

DELL  
COMIC

vol. 199

*Ben Bowie and his*

10¢

# MOUNTAIN MEN



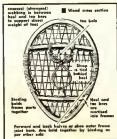
# Snowshoe Making

*It's impossible to travel in the mountains during winter without a good pair of snowshoes. They are made with hardwood frames. Birch is the best wood. Tanned deer hide or moose skin is used for the webbing. Frontiersmen get great store by a pair of well-made snowshoes. They are hard to make and very valuable.*



The first step is to cut your frames. They should be at least half-an-inch thick and about three-quarters of an inch deep. Look for a birch tree or other hardwood and see if you can find branches that grow in the shapes you need. Then square them out and shape them with a knife. Warning—make the wooden parts as smooth as you can! Rough wood soon wears away the leather webbing.

Now band the pieces of your frame together with a light banding of hide strips. The toe bar and heel bar fit into holes or notches in the outside frame and are held firmly in place when the permanent banding of the webbing is tightened around the two halves of the frame. Good snug joints where heel and toe bars fit into the frame are really necessary. If the wooden parts can slip at all, they'll soon work loose.



Lacing the snowshoe is long but easy work. Attach the webbing to the inside of the frame with copper tacks or staples. Don't run the webbing around the frame as it will wear away on the snow too rapidly. The hole in the center of the shoe is for your toes so make it fit the size of your foot. The strap is tied behind your ankle and your instep goes under the front loop. When you step forward, the toes of your rear foot pass through the hole and your heel rises easily with the single strap behind the heel. If the shoe were solid, your toes would soon become stiff. A tip for successful snowshoe travel—try to walk with your feet very far apart. It's easy to relax and put one snowshoe edge over the other and the result is usually a bad fall.

# Ben Bowie and his **MOUNTAIN MEN**

THERE'S JED  
TURNER'S TRADING  
POST, JIM!

THAT ISLAND'S PURE  
IS A STRANGE PLACE  
FOR A POST, BEN!



IT'S SAFE! TURNER LIVES THERE WITH  
HIS WIFE AND THREE-YEAR-OLD SON! HE  
FIGURES HE CAN FORT IN  
THOSE DIGGINGS SAFELY!



MAHSE HOSTILES COULDN'T  
ATTACK HIM UNLESS THEY  
LAND-HAILED THEIR CANOES  
FROM THEIR CAMP BUT HOW  
DO WE REACH THE  
ISLAND? HAH, HAH?

NO, JIM! TURNER OWNED  
TWO CANOES BY THE  
LAKESIDE! ALL THE  
LOCAL SOUL-TRADERS  
KNEW THE SECRET—BUT  
THE NODDAS DON'T!



I DON'T  
SEE ANY  
CANOE  
AROUND HERE,  
BEN!

THERE'S THE LANDMARK—  
A BRUSH LIMB ACROSS A  
BEECH BY A PINE TREE!  
THEN TEN PACE IN  
FRONT IS A  
HOLLOW LOG!



I SEE A  
SPIDER  
WEB ...

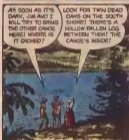
...A TRAPPER'S FISHING  
TRUCK, JIM! ONCE THE CANOE  
IS CONCEALED, THE TRAPPER  
FINDS A SPIDER TO WEAVE A  
WEB ACROSS THE OPENING!  
THAT USUALLY FOOLS EVEN  
THE NODDAS BRAVE!







SOON...



LATER...



3 SILENTLY, BEN BOWE ADVANCES TO THE FALLEN LOG...



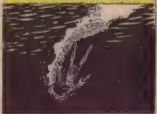


WITH A TREMENDOUS EFFORT, BEN HEAVES THE LOG INTO THE BRUSH...





**D**OWN IN THE DARK DEPTHS OF THE LAKE THE TWO MEN STRUGGLE, THEIR LUNGS BURSTING FOR AIR, THEIR HANDS TIGHTENING ON THEIR OPPONENT'S THROAT.





