

Paddle·to·the·Sea

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY

Holling Clancy Holling

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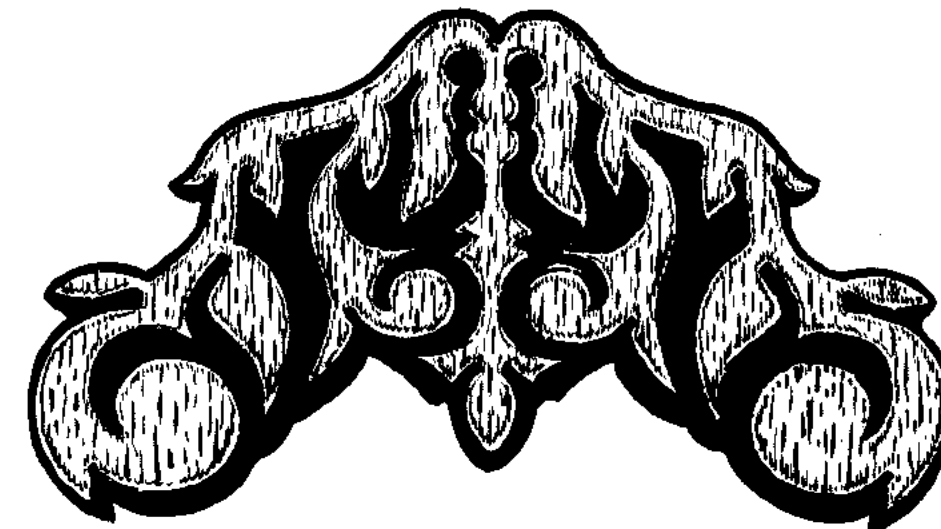
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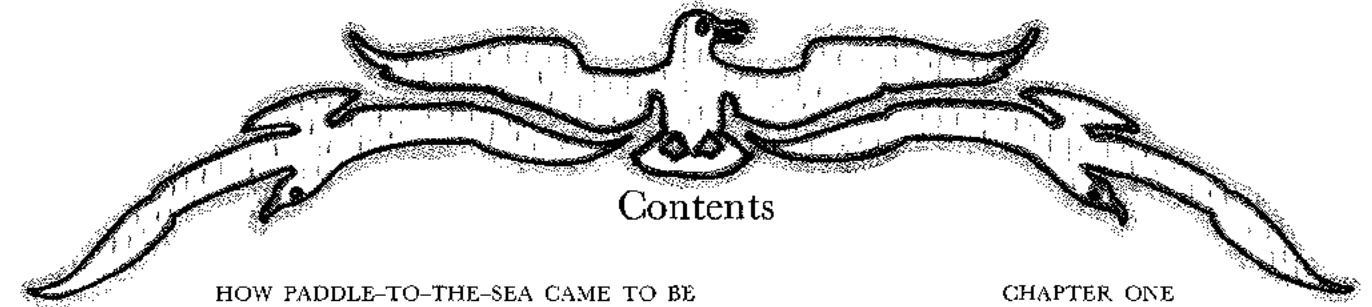


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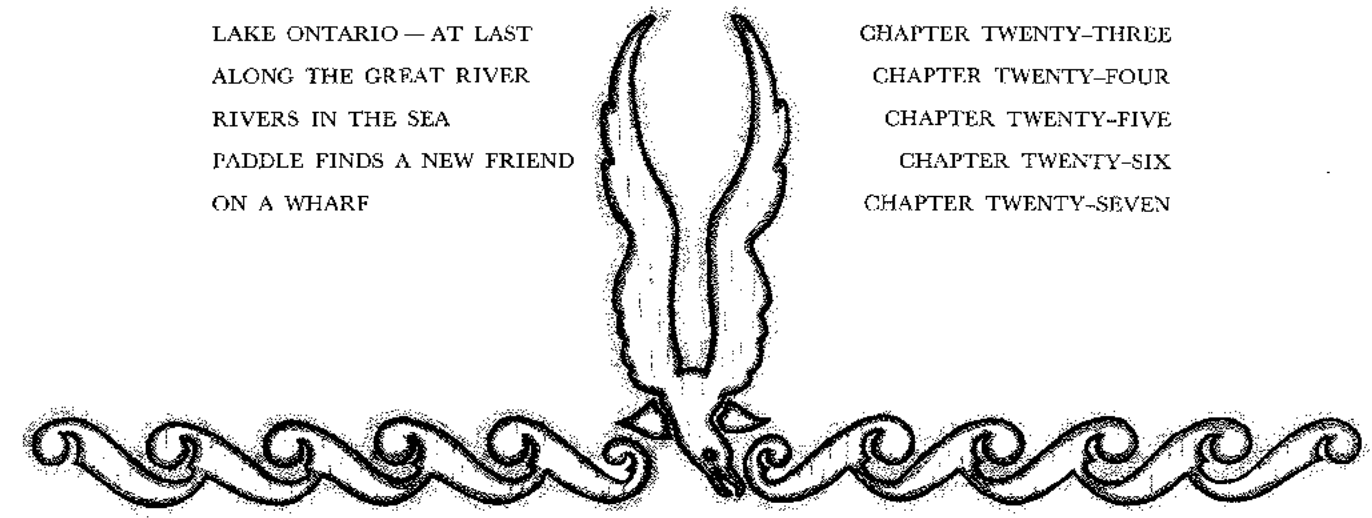
JOHN HENRY CHAPMAN

