

dozen years. On December 23, 2012 the Maya Great Cycle of 5,131 years comes to an end. At that time, the Maya believe, all things will cease to exist and an entirely new world will be ushered in to start the next great cycle. The creation of the Maya calendar is a wondrous tale to tell. But not now; I am out of time.

Arnold Schrier

Epilogue

So — now you have our bells and whistles. Happy centuries to you, both 20th and 21st and also happy sesquicentennial year as well. May you have a good millennium, whenever you choose to celebrate it.

SOURCE

December 7, 1998

John H. Wulsin

On Monday morning, July 1, 1879 three men met at the Chicago South Station, each with assorted gear for outdoors and each with his own prized, even venerated sailing canoe. And so here begins a tale.

Today, sailing canoes are museum pieces, unknown to LL Bean and boat shows, but in 1879 they were faddish icons of the adventuresome gallant. Like much of the paraphernalia of the sporting world, they were developed and popularized by the well-to-do, daring gentry of the British empire, who bored at home, prowled the remote and uncharted stretches of the foreign world in search of fact and fame and happy in the face of danger.

A certain John McGregor, affluent Scottish traveler and philanthropist, is credited with designing and promoting the modern sporting canoe as a result of voyages in Canada and Alaska. Impressed by the virtues of the North American bark canoe and of the Arctic Kayak as well, he created a craft light and small enough for one man to carry and navigate between and in turbulent narrow rivers, as well as on open waters. The occupant, facing forward, propelled with a paddle, single or double ended, this a great advantage over the ponderous rowboat and oars, which are clumsy for travel in the interior. McGregor covered his first canoe with India rubber and named it, true to Scotland, the Rob Roy.

Canoeing as a gentleman's sport caught on in this country after the Civil War. The countless rivers, lakes and woodlands of this continent beckoned the increasingly urbanized elite to challenge the wilderness for hunting, fishing, and the spice of personal survival. The frontier was vanishing but not yet gone. This post war passion was reflected in the wide popularity of Parkman's epic histories of the strife and settling of North America, all of which depended largely on the Indian bark canoe and later the lumbering oxen and wagon.

Canoe clubs sprang up in the riverine East and soon after in the burgeoning Mid West. The railroad provided quick movement between points, but human muscle was needed to penetrate and enjoy the wilds. Thus the canoe soon entered the armamentarium of the outdoor sportsman and nowhere more so than in the Adirondacks, bound closely by rail to the cities of the Northeast.

In Canton, NY, home to St. Lawrence University, a master boat builder named Rushton had learned to build portable cedar skiffs for travel on the Adirondack lakes, and was quick to make a small canoe, modeled after McGregor's Rob Roy and designed for the prodigal sporting trade, less parsimonious than his neighbors. New York canoeists suggested adding masts and sails as well as decking fore and aft. Thus was born the sailing canoe for solitary transport, light enough at 50-60 pounds to carry overland and strong enough for

passenger, food and gear. To the single passenger it provided mobility and shelter, even sleep for the undemanding, and all in nature's unspoiled lap.

In 1876 Rushton displayed several of his fine sailing canoes at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, and sales of his boats boomed, for they were marvels of construction. His catalogues, forerunner of the likes of Sears and LL Bean, brought in orders from near and far, and the master craftsman grew into the master marketer.

Now back to our three canoemen in Chicago. A.H. Siegfried, business manager of the Louisville Courier Journal and early enthusiast of the sport, had canoed from upstate New York to the Philadelphia Centennial. His accounts of that trip and others on the Scioto and James Rivers had attracted wide following. He and Barnes, a confectionery salesman from Louisville, ordered two custom boats from Rushton in 1876. Both of these men and their canoes were present in the Chicago Station that July first morning in 1879.

The third man, Lucien Wulsin of Cincinnati, also with a Rushton canoe, had for several years known the Louisville enthusiasts and had developed a warm friendship through their passion for canoeing. Wulsin, a bachelor in his early 30's and partner in Baldwin's music business, was at home in the wilderness, having survived a year and a half of constant cavalry service during Sherman's campaigns in Tennessee and Georgia. He too had canoed the rivers of West Virginia, and Ohio and knew well the rewards as well as demands of outdoor survival.

