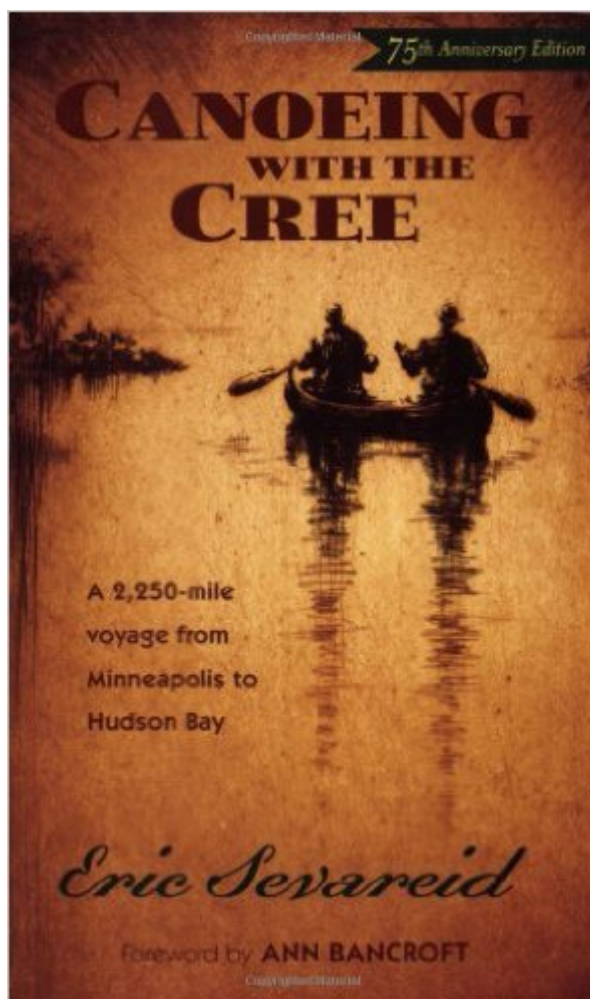


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# Canoeing With The Cree



## Synopsis

In 1930 two novice paddlers--Eric Sevareid and Walter C. Port--launched a secondhand 18-foot canvas canoe into the Minnesota River at Fort Snelling for an ambitious summer-long journey from Minneapolis to Hudson Bay. Without benefit of radio, motor, or good maps, the teenagers made their way over 2,250 miles of rivers, lakes, and difficult portages. Nearly four months later, after shooting hundreds of sets of rapids and surviving exceedingly bad conditions and even worse advice, the ragged, hungry adventurers arrived in York Factory on Hudson Bay--with winter freeze-up on their heels. First published in 1935, *Canoeing with the Cree* is Sevareid's classic account of this youthful odyssey. The newspaper stories that Sevareid wrote on this trip launched his distinguished journalism career, which included more than a decade as a television correspondent and commentator on the CBS Evening News. Now with a new foreword by Arctic explorer, Ann Bancroft.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a true adventure story written by a great American icon. It was 1930 and in their late teens, Eric Sevareid and his good friend Walter Port, embark on an amazing canoe journey through much of Minnesota and a remote region of Canada. The story takes you back to an era when life was simple but abundant; to a time when the north woods was truly a brutal frontier and men were really men. They fight mosquitoes, flies, boredom, mud, rain, cold, gigantic waves on Lake Winnepeg and being lost in areas where there is no chance of being saved. There is no modern technology. They are often times very much alone against the elements that had no mercy. As you read the book you

cannot help visit the thought that these events actually happened, they really did this and they lived to tell about it. The people they encounter, towns they visit and, of course, the rivers and lakes they traverse are all generously given to people like me who toil at computers all day but shamelessly dream impossible dreams of living in a time and place that is now slipping into the oblivion of modern life. I'm sure many critics would complain about the simplicity of Eric's writing and the lack of visual development in some segments. But take this book for what it is and just enjoy it. Makes a good gift, especially for Nintendo bound teenagers who need to see a bigger world.

