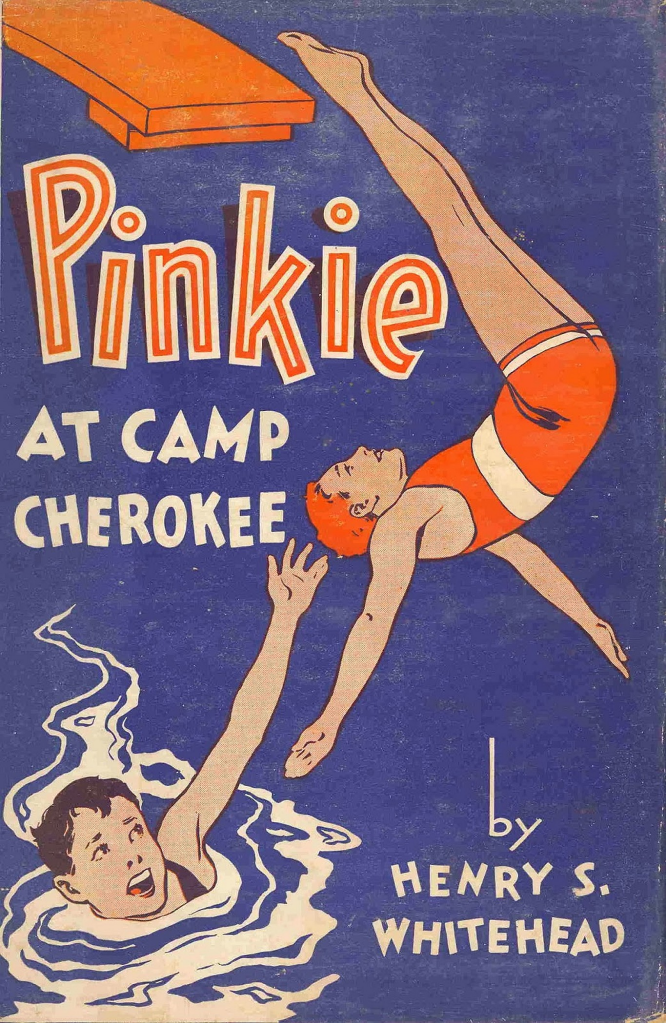
Pinkie
AT CAMP
CHEROKEE
by
HENRY S.
WHITEHEAD

U. S.

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Pinkie

at Camp Cherokee

BY HENRY S. WHITEHEAD

NEW YORK : LONDON
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1931

Made in the United States of America

TO

MY FATHER

HENRY HEDDEN WHITEHEAD, ESQ.

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CHAPTER I

BACK AT CAMP CHEROKEE

ALL Prattie could talk about for the last four or five hours or so on the train, was that Swim we were going to have when we got to camp! We were due to arrive at three-forty-four, the time-table said, but the train was late so we didn't get there until quarter past four.

It felt pretty good to get out into the open air at last, after all the time we had spent on the two trains coming all the way from Pencilville, Ohio, where we live. As soon as we landed on the station platform and shook off some of the train dust, well, there was the bus, and driving it was Bill Winchester, one of the counselors and a bully good fellow, ready waiting for us. We slapped Bill on the back and he slapped us on our backs, and then we climbed in with our grips, which we had had to lug along because we had had to be on the trains two whole days and one night, and Bill

jammed in the gears and let the old bus travel along to camp.

It was my second season at Camp Cherokee. Prattie had been there before I had, ever since he was a small kid—a "midget," as we call the little fellows of eight or nine in camp. Your second season is a lot better than your first because you know everybody that's back, and it's like Old Home Week to meet everybody again. It's good, too, to get out of the clothes you have been traveling in and which feel pretty hot by the time you arrive, the first of July, and get them stowed away on hangers in the storeroom, not to come out again until the first of September when camp breaks up and—Boy!—to get into that good old water again!

I think the Swim—with a capital S—is the best thing there is in camp. Of course there are all kinds of other "activities," like canoeing and handball—we have five courts at Cherokee—and baseball, of course, and all the different kinds of hikes and tennis and a lot of other things, so there isn't much chance to be either lonesome or unoccupied while you are there.

We got into camp about four-thirty and Prattie, and I too for that matter, had to wait for that Swim until five, but the half hour in-between snapped past like a couple of minutes because there was so much to do; unpacking and getting those clothes stowed away and having pow-wows and war-dances with the fellows who were already back and the bunches that kept

coming in on a couple of other trains besides ours, whooping around generally and going into conniption fits every so often just to think of the whale of a Good Time there was stretching ahead of us for two whole months!

You meet a lot of "different" fellows in camp. I mean that at home, in a town like ours for instance, and I guess in most other towns, the fellows are apt to be a lot alike. In camp they come from everywhere, and you chum up with city fellows and country fellows and fellows who have been all over and others who haven't been anywhere except here at camp, and it's pretty good, I'm here to tell you. A boy who is anyways "queer" soon gets the edges knocked off him, in our camp anyway!

Right after we got in I met the most "different" fellow I've ever run up against, right off the bat, and this story is mostly about him. He was named James Clutton (that was the main part of his name; you'll hear more about it later), and he was in our cabin, so that is how I ran into him right off.

I went straight for the cabin, Number Five, where Bill Winchester had told me I was to be. Bill was counselor of Cabin Five, and when I got inside, there was Clutton, who had got into camp a couple of days before because he had to come on a ship, seven or eight days at sea, all the way from Barbados, an island down near the very lowest end of the West Indies. Jim

Clutton looked up at me from where he was squatted down in the corner of the cabin fixing one of the little springs underneath his bed—he was a tall, thin boy with glasses—, and he said to me in the kind of a voice that I'd read about in funny stories but never actually heard before:

"Aha! you'll be Master Spofford, I take it!" Can you beat it? I ask you. "Master Spofford," and I fourteen years old. "Master Spofford"—good night! I was sort of stunned and didn't know how to come back at him, and all of a sudden it occurred to me that maybe he was one of these slick jokers and was just talking that way for a joke. It sort of relieved me and I started to say something but didn't get a chance because Jim Clutton had drawn his breath, I guess, after that mouthful, and was prattling along with:

"I say, you know,—awfully jolly place here, what, what! But then, I understand you were here lahst season—it *is* Spofford, is it not?"

Well, that set me goggling again. I swallowed a couple of times and kept on standing there with my big grip in my hand—my trunk would come up from the station later, of course—and I looked at him and wondered what cat had brought this queer critter into our cabin. I was just plain dumbfounded. I don't know how it would have come out, because just then Bill, our counselor, came barging into the cabin and introduced us, and I said, "Pleased to meet you," to Jim

Clutton and we shook hands, and I started to unpack my grip without saying anything else just then.

I hadn't got more than half-way through unpacking when Joe Terriss and Steve Grant showed up. I'd known them both, and good fellows they were, from the season before, but now we were to be in the same cabin for the first time. Joe was a New Yorker, as you could tell, more or less, by his accent. Steve, who came from Cleveland, Ohio, talked about as I did.

Well, after Steve and Joe and I had done a kind of war-dance all over the inside and outside of the good old cabin because we were pretty much pleased to get together like this, Bill Winchester introduced them and Jim Clutton. I sort of lay back at this, wanting to hear what "Master" Clutton would spring on them. I also naturally wanted to see what they'd make of it.

Well, Bill introduced them all right. I was watching Bill, and I thought I saw a kind of amused look on his homely face.

"Glad ta see ya," said Joe, talking in the New York way.

"Howdy," said Steve, in United States.

Then Jim Clutton came forth with the following:

"Ah—right-o, old dears—Cheerio and all that sort of thing, you know. Jolly glad to meet all the new chums, you know. Awfully jolly—awfully jolly, what!"

And right then, before either of them could do more than look sort of stupefied, the gong rang for after-

noon-swim, and all five of us, including Bill Winchester at that, made dives into our swim-suits, for the afternoon-swim is the Afternoon Swim and everything else must give way.

Steve and Jim Clutton were ready at exactly the same time and started out the cabin door with their towels hung over their shoulders off to the beach. Joe and Bill and I were left in the cabin, none of us being quite so quick on the trigger as the other two. I noticed that Joe looked sort of worried, in a way he has. He is shorter and stouter than the rest of us, Joe is, and his face always registers what he is thinking. He spoke up just as he was untying the last knot in his shoes, which he had left on until after he was otherwise all ready, sitting on the side of his bed, stooped over struggling with a knot and sort of looking up at Bill Winchester sideways.

"Say, Bill," said Li'l Joe, as we called him, "tell me, honest—what's wrong with that guy, huh? What you say his name was—Clutter? He talks kinda like he was goofy or something. Is he?"

I waited for Bill's reply. You see, Bill had been in the cabin with Jim Clutton for a couple of days, and Bill is a mighty sensible fellow that everybody in camp respects. He's the boxing instructor, that's his "activity" work, and he has a lot of judgment. I wanted, as much as Joe, to hear what he'd say. In

fact, Joe had blurted out the question that I'd wanted to ask myself only it sort of struck me it wasn't quite fair to Clutton to ask it. Joe would never think of anything like that, I'm afraid. He wasn't quite as grown-up as some of the rest of us, sort of a primitive guy Joe was, in some ways.

Bill said, "N-no—'goofy'?—no, not a bit goofy, Joey. I've got to admit he's about as 'different' from the general run of boys as anybody I've ever had in a cabin, and I've been camp-counseloring for six years, right here in this camp since I was a freshman in college. No. Jim Clutton is o.k., Joe; a regular-guy, I think you'll find him. I think he's first-rate and so does Dr. MacGregor—Chief. So don't go up in the air at the way he talks. There's a lot of difference between New York and Barbados, B.W.I."

"What's 'B.W.I.'?" asked Joey. Those initials made his eyes pop.

"That's what's on his trunks—'boxes' he calls them! It means 'British West Indies.' He lives 'way down there, almost to the Northeast corner of South America. One thing about him—he thinks this is cold winter weather! It's a pretty warm climate where he comes from, you see. He has five blankets for his bed!"

"This—*cold!*" shouted Joey, "what—the first of July here on Long Island—*good-night!*"

And, I'm afraid, in spite of Bill Winchester's trying

to make it seem as if Jim Clutton were really o.k., he left the impression on both of us that he was a kind of a freak.

Well, we all three went down for the swim, got there just before the "All In!", and had a marvelous time. There was Art MacMaster, the Swim-Counselor, busy as an egg-beater getting all the little kids and the new Non-Swimmers sorted out with three other counselors, Chief MacGregor himself helping him, most of the rest of last year's gang, and quite a lot of new fellows. We had a grand time, those of us who were qualified and didn't have to be "sorted out" on a swimming basis.

Jim Clutton, of course, was one of the Goats. But he soon joined us Sheep for he knew how to swim all right, and, being up near the top alphabetically, he got his test right off. It only meant going through the "official" motions, anyhow, because, you see, he had been there two days, and Art knew that he could swim.

Even there in the water poor Jim Clutton was "different" from the rest of us. It wasn't only the queer way he had of talking. His very skin was "different." I think all the rest of us were more or less tanned, even before we had been going around exposed to the sun in camp the way we do—and get tanned dark brown in most cases—but Jim Clutton had one of those skins that look almost like an Albino's. And when Bill Winchester, who was off duty at that swim, swatted

him on the back, just for fun you know, there on Jim's back was the red mark of Bill's palm, thumb, and four fingers. So poor Jim Clutton was kidded more or less on that account—good-naturedly, of course, you understand.

He took it wonderfully. I mean, it didn't bother him in the least, being kidded. He laughed. And when he laughed you could see every tooth in his mouth, so to speak, and he came right back at the kidders, only—this was the difficulty—nobody could understand what the points of the comebacks were! It was really queer, when you stop to think of it. Jim Clutton was talking English, the same language as ours. It was the ordinary, native tongue of all of us, allowing for slight differences here and there. But Jim's English was from "there," O, decidedly! So before that swim ended he was getting it from all sides, practically everybody kidding him all at once.

If it had happened to me for any reason, especially the first day I was in camp with a gang of fellows I had never seen before, I admit it would have annoyed me.

But it didn't seem to bother Jim Clutton. He was the most good-natured person you ever saw. When seven or eight fellows were yelling things at him all at once so that he couldn't come back at them all, he would just grin that toothful grin of his and let it go at that.

After awhile—too soon, as usual—"ALL OUT" came through Art MacMaster's big megaphone. We got out and used towels on our backs and in our ears and for our feet and toes, according to General Camp Orders, the big guys seeing to it that the little, new guys used their towels right and didn't just scamper off the way they will if you don't drill them for their own good. At last the crowd on the beach melted away, going back to their various cabins to get cleaned up for supper, which comes at half-past five in order to give us the longest evening possible.

I walked along with Jim Clutton and the rest of our cabin, including Bill Winchester. Jim was shivering, and all around his mouth was blue. Bill spoke to him about it.

"You ought to have got out a little sooner, Jim," he warned him.

Jim Clutton looked at all of us, one of those comprehensive glances you read about. That look seemed to me to mean "this is in the family, fellows." Then he said:

"True-Bill, sir. Right-o. I shall, another time—promise you. You see—I'd a little rather not, don't you know, with all that spoofing. It would have seemed a bit like a blighter, would it not?"

I think we all got the general drift of this. He meant he hadn't wanted to look like a quitter, even

if he was blue with "cold" just when all the rest of them were kidding him. I nodded my head.

"Right-o!" says I, and we all laughed, Jim Clutton heartier than any of us. That laugh seemed to warm him up.

When we got into the cabin, Jim started in on some intensive setting-up exercises to warm himself some more, and I gave him a back-rub with a towel. He was all right again in a couple of jiffies.

"Gee!" said Little Joe, watching him, "s' funny how you find it cold, huh? Must be hotter'n fire down there in—whadya call the place, Jim?"

"Bimshire," says Jim.

"Bimshire?" asks Bill Winchester, puzzled. "Why—I thought it was Barbados. That's what's on the trunks and all—'Barbados, B.W.I.'" quotes Bill. Jim Clutton laughed.

"'Bimshire' is a kind of local term," he explained. "You see, all the English Counties are called 'shires,' and in the old days in our colony someone jocosely named the island 'Bimshire,' so sometimes we call it that. I did so, you see, without thinking!"

"Like Wor-ces-ter-shire Sauce," said Li'l Joe, nodding his head.

"Prezactly!" said Steve.

"Ab—so—lute—ly!" I threw in to help out.

"Incontrovertibly!" added Bill Winchester, laughing.

"True-Bill," said Jim Clutton, and that made it unmistakable.

"Say," said Li'l Joe, "I wanna ask you something."

"Quite, quite, old dear," Jim Clutton came back at him.

"You got any kind of a nickname?" said Joey.

"O quite, quite," said Jim Clutton, nodding his head several times.

"Well, whadda they call ya?" asked matter-of-fact Joey.

"It's on account of my wretched skin," explained Jim. "You see, old dear, it's always been quite utterly out of the question for me to turn even a bit brownish—to tan, don't you know! Even in our climate. I've one of those frightfully annoying skins that merely burns and peels off, don't you know!"

"Yeah, but whadda they call ya?" insisted Joey, looking at him.

"Call me 'Pinkie,' old dear," said Jim, "and, by Jove, you know, I'll come a-trotting towards you with all sails set and pity the poor sailors on a night like this!"

And so "Pinkie" he was, from that moment on. The name spread like wildfire all over camp, and by the next morning's swim, everybody had it.

But "Pinkie" didn't seem to mind being called such a thing in the least. I guess, after all, he was kind of used to it.

CHAPTER II

JAMES RODERICK EVELYN MAURICE KELLEY-CLUTTON

PINKIE'S camp uniform hadn't arrived that first day of the reopening of camp, and that evening at supper and afterwards you could have told, if you had been a visitor, the old fellows from the new ones. That was because none of the other new boys' uniforms had been delivered—they didn't show up until the next morning—except perhaps one or two who had had theirs sent home and brought them along with them like us old campers at Cherokee.

Pinkie, having no uniform to put on, got dressed for supper in ordinary clothes. That is, I should say, *extra*ordinary clothes! Boy!—as a matter of fact, the rest of us, being engaged in getting dressed after the first swim ourselves, didn't specially notice him over in his corner. But when we were all ready and had our uniforms on and our hair slicked and the rest of us looking pretty spick and span, for we do things in style at Cherokee, we got a good eyeful of Pinkie for the first time. You might say he burst on us!

He had on an orange and pink blazer jacket, white shorts on those skinny legs of his, a tie with his soft shirt which matched the jacket, *and* a bright, orange-colored, silk sash around his waist instead of a belt on those white flapper-pants.

We all looked at him and didn't say a word for a minute or so. You see, I think we all had been somewhat impressed with what a good scout Pinkie was, on the way up from the swim I mean, and so forth, and Joe and I had heard what Bill Winchester had said about him, which was in his favor, of course; and then he had to go and put on those foolish looking things and spoil it all. I'd seen something like it somewhere, and I cudgelled my brains to remember where or how. It came to me after a while. It was a group of fellows dressed up more or less like that in a rotogravure section of one of the big newspapers, showing some very heavy "sassiety" persons, like The Prince of Wales and The Duke of York, or people like that, posing for their pictures on one of the fashionable foreign beaches. Well, it might be o.k. in a picture, to look at and more or less smile over and remind yourself that people didn't dress that way in Pencilville, but right here in our cabin! Well, it was a regular knockout.

The silence of that inspection was broken at last by Li'l Joe quietly snickering. Steve and I didn't make any remark. I think we felt either discouraged, or else

that it just wasn't our business. If it was anybody's, besides Pinkie's, it was Bill Winchester's. He was the counselor of that cabin, and we weren't. But Bill only spoke to Joe.

"What's the matter, Joe?" he asked.

Joe pointed to Pinkie from where he was, now, all curled up on the foot of his bed and laughing so he just couldn't stop. He waved his hand helplessly in Pinkie's direction, and at last he murmured, "Take it away, it hurts (he said huyts) my eyes!"

"Snap out of it!" said Bill, quite seriously.

Joey stopped laughing suddenly and stood up. Bill is that kind of a counselor. He's one of the most good-natured and reasonable fellows I ever knew, but when he commands,—well, he commands, that's all, and Joe Terriss knew it well enough.

"Yes, sir,—Bill," murmured Joey, trying like a little hero to be good and mind, and at the same time keep his face straight. Pinkie certainly was a funny looking thing, I've got to admit. He goggled at us all through his thick glasses which made his eyes look big and round and foolish.

"I say, old dears," he put in at this moment, "what's up and all that sort of thing, you know?"

"I doubt,"—it was Bill answering him,—"if Joe ever happened to see anything like your belt,—er—Pinkie. You see, it's unusual, here in the United States. And what's unusual has a comic element about it,

almost always. So please don't be sore because Joey laughed at you."

"O, quite, sir; quite," answered Pinkie. "But—sir,—I was not dreaming of being annoyed. That's what one means, is it not, by being—what is it?—*sore?* You see,—er—this is my cricket belt, at school, sir,—what one has for being on The Eleven, you know—er—not boasting, of course, you understand, merely explaining. Shall I take it off? Wouldn't it be—er—quite, you know——?"

"Slip on a pair of long trousers and a mere belt," said Bill, hurriedly, looking at his wrist-watch "and everything will be o.k."

So we waited until Pinkie, the most mystified fellow you ever saw, changed his trousers and put on a belt. After that he didn't look so outrageous, and none of us minded walking from the cabin to the mess-hall with him; the whole cabin together, which is a pleasant way to do. I honestly believe I'd have gone right down through the ground if Bill hadn't made him change his things. Walking with him looking the way he did at first, about the time we got near enough to have the rest of the gang spot him! Good-Night! Bill certainly was a diplomat that time.

The name, "Pinkie," as I've mentioned, caught on right away. That, all by itself, was enough for one evening, after the "spoofing" and "ragging" as Pinkie called it which he had received in the water that

afternoon about his sensitive skin and one thing and another. If Pinkie had worn those white shorts and that orange-colored, silk belt at supper, I don't suppose the cabin would have ever lived it down. As it was, before the night settled down on us sleeping in our beds, Pinkie was elected to be the goat of that camp anyway.

He took his "raggings" with perfect good-nature. But, I suppose you've noticed it; if you start in on anything wrong, with a bad temper, that is, or stupidly, or in any way that isn't the best way, the tendency is to keep it up wrong and make a botch of that particular job. That, just that, was what happened to poor Pinkie. And he hadn't, really, done a thing to deserve it! He couldn't help it, I mean. It was such a collection of little, unimportant, things! The name, the sensitive skin, the differences in the details of his clothes and looks, the language he spoke. That was all, to begin with. Pinkie was established as "goat" even before he made any of his breaks. It was too bad, I thought, because I felt it, rather. I liked him in a way, from almost the first. And then besides he was one of our cabin, and at Camp Cherokee there's a great deal of cabin rivalry and competition, and in a cabin it's one for all and all for one, as far as you can make it that way, even among the little midgets.

Pinkie made his first break the next morning, about ten o'clock. It happened at The "Centre," which is

the name of the outdoor assembly place—it's indoors when it happens to be raining—where all the announcements are made, after breakfast and cleaning-up are over. At morning assembly at The Centre, Chief MacGregor makes the day's announcements, gives out the special activities, and so forth.

This first active day of camp, that is the second day, for we had assembled really on the afternoon of the day before and this was the first day of regular schedule, we were all up there at The Centre a little before ten o'clock, and Dr. MacGregor spoke to the new fellows first and then to the rest of us, and welcomed us back; and then he gave out a lot of announcements, such as the preliminary work to be done on the swim-tests with Art McMaster in charge, and various things like that, routine matters, you see; and then he came to the day's activities.

All the new fellows' uniforms had arrived and had been given out right after breakfast. Pinkie had his on and, except that it was new-looking, he wasn't especially conspicuous, in his looks, I mean, except for that pink skin of his and the glasses, and—yes, I admit I forgot to mention—his brilliant red hair. However, this was cut very close, American fashion—he had stopped at a hotel in New York the day he landed from his ship and had a haircut there a few days before, you see—and so, as I say, Pinkie looked about the same as the rest of us. He wasn't getting any par-

ticular kidding or "ragging" because all hands were doing nothing else just then but listening with both ears to Chief making the first important camp announcements, with Nate Wilder, his secretary, alongside him, handing him slips of paper from time to time.

I won't bother you with hearing all the announcements that Chief made, except only to say that, as it happened, the baseball squad was left to the last. Chief ended up with the announcement that fellows trying for the ball team would report to Nate Wilder and give him their names, and afterwards, there would be preliminary practice for the picking of the first team with Jim Edgar, the captain, in charge, up at the ball field.

That ended the announcements for the morning, and right away the various fellows reported to the heads of the teams, and so forth, right there at The Centre, and it was all done in a very snappy way without any confusion or anything, the way we do things at our camp.

Nate Wilder was sitting on a stool on the edge of the boxing ring right in the middle of The Centre taking down the names of the fellows who were going out for the first ball team, and Jim Edgar stood beside him looking over his material. Of course there were a good many holes in last year's team to fill in, because the first team is made up of the biggest fel-

lows as a rule, and four of last year's team had "graduated" from camp. That is, they were too big to come back to a boys' camp, and their places on the team had to be filled.

There were quite a lot of candidates, including Pinkie.

Yes, old Pinkie had decided, it seems, to go out for the team. So, in a modest kind of way, there he was with the rest of us, including Prattie and me, near the end of the line.

We all stayed right there after giving Nate Wilder our names and saying a word or two to Jim Edgar, and, as it happened, Pinkie, being a modest kind of person as I've remarked, was the very last. All around The Centre were the fellows, by now pretty well sorted out for the activities, waiting until everything was finished to start in on whatever they were to do for the rest of that morning. It was quiet, more or less; as I say, everybody was waiting.

Pinkie stepped up and gave his name. He gave it all, I'd say! I'm pretty sure he didn't leave any of it out—not that time. Nate looked up at him, waiting there, and nodded his head.

"Your name in full," says Nate, his fountain-pen all ready to take it down. And Pinkie, in that comparative silence, came through with this:

"James Roderick Evelyn Maurice Kelley-Clutton."

For an instant the silence, which, as I say, had been

comparative, was absolute. Yes, absolute. It knocked everybody endwise—that name.

If you want to get the real effect of it, look it over once more and then stand up and recite it—out loud, like this:

"James, Roderick, Evelyn, Maurice, Kelley-Clutton!"

Now, maybe, you get what it was like.

Then the whoopee broke loose.

Poor Pinkie! Honestly, he was the most surprised-looking chap I think I ever saw in my life, either before or since! He opened his mouth two or three times as if he wanted to say something; only he couldn't. Or, if he could, no one would have heard it, with the haw-haw that had broken loose.

O yes, I laughed too. I tried not to, but no one could have helped it right then. Nate Wilder laid down his notebook half-way through writing down that mouthful Pinkie had uttered, and leaned back on his stool and pretty nearly fell on the floor. It was a riot. That's the only way I can describe it.

Of course it calmed down at last. You can't laugh forever. And just about the time when everybody had got quiet because we were too weak to do more than emit the little grunts and groans that you make after a hurricane like that, why, then, Pinkie piped up, looking up at Nate Wilder, and remarked,

"B-but—sir—you asked me for my *full* name—did you not sir?"

Then it broke loose once more. I, for one, thought I couldn't ever laugh again after that remark of Pinkie's, and his poor, puzzled, perfectly pink face.

Then, right then, old Pinkie showed—he showed me, anyhow—what kind of a fellow he really was. He started laughing himself; and, when you figure it out, what with the pressure of everybody laughing, giving you the laugh that way, I mean, having everybody against you, if you get what I mean, although not sore at you, just "agin" you for the time-being, and not being in the slightest degree able to guess what it's all about—and then, being able to laugh! Well, Pinkie's stock went up in my estimation. I imagine a lot of the others got it, too, the same as I did, for some of them including old Prattie and Steve Grant, who were able to navigate at all, went over to him and slapped him on the back and then reeled away with the tears running down their faces, some of them, just from laughing too much and getting "goofy" inside over it the way you do.

Well, in the course of time that laugh came to an end, died down; and the next thing that happened was Nate Wilder reaching down and shaking hands with Pinkie, who grinned up at him in the most perfectly good-natured way and showed every tooth in his mouth.

"Yes," remarked Nate, when he could speak plainly, "you're right—er—Pinkie old man. That's just what I

asked you for, and goodness knows, you certainly did respond something noble! So that's that. Now suppose all you fellows get going—er—just a minute—come on up here and *whisper* your full name in my ear while I try to get it written down, will you?"

There was a little postscript kind of laugh at that, and Pinkie joined in it and hauled himself up on the platform and told Nate Wilder his name quietly while Nate got it down—it must have used up a couple of lines in that notebook of his—and we all gathered around Jim Edgar, the baseball captain, that is, those of us who were trying out for the big team, while the rest of the gang got going about the day's activities. Pinkie joined us after getting through with Nate, and stood more or less on the outside of the ring around Jim Edgar while Jim was outlining some things to us.

Pinkie listened like the rest of us. Jim was saying that Miggles Craven, one of the older counselors, was coaching the team again this season—Miggles had been a star on the University of Pennsylvania team a few years before—and how what we seemed to need more than anything else, judging from who was back and who wasn't, was a few heavy hitters, and how the next thing we needed was a first-class shortstop, and a few things like that.

"Well," Jim ended up, "there's a couple of hours now before dinner, so I guess we'll get going right

away and get up to the field and do a little practice—how about it?"

