

The UNSPOILED COUNTRY

Canada Has a Great Asset in Temagami

By HAROLD C. LOWREY

PAUL, the Ojibway, slyly whittled a forked stick and stirred the sizzling bacon into sputtering a noisy protest at our apparent indifference to its delicious aroma.

Mingling with the tang of pine and balsam the odors of the camp-cooked meal floated temptingly upon the thin hardwood smoke drifting across the rocks to where we sat fascinated by the glorious beauty of the vista, spreading out beneath us like a fairy heaven.

The stiff climb up High Rock in the bracing morning air had given us keen appetites. But even our appetites, tantalizing as they were under the whetting odors, could not release us from the spell that the beautiful scene had cast over us. We were lifted above the everyday, swept out of the sordidness of human discordances into a heaven of good thoughts bounded by rambling hills and sprinkled with sparkling lakes.

The skillets rattled significantly, still we were indifferent.

The Ojibway patiently lifted the tea and the bacon to the end of the green-log grid where they would still keep hot even though they were out of the blaze of the open fire. Picking the centre frying pan from the fire, he dexterously flipped, with but a single movement of his wrist, the half-cooked flap-jack fitting so snugly against its flaring sides. Replacing the pan, Paul looked toward the open spot where our party were ecstatically pointing out to each other the *one hundred and seven lakes and lakelets* easily seen with the naked eye from the top of High Rock.

Paul had guided other parties to this eyrie table-land and knew its effect on the uninitiated, so he calmly waited until the fish and "jacks" were just right. Then with one of those rare, illuminating smiles expressive of the redman's shy humour, he reached for a tin plate to sound the tocsin that would break the spell and bring us pell-mell to our woodland meal of nut-brown bacon, crisp, fresh-caught fish, jam, flap-jacks and the inevitable strong tea. We eagerly consumed to the last crumb that meal, prepared a la Ojibway and served democratically in the invigorating, pine-scented air of High Rock, twelve hundred feet above the sea level.

Dinner over we were again drawn to the edge of the great flat rocks which the gods—so the Ojibways claim—dropped upon the presumptuous island mountain lest it thrust its summit too high in the garden of the gods and thus learn unduly of their secrets. Be he legend right or wrong, one cannot resist a certain degree of credulity, for those great flat rocks are strategically placed at the four corners of the summit if the gods might have said to the hill: "Thus far and no farther shalt thou intrude into our domain." These rocks are there, earning for the island mountain its name "High Rock" and providing the mountain's visitors with nature-chiselled seats before the wide open spaces from which can be seen one of the finest

panoramas in all the wide, wide world.

An Unexcelled View of Woods, Rock and Water

AS we looked out over it from our perch up there on those flattened rocks overhanging the blue waters of the lake four hundred feet below, we found the view unforgettable, a scene to stir to its innermost depths the soul of every Canadian and to bring into new significance those old familiar lines:

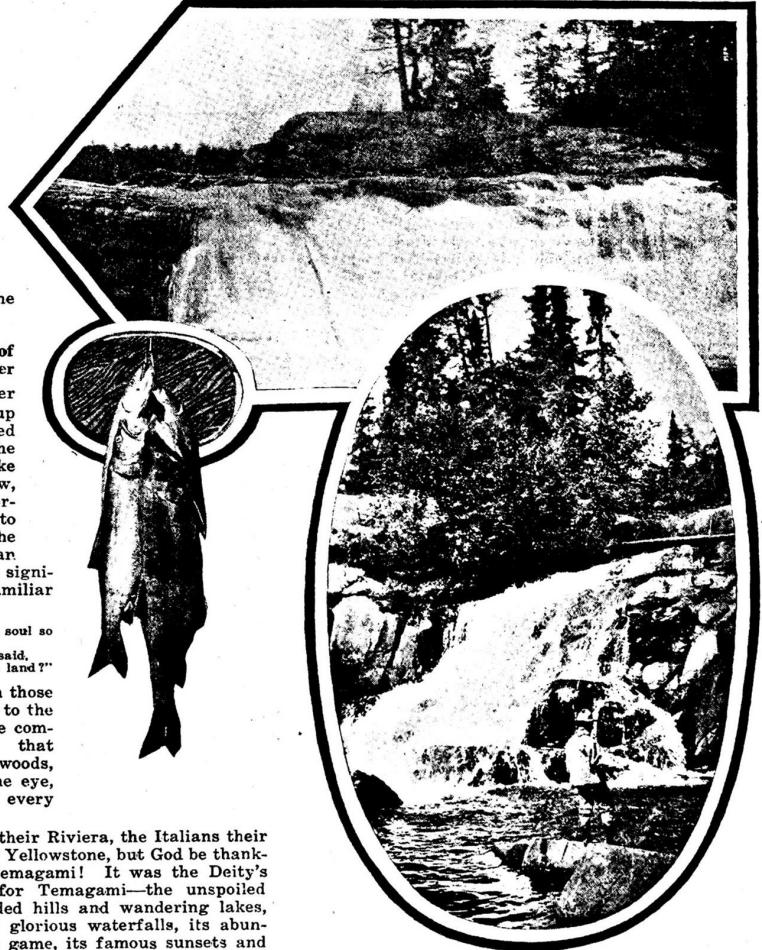
"Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself has said,
This is my own, my native land?"

