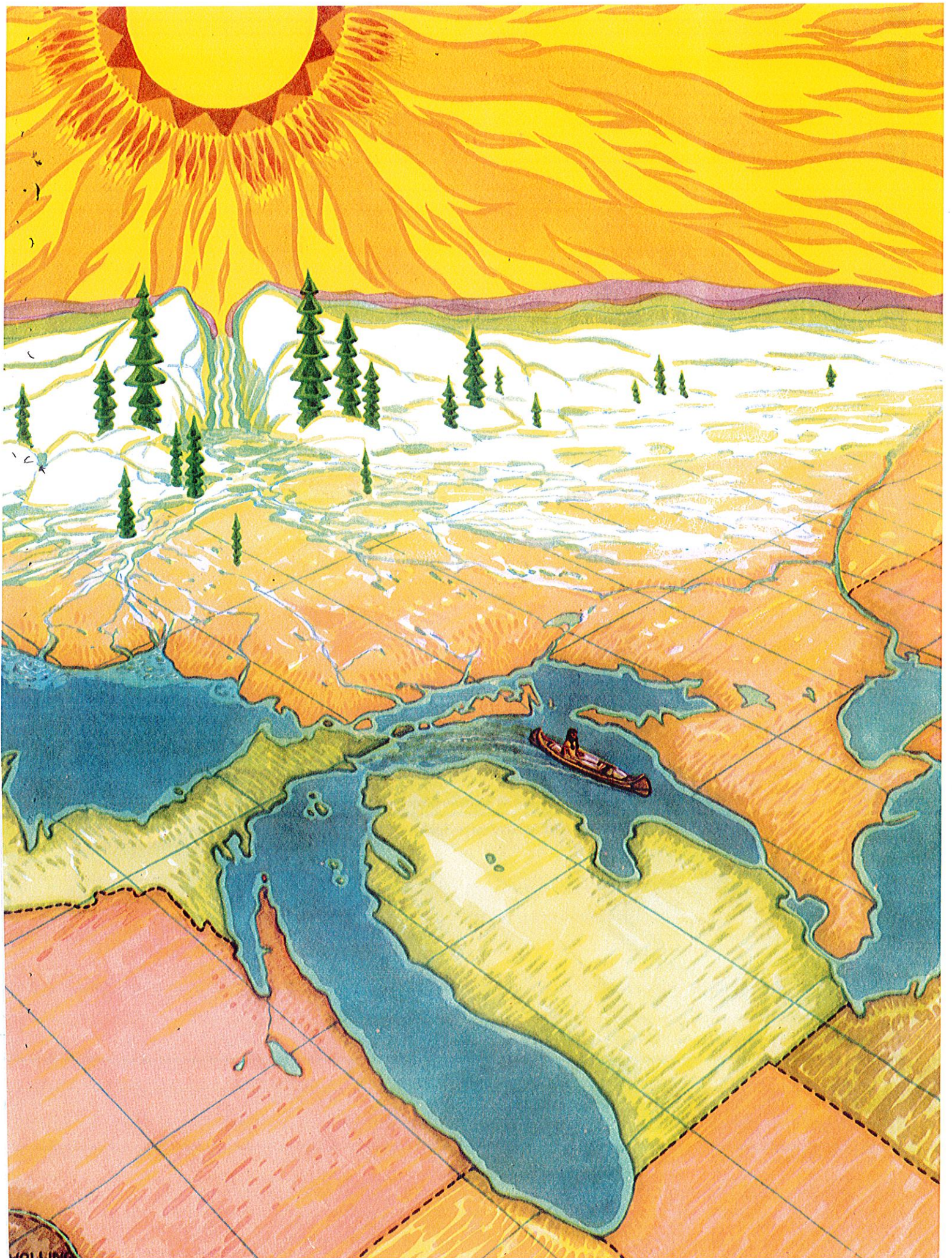
NEXT day the Indian boy climbed the hill back of his home. His snowshoes wide as shovels sank into the drifts at every step. When he reached the top he took from his coat the canoe he had made. He then set it in the snow facing southward where, far away, a river cut an icy path through the forest.

'Now I will tell you something!' said the boy to the little figure in the canoe. 'I have learned in school that when this snow in our Nipigon country melts, the water flows to that river. The river flows into the Great Lakes, the biggest lakes in the world. They are set like bowls on a gentle slope. The water from our river flows into the top one, drops into the next, and on to the others. Then it makes a river again, a river that flows to the Big Salt Water.'

