

## THE FOLLY OF THE BEAVER

by HAROLD E. HOBDEN\*

Beavers, too, can err in judgement. So it would appear from some unique beaver-work, the like of which I have never seen in all my years spent in the woods.

I own a couple of miles of canyon on the Little Clear River, what I call my private game sanctuary. This is north of the Peace River and just within Alberta, east of Fort St. John, B.C. The beavers multiply and migrate from there. I find they make the best of company — and no finer relaxation can I wish for than watching them in late evening or on a rainy day when work can be put off, allowing time for a hike.

To my surprise, the beavers started a damming and falling project in a most unfavourable location — 5 miles from the nearest stream. The timber supply was exceptionally heavy — mostly white poplars 60 to 70 feet in height with diameters of 12 to 24 inches. These were felled to a depth of 5 feet in places. The beaver dam, if completed, would have to be at least 80 rods (1,320 feet) long. It could have retained water to a depth of 6 feet, *if there had been any*, and backed it up for a half a mile. No water was dammed up and I could see no sign of their constructing a lodge.



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I decided this was worth a few snapshots, but could not include all the stumps in one picture. So I hired a man with a power-saw to cut a heater-block length off of each stump and I packed these to the gravel road. Then I hauled them to my house on the big trail shown here. When people ask what the objects are, I tell them "Peace River cabbages."

I suspect that this fall some road-side hunters saw where the beavers had dragged the tips of some of the fallen trees to the gravel road; their attention thus drawn to the beavers' activities they killed them off.



Another picture demonstrates that beavers, too, have fallers accidents; the tree slipped off the stump gnawed by the beaver. The lower end of the tree pinned the beaver's hind leg to the earth, while the tree remained upright, lodged against its neighbors.

## MAN PLAYS WITH THE QU'APPELLE WILDLIFE DIES

by KEN L. EARL\*

A trapper who is not a conservationist does not remain a trapper very long. As a part-time trapper, I am very interested in all aspects of wildlife and conservation here in the Qu'Appelle Valley. I believe that with some forethought, man could have an agricultural and recreational areas partnership with nature, but to date