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Ski-ing

in La PROVINCE de QUÉBEC

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CANADA



An Invitation to
OUR FRIENDS FROM ALL CANADA
and THE UNITED STATES

To Visit

LA PROVINCE DE QUÉBEC

CANADA

Dear Visitors,

The key-note of our relations with you, our Canadian compatriots and our neighbours to the South, is sincere cordiality. No people in the whole world are more welcome than you in this friendly *Province de Québec*.

The tourist in good faith is submitted to no vexatious restrictions, formalities at the border being held to the strictly necessary.

President Roosevelt declared in a recent official statement that *no deterrent to travel exists among the friendly nations of the Western hemisphere*.

Furthermore the Prime Minister of Canada, the Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, recently said, in his official message to you: "*To visit Canada, you have only to cross the most peaceful international boundary in all the world.*"

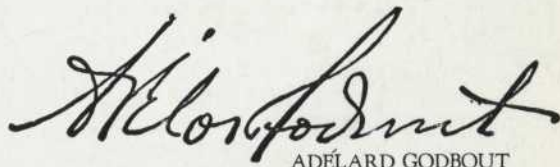
Now, as Prime Minister of *la Province de Québec*, the oldest and largest province in the Dominion, I may add that you are most welcome as a visitor in our midst. Here, in Québec, you will find a wonderful Old World atmosphere, an inspiring historic background. Beauty and charm galore are a fit setting for this happy and contented community; here are pleasing customs and delightful handicrafts, magnificent vistas, varied and alluring; a healthful climate, cool in summer, moderately cold in winter, and always ideal for outdoor sports. Here too, you will find forests, lakes and rivers well-stocked with fish and game; the sweetness and harmony of French language and French culture; in brief, something altogether new and utterly different for the inquiring visitor.

Come to *la Province de Québec* to enjoy a genuine French-Canadian vacation!

You will treasure every bit of your trip, delight in prolonging your sojourn, and will, I believe, only wish to have the privilege of renewing your experience at the earliest possible time.

U.S. currency is at a substantial premium here, and this will add to your vacation pleasure.

Very neighbourly yours,



ADELARD GODBOUT

Prime Minister of *La Province de Québec*

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Carriole brings skiers to Citadel Hill, Québec City.

Photo courtesy C.P.R.

SKI-ING IN LA PROVINCE DE QUÉBEC

(Reprinted from the *Canadian Geographical Journal*)

QUÉBEC CITY AND ENVIRONS

FOREWORD

With the steady increase in popularity of ski-ing in Canada, the rapid development of facilities in her ski-ing regions has greatly stimulated interprovincial and continental travel.

In the accompanying articles, an attempt has been made to present the ski-ing facilities offered by the various ski zones in the Province of Québec whose initiative in this field is well known. Mr. Maurice Hébert, Director, Québec Tourist Bureau, desires to make grateful acknowledgment to contributors: E. Fritz Loosli, head instructor, Ski Hawk School—"Québec City and Environs"; Frank Allan Sutcliffe,—"Eastern Townships"; C. E. Mortureux, President, Ottawa Ski Club, Gatineau and Seigneurie Club district—"Gatineau Territory"; H. P. Douglas, past President of the Canadian Amateur Ski Association, Montreal and Laurentian district—"Laurentian Ski-ways".

WHEN winter comes to the City of Québec and winter sports hold sway in the ancient capital and its environs, one thought is in almost every mind—ski-ing and Lac Beauport.

Recent developments and improvements in this new ski zone of the Province of Québec have made the Beauport area

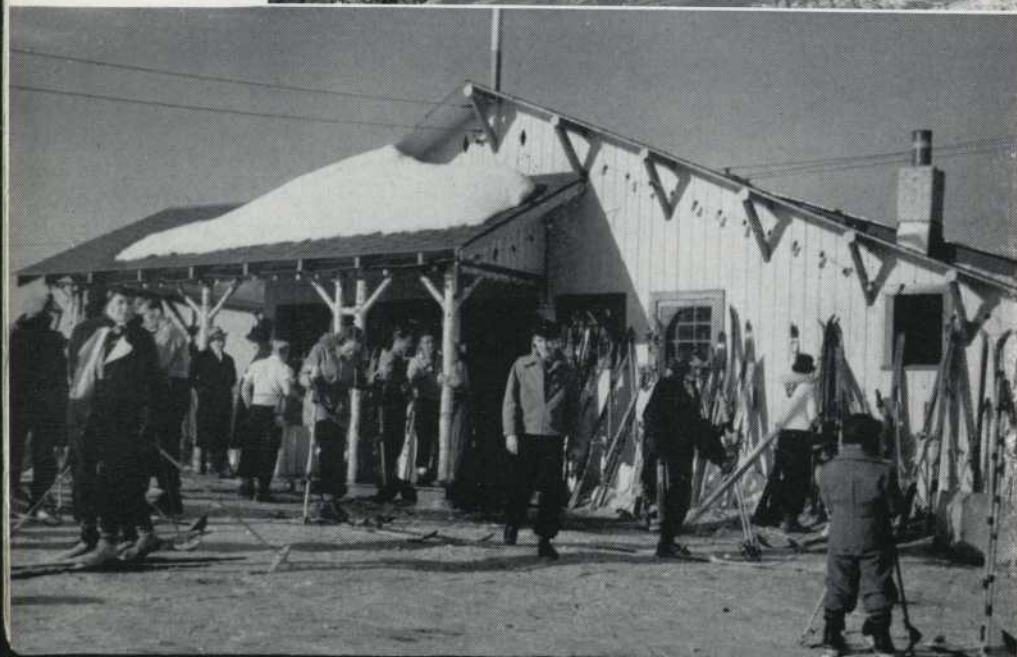
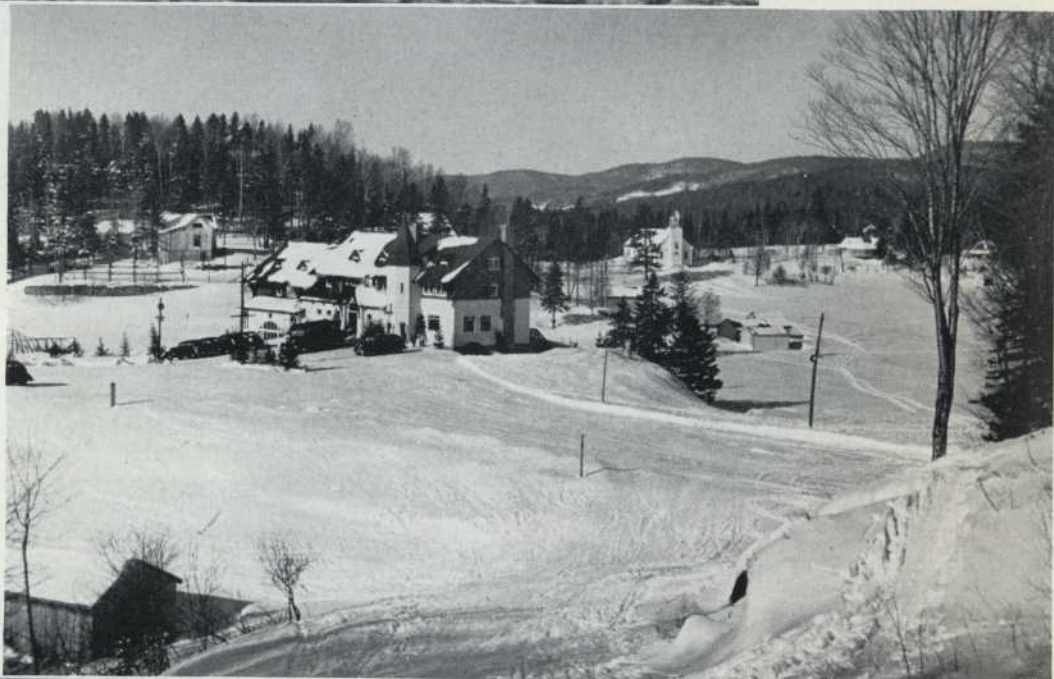
a favourite playground for increasing bands of ski legionaries from all parts of Eastern Canada and the United States. This rolling country-side that once quietly slumbered through the long winter months now resounds to quickened life with the advent of the snow season. Though the hickory blades dominate the sporting scene, skating, ice-boating, curling, snowshoeing and tobogganing are well represented, and the carriole maintains its appeal.