So we all chimed in that that was o.k. with us, and did Jim want us in our baseball suits or didn't it matter, and so forth; and Jim said to come just the way we were, in the uniforms; and we'd start with him and Miggles and Lefty Brown, one of the biggest fellows, rapping out fungoes to get our legs loosened up some; and the whole bunch of us started for the ball field.

We had got about a quarter of the way up there, for the ball field is up on the hill back of camp, when it occurred to me that Jim and Pinkie hadn't got acquainted yet, so I nudged Jim and said, "You and Pinkie acquainted?" And at that, Pinkie came over to us, and I said, "I guess you want to know Jim, Pinkie," and started to introduce them.

And Pinkie said, "Awfully bucked to meet you, old dear." And Jim, who had, of course, heard a lot about Pinkie and his strange vocabulary and had a lot of sense, remarked,

"Right-O, Old Thing!" and the two of them saw clearly that each of them was a good skate, and they both laughed, and the rest of us laughed too.

And then Pinkie put the climax on that morning's work. He said, "Do you imagine there's any chance for a blighter like me to make *The Eleven?*"

CHAPTER III

AN OLD-TIME FEUD

ONE day Harold Pratt, or "Prattie" as everybody calls him, happened to be talking with me and Prattie remarked, "Have you ever heard Bill Winchester tell that story of his about Richard Dwight, the counselor they called 'Simplex'?"

I told him no, I hadn't ever heard that story, and what was it like.

"You get Bill to tell it to you in the cabin, sometime, and don't fail," said Prattie. "Bill was our counselor two years ago, and he told it to us, and believe me, it's some story!"

So I said I would, and then later I asked Bill if he would tell it to us in our cabin, and he laughed and said he would; and then, a little later still, I got after him hard one unpleasant evening when we all had our choice of what we would do, and our cabin had decided on a private campfire of our own out back of the cabin. I put it up to Bill that night and he told us the story.

"It was six years ago," Bill began, "the first year I was here at camp. I was a freshman in college then.

I got off the train at the station here, and there stood a tall, skinny, sandy-haired fellow beside a car with CAMP CHEROKEE along its side, and I walked over to him and he stepped up to me and held out his hand, and said, 'You'll be Mr. Winchester, I imagine.' So I said I guessed I would because I always had been and didn't expect to change any that I knew of; and we laughed, and he said his name was Nate Wilder, and he was Dr. MacGregor's secretary and had come down to get me, and we talked along while he drove back to camp, and I liked him a lot.

"The camp wasn't as big in those days as it is now. We had, maybe, sixty fellows, perhaps sixty-five, and, in addition to his regular duties, which take all his time in camp nowadays, Nate Wilder was also doing some 'counseloring' in the cabin which Sam Hatch's gang has this season, and I was in the one next to it, where Dan Smith and his fellows are now.

"On the other side of Nate's cabin the counselor was Richard Dwight, known in camp as 'Simplex' because he had that kind of a bean—Simp was a one-track-minder, if you get what I mean?"

We said we got it, and Bill went ahead.

"Well, Simplex—or 'Simp,' as it got to be before that season was over—sure enough was a total loss! He knew his work all right; it wasn't that end of it so much, and he had come from another camp very highly recommended to Chief MacGregor who took

him on because one of his best counselors had gone abroad rather suddenly that spring and he had to get somebody for his place at rather short notice.

"No, it was Simp's disposition that queered him. These one-track minds are o.k. when it comes to buckling down to a job and going through with it. Where they fall down is that they get something inside them and can't ever get it out again! That was what happened between Simplex Dwight and Nate.

"As you fellows know, all counselors have one free evening a week. That's the case in all camps, all first-class ones, that is. Well, Simplex did just one thing with his Thursday-evening-out; got into his porch clothes, white flannels and everything, and beat it over to Martin's Camps, where they have grown-up summer guests, you know, over there on the Point, and spent the evening with his uke trying to convince a young lady by the name of Marion Whittlesey from Elizabeth, New Jersey, that he, Simplex Dwight, was the original worm's eyebrow.

"Miss Whittlesey was a very nice young lady in every way, and you couldn't blame Simplex for wanting to make a hit with her. That was perfectly all right. The difficulty arose out of the fact that we all kidded him about what we called his 'infatuation,' merely for fun, you fellows understand, and Simplex got it into that thick bean of his that it was Nate Wilder who was responsible for the kidding. Just how

he got such an idea nobody can tell. Nate hadn't started it, and hadn't said any more to him than any of the rest of us counselors. But there was the idea, imbedded in that thick skull, and you couldn't pry it loose with a stack of crowbars!

"Simplex was just plumb nasty about it. He used a kind of heavy sarcasm on Nate whenever they had anything to say to each other, and because that didn't get him anything, he got sorer and sorer. You see, Nate is a fellow who can stand up to pretty nearly anybody in anything like an argument. I don't know whether you fellows have noticed it—you don't see as much of him as you do of the rest of us, because Nate's duties don't bring him in touch with you very much—but, take it from me, well, Natey's some boy, and you can tie to that, as John Silver said!

"From trying to be sarcastic with Nate, Simplex went on to pulling off some pretty crude deals on him. For instance, one morning Nate started in to shave and found that his razor had been ruined. Somebody had gouged off the fine edge that three generations had put on that family heirloom, on a rock or something. Nate had inherited this fine, old-fashioned razor from his father, and his father had got it from *his* father! Nate was the only one of us, except Chief, who used an old-fashioned razor, and when he saw what had happened he was sure-enough regretful. There wasn't any way to replace that razor, and the

job had been so thoroughly done that the only thing left was to throw it away.

"Nate accumulated a couple of days' growth of pinkish fringe on his face before he could get another razor, and Simplex named him Tarzan. That, perhaps, will give you some idea of Simplex' sense of the fitness of things—calling a fellow Tarzan because of a couple of days' whiskers!

"Then, the next thing that happened was Simplex 'stacking' Nate's cabin. Nate had been out with his whole cabin of boys on an Overnight Hike, and they came in after suppertime—they were midgets—pretty weary and tired and about ready to flop in their little beds and pass away for the night, and there was the cabin about as scientifically 'stacked' as I'd ever seen, even at Chestertown Academy where I prepped for college. Yes, Simplex had done a thorough job. Even the little, underneath bed-springs were disconnected. My gang and I went over and gave Nate a hand, and it took us the best part of two hours to get the cabin straightened out—a rotten trick. We deduced that it was Simplex from the evidence, which I won't go into now, but it came out later that it *was* Simplex all right.

"I intimated to Nate that what was required was that somebody should 'smear' Simp, with a swift boot. I even offered, after seeing that cabin and the poor, little, tired midgets with their things all mixed up in a

heap and no place to sleep, to do it myself. I was figuring on Physical Instruction as a profession, back in those days, and was about as husky as Simplex. But Nate vetoed this and worked like a horse to get the cabin straightened out, and let it go at that.

"I'll own up to you that I sort of wondered if Nate wasn't a little *too* peaceful and thought maybe he was a trifle scared of Simplex, who was a big, powerful chap. However, that was Nate's business, not mine, and I didn't bother my head about it further, except, maybe, wondering about it a little—Nate's possible cowardice, I mean.

"And then Simplex swiped a pair of Nate's white flannel trousers, the only pair he had by the way, and, although they were a kind of tight fit for him, wore them over to Martin's Camps one evening, instead of having his own dry-cleaned in the village, which was a small and kind of a mean trick at that, because he and Nate were anything but friends you see, and he had really swiped them instead of borrowing a pair or wearing his own.

"We caught him red-handed that time. We two were sitting in Nate's cabin alone one afternoon when Simplex sneaked in with the trousers. He hadn't expected to find anybody there, and he was rather taken aback. However, he brazened it out, which was just like him.

" 'I hadn't expected to get them back so soon, if at

all, Mr. Dwight,' said Nate, pulling the sarcasm on Simplex first.

"Simplex glowered at him and remarked, 'You ought to be glad you're alive, Wilder!' and dropped the soiled trousers on the nearest bed and beat it outside.

" 'I just don't see how you put up with it,' I remarked to Nate.

" 'I'm not putting up with it any more,' answered Nate, picking up the trousers and shooting them into his laundry-bag. 'I'm through turning the other cheek to that brute from now on. I'm afraid he's a plain, rubber boot and irreformable!'

"That sounded a little better to me than Nate's former attitude of letting things ride, and I lay back and watched to see what would happen.

"Nate and I had the same night off, Wednesday night, every week. The following Wednesday we had been up to Port Jefferson to a party at the house of some friends of ours, people Nate had introduced me to, and we got back to camp quite late, well-along after all the gang was wrapped 'in the healthful slumbers of the pine-scented woods!' as the camp catalogue says. We were navigating along under the trees with a couple of flashlights, for there was no moon that night and it was as black as the inside of a cat.

"And, speaking of cats—just as we were coming past the mess-hall, the near presence of a whiff-pussy

was clearly indicated. Yes sir, there was a full-sized old Mr. Skunk on the prowl right then, in the vicinity of the kitchen. Just as we came around the corner of the mess-hall, Nate's flashlight picked him out, about thirty feet away from us. We stopped dead, naturally. Then Nate whispered to me, 'Here, take this and hold the two of 'em straight on him!' He pressed his flashlight into my hand, carefully, keeping it on the skunk, and I focussed the two lights straight on him. Nate slipped away at that, off to the right, and I could see the skunk's eyes like two little green moons. He was fascinated by the glare and standing as still as a little black and white statue.

"I waited quite a while, and then, all of a sudden, in the edge of the light-circle beside the skunk, I saw a hand and arm, and the hand was holding a mean-looking club. Nate was getting his stance. Then—wham! The club descended, taking Mr. Skunk neatly and accurately on the top of the bean, and one crowning was enough for that animated perfume-bottle. The skunk was the late Elias R. Skunk, and Nate said to come on over while he went into the kitchen and got something, for he had an idea.

"I went and stood alongside the remains of the skunk, wishing I were in the exact center of a ten-acre field of heliotrope in full bloom, and then Nate came back with a small, sharp, potato-peeling knife which he had borrowed from the cook's supplies.

"Right there my respect for what Harvard can do for a fellow, increased. Nate was a Harvard man, you see. He showed that he had been well trained in lab-work! The way he skun that varmint with the little knife was a caution. Neat. Then, Nate leading, we walked up to the old vegetable garden where you fellows get bait-worms, you know, and buried the carcass of the skunk. Nate rubbed a handful of salt into the hide and wrapped it up in a couple of newspapers he had brought also from the kitchen, and after a thorough wash we turned in, Nate keeping the skunk's hide.

"The second day following Simplex' little midgets went on a strike. They said they just wouldn't stay any longer in a cabin that was saturated with skunk!

"The source of the trouble was located in Simplex' trunk—a nice, fresh, skunk skin with the fur on, and Chief had one of the men scrub out the cabin with creolin, and the trunk and all the clothes in it fumigated; and the clothes that were nearest the skunk skin had to be buried in the ground; and I thought this was where I could contribute a little strategy, so I went along with Simplex and picked out the place; right where the rest of the skunk was buried——

"O, I guess Nate got square with Simplex, right enough, although he wouldn't have rubbed it in the way I did by picking that place to bury the clothes!

"And that wasn't all of it either. No! Chief made

Simplex sleep out for three nights in a pup-tent, and two of those nights it rained! O, I'd say Nate was square with him right enough.

"But—Simplex couldn't call it a day and let things go at that. And, because of that fact, I got two of the surprises of my life. I'll tell you what happened next.

"It took that brain of Simplex' about three days to get it through itself that Nate had got square—that Nate had something to do with his troubles! Of course, he wasn't thinking of all the nasty, mean things he had done to Nate; such as spoiling his razor, and the cabin-stacking—which showed mighty poor camp spirit besides being a thoroughly rotten trick —and the matter of the white flannel trousers. No! Simp's one idea was to see himself the injured party in all this.

"Being about a hundred and eighty pounds of solid bone and muscle—mostly bone, of course—he figured the easiest comeback, and one evening after all our midgets were sound asleep, a beautiful night with the moon full and everything just about perfect, Nate and I were sitting down on the rocks at the top of The Shelf looking out on Long Island Sound, resting our hands and faces after a strenuous day and talking a little.

"When—along comes Simplex, barging along, straight towards us where we were plain to be seen in that moonlight. He came straight up to Nate and

addressed him as follows, 'Well, Wilder, you think you framed me, don't you? Now stand up and take what's coming to you, you rat.'

"Nate looked up at him. 'How about calling it a day, Mr. Dwight,' he said.

"'Stand up, if you're not afraid,' was Simp's response to this.

"'I warn you,' said Nate, still sitting there,—'you called me a rat, you know. Well, maybe you know what a rat can do—to a hunk of cheese!'

"I had to laugh at that and parked it in my mind for any time that anybody might ever call me a rat, but Simplex just got madder and madder.

"'Get up here,' he said, very nasty and ugly now. 'I figured you'd be afraid, and I see I was right.'

"Nate heaved a sigh and got slowly up on his feet. I was figuring what I ought to do; interfere, or what. You see, I'd never heard of Nate being able to put up his hands, and he weighed about a hundred and forty, maybe, and I was as big as Simp and knew how to handle myself fairly well.

"But, I didn't get a chance, even if I had made up my mind to crash in on their little difficulty, because Simplex didn't really wait for Nate to be fairly on his feet before he swung a crack at him that would have bisected him like a problem in geometry if it had landed. However, it didn't land. Nate ducked like lightning and stepped back and spoke up again, 'Why

not cut it out, Mr. Dwight? There's really no occasion for this sort of thing, it seems to me.'

"Simplex didn't answer. He merely stepped up to Nate and swung again, a nasty one. That one didn't land, either, although it missed by maybe a half-inch or so.

"'O well,' said Nate, 'if I've got to, I've got to, I suppose,' and just as Simp was gathering his hundred and eighty pounds for another punisher, Nate stepped into him, and I heard a sharp snick, which was Nate's left as it landed exactly, precisely—by moonlight, if you get it, the most difficult blow there is to strike—straight and true on the point of Simplex' chin, and as Simplex caved, there was another sound, like 'ploo-oo-oof!' and that was Nate's right catching Simplex square in the midriff. Nate, you see, hadn't needed any intervention on my part.

"Simp fell over neatly, right into my arms, and I let him down gently on the ground, completely out and quite harmless for the time-being, and Nate stood there, shaking his head and looking down on him.

"'Well, I 'spose we've got to carry him all the way to his cabin and tuck him in for the night,' said Nate, 'for he's quite all right. I only just barely tapped him asleep!'

"I didn't say anything. I was too dumfounded at Nate. That was the first of the two surprises I told you about that I got that night. We picked him up and

carried him to his cabin and took him in and put him in bed, and he was breathing hard, but all right. So we left him there, and, just as we were coming out, whom did we run right smack into but Chief MacGregor himself!

"'What's the comedy?' asked Chief, addressing both of us.

"'I'm going to leave it to Bill to tell you all about,' answered Nate, after thinking for a couple of seconds. 'Probably Bill can tell it better than I can, because I'm one of the principals, so to speak.'

"'All right,' said Chief, grinning, and Nate went off and left me with Chief, and I told him the whole works, much the way I've been telling it to you. When I finished Chief nodded and said he guessed this would probably calm Simplex down enough so he could go through the remaining week of camp all right, and everything was o.k. with him; and then I got the second of those surprises. I had said, 'I never suspected that Nate could hand out any such wallop as that.'

"'Don't you know who he is?' Chief asked, raising his big eyebrows at me.

"'No—who is he?' I naturally enquired.

"'Only the intercollegiate champ for the past three years,' replied Chief. 'I thought you followed college boxing.'

"And I never knew that the great William N. Wilder, for that was the way his name always appeared

on the programs, was our Nate, who went by his middle name which was Nathaniel.

"So now you fellows know who Nate Wilder is," finished Bill, and, you may take it from me, we had learned something—several things, I guess—out of that evening's narrative by our cabin-counselor.

CHAPTER IV

GODDARD MAKES TROUBLE

WELL, Pinkie Kelley-Clutton, Esquire, on the ball field, was certainly a mirth-inducer.

To begin with, he had never played a game of baseball in his life, and to state the next handicap he was laboring under, if you can imagine it, he had never so much as *seen* a ball game! That, of course, isn't hard to understand when you realize that Pinkie had been living on the West Indian island of Barbados nearly all his life, that is, except for a couple of years of school in England; and I guess you don't have to be told that the baseball games in Dear Old England are about as scarce as cricket games around Pencilville, Ohio!

"At Home," down there in sunny Barbados, according to Pinkie, even the little darkies in the fields played cricket. I daresay he must have been a pretty good cricketer himself by all accounts. Not that you'd ever hear as much from Pinkie himself. Pinkie was painfully modest about all such things. But you see he had his "cricket belt," that funny-looking silk thing he had tried to wear the first night in camp and got

snapped out of by our counselor, Bill Winchester, just in time to keep from disgracing us all.

But as a baseball player, Pinkie had considerable to learn; everything, in fact. He not only had to find out how to do the various things you do, such as batting, catching in the field, and so forth, but he even had to learn what the object of the game was; what it was all about. So Jim Edgar handed him over to me to explain the inside of the game to him instead of just merely turning him down and letting him know that it was just plumb ridiculous for him to try for "The Eleven," as he called it, as if baseball were cricket!

But of course we weren't playing baseball, even those of us who were out to make Jim Edgar's First Team, all the time. The fourth day in camp a hare-and-hounds race was scheduled. It was free-for-all, and almost everybody went into it; our division I mean, for, as I mentioned, a big camp like ours runs in divisions according to size and age.

Hare-and-hounds as it is played in camps is a little different from ordinary hare-and-hounds. In camp a trail is laid, with directions, because it is one thing that isn't a team contest. Everybody is a "hound," and the course is planned in advance and set up with all kinds of obstacles and signs and so forth, to guide the pursuers.

This time, as usual, the trail was laid in the morning

by a couple of counselors; and they announced at dinner that the chase would start at two-thirty after we came out of rest-period, and that it was going to be a difficult course with a lot of sign-directions, and we'd have to look pretty sharp.

Well, I'll make a long story short, right here.

We started out, Pinkie among us, with timers, in groups of four a minute apart, and—here's where the shortening comes in—old Pinkie galloped in, loping along on those long, skinny legs of his, four minutes and three seconds ahead of the nearest contender, who happened to be Prattie himself. I was about sixteenth; and you can believe me, I ran some, too, and didn't let any grass grow under my feet.

Yes, sir. Pinkie trimmed the whole gang that time.

But that was only the beginning of the trouble. For poor Pinkie was so thoroughly established as "goat" by this time that it was hard for anybody to realize that *he* was the winner.

Pinkie came in with the trophy, right enough; it was an old, Indian doll kind of thing that we always used for the hare-and-hounds trophy and was known in camp as "the totem." You see the totem is hidden about a quarter of a mile from the finish, which is always The Centre back in camp. The first one to work his way by the indications to the place where it is concealed takes it and runs straight for The Centre. If anybody is near him, that person can chase

and tag him, and a "tag" counts on the scoring, only the taggers have to finish the race in addition.

But this time there wasn't, as it happened, anybody near enough to Pinkie even to see him, much less to tag him! You'll remember those four minutes and three seconds. Why, he was in at The Centre, had delivered the trophy to Doctor MacGregor, who was refereeing, and had had a quick rubdown and changed to his uniform and was half-way back to The Centre to see the rest of us come in before Prattie showed up blowing like a grampus.

Now it happened that Bradford Goddard was third. He came in right behind Prattie. In fact, they had to race for second place, and Prattie trimmed him, being lighter, and that was why Prattie was so blowed.

Bradford Goddard was the biggest fellow in camp. He was seventeen and really a year too old for our camp and certainly a lot too big. I wouldn't go the length of saying that Brad Goddard was a bully or anything like that. But he was bigger and older than the rest of us, probably as good, at the very least, as anybody in camp physically; a first-rate athlete; but to be honest not fixed up with too many brains! So, to begin with, I'm more or less sure that Goddard was sore because Prattie beat him in that race in to The Centre, Prattie being an ace on his legs and having much better wind than Goddard.

That, I imagine, started him being sort of ugly-tempered. However, there wasn't anything he could do about it. Prattie had won, by inches, in full sight of everybody.

But, Prattie hadn't beaten him for first place. Pinkie had that tucked away, you see. At that time, Goddard didn't know who had won! He and Prattie had come to the place where the totem was buried in sand, just together, and both of them had dug down after it. As soon as they saw someone had got there ahead of them, they merely started to sprint for The Centre.

And when they got there, and as soon as Goddard could speak, he naturally asked Dr. MacGregor, "Who won, Chief?"

"Clutton," answered Dr. MacGregor.

That choked Goddard. You see, don't you, how it would work in the mind of a fellow like that? He'd say to himself, and probably did for all I know, "Huh, that-there 'Pinkie' guy, huh? What right had a seven-cylinder dub like that hatrack got to win a race, huh?"

And right then along strolls Pinkie, all rubbed down and in a fresh uniform, coming towards The Centre where several counselors and a shoal of little midgets were assembled to see the finish and take in any races that might develop, like the one in which Prattie had just beaten Goddard.

"Huh," said Goddard, looking at Pinkie, "how did

you get by to win, huh? I betcha you didn't follow trail at all but just cut every corner and got away with it."

It was a rotten thing to say, but Pinkie merely smiled.

"You're spoofing!" was all he remarked.

"'Spoofing' my neck!" said Goddard, still sore and more or less hot and bothered and ugly as he could be. "I'll bet you—you skinned."

"Do you mean that I—I—I CHEATED?" asked Pinkie, suddenly very serious.

"You can take what you want out of what I say," said Goddard, nasty as a bear with a sore head.

And at that Pinkie marched straight up to him and swatted him, back-hand, straight across the mouth, and Prattie and one of the counselors grabbed Goddard just in time to keep him from slaughtering Pinkie then and there.

The next instant Dr. MacGregor was alongside them.

"I'd say you owe Clutton an apology, Goddard," said Chief, grave as poison. "You had no right, no right whatever, to accuse him of cheating. He brought in the totem and beat Pratt by better than four minutes, one of the best records for that course we've had at this camp in thirteen years. If you want to fight it out, you know the custom of camp. Not here, certainly —in the ring, with a referee and seconds; but Clutton

has every right to refuse you. You're three years older and twenty-five pounds heavier than he is, and he's perfectly in the right. However——"

"Quite o.k., sir," said Pinkie, who was standing by, and who was already learning how to talk United States. "I'll fight him in the ring if that's the camp usage, sir."

"All right, it's a grudge-fight," muttered Goddard, and went off to his cabin to get a rub-down before the afternoon swim which is to come off as soon as all the hare-and-houndsers are in at Centre; and, as they were coming in in bunches, now, Chief had to hurry back to his place among the timers who were taking down the names as they came over the tape.

So Pinkie had a grudge-fight on his hands, and it was only the fourth day of camp, too.

And, I'll just pause long enough to say that Goddard should have known better than to say what he did, to anybody, no matter *how* sore he may have been at getting beaten for first-place, because even if anybody wanted to cheat (which none of our gang at camp, or at any decent camp for that matter, would think of) he couldn't, because every one of the "corners" of the long course was "posted" with a counselor for a guide, and the slickest and meanest crook in the world couldn't cheat.

No sir. Pinkie had won fair and square, absolutely, and, as Chief had said, with one of the best times ever

recorded in camp. So there *was* something the long-legged jigger could do, after all! I was tickled to death, naturally, to have such a record as that hung up by one of our cabin. So, too, was our counselor, Bill Winchester, and so were Steve Grant and Joe Terriss. Joe's eyes stuck out when he came in (near the very end, for he was sort of fat and blobby) and heard that Pinkie had copped out First, and as soon as he got to the cabin he did a war-dance around Pinkie and slapped his back so hard that the mark of his hand showed for a week on that tissue-paper skin of Pinkie's.

The rest of the fellows seemed pretty well divided between wondering how a duffer like Pinkie could have managed to get First, and expressing themselves over how the poor goof was going to be "slaughtered" when he stacked up against Bradford Goddard.

"You'd ought to have had more sense than to agree to it," said Jim Edgar to him that evening after supper. And Bill Winchester told him the same. To these well-meant remarks Pinkie only answered, "But—you see—he said I cheated!"

So everybody had to let it go at that.

Bill Winchester offered to do some coaching, he being our boxing instructor, but Pinkie, although very politely and gratefully, told Bill that while he was "awfully obliged and all that sort of thing, you know,"

it wouldn't be the least good, and that more or less mystified Bill, so he let it go.

Well, one thing came out of the hare-and-hounds victory. It naturally occurred to Jim Edgar that if Pinkie could foot it that way, he could, just possibly, use him for running bases to some advantage. There was one natural aptitude he had that might fit into baseball. He was, of course, so extremely new to baseball that Jim merely hadn't got around to telling him he might as well quit coming out to practice, as he would have done in a couple of days.

So they started in coaching Pinkie heavily on the strategy of base-running, and Pinkie put his mind on it like a fellow boning-up for an examination. I never saw anybody work so hard in my life!

There wasn't a single thing the matter with Pinkie's brains. No, what he had above the ears was strictly o.k. So I managed, by the use of a pencil and paper mostly, to get the idea of the game into his head more or less.

But among the other things he found it almost impossible to do, was to hit the ball.

You see he was heavily handicapped, what with his other ignorance of the game and the fact that they hold the bat a different way—and a different kind of bat, too, with a flat blade and a smaller, rounded handle—when they play cricket; and cricket, so to speak, was

the thing that Pinkie hadn't done anything else but, for the most of his lifetime. Besides all that, the pitcher in a cricket game—they call him the "bowler"—shoots the ball over with a stiff arm, and the batter—the "batsman" I should say—swings underhand, and up at it to keep it from hitting a thing called "stumps" or "the wicket," which is just behind him as he bats.

So poor Pinkie actually had to unlearn all that stuff before he could even start in on baseball, which the rest of us understood by instinct.

But how he could run! After he got some expert coaching he'd go around those bases just exactly like a big, awkward-looking jack-rabbit that's afraid of its own shadow. Stride! That old boy certainly could push the ground away behind him.

In the course of time he even learned to slide, and that's no mean accomplishment for a newey. The way he did the hook-slide was exactly like a long, skinny, red-headed jackknife opening and shutting itself. And then old Pinkie would straighten up on the base and dust his baseball pants off (he'd ordered a suit along with the rest of us from the athletic outfitters in New York) just as if he'd been born and brought up in The Land of the Free and The Home of "The Braves."

When it came to catching, Pinkie was pretty nearly hopeless. That, however, he couldn't help. He explained it, in his own way, by saying that he'd need four separate pairs of glasses to see the ball from the

moment it left the bat until it arrived, say, out there in right field; which, being the place where the least flies were to be expected, was the position he was trying for on "The Eleven." The gang never really let up on him about that break. A cricket team, I forgot to mention, is called "The Eleven," just as we say "The Nine."

However, Pinkie, by means of calculation and getting about as rapidly as any human-being ever got "under a ball," when hollered to that is, did actually manage to stop one out there in Right Field once in a while. When he did, the gang always applauded him, and he'd get pink all over his face and neck and even his arms and try to look modest and fail at it and then start grinning and show all his teeth.

You really couldn't help liking the old skate.

All this time I'm speaking about, Bradford Goddard and Pinkie kept away from each other, according to the Code of a grudge-fight in Camp. The fellows spoke about it a lot, partly because it was the first (and such an early) one for the camp season; partly because Pinkie was Camp Goat; for his winning the hare-and-hounds race hadn't shut down on that at all, even though it showed everybody that there was maybe one thing that he could manage to do without stepping on his lip and falling all over himself.

