

# *Survey Monuments Must Be Respected*

By LON PATTERSON

A few years ago, shortly after our summer camp area had been opened up and surveyed we noticed one of the children playing with a round iron bar and forthwith suspected it was a surveyor's corner stake. Further investigation confirmed our worst fears.

In this case we were especially upset since we had not yet paid the surveyor.

The kids made no bones about finding their trophy and led us to the place they'd hammered and pried the iron stake from the ground. We set it back as near as possible to where we could ascertain it had been set by the survey party.

The incident brought to mind years back when as a youth we spent several summers on survey parties and recalled how angry the chief became when he found a corner stake from which he must start his line, had disappeared.

We remember one hot day searching for a corner stake in southern Illinois and finally uncovering an empty hole where a hardwood stake about an inch and a half square had been.

It had been set more than 100 years before and packed with charcoal. The stake had long since rotted but the square hole, now partially filled with dirt was quite distinct

in the indestructible packing of carbon.

We were reminded of these incidents of our youthful days by reference in a lands and forests weekly letter from Lindsay district, where, incidentally, our own father was born and grew up. The item mentioned that some of the original surveys were made as far back as 150 years ago and as a consequence no trace could be found of the original markers. Re-surveys, a laborious job, were under way.

Just how important the first land surveys were is reflected in an act passed by the legislature of Upper Canada in 1798 setting out penalties for chang-

ing or removing survey stakes:

**"Any person or persons who shall knowingly and willingly pull down, deface, alter or remove any such monuments so erected as aforesaid, he, she or they shall be judged guilty of a felony and shall suffer death without benefit of clergy."**

The penalty has been modified since, but the Criminal Code still provides a five-year prison term for this offence, a penalty severe enough to discourage people from looking up iron posts or monuments fixed by land surveyors. They are not mere vagrant pieces of scrap iron. They must be left strictly alone.