



THE CANOL

PICTORIAL

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by

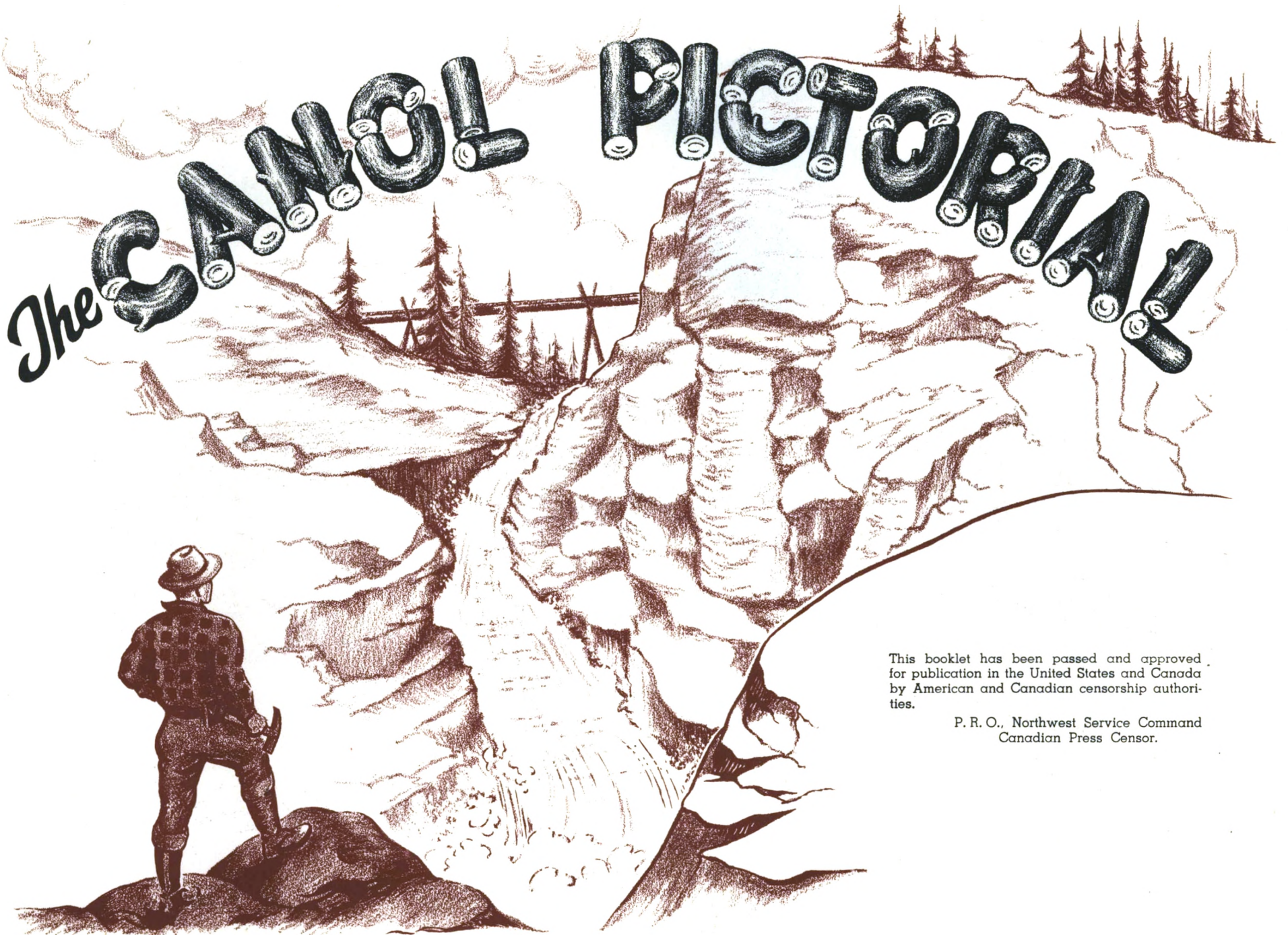
P. A. Harris

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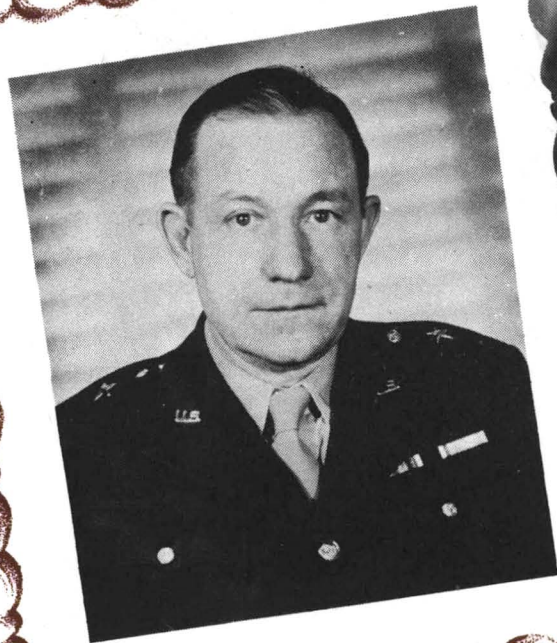
by

P. A. HARRIS



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Brigadier-General Ludson D. Worsham, Division Engineer, Northwest Division, under whose supervision the Canol Project is being completed.



Brigadier-General James A. O'Connor Commanding General, Northwest Service Command.

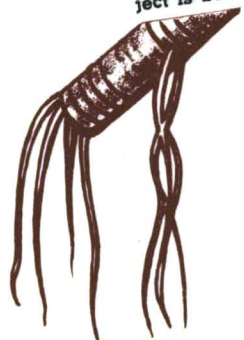
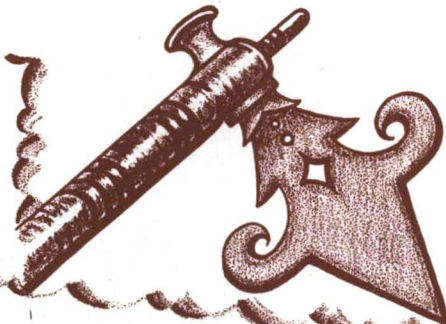
Brigadier-General O'Connor arrived with the original Engineer Troops building the Alaska Highway. Under his direction the pioneer Alaska Highway was built.

The Northwest Service Command was set up with Brigadier-General O'Connor in charge, and the Northwest Division was later formed, under the Northwest Service Command, to improve the pioneer road to an all-weather military highway.

Successful completion of the all-weather highway was acknowledged on the arrival at Whitehorse on October 18th, 1943, of the first truck convoy to go over the road.