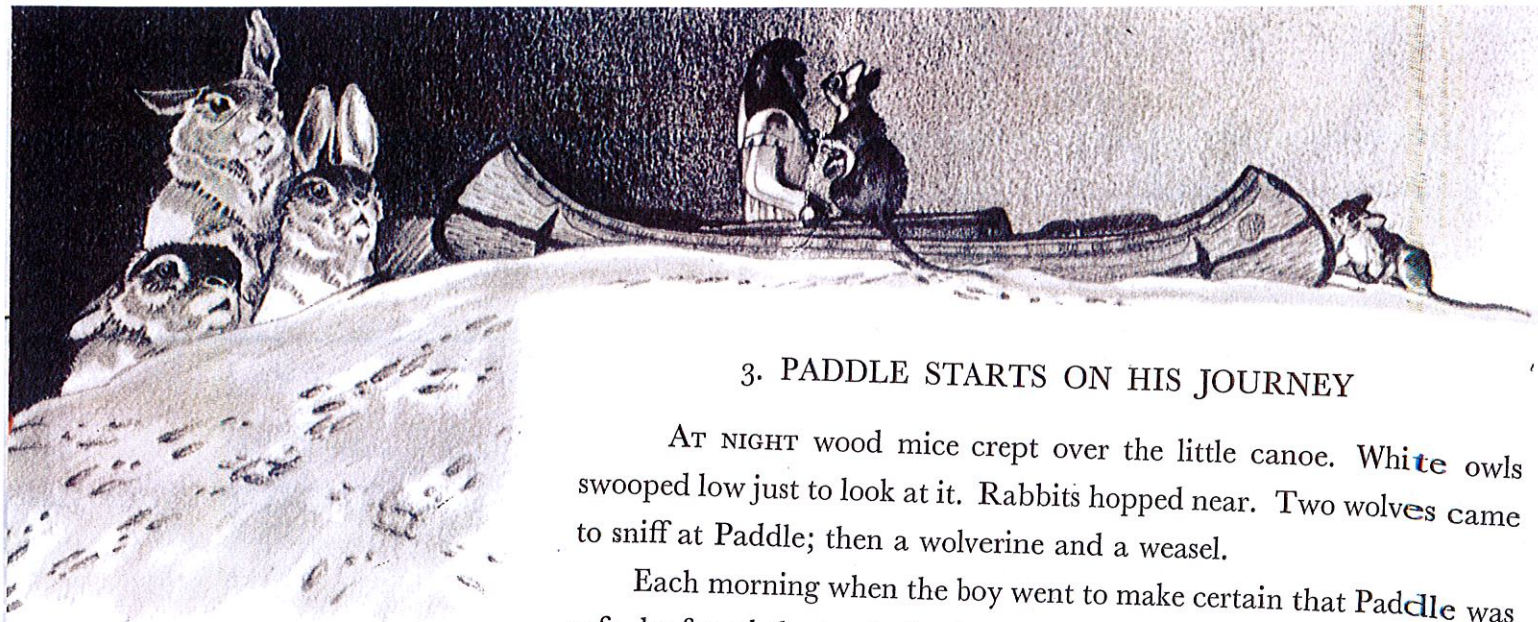
'I made you, Paddle Person, because I had a dream. A little wooden man smiled at me. He sat in a canoe on a snowbank on this hill. Now the dream has begun to come true. The Sun Spirit will look down at the snow. The snow will melt and the water will run downhill to the river, on down to the Great Lakes, down again and on at last to the sea. You will go with the water and you will have adventures that I would like to have. But I cannot go with you because I have to help my father with the traps.'

'The time has come for you to sit on this snowbank and wait for the Sun Spirit to set you free. Then you will be a real Paddle Person, a real Paddle-to-the-Sea.'









### 3. PADDLE STARTS ON HIS JOURNEY

AT NIGHT wood mice crept over the little canoe. White owls swooped low just to look at it. Rabbits hopped near. Two wolves came to sniff at Paddle; then a wolverine and a weasel.

Each morning when the boy went to make certain that Paddle was safe, he found the tracks in the snow. But he knew that Paddle could not be eaten because he was only painted wood.

