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Henry Percy Douglas

Born: 1873 Died: 1956

Henry Percy Douglas did not begin to ski until he was a student at Cornell University in 1893. In 1898, Douglas moved to Montreal, Canada, to work. The need for a strong Canadian parent ski organization became apparent, and Douglas began the Canadian Amateur Ski Association in 1920, serving as its president for ten years. During his tenure as president, a spirit of cooperation developed, and free exchange of athletes between the two countries was commonplace.



Henry P. Douglas was born August 18, 1873, in Tarrytown, New York. He did not start to ski until he was a student at Cornell University at Ithaca, New York, where in 1893 he set out to master the sport of skiing on the eight foot skis and a steel tipped bamboo pole.

In 1898, Douglas moved to Canada as an employee of an elevator company, and later as a Canadian insurance company executive. He aided the early day organization of skisport at both the club and intercollegiate level. In 1909, the skisport had begun to grip the imaginations at McGill University at Montreal, and Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire. These two schools eventually fielding winter sports teams to engage each other in fierce but friendly, competition in 1914. From this competition came the organization of the Intercollegiate Winter Sports Union in 1923-1924. Also, Douglas was a pioneer member of the Montreal Ski Club founded in 1904, and which for many years cooperated in the intercollegiate ski beginnings, which at the same time staging its own Nordic event for club and collegiate competitors gathered from Eastern Canada and the United States.



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The need for a parent organization became apparent following World War 1, with the actual founding of the Canadian Amateur Ski Association and Championship Tournament in 1921. Voted into the presidency during the meeting, Douglas served for ten years as the leader of skiing in the Dominion of Canada, during his tenure as president of the Canadian Amateur Ski Association, was the era which saw the spread of skisport all over North America, and the exchange of ski athletes on many occasions from both sides of the border.

In addition to duties with the Canadian Amateur Ski Association, Douglas was the editor of various magazines. He published "My Skiing Years" in 1951. Most important, took a keen interest in the young people who skied. He originated the system of efficiency test which did so much to improve the standard of the sport in North America.

Henry Percy Douglas died in 1956, and was elected posthumously to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in Ishpeming, Michigan, in 1968, for his service to skisport in North America.