There was a certain amount of speculation, too, about what would happen when the two of them got into the ring, because Pinkie had surprised everybody

once and might, of course, again. Pinkie himself didn't seem to worry about it in the least. As a matter of fact he never referred to it at all, and when anything about it was being said or hinted at when he was around he would get out or walk away.

It was plain to be seen that Pinkie felt it very keenly. I mean, that his straightness and sportsmanship had been questioned. Of course in the cabin, which is "in the family," we talked about it more or less, and Pinkie loosened up enough so that we saw how he felt about it. We came to the conclusion in the cabin that Pinkie had a very high idea of being a sound sport—a reasonable egg, he called it, but it meant being a real sportsman—and that he would quite as willingly have stepped into the ring with Gene Tunney himself or fought it out with harpoons against a whaleman or with battle axes and a helmet with any of King Arthur's crowd who happened to challenge his sportsmanship, as he appeared willing to step into our twenty-four foot roped arena at Camp Cherokee with Bradford Goddard.

So at least we knew that when the day of the First Grudge-Fight arrived, Pinkie wouldn't disgrace us in the cabin, whatever that big stiff Goddard might do to him.

And Pinkie himself was the least concerned about it all of any of us.

CHAPTER V

THE GRUDGE-FIGHT

THE day of the big shindy arrived at last!

Of course if either Pinkie or Goddard had decided before the actual time for it arrived, to make the thing up with each other, there would not have been any grudge-fight at all.

But neither one of them had done that, and from our point of view in Cabin Five Pinkie was entirely in the right. *He* hadn't anything to take back, certainly, the way we saw it.

A grudge-fight is a peculiar thing. It's a lot like the ancient tournaments you read about when one knight went out against another "for honor's sake." A grudge-fight has regular rules, and I don't mean merely ring rules, but a regular "code." As far as I know, it is very much the same in all first-class camps.

After I had got home from my first summer in camp and had told my father and mother all the details and happenings and camp customs I could think of, I'm bound to say my mother didn't take to the idea of grudge-fights very much. Probably mothers, with all respect to them of course, wouldn't

understand that kind of thing very well. I know mine didn't, at least until after father and I had managed to explain the principles of it to her, and even then I don't think she thought much of it.

What we explained was that when there is bad blood between two fellows for any reason you care to think of, and the two fellows don't settle it and get it out of their systems, why, the bad blood just remains, and that's pretty bad every way you look at it.

And the "code" that I speak of is a fine thing too. It makes a real grudge-fight about as different from an ordinary roughneck street fight as anything you could possibly think of.

The code provides that the two contestants shall keep out of each other's way between the time of the challenge and the settling of the point in the ring. That's a fine thing, for it keeps it from being one of those hot-blood scraps, without rhyme or reason and gives both persons a chance to cool off and get back their common-sense.

The fight is always conducted in the camp ring, with a time-keeper for the rounds, a referee, seconds, and all the trimmings; with the bell going between rounds, which are two-minute rounds in camp instead of three; and the seconds have pails of water, and sponges, and big bath towels, and they jump into the ring between rounds and sponge the contestants, and so forth.

All these arrangements give the two who have stepped on each other's necks, so to speak, a chance to think things over in-between. Many's the time those three or four days of waiting result in the one who is in the wrong conquering his pride and producing an apology. And that is a splendid thing for him. It takes a lot of real honest-to-goodness nerve to stand up and admit that you have been in the wrong.

In this case, I guess, everybody in camp knew that Goddard was the one in the wrong. Chief MacGregor had practically told him so at the very beginning of it, that time at the end of the hare-and-hounds race, only—Pinkie had just cut right across any chance he had to let it go at that by agreeing to fight Goddard the way I've mentioned.

Our ring is a standard, twenty-four foot square, with smooth board flooring covered with thick canvas and roped to four upright posts at each corner. Little extensions outside two of the corners, diagonally opposite from each other, run outside the ring, and these are the places where the seconds wait while the contest is actually going on, ready to jump in through the ropes as soon as the bell ends a round.

Everything was ready, officials and all. The fight was scheduled for a beautiful sunny morning; it was a Thursday early in July and camp had been running a little over a week.

Practically everybody was on hand except a bunch

of the little "midgets" who were off doing a nature-study activity on birds or something of the kind. It had been given out in the regular announcements, like the two or three grudge-fights I'd seen the year before. We all assembled, and there, refereeing, was Chief MacGregor himself, with our counselor, Bill Winchester, as time-keeper, and the seconds, and all. Jim Edgar, baseball-team captain, was seconding Pinkie, and one of the bigger fellows named Lewis Masters was with Bradford Goddard.

Everybody was pretty quiet and orderly, for one of these things is taken seriously in camp.

Doctor MacGregor called the two fellows into the ring, announced that if either of them was ready to admit he had been in the wrong, now was the time to speak up and settle the matter before proceeding to the settlement with the gloves, and briefly stated what the fight was about. "Goddard has alleged that Clutton cheated in the hare-and-hounds contest which he won on July Fifth," says Chief, very gravely, "and Clutton responded with a blow at the time."

Nobody said anything, so Bill Winchester stepped into the ring with the gloves and started, assisted by the two seconds, to tape the hands of the two who were to do the fighting, and put the gloves on over the taping. When that was finished and Bill had nodded to Chief and he and the seconds had stepped out again, Chief announced two minute rounds, said

the usual things about not striking "below the belt," "breaking from clinches," and so forth, and sent the two of them to their corners for the bell. Then he looked around, and his eye caught Pinkie sitting straight upright on his little round stool, and he frowned.

He stepped over to Pinkie and said something to him, and Pinkie obediently reached up and fumbled at his ears. He was trying to take off his big, thick spectacles, and of course he couldn't, with the clumsy boxing-gloves on his hands, so Chief stooped over him and unhooked them himself.

A little snicker went up from the audience. Pinkie had done another "goat" stunt, made another break. Imagine! Think of going into a grudge-fight with spectacles on, can you?

Pinkie winked and blinked a few times—I was naturally watching him—and passed one of his gloves in front of his face and tried to focus his eyes on it. Then he shook his head, all to himself I mean as though he were saying to himself, "I say, you know, Pinkie, old dear, it's no go, what, what!"

So Chief waited and then spoke up and said to him, "Can't you see without them?"

"No, sir," answered Pinkie—"never could, sir."

Everybody was as silent as a bunch of mice to hear what was going on, for you see it was about time for the bell after all these preparations, and naturally we

were all pretty well keyed up over it all, the first grudge-fight of the season and so forth.

Dr. MacGregor paused. Then he asked Pinkie, "How do you commonly box, Clutton?"

"I have never boxed at all, sir," replied Pinkie, getting more pink.

"What!" exclaimed Chief, "never boxed at all?"

"No, sir." Pinkie had turned bright red by now, I suppose at having to own up in public that here was another thing in which he was a duffer. "You see, I've never been able to do it, sir. With my spectacles on it's about impossible, of course, and—without them I can't see at all, sir."

Well, everybody took this in a silence that reached all the way to the edge of Long Island Sound. There wasn't a murmur from anybody. You could hear a bird chirping about forty yards away up in a big tree.

Dr. MacGregor kept perfectly still and looked at Pinkie, a frown on his forehead, as though studying. Then, rather abruptly, he spoke again, "Clutton!"

"Yes, sir," from Pinkie.

Dr. MacGregor spoke very slowly and distinctly. "Clutton, do you mean to say that you were entirely willing to stand up here in this ring, with a full understanding of what it means, with a fellow twenty-five pounds heavier than yourself and three years your senior, when you knew you couldn't box?" Pinkie was

pure crimson now, but he never hesitated one second in his answer.

"Certainly, sir," answered Pinkie.

You could feel a stir go all over the crowd of us. I leaned forward not to lose a word. I felt, somehow, as if there was something very serious going on; something the like of which you don't see or hear every day. Doctor MacGregor kept on looking steadily at Pinkie, and Pinkie just sat there as straight as a ramrod, those weak eyes of his winking and blinking. At last—it seemed like about five minutes to me, but I guess it was only about five seconds by the watch—Chief turned slowly to Bradford Goddard.

"Do you understand this situation, Goddard?" he asked, speaking pretty crisp and to the point. Goddard wriggled. He got more or less pink himself, and I could see him gulp a couple of times. His Adam's apple went up and down the way it does when anybody is pretty nervous about anything. Then Goddard stood up and walked out into the middle of the ring and stood beside Chief, looking over at Pinkie. He was as tall as Chief, and the muscles stood out on his long arms and big chest. His old Adam's apple was working overtime now, and he was bright scarlet, like Pinkie. You could see him breathe hard. He cleared his throat.

"I beg your pardon—er—Clutton," he muttered, in a funny, little husky voice.

Pinkie jumped up like a jack-in-the-box and came right over to him, his right hand stretched out, looking perfectly ridiculous with that big pudding of a glove at the end of his skinny arm. They shook hands, or paddled gloves rather, in the middle of the ring, Goddard towering over poor old Pinkie, and I saw that Dr. MacGregor had put his arm around Goddard's shoulder. The three of them made quite a picture up there.

And then we broke loose.

At first it was just a natural wild yell or series of yells, and then Jim Edgar had jumped down from his perch on one of the corners of the platform outside the ropes back of where Pinkie had been sitting in his corner, and was leading our famous Locomotive cheer with "three long Pinkie's" on the end, and after that we shot over another one for Goddard, who had been a mutt, but was man enough to snap out of it when he got an eyeful of Pinkie's cold nerve; and believe me, I felt queer and tingly all over, and I guess everybody else that had a heart inside him felt about the same way as I did.

And when they got down out of the ring and four or five fellows got all tangled up over trying to untie their gloves for them, like the too many cooks that spoil the soup, and everybody had slapped them both on the back (Pinkie's back looked like a cross-word puzzle for a week afterwards) well, Steve Grant and

I were so doggoned proud of Pinkie who lived in our cabin, that we picked him up between us and carried him all the way to the cabin and dumped him down on his bed in his corner while all the time he was shooting over a perfect fusillade of "I say's," and "My hat's" and "Look here, you know's" and, after we had got him there and shut the door and fastened it, with a dozen or more of the crowd hollering outside to get in and shake Pinkie by the mitt, we slapped his old back some more until he hollered and told us to "give over!"

So we "gave over," which means "let up, can't you," and Pinkie got dressed, and by that time the gong sounded for Morning Swim and poor Pinkie had to get undressed again and put on his trunks for the swim.

On the way down to the beach we got an idea of what Pinkie would have been up against, in addition to his lack of knowledge of boxing and Goddard's superiority, if Chief hadn't had the bean to spot those spectacles still on him when he sent the two of them to their corners. Pinkie nearly ran into a tree. Yes, his eyes were as nearsighted as that, and he had been going to stand up there and take a walloping just on principle because he figured that was the proper thing for him to do.

Do you get it?

So we navigated him to Chief's cabin for the spec-

tacles, which he had forgotten to get back in all that mêlée; and Chief shook hands with him (which turned him a kind of maroon color once more that morning) and gave him back the spectacles, and Pinkie put them on his nose and over his ears, and I said, "I guess you're all o.k. now, Pinkie."

And Pinkie grinned that toothy grin of his at me and said, "Right as rain, old bird," which is Pinkie-talk for "O.K."

Well, we went into the water at the "All In" signal, as usual, and about half-way through the swim I noticed that Pinkie got out of the water, and I could see him tanglefooting his way back to the cabin.

It was fifteen minutes later when the "All Out" came and the rest of us got out and started for our cabins with the towels working overtime on the beach and along the way back to dress, and when Li'l Joey and I, who were walking together, got to our cabin expecting to see Pinkie just about finishing dressing and maybe sitting on his bed, why there wasn't anybody there.

Well, that didn't mean anything particular, of course. Pinkie might have gone somewhere—anywhere. There was no reason why he should have been in the cabin just then of course.

So we got ourselves dressed, figuring, naturally, that Pinkie had had to come out of the swim because he wasn't quite acclimated to our northern water yet

after the Caribbean Sea down there at Barbados, and we didn't think anything particular about it.

But just before Bill and Steve came up from the swim, a little late from having stopped to see the handball tournament which hadn't been stopped that morning even for The Swim (the players being mostly guests from two other camps were having a special swim later) Li'l Joe remarked to me, "Where d'you s'pose Pinkie is, Bill!"

I said, "Well, Joe, I figure that the strain of this morning was pretty hefty on old Pinkie and probably he's sittin' out somewheres, thinkin' things over, sort of."

"Huh," Li'l Joe remarked again—he is a very matter-of-fact kind of fellow—"O yeah, I get you."

So Joey and I stepped on out just after Bill and Steve had come in, and I took a look around to see if I could see Pinkie, and there, sure enough, were some sharp angles which were edges of Pinkie sticking out from behind the trunk of a tree where Richard Nelson's old tree-house was built several seasons before. Pinkie had climbed up into the old tree-house and was sitting up there.

Joey started to yell, but I stopped him.

"Leave him alone, Joey," I said. "I guess he wants to be by himself, don't you think so?"

"I dunno," replied Li'l Joe, still matter-of-fact, "maybe he does."

Well, we passed quite near the tree in which Pinkie was sitting, and I saw his face, quite smiling and cheerful, come around the trunk and look down on us. He must have heard me whispering to Joey.

"Cheerio, old things," Pinkie called out. "Whither away, what?"

"What ya doin' up there?" Joe asked him.

"Merely cogitating a trifle," Pinkie answered, "the subject-matter being what an unutterably frabjous blitherer I am!"

Joey screwed up his face and looked hard at Pinkie. It was easy to see that Joey was pretty well mystified by this mouthful.

"I mean to say," explained Pinkie, beaming down on us, "that—ah—well, to put the affair in its true light and all that sort of thing, it's rather a rum go, you see!"

I had to laugh, to see Joey looking puzzled at this explanation which didn't explain to him but made the mystery only deeper. Joey whispered to me, "Whaddya s'pose is bitin' him now, Bill?"

But Pinkie was really explaining at last. It seems I had been wrong. He wasn't upset by the strain of that morning at all. This is what he said:

"Why, you see, I came out of Swim half-way—Chief's orders, though only for Morning Swim. And I paused a bit to look on at the handball. There's a chap there, one of the Camp Glenwood chaps, playing

handball with glasses. Had a kind of harness over his head. Chap standing by whom I asked, explained that it was the sort used by chaps who wear gig-lamps like me in basketball.

"Awfully unfortunate, don't you know. I'd never known about such an apparatus. If I had, I could have rather stepped up to Goddard this morning, you see, saved all the jolly fuss!"

I nodded, and Joey and I walked along, leaving Pinkie up in his tree to finish his "cogitating." We walked up to The Centre and sat down on one of the benches. It was only a few minutes to dinner-time, and The Centre is quite near the mess-hall. Joey hadn't said a word, but as I looked around at him beside me on the bench, he shook his head in a way he has.

"Wot a guy!" said Joey.

And I had to agree with him.

CHAPTER VI

WHAT CAN BE DONE WITH A GUITAR

THE grudge-fight naturally did considerable to show those fellows in camp who hadn't particularly "taken to" Pinkie so far, that he had a lot of character. Anybody, of course, could see that. There wasn't any question about it. It showed as plain as the nose on your face.

However, there was no getting away from the fact that Pinkie was just as odd a number among the rest of us as he had ever been; as different, I'd venture to say, as they make them. That he had character and that he could run like a wild rabbit, everybody knew. But that he was, somehow, rather "queer," was still in pretty nearly everybody's mind.

That being the case, I'm going to mention right here the next notable thing he did, because opinion in camp was still very much divided about him. He was so conspicuous in among the rest of us that no one could possibly ignore him, you see. Of course, in our cabin, being a lot more intimate with him than the rest of the gang, we knew already that he was Obadiah Kelley, or, in other words, O.K.; a first-class sport, a regular person, a good egg, and one of the

most good natured fellows anybody ever met up with. With us his strangeness, like his vocabulary, had pretty much worn off. We were for him a hundred per cent in the cabin.

A lot of the rest didn't, naturally enough, try to understand him. There was too much to do, I guess! So the division of opinion persisted. It seemed that about half the camp still thought of him as The Goat, because of his looks and his talk and his breaks, that he had made since coming among a gang like us for the first time in his life.

So on the occasion when he leaned forward and tapped Bill Winchester on the shoulder that time and asked Bill to borrow that fellow's guitar for him and Bill did, and it was announced that Jim Clutton was going to do a turn for us and our guests, there was, from perhaps half of our gang, as many catcalls and suchlike as there was applause.

It happened like this.

There's a certain amount of inter-camp entertaining that goes on. A camp will send a team to your place, or your camp'll do the same, and then the camp where such a team is visiting will keep the fellows overnight or have them to midday dinner, or perhaps put on a special show for them, or even manage it so that a regular show will come on the evening when the guests are to be there all night, so they can take it in.

Sometimes, too, a whole camp will be entertained, and this was the kind of occasion that was going on when Pinkie borrowed that fellow's guitar.

We were entertaining the fellows from Camp Junaluska this time. Junaluska is a bully little camp of about thirty-five or forty fellows, and they certainly are a fine crowd. We had had a swimming meet in the morning and a tennis tournament in the afternoon, and we had beaten them at swimming and they had given us one beautiful trimming at the tennis, having Teddy Minturn and Teddy Brown—The Two Teddies they were called—both of whom were tennis sharps.

And that evening, after dinner and supper with us—they were going to stay overnight besides—the Junaluska fellows put on a show.

It was a splendid little show. The first number was one of their younger counselors who was a harmonica-sharp. He had a fake radio-set which they set up on the stage, made out of packing boxes, and this fellow got inside and was his own loud speaker. He imitated several instruments, all on his mouth-organ and made announcements and did static squeaks, and got a big hand from all of us; and then there were three other numbers which I won't bother you with describing, except to say that the second one was a couple of ukes with a guitar accompaniment; and the others weren't musical stunts, but comedy.

And then what I've been leading up to happened. Mr. Sammons, who was the counselor in charge of the Junaluska bunch, got up and announced that he regretted to say their very best number couldn't be put on because the fellow who did it had got called home from camp the day before, and wouldn't be back for another week, and, he added, he wanted to take this opportunity to say again as it had been said for years in the past, what a grand lot of fellows we were and how the two camps had always been like good pals, and so forth, and thanked us in the name of Camp Junaluska for our entertainment, and he hoped, with all the talent we had at good old Cherokee, that somebody would carry on a somewhat skinny program.

Mr. Sammons got a nice lot of applause, and there was considerable fidgetting around; for that suggestion of his had hit us right in the neck, you see! Nobody had expected to do anything that night, and unless we put up Dan Smith to play the piano we just weren't prepared; so there was a lot of consultation going on and I guess we all felt rather low, because stunts for the stage was the one point in which Camp Cherokee wasn't strong, certainly that year. In fact, as I think it over, I don't think of a single good stunt that we could have put on unless it might be a kind of acrobatic one that three or four of us used to do on the beach at swims, but that wouldn't work because a thing like that has to be rehearsed pretty

exactly to do it on a stage, you see, and it hadn't been.

And just about then, Pinkie leaned forward and tapped Bill Winchester on the shoulder—Bill was sitting diagonally in front of where Pinkie was—and, as I learned in a second or two, asked Bill if he would mind borrowing the guitar from the Junaluska fellow who had used one to accompany the two uke players in the first stunt.

I could see the two of them talking, and Bill seemed a little reluctant; for I imagine as much as he personally liked Pinkie, he rather dreaded—if I have it right in my mind, being Pinkie's cabin counselor and so forth—to have Pinkie risk making some kind of a break and maybe get the laugh.

Pinkie talked to him, and Bill answered him, and then finally—I could see the back of Pinkie's neck get red, as usual when anything was coming off—Bill stood up and spoke to Mr. Sammons who was still up on the stage and said that one of our fellows, Clutton, had volunteered to do a stunt if the fellow who owned the guitar would kindly lend it to him.

Mr. Sammons nodded and smiled and went off the stage to get the guitar and then a kind of low buzz from our gang got going; restrained, you understand, but nevertheless a buzz. You could get out of it a kind of undertone which translated into something like this, "Gee! Pinkie! What does that dub want to try

to pull off a stunt for? He wouldn't know any regular stunt. He'll be doing some fool thing that'll make us all look ridiculous—goofy!"

But by this time Mr. Sammons was back with the guitar, and Pinkie went up on the stage and took it and thanked Mr. Sammons and sat down on a chair and started in tuning the guitar. There was some applause but mostly from the Junaluska fellows I'm afraid.

Then Pinkie started in.

Say! Make a guitar talk? Could he? He made that thing do back somersaults and eat out of his hand and step on its own lip and come up with a pleasant smile and wearing a finger-ring! When he really got going it sounded like two church organs having a duet, and a couple of calliopes and a mouth-organ and four saxophones thrown in for good measure! Old Pinkie's fist flew over those strings like an ice-wagon running away. And it wasn't any jazz, either. It was—well, it would be hard to tell what it was, really. But you may believe me it was Music was a big M.

Well, after a while, during which you could have heard a pin drop, and everybody was more or less holding his breath, all of us were so taken off our feet, Pinkie brought the overture to a close with a lot of big smashing chords and grinned and quit.

Right off, a perfect howl went up, and believe me it wasn't merely the visitors this time.

After the applause died down a little, Pinkie got up and turned pink, as usual, and remarked that maybe we'd like to hear some comic songs. We all howled we would, so Pinkie sat down again and sang some of the most amazing songs you ever heard in your life. He told us afterwards, in the cabin I mean, that they were what are called "Coster Songs," and that he had learned them while he was at school in England.

They weren't anything like anything I, for one, had ever heard; they were comical and almost foolish but with a kind of funny humor to them that beat anything I imagine any of us had ever heard. One went, in part,

"When I was a nipper,
Jolly little kipper,
Up a fella came to me;
Said: 'I know where there's a tree
Covered all with fruit—o,
Warranted to suit—o——'
So off I went,
Went to get a look at it,
Went to get a look at it,
But—I didn't get a look at it at all!"

Then the song goes on to explain why he didn't get a look at it, and he had all kinds of fool ad-

ventures which prevented him from seeing the tree. That will give you some idea, maybe, of what these Coster Songs of Pinkie's were like, but I can give you a better idea of what a hit they made with us, because Pinkie certainly did know how to sing them, and of course that English accent of his brought them out just the way they were supposed to be sung.

There was, for example, another one about a street-seller who went around the streets selling plaster images, and it wound up with a chorus, like all of them; and the last line of the chorus was:

"'Any Orna-ments for yer mantelpiece?'
Was 'is daily cry!"

We kept Pinkie doing those songs—he seemed to know about a thousand of them—for maybe twenty minutes; and then Pinkie, Harvard Crimson on the face and neck but grinning that toothy grin of his just the same, got up and bowed. But we wouldn't let him quit even then, and everybody roared and clapped, and stamped and screeched and hollered like a regular chorus:

"More, *MORE, M O R E !*"

So old Pinkie sat down again and told us he would try to play some West Indian songs; and believe me this part of it was the very best of all. Pinkie didn't sing this time. He only played the songs, first just the

plain tune and then with variations and little dingbats and oops and things thrown in and embroidered around them. Boy—it was keen. I'm telling you.

That audience was as silent as a lot of mice. Pinkie played on and on and did one lovely tune after another, and after awhile he made you want to more or less sway and move around with the music, most of which was slow and very tuneful; and you'd imagine you could hear the surf of the Caribbean and feel the Trade Wind blowing and see the moonlight, for they were Negro songs, of course; the way a fellow feels listening to *Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground* or *My Old Kentucky Home* under just the right circumstances; only these were gayer songs than our old Civil War and the old Southern songs, somehow, even though there was a little sadness and a kind of hopelessness mixed in with that wonderful music too.

And then Pinkie ended with a couple of bright, fast ones, with a lot of pep and move to them, and you just couldn't keep your feet quiet. And then he got up and walked over to Mr. Sammons and handed back the guitar and I guess said something polite to him which nobody could hear on account of the applause and came down the steps and went back to his seat. After that nobody suggested anybody else doing any kind of a stunt, for I guess anything else would have fallen as flat as a pancake; and as it was getting along past nine o'clock anyhow the party broke

up and we all went to our cabins to turn in for the night.

When we got into ours naturally we said a lot to Pinkie, and it was then that he explained what I've told you, about where he learned the Coster Songs and so forth, and Li'l Joe in his pajamas went over to Pinkie who was sitting on the side of his bed half undressed and took a good look at him and said, "Pinkie, you're sure some good old humdinger, I'm here to tell ya!"

And Pinkie laughed and said he'd have to write down that word as part of his course in The American Language; and Li'l Joe said "huh," and went and crawled in between the blankets.

The rest of us, including Bill Winchester, went right on talking to Pinkie about his music and the wonderful stuff he had played and sung for us that night; only low so that we wouldn't disturb any other cabin that was turning in, and Bill and the rest of us asked him a lot of questions which Pinkie answered.

Bill remarked that Pinkie'd have to do a turn in The Camp Follies the end of August after that, and Pinkie said he would if they wanted him to, and then he started telling us about what it was like in school in England; it was mighty interesting and a lot different from our way of going to school. And then he told us about the West Indian music and how they have orchestras with seven or eight guitar-players in

them and instruments made out of squash-rinds, and iron pipes, and all kinds of queer things; and how the Negroes dance the Bamboula-dance which they brought from Africa with them, and all sorts of things. Finally with Bill's permission, we all went over and sat down on the floor beside Pinkie's bed so that we could talk quietly and not disturb anybody, and Bill came too and sat down there in among us, in a row on the floor, because, he said, as though joking, that a conversation like this was a part of our education and he thought that was partly what fellows came to camp for anyhow, and he'd square it with Chief MacGregor in the morning, because he didn't want to do anything out of the way in his charge of this cabin; and so we sat there and talked quite a lot, which was unusual for us at that time of night.

Pinkie told us about the customs of the Negroes; and about their Spring Songs that they made; and how they believed in magic and all sorts of queer, strange things, and charms and amulets and talismans; and ever so much information that was mighty interesting.

Li'l Joe wanted to know what the difference was between an amulet and a talisman, so Pinkie told him an amulet was to keep off harm while a talisman was to draw things to you, like somebody's good-will; and Bill and Steve Grant and I all asked questions, for it was all very interesting.

Pinkie also told us about how some of the songs were made up, like those to which he had played us the tunes, and how sometimes the most beautiful tune would have apparently the silliest kinds of words, and he quoted some of them, and they certainly were queer.

Pinkie said that he had heard that the "magic" and so forth had a background of something real, and how it was different in different parts of Africa, like the Ashantee slaves bringing medicinal "magic" with them into the West Indies, which is "obeah," and the Dahomeyans bringing their magic, or *vodu,* which is connected with the Guinea Worship of The Snake-gods and not "medicinal" at all, and, boy, it surely was interesting.

And then at the very end—it was nearly ten o'clock —Steve Grant said, "Look, Pinkie, howcome you never told us here in the cabin about how you could play a guitar that way?"

And Pinkie sort of turned it off, because I guess he had one of his modest streaks on, even though he had offered to do the stunt, but that, as we all knew without being told, was for the credit of good old Camp Cherokee.

And Li'l Joe, being kind of sleepy, wound it up by saying, "Yeah, Pinkie, I'll tell the wuyld you can make onna those things talk all right, all right."

And Pinkie said, with a grin, "It wasn't so hot,

I'm afraid," speaking nearly pure United States, which he had been studying, "for, you see, the kind I'm used to have six or seven extra bass strings out at the side, and so I was, rawther, handicapped, you see!"

