

TOM SLADE WITH THE COLORS

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Tom Slade with the colors by Percy K. Fitzhugh

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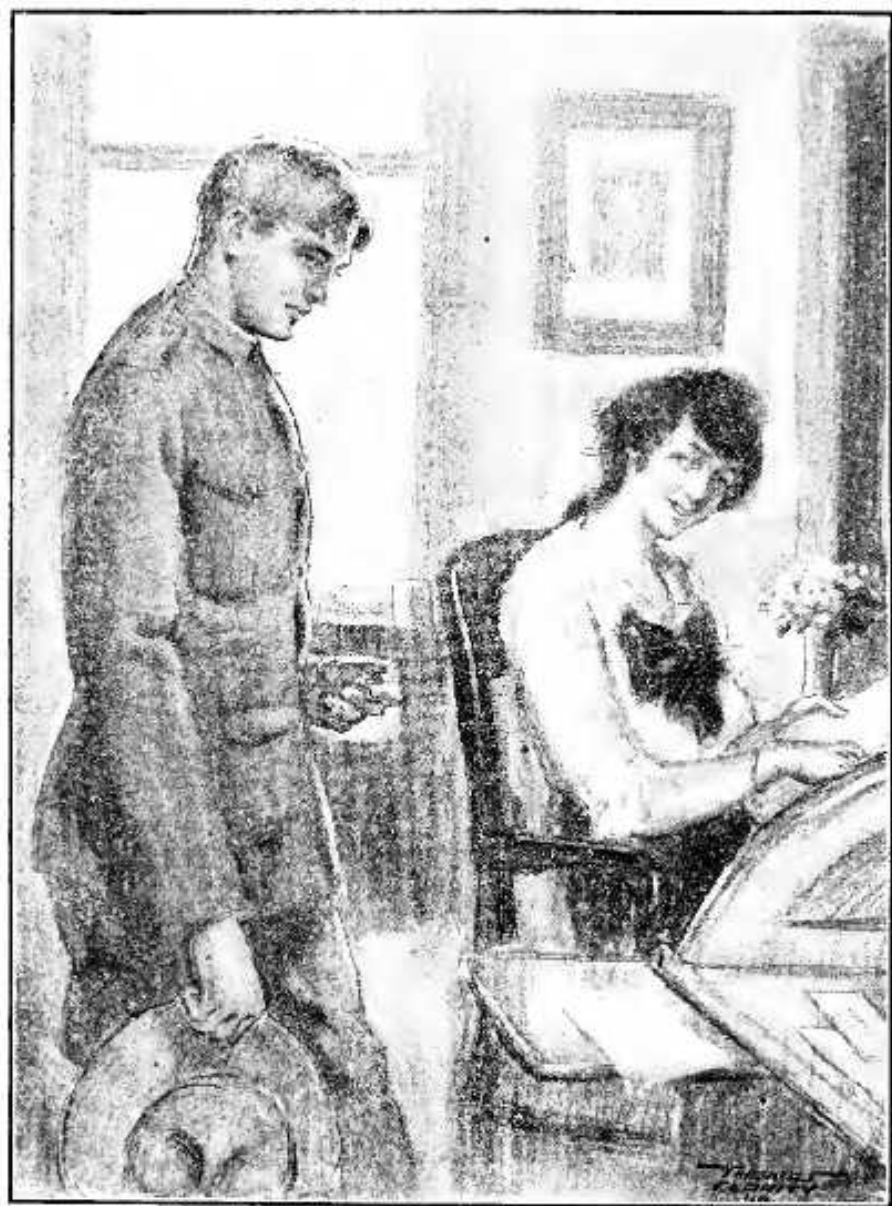
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PERCY K. FITZHUGH

**TOM SLADE WITH
THE COLORS**



MISS ELLISON GREETED TOM WITH A MYSTERIOUS SMILE.

