

High Adventure

A ROYAL RANGERS MAGAZINE FOR BOYS



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BIRTH OF A PATRIOT

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ADVENTURE IN THE
UNDERGROUND

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BIRTH OF A PATRIOT



TRIOT

by Johnnie Barnes



Alex Farmer sat upright in bed! He heard a horse galloping over the cobblestone pavement, then the sound of shouting up and down the street.

He leaped out of bed and rushed to the window. Looking down, he could see the lantern lights bobbing along the darkened street. Many of the shadowy figures were shouting and waving their arms.

Then he heard pounding on his own door downstairs. He ran to the stairs just in time to see his Uncle Ben open the front door.

A man in a tricorne hat began talking to his uncle in an excited whisper. He was gone almost as soon as he appeared.

His uncle turned and saw him on the stairway. "What was that all about?" Alex blurted.

As he waited for an answer, he could detect a worried look on Ben's weather-beaten face.

In a solemn voice his uncle explained. "Paul Revere just rode through announcing the British are marching on Lexington and Concord. Captain John Parker wants the militia to mobilize on the city green. The situation may be serious, because we're determined that they're not going to take our munition store at Concord."

The boy's eyes widened with excitement, "Can I go with you?" he quizzed.

His uncle smiled and tousled his hair with his hand. "Hold it, Tiger," he answered, "the green is no place for a fifteen-year-old. And besides that," he continued, seeing the disappointment in Alex's eyes, "I need someone to stay here with your mother and your Aunt Martha. Come on, help me get ready."

Alex lifted his uncle's flintlock musket down from over the mantel, while Ben slung his powder flask and shooting pouch over his shoulder. The boy studied the other gun hanging below his uncle's musket. Five years ago his father had died of pneumonia and left him this rifle. He and his mother had been living in Lexington with his uncle ever since.

He remembered how his uncle had taught him to shoot, and their many hunting trips together. His uncle reading his thoughts, promised, "We will go hunting again real soon."

His mother and Aunt Martha were up now. Hasty exclamations and good-byes were made. Then Uncle Ben was out the front door. A neighbor joined him and joshed, "The Captain said we should be ready in a minute's time; I reckon you and I don't qualify as Minutemen."

Uncle Ben laughed and replied, "I think it's what you do after you get there that counts."

"I guess we're all to meet in front of Buckman's Tavern," the other man answered. Then they were out of earshot.

There were tears in Aunt Martha's eyes, and his mother sternly instructed Alex not to leave the house. "Besides that, it's still in the wee hours of the morning," she reasoned. "You need to go back to bed."

Alex stayed in bed awhile, but couldn't sleep. He went to the window and leaned out to watch different people rush down the street toward the village green.

He was disgusted. Here was the most excitement in years, and he had to stay home.

Time dragged by so slowly it seemed daylight would never come. He kicked at the floor with impatience. Politics was common talk in Lexington. He had heard about "Taxation without representation" and other criticism of the King and parliament. He had also heard about trouble in Boston that resulted in some citizens being shot by British soldiers. He knew the blockade of Boston after the famous "Boston Tea Party" had caused a great hardship on all the people in Massachusetts.

He had heard that guns and other provisions were smuggled out of Boston and stored at various places—to be used to raise a provincial army if necessary.

There had also been rumors that General Gage was planning to send out his men to destroy these provisions the colonists had stored.

Emotions had been running high throughout the area. Now something exciting was about to happen right here in Lexington—and he couldn't get in on it.

There was shouting down by the green. Alex could make out the words, "Here they come."

A bell began to ring, and the muster drum began to sound.

That did it! Alex pulled on his clothes, slipped outside and ran down the street to a place where he could watch the activities.

Looking toward Boston in the light of early dawn, he could see the red-coated soldiers. They were magnificent. The beat of their drums and the sound of the fifes added to their splendor. "What a contrast to Captain Parker's drab militia," thought Alex. cont. next page

There were about 70 militia in two ranks and he could see his uncle on the front line. He was holding his musket in readiness.

As the Redcoats reached the fork of the road, they suddenly turned right and began running toward the village green. With bayonets poised, they stopped a few yards in front of Captain Parker's men.

Alex's heart beat rapidly with excitement. What would happen next!

Then a British officer snapped a command at the Minutemen: "Lay down your arms and clear the green."

John Parker responded with a counter order. "Stand your ground, men. Don't fire unless fired upon. If they mean to start a war, let it begin here."

For a few moments silence hung like a pall. Then a shot rang out. No one knew who fired it, but the British instantly opened fire.

As fire belched from the muzzles of the British muskets, smoke filled the air obscuring Alex's view momentarily. When the smoke lifted, some of the Minutemen were lying on the ground. Others were staggering about.

Alex saw his uncle clutch his chest, drop to his knees, and slowly fall forward.

Jonas Parker dropped his rifle and fell with a wounded knee. He reached out for his weapon and struggled to his feet. A British regular stabbed him with his bayonet and he fell back.

Jonathan Harrington, with a gushing wound in his chest, rose slowly to his feet, a dazed look on his face. He turned and stumbled toward his house across the street, then fell at the edge of the road. Raising himself to a crawling position, he crept toward his house. His wife came screaming out the front door.

Harrington reached his hand out toward her, and collapsed.

The militia began to fall back in retreat.

It all seemed like a nightmare. "This can't be real," Alex told himself. Surely Uncle Ben and these neighbors of ours aren't actually being shot down right here in Lexington!

He stood for several moments in shocked unbelief. Then his feet were propelled into action. He ran as fast as he could toward the village green.

By the time he reached his uncle, most of the Redcoats had passed by, driving Parker's men off the green. Uncle Ben looked up and saw him. His lips moved as though he was trying to say something. Blood covered the front of his coat.

Alex dropped on his knees beside him. "Uncle Ben! Uncle Ben!" he shouted.

Suddenly a rough hand laid hold of his shoulder and threw him backward onto the ground. He looked up to see a British soldier with a bayonet pointed at him. "Get out of here, or you'll get the same thing he did," the Redcoat snarled.

Alex felt for the first time a mixture of

hate and fury. As he scrambled to his feet, he noticed his uncle was lying still.

Another Redcoat shouted, "The Major wants us to move on to Concord."

Alex turned and ran toward home. He burst into the house shouting, "Uncle Ben's been shot."

Aunt Martha with a cry of distress ran out the door. Alex rushed across the room and took down his father's rifle. His mother, who had started to follow Aunt Martha, saw him and cried, "Alex, what are you doing?"

"I'm going to Concord," he shouted. "That's where the British are going, and I'm going to be there to help stop them."

"Alex, put that gun back! his mother ordered tearfully. "I've got enough trouble without worrying about your running off to get yourself shot."

"Mother, it's something I've got to do," he pleaded, as he pulled the shooting pouch over his shoulder. Then, after giving his mother a fleeting kiss, he dashed out the back door.

He skirted the main part of town and entered the woods near the Concord road. Instead of walking directly down the main road, he traveled through the woods in a parallel course.

The air was filled with the scent of blossoms and freshly tilled fields, but he didn't notice. The scene at the village green remained vividly in his mind. He had no definite plan. All he knew was there would probably be a fight in Concord, and he wanted to be in on it.

As he thought about Uncle Ben, he remembered the many kindnesses of this older man who had become a second father. He had not realized until then just how much he loved his uncle.