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



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I. HOW PADDLE-TO-THE-SEA CAME TO BE

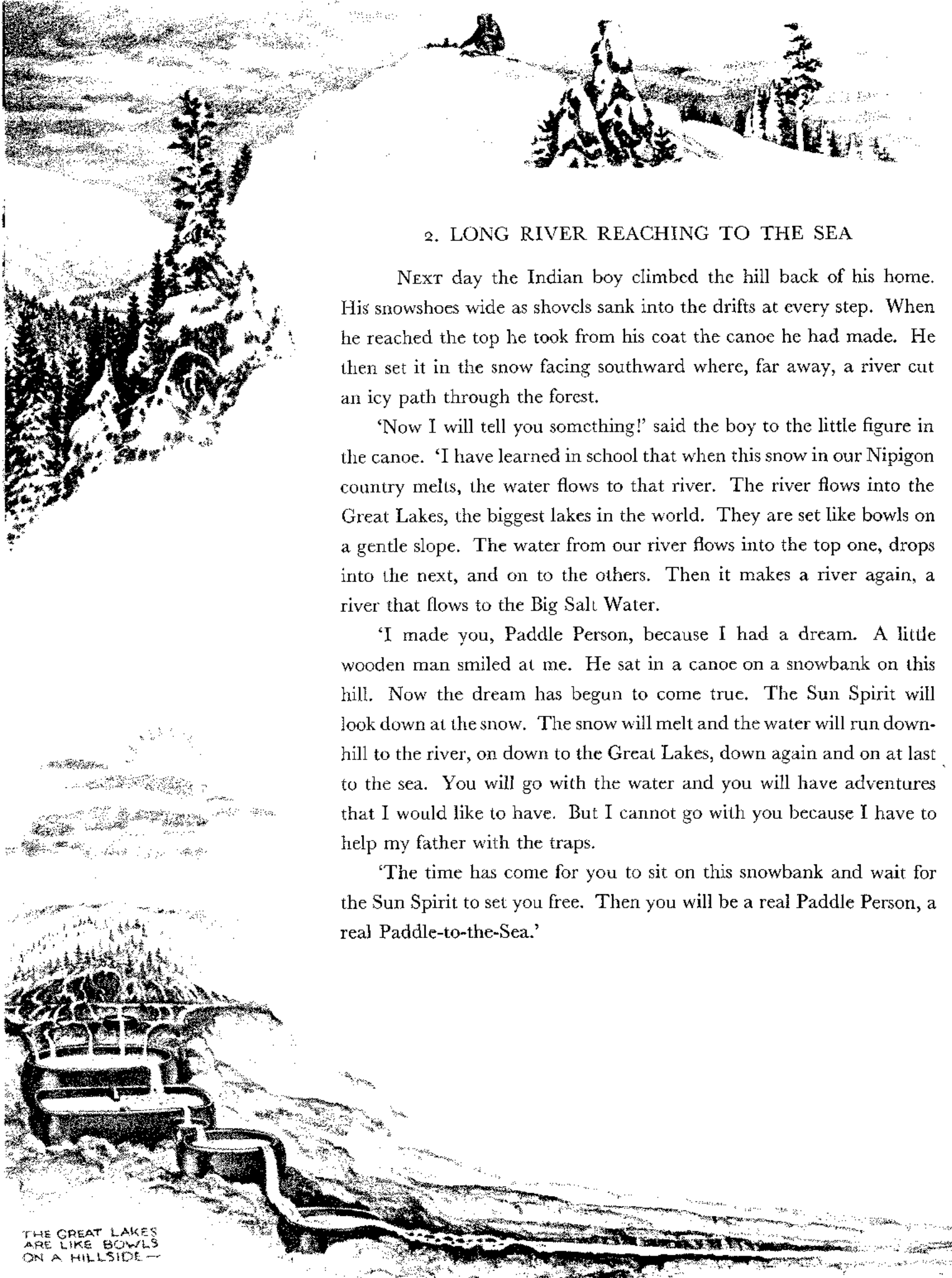
THE Canadian wilderness was white with snow. From Lake Superior northward the evergreen trees wore hoods and coats of white. A heavy blanket of cloud hung low across the hills. There was no sound. Nothing moved. Even a thread of gray smoke stood up like a pole, keeping the sky from falling on a log cabin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

Then far off a sound began, grew louder, louder — and swept overhead in a wild cackle of honks and cries. 'Geece!' 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.'

THE GREAT LAKES
ARE LIKE BOWLS
ON A HILLSIDE —