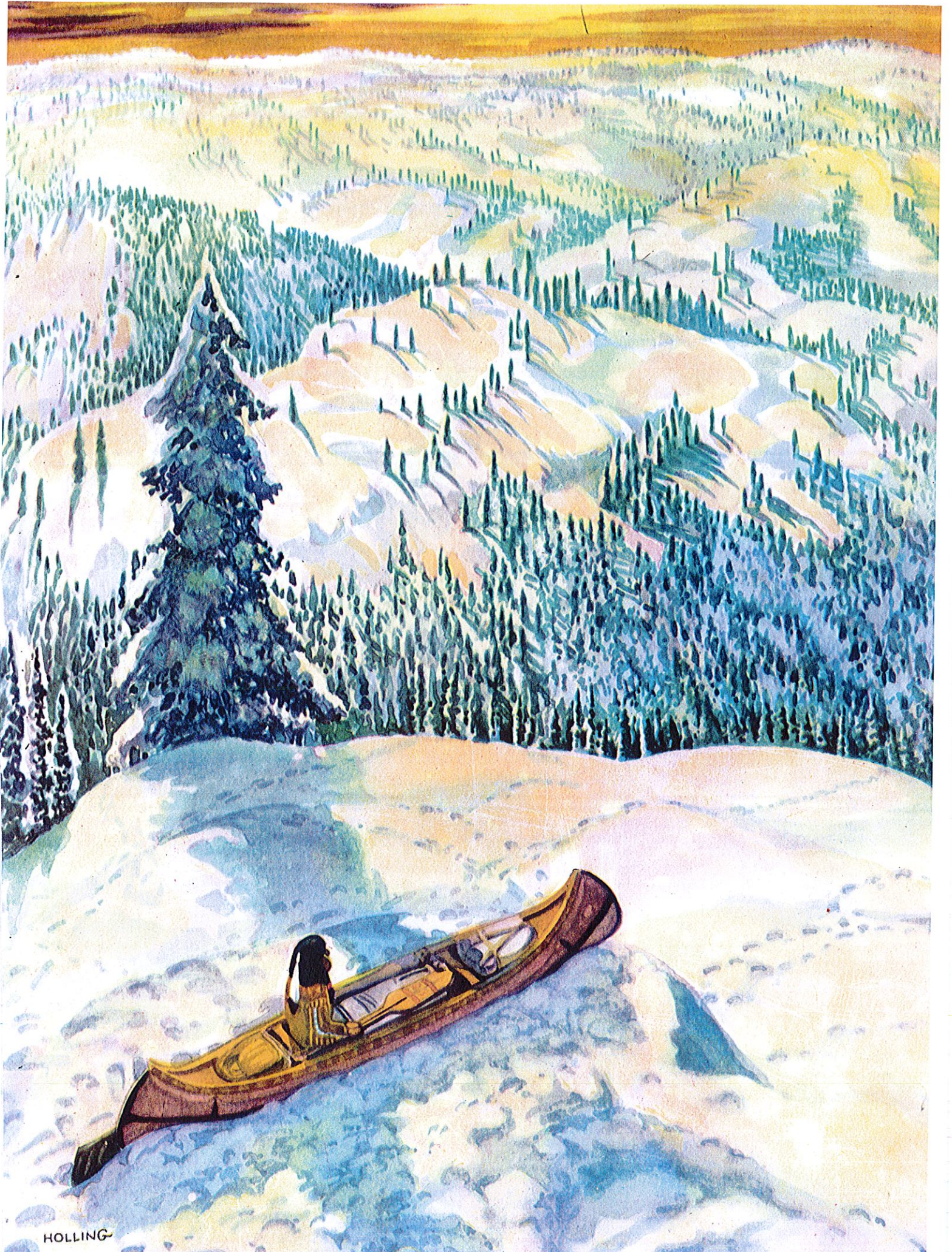
All this time the world was changing. The air grew warmer, the birch twigs swelled with new buds. A moose pawed the snow beside a log, uncovering green moss and arbutus like tiny stars. And then, one morning, the gray clouds drifted from the sky. The sun burst out warm and bright above the hills, and under its glare the snow blankets drooped on the fir trees. Everywhere the snow was melting. There was a steady tap-tap-tap of fat drops falling.

The snowbank began to settle under Paddle. Next morning it had split wide open. Across a narrow, deep canyon in the snow, the canoe made a little bridge. But hour by hour it tipped farther forward.

The boy came running over the slippery ground. He was just in time to see the canoe slide down into rushing water. It sank and came to the surface upside down. Then it righted itself and the watching boy saw it plunge forward, leaping on the crest of a brook that dashed downhill.

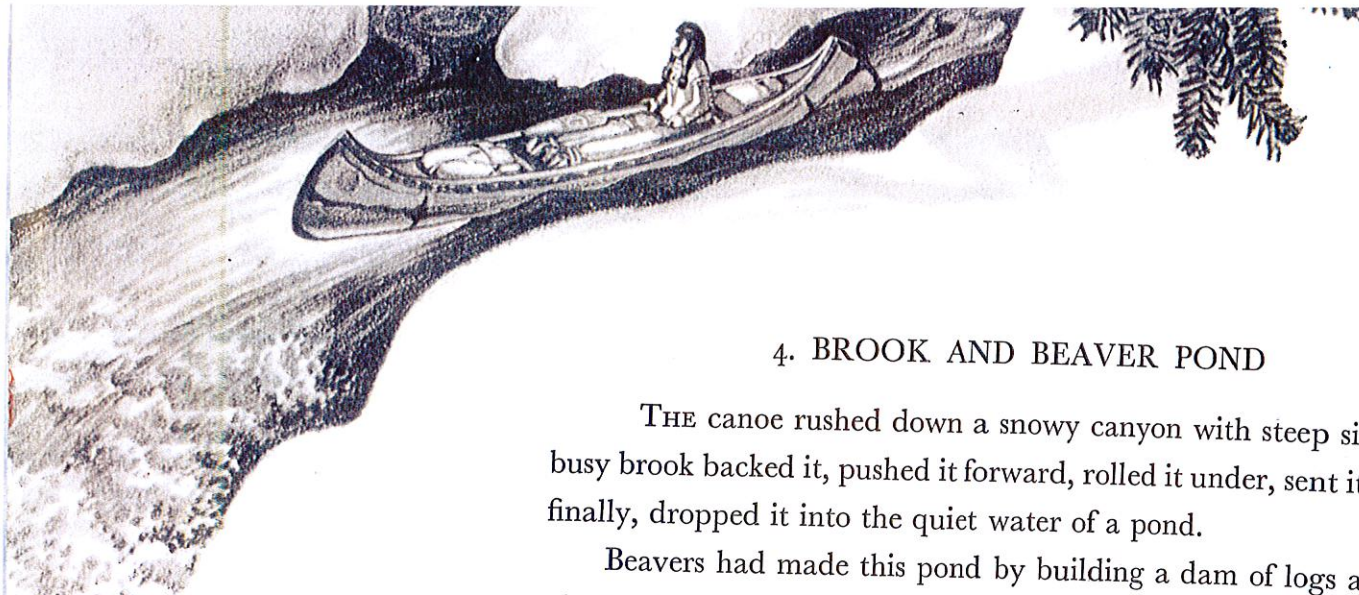
'Ho!' he called. 'You have started on your journey! Good-by, Paddle-to-the-Sea!'





