

But recreational ski-ing was not limited to racing. Racing was merely incidental. Men, women and children skied because they had to, or stay indoors. Children went to school and parties of young people went picnicing on skis.

It was on such a picnic that a ten-year-old girl threw away her pole, on a dare, at the top of Spanish Peak, and skied down to Meadow Valley at its foot, a feat comparable to a run down the headwall of Tuckerman Ravine. The distance is only four or five miles and unless you follow the road it is free from obstacles for all but the last mile or so. There you run into a fine stand of timber, two hundred foot pines, very substantial. The Peak towers over Meadow Valley some three thousand feet. She lived to become a charming lady and is still living on the slope of her beloved mountain. Her stunt that day over half a century ago is evidence that the technique of that period was not entirely dependent on the use of the pole but also involved the use of various "turns" even though the names "Telemark" and "Christiana" were of much later contrivance, and Jump and Tempo turns were still to be invented. Walter Robinson, a boy who lost his life in an avalanche on Spanish Peak in 1880 while on an errand of mercy, was known for his skill in what would now be known as "slalom," dodging obstacles at high speed.

The pioneers skied for business and pleasure and some of them combined the two. No one in his right mind would have endured the hardships, the fatigue and the ever-present danger, all in the course of a mail carrier's day's work, only for the pay he drew. Snowshoe Thompson did not carry the mails through the Lake Tahoe region from Placerville or from Murphy's Camp to Carson Valley for money alone. Neither did Dave Hayes carry the mails over Sonora Pass, nine thousand six hundred feet above the sea, on the Sonora Bridgeport mail route, for the money incentive entirely. They were sportsmen, professional sportsmen, of a high order, so regarded themselves and were so esteemed. They moved about with a halo of well-earned glory of which they were pleasantly conscious.

Their routes were strictly cross-country with little if any regard for roads. In consequence they developed considerable skill in ski jumping. However, there is no evidence of jumping contests at that time, and Thompson alone appears in the records as an exhibition ski-jumper.

He died at Genoa, Nevada, three years before ski racing and jumping were recognized as organized sport in his native Norway. A pair of crossed skis is carved on his headstone in the village cemetery.

We Build Our Ski Camp

By W.K.B.

FOR SEVERAL years we rented ski camps in the Laurentians, but each year the prices went up and the accommodation for what we could pay was poor. So I decided at last to build my own ski cabin at home in my leisure time, in the cellar, in panels, and when it was completed to move it up by truck to the country and rent a piece of land in a good location from some farmer.

We (my wife and I) spent about a year looking over the country between Shawbridge and St. Agathe. As we wanted to use the camp winter and summer it had to be near water, near the station, near provisions, not too far from a village, in a good ski-ing locality, and yet private and away from the crowd. We investigated along the railway line going back two or three miles in each direction. When we found a spot that looked fine in winter we visited it in summer. Practically no lakes were available, some fine spots had no water, others were inaccessible. Locations on the river or lake front have so many flies that they are

impossible in summer unless all the underbrush is cut for quite some distance around. Usually the lake is small and the river narrow and the site is in a hollow so there is little or no breeze, and in summer the heat is bad. As the camp was really a ski camp we decided to place it high on a hill where it would be more suitable for ski-ing.

The location we finally selected is on the brow of a high hill commanding a lovely view overlooking the nearby village and just off the road. There are several shade trees on our lot with a large sheer-faced mountain directly to the rear of the house from the top of which Montreal can be seen on a clear day. Below us is the North River where we swim in summer. We are a quarter of a mile from the station, a half mile from the village cross country and one mile by the road. The location is windy, so there are no flies except for about ten days each year. The farmer who supplies us with all our food except meat is just down the hill, as is also the drinking water. In the winter it blows a gale

on the hilltop so we have had to guy the roof of the cabin down with cable to hold the camp to the hill. This wind in summer saves us from heat discomfort. But to get back to the camp itself.