ARRIVAL OF INSPECTION PARTY AT NORMAN WELLS
Major-General T. M. Robins (left), Deputy Chief of Engineers, speaking with Brigadier-General L. D. Worsham, Division Engineer, Northwest Division; Lieut.-Colonel R. W. Lockridge, District Engineer, Edmonton District (at right rear), and Captain R. E. Westling, Area Engineer, Norman Wells (at rear).



THIS booklet has been prepared for those men and women who have worked in the far north on the Canol Project.

It is intended to serve them as a photographic memento of the many hours of arduous work performed under most trying circumstances to put still another knot in the whip with which the Axis powers of World War II shall be thrashed and beaten into submission. It is further intended, in some small measure, to depict some of the rugged beauty of Canada's intriguing gigantic northland.

The 'Call of the North' has been heard by thousands... To some, the call is an urgent sincere appeal to come and partake of her boundless riches, and the north gives freely of her bounty to those few who can overcome her vibrant spirit. For others the call is a hollow mockery and these weaker souls she flings back spurned and rejected—or she may charge a life to let the world know her charms are not easily travailed.

For those to whom the scenes illustrated in this booklet are unfamiliar, something of the Project might be mentioned.

The Canol Project, for some time a closely guarded military secret of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, is now generally known to be the intense development of the rich oil-bearing Ft. Norman territory in the Frozen North, 1,200 air miles Northwest of Edmonton, Alberta, and the construction of a road and pipe-line 500 miles long across the Mackenzie Mountains to a refining base at Whitehorse in the Yukon Territory. Final weld completing the pipe-line was made February 16th, 1944.

This was a tremendous undertaking.

'Frozen North' is literal, for at Norman Wells, N.W.T., the ground is frozen solid to a depth of 150 feet at all times, and only in the short summer months does the ground surface thaw out to a depth of only a few feet. In the raging winter, temperatures drop to 70 degrees below zero (150 degrees colder than summer) yet the work must, and does, go on—a tribute to those willing to face the gnawing hardships of these sub-Arctic regions to help beat an insatiable enemy. Blizzards may rage, but the work goes on.

This 'Land of the Midnight Sun' in summer provides tribulations of a different nature from the numbing cold of winter. Not intense heat, but vicious mosquitoes and flies, are summer pests. Treacherous muskegs of this northern wilderness too, add to the many obstacles encountered in the line of duty. In this mire, tractors will sometimes sink completely out of sight.

To this land of the bear and the lordly moose, this haven to thousand upon thousand of geese and ducks, to this well-protected storehouse of buried liquid treasure, supplies, road-building and drilling equipment in almost unbelievable quantity were rushed. To utilize precious time, nearly every conceivable method of transportation was called into play, from dog team to airplane.

Locomotives hauled freight to the railheads at Peace River and Waterways, in Alberta, respectively 300 miles Northwest and Northeast of Alberta's seat of government, Edmonton.

In the winter of 1942-43, from Peace River, giant tractors flayed their way an unbelievable 1,500 road miles to Norman Wells. Tractor trains and truck convoys followed through with surprising regularity, despite the frigid temperatures, the dangerous terrain and break-downs of over-strained equipment.

From Waterways, during the summer of 1943, barges transported more thousands of tons of freight down the Athabaska River, across Lake Athabaska into the Peace and then Slave Rivers. Crossing the mighty Great Slave Lake with its storms and 15-foot waves was the hardest part of this journey and the haven of the Mackenzie River, second largest river on the North American Continent, was welcomed as a port after an ocean storm. Down this river, named after Alexander Mackenzie, the young adventurous explorer first noticing oil seepage on its surface near Norman Wells in 1789, the barges labored to their destination at the oil-fields and to Camp Canol, base camp for road and pipe-line construction contractors, three miles across the river from the wells.

Commercial and cargo planes of the Air Transport Command incessantly shuttled back and forth from Edmonton, speeding ton after ton of freight to the northern outpost.

Planes to the workers in the north are always welcome, for the unconquerable drone of their motors might mean the replacement of a sorely needed part to a valuable piece of idle machinery—might even mean mail from home. Mail is greeted as the spring thaw, for to both soldier and civilian, separated by thousands of miles from their families, home news can not arrive too often.

To these men and women this booklet of Canol is presented.

—P. A. HARRIS.



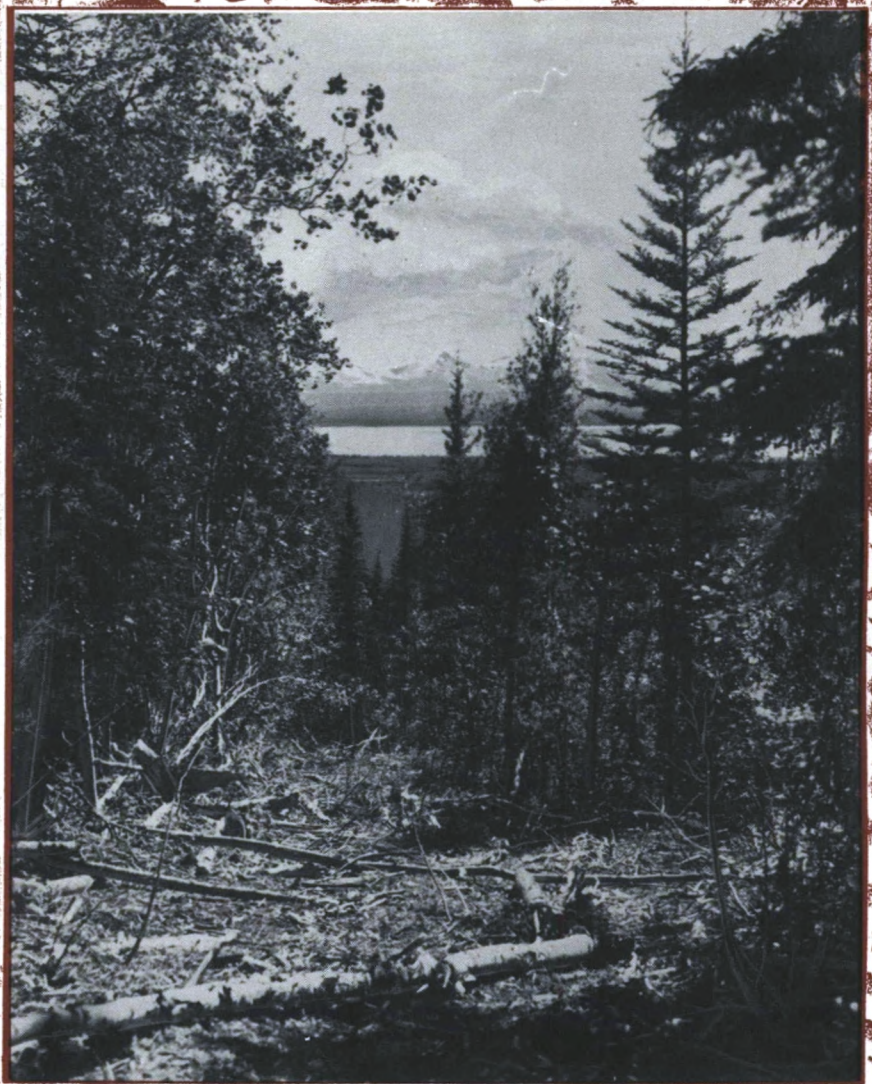
From Norman Wells, Camp Canol is barely visible across the mighty Mackenzie River.



