

# High Adventure

A ROYAL RANGERS MAGAZINE FOR BOYS



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*Randy Clute*



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## HIGH ADVENTURE—Volume 7

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# FROM BEYOND THE MOON

by CARSTEN AHRENS

"And last winter," said Commander Hunter sadly, "it blew over in a northeaster, it will supply us with fuel for tonight's council fire."

When they came to the fallen giant, Jim gasped in disbelief. Last summer he, Pete, Art, and Hal had been just able to reach around it, and even at that their fingertips had just touched the tips of the next one's hands.

"There's enough wood here for council fires for years and years," said Commander Hunter. "We'll saw at what was once the top of the tree."

Back and forth, back and forth, Jim and Commander Hunter fell into a rhythm and the teeth of the long cross-cut saw cut through the old yet sturdy wood. Once these branches were so far from the earth they seemed to hold up the sky.

"How have the mighty fallen," quoted Commander Hunter, "The glory hath departed!"

Each time they cut off a four-foot log, they would split it lengthwise, using axe and wedges, and then carry the pieces to the big fire; a big one would blaze tonight.

At noon they ate together in silence. All the other commanders and campers were away on the canoe trip.

But at one time during the afternoon, when the saw was moving smoothly, back and forth, deeper and deeper into a bough, the metal teeth suddenly struck something surely not made of wood—it was something so foreign that the saw seemed to cry out in protest. They stopped, removed the saw, and looked in vain to make out something strange in the dark recess made by the teeth. They decided to saw again, but the blade screamed sharply when Jim pulled on the handle.

"Who'd like to volunteer to help make wood for tonight's council fire?" called Commander Hunter. It was the last big day at camp.

There was an awkward silence among the 48 young Rangers gathered before the mess hall—then,

"I will," called Jim Hill.

"OK, Hill—but you'll miss the canoe trip to Green Island. . . ."

"Yes, sir; I'll be glad to stay and help."

"Very good. See you at the utility shed after breakfast."

Just then the come-and-get-it bell rang and the boys surged into the dining room.

"Really, Jim, why did you have to volunteer?" grumbled Pete, and their tentmates, Hal and Art, nodded in agreement. "On Green Island there's a Civil War fort, and you might have helped us find some relic that would have been tops, then our tent, the Eagle Patrol would be winner. . . ." Hal's arrowhead and Art's fossil puts our camp in tie with two others."

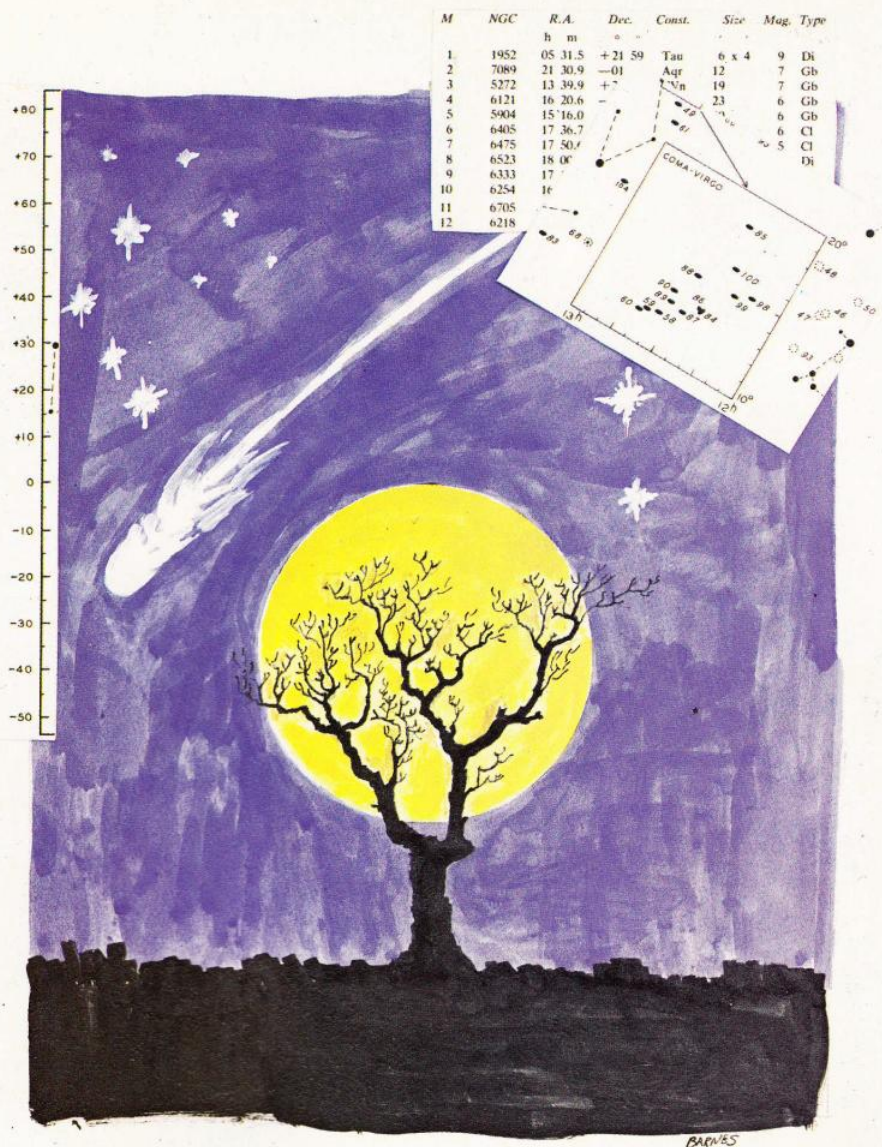
"Well, Commander Hunter needed help—someone had to volunteer. . . ."

After breakfast, the other three went off unhappily, and Jim joined Commander Hunter who was bringing out an axe, wedges, and a two-handled cross-cut saw.

"Do you remember," Commander Hunter asked as they started out, "the giant swamp white oak that stood along the nature trail?"

"Sure, according to its label the tree was estimated to be 350 years old. The label said the tree was already growing when Shakespeare was writing plays in England—that it's older than the United States!"





"When some of them got into the fatal pull of the gravity of our planet, the friction of speeding through a denser atmosphere caused them to burn and glow. We often see them streaking through the night and call them falling or shooting stars. Usually they burn up. This one, probably made up mostly of iron and other elements, didn't burn up. Instead, it struck the crotch of a giant oak, burned itself into the wood, and there it was held until the saw Commander Hunter and I were using discovered it. Since it survived its passage through the atmosphere and reached the earth, it is called a meteorite."

Commander Wood led the applause, then he said, "We're proud of you, Jim, and your Find of the Day is sort of a find of a lifetime. The judges were unanimous in deciding that the Eagle Patrol is the winner in the contest. Congratulations!" (This story is based on a true experience.) ★

# high adven- -ture staff

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"Let's move the saw about a foot down the limb and try again," said Commander Hunter.

They were sawing on the part of the oak where two limbs formed a great crotch. This time the saw ran smoothly. Shortly they had the awkwardly shaped crotch free from the tree.

"We won't try to split that piece," said Commander Hunter. "We'll wait until the rest are back and four of us will carry it as it is to the fire ring. Now we've made plenty of fuel so let's call it a day."

As they were carrying their tools back to camp, Jim asked, "Why weren't we able to finish that cut? What did the saw hit that made it scream as though it had a pain?"

"I don't know," said Commander Hunter. "Sometimes where two limbs grow out and develop at angles like that, the wood seems to grow unusually tough, sort of knotted."

"But," insisted Jim, "that didn't sound like steel striking wood—it was as if steel struck steel!"

They had reached the utility shed.

"May I," asked Jim, "borrow the axe and go back and see if I can find out what made the saw act like that?"

"Aren't you tired? I am. Surely, take the axe and see if you can unravel the mystery."

