

## PEOPLE THAT I HAVE KNOWN

### I

Seventeen miles above the mouth of the Allagash River, three miles above the Falls, on the right side going up-river, there is a clearing that used to be a farm. Michaud Farm, named after the last one who owned it. Jos Michaud, nicknamed McKeil Michaud from Wallagrass, who was a lumberman at the beginning of the century. He used this to grow his grain, hay and potatoes as well as meat for his lumbering operations in the neighborhood. This was connected to civilization by a winter tote road. To- day it is a good gravel road which passes on the farm and goes all the way to Round Pond and Musquacook on the left or to St. Pamphile, Quebec, in Canada on the right.

Before him the farm was owned by Donald McLellan and his brother Finley. At the lower end of the farm Farm Brook flows into a bay called Finley's Bogan after him. Just above the Michaud Farm there used to be a smaller farm; the Jalbert Farm. That is where Willard and Sam Jalbert were born and brought up. Their mother died of childbirth when they were young. She was taken down river in a canoe for her funeral and burial. The Jalberts did not farm much but did a lot of lumbering and log driving. They were very much at home on the water and were well known as the best guides on the Allagash.

Once Willard was guiding a party down the Allagash and was caught in a dense fog that prevented them to see more than a few yards around them. They had to cross Chamberlain Lake to reach Lock Dam. Willard told the men in the other canoes not to lose sight of him and he went ahead. As you may guess, they hit the shore at Lock Dam. One day he was guiding a party on Round Pond 11 miles below Long Lake Dam. They were camped on the northwest shore of the lake and the flies were chewing them good and hard. "Let's get the hell out of here," said Willard, and he took his customers to a rocky point across the lake where there was nice shade, a good breeze and no flies. Later he built a set of camps for his customers; it is still there and operated now by his grandson, Greg, Robert's son.

Bob was a very good guide in his own right. He once told me: "When you come to a rapid, look it over well, then make up your mind where you want to go through and don't change your mind until you are through." That is the cream of wisdom. If you don't go along with the current and hit a rock sideways, you have the best way to swamp your canoe and even break it. Bob's brother, Willard Jr., once told me: "Don't fight the river, go along with it and make it work for you." Wisdom again. When the water is high you can go very much the way you like but when it is not the

main channel goes from left to right and from right to left most of the time. If you don't follow it you are bound to land on a sandbar.

One day while talking about canoeing Bob told me: "When you sit in the back seat of your canoe, what you say goes, you are the boss and you have the responsibility." He told me that on a cold autumn day he had to take a border patrol with a prisoner from up the St. John River to court in Fort Kent. The Canadian who had jumped the border had nothing on but a shirt. So Bob opened the officer's pack and gave a jacket to the prisoner. "If we don't do that," he told the officer, "we will have a sick man on our hands when we reach town." And he added, "In my canoe, I make the decisions and they are final." Bob was a lawyer and a very good one.

Before the State took over the Allagash and made a park out of it, Sam had a camp on Long Lake. The buildings are gone but there is a campsite on that spot and they call it Sam's campsite. He is considered as the best guide on the Allagash. One thy, though, as he was coming to Two Brooks Rapids with one of his sons, the boy in front decided to go on one side of a rock when Sam was shooting for the other side. Result: they landed sideways on that rock and broke their canoe. Philip, one of his boys, told me that in the 1930s Sam would take a couple of his boys up the Allagash in the winter, trapping and living off the land. One day as they were crossing the river on the ice, Sam broke through with a pack on his back and snowshoes on his feet. He yelled to the boys to stay away from him and pulled himself out with his axe.

Of the Jalberts who were born on the farm on the river, only Willard, and I think a sister of his, are alive. Willard is in his nineties. Two of his boys are dead, Willard Jr. was killed in a car accident a few years ago, and Bob was killed in a plane accident in 1980. He was well known as a judge and a good lawyer. For nearly 25 years he was the Scoutmaster of the troop in Fort Kent. With his boys he restored the Block House, one of our important landmarks in the St. John Valley, and made a park around it. He also made a nice canoe landing on the Fish River and a campground near the Block House. About a year before he died, he was given the Silver Beaver; the highest decoration given to a scout leader in the State.