And Joey remarked "Good Night!"

CHAPTER VII

AROUND THE CAMPFIRE

ONE of the things we do in camp is hiking. There are all kinds of hikes, but the one I like the best is the plain, old-fashioned, "overnight-hike."

You get one or two friendly cabinfulls together with their counselors, and you start out for somewhere and get there and make a little temporary camp and have a long campfire and sit around it for a long evening after supper cooked right out in the open air; and then you turn in in your sleeping-bags with your feet to the fire. It's great fun.

Of course there's a lot of "know-how" to one of these excursions; eats, for instance. The whole thing could be knocked in the head if you didn't have at least one first-class cook along; that is, unless you merely carried a prepared supper and breakfast and maybe a lunch besides. But that wouldn't be the regular way; not by a long shot. The regular way is to cook a regular feed, out in the woods, or wherever you pitch your camp, in the old-time primitive manner of the Indians or the pioneers. The idea is to do everything yourself, of course, from picking the

right kind of a place to knowing how to douse your fire scientifically when you break camp. But the cooking is certainly one of the important parts of it, believe me!

Well, about the middle of July our cabin and one of the others with fellows about our size in it and the two counselors, Bill Winchester and Sam Hatch, planned an overnight hike together at a place about eight miles away from Camp Cherokee, inland. Sometimes you make a water-hike, you see, the main advantage of which is that the boats or canoes carry your duffle and you don't have to "pack" it, except to and from the boat.

However, this time it was made easy, because Bill Winchester had his car in camp with him and Bill took a couple of hours off the day before the hike and carried some of the heavy things, like the portable field stove which Chief said we could take along with us, and the rolled sleeping-bags, and so forth, and left them at the place where we were to camp, in a farmhouse about a quarter of a mile away. The next morning, after breakfast, we hiked out there carrying the rest of our stuff and doing a certain amount of "nature work" along the way, like "spotting" birds and all like that, and got there about half-past ten.

Maybe some of you think spotting birds and things like that are sissy things! If you do I'm not going to put up any argument with you beyond saying that

birds are absolutely necessary to human life. It has been figured out by scientists, that in a couple of years, if all the birds were removed from this planet, the human race would have to give in to the insects! The birds eat so many insects that without their help human beings couldn't cope with the swarming insect-life even with scientific apparatus to poison them off. And I'll add this, I'll bet that every fellow who thinks it's "goofy" to go in for nature study and birds and so forth, has some kind of a collection, like the fronts of match-boxes! Well, if you want to exercise your brains, try classifying birds once, and see how it opens out in front of you and where it leads you.

We got out there to the place where we were going to camp, a bully good place where I had never happened to go before, although it was one of the good places known in camp as such and used for some overnight-hiking gang from Cherokee several times during every season. There was that nice friendly farmer and his wife where Bill had left the heavy duffle, and Bill bought fresh milk from him according to plans he had made with the farmer the day before; but outside of that we packed along the rest of the things we needed, except a big mess of huckleberries which were exactly ripe and perfect just then.

Sam Hatch was a wonderful cook, and although he made the rest of us get the three meals we ate there,

he overseeing it so that the greenhorns could learn how, he himself made us an eight-quart huckleberry pie in a bean pan, and boy, I'm here to declare it was some pie!

Two of the fellows from the other cabin, as well as Pinkie, were new to camp, and the rest of us pitched in and did the best we knew how to show them how it was done, and they all took to it first-rate. All taken together we had a mighty good time; good eats, good weather, and a heap of fun. We had two swims in the millpond a little below where camp was pitched, which was beside a small stream which fed the millpond, and one of the stunts the new fellows learned was scrubbing out the pots and pans and the metal plates as well as the knives and forks and spoons which go with a camp cookery outfit, with the fine sand from the bottom of this stream.

And that evening, after a wonderful supper helped out with some good fish that we had snicked out of the millpond and fried in bacon-fat, we had a bully big campfire and—well, it was a grand and glorious feeling, believe me, to sit around like that with everything washed up and ready for breakfast, and everything shipshape for the night, with the stars shining overhead and no promise of rain and the fire going. It pulls any good gang of fellows together. No, there's nothing else quite like it, and it takes a fellow back

to the old, old days of the pioneers when people sat around such fires on the trails and had to watch out for hostile Indians.

Well, Bill Winchester started things off with a story, and then one of the fellows from the other cabin told several jokes and we all had a laugh, and I happened to say to Pinkie, just by way of making conversation, "Come on, Pinkie, *you* tell us a story—how about it?"

And Pinkie came through with this one. I'm going to turn it into United States for several reasons. I couldn't reproduce the way he told it, for one thing, with his own way of telling besides the Negro dialect which was queerer than anything any of us ever heard. And then, besides, it would be rather hard to read, I'm afraid, so I'll do my best on that end of it. Here's the story:

It seems that there was a Black fellow of the kind that was called a "gallows'-bird" down there where he lived, who was a wharf porter; pushed one of those hand trucks like his father and grandfather before him, and owned the truck which had descended from father to son for several generations. Like the rest of his kind of people he was very proud of his "profession" and wouldn't for anything work at anything else; wouldn't take, for instance, a hoe in his hands doing work in the sugar-cane fields or anything

like that, because that would "disgrace" a wharf-porter! It was exactly like the Chinese custom of "face" that I had read about.

Well, this fellow, who went by the outlandish name of Polka-dot Maguire, had a girl. He was very much in love with her. However, he had a pretty hard time because, as he would only work on a certain wharf when ships came in there, and would never do anything else, he didn't make a great deal of money, and so he didn't have very much to spend on the girl in taking her to the "Cinema" or buying her "sweets"; and so the girl wasn't as taken with him as he would have liked. She also, of course, was a Black girl.

So Polka-dot figured around in his mind for maybe six or eight months how he could make some money and impress his girl without lowering his dignity, and at last he came to the conclusion that there was only one way he could do it; only he wasn't sure he had the nerve, although he wouldn't admit this to anybody.

These West Indies Negroes are very superstitious, it seems, and one of their queer beliefs, among a lot of others that Pinkie told us for examples, was that if a man had a tooth from a dead man's jaw, he couldn't lose when he gambled!

So Polka-dot decided after a lot of thinking that he would get some dice and a tooth from a dead man's jaw, and start to make some money by gambling.

So he saved up his coppers and bought a pair of dice and laid them away, and then one very dark night when there was no moon he climbed the hill at the edge of the place where he lived to where the cemetery was located, right at the top of the hill.

He had been for weeks and weeks going to every funeral that had taken place up there, looking the ground over, and so now he knew just exactly where to go. It seems there was a part of the cemetery where they buried the very poor Black people whose families couldn't afford a regular funeral. The grave-diggers were convicts from the prison in the town. These convicts, when they had one of the paupers to bury, saved themselves a lot of work by digging down only a short distance, and Polka-dot had seen some ancient paupers' bones here and there sticking up out of the ground.

O, it was a bully story for the night, sitting there around the campfire, believe me! Bones and the cemetery and the convicts and the black, moonless night with clouds overhead down there on Barbados, and Polka-dot doing it for a "charm" and all—I could pretty nearly feel the shivers go up and down Li'l Joey Terriss' spine where he was sitting next to me and using me for a back to lean against!

Well, Polka-dot got out there where all the poor paupers were buried, and shivered and shook and sweated like a horse, for he was about scared pink in-

stead of black, but every time he lost his nerve and thought of flight he would remember his girl and how great it would be to buy her a big sack full of "sweets" and take her to the Cinemas, and he would go on looking for one of the old graves.

At last he found one and began digging down under the loose, sandy earth with his two hands, and as luck would have it before he had dug down more than a foot or eighteen inches, his hands struck something smooth, and—it was a SKULL!

So Polka-dot took several big, deep breaths and felt around for the jawbone, and—Gee Whillikens! He got his hands against the teeth and pulled quickly at one of them, with his eyes nearly popping out of his head even if it was pitch dark and he was doing it all by the sense of feeling, and lo and behold, without half trying the tooth came out as easy as pie, and Polka-dot had a Dead Man's Tooth!

Of course Polka-dot had to stay long enough to shovel back the loose earth he had scooped out, but he got through with that quickly enough and got up off his hands and knees beside the grave and gave himself a quick dusting off with both hands, the tooth safely in his pocket by now, and started to get out of that cemetery about as fast as he could walk.

He hadn't walked very far before he started to run a little,—just to get home quicker, of course, so that

he could get a good look at the tooth by the light of his kerosene lamp, and before he knew it he was just about flying, for he was so scared he almost turned white!

At last he got away from the cemetery which seemed to him about ten times as large as it had ever been before, and then he trotted down the hill to the town below. The street lights were beginning now, and then he began to feel a little better, and he stopped under one of the street lights to give himself a better dusting off; and at last he sneaked into the little cabin where he lived and lighted the lamp and took the tooth out of his pocket and looked at it.

It was certainly a fine-looking tooth! He hid it away and went to bed and slept well, and the next day he did a powerful heap of thinking. He got out the dice and practiced throwing them out on the cabin floor until he could throw them pretty slick, and then he passed around the word to all his cronies that he had a Dead Man's Tooth, and if they'd lend him a lot of money he'd win a lot more for them.

The news about the tooth spread like wildfire among his own friends and relatives, and they were all very careful to keep it away from outsiders; and in the course of a week or so all of Polka-dot's friends had given him more money to gamble with than he had ever seen in his life. Pinkie said he had a couple of

pounds, about forty shillings, or pretty nearly ten dollars in our money, as much as he would make in several months on the wharf with his hand-truck.

So Polka-dot sent a message, a kind of challenge, to a regular professional gallows'-bird who was a famous gambler among the Negroes, by "The Grape-vine Route," that is, passed on from one darkie to another by word-of-mouth, telling the other gallows'-bird that he was looking for a dice-throwing contest with him. He didn't, of course, say a word about the Dead Man's Tooth, because that was the secret of his side.

The other gallows'-bird accepted the challenge and all the whole boiling of these ne'er-do-wells gathered one night at a place outside of town for the contest. All of Polka-dot's crowd and several of his relatives who had given him money went along with him, about a couple of dozen of them, and all the other bird's crowd was gathered around him, for they had lent him money, too, and the two of them started in.

It seems the other fellow was very skilful at throwing the dice. He could make pretty nearly any number come up that he wanted to. But Polka-dot and his following didn't mind that in the least. Polka-dot had a Dead Man's Tooth!

He kept the tooth clutched tightly in his left hand and threw his nice new dice with his right hand, and every time he would throw them out on the floor the

other fellow would look at them, talk to his old, worn-smooth dice, and throw them out and match Polka-dot's number.

The crowd, that is, Polka-dot's bunch, began to murmur a little after Polka-dot had lost about half of their money inside the first three or four minutes; but they all had every confidence in the tooth, and he kept right on.

At the end of eight or ten minutes the forty shillings were all gone. The other gallows'-bird had every one of them, and the small-change besides, and he was standing there surrounded by his friends handing out their winnings to them, a shilling to this one, a sixpence to that one, and so forth.

Poor Polka-dot couldn't understand it at all. He just couldn't make it out. He stood there, looking kind of dazed, and very very sad and downcast, and then he and his friends stepped outside, and they had hardly got out to the open air when the "friends" all gathered around him and began to shout at him and call him down and call him names and tell him he was a cheat and a skin and everything they could think of. Pinkie did this in such a funny way that we were nearly dead laughing. We hadn't ever heard anything like it, and believe me it was great.

Anyhow, after they had all yelled themselves nearly sick and Polka-dot couldn't tell whether he was afoot or horseback and was still protesting that he had done

his very best and couldn't for the life of him understand why the Dead Man's Tooth which he had got out of the cemetery himself wouldn't work the way it was supposed to, an old man, who was his uncle and who had given him two shillings to gamble with, pushed his way through the mob and came up to Polka-dot and looked at him as if he'd like to bite a hunk out of him for losing his money. The old man said, "Show me that-there tooth, Polka-dot."

So Polka-dot took the tooth out of his pocket and handed it to the old man. He didn't care so much about that tooth now, you see. He had not allowed it out of his sight for a week, but now it didn't seem to matter. It wasn't a very good tooth, somehow.

The old man carried the tooth, followed by all the rest of them, over to a street lamp and looked at it very closely. Then he handed it back to Polka-dot with a look of disgust on his face and said, "Man, man, yo' is *too* stoopid! Dead-man toof, huh! Dis ain' no Dead-Man Toof. Dis Dead-Man have had de attention of a dentis'. *DIS AM A FALSE TOOF!"*

Well, we all had a good old laugh at Pinkie's story, which was the best one we had had that evening, even from Sam Hatch who is pretty good around a campfire, and as it was nine o'clock and I guess every one of us was pretty well worn out by a strenuous day, we fixed the fire for the night and got ready for turn-in and crawled into our good old sleeping bags

between the blankets and fixed the flaps so that we wouldn't get soaked from the necks up if it did happen to shower during the night.

The last thing I remember was snickering a little all to myself over the way Pinkie had done those different voices of the Negroes bawling out poor Polka-dot and looking up at the stars; and then the next thing I knew, it was a beautiful, fresh, bright morning, and Bill Winchester was shaking me and saying, "Come on, Bill—how about a before-breakfast dip in the old millpond?"

And I rolled out and smelled the good old bacon and eggs that Sam Hatch was putting together in two big frying-pans and stretched myself and said "Yee-ow—Boy! That smells good!" and shucked off my flannel pajamas and led the way to the millpond for a first class fresh-water dip.

CHAPTER VIII

MAKING GOOD

OUR chief rival camp I am going to call "Camp Pineapple." That isn't precisely its name, but it wouldn't be quite fair to tell its real name! You'll see why, too, before very long, I imagine.

Well, a little while after what I've just been telling you, we were scheduled to have a big day over at Camp Pineapple, a Field-Day, with track and field events: that is races; pole-vault; throwing the hammer; putting the shot; broad jumps, standing and running; high jumps the same; all the usual events, in fact. This Field-Day took place every Summer over at Pineapple. I'll tell you more about that camp as we go along, but I guess all I want to mention right here is that Pineapple is so big—with more than two hundred campers—and has such a variety to pick from, that it's just about impossible to beat them at anything.

Anyhow, we had a pretty good bunch ourselves and weren't scared in the least to stack our track team up against Pineapple's.

Pinkie, I'll mention right here, was entered for the

quarter and half mile races, those being his best distances.

The Pineapples had never heard of Pinkie. We had him, so to speak, up our sleeve, and, after what he had done to all the rest of us in that hare-and-hounds, we were counting on him a good deal.

He made good, I'm here to tell you! The quarter-mile came ahead of the half-mile, and there simply wasn't anything to it. Old Pinkie, using the English standing start, not like our crouch but standing at the line the way we Americans start a long-distance race, lost maybe a yard at get-away. But after that—! Well Pinkie passed everybody else in that race, in something like sixteen strides, and after that the quarter-mile was nothing but a contest for second place. That red-topped streak came across the finish line at least ten yards ahead of everybody else and wasn't even blowing.

So that was that.

And right here is where the Plot Thickens!

Goddard had been one of our three other fellows in that race. He had come in fourth. Pineapple got second and third; four points, which, with Pinkie's easy first, gave us a five to four on that event, second place counting three points and third one.

It made the Pineapples sit up and take notice, but, somehow, I managed to catch sight of that Goddard-bird right after the race, and he looked to me as if

he would have taken Pinkie down to their lake and drowned him if he thought he could get away with it! Maybe I was exaggerating how Goddard looked. I told myself a little while afterward that I was crazy, "cuckoo," to think such a thing. Anyhow that was my first impression based on my glimpse of Goddard, and you know what they say about first impressions; they're very often right.

I was watching Jim Edgar polishing off the twelve-pound hammer-throw—for we won that one too, although as usual they beat us out on the final score, our fifty-seven to their eighty-seven on the twelve events, and that was the highest score we had made against them in several years—and, as I guess you know, watching those field events is a lot easier than watching the races. There are a lot of intervals, and you can take it easy.

I was taking it easy. I had managed to cop out third place in the running-high-jump and hadn't anything else to do but sit around and look on, so that was what I was doing right then.

The fellows and counselors from both camps were all more or less mixed in together just at this time. A good many of us, especially the counselors, were personally acquainted, you see, and watching an event like the hammer-throw was a good chance to sit around and talk some with your friends from the other camp.

A trifle apart from the rest of the big bunch that was sitting around just then, I noticed Goddard. I noticed him particularly for no other reason than that the person he was talking to was Dr. Robbins, the big, fat, pursy-looking man who owns Camp Pineapple.

That struck me, more or less, as a little out of the ordinary. If it had been Dr. MacGregor, or maybe one of our older counselors with Dr. Robbins, there would have been nothing unusual about it. But I hadn't imagined that Goddard and Dr. Robbins were acquainted, although of course all of us who had been in camp before knew that old boy by sight, no matter what else we knew.

There they were, talking away as though they had been long-lost brothers.

Goddard, I noticed, was doing most of the talking, Dr. Robbins listening for the most part and nodding his head every once in a while, and making his double chin waggle up and down like a pudding and once in a while putting in a word. I noticed his eyes, too, looking all over us who were sitting around there relaxed and giving a whoop once in so often when there was a particularly good throw to see or when one of the hammer-throwers would overbalance and spoil his throw by stepping over the boundary of the seven-foot ring or maybe going in a heap—and then watch out for that hammer! She could certainly ruin

you if she slipped and went sidewise, as she did a couple of times.

Then I noticed that Dr. Robbins' eyes had come to rest, and I hunched myself around to see what he saw and while I couldn't tell exactly, I figured that it was old Pinkie those eyes had settled on.

Then Goddard shifted his eyes and looked in the same direction, and right away I felt a little queer; cold inside, if you know what I mean. Something, I felt, something, a kind of instinct told me, was wrong! I naturally didn't know what it was. I wasn't even certain that it was so. I just felt that way, and that's as well as I can describe it.

All of a sudden I lost interest in the hammer-throw. I couldn't take my eyes off the two of them sitting over there, Dr. Robbins and Goddard, a big, fat, pursy-looking, middle-aged man with a red face and double chin, and big, husky Goddard, with the muscles sticking out all over him, in his track jersey and running-pants; and, it was my instinct, I imagine,—there was something, somehow, wrong about it. . . .

I didn't have long to look at them, because just about then old Robbins got up—it was a lot like a cow getting up—and walked away, and Goddard did the same after a few moments and came over close to where I was sitting and sat down with several of our fellows and began to take an interest in the hammer-throw.

I followed Dr. Robbins with my eyes, for my curiosity was aroused, though over nothing I could put my finger on, and certainly it wasn't any of my business where he went or what he did right there on the athletic field of his own camp.

Anyhow, I saw him make a kind of big circle, and then he wound up over towards my right—he had been over at the left before—and had walked right around the whole collection of us instead of coming straight across. And the next thing I noticed was him talking with a big, husky-looking man who was the Camp Pineapple track-team trainer.

When I looked back over there the next time, Dr. Robbins was watching the hammer-throw, and the other fellow had disappeared.

The pole-vault followed, to give the runners as long an interval between the track events as possible, and that took up quite a lot of time.

And then, maybe twenty-five minutes after the beginning of what I'm telling you now, came the voice of Mr. Cummings, the announcer, through an enormous megaphone. "All out for the Half-Mile Run. All out for the Half-Mile." And everybody streaked it back off the field into the grand-stand—they have a wonderful lot of expensive equipment at Camp Pineapple—and once more old Pinkie was down there, with nine of the Pineapples and two other Cherokees, lining-up at the starting line.

The strategy of the half-mile is very different from that of the quarter. The quarter, nowadays, is just a long sprint, like the two-twenty and the hundred-yard-dash. It's speed alone that counts in a four-forty; sprinting speed, and the stuff in you to keep it up. But it doesn't take any particular brains to run a four-forty, if you have those other things.

In the half-mile, it's largely generalship. You have to watch several things; for instance, not to get yourself "pocketed," with one opponent running ahead of you, one on your right, and one or more just behind. "Pocketing" is team-work—on the part of the other team. Pace-making is another lookout for the slick half-miler. If he's good and the members of the other team know it, they'll lag and wish the making of the pace on him. But on that point, one of your own team, maybe running only for the purpose of having the good half-miler win, can help out a lot by jumping up in front and setting the pace himself.

All that kind of thing is generally worked out by the coach, where it is used. The Pineapples had a professional coach, as I've mentioned. I'm merely stating known facts, you see, and letting you draw your own conclusions.

Well, off they go at the crack of the starter's pistol, and right away anybody with half an eye could see

from the stand that that race had been very carefully "generalled" by the Pineapple contenders. There were nine of them, you see, plenty to work all kinds of track tricks. O, it's fair enough, I guess! It's simply, as I've said, a different kind of race altogether from a sprint, where speed's the thing.

Two Pineapples went straight to the front, one just behind the other, hugging the "pole" (the inside track-edge) as closely as possible. That took care of the "pacemaking" from the beginning. A third Pineapple runner was directly behind Pinkie, who had straightened out into third position. Just outside and a trifle behind this number three Pineapple was Pineapple number four; and back of him, and pressing him closely, came Goddard. All the rest, the Pineapples and our other fellow, were trailing and continued to trail.

In just that order, the two leading Pineapples changing places for the pace-making about a quarter of the way around the track—which is a standard, half-mile, cinder track in perfect condition—the whole bunch kept itself until almost exactly half-way around, or at the quarter-mile marker.

They were directly across the widest part of the oval from us in the grand stand now and at a strategic point in the race, the point where the "good ones" begin to "do their stuff."

They began to do it right then and there. I watched, straining my eyes, like everybody else. This is what happened:

The second pace-maker dropped back. He had already accomplished what he was there for, and there was no fault to find with him. Then the one who had replaced him, as I mentioned, also dropped back. This left Pinkie making the pace. The rest all kept their positions, the two original pace-makers trailing now, done, all through, merely trotting so as to make the finish decently.

Pinkie slowed, which was right tactics. Our other runner, Charlie Edwards, as anyone would have known in a half-mile race, even if he hadn't been told, should now have come up and jumped in ahead of Pinkie, and paced for him as long as he could stand the gruelling. Charlie made a strong effort. That, of course, was what he had been lying back there for, and he started in all right to do his part according to strategy.

But Charlie never got up there in front of Pinkie. Four Pineapples opened out the very instant Pinkie slowed down. Two of them, sprinting as hard as they knew how, went ahead of him. He let them go. Now wasn't the time for Pinkie to sprint. The other two, fanning out, blocked Charlie Edwards. You see, it's a foul if you pass a runner ahead of you on the inside of him and touch him. That's "interference." By "fanning out," one beside the other, these two effectively blocked

Charlie. Then, Charlie having tried and being winded and out of consideration now, those two Pineapples closed in on Pinkie, one settling just behind him and the other a shoulder's breadth ahead of him and to the right, and at last the Pineapples had Pinkie "pocketed."

That cool head of Pinkie's worked all o.k., of course. This wasn't his first half-mile race in competition, not by a jugful! Pinkie never wavered a sixteenth of an inch from that beautiful stride of his that you could see, but he moved up forward as close as he could get to the pacemakers. The fellow on his right moved up with him. The one just behind him came so close that he almost touched Pinkie from behind.

It was plain to everybody by now that this "pocket" had been carefully coached. They ran along in that order for the next eighth of a mile, and it was plain that somewhere among the Pineapple runners there was one who had been picked to try to pass Pinkie on the home-stretch, starting any time after they got around the corner over to our right, and into the straightaway. My eyes ran over them all, trying to pick out the "good one" who was lying back for this last piece of team-work strategy. I couldn't find him; that is, there wasn't anything to pick or choose from as far as anybody could see.

Then Goddard came up. It looked as if he had taken in what had happened to Pinkie and figured that it

was up to him to make the sprint and try to win the race himself, which was entirely o.k., as there wasn't anything whatever he could do to help Pinkie out of the "pocket" and, of course, he was in that race himself, to win for us if he could like any other contender.

So a yell went up from our section for Goddard, and he certainly did put foot to ground, I'm here to tell you! Goddard came up abreast of Pinkie and the Pineapple who was blocking him from the outside; for, you see, it was just a shade early in the race for the final sprint, and Goddard was the only one sprinting. The head pacemaker pulled away out to the outside, now. He was "all in," and he dropped back out of the running.

Then it was Pineapple number one pacing; Pineapple number two at Pinkie's right; Pineapple number three just behind Pinkie—the "pocket" still complete with those three and working like a clock—and, just abreast of Pinkie and number two, Goddard, straining everything he had to get out ahead and beat them all to the tape.

They came on, almost under our eyes now, straight for the finish which was right in front of the centre of the grandstand, and now I could see who the "good" Pineapple runners were. They were two big, tall, lanky fellows, who had been running steadily about seventh and eighth so far. These two "stepped on it" now and began to draw up abreast of Goddard. The pacemaker

had been going faster and faster, and right at this instant his speed slackened and he swung out because he couldn't hold the pace another second. He slowed, died down to a mere trot while the rest swept by him, and—well, I'll tell the rest in "the historical present!"

As the two "good" Pineapples who had been saving up for this now press Goddard, Goddard makes a tremendous effort, and, instead of shooting straight ahead as he should do to sprint it out with the others, *Goddard swings in against Pinkie,* throwing him off his stride over towards the pole, which is only a matter of inches with him anyway, he's hugging that imaginary inside barrier next the fence so closely anyway, saving energy, and then he "runs right up Pinkie's back," as the track saying is, planting his spikes right smack into the big tendon on the lower part of poor Pinkie's left leg.

There's a spurt of blood from Pinkie's torn leg, and Goddard goes down in a heap, and three or four Pineapples into the heap on top of him in a mess, and everybody's standing up and gone plumb crazy in the grandstand, and the Pineapples are yelling their heads off, and their two "good" runners are sprinting with everything they've got, and——

Well, that blood from Pinkie's torn leg isn't the only thing that spurts. No. Old Pinkie spurts, his own self!

He goes across that finish line like a frightened antelope, with a stride that puts his knees almost up

to his chin, his arms up over his head like a professional to hit the piece of red yarn with his chest and so save a protest which he'd get from that crowd if he touched it with his hand or arm, with the blood flying now from that horrible set of gashes he's got to mark him up for the rest of his life, and collapses in a dead faint, down and out, where Jim Edgar is waiting to catch him in his arms.

Well, the Pineapples, in spite of all their efforts, had to be satisfied with second and third respectively in *that* race, because good, old, antelope Pinkie is just too good for them all, and all their coaching and pacemaking and pocketing and all the rest of it.

There's a lot of confusion right away, of course, what with officials running around and fellows yelling, and that five or six picking themselves up off the track, where they are strewed around over and under big Goddard, and picking the cinders out of themselves, and hustling to the dressing-room after iodine and mercurochrome and all the rest of it, but there isn't any confusion on the part of the timers or the referee, who happens to be Bill Winchester, Esquire. Pinkie has that race to his credit, even if he is being carried to the dressing-room, and Dr. MacGregor and big "Runt" Edwards who is our First-Aid man at camp and a medical student hurrying after him with emergency kits being ripped open on the way and worried looks on their faces.

And the next time we see Pinkie he's pretty pale and is all done up like a package around that leg and walking with a stick; but his grin isn't spiked any! He comes over to where the rest of us are taking in the shot-put, which is the last event, and when we see him, every last one of us is on our feet and giving him our famous Locomotive Yell——

C-H-E-R-O-K-E-E!!!—Pinkie, *Pinkie,* PINKIE!