Just to stand there in those bracing breezes looking to the thirty-two points of the compass, where always that mesmeric beauty of woods, rock, and water met the eye, was an education that every Canadian should have.

The Swiss may have their Riviera, the Italians their Alps, the Yankees their Yellowstone, but God be thanked that Canada has Temagami! It was the Deity's most generous gift; for Temagami—the unspoiled country—with its wooded hills and wandering lakes, its winding rivers and glorious waterfalls, its abundant fish and rambling game, its famous sunsets and its wonderful blue haze, the beautiful solvent of it all, is indeed a paradise beyond compare.

Pictured in cold type, the beauty of that vista must seem as a thing overdrawn, or as the shadowy dreamings of a poet, yet imagine, if you can, standing there upon that summit, overhanging those blue waters ever so far beneath you, and looking out over the many-fingered expanse of Lake Temagami (te-mog-a-me), studded and dotted with its *sixteen hundred* islands and islets all of deepest emerald, laying like a giant hand of sparkling sapphire, lost here and there behind the high hills, against the soft green carpet of balsam and pine running all the way from the wandering shores to the dim horizon hiding behind the blue haze.

Seeing it in the fullness of its primeval glory, you too would find irresistible its call to come and explore its secret places, many of which have never seen the pale-face. Twelve years ago, the Temagami Forest Reserve was an almost unknown wilderness. To-day it is still unspoiled, yet its fame has reached the ends of



Scenes from the unspoiled country which abounds in waterfalls and island-studded lakes.

the earth, though unfortunately it is better appreciated by our cousins to the South than it is by Canadians. This fact cannot be too deeply impressed.

An Historic Point

TAKE for instance the camp colony, which Paul is pointing out to us down there on the point of Temagami Island. It was on that very spot where the first post of the Honourable the Hudson's Bay Company was established over a hundred years ago and it was there the Ojibways bartered their furs for the "firesticks" and "long knives" of the pale-face. To them the post was known as Wabi-Kon—a name still

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Unspoiled Country

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borne to-day by the tent camp there which, by the way, is owned and operated by a young Toronto girl—meaning "in the shadow of tall rock," though there is still a difference of opinion as to this even among the Ojibways, some claiming that it should be interpreted "the camp of flowers."

We put it up to Paul and got this answer: "Me t'ink it say in dark of tall High Rock; maybe no, Chippewa talk, me don' know, guess."

Near it is sacred ground where Indian chieftains have been buried in the curious method of the redman. In front of it is small cove guarded by a single barren rock nosing just above the water and holding aloft like a standard one lone pine, though not a particle of earth nor a vestige of vegetation can be seen above the water.

Then, as the eye follows the Arm, the same feeling of elation returns that we had experienced as we came in up that stretch of wide and narrow water. Sitting there, up high enough for us to trace our course all the way from the "Station" to Bear Island, we recalled how the cloak of conventionality slipped unnoticed from "us city-folks" when the witchery of the North touched the hidden spring within us that loosened our true natures and gave us back the care-free vivacity of youth. In moment the barriers were swept aside and we were old friends with our fellow passengers, discussing with boyish frankness our vacation plans till we rounded Matagami Point and headed for "Friday's Clearing." This was Temagami where everyone was a friend and where the millionaire, awed by the tremendous wealth of Nature, travels incognito.

