



AMONG THE BOY SCOUTS—

By Ricardo de la Cruz *

LONE SCOUT TRIBE GOES TO CAMP

(Continued from July issue)



At our left is a large fallen mango tree, whose roots are so big, we can use them as benches. At our right is a path. We follow this trail and presently reach the source of the Falls,—a sort of dried-up stream, very shallow, but very much alive and active, as can be seen from the swift current of the water. Across the stream is an improvised bamboo bridge. We go over it and at the other bank, we find that we have arrived at our destination. We are at Tribe One Camp.

The camp area is surrounded by a fence,—by two fences, rather, because it is a combination of bamboo poles and barbed wire. Taking everything at a glance, these are the things that we see: a large mango tree, laden with fruits; a white wall tent, (the color of which is very becoming to the background of green and brown); a flag with the letters "TRIBE ONE, MANILA"; a circular dug-up kitchen, with two stoves of stone and a firewood pile at the left of one of them; a small khaki pup tent; and various sorts of camp kinks and gadgets.

Very near the entrance to the area, we notice several pieces of firewood, laid out for purposes of drying them in the sun. We approach. The pieces are arranged and we finally are able to make out the letters. "WELCOME," it goes, and we enter.

At our right is a kitchen rack of bamboo. Above it are plates and spoons. Beside it is a basin stand, and a can of water for washing purposes. Then, there is a "cup tree," improvised from a many-branched trunk of a tree. On each branch is a cup. Beside it is a drinking water stand.

We proceed and inspect the place at closer range. We notice a sundial, a towel-rack, a shoe rack, and a clothes-line.

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The white wall tent, we learn, is used for shelter: while the pup tent serves as the supply tent. Here and there are benches of bamboo.

The drinking water is a natural spring, about two hundred steps away (analyzed by the Bureau of Health).

The surroundings of the area are a combination of green, yellow, brown, and several of the other woodland colors, which, if blended, produce a striking effect of the beauty and charm of Nature.

At night, though everything is pitch black and we can hardly recognize the mango tree in the gloom. No sign or sound of civilization reaches our ears after dark. All we hear are the roaring of the Falls and the varied cries of the woodland insects and birds.

The first two days were very busy ones for us. The "Buddy system" of work and play was applied (as in all of our previous camps) and proved to be very effective in overcoming whatever difficulties we met. The several camp kinks were made, and the boys had the opportunity of taking examinations in Handicraft and the Use of the Knife and Axe.

Hikes were held both to the town and into the woods. In one of our hikes to the latter, we returned to camp with an overflowing cargo of santol and casuy.

Had it not been for the frequent rains that occurred, we could have called our camp a total success. The weather was always on edge,—between sunshine and rain, and the latter seemed to have prevailed the more.

Signaling, Tracking, Cooking, and various tests were taken by the Scouts. We had an A-I Industrial First Aid Cabinet along and it proved to be a very necessary item in the list of camp equipment. We were able to render First Aid,

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English and there was no one near who spoke German. Trudie knew her English well, but there were no girls and boys for her to play with. In the new home her best pal and playmate was her old friend, Fifi.

By and by Trudie grew up and Fifi was becoming an old dog. Dogs, as you know, are considered old at ten. Finally, it was time for Trudie to go away to school. She was to sail to Europe and never expected to return to the islands again. They discussed the possibility of taking Fifi, but thought the heat in going through the Red Sea and Suez Canal would be too much for him since he was so old and so fat.

Trudie had her suitcases and bags spread out on the floor to pack and repack. Fifi stood watching her with a question in his eyes and the curl slightly out of his tail. After a while he jumped into one of the open bags and coiled up with a dejected look on his face. The girl was busy arranging something in another bag, but when she discovered the dog in the bag she sat down in the floor and wept and wept. By and by when she felt like talking she took Fifi's head between her hands and explained everything to him. "Listen, Fifi," she began. "it is very, very hard to leave you. You have been my playmate, pal, brother. Oh! you have been everything." With that she took her much loved pet up in her arms and hugged him tight. "You understand everything." Then she

put him back on the floor and standing on her knees took his head in her hands again and continued to explain: "You see the travel on the ship would be hard for you, then the heat in the Red Sea would be still harder. After that you would have to remain in quarantine for six months in Genoa. I could not be allowed to be there with you. I do not know the kind of food you would have or who would give you a bath. And the main thing, Fifi," she went on very seriously as she smoothed back his ears and stroke the back of his head, "you must stay here to keep my mother and father company while I am away. You are the only one around here who speaks German, you know. You must now take my place, and at the same time be yourself too. In Europe I will be busy at school. You can do more good here than by going with me. I'll miss you all my life, but you must stay here and be happy. Roll on the floor laughing and playing every day, but don't let any one know that you miss me. Always keep your tail curled."

Feeling that Fifi understood all she had said Trudie put him aside and silently continued her packing. And so it is—Trudie is in far away Europe busy with the business of a young girl. Since she went her mother often says, "Yes, we miss Trudie so very much, but Fifi is a great comfort, always faithful, and so cheerful that his tail is always tightly curled."

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not only to ourselves, but to injured excursionists as well.

In the afternoons, we went swimming in the Falls. A shallow place was marked off and non-swimmers were not permitted to go beyond the mark. A life-saving stick was always within reach: (thanks to God, it never was used actually).

During our last evening, we held a large campfire. You can imagine the seven of us,—a wee group, proportionally smaller than the fire we built, creating an atmosphere of merriment and cheer. There we were,—singing around the campfire,—and lusty voices raised in the air, lost in the darkness around. The Campfire is an institution. Around it, friendships are formed,—friendships as tight and binding as the large cables that support a mighty bridge. Around it, comradeship prevails,—a comradeship that will remain unforgotten in the years to come, even when we no longer wear shorts and neckerchiefs.

Tired but happy; a little hungry, but buoyant; each and every one of us returned home the next day, every boy with his own stories to tell. The members of our Tribe have had various camp experiences in the past, but take it from one who has always been present in all of them, our 1937 Summer Camp in Hinulagan Tak-Tak Falls, Antipolo, tops them all!