Lac Beauport has good reason to merit its general popularity, with an ideal ski-ing terrain providing easy slopes for the beginner and runs of increasing difficulty, jumps and slalom courses for the more expert skier. The weather at Québec is dependable, unfavourable ski-ing conditions being relatively rare. Snow in abundance, a five-month season, periodic layers of fine "powder" snow, brilliant winter sunshine, and air just nippy enough to set the



E. Fritz Loosli doing a high speed parallel turn in slalom competition.

Ski-ing terrain in Lac Beauport region.



A typical chalet scene.

blood tingling, combine to make a ski-ing Utopia.

Québec usually has more snow than the Montreal district and is several degrees colder. Ski-ing normally starts early in December and lasts until late April or early May. Snow depths of six feet or more are common in midwinter and guarantee splendid spring ski-ing under the warm sun of March and April.

Fortunately, Lac Beauport is easily accessible. Only nine miles north of Québec City, the two are linked by an excellent bus service over the one hundred-foot wide highway which is kept open throughout the winter.

A skier's first thought on arrival at a ski village is a chalet — a place in which to don ski regalia prior to that rendezvous with the outdoors. At Lac Beauport, Manoir Saint-Castin — Canadian Norman style — completed two years ago, meets all requirements admirably, while a short ski run leads to a modern little chalet at the foot of Mount Saint-Castin.

Some exceptionally fine runs have been cleared on Mount Saint-Castin which has a vertical drop of 500 feet. Two of these, extending 2,200 feet and ranging from 100 to 300 feet in width all the way, provide ski-ing opportunities with the first snow-fall. The twin runs are separated by hardwoods and evergreens and a recently built ski-tow which permits of disembarkation at 800 feet or where the Sky Line trail begins at the 1,800-foot level.

A downhill trail and slalom courses of championship calibre have combined to make the Mount Tourbillon section one of Lac Beauport's most popular ski fronts. From the Manoir it may be reached to the tune of sleigh bells or on foot, as preferred. The popularity and excellent competitive ski facilities of Mount Tourbillon have been attested by members of the International Collegiate Ski Meet who have met here on several occasions.

One of the finest runs in the country, the Sky Line trail commands as thrilling a view of the Québec country-side as is afforded anywhere in the Laurentians. From Mount Saint-Castin, it follows a series of mountain ridges for eight miles, until it reaches the championship lay-out of Mount Tourbillon.

From commanding prominences, the Sky Line trail affords sweeping panoramas of Québec's lovely "Lake District", snow-clad valleys, winding rivers and picturesque villages; while, in the distance, Québec City and the broad sweep of the St. Lawrence and Montmorency Rivers present a never-to-be-forgotten picture.

Homeward bound, downhill ski-ing most of the way, three thrilling optional runs branch off the main trail; one winding up at the colourful French-Canadian inn, the Manoir Saint-Castin, another at Lac Beauport, and the third at the edge of the lake.

Lac Beauport has become increasingly popular since its ski-ing facilities were first brought to the attention of our neighbours south of the border. The fact that they return year after year in increasing numbers is ample proof of its appeal.

* * *

Visitors to Québec will find that it is not necessary to leave the city for good ski-ing. In fact, ski-ing has become a popular way of exploring many sections of the city, while the ski runs from Battlefields Park to Wolfe's Cove offer sufficient difficulties to satisfy all but the most expert. Always a favourite with local skiers, the park is gaining in popularity. Last year, night lighting facilities were inaugurated.

Beginning just outside the famous Québec Citadel and the old walls which bounded the ancient city, Battlefields Park sweeps along the cliff top overlooking the ice-covered St. Lawrence, three hundred feet below. The escarpment commands a magnificent view. Directly across the mile-wide river, rising on the hill-side, is the City of Lévis, and, dotting the shore line, many French-Canadian towns and villages nest'e under the brow of the majestic cliff;





Photos courtesy C. P. R.





A FULL DAY
IN THE HILLS



AND AT EVENTIDE
A QUIET RETREAT
BY THE FIRESIDE.

Photo courtesy Alpine Inn

SKI-ING IN LA PROVINCE DE QUÉBEC

LA MAURICIE DISTRICT

down-stream, stretches the Island of Orléans, famous in legend and story; while, up-stream, emerge the spans of the great Québec bridge.

As a sports centre for the city and a favourite rendezvous for winter visitors, Québec is fortunate in having its turreted Château Frontenac which provides every facility for the skier — workshop, school, and equipment on the rental basis.

Although the ski season is one of general merry-making, festivities reach new heights when the old year meets the new. When the bells of the ancient capital are ringing in the New Year, Québec hotels, with capacity throngs of visitors from the United States and Canada, are a whirl of gaiety.

The Ski Hawk School, headed by Fritz Loosli, exponent of the parallel technique of ski-ing, provides instruction facilities. And for the uninitiated, Mr. Loosli explains: "Parallel ski-ing, in which the skis remain in a natural parallel position at all times, is the latest technique developed through competitive ski-ing. Although it has been taught for several years to the more expert, it is only lately that it has proved equally effective with beginners." The twice-champion Emile Allais of France and Adolph Rominger, the famous Swiss star, were among the great exponents who developed the parallel method.

CHARLEVOIX DISTRICT

Other ski grounds gaining in popularity which are easily reached from Québec City include Valcartier, the Charlevoix and Baie St. Paul districts, bordering on the St. Lawrence; la Beauce in south-eastern Québec, and Grandes-Piles, ski-ing centre for Trois-Rivières.

The Charlevoix and Baie St. Paul country, sixty miles east of Québec, provide excellent natural ski-ing terrain inviting development, and, while very little organization has yet been done, local facilities are adequate, and capable guides are available to the visitor.

LA BEAUCE DISTRICT

Organization for ski-ing in la Beauce has begun with the erection of a ski-jump and ski-tow at Valley Junction, an hour's ride from Québec City on the main line of the Québec Central Railway. The valley of the Chaudière, historically famous and delightfully picturesque, offers favourable topography for the advancement of winter sports.

Stretching northward from Trois-Rivières into the Laurentian Highlands is the St. Maurice valley, one of the oldest Canadian ski-ing regions. Keeping pace with modern developments, the region is sharing in the stimulated interest in this field of sport. Trois-Rivières itself has been the centre of provincial championships and maintains an adequate club-house, hotel accommodations, etc. A fifty-metre jump, built to the regulations of the *Fédération Internationale du Ski*, adds special interest for the expert.

Forty miles up the St. Maurice from the city, Grandes-Piles has become the most important ski-ing centre in the valley. Here, in a picturesque setting, patrons of the sport find, in this forest country, new thrills in the facilities offered, including a trail, with a vertical drop of 900 feet in a distance of three-quarters of a mile, which is considered one of the most inviting downhill runs in the province. Last winter saw the inauguration of a number of slalom hills and the introduction of keen racing competitions. The ski club, in co-operation with the railway, organizes snow trains from Trois-Rivières.

Plans for the coming winter include a well-appointed club-house at the Shawinigan Ski Club and new trails at Grand'Mère planned by the Laurentides Inn, a short cross-country run from Grandes-Piles.

SAND SKI-ING

The Province of Québec, pioneer in many fields, has inaugurated at Tadoussac an interesting innovation — sand-ski-ing — which has proved a popular summer pastime. Already this sport has been extended to the Saguenay region where the steep sand dunes overlooking the St. Lawrence provide ideal slopes. Here, speeds exceeding forty miles an hour have been realized and a ski-tow has been introduced.

At all ski centres in the Province of Québec the ski-blessing ceremony officially opens the ski-ing season.

Photo courtesy C. P. R.





