

SUPREME MOMENTS IN BOYS' LIVES

By DONALD L. PETERS

Supreme moments for boys, moments to live by, moments on which to build—such moments are readily available in Scouting's active program

WHAT MAKES A BOY PREFER ATHLETIC competition to a back-street brawl? What makes a boy prefer building an electronic computer in his basement to "riding around looking for action"? Accepting the hand of a new friend to jeering and bigoted name-calling? Or standing tall to slouching, perpetually lopsided?

What makes a man a constructive citizen, a leader, working consistently in the interests of his community and his nation? How does a person become what he turns out to be?

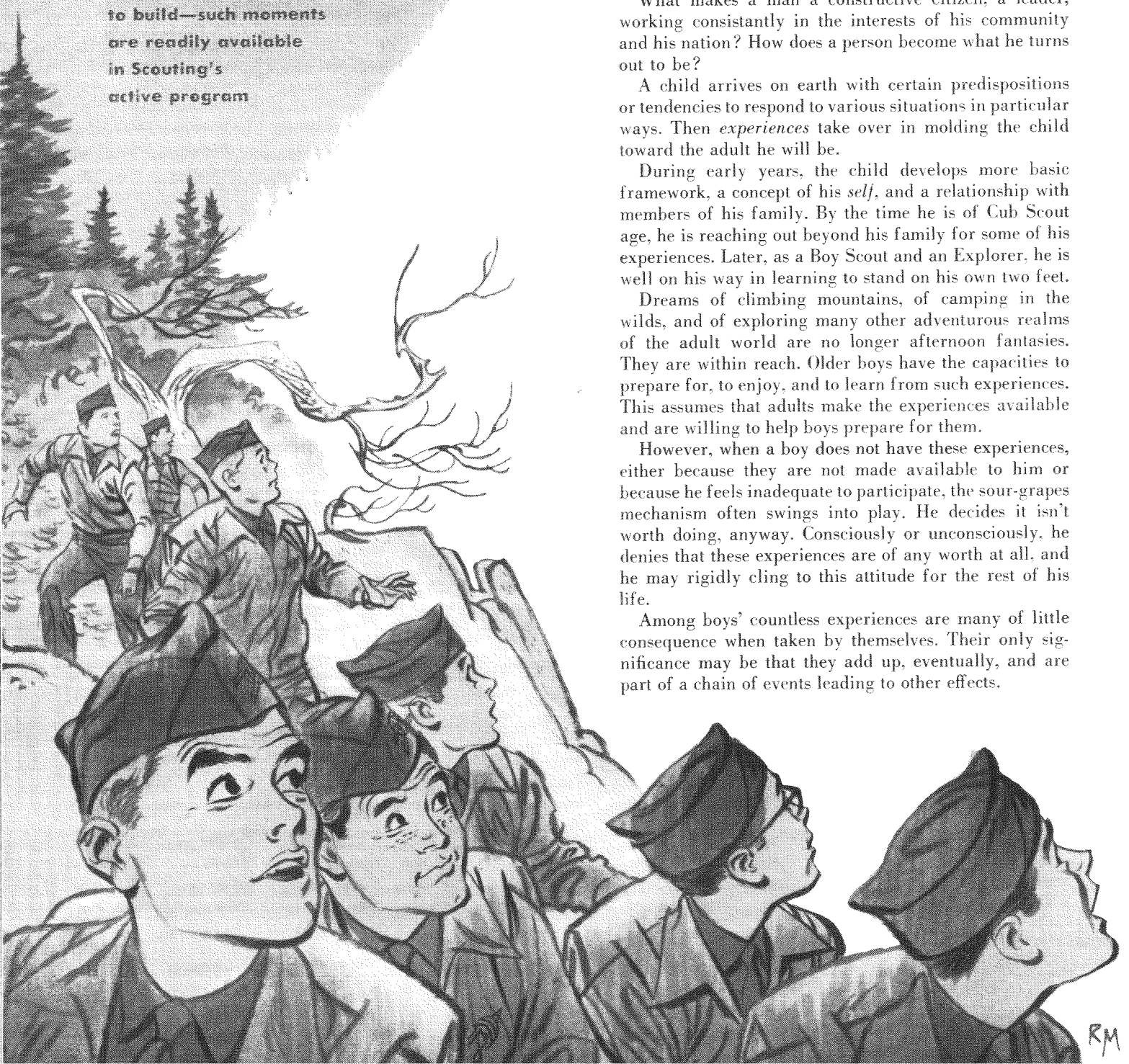
A child arrives on earth with certain predispositions or tendencies to respond to various situations in particular ways. Then *experiences* take over in molding the child toward the adult he will be.