HOLLING-





#### 4. BROOK AND BEAVER POND

THE canoe rushed down a snowy canyon with steep sides. The busy brook backed it, pushed it forward, rolled it under, sent it on, and, finally, dropped it into the quiet water of a pond.

Beavers had made this pond by building a dam of logs and sticks plastered with mud. To do this they had gnawed down trees. The stumps of the trees showed here and there along the banks. In the middle of the pond, the beavers had built their home, an island of sticks with an underwater entrance, safe from enemies. Inside on a shelf above water level, the nest of soft rushes would always be warm and dry.

An old beaver crept out of the water, sleek and dripping, to sit on the roof and scratch himself in the sun. A buck deer waded in the shallows. He had only one antler and the weight of it made him walk with his head turned aside. He swung the antler hard against a stump. It came off easily and dropped into the mud. He shook his head and bounded off into the forest, glad to be free of the weight. By fall he would grow a new set of weapons. A mink dived off a melting snow-bank and came up with a fish. A muskrat swam past the drifting canoe and disappeared in the dead rushes. A skunk met a porcupine on a log. Each looked disgusted, turned about, and waddled solemnly away.

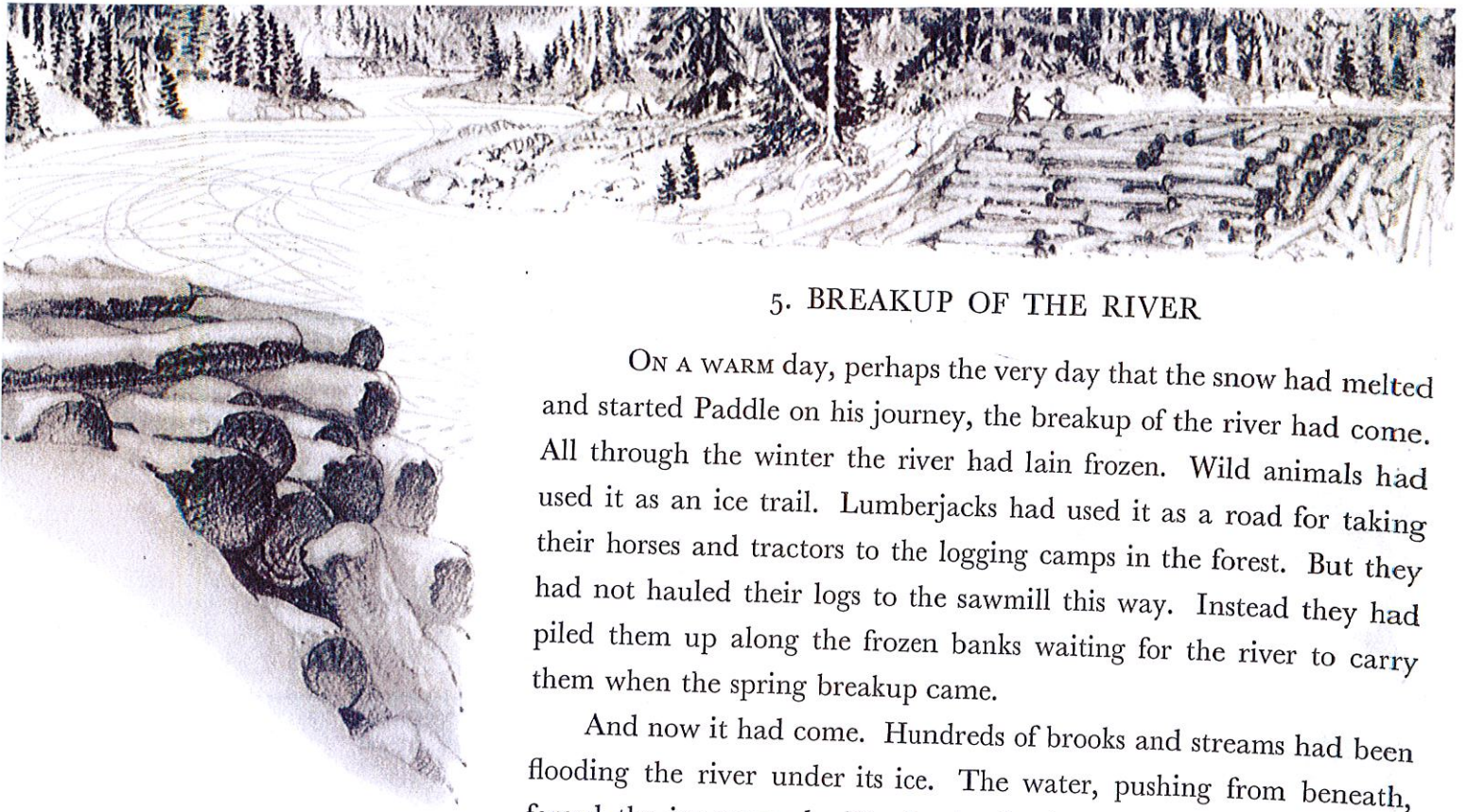
The flooding pond burst through a corner of the beaver dam that afternoon. Old leaves, with Paddle in the midst of them, pushed through the gap. Paddle-to-the-Sea was free. The little canoe rushed on with the brook, on toward the river.











