

On a whim in the winter of 2012 I decided I wanted to go on a short canoe camping trip. Didn't have any specific water way to canoe in mind, just wanted to hit the water and canoe for the first time. I began looking up the prices of canoes and decided that they were either too small or too expensive. I then decided to build my own using a 9 dollar book I purchased online. In late January of 2013 I stumbled on some pictures of the white cliffs on the Missouri River.

It was then decided that two friends and I would do a portion of that. As we continued the construction of the canoe our aspirations grew more and more until it was decided that we would take a leave of absence from our jobs and do the entire river. Around five days before our departure date we finished the canoe and test floated it for all of 30 minutes. It held our weight and then we were on to tackle the next problem, transporting it a couple thousand miles to three forks Missouri. We made an impromptu canoe rack out of some spare lumber and, much to everyone's surprise, it worked. Three days before departure one of our buddies bailed. This made carrying the canoe difficult but, to the best of our knowledge at the time, we wouldn't have to carry it as it would be in the water the whole time. (As you can tell we took no due diligence at planning the actual canoeing) we then enlisted two friends to road trip with Adam and I on the 36 hour drive so that we could make it a straight shot. We made it in 40 hours which really was great time considering the distance. We camped for a night at the three points state park and on the 25th of May we hit the water.

We hit our first damn early the second day and thanks to a passing truck we got our canoe down the road and found out that there were actually quite a few dams on the river, and this was the small one. Both of our hearts sank. From there Adam began to hate the dams, then the afternoon winds, then the weather. Eventually this all wore down on him and after a fight, food being thrown in the river and a little name calling he grabbed his stuff and walked up a small dirt road in the middle of nowhere Montana. (We laugh about this now but at the time it was infuriating.)

I then proceeded down the river and got a hold of a state park ranger to check on Adam. He was found two days later a little dehydrated and at a best western. I continued the trip from day 16 to 111 solo but with a lot of help from strangers. (The canoe was impossible to move by myself.) I met my father and grandfather at coopers landing and completed the last of the 170 mile trip with them. (Grandfather driving the truck and pops paddling.) this only took five days.

days and boat used: 116 days total journey 95 days solo in a flat bottom, 19 1/2 foot canoe.