In March 1879 Siegfried invited Wulsin to join in a novel and untried approach to Lake Itasca in Minnesota, the recognized source of the Mississippi River. The upstream course of this river after leaving St. Paul runs northwest into the center of the state, then curves northeasterly to Grand Rapids, where it heads west through a series of lakes small and large until reaching Bemidji. Here it runs southerly for some 120 circuitous miles, ending at last in Lake Itasca. In 1832 Henry Schoolcraft of Sault Ste. Marie had reached this water, known as Elk Lake by the

Indians. He came from the East overland via Leech Lake and coined a classical name for the source of the Father of the Waters. Starting with "veritas caput," poor Latin for true head, Schoolcraft, a better woodsman than scholar, cut off the first and last syllables and thereby created "Itasca." In 1875 Minnesota surveys of the area showed a small lake south of Itasca and mapped it as Elk Lake in deference to the old Indian name for Itasca. In 1879 there were no settlements, Indian or otherwise, within a hundred water miles of this area.

Siegfried was attracted to the notion of traveling to the Mississippi headwater from the west, and planned a series of articles for "Scribner's Monthly." He allotted six weeks of vacation time for the project with hopes of sailing down the river to Davenport, Iowa, or even St. Louis. To put this plan into action, the party would travel by train to Detroit Lakes in northwest Minnesota and then by wagon eighty miles north into the White Earth Indian reservation. Here they would enter the Wild Rice riverlake chain which drains from east to west into the Red River. This water shed runs north into Lake Winnipeg and eventually to Hudson's Bay via the Nelson. A narrow strip of heavily wooded height of land separates the westward and northward flowing waters from the Mississippi which runs south to the Gulf of Mexico. A third nearby system drains directly north to Lake Superior and the St. Lawrence. This surely is the fountain land that waters most of eastern United States, and our trio proposed to challenge that region.

Siegfried had arranged for White Earth Indians to carry their gear to the Wild Rice River and guide them to the upper Mississippi, but neither the Indians nor Siegfried knew what that would entail, traversing rugged untraveled woodland with three strange sailing canoes, not adaptable to such terrain, and three city sports who had no ken of the area and its demands. Siegfried, in his innocence, relied on his experience with some canoeing in the small lakes of central Minnesota. Both Indians and whites were in for surprises.

On July 2 our urban trio arrived by rail at St. Paul, brimming with expectant confidence. The day is devoted to acquiring non perishable food of the Army type, which Wulsin pursued with zest-hard tack, bacon, flour, meal, coffee, salt, pepper, sugar, and dried fruit, onions and pickles for delicacies. These stores must last at least four weeks and be conveniently portable, with trust that fish and game might enhance the menu. Maps and simple medicines, namely laxatives and opiates, join the packs which contain a minimum of personal gear-two blue flannel shirts, trousers, a change of underclothing, blanket, and rubber sheet. No tents but of course axes, rifles and fishing gear and thanks be, writing materials, or this paper would not have been born.

The next morning, July 3, the Northern Pacific night train drops the party and baggage at Detroit Lakes in northwest Minnesota. It's a frontier town, and waiting for them is Henry Beaulieu with a crew of Indians and two wagons from the White Earth Reservation. The Indians are drunk after a night of carousing away from home and are in no mood to load up, much less leave for the reservation. After much cajoling, they shove two canoes onto a wagon which takes off on a wild ride under the yells of its tipsy driver, who convinced of his skills, manages to crush the ends of the boats against an uncooperative tree. These are ruined for the water, but worry not, says Beaulieu, we have a fine carpenter at the reservation. By noon the liquor has worn off enough to start the trek to the Reservation, which they reach by nightfall.

The next day, the Fourth, means celebration and no work, but fortunately a skilled woodworker repairs both canoes in sound fashion. The resident surgeon, Dr. John Rosser, receives them warmly and fills them with firsthand facts about their journey. They realize now that they won't be at Lake Itasca in three days.

The following account appears in the Cincinnati Gazette July 31, 1879, date lined White Earth Agency, Chippewa Reservation,* concerning the holiday.