At the council fire that evening, Art, Pete, and Hal were amazed when Commander Hood, the master of ceremonies, announced that the Find for the Day had been made by Jim Hill, who hadn't gone on the canoe trip, but had volunteered to remain in camp.

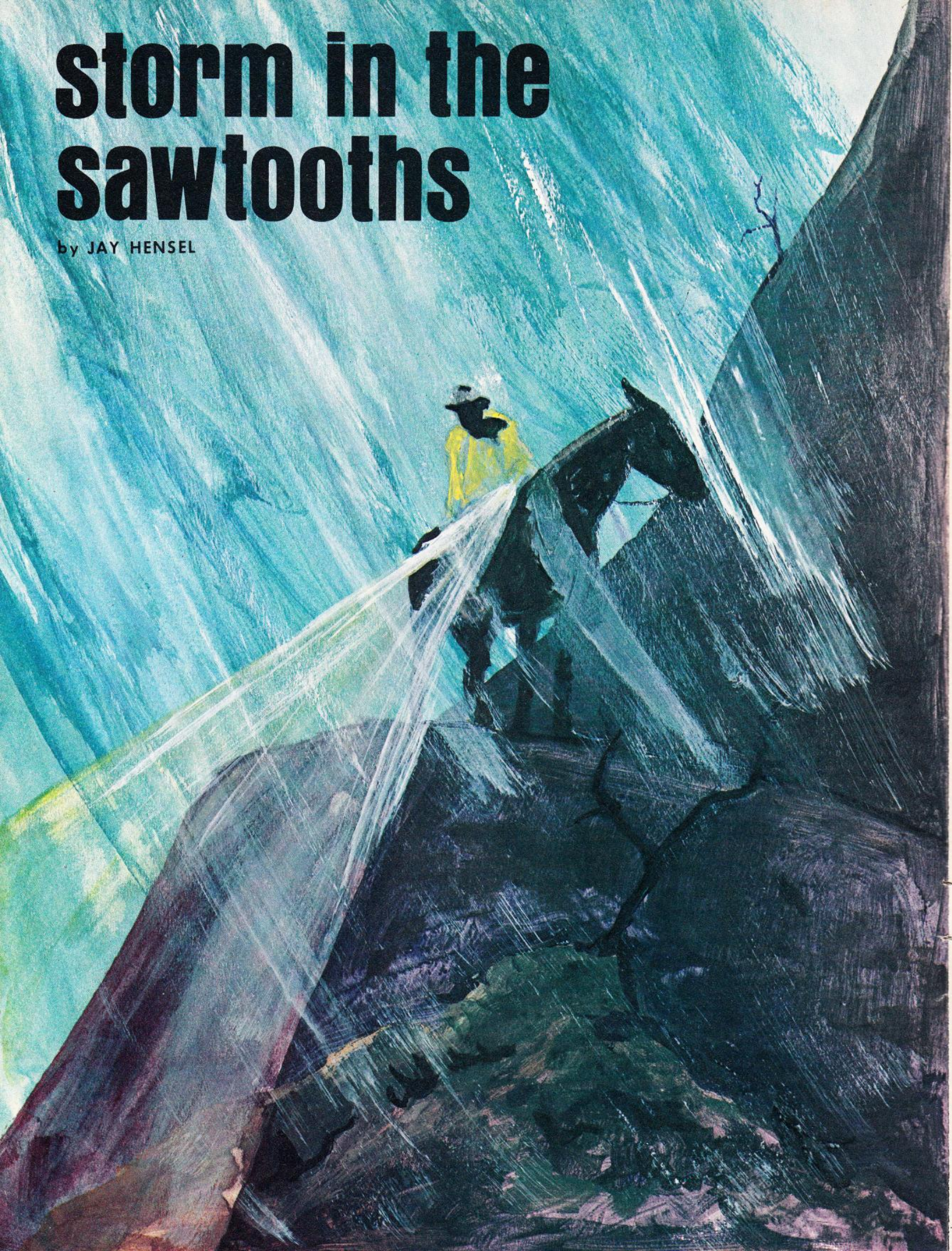
Jim stood in the light of the great fire. In his hand was a dark object about the size of his fist. It seemed black, irregular, and was evidently badly burned.

"Years ago," Jim began, "this campground had a visitor from outer space. For millions of years, it and countless others much like itself had followed an orbit around and around the sun. Maybe it was a part of a tail of a comet. Maybe its orbit took it to the outer limit of the solar system on its apparently endless journey circling the sun.



# storm in the sawtooths

by JAY HENSEL





Storm clouds boiled up against the Sawtooth Mountains as Rob Hunter and his near man-sized boy, Ben, drove the pack animals down the narrow trail from the upper pasture.

Rob crowded the animals past the hitching post, driving them behind the chinked log cabin to the shelters where the horses and mules were kept. Ben stabled the stock while Rob stowed the gear in the tack shed.

"Dad," Ben called, shutting the last gate behind him, "the weather's heading up, and I don't see Shorty's horse in the lean-to."

"Likely the storm's delayed him," Rob raised his voice over the steady patter of increasing rain. "He had to run supplies up to number three line shack. We're taking a party of six upcountry in the morning."

Hunching their shoulders under the chill wind gusting down from the mountain, Rob and Ben drew up the collars of their sheepskin jackets. Holding their Stetsons by the brim, they bent their heads into the pelting rain and headed for the house. Chips of bark and fallen pine needles floated in the rain-filled yard as Ben and his father thudded up the wooden stairs to the back door.

"Whoo-ee!" shouted Rob, over a rumble of thunder, shouldering his way into the kitchen, "She's fixing to bust loose any minute!"

"Tarnation," sputtered the old man standing beside the stove. "Ain't you never noticed that there foot wiping mat a-standing beside the door?" He pointed a long handled wooden spoon in their direction. "Wipe them boots a-fore you come into my kitchen," he growled. "This ain't no stable."

"Anything you say, Jethro," Ben gave a slight bow, holding his dripping Stetson over his heart.

Rob eased his long, rangy frame into a chair while Ben finished washing up. "Hurry up, Son," he grinned, "before Jethro, here, thinks you're slighting his cooking."

"Now, that's a dimwit notion," Jethro sniffed. "The three of you gobble up food faster than I can get it on the table. Come to think of it, ain't Shorty a mite overdue?"

Rob rubbed the back of his neck with a callused hand, looking over to the rain slashed window. "Slack up on your rope, old-timer. Shorty knows that trail like the back of his hand."

"Maybe he do, and maybe he don't," Jethro thumped his plate on the table and drew up a chair. "That storm come over the mountain. She must have hit upcountry hours ago." Jethro leaned forward, pointing a stubby finger at Rob. "Shorty was riding solo with them mules. I just say a man ought to think on it, that's all."

"Maybe Shorty decided to wait out the storm," Ben turned anxious eyes on his father.

"That's not likely, Son," Rob answered slowly. "He knew we needed those mules to make up the pack train in the morning." Rob shoved his plate to one side, hunching his shoulders as he placed his elbows on the table. "This sure makes things difficult," a worried frown crossed his face. "I've got that party of six to take upcountry, come daylight."

"I know that," Jethro snapped, "but you ain't got no choice, Rob. Shorty might be stove up, just waiting on our coming."

"He's right, Dad," Ben put down his fork. "Somebody's got to go, and the way it looks now, that somebody better be me. There's no way you can ride that line and be back by sunup."

Rob laid a work worn hand on Ben's shoulder. "It won't be easy riding, Son. Sure you can make it?"

"Well, I'm kind of planning on it," Ben grinned, rubbing a thumb nervously against his forefinger. "That gelding of mine is skittish in a storm, but if I took your Betsy mare, I think we'd do okay."