As you come across from Canada to Fort Kent, there is an old house across the street, years back it was the home of the Cunliffe family. My father, his father and grandfather worked for them cutting long logs on the Allagash watershed and on the St. John River around Castonguay Settlement. The three storied building across the street from the house was called the Cunliffe Block. It is used now for offices, apartments and the meeting place of the local Masons. They also had a store next to their house on the same side of the street. They were Will, his brother Vinn and later Will's son, Nick. This one was a pilot during the first world war and

last of the family to be interested in lumbering. He is dead now but he has a son who lived in Presque Isle for a while.

My father started working in the woods when he was 14 years old and my Uncle Benoit followed him soon after. That was on Second Musquacook Lake. In the Fall, before the lake froze, lots of big white fish gathered at the inlet to spawn. The boys found a boat left there by "sports" and a spear (negog). They made themselves torches with grain bags rolled around a green stick and soaked in kerosene and in a few hours in the evening they collected all the fresh fish they wanted. It was a lot better tasting than the salt cod they were provided with. One evening as they were coming back to camp with their catch, they were met at the shore by Mr. Cunliffe, who scolded them for burning his grain bags. But when he saw the fish and was given all he wanted, he let them have all the bags they wanted.

## II

### Rene Levesque

He was born in Clair, N.B. His family moved to Alberta in the late twenties and settled on a farm not far from Calgary. When the hard years came in the thirties he came back to Clair. He was married to my mother's sister, Aunt Alphena Nadeau. His sister was married to Roy Kent, an immigration officer at Fort Kent. Roy Kent was as fair and honest and helpful as the best.

Dad was in charge of the log driving on the St. John River in those years. We were living at Baker Brook then. My father's work was as much on one side of the river as the other. Also, the company he was working for had property and business on both sides of the International Boundary. Sometimes, Dad would come to Roy Kent with a problem. Roy would listen, then would say: "Jos, you cannot do that", but he would add: "But you can do this". He knew the law and would not break it but he knew what the law would allow and he used his knowledge to respect law and order in helping people. One day he told my father: "Jos, Rene is your brother-inlaw and mine, too. Could we do something to help him?" Rene got a job as clerk in the drive and in the fall, he got a contract for cutting and hauling logs for my father. He made good.

Later Uncle Rene got a job driving pulpwood on the Wallagrass River, for the Great Northern Paper Co. The company liked what he did and

gave him contracts for pulp cutting in Aroostook County. At that time the company had a big pulpwood cutting operation in the northern part of Baxter Park. They were having trouble. They were cutting the wood in the Fall and hauling it in the winter, but there was so much snow in those

mountains that it cost them more than the value of the wood to get it to the water for driving. When Uncle Rene took over, he cut and hauled his wood in the summer so when came November, his wood was all at the water. He had problems because there was too much mud in the dirt roads when they a day or two of rain. He showed me a pile of truck tires that were spoiled by the sharp stones in his roads; but he was still making much better than before.

Moreover, he put his savings back in the company and the company liked that. He got some special favors from the company that way. He was well liked by his workers, he had 125 working for him. Most of them stayed with him until he died. He liked them and he liked their work. In the hard years of the thirties, he was as poor as one can be but shortly before he died, he told me he had \$400,000.00 in reserve for his retirement fund. He had 40 horses, a fleet of trucks, bulldozers, a well organized machine shop and all the equipment needed for the needs of 125 workers.

He is the man who built the road from McCarthy Field to Sourdnahunk and made it possible to drive from Patten to Greenville, Me. He also made the road that went to Telos Lake from Sourdnahunk.