"Two Indians came along in leggings, clout, and hunting shirt all gaily embroidered with beads, one with a blue blanket, the other red, the one painted in quiet colors, the other a light yellow-the latter adorning a young dandy wearing a stiff hat with several feathers stuck in it. His hands holding his blanket in front of him clasped a fine stone pipe while his tobacco bag dangled down to his knees like a Highlander's purse. Both seemed conscious of their dress but moved along serenely, Indian file, without looking to right or left, the yellow one, nevertheless, with the air of a belle promenading."

An early start, disorganized as usual, with the wagons on Friday, July 5, the Kleine Fritz (Siegfried), the Hattie (Barnes), the Betsy D (Wulsin) and gear carefully stowed and with sober drivers for the long drive to the Wild Rice River. The trek proceeds through a "beautiful country" as reported to the Gazette.

"Mostly prairie, but for some four miles across spurs of the Leaf Mountains and hills, sandy ridges which traverse the State in a southwesterly direction from above Lake Superior to the Red River plateau. These hills do not exceed 200 feet in height but have all the characteristics of mountains in appearance and vegetation. It is among these that the headwaters of the three river systems have their origins in bogs and marshes and swamps and small streams that drain into the lakes lying among these sandy ridges. The majority of small lakes in this country have neither inlet nor outlet. The water is warm and while not from springs is pure and palatable despite much vegetable matter which seems to purify the alkaline content."

* This and succeeding quotes, Wulsin Papers - Cincinnati Historical Society Library.

The wagon journey to lower Rice Lake requires two full days instead of the expected half day, and their information about the route to the Mississippi becomes vaguer as they approach the Rice River.

On the morning of Monday, July 7, they put their canoes into lower Rice Lake, accompanied by five Indians, one a guide, another a hunter. Beaulieu leaves them with blessings but his true thoughts are silent. The sturdy cedar canoes guided by double ended paddles and a stern rudder are not built for narrow rivers and portage trails. The fancy sailing gear can only be useless weight in this country. The Indian is content to accept the white men's cash and at the same time look on their travels as ludicrous. Their ponderous wooden canoes for upstream going are out of place compared to the light disposable bark ones, and their route over terrain in the insects and heat of summer can only appear stupid to natives who travel in fall and winter for hunting and trapping but never for sport. Crazy rich whites, they are. Oh well!

The start on lower Rice is auspicious and colorful. Under following wind, sails and pennants fill, and our travelers fly up the five mile lake, while the Indians follow in bark canoes. One third of the lake is covered on the edges with wild rice which attracts the locals. Collection of the grain is tedious and tiresome, as it remains even today. A bow paddler heads his canoe into the rice stands while an expert stickman beats the grain into the hull. The rice can be harvested only at a critical and brief time; so no wonder it is costly.

Once in the Rice River at the eastern end of the lake down come the sails and out come the paddles, and no longer easy progress in narrowing faster current, as it twists and turns every thirty yards. By lunch time they flop with fatigue, and the afternoon brings swifter current. The Indians in bark canoes with bow and stern paddlers move promptly ahead of the loaded, clumsy sailing craft and the tired owners with awkward double ended paddles. At last the tourists give up and wade their boats up the knee deep stream. Twenty miles of the convoluted river equals four or five overland. The struggle that first day leaves them collapsed at

their campsite. The hunter shoots a fine buck, and its venison eases the fatigue of our city sports, but they find little rest from the mosquitoes. Again from the Cincinnati Gazette:

"In spite of a net they got into my canoe where I tried to sleep and stung me through blanket, clothing, and socks till I felt as though a thousand imps armed with red hot pitch forks were giving me a taste of hereafter. No desperation can do justice to the fierceness, blood thirstiness, and activity of Rice River and Itasca mosquitoes. They sting through clothing, search for the seams in gloves and shoes, and while you kill a dozen on one side, on the other a legion have settled and bitten you. I have felt like throwing myself in the water to escape them for a moment and cool the pain of their stings."

The mode of travel the next day changes. The three whites, guided by the native, walk overland while four Indians pull the canoes upstream. By five o'clock the Indians are unabashedly exhausted and their bark canoes are shattered in the fight against current, rocks, and windfall. The following day they wisely decide to leave the unruly Rice river and carry two miles to several small lakes, one of which is christened, Longworth, in honor of Judge Nicholas, founder of the Cincinnati Canoe Club. And there are bogs in this soggy terrain in which they sink to their waists. Their progress is slow, very slow.