SNOW





PATTERNS

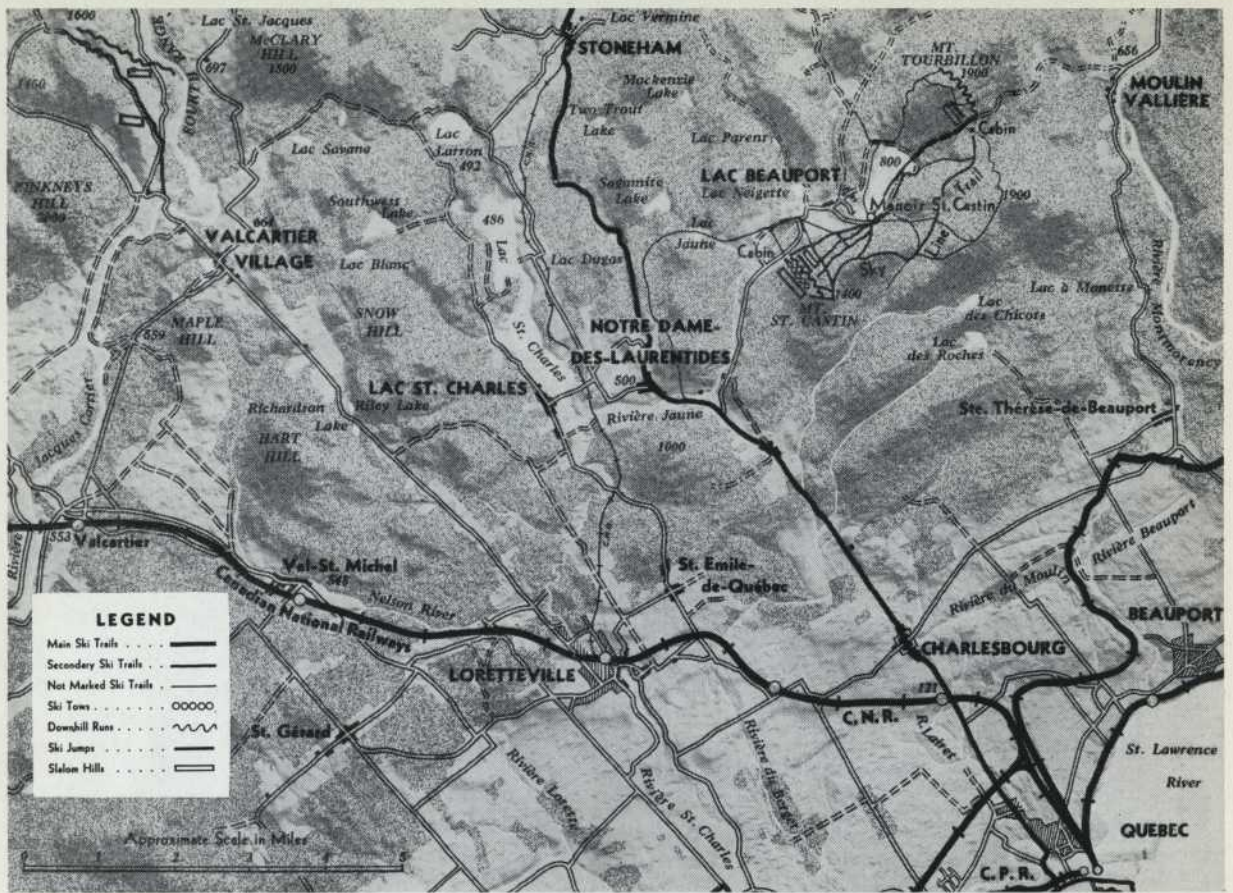
Photos courtesy C.P.R.





Below:—Photo courtesy C.P.R.





Courtesy Imperial Tobacco Company, Limited

Practice slope on Mount Saint-Castin.



SKI-ING IN THE EASTERN TOWNSHIPS

WHEN the lovely hills and valleys of the Eastern Townships assume their mantle of snow, the ski trails echo to the call of Track! Track! and the country-side rings with laughter and gaiety. In summer, this garden spot is reminiscent of Old England with lakes, streams, verdant green pastures, picturesque villages steeped in legend and mountains reaching skyward; in winter, no other section offers a wider variety of appeal to the ski enthusiast.

A casual glance at the map of the Eastern Townships shows the extensive ski-ing terrain commencing at the Vermont boundary line, the gateway to the townships. In the storied Missisquoi valley, around the village of Abercorn, comes the first thrill. The quaint village of Abercorn, nestling in the Green Mountains, is inhabited by people of Vermont and Québec extraction who talk with a Yankee accent and live to a ripe old age. The community, seventy-two miles distant from Montreal, is served by the Canadian Pacific main Boston-Montreal line. From Abercorn one may strike the trail to Pinnacle Mountain, 1,600 feet high, abounding in trails which would thrill a Hans Schneider — Split Rock, Josephine, Old Timer, Connecting Link, Raiders and Hardsrabble — excite the imagination of the romantic. One recalls that *Drums Along the Mohawk* and *Northwest Passage*, two best sellers, touch upon this very place, and that within a short distance of the Pinnacle at Eccles Hill a few sturdy "Hill Billy Boys" stopped the Fenian raiders.

An inspiring and breath-taking view crowns the ascent of Pinnacle. North, east, south and west, a vast panorama of mountain peaks meets the eye — Mansfield and Jay towering majestically above the lesser peaks of the Green Mountain range, and in the distance, Lake Champlain, Mount Orford and Shefford, and, on a clear day, Mount Royal. Ample opportunity awaits alike the expert, intermediate and novice. The gradual descent from the foot of the mountain to the village affords practice slopes, natural slaloms, downhill all the way through snow-clad pines and hemlocks — a winter fairyland. And at

the end of the day, the open doors of two Abercorn inns and of several private homes offer inviting retreats.

* * *

A delightful seven-mile cross-country run following the Missisquoi River brings us to Sutton, a prosperous town on the Canadian Pacific main line with frequent train connections to Montreal, Boston and New York. The growth of ski-ing in this southern Québec town has been phenomenal, the more so when one realizes that the citizens have all turned out to clear and cut trails and join the local ski club. Sutton might well be the typical country-town scene shown on Christmas cards, with its church steeple towering above the town, and, in the background, Sutton Mountain rising 2,600 feet to meet the clouds. Sutton boasts some of the finest ski trails in the townships, in fact, it is claimed to have a trail second only to Kandahar. The trails up Sutton Mountain are steep and thrilling. Number one trail is reputed to be four miles long; and from half-way up this trail, another, one and a half miles long, runs to Lake Mohonk—an unexpected body of deep water on the summit. On cloudy days the peak seems to be literally buried in the sky, and, on clear days, the town in the valley becomes a cobweb, dotted with toy houses. The descent from the mountain has been likened to a leap from the clouds. The sky reflects a soft blue which tones the whole scene; at sunset, a never-to-be-forgotten range of colours sweeps across the mountain-side, and every chasm, gorge and stately tree stands out in sharp silhouette. During the past two years Sutton has been steadily climbing into a position of prominence as a ski resort. Each week-end during the 1939-1940 season found this usually quiet town transformed into a beehive of activity with the modern hotel and restaurants filled to overflowing. Besides the mountain trails, Sutton provides a ski-tow, jumping hill and practice slopes. Snow comes early and stays late in this region. The northern slopes are deeply covered with snow long after the fields and valleys have taken on their spring garb. The

SKI-ING IN LA PROVINCE DE QUÉBEC

whole populace has taken ski-ing to heart, and every one turns out to greet the winter tourist. Horse-drawn sleighs with their tinkling bells and the cars of the townfolk are all at the station to meet the ski specials. Fortunate indeed are the skiers visiting this hospitable town in the spring, for an invitation will be extended to attend an old fashioned sugaring-off, with delicious boiled maple sugar on clean white snow, home-made doughnuts and pickles. Last but by no means least you may revel with the countryfolk at an old time country dance and swing your partner to the right, and duck for the oyster in the old tin pan.

Of more than passing interest in the townships is the new development on Mount Orford, now being transformed into a national park. At this writing some thirty-three young men are at work with the National Forestry Programme planning

and cutting trails under expert guidance.

Waterloo has made great strides in the realm of winter sports. Within easy reach of Montreal this busy town offers excellent ski facilities at nearby Mount Shefford.

North Hatley, a charming village bounded by beautiful Lake Massawippi, is fast becoming a well-known ski centre. Canadian and United States visitors, long familiar with the summer attractions and excellent accommodations afforded here, return to enjoy the winter sports.

All roads lead to the Eastern Townships! Main highways are kept open throughout the winter and the railroads serve all ski resorts with good and frequent service. From Montreal most of the townships may be reached in two hours. From New York or Boston, an overnight journey brings the skier into the very heart of this fairyland of hills, clean snow and brilliant sunshine.