We started to make plans. Everything had to be made in panels small enough to get out of the cellar door. The camp was to be small and compact, like a ship's cabin or an auto trailer. Every foot was to be used. It had to house two couples, and on occasion, six people. The roof was planned in four pieces, the floor in three, the walls in two and three pieces each. All pieces were to fit together in tongue and groove fashion, with the corners made so they would fit together snugly and bolt together.

The camp has one main room, 8 x 10 feet inside, with a four-foot gallery in front along the ten foot side. The roof has wide overhanging eaves and overlaps the front gallery by a foot. In appearance it resembles somewhat a Swiss chalet. Inside are double bunks, one over the other, with four drawers under the lower. In the rear wall of the cabin is a door leading to a toilet room. Through the floor of the cabin is cut a trap door under which is cellar accommodation for food to be cold-stored. There is a large window in the wall opposite the bunks. The window is equipped with outside shutters. We have never found we needed a double window. At the end of the bunks is a clothes closet, while behind the front door is a corner cupboard for water pails, etc. Other furniture consists of a cook stove with oven, a kitchen sink, a woodbox, chairs, folding shelves on each side of the sink, a dish cupboard with a swing-down front that forms a table for eating. To the outside of the bunk wall there is attached a large box of similar material to that used in the cabin walls. This box stores all the accessories needed at a camp of this kind, *e.g.*, paint, shovels, spare skis, poles, etc. Since there is no electricity we use oil lamps, a battery radio, and wood or coal for the stove.

The camp is built of cedar log siding nailed on 2 x 3 spruce, and insulated with a layer of building paper. It is finished inside with tongue and groove spruce. Both roof and floor are double and lined with insulating paper.

Doors are weather-stripped and the joints in the corners were all plugged with cotton, but this was not necessary as the cabin is really very warm. The first year the stove pipe ran inside the house and out at the peak of the rear wall, but this made the house too warm, so we cut a hole in the wall six inches above the stove and sent the pipe out here and made a ventilator out of the former stove pipe hole in the peak of the rear wall. In spite of the change the camp is still comfortable, especially at meal times. All walls and floor and roof are bolted together and the house is very solid indeed. Red gravel roofing paper waterproofs the roof. The log siding is stained dark brown, then painted with a coat of oil—boiled linseed oil. Door, window and shutters are in contrasting colours, as are the floor and ceiling.

The camp though set close to the ground has no foundation of cement, so when snow comes we bank the walls up about two feet to keep the draught out of the food cellar, and the floors from being draughty. Water is obtained from the creek that drains the mountain to the rear. In winter we fill two gallon bottles at the farmer's and carry these up by pack sack. That is sufficient for a weekend for four people for food and drink. All washing water and water used for other purposes is made from melted snow and ice. This is soft and washes fine.

The camp was built by one person, working evenings and weekends during the spring and summer of 1937. Once the panels were completed it was moved into the garden to the rear of the city house and erected there for last adjustments to be made. It was then loaded on to a truck with all the materials and furniture that was to go with it, and transported to the site. We left the city at about 8 a.m. and were sleeping in the camp the same evening, with practically everything in place in at least a temporary fashion.

The cabin itself cost about \$150 for materials. a similar one should be built and equipped with stove, sink, radio, dishes, lamps, pots and pans, mattresses, sheets, blankets, wood for a year, fire and theft insurance for a year, transportation paid and land rented, for from \$250 to \$300.

MANY of us have been asked, over and over, why the Canadians have no ski songs of their own. We haven't an answer. We have heard many parodies on existing melodies, some good, some bad, but so few of us have heard a Canadian ski-ing song, words and music native to us and our country. We utilize, to good advantage, European songs in every language. We improvise, we make parody, but we do not compose. If there should be, among our readers, one so inclined, who wishes to have his composition, providing it is good, immediately

adopted by thousands, let him compose a good rousing ski-ing melody, and we will see that it gets as much publicity as possible.

I had asked Bob and Peggy Johannsen to write me an article for this issue on this subject as they are famous ski troubadours around the Laurentians, Bob a writer and singer of songs, Peggy an expert with the accordion. Unfortunately, Bob is spending the winter in Norway, but next year we hope to reproduce some of their popular Canadian ski songs, and in the meantime ask for contributions from others.