On the fourth day they strike out from the Rice River watershed and portage four miles over the height of land to the banks of the Mississippi. The Indians find the sailing canoes much heavier than their bark ones. They fashion a padded cross thwart which bears the weight of the craft on shoulders, while they keep up a fast pace, a dogtrot in rhythm with the rise and fall of their burden. The pace, the weight and rough path cause them to stop twice for rest during the carry. At last they gratefully lower the loads on the flat shallow banks of the young Mississippi, which here flows clear and bright some thirty feet wide and two feet deep. After lunch, pay, and presents of tobacco the Indians happily take off for home. Despite offers of a dollar a day, the guide declines to go further.

He cheerfully assures the naive travellers that Lake Itasca lies about twelve miles upstream and abruptly disappears. They are soon to learn why.

Now for the final spurt. Each canoe stowed with provisions and baggage weighs a good eighty pounds. Guns and ammunition in the Betsy D load her to 100 pounds without the paddler, thus lowering the deck to about four inches above the waterline. Thrilled to be at last on the Mississippi, our group cheerfully paddles upstream for several hours before camping on a flat open bank. After the struggle of the past days the river and environs smile placidly in agreeable hospitable ways. The guide has told them about rapids below Itasca, but they are said to be downstream. So all should be easy paddling.

The following morning within a mile of their camp the Mississippi narrows abruptly, tumbling over shallow rocks between steep wooded banks that shed a devilish confusion of obstructing windfalls onto the course. Indians would directly take to the bush and skirt the stream, but not our Boy Scouts. Scratching their heads, and alone without guides, they look on these obstacles as impudent challenges, no worse than what they have mastered. They're not about to pull out their water born homes in favor of land travel. That would be defeat or at least retreat, and the notion of carrying 100 pounds of boat and baggage over unknown terrain is powerful dissuasion. So they unsheath their axes and start hacking away at the timber blockade. Clearing one simply brings them shortly to another. By now they have shed pants and are dragging their boats up current. Dense wood piles require lifting the boats over the top. Sunken logs trap and bruise their legs. When large trunks have fallen from bank to bank, a passage must be chopped among the hanging branches, and by sitting on bow and stern the travelers learn to ease the craft beneath the large trunk. The rapids intensify as do sharp rocks and large boulders. The banks steepen into high, savage ridges covered with stunted evergreen and hardwood that crowd out the sun and cast a gloomy aura. Ten hours of struggle yield about eight miles upstream. The worn out sportsmen think seriously of turning back. Will this be the dismal end of the trip?

After a solemn breakfast the next morning a short scouting tromp by Wulsin brings shouts of encouragement. He's seen a stretch of open water just ahead. So off they trudge. The time blockages become less frequent and by now the river runs clearly. The Indians would simply have carried around this unnavigable stretch by a five mile portage. Our heroes, on the other hand, count 117 log jams surmounted and 20 different rapids waded, attested by rent clothes and lacerated legs. The final twelve miles to Itasca allow them to climb in the canoes and paddle through rice fields and grasses and over smooth water and sandy bottom. A final ridge narrows and hastens the river through a 12 foot gap before it widens and changes to gentle swells. Ragged cries proclaim Lake Itasca. They have arrived. In its center three miles off lies an island names Schoolcraft, where that explorer had camped 45 years earlier. Here the triumphant travelers collapse, one week behind schedule and accompanied by ever attentive mosquitoes. The following day Sunday they rest. They had gone where no sailing canoe had ever moved, nor would be so foolish to do so again.

Our reporter to the Cincinnati Gazette dated July 14, Lake Itasca, writes:

"Lake Itasca is really a beautiful sheet of water of light greenish blue, set in the midst of sandy hills, 50-150 feet high, and closely covered with pine, fir, spruce, some oak and other hardwoods. Its form is three arms starting from and surrounding Schoolcraft Island. The sandy shores are indented with rounded bays and lined for probably 200 yards with rushes, wild rice, and lilies. We found the lake comparatively shallow, 14 to 16 feet, the water warm at 74° when the air was 72°. There are evidently no springs in the lake. In fact we find none in this country, there being no strata to form them.