A Fourth Degree member of the Knights of Columbus, he was very much interested in the needs of his parish. They were working hard to collect money to build a new church and rectory in Clair, N.E. Every year, they had a big bazaar. On that week, Uncle Rene would stop his pulp cutting operations and Docithe Long, his cook, went to Clair, N.E., to cook for the bazaar.

He died in his early sixties in 1959. He had two boys and two daughters, all well educated and married. He left enough for his beloved wife to live comfortably for many years.

May we have more like him. I will never be able to pay him back for all he did for me.

### III

#### Edouard Lacroix

When Dad was working at Castongay Settlement, Edouard Lacroix had bought a paper mill near Saint John, N.B. Later on, he bought a big sawmill at Keegan near Van Buren. One summer, after the log driving was over and Dad was pulling the sheer booms out of the water and piling

them on the river bank, Edouard's brother, Charles, was coming down river with a crew of men working on a pulpwood drive to their paper mill. He did not have too much of a crew and asked Dad if he would give him a hand. It would be considered a favor as he was not sure to reach the mill with his pulpwood, the water being low and he still had a long way to go. Dad accepted and helped him for a few weeks. The two men got acquainted and when Edouard bought the sawmill, he offered a contract for cutting logs. Dad had his depot camp at Savage Brook, about four miles above Castonguay Settlement and he had four more camps up river. One at Morrow Shed, operated by my brother, Willie; one at Seminary Brook and a couple more below the mouth of Big Black River. For a couple of years, my father made good money, until one year he moved to the headwaters of the Little Black River, ran into bad luck and lost nearly all he had. At that time, Mr. Lacroix had a big pulp cutting program around Churchill Lake. The Great Northern Paper Co. gave Mr. Lacroix a contract for a million cords of pulpwood to be hauled, on the shores of Chessuncook Lake and floated down the West Branch of the Penobscot River to their mill at Millinocket. Mr. Lacroix built a gravel road from Lake Frontiere near the International Boundary in Canada to Churchill Dam. Where his road crossed the St. John River, he built a steel bridge in 1927, which was still in use in 1955. There was quite a village at Clayton Lake and a bigger one at Churchill Dam. There he had a big storehouse near the Lake, a big machine shed, a huge boarding house, a school, a chapel with resident priest. He had a huge barn and stable for his horses but he was using log haulers too. He had tug boats on the Lake and on the western shore of Eagle Lake was the railroad terminal that hauled the pulpwood around Chamberlain Lake to Chesuncook Lake. Two big oil burning locomotives are rusting in the forest near the shore. He had an electric generator and a portable sawmill at the dam. When the hard years came in 1929, the Company was losing money with Mr. Lacroix and asked to reconsider the contract. But by that time, Mr. Lacroix had spent too much money on the project and he would have run broke, so he refused and the company honored the contract. When the million cords were cut and delivered, however, Mr. Lacroix did not get another contract. So he sold all his lumbering interests in Maine to Irving, an oil company from New Brunswick. By that time, my father was not working for Mr. Lacroix anymore. He called Mr. Irving on the phone and offered his paper mill near Saint John, N.H., his sawmill in Keegan and all his property in Maine for three million. He said that the Great Northern Paper Co. was ready to buy. Irving did. Mr. Lacroix still had lumbering operations in Gaspé, P.Q. He also owned the

telephone company operating in Beauce and different other business projects. He was still a millionaire when he died around 1960. He was born and brought up not far from St. Georges, Beauce. For a while, the people around there elected him as their representative in the Provincial Government and later on, at Ottawa in the Federal Government. He had studied English and business in Antigonish, N.S., and it served him well. At the peak of his career, he had managed to monopolize the sale of lumber in at least part of Europe. The Bank of Montreal, who was financing him, objected, because it had interests in other lumbering companies. So Mr. Lacroix relented on condition that the Bank would leave him alone for five years. Another time, when his logs were all cut and ready to go down river to the mill, the Bank foreclosed on him. In a few weeks he would saw his logs, sell the lumber and pay the Bank, but the Bank would not wait. So he went to Portland, Maine, to a banker. The banker would not interfere but he told Mr. Lacroix where he could get the money. He did and stayed in business. In East St. Georges, Beauce, there is a beautiful church. Mr. Lacroix gave at least a quarter of a million dollars on that project. He was a big man with a big heart. May the Good Lord give us more like Mr. Edouard Lacroix.