CHAPTER IX

A MIDGET IS LOST

AS soon as we got back to camp Dr. MacGregor and Runt Edwards put Pinkie straight into the infirmary and changed the dressings on his spiked leg; and right away Runt drove down to the village and brought Dr. Hilton back with him, because, being still a medical student—although Runt is a wonder, we all think—he didn't want to take the smallest chance on everything not being o.k. with Pinkie.

It went around camp that Dr. Hilton had said he'd be all right, and that there was no permanent injury —only the scars that would, of course, stay with him for life—either to the big tendon or to the ankle itself, and also that Pinkie was lucky in not having got any infection in those ugly wounds, five of them, one from each of Goddard's spikes, and three of them big, long tears at that, for Pinkie had got the whole weight of that big lummox's stride.

Believe me, we were all mighty glad to hear that, especially the rest of us fellows in our cabin and Bill Winchester our counselor, and all of us made a number of little hikes up to the infirmary and back for the two days they kept old Pinkie shut up there.

We missed him from the cabin, too, more than perhaps you'd imagine. I don't believe before that any one of us, including Bill himself, had half-realized how much Pinkie was the life of the old cabin; what a really grand and funny old critter he was anyhow.

But missing him from the cabin, for me, was the small end of it all. I was distinctly worried. Not about Pinkie being lame or anything. No, not that. What Dr. Hilton and Runt and Chief MacGregor said on that score was plenty good enough for Bill Spofford. But besides those things, as I guess you can see easily enough, I had plenty on my mind. For I had seen the whole thing, every last bit and speck of it, and it looked to my private eye and mind, down inside me—I'll just mention flatly right here for better for worse—it looked as if that big boob Goddard had done it on purpose.

Now, I grant you, that's a tough and terrible thing to say about any fellow that's a campmate of yours. I set it down, however, because it's the truth. I did, down inside me, believe not only that such a thing was possible, but also that it was the true state of affairs.

To begin with, I hadn't ever liked Goddard. I had always regarded him as more or less of a bully. You've heard about the grudge-fight, and maybe think that Goddard was after all a pretty good kind of a fellow, only maybe a little thick above the ears, because he apologized that way. I considered that, too, sizing the

thing up all by myself. I didn't know then, the time I'm mentioning here, while Pinkie was still in the infirmary, what we were all in for. That'll come later, all in its proper place. But right then I figured-in that apology on the good side of the ledger in sizing up Goddard, but, even if it sounds small on my part, I figured that it was the pressure of the gang's opinion, along with the urgency Dr. MacGregor was putting into what he said that time, that made Goddard come forward and square things with Pinkie.

And I think, if you'll figure that along with me the way I did, you'll come to the same conclusion, which is; there wasn't anything else left for Goddard to do! There wasn't, as I looked back over that occasion, one, single, solitary thing besides that was open to him; except to insist on going on with the fight then and there, which would have been too ridiculous even for Goddard.

So I was inclined to discount the apology; and when I had done that and went on sizing up Goddard in my mind, I saw that he hadn't a leg left to stand on. And, unless I missed my guess about a thousand miles, he went down off that platform the morning of the grudge-fight more sore at Pinkie even than he had been before; good and plenty sore.

Then, I had to come to it, there was what I had seen up at Camp Pineapple; I mean Goddard and that old Dr. Robbins talking together.

I admit such a thing seemed perfectly ridiculous; the owner of a great, fine camp like Pineapple lending himself to—well, whatever it had been Goddard was putting into his ear; some kind of a frame-up on Pinkie, as I'd suspected at the time. And remember, please, that was *before* the half-mile race! Goddard hadn't, at that time, done a regular lot of acrobatics to wind up spiking Pinkie the way he had. I've run in races myself and watched a lot of them. I never had my eyes off them down there on the track. Even without what I'd seen and allowed myself to suspect, anyone watching as closely as I did would have thought maybe Goddard did it all on purpose. In fact, there had been some wild talk to that effect at the time, but it seemed to be only wild talk, in the heat of the moment; that kind of talk. It blew right over. It seemed altogether too ridiculous, just as Dr. Robbins' possible part in something seemed foolish on the face of it to me.

I can't tell what you'll think of all this, reading it the way I am writing it down. But remember, please, you don't know Goddard quite the way I knew him, and you don't know that old Dr. Robbins, either.

So now that I've got that down, which I want to mention in this place before I go on and tell what all this grew into and how it eventually came out, I'll go on, and I think it's about time!

Pinkie came back to the cabin on the third morn-

ing after the field-day. His leg, of course, was still in complicated bandages, and he wasn't to swim for several more days but had to wash the best way he could with a big sponge that he brought out of one of his famous "boxes" and go to the infirmary twice a day for Runt Edwards to fix the leg and give him a couple of washes all over with rubbing alcohol. Boy—it was good to have him back in the cabin again.

And on that same evening, the trouble started!

The first I knew of it was just a little after half-past eight, which in camp is the midgets' bedtime. Prattie and Li'l Joe Terriss and I happened to be sitting together at campfire, which was being held outdoors, for this was a beautiful July night under the stars, and it was just after the break in the big evening campfire which comes to allow the little fellows to get going on the way to their final toothbrushing and bed. Each counselor for the midgets would wait a little outside the campfire circle, and his little fellows would gather around him where he stood and then all walk to their cabins in bunches, because at the campfires we sat where we liked, and the little midgets would be scattered around and sandwiched-in all over the circle.

Well, right back of us came, very quietly so as not to interrupt, a very nice, pleasant fellow all the way from Florida, named Jeff Fletcher. Jeff is one of our good counselors, and has charge of a cabin of about nine

or ten little fellows. Jeff came to a pause just back of where we were, and I looked around and grinned at him and he nodded his head at me. I turned around and whispered to him, "'Whassa matter,' Jeff—you look kinda worried?"

"One of my kids hasn't turned up and I'm looking over the campfire for him. He might have been wedged in somewhere and gone to sleep."

I whispered to Joe and Prattie, and we all got up very quietly and joined Jeff outside the circle and helped him look. We didn't see anything of little Jimmy Bronson, who was the midget Jeff had lost, and so we circled the campfire where there are a lot of built-in stone seats, thinking that perhaps he might be down in-between a couple of fellows, as Jeff had said, and asleep. We went all around twice, but no Jimmy!

Jimmy Bronson was a little, skinny, nine-year-old, who had been sent to camp for his health. He wasn't very big or very strong, but he was a nice little tad and not a pest the way some of them are until camp life gets them snapped out of it.

After a second circling, Jeff stepped inside the circle, went up to Chief, and whispered to him. Chief got up right away and stopped the gentleman who was giving us a talk on The Wild Life of The Canadian Rockies, with an apology, and announced with a smile that James Bronson had not shown up for his

bedding-down that evening and asked who had seen him at campfire.

No one answered, and it looked as if Jimmie had done his little disappearing-act before the campfire started. That meant that he had been "lost" or whatever it was, for an hour or more. Chief held a quick check-up about him right there and then. Yes, he had been at supper all o.k. Several fellows had seen him afterwards, too. He was, to cut it short, accounted for right up to about half an hour before campfire started. After that nobody had seen him.

So Chief called for four volunteers to go and look up Jimmy, and the three of us, Prattie and Joe and I, volunteered along with "Mike" McGarragh, and we slipped away while the speaker's talk about the elk and things was resumed.

Campfire was just letting out at a little after nine when we reported back. Among us, with Jeff working with us after he had settled his other midgets for the night, we had covered all the likely places; the beach first, of course, for you always think of water, somehow, when anybody gets lost out of camp, and all we could report to Chief was that there was neither sight nor sound that would show anybody where little Jimmy disappeared to.

So Chief ordered a General Search and everybody got busy, as quietly as possible near the cabins where the little fellows were settled for the night, and with

lanterns and flashlights and regular squads and divisions and everything done the way such searches are scientifically managed in a first-class camp.

Once more I'll make a long story short by leaving out the uninteresting details of that search to say merely that at ten-thirty, the time when the search-party had been ordered to come in and report at the campfire circle, we hadn't been able to discover hide nor hair of Jimmy Bronson, and on the whole we were a pretty gloomy as well as a very tired bunch. That had been a very thorough search, you can believe me, with all the resources of camp in on it and all the directing brains of Chief and the old, experienced counselors.

Besides there wasn't, of course, such an enormous lot of territory to be covered. Camp limits comprised some fifteen acres. Outside of that there were few places where a little boy could hide. We had combed the camp area with a fine-tooth-comb. We had also covered every house within a radius of a mile or so.

Of course Jimmy was somewhere, and not so very far away at that; unless, of course, one of the wild-eyed theories happened to be correct and somebody had stolen Jimmy and now had him, held for ransom or something that might happen in some crazy story and was hiking him away at sixty miles per hour in a speeding car with all lights out and guns bristling from every window!

Common-sense rather indicated that something serious had happened to Jimmy, such as losing his head—which was improbable, of course—and deciding, against all camp regulations, to take a swim all by himself just a little after supper-time, going in alone and getting himself drowned. The difficulty with any such explanation as that was that Jimmy was one of those perfectly sensible little kids, and such a solution wasn't like him.

Chief, who had been out searching himself, listened to the reports of the various groups, which didn't take long because there was nothing to report except failure, just made a very brief talk and ordered us all to turn in after thanking us and was organizing another intensive hunt with three or four of the older counselors who, with him, would, if necessary, be up all night looking for Jimmy. We were just drifting away from the circle, feeling pretty much down and sad I guess, if my own feelings were anything like the rest of them, when Pinkie, walking with his stick and in his pajamas and slippers, came hobbling towards us from the direction of our cabin. The first fellows he met corroborated his impression which he got from our looks, that Jimmy had not been found. Prattie and I and Li'l Joe Terriss joined him as he hobbled over to Chief. We had stuck together all that evening. Several others turned around and followed us. Pinkie, you see, on account of his injured leg, had not been allowed to

join the hunt. He was the only one who hadn't been in it, except the little midgets. Even Julius, the head cook, had been on that hunt, and Old George and Young Jim, the two men who did the heavy work around camp, had been plugging around in their overalls.

Maybe a dozen of us were with Pinkie when he reached the place where Chief and his group were sitting with their heads together. Pinkie went right to the point as soon as Chief had looked up enquiringly to see what we all wanted coming back like that.

"Please, sir," began Pinkie, "I've been thinking a bit, you know, lying there in the cabin, and—if you don't mind—I have a suggestion." Pinkie was quite red now, as he always was on occasions when he had to speak up or anything of the kind.

Chief smiled pleasantly. "They're welcome, Jim Clutton," he said. "Let's have it, please."

"Well, sir," said Pinkie, "it's elimination! I gather, sir, that Bronson not being discovered in any place that might seem usual or ordinary, so to speak, is necessarily in some place or perhaps some predicament, which is out of the ordinary. He is much too sensible a little beggar to get himself drowned. It's a safe conclusion he hasn't been—er, so to speak, stolen away by anybody! Now, sir, as he hasn't made his appearance, it seems likely *that he is being detained,* and in some way that prevents his calling out because—unless

he has lost his—er—hearing, so to speak, he would have heard the searchers.

"Now, sir, I am rather better acquainted with Bronson than with the other midgets, sir. That is because, not being—er—precisely an athlete, sir, he rather turns his mind to conversation, and to doing things he knows himself able to do. He's not very strong, as we all know. Now, sir, the thing he seems to like—his own little 'activity,' sir—is climbing trees. Perhaps others have noticed it too. I have, because I sometimes sit in Nelson's old tree-house, sir, and when I do, if Bronson sees me, he comes up that tree and joins me and sits and talks there with me. There is so much going on in camp that interests him, sir, and that with his extra rest-periods that he has to have, keeps him, rather, from—er—fulfilling his ambition to climb big trees.

"I've been figuring it out, as I say, sir, lying on the bed in the cabin. If it isn't too absurd, sir,"—and Pinkie became almost purple between his earnestness and something like embarrassment, for Chief was standing up now, listening carefully and nodding his head, and a lot of us were listening, all crowded around Pinkie—"I'd suggest, sir, that you try to the Westward, where those large trees are. It's at least possible that he went up there between supper and campfire to try his hand at one of those big trees—a sudden impulse, sir—I've had them myself when I was that little nipper's age—

and—it's possible he has got up into a tree and can't get down. There are all sorts of things that might happen, sir, you see. He may have fallen and been caught on a limb or got himself wedged, sir—one can hardly say, of course, but——"

"Good for you, Pinkie," exclaimed Chief and paused only to make the rest of us turn in according to previous orders, while he got his own gang together; and while we were reluctantly wending our way to our cabins and positively stumbling, we were so tired, off went Chief with five or six counselors at the double in the direction Pinkie had mentioned.

I, for one, went to sleep before I was entirely undressed. I woke up at the big gong on the main house veranda booming and jumped up and found, first, that I was sleeping with my shoes and cap on, and second, as soon as I could collect myself and get some idea of what it was all about, I noticed that it wasn't morning at all, as I had naturally supposed from the gong booming, but still dark. All around me in the cabin were the little noises of the fellows waking up and half out of bed, and from outside the cabin came the numerous little sounds of other cabins getting roused out of sleep.

And then through the enormous megaphone that hangs on the wall in the main assembly room came Chief's own voice so that you could hear it all over camp.

"ANNOUNCING BRONSON DISCOVERED AND SAFE. WILL REMAIN IN THE INFIRMARY OVERNIGHT FOR EXTRA REST. FULL DETAILS AT MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS. EVERYBODY ROLL OVER AND GET PLENTY OF SLEEP NOW. RISING GONG AT EIGHT-THIRTY IN THE MORNING FOR EXTRA REST. THANK YOU. GOOD NIGHT."

And then, from all over camp, came a kind of unorganized, wavering chorus of fellows and counselors, their minds at rest about Jimmy Bronson, "GOOD-NIGHT, CHIEF!"

CHAPTER X

THE RED-HEADED GHOST

IN the morning we got those particulars. Following out Pinkie's suggestion Chief and his group had gone west and come before very long to those big trees, which stood on a kind of knoll, and where we often went Sunday afternoons for an outdoor supper on the ground underneath that big stretch of shade.

They got there, and of course the first thing they did—the grove was a small one—was to spread out slightly, look up into the trees with their big flashlights playing around among the thick branches, and call out for Jimmy.

Well, they didn't see Jimmy; and if Jimmy was there he didn't give them any answer, and, as that had failed, Chief organized his group to take a tree at a time—there were perhaps forty of the big fellows—and put all the flashlights through it in groups for greater illumination.

At the fourth tree they noticed—someone did, and called the others' attention to it—a lot of freshly-fallen punk or rotten scraps of wood on the ground around the big roots. They then put in extra attention on that

tree, but, attention or no attention, Jimmy didn't reveal himself. However, they figured somebody or something had been lately up in that tree to cause the rotten wood-powder to fall like that, and they went over those branches with the flashlights again from all sides and angles, for this rotten punk was the only thing that looked like a clue that had come to light all the evening.

Then Jeff Fletcher had gone up the tree, with two flashlights tied around his neck hanging from his whistle-thong and three other flashlights lighting his way in the pitch-black up there on the knoll; and, Jeff had hardly got up as far as the top of the main trunk—it was a very simple and easy tree to go up, Jeff said afterwards—when one of the flashlights on the ground wavered and went suddenly flooie because one of the fellows had been standing right on that smear of slippery, damp punk, and his foot had slipped from under him, and he had gone in a heap. And when he gathered himself together and got up and stooped to pick up his flashlight, which was still burning o.k., that fellow gave a peculiar kind of grunt and steadied the flashlight down along the ground. He slipped away and came back in an instant, carrying in his hand the thing the flash had happened to show him about fifteen feet away from the tree's trunk and lying on the ground.

He brought it back to the rest, and Jeff paused just

at the top of the main trunk where he had got so far, and Chief and the rest took a good look at what had been found; it was little Jimmy Bronson's right moccasin.

Well, here was a real clue, at last, and now all the rest of them wanted to go up the tree too, but Chief made them stand where they were and put their attention on lighting Jeff's way for him, and within a couple of seconds Jeff had got his bearings again and went up a couple of big branches farther.

And then those on the ground saw Jeff stop suddenly and then brace his feet against a couple of branch crotches and stoop down and dig like a-dog-burying-a-bone, with both hands and then stoop over farther and dig his hands into something and straighten up and——

In the concentrated light of all those flashes held steadily on the place, they saw Jeff heave up the limp body of little Jimmy Bronson. Chief stepped up close to the tree, and Bill Miner bent over so that Chief could step carefully on his back. He reached up, and down into his arms came poor little Jimmy, unconscious, but still alive and not really damaged in any way; from the big hole where the tree had rotted and into which he had managed to slip and get caught, right up to the middle of his face, and where Jeff had all but stepped on him just before he saw what had happened and dug him out.

Chief ended his story at morning announcements by giving us a brief and pointed talk on just what was the matter with little Jimmy. He was to stay in the infirmary for a day or two, because, although there wasn't so much as a scratch on the little fellow, he was suffering from "physiological shock," and Chief went on to tell us about that and what it would do to a person. Most of us knew about it, anyhow, from our First Aid Course under Runt Edwards, which he gave the bigger fellows every year, but Chief impressed on us that since Jimmy hadn't been very well for a long time before he came to camp this Summer, we would all have to watch our step a little with Jimmy, for a few days at least until the memory of this experience of his had died down in his mind.

"He is set back considerably," said Chief, "and of course it is our wish, all of us, to get Jimmy built up and well before camp closes the first of September. So you see, fellows, I am relying on you all to help. Encourage Jimmy. Be pleasant to him. Maybe go out of your way somewhat, you older fellows, to make him forget what has happened. Above all, no 'roughhouse' with him, or anything of the kind, for a week or so at least until he gets back on his feet."

That was just like Chief, of course, and I figured naturally everybody was impressed and would carry out what Chief asked to the letter.

So you'll see what a "shock" all the rest of us got

the second night following this when I tell you what happened!

One of the things prescribed for Jimmy was as much fresh air as possible. Therefore, on all good and pleasant nights, Jimmy slept outside the cabin on a big mound of pine-needles, in his patent sleeping-bag, the kind we all use for overnight hikes. Only on rainy or threatening nights would Jimmy be inside Jeff Fletcher's cabin with the other little fellows who occupied it. His pine-needle bed was only a few steps from that cabin door anyhow, and it was almost like sleeping with the rest of the bunch for little Jimmy. And good old Jeff Fletcher would often get out of bed in the night, where, like a good counselor he slept among his little tads "with one eye open," and come out and look him over, and that sleeping-bag arrangement for Jimmy was one we were all accustomed to because a lot of us, from time to time, did the same. In fact, Pinkie very often slept in his sleeping-bag, on a good, warm night, up there in the old tree-house on the platform and had to climb down mornings looking like an old clothes-horse with his skinny, lanky arms and legs bristling up and down the tree-ladder!

On the second night, as I said, following Chief's account of the rescue of Jimmy, it was quite beautiful with every star glowing up above there, and a light, gentle wind among our pine trees, and, as a camp-catalogue I once read and grinned over expressed it,

we were all "wrapped in the pine-scented atmosphere of the health-giving Adirondacks"—only this wasn't the Adirondacks, but Long Island, New York State.

Suddenly out of the night came the most horrible, blood-curdling wails you could possibly imagine, and all over camp everybody was jumping out of bed and bumping into each other and rushing around and listening now to what was even worse than those blood-curdlers I've mentioned—a terrified little fellow's screams of pure fright. It was the most harrowing thing I've ever heard.

Like the rest, all over the place, I rushed outside to see what in goodness' name was the matter!

There was plenty the matter.

The yells and later screams had come from over by Jeff's cabin of little boys, and that, naturally, was the direction the lot of us took who were outside by that time.

The first person we gathered around was Jeff Fletcher, down on his knees beside little Bronson's sleeping-bag, with poor little Jimmy, just crazy with fright, in his arms and trying to quiet him down. It was nearly one o'clock in the morning, and over all the confusion the great beautiful stars looked down on us, quietly burning up there, and little soft breezes moved the spice and balm out of the upper air perfumed with millions and billions of scented pine-needles.

And in that almost deathly silence, broken only by the soft footfalls of those who were still coming from the cabins and gathering around Jeff and little Jimmy there at the side of the rumpled-up sleeping-bag, it was easy to get every word, in Jimmy's little piping voice, of what the poor, little frightened kid was saying, between the great catching sobs that shook his little self from head to foot and which he couldn't stop.

"It—was a great, big, tall, skinny, GHOST—Jeff. It—it—it c-came—right up to me and howled—ugh! It—was t-tall, and skinny, like I s-said, Jeff—an'—*it had red hair,* Jeff—ter'ble, red hair—stickin' out the t-top of itself—out through the w-w-white kinda stuff around its head!"

Out from the shadows behind the big pines beside Jeff's cabin, stepped Chief MacGregor, with Runt Edwards behind him; big Runt towering up over Chief who is a great big man, too, to his full six feet three. Runt was slipping a big, murderous-looking, blue-steel automatic pistol into the pocket of the jacket that he had grabbed and put on over his pajamas. Runt was certainly "heeled" for bears and wildcats, that night! Chief looked very grim, I'm telling you! He spoke to us, very quietly, "Everybody go back to bed—*pronto.* I'll have something to say about this in the morning. Off you go, now!"

Everybody did a swift sneak after that, leaving Chief

and Runt there beside Jeff and little Jimmy. Chief nodded at Runt in the direction of Jeff's cabin, where the doorway was all jammed up with the other little midgets, all of them pop-eyed, and Runt herded them together inside, which was the last thing I saw before getting back into the old cabin.

The next morning we heard from Chief, I'm here to tell you! Chief MacGregor is a big man every way you look at it. He weighs about a hundred and eighty pounds of solid bone and muscle and was a great athlete in his time, and nowadays I've heard it said that he can do anything any one of his counselors can do, and that's a pretty big order. Chief would make a lot better friend than an enemy. He's big-minded as well as big-bodied, and "knows his stuff" through and through and is in every way, I'm bound to admit, a kind of hero to all of us. We think at our camp that in many ways our Chief is the greatest man in the world. Anyhow, the younger campers always do and freely admit it, and I haven't noticed any of the older ones who have known him and seen him do the wonderful things he does year after year, who ever denied it.

Well, Chief was good and plenty mad the next morning! He spoke to us in little, crisp sentences, with his eyes half shut and his teeth shut all the way, and I honestly believe that if I had been the miserable

skunk who had sprung that rotten trick of half scaring to death poor little Jimmy Bronson after what he had been through and what Chief had said and everything, I'd have bogged down right there and died of pure shame.

But nobody did bog down. Whoever it had been was a pure mutt, if I may be allowed to use such an expression about a fellow-camper. For there wasn't any doubt, of course, that it was somebody right in camp. There wasn't anybody else to do it, naturally; no one else would have any reason to do such a thing.

Jimmy was in the infirmary again, and Runt and Miss Stokes, the camp nurse, had been up with him all night. He was sleeping now, Chief told us. Chief made it plain that this was something he wouldn't tolerate. I won't repeat what he said, although it was plenty, only to mention that he ended by saying that when—not "if," mind you, "when—I find what miserable skunk did that dirty trick, he's going out of this camp on the next train; and before he goes, I promise you, I'm going to do something I've never done in my seventeen years in camp. I'm going to give him a licking—personally—with these hands!"

That's the way Chief ended, and, compared with his usual mild and gentle way of speaking, it certainly made an impression on all of us.

I'll also tell you something else. I went away from

that morning assembly feeling about as badly as I've ever felt in my whole life, either before or since.

Why?

Well, because, you see, the night before, when I had got back to the cabin, with Jimmy's poor little voice in my ears telling what had happened, one thing kept repeating itself over and over to me and getting me more and more feeling queer and miserable inside; telling myself it couldn't possibly be so, but—well, you'll remember in that account of little Jimmy's the "ghost" had had red hair sticking up out of the top of its head. Do you remember?

That was what stuck in my mind.

You see, James Clutton, of Barbados, B. W. I.—our Pinkie—was the only single, solitary fellow in camp with red hair.

That was what was bothering me.

Of course, I told myself, it was ridiculous, impossible, out of the question! Pinkie! The last fellow on earth, much less in camp, who would do such a thing, even though in a small way Pinkie had proved to be a practical joker around the cabin, as I say, in little, rather harmless ways. If it could, possibly, be Pinkie, I put it down to a lack of judgment, rather than pure meanness. That didn't fit with what we in the cabin knew of Pinkie. But, late at night and right after seeing the pitiful effect the scare had had on poor Jimmy, there in Jeff's arms and frightened half to death, with

his little thin chest heaving in and out and the big tears that he couldn't stop running down his little, bony face, it was a terrible idea.

When I got into the cabin I looked over at Pinkie's bed. I hadn't seen him outside, you see. He was, apparently, one of those who hadn't got up. Everybody hadn't been there. It was dark inside the cabin, because no one had put on a light, and Bill Winchester merely contented himself with asking, "Is everybody in?"

And several sleepy voices, including mine, answered, "Yes, Bill."

And I couldn't get it clearly if a voice had come from Pinkie's bed even then.

And so, five minutes or so after the cabin had quieted down and I could hear Bill Winchester and Joey Terriss breathing in their sleep, I very quietly reached over and felt Pinkie's bed, which is nearest to mine. I pulled myself half out of bed to reach, with one hand on the cabin floor. There was a big roll of bedclothes there, and I felt very gently, and, after a while, I had felt pretty well all over that bed—and no Pinkie.

So I decided to remain awake if I could, and I did for quite a while, and then I think I must have fallen asleep, but I half-way awakened, with some tiny little noise I suppose, being all set to watch even if I had let go and fallen into a light doze; and there, in the almost blackness of the cabin, I saw the door open and a tall,

thin figure come in very cautiously and quietly and move without a single sound, after it had closed the cabin door by inches, over in my direction and melt into the blackness the other side of Pinkie's bed.

And then, after what seemed a very long time in which I had hardly dared breathe, I felt so queer and strange inside, I heard the tiniest little sound over the other side of the bed, like metal moving against metal, precisely the sound made by Pinkie when he would lift the lid of one of those boxes of his, and, wondering at that, I fell asleep again and didn't wake up until morning.

And being, on purpose, for the whole thing was in my mind very strongly, the last one out of the cabin that morning, I lifted the lid of the nearest trunk an inch and peeked in and then opened it a trifle more, and saw——A crumpled and mussed white sheet stuffed into that trunk.

So I imagine you won't find it very hard to understand something of how I was feeling after that talk of Chief's the next morning. I took a good look at Pinkie while Chief was ending that talk of his, and I'll own up I felt almost like a miserable cur and a traitor to a friend when I did so; much the way I had felt when I raised Pinkie's trunk-lid earlier that morning in the cabin before breakfast.

Pinkie looked very serious.

But then, we all did.

And there was nothing, absolutely nothing, in Pinkie's expression such as there would have been, you would imagine, in any boy's expression after listening to that biting denunciation of Chief's, provided that fellow had been mixed up in such a rotten trick.

Pinkie joined me as I walked away.

"Chief positively frothed, what!" remarked Pinkie. Then, continuing, "And he's quite in the gold—quite right, I mean to say. He hit the nail on the head properly. Er—I believe I'd take a shot at that blighter myself, Bill, if I know who it was positively—with a length of gaspipe for choice."

"Have you—" my tongue seemed rather thick—"have you—er—any idea, Pinkie who——"

Pinkie looked at me out of the corner of his eye, rather queerly.