During early years, the child develops more basic framework, a concept of his *self*, and a relationship with members of his family. By the time he is of Cub Scout age, he is reaching out beyond his family for some of his experiences. Later, as a Boy Scout and an Explorer, he is well on his way in learning to stand on his own two feet.

Dreams of climbing mountains, of camping in the wilds, and of exploring many other adventurous realms of the adult world are no longer afternoon fantasies. They are within reach. Older boys have the capacities to prepare for, to enjoy, and to learn from such experiences. This assumes that adults make the experiences available and are willing to help boys prepare for them.

However, when a boy does not have these experiences, either because they are not made available to him or because he feels inadequate to participate, the sour-grapes mechanism often swings into play. He decides it isn't worth doing, anyway. Consciously or unconsciously, he denies that these experiences are of any worth at all, and he may rigidly cling to this attitude for the rest of his life.

Among boys' countless experiences are many of little consequence when taken by themselves. Their only significance may be that they add up, eventually, and are part of a chain of events leading to other effects.



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But some experiences have outstanding individual worth. These, too, may add up to even bigger results with the passage of time; but they can also stand alone in their importance in the boy's development. These are the moments of major consequence, the moments to be remembered, the moments that mark turning points or new levels of achievement.

IT HAD BEEN A ROUGH HIKE, even up to the base of Ross Peak. Hank was completely done in. Now they were about 2,000 feet above the valley floor, but there was at least another 300 feet of steep climb ahead. Hank was bringing up the rear with four other Explorers who felt about the same way he did.

"What's the point?" he said, slumping back against the bedrock wall. "I like the view from right here." The hike back down would be more than enough hiking for the day, he told himself.

He sat there for awhile, glancing from the valley to the peak remembering how many times he'd promised himself he would climb this mountain. And now he had—almost. The last 300 yards . . . well, it really wasn't worth it.

Suddenly from some hidden ledge just up the trail, a golden eagle spread its great wings and pushed off from the craggy mountain into space.

"Look!" one boy shouted, then all was silent, as only high mountains can be silent. Every eye was on the giant bird. Effortlessly, it held suspended above the haze-filled valley for a time, then caught an updraft and soared even higher.

Hank watched enviously, rubbing his tired, aching knees, and recalling a phrase he had heard . . . "In the company of eagles . . ."

He pushed to his feet. "Maybe there's a better view up there, you know?" he said and led the way on up the trail.

SAM LEANED ONCE MORE on the worn doorbell button. Hearing no sound inside, he tried knocking. He could see a trace of light around the cardboard taped against the broken glass pane on the door.

Sam and his Explorer post were delivering Christmas boxes for a group of visiting nurses in San Francisco. They reasoned this service project would also be a supply-delivery problem for their emergency service specialty.

Feet shuffled across the hallway inside. The door inched open.

"Yes?" It was a white-haired little woman, with a faded purple shawl held tight about her narrow shoulders.



"Merry Christmas, ma'am. I have a box here I was asked to deliver."

"I'm sorry, I didn't order anything," she said, craning her neck and seeing the fruit and other groceries in the box.

"It isn't an order, ma'am. It's a gift."

"A gift?" She opened the door, letting him come in. "From who?" She led the way into the front room, a room bare, save for a rumpled couch in the corner, one rocker, and a lamp.

"Santa Claus. I guess. They didn't say."

"They didn't, eh?" She smiled up at him, a tight, set, squinting smile. "Well, you tell them thank you for us if you see them again, won't you?" Her head nodded as she talked. "Put the box down over there, please, and come see Father before you go." She motioned to the half-open bedroom doorway.