The Process of the Friday Boys

MY glass swept leisurely across the hundred and more islands thronging Pickerel Bay, till it came to a quick rest on the eagle's nest in the high crotch of an aged balsam towering over the portage from Spawning Bay into Spawning Lake. Old "baldhead" was sitting meditatively on the topmost branch, seemingly lost in wonder at the idle canoes upturned in front of the Friday cabin. This was a sight most unusual, for the "Friday Boys" are very popular guides.

"How much can the Friday boys carry over a portage, Paul?" I asked.

"Very much, heap much," replied our Ojibway after a few puffs at his pipe. Then, as if to express his envious contempt, he opined: "Too damn much."

We had watched with amazement, and not a little envy, the ease with which Paul swung a seventeen foot canoe, weighing eighty to ninety pounds, to his shoulders and trotted off with it across the rough trails which appeared impassable to our tenderfoot eyes. We had seen him take both a canoe and a hundred and fifty pound pack while we struggled courageously under single canoes or fifty to sixty pound loads. But the Friday boys are champion packers, carrying loads that seem incredible even to the seasoned woodsmen.

"Can they carry more than you, Paul?" our curiosity impelled us to inquire, even though we knew it might be treading dangerous grounds. For the redman never likes to be excelled.

"Me carry much heavy, tree hundred pounds, maybe more, all you have need, no more," explained Paul, watching us anxiously to detect any signs of our dissatisfaction with his portaging powers before permitting himself to advertise his competitor's ability. His fears for his own popularity allayed, he said: "Him, Big George, him carry four hundred feisty heap times, long time, maybe two, tree mile. Too damn much. Him at big war now."

Crossing to the opposite side of the tableland of our lookout we discovered the thin arm of land embracing Portage Bay, forcing its waters back from the wide expanse of the South Arm and guarding them from the seductive attractions of Outlet Bay which leads its victim waters on to the bewitching Temagami Falls, below which lay Cross

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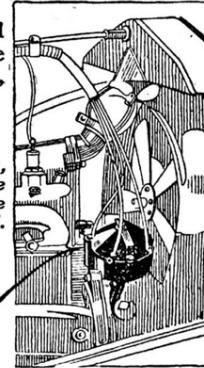
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Lake, McAdam, Lowry, and Hanging Stone Lakes. Across the wide waters of the South Arm of Temagami, dividing it from the curving deeps of the Southwest Arm with its piscatorial beauties—namaycush, bass, pickerel, pike—lay the pine-clad slopes of McLean Peninsula, which narrowly escaped the common fate of being an island by the scant thread of land, just a few hundred feet wide, tying it to the mainland at the south.

From where we were, the Southwest Arm was faintly discernible where it clung heavily against the foothills of the upper levels of the Reserve to the west. We could see the tops of the high cliffs, a rise sheer out of the waters of Gull Lake, to which the visiting Nimrods are invariably directed with the solemn warning to get behind a tree every time a hook is baited. That is not the joke it first appears, for the writer was one of a party which caught *sixty-six* lake trout there within two hours, none of them less than two-pounders, and I personally caught on a single troll within *fifteen* minutes three gamey, small-mouth black bass weighing three and a half to four pounds. Gull Lake should have been named Big Catch Lake. It is a picture—towering sheerness of cliffs, lonely browns of burnt islands, warm greens of waving balsams, greyness of exposed crags leaning fearfully away from the assaults of the rippling blueness of the laughing waters, and over all the smile of a summer's sun.

Between the Gull and the Southwest Arm on the easiest route in, are two lakes, Nobody's and Skunk. We had traversed them a previous year with another guide named Tom, who spent his winters in trapping through those lakes. While crossing Skunk Lake—some people prefer to call it Elbow Lake because of its shape—we had expressed concern lest we meet up with the gentleman whose name it carried. To quiet our fears, our guide had quickly interposed:

"No danger that, me ketch him las' winter in mink trap, me stay in bush heap long time."

