

on his waterlogged snowshoes, sinking down one foot in slush at every step.

The crusty snow and ice were hard on our skis, and as some of us had to put in more than one hundred ski-ing hours, several ingenious schemes were proposed to reduce the wear and tear. In a desperate effort to invent a new ski wax, one enterprising fellow, one evening gave his skis a thorough overhauling with seal oil. The result was very unsatisfactory.

In Lac Petit at Rushy Creek the author had the doubtful pleasure of being forced to take a swim with skis on. Two men, including myself, and a dog team went through the ice, when going to work, Easter Monday, at daybreak. Luckily we were near the camp, and two men on shore started at once to cut trees and make a bridge out to us, and finally after about ten minutes we were dragged out. We lost the dog team. This incident did not seem to cut any ice among these hardy bushmen, and my Indian friend Miranda remarked with a grin: "Don't start swimming in April."

The appetite was always exceptionally good and it was absolutely incredible what mountainous platefuls of fatty food would disappear. The meals resembled something like bayonet charges.

It should be easily understood that swell ski-ing togs would not do in the bush, so we dressed more in the line of lumber jacks. From a sportsman's point of view we might have looked distinctly shabby. The chief question was boots and skis. A good boot is half of the pleasure in ski-ing. I had two pairs of ski boots with me, one new pair and one seasoned. The last I had to lend to a fellow, who had none, so I had the pleasure of breaking in a new pair which resulted in swollen ankles the first few days. A ski boot for all round use should be without

lining, and with full tongue, so that the boot is watertight to the very top. This new pair of mine had a thick sheepskin lining, and half tongue only, which resulted in wet feet all the time and it was impossible to get the boots dry during the survey.

The only ski material suitable for this kind of work seems to be hickory. Besides two pairs of this material, we had two pairs of ash, and one pair of birch. The last gave in at the end of the survey; they were in places worn down to about half the original thickness, and took on some grotesque shapes. This gave occasion for a lot of jokes, and the owner of the skis is never again going to invest in birch. My own pair were well seasoned Hagen hickory skis, which had been planed down twice, and were therefore very thin and flexible. They stood the strain well, and lost neither the arching nor the bend. They were equipped with Haug's harness and Jordell's heel buckle. I consider this buckle superior to the ordinary one because it does not dig, will never loosen and keeps the heel from moving sidewise.

The weather gods were kind to us and we had glorious sunshine every day, except two, when we got soaked thoroughly. During the rain the scales on the transit often got illegible, and the instrument had to be taken to pieces and dried, which of course was miserable business when raining cats and dogs.

Saturday afternoon, April 22, we said goodbye to our friends at Senneterre, and boarded the Montreal bound train, tired and happy, and with an exceptionally deep sun tan.

But I will long remember the clear, cold mornings at Rushy Creek, standing by, waiting for the sun to rise, to be able to read the transit. Spring was in the air and if you were lucky, you might discover a solitary crane aloft on a tall pine tree.

## OUR FIRST SKI FUNICULAR

ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 1933, it was just a shaken-down, snowed-under old derelict of a Dodge, parked in the snow off to one side at the bottom of the "big hill" at Shaw-bridge—best known run of the Laurentians—with the inventor and proprietor, Alec Foster, tinkering away in the 15 below zero atmosphere. On Monday, January 2, 1933, it was the answer to the downhill ski runner's prayer. Not a funicular, but better, a 2,400-foot endless rope, passing through blocks at top and bottom of its span of two-thirds of the hill, and around a special hub on the rear axle of the Dodge.

No schedules, no waits for the next train just a constantly moving tow at about fifteen miles per hour, which the skier with the "price" could grab, at whatever part of the hill the desire to climb struck his fancy. Five cents a trip or fifty cents a day and business was booming. Although there were halts for cooling the motor and greasing the blocks, a skier with this aid could easily enjoy more downhill running than his legs could happily absorb. We hope to see it at work again this winter, and there is certainly room for another one on the St. Sauveur Hill as well.