Walter Port and (Arnold) Eric Sevareid took an amazing trip that they started by skipping some of their high school finals so they could get the boat they could afford. Though the project appeared to have been Port's pet, it was Sevareid who came up with the way to fund it: writing about it for the Minneapolis Star. It was clear that once the project began both of them were truly enthralled by it and could not be put off. The tale is told simply, but with a clear affection for all of the people who helped them try to reach their goal, even though few of the people who helped were confident that these young men could make it or were even very encouraging. The book is written from the journals that were kept along the trip. It is clear that this is a book of its times written by a man who was still quite young. While I would strongly encourage any teens to read this book to realize that they too can give themselves a goal that is worthwhile if only for being difficult, I would also encourage their parents to be ready to answer some questions about the wisdom and risks of such adventures and about some of the attitudes of the past. There is a casual acceptance of the bigotry against Native Americans that was common at the time and Sevareid was not yet the mature thoughtful man that we may remember from the CBS Evening News. Still, the fact that a reasonably literate student was able to take, and appreciate, such a grand adventure while trying his best to bring it alive for us was a remarkable feat. Twain, at his best, gave us better feel for river adventure, but he had the advantage that he could embroider the story whenever necessary, while Sevareid was already writing and thinking as a journalist. This is a quick read that almost anyone, from a child in middle school to an adult whose days of imagined adventure are long past, can enjoy.

A great book about the power of youth and inexperience. More about adventure than canoeing itself, Sevareid preserves through this amazing experience the intangible confidence (maybe brashness) of youth. Adult leaders of youth should read it. Teenagers who want to challenge anything unknown would be inspired by it.

"Eric Sevareid made his name as a CBS news correspondent. But at a young age, Sevareid experienced an adventure most only dream of. Sevareid detailed the journey in his book "Canoeing with the Cree". Now to mark the 75th anniversary of Sevareid's journey, two Minnesota men plan to make the same trip." Tim Post

In 1930 two young men paddled their way from Minneapolis to Hudson Bay in Canada. A trip of 2200 miles. Everyone told them it could not be done. Eric Sevareid, then a 17 year old, fresh graduate of high school, and his best buddy, Walter Port, planned the entire trip. They garnered financial support, collected supplies and a canoe and paddles and off they went. Five months later after trials and tribulations, they made it to Hudson Bay. Their journey is documented by Eric Sevareid, who gathered the weekly diaries he sent to their local Minneapolis paper, and in 1935, he wrote this book.

I stepped back in time to the 1930's when life seemed to be more innocent and the world a safer place to be. Sevareid who went on to become one of the most revered journalists of our time, wrote in an unpretentious manner, and we can feel the excitement of their adventures. They traversed unknown land and water. No one, it seems, had ever accomplished this trek. Even the best canoeists in the country failed. How then, did these two young lads accomplish this journey? Intelligence and good luck, I'd say. They questioned everyone they met, took upon themselves to digest all of the information and made decisions based on their best judgement. And, most of the time they were correct. They had no radio, no maps( this was uncharted country), little preserved food except for hardtack, but they had their ingenuity and the assistance of all of the people they met. The North Country was mostly woods. Camps, small towns and two larger towns had been established for hunting and trapping. Most of the humans they met were Indians who were kind and generous. As a matter of fact, most of the people they met were in awe of their journey and shared whatever food, equipment and conversation they were capable. The trip was amazing when we look at the obstacles they faced. Water, roaring cold water, sometimes rapids, sometimes falls, no maps, only the word of mouth of strangers, and cold brutal weather at times. Or hot humid weather with flies and gnats. They discovered all sorts of wild animals but were never in real danger. They had their tent, two paddles, food, water, ponchos and several blankets. This seems like a story of new adventurers discovering a new world, and in fact this is what they were. Two 17 year old lads set out on an adventure and one day after another they found one. Extraordinary when you think about it. Since the time of Eric and Walter, several other duos have made the trip by canoe. However, they had maps, food that could be kept for months and the best of camping equipment. This is not to lessen these young men's courage, but to think 78 years ago, this was accomplished with such primitive arrangements and care. This was an exciting read and one page after another flew by. The book was difficult to put down. Easy, simplistic writing.

but some of the most important writing I have found. The boys parents and friends did not hear from them often and at times, I am sure the parents were worried. But the two lads persevered and the trip was taken. Highly Recommended. prisrob 06-26-08 Not So Wild a Dream The Eleanor Roosevelt Story

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