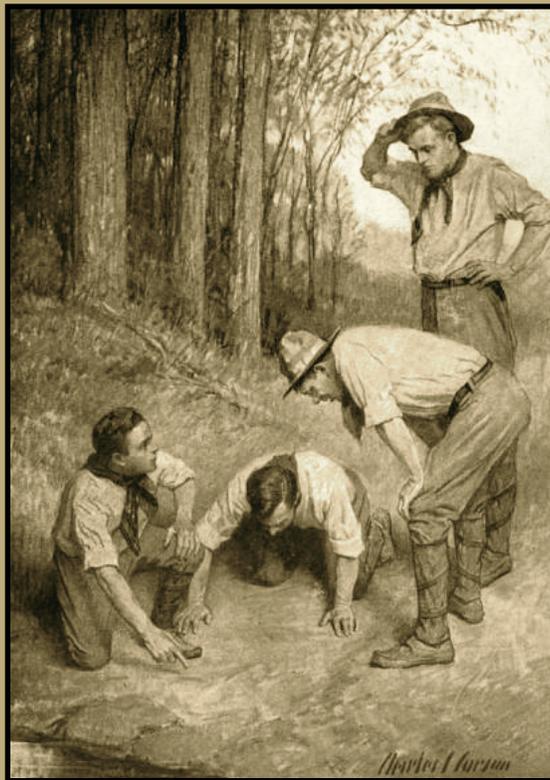


KEEPSAKE CURRICULUM

# STORIES TO GROW UP WITH



## The Boy Scouts on Lost Trail

By  
Thornton W. Burgess

# The Boy Scouts on Lost Trail

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Thornton W. Burgess

Author of  
The Boy Scouts of Woodcraft Camp  
The Boy Scouts on Swift River  
The Boy Scouts in a Trapper's Camp

**Illustrated by C. S. Corson**

**The Penn Publishing  
Company Philadelphia  
1920**

# Note from the Publisher:

This book is a wonderful book of adventure for young boys. Published in 1920, it cultivates the natural adventuresome spirit of boys balanced with character development. This book is in the public domain so I have formatted it to make it available either in an ebook form or as a paperback. Though I have changed some of the language to make it easier to read, I have left many of the words...to encourage a larger vocabulary....several of which I have footnoted with a more modern translation. I have also added some illustrations by my daughter Bethany to enhance the story.

Though not religious in its expression, the story is full of character and morals. It lends itself to many good conversations in which the character of God and His laws can be talked about and applied in the various circumstances which arise in the story.