## 5. BREAKUP OF THE RIVER

ON A WARM day, perhaps the very day that the snow had melted and started Paddle on his journey, the breakup of the river had come. All through the winter the river had lain frozen. Wild animals had used it as an ice trail. Lumberjacks had used it as a road for taking their horses and tractors to the logging camps in the forest. But they had not hauled their logs to the sawmill this way. Instead they had piled them up along the frozen banks waiting for the river to carry them when the spring breakup came.

And now it had come. Hundreds of brooks and streams had been flooding the river under its ice. The water, pushing from beneath, forced the ice upward. The banks shook as in an earthquake. Up and down the river the glass pavement cracked all over. The cracks split open. Blocks of ice began to move downstream — faster and faster. A foaming river roared through the forest where the frozen trail had been.

Paddle's canoe tumbled along with the brook until, with one last leap, it shot into the middle of the mad current of the river. The ice and the lumbermen's logs crushed in on every side. Escaping again and again, Paddle raced on. The river rounded a bend. Logs and ice ahead plunged out of sight without warning. Paddle, too, plunged forward, through mist, over the falls.

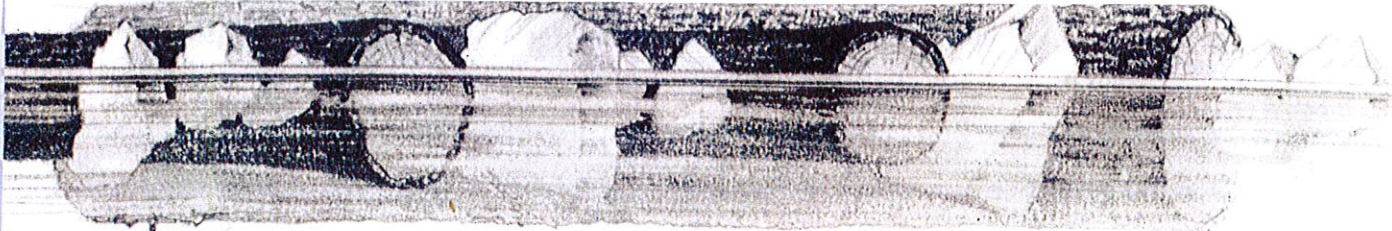
He was still bottom-side-up in the water when a log rushed over the falls behind him, striking the canoe such a hard blow that it was wedged in a crack of the shaggy bark. And when the log raced away it carried Paddle-to-the-Sea with it, upside down, under water.