SECONDS LATER, THE SURFACE IS BROKEN... BUT ONLY ONE MAN COMES UP GASPING FOR BREATH...





THEN THERE ARE TWO WAR PARTIES ON THE SHORE!

THE ALGONQUIAN AND THE HURON MUST BE FIGHTING FOR CONTROL OF THE LAKE AS PART OF THEIR HUNTING GROUNDS! WE'RE CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE!



A-AND JED-?

PROBABLY STILL ALIVE IN THE HANDS OF THE HURON! BUT WE CAN'T LEAVE THE ISLAND TONIGHT TO TRY TO RESCUE HER—NOT WHILE THE ALGONQUAINS HAVE A CHANCE!



THERE'S NO MOON TONIGHT!

GET ME A SMALL BRASS POT WITH A HANDLE! I HAVE A WAY THAT WILL MAKE THE ALGONQUIAN FOREWARN US IF THEY PADDLE HERE TONIGHT!

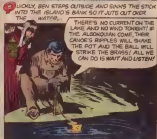


HOW'S THIS, SON?

PERFECT, MRS. TURNER! NOW I'LL DROP THIS LEAD BALL INTO IT!



THEN I'LL TIE A THORN FROM THE POT'S HANDLE TO THIS STICK!



QUICKLY, BEN STEPS OUTSIDE AND SINKS THE STICK INTO THE ISLAND'S BANK SO IT JUTS OUT OVER THE WATER...

THERE'S NO CURRENT ON THE LAKE AND NO WIND TONIGHT! IF THE ALGONQUIAN COME, THEIR CANOE'S RIPPLES WILL SHAKE THE POT AND THE BALL WILL STRIKE THE BRASS! ALL WE CAN DO IS WAIT AND LISTEN!

LATER, DURING HIS  
TURNER'S WATCH,  
SUDDENLY...

SOMETHING'S  
SHAKING THE  
POT!

TINKLE!  
TINKLE!



I'D BETTER TAKE THE  
LEAD OUT BEFORE ANY-  
ONE ELSE HEARS IT!



SEN, RIPPLES  
MOVING THE POT!



COULD BE A  
DEER! THEY  
OFTEN SWIM  
THE LAKE AT  
NIGHT!

IT'S SO DARK OUT,  
WE MAY NOT KNOW  
WHAT CAUSED THE  
RIPPLES 'TILL IT'S  
TOO LATE!



SOMETHING IS SHADOWED  
AGAINST THE SLIGHTLY LIGHTER SKY!  
IT'S MOVING - IT'S A CANOE!







**S**ILENCE-- THEN THE GROWL OF A WOUNDED BRUTE--  
THEN ONLY OMINOUS SILENCE AGAIN...



**A** MINUTE LATER, A STRANGE NOISE  
IS HEARD, LIKE WATER SPILLING...



THERE  
IT GOES  
AGAIN!

THEY'RE BAYING!  
SOME OF THE SHOTS  
MADE A LEAK!

THAT MEANS THEY'LL NOT BE ABLE TO USE THE GANGE FOR A SECOND ATTACK TONIGHT! NOW IS OUR CHANCE TO TRY TO FIND AND RESCUE YOUR HUSBAND.

BUT HOW CAN YOU FIND HIM IN THE DARK?



THE MIST WAS AT THE NORTH END! WE'LL START OUR SEARCH THERE!

WE'RE ON THE WATER!

THEY CAN'T PURSUE US! BUT THEY MUST HAVE HEARD THE FIRMS! THEY'LL BE ON THEIR GUARD!



THEY'LL NOT BE SURE WHAT WE'RE BRINGING AT! IN THE MORNING, THE TWO WAR PARTIES CAN'T HELP BUT HEST AND ONE OF THEM WILL CLAIM JED'S SCALP!

I WANT JED SAVED, BUT I'IT DON'T RIGHT SEEMS YOU PUT OUT FOR CERTAIN TROUBLE!



JED'S BEEN A FRIEND TO EVERY TRAPPER HEREASLITS-- IT'S THE LEAST WE CAN DO!