"Fair enough," Rob nodded. "She's surefooted and hard to spook. I'll take your gelding with me tomorrow."

A flash of lightning lit the windows as Ben shoved back his chair. Shrugging into his coat, he lifted a slicker from a nail on the door, and rammed his Stetson down over his unruly brown hair.

"Take care, Son," Rob followed Ben to the door. "If there's real trouble, just do the best you can."

"Can't nobody do no more," Jethro's blue eyes were serious beneath his crown of grizzled hair.

Ben leaned into the wind as the door closed behind him. A bone shaking roll of thunder boomed overhead as he reached the tack shed. Saddling Rob's Betsy mare, he eased her out on the path to the Sawtooths.

The rain bucketed down. Ben slouched in the saddle and let the mare take her head. The first thousand feet rose sharply; it was hard traveling. They moved up the mountain slow and steady. From time to time Ben stripped off a glove, and raised two numbed fingers to his mouth to give a piercing whistle.

No answer came through the windswept rain. Periodically, he checked the trail with his flashlight, looking for hoofprints or traces of sliding. There was no sign of Shorty or the mules.

The rain slackened as they rounded the curve to Rytle Creek crossing. Ben shone his light on its racing torrent, then flashed the beam over the boulders on the other side of the creek. The water was running fast and high. Ben's stomach felt tight as he edged Betsy into the stream. The mare hesitated, nickered softly, and began slowly to cross. The boy could feel the horse brace herself

against the rushing water. "Easy, girl," he reassured her, holding himself tense and ready. Suddenly, Betsy lurched in midstream, and fighting for her footing she fell helplessly, rolling over and down. Ben shoved his feet free of the stirrups, and threw himself clear of the saddle before Betsy hit water.

The horse threshed wildly behind him as the raging torrent tumbled him downstream, sweeping his body against the submerged rocks on the bottom of the streambed. He threw his arm up as a jagged branch narrowly missed his head. Ben fought the weight of his clothes, the current, and his rising panic as he struggled toward the bank.

Your eye must have been on me Lord, he breathed dragging himself out of the creek.

Sopping wet and cold to the bone, Ben sat down on a boulder. Hauling off first one boot, and then the other, he poured his footgear free of water. Stamping his feet back into his boots, he wiggled his chilled toes inside his oozing socks, and got set to look for Betsy. If anything's happened to that little mare, Ben thought, I don't know how I'm going to look Dad in the eye.

Ben found Betsy upstream, flanks heaving and head down, beyond the boulders. The boy looked her over carefully. There was a small cut on her rump, but that was all. With a sigh of relief, he swung up into the saddle and rubbed a gloved hand along her neck. He headed her back on the trail and settled down to some serious worrying. There hadn't been a sign of Shorty or the mules.

Ben slid a thumb along the barrel of his flashlight. "You were guaranteed water-tight," he muttered, as he hit the switch, "Don't fail me now." A beam of light shot through the darkness up ahead. Ben's eye caught the blurred outlines of a welter of water-filled hoofprints.

He reined the mare up short and swung down from the saddle. Ben moved cautiously to the edge of the trail where a good piece of the path had crumbled. Shining his light past the broken rim, he saw the edge dropped sharply to end in a narrow ledge. His eyes narrowed as the beam picked up a huddled mass of clothes that could only be the missing packer.

"Shorty," called Ben, afraid Shorty might make a sudden move on the knife-like edge.

There was no answer.

Ben turned back to Betsy, took his rope off the saddle, and anchored the middle of the line around a rim tree near the edge of the trail. Tying one free end tightly around his waist, he tucked the other end into his belt.

Grasping the rope, he backed slowly down the embankment, his boot soles scraping against the rain-slick shale. The rope was wet, too wet, and Ben's numbed hands were slipping. As he felt for the ledge with his left foot, his right





boot, braced against the wall, slipped, and he fell heavily into the shale. The rope swung him sideways out beyond the ledge. Ben felt his grip giving as the line swung back over the shelf. Ben grabbed a root growing out of the wall, and pulled himself to safety. Trembling, he leaned his face into his arm for a moment, then, flattening himself against the side of the mountain, he felt his way to where Shorty lay.

The packer moaned as Ben took the free end of the line from his belt, and slipped it under Shorty's arms. "Don't move," the boy cautioned. "It's me, Ben. Are you hurt bad?"

"I dunno," Shorty mumbled, hunching up so Ben could fasten the rope. "Seems like I just been laying here, fading in, and fading out."

Ben gave the line a final pull. "Shorty, you've got to hold on a while. I'm going back up." Taking hold of the rope tied around his waist, he pulled it taut, and grappled his way up onto the trail, using every rock and root for a toehold.

Ben untied the rope from the rim tree and secured it to the saddle horn. "Okay, Shorty," he called, "we're going to bring you up."

Shorty slid up the embankment like a half-filled sack of grain. Ben knelt and untied him as Shorty fell back groaning against a tree.

"I don't think anything's busted," Shorty said doubtfully, checking himself out. "Guess I musta just hit my head." Ben switched on his flashlight as Shorty brushed a trembling hand over a congealed mass of blood on his forehead. "Don't see that fool horse of mine anywhere, do you?" the packer muttered, leaning his head in his hands.

"No," Ben made a rough bandage with

his bandana, "nor any sign of the pack mules either."

"Dumb quarter horse spooked in a flash of lightning," Shorty's voice was fading. "Naturally, them stupid mules musta followed after."

"Shorty," Ben leaned forward, and gripped the packer under the arms, "you're passing out. Can you hold on till I get a horse under you?" Ben half walked, half carried, Shorty over to Betsy, and boosted him up into the saddle.

Shorty sagged over the pommel as the boy tied him on. Ben started Rob's mare down the mountain with a slap on her rump. Leaving the reins loose, he let Betsy take her head as he trudged alongside of the horse, occasionally balancing Shorty's slumped figure as it swayed in the saddle.

It was still windy and raining, but the storm darkened sky was giving way to patches of midnight blue as the mare traveled steadily down the mountain. Ben figured it must be past two o'clock when he brought Betsy to a halt under an overhand and roused Shorty.

"How's it going?" the boy shoved his Stetson back with a thumb, "Think you can make it or do you want to rest awhile?"

"Let's keep on going," the packer muttered. "I sure hate to face your Pa without them mules. Like as not that quarter horse will be trailing home come morning, but them mules," he said in a discouraged voice, "is stupid."

"It didn't seem like it was the mules, Jethro had himself in a lather about," Ben remarked mildly, "he was practically shoving Dad and me out of the house."

"Oh pshaw," Shorty mumbled sheepishly, "that old man is worse than a

mother hen. Raised a ruckus, did he?" he asked, a pleased grin spreading over his long boned jaw.

The rain was down to a drizzle as they came out from under the overhang. They could hear the water rushing down Rytle Creek before they rounded the bend.

"That water don't sound good," Shorty turned to Ben. "Dunno as we can make that crossing."

"She was a she-bear when I came up," Ben answered, "but she ought to be down by now."

Betsy came to a stop as they neared the crossing. She swung her head down and flicking it up past her shoulder, she nickered sharply.

Ben thumbed on his flashlight and played it over the boulders on this side of the stream.

"Well, do tell," Shorty whistled between his teeth, "some of those boulders look mighty like mules. Maybe, Rob's gonna have a full string in the morning."

"Sure looks that way," the boy grinned, striding over to the huddled pack animals. Ben brought the mules up behind Betsy, and tied the line onto the saddle horn. "Looks like they hightailed it down this far, and the creek stopped them."

"She's running high," the packer eyed the stream doubtfully.

"Not near as bad as when I came up," Ben answered. "I think we can make it."

Betsy mare picked her way nervously across the still swollen crossing. Ben kept a good grip on Shorty's coat as they neared midstream, but Betsy held steady as a rock, whiffing softly as she came out on the opposite shore.