HOLLING



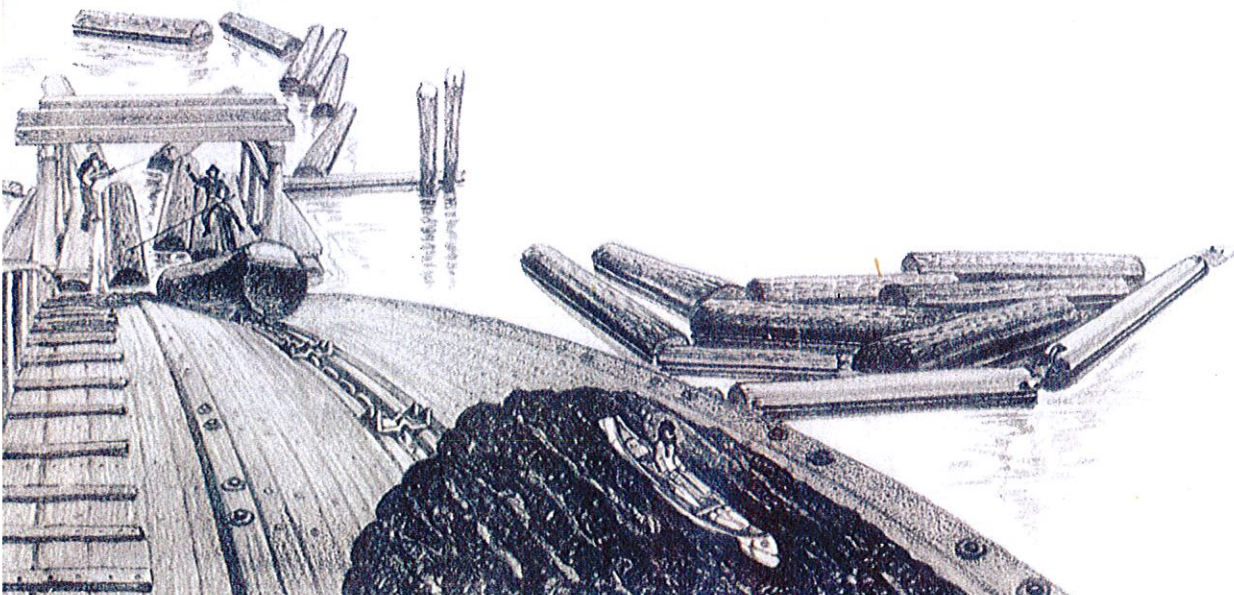
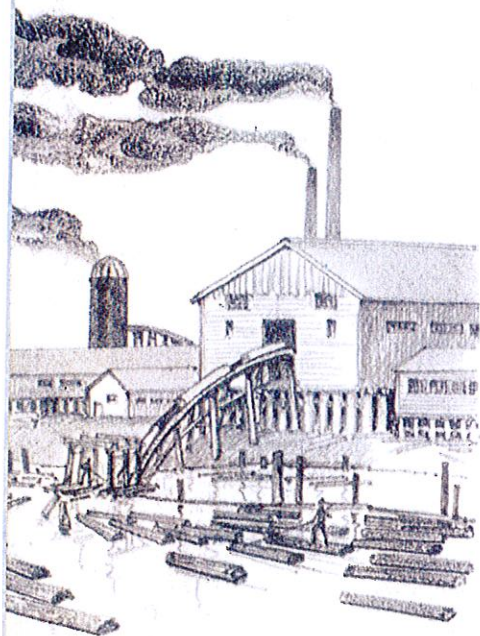


## 6. PADDLE MEETS A SAWMILL

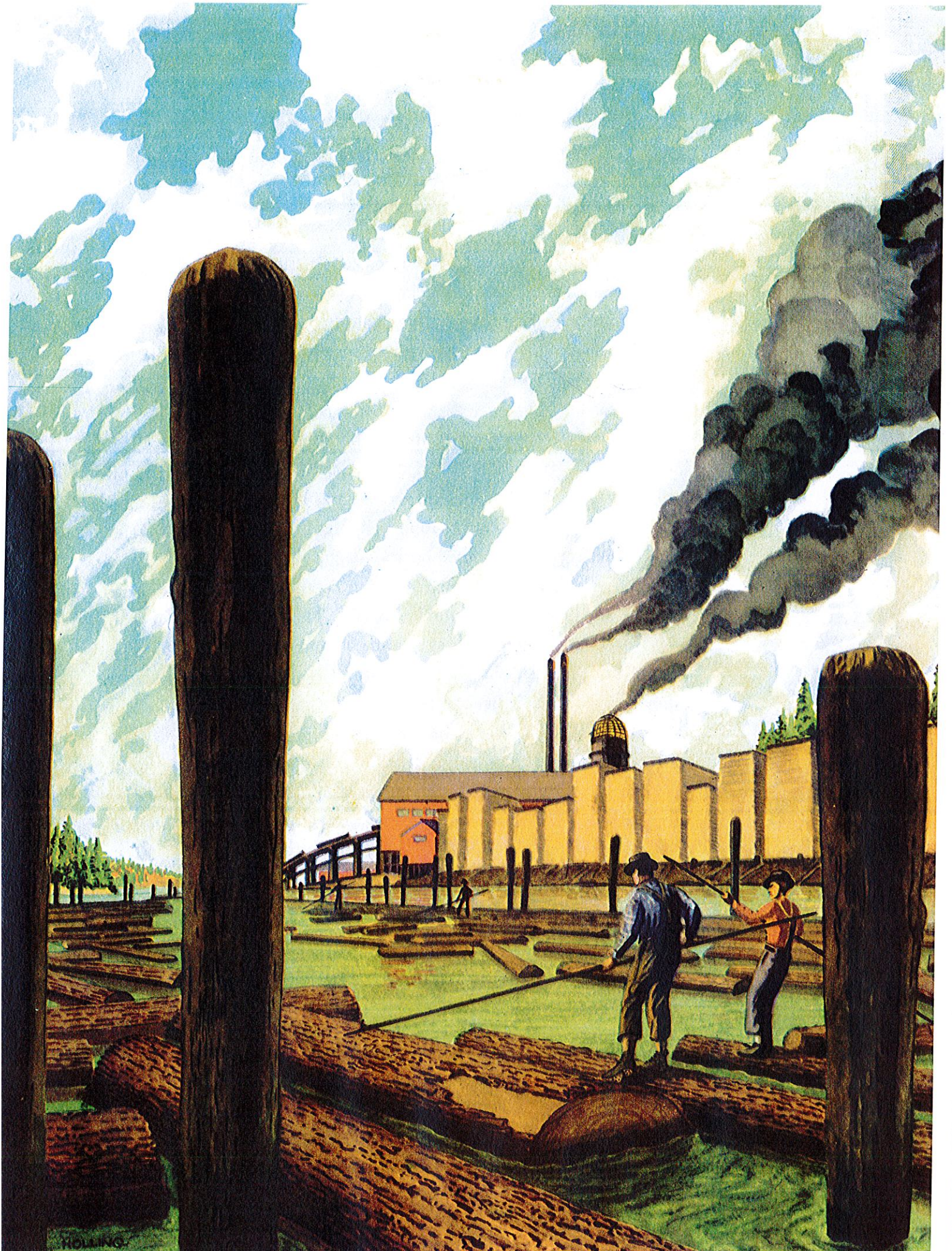
PADDLE's log was four feet thick. Timbers and ice crashed against it, but it floated so low in the water that the canoe, held snugly underneath, was well out of danger. Hours went by, days passed. In time the river widened into a bay dotted with islands, the ice disappeared, and rivermen in spiked boots leaped from log to log prodding them with long pike-poles toward the sawmill.