#### IV

#### Mr. W.H. Robinson

When I was in Rockwood visiting the lumber camps, I bought a little piece of land near an old mill that had been built by Albert Goodie's father. I built a little house on that land near the Moose river. My brother, Willie, was working for Mr. W.H. Robinson at the border near St. Pamphile, P.Q. When I mentioned my intention to build, Mr. Robinson told me that he would give me a truckload of lumber if I wanted to build. And he did. He was an emigrant from Russia who had landed in Stratton, Me., as a young man. He was staying at the hotel there and working at the mill. The hotel manager had a pair of horses and sometimes, he would send Mr. Robinson to the station in Carrabasset to pick up visitors and bring them to the Megantic Club, about 20 miles north of Stratton on the chain of lakes at the headwaters of the north branch of the Dead River. He made friends with some influential people and he went from Stratton to the Border Patrol.

There was a lot of activity lumbering around the Big Black River. Later, we found him in charge of a sawmill in Estcourt, near the American border. While he was working there, a big forest fire started on the American side, not far from the border. A few towns were threatened. The landowners came to the mill asking that Mr. Robinson stop it and send his men to fight the fire. As they told him, he was not obliged to do it, but he might save the villages and they added that they would consider his decision as a favor that they would reward well. He sent his workers to fight the forest fire and the towns were not damaged. The landowners gave him a commission on all the lumber cut along the border from St. Francis to Lake Frontiere. He was appointed supervisor on all the lumbering operations in that district.

He had a dog team to help him visit his territory. One day, coming home, a bobcat jumped in the trail in front of his dogs. Boy, did they go at it! There was no way of stopping them, so Mr. Robinson gave them the whip and held fast to the sled. After a while, the cat jumped at a tree and went to the top of it. The dogs? They were going too fast and could not stop, so they brought their driver home.

In the lean 1930s, there was a pastor in a poor parish who took his parishioners to the woods cutting pulp to save them from starving. He did not know who owned the land but he suspected that he would know sooner or later. He did. Mr. Robinson showed up at the rectory to tell him that he was stealing ... he did not bring the priest to court. Instead, he contacted the landowners to tell them what was going on and they gave the priest permission to cut wood and save the lives of his parishioners. Then, Mr. Robinson thought he would try his luck at lumbering. He would give work to those poor people and perhaps make a dollar or two in the process. The profit was not very encouraging; only ten cents a cord. When my brother asked him why he did not keep a little more, he answered, "I could not. Some of those poor men were coming to work with only dry bread for lunch." God blessed his helpfulness. Later on, he got my brother Willie to work with him. They started a little company with a score of men on the payroll.

In the beginning, they would pay the stumpage, have the trees cut and hauled to the mill. They paid the mill for sawing and sold the lumber. But they did not like that too much and after a while, they would pay the landowners for their trees, pay the cutters and the trucks to haul the logs to a mill who would pay for them. It did not take long that they had 35 miles of gravel roads in the forest. (That cost them \$600,000.00) Mr. Robinson made enough money to bring up his two boys and had plenty left when he retired. The list of all those he helped would probably take a whole book.

I mentioned above the truckload of lumber he gave me. That gift was

worth close to \$500.00. The pastor in St. Pamphile wanted a pine tree log, 40 feet long. Mr. Robinson sent five men and pair of horses in the woods to get the log and gave it to the priest free.

A young man showed up at his office one day, selling magazines to help with his college education. "We have no time to read that," Mr. Robinson told him, "and quite a few have come here before you with the same proposition." Then he told my brother to make him a check for \$100.00. Today the young man is a white father working in the missions of Africa.