"An idea—ye-es, Bill," answered Pinkie. "O, yes, an idea right enough. Doggo, old bird. Not a word, you know. Later—perhaps."

And I had to let it go at that.

And I didn't know what to make of it, either.

CHAPTER XI

TRACKING DOWN A VILLAIN

WELL, I seemed to have two problems, and very serious ones, on my hands, only the second one, "Who Had Done the Dirty Trick to Little Bronson?" was, of course, the problem of everybody in camp.

That one being more pressing, more or less crowded the older one—the one about Goddard—out of my mind. But, so far as Pinkie being the one was concerned, it was a simpler problem than the other. After sleeping on it, along with what Pinkie had said, I didn't find it hard to come to the conclusion that Pinkie could not possibly be that person who had played the ghost. It wasn't "in character" with him at all, and, plainly enough, in spite of the indefiniteness of what he had said, he had made it clear enough that he wasn't the one. I didn't find it hard to convince myself that I had been doing Pinkie an injustice in even thinking he could possibly be that red-headed ghost.

Yet, there couldn't be much mistake about what Jimmy Bronson had said. That ghost was red-headed and Pinkie was the only red-headed person in camp.

If only it hadn't been for that crumpled sheet in Pinkie's trunk!

Maybe you'll think I'm pretty slow. I guess perhaps I am. I think the reason it didn't dawn on me was because my mind was all tangled up with the other problem, the one about Goddard on the track at Pineapple.

It must have been towards the middle of the next morning after that ghost had got most of us up out of bed, that it dawned on me.

Somebody was trying to "frame" Pinkie; properly this time! And the best possible way, the most obvious way, was to do a rotten trick like frightening Jimmy Bronson, and have it appear on Jimmy's testimony that it was the only red-headed fellow in camp who had done it.

Naturally, it put a new light on the whole situation. If anybody was low-down enough to do such a thing and hated a fellow enough to go at it that way—what could be easier?

If that were the true state of affairs, then little Jimmy was right about that red hair and not at all off his head from fright, as several were saying. Of course, although I haven't mentioned it, you'd know the camp would be seething with it—who pulled off that rotten trick?—after most of us had seen with our own eyes what it had done to Jimmy and then heard what Chief had to say.

About ten that morning, Jim Edgar and three other fellows, all big reliable, fine fellows, walked up to our cabin and came in. I was there, as it happened. They said "howdy" to me and went and stood beside Pinkie's bed where he was lying resting his leg.

Jim Edgar opened the proceedings.

"Listen, Pinkie, old man! We have to ask you something that none of us likes to ask you. Will you tell us something, plainly?"

"Rather!" said Pinkie, "shoot the works!" That was one that Pinkie had recently picked up and was, as he expressed it, "accessionating" to his collection of remarks to use back home.

"Well," said Jim Edgar, "it's like this. Jimmy Bronson said that ghost-thing that nearly ruined him had red hair. You're the only fellow in camp that has. We're not wanting you to think we believe it was you, Pinkie, but it's necessary, for the good of the camp, that we get what you have to say to it. Were you that ghost?"

Pinkie sat and looked at them reflectively. He nodded his head, not in the way to indicate that he was the ghost, but sort of showing that he took in and didn't mind what these fellows were up to, asking him that.

"I get you," said Pinkie, after a little interval. "It's right and proper to ask me, and I want you all to know I don't hold it against you—not in the least—a

very proper question. Logically, after what Bronson said, the alternatives seem to be that I was the ghost or that somebody else was trying to make heavy trouble for me by means of that red hair effect, knowing that I am, as you say, the only chap in camp with—er—this type of hirsute adornment!" Pinkie rumpled his carroty thatch with both hands to emphasize its excessive redness. He looked at those fellows once more, pausing before he continued. Then he said, "No, Jim, and the rest of you. I was not that ghost. I might be pretty sore even to be asked such a question, but I'm not. I see that you're doing your duty to camp, and I'm on your side in that. But—let this be the last and only time anybody asks me that, please. I won't be polite about such a thing another time."

And with that Pinkie rolled over in bed away from them, and Jim and the others got up and got out very quietly.

That, of course, settled for me any possible lingering doubts I may have had about it, knocking around inside my skull. Pinkie had definitely said he was not the ghost. And he'd put his intelligent bean right on the same motive I had thought of—the fellow who was the ghost might have had getting Pinkie "in dutch" for his main motive!

He lay there, very quietly, and I sat in the old rocking-chair fixing new shoelaces in my keds and making a long job of it.

I was just through when Pinkie rolled back on his bed facing in my direction. He spoke to me in his usual voice, "Bill, you're the only chap in camp I'd be willing to own up to about something. Bill—I'm rather —er—up against it. Listen, now—perhaps you'd best come over here so I won't have to talk above a whisper. I want to spill something to you, Bill. I've been cogitating it for hours."

I went over and sat on Pinkie's bed beside him. Once more I was pretty thoroughly mystified, with all this about "owning up" and being "up against it." So I kept my mouth shut and waited for Pinkie to tell me whatever was on his mind. He sat there, on top of the bed, his bony, sharp knees drawn up under his freckled chin, his long, lanky arms clasped around his legs, his face drawn into a puzzled frown. He spoke slowly as though he were carefully choosing his words, but I imagine that was only because he was thinking hard while he spoke.

"Bill, I have 'an enemy' here in camp! Sounds a bit melodramatic, what? Wouldn't think of mentioning such a thing, even to a close pal, you know, unless it was necessary. It's a camp matter, now, you see—or do you see? If there's merely a row on between two chaps, it's their affair. When one of them—on the other hand—presses the private shindy to the point where it affects camp as a whole—which has been done, Bill —then—do you see?—it more or less takes it out of

the other chap's hands—makes it a public affair affecting the community—'The King against Silas Potts, for breaking His Majesty's Peace!' It isn't Simeon Bean whose pig Silas Potts has swiped—only. It's the king himself—because Potts has broken the Peace of the Realm, as the courts call it.

"Well, that's the way it is, Bill, right now.

"And—what has me guessing, Bill—why I'm taking you into my confidence right now—is because I want advice from someone else—you, in this case—on what I ought to do about it." Pinkie looked at me hard, and then shuffled himself along the bed until he was sitting right against me. He cupped his hands and put them up to his mouth and his mouth next my ear and said, "I know who the ghost is—positive proof—and I have 'the goods' on that rat, and, Bill—I want to know whether to settle it myself or whether I ought to go to Chief with the proof."

"Goddard!" I whispered.

Pinkie gave me another of those long, appraising looks. Then he nodded his head again.

"Right, Bill," he said, almost in a whisper, "Goddard by long and overwhelming odds—Goddard right down to the bone, old dear—Goddard, signed, sealed, and delivered, F.O.B and all charges paid, and all set to shed his bleedin' blood to make a Roman Holiday!" And once more Pinkie sat back and looked at me. Then, "but—don't you get it?—it's unfortunately the

one person in this camp who has it 'on him' who'd rather, under all the circumstances you understand, sacrifice his good right hand than be the one to go and say what he knows, as is his plain and righteous duty as a citizen of this-here camp, to the good and venerable Chieftain-bird, who is lathering himself pink over the slaughter of the aforesaid vile cur. I'd be inclined to say it's the most deucedly awkward situation ever to confront this present deponent, the same being James P. Clutton, and what have you, Bill, by way of remarks, sage counsel, juvenile reaction, and the bloomin' rest of it, what?"

I merely nodded in my turn. I had too much to get straightened out in my mind to start speaking right then. After awhile I saw where to begin, I thought.

"Let me get it all straight, Pinkie," I said. "First, how did you get the goods on him?"

"When those wails burst loose last night," Pinkie began, "I came to attention at once, and I was, as it happened, the first out of the cabin. I'm a light sleeper you know perhaps.

"I saw the ghost and I bobbed forthwith behind a tree. It wasn't until after that that anybody else appeared on the scene. Then the cabins began shooting out fellows in pajamas, most of them half-asleep and not knowing in the least what it was all about. The very first person out was Jeff Fletcher as you'd expect. But by the time he emerged, and it wasn't more than

a matter of seconds, the ghost had taken leg-bail, and I after him on my unsound twig, heck-for-leather, through the trees.

"The ghost peeled off his make-up as he ran, and—the first thing I naturally noticed, Bill—he was something of a runner. With the old twig, and being barefooted to boot, I couldn't keep up with him—but I managed enough speed to keep him in view, and although he went in the general direction of the very cabin where Goddard beds down, he kept veering off to the left among the tall trees back there, and I came to a pause back of a pine tree in plenty of time to see him shove his sheet into the space under a stump, *and something else with it,* Bill, that for the moment—if you don't, precisely, mind, old thing, shall remain nameless!

"Well, I waited. The chap moved away. It was Goddard, right enough! I caught his build and, of course, the way he ran and in spite of the dark it was easy to see him with the sheet on most of the way through that open space. I could only hear him now. Without the sheet it was impossible to see him, so I didn't know which cabin he went to. I had figured on that, you see.

"But—*he didn't go to any cabin.* No, Bill, he was too clever for that. *He ran back, Bill,* like anybody else, you see, suddenly roused out of sleep by those yells, to see what was going on! O, he was clever. He ran past

me within a couple of feet, and there was enough light to get a glimpse of his face, and then all doubts were set at rest.

"So I followed him back, Bill, to the scene of carnage and got there just in time to hear Chief's orders to get back to bed, and then I flopped doggo, behind some bushes, flat on my 'estomac.' I didn't obey Chief's orders. I had something else to do, it seemed to me!

"Two things I had in mind. I wanted to see if Goddard had shoes on! He had—keds, all laced up. Nobody else had, except a few who had stopped to shove their feet into slippers, and even one or two who had paused long enough to don the sprightly bathrobe over their unseemly nighties! That was one thing, and that made it complete—those keds—preliminary preparation, all demonstrated. Do you 'get' it, Bill?

"And the other thing? Well, after everybody had gone back to the cabins, except the aforesaid James P. Clutton, flat on his tum with several ants investigating rather too closely, and J. P. had waited until Jeff's cabin was all quieted down and Runt and Chief had carried off poor little Bronson, and all was sereno, then J. P. crawls out of his thicket and wends his way to that stump and pulls out the sheet and has an excellent look, by feeling chiefly, aided by one cautious sniff, which was likewise evidential—you'll get it when you know what that other thing was—of the remain-

ing article in the cache, and then comes back here as doggo as humanly possible, and parks—this!"

And Pinkie, reaching his sound leg out of the bed, lifted the lid of the nearer box, and once more I got a glimpse of that sheet down under the lid. Believe me, it made me feel queer, Pinkie doing that. And I had allowed myself to think—. But Pinkie had hastily pushed the lid back into place with his toe and was talking again, in the same confidential tone that didn't carry farther than my ear.

"You'll have to take my word for it, Bill, because it's better not to do more right now than peep at that sheet, the way you just have, because somebody may drop in here any instant, but—when I got a chance to take a good look at that sheet, well—more and pretty certain evidence! Everything in camp is supposed to be marked with the owners' names, you know—sheets, pillowcases, blankets, shirts, everything, for laundry purposes.

"Well, plainly printed on the usual little red-lettered tag and neatly sewn on that sheet is the name "Bradford R. Goddard." Goddard had taken one of his own sheets, instead of having the forethought to swipe one of mine!

"So there's the case, Bill, and—you see the difficulty, don't you?"

I saw the difficulty all right. I had to sit there and think some more. At last I said, "Listen, Pinkie, did

Goddard come to see you when you were in the infirmary? I know just about everybody else did."

"No-o," said Pinkie, slowly. Then—"That, Bill, was the fact that made it finally clear to me that Goddard was——"

"Out to do you, proper," I finished for him. And Pinkie looked at me and nodded, rather sadly, and then shook his head ruefully.

"Well," I said, after considerable more thought, figuring just the best way to go at it, "suppose you listen to me, now, Pinkie, and I'll shoot over an earful to you in return for your confidence which is duly appreciated." I then proceeded to spill my end of the Goddard story to Pinkie, beginning with the four-forty and ending with my coming to the conclusion that it had been Goddard, and why, who had played that dirty ghost trick. And I put in the fact about seeing Pinkie come into the cabin that night of the ghost, and I even put in the fact that I had peeked inside the trunk. I spilled it all, and when I had got through Pinkie nodded that wise, homely, old head of his brightly at me several times and reached out and sort of slapped me on the shoulder, and said, "Not blaming you in the least, Bill. A perfectly natural reaction, old bird! I'd have done the same, undoubtedly. It must have seemed plain to everybody that a ghost with red hair could only be—" and we nodded at each other, with perfect understanding.

"Well," I began again, after another thinking pause, "I'd say, on the whole, there's a good way out of it all. I think your duty to the camp, especially the way Chief feels about this ghost-thing, far outweighs our private feelings about Goddard or anything else. At the same time, going to Chief and 'spilling' it, while altogether the proper thing to do, is certainly wishing something pretty tough on you, Pinkie. It seems to me that I've got enough on my mind to make it worth while for the two of us to go, and I'll do most of the talking, too."

"You're on," said Pinkie, and then and there we got up off the bed and started together for Chief's big cabin.

We didn't say a word on the way. The thing we had to do was perfectly clear in both our minds. I had Pinkie's story, his end of it; and Pinkie had mine. There just wasn't anything, right then, *to* say.

But we said it to Chief.

We found him in, and Nate Wilder with him, both of them extremely busy with camp business, with a lot of correspondence I guess and several ledgers and such things open, one on each side of Chief's big table in his inside room where Nate spends most of his time, and when we had made it more or less clear what we had come for, Nate and Chief dropped everything they had been engaged on and settled down to listen.

As I'd said to Pinkie, I did most of the talking. I

began with the four-forty and worked through my part of it, leaving nothing out. I had thought over this and mulled on it in my mind so long and intensely that it was almost a relief to get it out of my system where it would do the most good. Besides, after all the thought I had put in on it, it was surprisingly easy and simple to tell. It all came out in good order, and of course I made it clear how we felt and that we had talked it over and come to the conclusion that the only proper thing to do was to tell Chief all we knew.

Then when I had finished my part, I went on and told Pinkie's part, just as he had told it to me, and Pinkie, although bright pink, was not enough embarrassed but what he could nod his head at the right places. And when I had said the last word, Pinkie got up and said, "Spofford has told my part of it, exactly the way I told it to him, sir, and I'm very much obliged to him for taking it off my hands. It's a very awkward situation, sir."

Chief and Nate Wilder nodded to each other, as they had done several times during my story, although they had not interrupted. Chief only asked one question at the end. He turned to Pinkie.

"What was the other piece of 'evidence' in that tree-stump?"

"The red wig out of the camp makeup-box for private theatricals," said Pinkie.

CHAPTER XII

CHIEF'S STORY

I THINK probably this is a pretty good place to give you a side-line on Chief MacGregor before going on to tell you how he settled the ghost trouble. It happened during the big rains we had the middle of the season. Rain isn't so bad unless it keeps up too long at a stretch, because in camp there are all kinds of indoor things that can be substituted for the regular outdoor activities. This time it lasted a week, and there wasn't a single day you could call o.k., although the sun showed once or twice.

Regular schedule went on, modified here and there, such as having indoor campfires which weren't bad at all. But when it rains every day for a week, it can't help taking some of the pep out of things. We couldn't, for instance, keep up baseball-practice at all. This I hated, because I had managed to make the first team, and that was a camp responsibility besides being a lot of fun and, of course, first-class exercise.

And you can say what you like! For me, anyhow, swims in the rain aren't like swims in the sunlight! To me and I'd say to most other people—whatever

the incurable water-fans may feel—at least half the pleasure of a swim is good old Mr. Sun working away overhead!

In a good camp like ours it would require a lot more than bad weather to upset our morale. I've got to admit, though, that the rain sort of got under your skin; got your nerve; made you feel pringly all over—just the sheer monotony of it, day after day, morning after morning, night after night. Rain is o.k. for the plants, and "rain beating on the roof" is fine for poetry and all that, but—give me sunshine, every time!

It was almost as bad inside the cabins as it was outside. There in our cabin just about everything had got pretty damp, and Bill Winchester and the rest of us were hoping for one good, clear, hot, sunshiny day to strip the beds right down to the metal springs and set the mattresses and blankets and everything out in the sun and let them get thoroughly dried out and sun-heated. I don't mean that we were actually wet in our cabin, or in any cabin, or that anybody suffered physically with colds or anything like that. No sir! Not at Camp Cherokee. There was too much scientific stuff managed by Chief and Runt Thomas and Nate Wilder, who certainly know about everything there is to know about a camp. But, in our minds, if you get what I mean, we were sick and tired, fed-up, with the everlasting rain, rain, rain.

And to be honest, I guess the resources of even

Chief himself had been pretty well used up working out "inside" stunts and so forth to keep us busy and happy and well and as full of pep and gimp as usual. There is a lot of what's called Camp Spirit at Cherokee, as you'd expect, but when the sixth day dawned in a gray, cold, miserable, steady downpour, you felt the way—or at least we did in our cabin—you feel when you wake up and say, "O, what's the use? I might just as well lie here where it's warm and comfortable and wish somebody would bring me my breakfast in bed, for what's the use of getting up and getting all cleaned up and going outside in *that* and only getting wetter and wetter and wetter!"

I guess you see how most of us felt towards the end of that week.

The ping-pong tables were being worked overtime. Dan Smith, one of the counselors who was a wonderful piano-player and who had charge of Dramatics, had actually started rehearsals for the Camp Follies which we give in our outdoor theatre every year at the very end of camp, and that was at least two weeks early, so you can see from that what inroads that rain had made on us. Rain-baths, too, had been rather popular among some of the fellows, especially the little midgets. O, we had tried out about everything and had pretty well come to the end of our rope.

So Chief MacGregor stepped in.

Chief got the whole camp together at an enormous,

great, roaring afternoon campfire. Outside it was gray and lead-color and about as dreary as anything you could think of. But there inside the big assembly hall with all the fellows from big Goddard down to the smallest midget and every counselor and even the cooks and Jim and George, all gathered together, it was very warm and light and pleasant.

We sat on the floor in big half-moons, the way we do at assemblies, and Chief sat up beside the fireplace with the Fire-Maker on the other side and the two Fire-Tenders up in front of us sitting by themselves facing Chief, and he began to talk to us, very quietly, like this:

"She started her life as part of a tree, quite near the bark, on the outside edge. When she first realized she was alive and somebody, she had gone through the machinery of a great match factory and was one of a family of sixty, just the way it was labelled on the outside of the box, where it said: 'Safety Matches, Made in New Jersey, Sixty Pieces.'

"Life as one of a family of sixty, all alike, was rather crowded there in the match-box. And besides that handicap, the little match I'm telling you about this afternoon had several others. To begin with, she was very, very thin; only about half the size she ought to be. Then, besides, she had grown so close to the bark of the original tree that she was brownish all down one side, and her neck was very thin and rather

twisted to one side. She was, really, only about half a match.

"At first she didn't realize these things especially. All the matches waited patiently, which is all they could do under the circumstances, and at last their patience was rewarded. Every now and then the whole box would drop down a little, about its own thickness from top to bottom, and the matches would hear a metallic clang, like a spring, and they would know they were that much nearer their destiny, which was to set something on fire.

"It might be anything they were to light—they couldn't know, of course—from a piece of paper in a stove to some great conflagration. The first real idea the little, thin match got hold of was that when it came her turn to go out of the box into the world for her short life outside, she must do one thing and do it right. She must take fire the first time she was rubbed alongside the box and burn, burn, burn, as brightly and clearly as she could, until she was blown out or else burned up completely. Then her destiny, whatever it might be, would be fulfilled.

"At last the little matches heard the clang of that spring for the last time. The box was released from the vending-machine and the box came out of the slot at the bottom into a smell of cheese and molasses and codfish on the counter of a country grocery store near Chattanooga, Tennessee, and went into the hand

of a fellow named Ed Pierce, who put the box in his pocket with several other things, and the matches started on their travels in the world.

"Ed Pierce used up sixteen of them, and after that, with forty-four of them left inside, there was more room in the box and they could get more of an idea about each other. They were shaken down together by now.

"The poor, little, thin match had by this time found out that the other matches didn't, somehow, care very much for her. She had been snubbed, and it was very hard for her to understand it. But that's the way it is with anybody who is just naturally 'different.' She was very thin, much too thin for a respectable match; and her crooked neck, and being partly brown instead of the way she should be—like all the others—made her distinctly an outsider. So the rest of them had settled down to give her the cold shoulder. She was down on the floor of the box now, and half-way wedged in between the thin wood of the bottom and the paper which was pasted on the outside and was a little loose down there.

"Ed Pierce handed the box to another man who borrowed it and forgot to give it back. This man used eight more matches, leaving thirty-six in the box and then left it in an old vest in a closet, where his wife found it and used ten more matches to light her kitchen stove with. One day this woman's son picked

up the box from the shelf over the stove and carried it off with him on his way to the Union Railroad Station to see a friend of his off to New York. So the twenty-six matches started on a twenty-seven-hour journey in the pocket of Big Bill Masterson who borrowed them from his friend who had come to see him off, and by the time they all got to New York there were nine matches left.

"Big Bill left the match-box in the pocket of the coat he had worn on the train while he was wearing another suit in New York, but three days later he was aboard a ship sailing North, for he was now on his way to Labrador. He used six of the remaining nine matches lighting his pipe up on deck, and then it turned cold and he packed away that coat and put on a sweater and a lumberjacket over it, and the three matches in the box didn't get any exercise for quite a long time.

"The little, thin match was one of the three. The others had long before decided to have nothing to do with her, and now she was wedged down rather tightly in her corner between the bottom and the paper. She had had a great deal of time to think about life and what it is like from her own experience. It hadn't been very pleasant, she thought, but at any rate she had thoroughly made up her mind that if ever she got a chance to get out and get used, she would do her very level best to fulfill her destiny, and also that the only

way to act in the meantime was with patience. So she just stayed where she was and thought and thought and thought about her destiny, which was to set something on fire.

"Big Bill was snowed-in in his cabin on the upper reaches of the Nasquapee River in North-Central Labrador. He had been snowed-in for several days, for the last great snowfall had piled it up a little above the top of the cabin. Then a heavy freeze had followed, and the snow was all around him like a casing of stone.

"Big Bill wasn't worried very much. He had plenty of provisions cached in the lean-to next the cabin, lots of dried meat and a whole sack of potatoes he hadn't broken into yet and any number of other things.

"But on the fourth day he got something to worry over. Just a little after noon on a very sunshiny day, a lot of slightly melted snow had come pouring down the broad chimney and washed out his fire just as if somebody had poured a dozen pails of water over it.

"That was pretty tough. It was bitter cold in the cabin without the fire, and Big Bill, after studying his trouble for a while, unpacked some more furs and put them on until he looked like a big, furry bear and could only move about the cabin very awkwardly.

"Of course you're wondering why he didn't just make up a new fire and get that going, *pronto.* Well, the reason was that his matches had given out. He

had had just one box left, four or five days before, plenty, with care, to see him through the rest of the winter. But, carelessly perhaps, he had lighted one on the edge of the box, and forgotten to shut the box first and had drawn the match along the side towards the end where the heads of the little matches were all looking up at him in a tight bunch, and the lighted match had set the other heads afire and the whole box had caught and gone up in one bright fizz-z-z-z!

"Now—some of you bright fellows are saying to yourselves—'huh, I bet *I* would know how to get a fire if I were in Big Bill's case—just get it from a rifle-cartridge—that's easy!' It would have been quite easy, only—Big Bill had hunted a great deal to keep his lean-to full of dried meat through the winter *And he only had one cartridge left.*

"Well, you might say, 'why didn't he use that? Here was an emergency certainly. It was time to use that last cartridge and get himself a fire going so as not to freeze to death.'

"The answer to that was that a huge lynx, emboldened by hunger, had dug down through the snow and was in the lean-to, where it had smelled food. And this lynx, being unable to move the great, flat stones which Big Bill had laid over his stock of dried meat for just such a reason as this, and being very, very, very hungry, was slowly working its way through the wall in-between into the cabin! If not pemmican, then Man,

said the lynx to itself, and there, in the cabin, was a splendid big Man, Big Bill himself, all ready to kill and eat as soon as those heavy boards could be gnawed and clawed through. The lynx was working away at that job right then.

"Of course, Bill could have shoved the end of his heavy rifle right through one of the cracks and blown the lynx to smithereens, any time. But then if he did that, he would have no way of lighting the fire. It was, you see, Hobson's Choice—be eaten by a lynx in a comparatively comfortable cabin or kill the lynx and then freeze to death.

"The lynx was nearly through. As Bill crouched there, in front of the dead, cold, fireplace, all sagged down under the heavy furs with that bitter cold biting through to the very bones of him, he heard a long, slithering, ripping sound over there to his right, and as he turned his head to look he could hear the lynx snuffle and see part of a huge paw armed with claws like chisels, tearing away at the heavy boards.

"All of a sudden Bill remembered that old jacket he had worn on the train and for the first couple of days on the ship coming up here to Labrador. It seemed a long time ago, that journey North. There might—there just, barely, might—be a loose match in one of those pockets.

"He rose slowly, very stiffly—the thermometer was

somewhere near fifty or sixty below zero—and went over to his bunk built against the wall, fumbled under it, his hands in the heavy fur gloves, for some things he had folded and laid away in under it.

"At last he hauled out the old jacket, and taking off his right glove and rubbing his numbed fingers against the fur of his 'parka' he reached into the right-hand pocket.

"What was this? Out of the pocket comes and falls on the hard-packed earth floor of the cabin, because Big Bill is trembling so from nervousness and cold that he can't hold onto it, an old, broken, greasy safety-match box! The lynx at this moment rips off a huge splinter of boarding. Big Bill stoops and fumbles once more after the match-box. He takes it over in front of where he has the kindlings and the big logs all ready laid for a new fire and crouches down and draws off his other glove and rubs his hands together so he can handle the box and opens it.

"Matches! Two of them, perfectly good matches! Big Bill is trembling so violently now—only it isn't the cold this time—that he can hardly handle them.

"Very very cautiously, for his life depends on those two matches, he takes one out and draws it carefully along the side of the box.

"The match lights, fizzes, burns off the head only—goes out.

"Big Bill pulls himself together with a great mental effort and takes out—The Last Match.

"It breaks, up near the head, when he draws this one along the side, and the little head, with maybe a half-inch of wood with it, falls on the earth floor. Bill looks for it, finds it there in the dust, picks it up. It's so short it'll burn him if it lights, but what's a burn, compared to what's at stake!

"Very cautiously he strikes the last match.

"It won't light. The head merely crumbles off, leaving the little bit of stick bare, useless. Bill stares at the empty box, then throws it down on the ground, grinds it into the earth with his heel.

"He sits there now, his mind sort of empty. He listens to the lynx tearing away at the boards, but his mind is dull. He looks down at his feet, as he sags lower and lower, while that deadly cold bites into his bones.

"What's this, between his feet? Looks like a match, just the edge sticking out of the shattered, thin wood of the box.

"Bill fumbles for it, a faint hope in his heart. He gets it. It is the little, thin match, still intact for a wonder after what she's been through.

"Bill takes real care this time, the very best he can. He isn't shaking now. He's strangely calm. He creeps up close to the kindlings, bends over them, finds a little piece of the side of the box, holds it close, draws

a deep breath, says a kind of a prayer, and strikes the match.

"The little thin match realizes that the time has come for her to fulfil her destiny—to set something alight. She concentrates on her duty, and out of her head comes a little, thin, bright yellow flame.