Alex looked at the rifle he was carrying, and recalled very vividly the first time his uncle had taught him to load and shoot it. He remembered pulling the trigger and flinching when the powder exploded in the pan. When the barrel fired, he expected to feel a shock at his shoulder, but was surprised at the lack of recoil.

"That's because of the slow burning black powder and the length of the barrel," Ben had chuckled.

As he remembered, hot tears began to stream down his cheeks. Then his anger toward the soldiers began to intensify again.

A little later he noticed two men carrying muskets hurrying along the road ahead of him. He hurried his pace until he was parallel to them. Then he rushed out of the woods beside them.

"Are you going to Concord?" he asked breathlessly.

The two startled men turned and stared at him. "Yes," the red-headed one said, "but a boy like you got no business being at Concord."

"They shot my uncle," Alex replied.

The two men looked at each other knowingly. The black-headed one said,

"We'd best hurry if we are to stay ahead of the troops."

"I'm going to Concord," he shouted. "That's where the British are going. I'm going to help stop them."

The men, who were both farmers, explained that Dr. Prescott had already sounded the alarm that the British were planning to take the arms and powders stored at Concord. The two farmers were rushing to Concord to help stop them.

They had heard there was a confrontation at Lexington, so they pressed Alex for details.

After he tearfully explained what had happened, they walked along in silence for a while. Then one of the men remarked, "Well, I guess it's started. It's war now for sure."

They arrived in Concord to find the town buzzing with excitement.

The people had spent hours hiding their valuables and provisions they had accumulated for their militia. They hid food and powder under haystacks, in attics, and in cellars.

They placed musket balls and cannon balls in leather bags and submerged them in ponds.

At Colonel James Barrett's farm where many of the provisions were stored, they covered up cannon barrels in the furrows of a newly plowed field.

Elisha Jones had fifty-five barrels of cured beef, and seventeen thousand pounds of salt fish hidden in the cellar of his wagon shed.

A group of Minutemen under the command of Captain David Brown marched toward Lexington to reconnoiter. About a mile down the road they spotted the British. They waited until the Redcoats were about a hundred yards away, then Captain Brown ordered his men about face and march back to Concord.

The British were playing "The White Cockade." Brown instructed his drummer and fifer to play the same tune.

One Minuteman remarked, "We had grand music." It was almost comical to see the Provincials marching like a special escort into the village ahead of the British.

Alex and several others had climbed the ridge beside the liberty pole where the colonial "Pine Tree" flag was fluttering in the breeze.

Adjutant Joseph Hosmer instructed the remainder to gather in squads on the high ground overlooking the common.

Pastor William Emerson paced up and down in front of the group. "Let us stand our ground," he challenged. "If we must die, let us die here."

Colonel Eleazer Brooks interrupted to point out that they were greatly outnumbered. And since most of the stores had

been hidden, little could be achieved by starting a battle. He ordered the militia to retreat across the North Bridge on the Little Concord River, about a mile north of town.

They marched over the bridge and on up Punkatasset Hill. He sent out pickets to all the roads leading into town to instruct the colonists who arrived to join them on the hill.

He sent a young man about Alex's age to ring the alarm bell to alert the countryside that the Minutemen were gathering at Concord. As the young man turned to leave he noticed Alex. "Want to come along?" he asked.

"Sure," responded Alex, happy to do something.

They ran to the meetinghouse and together pulled the heavy rope attached to the bell. The building seemed to vibrate with the gong, gong, gong.

Alex did not realize it at the time, but the ringing bell would spread out like a tonal alarm wave to most of Massachusetts. Villages nearby would hear the sound and ring their bells. Others would hear the tone and pass it on until towns like Worcester, Marble Head, Salem, and Portsmouth would hear the tidings.

From across the hill and field, they came from places like Acton, Bedford, Lincoln, Sudbury, Carlisle, Chelmsford, and Natick. Quickly they swelled the company at Punkatasset Hill.

Captain Lawrence Parsons led a British detachment out to Colonel Barrett's farm to destroy the provisions rumored to be stored there.

"Let us stand our ground," he challenged. "If we must die, let us die here."

At the North Bridge he left Captain Walter Laurie with about one hundred men to guard the wooden span.

Meanwhile, stories of what was happening in the village began to filter up to the colonists on Punkatasset Hill.

The British had found sixty barrels of flour in Ebenezer Hubbard's storehouse. They broke open the kegs and rolled them across the road into the mill pond. The area reportedly looked as though a snowstorm had struck.

Two large cannons and twenty "four pounders" were discovered in Jones' Tavern. The Redcoats knocked off the trunnions and drove spikes into the touch holes.

Suddenly the men on the hill saw dark billows of smoke rising from the village. "They're setting fire to the village," someone cried.

"We can't let them burn our village," the angry colonists shouted.

Colonel Barrett ordered everyone to load up, and it suddenly dawned on Alex that he had never loaded his rifle. Then, to his dismay, he discovered his powder

horn was empty! He had been so preoccupied he had not only failed to load his rifle, but he had failed to check his gear.

He turned to a man who had just walked up and blurted, "I don't have any powder!"

The man looked at him puzzled, then responded laughingly, "Son, if you're going to do much fighting, you're gonna need powder."

He pointed his finger down the road. "You see that third house? I hid some powder in my cellar. Tell my wife that Tom said you could fill your horn. You'd better hurry if you want to get in on the battle."

Alex ran toward the man's house. He had to knock several times before a frightened lady peeked out the window.

Alex blurted out his request. "Come around to the back," she responded. "You had better fill it on the back step."

In his haste, his hands trembled as he attempted to pour the powder into the tiny opening in the horn. It seemed it was taking forever to fill his horn. He could hear firing at the bridge before he was done.

At last he had enough in, but he decided he had better load his gun before leaving. He never realized before how long it took to load a rifle!

He poured powder down the barrel, at the same time put a small patch in his mouth to lubricate it with his saliva.

To make matters worse, his mouth was so dry he had difficulty getting up enough spit to moisten his patch. He envied those who had muskets because they didn't use patches.

He put the wet patch over the end of the barrel and laid a rifle ball on top of it. He wedged the ball into the end of the barrel with his ball starter. After cutting off the surplus cloth, he rammed the ball down the barrel.

Finally his shaky hand poured powder in the priming-pan, and the rifle was loaded. He rushed around the house toward the sound of fighting.

As he neared the bridge, sulphurous-smelling smoke permeated the air, stinging his eyes. However, the firing had stopped.

Alex rushed up to a group of Minutemen near the bridge, who were assisting several wounded colonists. He singled out Tom, who was sitting against the bridge holding a wounded arm.

Alex tore off some of his shirttail and helped bind Tom's wound while Tom updated him on the battle.

The colonists had marched down the hill with their drum and fife playing. As they neared the bridge, the British retreated to the opposite side and began tearing up the planks.

This angered the Provincials, so they rushed forward to stop them.

The Redcoats opened fire killing Captain David and Private Hosmer—and wounding several others.

Major Buttrick shouted for everyone to return the fire. The colonists broke rank and began firing across the bridge.

Then the British broke and retreated as the Minutemen charged across the bridge.

cont. next page





"We whipped them good," Tom concluded.

"And I didn't even get to fire a shot!" Alex complained.

"Don't worry," Tom assured him. "There will be plenty of time for that."

He gestured across the bridge. "The men are rallying on the hill in Jones's pasture."

Then looking off toward the village he snarled, "Before we're finished, those lobster backs will be sorry for this day for sure."