The Ski Special.





Sutton Mountain at sunset.
A much used practice slope.





Camp Fortune Lodge, Gatineau Hills.

Photos by J. J. Scott

Crossing Fortune Lake.



GATINEAU TERRITORY

BYOND the Ottawa River lies the Gatineau land in the Province of Québec, a vast tract of rugged territory, which is dotted with innumerable lakes and traversed by high ridges or plateaux of granitic formation. Leaping in a long series of cascades, the Gatineau River has cut its way through these ridges for three hundred miles. Named for the first foreigner to ascend the stream, Nicholas Gatineau, fur trader, *courreur des bois* and secretary of the *Compagnie des Cent Associés*, the waters in whose treacherous rapids he lost his life in 1651 have now been tamed by the hand of man, their wild energy having been converted into electrical energy. But the surrounding country and slopes remain unchanged — islands of sunset, as noted by a poet — from their condition in the glacial age, presenting a sharp contrast with the lower lands of Eastern Ontario, across the Ottawa River.

Few people explored those hills until recent years. When deep snow covered their slopes, only the wood cutters or lumber jacks ventured into the bush. So far as the city was concerned, the Gatineau valley went to sleep with the first snow, and awakened only in the spring. There were snowshoers, of course, but they seldom paddled far beyond the city limits. The introduction of skis revealed the tremendous possibilities of this land as a winter resort. There may be gold in other hills, but there is something much brighter than gold in the Gatineau hills — there is pleasure, health and the happiness that goes with it, but skis disclosed this treasure.

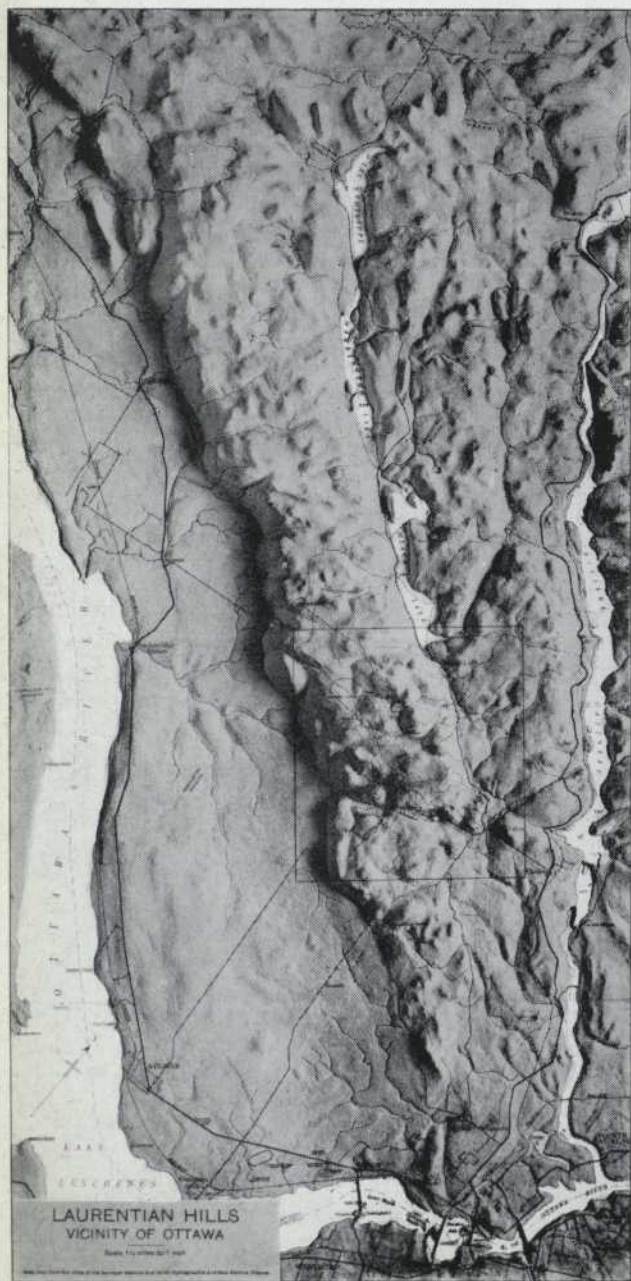
To-day, from early December until mid-April, the hills of the Gatineau, within a twenty-mile radius from the City of Ottawa, are invaded each week-end by a multitude of people, mounted on skis, who leave no slope untried, no trail unexplored, before sunset brings to a close another day. By train or by bus, by car or on skis, the whole city goes to the hills. The universality of the sport is perhaps its most striking characteristic. All indulge in it, rich and poor. High-grade, expensive, imported skis share the trail with home-made blades, costing practically nothing. Age is no bar; it is not a sport reserved for the young, and men of seventy are often

seen on the trail with ten-year-old youths. Nor is it a passing fad; the ski population is still on the increase after twenty-five years, although much more scattered now than it was at one time. There is a fascination about gliding on the snow which no one can fail to appreciate or escape. It is at once one of the simplest and one of the most difficult of all sports. While a high degree of skill, requiring many weeks of practice, is necessary to tackle the perpendicular slopes at "60 per," the merest novice can enjoy "nosing about" over an undulating, well-sheltered trail, under a blue sky and bright sunshine, without knowing anything of the *gelandesprung*, the *christiania* or the *telemark* swings, and most of those who have once enjoyed that pleasure live on the memory of it, or go on ski-ing to the end of their days.

Ottawa, the capital city of Canada, stands on the threshold of this ski paradise, being only half-an-hour's drive by bus or car from the Camp Fortune range of hills, having a mean elevation of 1,200 feet. Here, in the Province of Québec, the Ottawa Ski Club has established its headquarters. Hotels are few in this territory, as the close proximity of the city makes them unnecessary, and skiers generally carry lunch in a rucksack. Visitors may make their base at a hotel in the city, coming back from the ski fields at night. There are also splendid ski facilities at Wakefield, further up the Gatineau, where good accommodation can be obtained, and at the Seignior Club, forty-five miles down the Ottawa River, where ski-ing *de luxe* may be secured. The hills here begin on the golf course, a quarter of a mile distant from the Log Château, the club's huge residential building, and a ski school practises on convenient slopes under the guidance of a professional teacher. Farther north, connected by a road on which a pleasant drive may be enjoyed behind a horse or team of dogs, is snow-blanketed farm and forest country, strangely beautiful in winter, where the open, rolling character of the Laurentians is particularly well adapted to every variety of ski-running. The Seignior Club's major ski competitions are held there each winter and school-boy skiers assemble towards the end of February, when most of



McLean's Mountain Lodge,
Kingsmere, Québec.



the high school students of Montreal, Ottawa, and Hawkesbury compete for honours and a trophy presented by the Seigniory Club for annual competition. The accessibility of the Seigniory Club from Montreal, eighty miles to the east, and from Ottawa, forty-five miles to the west, and the excellence of the train connections through these two points with New York and Boston, Toronto and

Detroit, enable most members, whose homes are scattered throughout the estate, to reach the club in an overnight journey.

The Ottawa Ski Club, organized in 1919, now owns four lodges scattered over fifteen miles of territory, some of which can accommodate over four hundred persons — the Western Lodge, the Camp Fortune Lodge, the Pink Lake Lodge and the Dome Hill Lodge. It is also the proud possessor of over 400 acres of wooded land at Camp Fortune, and of one of the highest slalom and jumping hills in Eastern Canada.

Many Dominion and other championships have been held over the first-cut trails: the Canyon, the Highland, Little Switzerland, the Merry-Go-Round and the Western. While some of them follow abandoned forest roads, the majority were cut out of thick bush at considerable expense. There are few open hills anywhere in the Gatineau district, and practically every slope has had to be cleared. Bush trail ski-ing is rather difficult and demands the development of a special technique, but it affords shelter from the wind—quite an advantage in a country where sub-zero temperatures generally prevail in winter.

