

AN I.B.C. ACCIDENT

Reprinted from E.M.R.'s "Intercom"

There was a warning shout, and a 600-pound boulder, followed by a chain saw, and then a human body, tumbled over a 30-foot cliff.

The human body was Michael Lee, a member of the crew clearing a section of the international boundary near Stewart, British Columbia. Lee landed in some trees below the cliff sustaining two fractured ribs and bruises.

"I was unable to get out of the boulder's path and I was hit on the foot. From this point I slid down the mountain for about 10 feet and over the 30-foot cliff". Lee wrote this account in an accident report to the International Boundary Commission (IBC).

Carl Gustafson, party chief, said the working conditions of that stretch of the boundary along southeast Alaska were treacherous due to the rugged terrain. But he said the crews were very safety conscious and mishaps were kept to a minimum.

Gustafson is an Engineer with the Canadian Section of the IBC, part of the Surveys and Mapping Branch. His crew was employed in the regular opera-

tion of maintaining the 5,526-mile boundary between Canada and the United States. Every year crews are hired to keep the boundary markers in good condition and to clear the 20-foot-wide vista in forest covered areas.

The past field season found Gustafson's crew working on the boundary reference monuments along B.C.'s Portland Canal, and clearing the vista 36 miles inland. This is where Lee's accident occurred. He was climbing down a 40-degree mountain slope at the end of a day of work.

Felling 200-foot-high trees (higher than the EMR tower in Ottawa), crossing cold and fastmoving mountain rivers on a cable trolley, landing helicopters on high, precarious, rocky peaks to repair boundary markers — it was all part of the summer's operations. Ten miles of boundary were re-cleared, 22 monuments were repaired and painted and 50 reference monuments were replaced.

Another IBC crew from the Canadian Section worked on the boundary between Quebec and Maine over the summer, doing the same work but under less rugged conditions.

In addition to maintaining the boundary, the IBC deals with any boundary dispute and reviews any request for construction along the boundary. Permission for construction is only granted

if it is in the interest of the two countries, and if surveying is not obstructed.

The Commission, for example, has recently granted permission to the United States Border Patrol to build a 100-foot-long fence along the border near Debec, New Brunswick. The fence is intended to discourage drug trafficking between Canada and the United States.

Ed. Note, Alec McEwen, O.L.S., who represents Canada on the International Boundary Commission and who submitted the above notes that the assistant party chief on this project was Jim Ferguson-Roberts, who graduated in 1976 from Erindales first survey science class.

He also mentions that the northern extremity of this project was Mount St. Elias, the very same peak a picture of which was used in the Fall/77 issue of this magazine, to illustrate Tudor Jones' article about the Lapland Expedition. At the time, we were fresh out of Lapland photos, and used one that looked suitably snowy.

We thought nobody would notice.

THE CODE OF ETHICS AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

A look at and an explanation of the new code of ethics and standards of conduct being prepared by Council. THIS IS SCHEDULED FOR THE 1978 ANNUAL MEETING.