## **Additional Illustrations by Bethany Voss**

*“PERSISTENCE”*

Page 43

*“MOCASSINS”*

Page 59

*“BUSY BEAVER”*

Page 106

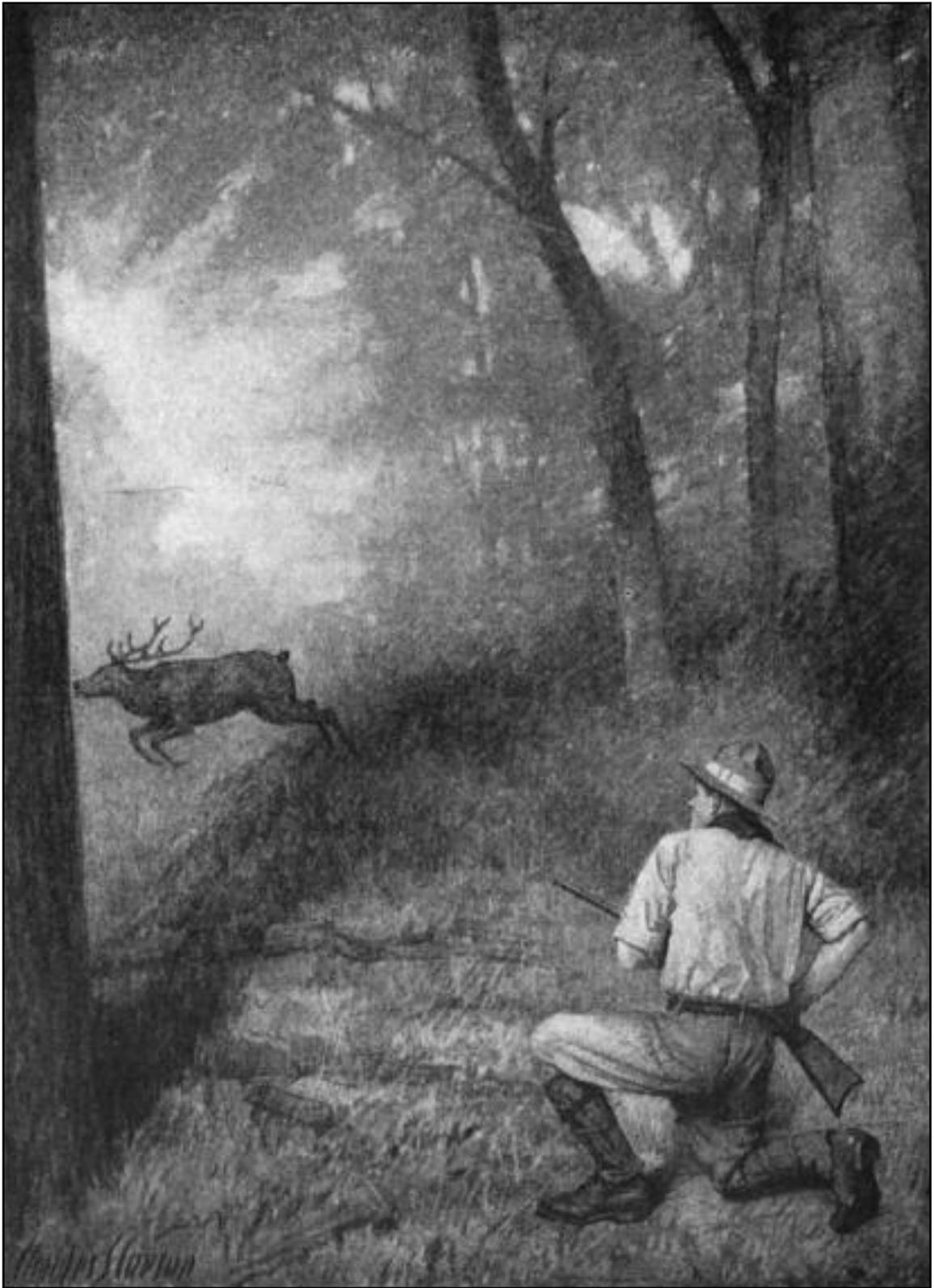
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Published by Voss Publications February 7, 2018.

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A MAGNIFICENT TEN-POINT BUCK

# Introduction

“Those who have read “The Boy Scouts of Woodcraft Camp,” the first book in this series, will need no introduction to most of the characters of the present volume. Four of them are members of Dr. Merriam’s famous vacation school in the deep woods, a camp conducted under Boy Scout law, but with tribes instead of patrols, each tribe having as chief a Scout of the first class. Three of them were principal characters in the second volume, “The Boy Scouts on Swift River.” On that trip they made practical use of the things they had learned at Woodcraft Camp, and their experiences further fitted them for the severer tests, such as are necessarily entailed by an overland trip through the wilderness, such a trip as in this volume they take in their search for Lost Trail.

Every boy with good red blood in his veins is heir apparent to love of adventure. It is his birthright. In the preceding volumes and in this I have endeavored to show how Nature is ever ready to gratify this. Nature has seized upon it as one of the most powerful factors in the development of courage, self-reliance and true manliness. The great woods, the mountains, the lakes and rivers are her classrooms, and those who seek knowledge there cannot but gain physical and moral strength.

In “The Boy Scouts of Woodcraft Camp” and in “The Boy Scouts in a Trapper’s Camp” I tried to portray my idea of what summer camp for boys should be. In “The Boy Scouts on Swift River” I drew from my own experience to show what average boys may find today of wholesome excitement, of clean living and of daily tests in moral and physical stamina by being thrown on their own resources in a vacation spent canoeing on a wilderness stream. In the present volume the tests of woodcraft and self-dependence are a little more severe, but only such as might reasonably be encountered on such a trip. There is none that Boy Scouts of the first class could not successfully meet.

The forests and the waters call; dead campfires wait to be rekindled; adventure lies along the trail. Seek them, oh, boy reader, and know the joy of true living.