The northern arm, some two miles long feeds into the head of the Mississippi. The southeast arm collects at its tip a clear two foot cheerful stream. The largest arm, the southwest, some four miles long, receives four insignificant streams. A largest creek,

some 15 feet wide, drains into the head of this arm through swampy ground.

On Monday our travelers push up this for 200 yards until forced to tramp for a mile through heavy brush along the course before reaching a small lake, called Elk by the map, and separated from Itasca by sandy hills. Stripping off his clothes, Wulsin pushes through the reeds and swims some fifty yards into the lake, which resembles a miniature Itasca. Only a mile wide it collects a few small creeks. After due deliberation our sportsmen consider that the volume of water flowing out of Elk into Itasca does not qualify it as a bonafide higher source of Old Man River.

That evening at their campfire on Schoolcraft Island, some 900 feet above St. Paul, the travelers reflect that hardly a dozen whites have ever passed through these waters, and then they proceed to destroy two eighteen inch lake trout, a welcome change from dried beef. The next day will start the long trip down river.

Taking advantage of the chopping done on the way up, they cover in twelve hours what had taken two days to ascend. In the rapids they wade, holding stern in one hand and controlling bow with the painter. In deep water they straddle the aft deck and in this way cover 25 miles. At evening two fat duck add variety to the army menu. After troubled sleep a frosty morning surprises them with frozen clothing and shivers.

The second day on the river they track some forty miles, including four rapids. The current now bubbles clear over sandy bottoms, at times too shallow to ride without wading, and carries them through savannah and grassy meadow broken by ridges topped with 100 foot pine. It's majestic open country. While the river widens to 60 feet, and as they float on down, here and there traces of man crop up, remnants of Indian lodges and hunting shacks, but in the summer no sign of human life. The Mississippi threads its silver skein like a necklace through jewels of small lakes and flashy larger ones. Suddenly they come to Lake Bemidji, 7 x 3 miles, full blown and expansive with surf on the sandy shore. For the first time since Rice Lake they hoist

the sails and fly to the northeast where the lake drains. Here stands a deserted Indian house of Elm bark sewered with thongs to poles, the first habitation since White Earth. It is civilization without human presence, and the promise of easier transit.

As the river mellows so does the mood of our travelers. The oppression of the first two weeks' journey begins to fade, replaced by campfire tales of their heroic struggles and by pride in their endurance and manly toughness. The narrow twisting streams, the devilish logjams, the stubborn rapids, the exhaustion, and darkness all loom less of a constant threat and in a magic shift become badges of merit to admire and be savored at softer times.

The reality about the travelers approaches their wintertime images of the unexplored wooded shore, the towering virgin timber, the mystical isles in the shimmering lakes. Yes, here truly the untrammelled land of Hiawatha, of Indian gods and spirits, the forest primeval of epic fame, unsullied by logger and white man's dwelling. At last they have time and energy to relish the lineaments of nature's creatures, eagles diving for fish, moose and calf browsing the lilies, waterfowl which in their swift flight are more than the hope of a meal, and the howl of the wolf in the night. In February they had dreamed of quiet current for sail or paddle, and this has finally come true. They have yet to realize that this stretch is the climax of their journey in fact and in spirit. All around is silence, the cradling silence of wilderness.

Beyond Lake Bemidji appear occasional plots of summertime Indian life, ragged patches of corn and potatoes next to a bark hut and racks of drying fish. Mangy dogs and wide eyes children guard the entrance. The Indians stare in disbelief at the shining canoes with strange sail and stranger paddles with double ended blades. The jaunty pampered whites elicit a weak wave from the puzzled natives. What are these spoiled strangers doing in their extravagant rigs? Travel should have purpose; otherwise it is silly and wasteful and never for pleasure.

Soon comes Lake Cass, named for an early governor of Minnesota, who mistakenly claimed this water as the source of the Mississippi, some 5 x 10 miles in size and dotted with islands. The lake seduces our travelers into a day of rest and repair, laundry, fishing, and duck shooting. Their appetites are huge and never sated. Such the blessings of heavy work and swims from a sandy beach.