"Big Bill, infinitely cautious, holds her against the kindlings, cut fine with his knife. The flame catches, a little, on one edge of one kindling-sliver, and then Bill begins suddenly trembling so that he drops the match.

"She hasn't more than a couple of inches to fall, and she uses every bit of will power she has to keep her flame burning. There's only one-third of her left now, but she does her best. Up, up, up, reaches the tiny, little, thin flame, reaches and catches the lower edge of those cut kindlings. A great flame goes spindling and then roaring up Bill's chimney. A tearing sound comes from the right, a ripping noise. Bill looks around, rubs his two hands hard on the fur of his parka, stands up, strides over to his bunk, picks up his great heavy rifle, walks over to the side of the cabin.

"A great murderous paw and the leg behind it, half a wicked head with glaring, shining, yellow eyeballs, come through the last hole the lynx has made. Bill shoves the muzzle of the rifle against the middle of the lynx's forehead, as steady as a rock, and pulls the trigger. There's a crack and a limp collapse behind that board wall, and Bill rubs a little blood off the

muzzle of his rifle, lays it down on the bunk, and goes back to where the fire is now roaring and crackling.

"The little, thin match has persevered to the end. She has fulfilled her destiny."

There was a long, long silence after Chief had finished. We just sat there, thinking. We didn't care, now, whether or not it rained for another week.

CHAPTER XIII

WHAT THE PICTURE SHOWED

I'VE told you before what we think of Chief MacGregor. In Li'l Joey Terriss' words, "Chief is one grand guy!" I'm going to tell you now how he handled this situation and then I guess you'll see that our confidence in him is not misplaced.

When Pinkie and I had finished and Chief had asked his one question and Pinkie had told him the answer, about that red wig, we figured that our part in this thing was done. We got up, together, and started to get out.

Chief told us to sit down. We did so, and he looked at us. His eyes were half shut, the way they had been when he had talked to us the night of the ghost-scare and the morning afterwards, and he spoke very slowly.

"Sit down again, fellows. You have done exactly the right thing. Put all idea of 'squealing' out of your heads, if you have it." He looked over at Nate, slowly and reflectively. "How about it, Nate?"

"Correct," said Nate. "No 'squealing' in it at all. Perfectly o.k. You don't 'squeal' on a mad dog. You take a length of gaspipe or a load of buckshot and give him the works!"

"Well," Chief resumed, still looking at us out of half-shut eyes, "there's another thing. You fellows rate being in on this. You've earned it. Stay right here with Nate and me and figure it with us." He turned to me.

"Go and find Bill Winchester now, Bill; tell him you and Pinkie are excused from everything for the rest of the morning. We'll sit and think until you're back."

I went out, found Bill, reported, and then got back in something like Pinkie's time for that four-forty, I'd say. I certainly put foot to ground!

"Now," said Chief, without any preliminaries, as soon as I was in a chair, "here's point number one: We have to leave Dr. Robbins out of this, I think. Obviously Goddard wasn't telling him he was going to work those spikes. That, of course, was an afterthought, an impulse, on the spur of the moment. What he apparently did was to suggest that Clutton had won one race and would probably win the next unless some team-work were done. He wouldn't, in the nature of things, go farther than that. Working out that 'pocket' was legitimate enough—if they want to do things that way in a camp. It isn't our way, here, but you can't do anything or even say anything more on that subject. It failed, and we got the race, and everybody here is satisfied on that score. Am I right?"

"Right as rain, sir," Pinkie blurted out, and we all laughed, including Pinkie himself.

"Next," went on Chief, turning to me, "do you see the weak point in your end of it, Bill? About the races, I mean—about Goddard spiking Pinkie on purpose. I talked about it with him, as you may imagine, like a Dutch uncle! His version is, of course, that it was a pure accident. He wavered in his stride, sprinting, fell over to the left, couldn't help running up Pinkie's back!"

"Ye-es," I answered. "It's Goddard's word against mine, and one is as good as the other."

"Precisely," said Chief, nodding at me, his eyes still half shut. "Now," Chief turned abruptly to Nate Wilder, "Nate—how well do you know Sam Abbott?" Sam Abbott is the business manager of Camp Pineapple.

"Fine," Nate told him. "He was in my class in Harvard. He and I have always been good pals."

"Then,"continued Chief, "as soon as we get this talked over here, jump into a car and run over and see Sam. He was one of two people who were taking slow-motion pictures of the end of that half-mile race. Get him, if you can, to show you that film. They probably have it developed by now. If possible, borrow it. Do you get the idea?"

"I'll say I do," said Nate, grinning from ear to ear. "You worked the old bean that time, Chief!" Chief merely nodded gravely.

Then he went on. "Next thing, how are we to

handle this? I see at least two ways. One is more spectacular than the other—it's waiting until the ghost makes his next attempt, right after little Bronson gets back to his cabin from the infirmary where he's doing beautifully right now and pretty nearly recovered from his fright, thanks to Runt and Miss Stokes. A mind like that would simply repeat. He sees that Pinkie hasn't been utterly ruined so far. He'd try it again, every time. I don't like that way any too well. Something might slip up, and the main reason is the possible effect on Bronson. I won't risk it.

"The other way is to assemble the evidence. That's the way we're going at it. I shall have to do it more or less alone. I have the necessary facts to work on now, thanks to you fellows' fine camp-spirit!"

Well, that pretty well ended the conversation. We got out after a few more words, and Nate came with us, and you could hear the roar of his cut-out going over to Camp Pineapple before we were back in the cabin and getting ready for late-morning swim, which we hadn't missed after all.

We both felt pretty good now, for obvious reasons. We both knew that we had done the right thing; that was the main and central reason.

We had our swim, and believe me it was the best swim I had had for a week, with nothing worrying me any more.

And when we got back to the cabin after the swim

and just before midday dinner to get cleaned up, and Pinkie had opened his box to get something out, there where he had left that sheet, neatly re-folded so as to pass daily trunk-inspection—well, there wasn't any sheet! Somebody, and we took one guess apiece on who that was, had been in during the swim and removed it.

Action! We got it, swift, sure, and sizeable!

We weren't quite dressed, any of us, when Nate poked his head inside the cabin door. He grinned at Bill Winchester and pointed to Pinkie and me. Bill grinned back without a word said, and Pinkie and I hustled for a few seconds while Nate and Li'l Joey made faces at each other, and then we followed Nate outside.

"Chief's cabin," said Nate quietly, and we went on up there with him.

We went inside and into the inner room, the office, where we had been before that morning, and there on the table, sure-enough, was the sheet; and beside it the red wig, and the corner of the sheet was turned up where Goddard's name-plate in its red letters was plainly visible, and Chief was engaged in clearing a big space of about the area of half the room.

Chief looked around at us as he finished moving the furniture.

"Nate got the whole reel," he said as he planted the last big Morris-chair in the far corner of the room.

"We haven't had time to project it yet, but I've looked at it with a magnifying glass. It's conclusive!"

We didn't say anything.

"Big room ready?" asked Chief, of Nate.

"O.k.," returned Nate.

"Well, let's go and eat," said Chief, and the four of us walked together to the mess-hall, mess-call sounding when we were about half-way there.

Just as we were starting in on some of Julius', the cook's, first-class cottage pudding with hard and boiled sauce, Chief got up and rang his little table bell.

"Right after dinner," said Chief, in his usual voice, his eyes wide open now, "everybody into the main hall for something I want to show you, just before rest-period."

We ate that good old pudding, and right here I'll mention something I had forgotten, something Nate said and what Chief answered while we were walking to the mess-hall.

Nate had laughed and turning to Chief had remarked, "You're going to have a handful, making good on that promise of yours, Mac!"

"What one?" enquired Chief.

"Giving the ghost a personal licking. Goddard is going to be an armful to lick! He's too big to put him across your knee, punishment-style. He'll want to put up his hands and go to it. I'm not questioning your—er—ability, to mop him up; only—you see what I

mean—it—er—isn't done—a camp director having a regular fight with one of his campers, if you get my idea."

"Oh," said Chief, "naturally I wouldn't do anything like that. I merely meant what you referred to as 'punishment-style,' what you'd call a 'birching' in an English school, eh, Pinkie?"

"Right, sir!" said Pinkie, grinning.

"But he's far too big for that kind of thing, wouldn't you say?" asked Nate.

Chief looked at him, inscrutably.

"He's going across my knee," said Chief, "just the way I promised. That's why I was clearing that space in the office! It's going to happen up there."

Well, dinner over, everybody filed into the main assembly room. It was pretty dark, all the windows being screened with the dark blue shades that we use when a movie is being run early in the evening of the long days and it isn't yet quite dark. Only one big shade was up, and as soon as we were all seated, that one came down and it was practically as dark as night.

Then one bulb went on, the one right above our projection machine, and Chief and Nate were to be seen arranging the machine, and Chief remarked, "I thought you'd all like to see this. It's a 'slow-motion' taken over at Camp Pineapple the other day," and with that, off went the bulb, and out on the screen came the finish of the half-mile race.

At first, of course, apart from Pinkie and me, and possibly Goddard himself, the gang hadn't an idea that there was anything out of the ordinary about this. A "slow-motion" is almost always funny, as everybody knows, and at first there were a lot of laughs, seeing the runners that way, so leisurely and so forth—you all know the way they look.

But that didn't last very long, believe me! The gang quieted down suddenly, down to the smallest midget, as soon as that scene unfolded itself in all its harrowing details. Boy! Believe me, it was just ruthless. There, right in front of us all, was a perfect, detailed picture —evidence—of precisely what I had seen, only perfect; "incontrovertible," as Pinkie put it, just the way I have already described here.

And there was Goddard, right at the end, *deliberately* doing just what I've described, to Pinkie, and winding up with spiking him, as deliberate, and mean, and *intentional,* and even more so in that form, than it had seemed to me at its very worst.

The picture went on to show that magnificent spurt of Pinkie's across the finish-line, and in a deadly silence and before anybody could breathe, it suddenly ended. The light was on, four counselors opened the shades, and the last thing anybody saw was Chief and Nate going out through the door with Goddard between them.

Bill Winchester stood up in front of us all, in front

of the silver sheet, and told us calmly that Chief requested no comment at that time, but that we were all to go quietly to our cabins for the usual rest-period.

That night, at campfire, there was a vacant space, one camper absent, just the way little Jimmy Bronson had been absent a few nights before, only this time there was no counselor looking for Goddard, no interruption of what was going on to organize any boy-hunt. No. But little Jimmy was there, sitting on Jeff Fletcher's knee, with a light blanket around him, grinning because it was a "stunt-night" and little Jimmy, being almost himself now, was tickled to death the same as all the rest of us. It was, on the whole, a doggoned good old campfire.

On the way to bed a little after nine, as usual, I ran after Nate Wilder and caught him.

"Yes?" said Nate.

"D-did he go across the Chieftain's knee, Nate?" I asked him.

"Huh—I'll tell the harkening universe he did—proper and no mistake!" said Nate. "And off for New York on the two-eighteen train with Ed Elliott with him to see that he got straight home, besides, and a telegram to his folks from me; and Chief mailed them a cheque for his full camp fees, too," ended Nate.

"Gosh! That's like him, isn't it?" I blurted out. Nate nodded.

"I'd have kept it," said Nate.

"So would I," I agreed.

"But Chieftain isn't that kind of a man!" ended Nate, and I turned and lit out for the old cabin and four million winks.

Nothing, according to Chief's general policy, nothing whatever further was said in public about Goddard and his doings. He was simply eliminated, which was a good thing all around, and, although it seeped through camp about the ghost and how Chief had quietly made good his promise on that critter and so forth, that ended it.

Little Jimmy picked up, somehow, quite wonderfully after his setback experiences, and within a couple of weeks or so, looked almost as husky, with good care and good eats and an increasing amount of good old exercise, as any other good little midget, and everybody's mind was getting pretty well set on the grand old time everybody was having as day followed day and campfire followed campfire, and the love of camp got stronger and stronger down deep inside every one of us at our good old place there underneath the pine trees.

Naturally I'm not even going to try to tell you anything like all we did. This story is, as I told you, mainly about Pinkie, so I'll jump along and get to the next showdown that crowned Pinkie's little old career in camp, which is a lot more interesting anyhow.

It wasn't very long, what with oil rubs replacing the bandaging, three times a day, from Runt, before Pinkie's "twig," as he called it, was pretty good once more, and he could join the gang in swims which, being used to the water by now, he enjoyed like anybody else. He slammed right back into his baseball training and base-running drill, too, at the earliest possible moment, for Pinkie cherished the ambition to be a baseball player, for better, for worse; and that old bird certainly did put everything he had into it.

Camp Pineapple always scheduled three ball games with us every season. Those were the particular games Jim Edgar, and all the rest of us, too, put in most of our efforts on. It was an evener break at baseball, you see. They could only play nine men at a time, and the only legitimate "edge" they had on us was the greater number of fellows out of which to pick their first team.

Of course they had a professional coach, but then our own coach, while not a "Pro," had been a crack college player, and we were even-Stephen as far as that went. However, they did manage another "edge," because they certainly did have some crack players. I've even heard it whispered around that some of them were "ringers" or, at least, great big fellows who were brought to camp just to enable Pineapple to beat other camps and have a lot of stuff to stick in their adver-

tisements! However, be that as it may, I won't say any more about it.

And besides, Pineapple could put one terrific bunch on its sidelines at any game. And that makes a lot of difference in any team contest as everybody knows.

We had played two of those games by the middle of August, and we had won the first. The second, Pineapple walked away with. They were too good for us that time, and they had a big, long lath of a fellow named Peterson who looked like a counselor but was rated a camper, and if he wasn't good enough for pitcher on a college team, or even a league team, I miss my guess.

The third and decisive game was scheduled for Saturday, the third week in August. Camp Junaluska and Camp Glenwood were both coming to see that game in a body, and with them as our guests we would have sidelines to compare with Pineapple's own enormous gang of cheerers.

Naturally those of us who had made the team and six or seven subs were right on our toes for that last game. Time and again Jim Edgar or one of the counselors would drop us the word, "don't overtrain. That isn't what camp is for!"

Pinkie, because of his base-running, was what you might call half-on and half-off the team! He was the best base-runner we had, with that slick head of his and his speed and judgment, and accurate to an inch,

coming up on a base as steady as a rock. But the rest of his ball-playing was, with his total lack of experience earlier, pretty much of a mess, I've got to admit.

All hands got busy along with Jim and George the hired men and prettied up our ball field before the big game. It was rolled and weeded and raked over, with new, white marks for the foul-lines and new red flags and everything!

On the big Saturday Glenwood showed up, fifty-six of them, and, with the Junaluska gang which had come earlier, we had all told two hundred and sixteen fellows exclusive of the team and subs. And then, a few minutes before two, nine big busses bursting with Pineapples, big and little, barged into camp, and after them Dr. Robbins, fatter than ever, in his own car with a kind of superior smile on his face!

Well, the umps called us out on the field promptly at two-thirty, after the Pineapple team had had its workout, and Bob Harte, our pitcher, slung over his five practice balls over the plate, and Mr. Meyers, from Junaluska, who was umpiring, called:

"BATTER UP!"

And the big game was on.

CHAPTER XIV

A BROKEN BAT

DR. ROBBINS, proprietor of Camp Pineapple, had not taken up his stand along with his numerous and variegated Pineapples to watch the big game of the season. On the contrary he had joined our own Chief, Dr. MacGregor, and the game started with the two of them standing quite close to the players'-bench on our side and talking together. That is, to be more accurate, Dr. Robbins was talking and Chief MacGregor listening very politely.

Dr. Robbins was telling our Chief how very, very good this ball team of his was! That was the burden of his conversation as I, for one, sitting there on the bench, couldn't very well help hearing. His fat face with its double chins was positively palpitating with happiness, for wasn't his famous First Team, from Invincible Camp Pineapple, just about to pile up the final victory of the camp season? It was, to judge by Dr. Robbins' expression; and if you heard what he was saying you wouldn't have room for any doubt about it whatever!

Sitting there, listening to him, just before Mr. Mey-

ers called us onto the field, as I've mentioned, I figured that he was framing up in his mind just how it would sound in the next Pineapple catalogue! Something like this:

"Camp Pineapple, the largest and most successful camp in the Metropolitan Section, is virtually invincible in camp contests and inter-camp athletic activities. These contests do much to make our camp life attractive. It is, nowadays, an established custom, among other neighboring camps, to join the athletic resources of several camps for competition against Invincible Camp Pineapple."

Just as we were called onto the field, he was remarking to Chief, "Really, MacGregor, I don't need anything more on this team than the Battery and the First Baseman!"

It made me, somehow, sort of mad; it certainly made me feel all pepped up and full of fight! No question, though, we were smack up against a superior team, and no mistake.

"Batter Up!" called Mr. Meyers.

In our half of that first inning, Jim Edgar came up to bat when there was only one fellow out. Prattie stood on second. He had managed a single off the nearly invincible Peterson, and had stolen Second. I could see the sweat running down Jim's neck, there at bat, from my place on the bench, where Dr. Robbins was still telling Chief what a wonderful aggregation

this team of his was; for it was a hot day, and I imagine Peterson was just a little mite too confident, for Jim smacked out the first ball pitched and made it a Two-bagger, and in came Prattie across Home-Plate like an antelope. We didn't score again that inning, but, to make a long story as short as I can, we did score again during the next four innings, so that at the end of the Fifth we had four runs and Pineapple had six.

These first five innings were rather uninteresting, but at least the Pineapples didn't have anything much on us, what with the two other camps strung along our sidelines and cheering for us every time we gave them a chance, and now, at the end of the Fifth, they were only two runs ahead. We had every chance in the world, quite as good as their chances, if we were careful and didn't miss out on anything.

Sixth Inning—no score.

Seventh Inning—one run for us.

Then, in their half of the Eighth, a big buster named Carlson cracked out a home run, which made the score seven to five, in favor of the Pineapples.

Bob Harte, pitching nearly perfect ball, shut them out from any more runs in that inning.

In our half, we didn't do anything.

At the beginning of the Ninth—last chance for us—the score stood seven to five.

Pineapple came to bat at the beginning of the Ninth,

and I'm here to tell you that Bob Harte pitched some ball right then. They went out, the first one on a little pop-fly right into Bill's hands, and he shoveled it down from just above his head like spearing a swallow! He fanned the next Pineapple up to the bat, one, two, three, and he was OUT. Then their captain, a fellow named Klein, came up to bat, and the umps called 'em.

"Striiiiike One."

"One Ball."

"Striiiiike Two."

And all the Junaluskas and Glenwoods and most of our own side-liners started up to their feet to watch it.

The third ball went over straight and fast, and Klein swung on it and just connected, and it came out almost straight at me on Third, only just enough inside the foul-line to make it a Fair Ball.

So I went out and speared it, about three feet off my bag, and threw it in, and we came in while the side-liners howled, and it was the second half of the Ninth, our bats, and our last chance that day; and the score was Seven to Five, in favor of the Pineapples.

There stood Dr. Robbins, with his stomach sticking out and wearing an expensive Panama hat which I guess he could afford, and one of those confident, superior, Pineapple smiles on his fat face, and I ground my teeth together again and made up my mind I'd knock one out or bust, and right then it was up to me

to step up to the plate and see if I could make good. With a kind of a prayer, I did and caught the second ball across—the first was a called Strike that I didn't try for—and beaned it on the nose just out of Short Stop's reach and along to not quite between Left and Centre Field, and it was scored as a Two-Bagger.

I stood there on Second, watched for a chance to steal Third, and got it and made it, and then stood on Third where there wasn't anything for me to do but watch Home-Plate, and so I saw what happened, and this is where I get down to those details.

Following me had been Jim Edgar, and Jim sacrificed to advance me a base, or at least he may not have meant to sacrifice, for I guess he tried for a Home Run every time he went up on general principles that day, but anyhow it amounted to a sacrifice and was so scored, so there I stood on Third, and there was one out.

One of our fellows named Sam Sands came up. Sam was our best batter, and it looked, maybe, well, just possible that we might do something and at least tie that score and pull down another inning and have a sporting chance to beat 'em yet.

But the Pineapple team weren't asleep or anything like that. Their captain signalled "Play for the Batter," and they edged in like one man moving. Boy, they certainly knew that old game of baseball. Big Peterson wound himself up as usual, and—well, Sam Sands

struck out; and that time the roar went up from the Pineapple sidelines.

Two men out, one fellow, happening to be me, Bill Spofford, on Third, the end of the Ninth, the other side two runs ahead, old Robbins grinning from ear to ear over there back of Home-Plate, and acting as though he were making little "rubbing-it-in" remarks to our Chief. Up to bat stepped Eddie Michaelis, who is pretty good, and I could see Eddie's face all screwed up tight, and over came:

"Striiiiike One!"

And all the Pineapples, who were standing up now, watching the finish of another rival, cheered hard and catcalled the way they do at a ball game, and yelled:

"Stick it on 'im, Pete!" and so forth—it was a regular Bedlam.

And then Eddie shifted his bat and snapped out a beautiful bunt precisely right between Home Plate and Pitcher's Mound, and Eddie stood on First, and it was the turn of our sideliners to jump up and cheer, and—

Pinkie comes up to the plate for his bats!

Well, I just said to myself right then, "You can't buck Fate! If it could only be one of the good ones, in a pinch like this, with the one real chance we've had since the game started. Well, it's this way, and you've got to put up with it, Bill Spofford, and keep that eye of yours peeled for the chance—the pretty skinny chance, now—of sneaking Home," and then I settled

down to watch the beginning of the end, as we all probably realized it was, only waiting on the off-chance that something might happen, you know.

"Striiiiike One!" called out the umpire.

"Ball One!"

"Striiiiiiiike Two!"

And then there was a stir among the Pineapple sidelines, a kind of contemptuous motion, all along their line. The Pineapples were getting set to go home with another ball game in their doggoned pockets, and then!

Well, then, in the midst of all the silence from our side, which was merely waiting according to the rules, for Pinkie to flivver out and us to go and get our shower-baths and grit our teeth over it all—then Pinkie did something with his bat! You'd never guess in four thousand years just what it was he did, so I'll simply have to tell you.

You know how a fellow up at the plate shifts his bat when he's going to try to lay down a bunt, don't you? Well, Pinkie made a shift of the old club somewhat like that, only he shifted his position along with it. You see, he had struck at both his strikes and missed them both by twenty inches or so, each time getting a howl of Pineapple derision from over across the field, and what he was doing was using his head, which was working fine and as clear as a bell—you'll re-

member nobody ever "rattled" old Pinkie; his bean was geared differently from that—only, nobody except Pinkie himself could possibly imagine what he was up to now.

I heard the laugh—more derision—run all along the Pineapple line when they spotted what he was doing, and I could hardly believe my own eyes when I saw what I did as I looked over at Pinkie. He had batted in perfect form, you understand, the way he had been taught to bat, here at Cherokee, under Jim Edgar and the coaches. O yes. He had got onto the form all o.k., only he couldn't connect that way. His whole background was tuned-in to batting another way; the way those Barbadians and English people bat. Cricket batting!

And now, there stood Pinkie, every tooth showing, his face and arms a brilliant rose-color, what with his blushing and the effect of a couple of hours out there in that hot sun.

His left foot was pointed towards the pitcher. His right foot, with the knee of that leg bent, was at right angles to the left foot. And Pinkie had hold of his bat more or less the way a golf club is held, and the business-end of that bat was swinging in a little, businesslike circle, just about an inch above the dusty ground beside Home Plate.

Pinkie had hold of that bat the old way he was used

to, and I guess imagining those "Stumps" just behind him. He had taken up a cricket stance, if you'll believe me, at bat in a game of baseball!

I wanted to lie down and die. The derision along the Pineapple sidelines was one roar of catcalls now. They were concentrated on Pinkie, and even the members of their team, close-in now, "playing for the last batter," were giving us the laugh. Pinkie had pulled one of his famous breaks.

Well, Peterson, after staring for a second, began to laugh right out, and then he wound up, quick, to finish it off, and sent over—what do you think? That "Inscrutable Providence" that I once heard a sermon about in church at home in Pencilville, seems to have taken a hand for us, at the last minute. Yes sir!

Peterson picked a slow one out of the bag of slick balls that he keeps up his semi-professional sleeve. Over that ball came, a regular lobber, the kind that fools the most experienced batter in the world when a slick pitcher spaces that kind in among the others just right.

I could see Pinkie stiffen like a statue. That's the one, only, perfect humdinger of a ball that old Pinkie was brought up with and knows all about from the time it starts until the time it——

Pinkie made a sweeping motion with his bat, as the ball was about half-way across, shifted his feet suddenly, twisted his head half-way around to the right,

seemed to straighten up till he was about six feet high, on the extreme tips of his toes, his body two-thirds of the way out of plumb—perfect cricket form I guess—and then connected, bringing his bat *upwards,* and rather shot out, as if he were spilling the ball off its end. You could hear the crack to the next county.

And then—well, Eddie Michaelis was past Second, and coming like the wind on a cold day, and I was across Home Plate, and nearly ruining myself getting straightened out to look back—after getting across and my run really in and no mistake—and back of me came Eddie, across Home Plate, and, if you'll believe me, Pinkie was crossing Third just as Eddie ice-wagoned over the Plate. Half of the Pineapple team, which had been close in, "playing for the last batter," had turned around and were chasing after that ball that Pinkie had cracked out, and I pretty nearly believe that Pinkie was across Home Plate and Joe Edsall swinging a couple of bats ready to stand up to the *next* pitched ball, before that ball Pinkie swatted had reached the ground, about a hundred yards back of Centre Field, or where Centre Field ought to have been if he hadn't been close-in, "playing for the last batter."

O, boy, it was a satisfaction to look at Dr. Robbins! Believe me, in the middle of that catastrophe and the roar that was just continuous from our sidelines and the flash of light that had been Pinkie going around

those bases for a Home Run and the "plop, plop" of Eddie and me coming across with two runs that tied the score and Pinkie hanging up the run that put us one to the good *and* another chance at the bat besides! Well that old skeezer looked as if somebody had stuck a pin in him and let about a couple of bushels of self-conceit out of him.

I walked over beside Chief and Dr. Robbins, because I wanted to get a good look at them standing there together. Chief's face hadn't changed a trifle, for he's a hardboiled, good old sport, I'm here to tell you.

And, when they had finally recovered Pinkie's ball and thrown it in, and Joe Edsall was calmly standing at the Plate waiting for the next ball, and the noise had calmed down all of a sudden, well, Chief had *his* innings after all the stuff that courtesy-to-a-guest had forced him to listen to from Dr. Robbins for the last couple of hours; standing there beside him and telling him about *his* camp and *his* steel diving rafts and *his* concrete bathhouse, and *his* this and that, and, above all, HIS ball team (which only, really, needed the Battery and the First Baseman, huh!).

Chief spoke to Joe Edsall, and said, "I don't believe you need to take your bats, Joe—we don't want to rub it in, you know!"

And that ended that game.

And the Junaluskas stood in a tight knot and gave their camp cheer for us.

And the Glenwoods stood in another tight knot and gave *their* cheer for us.

And Camp Cherokee stood in a still bigger and closer knot and only waited for our team to give Pineapple the official cheer before *they* broke loose too, and—well, it was some afternoon, all taken together.

Pinkie saw what would be coming to him, and as soon as our team had given the Pineapples the official cheer, all you could see was a streak as Pinkie lit out on those antelope hoofs of his for the showers!

And Chief MacGregor stooped down and picked up the broken bat, for Pinkie's swat had just ruined it, and Chief remarked, "This is going up on the wall in the assembly-hall, as a permanent reminder of this afternoon."

