

ORIGIN OF BANFF WINTER CARNIVAL

(Contributed)

"No one knows the joy of winter
'Till they've lived the ones we know,
When the snow has heaped the branches
And the mercury drops low:
When the tingling sunlight thrills through
All our veins like golden wine,
Then the mountains' magic claims us—
When the frost is on the pine."

The origin of the Banff Winter Carnival had its inception during the holiday season of 1916-17, when a prominent resident of Banff (whose wife and family were spending a few weeks visiting relatives and friends in Calgary) invited a "fellow orphan" to spend an evening in bewailing their enforced bachelorhood.

The two men mentioned above were N. K. Luxton and B. W. Collison, and the meeting was held at the home of the former.

The evening hours were whiled away with music, refreshments and social chat, interspersed with devotion at the shrine of My Lady Nicotine, and finally the conversation switched to the all-important subject (dear to the hearts of every Banffite) of what could be accomplished along the line of bringing people to Banff during the winter months—when the mountains, woods, lakes and rivers are more majestic and beautiful, covered with a mantle of pure white snow, than even in summer time.

Many methods of accomplishing the desired result were considered and discussed until finally the idea of holding a weeks' series of sporting events was decided upon as the most feasible, and the two gentlemen decided to dream upon the subject until the following day.

Messrs. Luxton and Collison met the following day, decided in the cold light of "the morning after" that the idea was a good one and immediately set to work to carry it into execution.

Barney wired to the authorities at Ottawa, and, in due course, received a reply that the Dominion government would back the scheme to the extent of a few hundred dollars.

A public meeting was then called, but the public, grown weary of attending meetings from which results seldom materialized, did not respond to the invitation to attend and talk over the project.

Nothing daunted, Norman Luxton inspired with renewed vigor started out to canvass the citizens individually. Armed with the courage of his convictions, he put up so good an argument and supported it by such sound and convincing reasons that business men and citizens generally fell in line and promised substantial contributions to the Banff Winter Carnival—as the project had been by this time named.