THE AUTHOR

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# Chapter IX

## A MIDNIGHT SCARE

The four bunks were arranged two on each side, one above another, in the same way as in a sleeping car. As there were five in the patrol it was self-evident that some one must bunk on the floor, and there was a good-natured argument as to who it should be. Pat settled the matter by calmly rolling up in his blanket on the pile of balsam which had been spread at the rear of the cabin. Plympton took the upper bunk on one side, with Spud in the lower bunk under him. Hal took the other upper, leaving the lower for Walter.

Sleep comes quickly in the woods. The boys were tired with that splendid healthy fatigue that comes from active exercise out-of-doors, and the good-nights were hardly said before all five were plunged in the deep, dreamless sleep of vigorous youth and save for the faint flicker of the dying embers in the fireplace the interior of the little cabin was wrapped in darkness. With a final effort the last ember flared up, flickered for an instant, and went out. Save for the measured breathing of the sleepers there was nothing to denote that the cabin was not as lonely and deserted as was its wont.

Walter had been asleep some hours when, without apparent cause, he awoke. For a few minutes he lay in that condition of comfortable drowsiness which is the borderland of sleep and wakefulness. He was conscious of a half defined feeling that something had wakened him, but his senses were not sufficiently aroused to produce more than a vague wonder as to what it could have been. He could see a star twinkling down at him through a hole in the roof. The mingled scent of fresh balsam and wood smoke filled his nostrils pleasantly. From outside came faint sounds scarcely distinguishable, the voices of the wilderness night. A rabbit thumped somewhere beyond the faint patch of lesser darkness which he knew to be the doorway and was answered by a thump from the rear. A stick snapped sharply, followed by a scurry of little feet as the rabbits sought safety from some unseen danger. He had listened to such sounds many times before and in them found one of the great charms of living in the open, the mystery of throbbing life on all sides, unseen but ever present.

Presently he became aware of a rustling and a sound of claws. It seemed close at hand as if inside rather than outside the cabin. His sense more alert now, he realized that this was what had roused him and furthermore that the sounds proceeded from under his bed, which was not more than two feet above the floor.

Thinking it some small animal who had become over-inquisitive, and not wishing to disturb the others, Walter reached down quickly with one hand, intending to get a moccasin and hurl it under the bunk to drive the intruder out. A second later a wild yell electrified the sleepers into sudden and disastrous action. Spud, forgetting where he was, sat up abruptly, or rather started to, but banged his head against the bunk above so hard that he fell back dazed for the time being.

Hal, wakened from sound sleep and still confused, attempted to leap from his bunk before freeing himself wholly from his blanket, with the result that he pitched headlong to the floor and emitted a yell second only to the one that had roused the camp. Pat had leaped to his feet at the first yell, and thinking that they had been attacked by thieves, with a roar of "Leave me at thim!" lunged toward a form he could dimly see framed against the doorway, and which happened to be Plympton, who had landed on the floor without mishap and was trying to get his scattered wits together. It was lucky for him that Pat tripped over Hal and came heavily to the floor, where he promptly grappled with Hal until, recognizing that unfortunate's voice, he desisted from his efforts to cram a corner of the blanket down his throat.

By this time Walter succeeded in making himself heard. "It's all right, Pat! There's nobody here!" he shouted.

"Then what in the name av mud is all the trouble about?" roared Pat, releasing Hal and struggling to his feet. "Where be the matches? Somebody strike a loight."

This Plympton succeeded in doing just as Pat spoke, and a second later found and lighted a candle. It was a weird scene that was presented in the dim light---Pat standing in his underclothes, his fists clinched and his eyes still blazing with the light of battle; Hal sprawled on the floor, his expression one of mingled anger and pain; Walter sitting on the edge of his bunk holding his right wrist tightly in his left hand and with his face drawn with pain; Spud just crawling form his bunk muttering unintelligible threats while one hand was pressed to his head; Plympton holding aloft the candle and gazing stupidly at the others.

"What does ut mane, tell me, what does ut mane?" roared Pat again.

"Something bit me in the hand and I hollered, that's all," replied Walter with a feeble attempt at a grin.

"And it bit me, and by Jingo, it hurts like sixty every time I move," added Hal.