Symbolic of the new North is this silhouette—a mountain stream framed by crossed timbers supporting a pipe-line.



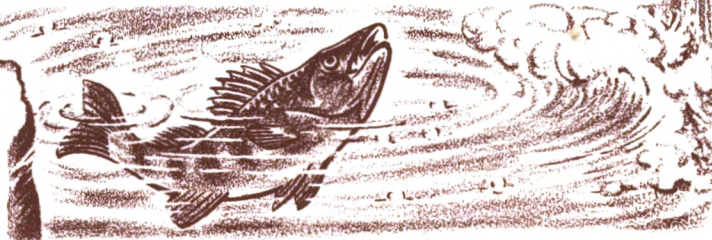
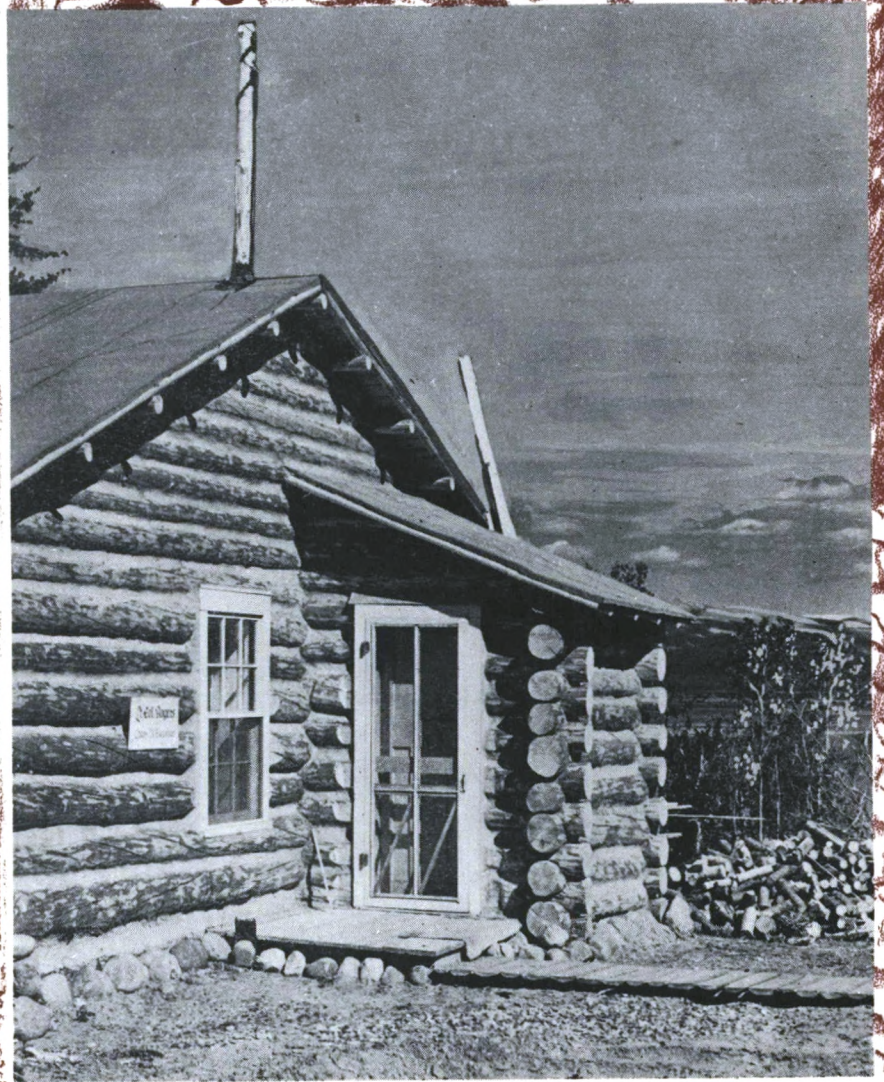
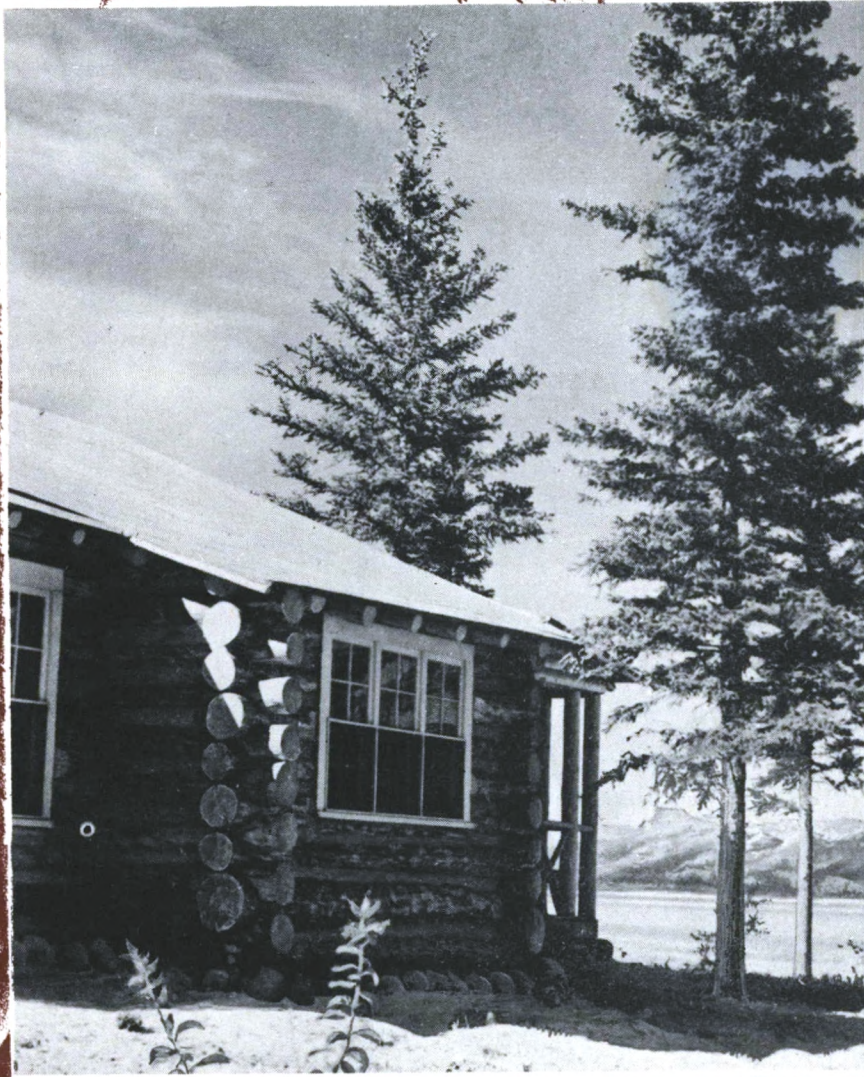
Theo. A. Link, shown here behind an instrument to view aerial geological photos.