Sam, basically shy, hesitated and wanted only to be on his way.

"Son," she said, asking. "I know he will want to say thank you." Inside the bedroom, her voice both sad and cheerful, she said. "Father, a young man's here to wish you a merry Christmas." The old man beneath the patchwork quilt raised his head a trifle and reached out to Sam. The deep lines of his face rose to a smile as the boy took his hand. . . .

Minutes later, Sam strode down the weathered steps, back to the waiting car. His Advisor asked, "How was it with this one?"

For a few seconds, he couldn't bring himself to speak. He swallowed hard. "There's an old man in there. He's dying. . . . and *nobody cares*."

"You're wrong, Sam," said the Advisor, pausing in checking the list for the next address. "Those nurses care. . . . and *you care*."

TIM HAD BEEN HOMESICK on the second day of camp, but now it was Friday, and he wished there was another



week instead of just one day to go. Camp had been packed with more discovery and thrills than he could have imagined.

Take little things, like birds. Before, birds had been, well, just *birds*. But that was before he lay in his sleeping bag each morning and watched the red-naped sapsuckers in the aspen just above his tent, and before he had fed Clark's nutcrackers perched on his shoulder.

There had been singed pork chops, bean hole beans, and all the other never-to-be-forgotten campfire cuisine. The 25-inch brook trout that broke the line and got away! The 14-inch rainbow that didn't!

And there would be another merit badge at the next court of honor—Pioneering. A sturdy foot bridge across Trail Creek stood testimony to that.

But now it was the last campfire. The rolling laughter of the skits had died away. The program director had told tales of Jim Bridger and John Colter, two pioneers who had camped beneath these very mountains.

The Scouts stood in one big circle about the fire. Tim's left hand rested on the shoulder of a lifelong friend from his own troop. The hand resting on Tim's right shoulder belonged to a young man from Burma, a former Scout, now attending a nearby college.

Together, they sang a closing song, words set to the tune of "The Halls of Ivy."

As the campfire softly glimmers
And a good day fades away,
We lift our hearts together,
And we earnestly pray
May our Scouting days be many.
May the good friends made remain.
May our vows be ever worthy
Of Thy Holy Name.

A GROUP OF HUSKY EXPLORERS, returning from a week-long snowshoe trek into the sub-zero wilderness of Yellowstone National Park, stand a moment in silent prayer before hiking the last half mile to their destination.

A Scout reaches out to shake the hand of the President of the United States at a national jamboree.

A boy stands with his parents and his Scoutmaster and is presented with the award of Eagle Scout.

HOW WONDERFULLY COMMON are such experiences within Scouting! Literally millions occur every year.

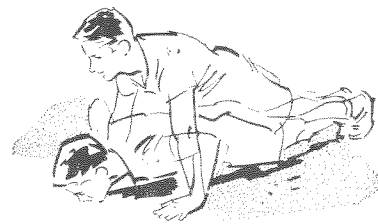
Yet, how very inappropriate the word "common" seems to be! More fitting are the words "exceptional," "irreplaceable," "unforgettable," "momentous," or "decisive."

These are moments of emotional impact, when every fiber of the body seems to tingle, when great things are going on. These are moments of lasting impression, of resolve and dedication. Such moments leave their marks on boys, providing depth of character and understanding and depth of loyalty to God and country.