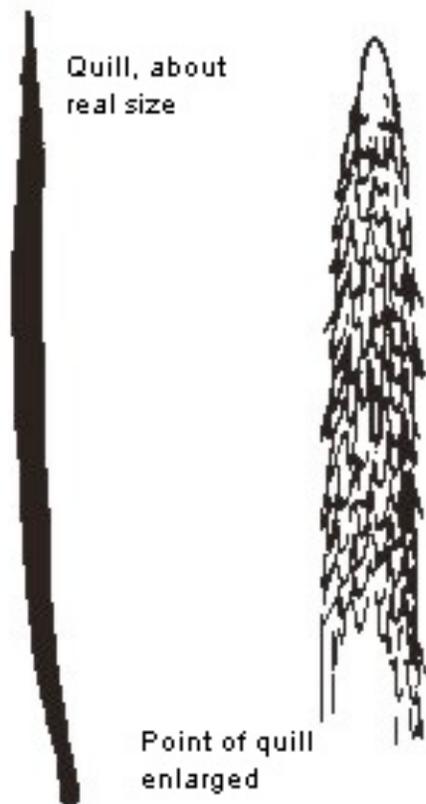
Walter now advanced where the light fell full on the wounded hand and for a full minute all stared at it dumbly while there slowly dawned a realization of what had

been the cause of their fright and resulting mishaps. Pat was the first to find his tongue.

“A quill-pig! A whole patrol av brave Scouts scared out av their sinses, and me wan av thim, by a quill-pig!” he muttered, wonder and disgust mingling in his voice.

It was true. There in the outstretched hand were a full dozen of the barbed quills of a porcupine. Evidently he had just come out from under the bunk as Walter reached for the moccasin and the boy had thrust his hand against the ever ready needle-pointed quills. The sudden pain and fright had led him to think that he had been bitten.

Pat at once assumed charge. More candles were lighted, and while Walter winced with pain Pat, with a deft twist, the result of experience, extracted the wicked little barbs. They had penetrated deeply, and it was necessary to take the utmost care not to break them off, leaving the barbs in the flesh. In such a case serious results might ensue. The quill of a porcupine is so constructed that once it has penetrated the flesh it continually works its way deeper. For this reason the sooner it is extracted the better.



At last they were all out, the wounded hand disinfected and bandaged and Pat was ready for another victim.

“Next!” he called. “Shtep roight this way if ye would consult Doctor Malone.”

Four quills were found protruding from Hal’s thigh. In his fall he had brushed against the porcupine, the quills catching in his underwear and then penetrating the flesh as he rolled on the floor.

Spud, meanwhile, had been giving himself first aid, bathing his forehead with cold water. He had received a nasty bump, and it was already beginning to swell and show discoloration.

“A piece of raw lean meat would keep that from discoloring, but we haven’t got it, and I guess you’ll be a beaut by tomorrow,” said Walter as he examined the bump.

“Oi have ut!” exclaimed Pat. “Sure ‘tis auld Doctor Malone will cure yez or kill yez, whichever be the aisiest, and this toime ‘tis a cure, Oi be thinking.”

With this Pat disappeared, but in a few minutes returned with a strip of raw meat cut from the flank of the rabbit which they had not yet cooked.

“Oi have heard av wearing a rabbit’s foot for luck, but this is the first toime, Oi iver heard av rabbit leg for the headache. But ‘twas raw mate ye wanted, and lean, and this is both, so ut ought to do the trick,” commented Pat as it was bound in place over the bruise. Then he stood off and surveyed the three discomfited victims and began to laugh, and presently as a sense of the ridiculousness of the whole affair took possession of them the rest joined until the cabin rang with their shouts.

“To think av ut, thot a quill-pig, the stupidest baste thot pokes his nose in where he has no business, could have done all this in wan call!” gasped Pat. “ ‘Tis mesilf thot takes me hat off to the nixt wan Oi mate. Oi wonder now where the little baste wint to. ‘Tis a foine tale he is loike to be telling his friends this very minut.”

Hal picked up one of the candles and began to search the cabin, looking under the bunks and in all the corners.

“You don’t expect to find him inside after all that rumpus, do you Hal?” laughed Plympton.