Some priests developed a place of picnic and prayer at a nice spot in view of the mountains and the St. Lawrence River not far from Ste. Anne. They asked Mr. Robinson for planks to be used as seats. He sent them a truckload of pine planks and never sent a bill. When the Most Reverend Bishop of Ste. Anne decided to build a chancery and home for himself and his staff, he contacted the companies in his diocese. The L'Islet Foundry gave \$35,000.00 and the Blanchet promised \$7,500.00. When Mr. Robinson was contacted, he asked how much the Blanchets had promised. He promised to give as much as they did. When the time came, he told Willie to give them a check for \$7,500.00. He loved machines and took good care of them. All his trucks and tractors were kept under shelter at night in the winter. He had plenty of stove wood and he never had problems starting his machines in the morning. He had a 12 cylinders Lincoln with the very best tires under it. He always kept it in perfect running condition until he retired. When he went to see his mother living in Detroit, he could enjoy the ride on the Pennsylvania Turnpike at 100 miles an hour. Once a cop caught up with him at a roadside restaurant. "Did I do anything wrong?" asked Mr. Robinson when the officer came to him. "No," said the cop, "but I would like to know what kind of motor you have under your hood."

He rigged himself a yacht with two airplane motors, complete with the propeller on the top of the cabin. He enjoyed that for a while and got rid of them because they were too fast and he had no power steering.

He did not belong to a church as far as I know, but Jam sure he believed in God. He was concerned with the good of all those he knew, and did his best to live according to the Ten Commandments.

He was very helpful to me and I have reason to believe he hoped that I would pay him back with my prayers and I do that. He worked real hard and knew some success but he knew sorrows and did not go through life without tears. May the Good Lord give him eternal happiness.

V  
Fr. Joseph Alexandre

I never met this good priest but I walked in his footsteps when I visited the lumber camps around Moosehead Lake and I heard so much about him that it seems he deserves a place in this write-up. In the 1940s, he was pastor at St. Zacharie, a small town near the border, 40 miles north of Rockwood. It was his habit to visit the lumber camps around Moosehead Lake as far as Grant Farm, northeast of Greenville and to the west as far as New Hampshire. Those camps were operated by the Great Northern Paper Co., H & W from Waterville, the International Paper Co., and the Brown Paper Co. of New Hampshire.

He was a huge man with a physical strength well above the average. In this time, Victor Delamarre was the champion weight lifter of the world. In his spare time, he visited small towns for demonstrations. In St. Zacharie, before the demonstration he invited anybody willing to come and check his dumb-bells to make sure they were not empty. Fr. Alexandre checked them. He did not do with them as much as the champion but enough to hear him say, "Father, only you and I can do that much with these." In the beginning of his priestly life, he was missionary in one of those newly settled places in Northern Quebec. In that particular parish, there was a guy with more muscle than brains who had the habit of standing in the back of the church on Sundays and breaking the elastic bands holding the ladies' bloomers when they came in. This annoyed the good ladies enough to keep them from coming to Mass. Fr. Alexandre heard about this. So he hid behind the joker one morning and when he tried his trick, the priest floored him with a blow and four men carried him out.

When he was in St. Zacharie, the parish owned a farm and Father became a pastor farmer to increase the revenue of his parish. He bought a tractor but his farm was so rocky that it was even dangerous to ride it. After he had been thrown out of the seat a couple of times, he drove the contraption to a stone pile and went back to his horses. He was planning a new church and was given pine trees by the landowners. So he went with his parishioners to cut and haul the logs. He was not a lumberjack but what he lacked in know-how, he could make up with his great strength. He could throw a log on the pile if need be. During the roaring twenties and for some time after the pastors were much against dancing. One evening he heard of a dance in a house in his parish. He showed up in the middle of the evening and the dancers disappeared as by magic but a big guy who was upstairs came down and threw himself on the priest and floored him. Father was back on his feet in a

flash and with one blow, he sent his attacker to the floor. The guy looked up and said: "Father, I have enough." "Same here," replied the priest. Another time, in winter, he came by a fellow who probably had had a few drinks too many. Anyway his language was too much for the priest. So he stopped his horses, grabbed the fellow by the neck and the bottom of his and planted him head down in the snow bank. When he got out, cooled off some, the priest was on his way and he had enough good sense not to push his luck too far.