AS EDY MOVES CLOSER TO THE PRISONER, JOE POURS SOME BLACK POWDER FROM HIS HORN INTO A PIECE OF BUCKSKIN, TYING THE END, HE TROWS IT.



AS THE POWDER BAG BURSTS OPEN ON THE COALS, SUDDENLY.

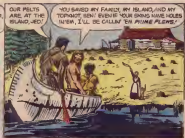








AND AS BEN BONE AND THE TRADER OPEN FIRE, A PARTY OF TRAPPERS ARRIVES AT THE LAKE.



# Ben Bowie and his MOUNTAIN MEN

and THE EARTH MOUNDS

NORTHWEST TERRITORY  
UNEXPLORED

Snake River



**A** CROSS THE UNCHARTED NORTHWEST TERRITORY, BEN BOWIE, JIM, ZEKE AND NAKAH PADDLE A PIRAGUE, CARRYING WESTWARD TWO OFFICIAL SURVIVORS ON AN IMPORTANT MISSION...

IF THE RAIN KEEPS UP, WE'LL NEVER REACH OUR GOAL - THE EIGHTY-SECOND MERIDIAN.

WASH! WE'LL BE LUCKY, BEN! IF THE FLOODTIDE COMES! IT WON'T WASH US CLEAN BACK INTO THE OCEAN!



'YOU'RE RIGHT, ZEKE! THE CURRENT'S GETTING STRONGER. KEEP YOUR EYE PEELED FOR LOSS, NAKAH!



LOOK! LOSS COME THIS WAY DENTY FAST!



SHE'LL SPLIT US IN TWO IF SHE CATCHES US NAKAH! PULL HARD ON THE ROPE! STRONG!





SEN. OL' HOSS, WE  
CAN'T TURN THIS LUMP OF  
DRIFTWOOD FAST ENOUGH!



NICE WORK, MAKAH!  
FOR A MINUTE, I  
THOUGHT WE WERE  
DONE BEAVERS!



GEORGE, YOU AND ALAN  
DIDN'T KNOW WHAT YOU  
WERE LETTING YOURSELVES  
IN FOR WHEN YOU TOOK THE  
JOB OF SURVIVING THIS  
WILDERNESS FOR THE  
COLONIES!

OUR SKIN'S WET, BUT  
OUR INSTRUMENTS  
ARE DRY! I JUST  
WISH THIS LIGHT-  
NING WOULD STOP!

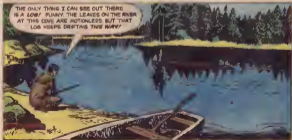


WAGH! THAT THUNDER-  
BOLT SURE PICKED  
THE WRONG TREE!

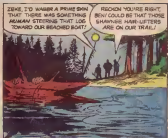
IF IT UPSETS US WE'LL  
HAVE NO CHANCE SWIM-  
MING IN THIS WILD  
FLOOD! GIVE IN!











THE NEXT MORNING...

YOU CAN PUT OUT NOW, BEN! WE'VE TRANSLATED THAT PEAK!

AND I'M WONDERIN' IF ANY SHANICE ARE 'BONN' READINGS ON OUR TOPGROTS!



RIVER NARROW HERE! MIGHT SEE PLENTY TRACKS! THIS BE WAA PARTY CROSSING!



W WE'VE HIT SOMETHING!



WE'RE ON A SAND BAR! LET'S TRY SACK WATERING OFF! PULL TOGETHER! AGH!



I- IT'S NOISE, BEN, WE'RE REALLY STUCK!









TAKE UP THE PADDLES, LADS! I'LL GIVE 'EM A FINAL BLAST!



AJEE!



WE STOPPED 'EM!

AND GEORGE'S INSTRUMENTS STOPPED AN ARROW!



LATER...

RECKON HERE'S WHERE THE RIVER SPLITS UP, GEORGE!

THIS IS AS FAR AS WE HAVE TO GO! WE'VE JUST PASSED THE EIGHTY-SECOND MERIDIAN! BUT WE SHOULD SURVEY BOTH SIDES OF THE RIVER HERE!



