



SITE OF ALPINES — NEW HAMPSHIRE WILL BE HOST to her most spectacular ski event in years when the North American Alpine Championships are staged on Cannon Mt., Franconia, March 10-12. A half dozen nations will be represented, there'll be live, color TV coverage by CBS—and the course will look something like this plus about 10,000 more spectators! (State of New Hampshire Photo by Dick Smith.)

Skiing History

(Continued from One)

His enthusiasm was shared by two friends, Peabody and John Carleton, Manchester attorney, member of the 1924 Olympic team, and former intercollegiate ski champion at Dartmouth college. Together, they promoted a meeting of North Country hotelmen at Concord on May 15, 1933, to get a reaction to their idea.

The Hodgebirge Ski club of Boston, which "Alec" helped to organize and later headed, backed the proposal and favored a tramway on Cannon Mountain. Many North Country skiers, including some from Franconia, favored Mt. Moosilauke. Other proposed locations were on Lafayette, Liberty, Kearsarge, Monadnock and Sunapee mountains.

After preliminary physical surveys were made of Cannon's slopes in November, 1933, and the next spring, the movement gained official recognition. Gov. John G. Winant named Councilor James C. MacLeod of Littleton, State Forester John Foster and John Childs, then state bridge engineer, to select a tramway site.

The 1935 Legislature authorized construction of the tramway with federal funds but they did not materialize. A later bill providing \$250,000 in state funds was passed by the 1937 Legislature. The fight for passage was led by MacLeod, who headed a North Country citizens' commit-

tee. Carleton was appointed chairman in 1935 of the first Aerial Tramway commission, which was superseded in 1937 by another headed by MacLeod. The latter group named Peabody as the tramway's first managing director.

Events then moved rapidly. In July, Charles Proctor, Jr., former U.S. Olympic team member, was hired to survey possible trails and, in August the Danbury CCC camp was moved to Franconia to help in the cutting of trails designed by "Sel" Hannah, Dartmouth ski captain in 1935. CCC crews constructed parking areas, foot trails and platforms but did not work on the tramway itself.

Coppermine Trail, which extended into Cannon's Eastern Valley, was the second one cut on the mountain and was followed by Tucker Brook, Kinsman (which has since been abandoned) and the Cannon Trail.

The tramway construction contract was awarded in August, 1937, and in October a freight tramway was erected to transport men and materials up the mountain. Construction problems delayed completion of the whole project until the spring of 1938.

Newspapermen, photographers, newsreel cameramen and syndicate writers from across the nation rode the tramway on June 20, 1938, in a preview of the official opening. Why the tramway officially opened to

public on June 28, 1,000 persons were on hand to acclaim an event of national importance.

Known locally at first as "Bright's Idea," the tramway had carried 100,000 passengers on its 74th day of operation; nearly 37,000 skiers in its first winter; 163,000 in its first year; more than 700,000 in the first six years. About the turn of this decade it will give a ride to its five millionth passenger.

Ambassador-at-large for New Hampshire's mountains and manager of one of the nation's most unique tourist attractions, Peabody initiated the first tests to certify professional ski instructors at Cannon Mountain in December, 1938, to set standards of competence in instruction. They were held at the tramway for many years under his guidance.

He became famous in skiing, according to an article in the December, 1938, issue of the "Open Roads for Boys" as "the first of the modern American professionals." The author says further that "The commission appointed by the governor chose as managing director of the tramway young Roland Peabody, the local boy who loved those mountains, had roamed them a-foot and ever since he was a child. As

States Eastern A tion with the head Littleton.

From the "small acorn" ished lovingly by Roland Peabody, the Pecketts, Sig Buchmayr, A. Bright, barrister Carleton and many more, stands the mighty oak of today. Cannon now bears five T-bars and a couple of double chairlifts in addition to the distinguished venerable Aerial Tramway, a far cry from the modest facilities of Roland Peabody's time to March of this year when the greatest amateur skiing talent in the world will gather at Cannon March 10-12 for the North American Alpines.

carried out not only effectively from a mechanical and engineering point of view, but also in a manner to delight everyone who wishes to see the mountains remain unspoiled while giving opportunities for recreation to the greatest possible number of citizens."

Several of the pioneers mentioned above have gone to the skiers' Valhalla. Roland Peabody's son, Roger, was for a time manager of Cannon. He has kept his "roots" close to home and for several years now has been executive head of the United