Alex looked at Tom and quizzed, "Are you coming?"

"Not with this arm," Tom apologized. "I've got to find a physician."

Alex nodded in understanding. He said good-bye to his wounded friend and hurried off.

"Good luck!" Tom called.

Alex found the colonists deployed behind a stone wall near the road to the village. He was getting a drink from Jones's well when someone shouted, "Here they come!"

He knelt behind the wall in time to see about two hundred Redcoats coming up the road.

Major Buttrick ordered them not to fire until he gave the signal. "Let them come real close," he instructed. "Then fire two or three times, and retreat."

Closer and closer the British came. "Why doesn't he give the order?" thought Alex. "I could hit them from here with my eyes closed."

Suddenly a British officer shouted an order, and the group did an about-face and marched back to the village.

Alex could hear grumbling in the ranks. Why hadn't the order been given to fire?

Others pointed out that the smoke in the village had stopped. The British hadn't burned the village after all.

The Major ordered them to a ridge closer to the village so they could see what the Redcoats were doing. Around noon, two hours after the battle at the

bridge, the British left the village for the march back to Boston.

On the ridge Major Buttrick led his men on a course parallel to the British column. The men were in an angry mood.

About a mile from town a small bridge crossed the millstream. At this juncture the last of the British troops wheeled about and fired a farewell volley at the Minutemen.

As the Redcoats started across the bridge, the colonists suddenly without command broke ranks and charged down the hill toward them.

Dodging from tree to tree, and behind stone walls, they opened fire on the long line of British.

A message was telegraphed through the ranks of the Provincials. "Fight Indian style. Move in—fire—fall back to cover."

Hundreds of Minutemen fanned out in small groups along the road, pouring a withering fire into the British lines.

Alex ran through the woods parallel to the British troops. He could hear musket balls whining in the branches above.

He ran until he thought he was well ahead of the Redcoats, then turned toward the Boston road. About fifty yards from the road, he stopped behind a rock

"It's a tragic thing when men are forced to choose between tyranny and fighting."

fence beside a large maple tree. He knelt to catch his breath. The Redcoats were coming closer. He could hear the constant firing, and the shouts and curses of the British as they cried out at the unseen Minutemen.

Alex crouched behind the rock fence and laid his rifle between two stones. He congratulated himself on the ideal spot he had chosen. He could fire from behind the fence, then stand behind the tree to reload.

Looking over the barrel of his rifle, he saw the Redcoats come into view. He heard a loud "thump, thump," and suddenly realized it was his own heart.

Holding his rifle steady, he sighted in on a Redcoat. He squeezed the trigger and the rifle responded. A moment later the man fell. Even at that distance, he could see the look of pain on the man's face and hear the cry of distress.

Several muskets were instantly pointed in his direction. He realized in alarm that the puff of smoke from his flintlock had given away his position. A ball splattered against the maple tree, and another ricocheted off the fence in front of him.

"What if they break rank and charge my position" the frightened youth thought.

His impulse was to leap up and run back into the forest—but an open space between him and the foliage would expose him to fire. He quickly crawled behind the tree to reload.

However, he did not fire at the column again, but remained concealed. Off in the distance, on the opposite side of the road, he heard the boom of muskets—and he knew other Minutemen were at work.

An infuriated and flustered British officer was yelling at his men to keep moving. From time to time he heard the cries of men in pain.

Toward the end of the column came the wagons with their grotesque cargo of wounded Redcoats. Soon the harassed British troops had moved on out of sight.

As the shouting and musket fire grew dimmer, Alex suddenly began to feel sick. His legs felt weak, so he slumped down with his back against the tree. Looking up he breathed an apologetic prayer. "Oh, Lord, I've killed a man."

Alex had seen his uncle shot down; he had been all day without food; he had walked and run for miles; he had witnessed his first horrors of battle—and he had just shot a man. All this seemed to cave in on him at once.

Sobs shook his body and he cried unashamedly. Hate began to drain from him and only grief remained—grief for his uncle, grief for the man he had shot, grief for the whole tragic day.

Later, when the weeping had passed, Alex became aware that a man was sitting on the rock fence a short distance from

him. It was the clergyman he had seen in the village. Alex did not know how long he had been there.

Reverend Emerson looked at him intently for a moment and said in a soft, sympathetic voice, "It's been a rough day, hasn't it, Son?"

The kindness in the voice and the face seemed to uncork Alex. All at once in a gush of words he blurted out all that had happened during the day.

When he had finished, the clergyman said: "It's been an agonizing day for many people. Good, peace-loving men have been forced to take up arms to fight for freedom. Many people who wouldn't have hurt a fly have been pushed too far today. It's a tragic thing when men are forced to choose between tyranny or

fighting. However, what you and the others fought for today is much more far-reaching than any of you realize."

Then looking into the boy's sad and drawn face, he added, "Why don't you go home now; you've done enough for one day."

As an afterthought he added, "I understand that some of the men who fell at Lexington were only wounded. Maybe your uncle is still alive."

When Alex hesitated, he prodded, "Go on home, your mother is no doubt worrying about you."

Alex stood and started toward the road. Then he stopped and looked back at the man who had given him a spark of hope. Unable to say what he really felt, he blurted out, "Thank you, Sir."

The minister responded, "God bless you, young man. And God bless our country."

As Alex trudged toward Lexington, all around him the scent of apple blossoms rose above the powder smoke, and he could hear springtime birds singing.

On that day, April 19, 1775, the British suffered over 273 casualties before they reached Boston. The American casualties were around 80.

The shot heard around the world had been fired. The American Revolution had begun.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This story is based upon historical facts. However, Alex Farmer is a fictitious character.



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the devil wolf

By Paul Stanek

The moonlit night hovered over the valley. New-fallen snow glittered like stars upon the frozen terrain while tall evergreens, crowned majestically in white, stood stately in the hush of the night. Ice crystals winged their way throughout the corridor of the mountains. All was silent—except for the occasional cry of the night stalker.

The man-eating wolf was well known and feared by settlers and Indians alike. The blood-thirsty, she-wolf appeared to have ghostly attributes. It could prey upon victims and vanish silently as a shadow in the night. No one had ever seen the night wolf up close, except for

the chaos and fury left by the savage.

The frontier village was petrified. No one dared to leave the immediate area at night, lest they be confronted by ravaging teeth and claws. Hunting parties were organized to kill the wolf, but with no success.

A bounty of two hundred dollars was placed on the terrorizing animal. Some bounty hunters went out; some never came back again.

Cody Adam's sleep was interrupted by a pounding at the cabin door and a harsh cry in broken English, "Cody!"

Springing from bed to see what was the commotion, Cody jerked open the door. There stood Keya his Indian friend, wrapped in a parka, with gun in hand. The weather-beaten old man stepped in and stood by the fireplace to kill the chill in his bones. His penetrating black eyes, set deep above his sharp protruding cheekbones, stared nonemotionally into the fire.

"Is it time already, Keya?"

"Uh-huh," grunted Keya as he rubbed his frostbitten hands. "Me find trail of devil wolf."

Getting dressed and bidding his family goodbye, Cody with Keya left the warmth and safety of the crude log cabin, not knowing the terrifying adventures that would befall them.

The two hunters picked up the trail some miles from the village, but the snow slowed their rate of travel. The arctic wind rose, cutting through their garments. They could go no further because a great northern blizzard had caught them unprepared.