GEORGE, GO WITH IZKE AND NANAH! ALAN WILL COME WITH JIM AND ME! THAT WILL SAVE TIME!

YES, BOB, BUT HALVING OUR STRENGTH WILL MAKE US EASY POUNDS FOR THE SHAWNEE!





HOW CAN WE TRAP THE LONG KNIVES?

GIVE ME A FEELING!

YOUR TOTEMPOW! WHEN I LEADS IT, THEY'LL WALK STRAIGHT INTO AN AMBUSH!



ENTER...

HERE'S BEN'S BLAZE MARK! SOONER WE JOIN UP, THE SAFER WE'LL ALL BE! COME ON!



MEANWHILE...

"YOU LOOK WORRIED, BEN."

"I AM A WITE, SIR! WE'VE COMPLETED OUR SURVEY AND SINCE ZEBE'S GROUP HAD AN HOUR'S START ON US, THEY SHOULD BE WITHIN SIGHT BY NOW!"



NO SIGN OF THEM DOWN TRAIL!

PICK UP YOUR GEAR ALAN! WE'RE GOING TO BACKTRACK!



GOON...

BEN, LOOK! THIS IS OUR TRAIL ALL RIGHT—BUT NOW THERE ARE NO BLAZE MARKS!



A FEW MINUTES LATER...





LOOK HERE, MAMM! THIS BLAZE MARK WAS MADE BY A GULL BLADE - BEN'S AGE IS HONED SHARP AS A RAZOR! I'LL BET SOME SHANNES TOMAHAWK CUT THIS MARK! WE'D BETTER BACK-TRACK FAST OR WE'LL BE FACIN' THE WORNIN' END OF SOME SOWS!



ZEEK! YOU'RE SAFE!

THANKS TO 'YOUR MAMM!' SHOT, O'L'HOSS!

BUT THE SHANNES UP TRAIL MUST HAVE HEARD THE SHOT, TOO! RECKON WE'D BETTER FIND A PLACE TO TAKE COVER AN' FIGHT TO KEEP OUR SCALPS!



WE CAN TAKE A QUICK LOOK FROM THIS RISE FOR A DEFENSIBLE SPOT!



WHAT IN JESHAPHAT IS THAT?

WASH! THIS CHILD'S NEVER SEEN SUCH A STRANGE SIGHT IN ALL HIS BORN DAYS!



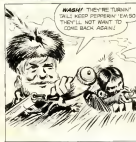
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**A**S THE SUMMER WINDS BLOW THE HILLS, JIM BURLY INVESTIGATES THE MYSTERIOUS MOUNDS...

BEN, LOOK WHAT I FOUND UNDER THESE BONES!



THIS MUST HAVE BEEN A VERY ANCIENT INDIAN BURIAL MOUND, JIM! AS FAR AS I KNOW WE'LL BE BRINGING BACK THE FIRST REPORT OF THESE STRANGE MOUNDS!

AND I GUESS THEY USED THE ALTAR FOR SOME PART OF THE FUNERAL CEREMONY!



**S**oon...

THERE SHE IS, SAFE AND SOUND!

BRING HER, BEN EAST—FOR HOME!



GOLLY, BEN, I WONDER WHAT THIS WILDERNESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN FIVE YEARS!

NOW IT'S HARPED, JIM! OTHER BOATS WILL PUSH UP THE RIVER FIRST, A PORT WILL BE MADE! THEN A CLEARING WILL BE CUT AND CABINS BUILT! FINALLY THE LAND WILL BE FLOODED AND HARVESTED!



YES, BEN, BUT NO ONE ELSE IN ALL THE COLONIES WILL EVER HAVE THE THRILL OF BEING THE FIRST EXPLORERS TO SET FOOT BY THOSE BURIAL MOUNDS!

I'LL NOT NEED YOUR MAP (HOW TO RECALL THOSE BURIAL MOUNDS' WASH! WE WERE ALMOST SURED BY 'EM!