“I’m not taking any chances,” replied Hal. “I’ve had all I want of Prickly Porky for one night. Hello! What’s that shining up there?” He pointed to a rafter in the darkest corner of the cabin.

“ ‘Tis the eyes av something, and as shure as me name be Pat Oi belave ‘tis the baste himsilf!” explained the corporal reaching for another candle and holding it aloft. Sure enough, there sat the cause of the fright apparently not in the least concerned.

Spud reached for his rifle. “Here’s where you pay for all this you brute,” he growled as he slipped in a cartridge. But before he could shoot Pat’s big hand closed on the barrel of the rifle.

“Forget ut, me son!” he said. “ ‘Twas not the fault av the baste. What did he do but walk in where he has been free to come as often as he plased? To his way av thinking ‘tis oursilves be intruding, and not he, and he’s not far from roight at thot. ‘Tis not yersilf would be taking the loife of a harmless crature for revinge, is ut?”

“Did you say harmless?” asked Walter.

Pat grinned. “Did he do ut?” he demanded. “The ividence is thot ye did ut yersilf. Would ye blame on the fire that burned the wan thot sat down in ut? We’ll just chase the baste out, and Oi’m thinking ut is himsilf will be glad to take French leave do we but give him the chance. Give him a clear road and Oi’ll be starting him along ut.”

There was no need to make a second request for a clear way for the quill-pig, for the Lone Wolves had suddenly become possessed of a wholesome respect for the prickly little animal. They promptly stowed themselves in the bunks, while with a stick Pat prodded the protesting porcupine, who grunted and squeaked and clashed his big teeth. Finally he fell heavily to the floor and then with his quills all on end scuttled for the door and disappeared.

“Look out for loose quills on the floor thot yez don’t get thim in the feet av yez,” warned Pat, and the advice was timely, for a number of quills were found on the floor lying in wait for unwary bare feet.

The bunks were soon restored to order and once more the patrol turned in.

“Say, Mr. Leader,” called Spud with an audible chuckle, “of course this all goes down in the records.”

“I think I’ll revoke my order so far as this is concerned,” replied Walter.

“You can’t!” chortled Spud. “You made it irrevocable.”

“Well, I said the haps, mishaps and events day by day, and this happened in the night, and that lets me out,” retorted Upton.

“Not on your tintype!” was Spud’s prompt reply. “A day consists of twenty-four hours, according to the dictionary, and you can’t go back of that. Oh, this goes in the records all right, all right! I told you we’d get something on you!” Chuckling happily Spud rolled over and presently the cabin was silent save for the measured breathing of the sleepers.

The sun was streaming in at the door when they awoke, for they had made up for their broken rest, that is all but Pat, who from force of habit was up with the sun. He had the cereal cooked and the bacon and potatoes, the latter having been put to soak the night before, ready for the frying pan when the others appeared, not so badly off for their experience of the night as might have been expected. Walter’s hand was, of course, very sore, but Hal asserted that he felt as good as ever so long as he didn’t have to sit down, and Spud was as cheerful as if bumped heads and sore feet were the regulation thing. There was a good sized lump on his forehead, but it showed no further discoloration, whether or not due to the rabbit poultice no one could say.

In the bright morning light the Hollow appeared less gloomy, though no less wild. In fact, it seemed an ideal place for a week’s camp, and every one was in high spirits. It was decided that the day should be spent in making the camp as comfortable as possible. Pat volunteered to patch the roof of the cabin with big sheets of birch bark and to cut a supply of logs and firewood if the others would help bring it in. This was agreed to and he at once started for a grove of big birches not far distant, Plympton going with him as assistant. The others busied themselves in further cleaning the inside of the cabin, clearing away the litter around the outside, cleaning out the spring which had been found a few feet to one side, making a substantial camp range with pot-hooks of varying lengths, and doing other odd jobs that would add to the comfort of all. One of the first things done was to float the patrol banner from a pole nailed to the cabin roof.

Pat had no difficulty in finding trees to suit him. Selecting a giant paper-birch with smooth, flawless trunk he made a cut through the bark to the sap wood for about a third of the way around the trunk; near the base. Then reaching as far up as he could he made a parallel cut. He then connected these cuts at the ends by vertical cuts, afterward making another vertical cut from the middle of the upper cross cut to

the middle of the lower. Making a “spud” or barking tool by the simple process of whittling the end of a small sapling to a wedge he loosened one edge of the bark and then by means of the “spud” gently worked the entire piece loose without breaking it. This gave him a strip of bark six feet long by a foot wide. In the same way he stripped off the second panel. Then he moved on to another tree.