The mill, a mass of red buildings on stilts above the river bank, opened its wide mouth in the main building. From the mouth ran the log chute, a giant tongue, licking into the water. A heavy chain of spikes moved up the center of the chute, turned over a wheel and returned to the river, an endless belt called a bull-chain. Rivermen pushed the logs onto the spikes which carried them up the chute into the open mouth. A buzzing noise which sometimes became a shriek came from inside the mill. The great saws were at work.

The spikes dug into Paddle's log. The great tree rolled over, bringing Paddle upright and dripping out of the water into the sunlight. The rivermen shouted with surprise as Paddle rode his log up the bull-chain. At the top he was heaved through the door, onto a carrier that looked like a flatcar. Ahead the saw, an endless belt of thin steel, raced so fast its teeth were a blur. Paddle's log was being pushed nearer and nearer to the hungry saw.









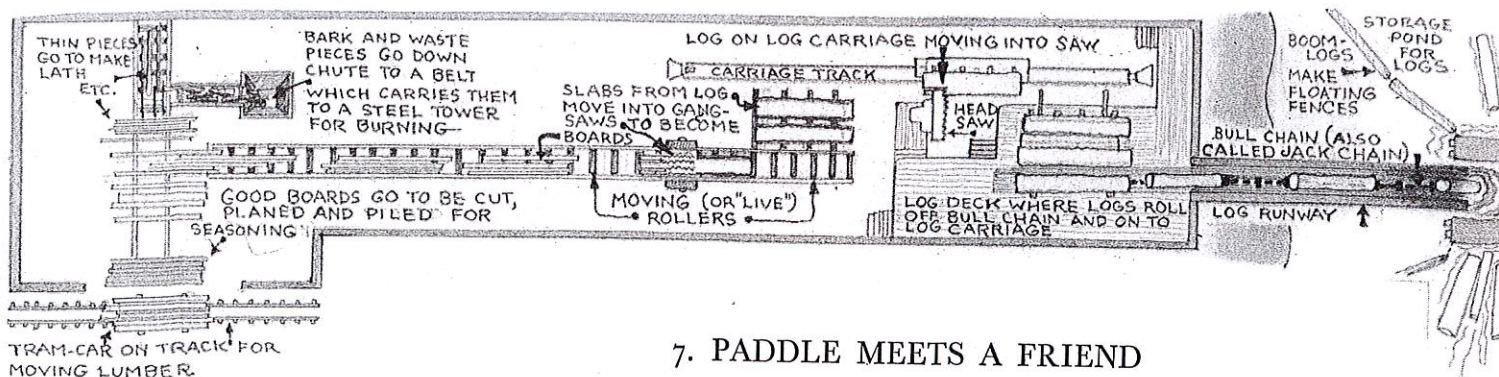


DIAGRAM OF A  
SAWMILL

## 7. PADDLE MEETS A FRIEND

THE saw ripped into the end of Paddle's log. The blur of teeth came nearer and nearer. Suddenly a hand snatched Paddle away.