With one last look out across the South Arm to where Camp Cochrane—known to the Ojibways as Mitawanga—(the Upper Canada College Camp) hid its charmingly situated island behind the group of green dots sheltering it from the open water, we turned reluctantly away to the last remaining lookout, before which lay the North and Northwest Arms.

It was the most beautiful of the four. Below us the blue waters stretched out in a curve around the little bay formed by the peculiar shoreline of High Rock Island at this point, and then ran away, through innumerable islands, past the startlingly incongruous whiteness of the Indian village of Bear Island, past Devil's Island where courageously stands Keywadin Camp, past Ferguson's Mountain with its deserted mines, to the long beaches of Sandy Inlet, there to greet the incoming waters of the Annina-Nipissing, or to fling a flecky wave at the only farm of the district—Father Pardee's. Flanking the North Arm, the wide deeps of another arm, where twenty to thirty pound namaycush are frequently caught, swing sharply to the Northwest between two haze-crowned hills to finally exhaust itself in the twining waters of Obabika Bay.

The high rippling forests of green made it impossible to see the short portage across the Wuskigama head of land into the spreading waters of the sister Arm—the North—where they gather in Devil's Bay and Granny Bay as if crouching for the spring against the island-split head waters of Whitefish Bay to the north, or, to the west against the compact Sharp Rock Inlet waiting confidently behind the two narrow channels leading into it, the one guarded by Fire Rangers who are sufficiently blasé to ask for "military papers" and licenses. The western portal of the Inlet is over the rough trail from which it derives its name—Sharp Rock Portage—leading into the Nonwakaming or Diamond Lake, a sparkling gem of rare splendour.

Diamond Lake is shaped somewhat like a thumb and forefinger, the

thumb leading away to the west across a diamond-shaped body of sparkling water to lose itself in the rocky canons across which one has to portage to the Wakimika and the Obabika. Near this portage out of Diamond is a curious pile of small boulders, about as big as pumpkins, which rises about four feet above the level of the lake, being about a hundred feet long and twenty wide. It has the appearance of being hand-built but is a relic of the glacier period. Nearer the portage is a strange cleft cliff which legend says was split asunder by the gods in anger at the cliff for sheltering the murderous, ambushing Iroquois. Seeing the rock, the legend sounds more than plausible.

The Reserve to the west of Wakimika and Obabika is almost a solid forest of white, red, and balsam pine, spruce, tamarac, birch and poplar through which roam moose, deer and black bears. Wakimika is a favorite haunt of wild fowl and it is not uncommon to canoe close to deer feeding near the entrance to the Wakimika river—a strange, swift creek, reeling, twisting and twining, in and out, over and under, back and forth, through a maze of fallen trees. This river is about two and a half miles as the crow flies and its current runs at least six miles an hour, yet so zigzagging is its course that it takes nearly three hours to traverse it, canoeing with the current. The thrills of the trip are beyond expression. I have threaded it twice, but would go many weary miles to repeat those pleasures. At its mouth is the ruins of a big motor launch which a mining company induced Oderic Perrone to portage into those wilds. It took ten guides of the Friday class to carry it across the rocky ravines. How they got it in is still a mystery, for they never brought it out. Oderic rarely abandons anything valuable.

The other branch of Diamond, the forefinger, points the way up to the Falls of the Lady Evelyn, at the foot of which four-pound bass wrestle with the strong currents. Beyond the Falls is the gloriously beautiful Lady Evelyn Lake, at the head of which, to the northeast, is the open route to the Montreal River; to the northwest, the speckled trout streams. Near the Falls, painted on a flat cliff, rising sheer out of the water, with that wonderful time-defying red pigment lost with the Indian warrior, is the hieroglyphic story of the death of the angel of the Iroquois who are called the "snakes of the lakes," because their tribe signature was a writhing snake, head downward, through whose coils was driven an arrow with six feathers. The story is of the drowning, near the rock, of the Iroquois' angel princess, of her burial on the top of the rock itself, and a history of the conquest of the country by the invincible Iroquois who came down the Annina-Nipissing.

A scant four miles away, the new home of the Honorable the Hudson's Bay Company's post on Bear Island stood in quiet relief at one end of the outstanding group of guides' houses lining the trail from the Post to the Fire Rangers' Hall at the nearer point of the island. Midway between we could see the tiny school, before which stood a tall flag-pole holding its ragged flag against the breeze, rippling the background of emerald green, which raised in one long wave from the village to the hill, behind atop of which stood a new Rangers' observation tower, stark and yellow against the blue haze.