Plympton had watched with interest and in silence until Pat moved along. Then he was moved to ask a question. “I have read how this thing is done,” said he, “but I understood that the usual way is to circle the tree all the way around top and bottom and then make one cut between the two and strip off the bark in one big sheet. Why don’t you do it that way? You would get more bark without spoiling so many trees.”

Pat looked up at the towering birch. There was a softness in the blue eyes such as Plympton had never noticed before. “Ut is a gr-rand tree, is ut not?” he asked. The younger boy nodded.

“And ‘twould be a pity to kill ut, do ye not think?”

Again Plympton nodded.

“Well, there ye have the rason,” said Pat. “If Oi completely girdled it the tree would die. The sap could not run. But by taking the bark from but a third av the way round Oi have not harmed ut save to shpoil the good looks av ut, ad not even the nade av the bark would have timpted me to do that were the tree where any but a few hunters would see ut. Oi be thinking ut be as sinful and unbecoming the honor av a true shportsman to kill a gr-rand tree without nade as to waste the loife av another av God’s cratures.”

“You’re right!” exclaimed Plympton heartily. “I never had thought of it in just that way, but it’s true. And I hate to see these great ugly yellow scars. Don’t you think we can get along without any more, Pat?”

“Wan more tree will do ut,” replied the young woodsman, “and there’s wan over beyant that will be hidden by that young hemlock.”

When they reached the cabin they found that Spud was awaiting them with some impatience. During their absence he had made the frame for a table. He had driven two stout forked sticks into the ground about three feet apart and so that the forks were three feet from the ground. Parallel to these and six feet distant he had driven similar sticks and then connected the two pairs by laying straight, smooth stout saplings in the forks. Now he wanted but a covering to make his table complete, primitive but serviceable and convenient. The bark was just what he needed, and

he howled long and loud when Pat would not let him have it until the repairs on the cabin roof were completed. These were done by laying the strips of bark overlapping, alternately convex and concave side up, and then putting logs on them to hold them in place. To Spud's disgust Pat used all the bark he had brought, but his spirits were restored on Pat's promise to get enough more for his purpose. This did not take long, and when it was tacked in place with brads which Spud produced from his ditty-bag the table was pronounced a great success.

The afternoon was spent by all hands in cutting and hauling in firewood. Walter's sore hand prevented him doing what he considered his share, but the others insisted that as leader he was not supposed to do the heavy work, and he finally desisted and devoted his time to laying out plans for the remainder of their stay in Smuggler's Hollow and the search for Lost Trail which would really begin there.

It was agreed that one of the first things to be done was to lay in a supply of meat. To Spud's huge delight he was detailed to go out with Pat the next morning in quest of a deer. If they failed to get one Hal was to have the next chance, and then Plympton.

"I'm sorry for you fellows, truly I am, because I'm going to get that buck tomorrow," chortled Spud as they turned in early that the hunters might have a good night's rest and be ready to start at daylight.

"Going to wear your new shoes?" asked Plympton innocently, and Spud relapsed into silence.

## THORNTON W. BURGESS

THORNTON W. BURGESS was born in Sandwich, Massachusetts, January 14, 1874. He graduated from the Sandwich High School in 1891, afterward taking a course in Comer's Commercial College, Boston. After a few years in business life he entered the editorial field as one of the editors of the Phelps Publishing and Orange Judd Companies and was for several years one of the editors of Good Housekeeping Magazine, for which he wrote extensively.

For some years he has been a contributor to many of the leading magazines. Over the name of W. B. Thornton he won recognition as a writer on outdoor life and nature topics. He is an ardent lover of nature and since boyhood has spent his spare time in the woods and fields. His vacations have been spent with rod, gun and camera, camping and canoe cruising.

Among his books are:

The Boy Scouts of Woodcraft Camp  
The Boy Scouts on Swift River  
The Boy Scouts on Lost Trail  
The Boy Scouts in a Trapper's Camp