Mother of those brainless bullies was conductor on the train Father was traveling on. He noticed that the fool had a very bad influence on the young ladies. Father reported him to the authorities. Not long after in the summer Father was on the train. No air conditioning and it was a hot day so he went to the platform at the end of the passenger car. The conductor followed him there and tried to throw him down. In a way to let him understand that he was biting more than he could swallow. Father grabbed him too, saying, "Brother, if I go, you are coming, too." That remark brought his attacker to his senses and he decided to reconsider.

Father never tried to get rich, but if he could help his parish, he was very willing. So if he had men working on a project and he ran out of funds, he would send the workers home, telling them to come back in a couple of weeks. Then he would grab his pack and head for the lumber camps. He would preach to the lumberjacks, absolve them of their sins, say Mass for them and give them communion and ... receive their offerings. Ninety percent of those men were French Canadians and Catholics. So he would go from one camp to the other and after two weeks he would come back home with something like \$1,500.00. He would not leave the place before the last Catholic had cleared his conscience and made up with his Lord and God. He was seen hearing confessions sitting on a stump along the trail. I was told that in a certain camp there was a fellow famous for his profanities. Of course, he did not go to Father. But this was during the hauling period of the winter and the guy needed a helper. Nobody would work with him because of his bad language. It is a belief among the lumberjacks that swearing on the job brings bad luck. So at breakfast the next morning Father stood up and said, "My visits are about over and I would welcome a little exercise. So, if any of you need a helper, I would be glad to oblige." The guy did not dare to say no in front of all the others and Father went to help him load and unload his wood. Now, if you know something about cutting pulp, you know that the cutters do not put the heavy pieces on top of the pile but at the bottom. When the sleigh is on the snow two feet from the ground, it takes two men to load the big pieces four feet long and I have seen some of them two feet in diameter. Father did not lose time asking for help. He could take care of anything in this pile.

You can bet your life that the fellow did not swear when Father was around; he would have landed head down in the snow bank. But the two of them made so good that after a couple of days he relented and was reconciled with his Good Lord. You have to agree that a priest loves his men very much to go that far to help them and save them. He knew how to talk to those hard working souls. His visits were very welcome; they broke the monotony of their hard working days. He sized his talks to their needs and likes (from to 7 p.m. to 11..) He had a good sense of humor. My father heard him and told me later that he wished I would preach like him.

It does not mean that the good priest was always successful. The story is told that at one camp the workers told Father about an old lumberjack who had given up lumbering and was living in a shack near a lake close by. He made a living guiding fishermen in the summer and doing a little trapping in the winter. The fellow was advanced in age and the good workers tried to do something to help the old man die a good death. So they told Father and one afternoon he walked to the shack with his pack. He told the old sinner that he was waiting for a ride and wanted to sleep a quiet night. He was welcome and Father did his best to break the negligence more than the malice of that old Catholic but to no avail. The

next morning before breakfast Father mentioned that he would like to say his Mass. No objection. So he fixed a little altar on the table and prayed.

At the end of the Mass after communion when Father poured wine in the chalice for the second time, the old man spoke up: "Father, save some for me, I am dry." Perhaps a little drink the evening before would have helped Father's business but who knows; the Good Lord Himself did not get them all.