Taking shelter under the bows of a giant evergreen, Cody and Keya ate some jerky and prepared to wait out the storm. Wrapped in sleeping gear, the two warmed their aching bones from the small fire. The freezing wind blew a white wall of continuous pellets of snow and sleet.

The night seemed unending. But the storm finally subsided during the late morning. Half frozen, Cody awoke from a troubled sleep. There before him stood the bent posture of Keya.

"Horses gone," exclaimed the old warrior. "Evil spirits have taken them."

Cody jumped to his feet, straining his eyes across the horizons. There was no sign of the mounts and supplies. They had been swallowed up. With little food and supplies left, the men faced a greater foe than the wolf. Their sole survival depended on their skills to confront the wilderness.

Making snow shoes out of pine shoots and the canvas of their packs, Cody and Keya searched for food and better shelter. The makeshift shoes sunk deep into the soft snow, sapping strength. No game was seen, that day or the next; their minds were plagued with thoughts of starvation. In desperation they ate the leather portion of the packs for nourishment. But survival seemed hopeless.

On the fourth day, the pair decided to try to retrace their steps back through the great barriers of the snow-laden passes through which they had come. With the torturous grind draining their remaining strength, a new storm forced them back to the old encampment, where they believed would be two unmarked frozen tombs.

The next day the weather changed and so did their luck. Spotting a herd of elk, Cody pulled back the hammer of his weapon, and took careful aim. "Snap, pow!" The elk dropped to the ground. Keya and Cody ran to the fallen game. Excited and high-spirited, the hunters shouted and danced around the elk like a couple of children opening Christmas gifts.

As the men feasted on the God-sent food and rested, they planned a way of escape. After making provisions for the trip and drying strips of meat from the elk, they headed for civilization.

They veered off their original trail and came to an ice-covered river with towering cliffs on both sides. There was no choice but to cross it. So they moved forward softly and cautiously, knowing the potential hazzard. About twenty yards out on the river's surface, Keya cried out, "Devil Wolf!"

The great snow imprint of the wolf's paw was as large as a man's hand. The men grasped their flintlocks in readiness, carefully scanning the area.

A roar sounded as many thunders—the ice began to crumble beneath their feet.

"Run, Keya!" Cody cried. "The ice is breaking up!"

As Cody turned, he saw his comrade swallowed up in the freezing ice. Taking but two steps, Cody felt the ice give way beneath him. Horrified, he plunged deep into what seemed to be a nightmare. Struggling to regain the surface, the frontiersman dropped supplies and rifle. Gasping for air and thrashing about, Cody reached the top, rolling his body onto a sheet of firm ice. Spread-eagled, he slowly crawled to the far shore and safety.

Keya was nowhere to be seen among the floating icebergs in the freezing waters. He was lost.

Cody's body quaked in the wet buckskin clothes. Knowing the danger of wet clothes in such a hostile environment, he hurriedly stripped them off and vigorously beat them against a rock to knock the new-formed ice from the hides. Time was an important factor. Men were known to have frozen to death in a short time. Every minute counted. Cody could feel the fingers of the Arctic cold taking possession of his limbs.

After beating the water from his outfit, Cody clothed himself and began trying to build up body temperature. He jumped and ran until his muscles began to feel the wonderful, delightful warmth return.

Surveying the situation and shocked at the loss of his comrade, Cody knew he

had to push on. The snow was not as deep on the opposite side of the river, making traveling easier. His whole desire was focused on getting back home. Nothing was going to stop him. But his thoughts were jolted once again when he saw imprints of the great timber wolf.

Sensing that he was not the hunter, but the hunted, Adams grasped his knife and looked side to side along the timberline for a sign of the wolf. As he proceeded cautiously, there were movements in the underbrush. He was vulnerable and needed to find better defense.

A small crevass nearby would make a good fortress and line of defense. Slowly, he backpedaled toward the crevass. Positioning himself in a crouch within the crevass, Cody stood ready for the ultimate. There was no way of escape. Only the victor would leave this battleground.

Perspiration ran down Cody's forehead into his eyes. His heart pounded like a locomotive. Gripping the knife firmly in a sweat-filled palm, Cody caught a first glance of his enemy. With lips snarled and teeth razor sharp, the death machine moved in for the kill.

Like a bullet, the man-eater lunged forward with snapping jaws. Cody slashed back wildly with his knife. Pain and blood surged from his left arm as ravaging teeth ripped flesh from him. With one frantic swing of Cody's blade, the attacker gave a high-pitched cry and retreated, slightly wounded.

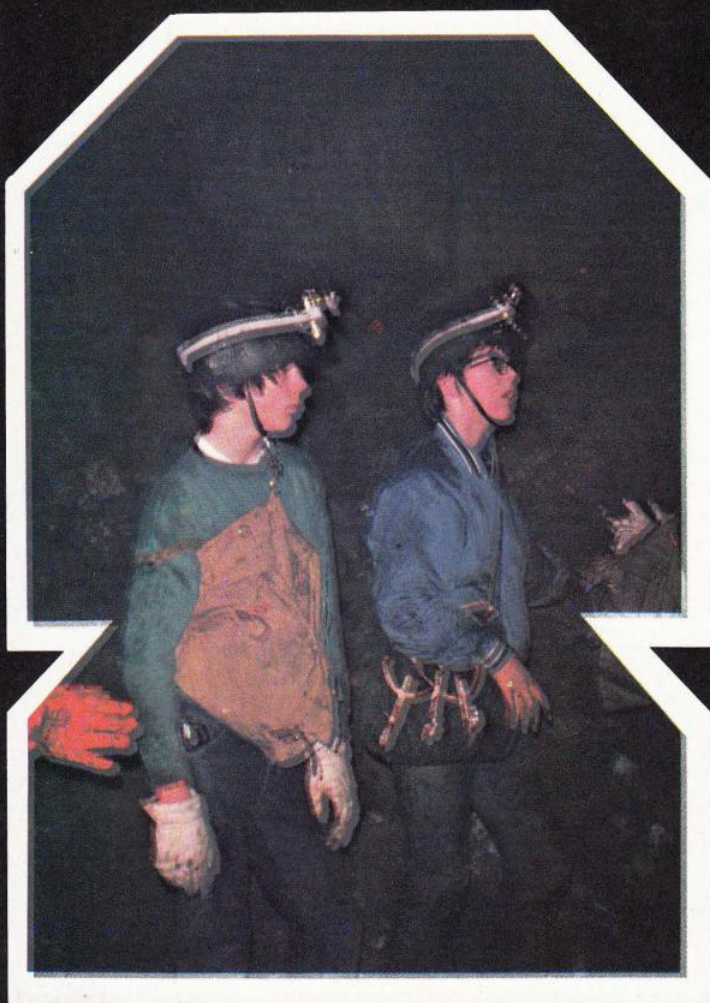
Badly bleeding, Cody placed a temporary compress on his wounds. The pain was unbearable. The thought of the wolf's return was more excruciating. But she would return.

Too weak to withstand another charge, Cody Adams gave up all hope of survival. He braced himself against the wall of stone and waited for the end. The giant wolf's cry echoed through the twilight, as though she were bragging about his forthcoming victory. Then all was silent.