Well, all I'll add to this is the usual Pinkie touch, i.e., what Pinkie said about it, to us, in the cabin afterwards, after that great day was all over and, so to speak, recorded in the archives of Camp Cherokee as one of the Red Letter Days.

That night before turning in, Li'l Joe Terriss said, maybe for the seventy-fifth time, "Boy, O boy! She was sure some swat!"

And Pinkie said, "I don't suppose I'll ever be really any good at the game, you know, able to bat in decent form, that is, I mean to say!"

CHAPTER XV

PINKIE HAS THE LAST LAUGH

THAT ball game against Camp Pineapple and Pinkie's part in it, which was the part, unquestionably, that made us win the game and series against the one camp we would have given anything to beat, did more than everything else to "set" Pinkie among the whole gang at camp. It was so *like* him, somehow—to win the critical game of the season by using that head of his and his bat in a manner that, I'd say, no human-being before or since, ever used a bat in a baseball-game!

Pinkie was, in a kind of a way, Camp Hero nowadays. And, if you can manage to understand it after what I've told you about him, in a certain way he was Camp Goat, too.

Only, now everybody was *for* him, goat or no goat. Even those who had had no time to "understand" Pinkie before, couldn't escape it now. They couldn't be indifferent any more. That last-mentioned feat of his had been somewhat too conspicuous, you see.

Down underneath, old Pinkie felt it—being the goat, I mean. He was sensitive, no question about it. He could feel keenly, the way all sensitive people do.

The grand and glorious thing about Pinkie was that he had drilled himself into not showing it.

Nowadays he had a perfect right to feel that he had graduated—made good. It's a fact and I know it, even though there never was the slightest whisper from Pinkie. I was close friends with him, about the closest friend he had in the whole camp, and I know that what I'm telling is the truth.

So this is to tell you how Pinkie "got back" at those who persisted in regarding him as the goat. He didn't like it, any more than I would or anybody else, even though he would laugh with them and at himself in the most good-natured way; even join in and make fun of himself.

It was one evening towards the end of August, at campfire, and the program, which is different from evening to evening, of course, called for Pinkie to give us a talk on "The Wild Life of The West Indies." The way that came about was really through our counselor, Bill Winchester, who had suggested that Pinkie give his guitar-stuff at the Camp Follies, (which he did and made another hit with it) and also that Chief should get Pinkie to give the whole camp a summing up of the many things he had told us about West Indian customs in the cabin.

So on this particular evening all of us were gathered around the good old campfire. It was very nearly the last one of the season, which made us homesick for

camp just to think about it, and that grand gang being broken up. I, for one, was thinking, too, that it would never again be exactly the same, on account of the changes and various fellows not being back again.

When the time came for his talk, Pinkie got up on his two feet, and started in telling us a wonderful lot of things such as I've mentioned before that he told us in the cabin; about the animals, mostly, and the birds, and the customs of the Negroes. It certainly was interesting, even to us from our cabin who had heard most of it before in little bits here and there.

Well, Pinkie talked along for half an hour or so, using United States mostly, for he'd learned pretty well to speak our language by this time; and then at a certain place in his talk Pinkie shifted suddenly to pelicans. He first told us about pelicans in a general way, such as what parts of the world they are in, including all parts of the West Indies and Florida and California and so forth, and something about their habits and methods of feeding, which, as I guess everybody knows, is by means of diving after small fish along shore; and then Pinkie started to tell us about a particular kind of pelican which, he says, is known as the Barbadian Pelican, and is certainly some bird!

"Now," said Pinkie, "this kind of pelican I'm trying to tell you about has at least one extremely peculiar habit or custom. It has to do with the way he eats, particularly. I'll try to describe it.

"The Barbadian Pelican, which is also found along the shores of the little island of Tobago, near Barbados, is a powerful bird, rather larger than the average or common pelican, and with a much bigger bill and pouch. The peculiarity of this bird is that he likes other things besides fish, which, as far as I have ever heard, makes him different from all other kinds of pelicans, which are fish-eaters and eaters of nothing else.

"The Barbadian Pelican eats fish like the others, but he varies his diet with one of the queerest things you could imagine! No milk-bottle is safe from him, if it happens to be anywhere near the shores where he lives! Before the days of milk bottles, I'm sure I don't know what it was this kind of pelican went after. I've heard it said that he used conch-shells, or even entire conchs with the meat inside if he could get them, but I've always found that hard to believe, because I've never known one of these pelicans to take a conch-shell—and there are plenty of them, used to line garden walks and all that sort of thing—and I've watched them with great interest many times. However, it is quite possible that it *was* conch-shells, I really cannot say.

"But, as to the milk-bottles, the Barbadian Pelican is a perfect glutton for them, strange as it may appear. You all know how a common fowl eats small stones and bits of oyster-shell and such things, of course.

Such hard substances, as I understand it, are regulated by the size of the bird's bill. The ordinary fowl has a small bill and therefore takes only small stones and bits of hard things. But the Barbadian Pelican, being equipped with a perfectly enormous bill and pouch, is able to take in hard substances as large as an ordinary cocoanut, conch-shell, or milk-bottle, as I've said.

"The method used by this bird is simply extraordinary!

"The pelican first discovers a milk-bottle without a guardian, and with murmurs expressing great happiness, engulfs it; that is to say, the pelican encloses the bottle with his huge bill, and so it hangs in the pouch for a moment, until the pelican, leaning back precisely as ordinary pelicans do when swallowing fish, allows the milk-bottle to enter its gullet and so slip down, whole, inside itself.

"Then begins one of the most remarkable things one could possibly imagine!

"Of course, not even a Barbadian Pelican could digest a whole milk-bottle, of hard glass. The bottle, if left alone, would merely remain inside the pelican indefinitely.

"But the pelican does not leave it there except for a few moments, during which time, it has the most happy expression on its rather knowing face and in its expressive eyes, that you could think of. No. The

pelican begins to bestir itself after those few moments and rises, slowly, in the air. It then, ordinarily, circles about somewhat, looking anxiously down toward the ground for a suitable spot for its next maneuver. Having found a flat, rocky spot, or something like a piece of concrete sidewalk, or a bit of pavement that is hard and level, the pelican scrutinizes it carefully, and then, measuring its distance, flies straight up in the air, vertically. Sometimes, this upward flight only half completed, the pelican will actually return, a most anxious look in its eyes, apparently to make sure it has calculated correctly—this pelican has an extraordinary intelligence, you know—and that it is directly over the place chosen.

"Then, finally, the pelican, having reassured itself to its satisfaction, flies resolutely straight up in the air until it is a mere speck or perhaps until the eye, unaided, can no longer see it. Then you stand and watch!

"Within a few minutes you will see the pelican coming down.

"Now, however, its wings are folded quite close to its sides; its huge head, with the enormous bill and pouch attached, are securely tucked under one of its wings—usually the left wing, as it happens. The pelican wraps itself up in this manner to avoid the friction of the wind in its drop, and so be able to come down as rapidly as possible and with as much force as it can.

"Faster and faster the rolled-up pelican comes down, like a bullet falling, or rather perhaps a cannon-ball! It positively makes one nervous, and people looking on customarily step away for fear the pelican, loaded up with the heavy milk-bottle inside it, may strike them. One case is on record where a Negro was struck in this manner, and while it may be a little exaggerated, it is said that he was driven several yards into the ground. However, this becomes more easy to believe when I say that the pelican—it seems it was a young one, inexperienced—had miscalculated his landing-place and struck the unfortunate Negro while he was standing, looking up peacefully, on some rather soft ground near the sea shore.

"And then, as you look, at last and with a whir which can be heard for some distance, the pelican, if it has calculated exactly, lands upon the rocky surface selected, or upon the concrete paving, and as it bounces —for Nature seems to have provided it with a very elastic set of outside muscles and skin—one hears a crashing of glass, for that, you see, is the object of the pelican's flight and fall—to break the glass inside him and so make it possible for it to be digested, or whatever it is that becomes of it.

"Sometimes a pelican will not fly high enough, and then the glass, or perhaps a conch-shell, if that is what the pelican has eaten, fails to break, and in that case, looking extremely crestfallen and ashamed of itself,

the pelican will try again, going higher this time. In such a case the second trial rarely or never fails to break the glass.

"Sometimes, too, even though the glass is broken successfully, the pelican seems to be dissatisfied, probably with the smallness of the pieces inside him, a matter of which, of course, he is the best judge.

"In that case, if his instinct tells him that smaller pieces are necessary, he will shake himself very gravely with his eyes slanted around to the side somewhat and with the drollest and wisest expression on his face; and then, after looking the ground over carefully once more,—one standing by can easily hear the glass rattle if one listens sharply—the pelican rises again, and the second landing makes the glass sufficiently fine for all practical purposes."

Pinkie finished and sat down and everybody applauded; and then he got up again when the applause was finished, and looked over at Chief MacGregor and smiled and bowed, and remarked, "Possibly some of you chaps might care to ask questions, and if so I shall be happy to try to answer them if I can."

Then he sat down once more, and for a minute or so everybody was quiet, and the gang thought up questions, mostly about this Barbadian Pelican he had ended up with. Then the questions began to pop.

"Gee, I don't see how he gets a thing like a milk-bottle down his throat after it leaves the pouch!"

"Say, Pinkie—listen! How come he doesn't get all smashed when he lands, huh?"

"Golly—milk-bottles! I betcha the milkmen haven't got much use for *those* birds, huh!!"

"Does he swallow clamshells and things like that, too? A hen eats pieces of clamshell, and sometimes people feed them to them."

"Why doesn't the broken glass cut him all up in his insides?"

"Does a very big old pelican eat more than one milk-bottle?"

Well, Pinkie answered all the questions, of which I've given you some samples. For instance, to these, in the order in which I've set them down, Pinkie answered like this:

"You see, the muscles of this pelican's throat are arranged so that they expand and contract to accommodate whatever the pelican wishes to swallow. You see —whatever will go in the pouch will pass down the gullet. It's a provision of Nature, I imagine."

"The pelican does not get hurt in the least. I mentioned, I think, how Nature has provided him with a highly elastic set of muscles. He sometimes bounces as high as eighteen or twenty feet, you see. Besides, of course, the feathers do a great deal to 'break' the effect of the fall on the hard surface. A soft surface would not answer because, as I said, the object of the fall is to break the bottle, and a soft landing place

would not do that. At any rate I have never heard of a pelican suffering any injury, or apparently even discomfort, from such a landing."

"No, I imagine the milkmen are quite disgusted with him. I have always thought it unfortunate that milk-bottles should have such an attraction for these pelicans. Some milk dealers will not use them for that reason, but of course people prefer to have the milk delivered in the glass bottles."

"Of course the pelican cannot always get milk-bottles. He merely prefers them. Other hard, brittle objects are frequently used. In fact, this pelican is rather a magpie! He will take almost anything that meets his approval, if only it is hard, brittle, and shiny, like a conch-shell or a milk-bottle. But I think they never hesitate between a milk-bottle and any other object. It is a very decided preference on their part."

"The broken particles of glass do not seem to do any injury to the pelican's insides. No more than small bits of hard material harm a common fowl, I daresay. The lining of the pelican's stomach is of very hard, tough material, quite as tough, I understand, as sharkskin, only rather less rough on the surface; like leather, or perhaps heavy rubber such as is used for automobile tires."

"O, yes, a large pelican will manage two, or even three, milk-bottles, one after another. Only, of course, it would be highly unusual for a pelican, even a very

enterprising one, to be so successful! One milk-bottle is ordinarily all he can find. If he managed to find more than one I daresay that pelican would regard it as a very singular piece of good-fortune."

That was the way Pinkie ran through those questions, without an instant's hesitation, and there were maybe a dozen more besides the ones I've given as fair samples.

And then when no more questions came over, Chief closed the campfire according to our old camp custom, and in the course of the closing, and with a very pleasant smile on his face, Chief thanked Pinkie for his very interesting talk, and Pinkie grinned as usual, showing all his teeth. Chief went on with the closing exercises and at last he got to the place where he looks all around and asks if anybody wants to say a final word that evening "for the good of camp, or by way of comment upon the activities of the day," and several fellows, as usual, and a couple of the counselors put in a word about this or that, as the case might be, and, last of all, Pinkie stood up.

Chief "recognized" him, and Pinkie looking all around blushed a bright rose-color and said he hoped that the members of camp would be kind enough to distinguish between two kinds of things he had been saying in the talk that evening about "West Indian Wild Life," and so forth, because he wouldn't want anybody to think that it was all real Natural History,

and he had taken this occasion, chiefly to amuse the rest of the gang, to do a little Nature-Faking, especially about the Barbadian Pelican and his peculiar diet, and that he was afraid it might be necessary to point out, as the questions seemed all to be *bona fide* questions (and he had tried his best to make the answers as plausible as possible, don't you know!) and he hoped and trusted that he had not misled or unwittingly deceived anybody, that portion of the talk having been included for purposes not even distantly connected with any real Natural History, you know; and then, when he had got about half the gang pretty well mystified about what he was talking about anyway, Pinkie grinned again, a great, big, gorgeous grin this time, as though he couldn't just hold it in another instant, and he looked at Chief, who was grinning from ear to ear, and Pinkie, after this pause in which you could have heard a pin drop, ended up his "explanation" with,

". . . because, don't you know, I fear—I'm afraid—that perhaps some of you chaps took me seriously, you know, being a bit gullible, easily spoofed, I mean to say!"

And I guess that put the final, perfect kibosh on the last remains of any of our gang who still had it in their minds that Pinkie was Camp Goat.

CHAPTER XVI

WE HOPE TO MEET AGAIN

PINKIE had come to camp with just about every handicap there was, if you stop to think of it. To begin with, he wasn't an American at all, and if there's one thing in our country that's worth while which is real, honest-to-goodness American, it's Camp. Camps were begun here, and even though they have spread across the ocean nowadays and you hear of all kinds of European camps, even up in Finland where they have a lot of them, just the same it's an American institution; and Pinkie, if anybody ever was, was a "foreigner."

His looks, his previous experience—he had never been in the United States before, you see—his way of expressing himself, everything about him, in fact, was just about as different as it could possibly be.

And, in spite of all this, old Pinkie had certainly more than made good with us all—because he had the stuff!

There wasn't anybody, nowadays, when the camp season was drawing to its close, who hadn't been just won over to him. And, I'm here to tell you, speaking

as the earliest and best friend he had among us, he deserved it. For he had handed out everything he had and done every single thing he could for camp.

And, I might mention, camp had done him a lot of good, too. He had learned a lot, American-fashion. He was eight pounds heavier, which was something he needed a great deal. He had learned, virtually, a new language!

And, I'm also here to say, that he had taught us a lot, too. Among other things that I guess most of us needed to know, he had made it clear, by just being himself and acting naturally, that there were others besides ourselves who amounted to something. Pinkie could do stuff that none of the rest of us could do.

Camp always ends with a big banquet; chicken-dinner. After the Big Feed, the season's rewards are given out. Camp breaks the next day.

That, anyhow, was the way we did it at the season's end in our camp, and as all things, good and bad, have to end some time our splendid season drew to a close, and the time for the banquet and the prizes arrived.

It was late in the afternoon of the next-to-last day at camp, and you can picture us all gathered around several enormous tables in the main assembly room and just about finishing-up one of the grandest spreads that ever was laid out before a lot of hungry fellows who had been talking about it, or hearing about it,

for the past week or ten days; all through the final doings, including the "Camp Follies," which was a lot of good stunts done by the fellows and the counselors.

There was, for the main part of the eats, chicken, but I won't waste any time describing the banquet beyond saying, in Li'l Joe Terriss' own words, that "she was sure some good ole humdinger!"

The big feed drew to a close just a little after six, because there was a long program to follow. Most of us pulled back our chairs from the tables and "got comfortable" and settled down to listen to the giving out of the camp awards, and to the little speeches of the captains of the teams, like Jim Edgar, and of course finally to our Chief himself.

I won't bother with the speeches. They were o.k., especially the one that Chief made, very short and to the point, and leaving things in our minds that were permanent, I guess; because I want to come to the thing that pleased me, and I guess everybody else too —more than anything else.

There are a lot of prizes, of course, but the one that means most in our camp is For the Camper Who Has Contributed Most to Camp.

It's a silver cup, a small one, that goes to the fellow who gets it by vote of the staff, and along with it is a bigger cup, a high, thick one, which stands forever with a lot of space for names and a lot more filled in

with the old boys' names of past years, on the centre of the big shelf over the great fireplace and commemorates the very pick of the fellows who have been the very best at camp. It's a real honor to get your name on that, believe me.

Well, to make a long story short once more, that cup went to James Roderick Evelyn Maurice Kelley-Clutton, i.e., Pinkie!

And did he get a hand when Chief handed it to him with a few appropriate remarks? Did he? I'll tell the hearkening universe he did.

It was certainly a popular award, that one. We took the roof off.

I don't suppose I need to mention, after all the details about Pinkie in camp that I've told you, why they gave it to him. But I'd like to say right here that to sum it all up, what Pinkie had done was to work his way by sheer, honest-to-goodness character and ability, all the way from the bottom to the top in our camp; from being nothing but Camp Goat, to what he had landed that last night; and he had done it all with that unfailing good-nature of his. There wasn't a dissenting voice nor one single, solitary fellow in camp, that didn't think, and most say, too, that old Pinkie had got what he rightly deserved.

That fine evening came to an end after awhile, and we wound up with the customary cheers for camp and for Chief and for the teams, and sang the old camp

song called "Come Back to Cherokee," and then at last everything was over including the shouting, and there wouldn't be any more until next year.

Prattie and I, who had come together and were to go back home together to-morrow, walked out on the bluff that evening, because discipline was relaxed and we didn't have to turn in for some time yet, and we sat up there and looked out on the water. It was very quiet up there. There wasn't a cloud in the sky, and the big stars were burning serenely.

"We've had some time, Bill," remarked Prattie.

"We have," I agreed. "I hate to leave, even to go home and see the folks again."

"Same here," said Prattie, and we kept quiet quite a while.

In the cabin, later, Li'l Joey Terriss was sitting when we got in holding Pinkie's silver cup and sort of muttering to himself in a way he has—thinking half-way out loud—and every once in a while taking a slant at Pinkie; and after a while he got up and carried the cup carefully over to Pinkie and handed it to him and remarked, "Well, Pinkie, old bozo, you sure crowned your career!"

We had to laugh, Joe was so serious, and Joey, never cracking a smile, turned around and said, "Hey, you guys—lemme tell you something! D'ya know, I often wondered how any guy gets like Pinkie—I mean bein'

able to win cups and like that. Now—me! I couldn't do anything like that in a thousan' years! How d'ya get that way, Pinkie—how d'ya do it, huh?"

Joey was not fooling. He was asking a serious question in his own way.

Bill Winchester answered him.

"You have to have, well—what's known among highbrows as—intestinal fortitude," said Bill.

Joey looked mystified.

"What's the everyday name for that?" he asked Bill.

"It has a short name," said Bill. "Come over here and I'll whisper it to you."

So Joey went over, obediently, and Bill whispered in his ear.

"O—yeah!" said Joey, enlightened now and nodding his head several times. Then he looked at Bill, still perfectly serious.

"You said it, Bill!" said Joey. "He's one of these-here *superguys,* that's what Pinkie is, an' no mistake!"

In the morning we were up early to get going. We had all, according to General Orders, got everything packed in our trunks, valises, and duffle-bags by the day before, and as this had included the uniforms we took off for the last time, it now looked rather queer to see all the fellows in their regular home clothes! They looked, somehow, awkward and strange. That would seem odd, maybe, to anybody who hadn't been

to camp himself and seen it for himself, but actually there were cases of running smack across some fellow dressed up now in knickers and a necktie and not immediately recognizing him! It was surprising, too, to see how many fellows, especially those about the general age of thirteen or so, had outgrown their clothes that they had come into camp wearing, and which had fitted them o.k. two months before! There were quite a lot of laughs at that, and after breakfast there was a big laugh, because Nate Wilder, in spite of being about as busy as a hen on a griddle getting everything straightened out for most of us, had organized that bunch, for the fun of it, and had them all lined up outside the mess-hall.

The rest of us nearly died laughing, and they couldn't hold still themselves, looking at each other and I suppose each one wondering if he looked as funny as the other fellows lined up with him!

That, of course, is one of the things camp does to you—makes you grow. It's on account of the perfectly healthy way of living; being outdoors practically all the time for a steady two months; exercising right; having precisely the right kind of eats.

"By Golly!" said Li'l Joe Terriss, "How this doggone shirt and underwear do itch me!"

I felt the same and I guess most everybody else, too, but I had to pause and take a good laugh at Joey going around running his finger around the inside of

his soft-shirt collar to get some extra room for his fat neck!

Well, not long after breakfast, that grand and glorious bunch that had been together all summer, began to melt away.

Some left in their families' cars. Those who came from New York City and parts adjacent, which was a fairly good proportion of us, left mostly in a body, about nine-thirty, in a great big bus. Li'l Joe went with that bunch. Others, another large slice of camp, were taken down to a train which connected with other trains at the Pennsylvania Station in New York, leaving our station at ten-eight.

All through these departures of course everybody was saying good bye, and so-long, and "See you next summer!" to everybody else, and, of course, high-powered Nate was doing so many things, getting last-minute tangles straightened out, that you could hardly see him for the smoke he raised. Nate was certainly an old stepper when he got going.

The good-byes were rather tough in one way but funny in another, because some fellows, particularly the little midgets, would be rushing frantically to their cabins to get something they remembered they had forgotten, and having their counselors remind them that it had been packed the day-before-yesterday; and all sorts of amusing little things like that, but through all this break-up there was, down underneath, a kind

of desolate feeling. Everybody who stopped to think knew that this particular gang would never in this world be exactly all together again.

I said good-bye to old Pinkie just before Prattie and I left, with another bunch that were getting away just before noon; and both of us gave him a grip that he'll remember.

"How's chances on your being back in the old place next summer, Pinkie?" said Prattie, quietly.

Pinkie's ship back to Barbados, B. W. I., wasn't due to sail for two more days, so Pinkie was outstaying the rest of us in camp and driving down to New York for the ship with Chief when the time came. Pinkie walked with us to where the big bus was waiting for our group.

"Well," said he, slowly, in answer to Prattie's question, "I think I can make it all o.k., after I've reported in person to the family. If I have the deciding vote, I'll be here, if I have to swim the two thousand miles through the sharks and flying-fish!"

And that was the first entire speech I had ever heard Pinkie make in pure, unadulterated United States!

It was mighty pleasant to have Prattie as a traveling companion on the train going back to Pencilville, Ohio, just as it had been coming to camp a couple of months earlier. It took us two days, and a night on the Pullman in-between, and I think we spent most of our

waking moments except maybe during meals when we had something else to do for the time being, talking over the things that had happened in camp.

We got home at last, and that was good, too. One thing replaced the other in our minds, of course, the way things generally work. It took the best part of a whole day and a couple of evenings besides, for me to tell the high spots of that summer to father and mother, who wanted to hear all about it the same as the season before. After that, when Prattie and I settled back into the ways of being home, why, of course, the big lot of things we had to do in Pencilville took up our time and attention pretty well, and by the time school opened again, we were both right back into things with both feet, and mostly football at that which needs "both feet" and all the rest of you, including what brains you have.

Down inside us, of course, we were looking ahead to the next camp season, only there was so much going on we weren't talking, or even thinking, so very much about it right then.

But just about the first of November, when the football was going strong, and long after our regular home clothes had stopped feeling uncomfortable, we got a reminder that made us get together and talk our heads off for a couple of days, steady.

I got a letter from Pinkie, with a Barbados, B. W. I., stamp and postmark on it; English writing paper with

funny-looking water marks on it, and a kind of slate-color, and written by Pinkie himself—five sheets—on his typewriting-machine—a fine job of typewriting, like everything else Pinkie turned that skinny, freckled hand of his to!

There was just about everything in that letter! Thorough—I'd say so. He told us about the trip to New York with Chief and the voyage back to Barbados, and how it was chilly for the first two days, because there had been a cool snap in New York the early part of September, and how it was rather damp going through the Gulf Stream, and how the third day, it was "comfortably warm" again—about ninety-five degrees, I'd guess, judging by old Pinkie's idea about temperature—and how everybody came out on deck wearing "whites," which meant, I daresay, that Pinkie had resurrected those white shorts of his and his gorgeous blazer and cricket-belt!

And Pinkie went on to tell us—for the letter was meant for Prattie, too—how he went ashore for four hours while the ship was in the harbor of St. Thomas, capital of the Virgin Islands, and what a slick place that was, and a lot about it which, although it's one of our American Caribbean possessions, neither of us knew much about; and then about Santa Cruz, which is another one of our Virgin Islands, where Alexander Hamilton was a boy, and then down toward his own island, stopping at St. Kitts, and Antigua, and

French Guadaloupe, and Dominica, which is English but where French is mostly spoken, and then French Martinique where Napoleon's wife, the Empress Josephine came from, and so on down until at last, after a few words about St. Lucia and Grenada and a couple of other places, the ship had at last docked at Georgetown, Barbados, B. W. I., and Pinkie strode his native heath at last!

Mangoes were ripe when he got home, Pinkie said. And the pelicans were "doing their stuff," and the negroes on his father's plantation were setting out the yam and sweet-potato crop—the middle of September, think of it!

It was a good old letter, and I took it along to school and read parts of it to the class, which I thought they'd like to hear, the places mentioned in it being so unusual and different from anything that we have in these good old United States; and, what I'm mostly leading up to, was what Pinkie wrote at the very end, the last quarter of the last page, and which I didn't read at school, but which I'll share with you. Pinkie said:

"About coming back to camp next summer, I need not, of course, mention where I stand on that subject! I told you I'd come, if it were left to me to decide, even if I had to swim it! But the prospect seems, so far, rather favorable, and I imagine I'll not have to dodge any sharks *en route*. The family all think I'm vastly 'improved,' so I have excellent prospects, you see!

"And now—I'm about to own up to something, old Bill. It's this: Do you know, until I arrived in camp last end-of-June, I had almost literally never met any Americans! That probably seems odd to you. Of course one sees tourists, off ships, about the streets and in the shops in Georgetown. They come and knock about and then go off on their tourist-ships. And I had always had the idea that Americans were, well, quite utterly otherwise than the way I found you all! I don't imagine I was prejudiced against Americans. One hears of that sort of thing, of course. It was not really prejudice. It was merely that I didn't know. I thought you all, well, merely 'commercial,' the kind of chaps who go into games solely for the purpose of winning; somewhat hard-featured persons who speak nasally and are always reaching for their pocketbooks to purchase something!

"But I know it's quite otherwise, now. Camp showed me that, of course. I shall not go into details, old bird. But, I assure you, that just so soon as 'James P. Clutton' is on his own, of age, you understand, no longer a 'minor in chancery' or anything of the sort, the aforesaid J. P. takes ship for the good old United States of America, and parks, permanently, neatly, of his own free will and accord, and, with the proceeds of the 'old plantation' *purchases a camp,* and invites one B. Spofford and another H. Pratt, to join him and run same, only it shall be in some part of the aforesaid U. S.

of A. where J. P. can stand the blooming climate, because he's going to have said camp going twelve months *per annum!*"

So Prattie and I, after a lot of grins at this, are looking forward, not only to next summer, at camp with Pinkie, but also, you see, to a professional career as partners with James Evelyn Roderick Maurice Kelley-Clutton, known as Pinkie, formerly of His Majesty's Loyal Colony, Bimshire; and, by Postal Regulations, Barbados, B. W. I.

THE END