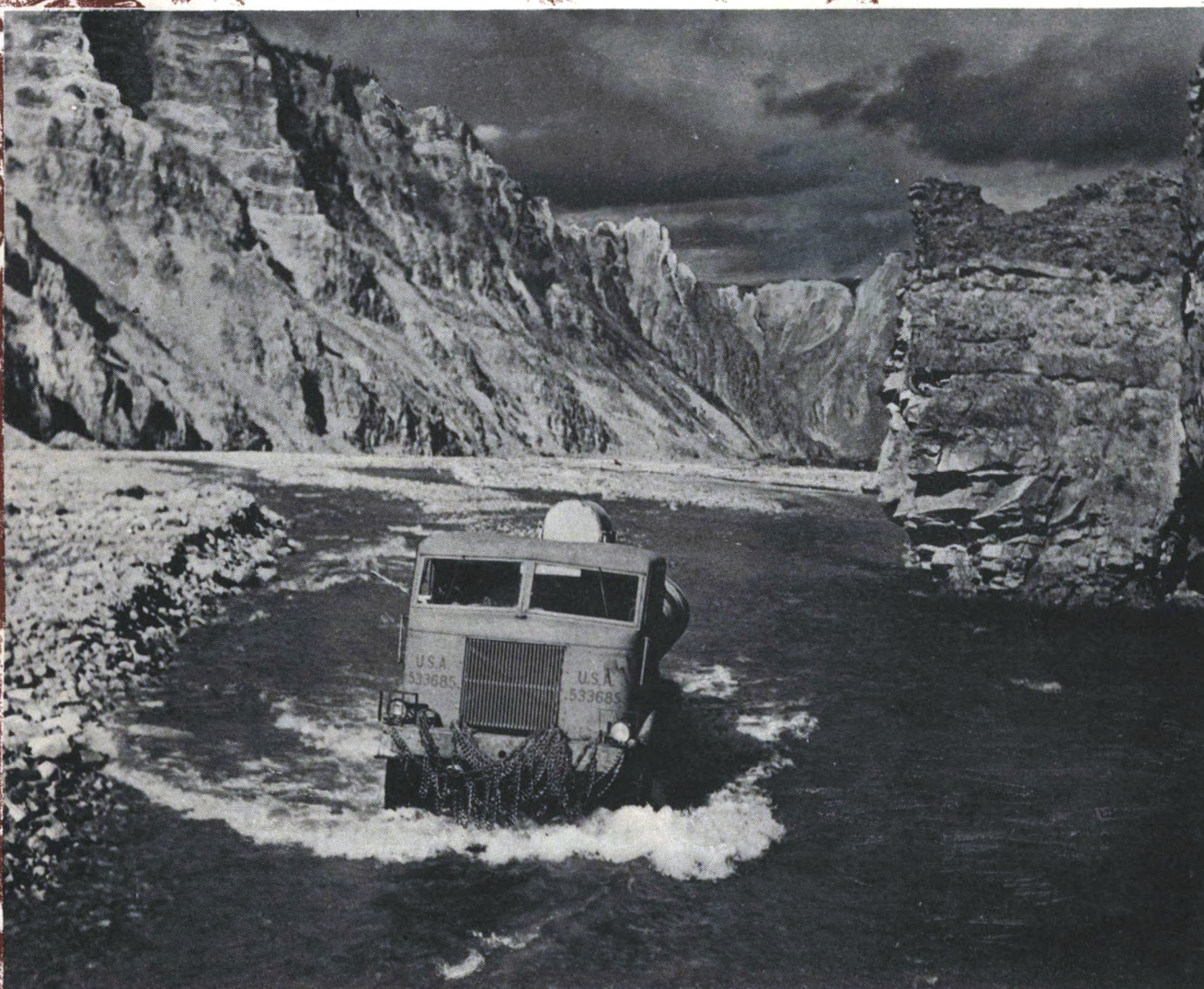
Down the side of the MacKinlay mountains, bulldozers crashed their way through 60-foot trees and snow waist-deep.



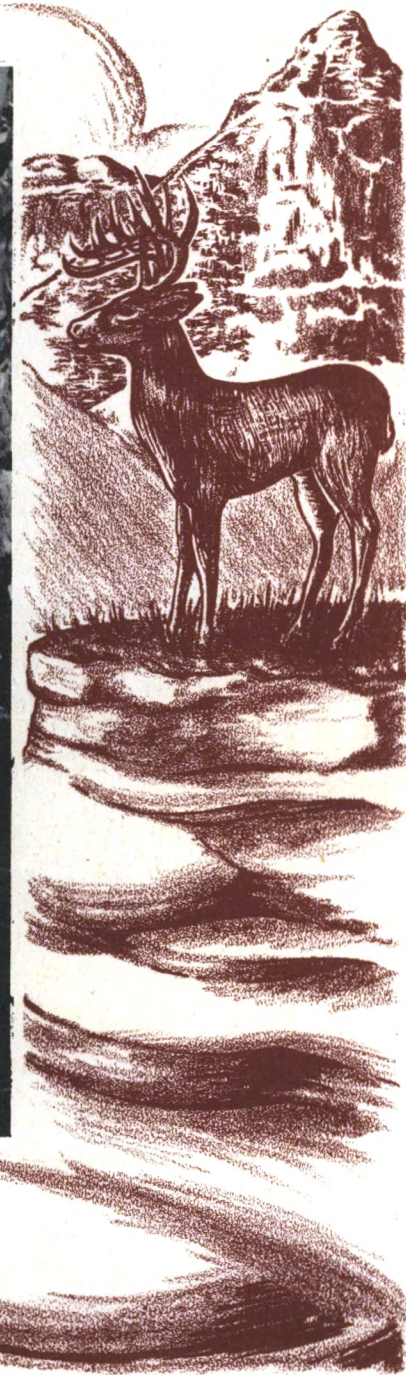
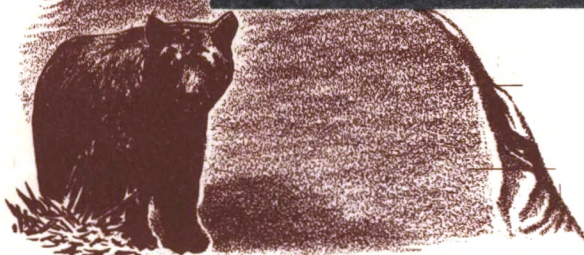
Through these snow-capped mountains the pipe-line is being taken to the Yukon refinery at Whitehorse.