Growls could be heard in the shadows as the devastating creature moved in for the kill. There before Cody, stood his assailant, breathing contempt and death. Too weak to fight anymore, Cody stood ready to accept death. Just as the wolf was ready to lunge, a spine tingling scream came from above Cody. A human-shaped creature flung itself upon the unexpected wolf. Teeth and blade slashed at one another. Yells and howls sounded the war cry. The battle was savage. The death cry sounded, and there in the blood-stained snow lay the night stalker, motionless.

The shadowy creature turned and headed toward Cody. As it stepped out of the shadow, Cody's heart sighed with relief. It was Keya! The men flung themselves on one another, pounding each other's back, thankful to be alive.

For years, thereafter, both Indians and whitemen recounted the legend of the devil wolf; and the exploits of the two brave men who killed her. ★



under-ground adventure

By D. R. Prince

The day began early as the Trailblazers and Trail Rangers of Outpost #72 Montgomery, Ohio, met at the church at 6:30 a.m. Within a few minutes we were loaded and underway.

Just west of Cincinnati we rendezvoused with the Trail Rangers of Outpost #62 Fairfield, Ohio, led by Commander Ralph Lenehan. We exchanged a few words of greeting and were on our way.

Ahead was an outing we all anticipated with great excitement. We were going spelunking; more often called cave exploring. Our convoy was heading for an area known as the Garrison Chapel Karst Area near Bloomington, Indiana. The Karst Area covers approximately two square miles, under which lies nearly thirteen miles of known cave passageway. Our precise destination was Salamander Crystal Cave, which we intended to completely explore.

During several previous weeks of Outpost meetings, we had prepared ourselves thoroughly for the outing. Each Ranger received training in safety, conservation, proper clothing and equipment for spelunking. Each member of the expedition was equipped with a hard hat, three independent light sources, gloves, and boots. Also each person carried his own high protein, quick-energy lunch. Equipment for each patrol included a complete first aid kit, space

blankets, a compass, and an accurate, detailed map of the cave. We were as Royal Rangers should be, "ready" for anything.

We arrived at the Bloomington caving area at about 10:30 a.m., signed in on the guest register, and headed for Salamander cave. By 11:15 a.m. we were ready to enter the cave.

The first patrol was led by Commander Ralph Lenehan with the assistance of Lieutenant Commanders Bill Schneider and Joe Hoyer. The remaining patrol was led by Senior Commander Don Prince, with the help of Commander Paul Hickman.

Each of us seemed to experience a moment of apprehension while entering the blackness of the underground world. But once inside the main passage we marvelled at the size of the rooms and the height of the ceilings.

The scenery, while plainly colored, was beautiful in form. God's handiwork was evident in each stalactite and crystal formation.

The need of being well prepared was reemphasized to us through various experiences. Todd Beaty was thankful that he had had a secondary source of light to rely on when his primary source failed just after entering the cave. Commander Schneider recalls how important it was that we all wore hard hats.

Salamander Cave is, as many caves are, an underground stream passage. We knew from advance investigation, and from our maps, that the first three hundred feet of passageway floods entirely during extremely heavy rains. We weren't concerned at the light sprinkle of rain that was falling that morning, for it had rained much harder than that during our first trip to this cave. And we had had no trouble that day.

The stream was clear and only an inch or so deep when we entered the cave. It was agreed, however, that we would all keep an eye on the stream. If it discolored or began to rise, even slightly, we would turn and head out.

The two patrols met and stopped for devotions after being in the cave about an hour. The devotion was on the fitting subject of the darkness and the light. All lights were extinguished for a few moments. As we experienced true total darkness, it was explained that God sees our world as darkness except for the light that Jesus brought. A single candle was lighted signifying Christ, the light of the world.

Several scriptures were shared and an invitation given. As men and boys came forward and lit their candles, we could see how much greater the light became as more persons received the light. We

were then challenged to let our lights shine and spread the light in a world of darkness. It was a moving and meaningful time as we closed with a few moments of prayer and praise.

We stopped for lunch near the halfway point of the thirty-five-hundred-foot cave. With our primary sources of light turned off to conserve energy, we dined by candlelight.

After lunch the lead patrol started further into the cave. Our patrol, however, lagged behind due to difficulties with Brian Haigh's carbide lamp. Unable to repair the lamp, Brian switched on his secondary light source. We then hit the trail, following the same route as the lead patrol. Our goal was to reach the end of the cave. We had been unable to do so on our previous trip because of time limitations.

We traveled only a short distance when we came upon a waterfall—a column of water, six or seven feet inches in diameter, falling from the ceiling. It was at this point that we met a group on their way out of the cave. Their leader, Mr. Bob Libbin, informed us that the waterfall was a surprise to him. "This spot was bone dry when we came by three hours ago!" he said. He advised us not to remain in the cave much longer.

Hurrying ahead we overtook the lead patrol within a few minutes and discussed the situation. It was wisely decided to start out immediately. We did no sight-seeing on the way out, as we had coming in. We simply followed the creek downstream to make as speedy an exit as possible.

As we walked out we noticed the stream deepening, it seemed, with each step. Entering the final portion of passageway, the stream was muddy and swirling above our boot tops, making it hard to walk.

It was then that we came upon three young men. Sitting on a ledge, they were apparently taking a break. It was obvious they were underequipped, for they had but one flashlight among them. Also their dress was inadequate for caving as they had no hard hats or boots.

Explaining the situation to them, we advised them to follow us out. They agreed that the water had risen and assured us they would be right behind us. Falling in behind our group, they followed us to the very entrance of the cave.

I stood at the point where the stream leaves the cave underground and counted the members of our group as each one crawled out the small entrance tunnel. As the last person went by, I turned to the three others to allow them to go next.

"No," they said, "you go ahead; we'll see you outside." As I turned and left the cave the water was nearly to my knees!

Even though it was raining very heavily outside, we were all thankful to be above ground again smelling the sweet fresh air of the forest. Once outside we turned our attention to climbing the steep, muddy slope back to where we had parked. After drying out and changing clothes, we headed for home.

Not until Monday morning, over thirty-six hours later, did we learn that those three persons had drowned in the cave. We don't know if this tragedy occurred ten minutes or two hours later.

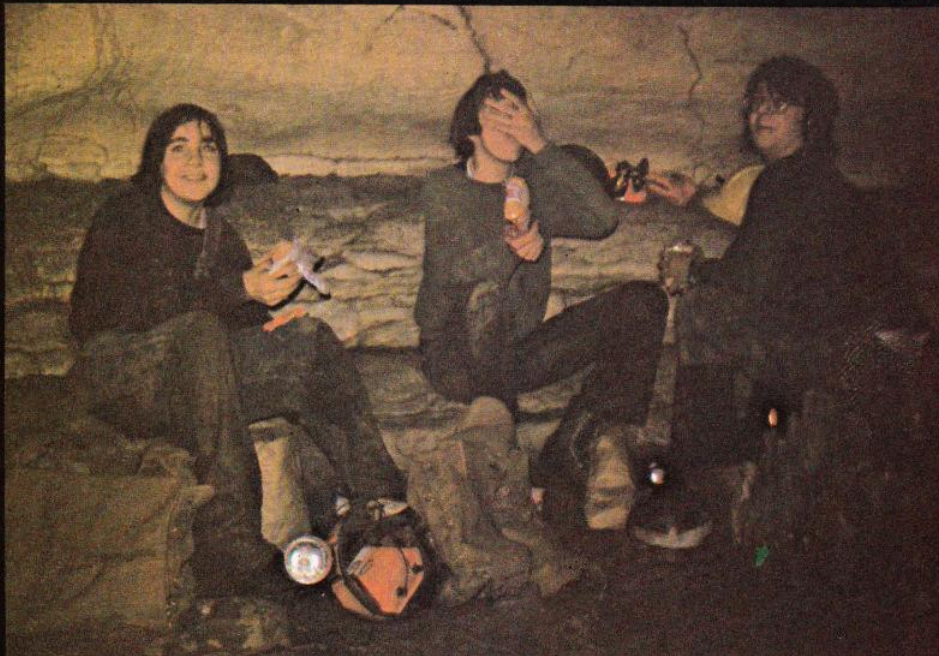
But we know that God delivered us from that cave.

