

**THE BOY SCOUTS IN THE
BLUE RIDGE:
OR MAROONED AMONG
THE MOONSHINERS**

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The Boy Scouts In the Blue Ridge

OR

Marooned Among the Moonshiners

By HERBERT CARTER

Author of "The Boy Scouts First Camp Fire," "The Boy Scouts On the Trail," "The Boy Scouts In the Maine Woods," "The Boy Scouts Through the Big Timber," "The Boy Scouts In the Rockies"



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THE BOY SCOUTS IN THE BLUE RIDGE

CHAPTER I.

THE HIKE THROUGH THE SMOKY RANGE.

"DID anybody happen to see my knapsack around?"

"Why, you had it just a few minutes ago, Step Hen!"

"I know that, Bumpus; and I'd take my affidavit I laid it down on this rock."

"Well, don't whine so about a little thing like that, Step Hen; it ain't there now, and that's a fact."

"Somebody's gone and sneaked it on me, that's what. I'm the unluckiest feller in the whole bunch, for havin' queer things happen to him. Just can't lay a single thing I've got down anywhere, but what it disappears in the most *remarkable* way you ever heard of, and bobs up somewhere else! I must be haunted, I'm beginnin' to believe. Do *you* know anything about my knapsack, Giraffe?"

"Never touched your old grub sack, Step Hen;

so don't you dare accuse me of playing a trick on you. Sure you didn't hang it up somewhere; I've known you to do some funny stunts that way;" and the tall boy called "Giraffe" by his mates, stretched his long neck in a most ridiculous manner, as he looked all around.

Eight boys were on a hike through the mountains of North Carolina. From the fact that they were all dressed in neat khaki uniforms it was evident that they must belong to some Boy Scout troop; and were off on a little excursion. This was exactly the truth; and they had come a long distance by rail before striking their present wild surroundings.

Their home town of Granford was located in a big Northern State, and all the members of the Silver Fox Patrol lived there; though several of them had come to that busy little town from other sections of the country.

Besides two of those whose conversation has been noted at the beginning of this chapter there was, first of all, Thad Brewster, the leader of the patrol, and when at home acting as scoutmaster in the absence of the young man who occupied that position, in order to carry out the rules and principles of the organization. Thad was a bright lad, and having belonged to another troop before coming to Cranford, knew considerably more than most of his fellows in the patrol.

Next to him, as second in command, was Allen

Hollister, a boy who had been raised to get the bumps of experience. He had lived for a time up in the Adirondacks, and also in Maine. When it came down to showing how things ought to be done according to the ways of woodsmen, and not by the book, the boys always looked to Allen for information.

Then there was a slender, rather effeminate, boy, who seemed very particular about his looks, as though he feared lest his uniform become soiled, or the shine on his shoes suffer from the dust of the mountain road. This was "Smithy." Of course he had another name when at home or in school—Edmund Maurice Travers Smith; but no ordinary boy could bother with such a high-flown appellation as this; and so "Smithy" it became as soon as he began to circulate among the lads of Cranford.

Next to him was a dumpy, rollicking sort of a boy, who seemed so clumsy in his actions that he was forever stumbling. He had once answered to the name of Cornelius Jasper Hawtree; but if anybody called out "Bumpus" he would smile, and answer to it. Bumpus he must be then to the end of the story. And as he was musically inclined, possessing a fine tenor voice, and being able to play on "any old instrument," as he claimed it was only right that he assume the duties of bugler to the Cranford Troop. Bumpus carried the shining bugle at his side, held by a thick crimson cord; and when he tried

he could certainly draw the sweetest kind of notes from its brass throat.

Then there was Davy Jones, a fellow who had a sinuous body, and seemed to be a born athlete. Davy could do all sorts of "stunts," and was never so happy as hanging by his toes from the high branch of some tree; or turning a double somersault in the air, always landing on his nimble feet, like a cat. Davy had one affliction, which often gave him more or less trouble. He was liable to be seized with cramps at any time; and these doubled him up in a knot. He carried some pills given to him by the family doctor at home, and at such times one of the other boys usually forced a couple between his blue lips. But some of the fellows were beginning to have faint suspicions concerning these "cramps;" and that the artful Davy always seemed to be gripped nowadays when there was a prospect of some extra heavy work at hand.

The last of the eight boys was a dark-haired lad, with a face that, while handsome, was a little inclined to be along the order of the proud. Robert White Quail was a Southern-born boy. He came from Alabama, but had lived many years in this very region through which the Silver Fox Patrol was now hiking. Indeed, it had been at his personal solicitation that they had finally agreed to take their outing in climbing the famous Blue Ridge Mountains, and tasting some of the delights of a genuine

experience in the wilderness. Among his companions the Southern lad went by the name of "Bob White;" and considering what his last name happened to be, it can be easily understood that nothing else in the wide world would have answered.

Of course Step Hen had another name, which was plainly Stephen Bingham. When a mite, going to school for the first time, on being asked his name by the teacher, he had spelled it as made up of two distinct words; and so Step Hen he was bound to be called by his comrades.

Giraffe also was known in family circles as Conrad Stedman; but if any boy in Cranford was asked about such a fellow, the chances were he would shake his head, and declare that the only one he knew by the name of Stedman was "Giraffe." For some time he had gone as "Rubberneck," but this became so common that the other stuck to him. Giraffe loved eating. He was also passionately fond of making fires, so that the others called him the fire fiend. When Giraffe was around no one else had the nerve to even think of starting the camp-fire; though after that had been done, he was willing they should "tote" the wood to keep it running.

The day was rather warm, even for up in the mountains, and if the signs told the truth they might look for a thunder storm before a great while.

As the scouts had no tents along, and were marching in very light order, they would have to depend

upon their natural sagacity to carry them through any emergencies that might arise, either in connection with the weather, or the food line. But they knew they could place unlimited dependence on their leaders; and besides, as Bob White had spent many years of his young life in this region, he must know considerable about its resources.

They were now in what is known as the Smoky Range, a spur of the Blue Ridge Mountains, which borders on Tennessee. Not a great many miles away was Asheville, a well-known resort; but few of the society people frequenting that place had ever ventured up in these lonely localities; for they did not have the best reputation possible.

Among these wild peaks dwelt men who, in spite of the efforts of revenue officers, persisted in defying the law that put a ban on the making of what has always been known as "moonshine" whiskey. Occasionally an arrest might be made; but there was much danger attached to this thing; and the country was so rugged, that it would take an army of United States regulars to clean out the nests of moonshiners holding forth there.

It would seem as though this might be a rather strange region for the hike of a Boy Scout patrol; and had the parents or guardians of the boys known as much about it as those living in Asheville, they might have thought twice before granting the lads permission to come here.