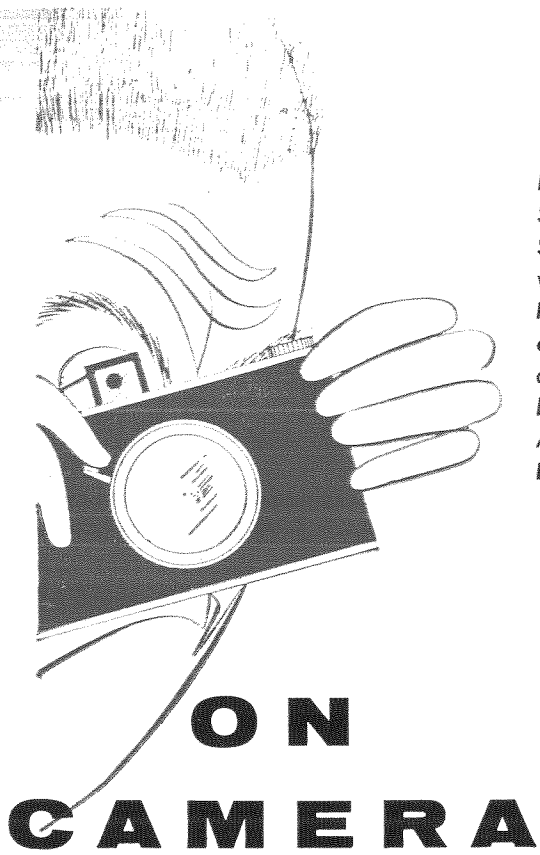
25 YEARS AGO. In the October, 1937, issue of SCOUTING, an English Scouter wrote these lines about the 5th World Jamboree, held in Holland.

Here where the campfires burn
and the world's youth is met.
Brother, give me your hand, say
you will not forget.
If in the years to come rumors
of war arise,
And wrath, mistrust, and greed
becloud the nations eyes;
The sting of angry words, the
surge of national pride—
How can they make us hate; our
tents stood side by side.
We walked with linked arms, we
were joined in joyous play,
And with youths' friendly eyes
smiled what we could not say.



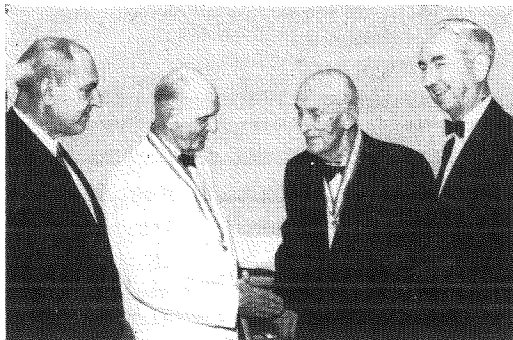
USED MUSCLES. Americans have great ingenuity for taking labor out of everything. Unquestionably, labor-saving devices have made for a better standard of living. However, in taking the work out of life, we have forgotten the importance of developing and maintaining muscular coordination and what it contributes to the well being of the individual. It's as Hippocrates, the father of medicine, once said—"That which is used develops and that which is not used wastes away."

Charles B. "Bud" Wilkinson
Special Consultant to the President
on Youth Fitness



ON CAMERA

HAPPY 50th BIRTHDAY to Girl Scouts of U.S.A. from the Boy Scouts of America is expressed with gift at Senior Girl Scout Roundup in Vermont. Girls' president, Mrs. Charles U. Culmer, receives Boy Scout statuette from boys' President, Ellsworth H. Augustus, left, and Chief Scout Executive Joseph A. Brunton, Jr.



SILVER BUFFALO AWARDS are presented on Scouting's Charter Day to two congressmen who were members of 64th Congress that granted our charter on June 14, 1916. Representative Carl Vinson of Georgia, in white coat congratulates Senator Carl Hayden of Arizona. Presenters are Army Polar Affairs Director Paul A. Siple, left, and Supreme Court Justice Tom Clark, right.

BOWLING CHAMPS of second annual national Explorer tournament receive trophies from U.S. Senator Jacob K. Javits of New York, and comedian Joey Adams, center. Team members, left to right, Andrew Edson, Mitchell Lambo, Robert Gottlieb, Robert Rosenberg, and Burt Cohen belong to Post 133, Pelham Parkway Jewish Center, Bronx, N. Y. Explorers Lambo and Cohen were national individual champs with three-game scores of 695 and 622. Information and entry blanks for 1963 tournament will be available at council offices by January 1.



COUNCIL CHARTER PRESENTATION, typical of hundreds on Scouting's National Charter Day, June 14, is made by Region One Vice-Chairman Howard N. Fowler to Massasoit Council, Fall River, Mass.



HAPPY 100th BIRTHDAY to United States Department of Agriculture from Scouting's National Council is conveyed by 12 Report to the Nation Scouts. Citation, presented to Undersecretary Charles S. Murphy, thanks the department for long cooperation with Scouting.