As Pastor in his last parish Father got in trouble with some important people and that did not help him. The story goes that during the Second World War his nephew who was a farmer was drafted. He did not want to go and his uncle did not want him to go. So on the day that he was due to be taken to the training camp, Father ordered him to come to the rectory and when the officers came, Father tried to argue with them but to no avail. So he lost his temper. Turning to his nephew, he told him to take care of the smallest of the three men and that he would take care of the two others. The officers left but Father was blamed for threatening an officer and had to pay a fine. There is also the story of a doctor in the neighborhood who

was not too careful with his maternity cases. He was accused of being too much in a hurry and causing the deaths of many babies. Father got involved in that case, too. So he resigned and died shortly after, poor like a monk.

He may have had his weak points, everybody has them. But the gratitude and veneration that hundreds of lumberjacks had for that priest is the best testimony anybody can wish this side of Heaven.

## VI

When I was in Rockwood, I met **Max Hilton**, in charge of the woods operation around Moosehead Lake for the Great Northern Paper Co. He was very good to me. His brother, Bill Hilton in Bangor, was in charge of all the wood procurement business for the company. Max owned the Kineo House and some property in Rockwood including the old railway station. He had that razed. He owned a few old houses around there and gave me one if I would take it apart or move it somewhere else. I had a little house on Moose River and sold it. I took apart the old house he gave me and built myself a nice camp on Brassua Lake with the lumber.

In Greenville, Mr. Louis Oakes lived next to the rectory. A millionaire who was very humble and generous, too. Every month, he would show up at the hospital and paid the outstanding bills. Greenville owes him the school. The water at Moosehead Lake is never warmer than 40°, a little cool for swimming. So Mr. Oakes hauled gravel on the ice along the shore of Fitzgerald Pond on his property, near Big Squaw Mountain. When the ice melted, the gravel went to the bottom and they had a nice beach, a nice place for swimming.

I lived five years in the Moosehead district and Dr. Pritham took care of me. He was a legend even during his lifetime. Close to 80 years old, he was still one of the local firemen and he played in the school band. He was healthy and very active to the end of his life. Once he was called for me at Lilly Bay in a lumber camp where I was sick. He got me out of there in the ambulance and into the hospital. In a few days, he sent me home fairly well. Another time, he came to my place at Brassua Lake. I never saw the bill for all the trouble I caused him. When he came to Moosehead Lake, there was no road between Greenville and Rockwood. If he had a sick call from Rockwood, he would jump in the C.P.R. freight train slowing down as it came in to Greenville, ride on it as far as Somerset Junction where he got out, hichhike with the section men of the Maine Central connecting Rockwood to Bingham. At night or on holidays, he would “borrow” the motor car. One winter, he was taking a patient from Lilly to the hospital, on the ice of Moosehead Lake in his snowmobile (a modified Model A with skis in front and lags for traction). He went through the ice. He managed to get his patient out of the water and into the hospital. I wonder how he did it. A nice book has been written about him.

When I was in Rockwood, one of my best friends there was Leo Cyr, the postmaster and owner of a set of camps on Moosehead Lake for tourists. A good Catholic, he took the collection on Sundays at the little church near Moose River. One Sunday, he walks into the sacristy with it and says, “Father, that money belongs to God, does it?” “So it does,” I

reply, “and so what?” “Well,” he says, “why not throw it up; He takes what He wants and we keep the rest.” I was not the pastor and could not decide. He knew when I was tired or nervous and he would come out with a joke or a favor. He was a brother to me. He was the son of the late Irenee Cyr of Fort Kent, who, for years, was town manager there and had been postmaster for quite a few years there, too. His son succeeded him in that position. He had two other sons, lawyers in Washington, D.C. He was 101 years old when he died. He had been State Representative when he was around 70 years old and was a good helper for the people of Northern Aroostook County. He was well liked by all and a first class fisherman. I saw him pull a 4’/2 pound brook trout out of Moosehead Lake. Was he happy! “I never caught anything that big before,” he said. In 1950, I was home on a sick leave with my father who loved to fish. Dad was getting along in years and said to me one day that his fishing days were over. The next day, I met Irenee Cyr and told him what my father had said. “Take him to Fall Brook,” he said, “All those who go there catch fish.” I did and we hit a fisherman’s paradise. We could catch all the ten inchers we wanted. We caught enough for supper, slept under the spruce trees and caught our limit to take home the next day.