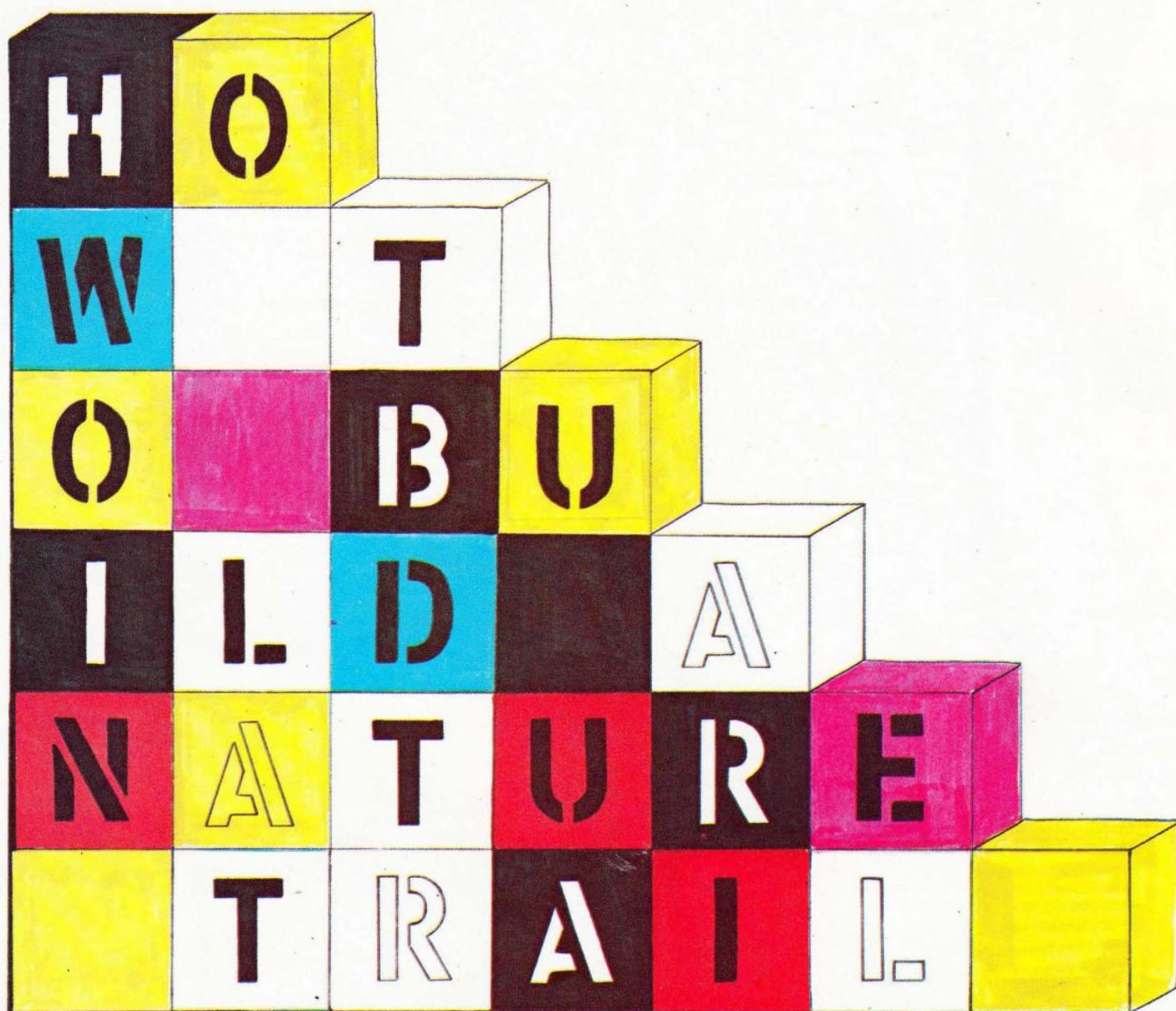
Had we become trapped we would have survived, for we were "ready." We had adequate food, water, and light. The experience would not have been enjoyable, but by retreating to high ground, we would only have had to wait for the waters to recede.

But God chose to deliver us from that situation. Looking back, we can see that if the carbide lamp had not malfunctioned and caused us to delay, we would have been already past the waterfall when we met the group coming out.

Praise the Lord! We met those people at precisely the right time to be warned.

After talking to parents of boys on the trip with us, we have been able to establish that at the exact time we were passing the waterfall, at least four parents were impressed to pray for us.





By Carsten Ahrens

The Lord was the earth's first gardener. Eastward of Eden, according to the Second Chapter of Genesis, He planted a garden. In it he placed Adam, the man he had formed. And one of the first tasks given Adam was to give names to the various forms of life that God had brought into being.

So the Garden of Eden must have been one great nature trail.

Ever since his time, the descendants of Adam have tried to work out an orderly classification of the amazing number of living creatures. It was the fate of Linnaeus, a Swedish botanist (1707-1778), to hit upon a scheme of arrangement that has been generally accepted. So any entity can be classified into kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus, and species.

According to the Old Testament, God spent two days conditioning our planet so that it would support life. Then, on that terrific third day, plants were introduced. Ever since they have been using up carbon dioxide, throwing off life-giving oxygen, providing food and shelter for the animals that were created later, and making of this sphere a more beautiful world.

Like the animals, the number and variety of plant species is truly phenomenal. They range in size from microscopic plants like bacteria and yeasts through lichens, mosses, liverworts, horsetails, ferns, herbs, and on to the trees as spectacular as the giant redwoods that tower 350 feet overhead and are hundreds of years old. Scientists have described more than 300,000 species, just of plants.

It isn't only the heavens that declare the glory of God—every bit of wilderness does!

During my years of teaching biology I have learned that one of the best ways to get people to realize and appreciate their Maker is through knowing and understanding His handiwork. One way of accomplishing this is to get folks to make and use a nature trail.

What is the best age for trail makers? I've helped children as young as sixth graders make such a path—also high schoolers, college students, family groups, even retirees.

Most groups have among their members some enthusiastic person who is right at home with native wildflowers, shrubs, and trees. Such a leader can make a nature trail a veritable path of information and inspiration. A path for all seasons: the thrill of returning spring with the developing of leaf and flower buds; the maturing of fruit, berries, nuts, and seeds during summer; the coloring of

foliage in fall; the recognizing of plants without the flash cards of leaves, flowers, and fruit in winter. Add to this a thousand other events: the return and departure of the migratory birds; activities of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, insects and other invertebrates in their relations with plants; the methods plants employ in the pollination of their flowers, the ways they use to disperse their seeds, the tracks of winter's wild residents in the snow, and on and on.