The Guest House at Camp Canol, affording an unobstructed view of the beautiful mountain-surrounded Mackenzie River Valley to visiting officials.



Fuel truck laboring up the canyon 'road.' Cold, crystal-clear streams served more than a scenic purpose in several parts of the canyon.

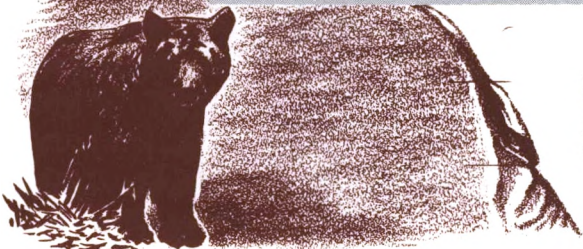




Fording one of the rivers with road-building equipment.



Rabbit tracks point to the first Canol drilled well at Norman Wells, drilled in the fall of 1942. Across the frozen Mackenzie can be seen the road from Canol to Norman Wells.





'Cat' with mutilated track receives assistance in hauling a load of pipe out of a soft spot in the road.



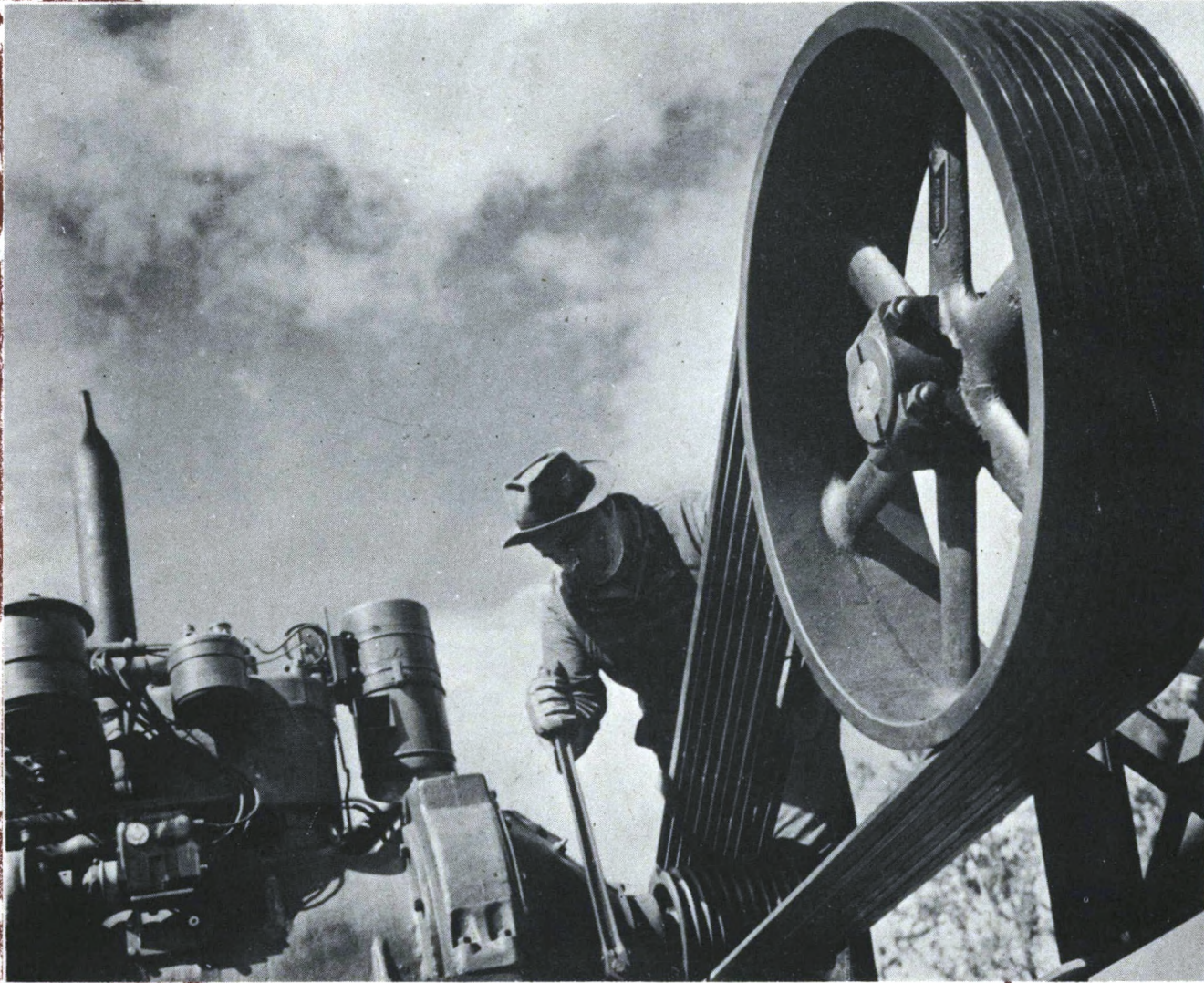
River boat landing with barge load of supplies
at Imperial Oil Limited dock.



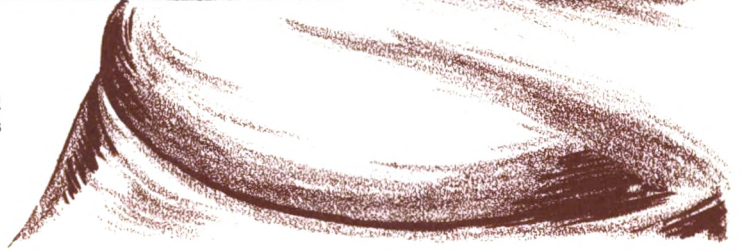
Major-General Foster, Canadian representative in the Northwest Command area, and Col. J. Lyons (left) stop to chat with welders L. S. Cook, Oklahoma, and C. R. Dunlop, San Francisco. Picture was made during General Foster's initial inspection trip.