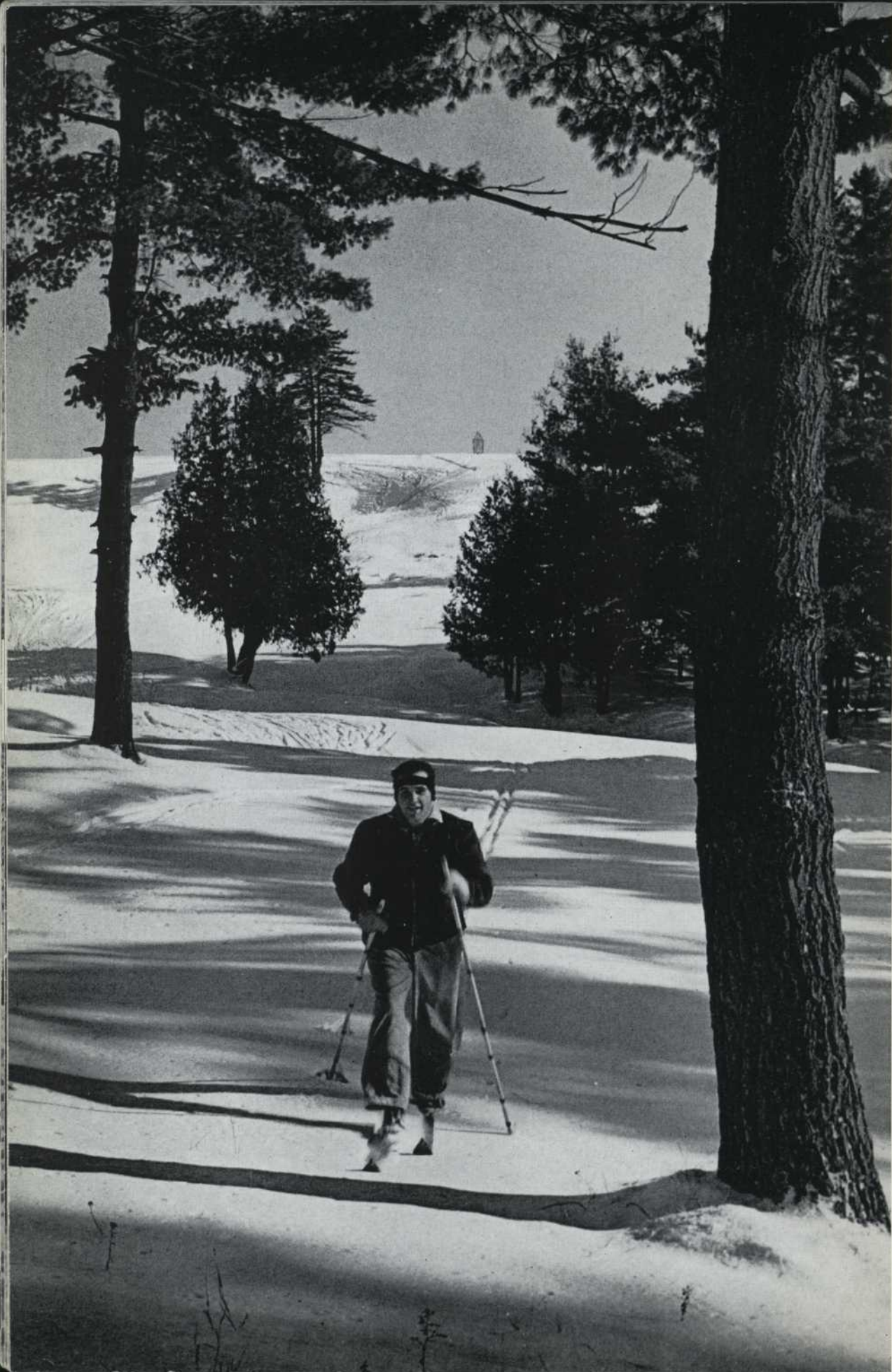
By carrying the sport farther afield to the high hills, the Ottawa Ski Club has also greatly lengthened the season. There is still snow on the heights of Camp Fortune when the slopes nearer the city are bare, and ski-ing goes on merrily until April 15th, instead of stopping around March 1st, as in the past. So long as there is snow in the bush, all's well!



TYPICAL SCENES IN THE GATINEAU HILLS.

Photos by R. E. Foster





LAURENTIAN SKI-WAYS

FIRST, it may be helpful to know just where this now famous Laurentian ski country is located. It starts at the little town of Shawbridge, the foothills of the mountains, forty-two miles north of Montreal on the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railways, and extends forty miles north-west to Mont Tremblant; its eastern boundary a line bisecting Lac Masson and its western boundary a line through Morin Heights to Lac Tremblant, a total area of some six hundred square miles. Into this comparatively small terrain now pours, during the winter season, a great throng of skiers, young and old, steadily increasing in number year by year. Possibly the clearest way of indicating their number is to quote from the official figures of our two major railways. Last season, from December to mid-April—eighteen weeks—145,000 were carried to the Laurentians, an average of about 8,000 a week; over the New Year's week-end the C. P. R. alone carried 12,000 to the north country; 400 special ski trains were run during the season, the record, 875 enthusiasts on one train. Converted into money the Railways collected around \$300,000, the Laurentians, \$700,000 and more. You can see that our ski-ing has now become a big business enterprise, well organized under the Laurentian Zone of the Canadian Amateur Ski Association, and bringing in a tremendous revenue to the railways, hotels, stores and the local people. In addition, many travel by bus and motor and some by plane; a regular flying ski service from New York and Boston is now advertised "four hours from the pavements to the snow".

It is extraordinary the way the Americans have taken to ski-ing. When last in New York I noticed every shop window was full of ski things, ski schools on artificial snow in the big stores, special trains to ski resorts advertised in all the railway stations. They are coming in increasing numbers to the Laurentians, and this year, I venture to state that the reservations over the

holidays will be largely those of our cousins from across the border. Several special excursions were run last year leaving New York Friday evening and reaching the Laurentian towns early next morning, to return Sunday evening. The fare is unbelievably low. The ski excursionists have discovered that about the only nearby dependable snow conditions are to be found north of Montreal.

The Provincial Government is making heroic efforts to keep the main highway open to Mont Tremblant but it is a big undertaking and at times the trip north by motor is an arctic adventure of the first magnitude and one long remembered. You may have read in the papers of the giant snow tractor the members of the Byrd Antarctic expedition took with them. Well, that is what is needed on our northern highway in stormy weather. Many amusing stories may be told of the experiences of motorists in our Québec winter. Friends of ours, a large party in three big cars, drove up from New York last winter, in January. Above Ste. Agathe, on a side road, they were drifted in, had to abandon their cars. It was several days before the cars could be rescued.

I noticed in the paper an account of a party of young people who chartered a bus for a Sunday trip to a nearby ski resort, but, caught in heavy drifts in the country, they never left the bus and arrived back in Montreal Monday noon. These, of course, are natural hazards of a country possessing the rugged terrain and heavy snow of a Québec winter.

Speaking of winter driving reminds me of a quite unusual experience last winter. February 22 is the big American winter holiday, and, the night before, a number of us were at the Laurentian Lodge at Shawbridge. Every bed was taken, the whole Laurentian country was jammed to the doors, no accommodation to be had anywhere; pitch black outside, snow piled waist-high, twenty below zero, a real



Mont Tremblant from Gray Rocks Inn.

Photo by J. J. Scott

Ski-tow, Mont Tremblant.

Photo courtesy C. P. R.



winter night, and we were just off to bed, about eleven, when we heard a motor horn outside. Then the front door opened and in trooped a party of boys and girls, all in ski clothes, frozen and famished and tired; in a minute more motors appeared, ten in all as I remember, all filled with young people. We got them some hot drinks, supper was soon on the table, and we sat around to hear their story. It turned out that they had left New York early that morning to spend the week-end holiday at some well-known ski place in New Hampshire, a 250-mile drive, but when they arrived, about two, they found everything covered with ice, no ski-ing possible. Some one in the party casually remarked "Well, I'll bet there is good ski-ing in the Laurentians", and off they started on their 150-mile drive to Canada, over strange icy roads. We were glad to see such a nice crowd and somehow we found accommodations for them all in the village, the boys sleeping on chairs, on the floor, anywhere; they didn't care. They had some excellent ski-ing and left late Sunday to drive all night to be home in the morning. These modern young people are certainly amazing to us old-timers, and so attractive.