It was good going after Rytle Creek. The trail was dropping fast, and by the time they had descended a few hundred feet the wind was gone and the weather was clear. Moonlight flooded the mountains as silver-edged clouds scudded after the departing storm. They kept on traveling. Ben's feet were numb in his boots, and he was cold to the bone. Shorty sat slumped in the saddle, his shoulders hunched as he swayed against the greying sky.

A breeze whispered through the trees as they started down the steep grade above the pack station. Far below, on the dirt road that climbed past Skeleton Lake, Ben saw two cars crawling up toward the cabin.

"That must be Dad's party of six, Shorty," the boy gave the packer a friendly nudge with his elbow. Looks like we'll beat them in to the station."

A rosy glow trembled across the valley as Ben led the string down past the upper pasture. Dawn light spread with the intensity of rising sound.

"Whoo-ee!" shouted Ben, slapping his Stetson against his thigh. "Great day in the morning, we made it, Shorty! Day's rising. That sun's fixing to bust loose any minute!" ★



# magic in the door



by GROVER BRINKMAN

Recently I stood and watched a carpenter complete the replica of a Colonial door of native woods, securing its construction with pegs instead of nails, in the same manner the original door had been made well over a century before. This door was part of the restoration of an ancient French Creole house. It was beautiful, its paneling so designed that the form of a cross was in outline on both sides. That door held a growing fascination as it took form. When it was hung it held even more.

Anthropologists remind us that the door as we know it today is more than 25,000 years old. Perhaps some cave dweller, tired of protecting his earthly refuge from wild beasts, pushed a slab of stone across his cavern entrance, sealing off the outside world. The first crude door was born.

"I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved," said Jesus (John 10:9). This is but one of many references to the door in the Bible.

In both the history and folklore of countries, the door has always played a significant part, telling the story of man and the progress of civilization. Opening the right door at the right time often means success—or hesitation to open that door might also result in failure.

Down through the ages, doors have been a vital component in every building design, from the domestic home to the skyscraper. They have been constructed of innumerable materials, in all sizes and shapes, from simple animal skins tightly stretched over framing to the magnificent entrances of the Roman Pantheon of the second century. They have been as light as Persian tapestries, as heavy as the immense boulders sealing the Egyptian pyramids.

Symbolically, there has always been the right door, the wrong one.

Religion, justice, government, successful business and homelife have all been affected by the door. Martin Luther nailed his history-making 95 Theses to the church door at Wittenberg, and thus created a new religious upheaval.

The Jewish Passover feast evolved from the "passing over" of the ancient Hebrews' homes by the Angel of Death, their mark of security being the blood of a newly slain lamb, splashed on the door itself.

The American pioneer mother hid her children behind the thick batten door in her isolated log cabin, barring it from the Indian who wanted her scalp. The door has always been a protector of lives.

And by the same token it has been a wall, a barrier to the timid.

The Rothschilds, celebrated European family of bankers, got their name from a red shield on their door at Frankfurt, Germany.


Secret doors have always played a large part in our historic past. Such doors, made to look like part of a wall, saved the life of many a fleeing tyrant, or permitted political refugees safe escape.

In the U.S., the history of doors reflects the vital story of young America. The charm of the simple planked doors of the colonists, stained by the weather, indelibly reflect the crude yet ambitious character of our earliest pioneers.

Now wood is growing so precious that doors are made of steel and aluminum, but they are still symbolic of life itself.

So many things are taken for granted today; press a button, turn a valve. But remember when you push open a door, there is 25,000 years of history behind it! ★





The early morning sun streamed through the large windows of the old two-story white farmhouse. In the kitchen Vince buttered toast and set two plates of bacon and eggs on the table. Then he sat down uncomfortably across from his father, who was brooding as usual over a hot cup of coffee and a copy of the *Chronicle News*.

Today was unusually warm and humid for early May. Wiping the beads of sweat from his forehead, Vince toyed nervously with his food. Right now there was something on his mind that just couldn't wait any longer. He drew a deep breath.

"Dad, I . . . have you got a minute?" he blurted.

Jolted by the sudden boom of his son's voice, Mr. Cramer looked up quickly from his newspaper. He ran his thick fingers through his gray tousled hair and leaned his stocky frame wearily back in his chair.

"Well, what is it?" he asked impatiently.

Vince thought about all the rehearsing he had done earlier in front of his bedroom mirror. The words had come easy then. But now, how could he tell his father that all he wanted to do was talk? Just talk!

Everything had changed since his mother's sudden death of a heart attack three months ago. Before that, they had always been so close. Why couldn't his father see that he missed her, too?

So many times Vince had tried to break the silence; to talk things out like they used to. But the distance between them only grew. And with it grew the gnawing ache of his loneliness.

A frown crossed Mr. Cramer's face. He began to reach for his billfold. "Okay, how much do you need?" he asked.

# TORNADO

by S.M. ST.GERMAIN



"I don't need anything. I mean . . . I don't need any money. I just thought we could talk." Vince felt his cheeks grow hot with embarrassment. This wasn't going to be the way he planned. He tried again.

"It's just that it's so quiet around here all the time since Mom—"

Vince saw the expression on his father's face change abruptly. There was that faraway stare and that hurt look, separating them again. Probably forever this time, Vince thought. He glanced hopelessly at the clock above the stove.

"I better go, Dad," he said awkwardly, swallowing a lump in his throat. "I'll be late for the bus."

There was a long, painful silence. "All right, Son, you run along. I'll clean up the dishes." Then his father added, "I checked the fields yesterday. They're dry enough now for plowing. You can join me on the back 40 after school."

Vince felt his spirits buoy a little. Until recently, it had been shaping up as one of the worst springs in Iowa history. Day after gloomy day the leaden skies erupted, flooding the fertile black earth with a steady downpour of rain. When the last leaky cloud disappeared from the horizon more than a week ago, the fields lay deep in pools of muddy water. But then finally out came the sun and, together with the wind, sucked up the excess moisture like a magnet.

The screen door of the front porch clattered shut. Vince raced across the lawn toward the main road, his shaggy brown hair flapping against the back of his neck. In the distance he could hear the faint hum of the school bus.

All that day Vince felt like a time bomb about to explode. He pictured himself astride his tractor, chugging along the field, his steel plow clawing deep fur-

rows in the rich soil beneath him. Working the other tractor, he imagined his father waiting at the end of the row to greet him.

"How's it going, Son?" he would ask. "Think we can finish this section today?"

"We've done it before," Vince would reply, feeling tingly proud that his father would think to ask for his opinion.

Maybe with a good corn crop they could take a trip somewhere in the fall. Just the two of them. Maybe go fishing. That would be fun. Time. That was all they needed; time to heal their wounds.

"Vince! Vince Cramer! For the last time, what was the turning point of the Civil War?" called Mrs. Fischer.

Vince gulped. He looked around the room at the snickering faces of his classmates.

"Er, I don't know," he stammered, forcing a weak smile.

"Well, if you'd take your head out of the clouds once in a while, you might learn something. I suppose if I were to ask you who the father of our country is you wouldn't know that, either."

"George Washington," he blurted. The class roared. Vince sunk his broad shoulders sheepishly down against the back of his seat.

What did he need to know about the Civil War for anyway, he thought afterwards. Why couldn't she ask him about something he really cared about, like farm tools or fertilizers or corn hybrids? Those were things that mattered to a boy destined to earn his living off the land.

On the way home, the kids on the bus teased him.

"Ask Vince who invented the plow," piped up one boy. "Bet he knows the answer to that."

Vince reddened with anger. "Knock it off," he snapped. Then he sat back to gaze out of his window at the sky.

At home, Vince went upstairs to his room and changed his clothes. The house was warm and stuffy, as though it had been shut up tight all day and the thermostat set at ninety degrees; yet the windows were open. He puzzled at it.