## VII

When I was a young man, **Cash Austin** was game warden in the Fort Kent district. He was not very popular but it sure is not easy for a game warden to please the majority. I have a good report about him from a good poacher who turned out to be a first class guide and sportsman: Georgie Michaud of Eagle Lake. Around 1959, I was chaplain at the hospital in Eagle Lake. My nerves were not healthy and I suffered with the patients. I would worry about them and pray for them enough to become sick. So one day, I decided to take a break and go to the woods for a few days. Georgie volunteered to come with me. He had a boat and a motor and his great experience as a guide. We went to Second Musquacook Lake, camped on a nice beach at the foot of it and stayed there from Sunday to Friday. The place was beautiful and real quiet. We caught all the fish we wanted to eat and about a dozen white fish to bring home. We could have caught a tubful but we had no way to preserve them. So Georgie saw to it that we would only catch what we could keep and I admire him more for it. After supper, he would wash the dishes, then throw more wood on the fire, roll a log near it and sit down, light his pipe and talk about his younger years. It is there that he told me a story about Cash Austin. It seems that one summer day, Georgie was heading for the upper end of Eagle Lake in a canoe with his

brother. They had a rifle with them. As they came near the point this side of Three Brooks Bay, three deer were in the lake. I will let Georgie tell you about it. "I told my brother to put me ashore, those deer were as good as mine. As I was sneaking through the woods toward them, I heard a motor. It could only be the game warden. So I hid my rifle in the woods and came back to the canoe as Cash Austin came ashore. I told him that I had gone to the woods to relieve myself but he did not buy that. He had seen the deer too. So before he left, he looked at me in the eyes and blurted out: 'You, little son of a gun, you were after mischief, hey?' "Well," said Georgie, "he saved the lives of those three deer and that's what a game warden is for." About game wardens, you know where they are when you see them but you cannot say where they will be in half an hour. They pop up in the woods in the most unexpected places and when you don't expect them to. **Bill Turgeon** was the first flying game warden and a good one, too. He knew that on a little lake closed to fishing there was a lot of poaching. So one rainy day, he took another game warden with him and flew low to another pond behind the ridge. They walked to the place where two poachers were filling their packs with trout. It was pouring rain and one of the poachers complained about the nasty weather and added: "Well, there's a consolation about it. In that kind of weather, we don't have to worry about the nosy game wardens." Just then, the game wardens stood up behind them...

One of the best game wardens that I have known is Leonard Pelletier of St. Francis. He is retired now but three of his boys are game wardens. Leonard is the best canoe man and all around outdoor man that I know. That puts him the same class as my dear father. On an open fire, those artists could cook a first class meal complete with hot biscuits and you wouldn't have to wait long. One night, the game warden caught some poachers jacking for deer. Jacking is hunting in the dark with a light. That is against the law and dangerous. Some horses and cattle have been killed that way. That was in the big woods and the only way to bring the guilty to court was in an open truck. They put the poachers in the back of the truck with Leonard and they knew better than try to jump out. Leonard would have caught them in the air and pulled them back in the truck. He is the only man I know that can stop a loaded canoe in the Chase-Carry Rapids and pole it back up. They don't make them that strong anymore. One nice winter day, I was going with him on snowmobile along Fall Brook to his camp. We stopped as we passed near the Falls and he told me about a case. One summer day, he was walking on the woods road along the brook and he saw a man fishing in the pools at the foot of the Falls. The poacher had a big dog with him. Leonard made a detour in the woods and came to them facing the wind. With the noise of the falling water, they never knew that Leonard was there before he touched the man on the shoulder. He told the man to control his dog and that was it.