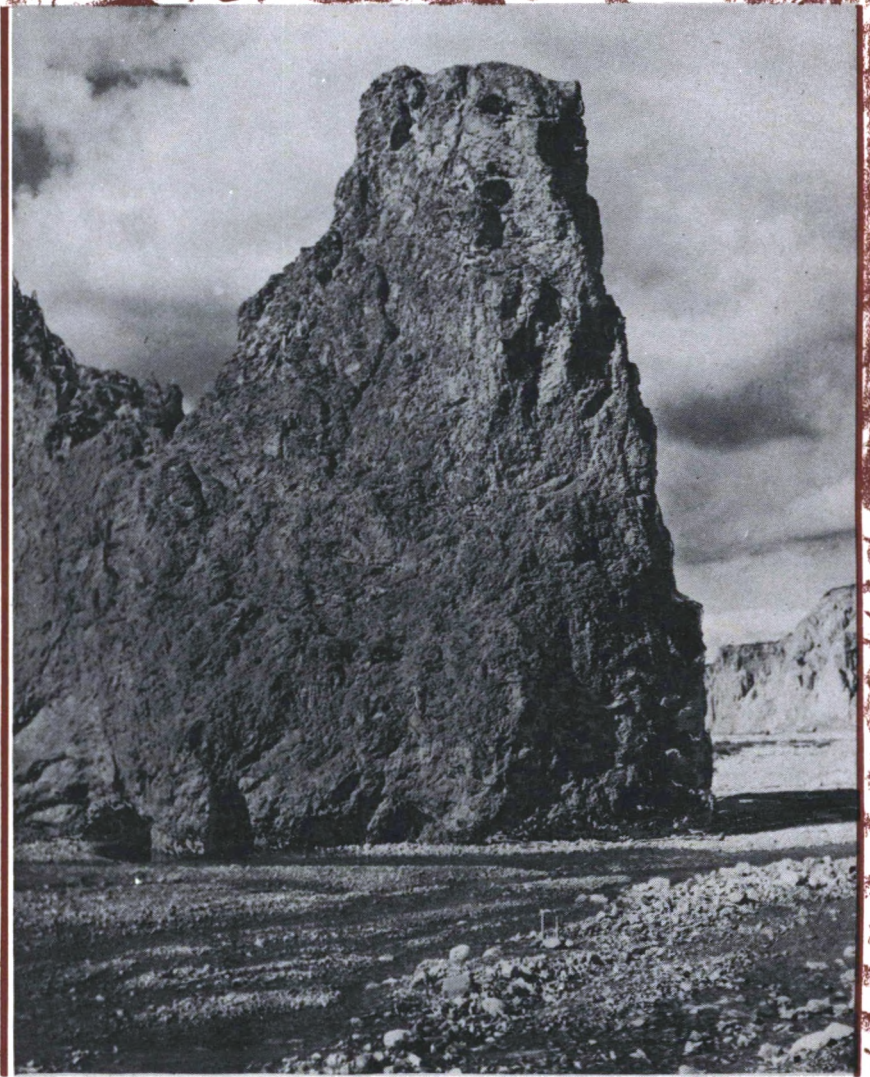


Geologists preparing to set out on a long field trip to make reports on the country surrounding the oil fields.

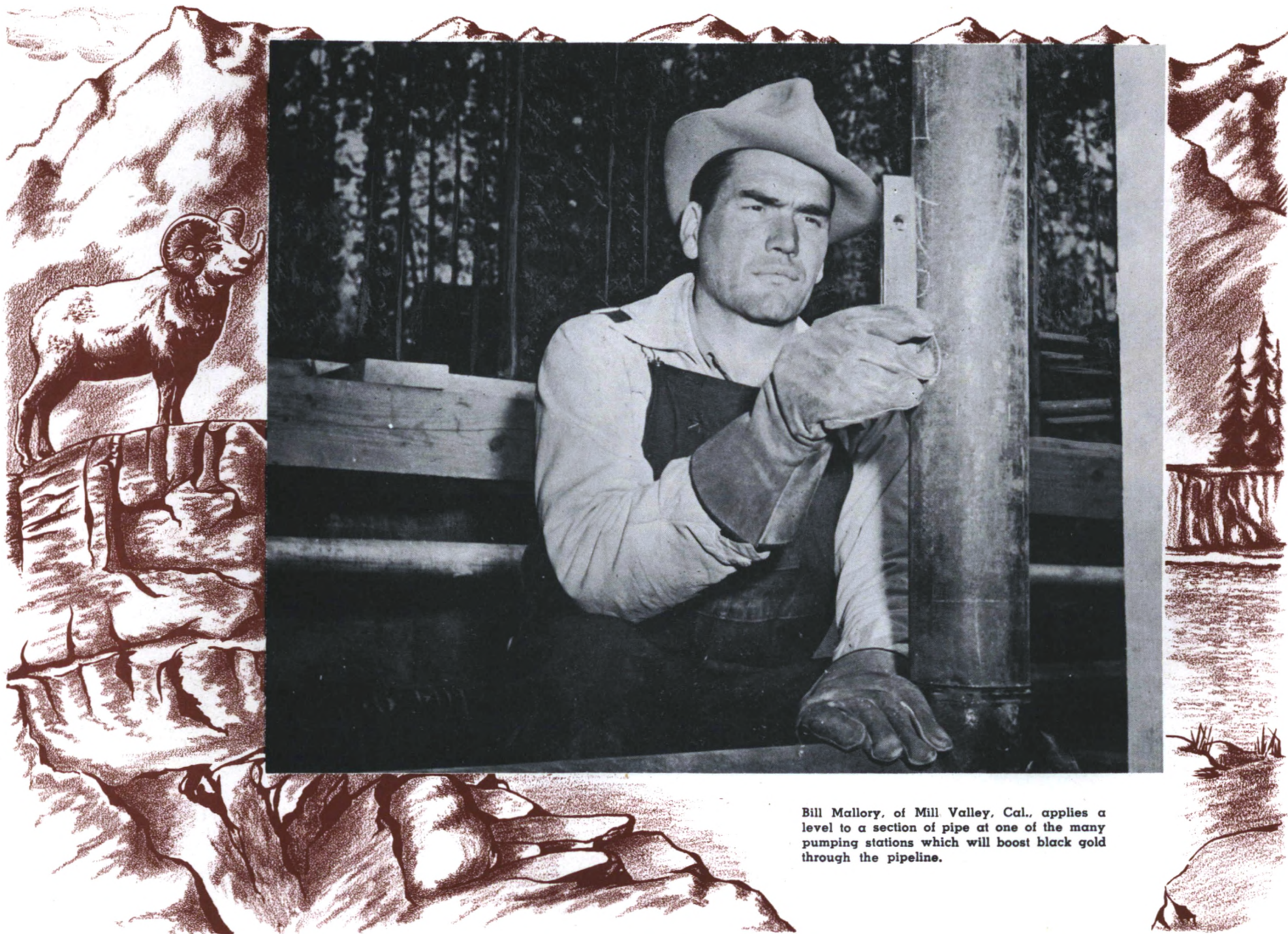


At one of the many pumping stations being constructed along the pipe-line, Roy Oakley, of Oklahoma City, tries out the lever of the belt shift.