Sliding his hand along the banister, Vince took the winding staircase back down two steps at a time. It groaned and creaked under the sturdy weight of his sixteen years. By the time he reached the machine shed he was panting.

Once in the field, Vince could hear the faint sputter of his father's tractor. Several times he waved at the moving figure, but his father appeared not to notice him. Vince shrugged. Lowering his plow, he felt the first gentle tug of moist earth.

An hour passed. Vince stopped to wipe the sweat from his face. Above him, he noticed that the clouds seemed to move in two directions. High above, gray masses floated from the northwest. Just beneath them, thinner but darker clouds moved from the south. In an instant they clashed, rolling and whirling in a spin as they met. The sun shone dimly in the sky, casting an eerie, yellowish glow across the prairie landscape.

How many times before had he witnessed a similar sky, Vince couldn't remember. Thunderstorms were common enough in the spring. And this year in particular. Still, it was not time to be caught out in the open.

He wondered if his father noticed the fast-gathering storm clouds. If he did, he was choosing to ignore them. The private world of Sid Cramer, Vince thought bitterly. He opened the throttle of his tractor and raced full-speed across the field,





Alongside his father, Vince motioned frantically toward the southwest sky. His father frowned as he scanned the forming cloud mass. His voice was urgent. "Let's hurry home."

On the way back, as they crisscrossed the fields, Vince could hear the sharp crackle of lightning and the faint rumble of thunder. Overhead, dark clouds milled wildly about. The still air reeked of sulphur.

And then, looking back for the first time, Vince saw it, dangling like a thick black rope from the sky—twisting and writhing and hissing toward them.

Tornado! The word froze in his throat.

At the same instant, he was aware that his father had seen it, too, and was shouting as he pointed toward a nearby hollow in the field where they could take cover.

As they leaped from the tractors, a thick cloud of dust whisked past them. Vince ran low to the ground, covering his head with his arms at the sudden onslaught of debris. Stumbling, he fell. He struggled to his knees. Dazed from the effort, a shivering terror began to grip him, squeezing his mind like a vise. Breathing was almost impossible. He was sure death was only moments away.

Another whirlwind of dust snapped him to alertness. His father. Where was his father? Vince groped in the semi-darkness and felt a torn shirt sleeve. "Dad! Dad!" he gasped. There was no response. He called again. Still no response. Finally he heard a low groan and in a split instant knew he would have to act fast. Grasping the limp arms, Vince tugged and pulled with all the strength he possessed.

One moment the funnel swayed from side to side, then darted ahead. Sometimes it simply bounced up and down, spitting out stones and clumps of dirt. Once, like a jackhammer, it stopped to bore a hole in the field before moving on. Roaring like a thousand freight trains,

the twister was approaching ever nearer.

Straining and groaning, Vince drew his father closer and closer to the hole.

The wind, which at first came in gusts, now blew more steadily. Shaking his head, Vince tried to ease the painful popping sensation in his ears, caused by the sudden drop in air pressure around him.

Dark clouds rushed across the sky above him in all directions at once, as if lost and confused. Riding on the screeching wind, huge raindrops blew past him, some smashing with a sting against his cheeks. A cluster of trees, bordering the field was uprooted and tossed about as if they were only matchsticks. Then, as a chill crept up his body, Vince watched the funnel veer toward the tractors. Picking up one of them it dashed it into the other and sailed the two of them high into the air before dropping them in a crumpled heap.

Trembling, weak with fear, Vince felt the grip on his father begin to loosen. Straining his muscles, he squeezed tighter. Just a few more feet, he told himself. Summoning his last ounce of strength, Vince crawled down into the hollow, braced himself against one bank, and in a final surge pulled his father over the edge. Just then, he felt something flying hit him with a thud. The throbbing pain in his head brought a dull redness that grew in intensity. It blazed for an instant and then he was lost in the blackness of unconsciousness.

A pair of thick arms reached out to grasp him, cradling his head gently against the torrent of the rain beating down on them. Vince stirred. He blinked his eyes, focusing at last on the image above him.

He tried to speak, but at first only managed to cough up a mouthful of dirt that tasted of blood. He began to shiver, then shake uncontrollably. Slipping off his

own drenched shirt, his father quickly squeezed out the excess water and draped it carefully around Vince's huddled shoulders.

"It's all over now," his father soothed. "We'll be all right. That was a pretty brave thing you did out there for me. I'm afraid it wasn't deserved. To think it took this to make me see the light—I've been so blind." His voice quavered for a moment, then he added softly, but once again firmly in control, "I need you, Son."

A warm glow filled Vince's body. The rain began to let up. Gradually, he stopped shaking.

"But you were... how did you know?"

"I only know that I didn't get here by myself. And I'd hate to think where I might be now if it hadn't been for you. Must have blacked out almost as soon as I hit the ground. I don't remember anything after that."

Vince gazed intently at his father. He had never seen him look so concerned. Suddenly all his pain seemed to melt away. He felt a smile surface, widening into a grin. His father grinned back.

"Come on, Son. Let's go home. We've got to pay a call on Doc Holton. He'll have that cut on your forehead fixed up in no time at all."

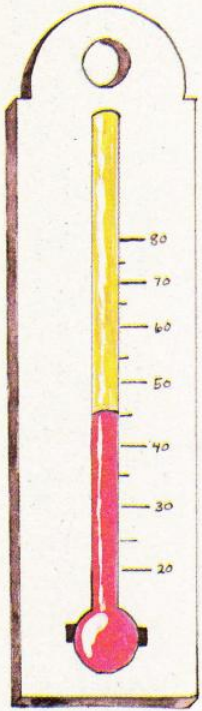
Rising slowly to his feet, Vince grasped his father's outstretched hand and climbed from the muddy hollow. Together they walked in the rain, side-stepping hunks of metal, trees, and other debris that lay scattered about the field. At last he saw the dim outline of the barn, and then the house, both still standing. Relief flooded through him.

So much had happened so fast he thought, glancing first at his father and then around him. Soon there would be work to do; but they were both still alive. And right now, that was all that mattered.★



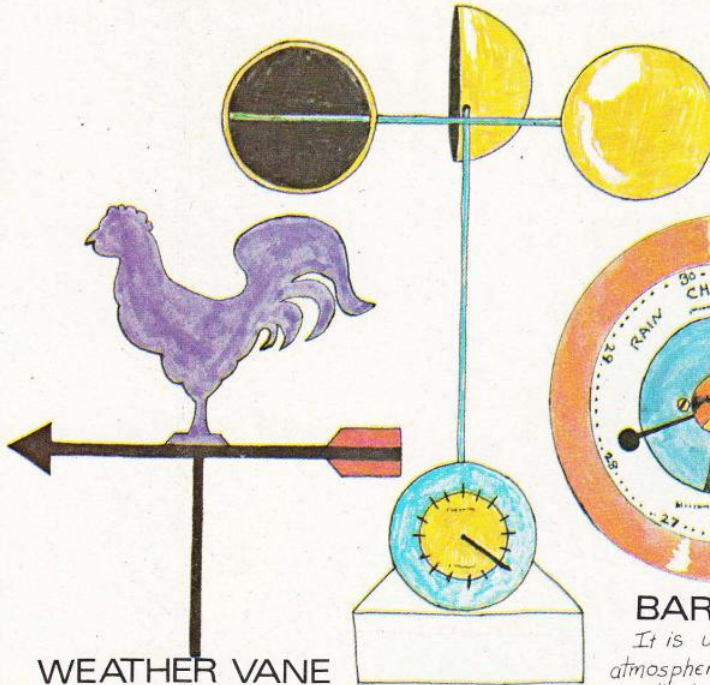


# WEATHER INSTRUMENTS:



**THERMOMETER**

Shows the temperature of the air in degrees. When mercury in the bulb at the bottom of the thermometer becomes hot, it expands and rises up the glass tube.