TOM SLADE WITH THE COLORS

BY
PERCY K. FITZHUGH

AUTHOR OF
TOM SLADE, BOY SCOUT
TOM SLADE AT TEMPLE CAMP
TOM SLADE ON THE RIVER

ILLUSTRATED BY
THOMAS CLARITY

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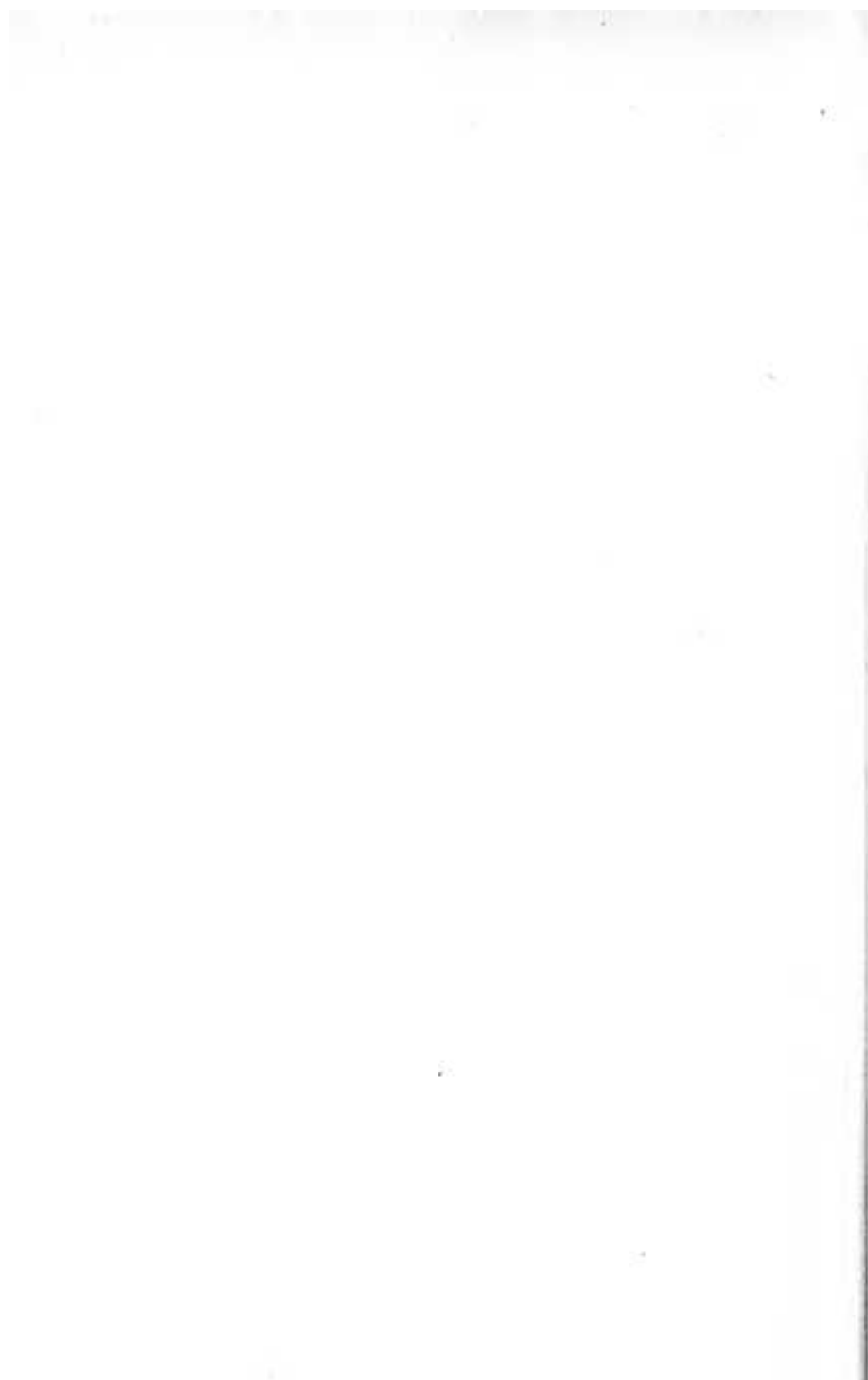


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TOM SLADE WITH THE COLORS

CHAPTER I

TOM MAKES A PROMISE

TOM SLADE hoisted up his trousers, tightened his belt, and lounged against the railing outside the troop room, listening dutifully but rather sullenly to his scoutmaster.

"All I want you to do, Tom," said Mr. Ellsworth, "is to have a little patience—just a little patience."

"A little tiny one—about as big as Pee-wee," added Roy.

"A little bigger than that, I'm afraid," laughed Mr. Ellsworth, glancing at Pee-wee, who was adjusting his belt axe preparatory to beginning his perilous journey homeward through the wilds of Main Street.

"Just a little patience," repeated the scoutmaster, rapping Tom pleasantly on the shoulder.

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"Don't be like the day nursery," put in Roy. "All their trouble is caused by having very little *patients*."

"Very bright," said Mr. Ellsworth.

"Eighteen candle power," retorted Roy. "I ought to have ground glass to dim the glare, hey?"

The special scout meeting, called to make final preparations for the momentous morrow, had just closed; the other scouts had gone off to their several homes, and these three—Tom Slade, Roy Blakeley and Walter Harris (alias Pee-wee)—were lingering on the sidewalk outside the troop room for a few parting words with "our beloved scoutmaster," as Roy facetiously called Mr. Ellsworth.

As they talked, the light in the windows disappeared, for "Dinky," the church sexton, was in a hurry to get around to Matty's stationery store to complete his humdrum but patriotic duty of throwing up a wooden railing to keep the throng in line in the morning.

"The screw driver is mightier than the sword, hey, Dink?" called the irrepressible Roy, as Dinky hurried away into the darkness.

"All I wanted to say, Tom," said Mr. Ells-