

Figure 1-5 The members of the 10th Mountain Division, which specialized in winter warfare during World War II, included many ski patrollers. Copyright New England Ski Museum



The Birth of OEC

Since its founding, the National Ski Patrol has evolved from a handful of ski patrollers into the world's largest nonurban medical rescue organization. In 1939, NSP established an affiliation with the American Red Cross (ARC). Out of this relationship came the publication "Ski Safety and First Aid," which was written by an ARC officer, L. M. Thompson, who became the first Chairman of the NSP's Medical Advisory Committee. This position later became the **National Medical Advisor**.

National Medical Advisor a licensed physician, MD, or DO with an interest in outdoor/wilderness medicine and ski patrolling, who is appointed by the National Ski Patrol's chairman and approved by the National Ski Patrol's board of directors to serve the NSP in all matters of medical concern; chairs the National Medical Committee.

For many years the American Red Cross First Aid Course proved very useful as a basic tool for ski patrollers. However, it became clear in the early 1980s that patrollers required additional training to care for patients during cold weather and at high altitude. As a result, in 1985 Dr. Warren Bowman, an internist from Billings, Montana, created an emergency responder textbook exclusively for ski patrollers, entitled *Winter Emergency Care (WEC)*. Three years later, this textbook was revised and renamed *Outdoor Emergency Care*. The new text was expanded to include information about a variety of illnesses and injuries in outdoor enthusiasts and for the first time included information about nonwinter emergencies and care for the sick and injured during sporting activities other than skiing. Those changes were made to better reflect the expanding role of OEC Technicians in providing year-round emergency care in a variety of settings.

In *Outdoor Emergency Care*, Dr. Bowman created the concept of "intermediate" outdoor medical care. OEC was positioned between the urban and wilderness curricula while emphasizing both. His idea—that OEC Technicians would begin the care of a patient in a wilderness situation, would continue care during transportation (usually using a toboggan in a ski area), and would further continue care in a first aid room or ski-area clinic—was unique to the prehospital emergency services community. The concept was widely successful, and the OEC text/curriculum was awarded the years "Best Educational Program Based on the Needs of Industry or Professional Associations" by the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) in 1989. Truly, Warren Bowman, MD is the father of Outdoor Emergency Care (Figure 1-6■, Table 1-1■).

1-5 Compare and contrast the OEC textbook and OEC course/curriculum.