



TIMBERLINE TREE

For three hundred years and more this tree battled the high winds and bitter cold of the high country of Colorado. Sheltered behind a glacial boulder, the tree took full advantage of the short annual growing season, finally succumbing to a series of too-severe winters. Recent coring of trees like this show that it takes them three hundred years or more to reach a diameter of six inches. This tree was probably a seedling when Juan de Onate led his starving army from New Mexico to the nearby headwaters of the Platte, seeking gold that he walked over but never found. The photograph is by R. L. Ives.

GEOGRAPHY

Ice Floe of Polar Scientists No Longer is Northernmost

Men Are Cheerful in Their Work; Guard Their Lamps And Briefcase of Data With Jealous Care

By ERNST KRENKEL

Radio Operator, Soviet North Pole Expedition.

OUR drifting ice-floe can no longer be called the northernmost ice-floe on the globe. The northern part of Greenland has been left behind.

Our camp can be noticed from a distance of ten to fifteen meters. Like a precious stone shines Jenya Fedorov's ice observatory, lighted by the lamp of an electric torch when Fedorov is engaged in his observations. There is a wide passage around our tent. It is not very comfortable here during a snow storm, for the thin snow penetrates through the thickest clothes.

Our tent resembles a richly candied

cake, on the top of which stands out a single black raisin—the insulator of our antenna. The tambour is tightly closed by a triple apron-like door. When coming inside you must fasten it otherwise the apron will start flapping. The tambour is fully taken up by 4 pairs of so-called "slippers." A two-month old baby can freely be bathed in each of them.

Now take off your boots and shake off the snow with a whisk broom. This is done on an ice foot-board covered with fur. For a long time our dog Vessyoly used to block our way here. He was expelled from there for an unhealthy curiosity he used to show for butter.

The fur-lined rubber door opens with

great difficulty. It is held by a rubber band fastened to a pole of the tent. The half-year experience taught us to pass dexterously through this door, even when carrying hot tea-pots and saucepans.

By the way, we must once and for all put an end to the definition of our dwelling as a tent. This is a real rigid dwelling house with only its roof made of cloth. In the summer time we had a few things in our house. The winter conditions, however, required a considerable increase in their quantity. But we are so accustomed to our dwelling that we find it even roomy.

Narrow Quarters

Amidst the vast expanse of the Arctic our "dwelling" space is limited to 3 square meters. This is all that has been left unoccupied by various things.

To the right of the entrance there is the wireless station. Below—storage batteries and tools. To the left of the entrance is suspended a box which we proudly call our cupboard. On the floor stand Shirshov's boxes with samples of water and on them several smoke-stained saucepans containing our simple dinner. Here, too, are the chronometers. The longer walls are occupied by double-tier beds.

A small worn-out briefcase hangs on a piece of string at Shirshov's feet. We look at it with great respect. Here are enclosed the secrets of the North Pole, the dreams of mankind which have come true; the fruit of six months of our intense life, a great many hours of hard physical labor. One would rather lose his head than this old briefcase. Between the beds stands a table occupied with our laboratory. Over the table hangs a thin piece of sheetiron protecting the ceiling from the heat of the lamp. My duty is to cover this piece of sheetiron with brittle frozen sausages.

Each of us has a corner for himself where our junk is kept. Papanin has a particularly great quantity of it. He sleeps on pieces of string and wire, notebooks, matches and books. He must have all of it within his reach.

In the day-time the lamps stand in the middle of the tent and like fire-worshippers we all crowd around them. Touching the lamp glasses is strictly prohibited. This is the privilege of the chief pontiff Papanin. Don't ask how many more lamp glasses are left. As a good house-master he will say "ten" though there are fifteen of them.

The few free spaces on the walls are used to hang up our arms, lanterns and bundles of books. Our "drug-store" box is suspended from the wall on a piece