The Mystery of Keywadin

"PAUL," we inquired as our Ojibway rose to pack for the return trip to Bear Island, "is that Keywadin up there beside the mountain beyond Bear Island?"

"Yep, him heap bad place," was the non-committal reply.

"What does Keywadin mean in Ojibway and why is it a bad place?" I persisted quite innocently.

"Him say 'north wind,' him bad place for Ojibway. Go home now." And go home unsatisfied we had to for, when the redman wishes to avoid embarrassment, he travels. So with our curiosity unsatisfied we made the journey home.

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it in his pocket, saying: "This may be true, Tacoma, or it may not. Personally, I've got what I want. If you're laughing down in your chest that you've put one over on Bulldog Carney, forget it. To keep you from making any foul play that might make me plug you I'm going to hобble you. When I pull out in the morning I'll turn you loose."

Carney was an artist at twisting a rope securely about a man, and Tacoma placed in the helpless condition of a swathed babe, Carney proceeded to cook himself a nice little dinner off the latter's bacon. Then he rubbed down the buckskin, melted some snow for a drink for the horse, gave him a feed of oats, and stretched himself on the opposite side of the fire from Tacoma, saying: "You're on your good behavior, for the minute you start anything you lose your bet on the chinook."

In the morning when Carney opened his eyes daylight was streaming in through the cave mouth. He blinked wonderingly; the snow wall that had all but closed the entrance, had sagged down like a weary man that had huddled to sleep; and the air that swept in through the opening was soft and balmy, like the gentle breeze of a May day.

Carney rose and pushed his way through the little mound of wet, soggy snow and gazed down the valley. The giant pines that had drooped beneath the weight of their white mantles were now dropping to earth huge masses of snow; the sky above was blue and suffused with gold from a climbing sun. Rocks on the hillside thrust through the white sheet black, wet, gnarled faces, and in the bottom of the valley the stream was gorged with snow-water.

A hundred yards down the trail, where a huge snow-bank leaned against a cliff, the head and neck of a horse stood stiff and rigid out of the white mass. About the neck was a leather strap, from which hung a cow-bell. It was Tacoma's cayuse frozen stiff, and the bell was the bell that Carney had heard as he was slipping off into dreamland behind the little buckskin.

CARNEY turned back to where the other man lay, his furtive eyes peeping out from above his blanket—they were like rat eyes.

"You win your bet, Tacoma," Carney said, "the chinook is here."

Tacoma had known; he had smelt it; but he had lain there, fear in his heart that now, when it was possible, Bulldog would take him in to Bucking Horse.

"The bargain stands, don't it, Bulldog?" he asked: "I win on the chinook, don't I?"

"You do, Tacoma. Bulldog Carney's stock in trade is that he keeps his word."

"Yes, I've heerd you was some man, Bulldog. If I'd knew you'd pulled into Buckin' Horse that day, and was in the game, I guess I'd a-played my hand dif'rent—p'raps it's kind of lucky for you I didn't know all that when I drug you in out of the blizzard."

Carney waited a day for the snow to melt before the hot chinook. It was just before he left that Tacoma asked, like a boy begging for a bite from an apple: "Will you give me back them cards, Bulldog?"—I'd be kind of lost when I'm alone if I didn't have 'em to rifle."

"If I gave you the cards, Tacoma, you'd never make the border; Oregon is waiting down at Big-horn to rope a man with a pack of cards in his pocket that's got seven blue doves on the back; and I'm not going to cold-deck you. After you pass Oregon you take your own chances of them getting you."

Unspoiled Country

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We were so anxious to solve the mystery surrounding Keywadin that we lost no time in making our way to the Island's home, Turner's House, where the old Scotch ex-factor and his Ojib-

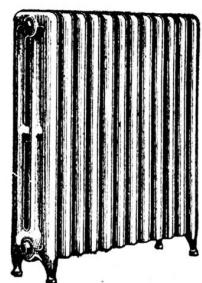
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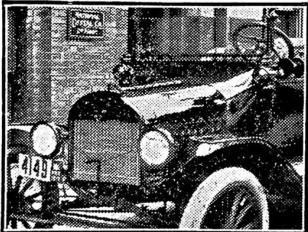
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We found the old Scotchman in his accustomed place, smoking his short pipe, and, like a lot of impatient school children, we bombarded him with questions till he finally consented, for peace's sake, to tell us the legend about Keywadin.