**WEATHER VANE**

Shows direction of wind.

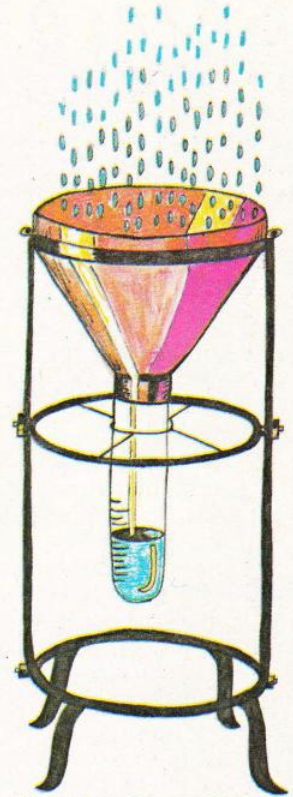
**ANEMOMETER**

The cups catch the wind and spin. The dial records the speed of the cups.



**BAROMETER**

It is used to measure atmosphere pressure. A needle is connected to an airless metal box.



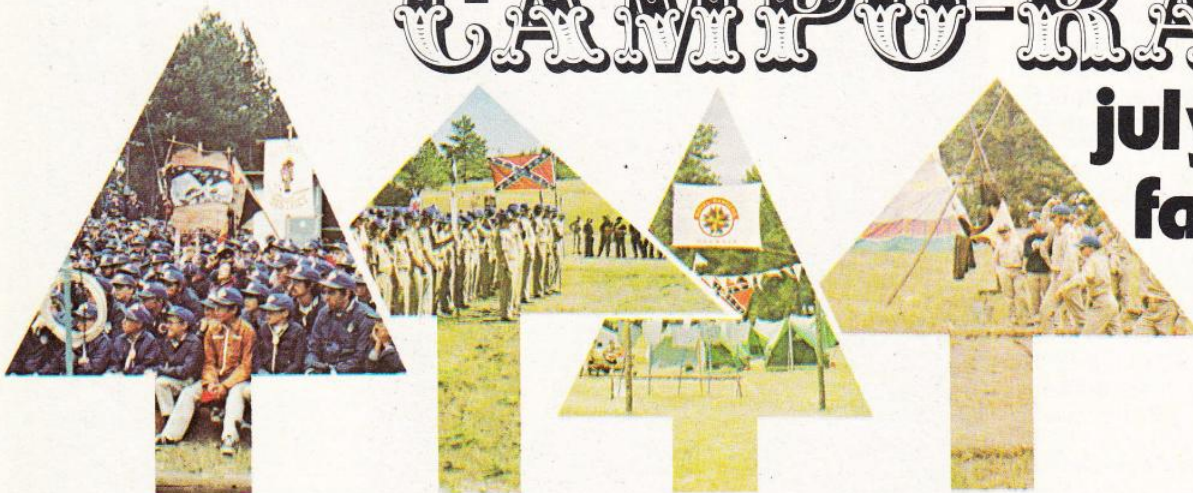
**RAIN GAUGE**

It measures the amount of rainfall. A wide opening catches the rain and funnels it into a narrow tube.

**if you thought the last campo-rama was exciting...**

**1978 NATIONAL CAMPO-RAMA**

**july 25-27  
farragut,  
idaho**



**...wait till you see this one**



by O. J. Robertson

"If I stay in the shadows, maybe no one will see me," Kit said. He ducked into the bushes and headed downriver. "It's a good thing that darkness isn't very far away."

He had walked only a couple of miles when his keen ears caught sounds behind him. He stopped. He heard the sounds again—a light rustle in the leaves. It was footsteps, not one man, or two; but at least three or four. He was being trailed!

"Those crafty Utes!" Kit whispered. "After some of their warriors got killed at Fort Bent, they'd probably take a man's scalp in a minute."

Kit knew he must think of some way to outwit the Indians. He was too tired to run. And if he did run, the Indians would know he had discovered them. He didn't have much powder, and besides, what good would it do if you couldn't see your target?

Slowly he began to increase his pace. He knew the wild Colorado hill country better than the Indians who lived eastward on the plains. With a streak of luck, he might leave them in the forest.

The woods grew darker. Kit, walking along with his mind fully occupied, didn't see the big log stretching before him. He stumbled and sprawled over it. As soon as he hit the ground he felt a sharp pain shoot up from his right foot. His foot had caught under the log and twisted sideways as he lost his balance.

"Some time to get a sprain," Kit grunted. He got up, but it took effort. When he set his right foot down, he knew he couldn't make it much farther with the Indians on his trail.

Angry at himself, and at the situation he was in, he kicked at the log with his left foot.

"I'd like to choke whoever cut this tree and left it here to rot!" he snapped.

The log sounded hollow from Kit's kick. He dropped down on his knees and examined it. A long wooden tunnel—long enough for him to crawl into and hide—stretched before him.

There was a chance the Indians might not find him. And then they might! But he had to have refuge in a hurry! So he lay down and eased himself into the log, pushing his rifle along ahead of him.

The log was roomy enough. But it was damp and rotten and showers of decaying wood scraped off on Kit's clothes. He felt the soft wood going down his neck. He knew it was sticking to his sweaty buckskin breeches and jacket.

It was late in the evening. The last beaver trap on the upper Timpas River was set, and Kit Carson was ready to return to his camp twenty miles downstream.

# fire man and the indians





He was tired from walking. His moccasined feet ached. And to add to his discomfort, he'd seen Indian signs along the way: a covered campfire in the hills, a few tracks down by the river's edge.

"A company of Utes out looking for deer," Kit thought. He hoped they were not part of the gang which had attacked Fort Bent last month. Those Indians had been hard to handle! It surely would be unpleasant meeting them alone.

"Guess I should thank whoever cut down this giant tree instead of choking him," he said. "If those Utes don't find me, I might just sleep here all night."

The Utes must have been expecting trickery. When they came to the fallen log, they stopped. Kit could hear their excited voices.

"Well, this could be the end of Christopher Carson!" Kit breathed.

The Indians examined the end of the log. When they saw that the moss and leaves had been disturbed, they chattered loudly in broken English.

"White man in log! He no escape now!"

Kit started inching himself out of his hideaway. If he surrendered peacefully, the Utes might not harm him. There was a chance they might even trade him for some of the Indians captured at Fort Bent.

As he backed out, more rotten wood rained down upon him. He felt it clinging to his hair, even sticking into his beard.

Finally, he was out. With a painful effort he rose to his feet. In the dimness he saw three forms standing before him like statues.

He expected the Indians to grab him and bind him hand and foot.

Kit was really surprised at what the Indians did.

All three Indians began to step back—to retreat!

Then one Indian shouted. "A fire spirit!" Quickly he dashed into the darkness.

"Fire Spirit!" the two others repeated. They wheeled and ran after their frightened companion.

"Whatever got into those savages!" Kit muttered.