This ski popularity or ski craze, if you will, has entirely transformed the Laurentians. In my early ski days the few hotels were terrible, food awful and there were no conveniences of any kind. Now they are comfortably well appointed, with excellent food and service. Most of the farm-houses have electric light, running water and are advertising for the ski trade, and taking good care of it too. So it is quite safe to stop in anywhere these days and get good accommodation at a fairly reasonable rate. Going north then to ski was a real adventure, starting with a compulsory charge of twenty-five cents for checking skis in the baggage car on the train. Trails and maps were unknown, you just had to learn your way around, there was no one to guide you. Speaking of trails; years ago Shaw-bridge was the headquarters of a few of us who loved the winter on skis in the north country. A regular companion was Tom Drummond, a keen ski-man, an early president of The Montreal Ski Club, and a really constructive pioneer. He was the first one to attempt to map and mark our few ski trails and employed a most ingenious device — he was a Civil Engineer by profession — a bicycle wheel with cyclometer mounted between a pair of short

skis. The wheel turned and the miles registered. I can see him now plodding along on his snowshoes, pushing his contraption ahead of him, axe in hand to blaze the trees. Unfortunately, the old maps he made were lost years ago; they would be so interesting to-day. Now well cut and plainly marked trails wander all over the Laurentians connecting up the important centres, and our ski maps are revised frequently. Each summer a well planned trail development programme is carried out by the local clubs. It is really difficult to lose one's self up there now.

Long before ski-ing was thought of, great numbers went up in the summer to that lovely lake and mountain region; our leading families had their country homes there and the larger lakes were Montreal's nearest and most popular playground for all classes. Then when the fall came every one moved into the city and the Laurentians went to sleep until the spring came along again. The snowshoe was the *habitant's* universal means of getting around the farm and country, and it was not until quite recently that the younger generation took up ski-ing. Now you see the ski tracks of the children in the snow around all the farm-houses. And such skis! Barrel staves, turned up boards, tied on with string—anything to ski! They all go to school on them as they have been doing in Norway for generations, and ski-ing is their favourite and only winter recreation. The result is that our best competitive skiers are now born and bred in the Laurentians. Louis Cochand and Viateur Cousineau, born in Ste. Marguerite about twenty-three years ago, have won the Québec-Kandahar against the best men in the world. In 1939 the Dominion Cross Country Championship was won in Fort William by one of the famous ski-ing Gillespies from Ste. Agathe. The Laurentian Zone has formed ski clubs in all the villages, the clubs in the zone now numbering twenty-three, downhill, slalom and jumping hills provided, and competitions encouraged. Ski schools under qualified instructors are now at all centres and this has improved enormously the technique of our local lads. Many of them, this year, will pass the required stiff tests and qualify as ski instructors themselves.

In the Laurentians and in the City of Montreal the St. John Ambulance Association is giving splendid voluntary service in providing immediate service for untoward

SKI-ING IN LA PROVINCE DE QUÉBEC

accidents. At all our busy ski centres are St. John Ambulance First-Aid posts with the latest equipment and two qualified volunteers on duty. The money is obtained through the sale of buttons to the skiers themselves, a special committee of the Ski Association having this important work in charge. We are more than grateful to these volunteers for the great service they are rendering.

But now suppose you come with me on a personally conducted tour of our Laurentian ski country so that you may know it for yourself. Our morning C. P. R. train from Montreal arrives at Lac Mercier station, eighty-four miles from Montreal, at one o'clock, and a motor runs us over to Mont Tremblant Lodge, three miles away, in a few minutes. I can imagine your exclamations of surprise and delight as you arrive and find yourself in a charming little French-Canadian village near the shore of Lac Tremblant and nestling in the forest at the base of old rugged Mont Tremblant. This transformation has been wrought by Joseph Ryan of Philadelphia at an expenditure of a million dollars, and there is nothing like it anywhere. Himself a ski enthusiast, well acquainted with all the famous ski places in Europe, he came to spend a week three winters ago at St. Jovite, skied on Tremblant, and, impressed with its natural advantages and possibilities, decided to build there the leading ski resort in Eastern North America. So to-day you find accommodations for three hundred guests; a lovely modern hotel, recreation centre, with dance floor, game room, a formal restaurant and also a cafeteria; forty cottages, all combinations; a ski shop; stables; and, next year, a chapel and old time country store will be built to be managed by The Hudson's Bay Company. A ski school, of course, is in charge of Hans Falkner and Erling Strom, famous ski teachers and experts. Running to the top of the mountain, 3,000 feet, is a chair ski hoist in which you sit back in comfort and safety and before you know it step off at the observation lodge and look over a panoramic view of snow-clad lakes and mountains that takes your breath away. Mont Tremblant is the highest Canadian mountain this side of the Rockies, and for the past nine years celebrated for its downhill ski racing. The Québec-Kandahar, the

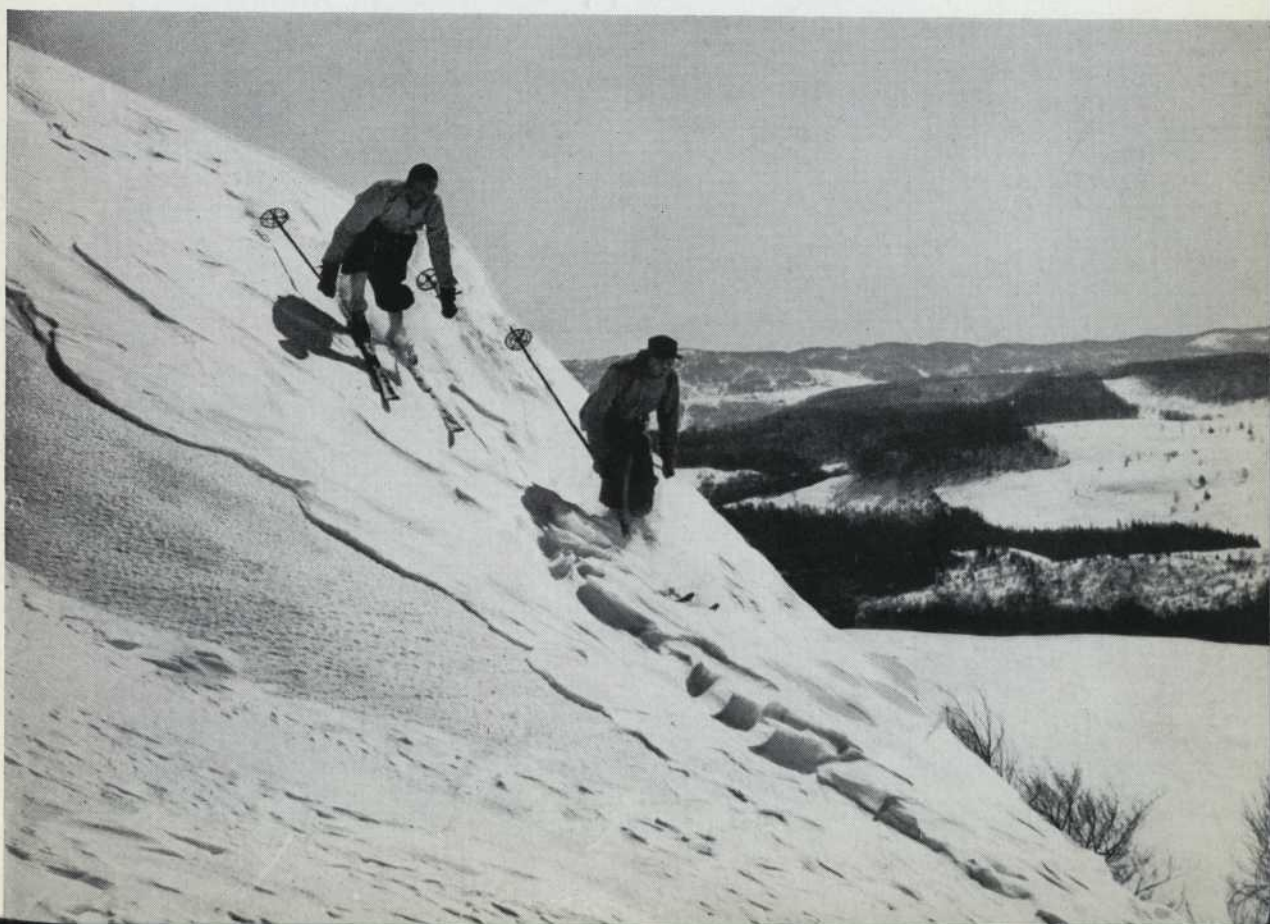
blue ribbon racing event of Canada, is held there each March. The Taschereau is another famous racing trail; miles of wide, safe trails have been cut to suit all grades of skiers, and nearby fine open slopes, in short, every kind of ski-ing may be enjoyed. We reluctantly say *au revoir* to Joe Ryan and his pretty little wife, fasten on our skis and take the Maple Leaf Trail for Gray Rocks Inn on lovely Lac Ouimet four miles south from the Lodge. For nearly forty years the Wheeler family have conducted the Inn and the genial Tom, as he is known to all, and his charming wife are at the door to greet us. His modern, comfortable hostelry with its adjoining cabins, is one of our best managed ski resorts and is filled all winter. Some forty miles of trails radiate from the Inn to Mont Tremblant, Lac Gauthier, St. Jovite and Lac Mercier. At the back door is a thirty-five meter jumping hill. The ski school is in charge of Hermann Gedner from Hans Schneider's famous Austrian ski school at Obergurgl, with a staff of capable assistants. Fine open country is round about and every kind of ski-ing enjoyed. The Seppla Kennels with their champion racing teams of Siberian Huskies are a great attraction to the young people. I might also mention that in the summer, Gray Rocks is famous for its fishing and hunting, quickly reached by its own plane service.