Even if there is no naturalist in the group, which is unlikely, anyone sincerely interested in plants—and people—can supervise the making of a nature trail.

What is a nature trail? It's simply a path that winds through any natural area, visiting all possible habitats, with the different living things tagged along the way. Since a shrub or tree is earthbound and cannot come to you, it's up to you to go calling on them. Such paths may lead into a forest or desert, follow the shoreline of a lake or ford a creek, crest a hill or cross a swamp.

Once we made a nature trail in a big city through the second growth of a proposed housing project that had been abandoned. True, most of our plants were foreigners (weeds, but even they can be intriguing), but we also found interesting escapees from surrounding gardens. Usually the group or school I worked with didn't own the land over which the trail ultimately wound. We convinced the owner that our project was worthy, and we were granted right of way.

PLANNING THE PATH

Once the use of a wilderness region is obtained, the area should be thoroughly studied. Then a simple map is made of the tract, showing its boundaries and locating any stream, bog, swamp, cliff, and hilltop it possesses. The initials designating (H) high and (L) low spots, (R) rich and (P) poor soils, (S) steep and (F) flat areas, (W) wet and (D) dry places, (NS) north and (SS) south slopes, etc., should be marked on the map.

Next, the meandering line designating the nature trail is drawn to connect these different habitats. Each habitat will be home for certain plants you won't meet elsewhere. A plant that is best fitted to grow in a certain spot is apt to be living there. A water lily is not going to be found on a dry hilltop, nor a common mullein growing in the water.

THE LABELS

Time was when we made our markers from shiny tin cans. With heavy tin shears we cut from the metal containers various sized squares and rectangles, painted them white, and printed our messages on them with pen and India ink. Nowadays securing labels is com-

paratively simple because biological supply houses offer inexpensive plastic tags and ballpoint pens that dispense waterproof ink. The completed tags, neatly labeled, are wired to stakes which are driven into the soil near the plants if they are herbs, or nailed loosely to the trunks of trees and shrubs.

The labels might record (1) the plant's common name or names; (2) the scientific name, if the trail makers want it; (3) some interesting fact that will help fix the plant in one's memory; and (4) whether the plant is native or introduced. It's interesting to discover that hundreds of our most common plants were not here in 1492; they sailed in with the early settlers and did successful colonizing on their own.

THE SCIENTIFIC NAME

There is always a discussion about the name that has been given a plant by some scientist. It is often a jawbreaker—a "binomial" expression (it has two parts). The scientific name, for instance, of the black walnut is *Juglans nigra*, a Latinized arrangement. *Juglans* is the genus of all the walnuts and *nigra* (it means black) is a particular species. Or, *Juglans* points out what closely related group the tree belongs to while *nigra* designates what kind of plant this species is. The butternut is *Juglans cinerea*.

Some plants have many common names; others have been given no common name at all. But every plant bears a scientific name that is used around the world by all biologists.

Over the years, most of my trail makers decide at first to omit this "fancy" name. I never insist, but just suggest they leave room on the tag if later they want to include it. Before the end of summer the space is usually filled.

IDENTIFYING THE PLANT

Years ago when we identified plants, we spent considerable time with plant keys. To be good at it, you had to be somewhat of a detective. Many youngsters and adults find "keying through a plant" is fascinating; many do not. Today any library has dozens of plant guides with the leaves, barks, flowers, and seeds beautifully colored and lifelike. It's easy to identify plants by comparing specimens and picture. Two of the best sets of color illustrated reference books are (1) the small, inexpensive paperback *GOLDEN NATURE GUIDES*, published by the Golden Press of New York, New York; and (2) the larger, more expensive hardback *PETERSON FIELD GUIDES*, published by Houghton Mifflin Co. of Boston, Massachusetts.

Attach the tags unobtrusively, yet where they can be seen by anyone looking for them. They should not give the trail a sloppy, pricetag appearance. Label the same species several times along the path—repetition aids memory. Tag a young tree as well as a mature tree, for often the generation gap is great. A young shagbark hickory, for example, has little resemblance to the old hickory tree.

After the trail is marked out, interesting plants always seem to be found in the area but not along the trail. There is nothing improper with transplanting if you place the newcomer in a habitat similar to the one in which you found it. Move the organism with care, not pulling off any of the delicate hair roots, if possible.

Don't allow anyone to bring in garden plants! Even before your nature trail is well established, some well-meaning person may insist on dressing up the trail with plants he or she will donate. You do some insisting too. Keep the plants native. Texas bluebonnets, California ramblers, English ivy, or Oregon grape are all mighty fine plants, but they have no excuse for being along a trail in, say, the state of New York.

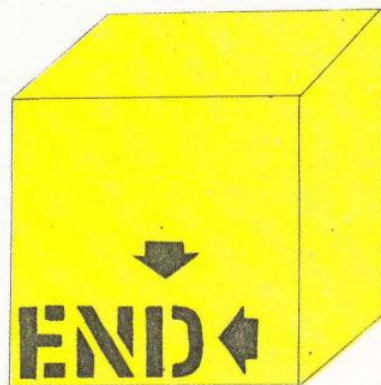
REMEMBER ANIMALS, TOO

With the use of tags and arrows, the trail makers should point out signs of animal activities along the path: a hornet's nest, muskrat lodge or beaver dam, an ant hill, a praying mantis egg case, sapsucker injury to a tree trunk, cecropia cocoon, an oriole or flicker nest, a fox or woodchuck den, tent caterpillar activity, raccoon tracks in mud, etc.

Have each trail maker draw his own map of the path with locations marked for all the species tagged. Reviewing this chart will be a good memory aid. Find someone, perhaps a nature study or biology teacher, to check your labeled plants to make certain all the identifications are correct.

Whenever I follow a good nature trail, as I recently did in the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Park on the Outer Banks of North Carolina, I can't help feeling that God is close by, among the plants He created on that amazing third day.

Happy trail making!



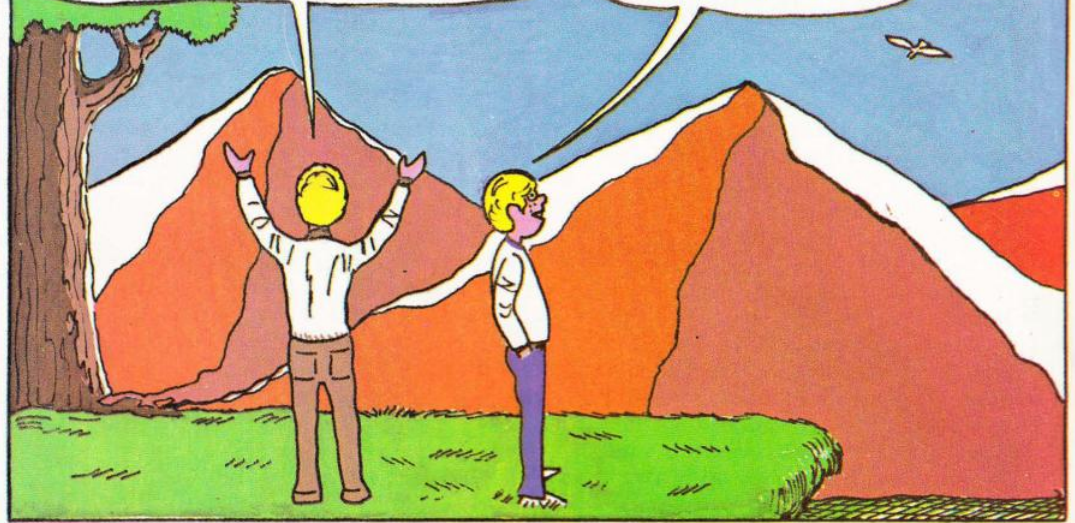
THE TURNER TWINS



"TAD" & "TOM"

ISN'T THIS A BEAUTIFUL VIEW FROM UP HERE, TOM?