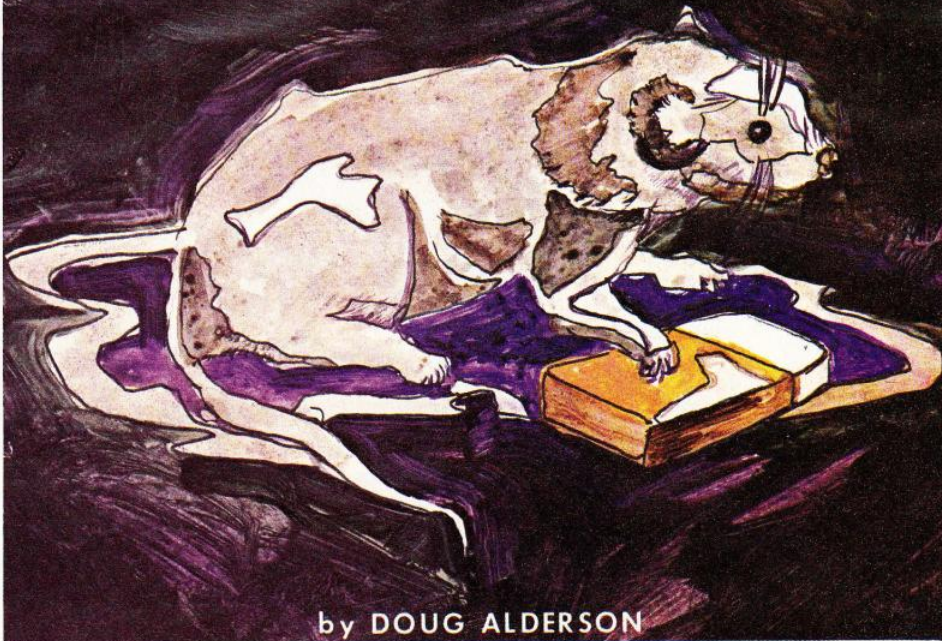
He raised a hand to brush his hot brow. He saw that his arm glowed with a soft light. He looked down. His whole body was glowing as if it were on fire! "Foxfire," Kit laughed happily.

The rotting wood inside the log was foxfire, and it was all over Kit. On his clothes, in his hair, even on his face. He shed a dim light that made the bushes close by visible.

"Well, that's one way to get rid of Utes!" Kit chuckled happily. "Give them a scare and superstitious Indians just won't hang around at all!"

\*Foxfire is a type of phosphate that appears on rotting wood.★

# beastly trail tales



by DOUG ALDERSON

While I was hiking the entire Appalachian Trail last summer and fall, I heard and started many humorous stories about experiences that happened to myself and fellow hikers I met along the trail. Encounters with the various animals in each state formed most of the funny tales told along the 2045-mile footpath running from Maine to Georgia. Most of the true stories—although exaggerated at times—were about hilarious encounters with bears, deer, rabbits, rats, and mice.

Bear adventures are the favorite stories experienced hikers spread. They love to tell bear tales to novice backpackers on their first hike, whose eyes would grow wide and mouths drop open in utter astonishment. I began to hear the tales when I first started out in Maine. A hiker I met told me he woke up one night with a big black bear licking on his face. "I screamed louder than I ever did in my life," he said, staring into space as if remembering the shocking experience, "And the bear ran away in fright." My partner in Shenandoah National Park in Virginia, found a bear ripping apart his backpack in search of food. When the bear bit into a tube of Ben-Gay lotion he ran away.

Perhaps the funniest experience I ever had was with a pack rat at Mosby Shelter in Virginia, (one of over 300 three-sided cabins along the trail). I was sleeping in the lean-to when I woke up to find a big rat chewing on my hair. He proceeded to steal my lighter which lay next to me and scurried off. Five minutes later he re-

turned with a thermometer in his mouth and he dropped it at the same spot where the lighter was. I found out later that this creature was a pack rat by the name of Herman, who had been ripping off hikers for years. When a friend of mine caught up with me, he said Herman stole his \$100 watch and brought him a piece of orange yarn. I think I got the better deal.

Looking straight into the eyes of a big buck deer two feet away isn't the most pleasant experience; especially when I had just opened my eyes first thing in the morning. I was sleeping under the stars in Shenandoah Park when I had my face-to-face encounter with the 12-point buck. As I lay there helpless in my mummy sleeping bag, my heart pounding as if it would break out of my chest and run away, I hoped the deer didn't want to seek revenge against hunters. After nodding his head once, he slowly strutted away.

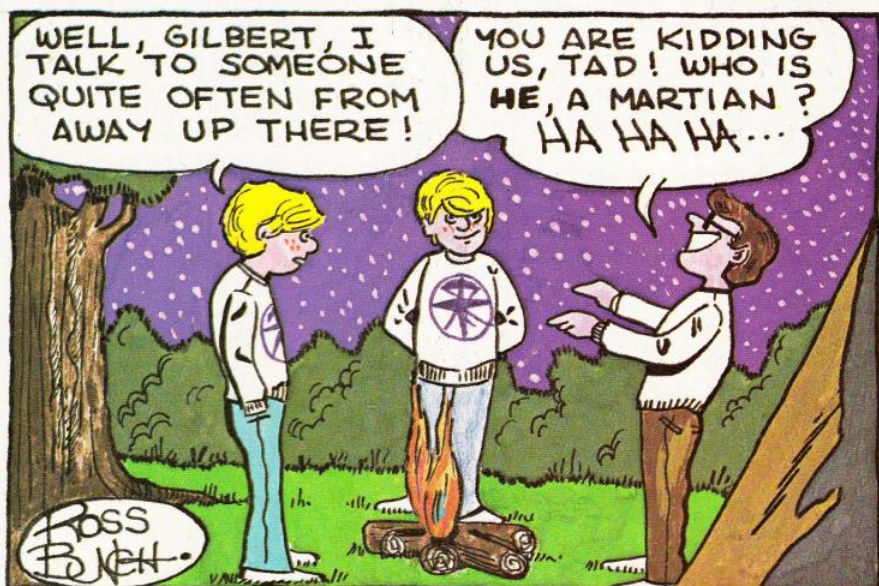
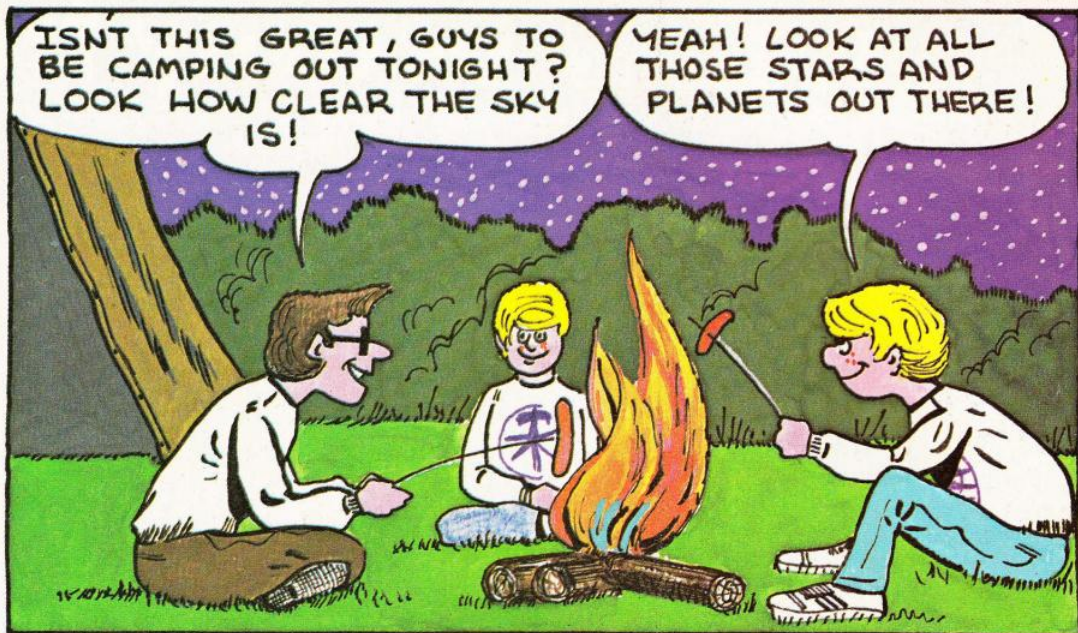
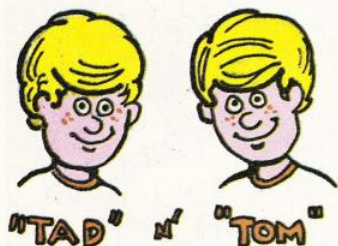
Thank heavens! They are ugly close-up and his bad breath and body odor nearly suffocated me.