These pictures show the rugged canyon through which the road and pipe-line are being built.



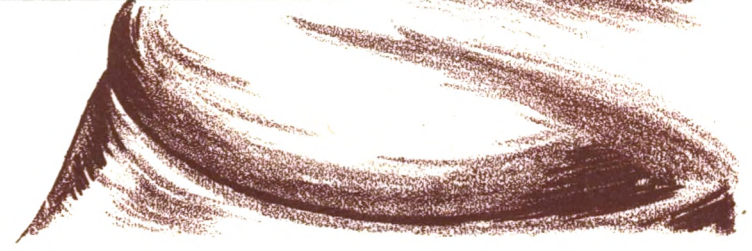
Bill Mallory, of Mill Valley, Cal., applies a level to a section of pipe at one of the many pumping stations which will boost black gold through the pipeline.



Harold "Denver" Atkins, Denver welder, applies welding torch to elbow of pipe made to allow for expansion and contraction of pipe from extreme heat to extreme cold.



The road beside which the pipe-line is being laid.

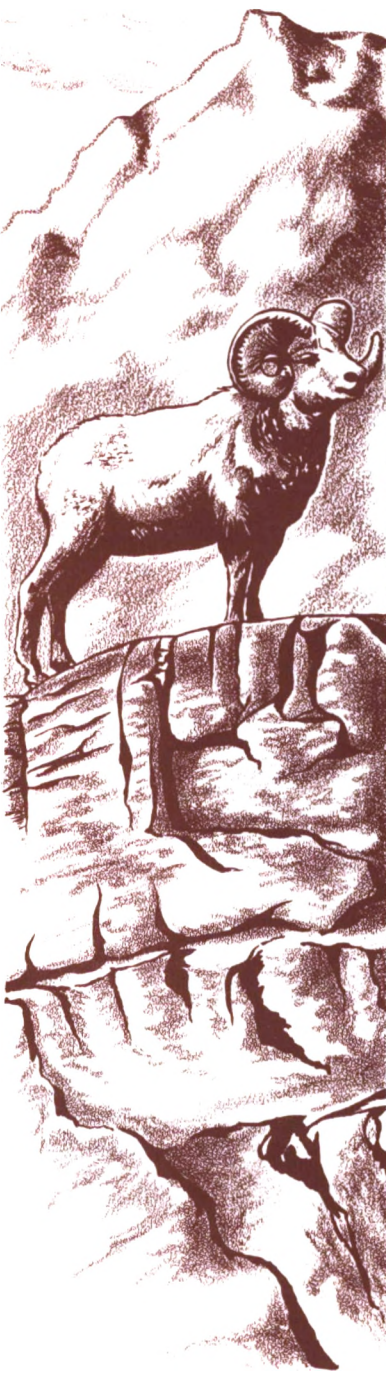




Dragging rock-weighted log bridge supports into position.



The MacKinlay range of mountains viewed from Camp Canol, looking down the Mackenzie River.



Pipe for the new pipe-line is delivered by huge trucks groaning under 7-ton loads. Here a load of pipe is being dumped. Pipe layers and welders will take over from here.



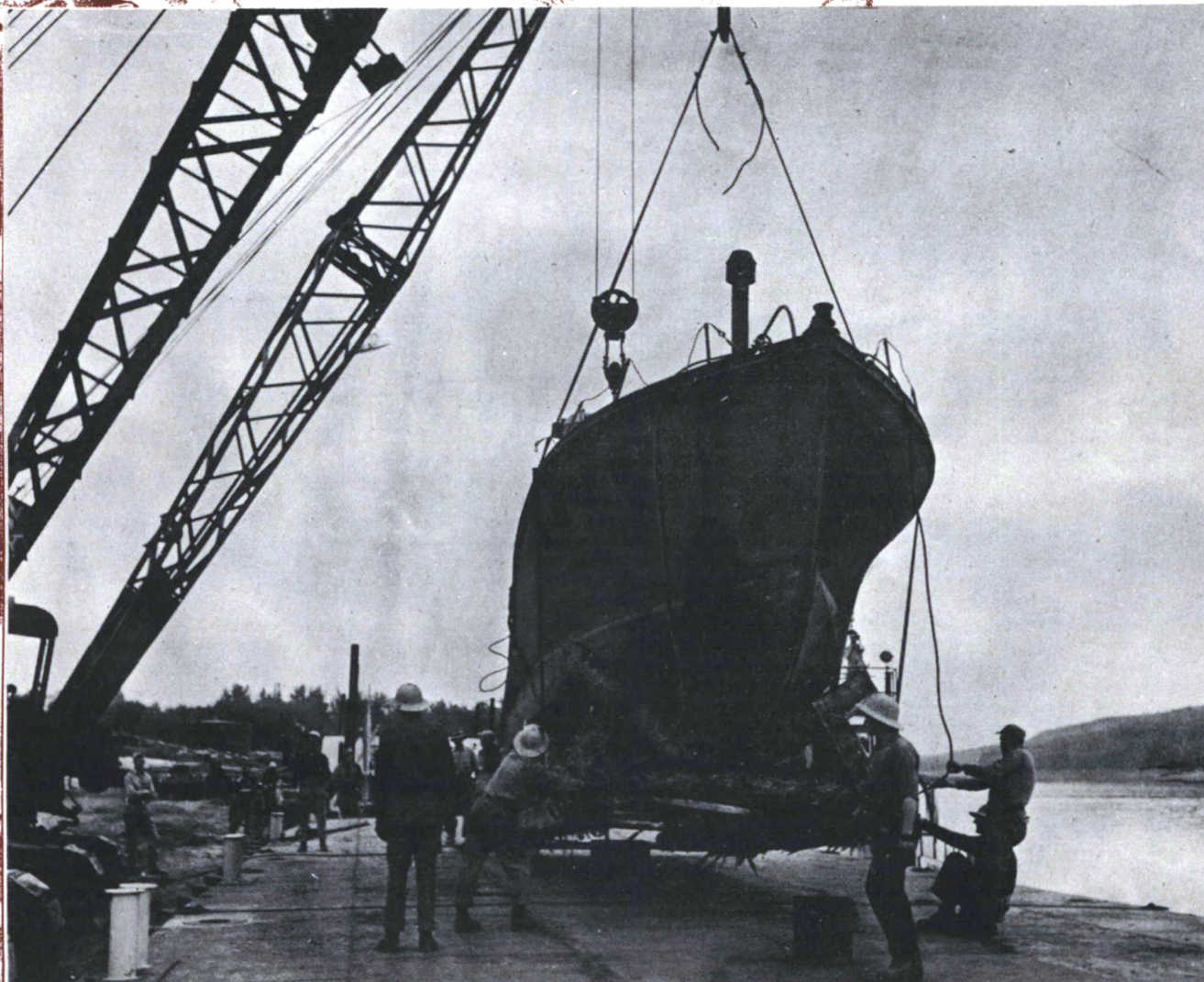
During the break-up, a certain amount of salvage work was performed on the debris floating down the river.