Near the outlet of Lake Cass they are hailed by a French-Canadian trapper, hairy and disreputable. The fluent French of the Betsy D's skipper does a bit to satisfy the trapper's curiosity about the strange craft and the purpose of their voyage. He's not convinced, but they are the first whites he has seen in more than a year. A plug of tobacco softens his suspicious view of aliens who change from threatening objects to merely outlandish ones. Tourist is a word he has never imagined, and strenuous travel for the sake of new sights is idiotic, especially in heavy craft. He warns of high winds and squalls on Lake Winnibigoshish, the next large body of water.

A meandering current connects the two lakes. The travelers learn to avoid the now frequent Indian camps for fear of theft and insatiable curiosity. The eyes of the children stare unblinkingly. The hands of the men probe and feel each strange item of the sailing craft. The squaws hover closely. The travelers conjure up polite nothings as they seek to shove off and retreat to the quiet of the river.

Lake Winnibigoshish is large, and fine in fair wind for sailing, but monotonous for paddling when a hot calm sheen lies on its surface. Some 12-15 miles in diameter its shores hover so distant that the slow work of paddling has no immediate gauge of progress-hour by hour of dull drudgery. But when the wind blows their spirits lift as can be seen in this report from the Cincinnati Gazette dated Grand Rapids, July 24, 1879:

"Today though the wind was rather fresh I determined not to reef my canoe. Everything went well for a couple of miles, then the wind veering to the east of north and changing a point or two every few

minutes blew fresher and fresher and things became decidedly interesting. The wind being directly aft, every change made a jibe necessary. I sat with eyes fixed on the pennant and flag that blew straight out from the masthead, my rubber apron buttoned down close over the cockpit and drawn around me. As the wind freshened, the jibes became more difficult and the waves rose higher. The wind settled into a northeast howler and instead of the Betsy rising, the pressure of the sail forced her nose under so that for minutes the deck was completely covered. Water surged over the combing and my apron while the crests of the waves washed clear over me. Then Betsy labored heavily, hardly making any way till, clearing herself of the water, she would seem to fly until down would go her nose and again water was all over her. I thought of taking down the sail but it couldn't be done without capsizing for sure. So I made for the western shore. I found that the heavy load the Betsy carried (nearly 100 pounds besides my weight) gave her a stiffness and steadiness that were surprising. She never showed the least sign of crankiness and seemed to have forgotten all that wilfulness and perverseness which had led her to wander all over the river. She fairly flew over the water, tearing her way through the high waves till at times she ran under and then would come up again. I was obliged to hold the sheet in my mouth tight between my back teeth and use both hands for steering. The paddle had to be at an angle of 45 degrees from the boat and required all the strength I could exert."

Once again they find the protection of the river. Clots and blots of civilization dot the widening and less picturesque river. Marsh and dull lowland welcome them as the strengthening course gathers for the long trek to the gulf, and they, like the floating debris from the tributaries, have weeks of passage ahead to go down the coiled, wandering path of the philandering Father of Rivers. As they navigate, a sense of tedium seeps in, and it saps the excitement that has fueled their every effort. Perhaps the time is near to leave the river.

Late on July 24th they hear a distant moan that grows to constant rumble as they approach-Pekagama Falls where the Mississippi tumbles over the first

granite outcrop of their journey. A portage of 100 yards brings them to the foot of the falls where they launch into the fast water above three rapids with three foot waves, hence the name of Grand Rapids, a logging town. Nonchalantly they sweep through the churning water and head for the shore and the nearest store and shave.

It has been some 250 miles from Itasca and how much further should they go? The hard part has been done, the never before tried stretch of the lonely wilderness, and from her on down the settled Midwest. They are holiday sportsmen who must soon return to the harness of commerce, so mercifully forgotten during their spree with nature. Their Rushton boats have survived superbly the wrenches and turmoil of the trip but they bear deep scars. Their clothing and supplies have just squeaked through. Would sailing to St. Paul or Dubuque be added glory? The comforts of Louisville and Cincinnati beckon seductively. They have met their goals and satisfied their sporting demands enough to last until another summer.