Once, while resting in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, I felt something tickle my foot. When I looked down, I found a big rabbit nibbling on my sock—while I was still wearing it! I guess after hiking for a long time in the wilderness, the animals felt close to me. I even found a mouse sleeping in my hand one night.

These encounters of animals with hikers provide some of the most hilarious stories ever told on the Appalachian Trail.★



# THE TURNER TWINS







"I DON'T LIKE THE WAY OUR VACATION IS STARTING OUT!"

**Commander:** What does it mean when the barometer starts falling?  
**Small Ranger:** I guess it means that whoever nailed it up didn't do a good job.

A farmer on his first visit to the city was fascinated by the asphalt streets. Scraping his feet on the hard surface, he remarked "Can't blame 'em for buildin' a town here. The grounds too hard to plow anyhow."

—Craig Minor  
 Longview, WA

**Commander** (instructing his Trailblazers in the woods): "Remember, boys, if you should get lost at night, get your bearings from the sky. A glow in the sky indicates the nearest shopping center."

—Warren Bebout  
 San Luis Obispo, CA



# puzzler

by Evelyn Mitsch

Hidden in the squares of the puzzle are the letters for "fun ways" the Fourth of July will be celebrated. There will be parades with drums and flag waving, picnics, fireworks, sparklers to light and cap guns.

Near the center of the puzzle are four shaded letters that spell the word "flag." Using that as an example, find the letters for the words listed below.

You may move to the left, to the right, up or down, but not corner to corner. The same letter may be used for more than one word. With a colored pencil, lightly fill in the squares as you find the letters. You will have solved the puzzle when you find all of the words and every square is colored.

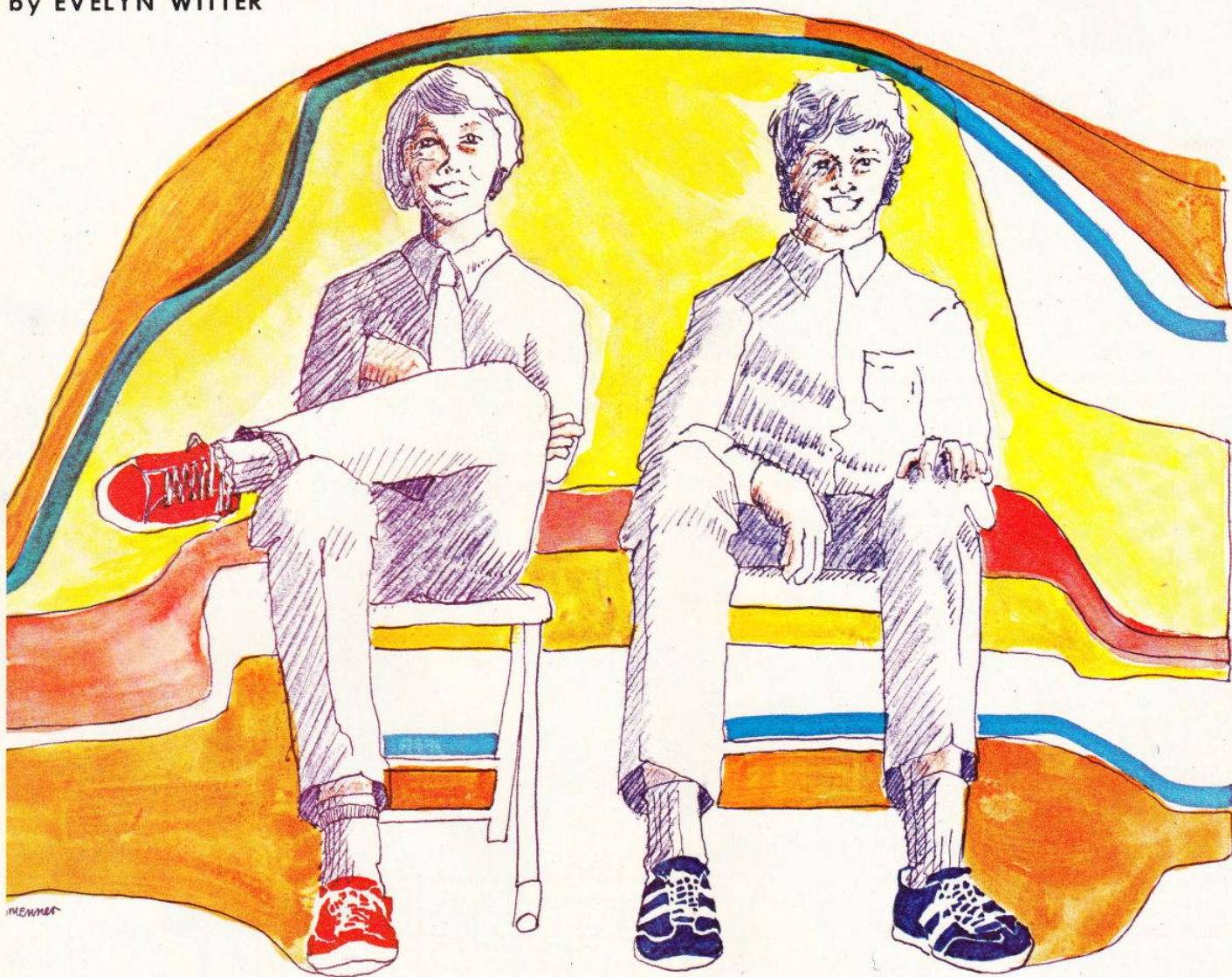
Skyrocket  
 Parade  
 Firecracker  
 Match  
 Roman candle  
 Punk  
 Bands  
 Picnic  
 Cap  
 Sparkler  
 Flare  
 Flag  
 Guns  
 Cherry bombs





# I DO BELONG

by EVELYN WITTER



It was the first time that Tom, age ten, had ever been to camp. And what was so remarkable about it all was that no one at camp knew that Tom was a "charity case." A local group near Tom's hometown who were youth-minded had paid his camp fee.

And this was also the first time in Tom's life that he had ever enjoyed equal advantages with other boys. Now he, too, was enjoying fun things like swimming, boating, hikes, campfire sings, carefree laughter, and new friendships!

Everything went happily for Tom until Sunday morning. On this morning, all the boys dressed in their best for chapel. Tom's best was passable except for his shoes. He had no shoes, other than the dirty tennis shoes he'd worn for camp activities.

As the boys filed into the chapel, Tom hung his head. He just couldn't seem to be able to raise his eyes above the offending tennis shoes. The same old feeling of being out of place was with him as it had always been.

He told himself, as he had always told himself: "I really don't belong."

But another boy, handsome, wealthy Bill Davidson, of happy moods and ready laughs, had his eyes on the tennis shoes too. He studied Tom's dejected pose in a few seconds of heartfelt observation.

Then Bill slipped out of the chapel unnoticed. In a very short time he returned, wearing his own tennis shoes. As the first chords of the hymn sounded, he found a seat near Tom, whose whole attention was taken up with trying to keep his feet out of sight.

Bill crossed his legs naturally and waited for the worship service to begin.

Finally Tom looked Bill's way. He saw the old tennis shoes immediately. And since Bill was Tom's "epitome of perfection," the shoes Bill was wearing to chapel were the most important things in Tom's life at the moment.

As Tom stared at Bill's tennis shoes, the happy smile he had learned to smile this week returned once more. He was thinking: "If Bill Davidson is wearing tennis shoes to chapel, it must be right to wear them! Why I'm not different from the others. I DO belong with these boys!"

Strangely enough, the text for that Sunday morning was: "All things whatsoever ye would that man should do to you, do ye even so to them." (Matthew 7:12) ★