YEAH! LET'S SPEND ALL AFTERNOON UP HERE, TAD!



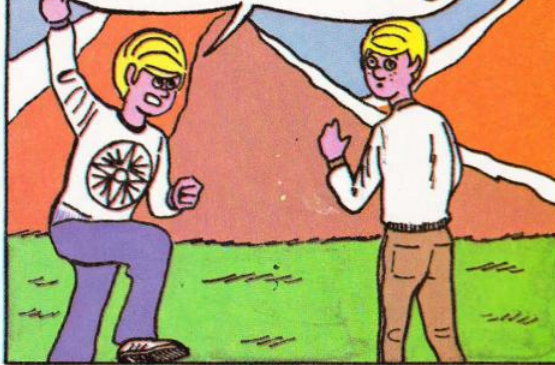
WE CAN'T DO THAT! WE GOTTA HELP THE OTHER GUYS SET UP OUR CAMP!



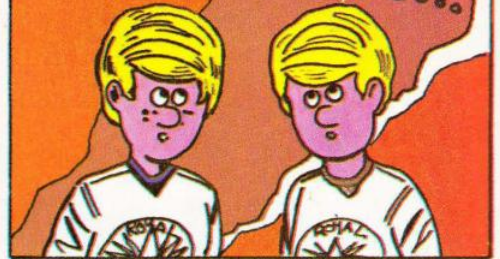
by Ross Punch

WHAT? WORK, WORK, WORK, THAT'S ALL YOU EVER THINK ABOUT, TAD!

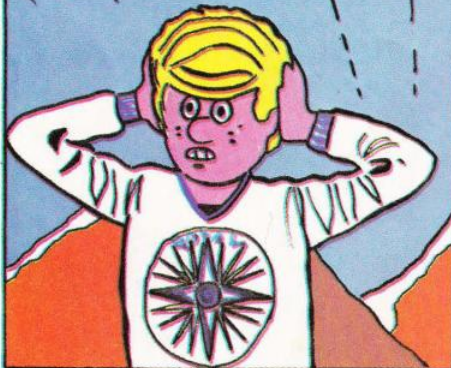
I'M SICK OF WORKING!



I'M SICK OF WORKING...



I'M SICK OF WORKING..



THAT ECHO SURE SHOWED ME JUST HOW I SOUND WHEN I GRIPE AND COMPLAIN, TAD! LET'S GO HELP SET UP THE CAMP!





A little three-year-old boy and his teenage brother were being pushed to the back of the crowded elevator. A kind old lady turned to the teenager and asked, "Aren't you afraid your little brother will get squashed?" "No way," said the teenager. "He bites."

Steve Nollkamper
Sweeney, TX

In Alabama, an old-timer was watching big black clouds gather overhead.

"I don't like to say it," said a man standing next to him, "but those clouds look exactly like some we had back in Texas just before the tornado struck."

"Was it a bad 'un?"

"Bad?" the man exclaimed. "How do you think I got here?"

Warren Bebout
Morro Bay, CA

QUESTION: Did Eve ever have a date with Adam?

ANSWER: No, it was an apple.

Butch Keifer
Port Vue, PA

A small boy in a department store stood at the head of the escalator watching the hand rail.

"Is there anything wrong?" asked the store clerk.

"Nope," answered the boy. "I'm just waiting for my bubble gum to come back."

Warren Bebout
Morro Bay, CA

STRANGER: Young man, would you direct me to the bank?

BOY: I will for a dollar.

STRANGER: A dollar! That's high pay isn't it?

BOY: Sure—but bank directors always get high pay!

Warren Bebout
Morro Bay, CA

MAN IN RESTAURANT: "Are you John Brown of Cleveland, Ohio?"

CLEM: "No, I'm not."

MAN: "Well I am, and that's his coat you're putting on."

Warren Bebout
Morro Bay, CA

SPACEY: The weirdest thing happened to me today.

TRACEY: What was that?

SPACEY: All day long I asked people what time it was, and I always got a different answer!

Warren Bebout
Morro Bay, CA

TEACHER: Eddie, do you want to go to Heaven?

EDDIE: I'd better not, Mom said to come straight home after Sunday School.

Eliezer Viera
Vineland, NJ

A little boy came home from school with a terrible report card for January.

"My goodness," said his mother. "What happened?"

"Oh, nothing special," answered Billy. "You know how it is; things are always marked down after the holidays."

Craig Minor
Longview, WA

BARBER: "Haven't I shaved you before?"

SAILOR: "No, I got that scar in the war."

Warren Bebout
Morro Bay, CA

BYSTANDER: I see you are putting up a new building.

FOREMAN: Yes. This company has a strict policy—we never put up an old one.

Warren Bebout
Morro Bay, CA



YOU REALLY CANT BLAME THE RANGER STEVE...
YOU'VE GOTTEN LOST THREE TIMES THIS YEAR "

the spy

By
Tom
Sanders

We're familiar with most of the major events of the Revolutionary War which shaped the victory for the colonies and birthed a new nation. But history records how the tide of war was changed through what some would call mere chance.

One such fascinating story involves the most famous traitor in United States history, Benedict Arnold.



Major General Arnold was in command of the fort at West Point in 1780. He had served the colonies with distinction until some unfortunate experiences caused him to become disenchanted with the American cause. He began corresponding with the enemy. He had worked out a plan to surrender West Point to the British General, Sir Henry Clinton. This would be a great blow to the Americans.

On the night of September 21, 1780, John Andre, the special messenger for General Clinton, slipped down the Hudson River on a British sloop and joined Arnold on shore to work out the final details of the plot. At dawn the Americans opened fire on the sloop which made a hasty retreat, leaving Andre stranded behind American lines. So he was forced to make his escape overland back to New York.

He disobeyed General Clinton's orders and discarded his British uniform in favor of civilian clothes. If captured, he could be tried as a spy rather than being taken prisoner as a British officer.

In his disguise, Andre had managed to evade the American militiamen and was only a few miles from the British outposts when two men stopped him. Their alertness paid off for in their search of Andre they found in the toe of his boot the papers Arnold had given him. To their surprise they realized they had accosted a British spy.

Unaware that Arnold was part of the plot, an American officer relayed word of the papers to Arnold and he escaped to become a British officer.

By sheer coincidence and the alertness of the militiamen (or was it divine providence), Andre was captured and West Point remained in the hands of the Americans. Had Andre successfully got the message through, the Americans could have been dealt a severe moral defeat. It might even have altered the course of American history.

Who is to say if God arranged for the two men to intercept the spy. It may depend on which side you were on.

But we do know that God in His sovereignty rules in the affairs of nations and men. And who can deny that God has blessed America and kept His hand on us these past two hundred years.

Even more important, God cares for each of us, and wants us to become like His Son, Jesus Christ. Sometimes He uses what we think are small, insignificant things to lead us into a deeper walk with Him.

Spiritual battles are won or lost in the little everyday things we do and say. Make every experience in life count for God; it will determine your eternal destiny. ★