Two summers later an ironic twist of events closed in on our intrepid trio, an event which tarnished the shining image of what they felt they had achieved. It happened that a professional traveler and showman, one Captain Willard Glazier, crossed paths with the pristine route of our heroes. He claimed a brilliant career in the Union Army (hence his title), though unsupported by impartial evidence. He made a comfortable living carrying out physical exploits in the great out-of-doors, much publicized and admired by an increasingly urbanized citizenry. For instance, he recently had ridden horseback from Boston to California with rousing receptions along the way. In short, a showman for the times, a beguiling rogue, who lived by the credulity of the naive.

He entered our story in 1881 when he determined to use the Mississippi as theater for his exploits. To start at its source his party journeyed overland from Lake Leech, some 50 miles east of Itasca. Once there he proclaimed to have discovered the true source of the Mississippi, which he proceeded to name Lake Glazier, the same lake called Elk by our travelers and by

Minnesota State Surveys. He blithely ignored the reports in 1880 by Siegfried in Lippincott's magazine and by Wulsin, 1879, in the Cincinnati Gazette. It later became clear that Glazier had been aware of these reports and had even plagiarized some of their language. The eastern press in New York, Baltimore, and Philadelphia made much of Glazier's story, feeding it to readers who knew little of the Midwest.

This was especially galling to our intrepid trio who, as true sporting explorers, deeply resented the fraudulent claim. With added insult, Glazier had equipped himself with several Rushton sailing canoes and proceeded to sail down the length of the Mississippi as far as the Gulf with frequent stops in towns and cities along the way to glorify his discoveries and exploits. His brother, a newspaper publicist, organized these money raising events and fed a stream of propaganda to the press. Eventually by 1887 the fraud of discovery was generally acknowledged but not until some maps had honored Lake Glazier, and the good Captain had profited generously. Nonetheless, even our travelers extended grudging credit to his transit from Lake Itasca to the Gulf in a Rushton sailing canoe.

Of course, Rushton's boat works were delighted with Glazier's feat and its publicity, which advertised free of charge their craft, as shown in their yearly catalogues. In effect, these exploits on the Mississippi heralded the high point of the sailing canoe craze in North America. Annual regattas were organized with much color and comment, first on Lake George in the Adirondacks, and later in Canada on the St. Lawrence. At all of these events the Cincinnati Canoe Club paraded craft and sailer-paddlers. Inevitably the races began to emphasize speed at the expense of comfort in travel, to the dismay of voyagers like our trio. And within a few short years Father Time was to deal unkindly with the splendid boats of Rushton and their hardy sailer-paddlers. The villain in this story proved to be the motor boat. The lure of solo travel gave way to the comforts of speed, space, and cottage living. By the turn of the century Rushton's shop and others like it ceased producing the sailing canoe which passed into history after a bright,

if brief, career. For history buffs the Adirondack Museum at Blue Mountain provides a splendid look at these remarkable craft and their role in American sport between the Civil and Spanish American Wars.

The demise of the sailing canoe coincided with and was prompted by the gradual disappearance of our frontier. The adventuresome traveler could hardly find uncluttered territory within our borders. And so off they went to distant realms, the polar regions, the deserts, the jungles. As an example, in 1884, Wulsin set forth to see Alaska, less than 20 years after Seward had bought it for our country from the Russians and long before the Gold Rush.

Today the excitement of nature's dangers draws the young and untameable spirits to packaged thrills for the bored and macho. We have skydiving, bungy jumping, white water rafting, western pack trips, mountain climbing, surfing, underwater diving, and for the true elite, space travel, and submarine exploration.

Some of us seek excitement in danger, some in the mysteries of the mind, some in the strife of athletics. Others, the true heroes of the indolent, find adventure enough in the hammock that swings slowly in the shelter of their veranda. Each of us has our own adventure to follow, always beckoning and perhaps more treasured if unattainable. Each of us travels and searches for a distant horizon to be worthy of a luminous wreath, one that brightens our diurnal trudge and one that allays our nocturnal phantasms.

This we do need.

And God's blessing as well.

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2. Wulsin Papers, Cincinnati Historical Society Library.