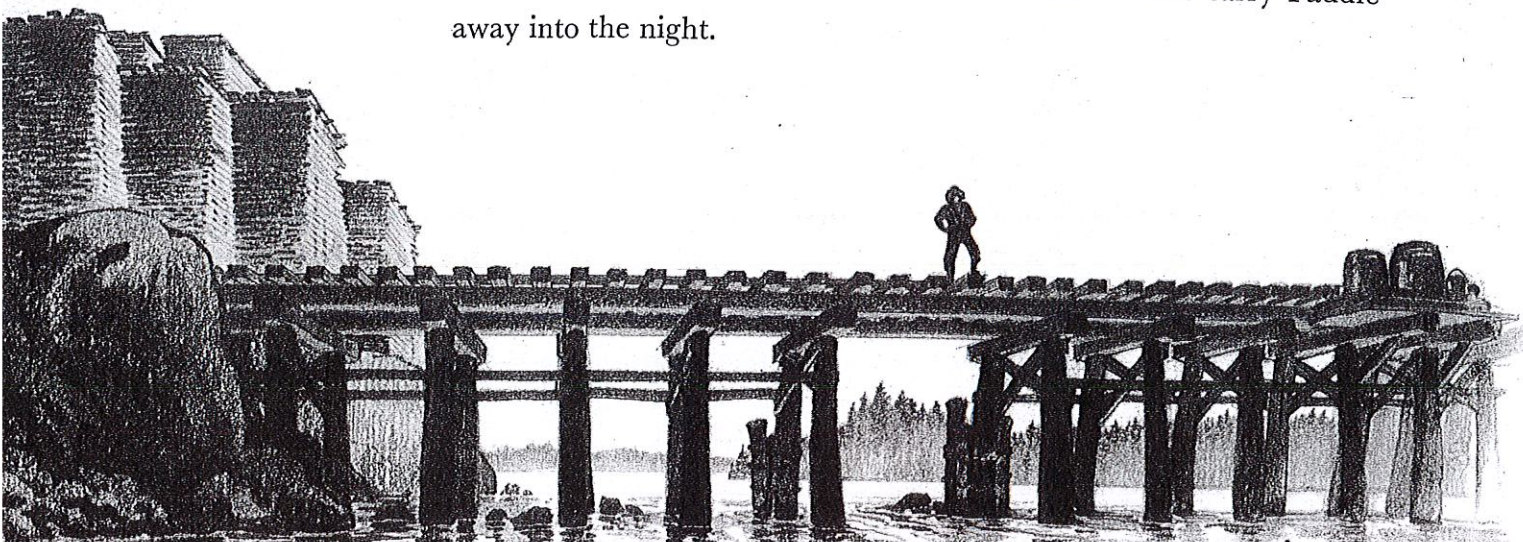
'By Jo!' yelled the lumberjack who had saved him, 'Look what came up the bull-chain! Pretty soon he would be split like a fish. Sit there, my fran. Tonight I take you to my little Henri!' and he laid the carving on a shelf.

The great log moved forward and back, and on each forward trip the band saw ate through it. The wide slabs dropping away slid on rollers to other saws, and came from them as boards. Men pushed the new lumber away on flatcars to unload outside the sawmill. The piles looked like rows of unpainted houses along a street.

After work the lumbermen looked at Paddle. They laughed at the way he had ridden the log into the sawmill. The French-Canadian who had saved him read the message on the bottom of the canoe. Someone wanted the little figure to float to the sea. He would show it to his little boy and then toss it back to the river. But no — Henri would cry if he couldn't keep it. By Jo, best not to tell him at all!

On his way home in the twilight the lumberjack stopped on a bridge. He carved more letters in the canoe. Now the sign read — PLEASE PUT ME BACK IN WATER I AM PADDLE-TO-THE-SEA FROM NIPIGON COUNTRY, CANADA.

The Frenchman dropped the little canoe off the bridge. 'Have a good voyage!' he said as he watched the river current carry Paddle away into the night.









LAKE NIPIGON  
NIPIGON RIVER  
ISLE ROYAL

LAKE SUPERIOR'S OUTLINE MAKES A WOLF HEAD

LAKE SUPERIOR IS SO big, it could hold Rhode Island, Connecticut and 3 more states the size of Massachusetts inside its outline. It is almost one quarter mile deep...



## 8. THE LARGEST LAKE IN THE WORLD

FOR the next few days Paddle, along with old logs, chips, and bits of boards, drifted on the current of the river. Then the river widened into a bay with many islands. Paddle floated past them all until at last there was no land anywhere. Paddle was alone on Lake Superior, the largest lake in the world.

Only the sky was left — and the sun, and the stars and the water that slid under him in black valleys or lifted him in blue mountains. He rode over them in foam before they rolled on and away to the edge of the sky.

But Paddle was not altogether alone on Lake Superior. One calm evening his canoe shot upward into the air. It splashed down, only to be spanked upward again. The glassy eyes of a great fish gazed at him from below, then disappeared. It had struck at the shiny tin of the rudder. But Paddle was not food. Another evening a small warbler swooped down from above and sat on the canoe all night tipping Paddle half over. Exhausted by its flight across the huge lake the little bird had found a resting place just in time. At sunrise it flew away on its journey.

Fish swam under Paddle, gulls soared over him. Ships slid across the horizon leaving black smoke-trails. Everything was going somewhere, everything except Paddle. He seemed to be sitting in one place rocking up and down. Yet all the time he had been traveling. Currents had carried him around the shores of the beaver pond. Now they carried him in Lake Superior in the same way. Paddle, now drifting westward, would someday circle eastward again guided by the shore currents. Steadily and surely they pushed him on — on toward the sea.