Farewell Gray Rocks and on to Ste. Agathe. Our twenty-mile trip, still on the Maple Leaf Trail, gives us plenty of vigorous exercise as we steadily ski up and up to 1,200 feet, the highest point this side of Tremblant in the Laurentians. Ste. Agathe has always been an important recreation centre and many well-known Montreal families have their winter and summer homes here or on Lac Manitou or Lac Brûlé but a few miles away. The old Laurentide Inn was moved four years ago from the village to the shore of Lac des Sables, completely modernized, separate cabins added. The attractive Harrisons are managing it well and making a great success, winter and summer. The elevation of Ste. Agathe guarantees our most dependable snow conditions, and the mountain



On the way to the Laurentian playgrounds.
Back of St. Sauveur Village.

Photos courtesy C. P. R.





The big hill at Shawbridge.

Photo courtesy C.N.R.

country lends itself to every variety of ski-ing; interesting cross-country trips all about; many miles of trails; downhill and slalom hills with ski-tows; a jumping hill nearby, and a well conducted ski school. Ste. Agathe is a favourite spot for Americans. The Harrisons start us on our way and we pick up the Maple Leaf Trail again for Ste. Marguerite, ten miles south and easy ski-ing, dropping down country to 900 feet elevation. This is a busy place we are coming to; many private ski cabins large and small have been built in the vicinity and the cottage colony is growing rapidly. Three miles east from the C. P. R. station we stop in to visit Emile Cochand, proprietor of Chalet Cochand. Emile, an old friend of mine, came to Québec from Switzerland thirty years ago. He is one of the best all-round skiers I ever remember, and is a thoroughly nice fellow. He and his capable wife started the Chalet back in 1914, and they have built up a remarkably extensive all-year clientele that comes back to them season after season. Their hotel is modern,

well conducted with excellent table and several attractive cottages much in demand. The ski-ing is first class, perfect trails and open country; a ski hoist to the top of the slalom and downhill; a championship jumping hill across the way; everything for which you may ask. And last but not least, there is Emile's son Louis, our Laurentian champion, head of his own ski school and chief examiner of the Laurentian Zone Ski School Association,—a fine family, the Cochands.

Three miles farther along the road from the Chalet we come to Baron Empain's big development on Lac Masson, Domaine d'Esterel. The country here is heavily wooded and the terrain rather low, the highest hill hardly 200 feet. However, they have cut out downhill and slalom hills, installed two ski-tows and do well in the winter season. The hotel designed in the Continental style is most modern, the cuisine wonderful. A large log sports house gives reasonably priced accommodation to the young people, and all together



Hills back of Ste. Agathe.

Photos courtesy Province of Québec Tourist Bureau

A jump turn.





Slalom course on Mont Tremblant.

Photo courtesy C.P.R.

it is quite unusual and interesting. Mt. Baldy is at Ste. Marguerite with its 1,000-foot tricky, difficult, downhill racing trail; just down the river is the jumping hill of the Ste. Marguerite Ski Club, and a short distance farther on over a lovely woods trail, Hill 60 with its ski-tow, always crowded. The new Alpine Inn at Ste. Marguerite is well equipped with all modern conveniences.

A short run south and west across country over open hills and bush trails brings us to the St. Sauveur valley, 600 feet elevation, and to me the most interesting ski community of all, though of late, terribly overcrowded. The little village lies in a charming natural valley with cleared hills on all sides rising up some 700 feet. The village street is bordered with one ski cabin after the other and an old church on the corner, a most picturesque and colourful little settlement; it might well be in Switzerland. Many good boarding-houses and eating places are available—the Sunday crowds coming here on the C.N.R. morning specials are enormous, every hill and tow jammed.

Just outside the village is the Penguins Club-house where forty smart and pretty girls live in every comfort; our only all women's ski club, they devote themselves to downhill and slalom racing and rank with the best in Canada. To the south is Hill 70 and at its foot the house of the celebrated Red Birds Ski Club, a McGill aggregation of racing experts. They have their downhill and slalom lay-outs and jumping hill. Nymark's popular hotel is just back of them. Four ski-tows take the downhill runners up the many different hills. They never seem to tire of going up and down all day, to me a peculiar disease.

We will take a tow up ourselves as time is getting on, but the four miles over the easy Douglas trail pass quickly and we stand on top of the big hill at Shawbridge admiring the gorgeous view, Mount Royal clearly seen in the distance. On our run down, we pass crowds coming up on the ski-tow, then we cross the North River, arrive at the Laurentian Lodge Club, the first Ski Club in the Laurentians. Here we must regretfully say good-bye to the



Hill 70, St. Sauveur, Québec. Dedicated March 4, 1934, to the memory of General Sir Arthur Currie by the Red Birds Ski Club. Red Birds House at left corner. Photo courtesy C.N.R.

lovely Laurentians and take the train back to Montreal. I hope you have enjoyed our imaginary trip as much as I have and may we do it in reality at some future time.

Unfortunately, we have not had time to become acquainted with many other popular ski places; Val Morin, Ste. Adèle, Mt. Rolland, Piedmont, all on the C. P. R., and Christieville and Morin Heights, on the C. N. R. At all these there is tremendous activity — ski cabins being rushed up, new hotels built, and every possible building leased for the season at rentals double those of five years ago. In Montreal ski-ing on Mount Royal is growing every year, also on the Westmount and Outremont Mountains. The crowds are so large you wonder how they can all fit in, yet despite the occasional accident they seem to have a wonderful time. But the mountain is so changed from what it used to be! The street railway ruined many of our favourite runs; the planting of countless trees did not help any. No longer

can we 'whiz' down the long slopes in the cemetery, but to us who know the mountain so well after thirty years, there are still hills tucked away from the general crowd on which we can play. Ski instruction is given on the mountain and many take the opportunity of learning how to ski properly. Special classes for school children are organized which is a splendid idea.

Those keen on good snow and open spaces, no longer possible in the city, and who dislike the overcrowding in the Laurentians, on the ski trains and in the hotels, may find all these quite near to Montreal — Rawdon, Rougemont, St. Hilaire, Oka, St. Andrews East. I have skied at all these places and fine sport can be enjoyed at any of them — not much downhill running but lovely touring country easily reached by train or motor. The old Côte des Neiges jumping hill in continuous service since 1910, still puts on a Saturday afternoon competition and still gives a thrilling show for our visitors to the city. And now, in conclusion, may I wish to all my readers "SKI HEIL".