One upon a time, his Satanic Majesty ruled over all the land and had his wigwam upon the top of Devil's Mountain, rising four hundred feet above Deep Water (Temagami). His wife Kokomis ruled with him. Then it came about that Kokomis tired of her evil consort and clandestinely took her affections elsewhere. In scorching anger, his Satanic Majesty turned his erring wife into a stone likeness of an old squaw with a shawl over her head to hide her shame, and then heaved the stone far out from the mountain so that it would fall into Deep Water. But he miscalculated the distance and the stone—"Granny Rock"—fell upon an elongated buttress of the mountain. In his towering rage the Devil jumped down and kicked out the narrow channel of deep water now separating Devil's Island from Devil's Mountain on the mainland. The stone image of Kokomis is still on the island.

During the first days of the mining boom some dare-devil palefaces defied the "bad medicine" of the Indians and camped on the island. Prior to this no redman could camp anywhere within sight of the home of Granny Rock for fear the Devil might be offended. Despite the dire warnings and vigilant eyes of scores of Indians, the pale-faces made camp; stayed out the night and were unpunished. These chaps then conceived the dangerous idea of turning the tables on the Indians by secretly removing Granny Rock to Bear Island where they placed it beside the trail leading to the Post. The Indians were panic stricken, believing that the Devil was warning them of impending punishment for permitting the pale-faces to violate Devil's Island. The calm counsel of the factor and the Ojibway Princess prevailed and after a long pow-wow the Indians returned Granny Rock to its proper place on Devil's Island.

Some Characters of Temagami

MRS. TURNER still mothers the tribe. She translates their letters from prospective tourists, she sends the orders to the mail-order houses, she gives the settlement its great feast—Christmas Dinner—which is a community affair, she cheers them when seasons are poor and game is scarce, and last but not least, she cooks a meal that men travel far to enjoy. She is a princess in name and in practice.

And the centre of all this great resort is the Honorable the Hudson's Bay Company's Post where another genial Scotchman by the name of Fraser holds forth as factor. He is the source of all information, supplies, and mail. He divides his honors somewhat with Oderic Perrone of whom we have previously spoken. Oderic meets us at the station, brings us in by motor boat in summer or by "Lizzie" or dog-sled in winter and takes us out the same way. He is a typical man of the North, bulging of biceps, big of heart, wonderfully resourceful, with black curly hair, blue eyes, and a laugh that never wanders far from his jovial face. To him the 3,750,000 acres of heavily wooded Reserve, its 1,062 lakes, its countless streams and myriad islands are as an open book.

To us as Canadian-born, it is a glorious heritage, one that we all should be intimately acquainted with, not only for our personal pleasure and recreation but for first-hand information of the natural resources and natural beauties of our own Canada. Too long have we been dilatory in this matter, too long have we sought in foreign climes for the scenic grandeur to be found only in our own land. Let us therefore become acquainted with Temagami—the unspoiled country—with its three thousand mile shoreline, its sixteen hundred islands, its game, its namaycush, its bass, its pickerel, pike, and trout, to say nothing of its health-giving tonic air or its recreation pleasures.

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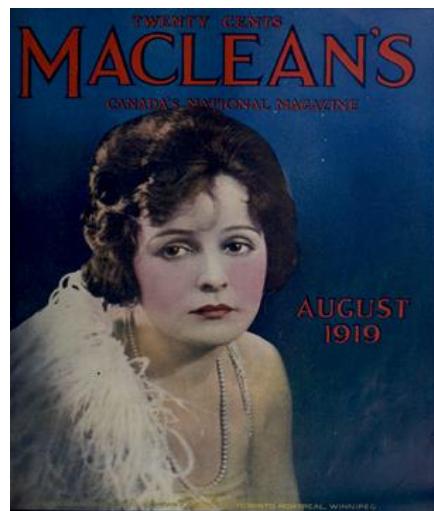
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