C. W. Harrison of Truro, Nova Scotia, watches as ton upon ton of ice continues to pile up near the shore of the Mackenzie River during the spring break-up of 1943.

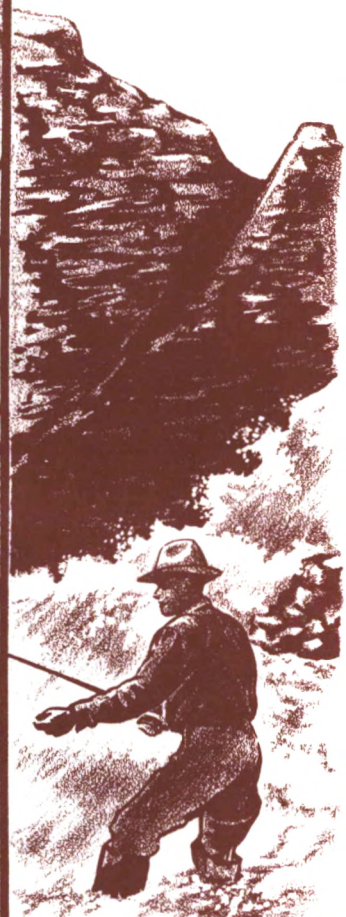


Tough hurdle is 16-mile portage around Pellican rapids at Fitzgerald and Fort Smith on N.W.T.-Alberta boundary. Here the 104-foot Providence, one of new steel tugs, is being towed across portage by caterpillars.



A tug is loaded onto a barge for shipment down the Mackenzie river.

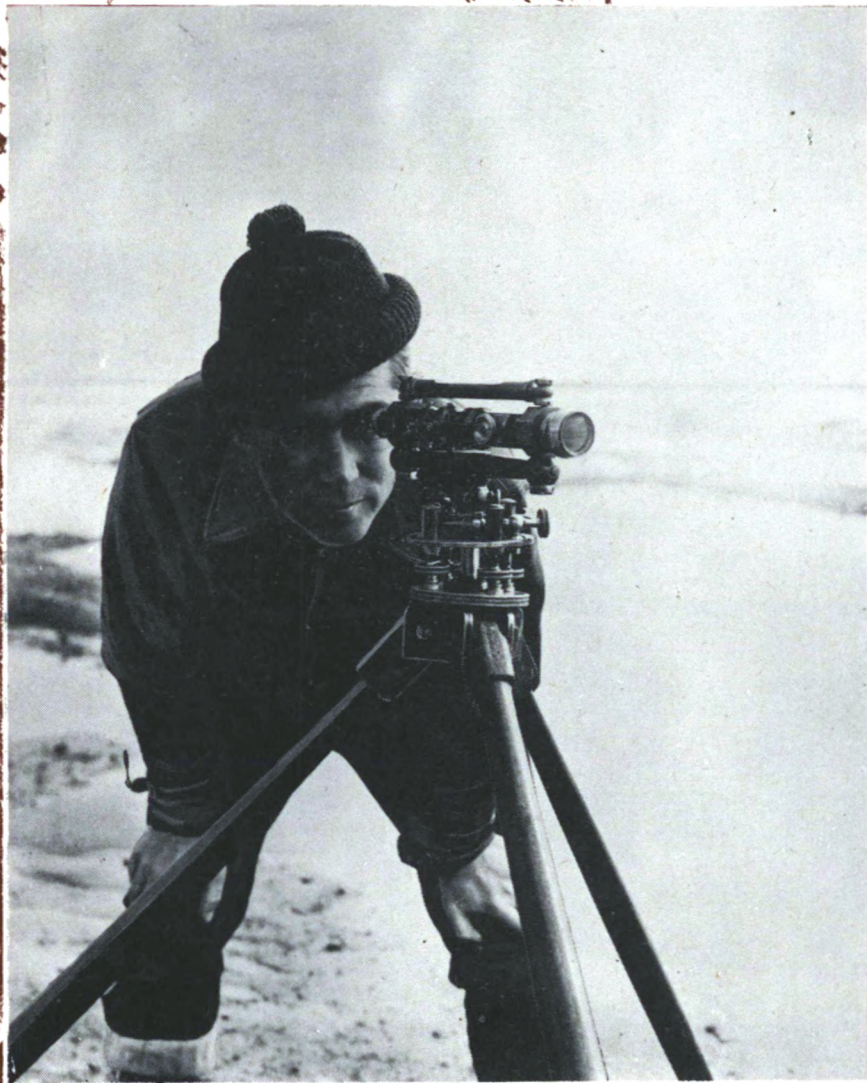




Boats and barges caught in the early freeze-up of the river, fall, 1942. Anchored on the down-stream side of Bear Island to give protection to the boats during the following spring break-up. Boats were undamaged.



Here a trio of American girls enjoy Sunday afternoon sunshine on swinging bridge over Canyon near Whitehorse falls. Not far is Robert W. Service cabin. Girls are from left to right: Sarette Neidlinger, Los Angeles, Cal.; Marie Stitch, San Francisco, Cal.; and Betty Sellner, Minneapolis.



W. T. Chaffin of Nashville, Tennessee, takes a 'shot.'



Gravel for the pipe-line road being loaded into truck by drag-line.



Sam Houston, geologist from New Orleans, La., now at Norman Wells, tends what is probably the northernmost garden in the world. Sowing of vegetables is done only in mid-June when the snow has finally melted away. Because of around-the-clock sunshine and light, plants sprout with amazing rapidity sometimes as much as two or three inches a day. Picture was taken at midnight.





The Midnight Sun—taken as the sun clipped the mountain tops
a few minutes before midnight, June 20th, 1943.

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