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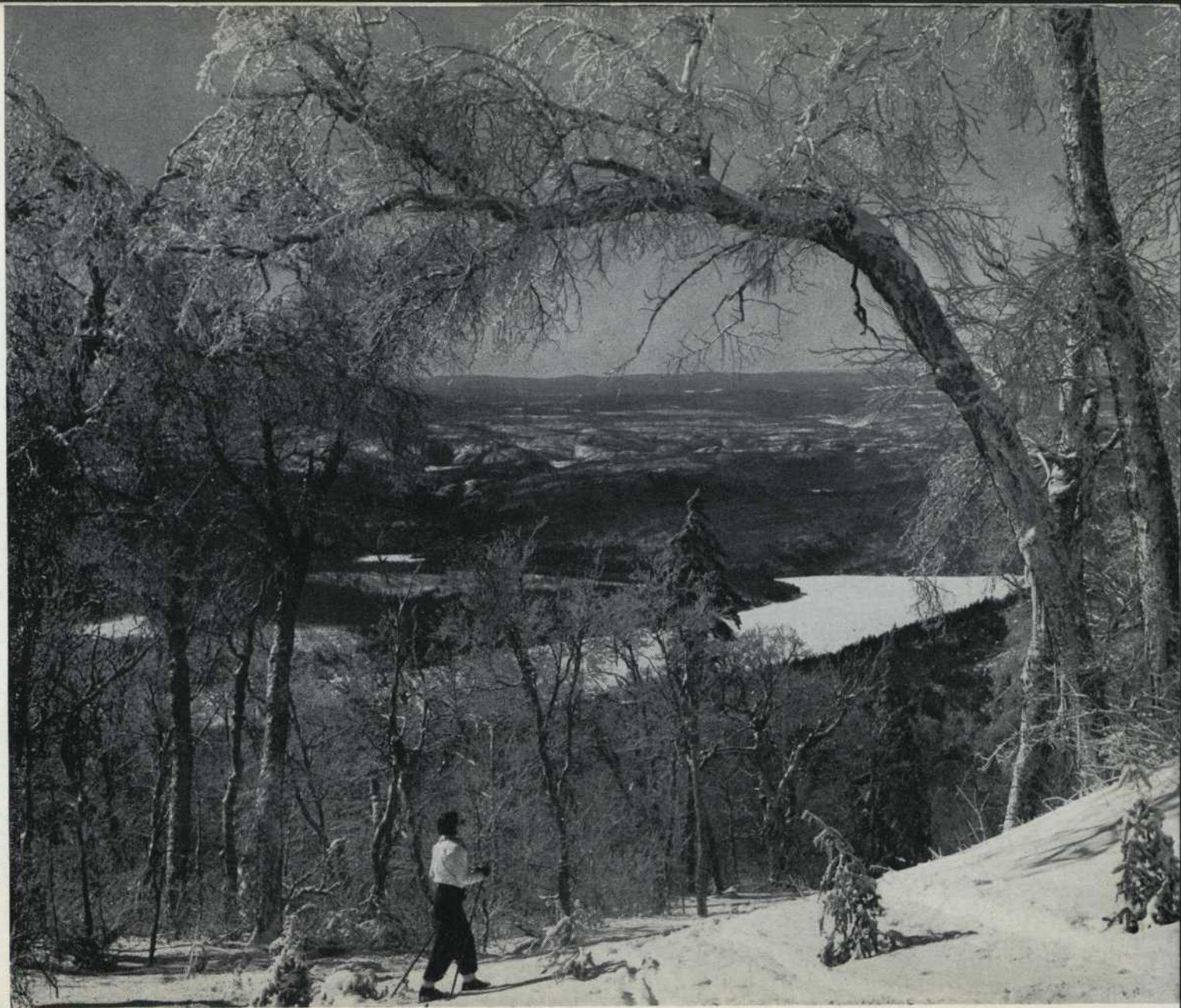
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On the Maple Leaf Trail.

Below:—The North River
near Piedmont.

Photos courtesy C.P.R.







**MAP
of the
LAURENTIANS**

Scale 1 inch to 1 Mile.



Made by Paul d'Allmen
Dec. 1930
Compiled from Laurentian Map of
Paul d'Allmen Copyright 1906
April, 1933

- Maple Leaf Ski Trail
- Marked Ski Trails
- Unmarked Ski Trails
- Ski Runs
- Traffic
- Hotels
- Railways
- Highways
- Streams
- Rivers
- Lakes
- Mountains

Trails revised Dec. 1933.

SKI MAP OF THE LAURENTIAN COUNTRY, FAMOUS WINTER SPORTS REGION OF THE PROVINCE OF QUÉBEC.

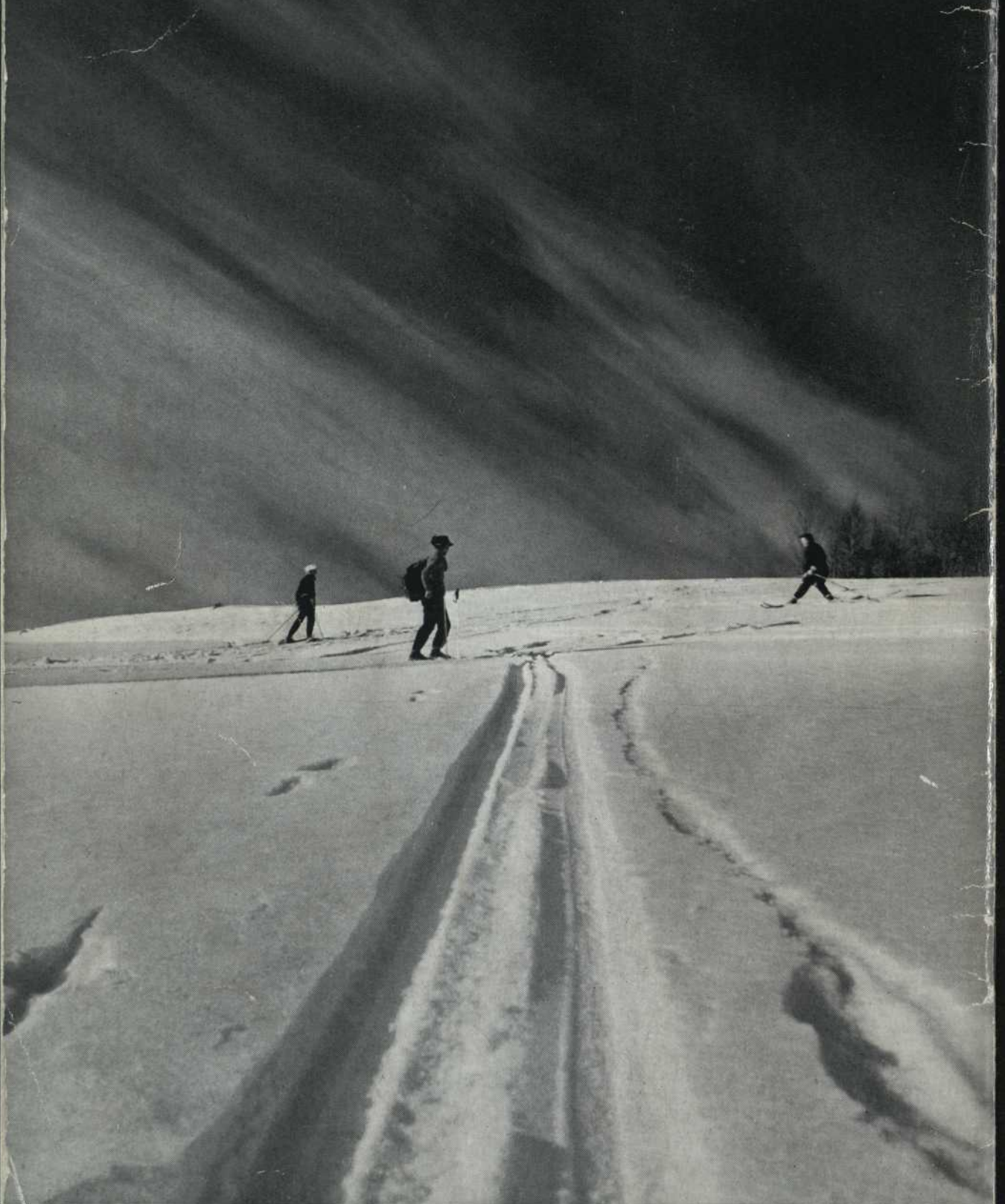
Back cover subject courtesy Gray Rocks Inn

Drawn by Paul d'Allmen, Montreal.

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