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Forman H. Craton - 1934 - 1935 - Diary

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Barbara paused before making her supreme effort, then said a whole string of things, looking him straight in the eye: "La rivière -- le fleuve -- se promener en bateau -- nous voudrions entrer dans le Canadian Pacific bateau -- nous voudrions descendre -- DESCENDRE -- nous voudrions aller en BAS! BAS! BAS!" She paused and looked at him hopefully.

"Je ne comprends pas," he said doggedly, shaking his head.

"Good Lord," exploded Charlie, "we just want to go up the Saguenay on Canadian Pacific!"

"Ah," said the driver, a great wave of comprehension coming over his face, "Saguenay -- Saguenay. Je comprends! Je comprends! Bateau -- Saguenay. C'est bon!"

We piled into his cab and were on our way to "Canadian Pacific." No more problems. Our ship was the S.S. QUEBEC and there is a good photo of her docked at Tadoussac. She was reasonably commodious and we were quite pleased. She had left Montreal the night before and this morning had unloaded 2,000 cases of Black Horse ale onto the dock, the medical convention having created an even greater than normal demand for this thoroughly delightful intoxicant. They cast off at 10:20 and we were on our way down the St. Lawrence with the mouth of the Saguenay 115 miles away. We passed the lovely rural Ile d'Orleans after which the river began to broaden out until it was like being at sea, the southern shore sometimes out of sight. But we were near enough to the northern shore to be able to see the many tiny villages scattered along the river and far beyond them, the Laurentians in a faint haze. We passed many ships. And along the shore were extensive pine forests ranging along between the villages. And the farther we went, the wilder it got. We passed the elegant resort of Murray Bay where Herbert Hoover would go occasionally to stay at the Manoir Richelieu, one of the most beautiful hotels in Canada, and beautifully situated on a bluff sloping down to the river. This was Hoover's "Key Biscayne" and "San Clemente" and "Camp David" all rolled into one and not supported by the American taxpayer nor visited practically every week either. We docked briefly at St. Simeon and then continued our voyage late in the afternoon. We passed a red lightship. We were nearing Tadoussac and the mouth of the Saguenay. We swung into the Saguenay channel at sunset. The deepest river in the world wound away from us toward the mountains, passing between 2,000-foot cliffs. It was a symphony of blues-- the deep blue of the St. Lawrence, the Laurentians far away in a haze, the azure sky far above the saffron sunset, and finally the black depths of the Saguenay itself. It was a magnificent sight in a magnificent setting. Charlie's pictures give some small idea of it -- today they would have been in color. We sailed up the Saguenay some sixty miles to Bagotville where we docked for the night. It was unbelievably beautiful as we cruised along through the inky waters beneath the full moon which shone on the surface of the deepest river on earth.

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